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# RISHI PRASAD

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**Pujya Sant  
Shri Asharamji Bapu**



**Shri Krishna, by smiling while taking birth amidst countless problems and sorrow, shows the world that despite being beset by problems and sorrow, you are the jnana-svarupa consciousness, Self, that can't be influenced by them. – Pujya Bapuji**

## Shri Krishna Janmashtami

15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> August 11



**By sacrificing this holy land for building a playground, are we promoting the nation's development, or degenerating India?**

**– Shri Ashutosh Jha, Advocate, Kolkata High Court 20**



# He crosses the maya and helps others to cross the maya

– Pujya Bapuji

Countries possessing more means and resources to excite passion, objects of material pleasure, luxury, and comfort are poor in the spiritual realm and peace, while the countries possessing less material comfort, luxury, and sense pleasure are rich in spiritual wealth. In spirituality, India is rich, while other countries like America, etc., are paupers.

The more luxury and comfort given to the senses, the stronger they become, making the *jiva* (individual soul) weaker in turn. The voluptuous and pleasure-loving ones, being spiritually weak *jivas*, hasten to commit suicide for trivial reasons. They get easily disturbed over trivial issues and are easily attracted to petty things.

If there is no control observed in eating, seeing, and speaking, abdominal disorders, depletion of Life Energy, and loss of energy are inevitable consequences, respectively. Similarly, unrestrained sexual indulgence inevitably leads to untimely death. Bhagavan Krishna said,

...सन्नियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।

ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥

*“Those who worship the imperishable, the indefinable, the unmanifest, the omnipresent, the unthinkable, the unchangeable, the immovable and the eternal, having restrained all the senses, being even-minded everywhere, ever rejoicing in the welfare of all beings – verily they also come unto Me.”* (The Gītā: 12.03-04)

All senses should be properly restrained. Just because one is married, it doesn't mean they should drain their energy in sexual indulgence. Eating doesn't mean that one should impair digestion by becoming a slave to taste. Being blessed with eyes doesn't mean one should watch useless things, or repeatedly watch any scene with lustful eyes and exhaust oneself. Being blessed with ears doesn't mean that one should listen to unnecessary things that excite passion. Ears are given to attain liberation, by diving deep into your heart after hearing the words of knowledge emanating from the blessed mouth of SatGuru about our essential nature.

The one who thus restrains all senses; and starts becoming even-minded – remaining equal in both favourable and unfavourable situations, honour and dishonour, heat and cold... such an equanimous one, the well-wisher of all beings, crosses the *māyā* and helps others coming in contact with, to cross the *māyā*.

*Sa tarati lokānstārayati.*



# True Independence vs. Imaginary Independence

The 15<sup>th</sup> of August will be celebrated as the 79<sup>th</sup> Independence Day across the Indian nation. This day is not just for celebration, but also for awakening – an awakening that should inspire us to think – ‘Even though we have gained external, political independence, we are also heading towards that ‘inner freedom’ that our shāstras and the Self-realized masters declared to be the highest goal of life?’ Pujya Bapuji’s satsang-discourses mention true independence – see below:

When one attains divine bliss beyond the bondage of the senses, mind, worldly indulgence and faults – that’s when one is said to have gained true independence; otherwise, imaginary freedom, like that of the respective states, nations, or religions, that individual beings belong to – have been observed and celebrated many times on earth since time immemorial. This freedom is like, a married couple being in mutual conflict, and then getting divorced, assuming – ‘Wow! I am independent now!’ or a prisoner being released from jail; or even an enslaved nation attaining freedom, so – ‘Let’s celebrate Independence Day!’ – all these are imaginary freedoms. Jivātmā (the individual soul) attains real independence when it becomes free from the influence of worldly indulgence and passion and gets divine bliss.

*‘In the mirror of your heart is the picture of your beloved. Whenever you like, you can see Him.’*

## 15<sup>th</sup> August: Independence Day Special

Such a person is truly independent – a free, liberated soul that remains unaffected by time, space, object, or situation; and doesn’t get entangled in any bondage or even the net of karma and the sense of doership. The truly liberated are the Self-realized souls (knowers of Brahman); while the rest remain deluded – celebrating imaginary independence in the imaginary world.

