

Sri Hari:

# MADHURA MURALI

Feb 2018



Spiritual Monthly with the Blessings of  
HH Maharanyam Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji





# madhuraGeetham

Ragam: Saraswathi

Talam: Adi

Pallavi

kiLi koNDu vanda seidi dAn ennavO  
prEmika varada! prEmika varada (kiLi)

Anupallavi

anDru nI kOdaikku aruLiyadu pOI  
inDru unnai enakku aruLa sonnALO (kiLi)

Charanam

AchArya stAnattil tAnE irundu  
en poruTTu saraNAgati seivittALO (kiLi)

Urum suTramum ariya vandu anDru  
kai piDitta rangamannAr nI dAn enDrALO (kiLi)



# MADHURA SMARANAM

My Guru As I See Him

[Experiences that our Australia  
GOD Satsang devotee  
Karunamai  
[Annette Willaims] shared  
with us is being  
published here]

**- Dr A Bhagyanathan**

Personal Secretary to Sri Sri Swamiji

Scriptures and Mahans opine that testimony to one's genuineness in his search for God is the Lord leading him to the holy feet of a Sadguru. Annette Williams of Australia, whom our Guru Maharaj calls as Karunamai, had been frequently visiting India in spiritual search. She has visited several holy places and Gurus, practised sadhanas and built an ashram in Australia where she conducted satsangs. Yet there was something unfulfilled. In spite of her wide travel, wanderings and sadhanas her mind remained unsatisfied.

As the spiritual thirst for attainment of God [which is verily the purpose of birth] grew day by day, in 2007 she was blessed with the opportunity to speak to our Guru Maharaj over the webcast during the satsang event that had been arranged for our Australian satsang members. Subsequently, in 2012 when Karunamai visited India she was blessed with the first darshan of Guru Maharaj in Premika Bhavanam. She could, very clearly, feel a great transformation and fulfilment by the very darshan of Guru Maharaj. She had not then realized that it was a great turning point in her life.

After her darshan of Guru Maharaj, Karunamai, as had been planned earlier, continued on her pilgrimage to Tiruvannamalai. Though she was involved in sadhana her mind was excited by the darshan of Guru Maharaj. 'When will I have His darshan again' was the uppermost thought in her. She contacted Guru Maharaj's personal secretary Mr. Bhagyanathan and explained her state. She felt consoled by his reply that she could have Guru Maharaj's darshan if she was able to make it to Chennai after a week. Her expression that it was the longest week in her life depicted her yearning and longing for Guru Maharaj's darshan. At the end of that week which seemed to move slowly she reached Premika Bhavanam.

At that moment she could feel that the fruit of all her pilgrimages and spiritual search was Guru Maharaj's darshan and the only place to reach was Guru Maharaj's presence. She gave up all the sadhanas that she had been doing until then. She

realized that its fruit had brought her to Guru Maharaj. From then onwards she began to chant the Hare Rama... Mahamantra that Guru Maharaj by himself initiated her into and frequently visited the ashram for his darshan. Though she returned to Australia after her visits she felt it a great fortune to do Mahamantra kirtan in Madhurapuri ashram. While referring to her days in the Ashram she would say 'that is an experience beyond all time and place'.

Her mind, true to Guru Maharaj's words that the Divine Name alone would suffice, began to get fixed in it and she began to experience inexplicable peace in the Satsang.

One evening, when Karunamai was in Australia Mr. Bhagyanathan called her from India. He said to her, "Guru Maharaj has asked me to give the following message – that he can see you wearing pure white dress and joyfully doing bhajan along with your satsang members. He has asked me to tell you that God will bless you." All of them were wonderstruck with the way Guru Maharaj had detailed what was happening in their satang. Karunamai and satang devotees were surprised and happy. She felt proud and happy with the thought that she was in Guru Maharaj's shadow.

Once, Karunamai was staying in our ashram and doing Mahamantra kirtan. At that very moment, in Australia, her pet dog Snoopy was seriously ill and dying. As soon as she received this message from Australia Karunamai became restless. She loved Snoopy deeply and as she had been told that snoopi was on the verge of death she desired to leave for Australia at once.

She said to Guru Maharaj, "I desire to be with Snoopy who is on the verge of death. He has none but me. For me, too, there was none but him for the past several years. Shall I leave today itself?"

