

# BRAHMA BHARATI

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Editor: Surendra Nath Pandey, Ph.D.



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:



Dear Fellow Brahmans,

The first quarter of the year 2003 is gone. After reviewing our membership roster we find that some of our members did not have a chance yet to renew their membership. The BSNA depends on your continued support. The first step in that direction is that you renew your membership every year. It is even better if you please convert it to life membership. If you have not renewed your membership yet, it is my earnest request to you to send your check towards the membership dues to your Chapter President or to Dr. Tej Pandey, the BSNA Treasurer, P.O. Box 660933, Sacramento, CA 95866-0933..

For sometime I had been mulling over discussing a couple of items with you, though they are a bit sensitive ones. The first is about wearing '*yajnasutra*' and the second is about completely eliminating beef, and preferably any meat, from our diet.

I strongly feel that we Brahmans should wear our *yajnasutra* (*janeu* or sacred-thread) all the time. The *Yajnasutra* is also called *yajnopavita*, which is defined in Sanskrit as '*yajnartham upavitam*' (That which is worn to perform *yajna* or sacrifice). It constantly reminds us of our spiritual roots and our vows for spiritual life, taken during our most important *sanskaara*, namely, the *Upanayana sanskaara*.

Until a few generations ago, when Brahmans lived in agrarian societies, they wore *shikha* (*choti* or *chuda*), *tilaka* and *yajnopavita*. *Shikha* is a lock of long hair located on our head in the area of the mouth of *Shahastrara*, which receives divine energy during chanting of *anganyasa* mantras, which are very potent. *Shikha* is constantly worn after the *chudakana sanskaara*. *Tilaka* is the paste of some mineral or sandalwood and is applied to forehead, chest and arms. It is believed that the *tilaka* destroys the sins of the person who wears it.

After the influence of modern education the Brahmans started shying away from displaying the *tilaka* and the *shikha* in public. It is quite understandable  
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*President's message, continued from page 1*

that they do not want to identify themselves as different from others. However, there should be no problem in wearing the *yajnasutra*, which is easily concealed inside the clothes. It is the only symbol of *Brahmanatva* that can be easily maintained to remind us of our spiritual roots. Therefore, I urge you all to please wear your *yajnopavita* and encourage your children to wear it all the time.

Choice of food is absolutely a personal matter. In many parts of India, e.g., Kashmir, Konkan, Bihar, Bengal and Orissa, Brahmans have been eating meat and/or fish for many generations. I dare not ask our members from those areas to abandon meat and fish completely. Yet I would like to emphasize that *Saatvik* food is more suitable for spiritually oriented people like Brahmans. Meat and fish are not *saatvik* but *rajasik* foods. If Americans, who are followers of Krishna Consciousness movement, could become pure vegetarians, I am sure our Brahmans, particularly our new generation, can easily switch over to vegetarian diets. Some thirty years ago meat was a recommended part of daily healthy diet. Today dieticians have changed their views. They have found that meat creates more health problems, which far outweighs the nutrition it provides. If for some reason it is not possible to avoid meat I would urge you not to encourage the children to eat beef. Cow is the symbol of motherhood. To show respect to the cow (and oxen) on a particular day (Hal Shashthi) we do not eat any produce from the ground, which was ploughed with the help of oxen. Eating cow's meat should be out of the question.

Now changing the subject, I will urge you to register for the coming convention as soon as possible. If you would like to organize a breakout session or participate in a session as a panelist, please contact Dr. Chandra Dwivedi, the Convention Director (e-mail: [dvidi@aol.com](mailto:dvidi@aol.com); Ph: 925- 838-1649).

With warmest regards,  
Shyam Narayan Shukla , Ph.D., P.E., F.ASCE  
President, BSNA

Phone: (510) 770-1218  
E-mail: [shuklas@attbi.com](mailto:shuklas@attbi.com)

Please visit BSNA homepage for latest information, news and highlights  
<http://www.bsna.org>



**A Message From The  
New Chairman Of The  
BSNA Board Of  
Trustees**

**Dr. Shri Kant Mishra**

My fellow Brahmans

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to share my thoughts with you. I am thankful to the BOT, EC and all of the members for having asked me to be the chair of BOT.

