

CHINMAYA PRADĪPIKĀ

CMSD QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



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The key feature of this quarter was the week-long 108th Chinmaya Jayanti celebrations that commenced with Śrī Rāma Lallā's ratha yātrā coming to Chinmaya Jyoti, special celebrations on Pujya Gurudev's 108th Jayanti day and a homage to the Guru Śiṣya Paramparā on the auspicious occasion of Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarā Jayanti exhibited through CMSD's seventh production, '*Sambhavāmi Yuge Yuge*'. The quarter concluded with the 24th Annual Presentations and a special BV Graduation Ceremony.



THE MASTER SPEAKS

"Bhagavadpada Acharya Sankara was not only a great thinker and the noblest of Advaitic philosophers, but he was essentially an inspired champion of Hinduism and one of the most vigorous missionaries in our country."

Śrī Rāma Navamī



April 14, 2024, marked Tamil New Year and Aunty commenced the Sunday assembly by addressing all the children the purport of the New Year Song composed by Pujya Guruji, “*kṣaṇam pratikṣaṇam yannavam navam*”. She further inspired children to receive each day and every moment ever new and fresh, to learn and become better.

In anticipation of Śrī Rāma Navamī festivities, **Grade 3** children beautifully presented a short play depicting Śrī Rāma janma and chanted Śrī Nāma-Rāmāyaṇa. The highlight was little Raghav enchanting all hearts as Śrī Rāma.



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Śrī Rāma Navamī



On the auspicious occasion of **Śrī Rāma Navamī**, celebrated on **April 17, 2024**, the ambience of the *āśrama* was brimming with positive energy. *Śrī Rāma-janma caupāī* was chanted and explained as to how the entire nature is preparing to welcome *Śrī Rāma*!

Praṇava Nilayam was reverberating with the melodious chants of *Śrī Rāma Nāma* and various forms of praise for the Lotus eyed *Rāma* in multiple languages.



Śrī Rāma Navamī



The evening continued with *Śrī Rāma Stuti* and *Śrī Rāma aṣṭottaraśatanāmāvali pūjā*. The *mūrti* of *Rāma Lallā* made the altar brim with radiance.

The *pūjā* was followed by an energetic chanting of *Śrī Nāma Rāmāyaṇa* by the BV children who were enthusiastic participants of the festival.

The glories of *Śrī Rāma* were sung in Tamil, Hindi and Telugu in the form of *bhajans*, *bhakti* songs and *kīrtan*.

The highlight of the evening was the chanting of the *Śrī Rāma Hṛdayam* from the *Bāla Kāṇḍam* portion of *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa*.

It was blissful and meditative. *Maryādā Puruṣottama Śrī Rāma* is an epitome of all virtues including gratitude, contentment, humility and sacrifice.

-Gayathri Vishwanathan
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Śrī Hanumān Jayanti



The celebration of *Hanumān Jayanti* began during the assembly on **April 21, 2024**, when **Grade 4** children enthusiastically narrated the birth of *Hanumānji* followed by the chanting of *Śrī Nāma-Rāmāyaṇa* and *Hanumān cālīsā*.



The celebrations continued the evening of **April 23, 2024**, as CMSD members congregated in *Praṇava Nilayam* for *Hanumānji's pūjā*.

A highlight of this special event was the chanting of *Hanumān cālīsā* for 16 times in different *rāgams*. The gathering was immersed in different melodies or *rāgas* - *Hindolam*, *Kānaḍā*, *Mohanam* and *Tilāṅg*, in praise of our beloved *Hanumān*.

The *pūjā* concluded with *Hanumān āratī* and chanting of the *San̥kaṭa Mocana Śrī Hanumān aṣṭakam*.

- Ashwin Mohan

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Chinmaya Gītāñjali

CMSD's twenty-fourth *Bhagavad Gītā* Chanting Competition was held on **April 27, 2024**. The participants chanted Chapter 4 (*Jñānakarmasamnyāsa Yoga*) of *Bhagavad Gītā*, and each of the 40 participants was judged for memory, pronunciation, presentation and the overall effect.



Akshara Mustyala, Grade 5, and **Aniket Chakradeo**, Grade 11, were the *Gītā* chanting competition finalists from CMSD to participate in the State Level *Gītā* Chanting competition, held on **May 26, 2024**, at CM San Jose.