There was a *fakir* (Self-realized saint) named Diogenes, who was truly independent and highly free-spirited. However, it was during the slave-trade when people were enslaved and bought. One day, goons, holding thick ropes from all sides, surrounded Diogenes with the

intention of selling him. Diogenes asked, “What are you doing?”

They replied, “We’re going to capture you and sell you.”

Diogenes calmly said, “Tie me only if I fear you, and resist or try to run away. Why be foolish?

Where are we going? Let me join you.”

“Won’t you run away?”

“Why would I?”

So, Diogenes joined them. They walked on and on... and finally brought him to the slave-market, making him stand on a dock. The goons said, “Is there anyone who is ready to buy this slave? Just bid for him now!”

Diogenes interrupted, “You’re shouting wrongly. You should instead say, ‘Is there any slave who is ready to buy a Master?’”





# The Destruction of Cultural and Religious Sites is a Violation of Human Rights: United Nations

## Spirituality is the Effective Solution to the Mental Health Crisis

The United Nations (UN) has stated that ‘The destruction of cultural and religious sites constitutes a violation of human rights.’ As per the International Journal of Human Rights Education – ‘The highest standards of health and human rights possible are not upheld for indigenous people because of the ongoing, current, and emerging destruction of sacred spaces.’

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), ‘The economic loss due to mental health conditions in India, between 2012-2030, is estimated at USD 1.03 trillion (approximately 87 trillion rupees).’ A global survey conducted in 2024 shows 1 in 2 urban Indians (53%) say they have experienced stress (along with anxiety and depression) to the extent that it impacted their daily life in the last year. This is causing major losses to the country in every sector.

As per the health experts of Harvard Medical School, USA, the best and fastest effective solution to this problem is – *Prāṇāyāma* (breathing practices) and *Dhyāna Yoga* (meditation). According to American multinational analytics and advisory company – Gallup’s World Poll data over ten years, more than 140 countries and nearly 1.5 million people interviewed – ‘there are ways in which spirituality can effectively help address the global mental health crisis. And people with stronger spiritual or faith commitment often have better health and wellbeing

outcomes than those without such devotion.’

## Is This Not a Grave Injustice to the Nation, Dharma, and Culture?

It is verily the Sanātān culture that has gifted the world with *Dhyāna Yoga* and the supreme knowledge of *Ātmā-Paramātmā* (Self and the Supreme Self), but today India is paying the price for drifting away from it. Still, there are places where this Sanātān culture is flourishing,

smiling, and bestowing physical, mental, and spiritual health upon the stressed and sick society

(disturbed and distracted due to modern lifestyle) – by means of yogic practices, devotion to God, Vedantic wisdom, abstinence education, altruism, etc.

Among such places, a prominent site is ‘Sant Shri Asharamji Ashram, Ahmedabad’, situated on the sacred bank of the Sābarmati River. People of all ages, religions, sects, and classes are living healthy, happy, and respectful lives by reaping the benefits of the holy land. This land was formerly the penance ground of Rishi Jābalya, and for over 5 decades, it has been charged with the spiritual vibes of *Shrotriya Brahmanishṭha* Sant Shri Asharamji Bapu (*who is versed in the essence of Vedas; and is established in Brahman*). Apart from Pujya Bapuji, this ashram has been sanctified by the holy feet of Swami Akhandānanda Saraswati, Shri Anandamayi Mā, and many other *mahāpurushas* (Self-realized great ones). It is a centre of faith for crores of people across India and abroad.

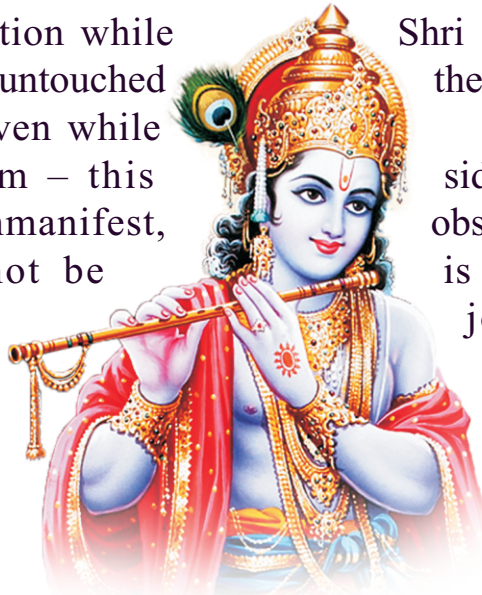
**Current  
affairs**



# Shri Krishna Avatar teaches the Art of being Joyful Amidst Obstacles

Shri Krishna Janmāshtami falls on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> August, this year. This festival is celebrated with great pomp and grandeur in all the Sant Shri Asharamji Ashrams. Pujya Bapuji describes the manifestation of Bhagavān Shri Krishna and the benefits of fasting on this day, as well as the harm caused by not observing the fast:

