

Purity

Monthly Journal of the Brahma Kumaris Hqs. Mount Abu, Rajasthan, India

New Light on Ancient Rajyoga

New Delhi: In an unprecedented event, more than 30,000 people gathered for a huge convention on 'Ancient Rajyoga for a Healthy and Happy Bharat', organised by the Brahma Kumaris at Indira Gandhi Stadium last month.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a message that was read out to the gathering, expressed his appreciation of the Brahma Kumaris for organising the event: "Yoga is a wonderful way to remain healthy. Yoga is about both fitness and wellness... my heartfelt congratulations on organising this mega yoga event, and I extend my best wishes for the successful conduct of the national convention."

BK Asha, Director, Om Shanti Retreat Centre, Gurugram, congratulated the audience for making history by being a part of the first-of-its-kind gathering of Rajyogis.

Emphasizing that a tranquil mind is the basis of a healthy body, yoga guru Dr. H.R. Nagendra, Chairman, VYASA, Bengaluru, said that meditation was a critical tool for maintaining a state of wellness, and it was also helpful in dealing with a number of diseases, the majority of which start in the mind.

(Contd. on page 2)



Ancient Rajyoga...

(Contd. from page 1)

BK Brijmohan, Additional Secretary-General of the Brahma Kumaris, said: "The purpose of this huge gathering of Rajyogis is to concentrate and spread pure vibrations for promoting a 'swachhhta abhiyan' (cleanliness campaign) of the mind." He elaborated on the truth about the long-lost, original, ancient Rajyoga of Bharat, which, he said, was again being revealed now by the God of the Gita, as the time of utter degeneration had arrived.

BK Mruthyunjaya, Executive Secretary of the Brahma Kumaris, said that everything in the world had been commercialized, and to create a pollution-free, poverty-free and corruption-free world, the power of Rajyoga was needed.

Swami Chidanand Saraswati, founder and spiritual head of Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh, urged the gathering to join hands and create a new Bharat based on the values of brotherhood, peace and compassion. He called on news organisations to move away from mundane breaking news and focus on positive stories that would uplift the public.

BK Santosh Didi, Director of Rajyoga centres in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Telengana, said, "Rajyoga is the highest connection, which enables us to become rulers of our body and the world. It teaches us the art of living gracefully, and of transforming the self... when we change, the world changes."

Motivational speaker BK Shivani invited everyone in the audience to take a pledge to renounce any weakness that was coming in the way of their progress, and by doing so become instrumental in changing the world. She also took them into a short and tranquil meditative experience.

A number of dignitaries present during the event felicitated Dadi Janki, the 102-year-old Administrative Head of Brahma Kumaris.

Giving her blessings by waving to the huge gathering, Dadi Janki said: "Rajyoga is all about the reality of who we are and to whom we belong, and the connection between the soul and the Supreme Soul." Dadi asked everyone to give up waste thoughts and to always create positive and elevated thoughts.

Dadi Ratan Mohini, Additional Chief of Brahma Kumaris, stood up to bless the audience, and said that our country would be transformed into a kingdom of heaven when our divine values emerged and we lived with love, purity and honesty, and had good wishes for everyone.

Sending her blessings through a pre-recorded video, Dadi Hirdaya Mohini, Additional Chief of Brahma Kumaris, said: "We all believe that God is one. This means that we, His children, are one family, so we must live with this consciousness." She added that the loss of our original spiritual identity was the source of all conflict in the world.

The mega event featured music, songs and classical dances. An award-winning song sung by Sister Asmita echoed through the programme with the lyrics: *Yeh mat kaho khuda se, meri mushkilein badi hain, yeh mushkilon se keh do, mera khuda bada hai* (Don't tell God that you are faced with great difficulties. Rather, tell the difficulties that your God is greater). ★

(Purity Report)



Top - Candle lighting during National Convention. Above - Joyful audience taking photos of Dadijis.

Felicitating Dadijis



Dr W. Selvamurthy, eminent scientist, formerly with DRDO, presently with Amity University.



Mr. Abdelrazeb Abu Jazer, First Secretary of Palestine Embassy.



Mr. Manoj Tiwari, MP & President, BJP, Delhi



Ms Magda Fernandez, Counsellor Consul, Embassy of Costa Rica



Mrs Reena Singh, Deputy Editor, Speaking Tree, Times of India



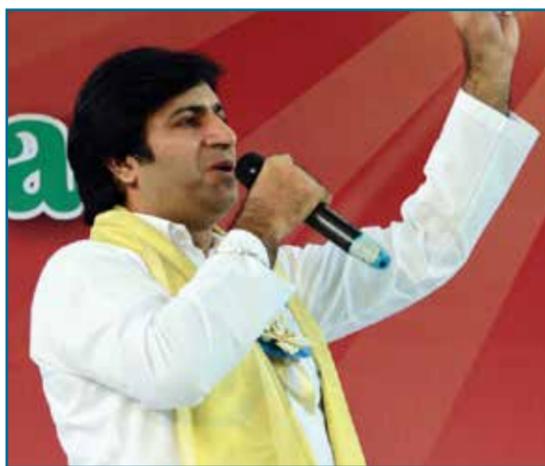
Melody makers



B.K.Asmita from Kolkata



(On stage, from left) BK Mruthyunjaya, Mt. Abu, BK Amirchand, Chandigarh, Mr. Manoj Tiwari, Delhi, Swami Chidanand Saraswati, Rishikesh, and BK Brijmohan, Delhi.



B.K.Amit from Bhopal



(On stage, from left) BK Hansa, London, Dadi Janki, Mt. Abu, BK Santosh Didi, Mumbai, BK Shivani, BK Asha Didi, Dadi Rukmani, BK Shukla Didi all from Delhi and BK Sharda, Ahmedabad.



B.K. Satish from Mount Abu and BK Yuvratan from Chattisgarh



Yoga Guru Dr. H.R. Nagendra, President VYASA, Bengaluru



Swami Chidanand Saraswati, President, Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh



Sectional view of packed gallery in Indira Gandhi Stadium.

Rising fear of a nuclear war

Recent developments in the world and statements emanating from leaders have rattled people across the globe and raised fears of humanity blundering into a nuclear war.