Guru Maharaj said to her, "Not necessary. You may leave as planned earlier. Do not prepone your ticket."

What a surprise! Nothing happened to Snoopy till she returned to Australia. While leaving the ashram Karunamai tearfully prayed to Guru Maharaj "Please, you must bless Snoopy."

Guru Maharaj said, "Do not worry. As he has heard the Divine Name you chant he will attain the lotus feet of Sri Krishna."

Karunamai felt elated and surprised. The thought 'how can this be' also rose up at the same time. Guru Maharaj who knows our thoughts said, "Certainly he will attain Sri Krishna's feet."

Karunamai thought 'Guru Maharaj is being so compassionate to me. The only way to show my gratitude is to be faithful like that dog'. Guru Maharaj blessed her trip back to Australia.

14th May 2014 the holy day of Ekadasi! That morning Mr. Bhagyanathan called Karunamai and gave her the message of Guru Maharaj that he was thinking of her and Snoopy. That very day Snoopy's health deteriorated gradually and even as Karunamai chanted the Mahamantra kirtan he attained the Lord's holy feet by Guru's grace. Just as Guru Maharaj had said, that jiva attained to Krishna's holy feet on Ekadasi. How fortunate! With the thought 'if Guru Maharaj had blessed that jiva who knew not the glory of the Mahamantra a good state on Ekadasi he will never forsake us who chant the Divine Name' Karunamai felt overjoyed!..... to be contd



## Four Conversations - 2

Devotee: Is our sampradaya in line with Sri Adi Shankara Bhagavadpada's or Sri Bhagavat Ramanujacharya's or Sri Madhvacharya's sampradaya?

Sri Swamiji: I totally understand what you are asking. All these, at the current time, are very big precepts ("periyavishayam"). If you ask what our sampradayam is, let me explain. There is jnana (spiritual wisdom). That jnana can be realized simply by the Divine Name itself (kEvalam nAma mAtrEna). Sri Adi Shankara or Bhagavat Ramanujacharya or Sri Madhvacharya - none are against the Divine Name. In fact, they all have exhorted everyone to chant the Divine Name. So the path of the Divine Name is acceptable to all Acharyas. Sri Adi Shankara Bhagavadpada's Advaita philosophy, Sri Bhagavat Ramanujacharya's broad, inclusive outlook and his path of kainkaryam to Bhagavan, Sri Madhvacharya's Krishna bhakti, all are acceptable to us.

Our Acharya, Paranur Mahatma Sri Sri Krishnapremi Swamiji, has given this as the final word in the Vaishnava Samhita:



sAdhyam vishNupadam nityam sAdhanam  
nAmakIrtanam  
sarvEshAm sampradAyAnAm sArOyam nahi samshayah

The goal is the eternal abode of Lord Vishnu. Singing in  
praise of Him is the means of attaining the goal  
undoubtedly. This is the essence of all Sampradayas.

tasmAt sankIrtayEt krishNam sadA sarvatra sarvathA  
sampradaya antaradvEsham vinaivadruDhanishThayA

So always, at all places, and at all cost, the praise of  
Lord Krishna has to be sung with a firm belief, without  
entertaining any idea of finding fault with different  
Sampradayas.

Have you understood this?

Devotee: Oh yes Swamiji! Our path is that of the Divine  
Name, which is  
Shruti/Smriti/Itihasa/Puranasammandam (acceptable  
to the Vedas, other Shastras, Puranas/Itihisas); it is  
sarvamathasammandam (acceptable to all the Vedic  
philosophies) and sarva Mahatma sammandam  
(acceptable to all Saints/Acharyas). In fact, I see this  
path's universality now. Also, I see the beauty of  
universal acceptance in this path. I now understand  
what Your Holiness always insists: 'Admire all, Adopt  
one – the path of Krishna Bhakti and the Divine Name.'

Sri Swamiji! Can I submit another question?

# *SERVICE IS HIGHEST BLESSING!*

From the lecture of Kanchi Sri Mahaswamigal:  
A human being is blessed with many things - the highest blessing of them all is the opportunity to be of service to others.

We are plagued by common day-to-day problems in all facets of our lives. Yet, we still serve our families, unaware that we are serving them. In addition to our own family, we should also serve those unrelated to us, those in our town, in our country, and the world. Forgo the thought that we have our own struggles and have no need to deal with the problems of others. Instead, remember that the act of service allows us to forget our own worries.

