



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are happy to announce the renaming of the SRCM India Newsletter as ECHOES INDIA. The renaming has been done in order to have a common name for all newsletters published by SRCM worldwide.

Ashrams around the country were abuzz with activity during the holiday season with camps for children and youth. Babuji's birthday celebrations were held at a few select ashrams across each zone. Master's fifty day long tour of the CIS and European countries, again showed us His commitment in bringing people together under the Sahaj Marg umbrella. Preparations are under way for Master's celebrations at Lucknow.

The last date for receipt of news articles for the September issue would be 10th August 2008. Please route the write-up in about 100-150 words along with photographs of the event through your respective ZiC.

Regards,

Editorial Team



## Master's Tour in April - May 2008

### Delhi

Master arrived from Lucknow on 19th April. The renovation of the Zonal Ashram at Gurgaon had been taken up in earnest and the work was completed in time for Master's visit.

The ashram now wears an entirely new look with a renovated and extended meditation hall, Master's cottage, kitchen block cum dining hall with a store, a new toilet block, concrete roads and lush green lawns.

Master inaugurated the cottage on 20th April. He liked the lush green lawns in front of the cottage and planted two saplings to mark the inauguration.

After satsangh, Master spent time talking to abhyasis, naming new born babies, distributing sweets to children and handing out gifts to volunteers. Sis. Ranjana's bhajans capped the day's events.

### Dubai

Dubai has turned out to be the launching pad for Master's tours abroad, the reason being that Master prefers relatively short flights to his destinations.

On 22nd April, Master flew to Dubai from Delhi accompanied by Br. Ajay Bhattar and about 25 abhyasis from India. He stayed in an abhyasi's flat and conducted satsanghs in the community hall downstairs. He found the time to make a short visit to Abu Dhabi centre. On 25th April, 350 abhyasis from all over the UAE had gathered at the Iranian Club, Dubai where Master conducted satsangh. Master expressed appreciation of the good work done by prefects as He could see from the quality of the hour long sitting. Master left for Moscow on 26th April.



## Casting His Light on the CIS Abhyasis

Master visited Russia and Belarus after nearly a decade and gladdened the hearts of the abhyasis of CIS (former USSR/Russian speaking countries) region. In Moscow, he attended Babuji Maharaj's Birth Anniversary celebrations in Klyzma Pensionat. He was happy to spiritually attend to the needs of 450 abhyasis who had gathered. Although nursing health problems due to the rigors of journeys and his voluminous work routine, he was cheerful and continued to interact with abhyasis (often in fluent Russian) and explain Sahaj Marg teachings and practice. He gave a shape to the idea of an ashram/meditation hall for Moscow and raised funds for the same personally.

After spending a week in Moscow, Master spent the next five days in Minsk, Belarus in the affectionate company of 250 abhyasis. He laid the foundation for a Yoga Centre that will be constructed by Br. Igor Onischenko, but will be at the disposal of the Mission for satsangh and other activities of Minsk centre.

Due to reasons of health, Master had missed the colourful and love-filled cultural programme of abhyasis at the Moscow venue, but this was compensated by Belarus abhyasis singing and dancing before him in the quadrangle of the Minsk ashram under the pleasant sunshine. In fact, it was sunshine weather all along as if Nature had contrived to celebrate Master's visit to his loved ones in Russian speaking countries.



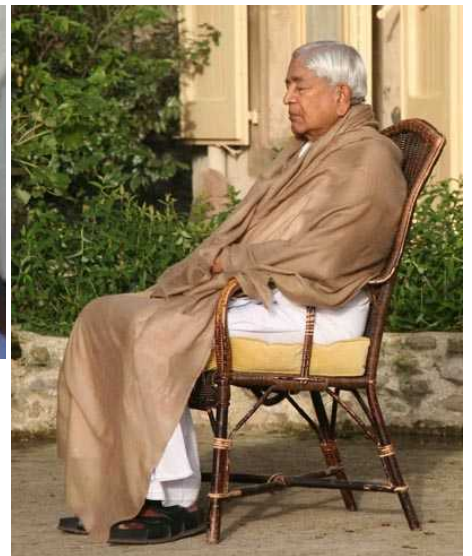
## On to European Countries

Latvia, one of the Baltic countries, is a former Soviet Republic which has now become part of the European community. In the capital city of Riga, well known as a seaside resort, we have a centre with 40 abhyasis with our own modest meditation hall. On 6th May, Master flew from Minsk, (Belarus) to Riga for a short stay of two days. He stayed in a hotel on the seafront and conducted two satsanghs in his living room.

