

This is a quarterly newsletter that provides updates on SMSF activities. In the words of our Revered Master, "This publication will essentially focus on the spiritual needs of human beings, how they are being or trying to be fulfilled by the Sahaj Marg philosophy and practice ..."

For archives of newsletters, visit <http://www.sahajmarg.org/newsletter/smsf-newsletters>.

Featured in this issue

CREST: We feature activities at CREST, Bangalore and CREST, Berlin.

ISAW: We cover the International Scholarship Award Workshop.

Retreat Centre: We include reports on activities at the Retreat Centre, Pune and SPURS Retreat ranch, USA.

Health: We cover medical center activities at Chennai.



(above) Revered Master speaking to abhyasis at Manapakkam during April 2014

Programs at CREST, Bangalore

During this quarter, two programmes were conducted at CREST, Bangalore. There were three visits by research scholars from other centres.

International Scholarship Award Workshop: 25 – 31 January 2014

The International Scholarship Award Workshop team comprising of forty delegates and sixteen coaches visited CREST, Bangalore as part of the workshop. Each day's activity comprised of a classroom session, group discussion and individual sittings. Following sessions were conducted:

- 'Religion and Spirituality' by Brother Mohandas Hegde
- 'Ten Maxims' by Brother Rishi Ranjan
- 'Love' by Brother N.S. Nagaraja

Library Immersion Period: 7 - 9 March 2014

The CREST library is a treasure of literature on spirituality, religions, cultures and philosophies of the world and on various related subjects. In this programme, abhyasis spend two days reading a

book of their choice from the CREST library and write or talk about the book on the third day.

During this quarter, one such programme with forty-one delegates was conducted. On an average, five to six hours were spent every day by the participants. The daily schedule also included two satsanghs, *shram daan* and golden hour of silence. Two movies, on the life of Jesus and on the life of Buddha were also shown.

Visit by research scholars: 2 - 6 March 2014

Sisters Neha and Veena from Pune centre, visited CREST from 2nd to 6th March 2014 and used the library for preparing a catalogue titled 'Soul and Body'. Sister Ruby from London, visited CREST with the purpose of becoming a faculty for the research centre. Sister Deborah from France visited the library for her post-graduate dissertation titled 'Babuji's contribution to Spiritual Philosophy: Tradition and Innovation'.

Source: Brother Mohandas Hegde



(above) Participants of the International Scholarship Award Workshop held in January 2014



(above) Participants of Library Immersion Period held during March 2014

Change in schedule of programmes at CREST, Bangalore and CREST, Kharagpur

Revered Master has instructed the CREST team to carefully review all the existing programmes at both CREST locations (Bangalore and Kharagpur) and has provided inspirational guidance for what these institutions and their programmes should offer to seekers and abhyasis, going forward. In order to revise these programmes so that His vision for CREST may be effectively fulfilled, all existing programmes scheduled at CREST Bangalore and Kharagpur for 2014 will be on hold until further notice. A revised calendar for both CRESTs, is expected to be announced soon. During this period, abhyasis may continue to use the CREST libraries as per the existing guidelines, and may contact the respective CREST Directors for further information.



(above) A research scholar during her visit to CREST

Activities at CREST, Berlin

A report on Seminar held at CREST, Berlin from 20th to 26th March 2014



(above) Participants of Seminar at CREST, Berlin

Does generosity depend on faith? - was the theme given by Master in this quarter for CREST, Berlin.

The seminar began with a evening satsangh. Each day began with satsangh and ended with the nine o' clock prayer. There were twenty-three participants with four tutors and eight speakers. Four young speakers - Ambra Zaro, Daphne Vaarning, Enzo and Emmanuele Ferraro presented as a group each afternoon on the theme 'From non-generosity to generosity on the path of Love'. Each afternoon, they delved deep, challenging many assumptions taken for granted. They used multimedia to keep us engaged. We questioned *Karma Cafés* and the non-generosity inherent in *Les Misérables*.

