

# Bhaktivedanta Gurukula & International School

Monthly Newsletter

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## Festival Gurukula - Bhaktivedanta Gurukula

Festivals celebrated by various cultures through their special rituals add to the colors of our Indian heritage. Some festivals welcome the seasons of the year, the harvest, the rains, or the full moon. Others celebrate religious occasions, the appearance days of divine beings, saints, and gurus, or the advent of the New Year. A number of these festivals are common to most parts of India. For Gaudiya Vaishnavas, however, the holy appearance day of Lord Sri Krsna and His brother Balarama are the most important festivals in the months of Sharavan and Bhadrapada.

Religious festivals here in Vrindavana are times for both celebration and purification, as many devout practitioners often fast and engage in other special rites in order to reap the particular benefits of the events. The temples are lavishly decorated, and sumptuous foodstuffs are offered to the deities to be later distributed to eager visitors and devotees.

Since all the inhabitants of Vrindavana were joyfully celebrating these recent festivals, how could our gurukula students possibly avoid participating in them? We at BGIS enthusiastically reveled in our own celebrations of Jhulan-yatra, Sri Balarama Purnima, Sri Krsna Janamashtami, and Srila Prabhupada's most glorious appearance day on Nandotsava. Many longtime associates and well-wishers of BGIS were in fact heard to comment on how this year's Janamashtami celebration was perhaps the best celebration that they had ever seen here in gurukula.

## Srila Prabhupada on Gurukula

We must develop our Krishna Consciousness school at Dallas to be the model for education in all the world, and let anyone see our Krishna Consciousness children and they will immediately understand the importance and necessity for such education amongst the citizens at large. Otherwise, the children of your country and other countries, they are simply growing up to be sophisticated animals, so what good will their education do? But if they will agree to try to understand our Krishna Consciousness education or way of life and allow their children to be educated by us, they will see them come out as the topmost citizens with all good qualities such as honesty, cleanliness, truthfulness, loyalty, etc. So that is a very important work and you are especially responsible to make it successful. All other GBC men should give you all assistance for building up the standard there.

- Letter to Satsvarupa - Los Angeles 1 July, 1972



## Village Outreach Program by the Patron of Education Team

The vision of our village outreach program is to cultivate the villagers of Braja by educating them about different aspects like organic farming and the benefits of adopting the tenets of Vedic civilization. One of our goals is to establish a program for village children that provides them free education and scholarships.



The students of Grade 11 accompanied by commerce instructor Rohit Gupta visited the village of Raal. Students did hari-naam sankirtana and performed a small skit to teach students the value of Krsna Consciousness. Rohit Gupta then gave a short speech on Lord Krsna's Kaliya pastime. The village students were happy and enthusiastic about the program. All the teachers of school we visited also appreciated the concept introduced by our team, and promised to support us in the future. Mr. Omprakash from the village of Pradhan was a great support, too. A special thanks goes out to the Principal of BGIS, HG Lila Purushottama das, who gave us this vision and guided us to be on such a path.





# Gurukula Times—A Month of Festivals



As is done every year, the senior secondary school students of Bhaktivedanta Gurukula and International School in Vrindavan decorated the jhulan for Sri Sri Radha Shyamasundara and Their associates, Srimati Lalita and Vishakha devi. The boys were in ecstasy when the Krishna Balarama Temple management asked them to decorate the swing for the Divine Couple on the second day of Jhulan Yatra. The four-day swing festival culminated on Balarama Purnima, Lord Balaramaa's Appearance Day.

In Vrindavana, the jhulan festival starts on Hariyali Teej, the third day of the lunar eclipse of Sharavan- masa. The story goes that on tvitya, the second day of this month, Sridam, Srimati Radharani's brother, goes to Javat to Srimati Radharani's in- laws' home to spend the night. On the next day, Sridam brings his beloved sister back to Barsana to Her maternal home, and there the intimate girlfriends of Srimati Radharani arrange a special swing for Her. This festival is very popular in all of Braja, and pilgrims flock to the local temples to take darshan of Their Lordships Who come off Their altars to enjoy the swing pastimes.