Master had been suffering from severe pains in the back and his legs. Still he was determined to continue with his travels in Europe. His reasoning was: because of one person's problem, why all should suffer?

Looking to his health, Master rescheduled his tour and proceeded to Vrats Sande ashram in Denmark for a stay of three weeks. Here his health improved within a few days and European abhyasis started coming in batches to be with him, a total of 1200 abhyasis. Vrats is like another home for him. He often went for a walk to some nearby places, some times inside the ashram to the kitchen, to the dining hall or up to the meditation hall. Many a time he sat outside with all abhyasis. Whenever he gave sittings from the rear deck of his cottage, abhyasis sat all over in the undulating terrain.

Master declared Vrats Sande as an international ashram. He recorded a small talk on this theme and invited specifically youth from all over to visit Vrats.



Master drove from Vrats 600 kilometres to Paris accompanied by 70 abhyasis, crossed four countries and reached Paris on the morning of 26th May. He stayed in a hotel in the city and conducted a satsangh at the Paris ashram on the 28th for 200 abhyasis.

Master spent the next five days in Calet in the house of an abhyasi near the mountains and here Master was able to rest and recoup. But still he managed to visit Montpellier centre (ashram) and conducted satsangh for 150 abhyasis.

On 5th June, Master arrived in Milan (Italy) after crossing the Alps mountains and going through a 13 kilometre long tunnel. He stopped at Aasta, a Mission centre and here he enjoyed an Italian lunch. The next day, Master inaugurated the newly acquired meditation hall in Milan and conducted satsanghs that day and the next.

On 8th June 2008, Master ended his historic tour to the CIS and Europe and flew back to Dubai from where he would return to India on the 15th June.



**SMSF RETREAT CENTRE, MALAMPUZHA**

The Retreat Centre at Malampuzha, Kerala started functioning from 14.04.08. This is Mission's first retreat Centre, the second at Pune has also become functional.

This centre can accommodate 48 abhyasis. The hostel building is divided into 2 wings one for ladies and the other for gents. To the extent possible, elder persons are accommodated in the ground floor. Cots, mattresses and bed sheets are provided to the inmates. Stay at the centre is free of charge. A person can stay for a minimum of 3 days and a maximum of 30 days. Husband and wife cannot be inmates at the same time. Children are not permitted.

The centre is located at a place called Kava near Chembana bus stop. It is about 6 kms from Malampuzha bus stand. It is about 15 kms from Palakkad Junction Railway station, 20 kms from Palakkad town and about 55 kms from Coimbatore Airport. Buses ply regularly from Palakkad to Malampuzha. From Malampuzha taxis jeeps or autorickshaws are available to reach the centre. There is bus service from Malampuzha to Kava but it is very infrequent. Those who travel by bus may get down at Chembana stop and walk to the Centre. For the convenience of travellers, there is a SMSF board at Chembana bus stop. As an identification mark, one can look for a power transformer at Chembana bus stop.

For fixing your retreat dates please visit <http://sahajmarg.org/welcome/retreat/index.html>

**'Our Master' - Released in Moscow**

A book entitled 'Our Master', was released in Moscow on 30th April 2008 by Rev. Master. This book is a collection of articles written by abhyasis who have been with Master for many years and have narrated their memorable experiences and feelings.

**Lucknow**

On 16th April Master visited Lucknow and inaugurated the newly constructed Master's cottage in a festive atmosphere. Built on an area of two acres, the cottage has a lot of greenery around. 4000 delegates from various cities took part in this function.

