

The Voice of
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Shānti Dūta: Harbinger of Peace

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Scholars differ as to the meaning and significance of the constituent elements of the capital of the Aśoka column at Sāmāth. One scholar, B. Majumdar, believes the so-called "bell" is not really a bell, but an inverted lotus with sixteen petals. He goes into great detail about the statue, which is a harbinger of peace and symbol of

the Republic of India.

"The capital is really the symbolic representation of the great religious event of the Buddha's appearance and the promulgation of his wonderful dharma, which was first preached in Sāmāth. Upon the 'bell-shaped' lotus there is an abacus having four figures, namely an elephant, a bull, a galloping horse and a lion, each separated from the other by a disc or

Editor's column

Introducing Om Shānti

It was the first and only peaceful revolution in recorded history. It showed the world India is not willing to compromise her principles, which happen to be the same ones champions of the American Revolution held sacred: freedom and self-sufficiency.

There is one principle, however, that colonial freedom fighters failed to understand: nonviolence. Our ideologies are the same, but our cultures are different. The concept of self-sacrifice is foreign to most Americans.

India's victory 50 years ago is the best example of what can be accomplished through peaceful action. We must learn to understand and respect the principle of peace (shānti).

The only way to universal peace is through understanding. One goal of *Om Shānti* is to dispel the myth that there are cultural barriers preventing Indians and Americans from living in unity. In Truth, All is indeed One.

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