

# Balavin Kural

Balambika Divya Sangam

May 2012 Vol 2 Issue 1



**Bala Tripurasundari Homam**  
a celebration of divinity



**Shakthi Thaan Bala:**  
the winner's attitude  
in pursuit of her goal  
page 6

**Yoga:**  
train the brain to focus and  
enhance your memory  
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## SNAPSHOT

### Bala Sahasranamam Parayanam:

June 8th, at 3:00 PM at Mythili Sundararajan's residence, Bangalore, India

Contact: myyasundar@gmail.com

June 3rd at 5:30 PM at Chakravarthy's residence, Ohio, USA.

Contact: 95chikki@gmail.com

June 8th at Anuradha Srinivasan's residence, Chicago, USA

Contact: asriniv65@gmail.com



### Dolai Utsava Murthy Abhishekam:

Abhishekam will be performed for the Dolai Utsava Murthy on Tuesdays/Fridays. Devotees who are interested please contact Sashikala Venkatesh (9886895627).



### Dolai Utsavam:

Dolai Utsavam will be performed for Sanchara Bala, in the privacy of one's home, amidst a social gathering. Devotees who are interested, please contact Mrs. Asha Manoharan asha.raji@gmail.com



### Lalitha Homam:

2012 Lalitha Homam event will take place from July 6th - 8th. Sponsorship for this 3-day event is open, and devotees can sign up for individual days and items for the pooja. Contact Mrs. Asha Manoharan at asha.raji@gmail.com



### Bala Thirunakshatram:

This year, Sri Bala's *thirunakshatram* (*vishakam in the month of vaikasi*), falls on the 3rd of June. Please share pictures of Bala's birthday celebrations with us.

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## EDITORIAL TEAM

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Mr. Ramesh Chakravarthy  
Mr. Raghu Ranganathan  
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## CONTACT

If you would like to participate, contribute or require more details please contact us via email or website. Contributions can be made in cash/cheque/DD/online transfer etc. For complete details, do email us.

Please give us your feedback and do share your ideas and divine experiences with us so that we can continue to give you the best and more.

web: [www.balambikatemple.org](http://www.balambikatemple.org)

email: [balambikathirupanitrust@gmail.com](mailto:balambikathirupanitrust@gmail.com)

The digital version of the newsletter can be accessed at

[http://dl.dropbox.com/u/61386694/May2012/Newsletter\\_May\\_2012.html](http://dl.dropbox.com/u/61386694/May2012/Newsletter_May_2012.html)



## WHAT'S NEW

By Mrs. Asha Manoharan

There are a lot of things happening in Balambika Divya Sangam. To name a few, we have two things listed for you this month.

1. The reformatting of the newsletter
2. Printing and release of Bala Sahasranamam books in five different languages

### **The reformatting of the newsletter:**

As we are nearing the first birthday of our newsletter, we thought we should give the newsletter a fresh look. Here it is... The newsletter of Balambika Divya Sangam is dedicated to Bala and the Sangam. So we thought the **cover page** should focus on Bala. The reader should have an instant connection with Bala right from the word go. Like a regular magazine, there should be a cover story and that would be mostly on Bala. The reader's attention will be captured with the picture on the cover which illustrates the story, so he/she remains focused on the issue at hand.

The inside page has the **snapshot** of all that is covered in that particular issue. This snapshot page helps the readers understand what they can expect from that issue. It covers the events that takes place during the month, and it also focuses on the content of the issue - a sneak preview as we call it. The pages come alive with information, as the readers glide along and it enriches them with the knowledge of Bala, her *leelas*, the words of wisdom and the activities which enlightens the blessed soul. Reading the issue should provide the readers a sense of blissfulness. The mood of the readers is sustained with relevant pictures of Bala, and we want the readers to experience peace and tranquility as they glance through the pages.



The **colours** in the issue have been carefully selected so as to soothen the mind as the message runs across the pages. The pages are like the flowers in the garland and the colour is the thread that holds it together. So we have taken care to see that the colours do not overwhelm the readers. The pictures are carefully selected, so as to help the readers understand the content, and relevant quotes are placed which inspires the readers to read on. The newsletter provides loads of information on the upcoming events, the *poojas*, *homams* and it aims to connect each member to the Balambika Divya Sangam family in a special way. The contents as always, is aimed to be a treat to the eyes and the soul. The **unique feature** as you are aware of, is the Divya Tattvam, a feature which helps the readers to go beyond the lines of the verse mentioned in Bala Sahasranamam, and to have a deep understanding, by coordinating the known facts to enlighten the soul - a unique perspective which revitalises one's thoughts and prevents being stereotyped.

The Sangam believes not only in the enrichment of the soul but also of the body, so it carefully selects yoga techniques to help the devotees to have a healthy body and a healthy mind. The passionate team has put together a string of events to help the readers understand the importance of being knowledgeable and understanding as being devoted. The last segment on Lalitha Homam is information to readers about the activities carried out by the Sangam, and encouraging them to come forward to be a part of the Sangam family.

