

ESPAÑOL

FRANÇAIS

Amidst its differences, humanity very often finds itself working as one. Examples of cooperation, generosity and selflessness touch the heart, and the differences fade. In its pages One World One Humanity brings highlights of the association between Shri Ram Chandra Mission and UN DPI in communicating that ideal of oneness.

E-Mail: un.info@srcm.org

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One World One Humanity



LUCKNOW CENTRE



Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari with Mr Rajiv Chandran, spokesman for India and Bhutan at the United Nations.

LUCKNOW, 24 JULY 2008: More than fifty-five thousand people from scores of countries, faiths, and traditions assembled in the north-Indian city of Lucknow on the occasion of the 81st birth anniversary of REVERED MASTER, SHRI PARTHASARATHI RAJAGOPALACHARI, President and Spiritual Head of Shri Ram Chandra Mission. Special invitee, MR RAJIV CHANDRAN, United Nations spokesman for India and Bhutan (left), addressed abhyasis on the priorities of the United Nations – the Millennium Development Goals. ‡

Sahaj Marg around the World

81st Birth Anniversary of Revered Master, Lucknow



LUCKNOW CENTRE

READ MR CHANDRAN'S ENTIRE SPEECH AT SRCM'S
"ONE WORLD" WEBPAGES: www.srcm.org/un

“REVERED MASTER, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,
Let me first offer warmest felicitations to you, Master, on this milestone birth anniversary. The eighty-first anniversary is truly a wondrous event, and I bring you the best greetings on this occasion, and the hope that the valuable work that you and your organization have undertaken will continue to grow further in strength, evermore. There are many commonalities between the Ram Chandra Mission, and my organization, the United Nations. Both enshrine universal values, values of peace, values of tranquility, values of development, values of fraternity, equality, and dignity of every individual. These are values that the Ram Chandra Mission undertakes in a certain direction and the United Nations catalyses in one hundred and ninety-two nations, which make up its member states.

“But what is important is that both your organization and the United Nations are looking in the same direction. And

“Creating a Better World”

U.N. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development



IMAGES: WWW.UN.ORG

that direction is one that will bring us a world that is free from fear and from want. These are the two basic things that torment us as individuals, as nations, as communities. “And if we are able to create a tomorrow where we are free from

“There are many commonalities between the Shri Ram Chandra Mission and my organization, the United Nations. Both enshrine universal values, values of peace, values of tranquility, values of development, values of fraternity, equality, and dignity of every individual.” – Mr Rajiv Chandran, Spokesman for India and Bhutan at the United Nations, 23 July 2008, Lucknow

both fear and want, we will then create that better world to which all of us together aspire. It is towards that end that, in the year 2000, all leaders of all nations of the world came together at the UN headquarters to come up with a basic charter, a new agenda that everybody could work towards. And we call them the Millennium Development Goals. Eight very simple points: all countries, all partners, all peoples would work towards eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. We would all work towards achieving universal primary education. We would promote gender equality and empower women. We would work towards reducing child mortality, improve maternal health, fight diseases that make us all vulnerable, ensure environmental sustainability. And subsequently, the climate change battle has joined this agenda. And towards all these seven ends, we would develop various kinds of global partnerships that would make this possible. But what was different about the Millennium Development Goals?” ‡

81st Birth Anniversary of Revered Master, Lucknow

Sahaj Marg around the World



LUCKNOW CENTRE

“Oneness of all Humans”

Talk by Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari “Chariji”, President and Spiritual Head of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission on 23 July 2008, Lucknow, following keynote address by Mr Rajiv Chandran, United Nations spokesman for India and Bhutan. In the background is a photo montage of Shri Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur, Chariji’s GURU.

“**R**ESPECTED
MR
CHANDRAN,

we are very grateful to you for your presence in this spiritual assembly, which in the terms of my Gurujī, Shri Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur, should always have an atmosphere pervasive with spiritual values. When a couple of years ago, we were permitted entry into the awesome institution known as the United Nations, I must confess that I was a little nervous of how this, you know, the marriage of a very rich man with a very poor girl will survive. I discovered that throughout the history of romance, poor girls, so long as they were pretty, were able to marry very rich people and make happy homes. The opposite was never the case.

