

Message from Trustees



Namaste Devotees, Volunteers and Well wishers of Cambridge Hindu Forum! We are very pleased to update you on several initiatives and collaborations that CHF has been involved in over the last quarter to further promote and deliver CHF activities to the wider community.

The first of these is CHF's participation in the Cambridge Mela on July 3rd at Parker's Piece, run every year by Cambridge City Council as part of the Summer Big Weekend event. CHF put up a nicely decorated stall with information brochures and publicity material and our volunteers were available on hand to explain about CHF activities.

The second initiative is the organisation of the Samuhika Satyanarayana Swamy Vratam at the Hub, Cambourne on 9th July. This is part of CHF's approach to offer all the communities in and around Cambridge to actively participate in our puja and educational activities. Future

pujas and events are being planned in other parts of Cambridge. We seek your support in reaching out and engaging with Hindu communities in other locations too.

CHF has been successfully collaborating with other groups in the community to strengthen our visibility and reach within Cambridge and beyond. The Ganesha Pooja in September was a wonderful example of such collaborations. Get a glimpse of this event in a later section within this newsletter. Celebrating the Mother Goddess Durga, CHF is also collaborating with DanceMasti to bring to the community an extended Durga Pooja in October 2022. We invite other community groups to engage with us in organising our events and Poojas, please contact us for any queries or feedback.

As always, we request you to submit new materials and any interesting information for sharing with the rest of the community and support Dharma, CHF's newsletter by submitting new content to chf.dharma@gmail.com.

— CHF

Epic Writing

by 11yr old Aadya, Cambridge

“The Mahabharata” has been considered as the biggest mythological story in the world. The main episode of the Mahabharata is the war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, as the history is very elaborate with an interesting archive of the generations. History indicates that the story of Mahabharata was authored by Sage Vedavyasa, who was born much earlier to the generations of the Kauravas and the Pandavas. He has the great powers of meditation and hence lived a long life. He lived even after his grandchildren – the Kauravas and the Pandavas – had died. Sage Vedavyasa had the full knowledge of the various instances

of the history and lives of the next generations. Therefore, Lord Brahma – God of Birth – thought that Sage Vedavyasa was the most suitable person to write the epic Mahabharata. This is the story on how the sage wrote this epic tale.



Sage Vedavyasa was a man who had great powers of meditation

and knowledge. Lord Brahma had given him a task to write a series of scriptures he called “the Mahabharata”. Vedavyasa accepted this challenge humbly, however, he was unable to finish these scriptures at a quicker pace. This was because Sage Vedavyasa did not have the abilities to write quickly. He decided to perform a puja for Lord Brahma so that he could tell the lord about his situation. Hence, he performed a puja greeting Lord Brahma. The lord was mightily impressed with this sage, for he was very devoted to meditation. Vedavyasa told Brahma about his dilemma. Brahma immediately understood and told Vedavyasa that Lord Mahadeva was the only one who could help him with this. Therefore, Vedavyasa climbed up the beautiful Mount Kailash to be greeted by

Nandi. Nandi led him to Goddess Parvati and Lord Mahadeva. They listened intently to what Vedavyasa had to say. When Vedavyasa told him about his situation, Mahadeva sent little Ganesha – his son – to finish the task. Ganesha agreed to do this job, on one condition, which was that Vedavyasa had to continually recite the scriptures without pausing. If he stopped to take a breath for even one second, Ganesha would immediately refuse to write any longer. Vedavyasa accepted this; however, he too had a condition which was that Ganesha could not write a sentence if he did not understand the meanings. That way – Vedavyasa thought – He could give the little boy a very complicated verse, and while Ganesha was figuring out the meaning he could pause for a nice, long breath. Ganesha agreed to this, and soon the writing was underway.

Ganesh's pen, Lekhani, suddenly broke mid – sentence. Ganesha started to panic, as he couldn't catch up with the sage if he had no pen. In a rush, he yanked his tusk until it broke in two, and started to write with that instead. This was how Ganesha lost his tusk. In a day's work, the enormous epic, Mahabharata was complete. Ganesha truly lived up to his reputation; incredible intelligence symbolised by his big forehead and focus and concentration symbolised by his small eyes. A job well accomplished indeed little Ganesha.

Vedic group, rangoli, a hearty meal enjoyed together and finally aarthi and Visarjan.



