



Echoes of Oceania

October 2009



Manapakkam Extracts from: Echoes of India Volume 2 – Issue 6 (November 2009) Master left Kolkata on 2nd October and he reached Manapakkam ashram by 2.00 pm. He was visibly tired after a long trip which took him to many places by road. He spent a quiet week at Manapakkam before Diwali began. From Sunday, 11th October, abhyasis started trickling in. Master was quite busy with administrative work but found time to meet abhyasis. On Friday, 16th October, he inaugurated the bakery section (named Ruchi Bakery). He drove into the kitchen in his golf cart with hundreds of abhyasis thronging either side of the path to have his darshan. He tasted some of the products which had been freshly baked and made some spot sales to officially commence the operations. Saturday 17th October was 'Diwali', the festival of lights. Master was up and ready quite early in the morning. Abhyasis were seen waiting to see him right from early morning. He patiently met many of them and exchanged festive greetings.

Master conducted the morning satsangh with more than 5,000 abhyasis assembled. He released several new books. Abhyasis from Gujarat had organized a Garba dance in the evening. Master sat through the half hour programme and congratulated the artistes for their performance. The cottage was lit up with lights and diyas giving it a fairy tale look. It was indeed a festive atmosphere and abhyasis were happy to be there to benefit from His presence amidst them. On Friday, 23rd October, Master went for resting to "Janaki Farm" in Trichy. During informal conversations, he emphasized the duty for abhyasis to be joyful. He also said that his health would no more allow him to travel abroad. He came back to Manapakkam Ashram on the 28th October.

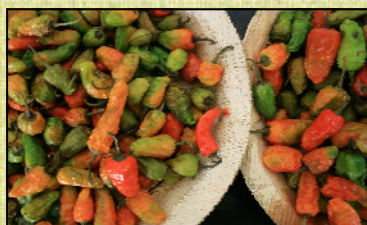
A new tower for the bell The bell at Manapakkam originally operated atop the large water tank above the canteen area. Master had been mentioning the need for erecting a separate tower for the bell. He had given his approval to the new bell structure proposed by Br. Varma, Architect. The work had started in right earnest a few weeks back and kept progressing well. On Friday, 30th October, Master came to the spot opposite the canteen area where the bell was being erected. In his presence, the bell was slowly and steadily hoisted to its new position at a height of 47 feet. By around 8.15 am Master walked to the new bell tower and pulled the ropes to produce the magical sound signalling the re-commencement of the bell which had fallen silent for a few days now. As the "bell music" reverberated across the nearby areas, all abhyasis happily clapped and shared their joy by partaking in the prasad that had been offered to all who were present.

Kolkata and the North of India Master went to Kolkata on the 3rd of November. He is expected to visit different centres and to attend the South African seminar in Kharagpur. He may then go the Lucknow for the foundation ceremony of the ashram. All his plans are tentative, due to his health and his Master's wishes.

Master's Request Before Eating

Molena Ashram, August 2003

We are still worried about our food and its purity. I'm not talking of the biological purity of stuff that we eat so that we don't get sick but the so-called spiritual purity. Babuji taught us a way of making everything palatable and good for us spiritually. He said, before you eat, meditate for a moment and offer it to your Master. I don't see anybody doing it, not one. So just try



that. Even if it's just a sandwich, or a cookie as they say in America for a biscuit. Just close your eyes for a moment and think that the great Master is eating it. And you'll find it becomes like nectar. It's no more Indian food, it's no more American food, it's not even food. It is nectar, and nectar belongs to all. There is no Christian nectar and Hindu nectar and Muslim nectar and Buddhist nectar. Nectar is of the gods. So let us try these things in our assemblies. Let us not try artificially to make everybody our brothers and sisters. Let us feel it in our hearts.

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Simplify your Life

Master's Address: U.S. General Body Meeting, 22nd July 2009, Tiruppur, India

May I say to all of you in all sincerity that I hate to have to welcome you again and again because I would like you all to be here permanently with me. That can be taken in two senses: the mundane physical sense; and in the sense that I really wish to impress upon you — the spiritual sense. Bodies can part, but souls should not part. Babuji once said to somebody who wanted to touch his feet, he said, “If you want to touch my feet, you should do it only once. And that first time you bend, your soul remains there, only your body gets up and moves on.” We have had enough spoken about, enough information dissemination, publications, DVDs, all this sort of thing you know. But going back to this phrase, ‘You have eyes but you see not,’ I would add: ‘You read, perhaps, but understand not. You understand, perhaps, but you assimilate not. You assimilate, perhaps, but practice it not.’ I don’t find enough emphasis given on the spiritual purposes of the Mission, and the soul’s purpose, which is the spiritual purpose of an abhyasi when he or she enrolls to start this practice. And this is a general comment applicable all over the world, more importantly here in India. We hesitate to tell the new abhyasi, prospective abhyasi, what is expected of him or her. I don’t see this being done. Because in the last two, three years I have had drop-outs

practically from everywhere in the world coming back, implying, if not specifically alleging, that had they been told what was expected of them when they started, they would not have left. In effect, we don’t give a foundation to the house that we are trying to build. Again from the Bible, “Build not thy house on a foundation of sand.” Because unless you tell them in the beginning, and later pop up the Ten Maxims and meditation times and retreats and what not, they feel cheated. They say, “Why didn’t you tell me all this first?” Precondition: Are you willing to do this? If not, stay away. I would say it unhesitatingly: stay away. Only three days back I received a letter from a lady abhyasi who a year ago visited Manapakkam, stayed a month, and quit — quit the Mission. She said that the atmosphere was too heavy. So that made me, you know, sort of look up at the sky just to clear my head. Then she elaborated and said there was too much discipline, too much ‘do this,’ too much ‘don’t do that.’ Of course, predictably it was a Westerner. Indians accept, but don’t perform. At least from inside they have no resistance, you see. But the others start off by rejecting everything that has to do with discipline. There is this utter lack of sensitivity to discipline, total lack of understanding of what discipline means, and the gross misunderstanding that discipline is anti-individual freedom. Anti-individual freedom, to put it in American. This should be elaborated upon. This should be explained. We should tell prospective abhyasis very insistently, if necessary even in writing, this is what discipline is for; this is what it will do to you if you accept it and practice it and regulate your life according to what it requires. But we don’t, you know; and I have this unfortunate feeling that we lose abhyasis after a few months, after a few years, even after twenty years, because it suddenly dawns on them that they were created free, and Sahaj Marg is interfering with that freedom. So this is something that all of you should correct, give more thought, you know, be-stow more thought upon it. Talk about it, not only to fresh ones but periodically to existing abhyasis in your, whatever you call it, get-togethers, meetings, instead of just using every seminar as a hail-fellow-well-met opportunity. There is too much of, shall we say, pampering in this Mission. I remember Babuji’s comment — I wanted to propose a bus, that the Mission should buy one and bring abhyasis from the station in Shahjahanpur to the ashram. Babuji said, “It’s a very good idea and it shows your concern for abhyasis, but I don’t want too much comfort.” Why on earth can we not