“We are a very humble, generally invisible, mostly unknown organization, for the single reason that we do not charge any fees for membership, and most of our ashrams have free accommodation and food, that being my Master’s specific charge, that in a country where even food is not available to most people, we should never charge for food. Of course, we do not have the resources that we would like

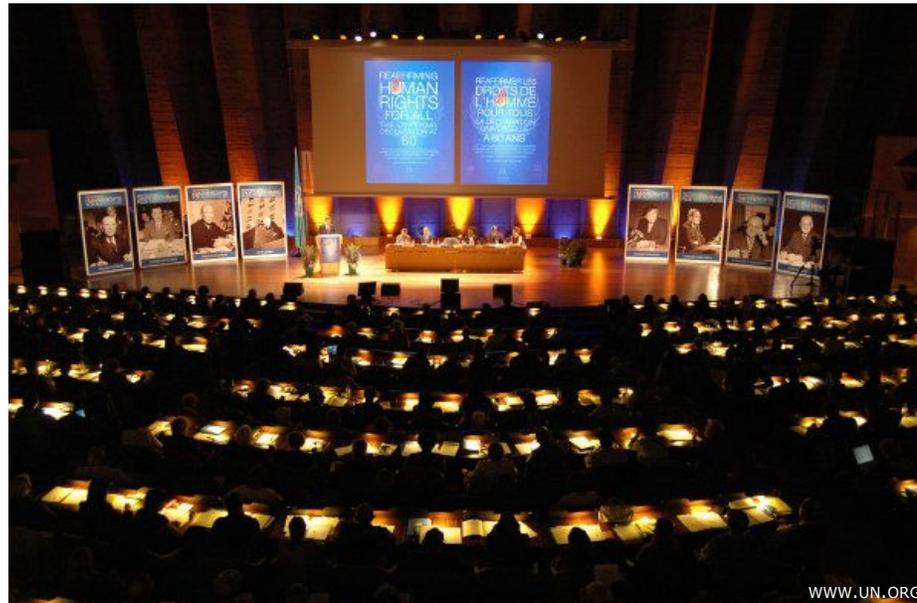
“ ...In our aims we have the highest. It is the oneness of all humans and a human brotherhood in which there is no separation, no alienation, no differentiation. – Revered Master

to have to feed all the poor in India. Nor can I say that our abhyasis fall under the category of poor. But there are suffering people who cannot afford.

“For instance, I would like to say that in 1964 when I joined the Mission, I had gone to Shahjahanpur and my Master was expecting a busload of abhyasis from Sitapur, not very far from Shahjahanpur. And the bus fare was I think two rupees two annas, or something like that. And he said, “Poor people, they cannot afford this bus fare. So we should not charge them anything.” I said, “Babuji, people come from South India paying eighty rupees for train fare, and you are not expressing any sympathy for them.” He smiled and said, “There is nothing political or geographical in what I say. I am only saying, if people cannot afford even two rupees two annas, how can we charge anybody?” So our feeding is generally free of charge in our ashrams, accommodation is free of charge, irrespective of time limits.” ‡

READ THE ENTIRE SPEECH AT SRCM’S
“ONE WORLD” WEBPAGES: www.srcm.org/un

Sahaj Marg around the World



DPI/NGO Conference, Paris

(Left) UNESCO headquarters, Paris, venue of DPI's annual meeting of NGOs on 3,4,5 September 2008. The aim of the gathering was to highlight ways in which NGOs can contribute to the advancement of human rights. In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a defence mechanism against oppression and discrimination. In the wake of a devastating world war, which witnessed some of the most barbarous crimes in human history, the Universal Declaration marked the first time that the rights and freedoms of individuals were set out in detail. It also represented the first time that there was international recognition that human rights and fundamental freedoms are applicable to every person, everywhere.

Reaffirming Human Rights for All: The Universal Declaration at 60

PARIS: THE UNITED NATIONS Department of Public Information organized its annual conference for its associated non-governmental organizations (NGO) on 3,4,5 September in Paris dedicated to human rights. Some 1,400 participants from 74 countries representing 537 NGOs attended, including the Shri Ram Chandra Mission.

The year 2008 marks the 60 years of the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the capital city of France is the place where the Declaration was adopted some 60 years ago.

