



# Every Town & Village



Issue 3, 2006

Newsletter of the Hare Krishna Centre in Leicester

## Krishna at the Campus

**F**ood for Life at Leicester University has become a regular feature at the campus. Students are delighted when they spot the blue and yellow rickshaw with its inviting flags waving in the wind. Some even sneak out of their lectures not to miss the delicious *prasadam* (food).

Devotees have recently started to not only provide hot *subji* (vegetable mix), rice, cakes and freshly pressed fruit juices but also fruit packs with bananas, apples and oranges. Health ranks high amongst students and the fully vegetarian dishes are much appreciated.

Students are pretty poor financially these days. Many leave university with about £15,000 in debts due to educational fees. They are very happy to get a healthy, free and nutritious meal. Because it is vegetarian it is suitable for Jews, Muslims, meat eaters and almost everyone.



Hey man, is that really free?



Students are happy to receive a plate of hot, delicious Krishna Prasadam

Many students are eager to learn more about Krishna Consciousness. Questions are being asked and books are thankfully accepted. Most leave their contact details to receive news about special events or to get the Centre's regular newsletter. Food and philosophy seem to go hand in hand.

Those who have developed a deeper interest in Krishna Consciousness are invited to the nearby Hare Krishna Centre. The Saturday program has become a popular event for students to drop in.

Each Saturday is governed by a theme. Devotees prepare a short talk which forms the basis

for discussion. The interactive format enables participants to express doubts or ask questions. It is a stimulating formula.

The evening offers music, dance and of course hot and delicious Krishna *prasadam*. It gives everyone the opportunity to meet new people and make new friends. Students always need support; spiritual support is no exception to this. The Centre fulfills that need and those who attend have experienced the benefit and come regularly. The evening is light, fun and free. Why say no?

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We really like it, we are regulars



Krishna Consciousness Society





## Krishna in the City

Devotees from the Hare Krishna Centre are distributing hot, delicious Krishna prasadam in the City Centre of Leicester via a converted Indian bicycle rickshaw. The program has met with considerable success and sixty plates of hot rice, *subji* (vegetable mix), cake and drinks are distributed within no more than thirty minutes.

The rickshaw has become an attractive feature amongst busy Saturday shoppers. Many have not experienced this side of Krishna Consciousness before and feel it makes it more accessible to them. People taking to Krishna *prasadam* (sanctified food) come from all walks of life.

The homeless and needy who know Hare Krishna devotees from their *prasadam* distribution at Leicester's Anchor Club are the first ones to turn up. The elderly and pensioners are also amongst those who are eagerly participating in the Lord's mercy mission as well as many families who appreciate the valuable service devotees offer to society at large.

Devotees announce the program



Prasadam distribution in the City



God bless you for your kindness!

with the help of a portable, battery powered amplifier to the sounds of lively Hare Krishna *kirtan* (chant). This makes the presentation very attractive. Sometimes fifteen people cue up to take advantage of this free offering of love. Hare Krishna has become a household word in Leicester and it is associated with dancing in the street and distributing literature and free food.

The *prasadam* is fully vegetarian and cakes are made without the use of eggs. Therefore it appeals to everyone, Christians, Hindus and Muslims alike.

One plate of delicious, hot



Is it really vegetarian?

*"It's delicious  
it's nutritious  
why say No?"*



My daughter loves your food



It's delicious, it's nutritious, why say No?



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## Radio Indraprastha

The Hare Krishna Centre has launched its digital Internet station, Radio Indraprastha. The station broadcasts 24 hours 365 days a year and is available at: [www.gauranga.org/indraprastha.htm](http://www.gauranga.org/indraprastha.htm)

Broadcasts consist mainly of Krishna Bhajan and Krishna Katha. It is a tribute to the worldwide audience of the

Centre's Real Audio site, which attracted over half a million listeners in the past few years only.

The station is available for advertising to fund itself. Potential advertisers are requested to get in touch with the Hare Krishna Centre.

Chakra, the leading Vaishnava news Internet site, reported in an article on 12 March 2006 about the launch of the radio



<http://www.gauranga.org/indraprastha.htm>

station: [www.gauranga.org/radio\\_indraprastha.htm](http://www.gauranga.org/radio_indraprastha.htm)



## Yajna

Ram Navami saw an auspicious Vedic fire *yajna* at the Hare Krishna Centre. It was a colourful event which was accompanied by chanting of mantras and offering of oblations into the fire.

Devotees at the Hare Krishna Centre perform *samskaras* (rites of passage) such as marriage, childbirth, first grain eating

ceremony etc. They also perform *yajnas* for auspiciousness and ceremonies after moving into a new home. Personal counseling and spiritual support and guidance as well as pastoral care in a variety of life's situations are also offered by the Centre.

