



ECHOES

Middle East & North Africa (MENA)

Echoes MENA is a newsletter that will provide updates, announcements and notifications on SMSF activities and events in the MENA region.

For Private Circulation Only

PONDERINGS

Excerpts from

'Thus Speaks Babuji'

GOD — Our job is to remain firm and sincere to our duty and the result rests with God. To feel resentment for what He gives or what He does not give is against the principle of true love and devotion.

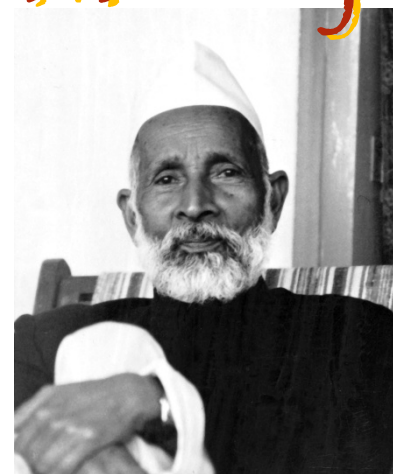
SPIRITUALITY — Only the torch of spirituality can remove the oppressing gloom and restore the real man. Let the light of the Real shine in the heart of everyone so that we may rise up to the expectations of the Divine!

MEDITATION — Meditation is the foundation of spirituality. If you meditate having your real goal before you, you are sure to arrive at the destination.

LOVE — I feel happy when the word 'Universal love' comes from the mouth of any person; generally the saints of the day preach universal love but they do not find ways to tell you how it is acquired. Only remove the hatred, I say, and universal love is there.

PRAYER — The most important and unfailing means of success is the prayer. It connects our link with God to whom we surrender ourselves with love and devotion.

110th Birth Anniversary of our Revered Babuji Maharaj April 30 - 2009



The world today, is in a state of unrest and disorder. Everybody seems to be crying for peace. But all efforts for bringing about peace appear to end in failure. The reason is that all efforts are merely external, touching only the outer surface. In fact, the problem is far from being related to the world in general; really it is the problem of the individual first and of society afterwards. As such it needs to be tackled in that order. World peace is closely related with the peace of the individual for which one has to take into account the inner state of one's mind. If man's mind is brought to the state of peace and order, everything in the outside world will get into order in the same colour. But it is sad that the world has lost its real basis, and for its re-establishment, it is necessary to adopt means which may promote the feeling of peace and calmness of mind of the individual man. What we have to do for the purpose is to introduce proper adjustments in the mental tendencies of the individual, which in effect is the proper molding and regulation of the mind. This is possible when the individual mind develops up to the state of the universal mind. Just Imagine! There will then be no problem! As it is, individual minds which themselves lack peace and tranquility are trying to establish peace in the world. Isn't it ridiculous? The only way open to mankind is to take to Spiritual way of life, which is unfortunately absent today, leading to all this chaos.

Ram Chandra (Babuji), May 6, 1969

Complete Works of Ram Chandra, Vol.3, Page 384

INVITATION TO BELOVED CHARJI'S 83RD BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

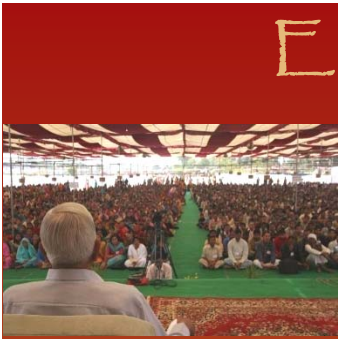
We are deeply grateful and joyous to announce that beloved Chariji's 83rd birthday celebration will be held in Tiruppur, India July 23-25, 2009. We invite all members to join in this happy occasion, where all our hearts are united in a natural and silent harmony.

It would be of great help if you all register as early as possible, to permit the organizers adequate time to prepare the facilities.