Akshara Mustyala stood 2nd at the state level competition in her group and will be representing CA centers at the National *Gītā* Chanting competition that will be held on **July 6, 2024**, at CM Chicago.

- **Hema Subburaman and Sandhya Srinivasan**

Śrī Rāma Lallā ratha yātrā comes to Chinmaya Jyoti



Śrī Rāma Lallā was ceremoniously brought inside the āśrama in a procession, under an umbrella, carried by Jayantibhai and Pūrṇakumbha held by Sukumar uncle. The air was filled with the chanting of *puruṣasūktam* and bells. Lakshmi auntie carried the *akṣata kalaśa* from Ayodhya.

Lakshmi auntie welcomed Vishwa Hindu Parishad America (VHPA) to CMSD. She mentioned that the auspicious Rāma Lallā has come in a week that marks the 108th Chinmaya Jayanti in two days. With grand fervor and faith, proper *ārāadhanā pūjā* and *naivedyam* were offered to Rāma Lallā.

The auspicious week of Pujya Gurudev's 108th *janma jayanti* gloriously embarked with Śrī Rāma Lallā's ratha yātrā at our āśrama. On **May 6, 2024**, āśrama reverberated with the melodious music of the *nādasvaram* as everyone awaited the auspicious arrival of Śrī Rāma Lallā from Ayodhyā to Chinmaya Jyoti.



Śrī Rāma Lallā ratha yātrā comes to Chinmaya Jyoti



We were privileged to have Swami Advaitananada from Los Angeles come to our āśrama with the procession. Lakshmi auntie along with Chinmaya Swaranjali sang the *Atri muni's Śrī Rāma stuti*. VHP glorified and praised Pujya Gurudev and Chinmaya Mission as He was instrumental in the foundation of VHP. Addressing the congregation, Shri Amitabh Mittal, General Secretary (VHPA) mentioned that *Rāma Lallā* came from *Ayodhyā* to Chicago, marking the start of the *Rāma Lallā Ratha Yātrā* in America.

Our center was the 441st temple visited by the divine *Rāma Lallā*. The *kalaśa* containing the *akṣata* and lord's blessings were brought from *Ayodhyā* after the *prāṇa pratiṣṭhā* on January 22nd of this year by Tejal Shah, Jt. General Secretary (VHPA) to New Jersey. Lakshmi auntie mentioned that it is grace again that 441 adds to the auspicious number 9 just like the Ninth St. of our āśrama.



After that Shri Amitabh Mittal gave us the sacred *akṣata* from the *kalaśa*. He asked us to keep it in our temple along with *Rāmāyaṇa* and the Holy *Gītā*. CMSD was also given a beautiful picture of *Rāma Lallā* by VHPA.

Tejal Shah, Jt. General Secretary (VHPA) graciously asked everyone to participate in the varied VHPA activities.

She also asked the children to follow the path of *dharma* and stay connected. She urged the children to stay Hindu.

Śrī Rāma Lallā ratha yātrā comes to Chinmaya Jyoti



Ārati and closing prayers concluded this momentous occasion. We bid adieu to dear Rāma Lallā by chanting Śrī Rāma maṅgalam and Śrī Rāma Jaya Rāma Jaya Jaya Rāma and breaking the coconut, to ward off any evil. This was followed by the distribution of prasādam and a book to all.

- Smita Bhatia

“It was truly magicalI felt like I was transported to Ayodhyā, and little Rāma Lallā, with grace and love, showered his blessings on all of us!” - Vidhya Bharath

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Celebrating 108th *Chinmaya Jayanti*

1 One Master 0 Unconditional Love 8 Infinite Bliss



The very auspicious day, **May 8, 2024**, commenced with the *maṅgalavādyā nādasvaram* as we all gathered to celebrate the special 108th birth anniversary of Pujya Gurudev. The evening started with praise of *Śrī Jyoti Vināyaka* and welcoming our beloved Pujya Gurudev with the melodious “*Āo Gurudev*” by Chinmaya Swaranjali.



