

## Understanding Sahaj Marg

Now I come to the most important thing, which is a clear and proper understanding of what Sahaj Marg is, what a spiritual life means and the clear distinction between my material life and my spiritual life. I have said it often enough that the material life is governed by the *samskaras* with which we come here. *Nothing* can change.

My physical circumstance, whether I am a *chamaar* (tanner) or a *dhobi* (washer man) or a weaver or a multimillionaire, does not affect my spiritual life, should not affect my spiritual life; it does not matter; My spiritual life must go on, in this clear understanding that my material life is one hundred percent what it is and will be because of *samskaras*, which, according to Babuji, even God cannot change.

Many (*abhyasis*), when something happens that they don't want to happen, they quit the Mission. People better understand that nothing will change in your physical life, material life, except it be in your *samskara*.

Unless you understand this clearly, every one of you is in danger of leaving this Mission sometime or the other when something which you don't want to happen, happens.

So please don't have any expectations at *all* for your personal, physical, material lives. Don't judge your spiritual progress by all that suffering or the enjoyment that you may undergo. So you



see it is a very necessary understanding which is fundamental to your approach to your spiritual life, whether you are a real seeker or not, or whether good times bring you here and bad times will take you away.

I caution you — in fact I would like to say, I warn you — correct your impression of what spirituality will give you. Spirituality will give you a spiritual life and liberation at the end of this life which *nothing* can give you — millions cannot give you, power cannot give you.

So please make up your minds. This is one part of my life; this is fixed. All that I can expect from spiritual life, from sincere meditation, from sincere compliance with the ten maxims, from obedience to the guru under all circumstances is that *my life will be normalised*.

(Excerpts from Master's talk "Understanding Sahaj Marg", 7th February 2010, Kolkata, India)

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**A Journey of Growth and Love***by Ge Hong, Shanghai, China Centre (Translated by Hari Venkatesan, Macau Centre)*

ISTP is an annual international scholarship training program of SRCM. The program typically spans a period of one month. I was a participant during the 2009/10 ISTP program. A comprehensive program to also get close with Master at Manapakkam. The 30 days spend at the ISTP was an unforgettable experience. Every moment was precious. Here I pick the most memorable ones to share with you.

***Being truthful***

One day, we were discussing the fifth maxim: “Be truthful...”, the need to be truthful in character, to say what we mean and to mean what we say, doing away with the mask on our face. This topic had a great impact on me. I have been unable to express my true feelings and emotions, especially my views or dissatisfaction towards others. To avoid conflict and to maintain harmony, I always buried negative feelings or disagreements deep in my heart. Similarly, I would go overboard praising others, even when I felt the opposite.

I realised the mask I had on my face had become part of it. To remove the mask, it took some effort before it finally came off. The decision to change percolated from the conscious mind to the subconscious. The good news is, today I am getting closer to my real self. I seldom say things I do not mean and find myself more transparent, with the courage and strength to face the world.

***Being accepting like water***

I have long known the need to be accepting, but it is hard to practice. One day during meditation, I thought about water and acceptance, and had a moment of revelation.

Water flows towards lower regions, therefore one learns to be modest, unassuming and uninterested in name and fame. Water, without colour, taste or shape is all encompassing and wherever it is located – the sea, a river, a bottle or reservoir, water takes its shape. This is what I would call real acceptance. This revealed to me irrespective of what happened to me, I should be welcoming. Accept, accept all like water.

The next day Bro. Ajay taught our class. His topic was “Change” and he talked about acceptance. I was amazed at the coincidence. He said not only must we be accepting, we also need to be happy in accepting, embracing everything that came to us with a smile! I was very happy to hear that as it seemed to tell me that I had the privilege of getting a rare glimpse into reality that was in front of me all the while! The gratitude I felt at that moment was indescribable. O Master! I could feel your grace flowing through me.

***Being with the Master and bringing Him back***

Of the “3 Ms” in SRCM, “Master” was something that was a bit unclear to me. Was it not enough if I practiced everyday according to the prescribed method? Why must one have a Master? Was meeting him really that important? However, on the two occasions I had the opportunity to meet Him, I felt something in my heart, something surging, with tears flowing without restraint. I saw a side of myself I never knew. I saw strength, and I felt powerful! Master had so generously allowed his grace to nurture me. I am not sure to date if I had actually found my real Self. But I am trying to move towards that goal, to change from someone timid into someone confident!

A preceptor once told us, “Meet Him, speak to Him and take Him back home with you!” I believe this is the purpose behind each one of us meeting Master. We must learn how to live like him, become like him, someone with patience, empathy, tolerance and a heart full of love!

