



# Echoes of Oceania

October Issue 2008



Top Photo Celebrations Lucknow Centre Photo Babujis House



Top Photo On the way to Satkol (Naukuchiya taal)

## Celebrations and travelling in India

Forty-two thousand abhyasis came to **Lucknow** from all over the world. Frequent downpours before and during the Bhandara abhyasis were smiling and walking like spiritual lotus flowers. It was a wonderful atmosphere, volunteers were working everywhere over the 100 acres of land of the Lucknow ashram. Bhajans (spiritual songs), cultural programs and 28 marriages performed over the three day gathering. On the 23rd of July, a representative of the United Nations praised the Mission's activities and described what the UN does to promote unity and development. Following this Master gave a short talk on how Sahaj Marg promotes unity and world brotherhood. On the morning of the 25th, a sister from Pakistan gave a talk on the Mission's growth in her country.

**Shahjahanpur** After a short journey (the time it took I cannot recall) we settled into our new accommodation. For most of us who visited Babuji's house it will be

something we will never forget and for some it was made even more special when they travelled by horse, quite possibly reliving the way Babuji would have travelled. Arriving at the house, it was as you would have read in books, simple with the basic necessities. Walls were sparsely decorated with photos that were decaying with time. The ten maxims sat precariously in the corner on the bed; the wording different from what we know today. Babuji's grandson conducted satsangh for the first batch of visitors, others took time to sit and absorb the atmosphere. I once thought it was a lot of humbug when people described the atmosphere; I know after this experience there is such a thing. Shahjahanpur was special and it will be a place that I could quite easily go back to time and time again, but that was my experience, it could have been different for others. What I do know after speaking to a handful of abhyasis, each one was overwhelmed in some way or another. The following day we moved on to **Satkhol**. To describe Satkhol is really simple and that would be HOME. I remember waking up and looking out at the view and thought it just felt like Home. The ashram is nestled in amongst

the hills. Gardeners wandered around every morning tending the plants, local villagers roamed the roads with bundles of sticks three times the size of their bodies smiling as they gently strolled up the hills that I cursed every morning. When Master arrived it was so nice to see Him in a place that we all know is so dear to His heart. He conducted satsangh one morning and praised the performer who sang a Bhajan that moved many to tears. Later that day He inspected the comfort dorms and sat outside the cottage feeding the dog and played with a little girl and her chalk board. For most of the time the Himalayas were lost in clouds every now and then we would get a peek. Then on the morning when most abhyasis were leaving, there they were in all their splendour as we stepped out of the meditation hall, the Himalayas. So Satkhol was Home, not because of its familiar surroundings but because it felt so right to be there. Master continued His journey, spending time again in Rudrapur, then Moradabad before arriving in Meerut on the 30th, where he inaugurated an ashram. Master then went on to Delhi and stayed for 3 days before returning to Chennai. SM



Left: Abhyasi's outside Babuji's House

Centre: Water Pump at Babuji's



Right: Sister Liya and Sister Waireti outside Babuji's



# Master visits China

Revered Master arrived in Shanghai on 16th September 2008 evening. Despite the long journey, Master was keen to give a sitting right away to all everyone gathered there and said, "Let's start the fireworks and light the torch like the Beijing Olympics". It was like the fireworks were not ending and a wave of love was spreading all over the great country. During all His stay,

Master was like a lion letting light everywhere and giving all His attention to every abhyasi. He took them sight seeing, shopping, lunch and dinner many times. There was so much effort and love given maybe with a sense of urgency. We will never ever be able to comprehend the real nature or extent or impact of this historic trip, it was truly a blessing to have been in His presence for those eight wonderful days. We pray that we will all cherish these moments, and spread the light high and bright a million times more effectively, in our hearts and in this great country." **SM**



