

Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation (SMSF) is a Non-Profit Organization Licensed by the Dubai Economic Development Department to offer training in Meditation. SMSF is associated with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations (UN DPI) through its parent body SRCM.

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<b>DAILY REFLECTIONS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>FOOTPRINTS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>EVENTS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PICTORIAL TOUR</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>REMINISCENCES</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>FEATURE—LMOS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>VALUE EDUCATION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>IN FOCUS</b>	<b>5</b>

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

For Private Circulation Only

#### PONDERINGS

- *“Wisdom is that knowledge, having which, you become desireless”*
- *“I am an ‘interior’ designer”*
- *““Our purpose in life should be to live a life full of purpose “*
- *“Sahaj Marg has a big agenda ...Variety in unity, all with the same heart”*
- *“Many feel and understand the absence of presence, but very few understand the presence of absence”*

*Chariji*

- *“We must learn how to create within the heart a feeling of universal love, which is surest remedy of all evils and can help to free us from the horrors of war”*

*Babuji*

#### SAHAJ MARG'S MIDDLE EASTERN VOYAGE

The roots of Sahaj Marg in the Middle East can be traced back, interestingly, to Sweden where 3 decades ago, in circa 1977, a young Arab national student from **Bahrain** instinctively took up meditation after a discussion in his university cafe. In 1980 he returned to his home in Bahrain and continued practice as the only abhyasi. He met Babuji in 1982 and took up preceptor work in 1986 thus beginning the Middle Eastern voyage of Sahaj Marg. In 1991, an Ethiopian national who was a senior UN official and preceptor gave the first sitting to 4 Iranian colleagues from the UNHRC in **Iran**. In 1992, a young Economics teacher from India commenced sittings and group meditation in **Dubai**, then a small trading city-state in the United Arab Emirates. Between 1992 and 1996 Sahaj Marg branched into the neighbouring countries of **Oman, Kuwait and Qatar**. Our spiritual guide, Chariji's maiden trip to the Middle East happened in August 1996 when he landed in Teheran, Iran for a few days stay on his way to Europe and the US. Around 100 abhyasis attended the group meditations that he conducted every day. Sahaj Marg entered **Pakistan** in 2001 when the first satsangh was conducted by a lady prefect who relocated from Dubai to Karachi. Chariji scheduled his first trip to Dubai in March 2002 but had to call it off on the day of his scheduled flight due to the start of the Iraq war. He however kept his tryst with Dubai in October 2003 when he arrived for a 10 day trip and the rest as is said, is history!. He prepared several prefects during this trip to work in **Saudi, Lebanon**, Iran, Oman, Qatar & UAE. On May 31, 2004, Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation was formally registered in Dubai as a Non-profit organization offering Meditation for Human Integration. This was followed by a presentation on Meditation to the staff of the Dubai Economic Development Department. The Senior Director of Executive Affairs of Dubai Economic Development Department hosted a meeting with Chariji and other senior working committee members in early 2005. Chariji's visits to Abu Dhabi (UAE) in Jan 2005, Muscat (Oman) in Nov 2005, Kuwait in May 2006 and regular visits to the now modern, geometrically expanding Dubai to meet abhyasis from the region has given the necessary impetus for Sahaj Marg to spread its message of universal brotherhood and meditation for world peace in the Middle East region. With growing interest in meditation among Middle Eastern Nationals and expatriates, Sahaj Marg, which offers training in meditation free of charge, is now a sought after system for balanced and peaceful life in our predominantly materialistic lifestyles. Sahaj Marg has reached out to train meditation to a growing number of people from the Arabic speaking countries of **Egypt, Sudan, Morocco & Libya** in North Africa.



Chariji receiving a memento on his maiden visit to Dubai in 2003.



Senior officials of Dubai Economic Dev. Dept. presenting appreciation plaque to SMSF, Dubai in Oct 2004.

## DAILY REFLECTIONS

### Two Existences

"The reality," my Master said when I first met him, "is that we have two lives, two existences - the inner and the outer." All our aspirations, our longings, our idealisms come from inside. All our ambitions for success, for growth, for development in whatever sphere we are in come from outside. So, we have to balance our aspiration with our ambition. One is related to my life outside myself, with growth in the material sense, success reflected in possessions, in ownership, in acquisitions, to be balanced with an inner aspiration which longs to be perfect, ideal.

