



Pranams.

It gives us great joy to know that the Newsletter is now being read by many abhyasis and is reaching remote corners of the country. The flow of articles from the zones has been increasing and it is indeed a pleasure for us to compile the news.

The months of January and February have been very busy for Master. He has been travelling across the country and his North India tour is continuing, as we complete editing this issue.

Pujya Lalaji's birthday celebrations, the ZiC/CiC seminar, several abhyasi training programmes, VBSE programme and the Youth Seminar at Bangalore are some of the news articles of the current issue. The Shahjahanpur ashram is featured in the 'Centres of Light' section. 'Whispers from the Brighter World, Vol. 2', which is to be released 30th April is another gift to us from our Master.

The last date for the receipt of news articles for the May 2009 issue is 15th April 2009. Please note that all news articles along with photographs on the event must be routed through your respective ZICs.

*With Warm Regards,
Editorial Team*

followed by a mellifluous rendering of bhajans by Sis. Ranjana Mehta. Although we expected Master would take rest in the evening, to our surprise, Master announced that he would conduct five sittings over the period of his stay. This spelt out a very clear message to both abhyasis and functionaries that we need to cultivate a sense of urgency in ourselves in attending to mission work and also recognize and assign prime importance to our spiritual wing of existence.

On 26th, after morning satsangh, Master watched the Gujarati youth perform *garba* and *ras* (traditional Gujarati dance). He then decided to conduct a meeting of around 140 prefects from Gujarat and neighbouring states. Besides giving a sitting Master also gave a talk. He was exhausted and fortunately had a quiet evening after some rest.

Master arrived in **Delhi** on 27th afternoon, visited the zonal ashram on 28th morning and conducted satsangh. Around 2500 abhyasis from different centers attended the satsangh. During satsangh one abhyasi's cell phone rang. After satsangh Master asked the abhyasi whose cell phone was ringing to come near the stage and apologize to the abhyasis in the hall. He left for Satkhol on 29th morning.

On January 29th, Master reached **Moradabad**. Several hundred abhyasis lined up on either side of the road to greet Master. That night, Master halted at Rudrapur, and on the 30th morning he left for Sathkol after breakfast.

Master's Tour - January & February 2009

Master was in **Chennai** during the Pongal festival and many abhyasis visited Manapakkam ashram during the holidays. Master solemnized several marriages during this festive season. On January 19th he drove down to **Ramapuram** (he had inaugurated the ashram here in 1991). After conducting satsangh, he left for **Chittoor** which is an hour's drive away. He conducted satsangh upon arrival with about 1,100 abhyasis present. Following satsangh, he inaugurated a cottage prepared for his stay. In a private conversation, while speaking about death, he drew a parallel with people travelling in a train, where people get down and new members join, and we don't worry about anyone. In a similar way, when dear and near ones pass away, their demise should be treated in a way which does not affect the inner serenity and purity of abhyasis.

After a brief rest, Master conducted another satsangh in the evening and also gave a talk in which he exhorted people to accept change, for which we should meditate. On the 20th morning, Master conducted satsangh and left for Tirupati.

Upon reaching **Tirupati**, he conducted satsangh for about 1500 people assembled and also gave a talk. He was very happy and jovial in the cottage, looking at the Echoes India Newsletter, January 2009 issue, and had nostalgic memories of the photograph published in it. After lunch he left for Chittoor and returned to Chennai the following morning.



Master arrived in **Ahmedabad** on 23rd January. On 24th morning at the Adalaj ashram, as Master made his way to the meditation hall, he liked the pin-drop silence as all abhyasis were seated well before Master came there. Satsangh was





At **Satkhol** Master was welcomed with a song. Despite the arduous journey, Master spent time with abhyasis making interesting conversation and polite inquiries. January 31st was Rev. Lalaji Maharaj's birthday by the Hindu calendar. "It's the holiest of the holy Basant," remarked Master. An abhyasi presented him with a hat, typical of the mountain place. He wore the *topi* with much excitement, occasionally adjusting it for a proper fit.