**Countdown to July Celebrations**

We would like to remind the readers about forthcoming celebration of Rev. Master's 81st birth anniversary in Lucknow, U.P. from 23rd to 25th July 2008. The celebration preparations are on in full swing and till date more than 25000 delegates have registered from all over country. This figure is expected to go up to 35000.

The Lucknow Ashram is on the Sitapur Hardoi bye-pass, near the Indian Institute of Management and is spread on an area of 100 acres of land. It is about 20 km from Lucknow railway station and 25 km from the airport. Pickup and drop for all the abhyasis from both the places has been arranged.

July will be hot and humid hence all abhyasis are requested to bring an umbrella or rain coat and hand fans for their convenience. Water proof tents will be covering the meditation hall of 150,000 sq ft, kitchen and dining area of 100,000 sq ft. Important facilities being provided are a medical centre with ambulance service, banking and internet access, a spacious canteen, children's corner, book stores besides registration counters.

General accommodation for all abhyasi brothers and sisters is available free of charge. Bedding will be provided on sale basis but limited number on first come first basis will also be available on rent. Comfort Dormitory with beds along with mattress, pillow, bed sheets and mosquito nets are also available.

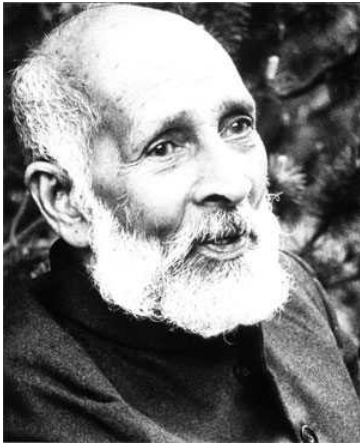
For the convenience of the families of abhyasis who are getting married during the celebration and for the abhyasis who will be celebrating their marriage anniversaries, a separate arrangement for breakfast and dinner would be available.

Many volunteers would be required for post and pre function work. As we expect more than 3000 children, we need trained volunteers to take care of them. We request all our centers to send the names of willing volunteers to [mehrotrashyamji@yahoo.co.in](mailto:mehrotrashyamji@yahoo.co.in).

We require all your support and assistance to make this function a grand success. Let us make this auspicious occasion a memorable one.



## Babuji's 109th Birth Anniversary Celebrations



### Mysore

Mysore regional ashram came alive on 30th April when 450 abhyasis of Mysore, Hassan, Hunsur, Hanur, Chikmagalur, Kollegal, Bangalore, Periyapatna, Kushalnagar, T Narasipura, and Chamrajanagar centres joined together to celebrate Rev. Babuji Maharaj's Birth Anniversary.



Besides the two satsanghs, abhyasis spent the day usefully. They watched a video on the life and teachings of Babuji Maharaj. This was complemented by a presentation of pictures of Babuji Maharaj by Sr. Kalpana. Hunsur abhyasis conducted a quiz on the same theme and this was followed by children coming on stage with songs, skits, prayers and talks. It was very heartening to hear children speak so well and so effectively about the system and Masters.

Needless to say, the whole atmosphere was charged with Master's presence and all those who had assembled were greatly benefited spiritually.

### Uttarakhand

This hilly region with the backdrop of the Himalayas was resounding with Babuji's name on his birth anniversary. In Satkhol, the Mission's flagship ashram in the Himalayas, 140 abhyasis gathered from nearby centres and celebrated the day with devotion and enthusiasm. In Dehra Dun, the capital city of the State, there were satsanghs, bhajans, videos and talks on the life and teachings of Babuji Maharaj. The day was observed with enthusiasm in other centres like Roorkee, Pithoragarh, Haldwani and Kashipur.

### Kolhapur

There was an enthusiastic gathering of abhyasis from Kolhapur, Miraj, Satara and Pune. A sprinkling of abhyasis from Belgaum, Gulbarga and Gondia were also present.

Between two satsanghs during the day, there were talks by abhyasis on the life and teachings of Babuji. Sis. Noorie and Br. Gopal spoke on his worldly life and spiritual evolution under the care of Lalaji Maharaj. Sis. Lata Patil touched on the relationship between Babuji and his chief disciple, our Master. Br. A.N. Kulkarni, Sis. Arundhati Kale and Br. Sudhakar Joshi narrated their touching experiences with Babuji Maharaj.

