



Dear brothers and sisters,

Pranams,

We are seeing a tremendous increase in the articles we are receiving from all around the country, thanks to your interest and participation. Please keep them coming, so that abhyasis all around the country can benefit from the experience. In a recent meeting with the editorial team, Rev. Master has advised that the articles must be free-flowing, interesting to read, and not stiff. Please keep these factors in mind as you develop the write-up for the newsletter.

The last date for receipt of news articles for the July issue would be 15th June 2008. Please route the write-up along with a photograph of the event through your respective zone-in-charge.

Regards
Editorial Team

Master's Tour in March

Tiruppur Ashram Inauguration

On 28th February, Master visited Tiruppur for a period of rest and to inaugurate a large and spacious meditation hall at the Diamond Jubilee Park. The inauguration was held on 2nd March, 2008, in a festive atmosphere. He gave a talk in Tamil with a generous sprinkling of Malayalam words, to the delight of the abhyasis. The hall is large, airy, spacious and can seat about 2500 abhyasis. The building is made in a simple style, to make it possible for further growth as and when needed.



SMSF Retreat Centre at Malampuzha, Kerala

On March 3rd, Master traveled by road from Tiruppur to the Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation's Retreat Center in Malampuzha, Kerala. It is on the outskirts of Palakkad, about 95kms from Tiruppur and 50kms from Coimbatore. He laid the foundation stone for the meditation hall, inaugurated the dormitory block and conducted a satsangh, which seemed to transport us all to an unknown world.



Coimbatore

Master's Coimbatore visit was another grand revelation, as He arrived by road, tired but looking forward to being with abhyasi brothers and sisters. Master came out to meet the huge crowd of abhyasis, saying, "One can be happy under any situation". Master also said, "I came by myself, without waiting to be called or invited; I came for two reasons: One, I don't want you to think that it is your ashram, it is My Ashram!" When abhyasis repeatedly asked for the second reason, He said, "Second reason for coming, is to teach you that it is not merely Master's ashram, but our ashram!"



Bangalore

Master arrived in Bangalore via flight from Coimbatore on 6th March. On the 8th He inspected the construction for Lalaji Nilayam Meditation Centre which is scheduled for completion in October 2008. He was happy with the progress of work and the quality of construction being maintained.

On Sunday He visited the Banashankari ashram where around 2000 abhyasis had gathered to meet Him. The ashram was bursting at the seams yet Master was quite relaxed and appreciated the improvements that had been made to the infrastructure. In spite of the large number of abhyasis, He took a walk along the corridor to His favourite place. He met many on this stroll through the ashram and abhyasis were grateful for this opportunity to be with Him.



Master conducted two weddings after the satsangh and then spoke on the need to maintain tolerance and control in order to create a place which was conducive to our spiritual growth. On the 9th He spoke at the Karnataka Prefects Seminar which was held at CREST. He said, "When are we going to become honest with ourselves? Use our time usefully for ourselves. Work honestly, with dedication, sense of purpose; the reward for ourselves, forgetting that old lie that we are working for Him. I repeat, nobody has ever worked for Him."

SMSF Retreat Centre, Panshet

On March 14, 2008, Rev. Master inaugurated the second SMSF retreat centre in India, located in a picturesque setting on the outskirts of Pune, Maharashtra. This retreat center is located on the banks of the Khadak Vasla lake near the Panshet Dam, with rolling hills surrounding the area. The facility includes a meditation hall, kitchen & dining area and dormitory block. Similar to the retreat centre in Malampuzha, Kerala which was inaugurated recently, this facility will be open from April 14, 2008 onwards to abhyasis who wish to commence retreats.

Panvel Ashram, Mumbai

Master left Pune for Panvel on 17th March by road. The big gathering of 1400 loving hearts eagerly awaiting Master's arrival rejoiced at seeing him. It was a sight to see Master waving to all, acknowledging individually the greetings of each and everyone and the tiny tots getting a pat with his walking stick. On reaching the ashram Master conducted satsangh. It was a very deep sitting and everyone present could feel an intense yet subtle flow of love.

