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North American Sankethi Association (NASA)

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<http://www.sankethi.org>

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President's Note

Dear NASA Members,

Happy Ugadi and Sri Rama Navami! Wishing everyone happy, healthy, and wealthy sprits for the upcoming New Year. A new year is a wonderful time to try new things, and NASA is no exception. This year we are going have our Annual get-together in a fabulous new place! We will be having it at the Glenwood Inn and Conference Center in Pennsylvania on June 30th and July1st (full day on Saturday and Sunday), with departure on Jul 2 morning.

Ranjini our Secretary has personally gone and explored this great place and we are confident you all will enjoy it. It is located in the beautiful Pocono Mountains and is a great vacation spot and central to many of our members. There is a beautiful Sharada Peta Temple also located in this area - we plan to have a NASA Puja event at this temple as part of the festivities. We will update you on more details about the program but we are planning lots of different activities for kids, youths and adults too! This is an election year as well and we are excited to elect a new president and board members to bring fresh new ideas to NASA!

All NASA members, non-members, and friends mark your calendars and plan your trips accordingly. At the Glenwood Inn, we need to give them our numbers in terms of attendance 14 days in advance. We ask that you all please let us know if you will be coming as soon as you can. You can expect the registration forms in the first week of May. We would love any suggestions you have to make this the best NASA event so far! If anyone is planning to sponsor any event please let us know in advance so that we can plan for it.

We hope that all of you will come and enjoy our NASA get-together and make it a big success. Looking forward to bringing Sankethis of all ages together!

Sincerely,

Prema Keshav Kumar

NASA President

1. NASA Annual Get-Together in Pennsylvania

This year, our Annual Get-Together Event is being planned at the Glenwood Inn and Conference Center in Pennsylvania. Please show your support by participating in this event and getting together with your fellow NASA members!

Date: Jun 30 – Jul 2, 2018

Place: Glenwood Inn and Conference Center

167 Main Street Delaware Water Gap, PA 18327



2. NASA 2018 Elections

As this is an election year, we are looking for those from the community who are interested in giving back to our community by becoming a member of the board. Official nomination instructions will be forthcoming. At this time we ask that you consider volunteering to take on a leadership role for NASA. The future of NASA is in your hands

3. Health Corner



Shingles is a painful itching rash caused by the varicella zoster virus. This is the same virus that causes chickenpox. A new adult vaccine, Shingrix, from GlaxoSmithKline for the prevention of shingles has received significant support within both Canada and the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the risk of shingles increases as you get older and CDC now recommends that people 50 years and older should get immunized. There is no maximum age for getting the shingles vaccine. Even if a person has had shingles, you should still get the vaccine to prevent future re-occurrence of the disease. Protection from certain shingles vaccines last about 5 years. Getting the immunization has been shown to reduce the risk of shingles by 51%.

As always, NASA recommends that our members discuss this vaccine with your doctor, as there may be risks and side effects. There are indeed situations where due to allergies or weakened immune systems, a person should not get this type of vaccine.

4. Skikethis – NASA’s Ski trip in Vermont

This President’s Day weekend, a small group of Sankethis took on Killington, one of the largest ski resorts in the northeast. Despite mild temperatures leading up to the weekend, we did experience fresh powder on the slopes and the lift lines were remarkably quick! We enjoyed beautiful views, long ski runs, cozy gondola rides and tasty waffles at the end of the day. We are definitely looking forward to next year!



5. Fun and Festivals!

NASA BoD wishes everyone a very happy Yugadi! Yugadi marks the beginning of the New Year and comes with a new hindu calendar or Panchanga. It is interesting to note that there are 2 main calendar systems in India based on the phases of the moon. In the North, the first day of each month begins on a full moon day and the in South India, the first day of the month begins on a new moon day.

While there are different versions of the Hindu Calendar specific to the various regions of the country, all of them have the same names for the 12 months (masa) in a year. Each month is 29.5 days, accounting for a total of 354 days. The shortfall means that the date of each festival moves back 11 days each year. To re-set, a leap-month or adika masa is added once every three years. The names of the months along with their associated season and Gregorian calendar equivalent are in the table below.

