



# Spiritual Perspectives

Seeing the World through Spiritual Eyes  
For Friends and Followers of Mukunda Goswami

February 2020

## What We Remember

By Radha devi dasi

Last month, the world celebrated the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz concentration camp. Commentators admonish us to remember the horrors of the Holocaust in order to prevent them from happening again. And yet, genocide goes on around the globe, even as we hold memorials for the 6 million murdered by Nazis at Auschwitz and other places. Perhaps the issue is not about whether we remember the Holocaust as much as it is about what we remember.

The Nazi effort to wipe out European Jews was notable for its scale. Only in modern times have we seen the demonic intent to destroy an entire people married to the ability to isolate and destroy huge numbers of people at a time. At Auschwitz, for example, tens of thousands of people were murdered in a single *day*. However, the Nazi genocide did not begin with slaughter. It began with a concerted propaganda campaign that allowed the Christian majority in Germany (and elsewhere) to see Jewish people as less than human.

This denigration of a race of people was not unique to Nazi Germany. While histories of the Holocaust correctly present the United States as a liberator of concentration camps, for example, the U.S. also aided Nazi Germany. In fact, Hitler cited U.S. Jim Crow laws that discriminated against African Americans in justifying Germany's treatment of Jews. Anti-Semitism was alive and well in the U.S. (and elsewhere) during the Holocaust and contributed to the U.S. closing its borders to Jewish refugees at the time.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-50743973>



*Child survivors of the Holocaust*

As Vaishnavas, we know the danger of material vision that allows us to see others as lesser than ourselves. We routinely preach against a mentality of exploitation that allows some to expand their sense enjoyment at the expense of others' well-being. And yet, humankind shows no sign of having learned this lesson. In Myanmar, Sudan, China, the Middle East and numerous other places entire populations are still subjected to persecution because they belong to the "wrong" religion or ethnic group. What are we missing?

Perhaps the reason for this failure is that the forces of hate will always be stronger than the forces of love if love does not imply action. One of the compelling questions about the Holocaust is why so many "good citizens" did nothing to protect the Jews. Apathy as much as hate enabled the Nazi genocide.

For Vaishnavas, local and national politics can seem far removed from our sphere of interest or influence. Seeking to transcend the material world, we may be excused for a reluctance to become involved in its trials and tribulations. And yet, in the words of John Stuart Mill, "Let not any one pacify his conscience by the delusion that he can do no harm if he takes no part, and forms no opinion. **Bad men need nothing more to compass their ends, than that good men should look on and do nothing.**"

It is our duty to speak up when we witness prejudice and oppression. Krishna tells us that all souls are equally deserving of life. Let's spread that message where it is most needed.

# New Jersey Devotees Appear on TV Asia to Over 1.5 Million Viewers

By: Madhava Smullen, *ISKCON News*, January 17, 2020

<https://bit.ly/2GTVizX>



<https://bit.ly/2GTVizX>

*The New Jersey devotees with host Vikas Nangia*

Devotees from ISKCON of New Jersey appeared on TV Asia's live call-in talk show, "Focus Live," on January 2<sup>nd</sup> at 8 p.m. EST to answer questions and present Krishna consciousness to an audience of 1.5 to 2 million viewers.

First founded in the UK in 1990, TV Asia was also the first coast-to-coast entertainment and information channel for the South Asian community settled in the U.S. It airs regularly scheduled programs in Hindi, English, Gujarati and other regional languages 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Appearing on Focus Live with host Vikas Nangia for the full hour-long duration of the show were three devotees: New Jersey temple president Nilamani Das; Communications director and education coordinator Madanagopala Das; and Catering Director and New Temple Project Finance Coordinator Manasi Ganga Dasi.

After the devotees opened with a short Hare Krishna mantra kirtan, the host introduced the topic of the day – Peace.

"He expressed that it would be nice to start the new decade on a spiritual and positive note, and asked each of us what 'Peace' meant to us," says Madanagopala.

Among the answers, Manasi Ganga said, "Peace means to know that there is someone out there who is looking out for me. I feel a sense of security and peace knowing that Krishna will take care of me."

Meanwhile Madanagopala responded, "As Krishna teaches us in the *Gita*, *asantasya kutah sukham*, there cannot be happiness without peace. So peace, which comes from cultivating Krishna consciousness, allows us to experience real happiness in life."

