Brahman Samaj of North America—Born at Boston

"Today the Brahman Samaj of North America is born" declared Mr. Nirmalendu Choubey, the Founder-President, with the characteristic glow in his eyes. The event took place at the residence of Drs. Anita and Anil Dubey at Wilmington, a suburb of Boston, MA. A description of this festive meeting is given elsewhere in this issue. Boston was the appropriate venue for the event, if you relate it, at least in name, to the “Brahmins of Boston.”

The Brahman Samaj of North America (abbreviated as BSNA) will be a non-profit, non-political, socio-cultural society operating mainly in the North America. The main aims and objectives of the BSNA are: (i) to promote a sense of kinship amongst all the Brahmans of North America and elsewhere, (ii) to promote cultural, social, and family interaction amongst all the members, (iii) to promote and uplift the traditional Brahman values of life amongst the members, and encourage the younger members to learn and adopt those values, within the frame work of modern scientific attitude, (iv) to promote respect for education amongst the children of the members, and (v) to promote goodwill, understanding, and friendship between members of the BSNA and all other communities irrespective of cast, religion, race, and national origin.

The birth of the BSNA has been greeted with great enthusiasm by the community all over the USA and Canada. Mr. Choubey has been working very hard for several months for an organization of the brahmans in this subcontinent. For him, it was a dream come true. Some major milestones have already been achieved as described in the letter by the President published in this issue. Some other meetings took place before the Boston meeting. A description of some of those meetings is also published in this issue.

It is important to emphasize that the BSNA is a socio-cultural organization with the sole objective of providing a platform for social and cultural interaction amongst the members. Some people are apprehensive that the BSNA will promote the infamous cast system of the Hinduism. On the contrary, it would promote goodwill and understanding with members of the other communities. Many of us are members of other organizations such as a professional association, or an Indian or a regional association, or a language based association. Each organization aims at bringing together people of common interests without implying hostility for other interest groups. For example, if I am a member of a Physics association, it does not mean that I am against math or engineering, or if I am a member of an Indian association, it does not mean that I am hostile to other countries. Similarly, membership of the BSNA does not imply an approval of the evils of the Hindu cast system or animosity towards non-brahmans.

While the BSNA will project our traditions and heritage with pride, it will not promote the attitude that we totally lock ourselves up in our traditions. We will flow with the modern scientific thoughts and the technological progress. Our traditions and our heritage define the framework of our personalities but science and technology develop it. In short, we derive strength from our past and move forward into the future.

We also celebrate the birth of the “Brahma-Bharti”, the news letter of the BSNA. The inaugural issue is in your hands. The success of the later issues is also in your hands. It is your journal, like the BSNA that...
From your President

A lot has happened since my last communication in June. Along with this newsletter, you should receive a copy of the Brahmans’ directory. You may recall, when I first approached many of you, publishing a directory was the only objective. By and large that objective has now been achieved. Even though the number of participants has nearly doubled within last six months, we still have a long way to go. To increase our numbers still further, a mass mailing campaign is already underway. Over 5000 households are involved. We urge you to make every effort you can to enlarge our group.

You are reading right now the first issue of Brahma-Bharti, our quarterly newsletter. With its publication, we have met another major milestone. We hope you find it enjoyable as well as a useful medium of communication. I certainly have. I am communicating to you right now through this newsletter. This cuts down our costs as well. We hope you will make full use of this facility.

We will hold our first annual convention on July 1, 1995 in New Jersey. We are engaged in negotiations for a suitable place and will advise you of the exact plan in the spring issue of this newsletter. To discuss the plan further, a get together is planned at the Agnihotri residence on January 14th. Please call Mrs. Neelam Agnihotri at (908) 607-0587 if you can join us. In any case, the convention will be a two-day extravaganza in which the second day is reserved for a picnic. Everyone, including the local guests, is expected to stay together at one place during this two-day period. This will give us a chance to get to know each other better. There will be something for every age group. However, there will be special emphasis on activities catering to the needs of our young adults and teenagers.

