

# SANATAN JYOTI



**Bharat Sevashram Sangha of North America**

**522 Garfield Avenue, Aurora, IL, 60506**

**Tel: 630-301-6039    [www.bsschicago.org](http://www.bsschicago.org)**

**2021**



### **Ten Messages**

**What is the goal of life?**

*Self-realization, Universal emancipation*

**What are real sins?**

*Weakness, fear (defeatism), cowardice, meanness, and selfishness*

**What is religion?  
strength?**

*Self-sacrifice (self-abnegation), self-discipline, adherence to truth and continence*

**What are the real sources of**

*Patience, fortitude and endurance*

**What is real death?**

*Forgetfulness of the Self*

**What are real assets?**

*Self-confidence, self-reliance and self-respect*

**What is the right life?**

*Self-realization, self-remembrance and self-consciousness*

**What are real enemies?**

*Indolence, slumber, procrastination, inertia, lustful senses and passions*

**What are real virtues?**

*Heroism, virility, manliness and aspiration for emancipation*

**What are real friends?**

*Energy, enthusiasm and perseverance*

# *Eternal Light*

Annual Magazine  
of  
**BHARAT SEVASHRAM SANGHA**  
of NORTH AMERICA



**CHICAGO ASHRAM**

**26th Annual Foundation Day**

**November 25, 2021**

# *Sanatan Jyoti*

## Acharya Swami Pranavananda in Light of Upanishad



Translated by Mita Banerji from the book by Dr. Sitanath Goswami

In the month of January 1924, Brahmachari Binod got his Sannyasa (ascetism) from Swami Govindananda Giri Maharaj in Prayag's Ardhakumbha (the ceremony that happens every six months in Prayag). Before that, he started his Brahmvyagata (pursuit of knowledge of God) and got the title of Acharya.

There is no doubt that he chose the path of Sannyasa (ascetism) for the betterment of human being. In 1923, he wrote "No matter where you are, you should imagine that you are in a Himalayan cave". He explained in many ways that he got liberation by virtue of his firm determination. He explained that a determined mind is equivalent to a peaceful solitary mountain cave. It does not matter what kind of responsibility is given to someone or where one is staying, always feel that you are in a cave of the Himalayas. A beautiful perfect life is not the fruit of austerities alone. Where there is determination, there is liberation. In the Upanishad, it is said that The Almighty only dwells in people's heart, where there is devotion.

A knowledgeable theologian teacher is the only one who can provide proper teachings. Indian teaching does not give only worldly prosperity and provide the path of worldly pleasure. Where is the humanity of a human being, what is the ultimate aim of life, how to achieve liberation, how to be free from the fear of death, and how to get real peace and happiness - the Indian Vedic knowledge and the teachings of the Upanishads provide answers to these questions.

It is at the attraction of money and so-called prosperity, people engage in unlawful activities, get misled, become narrow minded and do not hesitate to sacrifice their innate ideology, honor and dignity. But the money does not give them peace and happiness. Even after knowing all these, what attracts the people to get engaged in such evil unsocial activities? The only answer is to accept the Indian Vedic ideology and follow the teachings of the Upanishads to improve the miserable mind set of the pursuit of money at any cost. This is the only way of bringing peace, prosperity, and real happiness in this crazy turbulent world.

One can see the condition of people in all the countries of the world. People even with abundant money and riches end up living an empty aimless life. As they pursue their endless dreams of acquiring more wealth, they cannot even have good rest and sleep at night. They depend on destructive habit-forming drugs to get tranquility and sleep. Their family lives are strained, and the families become broken. The younger generation in these families do not get adequate parental guidance and supervision. This results in poor quality of next generation of human beings who resort to stealing, violence and many other destructive means for survival. Unfortunately, even in India, the land with profound messages from the Vedas and the Upanishads, people, especially the rich ones, are emulating the lifestyles of other rich people in the pursuit of so-called success in life.

Therefore, it is necessary to try to overcome the evil instincts with proper guidance, discipline and balance. This is possible with inspiration in spiritual thoughts, proper religious practices and maintaining appropriate discipline in life. The trend in the erosion of the virtuous qualities of life was evident even when the Acharya was here. He had helped many to become religiously inspired and gave guidance to lead a quality life. The thirsty people got peace after getting his teachings and blessings. He had changed many people's life and brought peace and happiness. It is the responsibility of the next generation to follow his ideology and guidance to spread his words to the people of the world.

It should be remembered that the Acharya did not talk only about spiritual growth, but also asserted the need for worldly prosperity. The Acharya indicated that a person should be happy, calm, and prosperous, and in turn bring about happiness and all-around prosperity in all families, villages and in the entire country. Spiritual wisdom in combination with acquired scientific knowledge and sincere efforts will work best for the country.

Acharya Pranavananda wanted all around wellbeing for everyone. He dedicated his entire life for this goal and worked tirelessly. Therefore, his well-disciplined firm strong heroic body decayed only when he was 45 years of age. Acharya's life was an embodiment of his teachings.

He used to say that my children's hard work is their inspiration and their time of rest. They will take rest when they die, not before that. They would have worked more if the day would have been a little longer. Work should always be done with judicious use of the time, not by checking the time.

NorthStar of Life

## Yogiraj Sri Sri Gambhirnathji

Compiler: Sri Nityananda

(1)



Numerous devotees are keen to learn about the life and work of Baba Gambhirnathji. Unfortunately, there is very little material available on him. There is some reference to his life in the book titled 'Bharat er Sebak' (The Attendants of India). A lot more information is available in a book that was written on it as some of the readers may be acquainted with. This book is titled 'Yogiraj Gambhirnath' written by one of his blessed disciples, respected Sri Akkhaykumar Bandyopadhyay. Recently, Sri Barun Kumar Nath presented me with a copy of that wonderful book. It is definitely the blessing of

Yogiraj that I was fortunate enough to have learned more about his life, and I would like to share his blessings with my fellow disciples. In an attempt to share this knowledge with others who are keenly interested in learning about his past life, I will publish it periodically in Pranab.

At this point, it may be noteworthy to mention that not only is this book ancient but it's rendition is also difficult for common understanding. Considering the current reader, it's language has been modified to suit the needs of the present.