Manifestation of ever-smiling Shri Krishna reminds us of his philosophy that shows immortality, also in mortal life. To grant the bliss of liberation while living, to help one remain untouched by worldly activities, even while being involved in them – this Supreme, unknown, Unmanifest, Brahman, which cannot be described in words, became the subject of words; which cannot be seen by the eyes, became visible; which is not ‘seen’, manifested as ‘seen’. Some people think, “The unknown



**15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> Au.: Shri Krishna Janmāshtami**

Brahman that is formless and Nirguna (without attributes), pervading every atom – how can such a Bhagavān become a small child?” But, brother! The self is also formless and without attributes, yet how did it become this world, humans, animals and birds? When the existence of formless and Nirguna (without attributes) can become animals and birds with forms and attributes, then why can’t the Nirguna and formless become the child of Yashodā or Devaki? To raise a child, one has to become a child – this much even parents understand.

Indra said, “I am alone the supreme. I

alone should be worshipped, and my principles should be followed.” ‘Indra’ stands for the symbol of authority. Where there was dominance of such Indra, there Shri Krishna started the worship of Mount Govardhan. He didn’t support the slaves of wealth and power, but hailed those who work hard and live affectionately. Good and virtuous people often cower in front of the wealthy and powerful – the removal of this cringing was also a divine work of Shri Krishna. Why cower? What is there to fear?

In Shri Krishna’s life, on one side, it is replete with hurdles and obstacles, and on the other side, it is also full of equally abundant joy, peace, and sweetness.

Immediately after birth, He had to leave His parents and go to a stranger’s house. There, Yashodā ji was asleep, and Vasudev ji left Him there. Shri

Krishna started crying:

‘I have come to Gokul, and the Gokul residents are sleeping! ‘Go’ means senses – this Nirguna formless has become sākār (having a form) so that He can be perceived with the senses, and here the mother is asleep!’ If crying can awaken someone, and even through crying, if someone can see ‘bliss’, then Shri Krishna says, “I have no problem in crying. If by stealing butter, I can steal hearts to install their Beloved (God) in them, then I have no problem in also being called a ‘butter-thief.’ I know who I am.”

On the sixth day of his birth, Putanā (a demoness who killed children) came with





## Preserving Cultural Heritage Is the Duty of Governments: UNESCO

A recently published research paper on the renowned academic, social networking platform ‘ResearchGate’ sheds light on the topic: ‘Spiritual Revitalization of Indian Cities through Heritage Conservation.’ It emphasizes that ‘Heritage is the mirror of human growth and development, and in this context, it must be preserved. **In their eagerness for a taste of development, Indian cities are losing their architectural and historical assets.** Thus, revitalization and conservation

have to come into action to celebrate the reputable past of our historic areas and to upgrade its way towards life.’

It is noteworthy that India is a member of the international organization UNESCO, which considers the protection of cultural heritage to be of the utmost importance. During a UNESCO General Conference, it was acknowledged that ‘It is the duty of governments to ensure the protection and preservation of the cultural heritage of mankind, enough to ensure social and economic development.’ It was further recommended that ‘Member States should give due priority to measures required for the preservation, in situ, of cultural property endangered by public or private work, in order to preserve historical associations and continuity.’

A former prosecutor of the International Criminal Court stated, “When cultural property is destroyed, it erases the past, never to be lived again, leading to an irreplaceable loss to humanity.”

There is a significant difference between cultural heritage and other types of (ordinary) buildings. If any other structure is destroyed, it can be rebuilt – perhaps even better – either at the same site or elsewhere. But once a cultural heritage site is destroyed, it cannot be re-constructed. The power to create spiritual centres like yogā Ashrams charged with divine spiritual vibrations lies solely

with Self-realized saints. All the nations of the world cannot construct

such ashrams, even with their combined force. If it were truly possible, millions of spiritual seekers from around the globe wouldn’t feel compelled to journey to (ashrams in) India in search of inner peace and Self-realization. Every country would have already built such ashrams in their cities.