All the necessary information for participants can be obtained at:

<http://www.srcm.org/members/24july2009/index.jsp>

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On Bhandaras (Spiritual Gatherings)

Salient Features - Series 6

So this is only a special occasion on which there should be intensification of the act of remembrance. That is, our longing for Him, to be united with Him, to merge with Him, should be so intensified, that it comes to a peak on such occasions. On the other days, it is there as a subtle stream, underlying our consciousness.

My Master said it is like bathing in the most fragrant and cool waters of a *sarovar* (lake), which makes possible a spiritual renewal of the abhyasi bathing in it, indeed drowning in it, if that can be made possible. "What is the use of coming out of such a *sarovar*? One who comes out of it may be definitely cleaner and cooler too. But it is the one who drowns in it, who continues to enjoy the bliss of immersion in it!"

This Bhandara is one such *sarovar* for us, and those who come to participate in it must not go back. Their bodies may play their part in continuing the stream of existence which is mundanely called 'life,' but the inner being must remain ever immersed in the bliss, the purity, the eternity of the *sarovar* which is what the spiritual *bhandaras*, the spiritual gatherings, should be.

POINTS OF LIGHT IN IRAN

We in Iran do not get together for big group satsangs. There are hundreds of active abhyasis in different centres across the country. Therefore this has resulted in multiplicity of our satsangs. There are small groups who sit together with no set schedule for any gathering, thus at any given time we might have a few satsangs going on in our centre.

In order to ensure that our practice remains in line with the main teachings, we have developed two modules of training for abhyasis and prefects. Two of our senior prefects present the training to small groups of abhyasis monthly, and to prefects in our regular monthly prefect meetings.

Selected articles from Sahaj Sandesh and Chariji's recent speeches are translated and distributed through email to all abhyasis. We also translate the SMSF quarterly newsletter, ECHOES MENA, and send it to our members.

We have started to pay keen attention to our youth and children recently. Coordinators for respective groups will work towards bringing in small numbers of youth and children together for different activities and training. We are translating Value Based Education material for the children of our centre which will be presented to them by two prefects who are also elementary school teachers.

EVENTS

ABU DHABI, U.A.E

New Year: Abu Dhabi centre celebrated New Year together amidst nature, the joy of families playing together, and the laughter of children in a beautiful park in the city. The New Year was ushered in with us doing meditation together on the cool grass. The rest of the day was packed with games, quizzes, and other activities enhanced by the beautiful winter weather. As the long shadows of the evening crept in, we left feeling very reluctant to part.

Lalaji Maharaj's 136 Birth Anniversary - 2 February, 2009

Abu Dhabi Centre celebrated Lalaji's birthday with two satsangs. The evening session started with abhyasis speaking on the topic "What does Sahaj Marg mean to me?" Around 50 abhyasis were present for the evening.

DUBAI, U.A.E

Basic Training Seminar - 14 November, 2008

The seminar commenced with a satsang at 8.00 am followed by a DVD of Master's talk. Br. Hegde, UAE Centre in Charge, welcomed the gathering warmly and explained the purpose of the seminar. All participants then introduced themselves and stated their expectations from the seminar. The seminar then proceeded with presentations and Q&A sessions on the importance of Cleaning, Meditation, Satsang and Prayer. These were co-ordinated by the resident preceptors. Post lunch session was dedicated to group discussions on various interesting topics viz. 'Universal Brotherhood', 'Balanced living', etc. The penultimate event for the day was an interactive session on 'Character Formation' and 'Ten Maxims'. The seminar concluded with a satsang and all participants left the venue in an exultant state after participating in a lively, informative and well planned seminar.



