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LEAFLETS OF
INSIGHTS



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Nirlepa, Nirmala, Nitya, Niraakara, Niraakula

Insights from Lalitha Sahasranama on the qualities of Ma Devi

In the Lalita Sahasranama, the names "Nirlepa, Nirmala, Nitya, Niraakara, Niraakula" highlight the transcendental and pure aspects of Lalita Tripurasundari, portraying her as the supreme, untouched consciousness beyond the physical and mental realms.



Nirlepa (निर्लेपा) – The Unattached

Nirlepa signifies the goddess as untouched by the impurities of the world. Though she pervades the universe and is the source of creation, she remains unattached to it. Just as the lotus floats on water without getting wet, Lalita is involved in the cosmic play yet remains untainted by karma, desires, or the limitations of material existence.

While engaging with the world and performing duties, a sadhaka should remain untouched by desires, ego, and the fruits of actions. Just as

the lotus blooms in the water yet remains unaffected by it, the spiritual seeker must transcend attachment to worldly pleasures and pains. By practicing non-attachment, the sadhaka moves toward a state of inner freedom and peace, unaffected by external circumstances.

Nirmala (निर्मला) – The Immaculate

Nirmala means the one who is pure, without any blemish or flaw. Lalita Devi is beyond any kind of impurity, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual. She is the embodiment of pristine purity, free from ignorance, and untouched by the stains of samsara. Her immaculate nature represents the ultimate truth that is eternally unsullied and radiant.

A sadhaka must purify the mind of negative thoughts, emotions, and desires to experience the divinity within. Just as a clean mirror reflects light clearly, a pure mind can reflect the presence of the divine. This purity is achieved through ethical living, self-discipline, meditation, and selfless service. When the sadhaka becomes Nirmala, free from mental and emotional impurities, they become a vessel for divine grace and wisdom, which naturally leads to deeper spiritual insight.

Nitya (नित्या) – The Eternal

Nitya emphasizes the eternal and timeless nature of Lalita Tripurasundari. She is beyond the constraints of time, existing before creation and continuing to exist after dissolution. As Nitya, she is the unchanging essence in the

midst of change, the permanent reality in the transient world.

Niraakara (निराकारा) – The Formless

Niraakara means the formless one. While Lalita manifests in countless forms to bless and guide her devotees, in her highest essence, she is beyond all forms and limitations. She transcends physical attributes and shapes, existing as pure consciousness, which is limitless and without any distinct form.

Niraakula (निराकुला) – The Unperturbed

Niraakula refers to the goddess as one who is ever calm and undisturbed. Despite the ceaseless activity of creation, preservation, and dissolution, she remains in a state of absolute peace and tranquility. Her mind is free from agitation, unaffected by the turbulence of the world, representing the state of pure equanimity.

Together, these names encapsulate the supreme, pure, eternal, and serene nature of Lalita Tripurasundari, inspiring devotees to seek her grace and realize their own true, unblemished, and eternal self.

Nitya, Niraakara, and Niraakula further remind the sadhaka of the eternal, formless, and unperturbed nature of the divine and the ideal state of mind they must aspire to. Nitya teaches the sadhaka that the true self is beyond time and change, encouraging them to seek the eternal, unchanging truth within. Niraakara emphasizes the formlessness of the ultimate reality, urging the aspirant to move beyond attachment to external forms and realize the essence of the divine, which transcends all physical manifestations. Lastly, Niraakula reminds the sadhaka to remain calm and undisturbed in the face of life's challenges. By cultivating inner stillness and equanimity,

the seeker can experience a state of unshakable peace, mirroring the goddess's unperturbed nature amidst the cosmic play of creation and dissolution. Together, these names provide a roadmap for the aspirant to progress on the spiritual path with purity, detachment, and serenity.

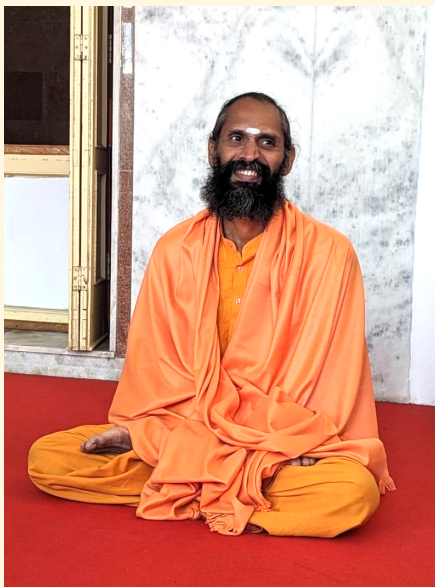


Prashnottara

A series that captures Q&As from satsang sessions with Shriman

what is the key to good health?