## Visiting the ashram

Overseas abhyasis are permitted to stay in the Ashram for 15 days with prior permission. Extension of stay beyond this requires permission which may be given based on special reasons/considerations, provided that there is a valid visa and a confirmed return ticket. Prior permission for stay in the Ashram may be obtained by sending your request by filling the attached travel request form and sending it via email [totravelrequest@srcm.org](mailto:totravelrequest@srcm.org)

All Travel Request forms must be signed by the Preceptor. No approvals will be given without a preceptor's signature. The approval for stay will be conveyed via email, and a copy will be sent to the Ashram Manager at [sraman@srcm.org](mailto:sraman@srcm.org) for his information. Any requests for special accommodation or other queries may be directed to the Ashram Manager at the above address. All overseas abhyasis are required to mention their time of arrival so that the appropriate arrangements may be made for late arrivals.

The Mission's ID card is mandatory and must be shown at the time of registration, along with the letter conveying travel approval.

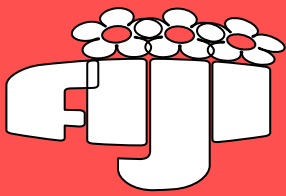
All overseas abhyasis must bring a copy of the first page of their passports and a copy of their visa page, to be submitted to the Ashram Office during Registration. Registration and reception offices at BMA function daily between 6.00 hrs and 21.30 hrs. Those who are likely to reach the Ashram outside the office hours, should inform the Reception office by telephone at the following numbers: +91(44)2521099/42171111/42014420 **SM**



## The Australian Regional Gathering and the Annual General Meeting 2008

Has been rescheduled to be held in **Sydney** at our Bringelly Ashram **Friday 21st(evening) to Monday 24th(midday) November.**

A Preceptors Program will be held on the **21st**. We encourage all to attend and gain from the spiritual benefits and to support the Mission. Registrations have been circulated, enquiries please contact Brother Rajesh [rklal@optusnet.com.au](mailto:rklal@optusnet.com.au).



**PUNJABI CHHOLE**  
(CHANA MASALA)

**Ingredients:**

- Chick Peas (Chane / Chhole) 1 cup
- Garam masala 1/2 tsp
- Garlic Paste 1 tsp
- Ginger Paste 1 tsp
- Green Chilli 1
- Red Chilli powder 1/2 tsp
- Bay Leaves 2/3
- Turmeric Powder 1/2 tsp
- Tomato Chopped 1
- Dry Coriander powder 1 tsp
- Chopped Coriander 1 tbsp
- Finely Chopped Large Onion 1
- Tea Bag 1
- Salt to taste
- Cooking Oil

**Method**

Soak chick peas in water for overnight  
 Pressure cook Chick Peas (with Tea Bag) until tender. Tea adds brown color to the chick peas  
 Heat oil in a pan and fry bay leaves for 30 secs. Add the chopped onion, green chilli, garlic and ginger paste and fry on medium heat until golden brown (oil starts separating from the mixture)  
 Add red chilli powder, turmeric powder, coriander powder, garam masala, tomato and salt. Mix well.  
 Fry for 2-3 minutes  
 Add cooked chick peas and the water (remove tea bag). Stir well and cook over medium heat for 5-7 minutes or until gravy thickens

This year's Master's birthday celebrations were held in both Suva and Lautoka Centres. Celebrations in Lautoka were attended by 19 abhyasis and their children. Meditation was followed by a video and dinner after which new abhyasis shared their experiences and expressed their joy attending their first celebration.

The Celebration in Suva was held at Br Sanjay's & Sister Anita's residence, with satsanghs at 6 am and 6 pm with 18 abhyasis present in the evening.

After satsangh, all abhyasis watched the 'He, Hookah and I' DVD, and were moved by Chariji's statement 'You shouldn't be afraid of the Guru, to go to

him under all circumstances'.

Sanjana Raj gave a presentation on 'Implementing Discipline in Everyday Life', some of the points being Discipline is a way of life, Each thing has to be done when it has to be done, relative importance governs every activity of our lives and Discipline covers the physical, mental and moral. Sanjana stated, 'That is one of the reasons why we meditate, to achieve regulation of the mind'.