## WHAT'S NEW

### **Printing and release of Bala Sahasranamam books in five different languages:**

Publication is an integral part of any organization, since it is the oldest and most effective means of communication. Hence Balambika Divya Sangam wanted to start its process of publication with Ambal's Sahasranamam - the Bala Sahasranamam. Publication of Bala Sahasranamam has involved the following stages:

1. **Editorial stage:** The text available was carefully edited to ensure the work matches the style and grammatical requirements of each market. Editing also involved some structural changes and we requested for more information from experts to maintain authenticity of the work.

2. **Design Stage:** Once the formatting was done with relevant correction, we went for designing the cover with the concept in mind and to be a treat for the eyes.

3. **Printing stage:** With editing and design work completed, we have entered into the printing phase. The first step to that is the creation of a pre-press proof, which is being made and waiting to be proof read, and to be signed off by the Sangam. This proof shows the book precisely as it will appear once printed, and is the final opportunity for us to find and correct any errors. We are using both electronic proofs and printed proofs. Once the proofs have been approved by the Sangam President, printing - the physical production of the published work - begins.

4. **Copyrights stage:** The Sangam is applying for exclusive rights for this publication. The exclusive rights that are attached to the copyright holders are:

- \* to produce copies or reproductions of the work and to sell those copies (including, typically, electronic copies)
- \* to import or export the work
- \* to create derivative work (works that adapt the original work)
- \* to perform or display the work publicly
- \* to sell or assign these rights to others
- \* to transmit or display by radio or video

