

More than dehyphenation as “SB” releases new website

It was George Bernard Shaw who once remarked “Progress is impossible without change”. For those who are familiar with the organization spearheading the Speak Sanskrit movement – for over 26 years in India and 10 years in the US - the launch of a new website might well be just another indication of its steady growth

On May 7, 2008, Samskrita Bharati announced the release of its new website www.sanskritabharati.org while redirecting its old hyphenated domain name Samskrita-bharati.org also to the new site. The day was also “akshaya tritiiya” considered propitious to the advancement of any initiative. Those familiar with the old website will easily realize that it is not just change of address, but a complete revamp

The front page welcomes you with some of the latest Sanskrit related news reported in various media, testimonials, quotes and links to announcements about the eagerly awaited youth and family camps in the US. Content seems much more elaborate than in its predecessor, and more up to date too like contact information of all the 18 centers in the US. ***“The website is still evolving, and not all features are complete”***, says Vidya Ramanathan, content manager of the website and also the Boston area coordinator for Samskrita Bharati , ***“For example eventually you will be able to buy the Samskrita Bharati publications online but for now, we redirect you to the old catalogue. We look forward to feedback and suggestions from users so that we can improve”***.



Front page of Samskrita Bharati’s new webpage

The site has quite a youthful look. The banner on the front page which includes a picture from the annual youth residential camp “Shraddhaa” of last year, may very well be indicative of the increased interest that is seen among Youth. A quick glance at some of the Samskrita Bharati events in the past few months also indicates the same trend. In January this year, a two day youth workshop conducted in Los Angeles was attended by 26 teenagers, and the concluding cultural program – “Viswa Samskrita Dinam” or World Sanskrit Day - was attended by an audience of over 150.



Children singing a Sanskrit song during the Vasantotsava in NY

A similar event in NY on March 29, named “Vasantotsava” or Spring festival was attended by over a 100 people, including the families of the Children who were performing. The event was broadcast by NY based ITV, together with an interview with Shri Krishna Shastry one of the co-founders of the organization and Sowmya Joisa, who is a full time Samskrita Bharati volunteer in the USA.



Some of the participants of the shloka competition in Boston

Selections from videos of these events and interviews available on google videos or youtube are listed in the community – videos section of the new website. In fact, the next time you search for a video of Ramayana, you may very well hit upon videos of three or four year old children reciting verses as part of the annual shloka competitions conducted in various US cities attracting hundreds of these young participants