

## Hindu Heritage Month Daily Announcements

Theme for 2022 - OM: Sound of the Universe



Day	Announcement
1	We officially welcome you to Hindu Heritage Month. The theme for November 2022 is the Sanskrit Chant 'OM' or 'AUM', that is the most sacred sound and symbol of Hinduism. It is known as the sound of the universe and means universal consciousness. So, by chanting OM, we are symbolically and physically acknowledging our connection to nature and all other living beings. Sanskrit is the language of Hindu Sacred texts and is known to be the root of many languages, including English.
2	Hinduism is said to be the oldest living religion in the world and is India's spiritual and cultural heritage. The ancient Hindu civilization was known for its rich economy and culture. There are over a billion Hindus worldwide, most of whom live in India.
3	Hindus believe in the oneness of all living beings and everything in creation and the universe. All is One. The whole world is One Family. Hindus revere and love teachers. A teacher not only gives education, but also gives inspiration and direction. Hindus often follow a spiritual Guru, a living saint, who can guide them on the spiritual path and answer questions about life and the religion.
4	Hindus believe that all humans are born as spiritual beings whose true nature is truth, peace and joy. Hindus believe in the oneness of all living beings and everything in creation: Sarvam khalvidam brahman- All Is One. Another sacred verse talks about Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: The whole world is One family. Hindu prayers are inclusive – they seek blessings for all humans, all living beings and non-living creation. For example, Loka Samasta Sukhino Bhavantu: May all be Happy.
5	India is the birthplace of the ancient Hindu civilization. In the past Hinduism was peacefully spread to Afghanistan, Thailand, Indonesia, Japan, and beyond. Angkor Wat, in Cambodia, is the largest Hindu complex in the world; it was a Hindu temple of Lord Vishnu built by a Khmer King. Even today, the King of Thailand is called Rama, after Lord Rama, who was a Hindu avatar.

7.	Hindus speak many languages, but the most common way for them to greet each other is by saying Na•mas•te - palms are held together in prayer position in front of the heart area while bowing the head down slightly. Na•mas•te is a Sanskrit word which means, the divine in me bows to the divine in you. The bowing down of the head is a way to show love, respect, and humility. In Tamil we say Vannakam.
8	Did you know that about half a million Hindus live in Canada? Hindus represent 1.5% of the total Canadian population. Immigrants of Hindu origin started coming to Canada over a hundred and twenty-five years ago. Most Hindus came later, starting in the 1970s. They came from many countries including India, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Fiji, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, Suriname, East Africa, South Africa among others.
9	Hindus pray to many Devis, the Divine in feminine forms. For example, Saras•wati Devi, the Goddess of Knowledge and Learning. Lak•shmi Devi is the Goddess of Wealth and Dur•ga Devi is the Warrior Goddess. Since ancient times there have been important Hindu female scholars, leaders, warriors, and saints.
10	Did you know that thousands of years ago, ancient Hindu sages discovered the idea of infinity known as anan•ta? Hindus believe that there is no beginning or end to the universe - only endless cycles of its creation and dissolution. Hindus also have the idea of Shunya which means 'void' or 'nothingness', from which the idea of the zero came.
11	An estimated 3.8 million Indian soldiers volunteered and fought valiantly in the two World Wars as part of the British Empire- 1.3 million in WW1 and 2.5 million in WW2. More than a third of them were Hindus. To commemorate the thousands of lives lost, a memorial named Chat•tri can be found in Brighton, England, the site where many Hindu soldiers were cremated.
12	Did you know that Zinc was discovered by ancient Indian scientists? 1000s of years ago, Hindus did research in metallurgy, astronomy, physics, mathematics, engineering, medicine, botany, architecture, agriculture, urban planning just to name a few.
13	Can you imagine science or technology without the discovery of zero as a mathematical place marker? We can thank Hindu mathematicians who not only discovered the zero but Algebra, square root and cube root, Geometry, Trigonometry, and calculus. Famous Hindu mathematicians include Arya•bhata, Brahma•gupta, Rama•nuja and Bose.

14	Hindus knew the earth was round and not flat 1000s of years ago - hundreds of years before the others discovered this. In fact, the Sanskrit word for geography is Bhu•gol, which means the round earth. Ancient Hindu sages had calculated the distance between the sun, moon and earth and were known as for their knowledge of cosmology.
16	Hindus believe in reincarnation or rebirth. Hindus believe that that the soul is immortal, which goes on forever and is born again and again. One can be reborn as human being or a being in the animal world. This awareness helps Hindus feel a connected to all of nature and to others who are not Hindu.
17	Protection of animals is part of the Hindu religion. Hindus respect all living beings and believe all animals have a soul. Vegetarianism is therefore an integral part of the Hindu ethics. The Indian native cow is revered as mother. Each Hindu deity, both Goddesses and Gods, is associated with some animal. For example, Saras•wati, the goddess of art and education, has the swan as her companion. Lord Shiva, has a bull and Goddess Dur•ga, is seated on a tiger.
18	Hindus are taught to follow five personal ethics or Ni•yamas: § Shau•cha - cleanliness of the body and mind § San•tosh - contentment and gratitude § Ta•pas - self-control and self-discipline § Swa•dhya•ya - study of the Self and abiding in the Self § Ish•wara•prani•dhana - believe that there is a higher force taking care of everything in the world
19	“The mind acts like an enemy for those who do not control it” This quote from the Bhaga•vad Gita, (Chapter 6, verse 6), which is the most important book of Hinduism. The book describes the nature of God, creation, and the human mind. It explains the many different ways for humans to develop spiritually and live happily.
20	Yoga and meditation are some of Hinduism’s important contributions to world civilization. Today Yoga poses and meditation are practiced by millions of people worldwide. Yoga is known to help calm the mind and body, and to discover the peace that lies within. In December 2014 the United Nations declared June 21 <sup>st</sup> as the International Yoga Day.
21	Kol•am (Ran•goli) an art, in which powdered rice is used to draw colorful art on the floor, it teaches us about the significance of harmonious coexistence with nature. The real purpose behind this traditional practice is to feed the ants and birds!

22	<p>Did you know that games like, Chess, Snakes and Ladders, Playing Cards and Polo originated by ancient Hindus and were later adapted to other countries? The game of Snakes and Ladders was invented by 13<sup>th</sup> century poet-saint Gyan•dev. The ladders in the game were about good actions or good karma that helped one make spiritual progress. The snakes were about bad actions or bad karma that made one go backwards. The game was originally played with shells and dices.</p>
23	<p>Ayur•veda is known as mother of indigenous health knowledge. It is a holistic health system discovered by Hindus to bring harmony in the body, mind and emotions. Thousands of years ago Ayur•vedic doctors in India were performing surgeries using metal tools. They could diagnose health by feeling the pulse on a person's arm. Ayurveda created a body of knowledge about plants now called botany. Medicinal plants and herbs were catalogued for their healing qualities.</p>
24	<p>Do you remember the story of the Lion and the Mouse or the Tortoise and the Hare? Many of today's popular children's stories such as those in the Aesop's Fables and Arabian Nights are said to have originated from ancient Hindu fables such as the Pan•cha•tan•tra and Hito•pa•de•sha.</p>
25	<p>In Hinduism dance, art and drama are celebrated as forms of spiritual expression. Nat•ya, as performing arts, was traditionally understood, and recognized as a tool to express devotion to God. Classical dance is therefore viewed as a spiritual practice using movement, sound, and emotion.</p>