walk six kilometres from Shahjahanpur railway station to our ashram in Shahjahanpur, when you are prepared to go into jungles, sleep in tents where only your head is in-side the tent, wash in a cupful of water? Why on earth, you know, if that is a holiday which is acceptable? Why go on white-water expeditions, endangering your life? No discipline, no comfort, you are prepared to be wet twenty-four hours of the day, perhaps longer. Why do you go moose hunting and bear hunting in the wilds of Canada and where else, I don't know? You have — you know, this white culture, this Occidental culture, gives you this as a sort of escape. I hope you would realize this. Take my comments seriously. These are escapes from a life of what the French would call ennui (boredom), too much money, too much comfort, too much good food. And you suddenly need to burst out of these un-disciplinary bondages into which you have stifled yourself, pummelled your life into, and break free. That is freedom. Every time you want to do bungee jumping and risk your life, every time you want to go into the wilds, you are only manifesting the inner urge of the soul for a true freedom as opposed to this spurious, stupid freedom that civilization has given you all: hot water in the bathroom; seven-inch, eight-inch, twelve-inch mattresses; air conditioned comfort. And if you don't mind a little (I won't say it's obscene because it's an everyday requirement) perfumed multi-ply toilet paper. In a civilization where your bathrooms, or restrooms as you call them euphemistically, are more important than your drawing rooms. I mean, what are we to think of such a civilization, such a modernization, such a com-fort-seeking environment where the bottom end of your alimentary system is more important than the top end? You put in filth through the top end, and worship at the other end. I mean, this is my comment. I mean, I don't pull punches, as William Waycott at least should know, having given him my address long ago when he tried to twist my tail about the first pair of jeans I ever wore. [Laughter] I want you all to think carefully on what I am saying, instead of just saying, "Aw, this brown-skinned Indian who has never had a day's comfort in his life!" I find peace, I find comfort, I find luxury, I find everything — within myself. You don't find it at all because the more you have, the more you need.

"Toughen yourself. Make your body something that Nature gave you to be proud of, and not something that cosmetics and proper alimentation and sanitation make you proud of....."

I have seen abhyasis in the U.S. on my numerous visits, you know, tucking cushions under their bottoms, one under this thigh, one under this thigh, then one from behind and still wiggling around until they find the right position, like a dog which circles around before it finds a comfortable place to sleep in. Have you watched a dog, those of you who keep dogs? I mean, what is this, you know, that you find bugs everywhere, you find dirt everywhere except in McDonald's (and I don't know where else), where you assume that because there are laws of the nation applicable to food processing in public places, ergo they are cleaner than anything you get in the East?

I have made a suggestion that you should all, all, every single one of you — don't think you are already at the bottom end, there's nothing more to

give up. No! Every one of you should reduce your level of comfort. If you have a twelve-inch mattress, throw it away and buy a six-inch mattress. If you are used to bathing in a hot shower, reduce the temperature, bring it as near to the cold as you can.

Tolerate. Toughen yourself.

Make your body something that Nature gave you to be proud of, and not something that cosmetics and proper alimentation and sanitation make you proud of. I owe my body to what Nature gave me, not to what civilization gave me. Civilization has beaten me, progressively, day after day, month after month, year after year. And thanks to whatever Western influence I have permitted myself to be affected by, it has taken me some years of absence from the U.S. to recover my sanity, my centre, and to be now what I was, what I must be, what I will always be — a human being as Nature made me. I hope you understand what I am saying. It is absolutely essential to the spiritual life — not to sit on a bed of nails and stand under the noon-day sun for forty-four hours, or to go without food; it's not at all necessary. It is, as Babuji said, "Be in tune with Nature." You cannot be in tune with Nature if you take a week's holiday up in the Adirondacks. That is only escape from the reality which you think is real, to the wildness which is the reality of life. Please be sure of this. Please try to accept without thinking that every time you go for, let us say, a swim in the ocean, you escape; you escape from that three-foot by three-foot shower stall so common in your country. Fitted — everything fitted. Multi-showers. I

have been in showers in Europe where you have three from the top and from the sides, and it is supposed to massage. We don't want to use our muscles but we want to use the water shower for massage! Where you are expected to use five litres, you use two hundred and fifty litres and come out feeling emasculated, enervated. I try not to be harsh and I hope I am not harsh. And if I am harsh I can only take refuge under the truth that truth is always harsh. Truth is always unwelcome. And truth is untruth because we try to sugar-coat it and present it in acceptable form. It's not my intention to sully the truth, to nullify the truth by making it appear as if it is not the truth, and making you practice it. In biblical terms, I would say, brothers and sisters, I don't know how you feel but my days are numbered. And in keeping with the old tradition that I shall pass this way but once, anything worth saying that I have to say, any kindness that I have which I can show, any good that I can do, let me do it now, for until our souls are here together we may not meet again. I am not dramatizing; I am only trying to pour the seriousness in my heart into your endeavours which are expensive, which cost you so much to come here, which cost you so much trouble. I know you suffer more than I suffer when I am in the West. For me it is a question of how to sleep on a mattress into which I sink and where, when I want to turn, I feel I am like one of these whales trying to turn in the ocean. Whereas your problem is how to adjust your bones on these floors that we provide for you here, marble or other-wise. Your suffering is more, I assure you, when you come here than my suffering when I go to your countries. I don't want you to suffer. Get used to it. You who make such wonderful things for, what do you call it, camp life and forestry and... I admire those belts, you know, which William Waycott type people who remain slim after seventy-five years of existence — those belts from which dangle so many beautiful, enticing tools. I don't know if they are ever used! But I am... you know, I am always a bit sensitive about the fact that the middle bulge that I have will not permit such a belt, much less with so many instruments hanging around it! I would love to display it. To what purpose? When I hear of people who have twenty-seven credit cards, on all of which they are overdrawn, and they use one to pay off the other, I shudder to think what sort of freedom has your freedom put you into. Are you free to spend money when you borrow from one bank to pay off another bank, and then pay off from this bank to pay off that? I remember my boss, you know, way

