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# Welcome Message



## PANDIT ROOPNAUTH SHARMA'S MESSAGE

Namaskar

It is winter again and all around us we see the beautiful white pure snow and all the trees beautifully decorated with white snowflakes. We have already had three major snowfalls in Toronto, it maybe an indication of things to come for this winter.

It is also December and the Christmas season is around the corner, the season for gift giving and forgiving, the season for caring and compassion to our fellow beings.

Together with all of its natural beauty and enchanting atmosphere the cold weather also brings the common flu that has the power to put a major chink in the joyous activities of the season. Nevertheless we all will endure the cold and all that the winter brings with the firm conviction that winter will be over in a few months then it will be spring and summer again. This is the classic example of life; in that we have to endure what we cannot change and that we have the power to endure and adapt, knowing that tomorrow does have the potential for a better day.

Merry Christmas and a most prosperous and blissful New Year to all.

*Pandit Roopnauth Sharma*

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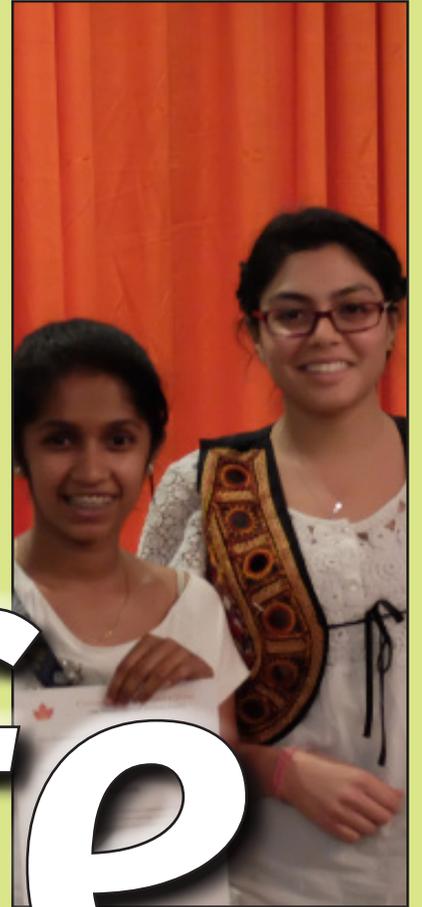
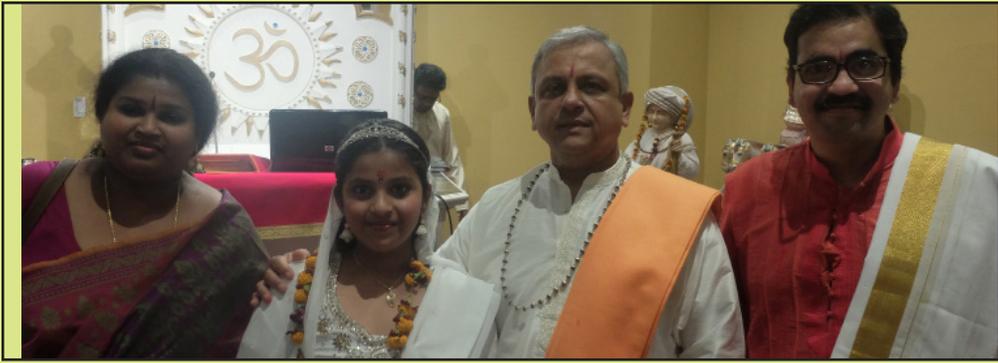
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Comments? Questions? Write Us!



# Life



# VOLUNTEERING

GET CONNECTED AND JOIN THE TEAM

**Our Mandir needs you.** Like any healthy family, it is important to find ways to pitch in and help in order to grow as a family. This is one of the key methods to get connected, build relationships and to feel like a part of the Mandir family. We would like everyone who attends the Mandir to join our team and find a place to serve our community.

There are many ways to get involved both on Sundays and throughout the week. Below are just some of the opportunities where our needs are the greatest so check it out and contact us so we can give you more information and help you find your best volunteer fit.

You can also find information and the application form on our website [www.canadahinduheritage.ca](http://www.canadahinduheritage.ca)

Volunteering may be an outlet for your natural talents, a road-test for your new career, or simply a handy way to network. It is also an opportunity to develop new skills, expand your horizons and help others. Volunteering is particularly helpful for those with little practical experience in their chosen field.

**REASON FOR VOLUNTEERING:** There is much to be gained when you volunteer. However, the following list is particularly relevant to any student moving towards a career.

**DEVELOP SKILLS:** You will gain skills and knowledge that may help you obtain a paid job and develop qualities that are relevant in the workplace. Some examples include punctuality, dependability, ability to work in a team environment and the ability to handle pressure.

**GAIN WORK EXPERIENCE:** Volunteer jobs provide hands on experience and give you the opportunity to apply your academic knowledge. You gain practical experience and qualifications to enhance your resume.

**FIND OUT ABOUT THE WORK WORLD:** You will discover the realities of the working environment. You will gain practical knowledge about organizations and how they operate on a day-to-day basis.

**LEARN TO MARKET YOURSELF:** You will learn how to network and market yourself during this process of volunteering, from completing the application to going for an interview, in the real work force.



Visit [canadahinduheritage.ca](http://canadahinduheritage.ca) for Volunteer Application & Information

## Volunteer Positions for High School Students:

- Kitchen Help
- Jr. Youth Leader
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# 11 New Hindi Phrases

for beginners to learn!

*You often come across these words while you are in Mandir, listening to the devotional songs. Ever wondered what they mean? Here are some often used words and their meanings.*

आशीर्वाद - **Ashirwad** - Blessing by God or elderly

प्रार्थना - **Prathna** - Prayer, request (the word is used in context of a devotional verse or song. For example " Jay Jagdish Hare" is a prathna)

आराधना - **Aradhana** - Prayer again but it is a combination of prayer and worship. Complete Satyanarayana Pooja is in fact aradhana of Lord Satyanarayana

भक्ति - **Bhakti** - Devotional worship. To do 'Bhakti' you need not be in temple or do rituals like aarti. It means pure devotion (to God)

पूजा - **Pooja** - ritualistic worship.

