

## SANATANA DHARMA

Sanatana Dharma, often referred to simply as Hinduism, is one of the oldest and most complex religious traditions in the world. Rooted in ancient Indian scriptures and traditions, it encompasses a diverse range of beliefs, practices, rituals, and philosophies that have evolved over millennia.

At its core, Sanatana Dharma emphasizes the eternal truths and principles that govern the universe. These truths are believed to be discovered rather than invented, and they form the basis of moral, ethical, and spiritual conduct for adherents. The term "Sanatana" means eternal, and "Dharma" signifies duty, righteousness, and cosmic law. Central to Sanatana Dharma is the concept of karma, which posits that every action has consequences, influencing future lives and the cycle of rebirth (samsara). Liberation from this cycle (moksha) is seen as the ultimate spiritual goal, achievable through self-realization, knowledge (jnana), devotion (bhakti), or disciplined action (karma yoga). Sanatana Dharma encompasses a vast array of deities and manifestations of the divine, reflecting its inclusive nature. Major deities such as Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, and Devi (the Goddess) are worshipped alongside countless regional and local deities, each embodying various aspects of the divine cosmic order (dharma). Scriptures like the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, and Mahabharata provide foundational teachings and stories that guide spiritual and ethical living. Philosophical schools such as Vedanta, Yoga, and Samkhya offer diverse paths to spiritual realization and understanding of the nature of reality.

Throughout its history, Sanatana Dharma has adapted to cultural changes while maintaining core principles of tolerance, pluralism, and respect for diversity. It has been influenced by various religious and philosophical traditions.

## Fear is both boon and bane

K.V. SEETHARAMAIAH

Fear is both a boon and bane. Fear has many facets. Fear can be out of respect to divinities, parents, elders, learned persons, teachers etc. And fear can be for imminent threat from hostile persons or wild animals. Fear out of respect takes a person to highest pedestal.

Fearlessness is good for adventure and bad for misadventure.

Success is adventurous and failure is misadventurous. Adventure or misadventure is always associated with risk. Successful completion of attaining the intended goal is adventure.

"Fear has a large shadow, but he himself is small", Ruth Gendler, Artist and Writer, says. If we salute our duty, we have nothing to fear but if we pollute our duty, fear encircles us. This is what former President of India APJ Abdul Kalam says. Not everything can be achieved without facing risks. Terrorists strike terror and then run away.

They run away fearing for life. They do not fight in the open. Their attack is mostly on unarmed people.

They execute their plan fearlessly and run away fearfully. It is for this reason, though the terrorists successfully play havoc and kill the civilians and army men, they are called cowards.

A number of terrorists who have successfully executed their plan to kill the innocent civilians and army men have been killed. Thanks to the bravery of the army men.

Killer terrorists are cowards because they cannot face security forces. Persons dying at the hands of terrorists are praised for their bravery and their death is described as martyrdom because they fight for the country and do not fear to be in the open unlike terrorists.

The fearlessness of terrorists does not command respect whereas the fearlessness of the security forces deserves respect. The nation remembers both coward terrorists and brave security forces.

Scamsters work for personal gains without a sense of fear, shame and guilt. Probability of being caught in due course of time for their misdeeds does not instil fear among scamsters and fraudsters.

Benefits are taken through unfair means hoping that they would not be caught and hoping that even if the arms of law catch them, by the time the case is disposed of, either they will be no more or even if the punishment to undergo jail sentence is awarded for the rest of life, they will be happy that they are in the evening of their life and their life-term sentence would not be too long before they undergo punishment.

Inordinate delay in the justice delivery system has been emboldening the persons to go for wrongdoings. Fearlessness to indulge in criminal activities is the outcome of the delayed delivery of justice.

Delayed delivery of justice is boon to the litigant standing on the wrong side and bane to the litigant standing on the right side. Persons seeking justice in the court of law are quailed at the thought of delayed delivery of justice.

Even right person fears to approach the court. Waiting for justice for an indefinite length of time is dreadful. Benjamin Franklin, American Polymath says that laws too gentle are seldom obeyed; too severe are seldom executed. This shows that gentle laws are not feared. Too severe laws are no threat since their implementation is rare. Examinees indulge in copying and other malpractices. Fearlessness to indulge in unfair practice by the examinees is bane if they are caught and debarred. Fools only make attempt to get through the examinations through unfair methods. It is well said "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread". An officer or any other employee who does not feel sense of shame and guilt does not fear to stretch out his arms for bribe. This is shameful fearlessness. Famous Kannada poet Dattatreya Ramachandra Bendre says, "He does not fear death". Asked how it is possible that he does not fear death, he said "Because death does not come when I am alive and I will not be alive when death comes". An army of lions commanded by a deer is never feared about than an army of deer commanded by a lion. The message is clear that the leadership from the position of strength can only instil fear among the followers. A man who lies will be in the grip of fear whereas a man who says truth does not have anything to fear about. Truth is God. Lie is demon. Truth is exact correspondence with reality, says Paramahansa. Chanakya advises "As soon as the fear approaches near, attack and destroy it".