The goals of the conference were to provide a forum for civil society, governments, media, academia, and the private sector to discuss human rights issues and what roles they need to play in addressing them, as well as to have participants take home information and knowledge that they can use in their activities.

Participants had various opportunities during roundtable panel discussions, break-out sessions, and midday workshops, to share experiences and perspectives about how best to protect and promote human rights around the world.

The work of NGOs that has resulted in positive changes at grass root level was acknowledged. At a time when the world is seen passing from crisis to crisis, most seemed to admit that there was a need for mobilizing goodwill and action across nations as never before. The three-day conference concluded with a session of meditation and a prayer for peace.

On the occasion of the 60 year anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December, Shri Ram Chandra Mission will be hosting gatherings and workshops in its meditation centres and ashrams across Europe, Oceania, and North America. ‡

WHY DOES THE U.N. WORK WITH NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS?

THROUGH NGOs, THE U.N. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION (DPI) AMPLIFIES U.N. THEMES, REACHES OUT TO PEOPLE FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND HELPS THEM UNDERSTAND THE U.N.'S WORK. WHILE OFFICIAL RELATIONSHIPS STARTED ONLY IN 1968, NGOs HAVE BEEN PARTNERS OF DPI SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN 1947. THE SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION GOT ASSOCIATED ON 12 DECEMBER 2005.

Omega Students Prepare Consensus Action Plan Dealing with Climate Crises

Joined via videoconference by students from 18 countries in the Caribbean, Latin America, Africa, North America and the Middle East

UN Student Conference on Human Rights Lalaji Memorial Omega International School, Chennai

CHENNAI: A TEAM OF 80 STUDENTS OF THE LALAJI MEMORIAL OMEGA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL (www.omegaschools.org) took part in a day-long videoconference along with 100 students from 18 countries assembled in five locations worldwide on the occasion of the 11th Annual United Nations Student Conference on Human Rights on “CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN RIGHTS”, organized by the UN’s Department of Public Information (DPI) on 3,4,5 December. Omega’s team of students, aged 12 – 15, conducted research and spelt out their Plan of Action on what must be done to protect and defend the rights of vulnerable people affected by severe climate change. Specifically, the Omega Plan of Action addressed the impact of climate change on Equality, Right to Life, Slavery, Economic and Social Rights, Right to Education and Cultural Rights.

Two days –3 & 4 December– were dedicated to exchanging, via online forums, the various actions plans prepared by the Latin and South American students in Mexico City and others assembled in Burnaby, B.C, New York City, Pretoria and Manama. On the third day–5 December–all the students–via simultaneous videoconference debated, asked and answered questions, defended their views and finally submitted a consensus Student Plan of Action (see pg. 8) to the President of the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly.

Lalaji Memorial Omega International School was among the six videoconfer-



Lalaji Memorial Omega International School students at the Chennai videoconference location of the 11th UN Student Conference on Human Rights. 100 more students from 18 countries joined from Mexico City, New York City, Burnaby B.C., Pretoria, and Manama.

ence locations worldwide and the only school in Asia to be invited to participate. Schools are selected for their commitment to international understanding, teaching of human rights and pedagogical excellence.

Braving Cyclone Nisha, floods in Chennai, untimely loss of Internet connection and passable roads the students and their teachers managed to submit the Omega Plan of Action well ahead of the deadline, underscoring a discipline and commitment forged during a 3-month rigorous study of the connection between climate crises and human rights. Omega Students met with climate and UN

experts deepening their study of the issue. Devyani Mani, a former Senior Researcher at the United Nations Centre for Regional Development in Nagoya, Japan ably assisted and provided expert information and support to the students.