Thereafter, the *Chinmaya Jyoti* was ceremoniously lit. **Lakshmi Aunty** welcomed the entire congregation to celebrate the 108th *Avatāra* day of *Bhagavān* as our very own Pujya Gurudev. She also explained that the number 108 has very special spiritual significance in *Sanātana Dharma* as well as other religions. In Auntie’s words, “The arrival of *Śrī Rāma Lallā* from *Ayodhyā* to *Chinmaya Jyoti* on **May 6, 2024**, made the celebrations extra special...”

Moreover, May 8th stands significant for our BV graduates as they partake in Pujya Gurudev’s blessings for the next phase of their life. This current batch is extremely blessed to celebrate the 108th *Jayanti*.

Celebrating 108th *Chinmaya Jayanti*



Śankha nādam by **Amarnath Puttur** marked the auspicious beginning of the *Guru Pādukā Pūjā* along with the *saṅkalpa* followed by *Guru Dhyānam* and special *upacāra*. **Lakshmi Aunty** performed the *Guru Pādukā Pūjā* as the *Aṣṭalakṣmīs* offered the *arcanā* to *Chinmaya Jyoti* and everyone chanted along the *aṣṭottaraśatanāmāvalī* of Pujya Gurudev.

Celebrating 108th *Chinmaya Jayanti*



A birthday cake of gajar halwa and Gurudev's favorite dishes were offered as *naivedyam*. The courtyard reverberated with *Guru pādukā Stotram* followed by the offering of *Bhagavadgītā* chapter 4 and *Kṛtajñatā Stotram*. **CMSD's Swaranjali** offered *bhajans* and **Lakshmi Aunty** sang the special birthday song composed by Guruji for Pujya Gurudev.

On this auspicious day, **Sukumar Uncle** along with his team announced the start of the Phase 2 building of *Chinmaya Jyoti* named as *Śankara Nilayam* with a very ambitious completion date on the 25th anniversary of CMSD, **January 28, 2026**. This created excitement among all the members present at the event.



The *pūjā* culminated with the Grade 6 presentation of *Cinmaya Mahimā*, *ārati* and *prasādam*. All the CMSD members danced away to the tune of *O Cinmayā terā darśana pāyā*. - **Smita Bhatia**

[Click here for member reflections and more pictures](#)

Śaṅkara Jayanti Celebrations with a Special CMSD Production Sambhavāmi Yuge Yuge



“Listening to the devoted chanting of the *toṭakāṣṭakam*, watching the numerous prostrations to *ācārya* with every verse, one could not help feeling, Yes! Indeed, it is only *Bhagavān* that has even enabled us to come together today in His worship. How befitting it is that we salute that great *Śaṅkara-ātman* again and again!” - **Rajasekar Vaidyanathan**



Śaṅkara Jayanti Celebrations with a Special CMSD Production *Sambhavāmi Yuge Yuge*



As an offering to the revered spiritual teacher *Bhagavatpāda Ācāryaḥ Śaṅkara*, BV children with *sevaks* and *sevikās* staged the 7th CMSD production '*Sambhavāmi Yuge Yuge*' on May 12, 2024, under the guidance of Lakshmi Aunty.

The thought for this production evolved through the past decade before it materialized post the 23rd anniversary program - tribute to Mother *Gaṅgā*, the one inspiring Pujya Gurudev to bring the wealth of Vedas to the masses. This production was truly a perfect homage on *Ādi Śaṅkara Jayanti* and Pujya Gurudev's 108th *Jayanti* celebrations -- glorifying the *Avatāras* of Lord *Viṣṇu* and reaching a pinnacle of *nitya śudhha avatāra*.

The emphatic and faith-instilling verses 7 and 8 of Chapter 4 of the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* form the central message of the play.

We learn about the *paurāṇik* and *vedāntik* significance of the Divine appearances of Lord *Viṣṇu*'s 10 *Avatāras* across various *Yugas* through a conversation between BV children and *Bhagavān* accompanied by his consort *Śrī Lakṣmī Devī*.

The whole conversation starts with a realistic and relatable question from a BV child grappling about why *Bhagavān* is not here amidst us in spite of all the "bad" she sees in the world. And lo! Lord hears her heartfelt plea and gives her His *Darśan* in her dream.