# Our Honey Pot Festival for Lord Balarama



1. Students arranging paraphernalia for the event



2. HG Devananda Pandit prabhu with HG Pancagauda prabhu, ISKCON Vrindavana Temple President, addressing students and explaining the significance of the festival



3. The ceremony is about to begin. HG Radhakanta prabhu, BGIS Vice Principal, performing the inauguration



4. HG Pancagauda Prabhu trying his hand



5. A human pyramid - a symbol of the power of unity



6. Two happy faces



# The Great Janmashtami Celebration



Sri Krsna Janmashtami is the celebration of the divine appearance of Lord Krsna and is observed on the eighth day of the Shukla Paksha of Bhadrapad month as per traditional calendar followed in North India. In ISKCON, we follow the Gaudiya Vaishava calendar calculated by the GBC, so our celebration was on the 22nd August.

The celebration started in the morning with a drawing competition called Chitrankan, and a Krsna book reading challenge. Then everyone busied themselves with the final preparations for the evening's grand event.

The courtyard and entry way to the school were decorated festively with colorful balloons and canopies, and prestigious guests like Mr. Bhatia, the founding member of the Bengal School of Arts and principal of the Swiss Cottage School in Delhi, the Deputy Commissioner of Palwal, Mr. Verma, and several prominent devotees from our ISKCON Vrindavana community such as Srila Prabhupada's servant, HG Srutakirti das, the temple president, HG Pancagauda das, and brahmacharis preachers Devananda Pandit das and Virendra das.

Students of all grades enacted various pastimes of the Lord like Lord Krsna's birth and the deliverance of King Mucukunda. Some students gave dance and kirtan performances as well. After the Abhisheka of the deities of Sri Sri Radha Shyamasundara, Sri Giriraja, Sri Sri Gaura Nitai and Laddu Gopal, the program ended with a spectacular fireworks display and delicious prasadam.

Janmashtami 2011 was really a memorable day for the whole BGIS team.

## Some clicks of the event....



Students participating in the morning's drawing competition



Chief guests lighting the lamp to start the program



Junior boys singing Krsna-krpa-kataksh, a well-received performance



## Some clicks of the event....



HG Pancagauda prabhu and HG Srutakirti prabhu distribute prizes and certificates



A scene with Krsna and Balarama in the play on the deliverance of Mucukunda



A moment from the surprise play by some ashram teachers



Firecrackers welcome Sri Krsna

## Other events of the month....



Ninth grader Gagan Puri, BGIS' star swimmer and the district swimming champion, won the Gold medal in the Guarilal Ji Goyal Swimming Competition again this year. BGIS won 13 out of 18 medals in the competition.



HH Bhakti Gaura Narayana Swami, HG Akinchana Krsna das, and HG Surariha das (both of the ISKCON Vrindavana 24 Hour Kirtan group) addressing the boys during our in-house kirtan competition



Raising the flag at assembly on Independence Day



Students doing a mrdanga demonstration for Srila Prabhupada's Appearance Day festival in the Sri Krishna Balaram Mandir courtyard



A close-up of the talented mrdanga players





## Sri Yugalashtakam by Srila Jiva Goswami

krishna-prema-mayi radha  
radha prema-mayo harih  
jivane nidhane nityam  
radha-krishnau gatih mama

Radha is immersed fully in pure love for Krishna and Hari is immersed fully in pure love for Radha. In life or in death, Radha and Krishna are my eternal shelter.

krishnasya dravinam radha  
radhaya dravinam harih  
jivane nidhane nityam  
radha-krishnau gatih mama

Radha is the precious treasure of Krishna and Hari is the precious treasure of Radha. In life or in death, Radha and Krishna are my eternal shelter.



krishna-prana-mayi radha  
radha-prana-mayo harih  
jivane nidhane nityam  
radha-krishnau gatih mama

Radha is the dear life of Krishna and Hari is the dear life of Radha. In life or in death, Radha and Krishna are my eternal shelter.

krishna-drava-mayi radha  
radha-drava-mayo harih  
jivane nidhane nityam  
radha-krishnau gatih mama

Radha is totally melted by Krishna and Hari is totally melted by Radha. In life or in death, Radha and Krishna are my eternal shelter.

krishna-gehe sthita radha  
radha-gehe sthito harih  
jivane nidhane nityam  
radha-krishnau gatih mama

Radha is situated in the heart of Krishna and Hari is situated in the heart of Radha. In life or in death, Radha and Krishna are my eternal shelter.