निष्ठा - **Nishtha** – steady devotion

भावना - **Bhavna** - feelings , emotions

श्रद्धा - **Shraddha** – Faith, belief (in god)

ममता - **Mamta** - love, affection

आनंद - **Anand** - Joy, Happiness

शक्ति - **Shakti** - Strength, power

सफल - **Safal** - successful, accomplished



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# CHARITY BEGINS WITH COMMUNITY

Founded in 2013 by Nirmala Ramprasad, Green Dupatta is a charitable organization that aims to provide underdeveloped communities with the resources to successfully face their challenges. After coming across an abandoned community centre on a trip to Guyana, Ramprasad garnered the support of three friends who she had previous fundraising experience with: Keisha Singh, Jasmine Sukhu, and Rhea Bhim. Together they further developed the charity, and this past summer they added business student Kristen Baijnauth to the team as their Social Media Coordinator. 'Green' symbolizes the team's strong belief in eco-friendly living; each endeavour is met with a focus on incorporating environmentally conscious solutions. The 'Dupatta' serves as a symbol for the charity's aid, stemming from the ancestral roots of the members; Dupattas are essentially long pieces of cloth that South Asian women drape over themselves. However, the charity uses it metaphorically to show their influence of each project they take on. In the same way that being wrapped in a scarf provides a sense of security, warmth, and comfort, Green Dupatta hopes to touch people's lives and facilitate safe environments that they can thrive in.

The charity's current project is the restoration of the Guyanese community centre. The centre had numerous safety issues and was no longer in use, but after two years of fundraising, Green Dupatta was able to begin renovations in August of 2015. The building is currently being used as an afterschool day care with classes for children. Although Green Dupatta has managed to get the centre up and running again, there are still things that are preventing the building from acting as a fully functioning hub for learning for the Leonora people. The team is currently continuing



their fundraising initiatives, which includes booths at festivals and fairs around the GTA, and their annual charity banquet.

The charity members are often asked why this project is so important when communities are suffering from perceivably more severe issues such as domestic-violence, rising suicide rates, poverty, hunger, etc. Drawing on their educational backgrounds in political science, health, and history, the team was able to recognize that the underlying cause to those 'more severe issues' can be seen at the roots of a community and its development. Who people become and what they go on to do in their lives is heavily shaped by the environment they grow up in. A community centre offers a place for individuals to come together, share knowledge and ideas, access resources that may not be available to them at home, support one another, and ultimately meet their full potential.

For more information about Green Dupatta , visit [www.greendupatta.com](http://www.greendupatta.com).



### *RHEA BHIM*

Rhea Bhim is a graduate of York University, holding a BA Honours in Health & Society. Currently, she is completing a certificate in Gerontology, while working as a Rehabilitation Therapist for clients with brain injuries. She is an active member of Green Dupatta, taking on a variety of tasks such as graphic design, website updates, volunteer coordination, and more. In her spare time she enjoys sewing, painting, and anything else that allows you to express your creativity and work with your hands.



# get youth involved

NATASHA SEERAM

When youth get involved in their community, they become much more proactive. They start to have more of a personal interest in it and can develop friendships with others as a result. In addition, youth can assume more responsibility for the world that they live in if they are able to feel a personal connection to their society. This is especially important when trying to encourage youth to associate with their culture and religion, since attitude has a significant impact on a person's actions.

Getting youth to go to events and participate is the first step to encouraging them to get involved in their communities. Through attending events, they are able to meet people with similar interests as themselves, and this can lead to forming friendships. Events such as prayers and temple functions also allow youth to be immersed in their religion, while they meet new people. Personally, I have made many friends in this way, and they have been by my side for years ever since. It can also give individuals an extra incentive to participate in religious affairs, such as Holi or Diwali shows, since they will have people they are comfortable around with them on such occasions. Therefore, they may have a more enjoyable time than if they were attending the event alone.

Later on, once youth have been participating in their community for some time, they may decide that they want to be part of the planning process for the events that they have been attending. For example, they may want to start volunteering to set up the events, or even organize the logistics for it. As this happens, youth will start gaining a sense of responsibility, and will work harder to ensure their community's success. This is important for youth because the more they are involved in their community, the more motivated they will be to help society prosper. They may slowly start taking on more leadership roles and start planning new events to bring others together. This is also how youth groups

are formed, as individuals take it upon themselves to figure out ways to get more youth involved in their communities and strengthen the relationships made within them.

Attitude is another vital aspect when encouraging youth to take part in their community functions. They are much more inclined to participate and get involved if it is something that they want to do, rather than being forced into it. In addition, if individuals have a positive attitude, they are more likely to have an enjoyable experience. They will want to continue to attend these types of functions and they may even become the people that start encouraging others to join them at these events too. A person's attitude and mind set strongly influences their actions, and if youth have positive thoughts towards their religion and culture, they would want to learn more about it and share in the festivities and prayers that accompany it, continuing the religion for future generations to come.

Youth involvement is very important for the betterment of communities, since youth can bring new and innovative ideas to groups. Involving them in activities and events would allow them to build relationships with others and become interested in what goes on around them. Having youth become part of the groups that plan events would also be very beneficial for them, because it would allow them to take on leadership roles and develop more responsibility towards their community and peers. They would develop positive attitudes towards the events going on and may learn new things along the way.

Youth are the ones who will continue to develop their communities in the future, and so how they feel towards their peers and other individuals will greatly impact how their culture and religion progresses over time.



# MRM YOUTH

## Annual Holiday

“Service which is given without consideration of anything in return, at the right place and time to one that is qualified, with the feeling that it is one’s duty, is regarded as the nature of goodness.”

— Bhagavad Gita 17.20



Service in Hindu religious custom is referred to as ‘Seva,’ meaning selfless service. This quote taken from the Bhagavad Gita explains that selfless service must be seen as one’s duty to humanity, and as such is an act of kindness. Selfless service is essentially doing things without expecting anything in return. It is my belief that selfless service is not only a Hindu custom but also an innate human behaviour, in which we all try to help those in need. In this article I would like to discuss the different forms of selfless service and how the Mississauga Ram Mandir (MRM) youths are performing ‘seva’ for their community.

With the holidays around the corner, many of us get enraptured with the shopping craze and forget to think about the “giving” aspect in this season. Just to give an idea of how much we spend during the Christmas season, in the year 2014 the average Canadian spent \$946 (Field Agent Canada, 2015). Now, wouldn’t it be nice if we spent more time on “giving” rather than excessive spending. Not only would we save a couple dollars in our pockets, but most importantly gain a great sense of self-satisfaction by helping others. So what kind of giving requires very little spending and provides an exceptional feeling of accomplishment by doing something for humanity? The answer is charity!