We can look at it in terms of three aspects. One is the food. Your food needs to be appropriate to your body type, age and the environment.



For example, if you come and work in our farm and have lunch, the food will just disappear from your stomach. It will be digested in no time. Here, in Rishikesh it will take much longer to digest. This is due to the altitude and the cold. If you go from these Shivalik ranges to Himalayas you will be able to notice this even better. If you eat like the plains here, you will see the after effect when you cross over to a different altitude. So eating the right food is an important aspect.

Second aspect is reasonable physical exercise. Allotting time for physical exercise is very important. 15-20 minutes of Yogasanas can work wonders. The practices that you have learnt here can keep you active and agile. You must be consistent with the practices.

Third thing is undertaking fasting periodically. Say, once a week, you go without dinner. You just have say 2 bananas or just a glass of milk. Fasting on Ekadasi or Shivarathri are very much part of our culture and people have been immensely benefitted by observing them.

If these three things you observe, you'll see you can actually enjoy good health, within reasonable constraints. Konjam apidiye vanthalam (even if you are sick a bit), it will not affect you much. Cold, fever or minor problems will not impact you too much. You will not be bed-ridden and exhausted. You'll not have too many swings. Within reasonable bounds you'll be able to carry on. Your resilience will be high. Only then, you can have an enjoyable experience. Otherwise it'll be a miserable experience. If the body does not listen to you, then that'll be in the forefront. For anything that you do, you will get a warning signal and it'll be painful. That means you have to sit simply without doing anything. But even that will not be possible because the mind will go bonkers. The body will pull you, the mind will pull you, and you will be stuck in between, waiting "When will these two go".[Laughter] If you have the cooperation of the mind and body, you will enjoy a reasonably good experience of life.

The body listening to us is the fundamental thing for our action?

For action the body is necessary. The mind is also necessary. If the two have to be in cooperation these three things (mentioned above) will be useful ...this is not about tapasya ... this is just plain health...you'll enjoy



reasonably good health, happiness and experience life not as misery but joy.

What are antah Karana and Bahya Karana?

We look at ourselves in terms of instrumentation - Bahyakarana and Antahkarana. Bahya means outer, and karana means instrument. When we say “I”, we look at instrumentation, because this body is an instrument for us to live this life experience. It is also called an upaadhi. Upaadhi is an instrument, a construct with a constraint. An instrument is that which comes with certain boundary constraints. You can do only certain things with an instrument. You cannot do certain other things. It has certain limiting constraints, but only with that you can act, in a certain playing field. Without this instrument, you cannot act in this playing field. This body is considered an outer instrument, or Bahyakarana. Likewise we have an inner instrument, or Antahkarana. The **Antahkarana** is generally looked at with respect to four aspects – **manas, chitta, buddhi and ahankara**.

Manas can be broadly seen as that which senses the sensory data, and which also has the playing field of emotions. Chitta can be broadly looked at as something like an electromagnetic storage space just the way hard disks and many other storage media are now electromagnetic. Chitta is subtler electromagnetics. The buddhi helps you judge, decide and discriminate. It helps you decide what is good and what is bad with whatever data is available.

It is important to note that these are all processes. To all these processes, you will see that there is a stamp- “I am the doer” and this is the ahamkara, loosely translated in English as the ego, which is the principle of doership. It’s not wrong. Ahamkara is also an instrument.

Without the ahamkara you will experience life as though it is somebody else’s life.

Cultivating a good Antahkarana is an extremely important educational process. The Antahkarana should be capable of seeing properly. Otherwise, it is problematic. If the eye, which is the Bahyakarana, does not see properly, what do we do? We wear glasses. We apply corrections to it so that it sees properly and the vision is corrected. Likewise, corrections in the form of such values, stories, disciplines, and in many other forms are applied to the Antahkarana so that we perceive life properly. Otherwise it is a distorted view of reality that we get.