Master visited each and every corner of the ashram, peering into each and every room. He went to the terrace and had an overall view of the 'green zone'. On 18th morning, Master conducted satsangh, after which the Marathi translation of 'Heart Speak 2005' was released. Thereafter Master went to the green zone, planted a sapling, and on the way back to His cottage, He sat under a canopy and entered into a jovial conversation with some abhyasis from Israel. He narrated his experiences and the difficulties he had faced when he visited those countries. Around 9PM he came and spent some time with abhyasis in the hall adjoining the dining hall.

Master's visit to Mumbai coincided with the festival of Holi, when evil and impurity are burnt in the 'holi fire' after which people dance around the fire, which has sanctified them. Holi is a festival of colours depicting rejuvenated life. True that there were no colours around but everyone could experience the different shades of peace, love and joy in the inner most core of their hearts.

Master on the banks of the Mandovi, Goa



CREST Retreat Centre, Panshet



Panvel Ashram - Under the mango trees



Panvel Ashram - Meditation Hall

Goa

Master flew to Goa on 21st. He stayed at the guesthouse of an abhyasi brother on the banks of the Mandovi River. On 22nd morning and evening Master went to the venue where about 400 abhyasis had gathered from nearby centres like Hubli, Belgaum, Pune, Mumbai and Nasik.

Master conducted satsangh on Sunday morning after which he gave a short talk. He said that next time he would come only if there are 500 abhyasis. "Why is the husband not able to bring his wife and the wife not able to bring her husband here, when they are able to go to the cinema and honeymoon together?" He said, "Here it is a spiritual honeymoon. We have to distribute what we receive, otherwise it will stink. In giving alone is there life, and God gives us only for giving. Remember this".

On 23rd evening Master came out of the cottage and sat on the banks of the river. About 40 abhyasis sat at His Divine feet in silence. He conducted a satsangh after which He went inside the cottage as it started to rain. On 24th morning Master visited the place where Sunday satsanghs were conducted and then proceeded to the airport to fly to Chennai via Mumbai.

24th July, 2008 at Lucknow

Master's 81st Birth Anniversary Celebrations will be held at Lucknow, UP, India on July 23, 24 & 25, 2008.

The circular, forms & information pertaining to the celebrations are available on the Mission's website at:
<http://www.srcm.org/members/24july2008/index.jsp>

Abhyasis are requested to register themselves as early as possible, preferably before 15th May 2008.

Volunteers are required to be present at the venue a minimum of 2 weeks before the celebrations to assist in the preparations. Some volunteers will also be required to stay on for ten days after the celebrations for winding up operations.

SMSF Retreat Centres

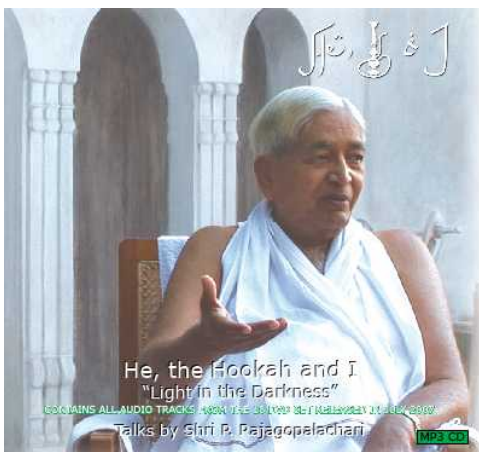
The SMSF retreat centres at Malampuzha and Panshet are open for abhyasis from April 14th 2008. Abhyasis who wish to retreat for a period of 3 to 30 days can apply.

For more details please check:
<http://sahajmarg.org/welcome/retreat/index.html>

New MP3 CD

'He, the Hookah and I - Light in the Darkness'

This MP3 CD contains the audio tracks from the 18-DVD set 'He the Hookah and I' which was released in July 2007. These are talks given by Master for this special publication.



