

[Global Dharma](#)

Category : [October 1995](#)

Published by Anonymous on Oct. 02, 1995

Global Dharma

A Monthly News Digest

Food Fight for Grown Ups

The Pure Food Campaign (PFC) and allied activists are battling the giant US food industry to protect consumers and small farmers from rising food pollution. The Centers for Disease Control says 20 to 80 million people get food poisoning each year. Published data shows a dramatic rise in environment-related cancers, hyper-sensitivities, anti-biotic resistance, allergies, sterility and immune disorder--all due to pandemic contamination.

Unfortunately, the administrative machinery that should protect the public is backsliding. Eleven states have passed "food slander" laws making it a crime to criticize food products without a "scientific basis." The intent is to silence consumer groups and let the food industry keep its "license to pollute." PFC says this dangerous disregards public safety and threatens the right of free speech. They are calling for "affordable, clean, natural food--safety tested and clearly labeled to let consumers exercise free choice."

In 1993, the Pure Food's lawyers sued the USDA because fully one-third of all ground beef sold in the US contains animal feces and potentially harmful bacteria. The government

averted losing the case with a promise to place warning labels on billions of meat packages--the policy went unenforced. Eighteen months after Monsanto introduced the genetically engineered synthetic rBGH "Bovine Growth Hormone," PFC sued Monsanto and the Food and Drug Administration. A national boycott among dairy farmers and consumers against milk from injected cows successfully killed the use of rBGH.

Despite the outcry, a dozen or more new genetically engineered foods have been introduced. The PFC calls for continuing boycotts. Meanwhile in South Dakota, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Idaho, Texas, Arizona, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Colorado and Louisiana," food disparagement" laws designed by ag-chemical biotech industry lobbyists continue to be passed. So, claims PFC, foods full of filth and chemicals continue reaching the dinner table unlabelled and without pre-marketing safety checks. Meat, fish and poultry are the worst, concentrating pollutants to high, unsafe levels.

Contact: Purefood@aol.com 1-800-451-7670

US Indian Students Post a Web Winner

In April of 1995 a group of Indian students directed by editors Abhijit Ghosh and Rumi Bhattacharyya and under the advisement of Dr. Pandharipande and Dr. Tikku at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA, started an electronic magazine on the Internet called Darpan(go: www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/People/pmishra/Darpan/). With its clean, open design, soft, Indian-style graphics and succinct writing style, it immediately attracted attention on the World Wide Web. It garnered the June 19th "Cool Site of the Day" Award.

On July 18th PointCom included it in the "Top 5% of All Web Sites" listing. For the week of August 16-23 it received the "High Five for Excellence in Web Design" and was voted as "Web Review Design Site of the Week" August 18-31. Darpan (which means "mirror" in Sanskrit) is devoted to "reflections on India" and, among other things, to "eliminating existing stereotypes" about Indians. While the design is outstanding, the content varies considerably. We find some high-minded, thoughtful reflections on the social problems of Indians in America. And then there is, sadly, one poem called "Redemption" which glorifies the confrontation between an Indian Hindu youth and a biggoted American in which the Hindu boy, contrary to the stereotype of being a "wimp," beats the American boy to a bloody pulp. But it is an accurate reflection on the feelings of Indian youth and the presentation overall is truly uplifting. This is a sign that Indian art and culture should quickly take a high place on the Web. In mid-August India's Overseas Communications Corp. inaugurated an Internet link through MCI Communications. For 5,000 rupees (US\$160) non-commercial users will get 250 hours of Internet access.

Religious Beliefs Polled in America

The Princeton Religious Research Center (PRRC,) in cooperation with the Gallop Poll, continues to survey the religious beliefs of America, Canada and UK. The June '95 issue of PRRC's Emerging Trends says the USA leads "the English-speaking union in matters of faith, with levels of belief remaining consistently high in recent years. Over 90% of Americans believe in God, as compared to 70% in Canada and 61% in the UK. But only 32% of Americans today take the Bible literally. The surveys are markedly Christian in orientation. But, of interest to Hindus, 33% of Canadians, 27% of Americans and

26% of Britons believe in reincarnation. About 50% believe in ESP and 70% believe in life after death. The trend indicates Hindu beliefs are spreading.

Ancient Astrophysical Temple Orientations

Some Hindu temples are lining up with Stone Henge, the pyramids and Mayan temples. Dr. Rana P. B. Singh of Banaras Hindu University and Professor John M. Malville, astrophysicist from the University of Colorado, USA, recently unveiled findings on the Dwadash Adityas (12 Sun temples) of Varanasi showing they were located at coordinates relating to the sun's annual passage through the 12 signs of the zodiac. Whether this was done by calculation, by meditation or intuition is a mystery. But the evidence indicates ancient temple architects used a sophisticated astrophysical system to determine the location and orientation of many temples in India. The data was presented in Allahabad, India, at a January national seminar held on "Pilgrimage, Tourism and Conservation of Cultural Heritage--Experiences and Revelations." The seminar drew 50 scholars from India and abroad.

Trends to Watch: Unveiling War's Horrors

Photo caption: One B-2 Stealth bomber costs U.S.\$530 million. The Medicare cost for all poor and near-poor families in the United States: U.S. \$500 million.

Terrence Webster-Doyle's "Operation Warhawks--How Young People Become Warriors," published by the Atrium Society, is a systematic deglorification of war and violence. It says becoming a warrior is not about armed forces splendor and exaltation. It is about becoming an "adult robot killing

machine." Doyle and numerous other authors are currently targeting intelligent teenagers especially with the message that war is not a noble soldiering activity. It's a horrible tragedy. He aims to wake up the next generation from the conditioning: "Other (Different) Person=Enemy/Enemy=Fear/Fear=Protect=Defend=Eliminate." The new theme is "One World, One Humanity" served up with a tone of "global patriotism" and anti-nationalism.