What follows is a conversation between the Lord and the BV children, which is enduring and glimmering with unblemished innocence of the children questioning the Lord about His various forms. While the Lord answers as always with compassion coming "down" to their level and simplifying His intent - sometimes with humor, sometimes with wit but mostly with love.

Śaṅkara Jayanti Celebrations with a Special CMSD Production *Sambhavāmi Yuge Yuge*



The play began with a beautiful *Bharatanāṭyam* invocation by **Srimeenakshi Srinivasan** depicting the *Daśāvatāras* to the song *Pārkaḍal alaimele*.

And as the story went on, with each *Avatāra* entering the stage, the whole audience including 5-year-olds were rapt with attention. The masterful storytelling is in conveying subtle *vedāntik* teachings with simplicity and the performance has achieved it.



With the finale song ‘*matsya kūrma varāho narahari...*’ the *Daśāvatāras* staged around the octagon and mesmerized the audience while the BV children beautifully performed the action song.

As shared by our CMSD *sevak*, **Rajasekar Vaidyanathan**, “Once again a quintessential CMSD production giving us not only the story but the deeper significance behind each *avatāra*. Soulful chanting, melodious music, graceful dance, and peerless performances by our BV children, all strung together seamlessly in a beautiful garland-offering to *Bhagavān Śaṅkara*.”

Śaṅkara Jayanti Celebrations with a Special CMSD Production *Sambhavāmi Yuge Yuge*



As the child is almost at the verge of waking up, *Bhagavān* leaves her with the message - "Do your best and leave the rest!" conveying to her that Pujya Gurudev is His form guiding her with his teachings to navigate the world.

Creatively contrasting the infinite compassion of the Lord displayed through the *Daśāvatāra* epic and the Divine appearances and Real Intelligence to the modern-day Artificial Intelligence, the Robotics presentation cleverly made a profound statement, 'Finite plus Finite cannot become Infinite. God is All Powerful with Infinite capabilities'.



The play concluded aptly with the song - 'My God is so great, so strong and so mighty, there is nothing my God cannot do'. - **Akhila Koneri**

[Click here for more pictures and member reflections](#)

Invoking the Divine on Mothers' Day



Celebrating Mothers' Day on **May 12, 2024**, by honoring *Jagadguru Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarācārya* is the most uplifting and gratifying experience for one and all – authentically the Chinmaya way!



The event commenced with the chanting of *Mahālakṣmī Aṣṭakam* by **Grade 1** children. After invoking the divine Mother, **Lakshmi Aunty**, along with **Chinmaya Swaranjali**, sang Pujya Guruji's beautiful composition, *Māṭṛ Stavanam*. The meaning of the verses was rendered by **Ashwin Mohan**. All the Mothers were blessed with an occasion to tune in with the divine grace and thank their own Mothers.

The *pujā* was followed by *ārati*, Chapter 15 *Bhagavadgītā* chanting and potluck lunch.

Screening of *Ādi Śaṅkara* Production



The weeklong celebrations for Pujya Gurudev's 108th *Jayanti* ended with the screening of CMSD's *Ādi Śaṅkara* Production in the afternoon of this auspicious day (**May 12, 2024**).

It was indeed a perfect way to pay a homage to the reverential *Guru Śiṣya Paramparā* of our *Sanātana Dharma*!

Keeping the Master's Vision Alive Through Grass Root Activities at *Chinmaya Jyoti*

CMSD Study Group Members' Reflections:

"My wife Meena and I have been attending various *pravacans* conducted by our Chinmaya Mission Swamis for over 25 years. These *pravacans* have been a great help and eye openers to our Vedantic teachings....But all the doubts and questions in what was taught were answered only in the study groups. Since study groups have a small number of people, we do not feel hesitant to ask questions and discuss what we understood in our own words...We both have greatly enjoyed and benefited from being in the study group..." - **Sushil and Meena Baluja**

"It all began four years ago when my wife, Thushara, told me about a wonderful course she was taking at CMSD entitled Self-Unfoldment. Eventually, I took that course, followed by many other Vedantic texts. Over time, I have become more aware, more accepting, and kinder. I also no longer feel that I am on this journey alone because I now know and appreciate that the Self is within me. I know that it is necessary for me to become a better person as I walk along the path towards Self-Realization. I shall always be grateful for this immeasurable opportunity to learn and absorb Vedantic philosophy."
- **Raymond Gogolewski**

"I have been a member of several study groups over the years. Additionally, I am also a member of the *Bhagavadgītā* Study and Discussion Groups at our *āśrama* on Sunday mornings.