Service is not only meant to help other humans, but also all life. Performing yagas and yagnas, offerings to the souls of our ancestors and death ceremonies to the souls of the departed are all acts of service done through the recitation of mantras.

It is a privilege to associate with other like-minded souls to provide service. These associations are strengthened by ethical guidelines; following the path of truth will not only be encouragement to those involved, but also maximize benefit to those receiving the service.

Instead of trying to simply pass time by visiting places of entertainment, spend time well by being of service to others. While partaking in entertainment to forget the burdens of this worldly life is not a vice, voluntary service should also evolve into a pastime, resulting in happiness.

Among all the incarnations of bhagavan, Lord Krishna epitomizes the act of serving others. Superficially, He appears to constantly be playing His lilas. However, every lila was done in service to others. It felt as if He was playing when He lifted Govardhan and danced on Kaliya's head. However, His underlying motive was to protect others and promote their safety - whether it be shielding the gopas from heavy rains or provide them the ability to use the pure waters of the Yamuna. In addition to this worldly service, He performed spiritual services, imparting jnana to Arjuna and Uddhava with His valuable teachings. Service, Jnana, and lila were one and the same for Krishna as He performed them without any attachments; similarly, those who serve should do it wholeheartedly.

Likewise, in the incarnation of Rama, Anjaneya was the personification of service. Remember Krishna and Anjaneya and hold them in our hearts to perform selfless service without seeking recognition or fame.

Like other daily practices, a day spent without serving others is equivalent to a day we shirked our responsibilities. Being mindful of our acts allows us to be of service to others each and every day.

# Bhakti for Today's Lifestyle

Sri Ramanujam

A person comes to Satsang somehow because of some punya (merits). There he even gets the association of a Mahan. He even develops an incomprehensible attraction towards the saint. He listens to the nectarine devotional discourses showered by him; he also sees him living the experience of bhakti continuously with such immense love and enjoyment. That time he feels, "Will I also not get such bhakti as this? Isn't the purpose of life itself Krishna bhakti? I want to do bhakti like that; but the vasanas carried through millions of births rise up as wretched thoughts. The body too sometimes does not cooperate. I set out for the Utsavam, but illness comes and becomes an obstacle to divine experience. Inborn qualities such desire, anger, etc. are waiting, ready to spoil bhakti. But making us feel that even all this is ok, above all of this there is the ego of "I" and "mine" that rises up now and then, that are huge hurdles!"

While he was struggling, not knowing what to do, he went to the discourse of the Mahan, who was his Guru. Like always, on that day also, the questions in his mind were answered in the discourse itself.

The Sadguru said: "Bhagavan Sri Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita's bhakti yoga, 'The one who, continuously, without taking up any other sadhana, without any other thought, does prema bhakti, he is the greatest among those who have united with the Truth'.

"I understand what you are thinking. You may worry, 'When we have not yet attained maturity in bhakti yoga, a lot of obstacles come up. What can we do?' For this also, Bhagavan says 'abhyasa yogena', i.e. until complete bhakti is attained, one should continue to do bhakti through proper, persistent, sincere effort and through prayer to Krishna for developing bhakti. Then, in the course of time, Krishna makes the ambience conducive for bhakti. And with His grace, bhakti will then be attained.

In the 11th Canto, 28th chapter of Srimad Bhagavatam, as His final upadesa to Uddhava, Krishna speaks in detail about what we have to do to progress in the spiritual path, while in a state when we have not yet reached the goal of bhakti yoga and jnana yoga.

Sri Krishna says that we have to look at our body as a banana leaf. Until we eat, we have to maintain the leaf carefully, without tearing it, by keeping it clean and without folds. But after eating, we can throw it away without any worry, isn't it? The use of the leaf itself is only until we eat on it. Similarly, we have to take care of our body until we attain Bhagavan, until jnana rises in us. If hindrances such as illnesses and diseases come even before bhakti and jnana are attained, then Krishna clearly tells Uddhava that we have to take steps to mitigate the problems.

Among all paths, our Bhagavata Dharma shows a practical approach. If, in the pretext of doing bhakti, we do not take care of the body, how can we progress in the path? So Bhagavan says that we have to take care of the body carefully, as much as is needed for sadhana. The body's excess heat and cold have to be set right using Chandra Surya yoga. With practices such as pranayama, yogasana, we have to fix illnesses related to

vadham (imbalance of air in the body). With penance (vrathas and fasting), we have to reduce our sins; with mantras we have to neutralize harmful planetary effects; with medicine we have to weed out ailments such as poisonous tumors.

