



Bharatiya Vidya
Bhavan



BENGALURU KENDRA

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आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः

"Let noble thoughts come to us from every side."

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan was founded in 1938 by Kulapati Dr. K. M. Munshi with the conviction that India's ancient wisdom — its philosophy, arts, and sciences — must not merely be archived, but lived. Today, across 119 centres worldwide, the Bhavan continues to be a beacon where scholarship meets practice, where tradition breathes alongside the contemporary.

The Bengaluru Kendra was established in 1965. The Kendra functions from an excellent building located in the heart of Bengaluru City. The foundation stone was laid by the late Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, the then Prime Minister, on January 23, 1965. The late Dr. V.V. Giri, the then President of India, inaugurated the building on November 16, 1969.

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN

Bengaluru Kendra · Estd. 1965

From the Chairman's Desk



K. G. Raghavan

CHAIRMAN, BENGALURU KENDRA

Dear Bhavanites,

FAITH OR BHAKTI OR DEVOTION

Repetition, a cultivated art in all religious literature, is especially characteristic of Vedantic literature. Its object is to emphasise the central ideas. It is apparent from the study of the several Upanishads that their core objective is to act as a guide towards the attainment of salvation or self-realization. The minimum requirement to reach that goal is to have Faith or Bhakti or Devotion in the Ultimate or the *Nirguna Brahman*.

In his introduction to the rendition of *Bhaja Govindam* by Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi, Rajaji famously noted —



M.S. SUBBULAKSHMI

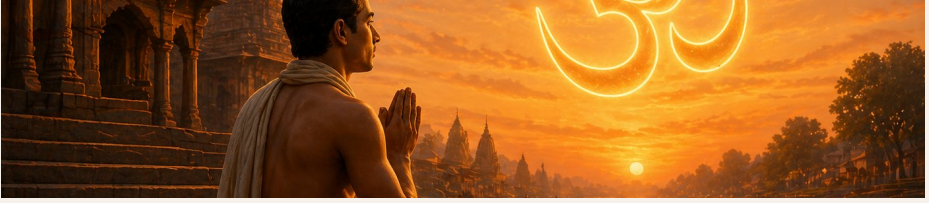


C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

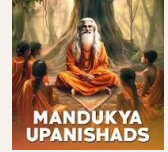
Rajaji's preface to Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi's rendition of Bhaja Govindam.

“Adi Shankaracharya wrote a number of Vedantic works for imparting knowledge of the Self and the Universal Spirit. He also composed a number of hymns to foster Bhakti in the hearts of men. One of these hymns is the famous Bhaja Govindam. The way of devotion is not different from the way of knowledge or Jnana. When intelligence matures and lodges securely in the mind, it becomes wisdom. When wisdom is integrated with life and issues out in action, it becomes Bhakti. Knowledge, when it becomes fully mature, is Bhakti. If it does not get transformed into Bhakti, such knowledge is useless tinsel. To believe that Jnana and Bhakti, knowledge and devotion, are different from each other, is ignorance.”

— C. RAJAGOPALACHARI (RAJAJI)



ELEMENTS OF THE MANDUKYA UPANISHAD



The thrust of the Mandukya Upanishad consists primarily in giving a **Shabda aakara** to the Divine Power by the resonance of the **Om** — thereby equating the creator Brahma with this primordial sound. It seeks to instil the irrefutable in the seeker: all that we perceive through the sense organs is *Mithya*, illusion. The Truth or *Satya* lies within us but is smothered by delusion — the belief that what is not true is true, or what is not permanent is permanent.

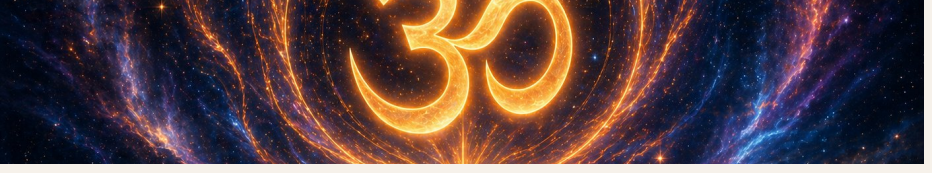
The approach of this Upanishad is to drive home this point through the description of the three states of consciousness we experience in daily life. The state of ultimate realisation is an extension of these three, with the vital difference that

the three states are body-related, while the ultimate realisation is beyond the body.

This realisation is possible only if one releases oneself from the bonds that tie one to the external world — the bond being the sense organs. As an analogy: the gravitational pull keeps us grounded and prevents us from hovering in weightlessness. To get into outer space one must escape the gravitational pull of the earth. Similarly, to escape the pull of worldliness, one must resist the influence of the sense organs.

The next stage of the exposition of this treatise is the Supreme that underlies even these states of consciousness.

THE RE-ITERATION



The third and the fourth Karikas re-emphasise the concepts of *Visva*, *Taijasa* and *Prajna*, which have already been expounded in verses 3, 4 and 5 of the main Upanishad itself. Of the three states, the closest to self-realisation is the state of *Prajna* — with the difference that being in the *Prajna* state is short-lived, given that after experiencing this state of sleep the cycle commences all over again from the *Visva* and *Taijasa* states of consciousness. The enjoyment in the *Prajna* state too is not permanent or everlasting.

विश्वो हि स्थूलभुङ्गित्यं तैजसः प्रविविक्तभुक् ।
आनन्दभुक्तथा प्राज्ञस्त्रिधा भोगं निबोधत ॥

*viśvo hi sthūla-bhuñ nityam taijasaḥ pravivikta-bhuk,
ānanda-bhuk tathā prājñastridhā bhogam nibodhata.*

“Visva enjoys the gross; Taijasa enjoys the subtle; and similarly Prajna enjoys bliss. Know enjoyment to be threefold.”

स्थूलं तर्पयते विश्वं प्रविविक्तं तु तैजसम् ।
आनन्दश्च तथा प्राज्ञं त्रिधा तृप्तिं निबोधत ॥

*sthūlam tarpayate viśvam praviviktam tu taijasam,
ānandaśca tathā prājñam tridhā tṛptim nibodhata.*

“The gross object satisfies Visva; the subtle the Taijasa; and the blissful the Prajna. Know these to be the threefold satisfaction.”

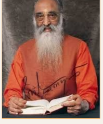
Having noticed the three states of consciousness, the next question that is answered in the fifth Karika is — *who is the experiencer, and how is the experience associated with the experiencer?*

BEHIND ONE AND ALL

त्रिषु धामसु यद्भोज्यं भोक्ता यश्च प्रकीर्तितः ।
वैदैतदुभयं यस्तु स भुञ्जानो न लिप्यते ॥

“He who knows both the experiencer and the objects of experience associated with the three states is not affected through experiencing the objects.”

The concept treated in this Karika is complex and layered. Realisation that behind the experiencer — ourselves acting through the sense organs — and behind the object experienced is somebody else, is the key to grasping this Karika.