According to the Oxford dictionary, charity is “the voluntary giving of help, typically in the form of money, to those in need” (Oxford University Press, 2016). This definition is limited as it emphasizes only monetary giving and not all the other forms of charity such as volunteering, giving of your time or lending a helping hand to someone in need. As Pandit Roopnauth Sharma says, “charity begins at home” and thus caring for others without any expectations is selfless. The MRM youths are definitely enthusiastic about seva or selfless service and are demonstrating this by participating in the annual holiday food drive.



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For over the past 10 years or more, the Ram Mandir has been conducting an annual Holiday food drive and I am proud that we the MRM youths have adopted this tradition. The MRM youth group has been participating in the food drive with various different food banks, including the Seva Food Bank and the Salvation Army. We have also been working with the Mississauga Food Bank since 2014 and have decided to work with them again this year, in order to achieve our goal of collecting and donating 1 ton of food!

Many of us are unaware of the number of people that actually use food banks for basic means of survival. I was curious to know and I came across some substantial statistics. As of March 2016, food banks assisted 863,492 people in Canada and 35.6% of these people were children, and in the province of Ontario 335,944 people used food banks and 33.4% of these people were children (Hunger Count Report, 2016). Also, the highest usage of food banks was by women at 49% and single people at 44.3% (Hunger Count Report, 2016). Thus, the importance of these food banks is clearly indicated by these statistics and it makes me feel more compelled to achieve our goal in collecting food.

Although, the MRM youth food drive is usually held during the holidays, it is important to note that food banks need our help all year around. There are those that are less fortunate and we are so privileged to be in safe environments and not be faced with food insecurity. As such, the food drive is probably the simplest form of giving back to the community, as it requires little time and effort. Just the willingness to serve others can make a huge difference. The MRM youths have also taken on various other fundraising initiatives including the Dr. Doobay Dialysis Clinic in Guyana, Blood Bank, natural disasters, and funding for senior's transportation to the Mandir. The MRM youth group holiday food drive will be on until December 22nd so please feel free to drop off a non-perishable food item in the bins in the front entrance of the Ram Mandir and do your duty by performing seva to humanity. In conclusion, I would like to end with this quote "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give" (Winston Churchill).



Retrieved from: <http://portcreditcommunityfoundation.org/images/community/logos/pccf-food-bank.jpg?1427858500>



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NIRVANA SHARMA





*Join*  
the **MRM**  
YOUTH GROUP

For All  
Youth  
Ages 10+

Since the beginning of 2014, we have held multiple fundraisers to raise money for the transportation of our seniors. We have also participated in Mandir events such as the annual Walk-a-thon, 7 Days of Bhagwat Katha and the Volunteer Appreciation Banquet as well as performing during Ram Navmi & Hanuman Jayanti under the direction of Pt. Sharma.



**The MRM Youth Group is looking for young, Hindu leaders** who are interested in getting involved with their local culture and spiritual community. Areas of involvement can range from arranging recreational activities to focusing on philanthropy to gaining experience in media and design.



Ram Mandir Youth

# About Ram Mandir



Mississauga's Ram Mandir, is one of Canada's leading Temples and it is providing exceptional quality service in the form of Spiritual guidance and Cultural preservation. The mandir is a Federally registered Charitable Organization that has been in existence for over 18 years.

Under the guidance of Pt. Roopnauth Sharma, Founder and Spiritual Leader, Shri Ram Mandir has attracted worshippers from several Geographical locations, such as India, Fiji, Mauritius, South Africa, Guyana, Trinidad and Suriname.

2017 marks the 17th anniversary of Mississauga Ram Mandir as we see it today. Ram Mandir offers not only daily services in the temple, but also many community and religious events as well as a day school, school of the arts and summer camp. Over the past 16 years, the facilities at Mississauga Ram Mandir have evolved to the needs of the community, hosting and producing programs for seniors, youths and families. The Ram Mandir has been a pivotal platform in Hindu advocacy in Mississauga and across the GTA working with cities across Ontario to empower Hindus everywhere.

## A HUMBLE BEGINNING:

Every Organization, Business or Corporate entity has humble beginnings. Shri Ram Mandir was no exception. Pt. Roopnauth Sharma, having

displayed remarkable leadership qualities in his community, coupled with his simple interpretation and presentation of Religion, was approached by various members of the Hindu Community to establish a Temple under his leadership. The establishment of Shri Ram Mandir was a dream fulfilled for Hindus in the City of Mississauga, since, an organization that focuses on development of youths and promoting Hinduism as it relates to the current century was long anticipated. For many years, the Temple operated in a Unit complex on Timberlea Blvd in Mississauga. In July 2001 the current structure was built.

## OBJECTIVES:

Propagate Hinduism, culture and religious philosophy within the Hindu community and to educate all about the Hindu way of life.

Provide essential services to the community to address its Spiritual, social, and cultural needs.





Represent the Hindu community, on all cultural and religious issues.

To partner with existing government services and other community institutions to address the general needs of the community.

Promote harmony and respect for all cultures, within Canadian society.

Throughout the years, Hindus from all walks of life, especially the youth, were drawn to the simple, yet most practical methods of practicing Hinduism. Worshippers are thrilled by the quality of knowledge expounded, and by the various services offered. To us, this is our greatest accomplishment.

Activities and celebrations such as Maha Shivratri, Holi, Hanuman Jayanti, Nav Ratri, Ram Navmi, Krishna Janam Ashthami Diwali etc, are all

celebrated in Grand style.

## Current Major Activities:

We have successfully launched a series of Public Forums to educate and motivate our community. These forums have a wide focus and are directed to all ages from twelve years and older. The topics included, "Youth and the Law", "Heart and Stroke Clinic" and "Consumers protection". These have been complimented with monthly social and recreational activities for our seniors. We have committed to building a seniors retirement home by 2019 and to continue to expand our senior services.

## Come Join Us!

Every Sunday, from 9:30 a.m to 12 p.m, there is bhajans, lingam pooja and sermon presented by Pandit Roopnauth Sharma.

*Can't Make It?*

**WE LIVE BROADCAST!**

From 11 a.m to 12 p.m, visit our website, [www.rammandir.ca](http://www.rammandir.ca), to watch a live broadcast of the sermon.

You can also visit our YouTube page for previous broadcasts

**Mississauga Ram Mandir**



# highlight of the season

at Ram Mandir

Celebrate the festival of Holi with the Mississauga Ram Mandir family, and the Kala Niketan School of Performing Arts as we showcase our colors at our annual Holi Show. Stay tuned for more information about our show happening at the beginning of March!