Meditation calms the 'noisiness and craziness' of the mind. A discussion about the topic of discipline followed.

Two children Shivang Ambasht & Aman Gupta presented regarding Master, Meditation & the System . SM



*My experience  
pre celebrations*  
Rita Vithal

On 14<sup>th</sup> July 2008, I departed Fiji to participate in Master's 81<sup>st</sup> Birthday celebrations in Lucknow/India. I arrived at Calcutta Ashram for the first time on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2008 late afternoon amidst a heavy downpour. Early next morning, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2008, I became more aware of my surroundings and could appreciate the beautiful Ashram with its greenery, the huge meditation hall, statue of Babuji Maharaj in the gardens and the grand cottage for Master. The same morning with other abhyasis we left for Brother Ajay Bhattar's residence to meet Master

and we arrived just in time for breakfast. After breakfast there was a group satsangh and I was happy to be close to Master, his divine presence. While waiting for Master I tried updating my diary and also had the opportunity to catch up with abhyasis I had met at previous seminars and celebrations. Master had his lunch and we were also invited to share a delicious meal. In the afternoon I caught the first glimpses of Master, and He later conducted a group satsangh. On 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008 early morning we arrived at Brother Ajay's residence to be with Master again, and were just in time to observe Master garlanding Babuji's photo and prasad was distributed. After breakfast Brother Ajay conducted group satsangh and as Master was expected to return to ashram after lunch, we left to return there. Guru Purnima - 18<sup>th</sup>

July 2008, Calcutta. Master returned to Calcutta Ashram on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2008 in the afternoon, and by this time it was swarming with hordes of abhyasis all wanting to be with their beloved Master on Guru Purnima. 18<sup>th</sup> July 2008, Guru Purnima day dawned with early morning showers, this did not deter abhyasis from waiting outside Master's Cottage to see or meet him on this auspicious day. At 9 am Master conducted group satsangh, the meditation hall was overflowing with abhyasis. After satsangh Master solemnized a wedding, and then there was a devotional songs program and poem recitals. The evening satsangh was conducted by Brother Ajay and then there was an enjoyable program of songs and dances by children especially prepared for Master. SM

# International Peace Day Celebrations

S hri Ram Chandra Mission's outreach events in support of the commemoration of United Nations International Day of Peace this year were conducted in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth, Australia as well as Auckland and Wellington, New Zealand.

The Mission's aim was to convey the United Nations peace aspirations through prayer programmes and to align our efforts with other Non Government Organisations (NGOs) throughout the world.

On Sunday 21 September after satsangh, the public were invited to join our prayer programmes. Some centres worked diligently spreading the word doing mail drops, hanging posters, sending invitations, press release notes sent to friends and family and like-minded people within the community who support Peace in various ways, as well as through the media.

In total 200 adults and children marked the day.

Our youth prepared poems, songs, drawings, quizzes, and presentations on what peace meant to them.

Fifty years after Rev. Babuji's letter to the UNO in 1957, the United Nations Secretary General made a call to all organizations worldwide to send a message. Babuji's letter and our Sahaj Sandesh outlining our recognition of this alignment with other organizations for peace, was sent to UN National Information Officer in Canberra on 15th September 2008. This letter was read out and presented to all participants of our outreach programmes.

In Brisbane, we were honoured to have with us Pr Toh Swee-Hin, UNESCO Peace Laureate 2000 and Director of the Multi Faith Centre, who, coordinates workshops on inter-faith dialogue and UN commemorations at Griffith University (Brisbane). **SM**



Photo: Brisbane Youth



Photo: Melbourne Centre



## Centre News

### Centre News—Sydney

23-24<sup>th</sup> July we celebrated Master's birthday at North Epping Scout Hall starting with 6:30 PM satsangh on 23<sup>rd</sup>. 24<sup>th</sup> we gathered and had satsangh at 6:30 AM, 10:0 AM and 6:30 PM. Total attendance was 53, as well as 5-10 children. The theme of the celebration was 'Forever Together'. 23<sup>rd</sup> August A meeting was organised at Bringelly ashram with more than 30 abhyasis present to discuss various aspects of the upcoming visit of Master to Sydney. The meeting started after the morning satsangh and different activities and coordinators for those activities were identified. Late August we learned that Master is no longer visiting Australia. SM

