Thousand Names for Lord Indra as Composed by Vasishtha Ganapati

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Thousand Names for Lord Indra as Composed by Vasishtha Ganapati

Prelude to Indra Sahasranama of Kavyakantha Ganapai Muni

Essential features of Deva - Indra as seen in Rigveda Mantras are very well woven together in the garland of thousand names - Indrasahasranama by Ganapati Muni. He says in concluding verse about his work as “these names are Vedic, so the scholars who know the Vedic terminology should understand etymological meaning of the words properly in accordance with the Vedic perspective”.

All that is said in Veda is the result of intuitive experience of Vedic Rishis - the Mystic poets. I have attempted here to give a brief note on Vedic concept of Devas which would help an aspirant to understand the intention of Ganapati Muni who followed the path of Vedic Rishis. It is essential to know the spiritual import of Veda and intricate characteristics of Devas invoked in Veda Mantras along with the performance of internal and external Yajnas to understand Indra Sahasranama.

Veda Mantras are the spontaneous expressions emerged from the Rishis who could visualize the knowledge stationed in the highest plane with their intuitive power developed from deep meditation (tapas). The study of Veda in the light of Shri Aurobindo’s ideas of symbolic language would give us tangible answers to the questions like Who are the Vedic Gods (devas) and the direct connection of these devas in our life.

Mantras tell us that the Devas are special powers in creation. The word “divine” has its origin in Sanskrit word “div”- “Deva” which has the connotation as

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\text{ேது\ேவாதநாத்தீதி\வா} \text{ (nirukta 7.15)} -
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“to give (bestow felicities), “to shine (luminous)” with Light and Knowledge, “resides in higher world”. This also means to make someone or something shine. Deva is the all pervasive cosmic energy, the powers of the Supreme Godhead.
Rigveda (1.164.46) proclaims that “There is only one God-head - एकमसत् ekam sat, but the wise people praise Him in different names - एकमसत् विप्रां भूदहाव वादलिं - as Mitra, VaruNa, Agni, GarutmAn, Yama, MAтаrAшшшш. Shri Aurobindo adds his observation to the above Mantra as: “The Rigveda itself, indeed, asserts that the Gods are only different names and expressions of one Universal Being who in His own reality transcends the universe; but from the language of the hymns we are compelled to perceive in the Gods not only the different names but also different forms, powers and personalities of the one Deva.”

MaharShi YAska’s Nirukta which dates back prior to the Second Millennium B.C. also gives a detailed note about the appearance of different Gods in the Veda Mantras and their alliance with the God Supreme in Daivata prakaraNa (7.4).

“Gods are praised in different ways even though they have only one soul owing to their abundant felicities. For one soul, other Gods become different organs (pratyangas). Further, taking the Satva of Parameshvara, the Supreme Godhead, they indulge in creation and assume different functions. They are praised in different names by Rishis. The Soul is ratha, ashva, Ayudha, ishus and the AtmA - Soul of all the Gods.”

Shri Aurobindo observes that “… the separate functions of Gods emerged by means (out of) of their activities, their epithets, the psychological sense (fCISION SHARE) of the legends connected with them....” (From The Secret of the Veda. The Psychological Theory by Shri Aurobindo). Many Mantras reveal how all Devas are different powers and personalities of the Supreme. They take birth in us when invoked and give/increase their powers as per our aspirations. Devas are called twice - born (dvijanma) since they take birth in the Universe and in every aspirant.
Indra is seen in the Mantras as the great bird (Suparna -garuda) without any abode. This epithet indicates very significant power and activity (work) of Indra. He is recognized as the “divine mind and action” of the Supreme by Shri Aurobindo.

The psychological aspects of Devas are clearly seen in many Mantras. Shri Aurobindo says that he got the first clue for finding the psychological aspect of the God - Agni from the frequently used epithet of Agni as “purohita”. The word “purohita” in its separated form पू: + रि: - “placed (nihita) in front” gives the symbolic meaning of the Divine Will or Force in all the human activities.

An aspirant invokes the cosmic powers in an inward journey on the spiritual path i.e., journey towards self-realization. The Devas would bestow their felicities on an aspirant to divinize his life. Divinizing means achieving all-sided perfection by spiritualizing our everyday life. Spirituality is different from religious beliefs and practices. It is the understanding and consciously recognizing the Supreme Spirit which pervades the entire cosmos including all human activities.

The vedic sages recognized different types of powers pulsating around and within all the aspects of manifestations and had realized the conscious supra-physical beings behind all the cosmic powers - Devas. They were aware that the minds of the individual human beings are not isolated. They are all the projections of the cosmic mind. They knew that they can increase their physical/spiritual/psychological powers by invoking the Supreme Power as well as the different Gods who are like His limbs to energize every aspect of human efforts.

Devas are invoked in Mantras to eradicate difficulties both in worldly life and spiritual life. They regarded worldly life as important as the spiritual pursuit and aspired to lead happy and long life. Invoked Devas to get health, power and prosperity. Indra is seen in the Mantras as the Lord of the Divine Mind and Action who gives knowledge and increases the life force. He is praised as the lord of abundant wealth and also the Deva who gives generously to aspirants.

**Indra as the Lord of the Divine Mind and Action**

Many Mantras tell us that Indra is the Lord of the heavens, mighty Power of the Gods, presiding over the Divine Mind, who descends with his lightning, abundant showers - the life
- giving rains. There is a common belief that Indra, the king of the Gods is ruling over the heavens, stands above the region of the clouds, deals with his famous weapon vajraAyudha, gives a death - blow to the demon called VritraSura and releases the waters. Traditionally, naturalistic interpretation of Vritra says that he represents the dark clouds which hoard the waters and the Indra gives the blow by his thunderbolt and causes the release of the waters. We can find a reference of symbolic meaning of Vritra in MahAbhArata in ashvamedha-parva, (11-7-20) where MaharShi VedavyAsa tells YudhiShThira a secret that he had learnt from the Rishis in the forest.

