

[Briefly . . .](#)

Category : [November 1998](#)

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EUROPE CONTINUES ITS love affair with Hindu culture. Among programs commemorating India's 50th Independence anniversary of is a touring exhibition on Lord Krishna, currently on view in Britain, organized by the Hayward Gallery for the Arts Council of England. It is the first major exhibit in Europe exclusively devoted to a single Hindu Deity. The objective, according to organizers, is to "celebrate Krishna's enduring legend and the relevance of his message in an age so besotted with materialism."

IT WAS TIME TO FACE THE MUSIC for Buddhist monk Kung Bunchhoeun. He was expelled from a temple in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, after being caught sneaking out at night to indulge in his secret passion--karaoke singing. He also went dancing and got in a punching fight with a lay student. "We no longer accept this monk, because he has too much freedom. His conduct violates Buddhist discipline," the temple abbot said.

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE expressing inner forces through outer art. Celebrating this in July was "Mannin Marabu," a Tamil cultural festival organized by India's government. A highlight was a workshop on kolams, rich mandala-like designs for beautifying and protecting the Hindu home. A hundred women shared their deft renderings of everything from tulips to yantras. Lakshmi Venkataram, coordinator, said, "The aim was

to revive traditional designs which have died out as well as to find new evolving kolam expressions."

THE AMERICAN HINDUS AGAINST Defamation announced a successful outcome in August of its efforts to negotiate with the Karma nightclub in Chicago. The club attracted numerous protests after opening in 1997, due to its decor of pictures, statues and other depictions of Hindu deities. The owner, Shrinivas Reddy, has removed all Hindu deities from the club. For details, visit the Defamation website at www.hindunet.org/anti_defamation/karma_club.

WELCOME TO OUR BROTHERS and sisters in the Ukraine Republic! The Odessa Center of Integral Yoga plans to hold a "World Spiritual Meditation" in August 2000--a meeting in Ukraine (part of the former Soviet Union) of monks and teachers of all religions to make a joint effort toward world peace. They ambitiously expect 150,000 participants. For details write: Odessa Center of Integral Yoga, PO Box 9, Odessa 270101, Ukraine. E-mail: jafep@farlep.net

HINDUISM TODAY'S staff, as they strolled through Kauai's Outrigger Hotel lobby in August, were taken aback when a group of evangelical Christians shoved pamphlets in their hands and loudly extolled Jesus. It was a surprise because the setting was private property. HT promptly informed Gordon, a hotel manager, who was upset with the proselytizing and said the hotel has a policy of "no solicitation," assuring that "we never want our guests to face this."

A CENTER FOR THE STUDY of alternative medicine has been established at the University of California in San Francisco. Funded by \$12.2 million in grants, the Osher Center for Integrated Medicine will research how alternatives can be combined with conventional patient care to "address all aspects of health and wellness--biological, psychological, social and spiritual." The first research focuses on areas such as how to treat coronary heart disease and breast cancer with approaches including hatha yoga, meditation, dance, Chinese herbs and art therapy.

SPEAKING AT PORTLAND STATE University in June, US President Clinton exhorted Americans to welcome rather than shun new immigrants, saying they have brought benefits in the economic, cultural and countless other spheres. Clinton also called on immigrants to do their part to be full citizens, and urged them to "embrace our culture, learn our language, know our history--and when the time comes, become citizens. Ethnic pride is a very good thing. But pride in one's ethnic and racial heritage must never become an excuse to withdraw from the larger American community. This does not honor diversity, it breeds divisiveness."

IT'S A CRISIS THE OTHER WAY around. Once regarded universally as a cherished goal, low birth rates in the industrial world have become a cause for alarm. Driven largely by prosperity and freedom, millions of women are having fewer children. Never before--except in times of plague, war and deep economic depression--have birth rates fallen so low. Europe is the worst: there's no longer a single country where people are having enough children to replace themselves when they die. Illustrating the thinking, Mia Hulton, 33, a

Swedish working wife, says, "Women finally have so many chances to have the life they want. To travel and work and learn. I find it hard to see where having children would fit into it."

STRANDED AT DEATH? The United Arab Emirates has banned cremation since January. The only Hindu crematorium in Dubai was shut down by the government. This put the UAE's 500,000 Indians, of whom 300,000 are Hindus, in a tough spot. "If anybody dies now, we have to take the body to India, which is very expensive," said one Dubai resident. Hindus have appealed to the Indian ambassador's office, but to no avail.

DESPITE MILITANT DISRUPTIONS, a record 140,000 pilgrims trekked to India's famous Amarnath cave in July/August for darshan of the ice Lingam. An official said numerous sadhus carrying the silver mace of Lord Siva entered the cave on August 8. About 15 pilgrims died this year along the arduous route, mostly due to heart failure.

A COLLEGE DORM KITCHEN should stock vegetarian basics, says the University of California at Los Angeles. Here is a sampling of their list, a good--and inexpensive--foundation for your own pantry: veggie burgers, whole wheat flour, pita bread, nuts, mixed vegetables, sunflower seeds, garlic powder, chili powder, honey, blackstrap molasses, miso, yeast flakes, brown rice, quinoa, millet and aseptically packaged tofu. It's good they have this list, since Chelsea Clinton, vegetarian daughter of the US President, just entered the dorm at Stanford University.

LIFE FOR COMMUNISTS IN KERALA has come full circle. The God-defying, temple-wrecking breed of Lenin worshipers are tossing away Marxist ideology for Hinduism. Realizing the power of India's new government and the appeal of Hindutva to the masses, they're energetically renovating temples and conducting annual temple festivals. "Faith in God doesn't hinder our party work," says activist Sukumaran. "Besides, temple festivals are part of our social life."