Along with fun, there will also be room for some serious discussion. We strongly recommend that everyone amongst us consider attending this convention no matter how far away or close we live from the convention site. We all have a lot at stake and we must do all we can to ensure its success. The registration form for the convention is printed in the newsletter. I invite you to take full advantage of the early bird special.

To cover our costs we are now looking for sponsors. We shall also accept advertisements for the Brahma-Bharti and the next supplement of the directory which is planned for July 1, 1995. To serve you better, now we have a formal BSNA organization. On September 3, 1994 Brahman Samaj of North America (BSNA) was established. This event took place at the residence of Drs. Anil and Anita Dubey at Wilmington, MA. The details are included elsewhere. A law firm has been engaged to incorporate this organization with a Not-For-Profit Tax Exempt status. We hope to accomplish that in 1995. Now we urge you to become a member. After all it is our organization. The membership form is printed in this issue. A life membership is strongly recommended. We have achieved some major milestones despite formidable odds.

It is my great pleasure to thank all of you for your support which contributed to formation of the BSNA. I express my gratitude to Shyam Shukla for preparing the directory. Vinod Tewary for bringing out the Brahma-Bharti, and Ram Bhargava for his help in the two publications. I am grateful to Ram Bijay Prasad Dubey, Arvind K. Pathak, and Gupatvihar Pathak for pledging financial support for Brahma-Bharti which gave us enough courage to move forward in this venture. The BSNA evolved after a series of meetings which were hosted by Leela and Ghanshyam Pandey (Chicago), Suneta and Prabhakar Misra (Washington DC), Urmila and Trayambak Bajpai (New Jersey), Neeti and Dheerendra Shukla (New Jersey), Urmila and Lakshmi Shankar Dubey (Montreal), Shanti and Gupuelswar Pathak (Indianapolis), Alok Chaturvedi (Indiana), Nirmala and Shyam Shukla (Calif-ornia), and finally by Anita and Anil Dubey at Boston where the BSNA was born. I am grateful to all these friends. Wish you all a happy New Year—Nirmal.

From your editor

This is the first issue of the Brahma-Bharti. I hope you enjoy it. Being the first issue, it will have many flaws. Not that later issues will be perfect. However, we can thrive for a modest perfection with your support. I would welcome your comments—compliments as well as criticisms, and contributions. This is your journal, for you and by you.

Brahma-Bharti is the official newsletter of the BSNA. It will be financed and supported by BSNA. However, the Brahma-Bharti will be editorially independent. This is in keeping up with the tradition of our country of origin, India, as well as our adopted country, the USA. It is consistent with the intellectual freedom which the brahmans have always enjoyed.

First, let me give you a brief preview of our editorial policy. The Brahma-Bharti will be a medium of communication for the BSNA. In addition, we will try hard to make it a journal of enjoyable and informative reading. We will publish all the official communiques of the BSNA and lots of other reading material. A sample of the diversity of the material should be apparent from this issue itself.

The opinions expressed in the Brahma-Bharti would not always reflect the official stand of the BSNA. We may occasionally venture into a healthy criticism of the BSNA or the community which should be regarded as a self-criticism. All the unsigned articles in the journal should be regarded as originating from the editorial staff. A signed article from a correspondent or an author will contain the views of that writer and would not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the Brahma-Bharti or the BSNA. If the authors so desire, they can write under a pseudonym, but we must have the full name and address of each author. We will not disclose their identity without their permission. Apart from following the usual journalistic norms, we would not impose any intellectual restrictions on the views expressed by the authors. Hopefully, and in all probability, such unpleasant issues will not arise. We invite you to contribute to Brahma-Bharti. Please send articles on any topic. Writings for and by the children will be particularly welcome. We also invite your comments and suggestions (criticisms as well as compliments) on the articles published in the Brahma-Bharti.

Please send news of the community events, any honors or awards to any members of our community, achievements of the children, or family events such as births or weddings. In other words, any news which you would like to share with other readers will be welcome. After all, this is your journal.

The items intended for publication must be submitted to the editor electronically—either by e-mail or on a floppy disk (IBM) in ASCII text format. The articles should be normally limited to 500 words, and other items should be limited to 200 words. An electronic edition of the Brahma-Bharti (without commercial advertisements) is available by e-mail. To receive the electronic edition, please send your e-mail address (see p 7 for addresses).