As you all know BSNA is an educational, social, and cultural organization, composed mainly of Brahmans of Indian origin residing in North America. It is a forward looking, family oriented organization with a strong emphasis on the promotion of modern scientific education along with human values amongst its youths. My predecessor chair, founding father and current leadership has done an outstanding job in making BSNA a credible well-recognized organization. Like many young organizations, we have to face the growing pain and have to accept challenges to achieve our intended goal. BSNA is proud of its Hindu heritage. It respects all faiths and all human beings respective of their race, color, or religion. In addition BSNA has responsibilities to coordinate other Brahman organizations globally and particularly in India. It has local and national leadership and well-developed infrastructure.

I shared a blue print for the BOT at the P-meeting held in San Jose, California, defining clear-cut roles and responsibilities of various parts of BSNA like EC, BOT, chapter presidents and other office members. I particularly would like to address the role of young members who will be responsible to bear the burden of this organization in future. All of us have to work hard in a collaborative and democratic fashion so we can achieve our stated goals and objectives. EC has been working hard to bring changes in the organization. BOT will work as a partner with all parts of the organization to enhance its image and to serve our membership. I urge all of you to attend our annual convention and participate in activities being planned by the local organizing committee directed by Dr Dwivedi.

Thanks, and hoping to see you at the convention. Please let us join hand to move forward the Brahmans and Brahmanical virtues.

With Warm regards,  
Shri Kant Mishra,  
*ABMS, MSC, M.D., M.S. (Administrative Medicine),  
FAAN, FIAA*  
Chairman, Board of Trustees

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT OF THE P-MEETING

BSNA held its first P-meeting of 2003 on February 8 and 9 at Hyatt Hotel near San Jose Airport, San Jose, CA, which will also be the venue of the next convention to be held July 4-6, 2003. P-meeting stands for meeting with physical participation (as against e-mail meetings), and it is held twice a year, once in January/February and the second time during conventions. P-meeting is a policy-making meeting of EC, BOT, Chapter Presidents, committee members and Editors of Brahma Bharati, Brahma-Vani, Brahmakulum and Home Page.

Nineteen persons attended the meeting. They are: Dr. Tej Pandey (BSNA Treasurer), Mr. Janak Sidhra (Sacramento Chapter President), Mr. Madan Sharma (Sacramento Chapter), Miss Sona Sharma (Sacramento Chapter), Miss Mona Sharma (Youth Group President, Sacramento Chapter), Mr. Hans Raj Sharma (East Pennsylvania Chapter President), Dr. Janeshwar Upadhyay (Board of Trustees Member & Virginia Chapter President), Dr. Chandra M. Dwivedi (Convention Director, and Bay Area Chapter President), Dr. Shri Kant Mishra (BOT Chair), Dr. Suresh Tiwari (BOT member), Dr. Shyam Shukla (BSNA President), Mr. Abhaya Maharaj (BSNA General Secretary), Mr. Vivek Shukla (Bay Area Chapter), Mrs. Poornima Dwivedi (Bay Area Chapter), Mrs. Nirmala Shukla (Bay Area Chapter), Ms. Hem Prabha Oswal (Convention Treasurer), Mrs. Lata Malviya (Bay Area Chapter), Miss Simi Dube (Bay Area Chapter) and Dave Dube (Bay Area Chapter).

After recitation of Dev-Vandana, and introductions, the agenda and minutes of the last meetings were approved. It was then proposed that letters of appreciation be sent by the BSNA President to Mr. Hari Panday, the last Convention Director and Mrs. Rita Pandey, the last Convention Treasurer for the wonderful job done by them.

- Dr. Tej Pandey, presented the financial report, and requested that all members should renew their membership of this year ASAP. This was followed by a discussion on the need for raising the membership dues citing that BSNA dues are smaller compared to those of other similar organizations. It was proposed to raise the annual dues to \$35, and life membership to \$350. However, this needs the approval by the EC for final action.
- The theme of the next convention is, "Contributions of Women to Hindu Religion". Dr. Dwivedi is in the process of identifying a women keynote speaker. He also said that we would have to raise funds through publication of Brahma-Vani to

take care of anticipated deficit, since we have always been subsidizing the cost by limiting the registration fee to \$499 per family. He talked about the program details, which is summarized below:

Friday, July 4: Joint P-meeting of EC, BOT, Chapter Presidents, committee members and Editors. The convention starts at 10:00 a.m. with prayers, Saraswati Puja, Bhajans and welcome addresses followed by luncheon, with youth symposium and breakout sessions in the afternoon. After dinner activities include cultural programs, youth dance and *Kavi Sammelan*.

Saturday, July 5: P-meetings in the morning, plenary session, and family introductions during luncheon. In the afternoon: youth symposium, breakout sessions, classical music and keynote speech. After dinner: cultural programs, youth get-together and *Sham-e-gazal* by invited artists.