BAHRAIN

Lalaji Maharaj's 136 Birth Anniversary - 2 February, 2009

The 136th birth anniversary of Lalaji Maharaj was celebrated in Bahrain centre on 2nd February 2009. To mark this occasion, 2 satsangs were conducted, one each in the morning and evening. A reading from Lalaji's book "Truth Eternal" followed the morning satsang. The evening satsang was followed by an audio of Babuji's message delivered on Lalaji's birth anniversary celebrations at Shajahanpur in 1971. Jaffer Salman, Center-in-charge and Amit led a session to clarify queries from abhyasis on the practice wherein stress was made on the importance of regularity in daily practice. A few abhyasis shared their experiences followed by dinner and closing of a spiritually invigorating day.



BENEFITS OF MEDITATION

Meditation opens the awareness to the infinite reservoir of energy, creativity, and intelligence that lies deep within everyone.

Maharishi Mahesh Yogi



First you have to learn to love yourself. That is why perhaps we meditate on our own heart: we learn to love what we find inside.

Chariji

A drop
Melting into the sea,
Everyone can see.
But the sea
Absorbed
In a drop--
A rare one
can follow!

Kabir das

PERSEVERE IN YOUR SEARCH FOR GOD

To succeed, you must have tremendous perseverance, tremendous will. "I will drink the ocean," says the persevering soul, "at my will mountains will crumble up." Have that sort of energy, that sort of will, work hard, and you will reach the goal.

Swami Vivekananda

KUWAIT

Preceptor Workshop – 1 January, 2009

The New Year in Kuwait Centre commenced on a bright note with a preceptor workshop conducted by Mohandas Hegde, Preceptor and Centre in Charge, UAE. All eight preceptors from Kuwait center benefited tremendously from this informative and interactive workshop.



Meditation Workshop– 2 January, 2009

A meditation workshop was held on the 2nd of January, 2009 conducted by M. Hegde from UAE. Nearly 100 abhyasis participated in this enlightening workshop which included audio-visual presentations, group discussions and interactive learning sessions on various topics related to the practice of meditation.



Lalaji Maharaj's 136 Birth Anniversary - 2 February, 2009

The 136th birth anniversary of Lalaji Maharaj was celebrated in Kuwait for the first time with a cultural program in the evening post satsang. Around 45 children from Value Education class presented lively dances, skits, poem recitation and songs related to Morals & Values. Enthusiastic abhyasis participated by rendering some of Master's favourite songs. Over 200 abhyasis, their spouses, children and friends gathered to celebrate this special occasion.



IRAN

Abhyasi Training — 10 April, 2009: A group of twenty abhyasis, mostly new, came together for a full-day abhyasi training in Tehran. This training module is an adaptation of the module used by Dubai centre across centres in Middle East. The program commenced with the morning satsang. Thereafter topics such as Cleaning, Prayer, Constant Remembrance, Character Formation and Ten maxims were covered by two senior prefects of the centre. At the end a session of question and answer with the CIC was held and the event ended with the evening satsang. Similar training is planned on a monthly basis for abhyasis of the centre.

Youth Gathering — 17 April, 2009: Some of our youth gathered for a one-day meeting. The day commenced with satsang and literature reading. We watched a recording of Master's Q & A with the youth in Chennai, 2006. The DVD was translated to the group simultaneously. Post lunch a

VALUE BASED EDUCATION

VBE program is conducted in 7 locations in UAE with nearly 140 participants and a dozen volunteer teachers. The program caters to 70 in the junior level (6 to 9 yrs), 55 in the middle level (10 to 13 yrs) and 15 in the senior level (14 to 18 yrs).



The topic for March 09 was "Healthy Living and Nature". The interactive sessions included preparation of calorie chart of healthy food to substitute junk foods and a collage on Healthy Living. A Nature Quiz and an audio visual presentation on "Northern Lights" was conducted to enliven the proceedings. A Nature Walk was organized to help children interact physically with nature.

A quarterly meeting was conducted by the VBE teachers to decide the agenda for the following quarter and share ideas on increasing the effectiveness of the VBE class.

For contributions to the newsletter & further information on SMSF in the Middle East please contact :
Email: smsfdxb@eim.ae , uae.info@sahajmarg.org - Website: www.sahajmarg.org