The dogged development of missiles and nuclear weapons by a regime that is regarded as reckless, and the attendant bellicose rhetoric from some prominent individuals, including talk of war, have created a sense of foreboding.

Nuclear weapons have long been considered tools of deterrence, and they are credited with having prevented a third world war. Many nuclear strategists believe that the massive destructive power of nuclear weapons, and the likelihood of all participants in a nuclear war suffering near-total destruction, will prevent the use of these weapons and stop any armed conflict involving nuclear powers from escalating beyond a point.

Besides the direct destruction caused by nuclear blasts, the aftermath of a nuclear war can involve firestorms, widespread radiation sickness, a nuclear winter and consequent mass starvation due to disrupted agriculture. Studies suggest that environmental and economic damage from a nuclear war can cause societal breakdown and lead to the end of civilization as we know it.

If we look beyond the immediate effects of a nuclear war and contemplate on what will come after the aftermath, we find reason for optimism.

That frightening prospect did, it seems, stop governments from resorting to use of these weapons, even at the height of the cold war. But the world is now more unstable than before, wracked by political and religious strife and buffeted by economic and environmental upheavals. In these circumstances, the future of mankind looks uncertain.

The nuclear powers have stockpiled thousands of nukes, with a considerable number of them on hair-trigger alert. Mistrust and rivalry among them is a source of tension in international relations. One rash decision, miscalculation or accident is enough to spark a conflict that can spiral out of control and turn parts of the world into a radioactive wasteland.

It is understandable, therefore, when talk of nuclear war causes deep disquiet among ordinary people. Such a feeling is derived from what we know to be the likely result of such a war. But if we look beyond the immediate effects of a nuclear war and contemplate on what will come after the aftermath, we find reason for optimism.

Life has thrived on earth despite many different kinds of cataclysms that have occurred over the course of history. Man and nature adapted to changes and human ingenuity enabled us to use natural resources in new ways to make our lives more comfortable than ever before.

Destruction is an opportunity for renewal.

It is easier to establish a new order after the old order has been swept away. Given the many intractable problems besetting the world, any large-scale change will present us the opportunity to begin with a clean slate and create a better future for mankind.

This is the message of the cycle of time, which signifies a never-ending process of birth, growth, decay and renewal. Nature also follows this pattern, and that is how life thrives on our planet.

Talk of a golden age or golden past is an expression of mankind's shared memories of an earlier time when man and nature lived in harmony with each other, in peace and abundance. As the passage of time worked its effect on souls and the physical elements, conditions in the world changed, and it is this process of change that has brought us to our present situation.

Change is inevitable, but we can ensure that it is for the better if we equip ourselves with the tools with which we can create a happier future for ourselves and the entire human family. These tools are the qualities that enrich and strengthen the soul and are a prerequisite to happiness. Among them are peace, purity, truth and love.

The human soul can draw these qualities from the Father of all souls, the Supreme Soul. When the soul remembers the Father, the mental link acts as a conduit by which it gets His powers and virtues. These make the soul healthy, happy and whole again. When souls begin to act on the basis of these virtues, they start to create a new culture, a new world of happiness. This is how hell is transformed into heaven. This change first occurs in human minds, in our thoughts, attitudes and emotions, and when expressed in action, it brings about physical transformation.

The present time calls for souls to return to their original, virtuous state and inspire others to do the same. This subtle movement for peace will bring about a peaceful world free of hostility, fear and conflict.*

(Purity Features)



Abu, Shantivan: Paying homage to Dadi Prakashmani on her 10th anniversary at 'Prakash Stambh'.

PEACE

Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.

— Albert Einstein

The true and solid peace of nations consists not in equality of arms, but in mutual trust alone.

— Pope John XXIII

Peace is not a relationship of nations. It is also a state of mind. Lasting peace can come only to peaceful people.

— Jawaharlal Nehru

The real and lasting victories are those of peace, and not of war.

— R.W. Emerson

Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly building new structures.

— John F. Kennedy

If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.

— Mother Teresa

We can never obtain peace in the outer world until we make peace with ourselves.

— Dalai Lama

Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without.

— Buddha

Dedicated to National Convention on Ancient Rajyoga for Healthy and Happy Bharat

Manifold Benefits of Rajyoga Meditation

BK Brijmohan

Rajyoga is considered an esoteric discipline, primarily of interest to the spiritually inclined. In reality, in its most practical form, Rajyoga enables us to lead a healthy and happy life.

It is a path of self-discipline wherein the seeker practices self-control, detachment from worldly things, concentration and meditation to achieve self-realisation. Even when one is making one's way to self-realisation, practice of Rajyoga brings inner peace and clarity.

The discipline required for the practice of Rajyoga naturally brings about a healthy lifestyle, as a pure way of life, moderation in diet, and good habits contribute to physical and mental well-being.

Rajyoga consists of eight steps: self-control, discipline, physical exercises, breathing exercises, withdrawing the senses from external objects, concentration, meditation, and realisation. The principles of non-violence, truthfulness, and complete purity of mind are inherent in these steps.

All these have wide-ranging benefits that affect one's whole life. For example, the inner peace and contentment experienced by



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The Times of India

Monday, September 18, 2017

practice of Rajyoga meditation helps one realise that merely accumulating possessions does not bring happiness. On the contrary, one who has many possessions also has many worries.

Not accumulating also means not holding on to other people. When we let go of something or someone, we set ourselves free from dependence or attachment.

The physical aspect of yoga and its health benefits are well-known; what is less known is that some of those rewards stem from the change in thinking, attitudes

and emotions enabled by practice of Rajyoga.

More than physical postures, the posture of the mind matters, and thought control comes before breath control. If one's mind is agitated, one's breathing will not be calm.

Modern science now attests to the wide range of healing properties of the ancient art of meditation. Meditation has been clinically proven to relieve chronic pain, reduce stress, slow ageing, lower blood pressure, improve heart and lung function, reduce depression, and improve sleep.

Many see meditation as a solitary activity better suited to loners, but it has been found to increase one's sense of connection to others and improve one's emotional intelligence.

Meditation may also change brain and immune function in positive ways, and it has been seen to improve one's ability to regulate emotions.

Some are under the impression that meditation is just sitting, doing nothing, and therefore a waste of time. But it has been found to increase one's focus and attention, improve the ability to multitask, and enhance memory,

all of which boosts productivity.

