



# October 2000

# Chinmaya

Issue 4

- **BRIEF PROFILE - SWAMI SWAROOPANANDA**
- **SANDEEPANY SADHANALAYA - MUMBAI**
- **THE THREE GODDESSES - SYMBOLISM**



## Message from our President

**Hari Om!**

### Limitations, Contradictions, Changes

As we go to print, the Human Rights Legislation will have become law, designed to give us rights and greater freedom. Strange, that as we strive to build a modern society giving us more independence of choice, we are becoming increasingly more dependent, to the extent that the withdrawal of a single commodity (the recent fuel crisis in the UK) can bring the whole country to a stand still.

It is interesting to note that in the recent Olympics, hailed as the best ever, fewer records were broken, especially in events that have introduced a greater degree of drugs testing. More reflective of today's values and attitudes is that national sporting bodies have been involved not only in the use of artificial stimulants by their athletes, but also in trying to hide the facts. Today the financial rewards for a medal winner can be huge.

As many athletes are tempted into taking drugs to win, we have a situation where in other sports, sportsmen accept inducements to lose!

Are we creating a society where everything has a price, but nothing has value?

### Infinite, complete, constant

Amid all these questions, changes and contradictions, Swami Swaroopanandaji encouraged and inspired us to look at our Greater Self - a constant, beyond our limitation and above the continuous changes of the world. A complete vision waiting to be rediscovered.

Swamiji spent a fortnight in England, leaving us with the sweetness of knowledge - 'sugar'. To quote Swamiji, 'now the sugar needs to be stirred'. The questioning, exploring, and understanding of Vedanta can only be stirred and digested through participation in study groups and Bal Vihars, several of which are active and available to you.

We now mark the first anniversary of our magazine Chinmayam, and have recently launched a website 'www.chinmayauk.org' where together with articles, news will be posted on a regular basis. Chinmaya Mission Worldwide has several websites that you may like to visit (see details in this issue).

Swamini Vimalananda visits us again in March. Our Autumn Yagna next year with Swami Swaroopananda will be on a much larger scale with the highly popular **Hanuman Chalisa** as the focus of the yagna. All these and more will help to stir the sugar in the constantly changing and contradictory world. We urge you to take full advantage of all these opportunities.

In His Service

*Rupin Vadera*

Rupin Vadera

**"Self clothed in mind is the ego (Jeeva) in man. Evolution and change are all for the mind and intellect and not for the Self."**

— Swami Chinmayananda

### Contents

Namaste . . . . .	2
Geeta Saar . . . . .	3
A Brief Profile - Swami Swaroopananda . . . . .	4
Heart of the Mission . . . . .	5
Festivals . . . . .	6
Symbolism - The Three Goddesses . . . . .	7
September Yagna . . . . .	8/9
From Our Bookshelf . . . . .	10
Childrens Page . . . . .	11
Bal Vihar Camp 2000 . . . . .	11
Mission Pledge . . . . .	12

Front Cover: Swami Swaroopananda



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### Feedback

We would like to hear from you!!

We would like to know what you think of your magazine. What do you like reading? What don't you? What would you like to see more of? Are there any articles you would like us to include?

Your comments are important to us. This is your magazine, let us make it the best we can for you.

Please post your comments to the Chinmaya Mission or e-mail them to: chinmayauk@aol.com

# GEETA SAAR



*Whatever Happened was Good*

*Whatever is Happening is Good*

*Whatever will Happen will also be Good*

*What of yours has gone to make you cry?*

*What did you bring with you that you have lost?*

*What did you create which is now destroyed?*

*What you have taken you have taken only from here*

*What was given was given only from here*

*What is yours today*

*was somebody else's yesterday,*

*will be someone else's tomorrow*

*Change is the Law of the Universe.*



# chinnaya **A BRIEF PROFILE**

## Swami Swaroopananda

**The orange robes and serene, ever-smiling face do not betray a successful young businessman who on hearing the call of Gurudev (Swami Chinmayananda), forgot all his worldly comforts to follow him unwaveringly.**



Swami Swaroopananda

Swamiji admits that even as a child he had an inclination for the spiritual, often sitting quietly with a mala in his hand. As a young boy Ashok (Swamiji) was reared on Krishna and Rama stories from the Puranas but it was only several years later in Hong Kong where he joined the family business that he came across Gurudev's commentary on the Holy Geeta. Studying this, he became aware of the deep philosophy buried in his childhood books. Shortly afterwards when he heard Gurudev in person, he was in his own words, totally swept off his feet with awe and reverence. Craving close contact with Gurudev he joined the Yuva Kendra for 2 years.