Sunday, July 6: Awards ceremony, GB meeting and picnic that will include *havan*, lunch and games.

Breakout sessions may include matrimonial issues, health issues, stress management, diet, definition of Brahmans, etc. All these are tentative programs and may be changed.

- It was proposed that a youth directory be published for youths above 18 years of age, so that they may have networking to help one another.
- There was some discussion about a proposal to hold the national convention only alternate years, with several regional conventions other years. This will give EC more time to focus on various BSNA projects. The consensus of the P-meeting attendees, however, was in favor of holding conventions every year to maintain continuity, interactions, and contacts with members. Texas and Midwest were mentioned as good candidates for future convention venues, with Washington, DC area as the venue for 2004 convention.
- There was a considerable discussion on modifying the constitution, and redefining the role and selection process of chapter presidents and BOT members. The Constitution Review Committee will take up this matter.
- Dr. Upadhyay suggested that BSNA should help BSNA families in matrimonial issues of young people, education of Brahmans in India, help families facing crises, help them perform religious ceremonies, help Brahman widows who are neglected and are deprived of quality life, and build schools in India.

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*P-meeting report, continued from page 3*

- It was suggested that the BSNA should concentrate on chapters by creating guidelines to keep them active. To get the youths involved, BSNA must make its programs attractive to them. It was proposed that some very active chapters interact with non-active chapters and help them in becoming more active.
- Mr. Hans Sharma presented the gist of the Education Programs developed by Dr. Ramesh Paliwal, which includes a series of lectures on History of India, culture, festivals, scriptures etc. with the help of about 40 slides.

## CHAPTER NEWS

### HOLI CELEBRATION

Most BSNA chapters are planning celebration of Holi festival. Following is a listing of chapters that have shared the information with BB:

#### **Southern Ontario Chapter**

Saturday, April 12, 2003, 6:30 PM  
River Oaks community centre, Room "A"  
2400 Sixth Line, Oakville, ON L6H 3M8  
Telephone: (905) 338-4186  
President: Mr. L. D. Mishra [mishral@ipoline.com](mailto:mishral@ipoline.com)

#### **Virginia Chapter**

Saturday, March 22, 2003 at 12:00 noon  
At the residence of:  
Mr. Upendra and Siddhi Pandey  
4907 Kavanagh Court, Richmond, Va. 23228  
President: Dr. Janeshwar Upadhyay  
[drjupadhyay@yahoo.com](mailto:drjupadhyay@yahoo.com)

### BAY AREA CHAPTER

A very distinguished guest is expected speak at the next meeting of the Bay Area Chapter, which will be held on April 20, 2003 at the residence of Dr. Shyam and Mrs. Nirmala Shukla in Freemont. Dr. Ram Karan Sharma will speak on Gita/Upanishad at the meeting. Dr. Sharma is a well-known scholar of Sanskrit, President of an International Sanskrit Organization and is presently a Visiting Professor of Sanskrit at UC Berkeley. He has a Ph.D. in Linguistics from UC Berkeley and was Vice Chancellor of Sanskrit University, Varanasi. For further details about the meeting, please contact the Chapter President, Dr. Chandra Dwivedi (925-838-1649) or the hosts Dr. and Mrs. Shukla (Phone: 510- 770-1218, E-mail: [shuklas@attbi.com](mailto:shuklas@attbi.com))

## NEW JERSEY CHAPTER MEETING AND HOLI CELEBRATION

**NJ Chapter** held its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2003 at the residence of Umesh and Prabha Shukla from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM. Sixteen families attended the meeting. After welcome by the hosts and family introductions, Dr. Shukla outlined the purpose of the meeting being to: celebrate the New Year and *Makar Sankranti*, plan chapter activities for the year, and participation in the annual convention.

*Makar Sankranti* is the only Hindu festival based on the position of Sun –other festivals are based on lunar calendar. Hence it always falls on January 14. Makar Sankranti signifies the beginning of auspicious period and known as the day when Sun begins to travel northwards. Newly harvested crop is cooked for the first time and offered to Sun and other deities. It is said that Bhishma Pitamah left this world on this date, after waiting on his bed of arrows for a long period. It is also said that 6 months period Jan 14 to June 14 is considered to be the daytime for Lord Brahma and the remaining 6 months are considered night --Lord Brahma's one day is considered to be equal to one year of human beings. This festival is celebrated under different names, e.g. Pongal, Lohri, etc., across India.