# Religion



## upcoming events

*Lohri*

Thursday  
January 12th  
7:00 PM

*Makar Sankranti*

Friday  
January 13th

*Indian Republic Day*

Thursday  
January 26th

*Saraswati Jayanti*

Wednesday  
February 1st

*Vasant Panchami*

Wednesday  
February 1st

*Family Day*

Monday  
February 20th

*Mahashivratri*

Friday  
February 24th

*Holi Purnima*

Saturday  
March 11th



# Ram Mandir's Past Events



Sunday, October 23, 2016 - the annual MRM Diwali Fundraising Dinner featuring live entertainment.



October 1 - 9, 2016 - the Ram Mandir celebrated Navatri in a grand style.



October 19th, 2016 - The Hindu community celebrates Karva Chauth



Sunday, December 18th, 2016 - the Seniors Holiday Dance



# Kailash Temple AT ELLORA

## The Jewel of Syhadris

When somebody asks you, which is the greatest man-made monument on this earth, what would your answer be? Great pyramid of Giza? St Peter's basilica? Burz Khalifa? Or the Taj?

If somebody asked me this question, I wouldn't hesitate, not even for a second, before replying, "Of course, the Great Kailash temple of Ellora."

Why do I think so? Because I feel it is a feat near impossible to repeat. The sheer beauty, magnitude, imagination, dedication and hard work that has gone into creating this magnificent monument is mind blowing. Imagine a whole mountain being chiselled and carved from top to bottom into a gigantic temple complex with several members like subsidiary shrines, an overbridge, free standing pillars, colonnades and gateway. The Kailash was cut from a single rock starting from the top at a height of 115 ft. and the work progressed downwards, by sculpting and carving. Thus the temple has an impressive exterior as well as a well-defined interior including a 72' long pillared 'Mandapa' or a prayer hall, all carved from the same stone.

The architects who must have planned this couldn't possibly live to see the results of their planning as it took one hundred and fifty years and six generations of craftsmen to complete this project. However, this handcrafted sculpture is so perfect in its execution that it's impossible to tell from where the grandfather left the crafting and the grandson took over.

Even in India, very few people know about Kailash. First, it is not close to any of the popular circuits. Secondly, there is little local awareness about the rock cut architecture. But any given day, you will find hundreds of international tourists flocking the site, for the architecture of Kailash is far superior to world famous Petra which is patronised in Hollywood movies. Kailash is one cave out of the thirty four caves



[http://www.thorsley.ca/album/India/album/Ajanta%20and%20Ellora%20Caves/2106000\\_KailashTempleElloraCaves.jpg](http://www.thorsley.ca/album/India/album/Ajanta%20and%20Ellora%20Caves/2106000_KailashTempleElloraCaves.jpg)



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<https://c.photoshelter.com/img-get/10000.BP5ILCKR1pE/s/850/680/GDeichmann-India-Ajanta-Ellora00579.jpg>

at Ellora. The entire group of rock cut caves at Ellora is a UNESCO world heritage site.

The Kailash is part of the Ellora group of caves located in the ranges of Syhadri mountains. The closest city is Aurangabad. Ellora was discovered by British archaeologists in the 19th century. The site of Ellora has thirty four caves. Caves one to twelve (sequentially) belong to Buddhist faith whereas caves thirteen to twenty nine belong to Hindu faith. Kailash is cave sixteen. The remaining caves belong to Jain faith. Kailash was commenced under the patronage of Rashtrakuta king Krishna I around 750 A.D. It was completed around 900 A.D. , after 150 years of relentless working.

The pit that was cut in the mountain to sculpt Kailash is 300 ft long and 200 ft wide. The height of the pit is 115 ft. Unlike the structural temples where the plinth is started first, the work on Kailash started from the top. So there was never any need for scaffoldings. It's still a mystery how they perceived and followed their plan but they gradually worked downwards finishing the surface. There was no place for afterthought. And so they worked on, year after year, decade after decade, generation after generation for a century and half till they reached the ground level.

The plan of Kailash temple is in Dravid ( Southern) style. It is loosely based on Virupaksha temple of Karnataka which was then a recent creation. The ornate entrance gateway greets you as you approach the mountain. The gateway leads to a huge courtyard which actually is a man made pit. The first structure is the square 'Nandi Mandapa' or the Bull Shrine. Bull being Shiva's vehicle always has a place in a Shiva temple. Beyond the Nandi Mandapa is the main temple. There is an over bridge connecting the two. The bridge, which is extended till the entrance only adds to the aesthetics of the mandir. On

the two sides of the Mandapa are two customary free standing pillars. There are sculpted elephants and many other sculptures within the courtyard.

The main temple is impressive, to say the least. It is carved as per the norms of the structural temples. It is a two compartment structure – the sanctum and the prayer hall. The exterior of the sanctum has a pyramidal tower in three stages topped by a domical finial. The rectangular hall has pillars copied from the originals, though they do not have any structural value.

The exterior of the mandir is richly carved with motifs and figurines. Most interesting is the tall plinth with elephants carved in bold relief as if they are lifting the temple on their backs. This is to lighten the height of the plinth.

All of the above is carved from a single rock. No stone in Kailash has been brought from outside.

That is not all. The three sides of the pit have long corridors with number of cells for utility. Best of the carvings from Hindu mythology is lavished upon here. The artwork of Kailash is of highest aesthetic order.

Writing about Kailash in a few lines does not justify its grandeur. It is only seen to be believed. It is a feat impossible to achieve again.



<http://immigration-lawyer.com/newsp/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Ellora-Caves-Maharashtra-India-126508043.jpg>

*UDAY LOHAKARE*

# Ask

*the Pandit*

**Q<sub>1</sub>:**

**What Is  
Arth?**

**Q<sub>2</sub>:**

**What is  
Moksha /  
Salvation?**

**A<sub>2</sub>:**

Moksha is to fully realise and accept without any doubt the presence of God in our life.

**A<sub>1</sub>:**

Arth represents the materialistic world. Everything in this world that mankind can consider of value to life is Arth.

**Q<sub>3</sub>:**

**What is Bhakti?**

**A<sub>3</sub>:**

Bhakti is that state of existence whereby we accept that God is in everything and all things come from God and all our actions, thoughts and words are in essence service to God.

**Ask**  
*the Pandit*

It's official...