In 1981 he went to Sidhabari where he experienced Gurudev's work and vision. It was here that Ashok realized that the two things he wanted most dearly could be achieved through Vedanta - his search for true knowledge and an aching desire to help people. Earlier he had considered a career in homeopathy as his means, and even now he is very interested and knowledgeable about Ayurveda.

Ashok entered the Sandeepany in Mumbai in 1984 and was a student of Guruji, Swami Tejomayananda. During this time Gurudev's frequent visits were a continuing source of inspiration. In 1986 on completion of the course he became Brahmachari Susheel; On Mar 2, 1992 he was given Sannyas

Diksha by Gurudev and was named Swami Swaroopananda.

Many of us can remember the young Swamiji who accompanied Gurudev to London in 1993 and gave the morning talks. The following year he conducted the entire yagna in London, and soon after became the Acharya here.

Presently stationed in Melbourne he is Head of the Mission in Australia and is also the Acharya for the Far East, Africa and the UK. He travels frequently all over the world delivering the teaching of Vedanta with great conviction and clarity, adding witty insights which endear him to old and young alike.

More recently his dynamic topics like **"Win the mind, Win the world", "Born to Succeed", "From Potential to Performance", "Make It Happen", "Chief Executive Officer"** present Vedantic values in a success-oriented, user-friendly package of great appeal to youth and adults alike.

Furthermore his interactive workshops for top level management at major corporations demonstrate how these strategies can be used successfully to cultivate dynamic leadership and management techniques, helping in the process to create an environment which is positive and inspiring. Welcome to vedanta to the workplace.

**A devotee lamented  
"When will I ever get called  
by the Lord?"  
Swamiji replied: "Krishna has  
crossed his legs from tiredness, he  
has gone blue from  
blowing on his flute, he has  
spondalitis in the back  
from standing so long .. And you  
still have not heard him?"**



## Sandeepany Sadhanalaya in Mumbai

In the year 2001, Chinmaya Mission will celebrate its Golden Jubilee - 50 years since Pujya Gurudev, Swami Chinmayananda gave his first public talk in Ganapati Mandir, Pune in 1951. Eight to ten people had gathered to listen to him. Since then, the growth and reach of the Mission is truly remarkable. It has 247 centres and 200 Swamis and Brahmacharis who carry out diverse activities all over India and abroad.

At the core of all these activities is the **Sandeepany Sadhanalaya** and the **Central Chinmaya Mission Trust (CCMT)**, the global governing body of the entire movement, both situated on the banks of Lake Powai in Mumbai, beside the Lord Jagadeeshwara temple dedicated to Lord Shiva.

**Sandeepany Sadhanalaya was the treasured dream of Pujya Gurudev.** As his Geeta Gnana Yagnas gained popularity all over the country, the need for many more trained teachers became imperative. His vision was the creation of a womb providing a continuous supply of trained spiritual teachers - not mahatmas seeking isolation in some remote Himalayan caves, but dynamic workers to go into the community and spread the knowledge of Vedanta far and wide.

On Jan. 9, 1963 the Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, at Powai was inaugurated to provide the necessary training course. Pujya Gurudev himself conducted the first course in English, which was widely condemned at the time by the Pandits. This Institute now opened up the possibility of a world of intense spiritual study to seekers of every caste and creed and from all walks of life, including women. It also meant that the seeker was no longer necessarily the son of a priestly Brahmin family with a ready-made background of scriptures, chanting and rituals; and he no longer had to seek a guru in the recesses of the Himalayas.

The academic nature of the course usually requires the aspirant to be a serious college graduate with a sincere yearning for a spiritual

life of selfless service, free from worldly responsibilities and with a capacity for sustained hard work and a deep devotion to Vedanta. The academic curriculum at the Sadhanalaya is vast but it is balanced out with an equal emphasis on bhakti, meditation, reverence and devotion to the Supreme Truth. Such a well-rounded programme gradually purifies the mind as worldly vasanas (tendencies) are replaced by spiritual ones.