The word from Omega was that they have many hopes to continue with this work, to spread awareness throughout the school and local community, to make Omega a green, low carbon school, to manifest personal and group commitments that they have been making along the way, and to strengthen their links and partnerships with the global community. ‡

LOG ONTO <http://www.un.org/webcast/archive.htm>
TO WATCH THE ARCHIVED VIDEOCONFERENCE ON
FRIDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2008

Omega Students Prepare Consensus Action Plan Dealing with Climate Crises

Joined by students from 18 countries in the Caribbean, Latin America, Africa, North America and the Middle East

EXCERPTS FROM THE FINAL PLAN
OF ACTION, 5 DECEMBER 2008
11TH UNITED NATIONS STUDENT
CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

“CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN RIGHTS”

Bearing in mind that this plan of action includes the input of young representatives from 19 different countries and one territory, including Mexico, The Dominican Republic, Haiti, USA, USA (Puerto Rico), Panama, Paraguay, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, El Salvador, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Canada, India, South Africa and Bahrain;

Affirming the importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at its 60th anniversary;

Deeply disturbed by the fact that Global Climate Change significantly impacts the integrity of all people's human rights and in most cases causes violations of the most vital amongst them;

Cognizant of the fact that in some regions, schools are located in areas which are vulnerable to the detrimental effects of climate change and are unprepared for the natural disasters that might wreak havoc on their environment, thus leading to migration into locations with insufficient educational facilities to accommodate the increase in population,

Concerned that the economic stress caused by climate change will directly affect poor families and intensify pressure to send children to work instead of attending school,

Acknowledging that climate change poses a substantial, exigent threat to human life, In contemplation of the scale at which Global Climate Change affects our planet,

...Reaffirming our belief that an idea may change a person, a person may change his or her community and communities may change the world; ‡

“Just love, love, and love. Because it is the only thing that will save our world from sinking into what I call the quagmire of insane and suicidal selfishness. This can only be counteracted by love – that’s what you are here for, that’s what you should be prepared for, to be able to love more – not to have more – but to have a bigger heart, so that you embrace more, and then life is really worth living.

—Response by H.E. Mr Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann, President, 63rd session of the United Nations General Assembly, to a question by Anirudh Rathinam, IX Standard, Omega school.



Lalaji Memorial Omega International School students of the “GAIA” environment club — named by Revered Master for the Greek goddess personifying the Earth— at a tree-planting event on Children’s Day at the school. Omega School is located in Chennai and offers Cambridge University’s International Examinations and Indian Central Board of Secondary Education certifications.

Peace Day 2008, N. America, Oceania, Europe, India

Sahaj Marg around the World

“Let There Be Peace On Earth And Let It Begin With Me!”

Peace Day song by Fraser Valley centre abhyasi (would-be) chorists, Canada

In living rooms to community centres, on the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains to an islet in the Atlantic Ocean, small and large assemblies of abhyasis and guests gathered to observe the International Day of Peace. Shri Ram Chandra Mission hosted the outreach gatherings across North America, Europe, India, and Oceania on the occasion of the UN-designated Day on 21 September. In **Vancouver, British Columbia**, about abhyasis joined by guests, including two children, commemorated the Day. One participant described the programme as having a “very peaceful and open feeling.”

In **Fort Langley, B.C. (Fraser Valley Centre)** abhyasis and guests of the Baha'i faith attended the Peace Day event. There were readings about the association between the Shri Ram Chandra Mission and the U.N., of a talk by Mr Kofi Annan, Hafiz poetry, quotes of Master, and some >>>



SPAIN CENTRE

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE, SEPTEMBER 21, GRANADA, SPAIN (above), SYDNEY (below). Peace Day was also celebrated in the Mission's centres in Barcelona, Figueiras in Portugal and in Isla de Gran Canara of Spain's Canary Islands, an archipelago located in the Atlantic Ocean. Across Europe centres in Munich, Offenbach/Frankfurt, Berlin, Galway, Dublin, Fairview, Milan, Aosta, Padova, Pordenone, Trento, Trieste, London, Manchester, Cambridge, Aberystwyth, Edinburgh, Sheffield, Paris, Toulouse, Montpellier, Marseille, Toulon, Nice, Lyon, Nancy/Belfort, Salzburg, Vienna, Vrads Sande, Brussels observed the Day.



SYDNEY CENTRE

>>> writings of Eileen Caddy, one of the founders of the Findhorn Movement. All present then made a valiant attempt to sing a song entitled “Let There Be Peace On Earth And Let It Begin With Me”. Participants then took some time to reflect on the song and how each one could begin with themselves to promote peace; they then shared what they wrote. In **Masset, B.C.** way up north along the British Columbia coast in the Queen Charlotte Islands, two abhyasis sat together in meditation to commemorate the Day. Many in the >>>

Sahaj Marg around the World

community had been informed of the gathering.