Season	Month	Gregorian Equivalent
Vasanta (Spring)	Chaitra	March/April
	Vaisakha	April/May
Greeshma (Summer)	Jyestha	May/June
	Asadha	June/July

Varsha (Monsoon)	Shravana	July/Aug
	Bhadrapada	Aug/Sept
Sharada (Autumn)	Asvina	Sept/Oct
	Kartika	Oct/Nov
Hemantha (Winter)	Margashira	Nov/Dec
	Pausha	Dec/Jan
Shishira (Dewey)	Magha	Jan/Feb
	Phalguna	Feb/Mar
	Adhika	Leap Month

Samvatsara is a Sanskrit term for year. The historic Indian calendars indicate that there are 60 Samvatsaras in a cycle and each is named. This year's Samvatsara is Vilambi and is the 32 Samvatsara in the cycle. Once all 60 are completed, the cycle starts all over again. The 60 Samvatsaras are divided into 3 groups of 20 Samvatsaras each. The first 20 are assigned to Brahma, the next 20 to Vishnu and the last 20 to Shiva. The table below lists all the 60 Samvatsaras in order.

#	Name (Brahma)	#	Name (Vishnu)	#	Name (Shiva)
1	Prabhava	21	Sarvajit	41	Plavaṅga
2	Vibhava	22	Sarvadhārin	42	Kīlaka
3	Sukla	23	Virodhin	43	Saumya
4	Pramodadūta	24	Vikṛti	44	Sādhāraṇa
5	Prajāpati	25	Khara	45	Virodhakṛta
6	Āṅgīrasa	26	Nandana	46	Paridhāvin
7	Śrīmukha	27	Vijaya	47	Pramādin
8	Bhāva	28	Jaya	48	Ānanda
9	Yuva	29	Manmatha	49	Rākṣasa
10	Dhātṛu	30	Durmukha	50	Nala/Anala
11	Īśvara	31	Hevilambi	51	Pīṅgala
12	Bahudhānya	32	Vilambi	52	Kālayukta
13	Pramāthi	33	Vikāri	53	Siddhārthin
14	Vikrama	34	Śārvarin	54	Raudra
15	Vṛushaprajā	35	Plava	55	Durmati
16	Chitrabhānu	36	Śubhakṛta	56	Dundubhi
17	Subhānu	37	Śobhana	57	Rudhīrodgārin
18	Tāraṇa	38	Krodhin	58	Raktākṣin
19	Pārthiva	39	Viśvāvasu	59	Krodhana
20	Vyaya	40	Parābhava	60	Akshaya

References:

<https://iskconeducationalservices.org/HoH/practice/402.htm>

<https://www.timecenter.com/articles/brief-history-of-the-hindu-calendar-by-timecenter/>

<https://www.quora.com/What-are-the-names-of-months-as-per-the-Hindu-calendar-and-what-is-their-significance-vis-%C3%A0-vis-festivals-or-rituals>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samvatsara>

6. Congratulations!

Memories of a time when city of Kochi was still being built

Engineer Ramachandra's son hands over rare old photographs of Kochi port to Maritime Heritage Museum

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
KOCHI

It was a rare moment for the Cochin Port Trust in particular and the city of Kochi as a whole as memories came flooding back from a time when the city was still being built with the sweat and toil of hundreds of workers under the leadership of Sir Robert Bristow and his engineers like R.T. Ramachandra.

The occasion was the handing over of about 25 rare pictures on the making of Kochi port, particularly the construction of the rail-road bridge to Willingdon Island. The pictures were handed over at a brief ceremony to the Cochin Port Maritime Heritage Museum by R. Shivshankar, son of the late Ramachandra, who was the resident engineer in-charge of bridge works for the Cochin Harbour during 1936-40. The photographs and other documents were received by A.V. Ramana, the Deputy Chairman of the Cochin Port Trust.

The Maritime Heritage Museum on the north end of Willingdon Island is a tribute to the maritime heritage of Kochi and the evolution of the Cochin Port. Rare photographs and maritime equip-

ment from the past are on display.

Old photos

The old photographs on display include arrival of the first train at Willingdon Island; loading of an elephant gifted by Jawaharlal Nehru to the children of Russia; Mattancherry shore lined up with boats from Alappuzha and those on the construction of bridges and wharves.

Mr. Ramana recollected the contributions made by Ramachandra in providing the much needed rail-road connectivity to Willingdon Island as the resident engineer in the team of Sir Robert Bristow, who created the modern port of Cochin.