Vritra is seen in the Rigveda Mantras as the symbol of negative forces which bring obstructions not only in the spiritual sAdhanA of an aspirant but in all the works dedicated to the upliftment of people. The killing of Vritra by Indra symbolizes the divine help rendered to overcome the obstructions caused by the negative forces in the developmental activities of one and all.

The doors of the “secret cover” of the spiritual knowledge hidden in the Veda Mantras, open up through the symbols. This has great significance to the inner world. It would enhance the psychological faculties which in turn lead an aspirant towards the intuitive power. Indra is the Lord of the Divine Mind and Action. Indra battles the evil forces on behalf of the seekers of knowledge.

External meaning: “Indra has fixed (raised) the Sun in the Heavens for the eternal view. He, the Sun, inspired to show his light to the entire world being on the top of the mountain”.
The meaning of the second line of this Mantra in surface level: “Indra smashed the hill (adrim) by the cows (gobhiH)”. This does not give any coherent meaning.

Spiritual interpretation: Here, the pattern of symbols under which the spiritual meaning of the Veda Mantras are hidden has to be studied. YAska”s Nirukta gives the meaning of “gauH” as “Aditya” and it also gives the meaning as “the rays of the Sun ..... and all the rays are called gauH” (कतन्मपः सिद्धिः कश्चन न स्मरणेन। अधिकाः वद्यमाणा सिद्धिः कश्चन न स्मरणेन। अधिकाः पद्यकृति कश्चन वद्यमाणा सिद्धिः कश्चन न स्मरणेन।॥ री. 2.6). It can be noted here that a commonly used word, “gOShThI” which means “the assembly of the learned people” has the component of “gauH - knowledge”.

Hence in the second line of the Mantra quoted above, the word “gauH” symbolizes, the ray of Light and the knowledge - jnAna. The Mountain symbolizes ajnAna, the ignorance and the verb vi+ airayat means smashed. Now, the coherent meaning emerges as: “Indra smashed ignorance of an aspirant by bestowing the knowledge upon him”... or as “ Indra destroyed the forces of ignorance using the Rays of spiritual Light.”

SHri Kapali Shastri, direct disciple of Shri Aurobindo, sums up his observation on this Mantra as “the Supreme Sun, destroyed the ignorance of an aspirant which is symbolized by the word “adri” - the inanimate dark world (within oneself)” by his rays of spiritual knowledge.

The role of Indra is evident as the Lord of the Divine Mind who helps the seekers by giving them the knowledge/guidance and helps them to develop the mental abilities and inspires them for proper actions. The actions of the Divine Mind, Indra, can be broadly classified into three categories. The first task is to manifest knowledge in seekers in several steps.

कथाम् प्रेक्षात् कथा मयादेवीकृतैः।
प्राणस्वरूपसाधनेण सदानह एकाशमेव षड्यन्त्यां।॥ त्रै। 1.10.1

O Shatakraatu, Indra of thousand activities, the singers are lauding you and worshiping with Mantras. The Seers of the Mantra rise and attain thee holding (like the) bamboo (ladder which helps to climb).

मदविषाणि: दग्धामालाः अहं दीर्घानं शरीरं दीर्घानं बालाः पुरुषानां।॥ त्रै। 1.10.2
When a seeker climbs from one peak to an other peak, he sees the task yet to be accomplished. Then, Indra awakens in him (seeker) the object of the ascent. Indra himself appears with the company of Gods for the aid (to guide) of the seeker.

The second task is the preparation and building up of subtle bodies which can absorb/sustain the knowledge.

Indra is praised as the “fashioner of perfect forms - surUpakritnumUtaye”.

“Rishis invoke Indra, to prepare the subtle body”. The physical body is made of material, vital (prANa) and mental energies. In its ordinary condition it is like an unbaked pot which will break if knowledge of great intensity enters it. Hence, Indra has to create new forms or subtle bodies which can receive the knowledge and make use of it for further internal growth. He prepares subtle body of the seekers to be able to receive vision and awakens the excellent knowledge in it.

“Gives knowledge to one who does not have it”. Indra gives an appropriate form - peSha, which can sustain this knowledge.

The third task of Indra is to offer protection for seekers from the hostile forces called Vritra, Vala etc., who bring the obstructions in the worldly and spiritual paths of the seekers. They are the forces of falsehood which conceal Truth or divide the Truth and they apply force to stop the flow of consciousness. They operate in cosmic level and in the inner life of every individual. Indra’s victory over such hostile forces are hailed in many Mantras. Rishis invoke Indra to help them overcome such obstacles caused by hostile forces by bestowing his strength on them.

Indra’s role as the power of the divine Mind:

“Impelled by thought, driven forward by the illumined thinker, Come O’ Indra to my thoughts, I am ready with the soma-juice (delight) and eager to express it in speech (Mantras)”.

1.4.1 Indra is praised as the “fashioner of perfect forms - surUpakritnumUtaye”.

1.6.3 “Gives knowledge to one who does not have it”. Indra gives an appropriate form - peSha, which can sustain this knowledge.
Interpretation of a Mantra (1-53-4) in spiritual perspective found in Shri Kapali Shastri’s SiddhAnjana can be observed here.