Throughout the course the students are nurtured in the Sandeepany. The real test of their inner strength is their ability to function ably when they emerge into the outside world. But such was the determination of Gurudev to bring this knowledge of Vedanta to the masses that he was confident his Shakti (special powers) would enable the secular student to ably bridge the gap and endure the vigours of such a demanding lifestyle.

*Today Gurudev's vision of an army of trained Swamis and Brahmacharis is a reality. Now, there are over 200 of them carrying the torch of knowledge to all parts of the world - India, Far East, Australia, Middle East, Africa, U.K., Europe, U.S.A. They also produce a wide range of publications and audio/visual material, besides running social welfare projects, hospitals and special value based schools all over India. Most recently the Chinmaya International Residential School in Coimbatore offers a value ñ based programme of education including Hindu Culture and Sanskrit along with curricula for O-& A- levels and I.B. Qualifications, especially geared to children living abroad.*

The Sadhanalaya in Mumbai currently offers this 2 1/2 year Brahmachari Training Course in English. The Sadhanalaya in Sidhabari offers a similar course in Hindi. The programme was also offered once at the Ashram in Piercy, Northern California; other centres in India offer the course in regional languages from time to time.

### THE DHARMA SEVAK COURSE AT KRISHNALAYA

#### Hari Om.

I would like to share with you one of my very enriching experiences. This year in the month of July I attended a Dharma Sevak Course at Krishnalaya, Chinmaya West's Spiritual Retreat in Piercy, Northern California. Our beloved Guruji - Swami Tejomanandaji, together with Swami Ishwaranandaji, Swami Nikhilanandaji and Brahmachari Arpitaji were all present at this camp.

This intensive one month course has been devised by Gurudev for those of us who cannot attend the two and half year Brahmachari training course offered at the Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Powai, Mumbai.

Krishnalaya, nestling in 8 acres along the Eel River in a red-wood forest setting, welcomes everyone with a stunning white marble Krishna. Straight ahead is Gurudev's cottage, as well as an ancient tree with a large wind chime and an old wooden swing on which Gurudev used to sit and give satsang. Gurudev had also got some Ganga Water from India and poured it into the Eel river, renaming it as the Eel Ganga River. His warm presence is felt everywhere.

Each day began with Meditation at 6 a.m. and ended with an informal satsang between 9 - 10 p.m. Sanskrit was tough, and our class was for one hour daily; the texts we studied were the Kathopanishad, Geeta Chapter 2, and several books written by Guruji, which were Manah Shodhanam, Jnana Sarah, Dyanaswarupam, and Bhakti Sudha.

The whole beauty of this one month is that there is so much time to study each text in detail, with the Swamis there to help any time of the day or night. We also had time to play games and go for long walks with them having satsang along the way.

There were 40 of us, aged 17-70 years, majority from the United States, some from Canada, two from Philippines and myself from London. As you can imagine, it was difficult to part from this big family, with all the warmth we shared, and to come back to interact with this fast moving world again. There is so much more to tell, but above all, I sincerely recommend this course to all of you.

Dina Khimasia



# chinmaya MISSION FESTIVALS

## Navaratri

Every Hindu festival has a spiritual message for the sadhaka. This nine-day festival celebrates the triumph of good over evil. In fact the theme of the entire Vedas is reflected in the Navaratri festival: first remove all negativities; then purify the mind and cultivate positive virtues; and finally gain spiritual knowledge and transcend all limitations.

Nava means nine and ratri means night. During these nine nights the Mother Goddess is worshipped in her variously manifested forms as Durga, Laxmi and Saraswati. On the first three nights Durga is invoked for her strength and ferocity which are required to cut out from the mind its strong rooted, deep-seated negative tendencies. Goddess Laxmi is (then) worshipped on the next three nights. She is invited to bring in her wealth of noble values to nourish and purify the cleansed mind. Finally Goddess Saraswati is invoked on the last three nights to bestow the Higher Knowledge of the Self-possible only after cleansing and purification have taken place.

With the dawn of spiritual wisdom the little ego is destroyed. This destruction is commemorated on the 10th night with the burning of an effigy. This 10th day is called Vijayadashmi (Vijaya-victory, dashmi-ten); or Vidhyarambha (Vidhya-wisdom, knowledge, rambha-joy) Victory Day or the Joy of Enlightenment respectively.