By helping the practitioner cleanse the mind and clear the intellect, Rajyoga enables correct perception and right decision-making. Ego, anger and other weaknesses no longer cloud the mind, and one is able to see the larger picture. In this way, Rajyoga helps one think beyond the bounds created by one's fears and desires.

The rewards of Rajyoga are not just personal. A yogi is an ideal citizen and a source of strength and support for his community. By empowering the mind and teaching one how to safeguard one's inner state, yoga makes one capable of helping others.*

(The writer is chief spokesperson of the Brahma Kumaris Organisation.)

Thanks Readers

With this issue, Purity enters its 37th year of publication. Thanks to all readers for their sustained interest.

Diwali celebrates inner cleansing and light

BK Brijmohan

Diwali, which falls on the darkest new moon night of the month of Kartik in the Hindu calendar, marks the victory of light over darkness.

The festival is celebrated by people of various faiths, but for Hindus, Jains and Sikhs, it commemorates historical or mythological events that symbolise the triumph of good over evil, knowledge over ignorance, and hope over despair.

Before Diwali, people clean or decorate their homes and workplaces. On Diwali night, they light lamps or candles in their homes and offer prayers, usually invoking Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth.

These practices have become ritualised over time, but they have deep spiritual significance, related to the renewal or rejuvenation of the human soul in its journey through time.

The cleaning done prior to Diwali is an expression of the cleansing that the soul needs to undergo in order to hold the wealth of wisdom and virtues that God grants it. It is said that Goddess Lakshmi shuns places that are not clean, so people discard disused items lying around their homes and make sure that



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every corner of their dwelling is clean before Diwali.

While it may be possible to hoard material wealth in a grimy home, the real wealth of the soul, which is spiritual awareness and purity, cannot be held in an impure mind.

A person whose mind is fouled by vices will have no inclination to seek wisdom or cultivate the finer qualities that divinise humans. Even if such a person is given spiritual knowledge, he or she will not retain it for long, and will shed it just as soiled cloth repels water instead of absorbing it.

The cleaner the mind, the more one is attracted to all that is good

and noble, and it is such a mind that seeks enlightenment.

The multifarious lights that illumine homes during Diwali are a manifestation of the human yearning for the light of knowledge – to know and clearly understand all that life is about. Just as darkness inspires fear and causes sorrow in the form of mishaps, ignorance of one's true identity leads to all human suffering, as body-consciousness gives rise to vices such as lust, anger, attachment and ego, which corrupt our thoughts and actions.

Several schools of Indian philosophy share the belief that there is something beyond the physical body and mind which is pure and eternal, called the soul. The celebration of Diwali refers to the light of higher knowledge dispelling the darkness of ignorance, which masks one's true identity as an immortal, immanent being.

The invocation of deities during this festival is meant to ensure a happy and prosperous future. But money alone does not bring happiness, as a lot of affluent people already know. Happiness is the fruit of good actions, which

in turn flow from pure thoughts and feelings. Noble thinking will come naturally to us only if we have cleaned the mind and cultivated virtues such as love, kindness, purity and truth, which, like the fragrance of flowers, enrich human life and bring joy to relationships.

The deities worshipped during Diwali are physical representations of virtues. Goddess Lakshmi, the deity most commonly associated with the festival, is depicted seated on a lotus flower, holding a lotus blossom in two of her four arms, while one palm is raised in blessing and another showers gold coins. The lotus is a symbol of purity, as the flower remains untouched by the mud in which it blooms. The blessings and the gold signify generosity and abundance.

It is such qualities we need to invoke during Diwali in order to enrich our lives, as without them no amount of material wealth can bring us happiness.*

(The writer is chief spokesperson of the Brahma Kumaris Organisation.)

Published in The Times of India on November 11, 2015

EDITORIAL

National Spiritual Responsibility

One of the biggest tasks Indian leaders have faced since independence is to improve the condition of the poor and reduce the gap between the haves and have-nots. A paper penned by a renowned economist and shared with the public last month states that economic inequality in the country is worse than it was during the British Raj. According to other media reports that came out earlier this year, the top one per cent of the Indian elite owns 58 per cent of the country's wealth.

To bring some balance in society, the government has adopted several measures. One of them, known as Corporate Social Responsibility, binds the corporate sector to give back to society some percentage of their profits. The trend of social entrepreneurship is also gaining ground, with more young people investing in socially beneficial ventures that also have a good business model.

Though these efforts have initiated positive change, statistics reveal that India has a long way to go before it can guarantee a dignified life to all its citizens. Ensuring equitable distribution of resources is a mammoth task, so it's not just the state or the business class that must step in. All citizens, wherever they may be placed, have to join hands and choose to fulfil their National Spiritual Responsibility.

Spirituality is at the root of Indian culture, and if this inherent potential is tapped into, it can make a big difference to the country's situation. When we realise that we are eternal spiritual beings who acquire a physical body and material possessions only temporarily, and when we understand that we are mere actors on the world stage who are entrusted with various roles, our world view is broadened. This inner awakening frees us from the propensity to take more than what is needed. When we realise that in our original form we all belong to the same family under the fatherhood of one God, we feel naturally inclined to share our surplus with our less fortunate brothers and sisters.

Awareness of the spiritual dimension guides us to use our powers and privileges with an eye on the common good. It makes us humble and inclusive. We thereby adopt self-regulatory measures that keep us from wasteful spending, and adopt a lifestyle that places our core values above materialistic pursuits.

Greed and a self-centred attitude are often the vices behind economic inequality. Spirituality teaches us to value our resources as precious means to attaining something useful. It also cautions us against seeing them as our ultimate destination. When we learn that our karma comes back to us, that the one who gives always remains full, and when we realise that an unburdened conscience is a soul's biggest comfort, we try to be fair for our own sake.

Many rich people in India donate to charity and for social causes. But it is often seen that their noble intentions are limited to these initiatives. Their lifestyle and work ethic do not reflect high values. If we really want to make a difference to our social set-up, it is imperative that the spirit of service seep into our work. It is good to practise moderation in everything, especially when one's fellow countrymen are deprived of even the basic necessities of life.