Bhakti sadhana should be performed using this body only, right? See how clearly Bhagavan Himself says that we have to take care of the body. Saying that 'I am doing bhakti', if we spoil our health or move around in dirty clothes, that is not spiritual progress.

It is not enough if we only take care of the body for spiritual progress. Should we not also bring our mind into control? For that too, our Krishna beautifully shows the way. Doing dhyana of Krishna whenever possible; listening to the stories from Bhagavatam and of the Lord; doing Nama sankirtanam - through these we have to destroy the mind's enemies such as desire, anger, etc.

Finally how to clean filth such as the ego, I-ness, mine-ness and pride?

Krishna says beautifully, 'These have to be slowly removed through sincere service to a Sadguru who is a Yogeeswara.' With this He completes His upadesa.

Yes, the main purpose of Guru kainkaryam is to completely root out our ego only!

In this, we have to observe one thing. For those who are treading the path of Bhagavata Dharma and bhakti, without giving any yoga sadhana or jnana sadhana to control the mind, Krishna instead shows the great path of Krishna shravana-kirtana-smarana-dhyana and Guru kainkaryam!"

When that devotee heard this, he was extremely happy. He prostrated mentally again and again to his Guru, who has beautifully shown and inspired us in this path of Bhagavata dharma that fits with our lifestyle, and began to walk majestically with more enthusiasm, in this kingly path, in his journey of bhakti.

{On July 26th this year, a group of devotees from the Middle East countries came to have Swamiji's Darshan. They had the good fortune of interacting with Sri Swamiji. Here are some excerpts from the conversation}

In the last issue, we saw Sri Swamiji's reply to a devotee's question regarding rendering service to Sadguru. Here we see the concluding part of Sri Swamiji's answer to further questions.

**Devotee:** Swamiji, We come to India once a year to have your Darshan. At other times, we have other travel plans like visiting various countries. During such times, can we visit places of worship of other religions??

**Sri Swamiji:** What is the reason behind your visit?

**Devotee:** As a tourist, Just to have a look around that place.

## *A Divine Dialogue*

- MK Ramanujam

**Sri Swamiji:** Oh! You mean just AS A TOURIST? Then it is alright. It would be pertinent to be focused on one's destination as well as the path. Only then, destination can be reached. As human beings, our destination is the same. But the path to the destination is many and is interspersed with many sub paths. For example, Let's say we have chosen the path of Worshipping Krishna. Even in this path, there are so many ways. One can do Nama Smarana, , Dhyana (Meditation), Bhakti and even Yoga. Each of these paths also has many sub paths. But once we have chosen a path for ourselves or a Sadguru has shown us a definite path, one

should strictly adhere to the path. Deviating from such a path or losing focus would not yield any results. Even in the last century, many of us have been fortunate to have darshan of great souls like Ramana Maharshi, Yogi Ramsuratkumar, Jnanananda Giri Swami and Kanchi Maha Periyava.

If you see the lives of each of these great souls, they have all led their lives in different ways. Yogi Ram Surat Kumar's way of life is different from that of Jnanand Swami. Ramana Maharshi led a totally different life. Not only Kanchi Periyava's way of life was different but his teachings were also different. Yes, they are all contemporaries but lived their lives in different manner. But their Godly experience is the common factor. Then why did each one of them preach a different way to seek God?

If you take the life of Kanchi Maha Periyava, he preached a Vedic way of life taught by the great rishis like Vasishtha. He advised strict observance of Vedic Rites and Rituals as ordained by the Vedas. Not only that, he was steadfast in his observance of these rites and rituals. Following this chosen path, along with other austerities like Namajapa, he attained God.

On the other hand, Ramana Maharshi preached Self enquiry or "Who am I: and lived his life accordingly. He said this enquiry is verily the Vedanta. This path requires sacrifice and dispassion. It also requires constant reflection, and deep introspection, preferably in solitude. Above all, this path requires us to eschew identification with our own body.

The lives and teachings of Great men like Yogi Ramsurat Kumar, Kabirdas, Shirdi Saibaba, Ganesh Puri Nityananda were different.