back thirty, forty years back, he told the story of a man who borrowed on a Saturday from a good friend, saying, "I'll repay you next week." So that fellow gave to him, and he paid the fellow who he had to pay money to. Next week he had to pay his good friend so he went back to this fellow and said, "You know, I just paid off your loan but can you give it to me for another week?" And he paid this fellow. This went on for about twenty weeks, then realization dawned on him. He realized, "Where do I come into this? I will tell them, 'You pay him one Saturday, he pays him the next Saturday.' Very simple." So this is what is happening. Real freedom comes when you have and don't spend. Real freedom comes when you have all the facilities of modern life and you sleep on the floor or a futon. How much does a futon cost in the USA? I don't know. Hundred dollars? Eighty dollars? I suggest all of you buy one, put it next to your wonderful king-size beds, queen-size beds, four posters, what have you, and sleep on that one day a week, one night a week, make it two nights a week. Soon you will sell your bed, earn some money, and you will pull yourself out of your debt. I'm not joking. You can laugh but it is not really a matter for laughing. Try it. The only way to make money is to reduce your needs, to reduce your expenditure. If year after year I can reduce my expenditure from hundred to ninety to eighty dollars, why on earth do I need more money? Don't I get more freedom when I am free of the shackles and bondages of my employment, my employers, the law? Earn more, pay more taxes, have auditors, lawyers. Simplify your life. Be simple and in tune with Nature. I urge you to, if you like, ask me questions later. Not today, but after you have sort of criticized me, chastised me, called me names in your minds. And then you come to some sort of a realization that after all that old Indian, what he said does mean something to me. Let me go and get it clarified. Thank you.





United Nations International Day of Peace

Report by Sis Danielle Smith (Brisbane Centre)

On the occasion of United Nations International Day of Peace on 20 and 27 September 2009, members of the Shri Ram Chandra Mission in the region invited the general public, family and friends to join in a universal prayer/meditation for Peace.

The various programmes for the Day were “devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples”. While World leaders were gathering in New York on the day for the 64th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, members of Shri Ram Chandra Mission conveyed the message of peace and offered a prayer for the same, in order to actively bring harmony and transformation, at the individual and collective levels.

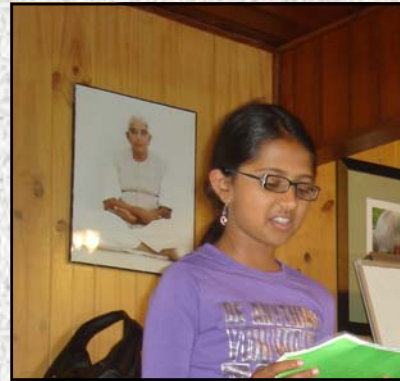
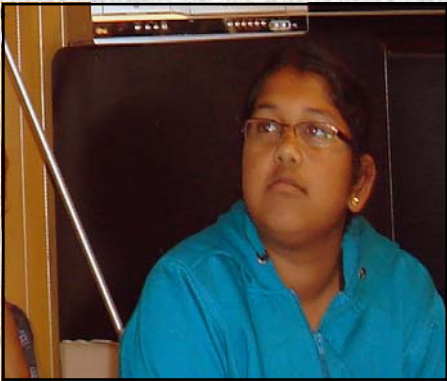
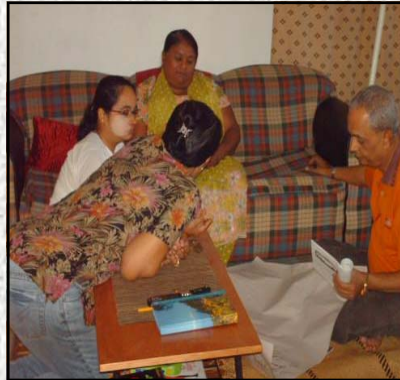
There was a common power point presented in all main centres of the region where 230 adults and children assembled for our prayer programmes. After the main presentation inclusive of the Secretary General’s message, children brought joy and laughter in the audience.

In Wellington, guests were reported to feel at home and to experience an unknown joy and sense of peace after the prayer.

Sydney, presenters made a special effort to engage the audience’s participation and stories were narrated relevant to the topic, with the addition of an audio recording of Vivekananda on Peace. The children compiled statements based on the topic ‘I like myself because’. They understood that for there to be peace in the world we need to have peace within and for there to be peace within, we need to love our Self.

In Perth as well as other centres, depending on age groups, youth presented songs, drawings and personal presentations.

In Brisbane, children compiled a powerpoint presenting their ideas on how they could contribute within their families and schools, to promote peace and harmony, and to support and welcome all equally with their hearts without prejudice.



I like myself because: Participate and take pride in other activities
Encourage and help other people, Act responsibly and take-over responsibilities
Care for things, people, animals, and plants
Entertain and let peoples strength form while I'm there
And, *I help my brother do things, *I help other people do new things
*Have a vast vocabulary in my mind, *act physically in sport and fitness
Raghupati Lal (Sydney UN Peace Poem)

Photos of Abhyasis, young and old
taken during the UN Peace Day
programs held throughout Oceania
Centres



Master's Birth Anniversary Celebrations

The grace of Master is continuously pouring during the days prescribed for Bhandaras and the abhyasis should feel and receive the same for their spiritual benefit. Even if an abhyasi requests for an individual sitting during these days they should be advised to sit for meditation by himself and feel/receive the grace for his benefit.....

Brisbane

Master's presence was felt very strongly throughout the day and readings selected were heart moving and inspiring. The day program was spent watching DVD's of Master's talks, meditating, reading and connecting within, to really feel inner peace, lightness and expansion in the heart. It felt so easy to be in remembrance throughout the whole day. More abhyasis were able to participate in the afternoon and in the evening satsangh. The children shared and discussed a reading that they had chosen and the day was full of love and a deep of gratitude to Master.

Sydney

24th July we all gathered to celebrate Rev. Master's birthday celebrations at Bringelly ashram. Satsangh was conducted at 7:30 AM and 6:30 PM. Total attendance for the day was 59. In addition 10 children were present during the day. During the celebration the children made a movie about what Sahaj Marg meant to them. Many of the children chose to write a short story, but one drew a 'Sahaj Marg' world map, that included places such as India, Australia and even the home of Santa Claus. Presenting their items you could tell the feeling was one of awe. Growing up in such an environment as Sahaj Marg the children naturally absorb what is going on around them.

Perth

Full day program coordinated by Br. Athman & Sister Lulu. There were 11 Abhyasis from Perth Centre visited India at Tiruppur to participate in Revered Master's birthday celebrations. Master's birthday was celebrated at Donnybrook with 4 abhyasis from Donnybrook and Busselton centres.