The host then took calls from Portland, OR; Long Island, NY; Allentown, PA; and other areas. One caller asked how fights amongst members of different religions can be avoided, to which Madanagopala answered, "In all religions, the essence is love of God. If we develop love, then love overpowers and saturates the atmosphere so much that peace and happiness come as natural byproducts."

Another caller, from Pennsylvania, said, "I was fortunate to be in touch with ISKCON back in 1984 and got the *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* and enjoyed reading it. The Lord is an ocean of peace. What

can you elaborate on that and how can we access some of that peace? What is the process?"

Nilamani Das replied, "We are eternally blissful and peaceful in our natural state. But because we have forgotten our relationship with Krishna, and because our father is God Himself, we feel anxiety and difficulty. But by the gradual process of bhakti and cultivation of knowledge we become more and more peaceful and happy."

The host also asked several other questions about the practice of Krishna consciousness and what makes ISKCON unique. He was particularly interested in learning about the youth and next generation.

"How is the young generation embracing Krishna consciousness and how much are they realizing the depth of this peace?" he asked. "I see generally the younger generation tend to be disturbed and restless."

"We would like to invite all our viewers to take spirituality more seriously," Nilamani replied. "This is the way to attain peace and happiness, not only for yourself but for the children and next generation youth. I can speak for my own children who have grown up in this ISKCON movement, and imbibed these values by going to the temple, attending Sunday School and doing fun things in this atmosphere. It has to be fun and also genuine. Then they will carry it in their hearts for the rest of their lives."

As part of the program, the host also showed several relevant Youtube videos including Yadunath Das' video on 50 years of ISKCON, and some kirtan videos. The show concluded with devotees singing the *Jaya Radha Madhava bhajan*.

*Continued on page 3*

“The host was very grateful and thoroughly appreciated our answers as well as the kirtans that we performed,” Madanagopala says. “He mentioned that he will look forward to having us on his show again to discuss other such topics sometime later this year.”

Several viewers – some ISKCON members themselves -- reached out to the devotees after the show with positive feedback, such as:

“You did an excellent job describing the concept of peace and explaining the *Gita*.”

“Keep up the good work. We watched the show and really liked the fact that you got to do kirtan and demonstrate *japa* meditation.”

“This is wonderful. It is a great service to ISKCON and Srila Prabhupada! Such wide exposure and coverage for our movement and temples.”

Speaking on behalf of the three devotees who appeared on the show, Madanagopala says, “We hope that thousands of viewers learned about ISKCON and its activities worldwide and were hopefully impressed enough by our responses, kirtan and presentation to want to learn more and perhaps attend an ISKCON program or visit a center.”



<https://bit.ly/2GTVizX>

*Nilamani Das, Manasi Ganga Dasi and Madanagopala Das on TV Asia's Focus Live with host Vikas Nangia*