Of these, the Venduruthy rail-road bridge and Mattancherry old bridge remain engineering marvels even to this day. The port official also recounted Ramachandra as a great philanthropist, who used to keep a portion of his income to educate the children in his village. He was like a lighted candle with the ability to spread light.

'Engineering feat'

Mr. Shivashankar, who is settled in the USA, remembered



(Above) R.T. Ramachandra's son R. Shivashankar (right) and Cochin Port Trust Deputy Chairman A.V. Ramana look at the old photographs that were handed over to the Maritime Heritage Museum on Monday; (left) R.T. Ramachandra; and (below) a photograph taken during the farewell of R.T. Ramachandra in 1940. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

his father as the only Indian engineer in the team of Sir Robert Bristow assigned with executive charge of bridges in Cochin.

It was an engineering feat for the fact that the underwater concrete pillars of this magnitude were raised for the first time in South India.

He recollected the farewell comments offered by Sir Robert Bristow.

'Exemplary conduct'

Ramachandra was described as a person of exemplary conduct and exceptional combination of theoretical and practical ability.

Ramachandra was born in 1902 in Rudrapatna, a small village in Mysuru, and graduated in civil engineering from Bengaluru in 1923. He worked with the then Bombay PWD, B.B & C.I. Rly, Callender's Cable & Construction Co. Ltd, Braithwaite & Co. Engineers Ltd during 1923 to 1936.

After a four-year stint at the Cochin Port, he worked with the inspection wing of the directorate general of Industry and Supply, Government of India. He passed away in 1962. Ramachandra and Seethamma had six children.



Awards and Achievements:

Mr. Ramachandra Shiva Shankar, one of our long-standing NASA members, has achieved success on an endeavor he has been working on since 2005. He has enabled many in the community of Kochi to become more informed, preserved the history on the making of Kochi port and, the construction of the railroad bridge to Willingdon Island. Mr. Shiva Shankar's father, Mr. Ramachandra was the only Indian engineer on a British led team that went on to accomplish many engineering feats including underwater concrete pillar construction – a first for South India! We are very proud to share the meaningful contributions of our Sankethi ancestors and thank Mr. Shiva Shankar for his perseverance in bringing this project to fruition.

7. Births

NASA Board Member Sheela Nagaraj and Pramod Dikshith welcomed the arrival of their second daughter – Ananya Dikshith Rudrapatna on Tuesday Feb 13 at 10:34 am. Mother and daughter are doing well and so is Aahana – coming into her role as a BIG sister!! NASA wishes a long and fruitful life to Ananya and all the best for the whole family.

8. Thoughts to Ponder



NEW YEAR GREETINGS

By Jai Rangappa

The beauty of short life is to give,
And dance, wonder and sing to live,
May home be a place where friends meet,
Gather family to grow with love so sweet.

Please don't exploit or cheat or fleece,
Do help one another and find true bliss,
May Lord bless all with real peace,
And keep all the living in one piece.

Wish you a robust and excellent health,
Do spend and give away all your wealth,
Depart with nothing like day you were born,
Survivor get nothing to fight for in the barn.

With God given wonders on a blue planet,
Destroy not anything and get Him upset,
Please live and let live life without any fear,
Wish family and friends a Happy New Year !



10. Community News

*Members of the community are invited to submit articles of interest for publication to: nasasecretary@gmail.com
NASA has not validated these announcements. They are provided for information exchange purposes only.*

Charity – Make-a-Wish Foundation

Happy new year to all NASA members!

My name is Mahathi Kumar and I am currently in my senior year at the University of Connecticut. I will be graduating in May and wanted to do something to give back to the community before I graduate! I am participating in an exciting UConn program called Choose a Challenge which helps to raise money for Make-A-Wish Connecticut. This organization grants life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses. I am looking to help support this organization in their efforts by helping to raise over \$75,000 for Make-A-Wish with many other UConn students!

In May, I will be traveling to Peru to hike Machu Picchu in honor of Make-A-Wish. I am extremely excited for the trip and, until then, will be fundraising to help support Make-A-Wish. I am hoping you will consider donating to help me reach my goal of \$4,000. All of the donations go directly to Make-A-Wish! This is an exciting program and I am looking forward to many of you contributing towards making life changing wishes happen for these kids.

Here is the link to donate:

http://site.wish.org/site/TR?px=3826334&fr_id=2684&pg=personal

Please let me know if you have any questions. Feel free to contact me at: mbkumar4@gmail.com

Thanks,
Mahathi



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