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Letters

Sri Lanka Report

The article ("Sri Lankan Tamils Tell Tales of a Desperate Diaspora," cover story, April '97) is the most comprehensive that I have read. The article is sensitively written, very educational and constitutes a valuable reference.

AMBIKAIPAKAN BALASUBRAMANIAM, CINCINNATI, OHIO, USA, Ambi.bala@UC.Edu

Your coverage of the Tamil refugees is brilliant. The Refugee Council in London has published a report which may interest your readers called, "Protection denied: Sri Lankan Tamils, the Home Office and the Forgotten Civil War." This report follows a 1996 fact-finding mission to the country by a Council delegation. The report calls on the UK government to show a humanitarian attitude towards Sri Lankan asylum seekers. Copies are available from Katharine Knox at (44) 171-820-3038 in London.

RAKESH MATHUR, LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

It Took Courage

A double congratulations and commendation: one for your new layout and second for your publisher's article ("Spare the Rod and Save the Child," publisher's desk, February '97) condemning corporal punishment. Both took courage and insight, and I applaud them!

CHRISTOPHER LARGENT, DELAWARE, USA

Recalling Ramana

Your recent article about Sri Ramana Maharishi is superb (Ramana Maharshi and His Teaching of "Who Am I," sage of arunachalam, March '97). Many are those who revere Maharshi and who seek Self-Knowledge-Jnana-entirely free of the concepts and remoteness which are sometimes erroneously associated with this clear wisdom. His simple, yet profound, method of Self-inquiry ("Who am I?") and the showing that the abidance as That is, indeed, our natural state are invaluable for those who yearn for deep peace and lasting happiness.

MASTER NOME, SOCIETY OF ABIDANCE IN TRUTH,
CALIFORNIA, USA

Singing Calypso's Praise

I see personally no controversy in teaching Kaise (Calypso) to Hindu children in Trinidad and Tobago. Both East Indian and Afro-Caribbean cultures have been rather blended in T&T for ages, especially in the recent years. Thus Calypso, despite its being thought of as strongly rooted only in African culture, has, in my opinion, received a lot of influence from the East Indian culture and arts and also from other cultures. The influence is seen in the lyrics, language, music, instruments and in the race of the artists. All of it is Trinidadian culture and should be appreciated by all Trinis as well as foreigners.

MIKA, HELSINKI, FINLAND, jansson@cc.helsinki.fi

Something Is Missing

I'm an 18-year-old student from the University of Natal-Durban. The price of your magazine almost tripled over

the newspaper format. I, along with many others, am no longer able to afford it. How can you just suddenly increase the price of a religious magazine which is meant to be accessible to almost every Hindu? The old format was very nice and reasonably priced. It had quotes from our scriptures at the bottom of each page which the new one seems to be lacking.

V. MOODLEY, DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA,

MOODLEYV17@scifs1.und.ac.za

* We have added a Vedic verses section each issue in Diaspora.

Are Tamils Hindus?

There is a misconception in South Africa [and Mauritius, too] that there is an indigenous difference between Hindus and Tamils. Tamils are Hindus who speak the language Tamil. Hindus, therefore, may speak any language, be it Tamil, Hindi, Telugu, Gujarati, Kannada, English, etc. The religion of the Hindus is Hinduism. A person who speaks Tamil may belong to Hinduism or to another religion.

KRISHNASWAMI R. GOVENDER, GREYTOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

Far from Home

A Nepali like myself, living very far from my homeland, is very glad to see that I can count on Hinduism Today to be informed of Nepalese news every once in awhile (article on Himalayas).

KIAN DHUNGANA, EDITOR, DIYALO, (A NEPALESE COMMUNITY NEWS MAGAZINE), 15 FOXACRE ROW, BRAMPTON, ONTARIO, L6V 3V7 CANADA

Movies Worse than Pageant

Indian movies are much more provocative than most Hollywood movies. No one is forcing women to enter beauty pageants, ("Bangalore Battlefield," cover story, March '97), nor people to attend or support them. With so much ignorance about birth control, poverty and pollution in India, these beauty pageant protesters ought to be promoting birth control, helping the needy and cleaning up unsanitary public facilities.

HENRY KARNILOWICZ, CALIFORNIA, USA

Make it Appealing

We feel your new magazine will help Hindus and non-Hindus transcend the negative poverty-stricken image of Hinduism that most Westerners seem to have--dirty, weird-looking people with greasy, stringy hair in weird-looking, messy clothing (or the lack of it), who are worshiping snakes, stones, rivers or other incomprehensible symbols because they were presented without an explanation of their deepest significance. Giving Hinduism the face it deserves is of the utmost importance. The Hindu image must be raised to the level that Westerners have for Buddhism and Buddhist monks: welcoming, and definitely not weird. Only then, we believe, will Westerners find Hinduism appealing.

SHRI GURUDEVI SWAMI SAVITRIPRIYA, SHIVA-SHAKTI
ANANDA ASHRAM, JALISCO, MEXICO

Some Things to be Proud of

The sadhus in Sarangpur very much recall the visit and talk of Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami in which Swamiji referred to the center as the largest training center for Hindu sadhus anywhere. We use your magazine to inform our sadhus on ways to implement our Hindu teaching in young generation's minds in foreign countries. The London Swaminarayan temple

and the Akshardham complex in India have been grand successes in bringing people closer to Hinduism.

SADHU CHAITANYAMURTIDAS, AKSHARPURUSHOTTAM
SWAMINARAYAN TEMPLE, AHMEDABAD, INDIA

Corrections

* Bagmati river photograph, page 12, April '97, was by Thomas L. Kelly.

* The correct home page address of Sri Ramana Maharshi's ashram in India is [http:// www.rtanet.com/ramana/index.htm](http://www.rtanet.com/ramana/index.htm)

Letters, with writer's name, address and daytime phone number, should be sent to:

Letters, Hinduism Today

107 Kaholalele Road

Kapaa, HI 96746-9304 USA

or faxed to: (808) 822-4351

or e-mailed to: letters@HinduismToday.kauai.hi.us

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