Melbourne

Prior to the birthday celebrations of Revered Master we focused our efforts on preparing ourselves for this celebration. On 5th July we had a discussion on "Ideal preparation for celebrating a bhandara". This presentation highlighted the significance of ideal preparation before the bhandara, increasing our capacity to absorb what HE gives during the bhandara and the ideal ways to maintain the condition once the bhandara is over. A week before the celebrations we did a centre cleanup. The focus being that we should not only prepare ourselves but our centre and welcome HIM in every way we possibly can. The theme set for Revered Master's birthday celebrations was "An Era of Hope and Opportunity". Accordingly, on the day of the celebration we had a presentation titled "Let Sahaj Marg Show in You" based on the theme "An Era of Hope and Opportunity". There were plenty of video sessions during the day. In the evening we had a presentation / discussion conducted by Sister Ajantha on "Read with your Heart". The celebration was well attended and everyone could feel a charge in the atmosphere. After the evening satsangh our children did a wonderful play. All abhyasis were very

appreciative and gave the kids a good round of applause for their efforts.

Fiji

In Suva, for Revered Master's Birthday Sr. Rita from Lautoka conducted Group Satsangh at 7.30am followed by a reading from the Sahaj Marg literature and we then partook 'Prasad'. Abhyasis met again at 7.30pm, shared a light tea, took turns to read the Birthday Messages by Rev. Master and from Whispers. At 9.00pm abhyasis meditated on the Universal Prayer, followed by the "Individual Sitting with Rev Master".

In Lautoka Master's Birthday was celebrated with a morning Satsangh attended by 12 abhyasis.



CENTRE NEWS

Noumea

Br Thierry Moutard

September, Saturday the 26th September after lunch and Sunday there was an opportunity for abhyasis of Noumea Centre to come together and re-centre themselves during this shared time. Danielle Smith from Brisbane was an important link between others, groups and the Master. Two vegetarian lunches gave time for warm human interactions between new and more established abhyasis. Two group meditations gave a sound connection with peace in the heart. Videos gave us access to Chariji's teachings in the context of the lecture given at the Geneva University in 1990 and were impressive with the density of their content although given with much calm and peaceful attitude. Sunday morning was dedicated to 2 and a half hours of workshops on 'Sacredness' applied to love, marriage, food, Prasad and ashram. We all left with a conviction of our responsibility to develop this feeling and recognition of sacredness within and without.



Photo; Noumea Centre

New Zealand, Wellington

July 7th being the first Sunday of the month we had an extended day program. It was story telling by the youth. They chose a triple filter test from our SMSF website by Socrates. It was well appreciated by all abhyasis as yet another teaching in character development. This story emphasizes the need for all abhyasis to talk or listen or absorb only that which is relevant, necessary. A prefect from Bangalore centre bro. Vijay Narayanan was in Wellington which enabled the local prefects to take

individual sittings. 12 abhyasis from Wellington attended Tiruppur celebrations.

August has been a month of reflection after attending the Bhandara and meeting our Revered Master in July. 16th August, a full Sunday programme was held and attended by a record number of 26 abhyasis. Two young sisters presented their experience of attending the Bhandara for the first time and meeting Rev Master. Their presentations were so insightful and it highlighted how much of an impression our Master and the His 'whole' family have left upon their young minds. They observed the brotherhood, tireless working of volunteers (they also took part) and amazing harmony and organisation. The day continued with Rev Master's video and a presentation on Character formation. The whole day program ended with a second satsangh at 3.00pm

Wellington

September The 3rd Sunday of every month is a full day program. This particular Sunday the program was held in a scout hall in a nearby school and fully organised and coordinated by an abhyasi every month. This coincided with the International Day of Peace. After the peace day presentation we continued our program and had an SMRTI workshop on Prayer followed by discussion on gratitude. All abhyasis shared their thoughts. The day ended with a second satsangh at 3.00pm.

On the 6th Bro. Vijay Narayanan a prefect from Bangalore who is also a CREST faculty at Bangalore is giving a presentation for students at the VUW hostel facility. Another talk is also organised at the open polytechnic of Wellington with the help of faculty who are also our abhyasis there. The topic is 'science and spirituality' Rev. Master asked him to speak from the heart and it will be well received. We do hope these talks help in creating more awareness among the general public.

New Zealand, Auckland

July Youth in Auckland centre are taking a lot of initiative to present Sahaj Marg related topics after Sunday satsangh. We have already had 3 members give presentations so far, covering topics like Materialism in Spirituality, Simplicity and Forgiveness. The youth are putting in a lot of research and effort to make their presentations meaningful and inspiring. This provides the perfect opportunity for them to read Sahaj Marg literature and watch Master's DVDs.

Auckland news continued

August Fortnightly presentations by youth are continuing. One of the youth presented a session on "Acceptance". The presenter is 16 years old and not an abhyasi yet and her insights on acceptance were very fresh and left an impact on all those that attended. As all the youth have finished their presentations, it is now the turn of the adults. Sister Jill presented on "Religion and Spirituality" which was fantastic and enthusiastically received with 19 abhyasis participating.

Brisbane Centre

September On the 6th the monthly gathering was held at the home of Sis Vani. We are always warmly welcomed there however this time there was a lot of joy and it was touching to see our host taking good care of everyone. We had an open house and 2 families came to hear about our system. All the children spent time preparing their presentation for the International Day of Peace commemoration and we also watched the 'Tobacco Brotherhood' and enjoyed Master's stories.

Note: We are happy to announce that Br Kumar Gandu is a new preceptor for South East Qld and is now working in the Toowoomba area. Weekly satsangh has now commenced on Sundays & Wednesdays

In August, an 8 week evening programme started at the University of Queensland to introduce students to raja-yoga and spirituality

Sydney

July 5th the monthly gathering, Br. Dharmin presented the session on Maxim 3.

August On August 2nd at the monthly gathering Br. Steven Haggart gave an ashram update and shared the architectural diagrams which were submitted for DA approval on 16th September. Following this ashram update abhyasis gathered to share experiences after attending Rev. Master's birthday celebrations at Tiruppur. This was a special session, particularly because for those who did not attend, the personal accounts that each narrated, it was as if you were there yourself. Thursday 27th August to Sunday 30th August, a retreat was held with a focus on introspection and meditation with minimum verbal communication.

September monthly gathering Sis. Margaret led a presentation on the 5th maxim. We were all invited to sit with someone we didn't know very well. Sharing with the group, Sis. Margaret told what it was for her to be simple and in tune with nature. Groups took her lead and some shared their thoughts. On Saturday 19th an abhyasi training session was organised by Sis. Elizabeth

Denley for South Coast abhyasis which was attended by 8 abhyasis, including 4 preceptors.

October 2nd to the 4th was the preceptors training session. Sis. Shalini shares her experiences from the seminar.