I hope you will accept the spelling “brahman” which we have used in the
Meditation is a process of meditating upon the God, who is within us in the form of our Atman or Self, and unite with Him. The modern medical science has found that meditation has many benefits. It relaxes the mind, reduces blood pressure and makes life more enjoyable.

Meditation is usually practiced three times a day, that is, (1) early in the morning after shower but before breakfast, (2) at noon before lunch, and (3) in the evening before dinner. A beginner should start with 10 minutes of practice each time increasing the duration to 30 minutes by the end of a year.

 Technique

To practice meditation you should sit in a comfortable position either on a chair or on the floor. If you want to sit on the floor you should use a small rug or a towel for your seat, set aside just for this purpose. A quiet room or a corner of a room in your house should be designated as a meditation place. Eventually your mind will be conditioned for tranquility as soon as you enter your meditation room. The seat for meditation should not be unstable or movable. You should sit erect so that your back bone is vertical to the seat and yet your body, arms and legs are relaxed. Put your right hand over the left hand with palms facing upward on your lap.

Meditation is a process of meditating upon God, who is within us in the form of our Atman or Self, and unite with Him.

Alternatively, put your hands on your knees with Alternatively palms facing upward. Breathe slowly and deeply so that your breathing does not create audible noise. Imagine your favorite flower in full bloom inside the cavity of your chest. In India the lotus flower is the mystical symbol of the divine Atman (Self) which resides in our heart. Therefore, the Hindus concentrate on the lotus flower. If other thoughts are trying to enter your mind ignore them but don’t fight with them and try to concentrate on the flower again. Stay in this posture with deep breathing and concentrating on the flower for about 10 minutes or longer. In the beginning it will be hard to meditate for a long time. But with practice, tranquility will be achieved in a few minutes.

Constant practice at least once a day is a must. It may take six months to a year before you observe the benefits. Your mind will experience tremendous tranquility, and your body will feel very light while you are meditating. After sometime you will be looking forward to your time of meditation every day.

Punditji had just come from India. It was snowing hard when he decided to buy a car. Some body advised him to buy snow tires. "What good would that do?" Punditji wondered, "Wouldn't they melt away?"

An apple a day will keep the doctor away, provided you aim it right.

A couple went to a psychotherapist. "My husband thinks he is a dog," complained the wife. The psychotherapist said to the husband, "OK, would you please come on the couch."

"NO!" The wife protested, "He is not allowed on the couch."

A man told his doctor that his wife is suffering from loss of speech. The doctor said that there was nothing he could do to cure it and she simply had to wait. The man said, "Cure it? I want you to prolong it."

The doctor said to the patient's wife, "To be honest with you, I don't like the look of your husband."

"Neither do I," said the wife, "But he earns a good salary."

Punditji used to watch movies on TV. His doctor advised him to get more exercise. Now he watches tennis on TV.

A doctor fell in a well and broke his leg. Moral of the story: Doctors, take care of the sick please, but leave the well alone.

There are no clocks in the leaning tower of Pisa. What good is it to have the inclination but no time?

A very fashionable lady was seen walking around in Delhi, just wrapped with the latest newspaper. She wanted to dress with the times.

Doctor: "If I consider surgery essential, can you pay for it?"
Patient: "If I can not pay, will you still consider the surgery essential?"

The teacher told the student that there was only one thing wrong with his essay. It was redundant, repetitive and it said the same thing twice.

One morning Suraj said to his mother that he did not want to go to school. "Why not?" Asked the mother. "The kids laugh and make fun of me." Suraj said with obvious fear. "You have to go to school my dear," said the mother, "Because you are the Principal."

Why did Ram take a ladder with him on his first day to school? Because he was going to a high school.

What is the difference between a kindergarten class and a Municipal Board meeting? Adult supervision.

Why don't the college students miss their classes? They need their sleep.

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**The poetry corner**

**Didi**

(By Anuranjita Tewary)

Blades of an electric fan blowing around different thoughts for so long. You tried to reach in to help me out. Pain. Pull the plug. Those horrid feelings gone like papers by an open window.