It is planned to hold 3 chapter meetings and one picnic during the year --the chapter meetings in conjunction with Makar Sankranti, (Jan 19), Holi (March 16) and Diwali (November 1st or 2nd week), and a picnic in August/September.

Dr. Ramesh Paliwal offered to give a short course on cultural history of India at the next meeting, and Dr. Kanhaiyalal Shukla offered to teach children about Brahman culture. Other upcoming cultural activities include Ram Katha by Swami Ram Kamal Das Vedanti Ji (April 20-26), at Umesh and Prabha Shukla's residence; Hindi Mahotsav (NJ chapter) is scheduled for Saturday, May 17, 2003 (contact Devendra or Rachita Singh at 856-582-5035 for further information); a concert by Rajan and Sajan Mishra on 1<sup>st</sup> June, 2:30 PM - 5:30 PM at Rutgers University.

Two new life members (Sri Niwas and Sumitra Sharma; and Hari and kaushal Sharma), and one regular member, Ashish Bhardwaj were welcomed. Mr. Jagar Sharma talked about his experiences of the past conventions, and shared some strategies to reduce the travel costs. Registration forms were provided to participants.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks, and was followed by potluck luncheon.

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## HOLI FUNCTION

**NJ Chapter** celebrated Holi with a luncheon meeting held on March 16 from noon to 3 PM at the residence of Prabha and Umesh Shukla. Twenty families attended the function/meeting. Following the Holi Greetings to each other, the following items were discussed during the meeting.

1. Dr. Ramesh Paliwal made a presentation on the Cultural History of India. This was followed by very stimulating discussion. People present were interested in finding scientific evidence of the period when Ramayana actually occurred. Dr. Virendra Pandey cited recent NASA discovery of the submerged bridge connecting India and Sri Lanka. After further discussion a committee of four (Ramendra Pandey, Virendra Pandey, K. J. Sharma and Ramesh Paliwal) was formed to investigate this event further. Children were also encouraged to research this topic and present their findings at the next meeting.

2. All attendees were encouraged to register for the 2003 convention, and make contributions to the BSNA publications.

3. Brahma Kulam (BSNA directory) needs to be updated. NJ members can update the address and other personal details by giving updated information to Umesh Shukla or via the email on Website.

The meeting was followed by luncheon, introductions and personal discussions. The next meeting will be held after the July convention.

Submitted by Dr. Umesh Shukla, Chapter President  
908-431-9845 E-mail: [UmeshandPrabha@aol.com](mailto:UmeshandPrabha@aol.com)

## WASHINGTON, D. C. CHAPTER

The Holi celebration was held on Sunday, March 16, 2003 from 2:00 PM – 9:00 PM at Windsor Green Community Center. All local Brahmans and their friends were invited. There was a sumptuous dinner -the potluck dinner was coordinated by Meera Sharma, Purnima Sharma, Anita Dubey, Sheela Misra, Sunita Misra, and Manju Shukla. A variety cultural program, directed by Mrs. Anshu Sharma included children as young as 3 years old and adults of all the age groups.

A surprise was a visit by Shri Janeshwar Upadhaya, President of Virginia Chapter of BSNA who spoke to the group about goals of BSNA, importance of getting youths involved in the activities of BSNA and promoting its mission. Then

Dr. Satish Misra spoke about the Convention 2003 to be held on July 4, 5 and 6 in San Jose, California. He urged people to register early. He also informed that Washington, D. C. has been chosen the site for the 2004 BSNA convention, to be held July 2-4. This will give an opportunity for visitors to see spectacular fireworks on Sunday, July 4, 2004. He urged everyone to work as a team for the convention to ensure its success. The audience responded with cheers and enthusiasm. He also urged everyone to become a member of BSNA and visit the website [www.bsna.org](http://www.bsna.org)

## AN APPEAL FROM THE EDITOR OF BRAHMA-VANI, THE SOUVENIR BOOK

Now that we had eight successful, exciting and great volumes of *Brahma-Vani*, we are embarking on the ninth one. We hope that this one will be even better and would surpass our own expectations. If we all pitch in, I assure you that we will have a great volume that we all can be proud of and keep it forever for our children to read and cherish. We need your help on the following points:

(1) Youth Editorial Board -- We want to identify youths who can serve on the youth editorial board. We are looking for people who have made an impact on BSNA, have published either in BB or BV, and can help in obtaining both articles and ads. But other meritorious candidates will also be considered. Please submit the names and particulars including e-mail address to the co-editors.