(2)

It is no news to those who know about Yogiraj Gorakhanathji that he had established an order of Nath-Yogi. This clan of Yogis not only merely exist but also are the beacons of spiritual leadership. Not only in India, but their influence can be felt in other countries like Afghanistan, Tibet, and Bangladesh. Many places have temples, ashrams and monasteries in Yogiraj's name. This clan of Nath-Yogis wander from place to place with little or no belongings. In remote forests and mountains, urban areas, cremation grounds and holy lands, they have established Shivlinga and idols of Kali following the ideals of Gorakhanathji. Epitomes of self-renunciation and abstinence, this clan of spiritual leaders have successfully instilled love and respect for Mahadev, the greatest God of Yog, knowledge and self-renunciation, the controller of creation and destruction, the bestower of knowledge and love, and his consort, Mahashakti, the one whose grace can make the impossible possible, The Nath-Yogis have preached and encouraged the common man to worship them. They have successfully explained the underlying philosophy of Yog and knowledge, transforming them into principles of love and devotion for the common man to imbibe and improve their spiritual status. Throughout India, Nath-Yogis have established many temples, the most noteworthy being the one located in the city of Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. The temple is named Gorakhanath Mandir. Legend says that Yogi Gorakhanathji was engrossed in Yog and meditation at this very spot way back in time when it was a forested land devoid of people. It is almost impossible to make a concrete estimate of the time period or the duration of his meditation.

It is doubtful whether there was even a tiny settlement when Gorakhanathji began his meditation here. As per local stories, it is most likely that people were attracted to this holy spot which eventually gave rise to settlements. Slowly, it grew and has acquired this present urban state. Borrowing from his holy name, this city and area was named Gorakhpur. It is believed that this math (monastery) and temple was present since the days of Gorakhanathji. With time though, everything has modified to some extent. The Yogis who were known to have no possessions built a simple yet physical establishment. Due to the proximity of local population, this can no longer claim to be located in a remote place. Despite these, it can be easily seen that simplicity of lifestyle of Guru-Shishya tradition since the time of Gorakhanathji is still maintained in the math and temple, and its reverence and holiness are intact.

The unique quality of this temple is that there is no idol of a deity. Neither is there any idol of Shiv-Shakti nor is there any idol of Gorakhanathji. There is an ashan-bedi (altar) in the temple. The Param Devata (ultimate one) is worshipped daily following all applicable rituals. Everyone is welcome to imagine his/her own deity on the empty altar and offer their prayers, or they can meditate

on the formless spotless supreme being. To the author, the bedi feels like a form that encompasses every form, a place where everything may reside, where every qualifying quality can be dissolved, where one may hope to be in the refuge of the Param Padam (lotus feet) and the Param dhaam (ultimate resting abode). Depending upon the worshipper, he or she is free to envision any form of divine play and enjoy it. Alternatively, they may engross themselves in deep contemplation of the supreme one who is the unifying spot of all diversity, the indivisible, endless, indistinguishable ever-happy form.

The philosophical path shown by Gorakkhanathji is neither dwaitya nor adwaitya. His followers believe in the worship of a variety of gods and goddesses. Alongside, they believe that the ultimate theory is beyond opinion, which drives them to respect all diversity and remain free of all communal disharmony. This central temple of a clan of Yogis is indicative of a central idea- the idea that no matter what their belief, every person is welcome to worship in this temple. Shaiva, Shakta, Vaishnav, Ramai, householder and sanyasi, believer of form and formless, self-righteous and pious, are all welcome to consider this temple as their own and offer their prayers according to their belief system.

The famous book entitled 'Gorokkho Siddhanta Sangraha' (Decisions of Gorokkho) describes 'Nath- Theory' as follows:

"Nirgunang bambhage cha sarbabhagehadbhuta nija|  
 Madhyabhage swayangpurnastasmai nathai te namah||  
 Muktah stabanti padagre nakhagre jivajatai|  
 Muktamukttagatermukta sarbatra ramate sthirha||  
 Bambhage stithah Shambhu sabbe Vishnustathaiba cha|  
 Madhye nath parang jyotishtad jyotirmattomoharam||"

The one who journeys with the non-dual reality on his left side and the personal God on his right side, but chooses to embrace both sides and becomes the epitome of this central path, who is indescribable and all powerful, to him we bow. Liberated souls' worship at his feet, while the attached ones dwell at his nail tips in their world of birth and rebirth, happiness and sorrow. The one who is above speed and physical constraints, who can break the barriers daily and reside in all countries and all timelines in a calm and contented state, to him do we bow. Shambhu is on his left and Vishnu to his right, while he resides in between blissfully emitting light of the Brahman. May that divine light wash away my ignorance and darkness.

This Nath is the deity of this temple. He is the Lord in the temple of each living being. He is the formless ultimate reality as much as he is the qualitative personal reality. He is outside the realm of cause and effect, as much as he is within it. He is the one and the many. He is the past of every living soul as much as he is the present and future. He is beyond the bondage of a name, yet he is plays through many names and forms. The great energy that emits from Him, finds its home and refuge forever in Him alone. He wraps this boundless energy within Himself, staying calm,

immovable, self-contained and blissful. Such a Nath is worthy of being worshiped by a wise yogi and shall be revered as a daily example. The yogi worships him devotedly out of the purity of his heart; through knowledge, he perceives this Nath as the supreme theory. Those who want to adopt these yogic ways end up in overcoming worldly attachments and sorrows. They can successfully break away from their self-created concepts of good and evil. Jogiguru Gorakhanath presented this value system to his devoted disciples and followers.

This supreme truth and ultimate theory are worshipped and upheld in Nath Temple. The religious services that are performed in this temple are considered as a part of the pursuit of outward worship. But those who attempt for true mumuksha or freedom must offer their body, senses, soul, mind, heart and intellect as ingredients for the worship of Nath. They must offer all of these for his service. All thoughts must be directed towards Him, and one must be ready to be absorbed in His thoughts for whole life. Devotion, knowledge and yog are all directed to realize Him.