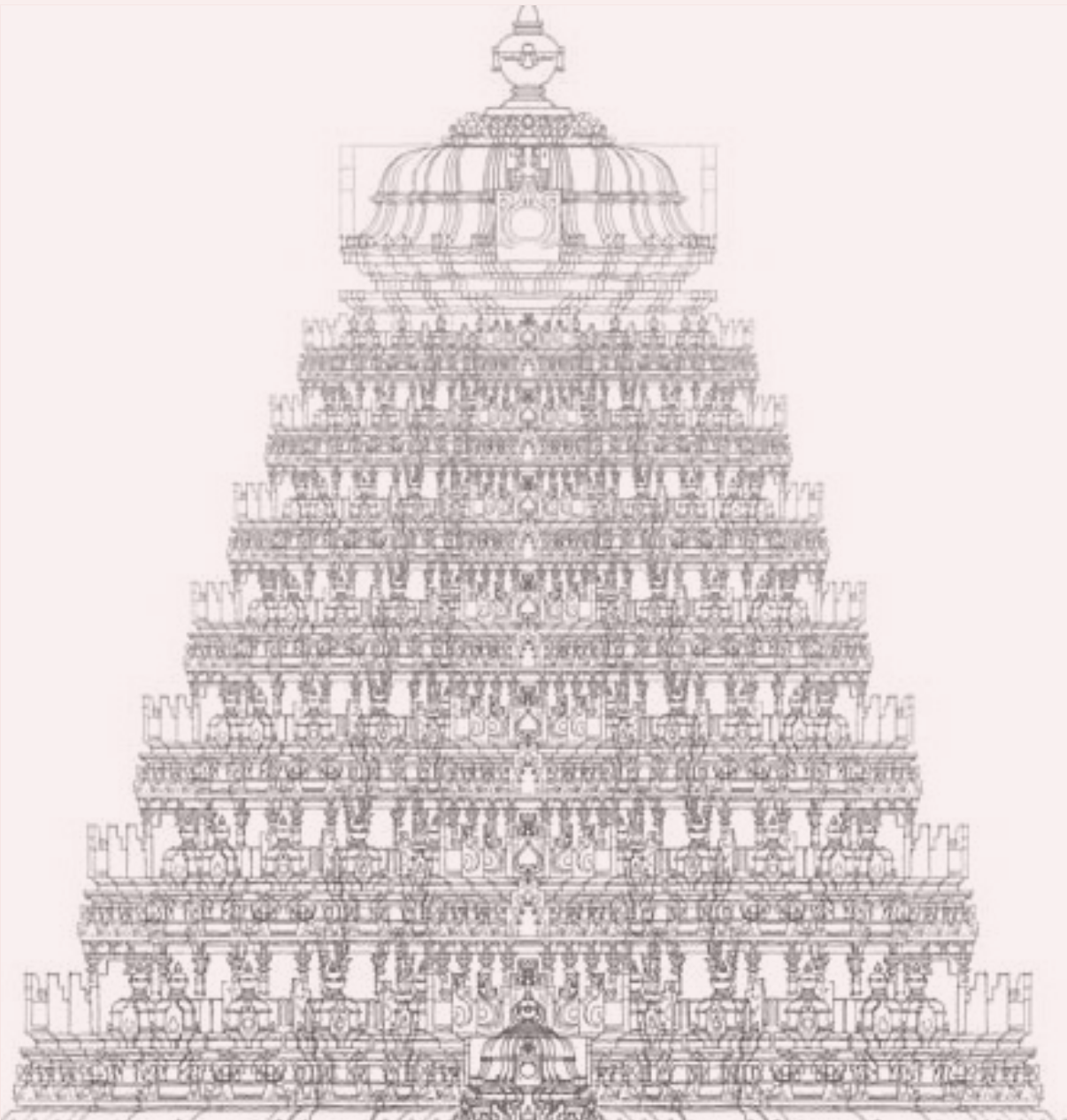


So with all this done, let me give you a little more information on the book itself. Bala Tripurasundari Sahasranamam is found in four versions - Vishnu Yamalam, Vamakeshwara Tantra, Rudra Yamala and BakArAdi Sahasranama. We have adopted the popular version, the Vishnu Yamalam. We had a hard time looking up for Bala Sahasranamam, and with the help of Sanskrit scholars and pundits we have now come up with the Sahasranamam. For the benefit of the devotees, we have also come up with its transliteration in regional languages namely Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and of course, the universally accepted language English.

This is the fruit of some very hard working people who work very hard behind the scenes to give the readers and devotees a flawless version of Bala Sahasranamam. This is our *samarpanam* to Devi Shri Bala. These books will be made available during the Lalitha Homam in July and after that it will available in many retail book shops. These can also be ordered through email, the details of which will be published later.

## MALUR SRI BALAMBIKA TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

- Polishing, cutting and carving work is being carried out at the temple site.
- The temple architect Mr. Muthiah Sthapathi is planning to bring more laborers to speed up the work at the temple site.
- A gas stove and cylinder has been donated to the laborers to assist with their cooking needs.
- Negotiations are underway with structural engineers regarding quotations for the construction of the proposed Yagashala.
- The amalgamation (Katha) for all the sites donated for temple construction has been completed.



## Shakthi Thaan Bala...

It was a hot summers day. Mala was alone at home sitting on the couch listening to the cricket commentary. It was her favourite sport, and when Dilip Vengsarkar was on the pitch fielding or batting, she was there glued to her radio, and nothing could distract her at that point in time. She had Vengsarkar's posters in her room and his pictures from Sportstar, a monthly magazine on sports which she bought only to save Vengsarkar's pictures. All her friends knew her passion for the sport. She could tell the number of test matches Gavaskar played, Sandeep Patil's entry into the game, and how he changed the face of the game with his strong shots. Vengsarkar was a steady right handed batsman at No.3 in the team and his consistent shots and stylish ones brought the fans to the stadium to experience them in person. In the early period of his career, Vengsarkar was in and out of the game, but the team had to bring him back because he was a steady player who could be depended on. The order was always Chetan Chauhan, Sunil Gavaskar, Dilip Vengsarkar, and the rest. It was a home series against Pakistan, the second test in Bangalore, and Vengsarkar and Sunil Gavaskar were at the crease with 29 runs on the board. It was Vengsarkar's turn to face the ball, and just then she heard the knock on the door. Quickly she hurried to open the door.

A middle aged stood there with a small plant in his hand. Mala stepped out and asked him what he wanted. He looked at Mala and said, "Appa asked me to bring a *parijatham* plant, can you give it to him?" He showed the plant to Mala. Mala nodded and took the plant. It was a small plant with very few leaves. The leaves were very tender and Mala could see the veins on the leaves. She placed it in the corner of the hall way and went back to the couch. Just then there was another knock, and turning around she saw Bala standing there. Mala smiled and called her in. Bala jumped in and said, "Hey, I am hungry do you have anything to eat?"

Mala smiled and said, "I was about to have lunch, come on in both of us can eat."

The two girls walked in and as they entered the hall the radio was shrieking with the commentary of the ongoing cricket match. Bala switched it off and went into the kitchen with Mala. The food was already prepared. It was *vathakuzhambu* with *appalam*. Mala picked up 2 plates and was ready to serve Bala. Bala stopped and said,

"*Vathakuzhambu* is very hot, I don't want it, what else do you have?"

"What do you want? Can I make something for you?" asked Mala.

"You should always know what your goals are. If that comes into perspective then everything else will disappear, whether it is pain, grief, inadequacy, everything will vanish and only your goal will be there. It becomes easy for you to move towards it. Never have that doubt whether you can do it or not. If you think and if you have made up your mind, then nothing should stop you from achieving it."

Bala nodded and said, "I like mango juice, can you make it for me?"

"Why not, give me a sec, I will be back."

Mala quickly went to the front room and in the cupboard her father had stacked all the mangoes to ripe. Mala took two of them and returned to the kitchen.

Bala was so excited, she looked over Mala to see how she was preparing. Mala smiled, pinched her cheeks and said,

"Give me a sec and your juice is ready," saying she quickly sprung into action and made the juice. She filled them in a big juice glass and handed over to



Bala. Bala took it and smiled.  
“Ok bring your lunch, we can both eat together,” saying she walked to the hall. Mala gave her a smile, turning she took a plate, placed some rice on it, added *vathakuzhambu* and took 2 *appalams* and joined Bala in the hall. The two girls sat down and Mala switched on the radio and the commentary went on.