Apart from the detailed study of the individual texts per se, these highly interactive study groups have enabled me to get a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of Vedantic principles, clarifying my understanding of the key drivers that motivate one's actions, and thereby better preparing me for navigating the world on a daily basis." - **Nikhil Varaiya**

"The *Gītā* lectures at CMSD are so spot on with what I am working. It is superb, and quite motivating to hear Lakshmi Auntie's depth of knowledge and interpretation. She is a role model being both a householder and a great Vedantin!" - **Monali Varaiya**

"The *Gītā* lecture discussions have been very beneficial as it applies to my day-to-day life and provides insights thereby enhancing my life." - **Dhanasekhar**

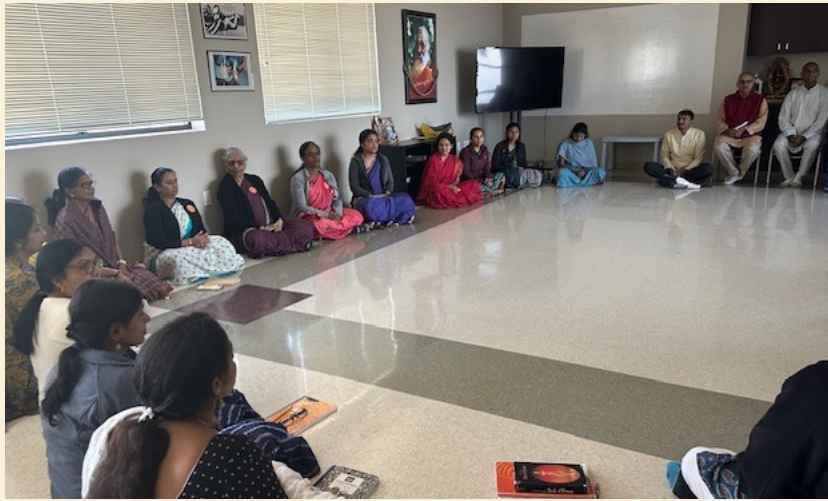
"Learning the *Gītā* has been very beneficial. I use its teachings every single day to benefit my life."
- **Minesh Babla**

CMSD Information and Registration Session 2024-25



The CMSD Information and Registration session was conducted on **May 18, 2024**. The session began with a brief introduction of the Shishu Vihar and Bala Vihar Program followed by experiences shared by current Bala Vihar students. Later on the session was opened up for general Q & A and registration.

SV/BV Teachers' Workshop



"I had the fortune of being part of the Teachers' workshop for *Sevaks* and *Sevikās* on **May 26, 2024**. It was inspiring to see the amount of thought, time and effort that goes towards creating an engaging curriculum for the students each year. Lakshmi aunty mentors each grade level teacher to set grade-appropriate learning goals and provides guidance and strategies to overcome any potential challenges that may arise. With such dedicated efforts, I feel that the children are in an excellent holistic environment to develop their understanding of Hinduism and nurture their devotion for God and *Guru*." – **Archana Venkat**

CMSD 24th Annual Program Presentations

The CMSD Annual program presentations this year, as in the recent past years, were spread over three weekends - Languages, Shishu Vihar - Bala Vihar classes.

Language classes Presentations - June 2, 2024

On **June 2, 2024** members of *Chinmaya Jyoti* gathered to celebrate its 24th Annual Program from the following language programs: Tamil, Hindi and Sanskrit.

CMSD Tamil *Paḷikkūḍam* students from levels 1 through 4 started off with *tamilttāi vālttu*, the song praising mother Tamil. Then, all of them presented prayers on lord *Gaṇeśa*, *Kartikēya* and *Viṣṇu*. Level 1 students showcased children's rhymes.

Level 3 & 4 students conversed in Tamil about *Tiruvalluvar* and his magnum opus, *Tirukkural*. Then, each one of them presented a *kurāl* (couplet), its meaning and our Pujya Gurudev's quotes that convey similar thoughts. Couplets chosen were on devotion, proper learning and abidance and righteousness.