*november is*

# Hindu HERITAGE MONTH



Living in North America as a Hindu in 2016, it can be challenging to hold on to your religious values and practices. Just as it can be challenging for other faiths to maintain their aura, Hindus need to work to ensure that their traditions and history don't get lost. Thanks to the dedication and perseverance of religious leaders and those dedicated to preserving the integrity of our faith, that's something Hindus in Ontario don't need to worry about anymore.

As of Thursday, December 8th, 2016, Bill 56, an Act to proclaim the month of November Hindu Heritage Month, received Royal Assent. That means that every November from now on will be recognized as Hindu Heritage Month, in which Ontarians will take the opportunity to celebrate their religion and educate others. The government of Ontario gladly recognizes the contributions that Hindu Canadians have made to the community:



***“Ontario is home to a large and vibrant Hindu community. Since the first Hindu immigrants arrived in Canada at the beginning of the 20th century, Hindu Canadians from across Ontario have made significant contributions to all fields: science, education, medicine, law, politics, business, culture, and sports. Hindu Canadians have helped build Ontario into the multicultural success story that it is and have helped to build this province into the best place to live, work and raise families. They continue to help foster growth, prosperity, and innovation throughout Ontario.”***

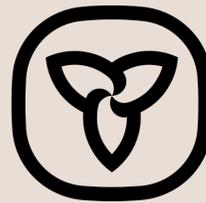
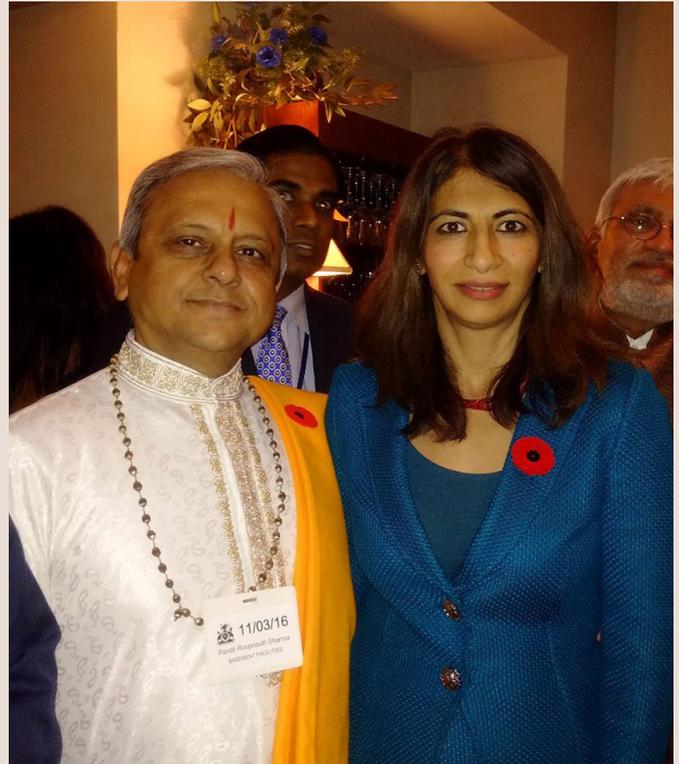


What does this mean for Hindus in Canada? It means being able to freely and proudly celebrate our religion, and share its rich history and culture with others. This bill will affect youth, in particular. Growing up, differences aren't often easily accepted. Although we live in a beautifully diverse community, for the most part, it can be difficult for children to express their pride and participation in their religion when they feel it's different from what's considered to be the norm. With Bill 56 in place, any reservations that Hindu youth may have about participating or expressing interest in their faith will be diminished. With November as Hindu Heritage Month, children and teenagers alike will be given an ample opportunity to share their religious beliefs with others, as well as enjoy them without the fear of not being accepted.

We are extremely privileged to live in a country where our religion is accepted and even celebrated. As neighboring countries embark on a trying journey wherein cultural differences are seen as a negative rather than a positive, it's important to appreciate the freedom and acceptance we're able to enjoy. With great thanks to those that worked towards achieving this momentous goal in the Hindu community, Bill 56 will serve to benefit future generations of Ontarians, whether they identify as Hindu or not.

Source:  
[http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills\\_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=4313&detailPage=bills\\_detail\\_the\\_bill](http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=4313&detailPage=bills_detail_the_bill)

*TARISHA BENIPRASAD*



Ontario

# the SACRED NUMBER 108

## *Embedded in the Mala*

Most Indians are unfamiliar with the huge contributions India has made to world civilization. The reason is that India's education system was designed by the British imperialists to make a group of Indians known as 'Macaulay's Children' mimic the masters and then go on to pass on that mimicry to the general Indian population. Thomas Macaulay was the architect of this. He argued in the British parliament (1835):

***"We must at present do our best to form a class [of Indians] who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect"***

Thus, Indian education is a "conscious policy of liquidating indigenous culture through the planned substitution of the alien culture of a colonizing power via the education system." So, Indians were taught, on the one hand, to denigrate their ancient culture and significant achievements and on the other taught very little

of the essential facts on these monumental achievements. The following article is intended to bring to readers' notice an Indian scientific discovery of sacred significance, without the use of scientific instruments,

When our fore-parents, the indentured Indians (pejoratively labelled 'bound coolies'), travelled across the Kala Pani (dark waters) - normally a proscription for Hindus in those days - they arrived in British Guiana and the Caribbean with very few earthly possessions. Nonetheless, they took along traditions which preserved their ultra-rich ancient Hindu heritage. One such profound tradition is embedded in the unassuming mala (Sanskrit: माला maalaa, for garland). Thus, the mala is widely known as a garland or necklace - of 108 beads.

What is special about the number 108 ?

For Hindus, who made up over 85% of the indentured labourers, this simple string of 108 beads has deep cosmic - scientific, mathematical and spiritual - significance. As an example of its spiritual significance and application, Hindu tradition

requires that on certain auspicious occasions some sacred mantras such as the Gayatri and Om Namah Shivaya be recited 108 times. The beads are used as a means to concentrate the mind on the chosen mantra while the devotee turns each bead to and fro. As well, each bead is considered to provide a unique sacrament/blessing as will be made clearer below. Finally, the beads are used to keep the count as the devotee progresses through the 108 repetitions.

The Museum of Anthropology tells us that the use of prayer beads most likely began with Hinduism in the 8th century BCE. Buddhism, Islam and the Catholic Church have since copied the practice.

