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Sri Lankan priests officiating at several temples in Durban, South Africa, are under fire for maintaining a tradition of their parampara which requires a dress-code of bare upper-bodies for those entering the mulasthan (inner sanctum). Letters to the editor of the Post Natal say wearing of kurtas and dhotis in the sanctum has been the practice for 130 years in South Africa, that their ancestors came from India, where no rule exists, and that Sri Lankan priests have no right to insist on anything, charging "bullying." Others say it is a small sacrifice to make to comply with the priests wishes or, if offended, to simply avoid entering the inner sanctum.

The world's largest yoga convention-that's how it was billed, as over 1,000 teachers and practitioners from 28 countries gathered in London for a week-long conference presided over by Pune's 75-year old master of hatha yoga, B.K.S. Iyengar "as a way of uniting the body, mind and soul into the sea of consciousness."

Pilgrims to the ice Shiva Lingam at Amarnath in the Kashmir Himalayas have been targets of attack for the first time in the now four-year-old secessionist movement. One woman was killed and 23 other pilgrims were injured in two August attacks. Record numbers of pilgrims have been making the trek to the shrine, 12,750 feet above sea level: 10,000 in 1990; 100,000 this year. Provocative slogans and banners carried by some pilgrims are being blamed for contributing to the tensions. For information and the status of temples and other holy sites in Kashmir, contact: Jammu Kashmir Vichar, P.O.Box 108, Pacca Danga, Jammu (Tawi), 180 001, India.

Bija mantra artist Mrs. Saroja Nagarathnam has been honored by the Ayanavaram Asthika Sabha of Madras for her "promotion of religious and moral values." The honor was bestowed during Sthapati Celebrations for the Mahaswami Paramacharya of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam. His Holiness is one of the many divine subjects depicted in Mrs. Nagarathnam's works of calligraphy consist of hundreds of

thousands of tiny inscribed mantras.

Puja and worship techniques were taught to over 40 rural priests of Tamil Nadu at a 15-day training camp, the fifth of its kind, conducted at Thennangore. Blessings were offered by the Shankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam and Guruji Haridoss Giri of Jnana-nandagiri Peetam. "The archaka class, which includes pujaris, Sivacharyas and Bhatacharyas, have evinced keen interest in such training camps. We are fulfilling their need in a humble but meritorious way," said Shri R.B.V.S. Manian of the VHP. Meanwhile, many of Tamil Nadu's 35,000 temples are enjoying renovation thanks to a 17-member board recently constituted by the Jayalalitha government which shifts temple administration away from the Hindu Religious & Charitable Endowments Department.

Hindus in Durban, South Africa, are savoring victory after demanding that the nation's largest hamburger chain, Wimpy, change its television advertisement for the "Bombay Megaburger," which featured a dhoti-clad man firewalking. The ad, called "grossly insensitive" and "an affront to all Hindus," was meant to introduce a new hot and spicy sauce. But Mr. Ram Maharaj, Chairman of the National Hindu Development Trust, demanded "the unconditional withdrawal of the offensive commercial because the religious susceptibilities of Hindus have been attacked." The ad was withdrawn, and the featured firewalker has apologized, saying "I am a staunch Hindu who travels regularly to attend the Annual Festival of Kavadi."

"Project Dharma" in Singapore has picked up where "Religious Knowledge" classes left off in 1991. Student enrollment in Hindu studies "dropped drastically" when the classes were discontinued during curriculum hours, writes the Singapore Hindu. The Project Dharma Committee reports 20 students in 1992, and expects a larger enrollment for 1993. "We depend on Hindu parents to urge their children to participate. Without your help the decline of our great religion amongst young Singaporeans will go unchecked." Classes are held at the Srinivasa Perumal Temple.

Apple Computer "is planning to move AppleScript and OpenDoc development to Calcutta," according to a "rumor" in Macweek computer magazine. "No shortage of sharp, motivated software engineers in India who are willing to work for a mere US\$25,000 per year," was the reason.

Sitar master Ravi Shankar is recovering from a second angioplasty procedure after suffering chest pains at his San Diego, California home. The 73-year-old virtuoso, who underwent the same procedure in 1992, had to cancel two-month's worth of concert dates and had just played two sold-out performances in Washington, D.C. prior to his latest heart ailment.

"The voice of Shankara" is just a phone call away. The spiritual dial-

in service named for Saint Adi Shankara went on-line in Madras in April, with automated offerings in both Tamil and Hindi including discourses by the Shankaracharyas of Kanchi Peetam, bhajans and prayers, a daily almanac, and slokas and explanations from the Bhagavad Gita. Beta Byte Technologies plans to launch similar services in Hyderabad and Coimbatore. The service is so popular, and provides such spiritual solace, that Indian Overseas Bank offers personal, unsecured loans to cover the annual fee and enrollment cost.

Women are smoking more-and dying more. Writes Dr. William G. Cahan in a Letter to the Editor of the New York Times, "Women, seduced by cynical advertisements using feminism and slimness as lures, have smoked themselves into a rising lung cancer death rate surpassing that for breast cancer."

Dharmic advice to householders is available for the cost of postage in the booklet How to Lead a Household Life, (Performance of One's Duty and Protection of the Rights of Others). Contact: Madan Lal Gupta, Vedic Dharma Samaj, 309 1/2 North Atlantic Boulevard, Alhambra, California, 91801, USA.

Shri Swami Divyananda Saraswathi is visiting North America during late 1993. The 82-year-old disciple of the Shankaracharya of Dwarka has been doing tapas in the Himalayas of Badrinath for the past 41 years. A popular lecturer, he can be contacted in care of Mahesh Sastry, Hindu Center, 42-55 Kissena Blvd., Flushing, New York, 11355, USA. Phone 718-358-6726, or in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, in care of Opinder Nurinder Cheema at 403-285-8439.

You're a great cook? Then consider the nationwide "Recipe Contest of Asian Indian

Cuisine." Fifty winners will be selected and included in a forthcoming recipe book. Categories include appetizers, vegetarian (and non-vegetarian) specialties, and desserts. Contact: Recipe Contest, c/o Spindle Publishing Company, 4136 Library Road, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15234, USA.

Humans evolved from herbivores and retained a gut designed for plants. So finds a University of California, Berkeley professor of anthropology after studying the dietary history of primates. While admitting meat may have been a pivotal force in the emergence of modern humans, the researcher concludes "our digestive tract does not seem to be greatly modified from that of the common ancestor of apes and humans, which was undoubtedly a strongly herbivorous animal."

The Jagannath temple at Puri in Orissa is now fully restored. In a US\$625,000 project, the Archeological Survey of India replaced 157 weak or cracked stones in the 800-year old temple and bound other stones together with liquid cement. The work began a year ago after a corbel stone crashed into the garbhagriha, narrowly missing the temple deities.

Catholic priests accused of sexually molesting child parishioners of the North American church number up to 400. About 200 such cases have been settled in the USA at a cost to the Catholic Church of US\$400 million, according to published reports. Bishops in the USA are now asking the Vatican to make it easier for priests who molest children to be defrocked. While not a new problem, Pope John Paul II only first mentioned priestly pedophilia publicly last August in Denver.