When a devotee has spent considerable time and attained samyak, then can he earn the title of Nath. (In other words, this title is not hereditary. Only when a devotee has reached a certain stage of spirituality, can he earn this title). Achieving this stage of Nathism is the goal of the yogi. Those who are able to reach this stage are also referred to as 'abhadhuto'. Members of Gorakhanath clan are often referred to as Nath-Yogi, Siddha-Yogi and Abudhuto. They consider Shiv as Adinath, the ultimate Nath. Shiv is the primeval guru; he is guru to the yogi, guru to the devoted, guru to the wise, guru to the lover – 'sa purbbesamapi guru kaleshambacchedat' (Yog Sutra). The realized yogi attains the qualities of Shiv within himself. Gorakhanath, having attained self-realization, became Shiv-incarnate and achieved Shamyak Nathism. Other yogis of his community have emerged in the search of yog and knowledge and has earned the gratitude of humanity. Numerous names of these realized souls can be found in the books of Yogshastra. All temples and maths were initially established as centers of yog. Unfortunately, many lost their former spiritual status due to the lack of followers as per the opinion of Akshaybabu. But Gorokhanath Math still maintains its reverence as a center of yog pursuit. This math remains as the biggest center of the Nath-Yogis till date.

In order for a math to function properly and uphold its values, it needs a leader. Every aspect of the math functions under his supervision. He is revered as the representative of Gorakhanathji by sadhus and householders as well. He is referred to as Mohanto or Mahonto. A new Mohanto is appointed according to the principles of Guru-Shishya tradition. His morality, spirituality, knowledge of the scriptures, dedication to values, character and personality have a strong influence on the moral and spiritual atmosphere of the math.

A disciplined system of operations coupled with a neat and clean environment leaves a positive mark on the minds of the common man. Many young persons, who are in search of spirituality and the knowledge of yog, those who renounce the world to free themselves and learn the theories and practices of yog sadhana arrive at the ashram and seek refuge with Mohanto. It is the duty of the leader to ensure that these men are guided properly so that they can achieve their spiritual goals. Grooming the new along a spiritual path is the main objective of establishing a math. In his book, Akshaybabu mentions that if there is any shortcoming in achieving this goal, then the purpose of the organization will be defeated. The entire functioning of the math thus depends on the capabilities of the Mahant.

The book states that the math at Gorakhpur is exemplary in this matter and retains its fame even today. Multiple influential wise men have served as the Mahant and have successfully spread the values of Yogi Guru Gorokhonath among the common devotees. Many have gained knowledge and practiced yog shastra in this monastery and attained mastery through their dedicated practice. Inspired by their renunciation, abstinence, yog practice and calm personalities, innumerable religious men and women have ventured on the path of yog practice. Traveling to distance pilgrim spots, these yog sadhaks have preached about the greatness of this math. Some of them have achieved samyakhhab in yog practice and have been entitled as Siddhayogirath. For centuries, this monastery, laid on the pure land where Yogiraj attained enlightenment, has been the beacon of yog shastra. Word about its greatness has spread throughout the country.

(3)

In the nineteenth century, Guru Golapnath was the residing Mahant and had gained fame as a great wise man. The ashram was very simple in those days with very few modern touches. Only those who desired to renounce the world and live a life of abstinence were allowed to live in the ashram. That did not mean that householders were not allowed to visit the ashram. People from the surrounding areas visited the ashram every Tuesday. They offered their prayers and flowers at the feet of the idol of Srinathji. During festivals and other auspicious occasions, people from distant areas came to pay their respects at this ashram. At that time, there was no permanent structure in the ashram. Urbanization had not infiltrated the ashram. There were small huts (as used by sadhus) as shelter for the travelers. There were adequate arrangements for serving traveling sadhus. The ashram was in the midst of mango orchards and flower gardens and other vegetation. The entire area was protected with as much care as any ancient, forested land. It was protected from the hustle and bustle of the outer world. The devotees remained engrossed in their own quests and in the proceedings of the temple. The fame of Gorakhpur Gorakhanath temple and its guardian of yog practice spread through the whole land within and outside Hindus as well.





## THE BHARAT SEVASHRAM SANGHA OF NORTH AMERICA

(A Registered Not-for-Profit, Socio-cultural, Educational, Spiritual & Philanthropic Organization)

Founder: Acharya Sreemat Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj F.I.D. Tax-exempt: 36-3867090

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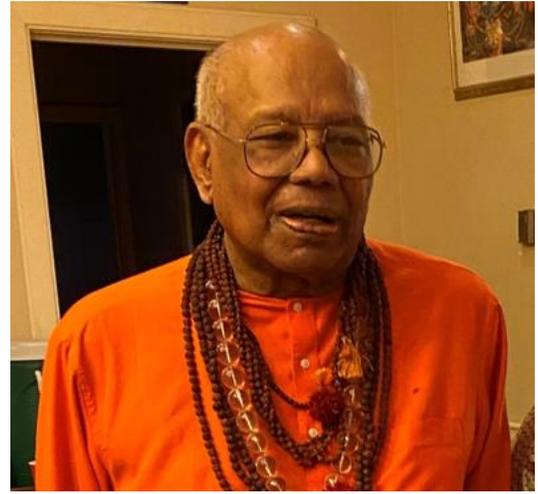
International Head Office: 211 R.B. Ave., Cal: 7000 19. India. Tel: 244-05178

Dear Devotees,

November 15, 2021

I appreciate the services rendered to the community by Bharat Sevashram Sangha of North America (Chicago Ashram) organized by all the volunteers. It is a proud privilege to greet the 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bharat Sevashram Sangha of North America. I am happy that you all are taking care of all the activities of the Chicago Ashram in the absence of a monk in charge. The Ashram's main worship hall is remodeled and murtis are kept separately in different area makes it more visible and beautiful. I felt very good when I was spending time there in July this year.

The Ashram is a living organism like that of a whole man; within it is living spirit that guides the mind and intellect. Guru's reverence is the key to self, the spiritual physician to whom one delivers the self leads to destruction of "I", "Me", or "Myself". Selfless service is a karmic-cleansing recipe in Kaliyuga. A desire for living alone in hermitage should be realized only



metaphorically. The stable, peaceful mind is the best cave. As such, one can have inner stability and serenity while going out to perform services for the world. Guru Maharaj's blessing is always with you all.

As India's leading monastic institution, Bharat Sevashram Sangha is dedicated to the service of humanity and is a source of comfort and strength for millions around the world. I convey my best wishes and would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all members, devotees, and well-wishers.