(2) Editorial Board -- If you can assist with the editorial activity, please let us know.

(3) Articles -- Please submit the articles early so that the editorial board has enough time to review them. Again, we would like to see many articles from our youths as we have in the past. It fills my heart with joy to see so many Brahman youths involved. Please keep it up and keep on reminding our youths to get involved in BSNA activities. Please plan ahead for the articles. It is very difficult to accommodate the last minute rush.

(4) The Theme -- The theme of this year's convention is "Contributions of Women to Hindu Culture". It is an exciting topic, hence locating information and developing articles should not be difficult. First preference will be given to the articles related to the above theme. If space permits, we would include other articles of interest. Please also submit articles related to reflection, first person types of pieces that make up popular reading, especially from our youths. Please encourage our youths to write about their experiences that bring out a Brahmanical value. This could include experiences at our conventions, visit to Bharat (India), meeting a unique Brahman, or their marriage, etc. Literary type articles should relate to Brahmanical values.

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*An Appeal, continued from page 5*

(5) Fund Raising -- Fund raising is a very important component of BV. Please plan ahead for getting greetings and advertisements. If we individually make a commitment to sponsor at least a quarter page, we would reach the milestone. This year you can sponsor the youth section by donating as little as \$50. Ads with family photographs have been much appreciated and we plan to continue this. We need you all, your help and involvement. The chapters are reimbursed 20% of the advertisement revenue coming from their chapters to support their chapter's activities.

The rates this year again are \$500 for full B&W page, \$300 for half B&W page, \$175 for quarter B&W page, and \$100 for business size card. The color pages start at \$1,000 per page depending on the location. The deadline for articles and ad is May 30, 2003.

Finally, we must avoid the last minute rush for both the ads and articles. This puts undue pressure on everybody (management, members of the editorial board, printer, etc.) to do a reasonably good job. Let us all work together in making the ninth volume of Brahma-Vani a memorable experience that can be cherished for years to come.

Thank you all.

For further information, please contact Dr. Satish Misra: Tel: (301) 340-2983 (Home); (301) 827-6050 (Office); e-mail: [misra@estart.com](mailto:misra@estart.com) or Dr. Tej Pandey.

## **A Message from the Convention Director**

### **" 2003 BSNA Convention to be Best Ever"**

It gives me a great pleasure to announce that the 2003 BSNA Convention will be held at the Hyatt Hotel at San Jose Airport, San Jose, CA, from July 4-6, 2003. We are very excited about the proposed theme of the Convention "Contributions of Women to Hindu Culture". It's crucial for us to recognize contributions of our women to Hinduism, world's richest culture and religion. We are also pleased to announce that Ms. Patti (Pratibha) Tripathi (formerly Anchorwomen at CNN, currently News Director and Anchorwomen at ANN) has accepted our invitation as a Keynote Speaker. Ms. Tripathi is expected to motivate and invigorate everyone, specially our youth, into our culture and heritage.

Besides the excellent theme for the Convention, a three-day fun-filled extravaganza for the whole family awaits your arrival in the Bay Area. The engaging and exciting program includes: Youth Programs, Family Introductions, Cultural Program, Sangeet Gosthi/ Kavi Sammelan, Sham-e-Gazal/ Mushaira, Dancing- DJ, Yoga/Meditation, Bhajan/Keertan, Panel Discussions, Keynote

Address, Breakout Sessions, EC-BOT Meetings, General Body Meeting, Awards & Recognition, Picnic/ Sports, and *Antakshari*. The extensive program being planned is expected to keep children of all ages spellbound and mesmerized, yet provide opportunities to contribute in all aspects of the convention. To summarize, I would say that the 2003 BSNA Convention can't be missed, especially for our youth who have the responsibility of continuing our great culture, heritage, traditions, and customs. Today, the whole world is focused on Hindu Culture and our youth are the best ambassadors of our heritage. We have the opportunity to educate and train our children to take this important responsibility with pride, great care, and humility. The BSNA Conventions provide the best platform to prepare our youth to embark on this responsibility with confidence.

Another reason to come to the 2003 BSNA Convention is that the State of California is known to be one of the most popular tourist destinations on earth. The San Francisco Bay Area offers innumerable places for vacation for the entire family. The famous sites in the Bay Area include: Golden Gate Bridge, Golden Gate Park, Bay Bridge, Fisherman's Wharf, the San Francisco Trolleys, Lombard (or crooked) street, other famous San Francisco streets, and Muir Woods (Tall Trees).