Thomas Jefferson says "When the people fear the government, there is tyranny. When the government fears the people, there is liberty". Tax terrorism is one of the strongest weapons that the government at centre or governments at states wield. It is well said "Tax is fine for doing right and fine is tax for doing wrong".

Both tax and fine cut into the pockets of people. High dosage of tax triggers fear among people leading for tax evasion. Moderate tax structure can do away with fear of people.

Herbert Hoover, American politician and humanitarian, wants the budget balanced not by more taxes but by reduction of follies.

Budget should allay the fear of imposition of hefty indirect taxes. Tax relief must be given every year because the prices of essential commodities and services will not be the same in the subsequent years. Raise in cost of goods and services in subsequent years without a corresponding tax relief means raise in tax rate without showing it to be so. It can be called passive shoot-up of tax rates. Even a lion is not free from fear because "he has to defend himself against the flies," a German proverb says. It is well said "Fear is an important human emotion that can help protect you and prepare you for action".

Fear is like fire. Fire can be used both for lighting and burning.

■ MOHAMMAD HANIEF



QR codes are, for many, an instantly recognisable invitation to interact with some form of media or process, from restaurant menus and event information to payments, applications and more. With the digital revolution, QR codes have been used even more significantly thanks to smart devices enabling instant connectivity between the camera and installed apps, seamlessly allowing users to process mobile payments and use their smartphone's data and credentials.

QR codes represent a touch point between consumers and merchants and are a physical gateway for many into the digital payments process. Many payment providers and banking services incorporate QR codes into their offerings, integrating them into banking apps to create added value and a better customer experience. One major benefit that QR codes offer is accessibility, being available for use by anyone with a smartphone - now ubiquitous across Europe.

QR code technology is widely used for payments worldwide. However, a significant barrier to increased adoption, especially in Europe, lies in the fact that QR code technologies differ greatly between providers. This means that merchants wishing to integrate and support the use of QR codes often have to implement various types, depending on each provider.

While they may look simple, QR codes are capable of storing lots of data. But no matter how much they contain, when scanned, the QR code should allow the user to access information instantly - hence why it's called a Quick Response code.

A QR code is a type of barcode that can be read easily by a digital device and which stores information as a series of pixels in a square-shaped grid. QR codes are frequently used to track information about products in a supply chain and - because many smartphones have built-in QR readers - they are often used in marketing and advertising campaigns. More recently, they have played a key role in helping to trace coronavirus exposure and slow the spread of the virus.

■ VIJAY GARG

A cartoon is a simple drawing of the things we see around us in an entertaining way with lots of lively colours in it or a cartoon is a film, movie or a small video with animation in it. Cartoons are mainly meant for kids. They are usually printed in newspapers, comic books and magazines or they are broadcasted on the television. Cartoons were previously meant for the purpose of entertainment only. But these days' cartoons are being extensively used for other purposes as well. Cartoons are now being used for education and spreading awareness amongst the people in addition to fun and entertainment.

Teaching is a very strenuous profession. It takes a lot of effort to transfer the whole lot of information from your own mind into someone else's mind. For this reason, teaching necessitates a lot of new strategies, technologies, and ideas which can make this task easier. Cartoons have been abundantly used as a teaching aid for a very long time. They have made learning an easier and a better experience for the students. Cartoons have made humdrum subjects fascinating for the students. Cartoons bring in life into the dull pages of the books and the hidden secrets of the subject. Cartoons are very eye-catching. If you open a page with a cartoon drawn on it, the first thing you will notice on the page will be the cartoon drawn on it and without even going through the text you will try to fathom the cartoon image. One single cartoon drawn on one-fourth or one-sixth of a page can replace a page full of text. The books meant for toddlers or pre-nursery and nursery students are flooded with cartoon images because they are very pleasing to children's eyes. The cartoon images seen by the children leave an impression in their mind. They tend to remember what the saw in the form of cartoons, or what actions were performed by the cartoons or anything else. If used in a correct way, cartoons can be very benign.