“O Indra, propitiated by these bright oblations, these Soma libations, dispel our ignorance (अमूलः) with Rays - Knowledge and Life-force (with cows and horses-चक्राणां प्रस्तुतिः).

And with the aid of Indra pleased with Soma - libation, we shall afflict the Robber and be relieved from enemies, be impelled together ahead.”

One can see in the above Mantra as to how the spiritual meaning as Light and Knowledge for the word “gauH” are more appropriate to get the cohesive meaning. When Indra is prayed to remove ignorance - अमूलः by cows and horses - चक्राणां प्रस्तुतिः, it does not give any cohesive meaning if it is taken in the outer meaning. One has to remove the veil of the symbols to get the inner meaning as the Knowledge and the Life-force (चक्राणां प्रस्तुतिः).

Indra is seen in many Mantras as though appearing in front of Rishis/aspirants and actually helping them to win over hostile forces both in war and in spiritual pursuit. Indra is praised as great hero. His attribute as “Garuda” gives a clue about the actual appearance of Indra in front of Rishis; perhaps in a chariot that looked like Garuda. This resembles the depiction of Garuda as the chariot of Vishnu.

“For the sake of Rijishvan, son of Vidathin, you have slain Pipru and the mighty Mrigaya. You have slain the fifty thousand KriShhNAs. You have demolished the cities (of Shambara), just as old age (destroys) the body”.

Here, the Seer of the Mantra, Rishi Babhru tells the aspirants, that “I have seen the firm and secret abode of Indra. The wise persons told me that we, the leaders, shall attain (understand) Indra being awakened (by him). “

Ganapati Muni recognises, Kundalini shakti as an aspect of the power of Indra. He was blessed with the Mantra shakti by his practice of Vedic life and tapas by which he could
heal the wounds. It is recorded in his biography that a broken bone of his son in a bus accident healed quickly when he invoked Indra (meditated upon) this Mantra (8.1.12).

“The magnificent Indra restores again the bleeding from broken neck by joining the broken neck with the body to original condition even in the absence of healing materials”.

Devas in Veda Mantras appear tangible to aspirants and enigmatic at the same time. A Mantra in 6th Mandala (6.47.18) says, “To every form, Indra has remained the counter-form, that is his form for us to face and see. By his maya powers, he moves on endowed with many forms, with his thousand steeds”.

Many events in the life of Ganapati Muni tell us that it is possible to get into the power of Indra by invoking and meditating upon his divine activities both worldly and spiritual. Meditating upon thousand names in Indra Sahasranama of Ganapati Muni would help aspirants to achieve all round perfection in whatever work undertaken as well as in spiritual pursuits.

There are 10552 Mantras in Rigveda. We may see the invoking of Indra in 1028 Mantras of Rigveda as a main deity as well as with other Devas mostly with Agni who is the Will power of Paramatma.

English translations of all the Mantras quoted here are rendered by Shri Kapali Shastri and Prof. R.L.Kashyap. There are many more aspects of Indra and his association with Soma. A detailed note is available in “Symbolism of Rigveda”, authored by me.

I conclude my humble attempt of very brief introduction to enigmatic Indra with a Mantra wherein he is addressed as Bliss (மூன்று).

Indra is invoked to get all that is needed for happy worldly life and to achieve spiritual knowledge.
“O Indra, Mrila (blissful) make me happy, inspire me for getting things required for living, my intellect and speech. Be happy with the offering of whatever little I speak for you and make me the possessor of Deva - the divine powers”. Here, the import is on acquiring the power and qualities of Deva. It is clearly seen when the Rishi says: “Make me devavantam .. குச்சிம் மூர் குடம்பிகள் .”
Indra Sahasranama contains one thousand names of Indra that are woven together in one hundred slokas by Ganapati Muni. All the words that are either synonyms or epithets of Indra are taken directly from Rigveda Mantras. I have been studying and contemplating on the divine powers and personalities of Devas who are invoked in Rigveda since three decades. However, it was a very challenging task to find corresponding words in English for thousand names of Indra spread in hundreds of Rigveda Mantras in different Mandalas that are ascribed to Indra. I have pondered over the import of each word by virtually going through a large number of Mantras in which these synonyms and epithets of Deva - Indra are found. I am greatly benefited by the spiritual interpretation given by my Guru, Prof. R. L. Kashyap for all the Mandalas of Rigveda (published by Sakshi Trust, Bangalore). I offer my deepest reverence to him.

Finally I bow down with humility to the power of Indra which pushed me ahead in this endeavor. I am only instrumental in his divine plan. In this translation, I hope that English readers would get a glimpse of spiritual and psychological import of Veda Mantras visualized by great sages.

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Thousand Names for Lord Indra as Composed by Vasishtha Ganapati

1. Indra is the highest deva among all devas. He is the great bird (Suparna - garuda ) without any abode/ moves swiftly like mind. He who has fully loaded chariot; tames all opponents. He is the ruler of the universe. He sees all.

Additional information: Indra is the great bird (Suparna - garuda) without any abode. This epithet indicates very significant power and activity (work) of Indra. He is recognized as the ‘divine mind’ of the Supreme by Shri Aurobindo who has shown how all Devas are different powers and personalities of the Supreme. They take birth in us when invoked and give their powers as per our aspirations. When looked at spiritual interpretation; Indra being the divine mind moves swiftly like Garuda with strong wings. He does not need any particular abode/His power is in everything.

2. Indra is capable of all (good) actions, he is above all, the Supreme, leader and creator of the universe. Mighty Indra fills the universe with his rays (Sun, universal knowledge), moves by his own will/ Inherent Power (swadha) without any vehicle which needs wheels to move.