On February 1st, Master visited **Almora**, a town famous for its Vivekananda memorial. As Master passed by the memorial, he remarked, "I have meditated here in 1958. This was six years before I got into Sahaj Marg. I am sure it is the same place where Swami Vivekananda had set foot". After lunch at an abhyasi's house, Master spent time with some abhyasis waiting to see him. A student wanted to know what is more important: study or meditation. "A student should focus on studies." A sister wished to know how she could make her husband meditate. "Don't force him, get transformed into a perfect person through your practice so that your husband would want to emulate you."

February 2nd was Rev. Lalaji Maharaj's birthday by the western calendar. After satsangh, seeing an abhyasi getting into some activity immediately, Master said, "We have to brood over our condition. Do not start activities immediately after satsangh." He released a DVD on the life of Lalaji Maharaj and enjoyed a skit based on the hierarchy of Sahaj Marg. He gave a talk announcing the publication of 'Whispers - Volume 2 & 3'. On February 3rd, Master visited the picturesque Naukuchiatal. In an informal chat, Master asked to "avoid people who have a frown on their face. Saints should always have joy on their face. Loyalty to the right person, honesty at the right time and integrity, go a long way in breeding spirituality".

On 5th February Master inaugurated the ashram at **Hapur** on the way to Delhi.

On 7th February, Master inaugurated the **Sonepat** ashram. He appeared very happy and was in a light mood. After satsangh he gave a speech in which he said, "Silence is the language of God, while love has no language. There can be no love without discipline and no discipline without spirituality". He advocated the fact by saying, "Love has no form or religion and thus it is only by the negation of differences that the spirit of universal brotherhood and love can be ignited in all our hearts". The melodious voice of Br. Gurpeeet flowed across the hall as he sang a few devotional songs.

On 8th February, Master arrived at **Jaipur**. Abhyasis had lined up to have a glimpse and as he arrived, the joy could be seen on their faces. On 10th morning Master conducted satsangh for about 2300 abhyasis seated well before he arrived. Some abhyasis brought their children to be named by him and he said that henceforth, he would name babies on the sole condition that the parents would not use any caste name or surname with the name given by him. To a sister who said her husband is not in the mission, he replied that he will come, "It is the negative thought which delays, you should bring him with you".

On 11th morning, satsangh was followed by a play of Mahabharata on the theme of 'Goal'. In an informal conversation, Master mentioned that there is no such thing as a pre-destined life. In a sense, everything can happen, but what will happen depends on our 'will'.

Master came to zonal ashram, **Delhi** on 12th afternoon from Jaipur. He conducted satsangh in the evening. There was a festive look all over the place. For the first time Master stayed in the cottage for the night. He conducted satsangh in the morning and left for Bhopal in the afternoon. At **Bhopal** he inaugurated the meditation hall on 15th February. The ashram is located in a village called as Adampur Chawni, 15 km from Bhopal. He solemnized two marriages after satsangh. Later he left for **Indore** by road. On 16th, he inaugurated the meditation hall at Indore ashram. Br. Ajay Bhattar spoke on the occasion and said, "The ashram is to be used for meditation and looking for Him within ourselves, fixing our only goal as Master". He also said that in coming times more people will accept spirituality. The ashram is located within the city, with a seating capacity of approximately 800. Master left for Mumbai on the 18th morning. He spent a day there before proceeding to Kolkata on the 19th for a brief rest before he continues his tour to other places.





Results of Essay Writing Competition



The results of the 2008 Essay competition, that saw the participation of nearly 75000 students across the country, have been declared. The competition was held in English and Hindi as well as in many regional languages. The topic for the junior category was "Truth is Courage", and for the senior category it was "Self Respect and Self Confidence Can Shape One's Character".

The winners in the English section in the junior category are Akanksha (Pune), Amal (Delhi), Sushma (Hyderabad), Arhun (Vadagara, Kerala), Deborpriya (Ranchi), Divya (Ghazipur, UP), Naina (Mohali), Sanika (Nasik) and Siddhant (Shakti Nagar, UP).