CHF is very lucky to have a talented and devoted artist in our midst, who not only makes the main Ganesha statue for the pooja, but has also in previous years conducted a workshop for children to make their own clay Ganesha, holy and blessed, and environmentally friendly. The entire experience is a feast to one's eyes and soul. This year CHF collaborated with Kannada Balaga UK for an online clay-Ganesha making workshop open to everyone. A quick glimpse of the glorious statues from CHF and CMM, a treat to the eye. This year's Ganesh pooja celebrations serves as a perfect example of CHF's vision to unite and collaborate with other Hindu cultural and religious groups.

of some of the less known temples of south India. While there was major spurt of temple constructions in south India from the fifth century onwards and predominantly at Aihole, Badami, Pattadakal and Mammalapuram there was a pause as power shifted from Pallavas to Cholas and the subsequent consolidation efforts of Cholas. The Cholas started the multifaceted columns architecture with projecting square capitals and the *Brihadeshwara Temple* is considered to be a monument that fully realizes the Chola style. Considered as the greatest Chola emperor, Raja Raja Cholan built the Brihadeeswarar Temple as a dedication to Lord Shiva. Although this temple was built in 11th century, additions were made to it over the next 1000 years.



The granite for building this magnificent 66m tall structure was contributed from various neighbouring states. It took nearly 25 years to sculpt those granite rocks and a 9 years more to stack them to the structure that stands today. The temple follows a rock-cut architecture with a heavily sand-boxed foundation such that the temple can adapt itself to survive earthquakes and seasonal changes. The temple has a very heavy 80 ton *gopuram* and is one of the few south Indian temples where the main gopuram is taller than the gopuram of the entrances. Despite the height and the heavy gopuram, no part of the temple has used concrete or other binding materials. The individual rocks are cut like a puzzle that interlock to add structural strength.

Lost Temples

by Anand S, Cambridge



Previous issues of this newsletter covered 800-1300 year old temples mostly located in north India. We now look at the architectural marvels

Source: Image

Ganesha Pooja

by Mithu Chopra, Cambridge

CHF is pleased to have organised a Maha pooja in September in collaboration with Cambridge Mitra Mandal (CMM), as we celebrated Ganesha Chaturthi as well as CHF's anniversary. The day-long celebration started with Ganapathi Sthapana, Pooja and archanas, religious cultural performances by children and the

It is believed that this was built with a surrounding moat to serve as a fortress which was used in 1777 by the French and modified to have gun holes. There are elaborate carvings on the temple walls, mostly dedicated to Shiva, Parvati, Ganesha, Subramanya and the story of Shiva's life. Some parts also praise Vishnu, Goddess Lakshmi and Krishna. Complete stories dedicated to these deities are etched along the walls from the outer walls to the gateway. The Shiva linga is 3.6m tall and is one of the largest in the country.

chisel work to show off the finesse and perfection of sculptors of the era. One can easily pass a thin blade of grass through some of the hollow carvings at the Subramanya temple. As with few other temples mentioned earlier in this newsletter, this temple too has inscriptions honoring the deities and depicting their stories all along the walls. However, this is among the few temples to also mention, inscribed on pebbles and rocks, the names of various benefactors and craftsmen that contributed to this magnificent and timeless icon of sanatana dharma.



This festival is celebrated across India at different times of the year, each with its own spiritual and religious background and glory. We present a beautiful collection of pictures of these celebrations from within our own Indian community based in Cambridge.



Images: Ami's blog



As with all Shiva temples, one must go past a large nandi before entering the temple sanctum. The nandi, as it stands today, was sculpted at much later date by the Nayaka rulers inside a pavilion that is supported by 16 finely sculpted pillars. The nandi weighs about 25 tonnes and is 2 m in height, 6 m in length and 2.5 m wide. This monolithic structure is one of the largest in the country. The main temple and nandi pavilion also have mesmerising colorful murals painted using organic dyes.

Fasting Festivals

by Mithu Chopra



Do join your friends from other regions of India to experience the similarities and differences, with love and joy at the core of it all.

Vedic Mathematics

by Dr Chandrappa, Cambridge



The astounding size and weight of the temple is also matched by some fine

Our beautiful Hindu traditions include a festival of fasting for married women. The day is not just about fasting, it strengthens the bond between a married woman and her husband and in-laws. It is a day to celebrate and pamper the women of the house, our own ancient women's day celebration. It is a celebration of love, togetherness and prosperity; for one's own home and for the community as well.

Dear readers, In the previous issue we were learning about multiplication where one of the multiplicand or multiplies is a number with all digits as 9, for e.g. 9, 99, 999 etc. To recap, two sutras were used for such problems. One was the *nikhilam navatah charamam dasatah* - meaning, to complete all from 9 and the last from 10, i.e. *nikhilam* - that which makes it complete or complement, *Navatah* - 9, *Charamam* - last/end, *Dasatah* - 10. The second sutra was *ekanyunena purvena*. The

latter sutra can be expanded as *Eka* meaning 'one', *Nyūmena* - 'less than or subtract' and *Purvena* as we know 'from previous one'. We then solidified our understanding by solving the some example problems. A graphic representation depicting the application of these two sutras is below.