The old guard might dismiss modern pacifist idealism as naive and blinkered, but the movement keeps its feet squarely on the ground. Doyle delivers startling statistics about humankind's incredible capacity to kill itself. Between 1900 and 1993, 150 million people were killed in war--over one million a year. Since 1945, twenty million civilians died in war and sixty million were injured--more than solidiers. Eighty-percent of these were women and children! Almost 500,000 civilians were killed by one bomb in Japan,. Estimates for World War II dead are 60,000,000. In a feat of modern technological efficiency, we humans killed over 100,000 fellow souls in less than six weeks during the Gulf War.

Doyles' numbers highlight the magnitude of the war effort. We have excess of 18,000 megatons of atomic bombs worldwide--the equivalent of 6,000 World War IIs. The United States alone will spend over \$3,000,000,000,000 (three trillion dollars) in just ten years, planning for war. That is three million dollars a day for the next 2,730 years! Ten percent of this spending could solve all of humanities major problems: poverty, famine, deforestation, illiteracy, acid rain, over population, health care, pollution, renewable energy and more. Doyle teaches youth: "There is a better, safer way to deal with

psychological threats. Becoming a warrior and fighting others can never bring peace. Violence can bring only one thing: more violence." Write for Doyle's award-winning youth books: Atrium, PO Box 816, Middlebury, VT 05753; Ph: 800-848-6021

70,000 Make Lofty Trek Despite Dangers

By August 7th, when registration closed, 70,000 pilgrims had departed Jammu, Kashmir, under heavy security for the annual worship of the swayambhu (self made) ice Siva Lingam at the 13,000 -foot-high Amarnath cave. The Harkat-ul-Ansar, a militant Kashmiri Muslim separatist group, had earlier made death threats against the pilgrimage. Protesting the Indian government's failure to rebuild the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, they exploded two bombs in late July in Jammu, killing 18 people, including two aged sadhus. But the blasts only made pilgrims more determined. Despite heavy rains, flooding and logistical problems, enthusiasm was high. This year the ice lingam reached over eight feet--compared with 1993's two-foot height. Local peace-loving Muslims pitched in to help the faithful on their way.

The main priest of the pilgrimage was Mahant Deependra Giri, head of the Srinigar Dasanami Akhara (monastery) which is in charge of the two sacred 6-foot-long silver maces representing Siva and Parvati that go up to the cave each year. On April 5th the mahant and the maces led the grand procession from Jammu to Amarnath in a bulletproof car. They arrived without mishap for the main puja to Mahadeva on full moon day, shravan purnima, August 10th. The government, determined to prevent a serious mishap, deployed a security force of 40,000 to protect the faithful Hindus who vowed to worship Siva in the face of death. The 345 km (210 mile) route from Jammu city to Srinagar, up to the mountain resort of Pahalgam, the main base camp, and the final 32km (20 mile) section up to the cave was heavily cordoned off. Pilgrims were all searched. The route was "sanitized" for land mines and helicopters periodically forayed overhead. The militants were held at bay. A few bombs were discovered and diffused, but

they still managed to explode several more, destroying a bridge, killing one trooper and a number of pilgrims. One elderly sadhu and a nine-year-old baby died from the cold, but there were no major attacks. There were nearly twice as many pilgrims this year as in 1993, and officials estimate that were it not for the bad weather 100,000 would have made it to the cave.

Nepal: Mahayogini Visits Kathmadku

On July 30, Mahayogini Smt. S.R.Y. Rajyalaksmi Devi, Principal, Institute of Yoga and Allied Sciences, Tirupatti, spoke at the Kathmandu Rotary Club. She gave a speech on "Yoga and Its Relevance in the Modern World." Mrs. Devi spoke of yoga as the means to bring about union of the jivatma with Paramatma, the need to awaken kundalini mahashakti and the curative power of yoga for various diseases. One of her objectives in visiting Kathmandu was to explore the possibility of establishing a yoga center in Nepal. During earlier years of sadhana, Mrs. Devi remained in nirvikalpasamadhi for 8 years in a closed room without food or drink. She has been propagating yoga for 30 years.

America: Sringeri Branch Mission in USA

The inauguration ceremonies for the Sringeri Sadhana Center were held in Stroudsburg, PA., July 13-14. Formerly the Rajarajeswari Peetham, the center is now owned by the Sringeri Bharati Vidya Foundation, Inc., an extension of Karnataka's esteemed Sringeri Math. The foundation's president is T. R. Ramachandran, editor of Tattvaloka, who plans to move his offices from India to the US. Its trustees are appointed by the Math and its activities are guided by the Sringeri Sankaracharya. V.R. Gowri Shanker, administrator of

the Sringeri Peetham (above left,) came from India for the occasion. Devi Parvati continues as youth camp director.

England: Prince of Wales Hindu Temple

The Prince of Wales' Institute of Architecture was established in 1992 by Prince Charles who has been critical of establishment architects for their lack of cultural continuity. This year the "radical" institute designed the Shree Krishna Temple being built on the site of a burned down Hindu shrine in Midlands, UK. The design is the brainchild of the institute's senior tutor, Dr. Adam Hardy, who is working with some Hindu students and Gujaratis. By mid-'96, Hindus who have been worshipping at the site for 29 years will have a 500 square meter traditional temple with a stained-glass lotus ceiling.