With Divine Love,

Swami Purnatmananda

Chairman of BSSNA



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November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020



Dear Devotees,

I first pay obedience and adoration to the Lord of the Sangha Acharya Sreemat Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj, without His blessings, I would have been a complete nonentity- a unredeemable soul.

On behalf of Bharat Sevashram Sangha of North America, I would like to thank all the volunteers, sponsors, and the donors for their contributions. We are humbled by your generosity, both your volunteerism and financial donation. Thank you for your unwavering support.

Special thanks to Pal's family members and Ketaki Kar, the project of remodeling the main worship hall couldn't have been as successful with their involvement. Thank you so much for volunteering more than 300 hours from the month of February through June.

During these four months in the main worship hall Ram Mandir and Hanumna and Ganesh mandir was buit. The background cloth of the main worship area and the idols cloth also has been changed. Volunteers made the Ashram a better-looking place. Our artist volunteers Prianka Rudra and Nayana Rajni Saha who created the Dhakhineswer Kali bari background with using thermocol for Ma kali murti area. Sroddha Patranabis, Pinki Chatterjee and Surabhi Gupta for decorating the Ram Mandir, Ganesh and Hanuman Mandir and other mandir's domes. Shubhomita Senmazumdar, who has donated her time and talent putting new cloths on murtis.

The ceiling paint was cheeping off for few years. It has also been painted.

Mr. Rabi Bhattacharya has sponsored \$5000 for building the Ram Mandir. We were thrilled to have his support. Through your donation we have been able to accomplish to complete all the mandirs and continue working towards the purpose of the organization. Mr. Bhattacharya and other donors truly made the difference for us, and we are extremely grateful!

We are so grateful for the support of our sponsors for sponsoring food during five days Durga puja from October 11 through October 15 and Kali puja.

I would next like to acknowledge the invaluable and priceless input made by Mrs. Piyali Sarkar for translating an Ashram's Bengali book "PUJYA SRIMAT BARO SWAMIJI R UPADESHAMRITA" in English. Bharat Sevashram Sangha has many devotees and monks who are Guyanese. Hindu Milan Mandir in Minnesota, they had also requested us to translate few Ashram's bengali books in English. This year Chicago Ashram is going to publish the English version of the book. Publishing of the will be sponsored by America Sevashram Sangha in New York and Minnesota Hindu Milan Mandir.

There will be virtual winter camp for youth from Dec27 through Dec3, 2021 and free online school from next year January 2022.

Thank you and best wishes for 2022.

Sincerely,

Sucheta Sadhukhan, President

*Sucheta Sadhukhan,*

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**Tarpan At Ashram**



## THE BHARAT SEVASHRAM SANGHA OF NORTH AMERICA

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November 24, 2021,

The Bharat Sevashram Sangha (BSSNA), Chicago is a tax-exempt non-profit organization dedicated to the educational and spiritual enlightenment of its members. While writing about this past year, I reflected on BSS's mission and the foundation's guiding principles.

Now, more than ever before, it is important to unite in the name of spirituality and selfless service in such a tumultuous year. The BSS community and swami ji's have all been massive support systems for so many throughout the world, especially this year, and have touched countless thousands of lives. BSS is so proud of the efforts to continue these acts of service and spiritual education, and we are grateful for your continued support and engagement. Whenever we feel downtrodden or discouraged by the state of world affairs, may we continue to remember Swami Pranavanandaji's teachings about seva (or service) and helping the helpless or less fortunate.



This year, in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, BSS has successfully distributed more than 20,000 masks, as well as sanitizer and many different types of disinfectants to about 40,000 people in remote areas. For 14 days after the shutdowns in March, BSS fed about 32,000 daily in Kolkata and sent dry food to almost 10,000 people. At our Aurora, IL location specifically, during the pandemic, we were so fortunate to have a safe, masked, socially distanced Durga puja and Kali puja.

In the coming year, I pray and hope that with the blessings of all the monks and Swami Purnatmananda ji Maharaj and their support, we will continue this spirituality and ongoing acts of kindness in the face of COVID-19. There have so many hardships in 2020 & 2021, as many people have lost their jobs and lives due to the pandemic, but the dedicated work of our volunteers has been inspiring.

Thank you and best wishes for 2022.

Rajendra S Patel,

Vice- President, BSSNA

## Sanatan Dharma (Hinduism) By Bharat Pal, Board of Director



Sanatan Dharma, commonly known as Hinduism, is an ancient religion that originated on the Indian Subcontinent. There are over 1 billion Hindus in the world. Hinduism can be practiced by anyone, there is no requirement to be a Hindu.

Hinduism is polytheistic, however, at it's core it teaches sacrifice, faith, honesty, integrity, love, respect, and discipline. The Holy Trinity of Hinduism includes 3 Gods and their consorts. First, the Creator is known as Brahma Ji and his consort



is Saraswati Ji.

Saraswati Ji and Brahma Ji are very important to the Hindu religion, as Brahma Ji is the Creator of the universe and Saraswati Ji is the Goddess of knowledge. There is an annual Puja for Saraswati Ji on Vasant Panchmi in February and on that day we pray to Saraswati Ji for success in education.

Next, Vishnu Ji is the Sustainer and his consort is Laxmi Ji, who is the Goddess of Prosperity. Vishnu Ji has 12 Avatars, or different incarnations of him. There are two incarnations of Vishnu Ji that are revered in Hinduism, namely Lord Krishna and Lord Rama. Lord Krishna spoke the Bhagwat Gita to



Arjuna during the Mahabharat. Lord Rama's victory over Ravana was documented in the Ramayana. These scriptures, the Ramayana and the Bhagwat Gita, are important to learn to better understand Hinduism. We can go over these scriptures in future camps.



Finally, Lord Shiva and his consort Parvati Ji are worshipped with their sons Ganesha and Kartikaya. One avatar of Shiva Ji is Hanuman Ji who accompanied Lord Rama during his battle with Ravana. Hanuman Ji's is often praised for his strength as he was able to carry a whole mountain to help Lord Rama during the Ramayan. Ganesh Ji is also widely worshipped and many Hindus pray to him when they wake up.

Again, we will discuss Hinduism further at other camps as this article is a basic description of the religion.