At Navaratri time the Rasa (dance of joy) of Shree Krishna and the Gopis is also performed. As the mind becomes purer, calmer quieter, a greater understanding of the nature of the Inner Self is revealed, giving rise to joy and happiness which is expressed in this dance of Realisation.

Why is the Navaratri Festival celebrated at night? The spiritual message of night-time worship is that "you have lived long enough in the sleepy realm of tamas, it is time to get up now. **Please, wake up!!**"

## Diwali

Diwali is a contraction of the word Deepavali which means 'a row of lights'. Oil lamps are lit in every household to mark this popular festival, which celebrates the victory of good over evil.



**Swami Swaroopananda asks us to:**

*'Fill the Heart with the oil of love.  
Place in it the wick of single-pointed mind.  
Light it with the Knowledge of Truth and remove  
the darkness of ignorance around you.  
Just as one lamp can light many lamps; let each  
youth kindle this Light in many hearts.'*



## Durga - The Power Terrible

Man the imperfect, is riddled with negative thoughts, fears and prejudices which are the cause of selfishness, jealousy, hatred, anger, etc. Mother Durga represents the Power Terrible. Her ferocious sword and other destructive weapons are employed to annihilate these negative forces.

She is also called Mahishasura Mardini the destroyer of Mahisa (buffalo) Asura (demon). The buffalo symbolizes Tamas, the quality of darkness, ignorance laziness and inertia which must be overcome before spiritual progress can be made.



## Laxmi - Goddess of Wealth

Purification of the Mind is obtained through worship of Laxmi Devi. Contrary to popular belief, Mother Lakshmi is worshipped not for material wealth, but for good and noble values (spiritual wealth). More important than material wealth is the inner wealth of spiritual values such as love, kindness, sincerity, self-control, self-discipline, etc. By the practice of such spiritual values in our daily lives, our minds become purified. The lotus on which the Goddess is seated symbolizes the Supreme Goal of Self -Realisation.

## Saraswati - Goddess of Knowledge and Learning

The Vedic Tradition in India has given women the highest place of respect and recognition. The Bhagawad Geeta is known as Mother Geeta; Knowledge itself is personified as a feminine deity - the Goddess Saraswati. The Goddess represents the ideal Guru, sitting on a lotus holding the sacred scriptures in one hand and a mala in the second hand.

With the other 2 hands she plays the Veena (an Indian flute)

1. Sitting on the Lotus symbolises that the teacher herself is well established in the subjective experience of the Truth.
2. Holding the Scriptures - indicates that she upholds the knowledge of the scriptures which alone can lead to the truth.
3. The 4 Hands - represents the 4 aspects of the inner personality - Manas (mind), Buddhi (intellect), Chitta (conditioned consciousness, memory) and Ahamkara (ego).
4. The Veena - The suggestion is that the guru tunes up the mind and intellect of the seeker to be in perfect harmony with the universe, and thus he surrenders his individual conditioning and ego.





# SEPTEMBER YAGNA

## Swami Swaroopananda's Yagna in London (September 2000)

The U.K. Mission is most fortunate to have the great inspiration of Swami Swaroopananda's Annual Yagna each September to launch us into the fresh academic year equipped with high ideals, valuable goals and the practical means with which to achieve these. Children, teenagers and adults are fired up with enthusiasm to meet their respective challenges after the mellow months of an English summer.



This year the magical combination of Kathopanishad Part 2 in the mornings and Bhagawad Geeta Chapter 15 in the evenings enticed ever-increasing numbers to brave the very real fuel crisis to partake of this irresistible spiritual feast.

Two special talks were held at the **Harrow Leisure Centre** at the special request of the Lohana Mahila Mandal for the increasing number of interested listeners in that area. Talks at the Sri Sathya Sai Centre in Mill Hill, London Business School and the Maha Laksmi Satsang rounded off this very special yagna, which included camps for Bal Vihar and CHYKS and a workshop for teenagers.

So many familiar faces, both old and new, numerous requests for Bal Vihars and Adult Study Groups, several offers of help and the ever-willing seva of our youthful members throughout, mark this yagna as an important crystallization of our U.K. Mission into a real CHINMAYA Force /Family. Grateful thanks for your inspiration Swamiji - we are now really "Making It Happen" !