Scholars and Scientists pay respect to Hindu concepts

The late astrophysicist Carl Sagan in his TV series, COSMOS argued that the Indian Yuga (epoch) system provides an age of the universe which is the closest to modern science of any other religious tradition. Prof. Brian Cox in the science series Human Universe commented on the Rig Veda's 'Nasadiya Sukta' hymn 10:129 on Creation of the



Universe, saying that it reflects “real intellectual rigour and honesty” while also noting that other significant “mathematical concepts such as Square Root, Pi (3.145) and the latterly named, ‘Pythagoras Theorem’ are all in the Vedas.”

Theoretical physicist, Fritjof Capra also speaks approvingly of Hindu philosophy and imagery. Capra writes in his bestseller, *Tao of Physics*, that

***“Shiva, the Cosmic Dancer [Nataraja], is perhaps the most perfect personification of the dynamic universe. Through his dance, Shiva sustains the manifold phenomena in the world, unifying all things by immersing them in his rhythm and making them participate in the dance...”***

Another physicist, Lee Smolin, speaks of the universe as a ‘bouncing ball’ – contracting to virtual nothingness and expanding to what we know today, over billions of years in a never ending process. Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita 8:17-20 & 9:7-8 revealed to Arjuna the very same idea of a cyclic universe over 5,000 years ago.

Sanskrit Alphabet & 108 Sound Elements

The word ‘Sanskrit’ means perfected or refined (speech). Furthermore, Vedic Sanskrit is considered a divine language and for sound (pun intended) reasons. The alphabet (varnamala) comprises the set of the smallest units of unique and identifiable sound (sabda) elements or phonemes, derived at five locations in the organ of speech.

P. G. Patel tells us that Vedic phoneticians observed the physiology of sound articulation and classified the sounds of Sanskrit accordingly. The arrangement of sounds according to phonetic classes is called varnamala. ‘The varnamala is the inventory of sounds of Sanskrit, arranged in term of place of utterance - bilabial, dental, palatal, etc. - and manners of articulation - aspirated-unaspirated, voiced-voiceless...’

According to Sanskrit scholars Shri Bibek Debroy, the original Vedic Sanskrit contained 54 letters comprising vowels (swara), including those requiring two and three units of time to pronounce and consonants.

Taking the theory much deeper, the ardent advocate of Indian classical music, Professor Alain Danielou wrote that we can distinguish and utilize 54 articulated sounds- those sounds being the Sanskrit vowels and

consonants. A similar limitation is encountered in music, “since we can only discern fifty-four sounds in the octave which the Hindus call sruti (in-text citation).” As such, he concluded that the totality of sound elements available to the human ear is 108 (54+54). It ought to be noted that musical notes and Sanskrit vowels are both termed ‘swara’ to show their linkage and similar origin.

Furthermore, these sound elements proceed from ‘nada,’ the primordial vibration, which is the first manifestation of the creative principle or Nada-Brahman [and Shabda Brahman, the vibratory supreme reality] from whom the world came forth’.

#### Astronomy & Cosmology

Danielou goes even further and asserts that “this figure [108] corresponds to certain numerical codes that we shall find in all aspects of creation”.

In this regard, Astronomy provides some remarkable evidence. Whether by coincidence or design, both the Sun and Moon are approximately 108 times their diameters from the Earth.. Furthermore, the diameter of the Sun is virtually 108 times wider than the Earth’s. In other words, virtual malas of 108 Sun and Moon disks can be laid out bridging from the Earth to these celestial bodies



which the devotee can mentally walk on to reach these celestial deities. Thirdly, a virtual mala of 108 Earth adjacent disks – or spheres as beads - can be stretched out along the diameter of the Sun. The speed of the Earth’s orbit around the Sun is 108,000 km/h. Not to be outdone, the average distance of Venus from the Sun is 108,208,930 km.

This might all seem fanciful, except that the RigVeda III:62.10 states in the very auspicious Gayatri mantra that the Sun (Savitur) in our solar system is a proxy for the beneficent God-head.

In Vedic Physics, Prof. R. R. Mohan Roy explains that the number of hymns in the Rig Veda is 1,017. In Hindu cosmology, because the universe is said to be divided into three lokas or sectors which the Supreme God-head, personified as Vishnu, symbolically covered in three strides, 339 hymns are allocated to each loka. Dividing 339 by Pi (ratio of circle circumference to diameter = 3.145) gives the quotient 108 - the number of times the auspicious Gayatri, Om Namah Shivaya and other sacred mantras are to be chanted.

## Architecture

As a consequence of the auspiciousness of the number 108 and its symbolism, it is applied in various ways. For example, in architecture – the laying and placement of stones and bricks in temples such as the 12th C. Angkor Wat temple complex in Cambodia, dedicated to Lord Vishnu.

## Human Physiology

Even in human physiology, the number 108 appears. In a twelve hour day, on average an adult human takes approximately 10800 breaths. As well, on average a healthy adult heart beats approximately 108,000 daily.

Clearly, the Hindu tradition has science on its side; or, to reiterate Prof. Brian Cox, “intellectual rigour”.

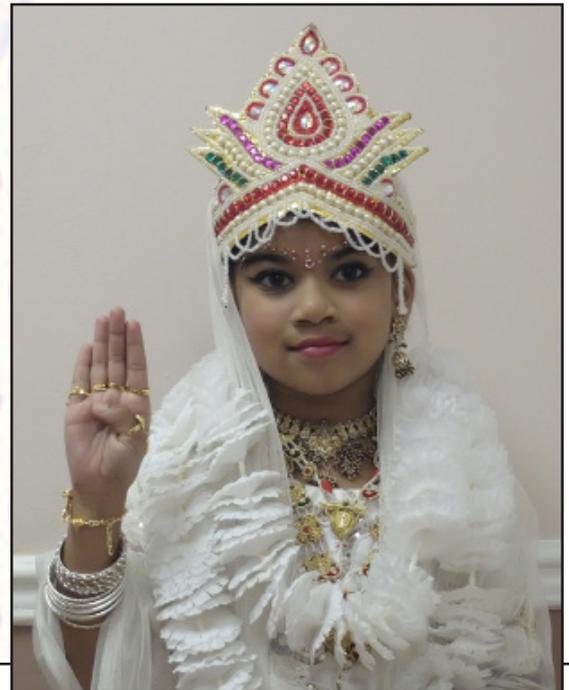
Whether they knew it or not, the indentured labourers carried around a potent symbol and vehicle around their necks – the mala, the celestial garland - with which they could commune with the universal consciousness, Brahman, via its surrogate and proxy, the Sun (Savitur).