In **Nelson, B.C.** people gathered at the home of an abhyasi family along with a potluck lunch. The midday gathering began with the lighting of a candle, followed by a brief explanation of the purpose and history of the International Day of Peace. Then everyone observed a five-minute silent meditation/prayer reading of Revered Babuji's 1957 letter to the United Nations. There was also talk of the Mission's nine o'clock Universal Prayer for benefit of all humanity.

In **Toronto** people gathered at the Mission's meditation center. Babuji's 1957 letter to the UN was read aloud. Some of those present shared thoughts and feelings about peace, meditation and spirituality. All meditated for 15 minutes thinking that all people of the World are growing peace-loving and pious. Tea and snacks rounded out the gathering, and

Peace Day 2008, N. America, Oceania, Europe, India

“When we want one humankind, one humanity, one world, perhaps one universe someday, we have to find the uniting factor, not the dividing factor! And that is what I think spirituality is all about.

—Revered Master, Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari

everyone went away feeling a little lighter with a prayer for peace in their hearts. The abhyasis of **Sherbrooke Centre, Quebec** invited friends and acquaintances to join together on this special day. “The more we talk about International Day of Peace and reflect on peace, the more it helps to develop and nurture an atmosphere of peace vis-à-vis our brother and sisters worldwide”, wrote the centre-in-charge of Canada, Kim Hansen.

Across Oceania in **Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Auckland** and **Wellington** local centres publi-

cized International Day of Peace with notices, posters, invites in public libraries and mail. The aim of the programme was to convey that peace cannot be attained without change at the individual level. Some centres conducted youth programmes encouraging youth to contribute and ponder over the ideal of peace through self-reflection and presentations, quiz, poems, songs and drawings. Copies of Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's message were distributed along with a reading of Revered Babuji's letter. All programmes concluded with a meditation/prayer for peace.

In the United States there were great turnouts in **New Orleans, San Antonio, Atlanta, Austin** and **Dallas**.

In Europe similar events were organized by the Mission in its centres in **Munich, Offenbach/Frankfurt, Berlin, Galway, Dublin, Fairview, Milan, Aosta, Padova, Pordenone, Trento, Trieste, London, Manchester, Cambridge, Aberystwyth, Edinburgh, Sheffield, Paris, Toulouse, Montpellier, Marseille, Toulon, Nice, Lyon, Nancy/Belfort, Salzburg, Vienna, Vrats Sande, Brussels, Barcelona, Figueiras and Isla de Gran Canara ‡**



ABHYASIS IN LONDON ON INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE : “It seemed as though a special silence had descended and we were there as Babuji himself read out his letter informing us of our relationship with the UN.” London was joined by observances in the Mission's meditation centres in 32 cities across Europe, and more in North America, India and Oceania.

Sahaj Marg around the World

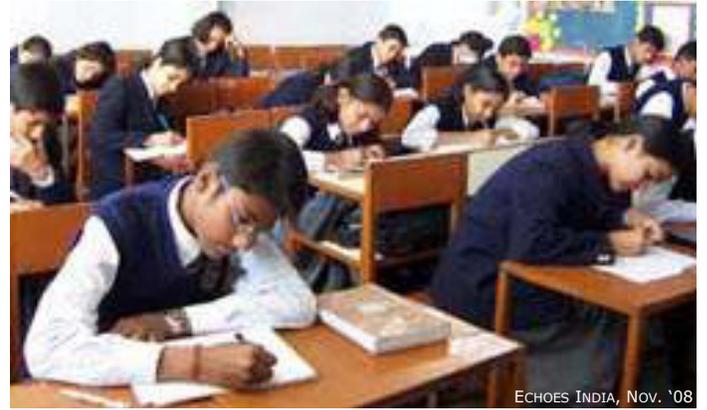
International Youth Day 2008, India

75,000 Students Participate in Youth Day Essay Writing Event Held in India by SRCM

The All-India Essay Writing Competition to commemorate the International Day of Youth, 12 August, was conducted in schools, colleges, and Shri Ram Chandra Mission ashrams all over India. The essays, which are now being evaluated, saw nearly 75,000 children and youth between the ages 10 and 24 participate. Children in the junior category (10-14 years) wrote on “Truth is Courage” while the senior category (17-24) wrote on “Self-respect and Self-confidence Shape One’s Character”. The essays were written in English, Hindi and other Indian languages. The competition saw widespread participation from educational institutions across the country. SRCM abhyasis volunteered to contact numerous schools, supervise and evaluate the essays. Abhyasis were pleasantly surprised from the enthusiastic reaction of headmasters and teachers in arranging the competition in their schools. Special trophies would be given to the best three essays in English and Hindi and books for the best three essays in other Indian languages.