Bala asked, “What is it?”

Mala replied “It is a sports commentary Bala, people play and commentators give us the running commentary of it all.”

“Oh, so what is so exciting about it?”

“It is a sport, how can I explain what is so exciting? It is exciting, that is all.”

Both girls remained silent.

“So what were you doing?” said Mala, changing the topic.

“I am here to see you, that is all,” replied Bala.

“Hey, I forgot to tell you, I am into the net ball team, I am so excited!!!” exclaimed Mala

“That is good, this I call is exciting! Well done you!!!”

“My first match is against the Roses, they are a very strong team.”

Mala’s school had 4 groups, Roses, Lilies, Daffodils and Sunflower. She was in the Lilies group.

“The whole school will be there to watch the match, I am excited and at the same time scared. I am the main shooter, so a lot rests on me.”

“Don’t worry, you will be alright. Just play the game.”

“Yeah, will you be there? I really want you to be there to encourage me”

“When is it?” asked Bala.

“Coming Friday,” replied Mala

“Alright, I will be there, I will bring a cheering group,” laughed Bala

“You better,” laughed Mala.

Bala gulped in her juice and kept the empty glass on the table. Mala also finished her lunch, collected Bala’s glass and went into the kitchen to wash them. Bala cried out, “Mala get me some water.”

Mala came back with a glass of water. “Here,” saying

she handed over the glass.

“The mango juice is just sticking to my throat.”

“Yes it is very pulpy, so it will,” replied Mala.

Bala got up and said, “Ok then, I am going, anything else?”

“No. Don’t forget to come for the match.”

“Ok! I will be there,” saying Bala bid Mala good bye.

The next few days passed away quickly and Mala was training hard for the match. Friday came. There she was in a white sports skirt, her white house colour shirt, a white wrist band and white canvas shoes. The



girls were all ready in the games room taking a last minute advice from the games teacher. The school ground was a medium sized one and on either side was the netball ring standing with a head held high. The teachers and students were all there supporting their favourites. The stands were full, the teams walked in lead by their captain. For the Lilies, Dhanam was the captain and for the Roses, it was Shamini. They stood in the middle of the ground waving, and ready to take the toss. Mala was so excited and as she walked along with the team she looked for one face, that of her friend’s. Somewhere in the

crowds she knew she was there, supporting her in all ways. But her eyes were searching for her. As the ball was placed in the centre, each group had their side picked up and all of them rearing to go. The ground looked very colourful with all the house flags put up and this trophy was very significant to every one. It was a very prestigious cup set up by the Superior Mother to encourage net ball in the school.



The game started and the teams were in an aggressive mood, passing the ball as quickly as they could, beating their defenders. The ball got passed from end to end but never near the shooters on either side. After 5 minutes, the ball finally came to Mala and she scored the first point for her team. The team was exuberant! But in the next few minutes, her defender Martha got the ball and as she ran, she tripped Mala and Mala fell down with a twisted ankle and gave a sigh of pain.

The game stopped. She was on the ground, her games teacher came to her, gave her some water, and asked if she was alright. Her team mates carried her to the nearest room, laid her on a bench and asked her if she was alright, Mala nodded and they quickly disap-

peared to continue the game. Mala was so angry with herself for getting her ankle twisted, she started to cry. There was a gentle knock on the door, Mala turned her head to see who it was, and there was Bala. She came down to her and asked her if she was alright. Mala could not say a word. She was choking with grief.

Bala consoled her, sat down beside her and said, "You will be alright, don't worry."

"How? See I cannot play anymore, this was my first match. I still have so many matches. I scored my first point for the team, why do I have to fall like this?" Mala started crying. Bala consoled her and said, "You can do it, Mala, you want this very badly isn't it? Then why do you cry. Come on think of the joy you would get, if your team wins inspite of your injury. Come on, nothing will happen to you. Come on, get up slowly, let me see."

Bala helped Mala sit up. Then holding her hand she helped her stand up. "Now slowly push your toes downwards, let me see?"

Mala did as she was told, but it hurt. She gave out a quick cry, "It hurts!"

"Yes it will. Do it again," and Bala made her do it again, this time rotating it from side to side. It did help her. It hurt, but not that much. "Now walk, let me see?"

Mala did as she was told, she could but it did hurt a little bit. Bala helped her walk a little more and now Mala had the confidence to move on her own.

Bala asked, "How are you feeling?"

"It hurts but I think I am ok."

"It will, but you will be alright. Go on, join your team."

Mala smiled, "Thank you!"

Bala nodded. "Go now, we will talk later."

Mala helped herself a little more, and stepped out of the room. She went to where the other team mates were, and sat down. They all looked at her surprised. One of them asked, "Are you ok?"

"Yes, I am," replied Mala.

It was half time. The team came to their resting places



and when they saw Mala they asked, “Are you alright?”