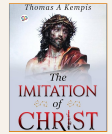
On this, the commentary of Swami Chinmayananda is illuminating: *“When we have correctly understood that the three states — waking, dream and deep sleep — cannot function but for the Reality behind them, the pure Consciousness or Awareness (Atman); and when we have realised in the living experience of samadhi that the Atman is our real nature, thereafter, the experiences in the three planes cannot involve us either in sorrow or in joy.”*

He further expounds: *“After Self-realisation, even if we return to play*

the game of life in the threefold Consciousness, we may enjoy the experiences good and bad, but in none of them will the individual get himself involved.”

Whether it is Maya, Leela, or dualism, the existence of the Reality behind the states of consciousness is an existential truth on which all three schools of philosophy agree. Everything is the manifestation of the Supreme Power and nothing exists apart from It — self-understanding or realisation is the ultimate objective.

In *The Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis, it is vividly put: *“Ultimately it is the Eternal Word which speaks to us. Those who see all things as one, and who relate everything to the One God, are able to remain single-minded and live at peace with God.”*



THE VIRTUE OF HUMILITY AND SURRENDER TO GOD

One should stand apart from oneself and view the entire world — including oneself — with a sense of detachment, much as when watching a movie one is conscious that it is a mere celluloid expression. From such detachment springs humility and service to God. On the essence of such humility, Kempis explains:

“A humble peasant who serves God is more pleasing to God than a conceited intellectual who knows the course of the stars but ignores the things of the spirit. If I possess all the knowledge in the world, but have no love, it will not assist me when God judges my actions. Many words do not satisfy the soul, but a good life refreshes the mind, and a clear conscience leads to confidence in God.”

“The more complete and the better your knowledge, the stricter will be the judgement on you, unless you

lead a holy life. Do not be proud of any skill or knowledge you may possess, but respect the learning you have. Why consider yourself above others, while many are wiser and more perfect in the law of God?”

“A realistic and humble attitude is the most valuable thing we can learn. The wisest form of self-understanding is to think little of ourselves and to think kindly of others. We are all frail; remember that no one is frailer than you.”

There is merit in Santvani — the teachings of the great seers who gave us the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Karikas of Gaudapada, the commentary of Adi Sankara, and the treatise of Swami Chinmayananda. Trust in them: *“It is better to pray to the Saints with devout prayer and sorrow, than to search into their secrets with pointless curiosity.”* (Thomas à Kempis)

Om Shanti! · Om Shanti! · Om Shanti!

— K. G. Raghavan CHAIRMAN, BHAVAN'S BENGALURU KENDRA

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विद्या नाम नरस्य रूपमधिकं प्रच्छन्नगुप्तं धनम्

"Knowledge is the finest adornment — a hidden treasure that cannot be stolen."



Ugadi Sambhrama 2026

*A harmonious beginning of rhythm,
reflection and renewal*

Sunday, 22 March 2026 — the New Year welcomed at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan with music, rhythm, spiritual introspection and the timeless splendour of Laya Lavanya.

A Harmonious Beginning of Rhythm, Reflection & Renewal

The auspicious festival of Ugadi was observed with great splendour and cultural zeal at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bengaluru, on Sunday, 22 March 2026. Branded Ugadi Sambhrama 2026, the event wove together music, rhythm and spiritual introspection — welcoming the New Year with devotion, artistic flair and collective joy.

At the heart of the celebration lay “Laya Lavanya,” a one of its kind percussion ensemble conceived and led by the esteemed Vidwan Anoor Anantha Krishna Sharma. He opened the programme with a reflection on the nature of *laya*, rhythm — noting that it need not always be gentle or untroubled. Sometimes it demands intensity and discipline, stirring the spirit and testing the performer; yet within its currents lie balance, beauty and harmony.

This insight shaped the morning performance, as the ensemble navigated moods that ranged from soothing mellowness to electrifying dynamism. The musical journey

began with the vibrant *Navaraagamaalike*, setting an auspicious tone, then moved into the devotional “*Nammamma Sharade*,” an invocation of Lord Ganesha’s blessings. As the concert advanced to the lively Kadana Kuthuhala Raga, the tempo rose and the stage pulsed with rhythmic energy.

A standout moment came with the extraordinary violin by the nation’s rising talent K. J. Dilip. His playing transcended mere technique — the violin seemed to speak through him, each note brimming with feeling and resonance that reached deep into the audience’s hearts.



Moments from Ugadi Sambhrama 2026 — the 13-member Laya Lavanya ensemble on stage, the welcome address, and the felicitation of the invited dignitaries.

Equally mesmerizing was the art of Konnakol, the vocalisation of percussive syllables like “*takita takita.*” He also rendered certain shlokas of Shiva Thandavam, *Aham Nirvikalpam* and other shlokas. As the instrumental tempo quickened, the Konnakol artist’s voice intertwined flawlessly with the drums, creating a living dialogue between voice and rhythm that showcased their unity.

The 13-member ensemble featured masters across disciplines, including: K. J. Dilip - Violin; Manojam - Vocal; Vidya Shankar - Mridangam; a Konnakol exponent and a team of supporting percussionists. Together they forged

a resonant tapestry of sound, reaching its peak during the *Mukhya Prasthuti* — an improvisational segment where creativity soared.

The morning’s devotional core emerged in the combined rendition of “*Pavamana*” and the soul-stirring “*Nagumomu,*” enveloping listeners in a profound sense of fulfilment. The finale was a thrilling *Thani Aavartanam*, as the percussionists unleashed intricate rhythmic patterns. Enthralled, the audience kept taala with their hands, their faces reflecting both concentration and delight. It felt less like a recital and more like a shared communion of rhythm and feeling.

“The violin seemed to speak through him — each note brimming with feeling and resonance.”

THE PANCHANGA SHRAVANA

Following this musical odyssey, Vedic scholar Sri Sudharshan Sharma delivered the traditional *Panchanga Shravana*. He explained that this year — *Sri Parabhava Nama Samvatsara*, the 48th in the sixty-year lunar cycle — draws its name from “*Parabhava*,” meaning the defeat of one’s own inner flaws rather than others. He urged attendees to conquer the *Arishadvargas*, the six inner adversaries of desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride and jealousy, and to cultivate discipline, compassion and wisdom.

Sri Sharma also highlighted the early Ugadi practice of gazing into a mirror as a symbol of self-reflection — an invitation to examine one’s thoughts and actions honestly at the year’s dawn. He closed by reminding everyone that societal peace and prosperity begin with harmony within individuals and leaders alike; those who govern must themselves embody balance, calm and justice.

Ugadi Sambhrama 2026 at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan thus stood not only as a musical extravaganza but as a celebration of purpose — affirming that rhythm, reflection and renewal lie at the core of the New Year. The melodies lingered, the rhythms echoed on, and the message rang clear: overcome the darkness within, and let harmony guide the way.