In the conventional teaching methodology, knowledge was imparted to the students by means of a systematic conversation or a discussion. But the upcoming generation is a bit different. The new generation of children wants to scrutinize almost everything. With so many queries popping in children's mind, the conventional scheme of teaching flops. This presents the need for new techniques for teaching. Sometimes, this is achieved through the use of cartoons or comic strips. Cartoons have proven themselves to be very advantageous for educating children. From the very beginning, they have been conveying moral values.

Importance of Cartoons in Education?

Cartoons catch Attention: Kids always want to enjoy each and every moment. They want to sense fun and humour all the time around them. And it is human nature to correlate cartoons with fun and

## QR codes in the digital payments era



The first QR code system was invented in 1994 by the Japanese company Denso Wave, a Toyota subsidiary. They needed a more accurate way to track vehicles and parts during the manufacturing process. To achieve this, they developed a type of barcode that could encode kanji, kana, and alphanumeric characters.

Standard barcodes can only be read in one direction - top to bottom. That means they can only store a small amount of information, usually in an alphanumeric format. But a QR code is read in two directions - top to bottom and right to left. This allows it to house significantly more data.

The development team behind the QR code wanted to make the code easy to scan so that operatives did not waste time getting it at the right angle. They also wanted it to have a distinctive design to make it easy to identify. This led them to choose the iconic square shape that is still used today.

Denso Wave made their QR code publicly available and declared they would not exercise their patent rights. This meant anyone could make and use QR codes.

Initial uptake of the idea was slow; however, in 2002, the first mobile phones containing built-in QR readers were marketed in Japan. The use of smartphones led to an increase in the number of companies using QR codes.

In 2020, Denso Wave continued to improve on their original design. Their new QR codes include traceability, brand protection, and anti-forgery measures. There are many new uses for the QR code, from transferring payments to determining objects' positions within augmented reality.

Most smartphones have built-in QR scanners, which are sometimes built in the camera. A QR scanner is simply a way to scan QR codes. Some tablets, such as the Apple iPad, have QR readers built into their cameras. Some older devices may require a particular app to read QR codes - these apps are readily available on the Apple App Store and Google Play.

Are QR codes safe?

Mobile devices, in general, tend to be less secure than computers or laptops. Since QR codes are used on mobile devices, this increases the potential risks. QR code-generating software does not collect personally identifiable information.

The data it does collect - and which is visible to the code's creators - includes location, the number of times the code has been scanned and at what times, plus the operating system of the device which scanned the code (i.e., iPhone or Android).

The QR codes themselves can't be hacked - the security risks associated with

QR codes derive from the destination of QR codes rather than the codes themselves. Hackers can create malicious QR codes which send users to fake websites that capture their personal data such as login credentials or even track their geo location on their phone. This is why mobile users should only scan codes that come from a trusted sender.

How do QR codes work?

The patterns within QR codes represent binary codes that can be interpreted to reveal the code's data. A QR reader can identify a standard QR code based on the three large squares outside the QR code. Once it has identified these three shapes, it knows that everything contained inside the square is a QR code.

The QR reader then analyzes the QR code by breaking the whole thing down to a grid. It looks at the individual grid squares and assigns each one a value based on whether it is black or white. It then groups grid squares to create larger patterns.

They can also be used to link directly to product pages online. For instance, if you were searching for the exact dress a model was wearing in a poster, a QR code could directly take you to the web page where you could purchase it.

The coronavirus pandemic has supercharged the use of QR codes. For example, in the UK, visitors to hospitality venues such as bars and restaurants are invited to scan a QR code upon arrival using the NHS Covid-19 tracing app. This is to help trace and stop the spread of the virus. If someone tests positive for Covid-19 at that venue, other visitors to the location are alerted by an app, thanks to the data accumulated from QR code scans.

In markets where digital payments have taken hold, the raw excitement of the newly converted is palpable. App companies are working to ensure ease of use across a wide spectrum of digital literacy. Merchants on the same sidewalk help one another. And because this is technology we are talking about, children come to the aid of parents.

Small voice boxes provided by payment apps are a fixture at snack carts and tea stalls, where vendors are too busy to check phone messages after every small transaction. A Siri-like voice declares how much money was instantly received with each payment by QR code. This has helped bridge mistrust among merchants long used to cash transactions.

## Importance of Cartoons in Teaching



humour. Therefore, it can be said that in search for entertainment the first entity around them which will seek student's attention will be cartoons or comic strips. Not only children, but even adults also do the same. Whenever we open a book we first look at the images printed on it and then the text. Similarly, the students will first read the comic strip and then the text. So in order to gain a student's attention toward a subject, the use of cartoons will be a great idea.