Spirituality inspires the rich to share, and guides the poor to make wise choices. If the poor are educated, if they are given help to keep them away from addictions and wasteful habits, and they are supported to make the most of what they have, their lot can be improved. They can use spirituality to train their mind to spot the hidden benefit in seemingly disadvantageous situations. That way they can lead a content life despite all odds. Anyone who is in touch with his inner intangible resources automatically shifts from the taking mode to the giving mode.

The Brahma Kumaris have been working for eight decades to create a culture of responsibility, cooperation and brotherhood. The spiritual knowledge imparted through their centres around the world is available free of cost to people from all walks of life. It helps them make ethical choices, remain content, and give back to the world whatever they can through awakening and service. ★

Gleanings from the press

Sitting too long can kill you, even if you exercise

Scientists at Columbia University have found strong statistical correlations between sitting and mortality. Too much time spent in a chair can shorten our lives, even if we exercise, according to their study, which uses objective measures to find the links between lengthy sitting time and death among middle-aged and older adults. More hopefully, the study also suggests that we might be able to take steps to reduce our risks by taking steps every half-hour or so. (*Times of India*)

Soon, milk capsules that don't go bad

Say goodbye to spoilt milk. Scientists have developed dissolvable milk capsules that can be added to your tea or coffee just like sugar cubes. Once the milk has been encapsulated, it can be stored for at least three weeks at room temperature. (*Times of India*)

27 states of emotion

A University of California, Berkeley study has found that human emotions have many facets, not merely the nine shown in classical Indian drama. The researchers studied the responses of some 800 men and women to 2,000 video clips. Analyzing them using novel statistical tools, they found that the responses were of 27 types. (*News Item*)

New camera can see through human body

Scientists in the U.K. have developed a camera that can see through the human body and track the medical tools known as endoscopes that are used to investigate a range of internal conditions. Until now, it was not possible to track where an endoscope was located in the body in order to guide it to the right place without using X-rays, researchers said. (*PTI, London*)

Glasses that let you do things in a blink

Scientists have designed a pair of eyeglasses integrated with a sensor that converts eye muscle movement into electric signals and can be used to control external devices such as computers or lamps. The sensor, developed in China, gets activated as soon as the user wears the glasses. The subject can then control electronic devices through eye movement or just by blinking. (*Press Trust of India*)

Type 2 diabetes is reversible

Type 2 diabetes is generally perceived as progressive and incurable, but for many patients it can be reversed with sustained weight loss of around 15 kg, say experts in *The British Medical Journal*. (*The Hindu*)

Bhoola Bhai

And our friend Bhoola Bhai on Temple Street points out that all work for development is for man, and if man himself is not morally developed, neither individuals nor society can be happy.



Careless or Carefree

When we look at little children, two adjectives that immediately come to mind are innocent and carefree. These are two shining qualities that are rarely found in grown-ups.

What is it about childhood and youth that makes one carefree? But then, we often hear parents, teachers and others telling us not to be careless. Many people often get a high by acting carefree, while actually they are being careless. Especially during the teenage years and adolescence, youngsters try to stand out and rebel against authority by behaving in a fashion that they think is carefree, while in reality they are being careless.

Carelessness is not a trait confined to youngsters or kids; even adults can be careless. It is a deep-rooted trait that is ingrained in people whose attention span is poor and who lack mental and emotional maturity. Their mind is distracted frequently and they tend to be forgetful. Careless people often suffer from a skewed sense of priorities. They place a high premium on things that are trivial or those which they feel are a 'lot of fun', and have little concern for routine tasks that are crucial, because they feel such tasks are 'boring'.

Careless people lack discipline and take everything for granted. They fail to learn from their mistakes and always play the blame game to avoid responsibility. They lose the trust of people who live and work with them. It is difficult to have a happy bonding with careless people. Because of carelessness, big disasters and mishaps have happened. Wars, accidents and man-made disasters often result from carelessness or, in other words, the acts of those who don't care about others' well-being.

Carelessness is born of selfishness and self-indulgence. When kings became careless about the welfare of the subjects, kingdoms were lost. When leaders become careless about the plight of the people they govern, anarchy sets in. When a person commits the crime of drink-driving, he may end up losing his life, and at times kill others in an accident. A student who is careless in his studies ends up ruining his chances of living a better life. The list of miseries incurred from careless behaviour is long. At the global level, the carelessness of communities, governments and citizens has directly or indirectly led to poverty, pollution, violence, global warming, wastage, filth and disease.

A carefree person is one who is in control of himself, his thoughts and emotions. He is careful about not losing his focus, and about remaining light.

In contrast, carefree people are those who are free from worry. They don't feel heavy due to their tasks or the roles they play, but do things with a lot of care and joy while being light-hearted and happy. They value everything in life and have a lot of love and gratitude for what they have. They see responsibilities and roles as opportunities to learn, share and grow. They have an open mind and heart, and are ready to learn from every experience.

Carefree people can face difficult situations and problems with quiet confidence and a positive attitude. They win the support and cooperation of people around them. People find the company of carefree people pleasant. Carefree people are able to handle responsibilities and remain free from stress and anxiety. They have a knack for staying calm and reassure others with their calm confidence. They can carry themselves lightly and see the lighter side of even difficult situations.

A carefree attitude is a natural trait in childhood, but in adulthood it has to be nurtured, except in those rare cases where it is a gift even in some grown-ups. In fact, wisdom is the key to being carefree. A high level of self-awareness and a deep faith in the goodness and benevolence of God and life makes us free from care or worry. When we understand and practise spiritual truths, we become free from delusion, doubt, worry and fear.

A careless person lives a life of self-deception, dependency and bondage. He does not respect the laws of nature and the laws of karma or spirituality. His irresponsible attitude makes him a victim of circumstances, and he gets entangled in more and more karmic bondages. A carefree person is one who is in control of himself, his own thoughts and

emotions. He acts with responsibility, and apart from doing things responsibly, he also pays attention to the lightness of his being. He is careful about not losing his focus and control over the quality of his own state of being. A true and lasting carefree nature can only come from deeply abiding by spiritual and ethical values.