The UN-designated International Youth Day gives the world an opportunity to recognize the potential of youth and celebrate their achievements. The essay writing was designed to provide an opportunity for the young minds to reflect upon higher values. This hopefully contributes towards establishing a strong value system at the individual level, which in turn may lead to a salutary effect on society and the world. ‡

(Adapted from Echoes India, November '08)



ECHOES INDIA, NOV. '08

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SHIMOGA, INDIA: An abhyasi of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission’s Shimoga centre in Karnataka at the Sri Sharada Devi School for the Blind (left). Fifty students from the 5th to the 10th standards participated with enthusiasm in the All India Essay Writing Competition organized by SRCM on the occasion of the UN Youth Day. Students dictated their thoughts to abhyasis who then transcribed them. “I was watching a girl dictating economics notes to her friend, as fast as I can read, by feeling the notes in Braille,” reported an abhyasi. “When I asked her ‘How do you manage (without seeing)?’, she said, ‘You have only two (eyes), but we have ten (fingers)’. We were very happy to spend time with the children and their teachers.”

PHOTO: SHIMOGA CENTRE

Events, 2008

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NOVEMBER, INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR
TOLERANCE:

Gatherings in India, Oceania, Europe, North America. The programme will be dedicated to present the Mission's common purpose with the world's peoples in promoting tolerance as declared by United Nations General Assembly in 1996; and complement the efforts by DPI to promote tolerance through its *Unlearning Intolerance* educational seminars.

10

DECEMBER, HUMAN RIGHTS DAY:
SIXTY YEARS OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS

DECLARATION:

Workshops in Europe, Oceania, North America will focus on the enduring relevance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that turns 60 in 2008.

Sahaj Marg around the World

UNITED NATIONS INTRODUCES AFFORDABLE PRICING POLICY FOR PUBLICATIONS SOLD IN DEVELOPING, LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

SINCE 1 JULY 2008, THE UNITED NATIONS INTRODUCED a new three-tier pricing policy for its publications sold in developing, least developed and developed countries. This novel marketing and sales effort will make more than 4,000 United Nations publications more economical and readily accessible to educational institutions, students, teachers and researchers. While prices in developed countries will continue to be set based on prevailing market conditions in those countries, the sales price in developing and least developed countries will be reduced by 50 per cent and 75 per cent, respectively. The new pricing policy will apply both to print publications as well as PDF versions sold online. [Learn more...](#)

LEARN MORE ABOUT OBSERVANCES, PROGRAMMES, WORKSHOPS ORGANIZED BY SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION ON VARIOUS U.N. INTERNATIONAL DAYS, VISIT THE "ONE WORLD" WEB PAGES, <http://www.srcm.org/un/>

WEB ARCHIVES (<http://www.srcm.org/un/>)

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Sahaj Marg around the World

Spiritual Retreat Centres, India, USA



The SPURS Retreat Ranch for the Americas in Austin, Texas (left) is located in southwestern Travis County. The retreat centre near Pune, India (below), with Singhad Fort in the background and the vast Khadakwasla Lake. The retreat centre in Malampuzha, Kerala (bottom left), also in India, is nestled in the midst of a forest running along the mountainous Western Ghats.

PHOTOS: WWW.SHAJMARG.ORG



“A RETREAT was for always the few, who needed to retreat from everyday life, and retire in seclusion to introspect, meditate, brood over one's inner condition etc. The purpose was to re-enter normal everyday life refreshed spiritually to face life with a renewed sense of purpose, to restore balance to one's life. A retreat could never be for the many or for the multitude.

“So here we look into ourselves, find ourselves as we are with the courage to look at what we see, and to accept what we see, and then comes the boldness and the determination to change what we see into what it should be. That is the culmination of yogic practice.”

– Revered Master, Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari