

# A Day of Solidarity

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On one day on April 18, a stray monkey wonders into a New England town making April 18 a memorable day to celebrate a day of solidarity every year.



Published on  
**Booksie**

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One day on April 18, a lone monkey lazily wandered into a town center in New England. In a town where a small fender bender is big news; a stray monkey jumping on the City Hall steps was sensational news. The local TV camera crew followed around the monkey to get a good footage for the evening news. The city mayor, an Irish American and his staff were all got excited in dealing with the monkey business.

Sam Ram is a prosperous hotelier and also owns the only two gas stations in town. Though he is an Indian American, he was often mistaken for African American because of his dark skin and curly hair. A spokes person for town's small affluent Indian American community of mostly professionals from medical and IT business, Sam Ram is the short version of his long name Sambasiva Rambachan. He is known for his charity and generous donations for every cause in town. As a person he was very likable and easy going. Always wearing a flamboyant tie loosely knot around his neck, a heavy set man in mid 60s but looks young with curly grey hair let loose over his shoulders, Sam could be seen every where all the time around the town. "I love your tie Sam," was the common greeting he gets all the time. Though lived in US for over 3 decades, he still has a faint Indian accent. He shakes his head sideways like most Indians during a conversation as a sign of agreement often confusing people except those know him well. If there was something in Indian mannerism he could not shake off was his sidewise head shake and his accent.

The word got around pretty fast on monkey sightings attracting plenty onlookers. On hearing the news on monkey, Sam Ram quickly drove to the city center to find a group of people spear headed by the Mayor watching the monkey sitting on the top of the City Hall Steps.

"What we should do Sam Ram?" the mayor patted softly on Sam's shoulder.

"Amazing," said Sam Ram breathing heavy from running towards the City Hall steps to join the watching crowd.

"Call the animal control to capture the animal," shouted the Mayor to his assistants.

"No, wait a minute," shouted back Sam Ram stretching his hands as if he was protecting the monkey from a possible harm.

"We need to capture the animal before it enters a home or worse bite somebody," the mayor looked helpless. The monkey business was the most challenging moment in his career as a mayor for the last 6 years.

Sam Ram is a religious man; to understand an unusual event like this, he tends to seek help from his Hindu faith. He quickly checked his smart phone for Hindu auspicious events to see a connection only to find that the birthday of Lord Hanuman, for the year fell on April 18. A monkey from nowhere all of a sudden appears on April 18, the day Lord Hanuman was born, it was an unusual coincidence. "There must be divine significance," screamed Sam at the crowd.

"What significance?" shouted somebody from the crowd.

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“ Lord Hanuman the most revered monkey god of Hindus was born on April 18. Lord Hanuman was responsible for alerting the people that Lord Rama’s wife Sita was in captivity at the palace of evil King Ravana. This started the greatest epic war of Ramayana between good and evil,” Sam Ram concluded his emotional outburst with nobody in the crowd has a clue what he was saying.

“ Wait a minute, today on April 18 in 1775, Paul Revere took midnight ride to Concord to warn “ Redcoats are coming,” that started our revolution war against England, Do you see the connection between Lord Hanuman and Paul Revere in starting heroic wars on April 18 to set the people free,” a tall and lanky history professor in the crowd tried to explain.

“ Then what shall we do with the monkey?” asked the Mayor.

“ I will adopt the monkey,” Sam Ram came forward placing his hands on his heart.

“ But why?” shouted few people in the crowd looking at each with bewilderment.

“ I consider the sudden appearance of monkey from nowhere on this historic day of April 18, signifies a divine intervention when I look deep into my Hindu faith,” Sam Ram spoke like a leader looking around the gathering from top of the City Hall steps.

“ Divine intervention towards what end?” asked the local Lutheran priest among the crowd.

“ This monkey is god sent to jump start our town economy,” Sam Ram moved close to the monkey on the steps of the City Hall, while the mayor and rest of the crowd stood on lower steps below.

“ What you name the monkey?” asked a boy in the crowd.

“ Umm, “ Hans for Hanuman” said Sam Ram.

A crew from animal control unit shot the monkey with a tranquilizer to capture and give necessary vaccinations before releasing it to Sam Ram.

Sam Ram was happy for his quick business decision to adopt the monkey and kept in a cage at his hotel lobby. The town council designated April 18 a day of solidarity to celebrate both Lord Hanuman and Paul Revere.

As a symbolic gesture, Hans the monkey was made the Grand Marshall of the parade to become a hit with thousands of tourists on every April 18, Sam Ram became a permanent fixture in the parade sitting next to Hans in a vintage car. The tourists couldn’t get enough figurines of Lord Hanuman in various poses; one flying in the sky with a burning torch and another showing off his bulging muscles were sold briskly. Figurines of Paul Revere riding the horse were equally in demand. Children bought posters of Hans wearing fancy clothing and others riding a bike. The mayor couldn’t be happier to collect the windfall sales tax on every April 18.

With all the hotel rooms in town booked solid for the event and tourists filling up the restaurants and vendors doing brisk business selling the figurines, Sam Ram riding high during the parade started chanting “ Jai Hanuman, Jai Revere, jai Hans,” patting the back of Hans busy eating a banana .

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