## Prominent Indian Corporate Billionaires Initiate Efforts to Develop Mayapur Heritage City

By: Parijata Dasi, *ISKCON News*, January 17, 2020  
<https://bit.ly/36H5cix>

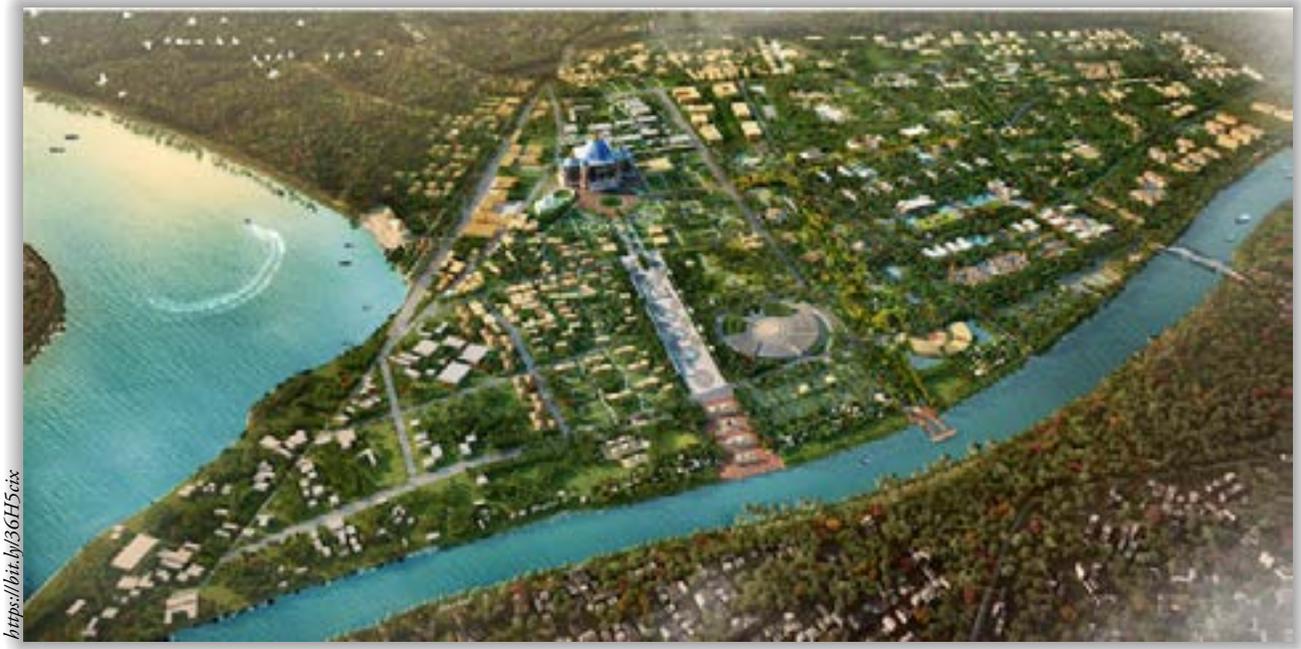
The first meeting of the Advisory Committee for development of Mayapur Heritage City, was held on January 9, 2020, at prominent Indian businessman Sajjan Jindal’s office.

The meeting was initiated by Devakinandan Das, Zonal Secretary and Vice Chairman of Mayapur Executive Board (MEB), and saw the participation of some of the most distinguished members of the corporate world namely Sajjan Jindal (Chairman, JSW Group & Advisory Committee), BK Goenka (Chairman, Welspun Group), Ajay Piramal (Chairman, Piramal Group), Ashok Goel (Chairman, Essel Group), Harshvardhan Neotia (Chairman, Ambuja Neotia Group) and Sanjiv Goenka (Chairman, RP Industries Ltd). Other businessmen who are

members of the Committee but were unable to attend the meeting are Shri Gautam Adani (Chairman, Adani Group), Shri Anil Agarwal (Chairman, Vedanta Resources) and Puneet Dalmia (Dalmia Bharat Group).

Some of the key topics discussed during the meeting were the phase-wise development plan of Mayapur City, real estate development, and infrastructure development. The Committee envisions the development of Mayapur as a world tourism circuit center, which includes ISKCON’s flagship center, the Temple of Vedic Planetarium (TOVP) and several themed public gardens, educational institutes, Ganga ghat development, ashrams

*Continued on page 4*



<https://bit.ly/36H5cix>

*Aerial view of the planned Mayapur landscape*

for visitors, cultural centers and exhibitions, a cottage industry enclave, and a *goshala*.

The Advisory Committee for development of Mayapur Heritage City will seek the help of accomplished consultants, retired bureaucrats, and government officials to initiate phase-one of the development.

Hrdaya Caitanya Das, Member, Advisory Committee, states, “It’s very encouraging to see that prominent Indian businessmen are coming together to help fulfill Srila Prabhupada’s vision of developing a spiritual city in Mayapur Dham.”



<https://bit.ly/36H5cix>

*Hrdaya Caitanya Das, BK Goenka, Devakinandan Das, Sajjan Jindal, Gauranga Das, Ajay Piramal and Ashok Goel*

## Devotees Safe in Australia Fires, Extending Help to Others

By: Madhava Smullen, *ISKCON News*, January 9, 2020

<https://bit.ly/36KcBh9>

Starting in September last year, bush fires have been causing widespread devastation in Australia, particularly in New South Wales (NSW). According to a CNN report on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 14.7 million acres have been burned across the country. At least 480 million animals have perished, as well as twenty-four people. In December, the smoke in Sydney was so bad that air quality measured eleven times the “hazardous” level.

According to Bhakta Das, ISKCON Australia Communications Director, no devotees have been injured, as the fire is some distance from ISKCON’s farming communities.

“All our centers are, however, on alert, especially New Gokula farm where the fires were only twenty kilometers away,” he says. “Thick smoke has been the major difficulty at New Gokula, Govinda Valley, and the Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne Temple areas, as some devotees suffer from asthma and the smoke from the bush fires is very toxic.”