Ashram Maintenance Orientation Program

The first batch of this program (AMOP) will run from 1st June to 30th June 2008 at Babuji Memorial Ashram, Chennai. This program conducted in English will provide intense training on all facets of maintaining an ashram.

The following are eligible to apply for this programme:

1. Abhyasis from India between the age group of 19 to 50.
2. Must have been practicing Sahaj Marg for at least one year.
3. Must have attended at least one bhandara/celebration.
4. Must attach a certificate of conduct from the respective zone/centre/Preceptor/country-in-charge.
5. Must not expect any other support, financial or otherwise (other than food and accommodation which will be provided free at ashram) during the programme tenure. They must carry enough clothing for their stay and some cash to cover their personal expenses.
6. Must be highly disciplined and motivated to participate for the full tenure.
7. We will also take 3 overseas abhyasis for the program.

Participants who complete the program successfully will be eligible for absorption as Ashram Staff in Manapakkam and across Ashrams in India.

Abhyasis must route their applications through their respective ZIC/CIC/Preceptor-in-charge/country-in-charge by 10th May 2008. Short listed candidates will be intimated by 12th May 2008 and they must report at Manapakkam Ashram by 28th May 2008. The completed application copies can be forwarded to the following address.

S. Prakash, Ashram Maintenance Manager,
Babuji Memorial Ashram, Shri Ram Chandra Mission - World Headquarters,
Manapakkam, Chennai - 600 116. India.
Ph: +91 44 4217 1111
Email: prakash@seechangeworld.com
Application Form: <http://www.srcm.org/members/forms/amop-appform.pdf>

CREST - Sadhana Program for Youth

CREST is happy to announce a new training program designed only for abhyasis in the age group of 20 - 30 years. The 'Sadhana Program for Youth' will be a 6 day residential program in CREST. The schedule of this program will be similar to that of the Sadhana Program, with facilitated discussions on topics specific to the Youth.

Some of the topics that will be dealt with via facilitated discussions are 'The Spirit of Volunteering', 'Marriage by Sahaj Marg Padhdhati', 'Relationships at Workplace and at Home', 'Financial Planning' and 'Family Planning/Importance of having a Family'.

Facilitated discussions on Meditation, Cleaning, Prayer and Constant Remembrance will also be held similar to the Sadhana Program.

The inaugural session of this training program in English will be conducted from 17th June to 22nd June, 2008. All abhyasis falling in the age group of 20 - 30 years are eligible to participate in the training program.

Application forms are available at:
<http://sahajmarg.org/welcome/crest/index.html>
Applications can be sent to the email ID crest.applications@sahajmarg.org with 'Sadhana Program : Youth' as the subject line.

VBSE Programmes

Rajasthan

The Value Based Spiritual Education Programme is being accepted in the state of Rajasthan very well. Sister Rani Mishra, who is the Faculty in-charge for VBSE in Rajasthan Zone, conducted a workshop for abhyasis at Kota on 13th January 2008, and on 20th March at Scholars' Academy, a secondary school in Khatipura, Jaipur. The Director and Principal of the school also attended the workshop. The programme was well appreciated by all the participants.

Madanapalli

A VBSE program was conducted on March 1st in the premises of Viswam B.Ed., college. Around 110 students participated. Br.Venkat Reddy spoke about the 'Need for Values' and Br. Brahmanandam spoke about the 'Implementation of Values in Education'. Br. Brahmanandam also clarified the queries put forth by the participants.

Anantapur

In March, the VBSE team under the guidance of Sis Gayathri visited the local schools where they explained the importance of having a value based system. The school managements have shown an interest in implementing the VBSE syllabus in their schools.

De-stressing through Meditation

Police Academy, Mysore

Br. Bhaskar Rao of Bangalore Centre gave a talk on 'De-stressing through Meditation' at the Karnataka Police Academy, Mysore. This was for officers of the Karnataka Police who were attending a refresher course at the Academy.