*VEDA NATH MOHABIR*  
*vedamohabir@rogers.com*





# Reality



Reality 

# MOGLAI VEGETABLE

## PULAU

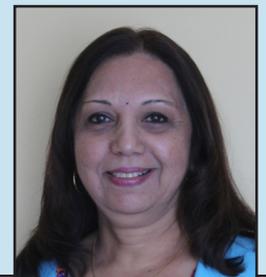
### *Ingredients:*

1 Large Onion chopped  
 1 Tblsp Butter  
 1 Tsp Jeera  
 1 Tsp Salt  
 a couple of Green Cardamom  
 a couple of sticks Cinnamon  
 2 Cups Basmati Rice  
 3 Cups hot water  
 1 Carrot chopped  
 1/4 cups sliced mushrooms  
 1/4 cups Broccoli Flowerets  
 1/4 cups Cauliflower chopped  
 1/4 cups green Peas  
 1/4 cups green Beans  
 1/4 cups Green/Red/Yellow  
 peppers and (Jalapeno peppers  
 optional)  
 1 Clove minced Garlic  
 1 Tsp Fresh Ginger minced  
 1 Tbsp Fresh Coriander  
 chopped



1. Saute' onion and butter, jeera, salt, cardamom and cinnamon sticks in large casserole at HIGH for 2-4 mins or until onion are tender.
2. Add rice and hot water and cover, Microwave at HIGH for 15 to 19 mins or until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed.
3. Fold all vegetables and seasonings into rice. Let it sit for 10 minutes. Microwave at MEDIUM heat for 2 to 3 mins. Make sure vegetables are tender and cooked thoroughly before serving.
4. Garnish with Green/Red/Yellow peppers sliced and chopped coriander fresh.

Enjoy this colorful and tasty Moglai Vege Pulau with Plain Yogurt or Yogurt Raita.



MADHU MISTRY

# h o l i d a y s p i r i t

## *the essence of giving*

December is here and as the holidays approach, people all around the world spring into action to get the very best for their loved ones. Whether it's big or small, gifts are showered throughout the homes of many as a sign of their love and appreciation. After all, 'tis the season of giving- but what is giving exactly? True giving comes from the same place inside you as your deepest happiness. They are inexplicably intertwined, as giving is something that is enjoyed twice. First by the giver who revels in the pleasure of giving something special, and then enjoyed by the person who receives the token of appreciation.

However, as years and years of this tradition goes by, the true meaning of giving sometimes gets lost in translation and the

value dissipates along the way. The act of giving doesn't have to be limited to Christmas or birthdays. As a matter of fact, you can treat every person you come into contact with as someone who you can give a gift to. Sometimes we become sceptical, wondering what exactly do you have to give? The truth is that everybody has something of value for another person. It could be some kind words, a simple smile and some appreciation, the sharing of some special knowledge, even a helping hand or a bit of support during a trying time.

Very often it is not money or belongings that people need, it's the things that can't be seen- such as advice, reassurance, a kind word, genuine compliments or even the warmth of a hug. So the next time you feel like you

haven't given enough, spark up a conversation, call up a loved one out of the ordinary, visit places you've never seen together, give them the gift laughter, be the very reason that they smile. Remember that time is the most precious gift that anyone can receive.

Make a decision that wherever you go, to whomever you meet, to give, especially to those less fortunate. As long as you are giving, you'll always be receiving. The more you give, the more positive energy will flow right back into your life, and be returned many times over. There's nothing more satisfying than spreading the gift of love, laughter and happiness.

Happy Holidays from our family to yours



### CARISSA MOHAMED

The colourful and vibrant team at Satya Danceworks was formed in the summer of 2013, and began as a family with one common interest, Dance. The school began with 3 members that branched off originally from a theater group and formed a group together in correspondence with an existing choreographer. Through dedication and hard work, and with the help of wonderful teaching faculty, Carissa Mohamed, the school's founder and Lead Artistic Director, has built one of the most promising upcoming and reputable schools in the GTA. Today, Satya Danceworks has a team of 3 + faculty members, including one of the finest choreographers/ assistant director Kamini Persaud. Along with the lead Director/choreographer(Carissa) and the many talented members, this teams deliverance of upbeat rhythmic routines have been nothing shy of pure excellence. They strive on providing several dancers of all ages with superb dance training in an energetic, nurturing environment and curve their focus on helping members develop the highest of confidence and healthy self esteem.

# SNEAK PEEK INTO *Bollywood*

Bollywood's favorite, Priyanka Chopra, has made a successive debut in her Hollywood career with a lead role in the American drama series, *Quantico*. She has been working at frantic paces- from presenting awards at the Emmys and the Oscars, to hosting the Global Citizen Festival, to shooting the second season of *Quantico*, this starlet is still not ready to take a day off. Priyanka is set on leaving a legacy and she is already on her way by being the first Bollywood celebrity to present at the Oscars. In 2017, Priyanka will be seen in the upcoming film 'Baywatch', along with Dwayne Johnson and Zac Efron. Set to release on the fourth of July, Priyanka plays the role of the villain, Victoria Leeds and she is definitely looking forward to it as she said, "Evil never looked so good." We are excited to see her on the big screen next year. You go girl! Or as Dwayne would say, "#ChopraDontPlay". (Source: Times of India)

Meanwhile, the leading female actress in the Bollywood industry, Deepika Padukone has also set foot for her new Hollywood debut this year. In January 2017, Deepika will be seen in the upcoming action film 'xXx: Return of Xander Cage' as the daring and dangerous Serena Unger alongside Vin Diesel and Ruby Rose. The official trailer has been released in four languages; English, Hindi, Tamil, and Telegu due to the huge Indian audience. Deepika broke all stereotypes through this film by flaunting her Indian accent. In an interview, she says, "I play an Indian girl in the film, and it's a matter of great pride that I get to be myself. That is one of the aspects that drew me to the script and attracted me to do this film... I was allowed to flaunt that I am Indian." Deepika has come a long way in a very short amount of time and Indians are beyond impatient to see her on the big screen in January. From an innocent Mastani to a dangerous Serena, Deepika sure knows how to keep us mesmerized. (Sources: Quartz India, The Indian Express)



(Source: NDTV Movies)



(Source: Hindustan Times)

Celebrity Profile: Shreya Ghoshal

Shreya Ghoshal is a female Indian singer, renowned in the Bollywood film industry. Born in West Bengal, the 32-year-old multitalented singer has sung in numerous languages, including Hindi, Telegu, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabi, Tamil, and much more. Shreya has always been passionate about singing and at the age of 6, the singer started training at the Hindustan Classical Gharana of music. Shreya Ghoshal is best known for her melodious voice best-suited for romantic songs.