“Yes I am. It must have been just a muscle pull. I guess, I will join now.” Mala got up and her team was surprised. The next 30 minutes went by. Mala felt the pain but her concentration on the game was so much more, that the pain did not affect her. She played very well and at the end of it, the team won by 3 points and everyone was overjoyed! They all cheered Mala for her wonderful effort and her games teacher came up to her and said, “Mala, you truly are a sports woman, brave, and courageous, you didn’t let down your team. Good job.” She tapped Mala on her shoulders. The other team mates also complimented her for her effort.

Mala sat and waited for everyone to go. She looked down at her foot, it was swollen. She knew she had sprained her ankle slightly. Bala walked up to her. Mala looked at her and smiled, “Congrats, you did it, you were all on fire, Mala. I love this game because of you. You were too good!”

“You know what? I must thank you. You gave me that courage to do it, otherwise I wouldn’t have.”

“You should always know what your goals are. If that comes into perspective then everything else will disappear, whether it is pain, grief, inadequacy, everything will vanish and only your goal will be there. It

becomes easy for you to move towards it. Never have that doubt whether you can do it or not. If you think and if you have made up your mind, then nothing should stop you from achieving it.”

“You gave me that confidence today. If with all the pain I could achieve, then I can achieve anything Bala.”

“There is no magic in this world. It is the hard work of someone behind it.”

“Yes! I was stupid to sit and cry.”

“Never mind, don’t waste your time crying over something that has already happened. Always think what next?”

“Yes, I will”

“Can we go home now?” laughed Bala

“Yes, of course! I am hungry, tired, and in pain,” said Mala as she tried to stand up. By now her legs had grown stiff and she fell back in her chair.

Bala said, “Ok, come on, I will help you.” Bala lifted Mala, and put her hands around her shoulders and Mala started limping.

Mala was comfortable with her arms around Bala. The two girls walked, shoulder to shoulder towards the bus stop...

### **Paadam Thodarum...**





**Prayer is meditation which has self-change as its object.  
Prayer in meditation is the reconditioning of one's nature.**

**It is the transforming of one's inner nature,  
accomplished by the purification of the three faculties,  
Thought, Word, and Deed.**

**Through meditation, one can understand that “we become what we think”,  
in accordance with the discoveries of psychology.**

**When you pray, you experience some relief, peace, a sense of calmness,  
and the ability to think wisely.**

**It gives you the strength to face facts of life which otherwise you would be struggling to find.**



## Divya Tattvam

A divine insight into the Bala Sahasranama Stotram - By Smt. Asha Manoharan

### Soumya

**She is as cooling as the full moon.**

**She who is qualified to receive the soma.**

Before we refer to Devi and how she is compared to the cooling effect of the moon, we need to understand how the world has been obsessed with the moon and how it is being recognised as a symbol of fertility, and hence it is not uncommon for even the Devas to compare the moon and its cooling effect with Devi.

"The name Astarte was variously identified with the moon, as distinguished from the sun, or with air and water, as opposed in their qualities to fire. The name of this goddess represented to the worshipper the great female parent of all animated things, variously conceived of as the moon, the earth, the watery element, primeval night, the eldest of the destinies." "The moon is the chief over the night darkness, rest, death, and the waters." It is also remarkable that in the language of the Algonquins of North America the ideas of night, death, cold, sleep, water, and moon are expressed by one and the same word. In the oriental mythology "the connection between the moon and water suggests the idea that the moon produces fertility and freshness in the soil."

The Persians held that the moon was the cause of an abundant supply of water and of rain, and therefore the names of the most fruitful places in Persia are compounded with the word *mâh*, "moon"; "for in the opinion of the Iranians the growth of plants depends on the influence of the moon."

In India "the moon is generally a male, for its most popular names, *Candras*, *Indus*, and *Somas*, are masculine; but as *Somas* signifies ambrosia, the moon, as giver of ambrosia, soon came to be considered a milk-giving cow; in fact, moon is one among the various meanings given in Sanskrit to the word *Gâus* (cow). The moon, *Somas*, who illumines the nocturnal sky,

and the pluvial sun, *Indras*, who during the night, or the winter, prepares the light of morn, or spring, are represented as companions; a young girl, the evening, or autumnal twilight, who goes to draw water towards night, or winter, finds in the well, and takes to *Indras*, the ambrosial moon, that is, the *Somas* whom he loves. Here are the very words of the Vedic hymn: "The young girl, descending towards the water, found the moon in the fountain, and said: I will take you to *Indras*, I will take you to *Çakras*; flow, O moon, and envelop *Indras*." Here in India we again find our old friend "the frog in the moon." "It is especially *Indus* who satisfies the frog's desire for rain. *Indus*, as the moon, brings or announces the *Somas*, or the rain; the frog, croaking, announces or brings the rain; and at this point the frog, which we have seen identified at first with the cloud, is also identified with the pluvial moon." This myth is not lacking in involution.