In the Bhagavad-gita *yajna* is encouraged as follows:

"Work done as a sacrifice for *Visnu* has to be performed; otherwise work causes bondage

in this material world. Therefore, O son of Kunti, perform your prescribed duties for His satisfaction, and in that way you will always remain free from bondage." BG 3.9)

"In the beginning of creation, the Lord of all creatures sent forth generations of men and demigods, along with sacrifices for *Visnu*, and blessed them by saying, "Be thou happy by this *yajna* [sacrifice] because its performance will bestow upon you everything desirable for



Chanting mantras before the yajna

living happily and achieving liberation." (BG 3.10)

"Acts of sacrifice, charity and penance are not to be given up; they must be performed. Indeed, sacrifice, charity and penance purify even the great souls." (BG 18.5)

But those who always worship Me with exclusive devotion, meditating on My transcendental form - to them I carry what they lack, and I preserve what they have. (BG 9.22)



The final oblations have been offered into the fire



## Krishna at School



arch saw a visit of 'English Martyrs Catholic Primary School' to the Hare Krishna Centre. Two groups of children from key stage one and key stage two were eager to learn something about Hinduism.

Children were introduced to Leicester's Geeta Bhavan as well as to the Hare Krishna Centre. They had previously studied the



Children and teachers chant at the Hare Krishna Centre

Jewish tradition and Islam and were now looking forward to learn something about the Hindu



English Martyrs Catholic Primary School at the Geeta Bhavan

way of life and worship.

After the *arati* ceremony the secretary of the Geeta Bhavan,



The school receives a thirty volume set of the ancient *Srimad Bhagavatam*

Mr Prasher, addressed the older children and spoke to them about the various deities at the Mandir. He explained that God is one and that other deities are *devatas* or demigods. Thereafter was time to ask questions. Children took to the opportunity, which proved that they were listening very attentively.

After having received some *maha prasadam* the group left Geeta Bhavan enriched with knowledge and understanding of the Hindu tradition.

In the afternoon a group of younger children visited the Hare Krishna Centre where they observed an *arati* ceremony for the presiding deities of the Centre, Sri Sri Nitai Saci-Sundar and Sri Giri-Govardhana.

Thereafter pupils were able to watch the famous film 'Vrindavan, Land of Krishna'. The children asked many questions till the group had finally to leave, enthused by the experience and with their hands full of *prasadam* (sanctified food).

Devotees from the Hare Krishna Centre were also able to speak at an assembly at English

Martyrs School and make a Power Point presentation on Hinduism, show articles of worship and answer the many questions students had. It was a hands on session and students were especially intrigued with blowing the conch, the symbol of *Vishnu*.

The Head Master had arranged for a reporter from the Rutland Mercury to come and take photos for an article about the uncommon visit at the school. Devotees took the opportunity to donate to the school a thirty volume set of the ancient *Srimad Bhagavatam*, which had



The conch blowing session was everyone's favourite

kindly been sponsored by supporters of the Hare Krishna Centre. Teachers and children were overwhelmed by this unexpected gift and promised to keep in touch with the Hare Krishna Centre.





## Gaura Purnima

This year's *Gaura Purnima* Festival at the Hare Krishna Centre was a full success. Many devotees, friends and guests turned up from as far as Sheffield, Manchester and Nottingham.

The temple room was fully charged with enthusiasm as devotees were eagerly awaiting the divine appearance of *Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu*, Lord Krishna Himself, who appeared in the form of His devotee and in the mood of *Srimati Radharani*. Lord *Caitanya* is therefore the combined form of *Radha* and *Krishna*.

Devotees had prepared a vast number of *bhoga* (food) preparations to be offered to Their Lordships after the *abhisheka* bathing ceremony. The *abhisheka* was the highlight of the evening. Devotees and guests looked especially forward to it because, by Lord *Caitanya's* great mercy, everyone present got the very special opportunity



An ocean of food offerings

to personally bathe the installed deities. This service is normally reserved for *pujaris* (priests) only, however, especially on *Gaura Purnima* the Lord's mercy

is without any limits.

The bathing started with sugar water to which flower petals were added for extra fragrance. The water was enriched with the sacred waters from 1008 holy rivers and ponds from India, Nepal, Kashmir etc. Thereafter followed milk, yogurt, honey and ghee, also known as *pancamrita* or the *amrita* (nectar) made from five (*panca*) substances. Freshly pressed fruit juices were poured over the divine forms of the two Lords who wore garlands made of dried fruit.

The bathing ended with a shower of coloured water for extra auspiciousness. Throughout this ceremony one could hear the blowing of conchs accompanied by the melodious sounds of *kirtan* (chanting), the rhythmical beats of drums and the high pitched sounds of *karatalas* (cymbals). The atmosphere was full of anticipation to be able to take part in this most auspicious event. Devotees patience was rewarded as everyone present got the chance to bathe Their Lordships.

After the *abhisheka* the Lords were dressed in Their new sea-blue outfit and decorated with precious ornaments and jewels. Everyone agreed They have never before looked so special and splendid as on this *Gaura Purnima* day. The Lords looked satisfied and blessed all those who happened to be present. Everyone felt fortunate to be able to witness this exalted and special appearance.