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**Swami Ishatmananda from Vedanta Society at Bharat Sevashram Sangha**

## Acharya Swami Pranavananda in Light of Upanishad



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A knowledgeable theologian teacher is the only one who can provide proper teachings. Indian teaching does not give only worldly prosperity and provide the path of worldly pleasure. Where is the humanity of a human being, what is the ultimate aim of life, how to achieve liberation, how to be free from the fear of death, and how to get real peace and happiness - the Indian Vedic knowledge and the teachings of the Upanishads provide answers to these questions.

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One can see the condition of people in all the countries of the world. People even with abundant money and riches end up living an empty aimless life. As they pursue their endless dreams of acquiring more wealth, they cannot even have good rest and sleep at night. They depend on destructive habit-forming drugs to get tranquility and sleep. Their family lives are strained, and the families become broken. The younger generation in these families do not get adequate parental guidance and supervision. This results in poor quality of next generation of human beings who resort to stealing, violence and many other destructive means for survival. Unfortunately, even in India, the land with profound messages from the Vedas and the Upanishads, people, especially the rich ones, are emulating the lifestyles of other rich people in the pursuit of so-called success in life.

Therefore, it is necessary to try to overcome the evil instincts with proper guidance, discipline and balance. This is possible with inspiration in spiritual thoughts, proper religious practices and maintaining appropriate discipline in life. The trend in the erosion of the virtuous qualities of life was evident even when the Acharya was here. He had helped many to become religiously inspired and gave guidance to lead a quality life. The thirsty people got peace after getting his teachings and blessings. He had changed many people's life and brought peace and happiness. It is the responsibility of the next generation to follow his ideology and guidance to spread his words to the people of the world.

It should be remembered that the Acharya did not talk only about spiritual growth, but also asserted the need for worldly prosperity. The Acharya indicated that a person should be happy, calm, and prosperous, and in turn bring about happiness and all-around prosperity in all families, villages and in the entire country.

Spiritual wisdom in combination with acquired scientific knowledge and sincere efforts will work best for the country.

Acharya Pranavananda wanted all around wellbeing for everyone. He dedicated his entire life for this goal and worked tirelessly. Therefore, his well-disciplined firm strong heroic body decayed only when he was 45 years of age. Acharya's life was an embodiment of his teachings.

He used to say that my children's hard work is their inspiration and their time of rest. They will take rest when they die, not before that. They would have worked more if the day would have been a little longer. Work should always be done with judicious use of the time, not by checking the time.

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**Ram Mandir opened During Ramanavami Puja**

Prof. Rabi Bhattacharya from Arizona donated \$5000 towards the Ram Mandir of Chicago Ashram in memory of his late wife Bithika Bhattacharya.



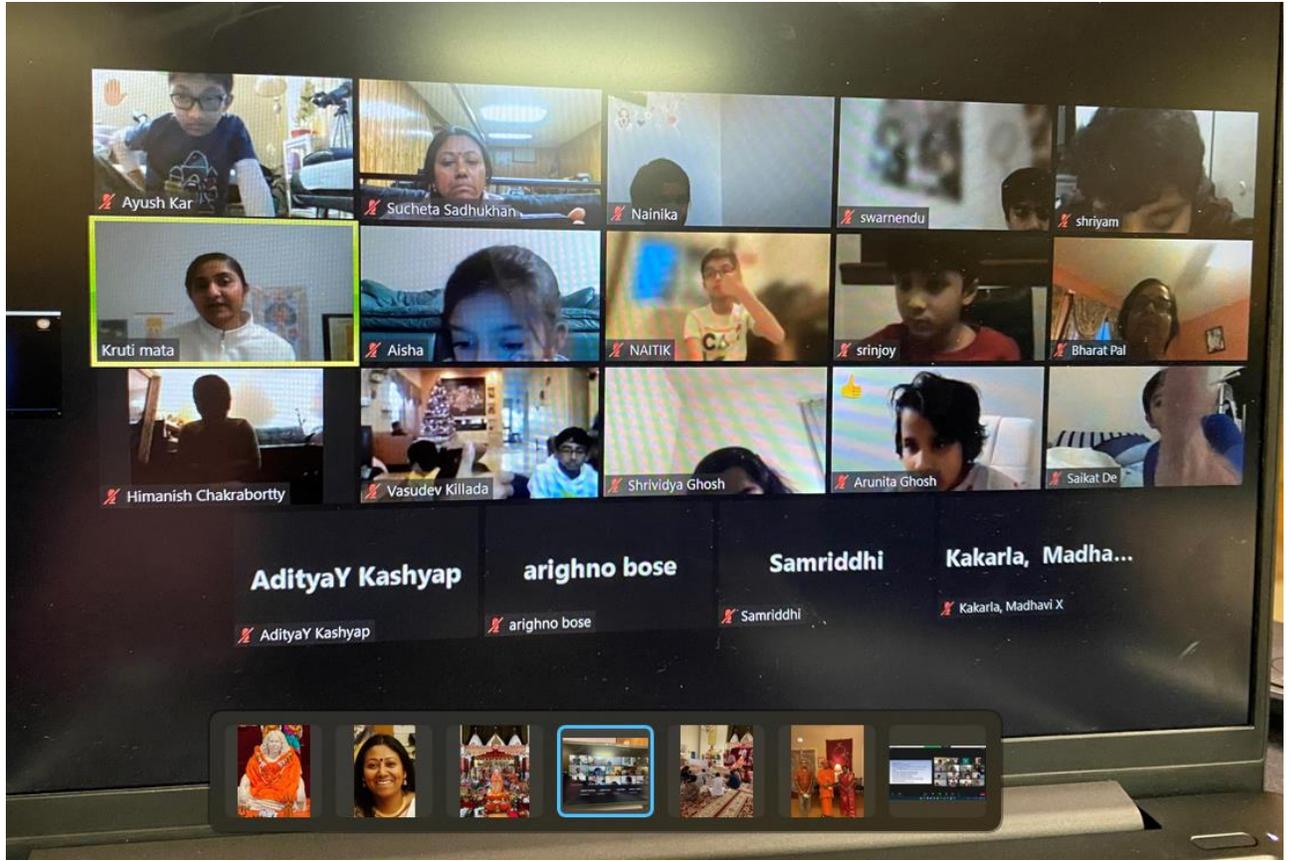
## ***2021 Activities at Bharat Sevashram Sangha of North America During Pandemic***

We are proud to inform you as prescribed by the Hindu religious calendar, most of the major Vedic rituals was performed throughout the year of 2021.