I remember when I received the letter saying I was admitted to the program, a preceptor who had previously attended the program, congratulated me. At that time I did not understand. Why would he congratulate me for that? Later, I would realise how this programme had changed my life. It was a gift bestowed upon me. A gift that came from God, from Master. And the gift was love, nothing but love. I want to tell everyone, ‘Go to ISTP to feel the love and to learn how to love. Go meet the Master and bring Him back with you!’

**A More Peaceful Me***by Maris A. Mortel, Philippines Centre*

**B**eginning 2007, I've experienced how snatches of utter peace can uplift my spirit and disposition, however great the crisis that's wreaking havoc on my sanity. Peace is what I experience when I meditate. In the stillness and silence, I can let go, put my burdens down, rest and recharge. It's a wonder that with the benefits of meditation as an effective stress reliever, more people don't practice it. The physical changes I've experienced during meditation such as slowness of breath and heartbeat, bring me to a relaxed state where my worries and stress can leave me.

It's been well-documented that meditation can benefit a person physiologically and emotionally. A more restful state lowers the levels of *cortisol* and lactate released by the body, which causes a decrease in high blood pressure and muscle tension. It also results in an improved overall immune system, enabling a person to be more productive in all areas of life. Furthermore, meditation is a mental exercise that has been known to improve concentration and focus.

The pressures of daily living can get overwhelming, and so far I have found a way to relax that doesn't require any special equipment or costly medication. At the start, meditation was merely an indulgence, but it has slowly become an act that my mind seeks out as a necessity.

When I come out of meditation, I feel calmer. I have a renewed sense of self where I can see things with a clearer and more positive outlook. The longer I practice meditation, the more I am in touch with myself. Because I am comfortable and confident in myself, I am more at ease with people I meet. I am able to be more accepting and tolerant of situations. This is what minutes of peace can give me. And if there is something I can do with certainty to help change the world for the better, that would be change that begins with a more peaceful me.

*(Excerpt from an article printed in Philippine Daily Inquirer, December 2007)*

**Calendar of Events (January—May 2010)****Singapore**

Extended Sessions	April 30
<i>3rd Sunday of every month (9:15 to 11:30 am)</i>	
January 24	Practice of Sahaj Marg
February 21	Youth and Outreach Activities
March 21	Discipline and Obedience
April 18	Self-Help Using the 10 Maxims
May 16	Inner Well-being
VBSE Training	<i>3rd Sunday of every month</i>
April 17	Earth Day (UN Event)
April 30	Babuji's Birthday Celebration

**Malaysia**

Babuji's Birthday Celebration
Family Day (UN Event)
1st Preceptors' Retreat
National Seminar



## Centre Updates



### Malaysia

**B**ro. Shyamji Mehrotra (ZIC for UP) and his wife, Sis. Latha recently visited the Melaka centre, after their visit to Master in Chennai. They joined Melaka abhyasis at the Centre for satsangh and dinner, followed by the 9 o'clock prayer.

After satsangh, Bro. Shyamji gave a small talk on the importance of coming early for satsangh - at least 20-30 minutes before satsangh starts. He mentioned sometimes Master arrives early and starts the sitting and those who come late lose out. He also impressed upon the need to switch off mobile phones before sitting for satsangh, as Master had said it was a disturbance even to leave it on silent mode. He conveyed Master's blessings to all the abhyasis in Malaysia and Singapore. *Prasad* was also distributed.

Bro. Shyamji invited everyone to attend Master's birthday celebrations at Lucknow in July 2010. He reminded us 25th July, the last day of the celebration, was *Guru Poornima*. On this day, the Guru's blessings are ten thousand fold, which makes the day very auspicious. He also informed in future, Master's Birthday celebration would be held in either Tiruppur or Lucknow as these were the only two places large enough to host such *bhandaras*. He closed by saying he was fortunate to join us for satsangh and celebrate his 60th birthday with us.

### Japan

**O**n 21st February, an Open House was organised at Omihachiman, a small city about 40 minutes from Kyoto. This Open House was unique, as it was the first time a local government body (the Municipal Corporation) hosted a Sahaj Marg event in Japan. Despite heavy snow, the session was well attended. Preceptor Bro. Dominique Lamure who is also a Hatha Yoga teacher, got the audience warmed up with some simple yoga *asanas* accompanied by his humorous comments. This was followed by an in-depth presentation by Preceptor Sis. Asuka Nakazawa. We hope the local people's interest in the event will mark the beginning of a new centre in Japan.