Source Text-Based Learning of Knowledge Systems

Vidyarthi at Dharma Gurukulam learn primarily from the source texts. Be it Ayurveda or Ganita or Nakshatra Vidya, source texts are memorised, meanings understood and concepts are practically applied.

Education has evolved through various paradigms, from the oral traditions of ancient societies to modern systems dominated by concepts and frameworks. One significant contrast lies between source text-based learning of knowledge systems, particularly in ancient traditions, and the concept-based learning prevalent in modern schooling content. In source text-based learning, students engage directly with original scriptures, philosophical treatises, or foundational texts. In contrast, modern education tends to distill these works into simplified concepts, which are then taught as standalone ideas. While both approaches have their merits, source text-based learning presents distinct advantages that offer a more holistic and profound understanding of subjects.

Education has undergone significant transformation over the centuries, evolving from deeply immersive, text-based learning rooted in traditional knowledge systems to the concept-driven methodologies that dominate modern schooling. One of the most stark contrasts lies between source text-based learning, particularly in systems like Ayurveda and Ganita (Indian mathematics), and the conceptual frameworks presented in modern education, such as biology and mathematics. While both approaches aim to impart knowledge, source text-based learning offers a more holistic, profound, and contextually grounded understanding of subjects, whereas modern schooling often emphasizes simplified, surface-level engagement with concepts. This

essay argues that source text-based learning, especially within knowledge systems like Ayurveda and Ganita, provides superior educational outcomes compared to the concept-based learning of modern biology and mathematics.

Holistic Understanding and Integration of Knowledge

Source text-based learning engages with the original, foundational texts of a knowledge system. In Ayurveda, for example, students study ancient texts like the Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita, which not only describe individual medical treatments but also integrate concepts of human physiology, psychology, and spirituality. These texts provide a holistic framework that connects the body, mind, and environment, thus offering a comprehensive view of health and wellness.

In contrast, modern biology lessons often break down topics into compartmentalized concepts such as cell theory, anatomy, or genetics, taught in isolation. While this approach may seem efficient, it often neglects the interconnectedness of these biological systems, which are crucial to understanding the complexities of life. A student learning biology through modern schooling might understand the structure of the human digestive system, but they might lack an understanding of how diet, environment, mental health, and seasonal changes interact with digestion—an insight readily available in Ayurvedic texts.

For instance, in Ayurveda, the concept of Agni (digestive fire) is central to understanding health. It is not just about digestion in a physical sense but also about how well one



assimilates experiences, emotions, and thoughts. Modern biology tends to view digestion in purely mechanistic terms—enzymes, acids, and peristalsis—focusing on the physical processes without delving into the broader energetic or psychological impacts. The richness of source text-based learning in Ayurveda enables students to appreciate the integrative nature of health, something that modern biology often lacks.

Deep Engagement and Critical Thinking

Another major advantage of source text-based learning is that it requires students to engage deeply with the material, encouraging critical thinking and interpretation. In the study of Ganita (Indian mathematics), students historically engaged directly with works like *Aryabhatiya* and *Lilavati* by Bhāskarācārya. These texts are not just collections of mathematical problems; they offer insights into the philosophy of mathematics, the role of numbers in understanding the cosmos, and complex problem-solving techniques. The process of studying these texts involves unraveling metaphors, decoding verses, and understanding the logic behind the solutions, thereby fostering analytical thinking and creative problem-solving.

In contrast, modern math education is often procedural. Students are typically taught to memorize formulas and follow step-by-step procedures to solve problems. For instance, modern schooling might teach students how to solve a quadratic equation using a standard formula, without delving into the origins or deeper implications of the equation. This method encourages rote learning rather than fostering an understanding of why the formula works or how it connects to broader mathematical principles. Students in modern schools may excel in exams by following these

rigid procedures but often struggle with non-standard problems that require creative solutions.

By contrast, Ganita source texts frequently present problems as riddles or poetic expressions, encouraging students to think beyond formulas and delve into the logic behind the mathematics. For example, the *Lilavati* of Bhāskarācārya presents mathematical problems in the form of poetic stanzas, combining aesthetics with numerical challenges. Solving such problems requires not just computational skill but also an appreciation for the cultural, philosophical, and intellectual milieu in which the mathematics was developed. This approach trains students to think critically, adapt their problem-solving strategies, and apply mathematical thinking to real-world situations.