The day concluded with devotional bhajans sung by Sis. Sneha Rajurikar. Abhyasis from all centers worked tirelessly as volunteers and ensured that this celebration was a successful event.

### Vadodara

Vadodara center hosted the celebrations for the Gujarat zone with around 1,300 abhyasis. Nature bestowed its loving grace with gentle showers. After a grand satsangh taking us to great depths, the hearts softened in meditation were melted by the touching music from the DVD - "Master's Choice". Rev. Master's recent speech delivered in Goa was read out as a message both in English and Gujarati.

Br. Suresh emphasized the need for establishing the permanent inner connecting link with the Master, feeling His presence during the non-meditative hours too. He encouraged one and all to establish priority for spirituality and inculcate enthusiasm as a part and parcel of oneself to make effective progress. A talk by Br. Rajendra Rathod on 'Volunteership an Ideal Way to Progress' inspired the abhyasis to give their names for the July 2008 function.

After lunch, abhyasis assembled in the meditation hall for cultural program presented by Anand, Ankleshwar, Bharuch, Bhavnagar and Vadodara centres. There were songs, skits and dances presented by abhyasis and abhyasi children.

Resuming from a short tea break, talks were given by Sis. Suman Dave, Br. Bharat Tanna and Br. Puneet Lalbhai on 'Role of Women in Promoting Growth of Sahaj Marg', 'Regularity in Sadhana' and 'Role of youth in Sahaj Marg' respectively. This was followed by screening of video on Babuji Maharaj's Europe trip.



## OPEN HOUSE SESSIONS

### Mangalore



An open house was held in Chetana School, Mangalore on the 3rd April 2008. This was mainly for the parents of the students. Dr. Sabita, an

enthusiastic trustee of the school was instrumental in arranging the event with the assistance of Sis. Geeta Acharya, centre-in-charge.

Sis. Vasanthakumari, a prefect of SRCM and faculty of a college in nearby Uppinangady addressed the audience followed by an interactive session. The aspects covered were - understanding people and children, accepting them with their strengths and weaknesses and the need for patience and tolerance based on love. How spirituality helps in development of the right attitudes to life was explained in detail. The response from the parents present was positive and enthusiastic.

### Karkala



There were more than 20 guests at the open house conducted at Br. Ramamand Bhat's residence at Anekere, Karkala on 18th May 2008. Sis. Pushpa from Mangalore gave an introductory

talk on the Sahaj Marg system and what Sahaj Marg is offering to the ones who are interested in a balanced life. She concluded the talk giving excellent examples from Vedic literature, Bhagavathgeetha, Buddhism and referring to some devotional songs.

### Udupi

There were more than 100 Robosoft employees at the presentation of 'Meditation for Better Living' at the Robosoft conference hall. Br. Ramanand Bhat introduced SahajMarg and welcomed Br. Mohan to talk in detail about what Sahaj Marg is going to offer for better living. Br. Mohan spoke about meditation, the history of meditation, need of meditation, evolution of human and Sahaj Marg's modified Raja yoga.

There were 44 who are interested in starting practice and the arrangements were made to start the sittings from 9th June.

## Taking a Step Forward

### Davanagere Centre, Karnataka

With the blessings and permission of Rev. Master, Davanagere Centre has purchased two acres of agricultural land at Doddabathi village, about 8 kms from Davanagere and Harihar town on 24th January 2008.

A common ashram for both the centres is expected to come up here. In addition to this, two and a half acres of land has been purchased for housing the abhyasis.

The picture has been captured from the adjacent hillock. Red marked portion - 1 is for the Mission and portion - 2 is for the abhyasis colony.



## Prelude to an Ashram in Solapur, Maharashtra



In His message of 6th July 2003, Babuji Maharaj said, 'In the decade to come the ashrams will grow in number. We foresee this project with favour. It is wise to envisage structures to deal with the increasing needs.'