krishna-citta-sthita radha  
radha-citta-sthito harih  
jivane nidhane nityam  
radha-krishnau gatih mama

Radha's mind is fixed upon Krishna and Hari's mind is fixed upon Radha. In life or in death, Radha and Krishna are my eternal shelter.

nilambara-dhara radha  
pitambara-dharo harih  
jivane nidhane nityam  
radha-krishnau gatih mama

Radha is dressed in blue, the hue of Krishna and Hari is dressed in yellow, the hue of Radha. In life or in death, Radha and Krishna are my eternal shelter.

vrindavaneshvari radha  
krishno vrindavaneshvarah  
jivane nidhane nityam  
radha-krishnau gatih mama

Radha is the Mistress of Vrindavana and Krishna is the Master of Vrindavana. In life or in death, Radha and Krishna are my eternal shelter.



# Let's Learn from a Story

A successful businessman was growing old and knew it was time to choose a successor to take over his business. Instead of choosing one of his directors or his children, he decided to do something different. He called all the young executives in his company together. He said, "It is time for me to step down and choose the next CEO. I have decided to choose one of you." The young executives were shocked, but the boss continued, "I am going to give each one of you a seed today – a very special seed. I want you to plant the seed, water it, and come back here one year from today with what you have grown from the seed I have given you. I will then judge the plants that you bring, and the one I choose will be the next CEO."



One of the men whose name was Jim was there that day, and he like the others received a seed. He went home and excitedly told his wife the story. She helped him get a pot, soil, and compost and then he planted the seed. Every day he would water it and watch to see if it had grown. After about three weeks, some of the other executives began to talk about their seeds and the plants that were beginning to grow. Jim kept checking his seed, but nothing ever grew. Three weeks, four weeks, five weeks went by, but still nothing. By now, the others were talking about their plants, but Jim didn't have a plant and he felt like a failure. Six months went by, but still there was nothing in Jim's pot. He just knew he had killed his seed. Everyone else had trees and tall plants, but he had nothing. Jim didn't say anything to his colleagues, however, he just kept watering and fertilizing the soil – he so wanted the seed to grow. A year finally went by, and all the young executives of the company brought their plants to the CEO for inspection.

Jim told his wife that he wasn't going to take an empty pot, but she asked him to be honest about what had happened. Jim felt sick to his stomach. It was going to be the most embarrassing moment of his life, but he knew his wife was right. He took his empty pot to the board room. When Jim arrived, he was amazed at the variety of plants grown by the other executives. They were beautiful — in all shapes and sizes. Jim put his empty pot on the floor and, although many of his colleagues laughed, a few felt sorry for him.

When the CEO arrived, he surveyed the room and greeted his young executives. Jim just tried to hide in the back. "My, what great plants, trees and flowers you have grown!" said the CEO. "Today one of you will be appointed the next CEO!" All of a sudden, the CEO spotted Jim at the back of the room with his empty pot. He ordered the financial director to bring him to the front. Jim was terrified. He thought, "The CEO knows I'm a failure! Maybe he will have me fired!" When Jim got to the front, the CEO asked him what had happened to his seed, and Jim told him the story.

The CEO asked everyone to sit down except Jim. He looked at Jim for a moment, and then announced to the young executives, "Behold your next Chief Executive Officer. His name is Jim!" Jim couldn't believe it; he couldn't even grow his seed. "How could he be the new CEO?" the others said.

Then the CEO said, "One year ago today, I gave everyone in this room a seed. I told you to take the seed, plant it, water it, and bring it back to me today. But I gave you all boiled seeds; they were dead – it was not possible for them to grow. All of you except Jim have brought me trees and plants and flowers. When you found that the seed would not grow, you substituted another seed for the one I gave you. Jim was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring me a pot with my original seed in it. Therefore, he is the one who will be the new Chief Executive Officer!"

- \* If you plant honesty, you will reap trust.
- \* If you plant goodness, you will reap friends.
- \* If you plant humility, you will reap greatness.
- \* If you plant perseverance, you will reap contentment.
- \* If you plant consideration, you will reap perspective.
- \* If you plant hard work, you will reap success.
- \* If you plant forgiveness, you will reap reconciliation.

**Moral:** Be careful. What you plant now will determine what you reap later.





Become a Patron of Education and  
help us to make a new future!

Thanks and regards,

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