**From Ramcharitmanas**

(By Tulsidas)

(in Hindi)

Bole vihans Mahesh tab, gyani mooth na koi.
Jo jus jub Harihar chahain, so tas teh kchan hoi.

(Approx. translation)

Lord Mahesh then smiled and said, “No one is basically wise or foolish. At any instant, one acts in a manner, determined by God”
The Brahmans have to .... preserve the best in the Hindu religion and (engage) themselves in the service of the community

As has rightly been said, the Brahmans are Dwijas, they have to earn their Brahmandom by disciplined spiritual pursuits. In this tradition, the persons like Valmiki and Vashishtha earned their Brahmandom and became Brahmashirs.

During the period of foreign domination, which, unfortunately extended to a millennium, many evils and superstitions crept into Hindu religion and the Brahmans, as the keepers of the Hindu way of life, bear a major share of the blame. In the recent past, they have been persecuted and maltreated, some times rightly and at times wrongly. The Brahmans have to compensate for their failures to preserve the best in the Hindu religion and I think of no way better than engaging themselves in the service of the community at large. It is only then that we can reclaim our lost glory and build a bright future. Let me hope that Brahma-Bharati will become a powerful instrument in accomplishing this.

Sincerely, Dr. Ram Chaudhari (Editor-Vishwa)

I am very happy to learn that you will be editing a quarterly News Letter, BRAHMA-BHARATI of BSNA. It is a very worthwhile cause and is a step in the direction of organized attempt to carry on our heritage in this distant land.

A brahman, as far as I understand, is one who is a seeker of the highest Reality, Brahma. Gita enumerates the loft characteristics of brahmans. It has not been a theoretical construct, but a reality, which a limited group of highly advanced people ardently followed. In Boston, a group of intellectuals, who were greatly motivated by these ideals organized a society with the name

A brahman ..... is one who is a seeker of the highest Reality, Brahma.

'Brahmins of Boston'.

Dr. Arnold Toynbee, considered to be the greatest of all western philosophers and authority on world societies, has praised the 'brhaman society' as the only perfect society of humans, that ever existed anywhere on earth. I send my hearty felicitations to BSNA and you, and hope that in the highest and best traditions of brahmans, Brahma-Bharati will propagate only the noblest and purest thoughts and practices of Hinduism, and will thus guide its readers through words and actions.

Sincerely, Bhu Dev Sharma, Professor & Chairman, Math Dept., Xavier University; Editor-in-Chief: 'Vishva-Vivek'

From your editor: On behalf of the BSNA and the Brahma-Bharti, I thank Dr. Ram Chaudhari and Prof. Bhu Dev Sharma for their good wishes, and, on behalf of the BSNA, visit the Washington area interested in the Brahman Samaj gathered at the Bowie home of Prabhakar & Sunetra Misra. Those present included Jitender Prakash & Niti Dubey of Greenbelt, MD; Awadh & Sunita Sharma of Laurel, MD; Lalji & Chandrawati Mishra of Germantown, MD; and Kanhaiya & Manju Shukla of Greenbelt, MD.

The issues discussed centered upon the relevance of such an organization in the USA. The consensus was that for the sake of our children the existence of such a forum is very important. It was felt that there is a need to instill pride in our heritage and culture, especially as it relates to the somewhat alienated younger generation. One way to accomplish this, for example, is to perform Satyanarayan puja, or other kinds of pujas, that would help bring families together, and at the same time be instructive for the younger generation. The existence of a forum -that brings like-minded people together- would also facilitate networking amongst our people.

Some members lamented the fact that there is little unity among the Brahmans, hailing originally from Hindi speaking Indian states, and who now reside in the Greater Washington area.

The meeting on August 20, 1994, was viewed as a starting point in the right direction. It is hoped that in the future there will be other meetings of this kind and the assembled group would expand.