It is only through the tireless service of saintly, spiritually awakened organizations – dedicated to protecting and nurturing Indian culture and Hindu Dharma – that India’s spiritual and cultural heritage still survives today and continues to benefit the whole world. Any attempt to destroy these institutions is a direct assault on our religious heritage. And if we lose this heritage, India will face grave consequences. Let us understand this through the firm words of a staunch paragon of Hinduism – Annie Besant: “Hinduism is the soul of India. Without Hinduism there can be no India. Without Hinduism India has no future.

# Cultural News





# For Students



## Discerning and Empathetic Chandrashekhar Azad

(From Puja Bapuji's Satsang-discourses)

An activist from the Indian Independence Movement said, "One should sacrifice one's life for the country. I am prepared to sacrifice my life for India's independence, even if I have to jump off a roof."

Other activists encouraged him, "Jump off the roof! Let's see your ability to sacrifice your life!"

The poor fellow jumped off the roof and ended up with a fractured leg. He was bedridden for six months. When

Chandrashekhar Āzād heard about this, he said, "It is good to be committed and enthusiastic to work for the country, but what kind of commitment and patriotism is this – where we cripple ourselves before even entering the struggle for freedom? Patriotism should not be blind; it should be guided by wisdom. Not just emotions, but discernment is also important. Jumping off the roof didn't extend any help to the freedom of the country – it just broke your bones instead and left you bedridden for six months."

### Endowed with Empathy

Chandrashekhar Āzād was empathetic. While he was passionate for the freedom of India, he was highly empathetic too.

He lived incognito in Jhansi (a city in UP) in the disguise of a driver.

His neighbour would get drunk and beat his wife. Though Āzād was in the guise of a driver at that time, he was a free-thinking person after all. So, he said to the man, "Brother! Don't beat your wife. She is a helpless woman. It is not right to beat her with sticks, in public."

The drunkard said, "Shut up, driver! Mind your business. Whether I slap her, beat her, or even kill her – it's my business. She's my wife after all; what does it matter to you?"

Āzād said, "Beware! If you touch her again, it won't end well for you!"

"She's my wife, whether I beat her or not – what harm does that cause to you?"

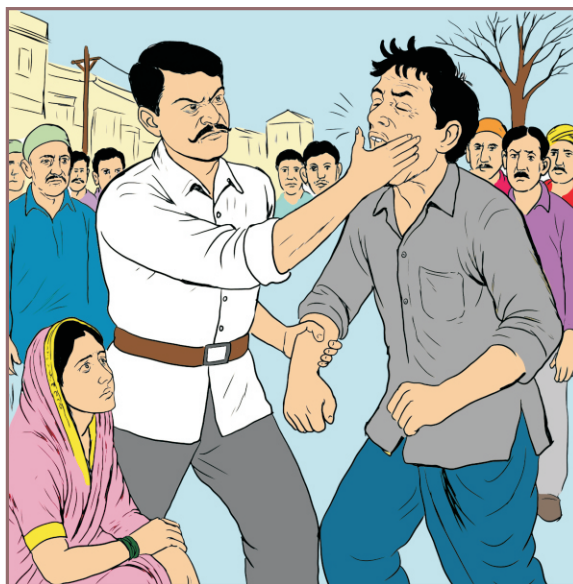
"If you beat her, I won't spare you."

"What do you mean, 'I won't spare you'? I'll drag her to the crossroads and beat her right there!"

He dragged his wife out of the house to the crossroads and was about to strike her in public when Chandrashekhar caught his hand and slapped him so hard that the drunkard felt dizzy and faint. From that day on, he never laid a finger on his wife again.

Chandrashekhar Āzād's mind was so strong-willed! See the difference between his mind and your mind. If you allow

### 23<sup>rd</sup> July: Chandrashekhar Azad Jayanti Special





# This Will Be a Blemish in the Constitutional History of India.

– Shri Ashutosh Jha, Advocate, Kolkata High Court,  
Joint Secretary, *Hindu Ekta Manch* (W.B.)