Nearby attractions include: UC Berkeley, Stanford University, Carmel, Monterey, Wine Country (Napa/Sonoma), Lake Tahoe, Reno, Yosemite, and Sequoia/Redwood National Parks. The summer is the best season to visit and to vacation at these beautiful and amazing California wonders. To make your stay trouble-free, we have arranged a special rate of \$70/Night at Hyatt Hotel, San Jose, three days before (July 1-3) or three days after (July 7-9) the convention.

I humbly welcome all BSNA members to the 2003 BSNA Convention in the San Francisco Bay Area. I urge each and every one of you to register immediately for this great event. You simply can't afford to miss this memorable and great event of the BSNA.

Chandra M. Dwivedi, Ph.D.  
Convention Director

### **MATRIMONIAL**

Parents invite correspondence for their daughter, 26 year old, 5'3" tall, fair complexion with Bachelor's degree in Commerce, North Indian Brahman with good values. Phone (514) 486 6204, Email: [ychaubev@hotmail.com](mailto:ychaubev@hotmail.com)

## From the Editor's Desk

My last editorial comment did not go unnoticed. I was very pleased to receive a letter from a youth member, Ms. Shefali Trivedi. Her letter has given me plenty to think about. For the benefit of all our readers I am printing her letter on this page. Readers are welcome to send their comments for publication in the next issue. Please make your comments brief and to the point.

This brings us to face the hard reality that our youths are facing in the U.S., where we are surrounded by a different and very dominant religion. Misinformation or lack of true information often leads to such confusion and bewilderment that may have contributed to many of our youths not taking pride in their rich heritage. How can one not be proud of one's ancestry in which knowledge was of supreme importance? They believed in the concept, *Swadeshe pujiyate raja, vidwan sarvatya pujiyate i.e.*, a king is worshiped in his own country while a learned person is revered all over the world. Our ancestors were learned people who spent their entire life dedicated to gaining knowledge, finding truth, and distributing that knowledge to others without expecting any material gains in return.

Somewhere in the course of history, people may have started exploitation of their status and not acted in the same grace and unselfish manner that our ancestors did, leading to the deterioration of the society. Yet, another group of people, for their personal gains, started exaggerating and emphasizing the negatives while completely ignoring the positives.

Whatever the reasons may be, it's incumbent upon us, the Brahmans in USA to reinstate the values that our ancestors wanted us to carry forward, and restore the pride that all Brahmans can, and must take in their heritage. BSNA has already taken a stand on this issue as stated on its home page, "BSNA is proud of its Hindu heritage. It respects all faiths and all human beings irrespective of their race, color, or religion."

I am also asking other Brahmans, especially the elders, to share their views on helping our youths through this dilemma.

Surendra Nath Pandey  
spandey@asurams.edu

For BSNA contact information, latest news, downloading membership form or convention registration form, please visit BSNA home page at:  
<http://www.bsna.org/>

## A Reader Comments

Jai Shree Krishna Uncleji, I recently received the latest copy of the BSNA newsletter. My family, Markand Trivedi of Chicago, is a member of BSNA. I wanted to write regarding your article 'From the editor's desk.' I respected the fact that you wrote about what has been a highly debated issue for centuries - Brahmin by birth or by Karma. I have often asked myself this question, being a young Brahmin who has been raised in the states for most of her life and still believes in many Indian ideals. Like you, I choose to refrain from giving my opinion on this complex matter, but am very curious as to what others think on this topic. I have witnessed Brahmin youths here in the U.S., almost struggling with their Brahmin identity. I have met too many young Brahmans who are sometimes eager to shun the label of Brahmin. Why do you think this occurs? I am curious to get feedback from you, as well as the respected elders of our community. I currently sit on the Board of the Brahma Samaj of Greater Chicago (BSGC) and think it is important to have a dialogue on these types of topics. I always enjoy the BSNA newsletters and am glad to see you discuss a topic that truly affects the Brahmin youths in the U.S.

Kindest Regards,  
Shefali M. Trivedi ([shefalitrivedi@yahoo.com](mailto:shefalitrivedi@yahoo.com))

## PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

✳️ **Dr. Onkar P. Dwivedi** was invited by the Chairman, Second Committee of General Assembly of the United Nations to deliver a speech on the subject, "The Turning World, Globalization and Governance at the Start of the 21st Century". The meeting was jointly organized by the International Institute of Administrative Science (Brussels) and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Dr. Dwivedi was one of the six people from around the globe invited to share their thoughts on the above subject.