BSNA Meetings

Chicago
(By Dr. Ghanshyam Pandey)

Mr. Nirmalendu Choubey, President of BSNA, visited Chicago on Sunday, June 12, 1994. A meeting of interested families was held at the residence of Dr. Ghanshyam Pandey, 7519 Hamilton Avenue, Burr Ridge, Illinois. About 10-12 families participated in the meeting. Mr. Choubey explained the aims and objectives of the BSNA and the need and importance of publishing a directory. He emphasized that it will be helpful to have such a directory for many reasons. People present generally welcomed this effort. However, some people expressed the opinion that the family information sought for the directory included too much personal information, and this may discourage many people from getting themselves listed. Mr. Choubey generally agreed and responded that people should provide as much information as they felt comfortable with. Dr. Hans Upadhyay was designated as coordinator for BSNA in Illinois. The meeting was followed with a dinner.

Washington DC
(By Dr. Prabhakar Misra)

On August 20, 1994, several families in the Washington area interested in the Brahman Samaj gathered at the Bowie home of Prabhakar & Sunetra Misra. Those present included Jitender Prakash & Niti Dubey of Greenbelt, MD; Awadh & Sunita Sharma of Laurel, MD; Lalji & Chandrawati Mishra of Germantown, MD; and Kanhaiya & Manju Shukla of Greenbelt, MD.

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Boston
(By Dr. Anita Dubey)

We had the privilege of hosting the inaugural meeting of the BSNA on Sept. 3, 1994, at our residence in Wilmington near Boston. The families who attended were: Sunita and Pradeep Shukla, Manjul and Kailash Shukla, Mali and Awadh Pandey, Shanta and Virendra Pande, Sangeetika and Raja Vashishtha Tripathi, Neelima and Prasoon Chaturvedi; Nirupma and Devendra Dubey, Uma and August Auditya, Usha and Vijay Kapila, Anuradha and Akhilesh Bhargava, Sharad and Vinod Tewary (from Boulder, CO), Nishi and Alok Tripathi, Rajni and Anoop Bhargava (from New Jersey), and Mukul and Nirmalendu Choubey (from Syracuse NY). Nirmalendu was the inspiring person behind the whole idea of having a group like this.

The evening was great fun with food and a cultural program. The cultural program was conducted by my 11 year old- Juhi, and Anuranjita Tewary (a freshman at MIT). The highlights of the program included bhajans, geets, and poetry recitals. We all swung to some delightful renderings of purabi, chaiti, and kajri. We all felt we had
## Brahman Samaj of North America (BSNA)
### Directory/Membership Form

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YES, I (We) want to be a BSNA member. Enclosed is a check in US dollars to BSNA for (please circle one)

- $250 (life)
- $25/ Yr
- $5/ Yr (for full time students)

[one copy of the directory and a yr subscription (4 issues) to the Brahma-Bharti free to members]

NO, I (We) do not want to a BSNA member but enclosed is a check of (please circle one)

- $15-one copy of the directory
- $10-one yr subscription (4 issues) to the Brahma-Bharti
- $25-both

(No fee required for inclusion in the directory)

Mailing Address

Phone number (Day):  
(Evening):  
Fax:  
e-mail:  

(Signed)Mr/Ms______________________________Date__________________

I am willing to play an active role in this effort. Please have someone call me--Yes/No (Please circle one)

Please sign and mail this form to

BSNA
P.O.B. 371
Manlius, NY 13104-0371

(Please turn over for the database registration form)

For question and comments please contact your nearest area coordinator or call N. Choube at (315) 682-5013
Brahman Samaj of North America  
(BSNA)  
Database Registration Form  
Note: Please first fill out the registration form for the directory.

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A brief family history

Details of children’s academic and other accomplishments/interests

I understand that the database will primarily be used to the benefit of brahman community. I absolve BSNA or anyone connected with this effort from any wrongdoing. I have the authority to sign this waiver.