Attending a seminar is always exciting and as we start preparing for it we start receiving HIS grace. I would like to share my experience about the recent Preceptors seminar held at our ashram for peace and goodwill, as this was a learning point for me. I was very excited before this seminar as there will be lot of learning on how to improve ourselves as abhyasis and preceptors. On Friday night most of us arrived after dinner we all sat for sitting with Master. Next morning the Satsangh was very deep and filled with HIS presence. Then we heard the talk given by our Beloved Master during Preceptor's meeting in Tirrupur this year in July. For me this was the second Satsangh I couldn't open my eyes, his love and grace was pouring all through. Followed by the session on "how our own abhyas affects the preceptor's work - importance of being a clear conduit for the transmission" presented by Sr Elizabeth Denley. This session was very fruitful for me as it was a practical session we discussed how we can become better abhyasi and a preceptor so that we can fulfil the trusted work.

Sydney centre hosted a children's camp over and parent's workshop for 21 parents and children at the ashram, the inspiration coming from the Melbourne centre where they had organised a similar activity. The first night the children watched a movie titled 'Emperor's New Groove'. Typical of Walt Disney movies there was a poignant message, the Emperor realised he had to change his ways. The following day, the first group activity was relaxation to a CD, feedback was positive but perhaps the most moving was 'As I lay listening to the music, I looked around and I could see my husband was so peaceful, I just cried.' Following this, there were workshops on 'Creativity and Behaviour Modification' for parents who found the sessions enriching as they shared experiences. The children free play activities on the condition that there was respect for others. It was fun for them and they really enjoyed the opportunity to lead the final session, as did the parents. The children have already organised their programme for the next camp over. It was a successful weekend in many ways but I believe that the true success of this weekend belongs to Our Beloved Master whose presence was ever felt over those two days.



Photos; Taken during the Ballarat visit

Melbourne Centre

August

We began this month by viewing Master's talk from "The Hubble Bubble" focusing on ensuring that we not only maintain but also expand the condition Master has given to all of us and that we should be in HIS remembrance at all times. Once again we had a mid-month centre cleanup. The whole idea is we maintain the thought that Revered Master will visit our centre and that the centre being a "Centre of Light" we must maintain it in the best way possible. On 21st August, brothers John Smith and Paul John visited our centre for the weekend. The whole weekend turned out to be like a celebration for our centre. On Saturday, both brothers held a preceptors workshop for most of the day. In the evening we had satsangh which was conducted by Brother Paul John. This was followed by dinner. Both brothers gave a short talk on the progress of our upcoming ashram in Sydney as well as their experiences on various aspects of the practice. On Sunday – 23rd August, Brother John Smith conducted satsangh. Following satsangh we had a presentation by Br Paul on our upcoming ashram plus had an abhyasi training program on Meditation a Scientific Approach to Spirituality by Br John. Thereafter, in the early afternoon we left for Ballarat to the house of Brother Sriganth. We have been working to establish a centre in Ballarat and saw this as a good opportunity to visit them and promote the growth in that centre. Brother Sriganth invited some of his friends for the occasion. Brother John Smith & Brother Nagesh spoke about the system of Sahaj Marg to everyone present and thereafter we played a short talk given by Revered Master introducing Sahaj Marg. Satsangh was conducted by Brother Paul John. In all there were about 10 abhyasis who came to Ballarat plus Brother Sriganth and his wife. It was a very enjoyable and enriching visit in which we all left feeling very elated. Brothers John and Paul left

Melbourne on Monday. All of us felt as though we had been privileged to be in a celebration so soon after HIS birthday celebrations. This is a blessing for our centre. August – 28th to 31st we held a retreat at our centre based on the theme of "Silence". Abhyasis were encouraged to visit and stay at our centre as long as they could. There was a preceptor on hand during these days. Abhyasis would do their practice, seek advice from the preceptor, be in total silence and view Master's talks when they wanted. The retreat was well attended and it showed the interest we have to see this centre develop.

September We began the month with a presentation given by Sis. Vinitha's mother and Sis. Usha, on the "Importance of stories in life for personal evolution". This was a wonderful presentation and abhyasis and children alike were enthralled by it. It reinforced in us that to a certain extent there is a "child" in all of us.

Perth

July 5th Study session Presented by Br Ram Topic: Efficacy of Raja Yoga – part 1

August Study session Presented by Br Ram: Topic: Efficacy of Raja Yoga – part 2

September Study session Presented by Br Ram: Topic: Giving direction to our practice
Retreat in Pinjarra: Theme "From Being to Becoming". About 40 abhyasis participated from Perth, Donnybrook, Busselton and Kalgoorlie centres.

Regional centres WA Weekly discussion sessions are held at Busselton centre after Satsangh, with abhyasis taking turns to pick and type up a reading and lead the discussion topic. The theme for August was a talk given by Master in Switzerland in 1989 'The way of the heart' which was spread over 3-4 weeks.

October 16th October onwards Value based education

Perth News continued

classes commencing at Willetton. These will be held on alternate Fridays from 7.00pm to 8.00pm. Please contact Sis Lulu/Sis. Sujatha/Br. Sanjeev for more details Study days will be held on the first Sunday of every month at the Perth centre. Abhyasis visiting Busselton, Donnybrook or Kalgoorlie can contact Sis Lorraine Dominic or Sis Dianne Milburn to participate in satsangh/study sessions in those centres



Photos Top and Bottom; Perth Centre

Suva Centre From mid February this year Suva Centre does not have a prefect. On 7th June Sis. Rita from Lautoka Centre conducted Sunday Satsangh and during her stay till 9th June abhyasis had the opportunity to take individual sittings as well.

July On the 7th July Guru Poornima was celebrated with a morning Satsangh in Nadawa followed by a further Satsangh in the evening conducted by Sis. Sashi from Lautoka at Sis. Peni's attended by 6 abhyasis. There were discussions on the 3 M's of Sahaj Marg and followed by refreshments.

September The 5th Sept was "Teachers Day" which is celebrated in India, keeping this in our hearts we also celebrated with Satsangh in Nadawa in Remembrance of

our Rev. Master our guide our Teacher.

From June to Sept, 2 new members have joined Sahaj Marg practice in Suva.

Labasa Centre Sis. Sashi travelled to a budding centre in Labasa. There she met with Sis. Adi Vasu, our first indigenous Fijian prefect and two new abhyasis. They spent time discussing the Mission, Practice and the Master.

This quarter 1 new abhyasi joined Sahaj Marg practice in Labasa

Lautoka Centre

July Guru Poornima on 7th July was celebrated by a Group Satsangh in the morning and a further Satsangh in the afternoon at FRIEND Office.