Contextual and Cultural Grounding

Source text-based learning situates knowledge within its cultural, historical, and philosophical context. In Ayurveda, for example, the study of health and medicine is deeply intertwined with the philosophical framework of the Tridosha (the three humors: Vata, Pitta, and Kapha) and their relationship to the five elements (earth, water, fire, air, and ether). These concepts are not isolated medical facts; they are part of a larger worldview that connects human health to the rhythms of nature and the cosmos.

Modern biology, on the other hand, tends to focus on empirical facts and observations, often removed from their broader philosophical or cultural implications. While this scientific rigor is valuable, it can lead to a fragmented understanding of human health and the environment. For instance, while modern biology might explain the mechanics of the respiratory system, it typically does not explore how breathing patterns are affected by mental states or environmental



factors—connections that are readily addressed in Ayurvedic texts, which consider breath (Prana) as a vital life force linked to both physical and mental health.

Similarly, in Ganita, the study of mathematics in ancient India was not just about solving problems but also about understanding the universe. Texts like the Aryabhatiya explore not only arithmetic and geometry but also astronomy, making connections between mathematical principles and celestial phenomena. Modern math education, in contrast, often presents math as a series of abstract concepts, disconnected from the physical world. Students might learn the formula for calculating the area of a circle but may not be encouraged to think about how this formula can be applied to understanding planetary orbits, as ancient Indian mathematicians did.

Preservation of Ethical and Moral Dimensions

Another key benefit of source text-based learning is the inclusion of ethical and moral dimensions. In Ayurveda, for example, the practice of medicine is not just about curing disease; it is also about promoting ethical behavior, compassion, and balance in all aspects of life. The texts often include discussions on the moral responsibilities of a physician, emphasizing the importance of treating the whole person, not just the disease.

Modern schooling, especially in fields like biology and medicine, often sidelines these ethical considerations, focusing instead on technical expertise. While bioethics is taught as a separate subject in many schools, it is frequently divorced from the core scientific

curriculum. In contrast, source text-based learning integrates ethics directly into the study of the subject, ensuring that students develop both technical knowledge and moral wisdom.

Enhanced Cognitive Skills

Source text-based learning significantly enhances memory skills, as it often involves memorizing verses, sutras, or shlokas that encapsulate deep concepts. When children commit these texts to memory, they develop a strong recall ability, allowing them to invoke these verses effortlessly, even years later. This form of learning integrates rhythm, structure, and meaning, making retention more natural and enduring. In contrast, students who memorize modern biology paragraphs or math formulas may find them harder to recall after a certain period, as these facts are often isolated and lack the contextual richness that aids long-term retention. The structured, poetic nature of ancient texts embeds the knowledge deeply, making it more accessible for recall at any time.



Yōginī Yōgadā Yōgyā Yōgānandā Yugandharā

The Lalita Sahasranama, a revered text in the worship of the Divine Mother, encompasses a thousand names that reveal the manifold aspects of Lalita Tripurasundari. Among these names, "योगिनी योगदा योग्या योगानंदा युगंधरा" (yōginī yōgadā yōgyā yōgānandā yugandharā) form a beautiful sequence that delves into her relationship with the profound spiritual practice of Yoga, depicting her as the ultimate source, goal, and sustainer of the yogic path.

योगिनी (Yōginī) – The Supreme Embodiment of Yoga

The name Yōginī signifies Lalita as the supreme embodiment of Yoga. A Yōginī is one who has mastered the path of Yoga, transcending the limitations of the kaya, manas and ahmka to merge with the universal consciousness. Lalita Tripurasundari, as Yōginī, is the very essence of divine union, the state where the jiva merges with the paramatma. She is the guiding light for all practitioners, leading them from the realm of ignorance to the blissful realization of their true, infinite nature.

As Yōginī, she is the force behind every aspect of the yogic journey—pranayama, dhyana, samadhi, and beyond. She resides in the innermost sanctum of the heart of every aspirant, silently directing them towards self-realization. Her presence in this name encourages the devotee to transcend the mundane and aspire for the higher, to transform one's life into a sacred sadhana aimed at attaining the ultimate union with the divine.