The winners in the senior category are Anuradha (Nainital), Naresh (Jaipur), Samina (Indore), Anoop (Namakkal, TN), Divya (Noida), Ishika (Kullu, HP), Keethan (Chennai), Snehal (Pune) and Varun (Jullundhar).

Review of Functioning of the Mission in India



The week before Pongal, the harvest festival in Tamil Nadu, witnessed a spectrum of activities in Babuji Memorial Ashram, Chennai. A 200 strong contingent of the mission's functionaries

- members of the Working Committee, Zones-in-charge and Centres-in-charge from all over India had gathered for an intensive review of their functioning for 3 days from 10th - 12th January, 2009.

On 10th January, Master addressed the ZiCs and the next day he again addressed the entire assembly. In both the talks, Master lamented the lowering of standards of discipline in the mission and said that if discipline was neglected, it would lead to dismemberment of the mission. He deplored the fact that caste divisions in the mission had not disappeared even four decades after Babuji regrettably declared in the year 1966 that he was a 'failure' in uniting abhyasis across caste and religion.

Master said that, while we were not capable of loving the Master in the Divine way, we could attract his grace - by serving him, the easier path available to us.

On the whole, it was a painful experience to hear from Master his assessment of the lack of external change in us - to which he has been making frequent references in his recent talks and comments.

During the workshops conducted for the CiCs, many presentations were made updating and briefing the participants on administration of centres, accounts, publications, security, membership administration and so on. The participants had useful interactions with the presenters and cleared their doubts. This exercise is planned to be repeated every two years.

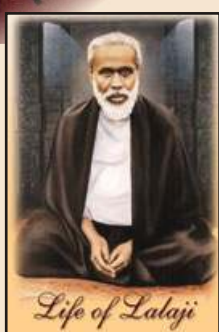


Special Publication

'Whispers from the Brighter World - A Second Revelation' will be released on April 30th, 2009.

Beloved Master has enabled us to get our own Special Collector's Edition. Please contact your local SRCM administrator for more information.

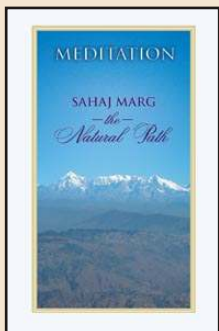
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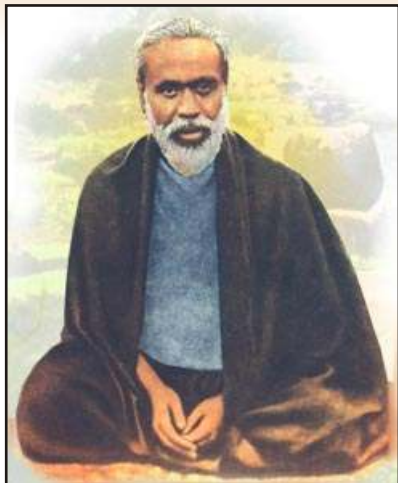
'Life of Lalaji' set of DVDs and Book

We are pleased to present on the auspicious occasion of Rev. Lalaji Maharaj's birth anniversary, a DVD set: 'Life of Lalaji'. This biographical movie on the life and teachings of Lalaji Maharaj was produced, enacted and released in video cassette form by the abhyasis of Pune centre, several years ago. Based on constant and popular demand for the availability of this movie, it is being re-released as a beautifully packaged DVD set and book - with some rare photographs of Lalaji Maharaj.

Sahaj Marg Brochure



This brochure can serve as a wonderful introduction to the 'Sahaj Marg' system of meditation for spiritual aspirants. This is standard introductory material recommended to be shared with all potential candidates seeking to join Sahaj Marg. It provides the salient features of Sahaj Marg practice along with local contact information, and may be handed out at Sahaj Marg information sessions.



Pujya Lalaji Maharaj's Birthday Celebrations

Cuttack, Orissa

A two day celebration took place, where around 160 abhyasis from all the centres of Orissa Zone participated.

On February 1st, after satsangh, salient points from Master's talks concerning mission's growth, the effect of global recession, how to improve the activities of the mission and to encourage larger participation of abhyasis were discussed.