August Every Tuesday starting 31st August a discussion session beginning 10am to 12pm for abhyasis who do not go out to work, to deepen their understanding of the 3M's of Sahaj Marg has began at Sis. Neelima's residence. The session ends with half an hour of meditation on the 9pm Universal Prayer. Alternate Tuesdays guests are also invited, this has resulted in 2 new members joining Sahaj Marg. In Remembrance of our Beloved Master 5th Sept, marked as Teachers Day in India, we had a morning stasangh at FRIEND Office attended by 10 abhyasis. This quarter 9 new members joined Sahaj Marg practice in Lautoka



Photos Top and Bottom; Lautoka



Report Prepared by Sis. Latha Sridhar

The weekend of Oct 2-4 was one of eager anticipation for all the NZ abhyasis as it was the weekend of our annual seminar to be held at Dunedin. This was the first ever seminar to be held in the South island and the abhyasis of Dunedin were also very excited with this prospect of hosting a seminar.

The venue for the seminar was at the John McGlashan College and you could not have asked for a more perfect venue than this. All the abhyasis were housed in the school's hostel where the accommodation was very comfortable. Meditation was held across the road in the school's state of the art library and learning centre. The meditation room itself was covered in glass on three sides opening out to a view of the spectacular mountains. Food was arranged at the school's dining room. Full compliments to the small team of Dunedin abhyasis who opened their hearts and worked tirelessly to make this event a memorable one.

We are also very thankful for Sister Libby Crichton for attending this seminar from Sydney. All the 8 preceptors of NZ gathered in Dunedin including Sis. Libby on Friday morning to have a Prefects seminar. This was good as all the New Zealand preceptors were here for this seminar. With Sis. Libby's guidance we were able to discuss how to progress and develop centres in New Zealand. From Friday afternoon all the abhyasis from Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch started arriving and the

atmosphere was one of love and joy. After Saturday morning's meditation, two brothers from Wellington presented the "Abhyasi training programme". This was very insightful to all the abhyasis and everyone irrespective of how long they have been practising Sahaj Marg found it very valuable. Sister Libby then conducted the "guided" meditation session in the afternoon. This is something that has never been done before in NZ and again most of the abhyasis found this targeted meditation to expand their hearts and minds greatly. The day finished with evening satsangh. Sunday morning, after satsangh, we discussed the maxim : Be Simple and in tune with nature. It brought many childhood memories to many and how simple life had been then and how sometimes we make life incredibly complicated now and how Sahaj Marg is helping us to go back to simpler living. The seminar came to a close at noon on Sunday and it was time to bid goodbye to our fellow brothers and sisters.. This was a wonderful seminar as it brought together all the abhyasis of NZ closer than ever and all of them committed to becoming what He wants us to become. I think the abhyasi training programme particularly by being succinct, devoid of ambiguity and simple struck a chord with all abhyasis. All of us went back to our homes with our hearts full of love and gratitude to our beloved Master and a renewed vigour to be regular in our practice, make our spiritual growth and development our first priority and make our Master proud.

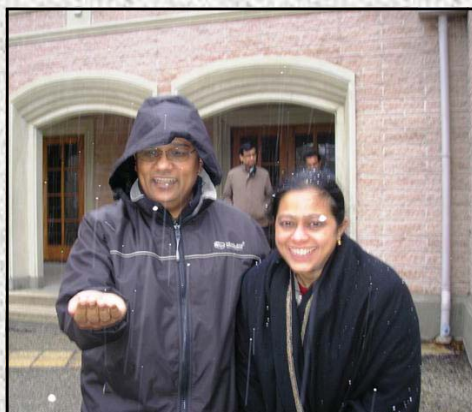


Photo; Picturesque, Dunedin or 'Otepoti' as known by the Maori

Preceptors Seminar Dunedin

Sunitha Joshi "New Zealand Centre organised a prefect seminar at Dunedin on 2nd October 2009. Eight prefects from all centres of NZ participated and sis. Libby from Sydney conducted the seminar. Some prefects arrived right on time, One prefect's flight was delayed so we started off with some confusion but were able to catch up soon with program schedule. The program started at 10.30am with exchange of sittings between prefects followed by morning tea. We had a presentation by bro. Sridhar on conducting sittings. This helped all of us to refresh our memory on conducting individual and group sittings.

Sis. Libby held a discussion on "how to develop new centres" We have noted all centres with 1 or 2 abhyasis already practicing and abhyasis in these centres will form the nuclei for developing these into fully fledged centres. We discussed a schedule on who is going to take care of which centre.



It helped all prefects to have understanding of need to travel and how this helps not only in the development of centres but also in our own development as well. It has been the experience of all prefects that when we make an effort to travel Master's help and guidance is sure to come forth and He works through them. All we need to do is to have positive outlook and willingness to become effective instruments. We ended the prefect seminar by guided meditation session organised Libby. Christchurch centre now has new prefect Sis Josephine who said that this seminar helped her immensely to begin her work in her centre. She has already expressed her plans to organise a presentation on SM. In December at Convergence centre. We would like to thank sis. Libby for her efforts to come all the way from Sydney and organising this seminar. Sis. Libby has agreed to visit Wellington in June for another prefect and general seminar."

Photos Top and Bottom; Typical Southland weather 'Snow'

Middle; New Zealand, Preceptors

Update of Oceania Ashram for 'Peace and Goodwill'

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

On the 17th September 2009, we handed in our Development Application to Liverpool Council, it was an exciting moment and the climax of a lot of research, reports undertaken and plans made and re-made to suit our purposes and budgets. We received a letter from the Council on the 9th October requiring further clarifications on our use as we applied under the development of "Place of Worship". The Committee of Management held a skype meeting and along with the help of the Town Planner we replied with a letter on Friday 23 October with clarifications on how we fall under this proposed development use.

We now await their response with a hopeful green light to proceed with the DA and to start the advertising process, this should take approximately 6 weeks. From there Council then reviews any comments, responses from the local community in regards to the development. Once the review is made it then goes to Councilors for their approval to proceed. The process can take from 4-6 months before we may have an approval. We need the good wishes and prayers for all for a successful outcome.

Other Developments:

Under the request from Br Ajay Bhattar an Ashram Management Committee (AMC) has been established with the following abhyasi's approved and appointed by beloved Master on the 1st October 2009.

Br David Todd Chair, Br Venkat Murthy, Br Vipul Jajal, Sr Kerrie Anderson & Br Sophy Hok, with the Regional in Charge, Centre in Charge & Secretary ex-officio members. There appointment is for the next two years until September 30th 2011. We welcome them to their new roles in taking care of the maintenance of the Ashram. On the 4th of October they held their first AMC meeting with the CIC & Secretary in attendance. During the meeting they covered the basic maintenance issues and divided them into the following categories with each assigned their role of duty to maintain.