3. Indra is the creator of the universe, has universal form, universal life, widely extended in the entire universe with universal activity. He is the universal deity, universal thought.
(divine mind) and stands above any reproach.

4. Indra Deva who knows all the three worlds is perceived as sharp - horned bull on the move (always moving). Most powerful, great Indra is shining with wisdom, he is self luminous and gives light (knowledge) to light - less (place/people).

Additional information:
Here, light may be taken as the Sun - light and also as knowledge (spiritual wisdom). Indra is known in Veda mantras as a bestower of knowledge by eradicating the negative forces operating in the mind of the aspirants. Indra destroys vritra who is recognized as a negative force who blocks the light/knowledge and waters which are recognized as dynamic forces. Rigveda Mantra 1.7.3. says that Indra placed (raised) the Sun in dyu - loka for eternal vision.

Surface meaning of the second line of Rigveda Mantra 1.7.3. says, ‘Indra smashed the hill (adrim) by cows (goobhih).’

Spiritual meaning:
Indra destroyed the ignorance (adrim) of aspirants by (bestowing) knowledge (goobhih). Vritra is seen clearly in Mahabharata (Ashvamedha parva 11.7.20) as the powerful negative force. Indra destroys him with his special weapon Vajra. Vajra is interpreted there as the discriminating power which can destroy the negative thoughts/instincts. (Shri Kapali Shastri)

5. Indra is Jyeshtha (eldest/earliest form) Deva (divine mind of Supreme), he is the most powerful bull among mortals, gives supreme light. Great Indra who has superb strength destroys those who work against cosmic order and sustains universal activity.
6. Indra is the possessor/sustainer of wealth, supporter of supporters (of yajna), brave, driven by thought (mind). He accomplishes and upholds the yajna. He (himself) is the yajna. He releases the water blocked by Vritra (negative forces). Refer: Mantra 3.32.12 - Yajna becomes your protector in the killing of Ahi by vajra.

7. Indra desires (needs) yajna. He is the master of yajna. He is endowed with swift movements. Protects the soma presser in sacrifices. He has well designed Vajra (weapon / discriminatory power) The great warrior casts down the foe. Glorious Indra is the son of power (Sahasa - Agni).

8. Indra gives protection (to aspirants) from people with evil thoughts, destroys people who protects sinful people. He propels the (mind of) weak. He is the master of action. He upholds divine law. Creator of Mantra (Brahma).

9. Indra's vigor is spontaneous. He supports people endowed with great mental power (dhee), collects wealth, stands erect (immovable like mountain). Created all forms in the Universe, Twashta (Indra) disperses the all-pervading forces of ignorance. Indra is the guardian. He ferries, protects with rapid force.

10. Indra who has radiating might crushes the foes swiftly. He is the supreme, performs many great deeds (tasks) and remains undefeated. Protects being firm in strong currents of water.
11. Indra brings felicities in abundance (vrisha=Indra), He knows everything, causes discomfort to foes. He is strong, bestows good thoughts (mati to aspirants). filled with delight/overjoyed, lord of good thoughts, accompanied with Maruts. He is the seer among Maruts.

12. Bountiful Indra (has liberal hands to give), Master of gana (Mantra gana), He is Brihaspati, master of knowledge of Riks, Maghavan. Indra enjoys, he is purifier, wise. He is the Sun (giver of spiritual light), supreme.

13. Indra is beyond measures (limitless), has many forms, he has the counter form for all the forms created/replica. He is invoked and lauded by many. Indra is stationed in front (of aspirant / yajamana of yajna), He performs variety of deeds. He is the tearer of cities (structures of the forces of ignorance).

Pura = physical body = humans)

Refer: Mantra 6.47.18: To every form, Indra has remained the counter-form, that is his form for us to face and see. By his maya powers, he moves on endowed with many forms, for yoked are his thousand steeds. (Quoted in Br.U. (2.5.19), as part of the exposition of Madhu-vidya. See Shri Kapali Sastry, “Lights on the Upanishads”, SAKSI).

14. Indra is widely lauded in yajna, Performer of many deeds, shatters wide range of cities, He manifests in manifold ways (in aspirants), Indra is the victor in many battles. He is spread (everywhere) in many forms.
15. Indra is Prachetasa who is consciously active, (helps the aspirant) abides in the supreme (parame vyoman), most praiseworthy, he cannot be covered. Indra increases in strength within (aspirants), grows abundantly, gives protections being accompanied by Pushan, brings protection within.

16. Indra is helpful, he is with panchajana (“pancha jana - five classes of people” - interpreted differently by many scholars). Devours variety of knowledge. Master of variety of wealth. Indra is resplendent (like gold), filled with energy, warrior who has destroyed the Dasyus and leads (aspirants) again and again.

17. Indra exceeds both Earth and Heaven, He is the most ancient deva who performs many deeds, appears in manifold ways. He is the first born, Rishi. He leads with guiding thoughts. Wonderful Indra is the lord of great wealth. He is the first born among Devas and humans.

18. Indra continues to be in yajna/comes forward, he is with Pushan, purifys. He is the constructor of paths, is present everywhere, has grown with times. He is the shooter who smites and not smitten. He is the father and protector.

19. Indra is the warrior with variegated strength, dwells in the summits (of consciousness), his wrath moves upward, stationed in front He is the destroyer of cities. He is firm, invincible, shows the right path (to aspirants).
20. Indra endowed with mighty arms is the conqueror in many battles, He stirs up great dust (in his movements) remains unmoved, he overcomes (the foes) alone/unhurt. He approaches with iron-like heels, He is mighty. Removes the covering of Light (knowledge).