On February 2nd, satsangh was followed by a talk on the principles which Lalaji emphasized as an integral part of Sahaj Marg sadhana. Development of qualities like self-discipline, serving others without any expectation, preparing ourselves to help our Master to effectively carry out the transformation within us, were discussed.

Sharing of personal experiences by abhyasis on how to develop faith in Master and mission and self-introspection was the next session. In the evening, a cultural programme was presented by the children and some young abhyasis. One and all could experience the Divine charge that prevailed in the premises and were benefited by His grace.

Aluva, Kerala

Aluva centre conducted a full-day program with satsanghs at 9 am and 5 pm. A video on Rev Lalaji's life was shown which contains principles of Sahaj Marg as proposed by our Grandmaster. As the video was in Hindi, it was translated into Malayalam, in order to make it easier for the abhyasis to understand. The translation was read out at intervals to the satisfaction of all assembled. This helped everybody to be in Constant Remembrance of the Master as was the very purpose of the celebration.

Gulbarga, Karnataka

A one day programme with about 280 abhyasis and 70 children participated from various places in Gulbarga district. Abhyasis started arriving a day prior to the celebration where arrangements for food and overnight stay of the abhyasis had been made. On 2nd February satsangh was held at 9:00 am. After breakfast, a video on the life of Lalaji Maharaj was shown. After lunch there was a program of songs and poems presented by children and devotional songs from abhyasis. Evening satsangh was held at 5:00 pm. Throughout the day an atmosphere of special grace was experienced and expressed by many abhyasis. The program was organized in a simple manner filled with love and highly appreciated by all abhyasis.

VGT, Andhra Pradesh

Celebrations were conducted at the newly acquired regional ashram (50 acres) at Khazipet, Guntur district. More than 1000 abhyasis including children from nearby sub-centres attended the function.

Morning satsangh was followed by reading of the biography and teachings of Lalaji Maharaj. Performance of children in drawing, recitation, and small skits highlighting the essence of Sahaj Marg was inspiring and bore testimony to the effective impact of Sahaj Marg on the next generation with a promise for spiritual evolution.

The Joint Secretary, Br. A.P. Durai participated in the proceedings inspiring the abhyasis. He conducted the evening satsangh and subsequently presided over a prefects meeting.

Mumbai, Maharashtra

A large number of abhyasis from Mumbai centre participated with enthusiasm in the function. On Sunday, the function started with morning meditation followed by bhajans, reading on Life of Lalaji Maharaj and a talk on 'Duties of Abhyasis' from Lalaji's teachings. In the afternoon, youth team performed a skit on 'Sufi Saints of Middle East' which stirred up thoughts.

On 2nd Feb, morning meditation was followed by bhajans by sisters and skits by children. In the afternoon, a movie on 'Life of Lalaji Maharaj' was played for all to absorb the essence of his teachings. The whole atmosphere at ashram was so blissful that everybody went back charged as the two day function concluded with evening meditation.

Ahmednagar, Maharashtra

On this auspicious day around 216 abhyasis from several centers in Maharashtra participated in the function. After the morning satsangh, bhajans, skits by children, discussions and speeches were organized in remembrance of Lalaji Maharaj. Simultaneously an 'Open House' programme was organized for seekers of spirituality from Ahmednagar and nearby areas. This was conducted by Br. R.D. Kulkarni from Shirval and Sis. Kale from Satara.

The outcome of this celebration was rightly described by Br. Subhash Vaidya in following words "Whatever we have received from our beloved Master must be distributed amongst everyone open-heartedly so that Master's grace will remain upon us forever.



Meditation Hall Inauguration - Valsad, Gujarat

On the occasion of Rev. Lalaji Maharaj's birth anniversary, Br. C. Rajagopalan inaugurated the meditation hall at Valsad. This marked the commencement of Sunday satsanghs at the ashram. Around 300 abhyasis from different centers of South Gujarat attended the function, which included showcasing of Lalaji Maharaj's videos, talks by abhyasi brothers and a prefect meet.