(Signed) Mr/Ms ________________________________ Date __________________

Please sign and mail this form to:  
BSNA  
P.O.B. 371  
Manlius, NY 13104-0371

For question and comments please contact your nearest area coordinator or call N. Choube at (315) 682-5013

Referral Form

Please send details of the BSNA and the registration forms to following (names/addresses/phone numbers)

1. ________________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________________
Dr. Dwivedi has over 60 publications in national and international peer reviewed journals and has presented over 60 papers at national and international meetings. Dr. Dwivedi also co-owns with Dr. Gary Omodt, Professor emeritus in the College of Pharmacy, a U.S. Patent on “Anticonvulsant Substituted Quinazolone.” His current research project entitled “Effects of Cocaine on the Liver” is supported from the National Institutes of Health.

Dr. Dwivedi is a member of a number of professional societies. He serves as a member of the Legislative Committee for American Association for Cancer Research, and is on the membership committee of the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists. Dr. Dwivedi has received recognition for Excellence in the Research and Services to students by the College of Pharmacy and the F.O. Butler Award for Excellence in Research by South Dakota State University.

Dr. Dwivedi was also a speaker at the 1993 Sewery Faculty Colloquium. He has served as President of Sigma Xi, the Scientific Research Honor Society during 1993-94. This year he was selected as Phi Kappa Phi faculty lecturer. This honor is given to only one faculty each year by the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society of South Dakota State University chapter.

In addition to his professional expertise, Dr. Dwivedi is a scholar and resource person on Hinduism and India in the local community. He is a Hindu priest and has performed Hindu weddings across the U.S.A. He has a deep interest in the international events in the local community and is one of the organizer’s of International Day (Festival of Cultures) at South Dakota State University.

Dr. Dwivedi’s advise to the young generation is to be determined, dedicated, industrious, and a person of highest possible moral and ethical standards. Please do not live for materialistic belongings but seek spiritual knowledge of higher learning. That is what Brahmans are to be. Just by birth one does not become Brahman but one should strive to maintain the highest standards set by our forefathers.

Let me share with you my own little success story. In October this year, I was given a multicultural award for, according to the citation, “Excellence in Science” by the Colorado Department of Community Relations at Boulder. Earlier, I also had the honor of receiving a Pride of India award for my contributions to sciences.

Sorry for blowing my own trumpet, but, if I don’t do it, no shortcut to success. Pt. Onkar Nath Thakur, one of the greatest musicians who ever lived, did his daily riyaz (practice) almost until his last day. Quite often he would practice just the first note “Sa” for several hours. Once he was asked why he spent so much time on a single note. “Because,” he replied with exemplary modesty, “I can’t get it right.”

On another occasion he was asked what was the best composition that he ever heard. “One that is most exhilarating,” said the maestro, “and I can come no where near composing that kind of music, is the sound of river Ganges.”

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BSNA ANNUAL CONVENTION-JULY 1-2, 1995
IN
NEW JERSEY
A two-day fun-filled extravaganza for the whole family
plus a
SPECIAL TREAT FOR YOUNG ADULTS AND TEENAGERS
Please register today
Registration fee (for BSNA members): Until Jan 31, '95: $39 per person or $99 per family; Until March 31, '95: $49 per person or $129 per family; Until May 31, '95: $59 per person or $159 per family; Until June 30, '95: $69 per family or $189 per family.
Registration at the Convention Center: $15 surcharge. Nonmembers please add $25. Please call your nearest representative or a member of the Annual Convention Committee.
Annual Convention Committee: Neelam Agnihotri-(908)607-0587; Anoop Bhargava (609)896-1423; Ramakant Chaturvedi (610)861-5952; Kailash Chandra Sharma-(718) 379-5449; Dhirendra Kumar Shukla-(908) 665-8590.

REGISTRATION FORM

Please register the following person(s):

____________________________________________________________________

No. of young adults-single (age 20-30)____ teenagers (age 13 to 19)____ children (age 1 to 12)____ toddlers?____
Please describe if anyone in the party has an interest in performing:_______________
BSNA MEMBER: YES / NO (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE)
ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER:____________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________________________________
Enclosed is a check to BSNA in the amount of:$________ (includes one night accommodation, all meals, and entertainment).
Please mail the check and the form to: Mr. D.K. Shukla, 10 Southgate Rd. #2A, Murray Hill, NJ 07974. Phone: (908) 665-8590

From
BSNA
POB 371
Manlius, NY 13104-0371

inside...