21. Indra loves the Mantra, is impelled by Mantras, upholder of Mantra, he is ready with his mighty movements. He has awakened mind, is undecaying and is with enormous luster, kills the foes.

22. Indra is the doer of many deeds / great tasks in battles, is blissful with the prayers. Indra is invoked in yajnas, he is with abundant vigor, wanders everywhere, destroys the cities, overcomes the foes and offers perfect protection.

23. Indra is mighty, fierce, manifests the force wholly, destroys the evil. He is lauded with soma offerings, He is the lord of luminous strength, guardian of people, hero, protector, lord of luminous strength.

24. Indra is the generous giver, He is very fatherly, He is the possessor of excellent and beautiful riches. Possessor of abundant knowledge (go /gava = knowledge), He fights against the Panis. He cuts (unwanted thoughts), He destroys the cities (of foes); works hard, kills the arrogant (foes).
25. Indra is the strong master of the earth, the ancient lord, enjoys chanting of Mantras, the eldest and the lord of all, He is spread widely, He shatters the foes, enjoys abundant Soma, most intelligent (conscious - praketa), helps who have the power of (spiritual) vision.

26. Indra increases (his power) and upholds the Rishis (Seers) who sing (Mantras), he has mighty will (power) since birth, eradicates darkness (brings light), greatest among great Seers, upholds the word (Veda) drives the singers forward to felicities.

Kavi is the Rishi (Seer) who can see (vision) beyond the perception of normal sensory organs.

27 Indra is the son of Kushika, protector of Earth, is vigilant in nights, king of settlements on earth, protector of cows (knowledge), He is the Cow (go - knowledge). He is the destroyer of darkness, opens the doors of light (knowledge), life - energies (Ashva) and material forces.

Symbolically ‘Go’ is light and knowledge and ‘Ashva’ stands for Pranashakti - life energies. Kshapavan also gives the meaning, ‘Indra who accepts Soma in the nights’. Indra is also depicted as ‘Milch - Cow’ (Kamadhenu).

28. Indra is embedded in delight. He bestows proficiency, impels intellect. Radiant / wonderful. Indra holds Vajra (discus) firmly with brilliant might.

Symbolically ‘Vajra’ stands for discriminatory power (viveka). Indra dispels ignorance (ajnana) of aspirants by (Vajra) giving them discriminatory power.
29. Indra who takes many births appears/manifests (in different forms) in front of number of aspirants and protects number of seekers. He is the doer of many tasks. He has great powers, variegated strength, radiance and affluence.

30. Indra has many powers, mighty neck, accompanied with many strengths (Maruts etc.), manifold will power. He appears ever growing, accepts numerous offerings and gives many felicities.

31. Indra is the distributor/promoter of great felicities. He is the great leader, moves swiftly. Resplendent Indra is adorable, mighty, moves swiftly like steed (in battles) seated in the chariot, destroys the foes. He can not be overpowered by foes.

32. Indra who is like a whip (leads on the right path) saves aspirant across. He consumes strength (of foes), vigorous, swift, smites and overcomes the foes. He has everything in him. Enormously strong Indra protects aspirants to swiftly cross (worldly as well as spiritual adversities).

33. Indra grows/gets strength by yajna (by soma - chanting), he is the master (supreme) of yajna, increases his powers by yajna. Indra’s eyes do not wink, he rushes like bull and destroys foes. He turns away from yajna where Soma is not prepared.

Unwinking : staying without winking is one among many special features of devatas.
34. Indra enjoys numerous wealth, he is honest, unquestionable hero. He is filled with light (knowledge). He listens from everywhere, stationed in mid region (antariksha), has unlimited strength and praised by warriors.

Yask Maharshi’s Nirukta gives the meaning of ‘shipri’ as ray of light; ‘shiprivan’ : filled with light. Shipra also means jaw. It may be taken as hero with firm jaws.

॥ 34 ॥

4. Indra’s Nirukta

35. Indra is imperceptible, eternal, lord of energies, moves in the upper regions, raises upwards, stable, Sun who stimulates activity, stands with his own might, shining with Truth, well known.

॥ 35 ॥

36. Indra is the initiator, intuition in aspirants, moves the unmovables, unassailable, far reaching, master of himself with his own strength. He who has the power (shachi), gives the light which does not scatter.

Shachi is the power of Indra. He is depicted as Shachivan, lord of Shachi in many Mantras. Refer R:1.54.2. It is the name of the spouse of Indra in Puranas.

॥ 36 ॥

37. Indra has unfailing strength, warrior of the Sattva (Truth), the son of Truth, drinker of Soma, slays the Dasyus, Supports both the heaven and the mid world, He is the King, divine consciousness (chetana).

॥ 37 ॥

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38. Indra is (becomes) the Mantra (Rik), makes aspirant to shine, imparts strength, protector of Truth. He is the Truth, true in his being, gives happiness (riches), affluent and inspires to get happiness (riches).

Indra manifests as the Rik Mantra with proper chanting in yajna.

39. Indra is magnificent/noble, with abundant bliss, King, source of felicities, bestows felicities, chief of Ribhus (heavenly craftsmen), limitless. He is Ashva (life-energies), forceful, holds riches like ocean.

40. Indra demands commitment. He is wonderful, seeks joy in the Word (Veda), he causes misery (to the foes), initiator of battles, remover (of foes). He has riches, is attractive, victor with abundant felicities. He is the Seer/Rishi.

41. Indra, the lord of opulence, weakens the foes. Illumined Indra is omniscient, increases the Rita (self-law), yoked with Truth, law maker, milching cow, conqueror of riches, abode of all aspirations, strong with armor.