One afternoon, we were taken on an outing where we bought each other ice-creams. This again left us questioning the act of giving and receiving.

The *pièce de résistance* for me was on the final day when, with much courage, the speakers abandoned their prepared text. This revealed to us that the process had taken them to new levels of understanding. Friday's theme - 'Winning the heart of the Creator: Attend to His Creation' by Dorina Graur - emphasized beautifully how the opportunity to see oneself lower than the other is a means of truly engaging with each other in the field of the heart. On Sunday morning, Lisa Macketanz led us on an inner

journey where we were invited to explore the theme 'Developing a giving heart as part of one's spiritual yatra'. We were invited to write a letter to Master. There was great enthusiasm to post these letters to Master. Ole Vaarning gave a delightful presentation on 'The Inner Observer.' We explored what we are passionate about and Ole helped us to rediscover the importance of having passion for our spiritual journey. We were invited to see the inner observer as another means of understanding constant remembrance. Theresia Schmitzberger sustained us with coffee and cakes.

The inner atmosphere of the CREST programme was light, harmonious and joyous. I want to conclude by returning to the theme of the seminar and asking "What is it at this CREST that is different from our experience at other seminars?" One possible answer for me lies in the incident relating to the purchase of Berlin ashram. It seems that the local abhyasi group being small had very little money and therefore had not seriously thought of having an ashram. When Master came on a visit, a few abhyasis started singing songs. Master sang, "Babuji would like an ashram in Berlin." Within twenty-four hours, a place had been found for the ashram. Apparently, Master said that even if one person then had the thought that the ashram should not be at the place chosen, it would not have happened. For me, there is a deep learning in this incident: any consciousness of giving is not generosity; any disharmony displays lack of faith. Generosity is not about counting money, time or other resources. Faith is not about identifying this plot here or that plot in that city.

I feel that this is why attending CREST in Berlin has such enormous potential; because coming from other parts of Europe, we have the opportunity to be blessed for five days with Master's grace. Perhaps unbeknown to ourselves, we might, during the programme, imbibe something of the truth that real unity cannot be conscious of itself, and His love can flow fully only when our fears have been dissolved.

Report by Sis. Hester O Connor

International Scholarship Award Workshop 2014



(left) Participants of ISAW with Master

The programme is organized every year during winter and lasts for four weeks. Participants from all over the world come to India to deepen their understanding and experience of the practice as well as some aspects of the philosophy of Sahaj Marg. This year, Master invited thirty-nine participants from twenty-three countries where Sahaj Marg is developing. Venezuela, Peru, Colombia, Brazil, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Morocco, South Africa, Ethiopia, Belgium, Vietnam, China, Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Estonia, Turkey, Iran, Romania, Ukraine, and the Philippines were the countries represented.

The talks and activities of the programme were organized around themes such as 'The Practice', 'Ten Maxims' and 'The work of the Prefects'. There were talks or discussions for topics such as 'Evolution', 'Love', 'The History of the Mission', 'Acceptance', 'Our understanding of Freedom', 'Caring for new Abhyasis' and 'Joys and difficulties of a spiritual path'. All the activities and talks were delivered in English and were translated simultaneously in Russian, French, Spanish, Farsi, Vietnamese and Chinese.

The programme this year started in Manapakkam where Master made twenty-seven of the participants prefects for the world. He presided over the inaugural session and to the group's delight gave the first talk of the programme on 'Evolution', setting the tone and tread to follow for the whole programme. After a week, the group moved to CREST, Bangalore for a few days and then to Tiruppur to attend Revered Lalaji's birth anniversary celebrations. It was the first time that the ISAW group attended a bhandara and the experience for them was out of this world. At the end of the third week, the group gathered again in Manapakkam to finish the training, being in Master's presence.

The experience has been unforgettable for all the participants as well as the coordinators. It is a new learning each year, a deeper understanding, a discovery of the world inside and its wonders, and an opening to the world as one humanity; it starts in Master's hands and with a unique enthusiasm insufflated by Him, spreads through the scholars to the rest of the world.