The ashram which is spread over one and half acres of land, is situated near the Valsad-Dharampur State Highway, about 4 kms from National Highway No. 8 connecting Mumbai and Delhi. The meditation hall can accommodate 250 abhyasis. The ashram also has a children's corner and a toilet block along with storage and security cabins.

Satsanghs were held in neighbouring centres of Surat, Navsari and Vapi prior to the inaugural ceremony at Valsad. The satsanghs were followed by talks and question-answer sessions.

Prefect Training Programme (PTP - Batch I)

The first batch of this programme was conducted for the Prefects from TN South, 2B Zone, at Malampuzha Retreat Centre. Forty six prefects participated in it.

The subjects handled were, Essentials for a Spiritual Trainer, Prefect's Work and Team Work and Harmony. These were well prepared and presented with a lot of care, concern and love. All felt that as a result of their sincerity and due to the receptivity of the participants, the sessions were very effective.

The ambience and the facilities of Malampuzha retreat was something very special and made for such programmes.

The training programme ran for nearly ten hours, with sufficient breaks for lunch and tea.

All felt a deep gratitude to Master, everything that took place in these two days, for it was His love, permission and presence which made it all possible.



Kerala Prefect Seminar- Aluva

An all Kerala prefect seminar was held at Aluva from 31st January-1st of February 2009. The seminar was presided over by ZiC, Br. K.U. Mohan. The aim of the event was to share the important points discussed during the meet of ZICs and CICs at Chennai. The pattern of the meeting at Chennai was followed during the seminar also. Talks were given by three facilitators - each handling eleven subjects such as responsibilities of CiC, character formation, ashrams, SRCM marriages, book sales and publication, security, accounting, etc. This seminar has been efficacious in improving the knowledge of the functionaries of the mission on their working and has given a sense of direction to their work.

North Karnataka Prefects Seminar



A seminar for prefects of North Karnataka Zone was organized on 25th December 2008 at Gulbarga Ashram. 30 prefects attended the seminar. The program included a talk by ZiC Br. Raju Kashampurkar. Other activities during the day included reflection on work, group discussion, a question-answer session followed by discussions on center level activities like conducting open house sessions, abhyasi training program, organizing full day program and planning for sitting chart for nearby centres and reporting. Master's audio CD covering important points regarding prefects work was played in the evening followed by satsangh. All prefects felt greatly benefitted from the program and expressed that such a seminar should be conducted once every six months.



“The only thing that stands between an individual and the God within himself is E-G-O, ego. And when ego is given away, thrown away, surrendered, we have G-O-D in its place.” - Chariji



Abhyasi Training Programme on Character Formation



A day long abhyasi training programme was organized by Digboi centre, Assam, on 4th January. About 200 abhyasis from nearby centres like Tinsukia, Tezpur, Jorhat, Sibsagar, Duliajan, Naharkatia, Dibrugarh, Doomdooma of Assam & Arunachal Pradesh attended the program. In line with Rev. Master's recent speeches, prime focus was given on 'Character Formation' of abhyasis. Br. Asoke Sengupta of Guwahati gave a presentation quoting Lalaji's words that, "However high a person may have risen in spirituality, if he is immoral, even the breath of spirituality has not touched him." It was also highlighted that, "Master is responsible for our spiritual progress, but we are responsible for transforming our character and attitude" and the paramount importance of Babuji's words "Being true to Yourself" first, to ensure change within us. After the presentation, a question-answer session followed, mainly from the youth, which further inspired the whole audience with a firm commitment towards their own self.

Bhadravathi, Karnataka

Bhadravathi, the town of first steel industry of pre-independence started by M. Vishveshwaraya in 1922, saw the first mission celebrations on February 2nd this year.

This centre which started with 3 abhyasis in August 2008 has grown to a strength of 30, with the blessings of Master, the enthusiasm of the local abhyasis, the volunteers, and sustained visits of prefects from Shimoga, Tiptur and Bangalore.

The celebrations were held in the house of Sis. Nagmani, with local abhyasis arranging for food. Sis. Roopa and Br. Pramod from Bangalore conducted the day long program, which comprised of playing of Lalaji Maharaj's video, discussion on the practice and dumb charades on quotations from our Masters, captivated the participating abhyasis to stay right through the day.