When we live a life based on truth about the self, God and life, we are free from mistakes and karmic bondages. Knowledge of our true identity as a soul, our true relationship with God, and of the infallible benevolence of the drama of life frees us from all worries and fear. By following the spiritual wisdom imparted by God we are able to remain carefree not just in the present life but also in our future lives. The deities worshipped in some faiths are the most carefree beings, as they are blessed with all attainments – health, wealth, happiness, harmony and a long life. Spiritually enlightened actions in the present create a destiny of many carefree lives in future.*

(Purity Bureau)

In Lighter Vein

School: A place where papa pays and son plays.

Life insurance: A contract that keeps you poor all your life so that you can die rich.

Lecture: An art of transferring information from the notes of the lecturer to the notes of the students without passing through the minds of either.

Conference: The confusion of one man multiplied by the number present.

Compromise: The art of dividing a cake in such a way that everybody believes he got the biggest piece.

Dictionary: A place where success comes before work.

Politician: One who shakes your hand before elections, and your confidence after.

Doctor: A person who kills your ills by pills, and kills you by bills.

Classic: Books which people praise but do not read.

Office: A place where you can relax after your strenuous home life.



New Delhi: Lighting lamps during the launching ceremony of a campaign on 'Self-Governance for Good Governance' at Mavlankar Hall are Mr. P.J. Kurien, Dy. Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Mr. Mridul Kumar, Jt. Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India, Mr. Rakesh Mehta, former Chief Secretary of Delhi, BK Brijmohan, Addl. Secretary General of Brahma Kumaris, BK Asha Didi, Chairperson, BK Avdesh Didi, National Coordinator, and other office bearers of the Administrators' Service Wing of the Brahma Kumaris.



Lucknow, UP : Lighting candles at a programme titled '3-D Health Care and Happy Life through Rajyoga Meditation' are Dr. Reeta Bahuguna Joshi, Women & Family Welfare and Tourism Minister, Dr. Satish Gupta from Mount Abu, BK Vidya Didi and BK Radha Behn.



Raipur, Chattisgarh : Lighting lamps at two-day seminar on 'Self-empowerment to face challenges' are BK Kamla Didi, BK Cdr. Shiv Singh, Mr. A.D.Gautam, Home Secretary & others.



Pokhara : BK Sister Parinita, Director of Rajyoga Centres in West Nepal speaking at Janamashtami celebrations organised by Vishwa Hindu Mahasangh in the presence of Nepal Kesari Dr. Manibadhra Maharaj and other religious leaders.

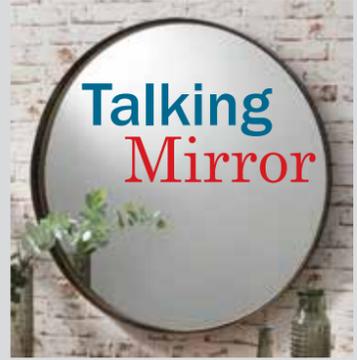


Mumbai : BK Meera Didi, Santacruz Sub-zone Incharge giving away prizes to winners of 'Spiritual Music Competition' of devotional, motivational and patriotic Songs organised at Brahma Kumaris Muktanand Park.



Chennai, Tamil Nadu : Celebrating 80th Anniversary of Brahma Kumaris and launching the project 'My Chennai Peaceful Chennai' are (L-R) BK Sisters Muthumani, Beena, Padma Vibhushan Dr. V.Shanta, BK Usha Behn from Mt. Abu, Hon'ble Justice V.Ramasubramanian from Hyderabad, BK Kalavathy, Dr. G.Santhanam IAS, former Secretary, Tamil Nadu and Dr. Mannar Jawahar, Former Vice Chancellor, Anna University.

And This Too Shall Pass



One day King Solomon decided to humble Benaiah ben Yehoyada, his most trusted minister. He said to him, "Benaiah, there is a certain ring that I want you to bring to me. I wish to wear it for Sukkot (a festival) which gives you six months to find it."

"If it exists anywhere on earth, your majesty," replied Benaiah, "I will find it and bring it to you, but what makes the ring so special?" "It has magical powers," answered the king. "If a happy man looks at it, he becomes sad, and if a sad man looks at it, he becomes happy." Solomon knew that no such ring existed in the world, but he wished to give his minister a little taste of humility.

Spring passed and then summer, and still Benaiah had no idea where he could find the ring. On the night before Sukkot, he decided to take a walk in one of the poorest quarters of Jerusalem. He passed by a merchant who had begun to set out the day's wares on a shabby carpet. "Have you by any chance heard of a magic ring that makes the happy wearer forget his joy and the broken-hearted wearer forget his sorrows?" asked Benaiah.

He watched the merchant take a plain gold ring from his carpet and engrave something on it. When Benaiah read the words on the ring, his face broke out in a wide smile. That night the entire city welcomed the holiday of Sukkot with great festivity. "Well, my friend," said Solomon, "have you found what I sent you after?" All the ministers laughed and Solomon himself smiled.

To everyone's surprise, Benaiah held up a small gold ring and declared, "Here it is, your majesty!" As soon as Solomon read the inscription, the smile vanished from his face. The jeweller had written three Hebrew letters which began the words "Gam zeh ya'avor" — "This too shall pass." At that moment Solomon realized that all his wisdom and fabulous wealth and tremendous power were but fleeting things, for one day all that would be nothing but dust. *

Bhubaneswar : Mr. Naveen Patnaik, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha presenting 'Nagarbandhu Award' to BK Tapaswini for 'Spiritual Social Service'. Also in pic. is Prof. Prasanna Kumar Patasani, Member of Parliament.



Mr. Amit Shah, President Bhartiya Janta Party with Dr. Pramila Srivastava, Chairperson, New Delhi Times after being appraised about ongoing services of the Brahma Kumaris.

The mystery of death

Life, they say, is a mystery, but death is even more mystifying. As certain as death is a saying that gives death a ring of surety, but for most travellers on the path of life, death is a mysterious turn that is expected any time but not welcomed.

Death is a great leveller. It levels off everyone with one stroke. A king or a pauper, a sinner or a saint – all have to bow to death. What exactly is the phenomenon of death? Is it the end of life? Does death lead to another life or existence? What happens after death? Does one go to heaven or hell after death?

To understand death, we must first understand life. A human being is a combination of a living spirit and a physical body. Electric current needs an appliance or instrument to flow. A soul enters a body to express as well as experience life because it is sentient. A dead person is actually a dead body sans the living soul that has passed on in its journey.