42. Indra is born in the Truth, overcomes all adversaries, He is Soma (soma yajna), collaborates (with his aids), follows Rita, strong, victorious holding vajra. He is the very light (knowledge imbibed) of the Riks.

43. Indra knows the Riks, overthrows the foes, has great vigor, strong protector, glorious, gives desired felicities, defeats (the foes), leader, gives good direction. Pure with auspicious deeds.
44. Indra fulfills obligations, he is the son of energy is on move, he is the great giver, endowed with followers/attendants, donor of riches, worthy to be invoked (stomyah), enjoys with yajniks, kills foes. He is the achiever of many deeds, subdues adversaries.

45. Mighty Indra is impetuous, has done many deeds (shatakratu). He is Shakra/mighty the instructor, showers powerful (bliss), blazing, has the ears to hear (the prayers), opens up the ears (of aspirants to receive knowledge) like a friend.

Shatakratu is a synonym of Indra in Puranas which says that he has performed one hundred yajnas (kratus).

46. Indra has hundrefold growth/progress (uuti) with glorious deeds attained in many ways, opulent, has luminous energy, purest, bears the title as (source of) inspiration (shrutyam). He is unbending (firm).

47. Valiant Indra has strong chin (mighty). Son of sage Shringavrisha (fashioned by sage with special hymns), has abundant growth. He is chaste, abides by his law, likes the inspired knowledge. He is confident of himself.
48. Indra fashions perfect forms, has abundant strength/absolute control, Ruler, lord of energies (shachi), bestows true power, dynamic, possesses force and boundless Will power. Refer Rigveda:1.4.1 and 6.47.18 Fashions perfect forms.

49. Indra is endowed with variegated thoughts, right minded. Drinker of Soma is the great donor. He hears (prayers) well, Pure, has knowledge and perfect Will power. He is dedicated (fights battles with dedication) in battles.

50. Indra grows with inspiration (impelled prayers), is the lord of all that moves and breathes, swiftly destroys (cities of hostiles), his arms are upheld (for protection), desirous (of soma - prayers), increases force always (in aspirants).

51. Indra is joyful, Truthful, lord of existence (all that exists). Charming Indra is the supreme hero, supports truth/destroyer of foes, has strong variegated thoughts, he commands In front (of the battle), he becomes the form and the measure of each existing thing.

52. Indra mounted in his chariot, is conscious, luminous with perfect deeds. He is with perfect inspirations, bestower of strength, has inspired knowledge. He is the sovereign, carries (aspirants) safely through. He is the friend of one who prepares Soma.

53. Indra is upholder of Mantras, well known. He is Mantra, he is Vishnu/he pervades everything, lord of treasures. He is with green steeds (hari) lord of treasures. He is Hara, Rudra/who roars, fights perfect battles, He is law maker, enjoys (Soma).
54. Indra is illumined thinker, supreme Rishi, mighty, holder of Vajra, blissful, radiant, covers the source (of foes), great hero. He is Vayu/vital energy, Matarishva who is always on move/brings fire, friend of Maruts.

55. Indra who is lauded by all brings inspired knowledge, good listener of prayers, spreads rapidly, manifests (with his troop when invoked), He is the lord of riches born of plentitude. Mighty Indra is possessor of riches.

vrishni: one who showers knowledge and power. Indra rushes to help aspirants along with his aids. Refer R:1.10.2.

56. Indra is wise, terrible to opponents, carries the oblations, ancient, popular who enjoys in heaven. Kills Vritra holding Vajra, increases his power in aspirants and grants all desirable things to aspirants.

57. Indra moves with great speed in his mighty ratha, he is showerer of food (felicity), is endowed with abundant will power showers the grace magnanimously. Great astute Indra (power) grows within aspirants. Liberal benefactor bestows wealth and nourishment.
58. Indra is devoid of evil in his speech, killer of demons, Creator, works eternally, immortal, limitless, with his aids, destroys enemies. He is the most renowned Angira.

59. Immortal Indra has the perfect weapon, has no enemy, irresistible, rejoices together, mighty, born within aspirants, most worthy to be worshiped, auspicious, eradicates fear. Refer Mantra 1.103.4 Indra bears the name, "the son of inspired hearing" ‘Nama’, the name of devas, carries the power associated and it reveals in the person doing ‘Namajapa’.

60. Indra the leader, likes opulence, is with seven rays (knowledge), fulfills desires, has no opposition (moves without steeds), conqueror, protects who chants Mantras, restores (the lost limb or riches). Refer Mantra 8.1.12 When the great mystic poet Vasishta Ganapati Muni (1878-1936) was involved in a bus accident, his son had a fracture in his hand. The Muni uttered this mantra at once for healing the bones. His bones healed quickly.

61. Indra has no enemy born, leads the army, has access and act in both heaven and earth, supports all, he is the womb of the truth, mighty, lord of life-energy.

62. Indra is fierce, protects, has powerful bow in his strong arms, increases his power (in aspirants) with chanting, gives inspired knowledge. He is the supreme lord of spoken words (chanting).
63. Vajra-armed Indra, mighty Vrishbha for Rishis. He operates Vajra with discrimination, desires Soma, delight. He is the lord of Soma, grows with delight.

64. Indra is with perfect Mantra, stable, the Sun, overthrows foes who confront, spreading light widely, has shining beard, lord of steeds and invincible.

65. Indra has golden arms, gives enormous protection, has lustrous hair, shining steeds, strong jaws, fills with luster and delight, rejoices with the work done.