Dr. Dwivedi is a Professor Emeritus, Department of Political Science, University of Guelph, Canada. He is one of the founding members of the BSNA, a member of the first Board of Trustees, and the keynote speaker at the Toronto Convention in 2002. In announcing this news, President Shukla said, "It is a matter of great pride for the BSNA. I, on behalf of the BSNA and on my own behalf, congratulate Dr. Dwivedi for the recognition he received by the United Nations as a distinguished authority in his subject."

## 2003 CONVENTION KEYNOTE SPEAKER

### Ms. Pratibha Tripathi

Ms. Pratibha (Patti) Tripathi is one of the first Indian-American journalists to anchor national news in the U.S. She's currently the News Director/Main Anchor for the newly launched American News Network, based in Atlanta. Now that she is in a management position she is hiring many South Asian-American journalists. She hopes that she can serve as a role model and guide their careers because she says there weren't very many Indian-American journalists that she could look up to when she decided to pursue a career in broadcast journalism more than ten years ago.

For seven years, Patti worked as a news anchor for CNN Headline News, CNN Airport News, CNN Radio and CNN International. She announced in college that her goal was to anchor the news for CNN one day. It gives her a great sense of accomplishment after having achieved that lofty goal in a highly competitive field.

Prior to CNN, she worked as a field reporter for ABC affiliates in Raleigh/Durham, South Bend, IN, and in Phoenix. She's graduate of the University of Notre Dame.

Patti does a lot of volunteer work in Atlanta. She serves on the Board of Directors of The Atlanta Children's Shelter, a day care center for homeless kids. She was honored by Cystic Fibrosis Foundation for her fundraising activities...and was dubbed one of Atlanta's most "eligible singles."

Patti was born in Gorakhpur, India. Her father, Dr. GNR Tripathi, is a senior scientist/physicist at the University of Notre Dame. Her younger brother Pradeep invented and patented a diagnostic device that measures auto emission pollution.

Administrative Medicine from University of Wisconsin. He trained in basic and clinical Neurosciences at UCLA, USC, and Mayo Clinic.

He served as Chair of study section of NCCAM (NIH) and chair of history section of American Neurological Association. He has published more than 200 articles, presented many papers, and authored book chapters. He has contributed significantly to the enhancement of integrative Medicine particularly Ayurveda. He is founder and President of American Academy of Ayurvedic Medicine (AAAM) and serves as Chair, Integrative medicine AAPI. He is visiting Professor at Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute, Lucknow. His major goal is to establish evidence based Ayurvedic Medicine.

Professor Mishra has three professional tracks --Neurosciences, where he has contributed significantly in the field of muscular diseases and history of neurology; scientific basis of Ayurveda where he is working to globalize Ayurveda; and Administrative Medicine.

Dr Mishra has been involved in various local, national and international professional, social and community organizations. He is past president and Chair of FIA, Southern California, President of IMA, SC, Regional director AAPI, Regional director BSNA, member BOT, and president of BSNA SC chapter.

Dr. Mishra comes from Raiya, Roberts Ganj Sonabhadra district that was part of Mirzapur district in U.P., India. He has three brothers living in India. He and his wife Archana have two sons -- Alok, who is in movie production in Los Angeles, and Arvind, who has an MBA degree from Wharton and works at Microsoft. Dr. Mishra also has two nephews who are settled in USA.

### Mr. Purushottam Sharma Executive Vice President

Mr. Sharma is originally from Bulandshahar, U. P. and grew up in New Delhi. After getting his B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in nuclear physics from Agra University, he worked at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Bombay, as a scientific officer for 9 years. He moved to Canada in 1970 where he completed his M.Sc. degree in Medical Physics at the University of Alberta, Edmonton. He served as the Director of Medical Physics at the Thunder Bay Regional Cancer Center for 15 years. While in Thunder Bay, Canada he was the president of the India Canada Association. In 1988, he joined the Department of Radiation Oncology of William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, Michigan as Clinical Director of medical physics,

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### **Biography**

#### **Dr. Shri Kant Mishra**

*ABMS, MSC, M.D., M.S.ABMS, MSC, M.D., M.S.  
(Administrative Medicine), FAAN, FIAA*