India is rapidly moving towards hosting the 2036 Olympics, but are we achieving this ‘development’ at the cost of India’s soul? For the soul of India comprises faith, devotion, and spirituality. In the name of the Olympics 2036 master plan, a notice has been issued by the Gujarat government to Sant Shri Asharamji Ashram, Motera – asking the residents (of the ashram) to vacate the site. This is totally unconstitutional. Can any development or plan, put on paper with the intent of crushing faith (directly or indirectly), ever be lasting or even constitutional?

Article 25 of the Indian Constitution gives us the constitutional right to religious freedom – not just to follow our religion, but to also follow our morality and the fundamental structure of our society. This ashram is not just a building; it is a saint’s ‘place of penance’. In ancient times, Rishi Jābalya, along with his disciples, would practice penance at this holy place located on the banks of the River Sābarmati.

Today, when the entire world is turning towards meditation and yoga, and when the Government of India spends a good amount of money to promote ‘International Yoga Day’, etc., what urgent need has arisen to build an Olympic project on this land, thereby demolishing a local ashram where lakhs of people have been reaping the benefits of yoga, meditation, and *Brahmavidyā* (the Knowledge of Brahman), and where such spiritual activities have been taking place for the past 53 years? Can sports events be

conducted only in a place where a sage has practiced penance? By sacrificing our 53 years of spiritual heritage, which has promoted and protected Hindu Dharma for decades, for the sake of hosting a 50-day sports event, are you promoting the nation’s development or degenerating India? Is it progress or the degeneration of India?

Sant Shri Asharamji Ashram, Motera, is not only a top-level spiritual centre of faith but also the headquarters of global *sevā*-projects (activities of selfless service) for the all-round development of everyone, including children, youth, the elderly, women, service to cows, environmental protection, and the dissemination of *satsang* and noble thoughts. Development and faith are not inherently contradictory or mutually exclusive; rather, they complement each other. Scientific development, in some way, is born out of faith, and faith, in some way or other fosters development. So, can’t we advance with both science and faith? Can’t science and faith co-exist? Therefore, I am constitutionally appealing to the ‘powers that be’, who are responsible for the decision to vacate the ashram, asking them to re-consider this decision. This, instead of being an indication of wisdom, is but a violation of the constitutional rights of lakhs and crores of people, which, in turn, will prove to be a blemish in the constitutional history of India. ○





## Sanskrit: A Language That Brings Peace, Joy, and Introversion

This August 9<sup>th</sup> is World Sanskrit Day. The word ‘Sanskrit’ (derived from the word ‘*saṁskṛita*’) means refined, complete, and rhetorical. Sanskrit has the ability to express profound meanings using very few words. Pujya Bapuji’s satsang-discourses often mention the Sanskrit language as below:

Sanskrit is the mother of all languages. Pronunciation of Sanskrit for a little time gives rise to vibrations of tranquility, love, and oneness in the environment. Sanskrit has been referred to as the divine language, (*deva bhāshā*). Hearing Vedic mantras and Sanskrit verses turns the mind inwards and brings peace and joy. English pronunciations tend to turn the mind outwards (making one extroverted), while pronunciation of Sanskrit words makes even an extroverted mind introverted. This is because the Sanskrit language originated from *antarātmā* (the indwelling, inner Self); it is not man-made. Now, even scientists claim that Sanskrit, the ancient Hindu language, is the most perfect language for computer programming.

Those having knowledge of Sanskrit, experience bliss and tranquility when reciting hymns, verses, etc., in Sanskrit; or at least realize its significance and glory. However, the current situation and environment of the country is such that many people no longer know Sanskrit. Even if one doesn’t understand the Sanskrit language, the pronounced Sanskrit words still work. For example, a Hindu bathing in the Holy Ganges earns religious merit. If a Muslim bathes in the Holy Ganges, he may not earn any religious merit due to his lack of faith in

the river; however, he will still experience its coolness. Likewise, those who understand the meaning of Sanskrit enjoy its bliss, but even those who don’t, still benefit to some extent. Pronunciation in Sanskrit leads one back to their cultural roots.

### The Echo of *Veda-vāṇī* (Language of the Vedas): Where Sounds Produce Definite Forms

Researchers from European countries, such as France and Italy, have explored this subject and conducted experiments. A young woman from Italy learnt to play a *ṛchā* (Vedic mantra) of Sāmaveda on a *Sitār* (a stringed musical instrument) from an Indian Master. As a result of many years of patient labour, she carried out a demonstrative performance on a riverbank, wherein she placed the *Sitār* on the sand and played the very same musical tune. To everyone’s amazement, a form appeared on the sand, which turned out to be that of Goddess Sarasvati holding a *Vī ṇā* (a seven-stringed musical instrument) and books. Every time she played that tune, the same form would appear.