**The list of the major worships conducted is given below:**

- **Trishul Purnima, January 28, 2021**
- **February 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday 2021, Saraswati Puja and virtual cultural program, participants names are:**  
Manjishtha Sarkar , Mouktik Sarkar, Bishakha Sinha, Aarohan Dutta, Monisa Paul, Shomili Mitra, Aditya Kashyap, Tanush Paul, Sambodhi Saha, Pritika Ganguly, Manaswita Kodali, Sanjana Kashyap, Ahana Bose
- **February 27, Maghi Purnima, Birthday of Ashram's founder Acharya Sreemat Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj**
- **March 11, Shiva Ratri**
- **April 11, Basanti puja and Ram Mandir opening ceremony**
- **May 14, Akhsaya Tritiya, Purna Pratishtha of all the idols after remodeling**
- **July 24, Guru Purnima Puja**
- **August 30, Janmastami**
- **September 11, Saturday, Ganesh Chaturthi**
- **September 9<sup>th</sup> Tarpan (Prayer to the ancestors)**
- **October 11, Monday, Shashthi (The autumn festival for Goddess Durga began)**
- **October 12<sup>th</sup> through October 15<sup>th</sup> Sri Sri Durga Puja**
- **October 19<sup>th</sup> Tuesday, Kojagari Lakshmi puja**
- **November 4<sup>th</sup> , Kali (Goddess Kali) Puja and Diwali puja**
- **Youth Camp December 27<sup>th</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup> (Virtual)**

Ashram offers special prayer services (e.g. First rice eating ceremony for infants, first writing instructions for young children, blessings to new vehicles, Shradha, offered for deceased parents etc.) as requested by devotees, House warming rituals at people's new house.



### *Online Youth Winter Camp from December 27 Through Dec 31, 2021*

29 kids attended the online winter camp. They learnt about positive thinking, negative thoughts, waste thoughts and necessary thoughts. Kids were introduced to yoga, meditation, and daily habits.

To continue teaching kids online during pandemic, Ashram started online Saturday class. During the class kids will be taught their real existence about being a soul not as a body and thought management. Thought is our destiny.

Every other Saturday kids will be taught about Srimat Bhagwad Gita. The teaching of Bhagvad Gita is all about Dharma of the soul, which is applicable to all religion.

*Vasudev Kutumbakam. The whole world is a family.*





## **Amader Bharat (Our India)**

Anima Majumdar (translated by Dr. Diptarka Majumdar)

Birds fly lost in their thoughts

Tree leaves sway in step with a rhythm

The wind blows engrossed in its own imagination

Animals in the forest keep to themselves

Flower petals bloom and fall in harmony with their virtue

Lakes shimmer resplendent with smiling lotuses and lilies

And butterflies and bees hover and wander as they please

But, what about humans and their consciousness and desires? The stories of their birth, death and workmanship? Their needs encompassing society, family, love, duty, humanity, shelter and faith? Their vagarious life paths strewn with truth, untruth, devotion, prayer, contribution, charity? Their ever-changing emotions fleeting between the big blue sky, the floating white clouds, the bright, shimmering moonlight, and the deluge from the rain clouds?

The journey of worldly life needs to be adorned with the rhinestones of love, goodwill, respect and devotion. The journey itself is arduous, the terrain littered with pitfalls and hardship and the trek across it harassing and exhausting causing the mind to sometimes dither, sometimes wither and lament from fear, agony and despair. Desire, hope, disappointment, and consternation form the foundation of the altar for human prayers and enmesh the mind and soul in the worship of divinity. This worship and the concomitant devotion and respect for a higher power ushers a sense of detachment and also springs forth many questions. It is a soul cleansing endeavor steeped in love, goodwill and gratitude and its serenity and soothing effect founded in abiding faith.

Bharat Sevashram Sangha, founded by His Holiness Swami Pranabanandaji Maharaj, has had a notable influence on this human journey founded in faith and devotion. Swamiji recognized and actively endeavored to leverage the interconnections between education, culture, art and societal values to shape and direct practical aspects of daily life to elevate society through his ideology and teachings. The Sangha and its wide-ranging humanitarian and social activities are a culmination of Swamiji's active ideological engagement for greater good of society and civilization. It is through this organization that Swamiji desired to portray and uphold the cultural values of the Vedic civilization which are consolidated in faith and devotion.

For ages, the spirituality of Vedic sages and seers has helped establish on the soil of Bharatvarsha, an eternal philosophy and faith whose defining banner reads “Respect and Devotion”. Through worship and prayer they have endeavored to highlight the importance of serving the helpless and downtrodden amongst us as well as address the endless human curiosity about the mystery of life on planet earth and beyond. It is through this conduit that the humane grace and essence of divinity enters day to day life. It is this unshakeable faith that acknowledges the human manifestation of divinity through “Pitri Devo Bhava” and “Matri Devo Bhava” as espoused in the Upanishads and which are quintessential representations of Vedic spirituality and wisdom. Śrāddha or Shraaddha (श्राद्ध) is a Sanskrit word which literally means anything or any act that is performed with pristine sincerity and absolute faith. In the Hindu religion, this word is also used to refer to the ritual of paying homage to one's ancestors (Sanskrit: Pitṛs), especially to one's parents upon their passing. Respect and Devotion are cornerstones of these rituals observed to pay obeisance to departed souls.

A key element of the Hindu rituals to honor departed souls is Pind-daan. It is believed that Pind-daan is indispensable for the salvation of departed souls. The city of Gaya is a holy place of Hinduism where Rama, along with Sita and Lakshmana, offered Pind-daan for his father, Dasharatha. Gaya has since remained a site of key importance for the performance of Shraaddha and the Pind-daan ritual for Hindus.