Fear of death arises mainly from ignorance and attachment. People don't know what happens after death, and they know that when they die, everything they possess and everyone they are close to will be lost forever.

The era we live in is Kaliyug (Iron Age or Hell) and this world is truly *mrityulok* (land of death). Today, the fear of untimely death stalks us constantly.

Many people consider death as equivalent to *mukti* or liberation. In fact, people actually desire liberation from suffering and pain, not from life. Death is a temporary liberation from immediate sufferings, but the soul has to take rebirth and finish its karmic debt in the next life.

Though every human being dies, there is a difference in the nature of each person's death. Some people die peacefully, without any suffering, while others die after prolonged suffering such as an illness. Some die untimely and painful deaths, such as in an accident, a suicide or murder, while others live a long life and pass on in the manner an overripe fruit drops from a tree. It all depends on the level of purity of the soul. When souls are pure (*satopradhan*), there is no painful birth or death.

Soon after death, the human soul enters a new body in a womb and takes birth again. Sudden and violent deaths sometimes cause souls to wander in restlessness and pain. Studies have proved that human souls take rebirth only in human bodies. If humans were

Death be not proud,
though some have called
thee mighty and dreadful,
for thou art not so. For,
those whom thou think'st
thou dost overthrow, die
not... — John Donne

being reborn as various animals, there would be more animals and few humans on earth. Moreover, souls leaving a body in Kaliyug will take rebirth in the same world. People believe that souls go to heaven after death; if so, why do we pray for them to be in peace? A soul in heaven would be in peace anyway.

Of late there has been a lot of interest in the scientific and spiritual aspects of the phenomenon of death. Studies on paranormal experiences, such as near death experiences and hypnotic regression, have acknowledged the existence of the soul. Many people have experienced being detached from their body in an accident or during serious medical conditions. Most of them have similar experiences of seeing their body from above, going through a dark tunnel and meeting a 'light' that comforts them and loves them. Paradoxically, investigation of death has brought us closer to the realization that we are eternal and immortal spirits.

There is a religious belief that sinful souls have to go through hell, where they meet *yamdoots* (agents of Yama, the lord of death) who punish them severely for their sins. *Yamdoots* are not any scary looking characters; they are visions of our bad actions that haunt us at death.

Do we have control over death? It depends on the purity and state of consciousness of the soul, which lives and acts through a body.

There was a time period called Satyug (Golden Age or heaven) when all human beings had a long lifespan, and because they were soul-conscious, death was merely like taking off one costume and putting on another. They would also have a vision of the new body before leaving the old one. That is why

there is no such feeling as if someone is dead. Hence it is said that all souls in heaven are immortal, and it is called *amarlok* (the land of immortality); they are said to have conquered *kaal* (time or death). But in the present time of Kaliyug, all humans are body conscious, and so they are subject to sin, suffering, illness and untimely death.

Incorporeal God Shiva is now imparting the knowledge of Rajyoga, which helps impure human beings to regain their purity and spiritual power by practising soul consciousness and performing all actions in remembrance of God. Soul consciousness helps Rajyogis to rule over their senses and their mind. God consciousness helps them destroy their sins and purify the elements of nature. A pure soul is able to conquer death in the sense that it will take birth in a pure body and enjoy a full lifespan with health, beauty, wealth, intelligence etc.

It is an eternal spiritual law that everything created new becomes old, loses its original vitality and nature, and is renewed. Death is only a change of roles. In a change of roles the actor also changes his costume; the sets and co-actors also change, and almost nothing remains the same. A spiritually mature person has an attitude of both detachment and enthusiasm for life, and so death does not upset such a person.

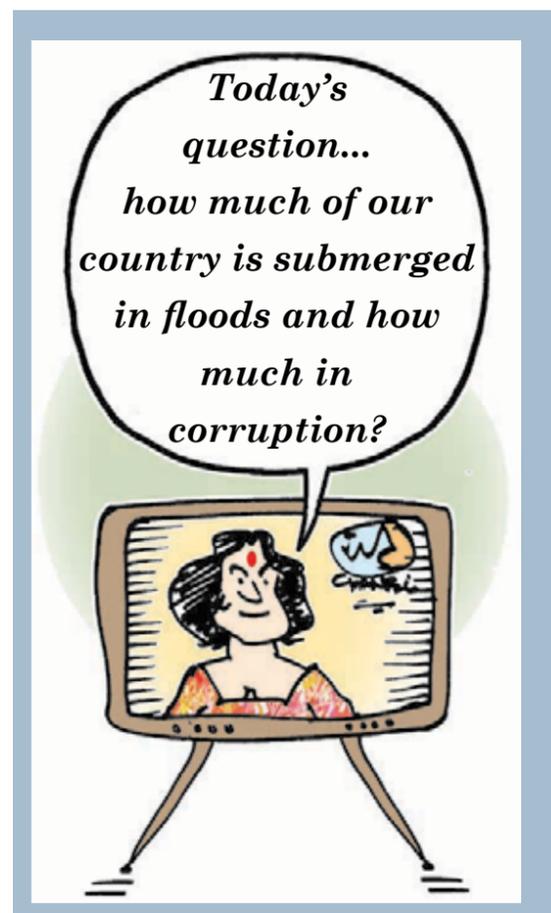
When the incarnated soul lives consciously, divinely and constructively within the physical vehicle – the body – the sorrow, loneliness and sense of loss connected to death will steadily fade. This needs conscious identification with the eternal spiritual self and detachment from the body, personalities, roles, relationships and possessions.

The more detached we are from the costume of our body, the more will death feel as simple as discarding an old costume and wearing a new one. Through constant awareness that we are souls and not bodies, and that we are simply playing a role in this world, and by expressing our innate divine qualities in our actions, we can conquer the fear and bondage of death.*

(Purity Features)



Moscow, Russia: Cutting a cake to mark the 28th anniversary of BK activities in Russia at the new premises, Lighthouse for the World, are BK Vedanti, Regional Coordinator of Brahma Kumaris in Africa, BK Sudha, Dy. Regional Coordinator of Brahma Kumaris in Russia and neighbouring countries, and others.