Report by Sis. Dolly Nicolai



(left) Participants of the ISAW with Br. Kamlesh Patel

Activities at SPURS



(above) Inside the campus of SPURS retreat center

SPURS hosted thirteen abhyasis for the quarter ending March 2014. The cold weather prevented several abhyasis from traveling here for their retreat and slowed down the volunteer work. There was even a day of mild snow at the Retreat Center. By the end of March, spring was peeking her head out, as wildflowers started popping up and the birds began to chirp. A beautiful bluebird joined in with the retreat to express his joy at being able to be here celebrating the profound benefit of Master's grace.

The major project this quarter was the installation of security cameras for the safety of abhyasis on retreat.

Below is some feedback provided by abhyasis on their experience at SPURS:

(below) A bluebird at SPURS retreat center



- *I felt a shift in me, a state of subtle remembrance, and an integrated sense of self, like I've reached a level in my spiritual maturity that was really needed. Now I can carry it throughout the day. This was really an important time for me. It feels like a new beginning.*
- *There was time here to be and do nothing. The simplicity of that was really good.*
- *The sanctuary makes you feel like Master is there within a few feet.*
- *When you go into yourself in this environment you're more conscious of Him. The setting here is perfect. It's a nice place and I wish more people use it.*

Source: Sis. Suzanne Garner, SPURS Ranch Retreat Center Resident Prefect

You may yourself wish to spend a few days in this very special place. Should you have questions about coming to SPURS, please do not hesitate to call at +1-512-301-2104. Information on SPURS is available on web at: <http://www.sahajmarg.org/smwww/spurs-texas-usa>. Abhyasis may submit the participation requests online. Once requests are processed, abhyasis will receive a confirmation and a welcome package containing detailed information on the program and the facility. Please e-mail austin@sahajmarg.org for any questions or information.

Activities at Pune Retreat Centre

Fifty-four abhyasis stayed at Pune retreat centre during January to March 2014. Pune retreat centre is available for stay in the coming quarter from May to July 2014. Abhyasis are advised to book their place well in advance. Pune is warm during April and May but cools down with the first showers during June. Abhyasis should bring their caps and umbrellas. Bedding, blanket or bed sheets are provided in the centre.

We strongly recommend that abhyasis should prepare themselves by reading prescribed material, taking individual sittings and getting into the retreat mood a week before the retreat starts.

Pune retreat is full of trees and has a nice campus where abhyasis can be in tune with nature. The meditation hall is open on all sides and provides a

cool place to brood over one's condition and meditate.

Senior citizens are required to obtain a fitness certificate from a doctor to visit retreat centres in India. Prefects are requested to take note of this requirement and not approve retreat requests if an applicant is not medically fit.

Though abhyasis are advised not to do volunteer work during the first three days, they can take up small tasks of picking leaves, sweeping, gardening, painting and helping kitchen staff after three days.

Master has created this facility with a vision and abhyasis realize why retreat is so important once they stay here. We urge abhyasis to plan a stay at the retreat centre and benefit from it.

Source: Br. Prem Apte



(above) A mango tree at the Pune retreat centre



(above) A view of Pune retreat centre

Applying for Retreats

Abhyasis who wish to apply for retreats either at the **Malampuzha** or **Pune** centres may find more information about these facilities and the retreat program at: <http://www.sahajmarg.org/smww/retreat-center-overview>. Abhyasis who wish to enroll for retreat programs may now apply online at the address given above.

Medical Centre News

Free Medical Centres (FMC) at Manapakkam and Satkhol have been undertaking many activities towards imparting medical services to the needy. Medical Camps are regularly held in many other centres. Physicians, medical students, residents, nurses and others in the medical community have formed Sahaj Marg Physicians Group (SMPG) to offer medical services to the needy in the FMCs. This group may be contacted at rgokula@hotmail.com or smpg@sahajmarg.info

Services of Free Medical Centre at Manapakkam during the period from January 2014 to March 2014

The FMC served 22,410 patients during this quarter. Details of the activities in this period are given below.