*-Taken from 'Love and Death', p. 81-82, public lecture, Arhus, Denmark, 1992, - by Chariji*

### Patience

Have you seen a lioness hunting? It is crouching in the grass with its tail twitching and there is, for instance, a herd of deer or buffalo, and it waits. Another lioness comes from the other side, and the herd separates. And if one stupid deer or bull tries to run away, it is isolated. Patience! And if it outruns them, they don't say, "Oh, what shall I do? My lunch is gone." They don't. They just go into the grass and wait, licking their chops, twitching their tails, until the next thing comes, until they make a kill, because otherwise they will die. So, patience and proper attitude.

*Taken from 'Youth: A Time of Promise and for Effort', vol-2, chapter "Wisdom and Restraint" p.157 & 163 - by Chariji*



*"The past is history, the future is a mystery, but the present is a gift"*

Anon

## FOOT PRINTS

**July 24 ,2007** — Close to sixty-thousand people of all nations, faiths and traditions, assembled in Tiruppur, India on the occasion of the 80th Birth Anniversary of Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari, (Chariji) the spiritual guide of Sahaj Marg. Chariji acts as a guide to the aspirant in much the same way as an accomplished mountaineer is a guide to the inexperienced climber. He knows the terrain of the journey first-hand and is able to lead the seeker safely, surely and expeditiously to the goal. There is only one objective behind Chariji's relationship with the aspirants, and that is their spiritual welfare. He rekindles their idealism, and inspires them to hold themselves up to the highest ideals in all their endeavours.

*(From One world One Humanity— Vol 2, issue 1, May 2008)*

**April 30, 2007**— Babuji's 108th Birth Anniversary was celebrated in Dubai. *(see picture on the right)*. Chariji graced the occasion which was attended by over 700 abhyasis from Middle East, Europe, US & India. This was SMSF's first major event to be celebrated in the Middle East and was held in the Iranian Club Auditorium, a venue which has been the centre of all group meditations for UAE since 2005. The Iranian club authorities have been a key support for Sahaj Marg's continuing growth in the region.



*"When will man understand that only love can save the world? This word is so often overused, abused, distorted or half-heartedly used, even in a spiritual way like ours. Only a completely open and receptive heart can feel its benefits."*

Chariji

## EVENTS

### Dubai –Apr 22 to 26, 2008

Chariji stopped over in Dubai for a brief rest on his way to a long tour of Europe. He met over 100 abhyasis from the region.

### Kuwait – May 29, 2008

An Open house was conducted for over 25 invitees interested in learning meditation. Many of them took their introductory sittings immediately thereafter.

### Dubai—June 9 to 15, 2008

During his return from his trip to Europe, Chariji rested in Dubai from Jun 9 to June 15. He met several hundred abhyasis and conducted numerous meditation sessions. He presided over a

specialty convened Preceptor's Workshop *(see picture below)* in Dubai on 13 June 2008. He emphasized on the need for preceptors to be disciplined and dedicated to mission's work and likened them to the arteries which ensure that the heart is always in good condition.



### Dubai - June 12, 2008

A presentation on meditation was conducted for 30 staff members of Dragon Mart, Nakheel Group in their auditorium.

### Kuwait—June 27, 2008

A beginners' training workshop was conducted for new entrants to highlight the importance of daily practice, regular sittings and group meditation.

### UN Speak

*"There is no doubt in my mind that the theme for this event reaffirms the values enshrined in the UN Charter and indeed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But more significantly, is that your organization (SMSF) has taken concrete steps to advance these values here in Australia."*

**Mr. Abdullah Mbamba, Director, UN Information Centre for Australia, New Zealand & South Pacific at SRCM regional seminar in Sydney on the occasion of the UN's 62nd anniversary.**

PICTORIAL TOUR—CHARIJIS'S MIDDLE EAST SOJOURNS



Tehran, Aug 96 – special moments



Dubai, Nov 2003 – Jumeirah



Dubai, Jan 2005 – Desert trip



Muscat, Oman - Nov 2005 – meeting locals



Kuwait, May 2006 - one for memories



Bahrain, May 2006 - with the Salmans



Dubai, April 2007, Babuji's 108th Birth A'sary



Dubai, June 2008 - Informal conversations



Dubai, June 2008 - Iranian Club auditorium



Dubai, Apr 2007, children performing on Babuji Birth Anniversary

**MEDITATION FOR HUMAN INTEGRATION**

I began Sahaj Marg meditation as a response to an inner urge to walk towards personal integrity and wholeness.