Sri Jananda attained God by way of Yoga. Therefore, each path is different when it comes to practice. In one path, one is not supposed to take bath. Whereas, in the Vedic way, bathing four to five times a day is prescribed. When we have chosen a path, it is of utmost importance that we adhere to each and every detail of the practices prescribed in that path. Only then we can attain the sidhis. (Special powers).

Now let us come to the path chosen by us. What is our path? What are the practices required for travelling in that path? We have chosen the path of "Bhakti" or "Devotion". The path chosen by Meera bai, Saint Tyagaraja, Purandaradas, Azhwars, Naayanmars and countless other saints. Even this path has so many pathways. All these great saints chose their path and remained steadfast in their practice. Thus they attained God.

Let's take the case of Naayanmars. In their composition Devaaram, running into thousands of verses, there is not a single mention of Vishnu. It is even impossible to find a mention of the Goddess Karpakambal, Mangalambal or Avvayambal. (Lord Shiva's consorts). The entire composition is dedicated to Lord Shiva. Similarly in Naalayira Divya Prabandham, a composition of Azhwars, it is next to impossible to find a verse dedicated to Lord Shiva or even Vishnu's consort Komalavalli. Why is it so??

Bhakti is an emotion embodying love. Just as wealth and knowledge that are in abundance can be shared in many ways, can not love be shared?? But a true devotee reserves all his love for his deity. He does not like to share this love with other people or turn it on objects. That is his single minded devotion. Thus Bhakti or devotion involves emotion or "Bhava". Now what is "Bhava"?

Let's suppose we are in the midst of an interesting conversation and a naughty child interrupts it, our immediate reaction is to shout at the child, " Don't test my patience!. Just as one can arouse anger or hatred, one can also arouse Bhakti. Upanyasam is the way to arouse Bhakti. Listening ardently to Upanyasam about Bhagawan or Devotees who have done Bhakti stokes the fire of Bhakti in us. The Bhakti arising out of this is called "Bhava'. We are all verily the forms of love.

Kindling that emotion is called Bhava. Remaining in satsangh (company of devotees) constantly produces Bhakti and such a state is called Satvik state. Gradually it leads to the destruction of Rajasic and Tamasic tendencies in us. When the pure Satva state increases, one gets the vision of subtle movement of demi gods etc. When the Satva further increases, it can even lead to Krishna Sakshaatkar (or vision of Krishna). When this stage is also transcended, it results in vision of Krishna everywhere and in every being, the ultimate NON Dual state or state of one ness with all beings. This can only be achieved by incessant chanting of HIS names.

Now let's come to your question again.

(to be contd.)

*The conch that Bhagavan holds in His Hands, bestows jnana. Srimad Bhagavatham says, Bhagavan touched Dhruva's cheeks fondly with the conch, and bestowed jnana to him. How supreme is Andal's devotion, that even after seeing that conch, she asks whether Bhagavan's Divine Lips are as fragrant as camphor, or the lotus, and if they taste sweet!*

- Sri Sri Swamiji

# VIRTUES AND DRAWBACKS

(. contd)

(Professor Meghanathan started recording the conversations that happen between him and his son Srivatsan in his diary. He realized that there is so much to learn even from a little boy. Here's yet another note from his diary...)

Professor Meghanathan received a whatsapp message. It was about an interesting incident that happened in the classroom. He decided to teach his students a lesson with that and taught them too. The students happily agreed. He rushed home with eagerness, to share all that had happened with his son Srivatsan.

At home, Srivatsan was reading something. "Srivatsa, I must share with you, an interesting incident that happened today!"

"Yes! Please tell me right away!"

"Today, I wished to teach my students a life lesson. On the black board, I wrote and explained,

$$3 \times 1 = 3$$

$$3 \times 2 = 5$$

$$3 \times 3 = 9$$

$$3 \times 4 = 12$$

On seeing this, the children laughed out loud. I asked, as if not aware of it, "What is the matter? Why this bustle?"

A boy amongst the students said, "Sir, what you have written is wrong.  $3 \times 2 = 6$  and not 5".

I answered with a smile, "Yes! I wrote it deliberately! Out of the four lines, three were right, and only one was wrong. The correct ones were insignificant to you all, but that one mistake was noticed. It was seen as a matter of importance. This is how the world will look at you. It may or may not appreciate the hundreds of good things that you do, but, will definitely criticize and ridicule you for one single mistake of yours. So, by remaining unperturbed by criticism and praises, we should tirelessly strive towards our goal.