Language learning goes beyond grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. To truly understand a language, one must delve into its literature. In Hindi spiritual literature, Saint Kabir Das *Sākhis* and *Dohās* stand out for blending spirituality with everyday experiences, creating idiomatic expressions that defy linguistic norms.

During this year's annual Hindi Program, CMSD Hindi Teachers, across all the grade levels, introduced the works of Saint Kabir Das. His words contain timeless wisdom, woven seamlessly into daily life and accessible to all in their own language. Discussions leading up to the actual presentation enabled the students to relate these teachings in their own lives.

All saṁskṛta vihāra students (batches 1-9) started their presentation with “*mangalācaraṇam*” followed by “*māheśvarasūtrāṇi*”. Based on the theme of values connected to Pujya Gurudev's quotes, **Batch 8** play “*kṛtajñā pipīlikā*” demonstrated the value “attitude of gratitude” by an ant who was saved by a dove from drowning. **Batch 7** play “*alasaḥ bālakaḥ*” depicted a lazy boy who realized that laziness is the greatest enemy residing in the body, and decided to give it up.

Batches 5-6 presented a story of a bird with two mouths and one stomach. After finding a fruit, one mouth did not share the fruit with the second mouth. The second mouth, driven by anger, ate a poisonous fruit. As a result the bird died - demonstrating the importance of *Yajñā bhāva*.

Batches 2-4 presented the play “*gobhaktah Dilīpaḥ*” which highlighted *gosevā* as *govindasevā*. Various *subhāṣitāni* (eloquent quotes) along with meanings were connected to Pujya Gurudev's quotes and presented by **Batch 1** students.

- Sowmian Rangarajan, Ashok Bhatia and Ravi Kulkarni

CMSD 24th Annual Program Presentations

Shishu Vihar and Bala Vihar upto Grade 8 Presentations - June 9, 2024

CMSD conducted the Shishu Vihar to Bala Vihar Grade 8 Annual Program on **June 9, 2024**. Puja Gurudev's signature movement to revive Hinduism, namely, his spiritual discourses or *jñāna yajñas* which he conducted while crisscrossing the globe, were highlighted in **Grade 6** students' presentation. In fact, on this, His 108th *Jayanti* year, the theme for the entire program for all classes was "**The Spirit of Yajña**".

After an invocation by Chinmaya Swaranjali, Shishu Vihar children and their mothers sang a song "everything I do is a gift to you" as part of their presentation. The Chinmaya Dhvani group then sang of the beauty and harmony nourished in Bala Vihar with the song - "Chinmaya Bala Vihar *lāyegā navinatā*..".

Harmony and beauty come from working cooperatively for a higher purpose. That message came through in an entertaining fashion during presentations by **PreK**, making a beautiful picture takes many unique and colorful crayons, **Grade 1**, body parts find that they need to help each other to live and grow together, and **Grade 5**, the *devas* dine at Lord *Nārāyaṇa*'s banquet without bending their elbows by feeding each other rather than vainly trying to eat on their own like the *asuras*.

The worshipful and grateful attitude signified in *yajña* spirit was depicted in the story of *Kārtikeya* (**Grade K**) while the grace and blessings showered by the Lord on his devotees working in the *yajña* spirit was enacted by several BV classes. **Grade 2** depicted the story of Lord *Kṛṣṇa* holding aloft the *Govardhana* mountain and the devotees' song (The Lord of all sweetness is nothing but sweet). **Grade 3** enacted a scene from Bala Ramayana where Lord *Rāma* and *Lakṣmaṇa* protect the *yajña* of sage *Viśvāmitra*. **Grade 4** depicted the blessings of Lord *Rāma* on the hardworking squirrels building the bridge to Lanka, while **Grade 7** showcased His compassion to His devotees *Jaṭāyu* and *Vibhīṣaṇa*.

The program concluded with **Grade 8** enacting the story behind the golden mongoose from the *Mahābhārata*. The selflessness of a brahmin family in being ready to sacrifice mortal life itself for the sake of a guest, who is like God himself, was shown in their presentation. Even *Yudhiṣṭhira*'s royal *yajña* could not compare against this ultimate *yajña bhāva* of a poor family.