Specialty wise	Patients	Panel of Doctors	
Allopathy	21,173	Dr U. Ravindran, Dr Anamay K. Bidwai, Dr S. Kishore, Dr R. Sulochana, Dr V. Vidyavathi, Dr Komal Gupta, Dr Jaya Prasanthi, Dr Vikram Srivatsava, Dr N. Parkavi	
Cardiology	66	Dr V. Vanaja	
Dentistry	964	Dr Jagadish Kumar, Dr Komal Gupta, Dr Vikram Shrivatsava, Dr N. Parkavi	
Dermatology	500	Dr M. Jayaraman	
Endocrinology	51	Dr M. Ravi Kiran	
Gastro-enterology	115	Dr M. Manimaran	
General Surgery	196	Dr Anamay K. Bidwai	
Physiotherapy	687	Sis. P. Kiranmayee	
Homeopathy	1,067	Dr Ram Subramaniam Dr Vidhi N. Shah	
Nutrition	65	Sis. G. Srilatha	
Ophthalmology	250	Dr Harshitha Bakshi	
Orthopedics	66	Dr D. Narendra	
Paediatrics	3,142	Dr Natwar Sharma Dr S. Kishore	
Psychiatry	16	Dr A.P. Mythili	
Pulmonology	15	Dr G. Raja Amarnath	
Urology	22	Dr Sanjay Sharma	
Gynecology	0	Dr Jayanthi Mohan	
Neurology	12	Dr R. Padmini	
Spirometry	15	Courtesy Lupin Laboratories	
Ayurveda	386	Dr C. Jayasree	
Categories	Patients	Categories	Patients
Male	8,133	Abhyasis	6,886
Female	11,351	Others	15,570
Children	3,142	Total	22,626
Other details	Patients		
Services outside regular hours	142		
In patients	99		
Clinical Laboratory investigations	1,366		
Staff	Staff	Volunteers	
Dr S. Kishore (Doctor) Dr Anamay K. Bidwai (Doctor) Dr Vidhi N. Shah (Doctor) Dr Komal Gupta (Doctor) Dr Jaya Prasanthi A. KrishnaKumar (Pharmacist) K. Jaya (House-keeping) Sis. P. Kiranmayee (Physiotherapist)	A. Radhamani (Nurse) S. Hemavathy (Nurse) D. Eswaramma (Nurse) S. Jayasudha (Nurse) M. Suba (Nurse) S. Selvavani (Nurse) V. Samanthi V. Sandhya (Lab Technician) K. Kavitha (Lab Technician)	Dr U. Ravindran Dr V. Vidyavathi Dr R. Sulochana Sis. Janaki Sudha	

Source: Br. Dr Ravindran Ulaganathan

Free Medical Camps at Thiruvallur

SMSF has recently purchased land near Thiruvallur about forty kilometres from Chennai. Master had announced that a Free Medical Centre would come up here. As a beginning in that direction, he has instructed that Free Medical Camps should be conducted here on the last Sunday of every month. Two camps were conducted in December 2013 and January 2014.

On 23 February 2014, the third camp was conducted. On that day, 543 patients from about twenty-one villages in and around the land were treated.

Seventeen consultants from Chennai participated in the camp. Laboratory investigations such as blood sugar and haemoglobin were conducted for ninety-five patients. ECG was taken for ten patients.

The fourth camp was conducted on 30 March 2014. About 569 patients from thirty-three villages were treated. Sixteen consultants from Chennai participated in the camp. Laboratory investigations such as blood sugar and haemoglobin were conducted for eighty patients. ECG was taken for four patients.

Source: Br. Dr Ravindran Ulaganathan

(left and below) Pictures from a Free Medical Camp at Thiruvallur



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