66. Indra is of golden color, has golden steeds, shining form, lover of steeds, slayer, luminous, offering of yajna, yokes the steeds.

7. Victorious Indra is the lord of all that is moving and all that is non-moving He dances (with delight). He is the lord of human beings, knows all the actions related to human beings, regulates the waters, distributes great wealth.
69. Indra has the divine powers of work, regulates rain fall, lord of all the streams, has the power of Godhead, joins with divine, strong, overcomes the foes assailing in front, creates bonds (between humans and devas).

70. Indra is fashioned newly (by Rishi), supports, full of vigor, staying together, happy with soma, dancing, enjoys (in yajna), finds new aspirant, supreme among men (divine), conquers fertile lands.

71. Indra effaces the sin (of devotees), has strong arms, destroyer of Vritra, shatterer of Vala, he is thunder - armed, the most supreme, overthrows the strong opponents. He is the patron of people.

72. Indra is the universal force, has treasures, impels like bull, distributor (of riches), leader, destroyer of cities (of foes), bestower, is the lord of what moves and what stands still.

*Refer Mantra 8.1.12 When the great mystic poet Vasihta Ganapati Muni (1878-1936) was involved in a bus accident, his son had a fracture in his hand. The Muni uttered this mantra at once for healing the bones. His bones healed quickly.
74. Indra gives knowledge to ignorants, gives form to formless, smites with Vajra, mighty, praised along with gods Maruts. He is the leader of host of Maruts.

Ketu means ray - knowledge in the spiritual sense, it signifies the vision or the vision of knowledge born of inner understanding, intuition. Indra is the lord of divine mind. He gives the vision of the supra-physical to the Rishi, thus manifesting knowledge for the Rishi who earlier had no knowledge, aketu. (Refer Rig: 1.24.12, 1.3.12. by Prof.R.L.Kashyap)

75. Indra is the great hero, does great deeds, guides thoughts, lord of heaven and earth, most generous among wealthy, extremely wrathful.

76. Celebrated Indra strives with enemies (Ram), releases waters, rejoices, mighty, has vast thought, exceedingly generous, slayer of enemies, graceful, opulent.

77. Indra dripped with intoxication, bestows felicity to one who offers soma, enjoys soma, lord of ecstasy, torments (the foes). He is praised with proper words (Mantras), stationed in svar loka, Lord of treasures, accomplishes many great deeds.

78. Indra has arrow in his hands, gives impulsions, gives felicities, knows the treasures, opulent, pervades everywhere, delightful, superior/excellent, conqueror of all worlds, all-encompassing (found in various forms).
79. Indra is watching (activities) people (to help), subduer of enemies, knows the world of light (knowledge), performer of perfect yajna, well praised, completely free, originator of Earth and Sun, has inspired knowledge/listens.

80. Indra investigates, active, has perfect blissful thoughts, guides with proper steps (to spiritual heights) generous giver of gifts, He is universal, has comfortable chariot with perfect steeds, conqueror of fertile lands. He is wonderful/magnificent.

81. Indra is the supreme king, gives quickly, approaches (to aspirants), Indra cuts asunder the foes, easily attainable, approaches, filled in the universe, has different forms, grows enormously, elevates aspirants.

82. Indra is adorable, reaches the goal (helps to reach the goal), lord of horses of the wind-god (Vayu), divine, good observer, full of wrath, gives knowledge, born afresh, distributes well.

83. Indra is revered in battles, distributor of plenitude, creates his own form, goes to aspirants, carries vajra, supreme hero, luminous.

84. Indra is born of plenitude, owns/provides riches, lord of plenitude, battles, Lord of dwellings, destroys demons, king of many places/worlds, has voluminous belly.
85. Indra is opulent, protector, slayer of evil forces, destroyer of foes, he is powerful, magnificent, lord of all armies, liberator of bonds.

86. Indra is bearer of vajra, lord of all aspirations, has mastered knowledge, he is the lord of light/knowledge (go - light), pervades the universe, destroys dark forces, kind hearted, created heaven (mid-world).

87. Indra has the name grasped well, performs many great deeds, guardian of the lofty, shining, bestower, gives easily, has inspired knowledge afar (motivates aspirants living far away). He is sacred.

88. Indra is dynamic/skilled, lord of great heavens, Rishi sent by gods, ruler of heavens, destroyer of demons, divine force. He has understanding mind, irresistible, luminous, made full of light/sparkling.

89. Indra gives in abundance, has true thought, shining, spontaneous, vanquisher of foes, invulnerable (to any force), is hard to resist, showerer of delight in heaven filled with divine thoughts.
90. Indra is all-discerning, killer of dasyu, victorious/ferocious, adjudicator, rich in thought (intellect), seizes the riches (of foes), overcomes foes, supports, giver, conquers treasures (in battles).

91. Indra is celestial/divine, operates in both planes (heaven and earth), eternal, Arya/noble, comes to battles, savior, noble, friend, destroyer, common (treats aspirants equally), perfect worker, lord of achievements, cannot be seized.

92. Indra is lord of the Earth, powerful/vigorous, swells. He is guardian of the truth, god Ribhu, only king, enemy of arrogant, combats single handed, moves extensively.

93. Indra creates the world (different), gives birth to life-energies (ashva - prana shakti) and knowledge (go), he helps (challenges), ancient, king of mortals/ all living beings, happy with Mantras, protects one who presses out the Soma - delight (released by work done). Many Mantras give clear symbolic meaning of prana shakti and jnana to words ‘Ashva’ and ‘go’.