Yet another step forward in this direction was taken by abhyasis of Solapur centre on 29th May when one and a half acres of land was purchased and gifted to the Mission for developing an ashram in due course. The site lies on Akkalkot road, five kilometres from Solapur.

Br. A.P. Durai, Joint Secretary SRCM and Br. S.Vaidya, ZiC were present during the registration formalities as well as the programmes for abhyasis during the day. 120 abhyasis from Solapur, Barshi, Osmanabad, Latur and Ausa had gathered on this occasion. A notable participant was Sis. Anasuya Ramachandran who had served in Solapur as its first prefect years ago.



## SUMMER CAMPS

## Bangalore

Forty children from ages to 3-18 attended the one-day Summer camp at the Banashankari Ashram on Saturday 24-May-2008 supported by volunteers and parents. The day commenced with introductions and was followed by Yoga. The children were then grouped age-wise into two groups of twenty. The camp saw various games a brain and team communication game consists of 9x9 squares, artwork in the form of preparation of a mould of the child's hand in plaster-of-paris which was then painted by the child, innovation given only certain raw material, songs, cricket, dog and the bone and spontaneous games made up by children were played during the day. The VBSE team brought in values through an integrated approach. Special attention was given to the menu from an energizer mid-day drink to ice-cream and fruit salad in the mid-afternoon break - to add to an all encompassing, enriching and joyful day.



## Thiruvananthapuram

Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala) centre invited children accompanied by parents to a day long programme on 20th April. Responding to our volunteers visiting people door to door and inviting them, fiftytwo children (only twelve were from abhyasi families) enthusiastically participated in activities like story telling, drawing and painting besides games. The children of abhyasis put up a charming play depicting the futility of amassing wealth.

A sumptuous lunch was served to all. While the children were busy, the parents listened to a briefing on spirituality and Sahaj Marg meditation. At the end of the day, many of them expressed their keenness to start the practice.



## Ahmedabad

Summer camps for children of abhyasis are now a regular feature in Ahmedabad centre. The fourth such camp was attended this year by 34 children from 26th to 29th May. The aim was to give them an environment that would bring out their creative potential apart from opening up their world to new friends.

The activities included creative story writing, a treasure hunt, hands-on craft work, pottery making and a quiz session. The children enjoyed an excursion to ISKCON temple which depicts Lord Krishna's life through paintings and Sundarvan Nature Park where they got an insight into the life and habits of snakes. On the last day, they tried their hands on washing of vessels and dishes and were educated in conservation of food and water resources. Creation of environmental awareness and acquisition of creative skills were the net gains of this delightful summer camp.



## Nanjangud

Nanjangud is a small town near Mysore. For the third successive year, a month long summer camp for school children was held by our Mission volunteers from 13th April from 9 a.m. to 12 noon every day. The venue was Sri Neelakanteswara Educational Society School.



The morning started with reciting of Mission's prayer. Then the children were engaged in different activities like painting, crafts, singing, music, quiz, etc. About 150 students from different schools and from nearby villages participated. The work of the children was displayed for parents to view.

On 11th May, there was the closing function and Br. Prabhakar arrived from Bangalore to inaugurate the exhibition. Br. Shrinivas from Mysore and Sis. Ratna Bhattacharjee, the headmistress of the school were the chief guests at the function. The president of the institute, Mr. K.B. Somashekar, in his speech, said this was the right and the suitable time to inculcate values that were sadly missing in the present society due to the impact of modern technology.

### A Break for the Teens, Ahmedabad

Teenagers as a group are at the crossroads of life and vulnerable to life's confusing signals. To fill the need for value orientation, 19 teenage participants of Ahmedabad centre participated in a workshop at the local ashram on 24th and 25th May. The workshop aimed at group learning and the participants themselves developed the schedule of activities and allocated various roles to themselves, like logistics, finance, evaluation and reporting.

Real life situations were presented by participants in the form of skits illustrating the need to manage one's anger, frustration and negative emotions. Very exciting was the budget exercise where the teenagers were asked to plan a monthly budget of Rs.10, 000. This made them appreciate the value of money, the financial constraints of their parents and taught them to discriminate needs from wants.