Today, perhaps more than ever, the word *integration* comes as a beam of light or a breath of fresh air to us ordinary human beings wanting peace of mind for ourselves and our families. This is true globally and it is fair to say that it is crucially pertinent to our troubled region. War, if not in our immediate homes but among our brothers in the neighboring countries, soaring living expenses, environmental pollution, stress and anxiety of different kinds, and loss of cultural identity among our children, are only a few to name that put weight on our minds and hearts.

We all know the familiar effect of pressure: breaking down, disintegration, and falling into pieces, be it a piece of stone under immense pressure, one of us as an individual, or us as a collective entity called humanity. A close look at our families, countries, and our region is an alarming testament to this impending trend: our blood brothers and sisters to whom we talk no more, or next door neighbor whose look or behavior is not to our taste anymore, and so on if we trace this chain of separation and animosity, we arrive at a clear picture of what our region, or our world for that matter, looks like today. Naturally, as a result of this disintegration, separation and finally isolation we suffer.

Thanks God there is another side to this not-so happy story, namely the aim of all genuine holistic practices including our Sahaj Marg system of Meditation where we are invited to strive to remain whole as a person first, and ultimately as a collective humanity. The word holistic might come as a word from another planet to some of us. However, we all know, in one way or another, the taste of being and feeling whole. Enjoying a home-cooked meal after a long day of work with family, being absorbed in the purity of a flower, listening to the wind in the naked desert, and losing ourselves in our spiritual or religious practices are all very intimate and familiar moments of oneness with what is, of coming back to ourselves. What might define all these moments of wholeness is that we choose an anchor to which we pay complete attention for a specific amount of time, and often we come out refreshed, and rejuvenated. This is, in essence, the definition of meditation.

If we observe these times of connection closely, we realize that our hearts become more open to ourselves, others and the world in general. Anger, hatred, and a sense of separation subside to some degree, and we feel more at ease with our lives. Good news is that we all know that these lines are more than empty poetic words, but a description of a real and tangible experience of integrity available and accessible to each and every one of us.

- An abhyasi from Iran

**JOY AND OPTIMISM**

As I was introduced to the system and since there were no preceptors in Sweden, for three years I used to travel to Denmark for sittings, and sometimes some Danish prefects were kind enough to travel to Sweden to give individual sittings and conduct Satsangh. During this period I noticed very prompt and positive changes taking place within. It is like regaining control and mastery over your own destiny. I discovered how much we are deluded by outer influences and enslaved to outer circumstances. Life became more disciplined and loving. Joy and optimism replaced doubt and fear. I may term Bahrain centre as a cosmopolitan one, in the sense that many join from different parts of the world and move on. We had Europeans, Americans, Indians who moved on to different parts of the world. At this stage there are about seventy abhyasis who are enjoying the tremendous and joyful effects of meditation. The Master says that you can not become God but you can become a perfect human being, and that is the closest to God, that is what it's all about, so good luck.

- An abhyasi from Bahrain

**PRACTICE OF SAHAJMARG**

"If we pay attention to our own spiritual growth, and become examples of what a spiritual person should be, automatically we will invite the attention of those who cross our paths. As Babuji used to say, if you light a lamp, the insects will automatically be attracted to it."\*

Sahaj Marg practice comes into peoples' lives in response to the longing in their hearts to return home; to find the deep meaning in their lives; to find answers to the questions of existence; to find the Real in life. Sometimes they will have found a small announcement of meditation availability, but in general there is no advertising of Sahaj Marg. Most people discover the practice by observing its effects in the lives of family, friends, colleagues and acquaintances.

Personal spiritual development and evolution is the base of the growth of Sahaj Marg. Each abhyasi's practice is centred in the presence of the Divine within his or her heart. As the abhyasi follows the practice, inner change takes place allowing the Divine to shine through, touching everyone he or she comes in contact with. It is like the frangipani so common here in the UAE, it needs no advertising, its scent on the breeze gets our attention and we seek out the plant to enjoy its perfume.