The event was graciously sponsored by Shri B. Krishnakumar, Managing Partner, M/s. Mahendra Perfumery Works. The auspicious lamp-lighting ceremony was conducted by Shri Raghavan, Shri H. N. Suresh, Smt. Nagalakshmi K. Rao, chief guest Shri Krishnakumar, and all trustee members. Smt. Nagalakshmi K. Rao spoke eloquently about the significance of Ugadi, highlighting its spiritual and cultural importance. Shri Raghavan, the Chairman of the Bhavan, also shared insights about the upcoming Literary Festival and Cultural Festival, which will be sponsored by the Prestige Group.



Audience · Panchanga Shravana · Ensemble finale at Ugadi Sambhrama 2026.



Reading Contemporary India

*A thoughtful exploration of society
and civilization at Bhavan's*

A panel discussion on M. K. Raghavendra's new book — with Dr. Chiranjiv Singh and Dr. Sharadini Rath — held at K.R.G. Hall on Saturday, 28 March 2026.

History, Identity and the Search for an Equitable Society

In keeping with its enduring commitment to intellectual dialogue and cultural reflection, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bengaluru, organized an engaging panel discussion on the book *Reading Contemporary India* authored by M. K. Raghavendra, a National Award-winning film critic, literary scholar, and author.



The panel in session at K.R.G. Hall — and the author of *Reading Contemporary India*, Dr. M. K. Raghavendra.

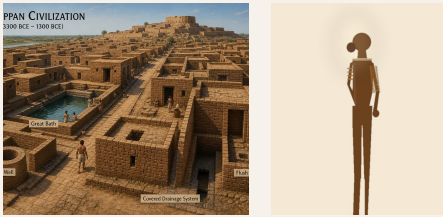
The discussion was held on Saturday, 28 March 2026, at K.R.G. Hall, bringing together scholars and readers to reflect on the social, historical, and cultural forces that have shaped contemporary India. The distinguished panel included Chiranjiv Singh, Vice-Chairman of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bengaluru, and Sharadini Rath, an academic researcher known for her work on poverty, decentralisation, and social policy. The session offered a rich intellectual engagement with the themes of history, identity, social

hierarchy, and the search for a more equitable society.

The Author's Introduction — The session began with an extensive and thought-provoking introduction by the author, Dr. M. K. Raghavendra, who explained that his book is an interdisciplinary inquiry into the forces that have shaped Indian society. Drawing upon his background in economics, literature, and cinema studies, he emphasized the need to connect different disciplines in order to understand the complexity of India.

UNDERSTANDING INDIA THROUGH HISTORY, CULTURE & SOCIAL STRUCTURE

One of the central ideas presented by the author was that contemporary India cannot be understood without examining the deep historical processes that shaped its society. He illustrated this idea through vivid examples from ancient history and social practice.



HARAPPAN CIVILIZATION · THE DANCING GIRL FIGURINE

Dr. Raghavendra spoke at length about the mixing of races and cultures that occurred over centuries in the Indian subcontinent. He referred to archaeological discoveries from the Harappan civilization, particularly the famous “dancing girl” figurine, noting that its physical features suggest diversity and cultural blending even in ancient times. He explained that successive migrations and interactions — Harappan, Aryan, and later cultural influences — created a society marked by remarkable diversity in language, appearance, and social customs.

He further explored how certain social practices associated with Hindu traditions evolved gradually over long periods. According to him, these practices influenced not only those identified as Hindus but also other communities living in India, demonstrating the broad cultural reach of shared social norms.

A significant part of his introduction focused on the hierarchical nature of traditional society, particularly the role of Brahmins in preserving knowledge. He explained that in the traditional system, knowledge was transmitted carefully from guru to shishya, often with an emphasis on preserving established wisdom rather than encouraging innovation beyond the teacher’s authority. This tendency, he noted, was observed by scholars such as Dharampala and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who examined how knowledge systems shaped social structures.



DHARAMPALA



DR. B. R. AMBEDKAR

Scholars cited in the panel discussion on the layered nature of Indian knowledge systems.

Dr. Raghavendra also distinguished between *bhakti* (devotion) and ritual practice, explaining that certain rituals historically functioned in a transactional manner, rooted in older sacrificial traditions. These reflections formed part of his broader effort to examine how historical practices continue to influence modern society.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

The author explained that the book is divided into several chapters, each addressing a key dimension of Indian society. The chapters include themes such as:

- Caste hierarchy
- Religious communities and democratic politics
- Identity and conflict
- Justice and state authority
- Poverty and income disparity
- Higher education and globalization
- Local languages and cultural policy
- Artistic and intellectual life
- Knowledge systems and education
- Contemporary crisis areas in Indian society

A distinctive feature of the book, as emphasized during the discussion, is that each chapter offers not only analysis but also practical suggestions for reform, reflecting the author's commitment to constructive social change.

DR. CHIRANJIV SINGH · LAYERS OF CIVILIZATION

In his address, Dr. Chiranjiv Singh, former Ambassador to UNESCO and Vice-Chairman of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, shared insightful reflections on the layered nature of Indian civilization. Drawing from his personal background — his ancestral village being located near the historic region of Harappa — he spoke about how societies evolve through successive layers of history. He described Indian civilization as a continuum shaped by multiple cultural influences, including ancient settlements, religious movements, and social transformations.

“Indian civilization is a continuum — shaped by successive layers of history, woven together by every people who have called this land their home.”

DR. CHIRANJIV SINGH · VICE-CHAIRMAN, BVB BENGALURU

Dr. Singh emphasized that understanding these layers is essential for building a just and equitable society. He observed that history shapes the way nations perceive themselves and that responsible scholarship must guide social reform. He particularly appreciated the author's approach of offering solutions rather than leaving questions unresolved. Beginning with education, he highlighted the importance of reducing the burden on children, developing thoughtful language policies, and addressing social inequality through inclusive reforms. He described the book as a valuable contribution to national discourse, combining intellectual depth with practical vision.

**Dr. Sharadini Rath ·
Critical Reflection —**



Offering a scholarly perspective, Dr. Sharadini Rath described the book as intellectually stimulating and analytically rigorous. She noted that the work challenges readers to think deeply about social structures rather than relying on superficial interpretations.

She discussed the long-term impact of rigid social hierarchies on talent and opportunity, emphasizing that societies flourish when individuals from diverse backgrounds are able to contribute freely. She praised the chapter on the “inward look”, which examines how societies sometimes become inward-focused, limiting their capacity for innovation and collaboration. At the same time, she acknowledged the author's belief in education as a powerful tool for social transformation, while cautioning that achieving equality requires sustained collective effort.



CONCLUSION · CONTINUING THE SPIRIT OF DIALOGUE

The panel discussion concluded with a sense of thoughtful reflection and renewed commitment to intellectual inquiry. By bringing together diverse perspectives on history, society, and reform, the event reaffirmed Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's role as a centre for meaningful dialogue and cultural understanding. Through discussions such as these, the institution continues to nurture informed citizenship and encourage critical engagement with the challenges of contemporary India.