No poet has ever stopped comparing Devi to the moon. You find references to her compared to the sun and the moon in *Soundarya Lahiri*. Why is this comparison made? The answer to this question is in *Devi Gita*, where she shows her *viswa roopa* to the *devathas* and there the sun and the moon takes its place and she says, "I am the Sun, I am the Moon, I am the Stars; I am beast, birds..."

In China "the moon is regarded as chief and director of everything subject in the cosmic system to the Yin [feminine] principle, such as darkness, the earth, female creatures, water, etc. Thus Pao P'ah Tsze declares with reference to the tides: 'The vital essence of the moon governs water: and hence, when the moon is at its brightest, the tides are high.'" According to the Japanese fairy tale the moon was to "rule over the new

-born earth and the blue waste of the sea, with its multitudinous salt waters." Thus we see that throughout Asia, "as lord of moisture and humidity, the moon is connected with growth and the nurturing power of the peaceful night."

Of the kindred of the Pharaohs, Plutarch observes: "The sun and moon were described by the Egyptians as sailing round the world in boats, intimating that these bodies owe their power of moving, as well as their support and nourishment, to the principle of humidity". The moon-god Khons bears in his hands either a palm-branch or "the Nilometer." When the Egyptians sacrificed a pig to the moon, "the first sacred emblem they carried was a *hydria*, or water-pitcher." At another festival the Egyptians "marched in procession towards the sea-side, whither likewise the priests and other proper officers carried the sacred chest, inclosing a small boat or vessel of gold, into which they first poured some fresh water; and then all present cried out with a loud voice 'Osiris is found.' This ceremony being ended, they threw a little fresh mould, together with rich odours and spices, into the water, mixing the whole mass together, and working it up into a little image in the shape of a crescent. The image was afterwards dressed and adorned with a proper habit, and the whole was intended to intimate that they looked upon these gods as the essence and power of earth and water."

The Austro-Hungarians have a man in the moon who is a sort of aquarius. Grimm says: "Water, an essential part of the Norse myth, is wanting in the story of the man with the thorn bush, but it reappears in the Carniolan story cited in Bretano's *Libussa* the man in the moon is called Kotar, he makes her grow by pouring water." The Scandinavian legend, distilled into Jack and Jill, is, as we have seen, an embodiment of early European belief that the ebb and flow of the tides were dependent upon the motions and mutations of the moon. We find the same notion prevailing in the western hemisphere. "As the MOON is associated with the dampness and dews of night, an ancient and widespread myth identified her with the goddess of

water. Moreover, in spite of the expostulations of the learned, the common people the world over persist in attributing to her a marked influence on the rains.

Whether false or true, this familiar opinion is of great antiquity, and was decidedly approved. by the Indians, great observers of the weather by the moon.' They looked upon her, not only as forewarning them by her appearance of the approach of rains and fogs, but as being their actual cause. Isis, her Egyptian title, literally means moisture; *Ataensic*, whom the Hurons said was the moon, is derived from the word for water; and *Citatli* and *Atl*, moon and water, are constantly confounded in Aztec theology." One of the gods of the Dakotahs was "Unk-ta-he (god of the water). The Dakotahs say that this god and its associates are seen in their dreams. It is the master-spirit of all their juggling and superstitious belief, From it the medicine men obtain their supernatural powers, and a great part of their religion springs from this god."



"In the legend of the Muyscas it is Chia, the moon, who was also goddess of water and flooded the earth out of spite." In this myth the moon is a malevolent deity, and water, usually a symbol of life, becomes an agency of death. Reactions are constantly occurring in



the myth-making process. The god is male or female, good or evil, angry or amiable, according to the season or climate, the aspect of nature or the mood of the people. "The time of full moon was chosen both in Mexico and Peru to celebrate the festival of the deities of water, the patrons of agriculture, and very generally the ceremonies connected with the crops were regulated by her phases. The Nicaraguans said that the god of rains, Quiateot, rose in the east, thus hinting how this connection originated."

"The Muyscas of the high plains of Bogota were once, they said, savages without agriculture, religion, or law; but there came to them from the east an old and bearded man, Bochica, the child of the sun, and he taught them to till the fields, to clothe themselves, to worship the gods, to become a nation. But Bochica had a wicked, beautiful wife, Huythaca, who loved to spite and spoil her husband's work; and she it was who made the river swell till the land was covered by a flood, and but a few of mankind escaped upon the mountain tops. Then Bochica was wroth, and he drove the wicked Huythaca from the earth, and made her the moon, for there had been no moon before; and he cleft the rocks and made the mighty cataract of Tequendama, to let the deluge flow away. Then, when the land was dry, he gave to the remnant of mankind the year and its periodic sacrifices, and the worship of the sun. Now the people who told this myth had not forgotten, what indeed we might guess without their help, that Bochica was himself Zuhé, the sun, and Huytheca, the sun's wife, the moon." In its solar husband and lunar wife it embraces that anthropomorphism and sexuality which we think have been and still are the principal factors in the production of legendary and religious impersonations.