Cartoons Lead to a Better Understanding: There are many topics which cannot be theoretically understood. They need practical experiences or real-life examples. Comic strips can help a lot in this situation. The comic strip can be easily used to narrate a story. With the use of cartoon characters and callouts, a story can be easily cooked up and the students will be able to understand the burdensome subjects very comfortably. Many writers are already using this concept of cartoons. Many history and economics book writer use cartoons or comic strips to present an important incidence which occurred in the past or a theory or concept which is beyond theoretical understanding. Instead of just writing an example it will be great if it is expressed in the form of a comic strip which will gain the concentration of the student and will lead to a better comprehension.

Cartoons can Develop Public Speaking: A cartoon comic strip has a lot of characters in it with different individual dialogues. A teacher can assign each of the characters to the students and tell them to perform a play on the comic strip. This will boost the student's confidence. The students will get a chance to speak or perform in front of the whole class. It will enhance their speaking skills. It is beneficial for the rest of the students as well because they will understand the story in a better way. It will be like a fun session for everyone.

Cartoons are an Effective way to Teach

Moral Education: Sometimes it becomes difficult for the teachers to teach the moral values and good manners. Students may take them lightly. They may not understand the consequences if they do not behave well. This can be taught to them dramatically. By showing them a cartoon video or movie the students can learn how to handle different situations, or if they do not follow a proper conduct then what circumstances they have to face. Other than these many small things like how to keep up the friendship, differentiating between right and wrong, how to behave in front of others, how to follow your own dreams and many more things can be learned from watching cartoons or reading comic strips.

Cartoons are a great Tool for Pre-Schooling: Cartoons can seek the attention of the tiny tots. They can be taught nursery rhymes, alphabetical order or counting series using cartoons. It will be also an effective way to teach them stories. Physical exercises can also be taught in this manner. A cartoon video on physical exercise can be shown to the kids and they can be asked to perform the same exercises the characters are performing in the video.

Cartoons can make Children Artists: Cartoons can develop an artistic mind in the students. If you tell a student to draw a cartoon character from their own imagination they will show such an amazing creation that will astonish you. Writing a comic strip on their own will enhance the thinking skills and writing skills of the students. This will also help in their brain developments as they will have to think about how to form dialogues from their story and what kind of cartoon will suit their character. This coordination between their brains and hands will develop their brain.

Cartoons will enhance Thinking Skills: Printed cartoons are not just in the form of comic strips. There are simple cartoon images also which have no text printed on

them. They require critical thinking level to interpret what the cartoon is saying. There may be many possible outcomes but choosing the right one requires higher order thinking skills.

Cartoons can Improve Vocabulary: While watching cartoon movies, children can learn a lot of new words. They can learn their meaning and how to use them in sentences. They may also be able to learn how the voice tones can or gesture can change the meaning of the whole sentences. They may also learn what words to use on what occasions.

Cartoons can improve the Student-Teacher Relationship: Cartoons are liked by all children. If the teacher will use a cartoon to teach the students, the students will start to like the teacher. When the teacher will offer the students to see a cartoon or read comics to understand some theory or a subject the students will develop a liking for the teacher. Once this relation is developed, the students will be more attentive towards the teacher and will listen to every word said by the teacher. The student-teacher bond will be enhanced.

Cartoons are an Inexpensive Tool for Teaching: As compared to other tools like projectors, computers, and other varieties of smart technology cartoons are very cheap. They need to be just printed on a sheet of paper in the case of a comic strip or just need to be displayed on a television screen if it is an animation video or movie. Cartoons are very easily available. The can be downloaded from the internet, comic strips can be cut out from newspaper or magazines. There many television channels which show cartoon movies all the time. In this ways, they become a very inexpensive tool compared to others.

Every parent thinks that watching too many cartoons can affect their child's health. It may affect his eyes or his brain development. This vision is only fifty per cent right. Watching cartoons in excess will definitely affect a child's health but a right amount of time spent on cartoons will help in the child's development and education. It is also thought that if a child will watch cartoons he will start to behave like a cartoon. This is not always correct. Watching the same cartoon all day can make him like that but watching it for half or one hour will not have much effect on him. This also depends on the type of cartoon the child is watching. If the cartoon character behaves positively in his role it will have a good effect on the child. Cartoons can also become a good teaching tool. This inexpensive tool has so many advantages. It can not only seek the student's attention but it can also teach him many things. From pre-schooling to middle schooling, cartoons play a very important role. Instead of creating a stressed and monotonous atmosphere, cartoons create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere.

(The writer Retired Principal and educational columnist)