Reading of the Mission's books and magazines was followed by individual presentations through charts on themes like morality, discipline and truth. Priorities in life were highlighted through a group game.

Dr. Jitendra Jetwa spoke on memory enhancement and Br. Khar interacted with participants on the concept of volunteers and its practical manifestations. Following this, the teenagers performed various chores. Br. Suresh Rajagopalan spoke on values underlying character building and the usefulness of the Mission's prayer in bringing about one's transformation.

Participants articulated the need for freedom of choice without parental compulsion and this, in turn, has left the organisers wondering if there should be a workshop for the parents, too!



### Sahaj Camp, Hyderabad

A Sahaj Camp for children was conducted at the Zonal Ashram at Tumukunta from 09.05.08 to 11.05.08 for children between 9 to 17 years. The next two days saw the children moving enthusiastically from games to value-based and thought-provoking discussion sessions to reading books in the library. Because of the heat of summer, afternoons were devoted to indoor games & activities (chess, carrom, puzzles, origami, vedic maths, etc.) and evenings to outdoor activities. Older children expressed clear choice of games while younger children enjoyed all fun-based games. The children were also treated to a movie on Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon. Children were encouraged to express their comments and suggestions freely and frankly.

### Indore

On 18th May 2008 a youth program was held with the main aim of highlighting the hidden treasure of infinite knowledge and wisdom that is encapsulated in our Mission's literature. The preparation for the program started 3 weeks in advance with 25 youth



showing an interest to participate. The participants were divided into four groups Prem, Vairagya, Ghyana and Bhakti. Each group was given a book to read and to make a presentation. The groups were coordinated by Br. Surendra Tripathi, Br. Bhupendra Bhatore, Br. Sachin Khendekar and Br. Amit Bhatore. Each group had a senior abhyasi to give their insight. Br. Rajesh Raverkar conducted the program along with Br. Ramakant Agarwal who coordinated the program.

It was amazing to see how the same book could carry so many messages and how it could be viewed in so many angles and different notions and ideas could be conceived. We strongly felt that one day with His blessings we will be able to evolve ourselves to be free from any preconceived notions and to be able to see and understand what He wants us to communicate through these divine writings.

### Performance by Children's Centre, Jaipur


On 11th May, forty children and youth in the age group of 3-17 years displayed their talents for two hours. They delighted the abhyasi audience with value based stories and poems and songs evoking love for Master. Two plays were also performed. The plays carried the message, 'Religion divides, spirituality unites' and 'God is everywhere'. The children had been preparing for this day since long at the children's centre every Sunday.



Encouraged by the performances from children, some young abhyasis also joined in the group songs. By the end of the session, Master's presence could be felt very strongly. Overall it was a beautiful experience for the children expressing themselves on the stage and for the abhyasis also to see these children growing in Master's love and care.







## Centres of Light

### Another Himalayan Gateway - Pithoragarh

"I have called an ashram a centre of light. There is an old tradition that God permits, when He thinks the time is ripe, certain doors to be opened to the brighter world. The first door is, of course, the great personality who comes to establish these doors. He gives the teaching. He gives the message. He gives the call. And to make people come and assemble at one spot from where they can take off, we create ashrams. In a very real sense, it is the gateway into the brighter world. provided it is used properly." Thus spoke our Master when he inaugurated the Pithoragarh ashram on 19th December 2004.

The ashram is situated at an altitude of 5400 feet in Pithoragarh district 150 kilometres north east of Satkhol ashram. Designed by Master himself, the ashram looks like a pearl in an oyster nestling among the sub-Himalayan hills with Nepal on the east and Tibet on the north. Besides the meditation hall that accommodates five hundred, there are also other facilities like Master's cottage, kitchen and a room.

The construction of the ashram was a saga by itself considering that all building materials had to be brought uphill nearly 150 kilometres. The construction work was started in April 2004 and by Master's Grace completed in a record time of less than nine months. There is, as yet, no dormitory and therefore, Master has not permitted abhyasis to visit the ashram without advance permission.



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