- Rajasekar Vaidyanathan



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CMSD 24th Annual Program Presentations

Bala Vihar Grade 9 through Grade 12 Presentations - June 16, 2024

Continuing with the *yajña* spirit, the high schoolers presented their learnings using everyday activities and relatable happenings on **June 16, 2024**. The event commenced with **CMSD's Chinmaya Swaranjali** offering an invocation to the Lord. **Grade 9** children presented how even the daily act of eating food can be a *yajña*. **Grade 10** students exhibited how nature exemplifies *yajña bhāva* and how the human race needs to make eco-friendly and sustainable choices and protect Mother Earth. **Grade 11** brought forth life lessons from chapter 13 of the *Bhagavadgītā*. Students from **Grade 12** chose elections as a medium to showcase how our spiritual values can be adopted across all lines of work to be successful, and thereby making a positive impact in the world.

Children across all grades for Bala Vihar and Language classes with perfect attendance were recognized and presented with e-certificates. Children who completed various levels of Chinmaya *Ślokāñjali* and Chinmaya *Gītāñjali* winners were also recognized. There was a special mention of all the *bāla sevaks* who do *sevā* week after week at the *āśrama* and the *CHYK sevaks* who are involved in various capacities.

- Srividya Brahmakal



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Bala Vihar Graduation: Class of 2024

Every year to see the seniors graduate from Chinmaya Mission Bala Vihar program into the CHYK program is a moment of great joy for all the Bala Vihar teachers, who have nurtured and helped them blossom into the confident, young adults they have become under the grace and guidance of Pujya Gurudev.

As shared by our CMSD *sevak*, **Radhachandran Padmanaban**, “For us Bala Vihar families, ‘It takes an *āśrama* to raise a child’, and as a parent to see my daughter Aathmika Radhachandran graduate was a feeling of immense gratitude to all the *sevaks* in the *āśrama* who led her in this journey under the guidance of Lakshmiji and Sukumarji.”

The graduation ceremony started off with a trip down the memory lane with several pictures capturing poignant memories of the graduating children over more than a decade. The children along with Lakshmiji thoroughly enjoyed this experience and were gushing with nostalgic moments from the past. The convocation address from *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, rendered solemnly as always by the team of senior *sevaks* Sukumarji, Lakshmiji, Raja Reddy, Rajasekar Vaidyanathan and Nagesh Nookala, was a valuable message to the graduates on their responsibilities and duties as they face the world armed with the values from their strong foundation in Chinmaya Mission.

Sukumarji gifted the graduates with their graduation certificate, *Chinmaya Jyoti* lamp and a Mananam book “From Egocentric to Ecocentric” which will be treasured during their lifetime. The children took on the personalized questions addressed to them by their teachers and verbalized very well how they will live up to the values they have learnt in Chinmaya Mission.

In the CMSD tradition, as the rest of the high schoolers pushed the graduates over to the CHYKs, it was a beginning of a new phase in their life but in the same boat of Chinmaya Mission and Hindu values!

- **Radhachandran Padmanaban**



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CMSD Ongoing Events

Monthly *Sundarakāṇḍa Pārāyaṇā*



April 20, 2024



June 22, 2024

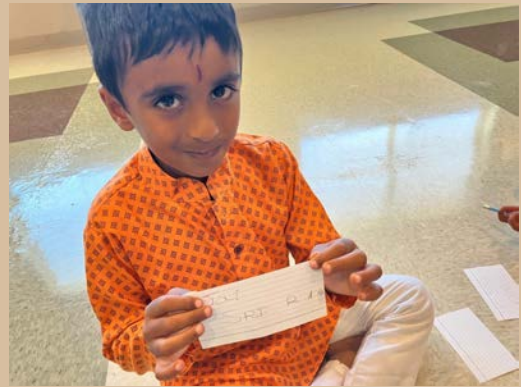
May 25, 2024

Chinmaya Jyoti Spring Blossoms



Shishu Vihar Corner

Class Activities



Shishu Vihar Corner

Class Activities



Shishu Vihar Corner



Planting in our vegetable garden.