Such is the obsessions of mankind to the moon that he finds himself immersed in its coolness and its light which being west or east brings out the love of man to nature. No poet has ever stopped comparing devi to the moon. You find references to her compared to the sun and the moon in *Soundarya Lahiri*

***Tatil-lekha-thanvim thapana-sasi-vaisvanara-mayim  
Nishannam shannam apy upari kamalanam tava ka-  
laam;***

***Maha-padma tavyam mrdita-mala-mayena manasa  
Mahantah pasyanto dadhati parama'hlada-laharim.***

Those souls great,  
Who have removed all the dirt from the mind,  
And meditate on you within their mind,  
Who is of the form of sun and moon,  
And living in the forest of lotus,  
And also above the six wheels of lotus,  
Enjoy waves after waves,  
Of happiness supreme.

in another verse it says:

***Sivah saktih kamah kshitir atha ravih sithakirana  
Smaro hamsah sakrastadanu cha para-mara-  
harayah;***

***Amee hrillekhabhis tisrbhir avasanesu ghatitha  
Bhajante varnaste tava janani nam'avayavatham.***

She who is mother of us all,  
The seed letter "ka" of my lord Shiva,  
The seed letter "a" of goddess Shakthi,  
The seed letter "ee" of the god of love,  
The seed letter "la" of earth,  
The seed letter "ha" of the sun god,  
The seed letter "sa" of the moon with cool rays...

Why is this comparison made? Was man obsessed with nature that he takes pride in comparing her creation with her or is she inducing that knowledge in some way for man to realise such a thought. Has she given a hint of it. The answer to this question in *Devi Gita* where she shows her *viswa roopa* to the *devathas* and there the sun and the moon takes its place and she says, "I am the Sun, I am the Moon, I am the Stars; I am beast, birds..." In Her her cosmic form, "The Satyaloka is situated on the topmost part and is Her head; the Sun and Moon are Her eyes; the quarters, Her ears; the Vedas are Her words; the Universe is Her heart..."

## You, Me and our cup of Yoga

Memory, did I forget you? - By Gargi Parthasarathy

Many years ago when I was first introduced to the realm of our ancient Vedic texts, I was told that most of it was documented only later. All that literature and information was passed on by word of mouth. My first reaction to that was, "Impossible, someone is making all that stuff up to glamorise the whole event." No offense meant to anyone, but at that juncture I carried around a paper and pen/pencil everywhere to jot down a "to do list" (Doesn't matter if the list had only 2 items on it). But honestly, even for someone who clearly remembers what they need to do, memorising not one or two but all those Sanskrit texts does seem a supernatural feat doesn't it?

Yoga works on many levels like the body, mind, breath and sound to help every individual focus their mind and clear it of stress and fear.

Our ancestors obviously knew how to use their brain effectively. So why is it that we are not able to utilise and access our brain and memory so well? The brain by nature thrives on doing one single task effectively and then moving onto the next one. So if you are reading an article and are thinking about what to do after reading simultaneously, the brain doesn't do justice to both. It does not give importance to the article since you obviously have told it to also function on something else and doesn't store it in the memory, it's as simple as that when it comes to the brain. Under the guise of multitasking we do not concentrate on the task at hand. Concentration and memory are two peas in a pod. You simply cannot recollect things you have not paid attention to. So the first step to rectifying a poor memory is to start paying attention and concentrate.

Next step is to realise that our brain is the best organizer we have around and use it! We have so many

tools and gadgets which provide a crutch to our memory. Look at the number of simple "To do list" apps available on the mobile apps market! Astounding! Our brain is an example of "Use it or lose it". So another simple step is to start trusting your memory with one thing at a time and using it.

Let us not neglect the fact that stress and a nagging sense of fear play an important part in cognitive decline. Stress tenses up the nerves and slowly stops them from functioning effectively. Its like putting your brain in a bind and expecting it to work efficiently. In fact these factors are one of the major reasons why we experience a lack of concentration, forgetfulness, and even memory loss. We jest about these symptoms calling them "mommy brain" or "senior moments" but in the worst-case scenario it could lead to dementia or Alzheimer's disease.

Now comes the real question: How can Yoga help us in improving our memory? Yoga works on many levels like the body, mind, breath and sound to help every individual focus their mind and clear it of stress and fear. Through *asanas* it works on the body level and improves the vital blood flow supply to the brain, thus improving the neuromuscular functioning of the brain. Through *pranayama* it works on the breath level and helps us combat stress which is one of the prime factors in many of the body ailments including a poorly functioning brain. Through *dhyana* (meditation) and chanting it works on the mind level helping us calm down and look at life from a fresh new perspective.

The next question is: With Yoga can we reverse a declining cognitive faculty and make it function optimally no matter the age? Research in neurosciences have proved that the brain is an ever evolving entity of our body. It is plastic in nature and can change its architecture depending on the usage. If we choose to not depend on it for memory, well guess what? The brain



doesn't wire itself to serve the purpose. The minute we depend on it for memory and concentration, it wires itself accordingly. The saying "As you think so you are" definitely gets a new perspective now!