Living in the NOW

Mike George, London

Have you ever noticed there are no straight lines in the universe? Everything has a curve somewhere. Even that old ruler at school had a curve at the end, although you may need a bedbug-sized perspective to see it! What we tend to do, however, is try to straighten out the world. It comes from the impulse to control. We think we can straighten out other people, gardeners think they can straighten out their garden, countries think they can straighten out other countries, and sometimes our arrogance stretches as far as the weather, as we attempt to manipulate its mysterious patterns. But the world just doesn't work like that. It works in curves, or to be more precise, cycles. The carbon cycle, the water cycle, the economic cycle, the cyclical movements of orbiting planets are all testimony to the idea that the world goes around, it doesn't go along.

When we are conditioned by linear thinking we can only see in straight lines, and if we can't, we become frustrated. Yet even the world in our heads moves in cycles - thought, feeling, action, result, thought, feeling action, result. And most mystically of all, time itself moves in straight lines or cycles? The day, the year, the seasons are all cycles that define the rhythm of our lives. In these cycles there is both, a sense of completion and completeness that sits alongside and awareness of continuity. What is momentary sits comfortably within the eternity of what is!

There is a symmetrical beauty in the turning of a wheel, perfection and harmony in a rhythm that turns back on itself to begin again. At any point on the surface of the wheel of time the past is the future, the future is the past, and the present a meeting of the two, when all is contained in one singular, infinite moment called NOW. Viewed from the centre of the wheel the viewer is still, while the wheel of time and change moves perfectly around. Leave this central viewing point and the nature of the changes within the movement of the wheel attract attention, absorb energy and give rise to a different sense of reality. It is a reality where constant change is simply the nature of life. After 'some time' in a changing reality, the peace

The past is an expired
cheque;
The future is a post-dated
cheque;
Cash in on the 'NOW'

and the all-encompassing awareness of the original still point will be yearned for.

Some sages have tried to teach us that there is only this 'NOW', and that living in the present moment is the only way to fully experience the true beauty and richness of life throughout time. They have tried to teach us that the only way to perceive and hold an awareness of all time and all space is from that point of stillness that we carry forever at the very centre of our consciousness. Unfortunately, we have developed the tendency to get trapped in our memories, or to be preoccupied with worrisome futures. Unable to 'be still' at our centre we have a habit of missing the present moment and, it could be said, a large part of our 'real life'. In the world we all share, 'reality' is only NOW and never in the past or in the future.

Being mindful of 'the moment' and knowing the reality of NOW is the art of seeing that every moment has a value of its own, even if the experience of that moment

does not connect with any of our ambitions, or goals, or mental preoccupations. Every day contains infinite opportunities when we can return to being 'in the moment'. To spotlessly clean a window, or sweep leaves in the backyard, is a physical experience that has its own significance and nobility. This is one reason why monks of many faiths recognize the spiritual value of routine agricultural work, such as digging, planting and other activities that we might normally consider tedious and banal. They knew that the time signified by the machines we call watches was nothing compared to the timelessness that could be experienced by being fully present in the moment, fully mindful of whatever action is being performed. They knew that cycles of change into which we offer our activity, were made of unlimited moments of eternity.*

Ha! Ha!

Judge : "Have you ever worked?"
Tramp : "Yes, Your Honour."
Judge : "Where?"
Tramp : "Oh, here and there."
Judge : "Doing what?"
Tramp : "This and that."
Judge : "When?"
Tramp : "Now and then."
Judge : "Lock him up!"
Tramp : "When do I get out?"
Judge : "Sooner or later."

On Learning

Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.

— Benjamin Franklin

Learning is a lifelong process of keeping abreast of change. — Peter F. Drucker

Education consists mainly of what we have unlearned. — Mark Twain

I am always doing that which I cannot do, in order that I may learn how to do it.

— Pablo Picasso

We learn geology the morning after the earthquake. — Emerson

In the end we retain from our studies only that which we practically apply. — Goethe

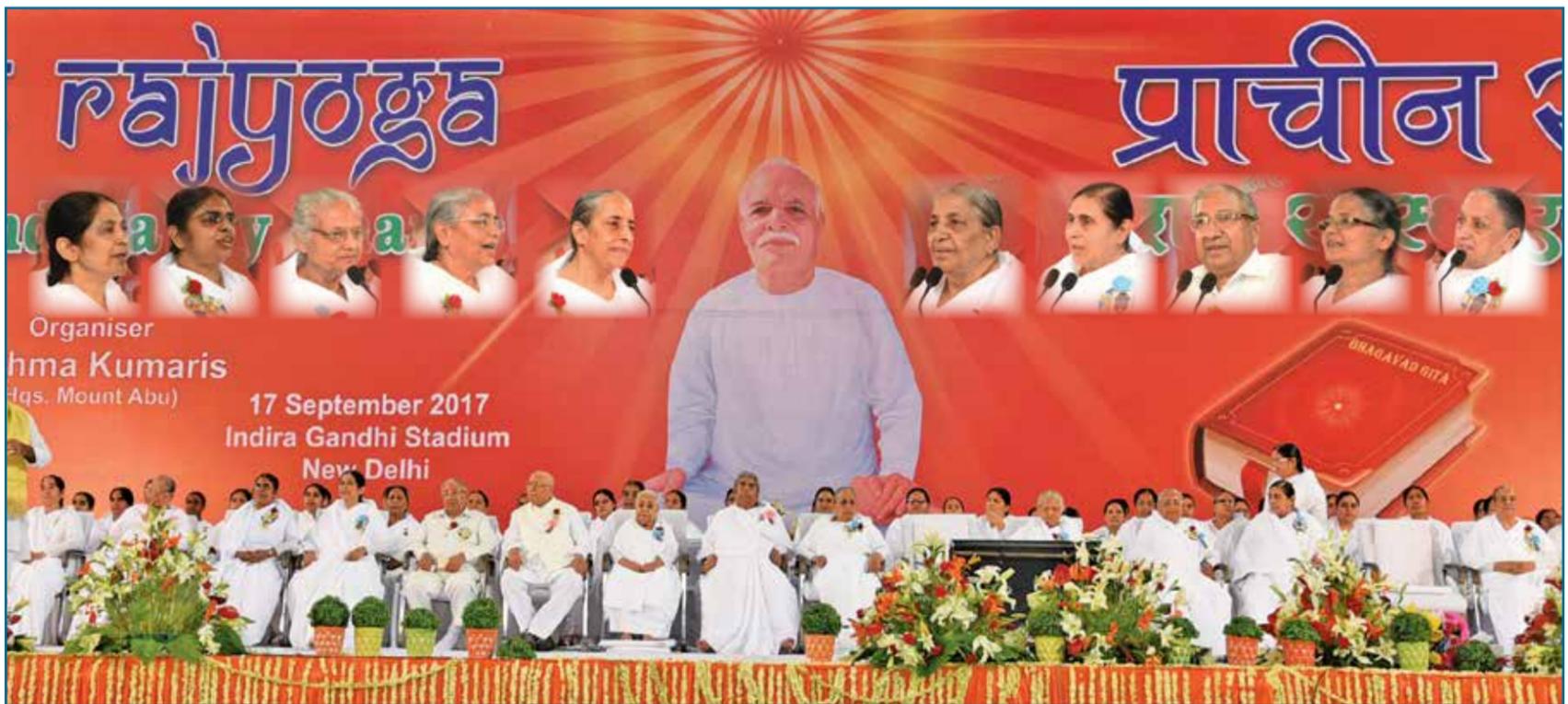
Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.