Bala Vihar Corner

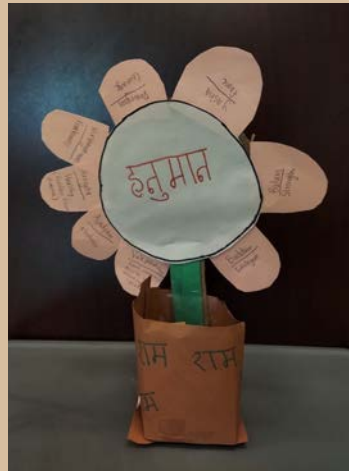
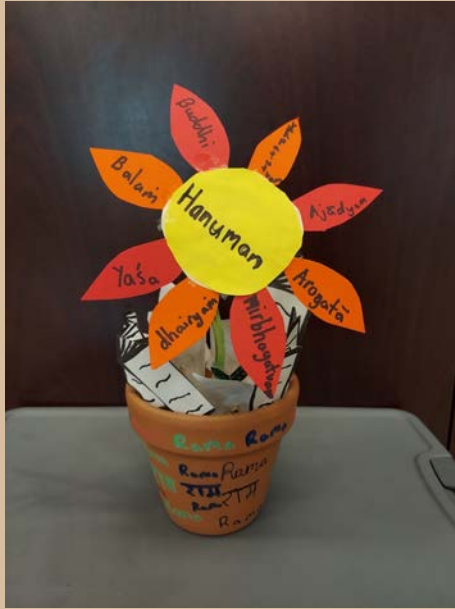
Grade 4: This series of pictures depict key scenes from the *Rāmāyaṇa* - from *Kiṣkindhā Kāṇḍa* to *Ayodhyā Kāṇḍa*. With the divine embrace as the centerpiece, children colored all the pictures maintaining consistency in colors used across the scenes. The project was completed before the 108th jayanti of Pujya Gurudev as an offering depicting *yajña bhāva*!



Pot of Devotion fertilized with Knowledge, blossoms the flower of *Hanumānji* bejeweled with gems of intelligence, strength, courage, fearlessness, freedom from disease, freedom from fatigue, eloquence and fame.



Bala Vihar Corner



Grade 5: After learning *Daśāvatāra Stotram*, children made parachutes representing the descent of the Lord. If our prayers are offered with a pure heart, *Bhagavān* listens and comes in any form to fulfill our wishes and to protect us!



Bala Vihar Corner



Grade 5 children got an opportunity to release their parachutes representing the descent of the *Avatāras* during the offering of a special production, '*Sambhavāmi Yuge Yuge*'.

Grade 7: A special project for Pujya Gurudev's 108th *Jayanti* was offered by the students by mapping the values from the Chariot of *Dharma* (*Vibhiṣaṇa Gītā*) with names from Gurudev's *Aṣṭottaraśatanāmāvali*.



Bala Vihar Corner

Grade 10: In-Class Activities

Activity without desire

No human being can be without desire. Desire motivates all action.
So how can a person act without desire?

In class we dissolved a pinch of salt (= "desire") in a small bowl of water (= "myself").

The water was very salty and unpleasant.

However, the same amount of salt in a much larger bowl of water (= "the world") was hardly recognizable in saltiness.

When desire is poured into a larger purpose, the saltiness disappears.

The demonstration showed the secret of working without desire.

When desire is poured into an activity with a larger purpose that serves the world, the unpleasant taste of selfishness disappears, and it is as if I acted without desire.

- Arushi Pandey

Pinch of Salt in Water-filled bowl

In tiny bowl, water 's too brined,
In big bowl, salt 's hard to find!

Small class demo, yet great concept,
Self-less-ness, we should accept.
In verse 3:25, a message divine,
Serve a cause, that's the sign.

Just for me - that's selfish, it's true,
But in greater purpose - actions shine thru.
Serving others without a doubt,
Makes our work simply stand out.

So let's work for others, not just ourselves,
In greater good, true happiness dwells.

- Aditi Bharadwaj

Bala Vihar Corner

HighSchool Mentorship:

Zero Degree Lab presentation by HighSchoolers during April 21, 2024 Sunday Assembly.

Chinmaya Pradipika Team

Parag Kelkar, Ritu Chandiramani, Reshma Rao, Smita Bhatia, Akhila Koneri, Manasi Popat
and the CMSD Photography Team.