The students applauded with great delight. "He asked, "What Srivatsa! Isn't it good?"

Srivatsa nodded happily in agreement. Then, he was lost in thoughts. This is what the Professor expected too! Srivatsa! What are you thinking about?"

"Father, There is another lesson in this"  
"Please tell, I'm curious to hear".

"Father! If I had been amongst the students, I too would have noticed that mistake. I would have pointed it out to you. How naturally the mind records the faults of others without any effort. And, how easily it refuses to record the merits! How a single defect covers up many virtues! Hence, the mind should be trained to record the virtues too, isn't father? Else, focusing on such vices would result in constant dwelling on the defects ! Life shouldn't be wasted this way, isn't it?!" The Professor was immersed in great joy!! His hands started to applaud on their own.

# Sanskrit Word Of The Month

## Sri Vishnupriya

Kosha:  
कोशः

One meaning of Kosha is collection. Hence 'Dhanakosha:' refers to collection of wealth, i.e. 'treasure'. Similarly 'shabdakosha:' refers to collection of 'shabda' (sounds), i.e. 'dictionary' and 'Pustakakosham' refers to a collection of books, i.e. 'library'.

Another meaning of Kosha is 'covering' (something covering over another) or 'sheath'. It is said that the individual soul is covered by five sheaths, usually referred to as 'panchakosha:' (five sheaths). The five sheaths are 'Annamaya kosha', 'Pranamaya kosha', 'Manomaya kosha', 'Vijnanamaya kosha' and 'Anandamaya kosha'. The individual soul can delight in the 'Atmaswaroopa' when it gets separated from these five sheaths.

In the same meaning, 'Koshakara' or 'Koshaskrita' meaning creating a sheath. The silkworm is generally referred to as 'Koshakara' since it creates a sheath around itself with its silk. This sheath itself is the cause of its sorrow since we kill the silkworm for its silk.

Srimad Bhagavatham uses this silkworm as an example and explains beautifully,

देहयज्ञो ऽजितषड्वर्गो नेच्छत्कर्माणि कार्यते |  
कोशकार इवात्मानं कर्मनाच्छाद्य मुह्यति ||

An ignorant man, who has not conquered his senses, is always engaged in some desire-bound activities as though by force, even without any interest. Just as a silkworm covers itself with a sheath, this ignorant man binds himself with various activities and suffers (मुह्यति) and does not know how to come out of them.

Another meaning of Kosha is 'inner part'. 'Padmakosha' means the inner part of a lotus. In the Rudragitam, while explaining the beauty of Bhagavan, it is said

'Padmakosha palasaksham sundarabru sunasikam'.

It means that the eyes of Bhagavan are slightly reddish just as the inner part of a lotus. In the eleventh canto of Srimad Bhagavatham, when Bhagavan describes his glories and says that wherever excellence is found in this world, he is manifested there. He refers to it as "पद्मकोशः सुपेशसां", i.e. 'among all beautiful things, he is the beauty of the inner part of a lotus'.

Kosha has still further meanings – water cup, store-room, inner part of a palanquin, bud etc. But here, we have seen only the prominent meanings.

**Our Humble Pranams to the Lotus feet of  
His Holiness Sri Sri Muralidhara Swamiji**



**Gururam Consulting Private Ltd**



# Kumbh Mela enters UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage of humanity

December 7, 2017  
TIMES OF INDIA

Kumbh Mela which is held once every 12 years has been recognised as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity by the UNESCO on Thursday.

The inclusion of the Kumbh in the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage of humanity was done during the ongoing session of the committee's meeting in South Korea. The inscription of Kumbh is the third in two years after the addition of Yoga and the Parsi festival Nouroz on December 2016.

The culture ministry, which expressed happiness over the inclusion of Kumbh in the list, said the inscription of Kumbh Mela was recommended by the expert body after it observed that it is the largest peaceful congregation of pilgrims on earth, and that it represents a syncretic set of rituals related to worship

The committee also noted that knowledge and skills related to the Kumbh are transmitted through the 'Guru-Shishyaparampara parampara', which ensures the continuity and viability of this festival in perpetuity.

In 2003, the UNESCO General Conference adopted the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Heritage as an international treaty acknowledging that cultural heritage is more than tangible places, monuments and objects, and that it also encompasses traditions and living expressions.

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