यद्यप्यहं नवं वस्तु
लब्धुमिच्छामि सर्वतः ।
तथापि प्राचीनं भव्यं
न त्यक्तुं स्पृहयाम्यहम् ॥

*“Though I seek the new from every side,
yet I do not wish to abandon what is
ancient and noble.”*

— Kālidāsa, Mālavikāgnimitram

A Legacy of Music, Memory & Inspiration

International Women's Day at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan · Saturday, 14
March 2026

The annual Carnatic Music Concert instituted in memory of **Smt. Sita Bai Subba Rao** — a woman remembered for her love of music, her strength of character, her quiet resilience and her enduring values.



Vidushi Jayamangala Krishnamani with the ensemble of women musicians at K.R.G. Hall — the Women's Day Carnatic Concert, March 2026.

“Music has the power to uplift, unite, and inspire — legacies are not built only through achievements, but through kindness, encouragement and quiet strength.”

IN MEMORY OF SMT. SITA BAI SUBBA RAO · 1894

Under the cherished banner of the Endowment Legacy of the Bhavan, the Bengaluru Kendra marked International Women’s Day with a deeply meaningful musical tribute on Saturday, 14 March 2026, at K.R.G. Hall.

The occasion was the annual Carnatic Music Concert instituted in memory of Smt. Sita Bai Subba Rao — a woman remembered not only for her love of music, but also for her strength of character, quiet resilience, and enduring values.

The concert featured a distinguished ensemble of accomplished women musicians, reflecting the spirit of excellence that the endowment seeks to nurture. The vocal recital by Vidushi Jayamangala Krishnamani was accompanied by Vidushi Nalina Mohan on the violin, Vidushi Ranjini Siddanti Venkatesh on the mridanga, and Vidushi Bhagyalakshmi M. Krishna on the morsing — creating an atmosphere of devotion, artistry, and

celebration. The presence of Vid. R. S. Ramakanth, renowned musician and scholar, as Chief Guest, added dignity and depth to the occasion.

This annual concert stands as a living testament to the legacy of Smt. Sita Bai Subba Rao, whose life story continues to inspire generations. Born in 1894, she was a woman of remarkable inner strength, intellectual curiosity, and deep spiritual grounding. Though she did not receive formal schooling, she was highly literate — well versed in Tamil and Sanskrit, and deeply knowledgeable in the sacred traditions and temple lore of India. Her life was marked by personal hardships, yet she faced every challenge with courage, grace, and unwavering faith.

More than anything, she possessed a profound love for Carnatic music and found immense joy in encouraging younger members of her family to sing, learn, and perform.

“Legacies are not built only through achievements, but through kindness, encouragement, and the quiet strength that shapes families and communities.”

The endowment established in her memory is therefore not merely a commemorative gesture, but a celebration of a woman who believed that music has the power to uplift, unite, and inspire. Through such endowment programmes, the Bhavan continues to honour individuals whose lives embodied values of dedication, culture, and service.

The annual Women’s Day concert serves as a reminder that legacies are not built only through achievements, but through kindness, encouragement, and the quiet strength that shapes families and communities. In preserving and celebrating these legacies, the Bhavan reaffirms its timeless mission — to nurture culture, to honour tradition, and to inspire future generations through the living heritage of music and values.



The ensemble in full flow — a distinguished gathering of women musicians honouring a legacy of devotion and artistry.



What's Up at the Bhavan

April at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is brimming with culture.

03 Bharatanatyam · Mrs. Niyathi Nagesh

APR We begin with a recorded Bharatanatyam performance by Mrs. Niyathi Nagesh.

10 Duet · Ms. Anjana & Ms. Swathi Simha

APR A duet by Ms. Anjana and Ms. Swathi Simha.

17 Bharatanatyam · Ms. Mahika Neranjen

APR Ms. Mahika Neranjen's recorded performance.

19 Shatavadhani Dr. R. Ganesh

APR Felicitation · Padma Bhushan Awardee

We proudly felicitate Shatavadhani Dr. R. Ganesh on receiving the Padma Bhushan, and launch the book "*Echoes from Ramayana*" at Khincha Auditorium.

24 Live Bharatanatyam · Ms. Jessica Oliver

APR A special live Bharatanatyam by Ms. Jessica Oliver will conclude the series. Join us!



FESTIVAL REFLECTION

राम नवमी

Celebrating Rama

*The ideal leader for all times ·
a meditation on Maryada Purushottam*

*“Rama did not become great because he was
powerful.
He became great because he was principled.”*

Celebrating Rama, the Ideal Leader for All Times

When Ramanavami was celebrated this March, temples resonated with devotional songs, homes were filled with the fragrance of incense, and hearts turned toward Ayodhya. It was not merely a celebration of a divine birth — it was a remembrance of a life that continues to guide humanity across centuries.

Ramanavami falls in the sacred month of Chaitra and commemorates the birth of Lord Rama, revered as an embodiment of righteousness, virtue and ideal conduct. Yet beyond rituals and festivities, the festival invites us to reflect on a deeper question — what made Rama so extraordinary that generations continue to look up to him as a role model for leadership, character, and responsibility?



Sri Rama with Sita, Lakshmana, Hanuman and Luva · the Maryada Purushottam and his beloved family.

Lord Rama is often called *Maryada Purushottam* — the ideal human being who lived within the highest standards of righteousness and moral discipline. His life was not

free from challenges, sorrow or dilemmas, but he chose the path of *dharma* even when it demanded sacrifice.

“Rama did not become great because he was powerful. He became great because he was principled.”

Leadership today is often associated with authority, success and power. However, the leadership Rama demonstrated was rooted in values, compassion and accountability. He did not lead through fear or dominance — he led through example.

One of the most powerful moments in the Ramayana was when Rama willingly accepted fourteen years of exile to honour the promise made by his father. He did not argue, complain or rebel — he embraced his responsibility with dignity and calmness. In that moment, he taught humanity a profound lesson: true leadership begins with obedience to principles, not attachment to position.

Throughout his journey in the forest, Rama protected sages, respected nature, and built alliances with people from different backgrounds. He treated everyone with fairness and kindness — whether kings, warriors, or ordinary citizens. His actions reflected a leadership style based on inclusion, empathy, and respect for diversity.

Another remarkable aspect of Rama’s leadership was his sense of justice. As a ruler, he placed the welfare of his people above his

personal comfort. His reign — remembered as *Rama Rajya* — is often described as a period of harmony, fairness and social responsibility, where governance was guided by ethics rather than self-interest.

Rama also demonstrated emotional strength. He experienced grief, separation and hardship, yet never allowed his emotions to cloud his judgement. He remained calm, balanced and focused on his duty — inner discipline that made him a leader who inspired trust and respect.

In our modern world, where decisions are often driven by ambition and competition, Rama’s example reminds us that leadership is not about controlling others — it is about serving others.

Ramanavami is therefore not only a religious festival but a moral reminder: to examine whether we are leading with integrity, compassion and responsibility in our families, workplaces and communities. Greatness is not measured by wealth or status, but by character and conduct — leadership begins within, in the quiet decisions we make every day.

**धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः
धर्म एव हतो हन्ति**

*“Dharma protects those who protect it;
dharma destroys those who destroy it.”*



— *Manusmṛti 8.15, quoted in the Vana Parva of
the Mahabharata*

गङ्गा सिन्धु सरस्वती च यमुना
गोदावरी नर्मदा ।
कावेरी सरयू महेन्द्रतनया
चर्मण्वती वेदिका ॥

*“Gaṅgā, Sindhu, Sarasvatī, Yamunā,
Godāvarī, Narmadā,
Kāverī, Sarayū, Mahendrā, Carmaṇvatī,
Vedikā —
may these sacred rivers cleanse our
hearts.”*

*— A traditional invocation of the holy rivers of
Bhārata*

alks

Mukhba

The Winter Abode of Mother Ganga

Under the serene embrace of the Himalayas, in the Garhwal region of Uttarakhand — a quiet village where devotion flows like the river itself, through every season.

A Sanctuary Between Snowfall and Deodar

A HERITAGE STORY · COMPILED BY MANOJ INAMDAR

At an altitude of about 2,620 metres, on the banks of the sacred Bhagirathi, stands the quiet and spiritually vibrant village of Mukhba — home to the revered Mukhba Ganga Mata Temple, surrounded by snow-clad peaks and dense deodar forests.



Mukhba village — the winter abode of Mother Ganga, set against the snow-clad peaks of the Garhwal Himalayas.

For centuries, this temple has held a unique place in the sacred traditions of the Char Dham pilgrimage. While the physical structure has been renovated over time, the living tradition associated with it has remained unbroken. It is not merely a place of worship, but a

symbol of faith that adapts to nature while preserving the divine presence.

The temple is dedicated to Ganga Mata, the sacred river goddess worshipped as the purifier of sins and the giver of life.

During the harsh winter months, when heavy snowfall makes access to Gangotri difficult, the idol of Goddess Ganga is ceremonially brought to Mukhba in a grand and devotional procession. Here she resides for nearly six months, allowing devotees to continue their worship even when the main shrine remains closed. This tradition reflects the belief that divine grace never withdraws — it simply finds another path to reach the devotee. Architecturally, the temple reflects the wisdom of Himalayan craftsmanship. The older structure, built using deodar wood and brass, stands alongside a newer stone-and-marble temple designed in the style of the Gangotri shrine. Sloping roofs, intricate wooden carvings and a compact sanctum are thoughtfully made to withstand heavy snowfall — while preserving the sanctity and warmth of the sacred space.

Local tradition also connects the region to ancient legends. It is believed that Chaman Rishi once rested here along with Bhima after

the Ashwamedha Yagna, adding a layer of mythological significance. Such stories, passed down through generations, weave faith, history and memory into the identity of the place.

The most significant festivals revolve around the seasonal journey of the deity. After Diwali, the idol is brought from Gangotri to Mukhba with traditional music, rituals and community participation — marking the beginning of winter worship. On Akshaya Tritiya, the goddess returns to Gangotri as the temple reopens for the summer season. These sacred movements symbolize continuity, resilience and the enduring bond between nature and devotion.

Mukhba thus represents more than a geographical location — it embodies a living heritage where faith adapts to the rhythms of the mountains, where tradition flows like the river itself, and where devotion remains steady across seasons.



The temple at Mukhba — a living heritage of seasonal devotion.

— COMPILED BY MANOJ INAMDAR

यत्र विश्वं भवत्येकनीडम्

*“Where the whole world becomes one
single nest.”*



*— Yajurveda, an aspiration held close at the
Bhavan since 1938*

164th Samskrithika Karyakrama

A Saxophone Recital · by Sri Yadukumar & Team

SATURDAY, 21 MARCH 2026 · PROF. Y. T. THATHACHARI AUDITORIUM
· MYSURU

The 164th edition of the Bhavan's Samskrithika Karyakrama — the Kendra's flagship Cultural Outreach Programme — travelled to Mysuru this quarter with a luminous Saxophone recital by Sri Yadukumar and his ensemble. Held at the Prof. Y. T. Thathachari Auditorium on 21 March 2026 at 6:00 pm, the concert welcomed rasikas from across the city for an evening of Carnatic music rendered in a voice both ancient and new.

The programme was jointly presented by the Infosys Foundation, Bengaluru, and the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bengaluru & Mysuru Kendras — a continuing partnership that has now carried classical music, dance and dialogue into over a hundred and sixty community gatherings.

Under the stewardship of the Governing Council, the Outreach Programme remains a living tradition — a promise that the Bhavan's voice will always travel where it is heard, and always return with something new.

*“The Bhavan's voice will always travel where
it is heard, and always return with something
new.”*

164TH CULTURAL OUTREACH · BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN

BECOME A MEMBER

Join the Bhavan.

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bengaluru stands as one of the city's most revered cultural sanctuaries — a living institution where classical music, dance, scholarship and dialogue have flourished, uninterrupted, for six decades.

You, too, can become a steward of this legacy by enrolling as a Life Member.



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- ◆ Invitation to Bhavan's events

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For six decades, BVB has promoted art and culture and organised cultural events at its premises. If you wish to volunteer for these events, send your contact details and a brief profile mentioning your area of interest.

bvb_blr_volunteer@gmail.com

LIFE MEMBERSHIP · FORM

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN


Life Membership / Life Subscriber Form · Privileges

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>FOR OFFICE USE ONLY</u></p> <p>ENROLMENT NO. : _____ Date : _____</p> <p>Approved by : _____</p> <p>DIRECT :- Ref. Letter No. _____ Date : _____</p> <p>KENDRA :- Ref. No. _____ Date : _____</p> <p>PAYMENT : Rs. _____</p> <p>DIRECT : BY M.O./CHEQUE/D.D.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">No. _____</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">on _____ Bank</p> <p>H.O. : R.No. _____</p> <p>KENDRA : R.No. _____</p> <div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; width: fit-content; margin: 10px auto;">Privileges</div> <p>A Life Member / Life Subscriber is entitled to :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A copy of one of the Journals - Bhavan's Journal (English)/ Navneet (Hindi) / Navneet Samarpan (Gujarati) for twenty years. ◆ A discount of 25% on the cover price of all the books published by Bhavan. ◆ Free Membership of Library wherever exists. ◆ Invitation to Bhavan's major functions. 	<div style="text-align: center; border: 2px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>LIFE MEMBERSHIP / LIFE SUBSCRIBER FORM</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">K.M. MUNSHI MARG. CHOWPATTY, MUMBAI - 400 007, INDIA. TEL No. 022-23631261, 23634462, 23634464, FAX : 022-23630058 E-mail : bhavan@bhavans.info Website : www.bhavans.info</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>
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Bhavan's official Life Membership form — office-use page (left) and the front cover (right) with the schedule of member privileges.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP · APPLICATION
APPLICATION & FOUNDER'S MESSAGE