One devotee family has lost a holiday home to the fire, but the family members themselves are all safe.

Meanwhile the devotee community in Australia has been expressing a great outpouring of sympathy for the victims of the fires.

*Continued on page 5*

“In a practical way, we are helping by working with local Hindu organizations that have been providing bottled water to the firefighters,” Bhakta says. “ISKCON Melbourne has offered to fund the next major shipment.”

Govinda Valley, a Hare Krishna retreat center in NSW, has offered to house any victims of the bush fire that have lost their homes, when there is availability.

In Victoria, ISKCON has contacted the Victorian Council of Churches Emergency Ministry – an interfaith organization which provides spiritual counseling to those in need during the tragic bush fire – and is volunteering the services of devotees who are Spiritual Care Providers (chaplains). This service will go on for several months.

As far as emergency meal distributions are concerned, at present the needs of the various fire affected areas have been met by local Lions Clubs and the Australian Army reserves.

“We have however offered our services to the appropriate relief organizations and local Councils at any time we are needed, to provide vegetarian or vegan meals to those in need,” says Bhakta. “In NSW we have a Hare Krishna Food for Life food van ready to go to any area where we may be required, but at the

moment those authorities have appreciated our offers, but have asked us to wait and act when instructed by them.”

Unfortunately, according to Bhakta Das the devastation may be far from over.

“Due to the extreme drought throughout many regions of Australia, so many areas are extremely dry and as such with exceptionally high temperatures and strong winds, even so very early into the summer months, there is anticipation that this is just the beginning of more tragic bush fires in the months to come,” he explains.

All ISKCON centers in Australia, and the farming communities in particular, will remain on high alert for fire risks.

Many devotees are organizing *bhajan* and kirtan nights at their temples, and *Harinama Sankirtana* sessions in the streets of major cities, with the specific prayer for rain and an end to the tragedy. Devotees are also contributing to various combined *Vedic Yajnas* organized by their Hindu brothers and sisters at their temples.

“They have also asked us to perform *Harinama Sankirtana* at their events,” Bhakta Das confirms.

## SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVES

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<https://bit.ly/36KcBb9>

People and animals are safe at ISKCON's New Govardhan farm in Australia

# Personal Message



Dear Friends,

Please accept my humble obeisance. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

This is a very rough draft excerpt from a booklet I'm producing whose purpose is to unpack the many statements made by Srila Prabhupada that milk benefits the brain.

## INTRODUCTION

It has been generally thought that the brain can be divided into right and left hemispheres, the right side being intuitive and emotional, and the left side being logical and systematic. However, in recent times, neurologists have determined that the human brain is a far more complex organ. For a long time, IQ tests were considered the best measure of human intelligence. However, in 1993 Daniel Goleman posited that something he called "EQ" (emotional intelligence) was an equally or even greater criterion for brain power. In 1996 Danah Zohar and Dr. Ian Marshall asserted in their book, "SQ" (spiritual intelligence) that SQ was the foundation for both IQ and EQ.

Studies intimate that milk contains ingredients that develop finer brain tissues, preserve and improve IQ levels, and enhance other aspects of human intellect. I/we strongly suggest you read our companion volume, XXXX XXXX, which details scientifically, nutritionally, and medically why this is true. As you will learn, milk from protected cows is especially beneficial for the human brain.

## SOME SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

A study made at the University of Maine (in the USA) was reported on by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and Weber Shandwick Worldwide.

The title tells us: "A glass of milk a day could benefit your brain —  
New research finds milk drinkers scored better on memory and brain function tests"

The 2018 report states: "Researchers at the University of Maine put more than 900 men and women ages 23 to 98 through a series of brain tests - including visual-spatial, verbal and working memory tests - and tracked the milk consumption habits of the participants. In the series of eight different measures of mental performance, regardless of age and through all tests, those who drank at least one glass of milk each day had an advantage. The highest scores for all eight outcomes were observed for those with the highest intakes of milk and milk products compared to those with low and infrequent milk intakes. The benefits persisted even after controlling for other factors that can affect brain health, including cardiovascular health and other lifestyle and diet factors. In fact, milk drinkers tended to have healthier diets overall, but there was something about milk intake specifically that offered the brain health advantage."

Your friend,

*Mukunda Goswami*

Mukunda Goswami