## Junior CHYK Workshop with Swami Swaroopananda on 'Know yourself, know your Culture'

Saturday the 16th of Sept. saw the convergence of over thirty young teenagers up to the age 16, to Elstree for a half-day workshop with the dynamic Swami Swaroopanandaji.

Following a poornakumbham when the children chanted the Vedic Aarti, there was chanting of invocation prayers and then an hour and half's discourse by Swamiji. He captured his young audience's attention by talking about the importance of having a firm idea of one's identity, especially with appropriate examples and colorful stories. This was followed by a team-building activity, led by the Senior CHYKS and a delicious lunch Bhiksha cooked by the host.

The work shop ended with an enthralling question and answer session with Swamiji, where he expounded upon various topics such as life after death, astrological prediction of destiny, guilt about following a particular religious sect, the purpose of religious festivals, the meaning of the word SWAMI and so on.

After the distribution of prasada, which included a bookmark containing Gurudev's message, the workshop reluctantly dispersed with a promise by Swamiji to have a teenager's camp in the year 2001.

**Smita Samani**







## CHYK Camp 2000: How It Was Made To Happen

“Make It Happen” is the inspiring title of the 5th CHYK Camp with Swami Swaroopanandaji. This year it was held at the picturesque (and huge) campus of Royal Holloway University in Egham, Surrey. Though not too far from London in terms of distance, the location seemed far, far away from the hustle and bustle of everyday city life! A welcome change for everyone!

Although mainly dominated by Londoners, Camp 2000 also attracted youth from as far off as Australia to join in the fun! The camp boasted of a good combination of previous CHYK- campers (many of whom took on the roles of group-leaders or assistants), and of course the newcomers ñ some anxious, some curious, but all open-minded and geared-up to learn how to “make it happen”. With Swamiji at its helm, the camp promised to be thought provoking and motivational.

Running from the evening of Friday 8th Sept. to the evening of Sunday 10th September, the camp involved two full days of educational, spiritual and recreational activities. Each participant received a handbook, which included an hour-by-hour daily schedule for the duration of the camp. On paper, it seemed like too much was crammed in, so by the end of it all, it was truly surprising how quickly time flew by and how much we managed to get done. And all that with plenty of time set aside to rest, enjoy the surroundings, make new friends, and even get a few moments of private discussion time with Swamiji. Who knew “Make It Happen” was to be a lesson in time management too!

The camp delegates were split up into 8 groups of 7-8 people, each named after a symbolic aspect reflected in the form of Lord Ganesha, the “destroyer of obstacles”, and therefore the perfect inspiration for our “Make It Happen” camp. These groups were the ones in which



we discussed the ideas which cropped up in Swamiji’s lectures, about recognizing our needs, desires and goals and fulfilling our ambitions. The atmosphere at camp may have been serene, but the discussion groups were another story altogether!! For where there are groups of animated and opinionated youngsters, sparks are sure to fly! (And they sure did)

Other sessions included meditation in the morning - absolutely vital to get you through the long day; Walking meditation - or sleep-walking for those sleepyheads who never made it to yoga! CHYK OUT-outdoor team activities such as rounders, football and a scavenger hunt; role-plays, and so much more.

*Camp 2000 was “made to happen” because of the combined efforts of so many hard-working people, who worked round the clock to ensure everything went according to plan! And if there were any hiccups, they definitely weren’t noticeable. Kudos to an excellent team of organizers for their single-minded dedication, not just in the organization of the activities, but also of the amenities such as transportation, food and accommodation. They’re the ones who truly “made to happen”.*

If at all, the only complaint one could have with the CHYK Camp 2000 was that it was over too soon! But consolation lies in the fact that once you’ve attended such a camp, you wish to imbibe some of its unadulterated goodness in your daily life, permanently. “Make It Happen” had something to offer everyone who attended, and no one left without taking their enjoyable memories and valuable insights with them.

**Trishna Gulrajani**

Bal Vihar 2000 - See Children’s Page





# FROM OUR BOOKSHELF

## Parenting by Swami Tejomayananda

### Take an interest in their interest

Whenever we want another person to take an interest in what we are doing or what we want him to do, we first have to take an interest in his interest. Let me give you a couple of examples on this point.