Letter from the Executive Secretary · Subscription form

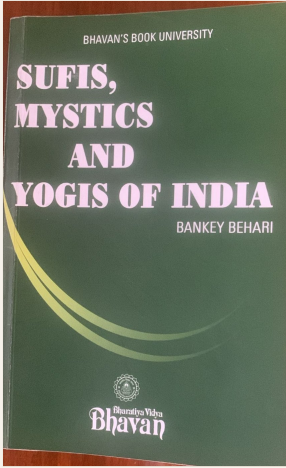
<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>Dear Patron,</p> <p>Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, founded in 1938 by the illustrious philosopher-statesman, thinker, writer and Father of the Indian Cultural Renaissance, Dr. K.M. Munshi, with the blessings of Mahatma Gandhi, has emerged as the largest National Institution with an international outlook totally apolitical and by virtue of its contributions in its chosen area of service, come to be recognized by the Government of India as "An Institution of National Eminence" it was awarded the Gandhi Peace Prize for 2002.</p> <p>The continued and enthusiastic support, assistance and active participation of good friends of your stature, has helped the Bhavan to grow, against all vicissitudes, and establish 115 Kendras, 7 Overseas Centres and 367 constituent Institutions. In the education field itself it has come to be recognized and preferred as a premier educational institution of the country with over 2,00,000 students benefitting annually nationwide. Its publications numbering 1800 as of now, authored by thinkers, philosophers, saints, scientists and historians are finding their place in houses and libraries throughout the world.</p> <p>It brings out Bhavan's Journal, English Fortnightly, Navneet Hindi Monthly, Navneet Samarpan Gujarati monthly, Samvid Sanskrit Quarterly and Bharatiya Vidya, Research journal and Dimdim a children's magazine.</p> <p>In Dr. Munshi's words "The Bhavan is growing because it is ceaselessly striving to satisfy to some extent the hunger created by our renaissance in sensitive minds to recapture the fundamental values of our culture in a form suited to modern conditions, cutting across political, religious and socio-economic barriers."</p> <p>Bhavan upholds our ancient concepts: <i>Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam - "The world is one Family"</i> <i>Sarva Dharma Samabhava - Equal respect for all religions and Aa no bhadraah. Kratavyantus vishvatah - "Let noble thoughts come to us from every side"</i></p> <p>The above connotations vindicate unequivocally the catholicity of mind, the democratic fibre and the secularistic character enshrined in our culture from time immemorial.</p> <p>We therefore invite you to join us in continuing this pious and holy campaign and thus strengthen Bhavan's hands in its relentless efforts.</p> <p>We welcome you affectionately into Bhavan's family.</p> <p>With warm regards.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yours sincerely H.N. Dastur Executive Secretary</p>	<div style="text-align: center; border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> LIFE MEMBERSHIP / LIFE SUBSCRIBER FORM Bangalore Kendra </div> <p>To, _____ LMNo. _____ The Executive Secretary Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan K.M. Munshi Marg, Chowpaty, MUMBAI - 400 007.</p> <p>Dear sir,</p> <p>I heartily endorse and subscribe to the principles, and ideals of the Bhavan and request you to enrol me as a Life Member & a Life-Subscriber for the periodical indicated below.</p> <p>I note that the duration of Life Member / Life Subscriber is for a period of 20 years.</p> <p>I have remitted Rs. <u>10,000/-</u> by M.O. /Cheque/D.D. No. _____ on _____ Bank/enclosed.</p> <p>1. Name _____ 2. Address _____ _____ _____ Pincode _____</p> <p>3. Date of birth _____ 4. Telephone Nos.: Off: _____ Res.: _____ Mobile: _____</p> <p>5. Periodical Opted Bhavan's Journal / Navneet Hindi / Navneet Samarpan _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Your faithfully, _____ (Signature)</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>P.S. 1. Write the name and address in BLOCK LETTERS. 2. Intimate change in address whenever takes place 3. Strike off whichever not required. 4. Cheque/DD should be in the name of 'BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN' (P.T.O.)</p>
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The Founder's message from Dr. K. M. Munshi (left) and the fillable Life Member / Life Subscriber application (right) — 20-year term at ₹10,000.

A Journey from Law to Light

Sufis, Mystics and Yogis of India by Bankey Bihari

REVIEWED BY CAPT SAHANA SUNDAR (RETD)



“Not merely a collection of biographies — a spiritual pilgrimage across centuries of India’s sacred heritage.”

The author writes not as a detached historian but as a seeker who himself walked the path of renunciation. Bankey Bihari’s life journey — from a successful lawyer associated with eminent leaders, to a contemplative ascetic immersed in devotion — forms the spiritual foundation of this work.

Deeply influenced by Mahatma Gandhi, Ramana Maharshi, Jiddu Krishnamurti and Sri Aurobindo, the author renounced worldly ambitions and dedicated his life to spiritual contemplation in Vrindavan. This

personal transformation lends authenticity — one senses that he is not merely narrating the lives of saints, he is participating in their inner journey.

The book unfolds as a tapestry of devotion drawn from many regions of India — from Bulleh Shah and Guru Nanak to Kabir, Namdev, Adi Shankaracharya and Samarth Ramdas. What gives the work its distinct character is the author’s ability to draw out the human in the holy.



Bulla Shah

The Rebel Mystic of Divine Love

THE CENTRAL VISION · UNITY OF SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS

The opening chapters present a profound philosophical insight — all spiritual traditions, despite their external differences, ultimately converge in divine love. The saint, according to the author, is a paradox: silent, yet transformative; detached, yet compassionate; simple, yet spiritually profound.

Throughout the book, a recurring message emerges — truth is realized through humility; renunciation leads to illumination; devotion dissolves the ego; love is the highest form of worship. Whether expressed through Sufi poetry, Bhakti songs, or Vedantic philosophy, the essence remains the same: God is one, and love is the path.

The book unfolds like a vast spiritual panorama, presenting saints from diverse traditions — Sufi, Bhakti, and Vedantic. Each saint is portrayed not merely as a historical figure but as a living example of devotion and inner transformation. The narrative moves gracefully from the emotional intensity of Sufi mysticism to the philosophical depth of Vedanta and the devotional warmth of Bhakti.

Bulla Shah — The Rebel Mystic of Divine Love. Among the Sufi saints, Bullah Shah emerges as a passionate seeker whose life symbolizes the power of surrender. His relationship with his spiritual master was marked by deep emotional intensity. At one stage, he was expelled from his guru's presence — a painful separation that filled him with anguish. Yet his longing for reconciliation led him back to his teacher in humility. Disguised as a dancer, he sang before his guru with tears in his eyes. The sincerity of his devotion melted the heart of the master, and the disciple was welcomed back.

This incident beautifully illustrates a central Sufi truth: *love requires humility, and humility leads to union*. Bullah Shah's poetry expresses the agony and ecstasy of divine love. One of his celebrated lines reflects the depth of his surrender: *"The fire of love has consumed me — who can extinguish this flame?"* For Bullah Shah, the Divine was not a distant concept but a living presence within the heart. His teachings remind us that spiritual realization begins when ego dissolves in love.