- ◆ Outdoor Areas and Ground Maintenance: *David Todd*
- ◆ Kitchen and Cooking: *Venkat Murthy*

- ◆ House Cleaning: *Kerrie Anderson*
- ◆ Security and House Maintenance: *Sophy Hok*
- ◆ Childrens' Areas: *Vipul Jajal*

During the meeting a few areas of work were identified such as the need for shoe racks, set-up of blinds to reduce the heat into the house, cleaning the flue in the fire place, repairing the front gates and general tidy up of the front grounds, making of some seats around the grounds, set new procedures for food storage, steam cleaning of carpet in meditation room, arrange for pest control especially rodent activity, relocate electrical cord to children's room and set up of first aid items in the children's room.

Masters Birthday Celebration were held at the Ashram with a good attendance, retreats, workshops and training days were also held over the past quarter which have been of enormous value to those who attended.

We would also like to announce that our Regional In Charge Brother Kamlesh Patel regrettably will NOT be coming to visit and join us for our Regional Gathering. Preparations are now under way with two meetings held by the volunteering brothers & sisters, we welcome all brothers and sisters from the Oceania Region to come and join us for the wonderful opportunity to be in this special spiritual atmosphere that Master graces us with during these events.

Affectionately

John Smith
Vice President Australia

We invite all brothers and sisters to come and make use of their Ashram, for reservation to stay please contact Br Venkata Murthy on 0410 302 841. Please note permission to stay will not be given without prior reservation.

Br Venkat Murthy (M) 0410 302 841

Volunteering at Masters Birth Anniversary Celebrations, Tiruppur

Rohan Kulkarni, New Zealand

I was pretty excited to visit Master and work as a volunteer during Master's birthday celebrations. My holidays and flight tickets were easily organised, and I was eagerly waiting to spend quality time working for Master. After a week's visit to my parents in Mumbai, on 14th July I flew to Coimbatore. Volunteers were present late in the night to pick me up and had organised for a taxi. At the venue volunteers happily organised for food, bedding and place to stay in a tent. The venue had only 150 volunteers and the only erect structure was Master's cottage, old Kitchen, 10 general tents and toilets. I worked with many volunteers from different states of India all of whom spoke different languages. Language would have been a barrier but, when working for Master, everyone seemed to understand each other. On my very first day, I was working with an abhyasi Br. Velcham who didn't know any other language but Tamil. So with my hand gestures we worked along for three days. He used to converse in Tamil, and I was amazed to understand him 70% of the time. It's not the language which communicates, but the heart speaks. All celebrations are eco-logical with minimum waste. On my first day, we added a concoction of Coffee, Jaggery and salt mixture to all Toilet sewage tanks to avoid foul smell and we sprayed light chemicals on bamboo bases in all tents to prevent spreading of termites. By evening, Br. Velcham invited me to help him with ironing of Master's clothes the next day. I was in high spirits and gratefully accepted the offer. In the evening he took me along to the city to purchase coal for traditional Indian ironing. Br. Velcham held my hand all along in the city in Tiruppur and in crowded buses, the same as Master holds abhyasis' fingers to guide them to the Brighter World. Next morning I was assigned to clear big stones and thorns near the toilet entrances. It was the hottest day so far with the mercury rising above 40°C. It was tiring and dehydrating. With limited concentration, I got pricked with thorns. It was most painful and I carried those five thorns in my left leg for a whole month. Later in the afternoon, we organised a huge ironing table in Master's cottage and pressed Master's clothes, bed sheets and towels. But later found that, all the clothes smelt of coal. So we got all the clothes washed again and started pressing with a normal electric iron. That night we slept in Master's guest room. We hardly slept for three hours but it was a very deep sleep. In the afternoon, one elder sister from Gujarat centre advised me to move my bedding to the opposite side of the tent, as it was clean and the previous brothers sleeping there had left. That night it rained heavily, and luckily due to sister's advice I was left dry, as the place where I used to sleep was filled with water and abhyasis sleeping there had all their

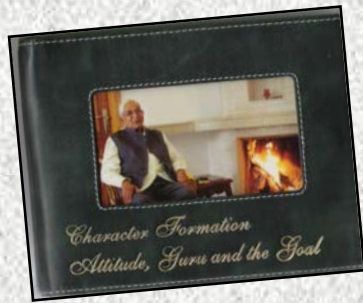
luggage and bedding wet. I was really thankful to Master, as I had two sets of luggage full with stuff required to be taken to New Zealand. Next day, I was assigned to assist brothers to dig a 4 feet deep hole to place the Comfort Dorm main gate. After lunch we got news that Master would be arriving at Tiruppur from Trichy in a few hours and would be visiting the whole place so we quickly started levelling the main road. It would have taken more than 2 hours to level the main road, as it had lots of stones and sand but we finished the impossible task in just 30 minutes.

When Master's car passed by he looked deeply into everyone's eyes and when he stared at me, his facial expressions changed with a questioning face "oh even you're here? We all were very happy to see Master and didn't feel like working after that. From next day onwards, I was made cleaning in charge of the Comfort dorm men's toilet. Work started by getting toilet doors welded, checking plumbing, placing slippers and cleaning the toilets. It was challenging to organise for volunteers to clean toilets as it's an unpopular task but by Master's grace, we always used to get new volunteers each day to get the work done. On 21st July, Master invited all abhyasis from Australia and New Zealand to his cottage. Master was very happy to see all us and gave us sitting. We later met Br. Kamlesh who got Master's message for all of us. He said, "Lalaji re-introduced Transmission and opened the gates for Brighter World. The gates may close again. So time is short, Do you're practise regularly". On the last two days, I worked with the Echoes India Newsletter team. It was an interesting job making abhyasis aware of our free mission newsletter, where they can avail themselves of Master's talks and various activities happening at other centres, thus helping being in constant remembrance and getting new ideas for their own centres. I had grand time working as a volunteer for Master, where one never feels tired. The divine food gave us heaps of energy to pursue our work. A big lesson learnt from volunteer work was "No work is good or bad. It's what our mind decides with our limited knowledge.