In this article we will cover a few basic *asanas* like Uttanasana and Paschimottanasana (demonstration in the video). Practice of these asanas along with proper breathing and chanting improves blood supply to the brain helping it to function optimally. Trataka (demonstrated in the video) is another technique which when practised regularly helps in increasing concentration and training your mind to stay focused.

## Lalitha Homam 2012

### Bala Tripurasundari Homam and Kubera Lakshmi Homam

#### Bala Tripurasundari Homam

On the second day of the Lalitha Homam event, the Bala Tripurasundari homam is performed for Sri Bala. Sri Bala is the most sublime form of the divine mother, the epitome of knowledge, and the personification of the very essence of *Shakti*. For this divine *homam*, "*Aum kleem sauh baalaayai namah*", the eight syllable mantra is chanted while offering oblation to Agni. Panchadasaaksaree (15 syllables) mantra of Sri Lalitha "*ka ae ee la hreem ha sa ka ha la hreem sa ka la hreem*" is also used in these *homas*. In Lalitha Sahasranamam the 965th Naamaavali is "Baalaayai Namah" and the 966th Naamaavali is "Leelaa Vinodinyai Namah" referring to the child's (Shakti's) amusement. Through this *homam*, Sri Bala blesses Her devotees with knowledge, longevity, health, progeny, fame, and shelter at Her holy feet.

#### Kubera Lakshmi Homam

Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Kubera are the chief deities of this powerful *homam*. Goddess Lakshmi is an embodiment of wealth and prosperity. Lord Kubera is also the lord of wealth who blesses his devotees with comfort and luxuries. This *homam* is performed to invoke the blessings of Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Kubera to acquire material growth and prosperity.



Bala Tripurasundari Homam	Kubera Lakshmi Homam
<b>Vastram:</b> Pattu pavadai (2)	<b>Vastram:</b> 9 yards pattu pudavai 6 yards pattu pudavai
<b>Prasadam:</b> kalkandu pongal thayir sadam Karasev Jhangiri	<b>Prasadam:</b> suddha annam sakkarai pongal thayir sadam

We are very thankful to...

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## Bala Prastha

Once upon a time, there was a king who ruled a prosperous country. One day, he went to visit his kingdom and his people, and so travelled far and wide. When he was back in his palace, he complained that his feet were very painful, because it was the first time that he went on such a long trip, and the road that he went through was very rough and stony. He then ordered his people to cover every road of the entire country with leather. Definitely, this would need thousands of cows' skin, and would cost a huge amount of money. One of his wise servants dared himself to tell the king, "Why do you have to spend that unnecessary amount of money? Why don't you just cut a little piece of leather to cover your feet?" The king was surprised, but he later agreed to his suggestion, to make a shoe for himself.

**Moral of the story:** To make the world a happy place, if need be change yourself, not the world.

### Riddles:

1. You answer me, although I never ask you questions. What am I?  
(əʊəphəʊn)
2. What question can you never answer "yes" to?  
(? ʌre ju əslɛp?)
3. Big as a biscuit, deep as a cup, Even a river can't fill it up. What is it?  
(ə teɪ stɹaɪnɜː)
4. If you have it, you want to share it. If you share it, you don't have it. What is it?  
(ə sɪkɪt)
5. Remove the outside, cook the inside, eat the outside, throw away the inside.  
(ə kɔːn)



### Word Scrambler

SCRAMBLER	ANSWER
SHIUNV	
SENAGH	
RAGMNUU	
THARVAIP	
AIVHS	

- Answer:
1. Vishnu
  2. Ganesh
  3. Murugan
  4. Parvathi
  5. Shiva

**Who Am I**

By Susan Caffery

*I am the first cool rays of the sun  
Brightening the night time's shadow  
I am the silver gurgling stream lying in reverse shallows  
I am the welcomed rays of the sun lighting the gloomy wood  
I am the soft hand of dawn caressing the tiger's brood*

*And awakening the baby rabbit  
And stroking the wooly bear cub  
And stirring the birds to singing  
And melting the cold black ground  
So the mushroom can be found*

*I am Bala, Bala, Bhoomy, Bhoomy,  
I am the young virgin earth  
I am the awakening spring time*

*I am the dainty lilies of the field nodding our lovely heads  
I am the first crocus of spring just climbing out of my bed  
I am the melting snow on the hill gathering a waterfall  
I am the chick from the broken egg, stretching and standing soo tall*

*I am the roly poly puppies  
And soft and tender kittens  
And wobbly gobbly elephants  
And all the new born babies  
From all the motherly ladies*

*I am Bala. Bala, Bhoomy, Bhoomy  
I am the virgin earth  
I am the awakening spring time*

The author of this poem Ms. Susan Caffery is a member of Balambika Divya Sangam. An ardent devotee of Bala, she derives her inspiration from the Brahmanda Puranam. Ms. Caffery has written many books for teens, that depict the imaginary adventures of Bala. Ms. Caffery presently resides in Florida, USA.