### Centre News—Brisbane

Program 23- 24th July: (report by Helen Wood) Program commenced on Wednesday evening at the home of Mohan and Rajani with a group meditation followed by reading, video viewing and snacks. The 24th, Master's 81st birthday was a beautiful rainy day in Brisbane and 3 group meditations were held, followed by shared meals. Abhyasis from the Gold and Sunshine Coast attended and a surprise visit by Sis Kerrie Anderson and family from Central Coast, NSW, added to the enchantment of the celebration. Readings were done from the book 'HE Marches On' and DVD's of some of Master's talks were played throughout the day. The Multi-Faith Centre, Griffith University, has offered an in house course for the year 2008 on Interfaith Dialogue, with a number of lectures delivered by religious leaders on their religions/ faiths. Sis Danielle and Bro John were invited to join in and hoped to run a workshop/ presentation at the Multi-Faith Centre on Sahaj Marg Meditation. This has been accepted and will run Sunday 5th December 7.15 to 9.15pm. It is an opportunity to let the community know about Sahaj Marg, and to join with those developing programs for peace and inter-faith dialogue. At the Monthly Gathering held at the home of Sister Madhuri Chava, in the Northern Brisbane suburb of Taigum a presentation on cleaning was done by Sr Helen Wood as a training session to help clarify the purpose and importance of doing the cleaning. It was followed by a shared lunch and then a DVD was played from 'HE the Hookah and I SM

### Centre News—Perth

Master's birthday was celebrated over two days on 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> July 08 with three satsanghs on 24<sup>th</sup> July. The program also included a presentation by Br Ram on the topic: '**Life of Master—the Yatra that we know**'. A retreat was held at Jarrahdale about 45 minutes from Perth in a lovely location in the hills. The theme of the retreat was 'Integrating Spirituality in our daily life'. To involve the new abhyasis, the program was conducted like a workshop with 4 groups each being given a topic. A coordinator and a preceptor were part of each group and each group did a power point presentation. The four topics related to the theme were: (a) "Barriers to integrate spirituality into daily life" (b) "How to integrate daily sadhana into your daily life" (c) "Ten maxims *how to apply them in daily life*" (d) "Other aspect of sadhana *observing yourself being the observer*". Sixteen abhyasis attended the retreat and new abhyasis actively participated SM

### Centre News—Melbourne

On 6<sup>th</sup> July viewed the DVD "Master and Disciple" from "HE, the Hookah and I" series. 13<sup>th</sup> July Group discussion around "Being with HIM" followed after satsangh. Many shared experiences of being in His physical presence some described what it meant not only to be with Him physically but also His being in their hearts. 20<sup>th</sup> July Watched the recently released DVD of Masters interviews "Being There" recorded in the late 1980s. The main focus for July, was centred around Revered Master's 81<sup>st</sup> birthday celebrations, the focal point on the deepening of the practice and an emphasis on discipline. **The celebrations** started with evening satsangh followed by the viewing of Master's talks given during a previous Birthday celebration. 24<sup>th</sup> July's program the centre had 3 satsanghs performed in the morning and evening. We then watched a number of talks from 'HE, the Hookah and I' series and listened to an audio recording of an radio interview of Babuji Maharaj accompanied with Master, released around the early 1970s. The children then presented a play after evening satsangh followed by dinner. 27<sup>th</sup> July after satsangh time was dedicated to silent contemplation; *a period of golden silence*. 3<sup>rd</sup> August, with the thought of Master's upcoming visit to Australia at the end of the year, Brother Steve spoke on maxim 1 sharing his personal experiences

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*(continued) Centre News—Melbourne*

and encouraging us to follow the maxim.