Photo; Taken at Tiruppur July 2009





Book Corner

A new set of DVD's were released at Master's Birth Anniversary Celebrations, Character Formation DVD's (8 set DVD's). The contains 8 DVD's where Master emphasises on Character formation and various other topics

Character formation; Waken Now, Character is pure love, Cultivate goodness of the heart, Balance Speech and action, New Year 2009 and Love, Compassion, Mercy

Attitude; Guru and the Goal, Approaching the Guru, The first exposure to the Guru, The power of our Attitude Etiquette vis-a-vis the Guru, Informal conversations, To be like the Master and Working in harmony with the Divine Plan

DVD's and MP3's



DVD Appreciating Yourself What Sahaj Marg Is

This DVD contains two speeches given by Reverend Master delivered during the CREST training programs in 2006. **Appreciating in Yourself What Sahaj Marg Is** Bangalore CREST 2006 **Communication** 2nd training session Bangalore CREST 2006



Be with Him

This DVD contains two speeches by Reverend Master delivered during his trip to Russian in 2008 **Accept Suffering** 30th April 2008 and **Be With Him** April 2008



Visions and Expressions

This DVD contains two speeches given by Reverend Master delivered during the CREST training programs in 2006. **Visions and Experiences** 20 December 2006 and **Women Must Evoke Love** 10th December 2008



Love is God

This DVD contains two speeches by Reverend Master delivered in 2006 and 2008

Love is God Speech given in Prague, Czech Republic, 4th June 2006 and **Embrace Spirituality Totally** Pre-recorded messaged delivered to

abhyasis on the occasion of Reverend

Babuji Maharaj's birthday celebrations in Cleveland, USA on 30 April 2008



Fulfilling Nature's Purpose

This DVD contains speeches by Reverend Master delivered in 2006 and 2007

Fulfilling Nature's Purpose Speech given during Basant Celebrations held at Tiruppur on 2 February 2007 and

Water of Life Message delivered on the eve of Reverend Master's birthday celebrations on 23rd July 2007

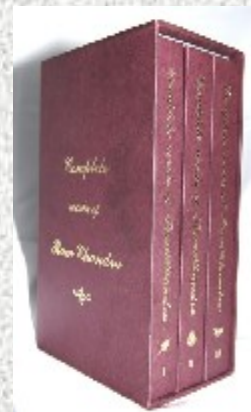


He, the Hookah and I—The Hubble Bubble

Contains all the audio tracks of the 5 DVD, set released in 2008 under the same title.

Complete Works of Ram Chandra, Special Edition

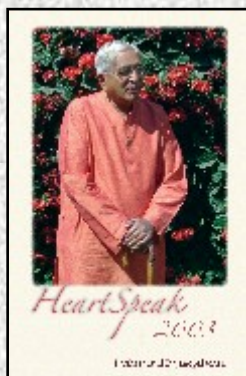
This is a special edition reprint of the Complete Works of Ram Chandra, authored by founder-president of Shri Ram Chandra Mission (Babuji). This special edition boxed set is released as a three-volume set.



Volume one is a compilation of the following books by Shri Ram Chandra; **Reality at Dawn**, **Efficacy of Raja Yoga In the Light of Sahaj Marg**, **Commentary on the Ten Maxims of Sahaj Marg**, **Towards Infinity** and **Sahaj Marg Philosophy**

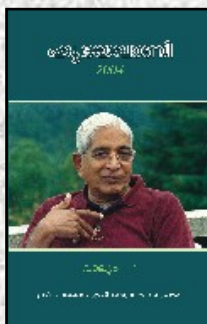
Volume two is a compilation of the following books by Shri Ram Chandra; **Voice Real - The First Selection** **Voice Real - The Second Selection**

Volume three is a compilation of the following books by Shri Ram Chandra; **Autobiography of Ram Chandra**, Volume One **Autobiography of Ram Chandra**, Volume Two **Messages Universal**



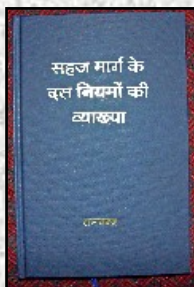
Heartspeak 2003 (English)

We are pleased to present Heartspeak 2003, part of the Heartspeak series of collected talks and lectures delivered in India and abroad by our beloved Master Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari (Chariji). This series features many inspiring and uplifting talks given by Chariji while on tour in India, Australia, the USA and Europe in the year 2003. Some of these talks have been made available on the SRCM website in the past. With this edition, majority of his talks are available for the first time in print.



Heartspeak 2004 Volume One (Malayalam)

Heartspeak 2004, Volume One, is the first book in the Heartspeak series presenting talks and lectures given by our beloved Master, Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari (Chariji), in India between 1 January and 30 September 2004. This is the translation of this book in Malayalam.



Commentary on the Ten Maxims (Hindi)

This is a hard bound special edition of the timeless Commentary on the Ten Maxims, by Shri Ram Chandra (Babuji), translated into Hindi. The book jacket is made of fine-grained, cloth like paper, with gold foil type.



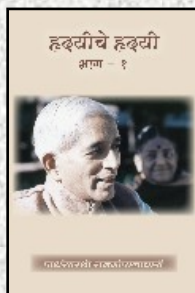
Efficacy of Raja Yoga (Spanish)

This is a hard bound special edition of the timeless Efficacy of Raja Yoga – In the light of Sahaj Marg by Shri Ram Chandra (Babuji), translated into Spanish. The book jacket is made of fine-grained, cloth like paper, with gold foil type.



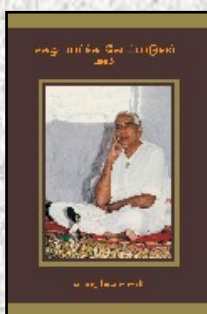
Heartspeak 2004 Volume 2 (Kannada)

Heartspeak 2004, Volume Two, is the second book in the Heartspeak series presenting talks and lectures given by our beloved Master, Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari (Chariji), while on tour in Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, and India in 2004. This is the translation of this book in Kannada.



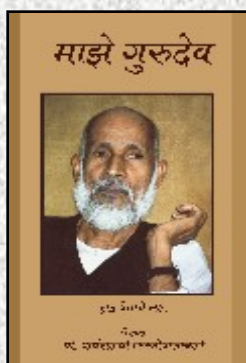
Heart to Heart Volume One (Marathi)

This book, first published in the year 1988, launched the Heart to Heart series featuring the lectures and informal talks given by our beloved Master, Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari, while hosting Sahaj Marg seminars outside India.



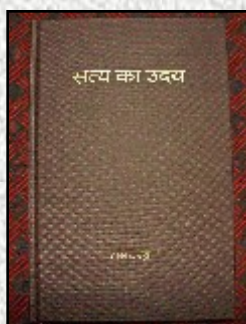
The Principles of Sahaj Marg Volume XI (Tamil)

We are pleased to present the Tamil translation of The Principles of Sahaj Marg, Volume XI (Eleven), a collection of talks and lectures given by our beloved Master, Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari, while travelling throughout India in 1989. Included in this volume is his speech, given on the auspicious occasion of the inauguration of the ashram site at Manapakkam, 10 December 1989.



My Master (Marathi)

This is a reprint of the timeless My Master by our beloved Master, Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari (Chariji), translated in Marathi.



Reality at Dawn (Hindi)

This is a hard bound special edition of the timeless Reality at Dawn by Shri Ram Chandra (Babuji), translated into Hindi. The book jacket is made of fine-grained, cloth like paper, with gold foil type.

Coordination and contact: Waireti Amai and Libby Crichton. Please send your contributions to Sister Libby Crichton (see details below). Please email all articles to ecrichton@optus.com.au

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