In the ancient and storied history of mankind, rivers have played an incontrovertible role in cradling and nurturing civilizations from Mohenjodaro to Mesopotamia. The role of the great Indian rivers Indus, Ganges, Krishna, Kaveri and others in the growth and sustenance of the Indian civilization from pre-Vedic ages is well known. Gaya is located on the western shore of the Phalgu river where the Vishnupad temple is also located while Sitakunda is to the east of the river. Exactly opposite to the Vishnupad temple on the other bank of the Phalgu is a small temple depicting the spot where Sita Devi is purported to have performed Pind-daan for her father-in-law, King Dasarath; hence the name Sitakunda. Hindus believe that the performance of Pind-daan in Gaya in memory of a departed soul enables it to emerge from the bondage of its attachment to its past physical existence and move on peacefully in its journey to the metaphysical realm.

Gaya has, therefore, over the ages become the prime location for the performance of funeral rites and Pind-daan and a sanctum for Hindus. This had led to a large number of people visiting Gaya for pilgrimage as well as the performance of last rites of their elders and ancestors. On their trip to Gaya, visitors were vulnerable to facing difficulties and being manipulated by local traders and vendors as well as some unscrupulous priests or Pandas of the temples. To ease the hardships of such travelers, Swami Pranabanandaji Maharaj, with the help of few local sannyasis and social servants established Gaya Sevashram in 1924. Later, the Bharat Sevashram Sangha in Gaya was built and established on ten bighas of land in Swarajpuri. The Gaya location started offering hospice, free homeopathic treatment and school

facilities which continue to this day. The school is currently administered by the government of the state. As also stated by His Holiness Pranabanandaji Maharaj, the holy city of Gaya is India's premier pilgrimage and location for "tarpan" (offering of prayers for departed souls). Like Lord Buddha who attained enlightenment here, many ascetics and seers, over the years, through their prayers and penance in this city have appointed it as a sanctum sanctorum of pilgrimage sites for Hindus. Gaya was also the spiritual playground of Swami Pranabanandaji's spiritual guide or guru, Swami Gambharnathji, who was blessed with supernatural spiritual prowess. Swami Gambharnathji had established his practice of penance and spirituality in Kapildhara. Today, Bharat Sevashram Sangha has firmly established itself as a prominent philanthropic organization with a global footprint and pedigree as a change agent through its involvement in education, health and socio-religious aspects of the communities it operates in.

Divinity resides in the human spirit as refulgence adorned with the purity of our thoughts and our feelings of love, respect, devotion and goodwill. This resplendence is serene and sedate and helps us sooth and steady the mind and soul in the face of the turmoil and tumult of life. The scarcity of faith and respect in today's increasingly divided and agitated world is making the human mind frail and feeble. The old, the young and the youth are now unable to live and breathe freely. Humanity has fallen victim to soullessness and morality, values and societies at large are struggling for survival. Swami Pranabanandaji Maharaj had established Bharat Sevashram Sangha on the pedestal of faith and devotion with the intention that a sense of service, morality, respect and devotion would provide the lodestars for thought and action in day-to-day life and that the Sangha, the country and its people would arise and awaken to the service of mankind. Bharat Sevashram Sangha's globalized presence through its establishments across the globe has enabled it to have an uplifting impact on people through its services encompassing multifarious facets of human life.

Swami Vivekananda had famously written "Jibey prem karey jei jon, shei jon shebichhe Ishwar" (One who serves humanity, serves God). While the dulcet tone of this beautiful quote effortlessly resonates with every mind, the execution to translate it into reality on the ground is much less facile thereby causing the essence of this magnanimous ideal to remain enmeshed in and waylaid by the complexities and convolutions of life and society. Therefore, despite all planning, thought and action in the many meetings and associations, the hapless, helpless and downtrodden sections of society continue to remain in want for respite. Hence, the great sages and saints who graced the holy land of India, endeavored to establish a society underpinned by an eternal value system whose defining cornerstones were to be "Respect and Devotion". A social environment that is respectful, devoted and tolerant does not suffer from dereliction of duty for the fellow being and is not guilty of inadequacy of rightful thought, rightful action and compassion.

Unfortunately, today's society is getting increasingly entrapped and enmeshed in violence, hate, egocentricity and selfishness. We pray that in India, this great land of yore, may humanity arise and blossom

in all its sweetness through its eternal principles and values, its culture and the cumulative efforts of all its people and organizations. May respect, devotion and faith pervade hearts and souls to make life stories mellifluous. May the afflictions of arrogance, selfishness, despair and poverty be washed away by the sunrise of spiritual awakening. May there be, in the holy Indian land, a proliferation of the eternal faith, dispersion of respect and devotion and harmony amongst all.



Ganesh Chaturthi At the new Ganesh Temple



Hanuman Mandir Inside The Main Worship hall



Kali Puja at the Ashram

## Principle of Three



Prabhat Tekriwal, Ph. D., MBA

Lakeville, Minnesota (USA)

Minnesota Hindu Milan Mandir

**Summary:** The Principle of Three is axiomatic in nature. The author attempts to explain how this principle can help one fight the superiority complex as well as any inferiority complex at the same time, thus helping one lead life with a more balanced mindset.

According to Principle of Three everyone and everything is at number two. What does it mean? Take any attribute such as beauty, aroma, ugliness, disdainfulness, height, education, riches (wealth), cost, kindness, charitability, knowledge, reading ability, comprehensibility, sports ability, hatefulness, lovingness, lovability, smartness, etc. (any ability or disability, any feature), a person (or a thing) would find another that will possess better of the same attribute (number one) and would also find yet another that will possess worse of the very same attribute (number three).

What do we learn then? The number-one person (or thing) makes one humble, helps one fight the ever-existent ego. From the number-three person one can derive a sense of accomplishment (satisfaction) that one is “not so bad.” There are people (number-three people) who are managing life with less of the attribute (say, wealth for instance).

How else can the Principle of Three help? I shall share a personal example. On December 11, 2020, my 25-year-old niece’s nuptial ceremonies were completed as per tradition (in Jharkhand, India). Our intention was to spend about Rs. 15 lakh total. During events and negotiations leading up to the wedding (on December 11, 2020) one of the persons from the groom side put pressure on my brother by stating that he was to spend Rs. 50 lakh for his own daughter’s wedding on December 9, 2020 (just 2 days prior to my niece’s scheduled wedding). I suggested to my brother that he leverage the Principle of Three. In the next conversation my brother said to the same person on groom’s side – it is good that you decided to spend Rs. 50 lakh on your daughter’s wedding; someone might spend Rs. 5 crore or Rs. 50 crore while yet someone else would spend Rs. 5 lakh or only Rs. 5 thousand even; both you (groom-side person) and I (my brother) are number-two people. Everyone is. And, thenceforth the groom’s side person in conversation was managed well. His ego was in check. (We landed up spending about Rs. 20 lakh when the wedding was all done.)