Shreya Ghoshal started her career in 1998 by recording her first Bengali album, called “Bendhechhi Beena” and several devotional songs. Her amazing talent was discovered by the popular director, Sanjay Leela Bhansali when she had won the Sa Re Ga Ma Pa adult contest. The director immediately offered her songs in his movie, Devdas. In 2002, at the age of only 16, Shreya Ghoshal sang her first movie songs ‘Bairi Piya’, “Dola Re’, ‘Silsila Ye Chaahat Ka’, and ‘Morey Piya’, for which she won multiple awards such as Best Female Singer for the National Film Award and the Filmfare Award. Having sung four hit songs as a debutant, the singer was definite to make it huge in the industry. Since then, Shreya has been featured in Forbes list of the top 100 celebrities of India three times over, and she continues to be one of the leading singers in the Indian film industry today. She is currently one of the judges of the television show, Indian Idol Junior.

Apart from Bollywood, Shreya Ghoshal has also sung for the English movie ‘When Harry Tries to Marry’. Fond of her music and kind qualities, Ted Strickland, the governor of the U.S State of Ohio has declared the 26<sup>th</sup> June as “Shreya Ghoshal Day”. Furthermore, the singer was crowned as the Bollywood industry’s Most Gorgeous Female Singer in 2013.

Shreya Ghoshal’s music has made history in the Bollywood industry and the singer continues to amaze her fans with more unique and melodious songs. (Source: Filmy Folks)



(Source: Wikipedia)



(Source: The Times of India)

*Kale has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory and potent anticancer properties, particularly when chopped or minced.*

# Curried Kale Chips

## Ingredients:

6 Cups fresh Kale

1 1/2 cups Cashews, soaked for 4 hours

4 tablespoons Olive Oil

4 tablespoons Lemon Juice

1 teaspoon Curry powder

1/2 teaspoon Turmeric

1/2 teaspoon Salt

1 Clove Garlic



1. Remove the stems from the kale and tear the leaves into big pieces. Place in a large bowl and set aside.
2. In a blender or food processor, blend all remaining ingredients until smooth. You may need to add 1 tablespoon water to help the cashews blend.
3. Mix the sauce with the kale in a bowl. Use your hand to ensure the kale is well coated with the sauce.
4. Place the kale on dehydrator tray. Dehydrate at 115 F for 4 to 6 hours until crunchy.

Enjoy these healthy chips any time you crave a healthy snack.

MADHU MISTRY



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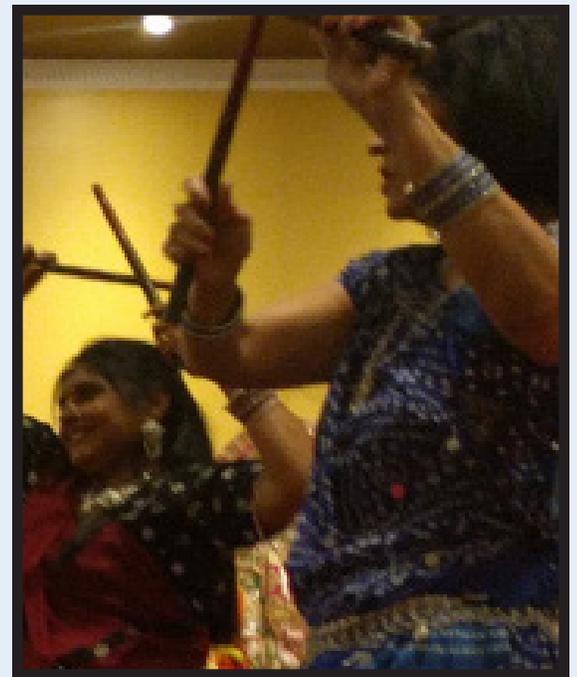
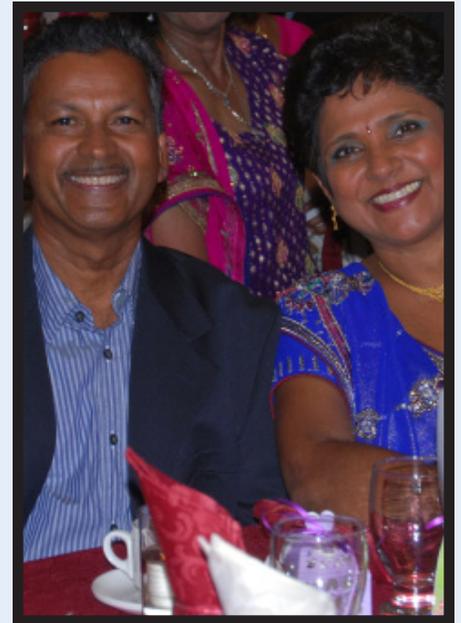


# Seniors Corner



The older adult community of the Mississauga Ram Mandir has been the cornerstone to the overall progression forward of the Mandir. Over the past 16 years, the facilities at Mississauga Ram Mandir have evolved to the needs of the community, hosting and producing programs, seminars, and socials for seniors. With the newly added events, the Ram Mandir has become a social hub for our seniors to stay connected, stay active and stay educated.





We have now established a formal seniors club that is intended to promote more interaction of seniors and provide them a forum to express themselves and to be creative and also to contribute to the growth of the Mandir. We feel that our seniors have lots to offer to the younger generation and hope to tap into this vast resource of knowledge and experience.

We have committed to building a seniors retirement home by 2019 and to continue to expand our senior services. As this vibrant group continues to liven up the Mandir with their presence, we only hope we can match their energy and enthusiasm with the services we are able to provide.





## Are You A Senior?

If you would like to participate in fun events throughout the year dedicated specifically for you,

*Join the Seniors Club!*

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For more information, contact the office at (905) 696 8886.

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### GOALS

1. To establish and maintain a forum that will serve as the central voice and action entity on all matters relating to Hindus in Canada.
2. To promote Harmony within the Hindu Community through focus efforts to build and maintain relations.
3. To promote harmony within the Canadian mosaic.
4. To provide a forum that is open to addressing the general needs of the community.
5. To promote the principles of Hinduism.

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