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{nikhilam} \\
 \text{994} \times \text{999} = \text{993006} \\
 \text{-1}
 \end{array}$$

We had also covered palindromic numbers in the June 2022 issue. For e.g. 37 times 99 = 3663. 3663 is a palindromic number. Similarly we have 82 times 99 = 8118, 1729 times 9999 = 17288271. The reader is encourage to identify the pattern in the multiplicand (multiplier has all 9's) which will result in the product being a palindrome. Will either, 6814 times 9999 or 3547 times 9999 have a palindromic product? Look for the answer at the end of the article. The examples above also used a number very famous among mathematicians, 1729. The readers are encouraged to investigate the significance of this number.

We can also apply the sutra from June 2022 issue, *ekadhikena purvena* with the *upa sutra antyayordasa kepi* (antya=last, dasa=ten, Ke'pi or Ke+api=also sum of tenth place digits is 10) to find the squares of numbers that have 5 in the units place.

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{x} \\
 \text{15} \times \text{15} = \text{225} \\
 \text{+1 x}
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{25} \times \text{25} = \text{625} \\
 \text{+1 x}
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{65} \times \text{65} = \text{4225} \\
 \text{+1 x}
 \end{array}$$

Why are these important? Let us look at some practical examples. To find the area of a square or rectangle or

circle we use l^2 , $l \times b$ and πr^2 - where l and b are length and breadth of the square or rectangle and r is radius of the circle. We can also use these sutras to speed up calculation of percentages - 13% of 17.

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{x} \\
 \text{13} \times \text{17} = \text{221} \\
 \text{+1 x}
 \end{array}$$

We can divide 221 by 100 to get 2.21. We can also apply this for summing fractions as shown below:

$$\frac{1}{13} + \frac{1}{17} = \frac{13 + 17}{13 \times 17} = \frac{30}{221}$$

Users can be clever about applying these sutras - for e.g. 36 x 12 does not satisfy the rule *antyayordasa kepi* (antya=last, dasa=ten, Ke'pi or Ke+api=also sum of tenth place digits is 10). However, 18 x 12 does and 36 x 12 can be written as 18 x 12 x 2. We can therefore apply *ekadhikena purvena* for 18 x 12 and then double the answer. A word of caution though - it may become tempting to frame sutras based on limited validation. It is true that mathematical problems can be solved in multiple ways and all ways should lead to the same answer. Let us for e.g. look at 428 x 999

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{nikhilam} \\
 \text{428} \times \text{999} = \text{427572} \\
 \text{-1}
 \end{array}$$

The above can also be seemingly solved by $8 \times 9 = 72$, then apply *ekadhikena purvena* for 2 and 9 in tens place and for 4 and 9 in hundredths to get $3 \times 9 = 27$ and $5 \times 9 = 45$. Finally thje product for 428 x 999 can be assembled as 427572.

But we need to ask ourselves if such a method will stand scrutiny. Mere conjecturing is insufficient. The methods have to be exhaustively proven or must be disproven at least in a single instance. The readers are encouraged to to disprove the above latter method with at least two examples.

In our next issue, we will cover multiplication of numbers above a base, i.e. if 10 is the base, how do we multiply 12 with 13? or if 100 is the base, how do we multiply 104 with 103? Powers of 10 ie 10,100,1000 and so on are called 'base' numbers. Numbers like 20, 50, 200 and so on are called 'working base' numbers. Multiples of any base are called 'working base' numbers.

We will explore this concept in the next issue. And, before we close, the answer to the palindrome question is 'sum of last 2 digits should be 10 and middle numbers should be 9'.

Editor's Corner

by CHF, Cambridge

Namaste dear readers! We hope you all had a good summer and a great start to the Hindu festive season for the second half of this year. Team Dharma is very proud to present the very first article contribution from one of our junior writers. We are sure you will all enjoy it as well as we hope this motivates other young writers to come forward.

This is also a great conversation for children to have with their parents and grandparents discussing our heritage and producing a wonderful article in the process. We have all just enjoyed a beautiful line up of traditions - 10 joyful days of Ganapathi, 16 days of Pitrupaksha to pay homage to our beloved ancestors and 9 nights of celebration of Goddess Durga; and looking forward to the most popular and widely celebrated festival of lights, Diwali. We would love to hear about your family traditions, cultural significance of rituals and celebratory cheer; do write to us at chf.dharma@gmail.com with new ideas, articles, feedback and suggestions.