After the bathing it was time to offer the multi-course feast. It took time to bring in the various dishes devotees had prepared with much love and devotion. It was a beautiful sight to see such



Devotees enthusiasm knew no bounds

an ocean of items displayed in front of the Lords.

The festival ended with devotees breaking their fast and respecting the remnants of food offered to the Lords called *maha prasadam* (great mercy), which is so potent that it is capable to deliver even the greatest of sinners and wrongdoers.

This year's *Gaura Purnima* festival was the second birth day celebration of Their Lordships since Their installation in 2005. It was an opportunity to reflect on how much had been achieved so far. Devotees were much satisfied by the progress of the Centre and felt grateful and humbled by so much mercy pouring on them in such a short time. *Gaura Purnima* photos can be viewed at: [www.gauranga.org/gaura\\_purnima\\_06/album/index.html](http://www.gauranga.org/gaura_purnima_06/album/index.html)



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Their Lordships in Their new outfit



The abhisheka bathing ceremony



## Buddha and Krishna

The Hare Krishna Centre hosted an international group of Buddhist monks during their pre-seminar activities in Leicester. The monks came from as far as Canada, Zimbabwe, Japan, Holland and from various locations throughout the UK.

The group was introduced to a Vedic *arati* ceremony after which devotees explained the philosophy and history of Krishna consciousness and the importance of Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His *bhakti* movement. Devotees also discussed the various incarnations of Lord Krishna and the importance of the chanting of the holy names of God as the *yuga dharma* or the science of self-realisation for this age of *kali*.

Everyone joined together in the chanting of the Hare Krishna *maha mantra* with the accompaniment of harmonium, *karatalas* (cymbels) and *mrdangam* (drum). It was a powerful and meditative experience which all enjoyed so much that

devotees were invited to the Buddhist House for a lively kirtan on the last day of their seminars.

The group had also the opportunity to watch Indradyumna Swami's Polish Tour video. Everyone enjoyed this part of the presentation very much. The monks appreciated the vast amount of preparation needed to set-up the 'Festival of India'.

A lively question and answer session and the sharing of Krishna *prasadam* (spiritual food) rounded off this extraordinary visit. All felt



*Intense listening and openness*

enlivened and promised to keep in touch. Devotees felt the two communities had much in common, could share experiences and work together. The Buddhist monks expressed their appreciation as follows:

"You and the others were very welcoming, the openness and the joy exuded by all of you is in itself testimony of your faith."

One of the monks explained she would like to set up a multi-faith chaplaincy in the future and a Hare Krishna chaplain would be welcomed.

All in all the visit of this Buddhist monastic order highlighted clearly the potential and benefits of different faith communities, cultures and institutions coming together in openness, acceptance and appreciation of each other rather than being confined to isolation and self righteousness.



*The 'Festival of India' caught everyone's attention*



*The Buddhist monks greatly enjoyed their visit to the Hare Krishna Centre*

## Krishna at the Door

**D**oor to door book distribution is a very effective way of spreading Krishna consciousness. Devotees from the Hare Krishna Centre distributed 2,400 'Back to Godhead' magazines last year alone, most of them door to door.

Householders are much pleased when devotees visit them with transcendental literature and some *maha prasadam* (spiritual food). Many are asking the devotees to return regularly.

Devotees were able to place 30 sets of the 30 volume *Srimad Bhagavatam* classic in people's homes and into school libraries. Moreover, they were able to distribute 5,000 newsletters door to door and on the weekly *harinam* (public chanting).

Srila Prabhupada encourages this door to door program as follows:

"Continue this door to door

program. It is very nice. Lord Nityananda used to do that; Haridasa Thakura used to do that; all of Lord Caitanya's close associates used to do that. So we must follow in their footprints." (Letter to Jagadisa, 2.9.71)

"One should also consider that those who engage in the missionary activities of Krishna consciousness are under the guidance of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. They are not actually beggars; their real business is to deliver fallen souls. Therefore they may go from door to door just to introduce a book about Krishna consciousness so that people can become enlightened by reading." (CC Madhya, 8.39 pp)

"The preachers of Krishna consciousness go from door to door to inform people how they can be relieved from the miserable conditions of material life." (SB 5.14.39 pp)

"... every member of the Krishna consciousness movement is interested in going door to door



A Back to Godhead magazine in every street and house

to try to convince people about the teachings of Bhagavad-gita As It Is, the teachings of Lord Caitanya. That is the purpose of the Hare Krishna movement." (SB 7.9.44 pp)



## Join Us

**T**he Hare Krishna Centre holds regular programs every Saturday from 7 to 9 PM. We therefore want to invite you to an evening of music, dance, philosophy, discussion, entertainment and *prasadam* (spiritual food).

We have an increased number of students from the nearby

University attending the program, which ensures lively discussion, debate and questions and answers. Why not come along, be our guest and make new friends?



Open Evening  
Saturdays  
7-9 pm

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