योगदा (Yōgadā) – The Giver of Yoga

Yōgadā depicts the goddess as the bestower of Yoga, the divine grace that grants the seeker the opportunity and capability to tread the path of Yoga. It is through her boundless

compassion that the knowledge, techniques, and inner strength required for Yoga are bestowed upon the aspirant. Lalita, as Yōgadā, provides not only the teachings but also the inner calling and desire for spiritual awakening.

योग्या (Yōgyā) – The Worthy One

Yōgyā means the one who is worthy, fitting, or deserving of worship and adoration. Lalita Tripurasundari, as Yōgyā, is the epitome of divine perfection, embodying all the qualities and virtues that make her the supreme object of devotion. She is the ideal that all yogis and yoginis aspire to attain, the embodiment of purity, wisdom, compassion, and beauty.

As Yōgyā, she is worthy not only of external worship but of the deepest internal surrender. She represents the ultimate goal of Yoga—complete union with the divine, where the jiva realizes its oneness with her. This name also reminds us that she is the most suitable recipient of all our love, devotion, and spiritual aspirations. By making her the focus of our sadhana, we align ourselves with the highest and most sacred purpose of existence.

योगानंदा (Yōgānandā) – The Bliss of Yoga

Yōgānandā describes Lalita as the personification of the bliss that arises from the union of the jiva with the supreme consciousness. This state of Yōgānanda is the ultimate fruit of the yogic path—the transcendental joy that is beyond all worldly pleasures and sorrows. It is the bliss of samadhi, the peace that surpasses all understanding, the state of divine ecstasy that is experienced when the mind is stilled, and the heart is merged with the infinite.

As Yōgānandā, Lalita is the very essence of this bliss. She is the ananda that the yogi experiences in the deepest meditative absorption, the joy that comes from realizing one's true nature as sat-chit-ananda (existence, consciousness, and bliss). She is both the goal and the experience of Yoga, the sweet nectar that fills the soul when it is freed from the bondage of the mind and senses.

युगंधरा (Yugandharā) – The Bearer of the Yugas

Yugandharā signifies Lalita as the sustainer and bearer of the cycles of time, the yugas. She is the eternal, unchanging substratum that supports the ever-changing play of creation, preservation, and dissolution across the epochs. As Yugandharā, she holds the entire universe in her being, witnessing the rise and fall of civilizations, the dawn and dusk of ages, and the dance of time itself.

This name portrays her as the supreme ruler of time and destiny, the one who weaves the fabric of cosmic order and dharma throughout the yugas. Despite the flux of creation, she remains the changeless witness, the timeless presence that endures beyond the limitations of time and space. She is the one who maintains the balance and continuity of the cosmic cycle, ensuring that the divine play unfolds according to the eternal principles.

She is the supreme mistress, the giver, the worthy object of devotion, the blissful experience, and the eternal sustainer. Understanding these names invites the devotee to delve deeper into the yogic path, to seek her guidance, grace, and ultimately, to merge with her boundless, blissful presence that sustains all existence through the ages.



Sarvakartrī Sarvabhartrī Sarvahantrī Sanātanā

The Lalita Trishati, a profound and esoteric hymn dedicated to the divine goddess Lalita Tripurasundari, holds within its sacred verses an exposition of 300 names that reflect the infinite facets of the goddess. Among these, four names stand out, forming a captivating sequence that reveals the essence of the divine mother as the creator, sustainer, destroyer, and eternal one: "सर्वकर्त्री सर्वभर्त्री सर्वहन्त्री सनातना" (Sarvakartrī, Sarvabhartrī, Sarvahantrī, Sanātanā). Each of these epithets encapsulates the cosmic functions and timeless nature of the goddess, portraying her as the supreme embodiment of the universal principles of creation, preservation, dissolution, and eternity.

सर्वकर्त्री (Sarvakartrī) – The Supreme Creator

The name Sarvakartrī signifies the divine mother as the creator of all that exists. She is the cosmic womb from which the entire universe emerges. Just as a painter conceives and brings to life a masterpiece on a blank canvas, Lalita Tripurasundari, as Sarvakartrī, envisions and manifests the cosmos with her will alone. The infinite galaxies, the myriad of beings, the intricate laws of nature, and the subtle play of energies—all arise from her creative power.