It was really a joy to watch the enthusiasm of the young volunteers and the urgency shown by the abhyasis of this new centre to hold an ashram function.

Youth Seminar - Preparing for the future



A 3 day residential youth seminar - 'Preparing for the Future' was held at Bangalore from 24th-26th January. Around 25 abhyasis in the age group of 18-35 participated. Each day began with satsangh, talks and discussion on selected topics during the day, followed by voluntary work in the evening. The first day was focussed on character development, teamwork, brotherhood and basics of Sahaj Marg. All the abhyasis could feel the message deep within.

The second day, a session on various mission activities was presented. Later the abhyasis volunteered for activities of their choice, and started participating in right earnest.

The third day saw the abhyasis, sharing their experiences, and there was a singular feeling of Master's influence in their lives. The seminar also had a skit by abhyasis, team building games and some special movies with spiritual significance during the late evenings. We saw the emerging of a very important way of reaching out to the youth, who are full of enthusiasm and zest to work for the mission, and to help channelize their energies in the right direction.

Abhyasi Training Programme at Chandrapur

An abhyasi training programme in Hindi was arranged to serve as a reminder towards better and assiduous practice for all abhyasis of Chandrapur centre (Maharashtra) on 28th Dec. 2008. The purpose was to present the Sahaj Marg practice and philosophy. After the satsangh, in the morning, a video CD talk by Rev. Master in Hindi, on 'Ishwar se Sambandh Jodo' [Make a relationship with God] was played. Talks were given on topics like goal of human life and the role of Guru, prayer, meditation, cleaning, and importance of diary-writing. In the afternoon session a few speakers expressed their views on the various aspects of Sahaj Marg sadhana. Thereafter to assess the individual interest in sadhana and correct approach, a questionnaire was circulated among abhyasis. The programme concluded with the evening satsangh.





Children's Workshop at Aurangabad

A one day Children's Workshop was organised at Aurangabad on 18th January 2009. Twenty-two children aged between 5-12 yrs gathered to unfold a day filled with fun and knowledge and with a way to live life. The programme began with the prayer, followed by a drawing competition. A unique interactive session was held where children identified and explained the elements of nature and their virtues. It was heartening to see that all the children mingled so well. Stories about hope, perseverance and gratitude were told to the children.



VBSE Faculty Development and Facilitation Program - Ranchi

A two-day state level program was held at Ranchi from January 3-4, 2009. The purpose of the program was to intensify the VBSE activity in the state of Jharkhand. About 59 delegates participated in the program which was led by Br. Aroon Dave and Sis. Leena Dave, faculties from Kolkata, along with ZiC Dr. G.M. Bhatnagar, Br. Arun Kumar Lal and Br. Manoj Tiwari. The faculties of the event threw light on how to structure and present the VBSE program which was helpful for the centers which have not yet taken up these activities.

It was explained that this program is about spreading the concept of values wherever we get an opportunity to do so. Though the VBSE curriculum is for schools and associated activities are the main aspects of the program, it should not be limited to schools. VBSE should be used in a comprehensive manner in all walks of an abhyasi's life. Br. Dave shared his views about motivating teachers who are the real carriers of the VBSE program and stressed that we have to gradually lead everybody towards spirituality. Sis. Leena gave some tips and suggestions to speak in public. Br. Manoj dealt with personality development and balanced existence. Participants gave presentations on subjects of their choice and feedback was given to improve their communication skills.

In a meeting held to discuss the future activities of the center, it was suggested that the introduction can be made more interesting by telling stories and experiments a little more innovatively. A teacher's training kit, containing 2 cd's, was presented to each center.



Stress Management and Balanced Growth

Open house sessions were organized at various centers in MP, including Guru Dattatraya Institute of Technology (GDIT), Indore, Indore University and Rajgarh center, 200 km from Indore. The theme for the sessions was 'Stress Management and Balanced Growth'. It was explained that we create stress due to an unregulated mind and regulation of the mind is possible through the practice of meditation. Our pre-conceived notions and prejudices can stop us in taking right action. Spirituality helps us in establishing a balance between inner and outer demands.