This view received corroboration from the experiments conducted by many great scientists. Mrs. Watts Hughes delivered an illustrated lecture before a select audience in a studio (Lord Leighton’s studio) to demonstrate the beautiful scientific discoveries. She sang into a simple instrument (called an Eidophone) which consists of a tube, a receiver and a flexible membrane, and she found that each note assumes a definite and constant shape, as revealed through a sensitive and mobile

(Continued on page: 29...)

## A Blessing for a Healthy and Disease-Free Life: Punarnava

*Sabji*, a vegetable dish prepared from hogweed (*Boerhavia diffusa*) is a boon to health. It is known by different names in various languages: in Hindi – Lāl Punarnavā, Sānth, and Gadahapuranā, in Gujarati – Rātī Sātoḍī, in Marāṭhī – Ghetuli, in Punjabi – Itasit, Khattan, and in English – Spreading Hogweed.

शरीरं पुनर्नवं करोति इति पुनर्नवा ।

Meaning: That which revitalizes the entire body with its haematopoietic and rejuvenative properties is called ‘Punarnavā’. Ayurvedāchārya Vāgbhata ji said, ‘जीर्णोऽपि भूयः सः पुनर्नवः स्यात्’

“Even an old person can become youthful by its proper use.”

It balances all three *doshas* and increases appetite. It is a strength-promoting tonic. Therefore, it is used to remove weakness after disease.

It is a highly beneficial medicine for heart disease, anemia, and inflammation (swelling). It is a diuretic which enhances heart functioning, it improves peripheral blood circulation, and thereby reduces swelling. It is very effective in cardiac debility and also cardiac dilatation.

There is another herb also used by the name of Punarnavā, called Sātoḍī, which is found only in the rainy season. Due to having similar properties, it can also be used.

Pujya Bapuji explains the medicinal

benefits of Punarnavā: “Ever since people forgot to eat Punarnavā, renal diseases have increased. Many helpless people are surviving on dialysis. Dialysis not only costs thousands of rupees but also drains the whole body. Their condition becomes very bad. After 2-3 days of slight improvement, dialysis is required again. The chemicals and medicines used during dialysis do not allow for a long life. Just as I could not bear to see the lives of young boys and girls being ruined due to ‘Valentine’s Day’, I initiated ‘Parents’ Worship Day’, and it has given good results. In the same way, so that people don’t face dialysis, renal or urinary problems, eat and serve Punarnavā and bring it to the market. Poor farmers

bring it to the market, but no one values it because people don’t know its importance. So eat it and also tell others about its importance. Spread this message even among Purnimā Vratadhāris and all satsang listeners or those who wish to stay healthy. Tell those suffering from renal disease about eating Punarnavā if it suits them. If someone cannot eat Punarnavā *sabji*, they can take 2 tablets of Punarnavā (Punarnavā Mool★) once



**Dialysis not only costs thousands of rupees but also drains the whole body, ...so that people don’t face dialysis, renal or urinary problems, eat and serve Punarnavā.**



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\* Ambrosial quotes of Pujya Bapuji to inculcate virtues in students like self-restraint, good conduct, Self-knowledge, devotion, industriousness, dutifulness, etc. \* Inspirational aphorisms on every page that instil in students virtues like self-confidence, regard for parents and teachers, etc. \* Effective methods to develop sound health, mental, and intellectual power. \* Tips to improve concentration and memory power. \* Ways to excel in exams. \* Natural scenes, photographs, and cultural symbols that bring cheer, zeal and joy to the mind, and augment Life-Energy.

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Shivir attendees dancing to sankirtana



Yuva Nagari Exhibition



Resolve of Rishi Prasad Seva



Yogasana



Prize distribution

## Karmayogins lighting the lamp of jnana, devotion, and culture by delivering Rishi Prasad from house to house to the masses



Surat

Three generations (son, mother, and maternal grandmother) engaged in Rishi Prasad Seva



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Yogacharya Shri Ramdev Baba receiving Rishi Prasad

## Vidyarthi Ujval Bhavishya Nirmana Shivir – The school imparting moral values



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