In this act of creation, she is not bound by any tools or external materials. Her very sankalpa, her divine intention, is enough to bring forth

the multiplicity of forms and phenomena. She is the causeless cause, the one from whom even the primordial elements and principles of existence are born. Every speck of dust and every grand star is a reflection of her infinite creativity. As Sarvakartrī, she not only creates but also infuses each creation with her divine essence, making the universe a living testament to her boundless creativity and grace.

सर्वभर्त्री (Sarvabhartrī) – The All-Sustaining Force

As Sarvabhartrī, Lalita Tripurasundari embodies the sustaining power of the universe. Just as a mother nurtures her child with unconditional love and care, the divine mother supports and sustains all that she has created. The sun shines, rivers flow, plants grow, and life flourishes because of her nurturing presence. It is her benevolent energy that keeps the cosmos in perfect balance and harmony.



She is the force behind the rhythm of the seasons, the cycle of birth and death, and the delicate balance of ecosystems. The concept of dharma, the cosmic order, is sustained by her will, ensuring that every being, from the smallest insect to the mightiest deity, plays its part in the grand symphony of life. Her sustenance is not limited to the physical realm alone; she also upholds the moral and spiritual

dimensions, guiding souls on their path of evolution and realization. As Sarvabhartṛī, she is the unifying thread that weaves through the tapestry of existence, holding it together with her boundless love and compassion.

सर्वहन्त्री (Sarvahantrī) – The Ultimate Destroyer

The name Sarvahantrī depicts the goddess as the ultimate destroyer, the force that brings an end to all forms and phenomena. However, this destruction is not malevolent; it is the necessary dissolution that paves the way for renewal and transformation. Just as night follows day, and autumn precedes spring, destruction is an integral part of the cosmic cycle, enabling the continuity of life.



Lalita Tripurasundari, as Sarvahantrī, dissolves not only the physical forms but also the illusions and limitations that bind the soul. She is the force that liberates beings from the shackles of ignorance and ego, leading them toward the ultimate realization of their divine nature. Her destructive aspect removes obstacles, purifies, and transforms, much like a forest fire that clears the old, making way for new growth. In her role as Sarvahantrī, she is both the fierce yet compassionate mother who ensures that nothing static or stagnant remains, allowing the universe to evolve perpetually.

सनातना (Sanātanā) – The Eternal One

The name Sanātanā signifies the goddess as the eternal, unchanging reality that underlies

the ever-changing cosmos. She is beyond time, space, and causation, the ultimate truth that remains constant amidst the transient play of creation, preservation, and destruction. While the world of forms appears and disappears, she, as Sanātanā, remains the eternal witness, the immutable substratum upon which the drama of life unfolds.

This eternal nature of the goddess reflects the idea that she is both immanent and transcendent. She is present in every particle of creation, yet she transcends all phenomena, untouched by the changes of the material world. As Sanātanā, she is the ultimate refuge, the timeless source from which all beings arise and into which they ultimately dissolve. She is the supreme reality, the unchanging essence that supports, pervades, and transcends the entire universe.

She is the creator, the sustainer, the destroyer and yet she remains the uninvolved witness to all actions : karmādisākṣiṇī. She is the all-pervading consciousness that observes every thought, deed, and event without attachment or judgment. As the eternal witness, she remains untouched by the dualities of life—success and failure, joy and sorrow, virtue and vice—existing beyond the transient nature of karma and its consequences. In her presence, all actions unfold within the cosmic play, yet she remains aloof and serene, embodying the pure awareness that neither influences nor is influenced by the myriad of activities that occur within her boundless expanse. This aspect of the Divine Mother encourages us to cultivate inner detachment, to observe the unfolding of our own lives with equanimity, and to realize our true nature as the ever-illuminated, unchanging witness beyond the play of actions and reactions.

Upcoming Programs

Event	Date	Venue	Registration Link
<i>Introduction to Shad Darshanam : USA Timing</i>	Oct 26 - Oct 29, 2024	Online	tiny.cc/6darsh
<i>Timesless Tales of Mahabharata</i>	Oct 27, 2024	San Ramon, CA, USA	tiny.cc/mahabca
Arupadai Veedu Yatra	Nov 3 - 7, 2024	Anaadi Foundation	anaadi.org/padai