An introduction to Sahaj Marg was presented to the audience. At GDIT, 200 students and 30 faculty members attended the program. At Rajgarh, abhyasis had arranged for a session coordinating with nearby centers like Khilchipur, Kurabar and Biora. Around 125 people attended the program and 35 of them started practice. Another open house at Morena, was attended by 83 people and 33 were willing to start practice.

Introducing Sahaj Marg to Engineering College Students, Solapur

Abhyasi students of the Govt. Medical College, Solapur (Maharashtra) presented Sahaj Marg to the students of B.I.G Engineering college on 19th and 20th January. Around 300 students were present for each session. Our Sahaj Marg youth speakers explained very effectively the necessity and usefulness of meditation in general and Sahaj Marg way of meditation in particular, to the student community. One could see the total acceptability from the student audience as it was delivered by their same age group with full conviction and self experience. The speeches were followed by a question-answer session, which resulted in around 126 students showing interest to start the practice. The students were also given basic introductory literature; and for those who showed further interest sittings were arranged in the hostel campus, with the co-operation of the college management. This overwhelming response has prompted us to contact another engineering college, BM Institute of Technology Solapur, who have acceded to our proposal. The volunteers have accepted this 'Reward of work is more work', with a sense of gratitude to our beloved Master.



Connecting with Abhyasis



Chennai has about 8,500 registered abhyasis, with the Sunday satsangh at the Manapakkam ashram witnessing about 2500 local abhyasis. A program was organized on the 28th of December by the Chrompet sub-centre in Chennai. Close to 120 abhyasis turned out, which was a indication to the effort made prior to the program to invite all registered abhyasis. There were two short talks, the first one by a local prefect covering the practice, and the second one by an abhyasi who talked about her experience with Sahaj Marg and the manner in which she has benefited by the practice. This was followed by a question-answer session which served to clarify doubts, gain clarity on the practice and to reinforce the need for regularity to benefit from the practice. The two-hour program concluded with satsangh.

Master has repeatedly emphasized the need for an attitude of 'After Sales Service.' Every abhyasi starts the practice because of an inner need. Reaching out to the abhyasis to establish them in their sadhana is an important aspect of helping them and this objective seemed to have been effectively realized by this event.

Personal Character as Foundation for Spiritual Life

A 2 day special training program for abhyasis of the age group 30-50 on this theme, as conceptualized by Br. Ajay Bhattar, was held at Babuji Memorial Ashram, New Panvel on December 13-14, 2008.

The success of the youth convention at Pune in October 2008 motivated the abhyasis to conduct a similar program at Panvel for older abhyasis. The program was a mix of lectures, activities, skits, quiz, games and presentations covering topics such as Look Only at Him, Character Protects Life, Brotherhood, Let Sahaj Marg Show in You and Serve to Deserve. Abhyasis from nearby centers of Pune and Nasik also joined in.

Events followed one after another in a packed program with ample time allocated for introspection and diary writing. All the topics, finalized in consultation with Br Ajay Bhattar, were so interlinked that one topic often led to another and abhyasis were so captivated that the two days seemed very short. The program ended with suggestions to have similar programmes more often.

Gathering in Coal Belt Area-North AP

In the northern Andhra Pradesh, what is commonly referred to as the Coal Belt, lie several centers of our mission within a span of about 50 KM. The ashrams in these centres were constructed a while ago with assistance from the authorities of the coal mines, many of whom are our abhyasis. Jaipur is centrally located to all these places and has an ashram site of 10.5 acres with a proposed colony for abhyasis around it.

On Sunday, January 25th, about 200 abhyasis from nearby centers attended the first satsangh at a training institute in Mancherial. Some abhyasis, including the ZiC, AP-North, travelled from Hyderabad for this gathering.

After Mancherial, there was a gathering at a new center-Goleti. The center has grown to over twenty abhyasis from none in a short span. There is encouraging support from the local mine authorities who are refurbishing an old building for future activities of the mission. After satsangh at Goleti, the group of abhyasis, travelled to Bellampalle ashram. Satsangh at Bellampalle was attended by over eighty abhyasis. The travelers spent the night at Godavarikhani.