— Albert Einstein

Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other. — John F. Kennedy



Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh: Led by BK Parul behn of Shahpur, a team of Brahma Kumaris distributed water bottles, food and bread packets to affected people in flood-hit areas reachable only by boat.



New Delhi: Evening session of Ancient Rajyoga National Convention at Indira Gandhi Stadium. (Inset) Speakers (from left) BK Radha Behn, Lucknow, BK Beena Behn, Chennai, BK Vidya Behn, Kanpur, BK Sarla Behn, Mehsana, BK Surendra Behn, Varanasi, BK Shukla Didi, Hari Nagar, Delhi, BK Divya Behn, Borivali, Mumbai, BK Mohan Singhal, Mount Abu, BK Poonam, Raja Park, Jaipur and BK Shanta, Ajmer. Seated on stage are Rajyogis from Delhi and other parts of India who came to participate in the event.



Abu, Shantivan: Inaugurating National Media Conference are BK Nirwair Bhai, BK Sheilu, Mr. S. Narendra, former Information Advisor to PM, Dr. Ajit Pathak, National President, PR Society of India, Prof. Kamal Dixit, Mr. M.B. Jayaram, Chief Mentor, PR Council of India, BK Karuna Bhai, BK Atam Prakash and BK Shantanu.



Mount Abu, Gyan Sarovar: Inaugurating Politicians' Conference are Dadi Ratan Mohini, BK Brij Mohan, BK Laxmi Didi, Prof. Sita Sinha, former Bihar minister, BK Usha Behn, BK Gangaram Saudagar and BK Sapna Behn.



Guwahati, Asom: Lighting lamps during 80th anniversary celebrations of Brahma Kumaris are Mr. Sarbananda Sonowal, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Dr. Nirmala Didi, BK Sharda Behn, BK Sheela Behn, Mr. Vinod Kumar Pipersenia, Chief Secretary, and BK Vijay Gupta.



Mount Abu, Gyan Sarovar: Lighting candles during Mind-Body Medicine Conference are Dr. Nirmala Didi, Dr. Ashok Mehta, Dr. Pratap Midha, Mr. Ramesh Mittal, Chancellor, Medi-Caps University, Indore, Mr. Anurag Aggarwal, IAS, Chandigarh, Mr. Ranjit Mehta, CEO, Max Health Care, Delhi, BK Shivani Behn, Ms Latika Pradhan, Chairperson, State Welfare Board, Odisha, and others.



Sunderbani, Jammu: Group photo of participants in a two-day Stress Management Workshop for a BSF unit, 126 Battalion. Seen in middle is the faculty, BK Ritu, Mumbai, BK Poonam, Faridabad, BK Raj Singh, Abu, Dr. Dinesh, Delhi and BK Raj Kumari, Sunderbani centre incharge. The workshop was inaugurated by DIG Indiraj Singh.



Sydney, Australia: Group photo of participants in 'future of power' dialogue. For details, visit www.futureofpower.org



Dance performance by BK sisters Varnika, Vidhatri and Yesu during Ancient Rajyoga Convention in Indira Gandhi Stadium, New Delhi.



Mr. Wise



Mr. Wise?

Yes.

Stress has affected the entire human race?

True. Its causes may vary, but it has affected almost everyone.

Isn't stress growing in direct proportion to modern advancement? I cannot say.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

And Mr. Wise?

Be pleased to say.

Stress management is becoming a big business?

Quite. Medicos, management gurus, entertainers are all in it and coming up with their respective solutions.

And yet people complain of growing stress, why?

I cannot say.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Lastly...

Come on.

Stress is born in the human mind?

Quite so. And strengthening of the mind by enhancing inner powers will dilute stress gradually.

And this can be achieved through Rajyoga meditation?

You are right.

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

Tailpiece



An eager young man entered his prospective boss's cabin for an interview. Said the boss, 'One thing our company is very particular about is cleanliness. I hope you wiped your shoes on the doormat while coming in?'

'Yes, sir,' the young man replied promptly.

Back came the rejoinder, 'One more thing we're very particular about... is honesty. There is no doormat outside!'

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

'This is the garage,' an excited voice proclaimed to a man over the phone. 'Your wife just drove your car in here to be repaired, and I want to know who's going to...'

'Okay, okay,' interrupted the man wearily. 'I'll pay for the car.'

'Who's worrying about that?' the voice continued. 'What I want to know is who's going to pay to repair my garage?'

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

An insurance salesman was trying to sell a policy to a factory owner. 'I've got all the insurance I need,' said the owner. 'Fire, accident, employer's liability, the lot, so don't waste your time.'

'Are you covered against floods?' asked the salesman. 'Floods?' said the businessman with interest. 'How do you arrange a flood?'

♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦

The sign on the door of a lawyer's chamber reads: "Where there is a will, there is a way; where there is a way, there is law; where there is law, there is a rule; where there is a rule, there is a loophole; where there is a loophole, there is a lawyer; and so here I am."