When I came to the U.S.A for the first time in 1986, there was an international camp in Olivette, Michigan. I was totally new. One day I was told to go and speak to the youth group. I went to the lecture hall and saw one person sitting with legs stretched another was lying down. They were not sitting properly in the class. I took a seat and tried to break the ice. I asked, "Did you know that I was supposed to come for this class?" Some said yes, " some said "no. " I said "All right, whether you knew or not, I am already here. Now I have not come here to give any lecture or advice, because -you must have heard enough of it and you must also be tired and fed up with that. ", They agreed. They were honest. I continued, "So therefore I am not going to speak or advise. Now you tell me what you want to hear "Now suddenly the ball was in their court. They had, to say something. So one asked, "What is this Brahmchari training course in Bombay? "I told them about the course. Next they asked, "What is your opinion about the youth in America? " I said that I had come to America only two days ago and so I couldn't pass any judgment until I had lived here awhile. Then they asked "So what difference do you find between the youth of India and the Youth of America?" I said, "You know, youth is youth. There also, they resist, protest and have got questions. But them is one thing that is different about the youth in India. They don't sit the way you are sitting. "Suddenly all of them straightened themselves out and sat properly. So my first meeting with them turned out to be a very wonderful session... And thereafter, I had many other meetings also, in different places.

I also found that all the youth, when they are in a group, listen but pretend not to. They may look at you, but the moment you look at them, immediately they turn their eyes. In India it is different. There they look at you and when you look at them, they feel very happy and look back at you. There is eye to-eye contact when you communicate.

One more thing I have found here. If you speak to the youth as one-to-one,, it is wonderful. They listen to you and they are very nice. But the moment they are in a group, the group psychology takes over and the experience is totally different. They have discussed all their serious problems as to what is bothering them at the emotional level etc. And when I speak to them, they respond very well. They say "You must speak to our parents also Swamiji." Let me give you another example.

I went to a place. The hosts were parents of two sons. The parents told their children,, "Now Swamiji is here. Ask whatever question you want to ask. Ask. The children

immediately replied, "We don't have any questions." I told the parents to leave them alone. After breakfast, I went to both the boys and I asked, "What is your hobby?" "We love to play baseball," was the reply. I said, "Please teach me, what is this baseball? I want to understand." They said, "You really want to understand?" Immediately they became so enthusiastic about educating me on baseball. They showed me some pictures and video. Slowly they began asking me all questions about religion and culture. But earlier when the mother said, "Ask Swamiji, Ask, " - in a military like manner, they did not want to ask me anything.

This shows that we have to take an interest in their interest as to what they think, what they like and so on. Then slowly a rapport is built up. Now I come to the most important point of establishing a rapport.

### Establish a rapport

It is extremely important to establish a rapport between the parents and the children. In their heart, there has to be love and total confidence in you. They must be able to confide in you. When this kind of rapport is built up, everything else becomes very easy. Otherwise even minor things can be very irritating and disturbing.

It is said that if I like you then I like everything about you. I like the way you look, the way you speak, whatever you say, and whatever you do. But if I dislike you, then even if you come in front of me, I say, "Why did you come in front of me?"

You must have found this behavior in any relationship. Even in a love marriage this can happen. While they are courting, they talk to each other for hours on end. It is always a wonder for me as to what they talk about for so long! Then after the marriage, some kind of a strained relationship develops. Then, instead of talking to each other directly, they start talking to each other through lawyers. That means the rapport is broken. When this happens, then everything is a problem.

**To be continued ...**



To order or request a current listing, please contact Smita Samani via e-mail ([smitasamani@hotmail.com](mailto:smitasamani@hotmail.com)), phone on 07961 177106 (after 7 pm ) or contact Chinmaya Mission UK at Signal House, 16 Lyon Rd., Harrow, Middx, HA1 2AG, Tel: 020 8861 2625. Alternatively, on-line ordering is now also available through [www.chinmayauk.org](http://www.chinmayauk.org)



## Ganesh Chaturthi

This festival is celebrated in September to honour Lord Ganesh, the elephant headed son of Lord Shiva and his consort Parvati. He is loved by all and is a special favourite of children!

He is called upon to remove obstacles that may come in our path and is invoked before all auspicious activities. For the festival many divas are lit, bhajans and musical performances are acted in front of huge crowds.