Refer: 8.36.5

94. Indra has robe of light, king of all strivers, supremely laudable, he is full of light, filled in vast area, most aspired, shatters (demons), giver, most vigorous, fierce, makes the foes cry, possessor of light.
95. Indra is awake (always), lord of the world, wise, endowed with light/ knowledge, destroyer, conqueror, master, unbounded (like sea), carries gifts, mighty (asu - prana shakti), has oceanic flow (of delight).

96. Indra is luminous, dweller (within), most mighty among the mighty, never encircled, giver of all desirable riches, omniscient /inspired scholar, killer of Vritra.

97. Indra is irresistible, overcomes (the foes), will be in front of endeavors (battles), well praiseworthy/ affectionate, fighter, owner, carries energies, mighty, protector.

98. Indra is (prime) creator, has inspired wisdom (seer), binds (yokes), is strong as serpent, performs great deeds, ancient lord, gives energy/plentitude, manifests the light (knowledge), lord of speech (Mantra).

plentitude - plenty of plenty

99. Indra is faultless, has good horses, wielder of Vajra, stable, comes to aid, powerful, master of yajna, fights bravely, overcomes the foes. He performs action for aspirants/devotees.
100. Indra’s head is uplifted like a serpent, he is full of energy, enthuses Veda/Brahma (in aspirant), He is Yama (regulates), stands amidst lauds, destroyer of cities. He is Rishi Brihaddiva.

101. Indra destroys cities/ (of danavas) defends friends, he is lord of honey (soma), adored, regulates, young, likes lauds extensively, hears the invoking call, giver of abundant felicities, gives great inspirations.

102. Indra nourishes like mother, he stands strong (bull) among stable things, great giver, mighty destroyer, easily accessible, enjoys profusely, overcomes the foes, happy with the dawn, he is conqueror.

103. Indra fulfills aspirations, showers profusely, gives happiness. He is created by the potency, invoking priest for yajamana (aspirant), leader of the rivers, gives the enjoyment, chief of charioteers.

104. Indra who is Friend of Rishis, gives wife (to one who desires), has self-law, matchless, irresistible, grows in mind/intellect, engaged in yajna (adhvara), giver, greatly praised, protector, god Bhaga/possesses fortunes.

105. Indra is inviolable, unhurt, wields vajra, creates hero (warriors), master of all creation, sole deva, master of strength, hero, swells, great warrior, has perfect vision/handsome.
106. Indra is exclusively invoked, ancient, assails, creates dwelling, holds Mantra, has perfect Mantra, immortal, no one disobeys, establishes strength, he fulfills promises.

107. Limitless/mighty Indra, divine Mitra/friend, enormous, most gracious / auspicious, winner of waters, strong, mighty, travels in ratha, has strong arms, Rishi Ushana, leads/guides, giver of plenty, unparalleled giver.

108. Indra is the king of blissful Soma, drinker of soma, created (the universe), lord of light /heaven, mighty, slayer, warrior, hears the lauds (in yajna), forceful, self-resplendent.

Concluding shlokas

These thousand names( sahasranama) of Indra, are very sacred. This is the composition of Vasishtha Ganapathi, selecting from Rig Veda.

Hundred verses are composed here without the repetition of names and help of letters like ‘ha’ is not taken (added) in the middle of the verses to complete the meters.
As these names are Vedic, the scholars who know the Vedic terminology should understand etymological meaning of the words properly in accordance with the Vedic perspective.

The word order to be followed in the forms of Chaturthi vibhakti (Dative case), while using these words and names at the time of worship/prayer.

Studying this Sahasranama which is originated from Rigveda gives the full benefit of studying one’s own branch of Veda (Veda shakha).

This Sahasranama is composed with rich essence of Vedic hymns. One will attain all the Siddhis, by worshipping lord Indra with these names.

Indra, lord of all the worlds, is victorious. And His sahasranama originating from Veda is victorious.

Thus Indra Sahasranama Composed by Vasishtha Ganapathi, son of Narasihma, disciple of Ramana Maharshi is completed.

A Brief Introduction of Author

Dr. Jayanthi Manohar, primarily a scholar in Sanskrit and Kannada languages, has been awarded PhD for her thesis, ‘Rigvedic Symbolism,’ which reveals the esoteric and psychological concepts of Veda Mantras. She is well known for her lectures and writings...
about the insights of great sages who have visualized the intricate correlation between universal divine forces and life on earth.

Dr. Jayanthi Manohar is teaching Sanskrit and Kannada languages along with cultural insights for adult learners since four decades. She is a specialized language teacher for Indologists and has conducted short term language courses (Sanskrit and Kannada) in England, Germany and Australia. Her travelogues and audio-visual presentations based on her extensive lecture tours in Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia and Japan portray the glorious past of Indian culture that was spread far and wide.

She is a leading Columnist and her articles are published in popular newspapers and periodicals in Kannada as well as in English. She has delivered lectures in renowned organizations on Vedas, ancient Indian culture and role of Women from ancient times to modern day. In 2015, she was invited to deliver lectures in 10 leading cities of US on Indian thought and Vedas. She conducts workshops on topics like position of women in Vedic age, Religion, Indian Culture, Ramayana, Mahabharatha, Bhagavadgita and so on. She has been a panelist on many TV programmes and her lectures in leading Kannada TV channels bring in relevance of ancient Indian wisdom to improve quality of life.

She has produced many documentary films along with her husband, Mr.B.S.Manohar, to protect and promote the rich cultural heritage of India. Some of the films include Veda Nada, cosmic prayer for peaceful existence, Women Achievers and ‘Kannada Ashtavadhana’ a film on memory techniques used in traditional art sport.

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