Letters
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Sacred Songs in a Sleazy Show

ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 8, SHORTLY AFTER 8:00 PM, I suddenly recognized Indian classical music playing on TV and was shocked to hear, accompanying a murder scene, the soundtrack spewing the chant Shanta Akaram, Bhujaga Shayanam..." the well-known hymn in praise of Lord Vishnu. The voice seemed Western. I could not believe that any singer who knew what they were chanting would have permitted its use in such a context. I later learned that the show is a popular new serial, "Legacy." I fear that some musician, ignorant of the context, has permitted his or her music to be used by "Legacy's" producers, or worse, that the producers illegally used the music and displayed their abysmal disregard for Hindu sensitivities. Can someone verify independently what I saw and heard or tell me how I can confirm this and guide Hindus on how to protest this abominable behavior?

N. M. Sundar
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Praise!!!!!

PRAISE!!!!! I'M 16-YEARS-OLD AND HAVE found your magazine to be invaluable! I love the topics that you deal with. I feel very proud of my heritage, as I learn more and more about it.

THANK YOU!!!!!!
Sirisha K.
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Grace and Love in Action

THANK YOU FOR THE ARTICLE ON MA JAYA Sati Bhagavati. (Women of Vision, Feb. 1999). This is truly Lord Shiva's grace and love in action, as opposed to others who would like to marginalize, denigrate and destroy those who are living with HIV/AIDS. And Phyllis Kantor's My Turn, "Fearless Compassion," gives the reader the facts. No one should dwell in darkness on this issue. It's time people start telling the truth and proving that all people are Shiva's children.
Steven M. Pfeiffer
St. Louis, Mo, USA
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I WAS SO GRATIFIED TO SEE YOUR ARTICCLES on AIDS, Kashi Ashram and Ma Jaya Sati Bhagavati (My Turn, Women of Vision, Feb. 1999). It is good to know that people of faith are serving the ill and needy. I have served the community through the AIDS epidemic since 1982. Then we knew nothing about this disease. But as we held the hands of the dying (and almost everyone died back then), we experienced that miraculous transformation at the time of death that those on the spiritual path talk about but find so difficult to put into practice. I have had AIDS for over 20 years. I came to Ma Jaya's Kashi Ashram when I thought I was dying.

I left transformed. Wherever I now find myself, I know I have a home at Kashi, the nurturing spirit of my God, and the loving breath of a living guru to return to. If this is what a combination of the AIDS epidemic and the Hindu path have done to me, I pray everyone of your readers across the world are so affected and find the passion to walk the streets, be they Calcutta or New York, embracing the exiled, touching the sick, providing food and shelter to the poor!

SHAMBO
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Please, Be More Sensitive!

A REGULAR READER OF HINDUISM TODAY, I congratulate you on your 20th Anniversary, but you have been insensitive of many Hindus' feelings by referring to those who struggled for Hinduism's sacred place, Ayodhya, as "militant Hindu fanatics." (Insight, page 32, Jan. 1999). One of those whom you call "fanatics" you lauded that very year as Hindu of the Year--Swami Chinmayananda. He actively supported and blessed the whole drama, along with other reputed saints

and sadhus of India. One of India's greatest and most revered of all saints, Paramacharya, Great Sage, the Shankaracharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam, gave his full blessing for Hindus to restore the temple at Ayodhya, and even blessed holy bricks, with inscriptions of Ram, for the construction of the temple. You previously sufficiently covered the Hindu position in the Babri Masjid episode. I am amazed that you later refer to them in this character-defiling manner. Can Hindus not protest without

being dubbed "fanatics" or fundamentalists or extremists? Secondly, in the article on Madonna (Controversy, Jan. 1999) your reporter makes the ridiculous blunder of placing the responsibility of explaining the erotic literature of the Kama Sutras and carvings of Khajuraho at the portals of the Hindu conscience. Do you expect everything that comes out of India to be pure? The Kama Sutras are not Hindu scriptures that Hindus need be embarrassed by, nor are the Khajuraho carvings necessarily

representative of Indian religious culture. Your reporter may thus have consciously or unconsciously succeeded in silencing a legitimate Hindu voice of protest.

Pradeep Ramlall
Durban, South Africa

IN JANUARY'S RETROSPECTIVE ON YOUR twenty years of publication, why do you call those who took down the Babri Masjid militants when your original article referred to them

as kar sevaks (action workers)? What about the post-Masjid destruction? It is best that you show all sides of the story, instead of deeming us culprits and them victims.

Ishani Chowdhury
Brooklyn, New York, USA

Social Worker Says, "Share it!"

THANK YOU FOR ALL THE FANTASTIC ARTICLES on Hindus around the world. I also utilize the parenting feature as

a social worker. Keep up the good work! I would encourage my Hindu sisters and brothers to share the Sanatana Dharma with others by making presents of books, pictures of the devas and Om symbols to friends, local hospital chapels, community centers and libraries.

Shiva Sookhal
Battle Creek, Michigan, USA

* And you can also get back issues of Hinduism Today to

share at local reading venues by writing to: letters@hindu.org

Hindus Should Unite to Survive

LET ME CONGRATULATE YOU ON THE FINE service you are providing to all Hindus around the world. Our biggest problems are the caste system and language barriers. To flourish, we must abolish

the caste system. Today people respect a rich Christian or Muslim more than an outcaste. To me, outcaste Hindus are more respectable than rich Christians or Muslims who are working to convert people. We are all Hindus, regardless of caste and language. Let us all unite, help each other, stop infighting, learn from each other and do more to help the tribal, outcaste and the

underprivileged.

Haresh Vyas
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More on Yoga, Please

I LOOK FORWARD TO READING EACH ISSUE of your magazine with enthusiasm. I teach

hatha yoga. Some contemporary magazines published by Westerners, though professing to be all about yoga, and despite some good articles, often do yoga injustice by publishing advertising about sex and distorting the meaning of tantra yoga. I would like to see more articles on yoga in

your issues.

P. Ramanathan
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