Through his effective oration on this well-prepared, interesting and need-of-the-hour topic, Br. Bhaskar Rao connected the outward stressful life, work-pressure, the various negative effects that man is facing, to the inner peace and serenity that one can achieve through meditation. He focused on 'Stress', 'Mind', 'Goal' and 'The Ultimate Goal'. The whole programme was interactive with full participation from the senior Police officials who attended. The session concluded with a Q&A session.



Talk on Stress Management

IFFCO Kalol, Gujarat

A talk on "Stress Management" was delivered by Br. C. Rajagopalan on 19th March at the Training Centre Auditorium located within the plant premises under the auspices of the Technocrat Forum of Indian Farmers Fertilisers Co-operative Ltd (IFFCO), Kalol.

More than a hundred employees of IFFCO-Kalol including all Joint GMs and DGMs participated in the program. There was a good response among the employees and many were keen to begin the practice of Sahaj Marg system of meditation.



Life Insurance Corporation of India

Jaipur

The Life Insurance Corporation of India, Jaipur, under its HRD program, invited our Mission to give a presentation on meditation and stress management. We were asked to do the very first session of 90 minutes, of their two day program. The presentation was basically focused on 'What is Meditation', 'Benefits of Meditation', 'What Sahaj Marg Offers' and 'How to Start Sahaj Marg Meditation'. This program was organized by Br. Sanjeev Singh, in different batches for all the employees of LIC, under Jaipur Division. Around fourteen such sessions have been organized during the last three months. In all the sessions, participants have been highly motivated and have readily agreed to start meditation in this system.



Registration of Land at Valsad, Daman

25th February

Br. Bajpai (Secretary, SRCM) inspected the ashram site and was briefed about the future plans for infrastructure. About 100 abhyasis from Valsad, Vapi, Khergam, Navsari and Bardoli participated in the satsangh. A familiar stillness enveloped the site implying the subtle presence of Rev Master which was invigorating and enriching.

Br. Suresh, Shri Bajpai and Dr. Surendra Agarwal (Sub-Zonal-co-ordinator) addressed the abhyasis in an atmosphere filled with joy and happiness. Br. Hitesh (CIC) gave the valedictory address. This was followed by the registration of the Valsad Ashram land.

6th April, 2008

Around 100 villagers including the Village Mukhia, Talati, local MLA and other influential people were invited for an open house at the 'Valsad Ashram Land' on Sunday 6th April where 150 abhyasis from Valsad, Vapi, Khergam and Umergam had assembled for a combined satsangh.

The original land owners from whom the one and half acre land was purchased were honoured with a shawl for facilitating the purchase of land for a divine and spiritual cause. We communicated that we were not there for any religious conversions, nor did we belong to any particular religion, caste or sect.

The villagers were very happy to learn about the 'Sahaj Marg Practice' in attempting to make better human beings with enhanced humane qualities. The essence of spirituality vis-a-vis religion was enunciated. This was followed by lunch for around three hundred persons assembled there.

A number of villagers have expressed a keen interest to start abhyas which should augur well for the growth, upkeep and utilisation of the Valsad Ashram property.

Suresh Rajagopalan, Ahmedabad



Role of Parents in the upbringing of Children

Indore Center

With a view to creating an awareness among abhyasi parents on their role in the upbringing of their children as guided by Rev. Master, a half day workshop was organized at Indore on 24th February. Rev. Lalaji's, Rev. Babuji's and our Master's literature were specially studied and the relevant portions on the role of parents were presented.

Sis. Yamini Karmarkar and Br. Rajesh Raverkar were the co-ordinators for this program. The workshop was spread over three sessions. In the first session, group discussions on various issues of relationship between parents and child were held. Next was an interactive session between the participants and coordinators. In the third session, the closing remarks were given by Br. Vikalp Mundra, zone-in-charge, MP and Br. Nirmal Dagdhi.

The practical implementation of the teachings of Master on this issue and our sincere and honest endeavor for doing sadhana and bringing change in our behavior will appeal to our children and will have a very positive effect on them was the main outcome of these discussions.

