

EVOLUTIONS

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AWARDED: The "Best of Industry" to Ayush Herbs Inc. on June 11, 1997, by the Himachal Pradesh state government in India. The award was received for innovation in technology, quality assurance, providing jobs and environmental conservation. Ayush Herbs was founded by brothers Virender and Jitender Sodhi to provide quality ayurvedic herbs for a growing world market. Their herbs are grown organically in the Himalayas.

Awarded: US\$1.9 million in a Pennsylvania, USA, jury judgment September 4 to a woman who charged she was sexually assaulted 30 times by Swami Rama of the Himalayan Institute in 1993 when he was 66 and she was 19. The Institute was assessed the high damages because, according to the Associated Press, "Although she told an institute official about the assaults and the institute was aware of similar complaints by other women, the center did nothing to stop it."

SENTENCED: Premananda in Tamil Nadu state, India, to two life prison terms. A Sri Lankan, he was convicted on August 20, 1997, of having raped at least 13 disciples at an ashram retreat he set up after fleeing civil war in Sri Lanka.

TAKEN TO COURT: Lord Brahma Himself in Ajmer, India. With a Puranic story--involving Brahma's wedding a second 'wife'--as

its fulcrum, a court is addressing a dispute over customary sharing of offerings between a Savitri temple and the nearby Brahma temple in Pushkar. The Savitri priest, Benigopal Mishra, feeling financially burdened, stopped sharing with the Brahma priest on grounds that Brahma "should not expect His estranged wife to provide for him."