A new venue recently opened at the Kulim centre. The inaugural satsangh was held on Sunday, 7th March with 16 abhyasis in attendance. Sis. Lakshmi designated a part of her new office premises, which can accommodate around 30 to 40 people, for SRCM's usage.

The location is ideal for its visibility along the main commercial street and the availability of the preceptors for individual sittings. Four preceptors travelled there, gave individual sittings and one introductory sitting. Overall, there is now great potential in Kulim to spearhead the growth in the northern region.

Kuantan Centre has shifted to a new venue, which coincidentally is the same house Master had stayed during his visit to Kuantan in 1990! There is renewed enthusiasm and energy in Kuantan's abhyasis.

### Philippines

**W**e commemorated Lalaji's Birth Anniversary with a two-day seminar. Satsanghs were conducted at 7:30 am and 7:00 pm. After satsangh, there was a reading of Lalaji's biography and some of his quotations. The morning was spent watching a video of Chariji's speech to students at a university in India. The seminar ended with regular Wednesday satsangh.



### Sri Lanka

**L**alaji Maharaj's birthday celebrations took place at the Balagolla Centre with two satsanghs, one at 7:30 am and the other at 5:30 pm, with 20 abhyasis in attendance. Lalaji Maharaj's whisper from the 'Brighter World' was read. Material highlighting Lalaji's teachings on Sahaj Marg were also read out in Tamil and Sinhala. In the evening, sweets brought by the abhyasis were shared and relished by all as *prasad* from Lalaji. Many abhyasis experienced the grace of Lalaji in the wonderful atmosphere. The day's events ended on a very joyous note.



### Vietnam

**S**ince June 2009, by Master's grace, there has been good developments in the Mission's activities in Vietnam, notably in the capital city of Hanoi. The presence of dedicated abhyasis like Bro. Harish Taparia and Sis. Krishna Taparia has provided the right base and support needed there.

During Bro. Nitin Govila's recent visit, the Taparia family organised an open house. 11 people, mostly Indians and some local Vietnamese attended. Of this group, four started the practice (two Indians and two Vietnamese). With the inclusion of the two locals, the number of Vietnamese abhyasis has gone up to four. Currently there are five Indian abhyasis. Sunday and Wednesday satsanghs are held at the Taparia residence.





**Singapore****Rev. Lalaji's Birth Anniversary, 2nd February**

**A** time to unwind, a chance to experience inner balance, a place to foster brotherhood and a much required boost to enliven our daily routines: this was what Rev. Lalaji's 137th Birth Anniversary offered us.

The celebration commenced with satsangh at 7:30 am, followed by breakfast. The morning session was marked by presentations on "The Nature's Prodigy – Lalaji's biography", "Whispers from the Brighter World" and a captivating video presentation on Lalaji. Post lunch, saw a presentation on "Character Formation — Our Responsibility" followed by a charming skit on Lalaji's life. The innocent yet purposeful activities showcased during the children's programme lifted everyone's spirits. After a short tea break, "Experiences with Rev Babuji" was presented. Everyone then participated in an interactive session on "Sensitivity". The event concluded with satsangh at 6:30 pm.

**VBSE Field Trip, Kranji Farm, 6th December 2009**

Around 50 abhyasis and children visited Bollywood Veggie, an organic farmland. In the guided tour that was arranged, everyone was surprised to discover that such a natural countryside existed in Singapore.

The VBSE team kept the children entertained and occupied with various activities such as colouring fallen leaves and watering of the plants.

Abhyasis subsequently adjourned to Bro. Suresh Babu's residence for a scrumptious pot-luck lunch.

**Abhyasi Bonding Activities, Pulau Ubin, 25th December 2009 and East Coast Park, 15th February**

Two bonding activities were organised by the Youth Committee with the objective of promoting a feeling of **one family** through team building activities.

Around 45 abhyasis and 15 children participated in the gatherings. Abhyasis were provided an opportunity to get to know one another better to foster the feeling of brotherhood. After these outings, an increased number of abhyasis have since volunteered their services towards the Mission's activities.

**Ma Maitre**

*J'adore ma maitre  
qui adore tout  
adore tout qu'il adore  
I love my master  
who loves all  
love all whom he loves  
Across the sea  
beyond the mountains  
there lies divinity in our hearts  
A drop of water  
or speck of dust  
there lies divinity in our hearts  
With our hands joined together  
under the blue sky  
above the ground  
let us all pray for our master  
- and live a blissful life.*

*By Bhuma. K, 15*