Rajesh Raverkar, Yamini Karmarkar



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

P. Rajagopalachari
Chapter "Krishna," Down Memory Lane, Vol. 2, p. 226.



Program for New Entrants at Indore Center

“For a shepherd it is not the hundred sheep at home at that moment, which occupies his attention, it is the missing one. So love bothers about the missing one.”

The Principles of Sahaj Marg, vol.10, p.130 Rev. Chariji



At Indore center it was observed that while many people joined the system, after a while many discontinued. The reasons were varied. The center felt the need to reduce the dropout rate and conducted this program to help solve the problem.

“**Sadhana Orientation Program**” for our new brothers and sisters who had joined the mission after January 2007, was organized on 23rd of March '08.

Around 50 abhyasis attended the programme. The environment for the workshop was set in a very friendly and congenial way. Br. Avinash Karmarkar, CIC Indore and Br. Nirmal Dagdhi, gave a complete introduction of the sadhana. They explained in detail about the various aspects of Sahaj Marg practice, emphasized its simplicity, and the need to be regular. The use of a presentation to convey these points made the session more interesting and lively. The question answer session at the end was handled by Dr. P.C. Sharma.

Rajesh Raverkar/Yamini Karmarkar

Youth Workshop, Coimbatore



Abhyasi Training Programme

Jorhat Centre

A one day training programme was convened at Jorhat centre on 6th April. The programme was attended by 48 abhyasis from Jorhat, Nazira, Sibsagar and Diphu centres. Other than abhyasis, 4 engineering students studying in the Jorhat Engineering College and a few relatives and friends also attended the programme. The programme started with a satsangh.

Br. Asoke Sengupta of Guwahati Centre conducted the training programme. With the help of a slide show he explained about Master, the Mission and the Method. The focus was on how to adopt a holistic approach to sadhana with the six main elements - morning meditation, evening cleaning, night prayer meditation, satsangh, individual sittings and love and dedication to Master.

It was emphasised that even by missing any one of the above, proper progress cannot be achieved. The presentation was followed by an interesting question and answer session which lasted for about an hour. The programme concluded after group meditation at 4.30 PM.



Youth Workshop

Coimbatore January 25th, 26th and 27th, 2008.

‘**Future is Inside**’ was the theme for a two day workshop for youth which was conducted at the Coimbatore Ashram. 35 abhyasis from Coimbatore, Ooty, Pollachi and Chennai participated in the programme. It was felt as if Master himself was taking charge of the programme and a mood of subtle calmness and joy was prevalent in the atmosphere.

Topics like 'Darshan', 'Darsana-way of seeing' and 'Change' were discussed in various ways like group-discussions, quiz, questions and clarifications, video session of ‘He, the Hookah and I’ and role plays.

The message that, ‘**We have to do something in the present to make the future according to the Divine plan**’ and that it should be done ‘**Here and Now**’ was conveyed in such a manner that the entire audience remained spell bound. The objective of the program was very clearly achieved.

Br. G. Krishnamurthi, Coimbatore

Regional Gathering

Madhugiri Centre

Madhugiri is a taluk in Tumkur district, about 105 kms from Bangalore. The centre is three years old with an abhyasi strength of about 20. Prefects visit the centre from Bangalore on alternate weekends.

A regional gathering of nearby centres for a full-day program was held at Madhugiri on March 23rd. The aim of this programme was to allow for interaction and experience sharing among abhyasis of nearby centres, to understand and appreciate the role of Master in one's evolution and to understand the importance of attending bhandaras.

About 60 abhyasis from Tumkur, Tiptur, Gouribidanur, Madhugiri and Bangalore attended the full-day program. The importance of such gatherings in overcoming the complacency that can creep into the abhyasis' lives was pointed out. Abhyasis were encouraged to travel from their respective centres and meet Master as this helps them build a sub-conscious connection with Master.

Abhyasis shared their experience in Sahaj Marg and a group discussion was held. The program was successful in opening up the hearts of the abhyasis and promoting a sense of one-ness and brotherhood.

An open house was arranged in conjunction with the function where about 25 persons of Madhugiri attended. Many were spouses and family members of the abhyasis. Br. Dr. Krishnamurthy and Br. Amarnath conducted the open house and clarified the questions of the invitees.



Faculty Development Program



The objective of this new initiative by SMRTI is to prepare abhyasis to speak in public on the subject of Sahaj Marg.


A set of 20 abhyasis and preceptors were identified to be part of the inaugural program. Participants were grouped by language (English and Tamil) with training sessions being held on weekends. Each group assembled once in two weeks and every member was asked to speak on two topics, for about ten minutes on each topic. Topics were shared ahead of time to enable the trainees to come prepared to speak on the subject. The feedback shared by the program coordinator at the end of each talk helped the individuals to understand the areas for improvement. Understanding the audience, setting the context, appropriate depth of concepts, accuracy of content, conceptual clarity, usage of Sanskrit words, speaking from the heart, speed of speech, accent, diction, time management were some of the aspects that were brought up to the trainee's attention.

The program started with basic topics such as meditation, cleaning and prayer before it progressed to more involved topics such as love, faith and surrender. Topics such as 'Sahaj Marg is simple but not easy' were interesting, requiring the abhyasis to introspect on the subject. Much emphasis was laid on how one would introduce Sahaj Marg to a public audience. To make it real, participants were asked to introduce Sahaj Marg to a variety of audiences.

As the sessions have progressed, the signs of improvement are visible and the trainees are becoming more comfortable with the prospect of 'speaking'. It was beautiful to see how the initial nervousness experienced by most of the participants changed to tacit acceptance before the occasional sparks started coming through. As the participants hone their skills and mature as speakers, opportunities are provided for them to start speaking to abhyasi audiences and the public at large.

The signs of progress and enthusiasm generated by these first few steps, and the ease with which this program can be replicated in other centers awaken a sense of wonder on how the path will continue to unfold as we move forward.

Sriram Raghavendran



Centres of Light

KERALA ZONAL ASHRAM, ALUVA

The zonal ashram at Aluva was the first ashram of the Mission in Kerala and was inaugurated by Master on 25th February 2001. On the occasion, Master said, "Awake all Keralites". He emphasized the importance of the three M's (Master, Mission, Method) in the life of an abhyasi. It was a wonderful celebration attended by almost all abhyasis of Kerala and nearby states. In a way it was a boost to the Mission in the land of Kerala.

The idea of this ashram came in 1995. The land selected was approved by Master and was purchased by some abhyasis who later donated 55 cents to the Mission in addition to the roads. Later the Mission purchased the front portion also and at present 14 abhyasis own plots in the complex. Most of them have built houses in this area which is now called 'Sahajagramam'.

The meditation hall of about 5600 sq. feet is built on 1.17 acres of land. It can accommodate nearly 1400 abhyasis. It has a dormitory where ninety abhyasis can sleep during the time of celebrations. The surrounding area of the meditation hall can accommodate nearly 3000 abhyasis in tents during celebrations. Master's cottage is attached to the meditation hall. There is a full fledged general kitchen. It is near the meditation hall with all amenities and has a dining hall about 1000 sq. feet. There are separate toilet and bathroom blocks for sisters and brothers.

There is a beautiful garden which is well looked after. The children are provided with a small playground with sufficient amenities to keep them engaged during satsangh. The ashram has a good library which has Hindi, English, Tamil and Malayalam books and is being well used by the abhyasis.

Many celebrations centralized for the Kerala Zone have been conducted here and the coming 30th April function of Babuji Maharaj's birth anniversary will be celebrated in Aluva Ashram, in which abhyasis from all parts of Kerala shall participate.

This ashram is located in Kadungalloor village, 5 kms from Aluva railway station, 3 kms from NH 47 and 11 kms from Cochin International Airport.



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