**10<sup>th</sup> August** We had discussion on the following topics: Kids corner and Open House, held **23<sup>rd</sup> August** and the Yoga Expo held **31<sup>st</sup> August**. Discussions were lively as teams brought together the ideas.

**23<sup>rd</sup> August** there was an open house for the Marathi Mandal, at the Hawthorn Library hall, Victoria. Sister Elizabeth Denley conducted the session which was attended by 35 people, 6 preceptors and abhyasis; there was interest to start the practice from some who attended.

**24<sup>th</sup> August**, Brother Harpreet Singh from Dubai conducted Sunday satsangh and spoke about the spread of the Mission in UAE and surrounding areas. A power point presentation on Value Based Education followed and involved the children. **SM**

*Centre News—New Zealand*

Centre Activities – Auckland Master’s birthday was celebrated in Auckland with a dozen abhyasis gathered for the whole day. Others attended both the satsanghs at 9am and 6pm. We watched a DVD from “He, the Hookah and I” series after morning satsangh and then discussed “Religion and Spirituality”. After a shared lunch, we watched some more talks by Master and followed it with a Q&A session with all the abhyasis participating. After evening satsangh, we had a shared dinner. The whole day was very special and we did not want the day to end, evidenced by the prolonged time of departure of abhyasis. August turned out to be an exciting month with the news of Master’s impending visit to Singapore for the APAC seminar and a possible visit to Australia/New Zealand/Fiji. The DVD series “He, the Hookah and I” is watched every second Sunday after satsangh. We have re-started the series for the benefit of those who missed it the previous time and also a refresher for those who had watched it. Abhyasis look forward to these sessions and it engenders a lively discussion after the DVD. Auckland Centre youth are planning some exciting events in the coming months, there will be a “Sahaj Marg Quiz afternoon” and an Open Evening for youth who would like to know more about Sahaj Marg. **Preceptor Seminar in New Zealand** On Saturday and Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> September we had our first preceptor seminar in New Zealand. It was held in

*(continued) Centre News—New Zealand*

Christchurch and sister Libby Crichton came over from Sydney to run it. It seemed very special to have two days to focus on our own development and our preceptor work. We were supported by Brother Yugaraja and Sister Balanathany of the Christchurch centre who drove us to and fro and supplied us with delicious food. Apart from sister Libby, there were six New Zealand preceptors present, three from the South Island and three from the North Island. Already on the Friday I could feel that Master was preparing us for the seminar. The next morning started with sittings and one brother said it was as if Master had put a balloon right over us. During the two days there was much laughter and discussion interspersed with meditation and reflection. We all went home grateful for the experience and richer. **SM**



Photo: Sydney Youth



Photo: Perth Centre

# Ashram Update

16th July Br Steven Haggart & Br Dipak Joshi attended a preliminary DA meeting with Liverpool Council to present the design & staging plans. Council were happy with the design and presentation, however because of the Natural watercourse will not allow construction on the land allocated to Master's cottage. Masters residence has now been incorporated into the Caretakers residence and this will also allow costs to remain within our projected budget.

As the estimated costs for the full Ashram Project are beyond our current budget, discussions took place with the proposed builder regarding infrastructure changes to decrease costs. Suggestions from this discussion will allow development of stage 1, ie the Meditation Hall and Dining facilities, with existing funds.

Our Architect, Br Steven Haggart is revising the design and we can then lodge the Development Application with Council .

John Smith, Vice President

## Ashram Work

Br. Sophy Hok and his brother have spent many hours working at the ashram installing the pump and laying the 3 phase electric cable from the house mains to the pump room so that we can pump water from the dam to water the garden. They have done this single handed and their time and energy is greatly appreciated. Our thanks to you both!



**Pictures Above:** Ashram for "Peace and Goodwill"

Coordination and contact: Waireti Amai and Libby Crichton

Please email all articles to [ecrichton@optus.net.au](mailto:ecrichton@optus.net.au)

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