Is Bill Gates, the co-founder of Microsoft (or Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon, or Elon Musk, the founder of SpaceX and co-founder of Tesla), the often-stated richest person of the world really “the richest?” I will let the readers realize their own answers with some hints from my side to consider:

- a. How does the reader define “being rich?”

- b. Is time a factor?
- c. How limited is the domain in consideration?

**ADDENDUM**

My dear brother-in-law, Gaurav Motani, after reading this article raised an excellent point, “How should Principle of Three not be construed as being happy with being average?” And, I decided to put an addendum in response:

**EFFORT IS PARAMOUNT.** For, lack of effort would render one rather “invalid.” The Bhagavad Gita verse 2:47 advises us never to resort to inaction. This article attempts to advise readers that after putting one’s best effort, one should be willing to **ACCEPT** what transpires in order to Create Peace in one’s mind. One has right to perform one’s duties and not to the desired or intended fruits thereof. An effort shall bear fruits (consequences) according to the Law of Nature (“Law of Karma”). The fruits or the outcome depends upon several inputs, some of which are not in control of the effort maker, albeit unbeknown to the effort maker often.

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**BHARAT SEVASHRAM SANGHA  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRE  
VILL+P.O.-MAHENDRAGANJ**

**Poultry Hatchery Project, Training Hall and Park Funded by**

**Mr. Rabi Bhattacharya from Arizona, USA has donated \$150,000 towards rural development and buy the land for the project.**





**Bio Flock Fishery Project Funded by**

**Mr. Bishnu Datta, President, GRABU, INC**

GRABUU ( Gram Bangla Unnayan Udyog ) has decided to partially or fully fund the following projects jointly developed by GRABUU and Bharat Sevashram Sangha (BSS) at their sites, Pranabananda Gramin Bikas Kendra at Harekhali, Midnapur and Mahendragunj, Gangasagar, Sunderban:

I. Harekhali, Midnapur Site:

1. Tailoring Training School cum production Center:

Cost of five sewing machines:  $4 \times \text{Rs.}8,500 + 1 \times \text{Rs.} 8,400 = \text{Rs.}42,400$

Six-month Salary for the Master tailor to train 10 local women every six months: Rs.18,000.

2. Computer Training Center:

1. Cost of a 4 GB RAM Desktop legacy Computer ( from manufacturers like DELL, HP, Toshiba, etc. ) : Rs.30,000.

This computer will be added to the five other locally fabricated computers at the center. These six computers will be used to run the following training courses:

- \* TALLY Accounting Software
- \* SITA - a software used on general business office work world wide
- \* DITA - Darwin Information Typing Architecture.

GRABUU will pay for the the salary of a qualifier TALLY software practitioner @ Rs.3000.00 per month for six month to train 12 Higher Secondary graduates every six month. Tally - trained personnel are very much in demand for bookkeeping and tax preparation for small businesses in the market these days.

Following the suggestion of GRABUU this site has decided to add one other training course named "Computer Hardware and Repair".

As there is no Broadband connection is not available on the site GRABUU will pay for one time connection charge: Rs.5,000. Monthly charge for buying data would be borne by the site

Total amount of GRABUU's funding for the Horekhali Site is: Rs.1,13,400

II. Mahendragunj, Sardwip Site

1. One-year salary of the Pranabananda Primary School Teacher, M/S Anuva Maity : Rs.60,000
  2. Educational Toys and Gadgets for the "Education Lab / Library" attached to the Primary School : Rs.8,500.00
  3. Funding to buy Fruit Samplings for the Nursery Project: Rs.50,000.00
  4. Dollar to Rupee exchange rate difference of GRABUU's earlier funding: Rs.14,000  
( Exchange rate changes everyday, GRABUU has no control on it. As GRABUU is a us-based Foundation, we, by IRS rule make transactions only in dollars. Therefore, GRABUU won't pay the difference in the future ).
- Total amount of GRABUU's funding for the Mahendragunj Site is: Rs1,32,000  
Total funding for Harekhali and Mahendragunj site at this time is: Rs.1,13,400 + Rs1,32,000  
= 2, 45,400.00
- By today's Sept. 29, 2021, dollar to Rupee exchange rate which is \$1 = Rs.73.36 Therefore, total funding for the two sites in dollar = \$3,345.00





# Bharat Sevāshram Sanghā of North America

A spiritual brotherhood of monks and selfless workers devoted to the service of humanity. **Chicago**

630-301-6039



## Free Online Youth Camp (6-18 yrs )

**Dec 27 – Dec 31 from 3:30pm -5pm**

### Self Empowerment Power of Thoughts

It will help you understand how mind works, what influences it, and how to protect it from negative influences and direct toward positivity. Explore the journey of mind. Learn easy meditation.

Interactive questions from Ramayana  
Visit [bsschicago.org](http://bsschicago.org) for registration

### Learn Yoga, Mental Health, Diet from Sanmoy Mukhopadhyay, Yoga Therapist from California

Class will continue five more days if kids are interested

**Thoughts are the seeds of our personality  
We are what we think.**

**Are we nurturing these seeds with love, care and compassion?  
Or do we just leave them to take its course depending on the situations, people and society?**

**BHARAT SEVASHRAM SANGHA**  
 (A Regd. Socio-Educational-Cultural-Philanthropic & Spiritual Org)  
 India's Leading Monastic Mission  
 INT'L. H.O. 211, Rash Behari Ave., Kolkata-19, India, Ph. :(033)2440 5178/2327  
 Founder: Acharya Srimat Swami Pranavanandji Maharaj

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| <b>Minnesota</b>   | Hindu Milan Mandir,<br>501 Walnut St, Farmington, Minnesota 55024<br>Phone: (651) 365-0331, Email: <a href="mailto:satyab@comcast.net">satyab@comcast.net</a>                                              |
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