SMSF is unlike other human groups like clubs, businesses, corporations etc where a person joins and fits into the organisation. Here the organisation exists only because of the unity of hearts of the individuals involved in this spiritual practice. It is not like "joining" anything. The size of the Mission grows when each individual begins the spiritual journey in the practice, and discovers fellow companions on the same path. From the enjoyment of travelling together brotherhood grows. So the gathering of souls practicing Sahaj Marg experiences ever increasing degrees of oneness. On a practical level, whenever fellow travellers meet, so the "organisation" grows and develops to meet their needs.

Newsletters like Echoes MENA help to provide companionship on the path, by expanding our circle to include overseas abhyasis with our own centres. It is an opportunity to share insights, awareness, musings as well as practical information, events past and future, activities within centres, expressing outwardly the inner sense of brotherhood fostered by the practice.

\*Quote taken from "The Fruit of the Tree" page 80 (Opening address by Chariji in New Jersey, September 26, 1986)

- An abhyasi from Abudhabi, UAE



FEATURE

LALAJI MEMORIAL OMEGA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL—LMOS

VALUE EDUCATION



Nine Gems of Life

The driving force at Lalaji Memorial Omega International School, India is the Value based Spiritual Education (VBSE) that aims to impart the message of a balanced life, one equally progressive and luminous in inner and outer existence. Building on UNESCO's Core Values, Omega has adopted the Nava Ratnas (Nine Gems) of life : Truth & Wisdom; Love & Compassion; Sensitivity & Creativity; Spirituality; Peace & Justice; Self-Awareness/Self-Management; Environmental Morality; Citizenship; Health and Nutrition.

VISION

"Omega strives to produce youngsters who are balanced, with soul, mind and body working in unison, with the soul guiding the mind in its activities and the body acting under the guidance of the mind." The Omega International School therefore aims to promote excellence all around, with the feeling of harmony and mutual brotherhood amongst students, to produce a spiritually enlightened leadership capable of taking the future generations of mankind towards peace and prosperity.

Each class has a weekly period dedicated to VBSE, and the curriculum aims to give the message of a balanced life: a life equally progressive and luminous in inner existence and outer existence. Subject teachers are encouraged to incorporate these values as part of the main curriculum as well as embodying them in their interactions with the students..

Source : [www.omegaschools.org](http://www.omegaschools.org)

*"Children are wonderful agents for family harmony, peace and blessedness. Children bring light and laughter, two essential ingredients for happiness, into our lives. They represent the future, not merely of the family into which they are born, but of the human race as a whole. In contributing to their growth and development, we therefore participate in a very definite manner in molding the future of the human race."*  
Chariji

IN FOCUS - RUMI'S "BE SILENT"

I worship the moon, tell me nothing but the moon  
tell me nothing but of the sweet and the light and be silent

I said, O Love, what kind of moon is this?  
Love said this is beyond you, go and be silent

Don't talk about sorrow, tell me of that treasure hidden  
if it is to you, don't suffer, be silent

I said, O Love, what kind of face is this?  
angelic or human?  
Love said neither this nor that, be silent

Last night I lost my sanity. Love saw me and said  
I am here, don't scream, don't tear your clothes, be silent

I said tell me or I will remain this restless  
Love said be like this and be silent

I said, O Love I am frightened of other than you  
Love said there is no other than me, be silent

O you who dwell in this hall of images and illusions  
stand up, leave this house and be silent

I will whisper secrets in your ear  
just nod yes and be silent

I said, O Love  
this is not how God treats His children  
Love said yes my dear child, but be silent

A moon appeared on the path of heart  
how subtle this inner journey  
be silent

(This poem was read out in Farsi and English by a young abhyasi from Iran to Chariji during his recent visit to Dubai— picture on right)

*Asceticism is not spirituality; the opposite is also not true. Sahaj Marg says "Live a sensible balanced life, live a simple life in tune with nature"*

Source : [www.sahajmarg.org](http://www.sahajmarg.org)



For contributions to the newsletter & further information on SMSF in Middle East please contact :

Email : [smsfdbx@eim.ae](mailto:smsfdbx@eim.ae)

[uae.info@sahajmarg.org](mailto:uae.info@sahajmarg.org)

Web : [www.sahajmarg.org](http://www.sahajmarg.org)

"Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation", "SMSF", "Sahaj Marg" and the Foundation's flag are registered in U.S. Patent & Trademark office. The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of SMSF.