Images and statues of the deity are placed under Banyan trees, on the roadsides and in water (rivers and seas) because of his protective influence.

## Ganesh Mantra

*Vakra tunda maha kaya*

The one with the broken tusk and big belly

*Suryo kotih sama prabha*

Whose brilliance exceeds that of a thousand suns

*Nirvighnam kuru me deva*

Oh Lord make my path free of all obstacles

*Sarva karyesu sarvada*

In all that I do; in everything

## What are Ganesh's three other names?

(1) G \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ Y

(2) V \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ A

(3) V \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ A

## Puzzles

(1) On what animal does Ganesh ride?

(2) What is his favourite food?

(3) Why does he have:

- Big ears
- Large Head
- Big Belly

## Brain teaser

Shanil turns off the light in his bedroom. The light switch is twenty feet from the bed, but he still manages to get into his bed before it is dark. How does he do it?

Krishna Majeethia

## Bal Vihar Camp 2000: Hanumanji the Superhero

Nearly 70 children and 32 adults attended our second Bal Vihar Camp.

We started with a coach drive from London to the coastal resort of Osmington in Dorset, watching the gripping Ramayana video along the way. The resort was a purpose built children's activity centre set on a cliff top with it's own private beach.

The first evening was spent getting to know each other, singing the Hanuman Chalisa followed by a quiz around the theme of the camp culminating in meeting Swamiji who started off the "yagna" with a thrilling story. As it was Ganesh Chaturthi, we all sang "Ganapati Bappa Mauriya" and danced, with Swamiji demonstrating the "Mumbai dancing style", finally placing Ganapati in the swimming pool!



The following day we woke up early for meditation and yoga, conducted by Brni Sadhnaji from Toronto. All the children were punctual - (the sevaks, however....) This was followed **continued on last page .....**

Children, this is your very own page in the magazine... if you would like to see your poems, stories and games on this page, send them to chinmayauk@aol.com or Chinmaya Mission UK.



## CHINMAYA MISSION PLEDGE

*We stand as one family  
Bound to each other with love and respect.*

*We serve as an army,  
Courageous and disciplined,  
Ever ready to fight  
Against all low tendencies and false values  
Within and without us.*

*We live honestly  
The noble life of sacrifice and service,  
Producing more than what we consume  
And giving more than what we take.*

*We seek the Lord's grace  
To keep us on the path of virtue,  
Courage and wisdom.  
May Thy grace and blessings  
Flow through us  
To the world around us.*

*We believe that the service of our country  
Is the service of the Lord of Lords,  
And devotion to the People  
Is the devotion to the Supreme Self.*

*We know our responsibilities,  
Give us the ability and courage to fulfill them.*

OM - TAT - SAT

## ... hanumanji the superhero continued from page 11

by another riveting session with Swamiji after which we tried to copy some of the things we had learnt by climbing walls like the Vaanars and handling a ropes course, by working together as a team.

The very little children played "act like Hanumanji" while the others guessed what they were doing. In the afternoon, there were some recreation activities, followed by rest (which no one took) and another session with Swamiji, where he continued the stories of Hanumanji.

There was a craft session, in which all the children made and decorated little photo frames of Hanumanji, together with their own thoughts about him, while listening to Guruji's singing of the Hanuman Chalisa. Everybody was really looking forward to our version of burning Lanka (walking down to the beach, around a campfire) singing songs along the way, but after a while it started raining and we all had to rush back. Luckily we harassed Swamiji to tell us another story, which was a wonderful way to end the day!

Our session with Swamiji the next day was bright and early straight after some more Yoga and meditation with Brni Sadhanaji. Then some of us went dragon boat racing and the rest of us made a raft, which we floated out into the sea, like the building of bridges by our vaanara ancestors with Hanumanji! Then it was time for our final session

with Swamiji\_Hanumanji was going to burn Lanka - we could all feel HIS presence through Swamiji's words, the atmosphere was unbelievably charged - not one child stirred as the story came to its finale. The convocation was a mix of tears and joy, receiving blessings and prasad, thanking all the people who had worked so hard, and especially Swamiji for bringing us closer to Hanumanji and tapping the "superhero" in all of us.

**Madhavi Vadera**