Shah Abdul Latif

The Poet of Eternal Longing

SHAH ABDUL LATIF · THE POET OF ETERNAL LONGING

The narrative then moves to Shah Abdul Latif, a saint whose poetry resonates with deep emotional sensitivity. Born in Sindh, he became a spiritual voice for ordinary people. His songs reflect the yearning of the human soul for union with the Divine.

Latif's message was simple yet profound: *true love requires sacrifice*. He often used folk legends and romantic stories to convey spiritual truths. Through the symbolism of lovers separated by distance and hardship, he illustrated the soul's longing for God. His poetry transforms human love into divine devotion, reminding readers that spiritual realization is born from perseverance and faith.

Nazir Akbarabadi — The Realist Poet of the Common People.

Nazir Akbarabadi stands out in the book as a saint deeply rooted in everyday life. Unlike many mystics who withdrew from society, Nazir lived among ordinary people, observing their struggles and joys. His poetry reflects the fleeting

nature of worldly existence and the inevitability of death.

One of the most striking incidents in his life reveals his commitment to spiritual simplicity. When the ruler of Awadh invited him to join his royal court and offered a generous sum of money, Nazir initially accepted the gift but spent the entire night in anxiety, fearing the responsibility that wealth would bring. Unable to sleep, he returned the money the next morning, declaring, *“My love for poverty and my God make me unfit to sit in the company of the rich.”*

This episode captures the essence of Sufi renunciation — not rejection of wealth, but freedom from attachment. Nazir's poetry often reflects the impermanence of life:

“What is this world where every relic excites thought? / On the ruins of fallen kings I see the dust of forgotten glory.”

Through such reflections, he reminds readers that worldly achievements fade, but spiritual wisdom endures.



Adi Shankaracharya

The Architect of Advaita

The transition from Sufi devotion to Vedantic philosophy reaches its peak in the life of Adi Shankaracharya. Born in the 8th century, Shankaracharya displayed extraordinary brilliance from childhood and, at a remarkably young age, renounced worldly life to embrace the path of knowledge and renunciation.

His greatest contribution was the establishment of the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta — the unity of the individual soul and the universal reality. He organised monastic life

into ten distinct orders of *sannyasa*, creating a disciplined structure for spiritual seekers. Despite his short life — he passed away at thirty-eight — his influence transformed the spiritual landscape of India.

His philosophy can be summarised in a simple yet profound statement: *Brahman alone is real, the world is transient, the soul is not different from Brahman*. Spiritual liberation, he taught, is achieved through knowledge, self-discipline and inner realisation.

JÑANESHWAR

The Child Saint of Compassion

Jñaneshwar's life is a remarkable example of spiritual wisdom emerging from adversity. Despite social rejection and hardship, he developed extraordinary insight at a very young age. His greatest contribution was the *Jñaneshwari*, a commentary on the Bhagavad Gita written in the language of ordinary people — by choosing the vernacular over Sanskrit, he made

spiritual knowledge accessible to society at large.

His teachings emphasised compassion, humility and devotion. Jñaneshwar believed that true knowledge must lead to love and service. His life demonstrates that spiritual greatness is measured not by age but by the depth of wisdom shared with humanity.



Guru Nanak

The Messenger of Universal Brotherhood

GURU NANAK · THE MESSENGER OF UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD

The life of Guru Nanak marks a powerful turning point in the book's narrative. He emerges as a fearless reformer who challenged blind ritual and emphasized the omnipresence of God.

One of the most memorable incidents described in the book is his visit to Mecca. While resting, he unknowingly stretched his feet toward the sacred shrine. A priest reprimanded him for disrespect. Calmly, Nanak replied, *"Turn my feet in the direction where God is not."* This simple statement carries profound spiritual wisdom. It reminds humanity that God cannot

be confined to a single place or direction.

Another well-known incident occurred at Haridwar. Observing pilgrims offering water to the rising sun, Nanak began throwing water in the opposite direction. When questioned, he explained that he was sending water to his distant fields. Through this symbolic act, he exposed the mechanical nature of rituals performed without understanding.

Guru Nanak's teachings emphasize equality of all human beings, simplicity in living, honest work, sharing with others, and devotion to one universal God.

"Turn my feet in the direction where God is not."

— Guru Nanak at Mecca



Kabir

The Weaver Saint of Fearless Truth

KABIR · THE WEAVER SAINT OF FEARLESS TRUTH

The life of Kabir occupies a unique and powerful place in the spiritual history of India. Born in the holy city of Banaras, he entered the world in circumstances that were both mysterious and symbolic. Tradition records that a Muslim weaver named Neeru discovered a radiant infant lying on a lotus leaf in a neglected tank. The child, smiling and serene, seemed touched by divine grace. He was taken home with reverence, and after the necessary ceremonies were performed, the child was named Kabir.

From the very beginning, Kabir's life was marked by spiritual depth and fearless independence. Though born in an age of rigid orthodoxy, he refused to be bound by narrow divisions of caste and religion. He lived as a humble householder and continued his profession as a weaver. Yet even in the rhythmic movement of his loom, he heard the music of the Divine. The threads he wove were not merely cloth — they were symbols of devotion and spiritual awareness.

Kabir's teachings emphasized the equality of all human beings and the

futility of external distinctions. He fearlessly proclaimed that spiritual worth does not depend on caste or social status. One of his well-known lines expresses this truth with striking simplicity:

“Jati pati poochhe na koi, / Hari ko bhaje so Hari ka hoi.”

In these words, Kabir declared that the person who worships God becomes one with God, regardless of birth or social position.

Kabir's initiation into spiritual life is itself a remarkable story. He longed to accept the great saint Ramanand as his guru, but the rules of the time allowed only Brahmins to become disciples. Determined to overcome this barrier, Kabir lay quietly on the steps of the ghat at Banaras, where Ramanand used to come for his early morning bath. As the saint descended in the darkness, his foot accidentally touched Kabir, and in surprise he uttered the sacred name, *Rama, Rama*. Kabir accepted these words as his initiation mantra and considered himself the disciple of Ramanand from that moment onward.

KABIR · THE TWO AND A HALF LETTERS OF LOVE

This incident reflects Kabir's courage and spiritual determination. He did not rebel with anger — he overcame barriers with faith and humility.

Kabir was also known for his sharp criticism of empty rituals and superficial learning. He believed that true wisdom lies not in reading countless books but in cultivating love and compassion. In one of his famous couplets, he expressed this idea with profound clarity:

“Pothe padh padh jag mua, pandit bhaya na koi, / Dhai akhar prem ka, padhe so pandit hoi.”

The world, he said, may spend a lifetime reading scriptures, yet true enlightenment belongs only to the one who understands the two and a half letters of love.

His teachings were simple, direct, and deeply practical. He reminded people that life is short and precious, and that spiritual awakening must not be postponed. In another of his verses, he warned against wasting time in ignorance: *“Why do you sleep through the*

night, O foolish one? The precious jewel of life slips away in sleep.”