#### **Chairman Of The Board Of Trustees**

Dr. Mishra is a Professor of Neurology, Coordinator, Integrative medicine and Associate Dean at Keck School of Medicine, University of Southern California. Also, he is Neurologist, VA Greater Los Angeles and Director, Neuromuscular program, Olive View UCLA Medical Center, Los Angeles, California. He has an ABMS degree (Gold Medalist) from Banaras Hindu University, M. S. from Queens University, Kingston; M.D. from University of Toronto, Canada; and M. S. degree in

## A BRAHMANIC LOOK TO IMPROVE THE FACE OF THE EARTH

Suresh Tiwari, Ph.D.  
BOT Member

I was born in a rural surrounding having clusters of trees scattered within the area of approximately forty-five square miles. This area, under the blue sky has the river Ganges on its north, the Eastern Railway Line on the south, the city of Buxar on the west, and the village of Bhojpur on the east. It still represents a heavenly beauty on the surface of the earth. Patches of fruit orchards of various sizes existed all over this area. When I was young, I asked my grand father: "Baba, who planted all these trees?" And he said: "These trees were individually planted by human hands, and the hard working people nourished these trees with water of the holy Ganges and prayed God for the rain-water to keep the soil moist." Then, there were just a few wells in the villages. Now there are hand-pumps in each and every household. During those days drinking water was scarce, but if available, it was pure. Now it is plentiful but quite polluted. Even under the scarcity of water the trees were planted and irrigated by fetching water from the Ganges. In recent years, the number of trees has declined. Besides, with the agricultural revolution of the sixties, many orchards were cleared to enlarge the croplands. As the orchards declined in number, the number of birds with melodious sounds and the monkeys jumping from one branch of the tree to the other has also gradually reduced. As a result, the natural beauty of this unique place has almost vanished. The unique combination of humans, birds, animals, orchards, and field crops has become disproportionate. This change has adversely affected the human behavior. People have become very selfish. The natural environment has been destroyed. Nature itself has been crying out, as if saying: "What have you done to Me? -And how dare you like to progress by neglecting me?"

In 1940-46, when I was in high school, and India was still struggling for independence from the British rule, I was once walking down on the village dirt road and saw a delicious mango fruit just dropping in front of me. I picked it up and became very happy. A person saw me from a few yards and came close to me with a small package of a few freshly collected ripe mangoes wrapped in a raggedy piece of cloth, which he smilingly handed over to me. I still remember the glow in the face of that stranger. But just twenty years later, in the same vicinity, when I happened to pick up a ripe mango, I heard a loud voice from quite a distance: "Put that

mango back. You cannot take it. It belongs to me." I immediately dropped it and quietly walked away. I then realize that the time has changed. There was little beauty left in the environment and the attitude of the people appeared to decline to keep pace with the eroding situations. One thing echoed in my mind: "May God revive us again into the world of sharing and brotherhood so that we may rejoice together on the face of this earth."

For the upcoming generations, I have my own ideas. I wish to offer to the kids of the future the charm on the face of this earth, which I once experienced, namely, the fruit trees in combination with other trees. I want to get planted orchards of small and big sizes at my cost in their own lands and let them have it. Later, they need to take care, possess, enjoy and share them amongst themselves.

The values of a tree cannot be enumerated as they help in reducing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which can efficiently counteract the global warming. As we know from the scriptures, that in the past many saints and sages like Mahatma Buddha meditated under the trees and succeeded in achieving His glory. Many under the scorching heat of the sun take refuge under the shade of the trees waiting for the sun to go down. And after the restful break they enjoy the beauty of the setting sun and pray Him before departing. Such facilities appear to be vanishing too.

If, as a Brahman, I can help in this activity, I think I may very effectively be able to increase future number of better human beings in this world! How? Maybe an individual, by prayer and meditation under the shade of a tree planted by me, may enhance his or her capacity to become a better person in the present life as well as in the next, with His grace. I feel very obliged to Him for giving me this insight as well as opportunity to take up this mission for the last three years.

*Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram! Om Shanti -Shanti- Shanti!*

*Mr. Sharma, continued from page 8*

from where he retired recently. He has been a member of the BSNA Executive Committee, and the Regional Coordinator of the Mid-west USA (R3). Kusum, his wife of 40 years, is an Accountant by training and currently a homemaker. They have two sons; the elder, Vikas, LLB, MBA, is the Director with the Mergers and Acquisitions Group of the investment bank, Scotia Capitals, Toronto, Canada. The younger son, Vinay, MD, FRCP(C), is a Radiation Oncologist at Hollywood Memorial Hospital in Florida. Mr. Purushottam and Mrs. Kusum Sharma are now proud grand parents.