

[Briefly](#)

Category : [March 1998](#)

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SUNDERLAL BAHUGUNA ENDED his fast at the work site of the controversial Tehri Dam on the Ganges River in the Himalayas after 56 days. Bahuguna was informed November 26--before the call for new elections--by high level government officials that work was being suspended until he could meet with the Prime Minister. Bahuguna has won promises--none fulfilled--from three former Prime Ministers to review the project, which faces criticism due to potential ecological impact, earthquake disaster and, most recently, even a dam-breaking missile attack from a hostile country.

HOUSES IN THE SMALL VILLAGE of Siadia in Orissa state, India, have no doors and no bars on the windows. Villagers believe Kharkhai Thakurani, their local Deity, guards each house, says Ajay Nayak, an educated youth of the village. Neighboring areas are regularly visited by thieves, but in Siadia the last robbery was twenty years ago. In that case the thief was caught immediately, and he died within a month.

SRI SUGENENDRA THEERTHA, whose visit to America was greatly appreciated by Hindus, will not be allowed to perform puja to Lord Krishna at the Udipi Sri Krishna temple upon his return to Kerala, according to the Deccan Herald. He is abbot of Putige Math, one of the eight monasteries founded by the great dualist philosopher, Madvachariya, 700 years ago. Sri

Vidyavarinidhi Theertha, abbot of the Kaniyoor Krishna monastery, said the abbots of the eight monasteries were expected to not cross the ocean. The provision dates from ancient times when sea travel made impossible the mandatory daily ablutions and observances.

INDIAN COW BONES are being used--really--to filter water for towns in Northern England. Local vegetarians are turning off their taps and buying bottled water--lots of it--to avoid the local water filtered through charcoal made from the bones. Only the bones of old cows make good charcoal ("activated carbon," to be exact), according to the water utility, and only in India do cows live to a ripe old age. Vegetarians should be aware that ground cow bones are also sometimes used in the refining of sugar.

THE "GUIDE TO FOOD INGREDIENTS" from the Vegetarian Resource Group will alert you to such problems as the previous item's non-vegetarian source of activated carbon. For example, you inspect a carton of delicious ice cream containing "cellulose gum." Should you be worried? Nope, it's totally a nonanimal product. But, wait, what about the "carmine" also listed in the ingredients? Yuck!--it's "food coloring derived from the dried bodies of female beetles." Contact VRG, Post Office Box 1463, Baltimore, Maryland, 21203, USA.

ONE IN SIX CANADIANS CHOOSE YOGA as their method of de-stressing, according to a survey conducted for the Royal Bank of Canada. Two-thirds of Canadians feel their job is too stressful--two percent say it's so bad they believe themselves

on the edge of a nervous breakdown. A quarter do nothing to relieve stress, another quarter take to physical exercise, and a full sixteen percent have taken up yoga exercises.

READING THE MAHABHARATA, even a shortened version such as C. Rajagopalachari's English translation, is a mammoth undertaking. Now you can listen to it on the way to work or school, thanks to Dr. Akshay R. Rao's 13-hour dramatic reading of Rajagopalachari's excellent version on cassette tape or CD. Contact: Ethnic Enterprises, P.O. Box 385468, Bloomington, Minnesota 55438 USA.

THE US RELIGIOUS WORKER VISA has been extended another three years, despite allegations of widespread fraud. "The Religious Professionals and Other Religious Workers" provision first added in 1990 to American immigration law allows for not only ministers, but nonclergy religious workers, such as instructors in dance and music, translators, and broadcasters to receive a visa and eventually permanent status. The US State Department "uncovered a troubling number of scams, both individual and organized, including Christian churches that sell visas to the highest bidder," according to a report in Christianity Today. The visa provision has allowed Hindu priests and temple workers easier entry to the country.

MORTAL KOMBAT: ANNIHILATION, for those who don't already know, is the latest movie to be based upon the video game of the same name. "Anyone who really wants to see this really doesn't care what any critic has to say," begins one scathing review of this kid's martial arts flick. At issue for Hindus is a minor, four-armed character named "Sheeva" played by

Marjean Holden. We only know one person who admits to seeing the movie, and he claims the character is just named "Sheeva," and is not intended to be a warped depiction of the Supreme God. We hope so. Investigation is underway.

THE CENTER FOR INDIA STUDIES at the State University of New York at Stony Brook is celebrating one of its first major accomplishments--the release of *Ananya, A Portrait of India*, a formidable 900-plus page book on India. Forty scholars collaborated to produce a "reliable, readable, single-volume resource" intended for college undergraduates. Sections include history--thankfully devoid of the now-debunked "Aryan Invasion" of India theory--religion, society, business, art, language, literature, "Makers of Modern India," the Indian diaspora and much, much more. Contact: Center for India Studies, E 5350 Melville Library, SUNY Stony Brook, New York 11794-3386 USA.

SEVEN-HUNDRED JAPANESE school children were rushed to hospitals after suffering seizures brought on by a popular TV cartoon show, "Pokeman," based on Nintendo's "Pocket Monsters" video game. "I was shocked to see my daughter lose consciousness," said one Japanese parent. "She started to breathe only when I hit her on the back." Video games are known to cause seizures--convulsions, spasms or nausea, but this is the first case involving a TV cartoon. The children, living mostly in Japan's compact apartments, were watching large sets from about three feet away. They had become very excited from the fast-paced show. Twenty minutes into the program bright flashing red lights filled the screen, apparently triggering the seizure reaction in the brain. A few of the children were hospitalized overnight, and more came in after

watching video recordings of the same program over the next few days.