The next day, 26th January, started with satsangh at 6:30 AM at the ashram in Godavarikhani. Following breakfast, the group moved to Jaipur ashram site, a short distance north of river Godavari. Satsangh was conducted at 10 AM in a very natural setting under the shade of peepal and neem trees. The place was vibrant with Master's presence.

Faculty Training Programme at Jammu

A three day residential training programme to develop faculties who can speak about Sahaj Marg to various segments of society was held at Jammu on 27th December 2008. There were 24 registered participants (7 of them preceptors) from J&K and Himachal Pradesh. Each of them had been given a topic for preparation a week in advance. Four faculty members from Delhi conducted the program. They interacted with participants and provided feedback regarding their strengths, weaknesses and scope for improvement. The participants felt that the training program was of immense value in making them understand Sahaj Marg correctly, besides providing tremendous spiritual benefit.





Shahjahanpur Ashram

The construction of the Shahjahanpur ashram was one of Babuji's loving contributions to his Master, Lalaji Maharaj of Fategarh. Babuji took very keen interest, right from finding an appropriate land to the construction of the ashram. He personally ordered to erect a marble stone in the site, with the inscription 'Shahjahanpur – The Birth Place of Sahaj Marg System'. The ashram is nearly 8 Km. from Shahjahanpur Railway Station and about 7 Km. from the Roadways Bus Station.

The Shahjahanpur ashram is spread over fifteen acres and is located at the juncture of Shahjahanpur-Hardoi road and National Highway No. 24. The ashram's meditation hall -the 'Dhyan Kaksh' was constructed under the guidance of Babuji from 1973 to 1976. This meditation hall was formally dedicated by Babuji to his Master Lalaji during Basant celebrations on 5th February 1976.

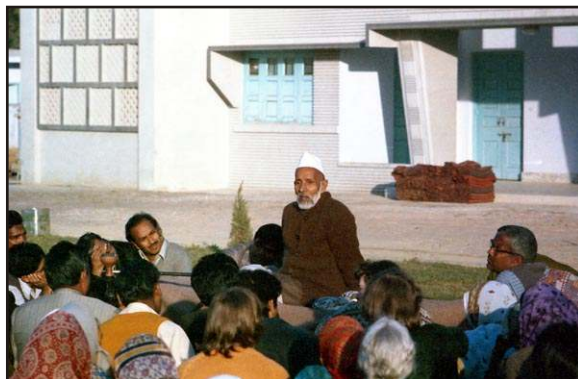
The meditation hall has a seating capacity of 800 abhyasis. It has three enclosed verandas and a stage on the eastern side. On the wall behind the dais is embedded the Mission emblem made of stained glass which was donated by an abhyasi from Canada. This emblem is situated on the East and hence changes its colors with the rising sun. The attractive flooring of green marble was brought from Ambaji Hills near Ahmedabad. The hall has been designed to provide a natural air conditioning system, so as to make it warm during winter and cool during summer. This hall is surrounded by a platform on the outside with red Agra stone flooring and the wall around is clad with white Agra stone.

A simple double storey building has two dormitories each for brothers and sisters on the ground floor and fourteen rooms on the first floor. Of the fourteen rooms, one room was donated by Babuji in memory of his father Rai Bahadur Shri Badri Prashad ji, and another room by Chariji in memory of his mother, Janaki.

The ashram also houses Babuji Maharaj's samadhi sthal, a spacious kitchen and a dining hall. Babuji's cottage and Master's cottage are also situated on either sides of the meditation hall.

In between the two main gates on the western side of the ashram is a grand fountain with a triangular pillar with the mission emblem made of red stone, with a copper sheet all around, surrounded by colored water jets. Four arches on each side of the fountain enhance it's architectural beauty.

The ashram campus is full of lush green lawns, trees, shrubs and herbs all around which brings in different varieties of birds. The kadam tree planted by Babuji Maharaj has been flourishing for the past 33 years.



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