Kabir also possessed the rare ability to look inward and examine his own faults rather than blame others. One of his most beloved couplets reflects this spirit of self-awareness: *“When I searched for the bad in others, I found none; when I searched within myself, I found none worse than me.”*

Such humility and honesty made Kabir a spiritual reformer of extraordinary courage. He challenged superstition, opposed social inequality, and encouraged people to discover God within their own hearts. Many stories of miracles are associated with his life, yet the greatest miracle of Kabir was his ability to unite people across religious boundaries. Hindus and Muslims alike respected him, and his teachings continue to inspire seekers even today.

Kabir's message can be summarized in a single enduring truth — spirituality is not found in rituals, ceremonies, or external identities; it is found in love, sincerity, and self-realization.



Namdev

The Singer of Divine Remembrance

The spiritual history of Maharashtra is enriched by the lives of humble devotees who rose above social barriers to attain divine realisation. Among them, Namdev occupies a place of deep reverence — his life a shining testimony to the power of devotion, perseverance and constant remembrance of the Divine.

In the devotional tradition of Maharashtra, saints emerged from every section of society: the barber, the potter, the cobbler, the gardener, the goldsmith, the maid — even those considered untouchable. Their lives demonstrated a profound truth: God does not discriminate by caste, occupation or social status. Like sugarcane that remains sweet regardless of its shape, the human soul retains its divine essence irrespective of birth or circumstance.

Namdev, born in 1270, became one of the foremost saints of the Bhakti movement and helped establish Pandharpur as a great centre of

devotion. His association with the saint Jñāneshwar proved a turning point — under the guidance of enlightened teachers, he transformed from an ordinary devotee into a realised soul whose life radiated faith and surrender.

The path was not easy. Namdev passed through intense struggle, sorrow and spiritual restlessness; his heart burned with longing for the vision of God, and his prayers often reflected the pain of separation. These experiences — a dark night of the soul — purified his mind and strengthened his devotion until he eventually attained spiritual awakening.

His songs became expressions of gratitude and joy, revealing the sweetness of divine communion. The repetition of the divine name, he taught, is the surest path to liberation; every moment of life should be filled with the thought of God. His teachings emphasise contentment, humility and unwavering faith.



Samarth Ramdas

The Saint of Courage and National Awakening

The spiritual tradition of Maharashtra reaches a powerful culmination in the life of Samarth Ramdas, a saint whose devotion was inseparably linked with strength of character and service to society. His life represents the union of spirituality and action, reminding humanity that devotion to God must express itself through discipline, courage, and responsibility.

From an early age, Ramdas displayed an intense longing for divine realization. Tradition records that after years of spiritual searching, he prayed earnestly that God would guide him to a true teacher who would reveal the path of truth. His life thereafter became a journey of surrender to the Divine will.

He believed that every event in life, whether pleasant or painful, must be accepted as the grace of God. If hunger came, he praised God; if comfort came, he praised God; if hardship appeared, he still praised God. Thus, he declared that he had never experienced a bad day,

because everything that came to him was a gift from the Divine.

Ramdas taught that true happiness lies not in worldly success but in complete surrender to God. His devotion was so intense that he declared he would rather be in hell with God than in heaven without God — for him the presence of God was the only true joy.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Ramdas's life was his influence on society and leadership. He inspired the great Maratha ruler Chhatrapati Shivaji to govern with righteousness and courage, and encouraged people to live disciplined lives and serve the nation with dedication.

Ramdas emphasized principles that remain relevant today: peace cannot be disturbed by harsh words, the pursuit of fame brings no lasting happiness, and forgiveness strengthens the heart. He called upon people to awaken from spiritual laziness, revive the spirit of the Bhagavad Gita, and keep the mind fixed on the highest truth.

CONCLUSION · A TIMELESS MESSAGE FOR HUMANITY

Sufis, Mystics and Yogis of India stands as a remarkable spiritual chronicle that brings together saints from diverse traditions and regions of India. From the passionate devotion of Bulleh Shah, the universal message of Guru Nanak, the fearless truth of Kabir, the loving remembrance of Namdev, and the disciplined strength of Samarth Ramdas, the book presents a unified vision of spirituality rooted in love, humility, and service.

The saints described in this work differ in language, culture, and background, yet their teachings converge in a single truth: *the realization of God is the highest purpose of human life*. Through

stories, poetry, and lived examples, the author reminds readers that spirituality is not confined to rituals or institutions — it is a living force that transforms the heart and guides society toward harmony and compassion.

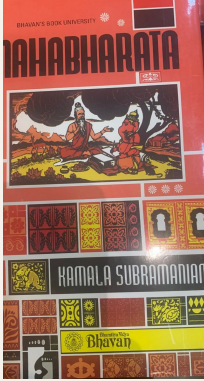
In an age marked by materialism and division, this book offers a message of hope and unity. It encourages readers to cultivate inner strength, practice compassion, and remain steadfast in faith. The wisdom of these saints continues to illuminate the path of humanity, reminding us that love, devotion, and courage are the foundations of a meaningful life.

**THE REVIEWER**

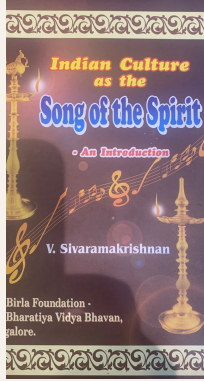
Capt Sahana Sundar (Retd) is the Editor of Samskriti Vāṇi.

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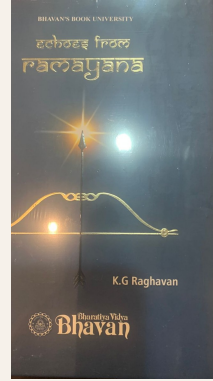
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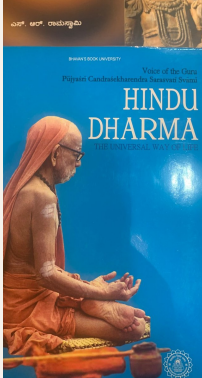
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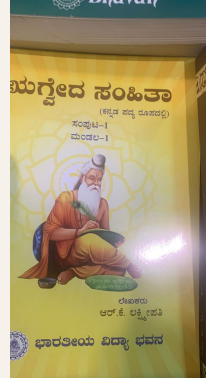
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Obituary



WITH HEAVY HEARTS, WE MOURN THE PASSING OF

Mr. George Thomas

4 SEPTEMBER 1953 — 23 MARCH 2026

A dear friend, patron and long-standing supporter of the Bhavan's Bengaluru Kendra. His quiet encouragement, generosity of spirit and enduring love for the arts shaped the Kendra in ways both seen and unseen. Our heartfelt condolences to Smt. Anita Thomas and the family.

"And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

MATTHEW 28:20 · — THE GOVERNING COUNCIL & MEMBERS, BHAVAN'S BENGALURU KENDRA



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