

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.

**Retreat Centre:** We include reports on activities at the Retreat Centres at Pune and Kharagpur, as well as SPURS Retreat ranch, USA.

**Health:** We cover medical centre activities at Chennai and medical camps at Tiruvallur.



(above) Revered Master at Manapakkam, Chennai during December 2014

## Programmes at CREST, Bangalore

During this quarter, four Chapter Seminars, two workshops, one Library Immersion Programme and a few other events including a medical camp for inmates were conducted at CREST, Bangalore.

### **'Sahaj Marg at the Workplace', Workshop for Doctors and Staff: 7 – 8 October 2014**

CREST started a new programme to introduce spirituality at the workplace. Doctors and staff from the *Samudaya Arogya Kendra* (a community health centre close to CREST) participated.

### **Visit by students from Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore: 19 October 2014**

Eleven students and three staff members were introduced to the activities of CREST and the importance of the Sahaj Marg system.

### **Chapter Seminar on 'Exploring the Mind': 28 October – 1 November 2014**

Thirty-two participants attended this seminar. Sister.

Elizabeth Denley was in-charge of this programme and she coordinated all the events. Participants were divided into three groups namely Media; Writing and Art; Research, Seminars and Workshops. These teams, after discussions and brainstorming, came up with basic modules in each of the above areas for the topic 'Exploring the Mind'.

### **Library Immersion Programme: 7-9 November 2014**

Twenty abhyasis participated in the programme. The topic was 'Read, Review and Reap.' Participants were divided into four groups. The following themes were assigned to the groups: 'True repentance is in resolving not to do it again', 'Self-effort is just the means for making one self-deserving of Grace', 'Etiquette without love is hypocrisy' and 'Maintaining a Diary Helps in Training the Mind'. Each group presented an article and a skit on the theme assigned to the group.



(left) Participants of the Workshop on 'Spirituality at Workplace' conducted on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2014

**CREST Academic Team Meeting: 16 November 2014**

CREST Academic team discussed new modules for the year 2015 based on topics suggested by Master namely, 'Ashram Life', 'Time Management (Expansion and Contraction during meditation)', 'Economy and Equanimity in Everything' and 'Respect for the Teacher (Guru)'.

**Chapter Seminar on 'Human Integration': 18 – 22 November 2014**

Twenty-seven delegates participated in this programme facilitated by sister Ekta, brother Manish Agarwal and brother Manoj Tiwari. The participants developed topics and themes under three categories namely, Seminar and Workshops, Research, Media and Dramatics and Writings.

**'Spirituality at the Workplace', Workshop for Doctors and Staff: 4 December 2014**

This was the second level of training on the same topic held earlier on 7 October 2014. Doctors and staff from the *Samudaya Arogya Kendra* participated. After introduction, the previous training was reviewed and a documentary was shown. A few staff members expressed their interest to begin meditation.

**Chapter Seminar on 'Living Naturally': 9 – 13 December 2014**

Forty-one delegates including the facilitator, brother Subramanian Shankaran participated. The programme started with an introduction to the topic. Six different areas of our daily life were mentioned namely health, wealth, career, family, social and



(left) Participants of the Chapter Seminar on 'Human Integration' held during October 2014

intellect. These were referred to as the spokes with spirituality as the hub. Delegates were divided into six groups to dive deep into the topics and come up with skits, one-day workshop modules and some articles and poems.

### Volunteers Day: 14 December 2014

Sixty-six volunteers participated in this event. Three

lectures were organised on the following topics: Volunteers' work, firefighting techniques and guidelines for first-aid. In the afternoon session, the participants were shown the English movie *Up*.

Source: Br. Mohandas Hegde



(above) Students from I.I.Sc (Bangalore) during visit to CREST



(above) Participants of CREST Academic Team meeting

## Activities at CREST, Berlin

A seminar was conducted on the theme '**Peace Within**' from 7<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014, coinciding with the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Berlin wall. It also coincided with the anniversary of the establishment of UNESCO. The theme was chosen by respected Kamleshji. The following topics were covered:

- Perceiving the world with the inner eye
- Eclipse of conscience: Eclipsing of the heart and the mind
- How to take advantage of inner turmoil
- Peace within and restlessness: The eye of a tornado
- Permanent inner peace: Is it possible?

Two members of the faculty took up each topic. They made presentations, coordinated group discussions and provided direction to the participants in their exploration of the topics.

The experience brought to the fore the significance of human integration and the importance of continuous self-observation for personal development. This was highlighted by brother Ole who shared his thoughts on the concept of the inner eye, using the inner eye to observe ourselves, our thoughts, feelings, actions and reactions.

The significance of separating out the observer from the observed, acceptance of self and integration were other themes that emerged; in essence, it was being truthful to one's self, accepting yourself as you are, and recognising this acceptance as a pre-condition of change.

One of the activities organised for the group involved a trip into the centre of Berlin, the Alexanderplatz. The purpose of this exercise was one of integration, to observe oneself in retaining the condition acquired while in the ashram - one of inner peace - while moving and being in a different environment. This proved to be a positive experience for the group. There was a sense of open-heartedness, of nurturing that which we received in the environment of the ashram and sharing it with others too.

The experience of CREST also provided an opportunity to examine our daily practice, in particular attitudes or patterns of thinking that may have gone unnoticed. The seminar created a space for all to 'think outside the box', to be imaginative and to go deeper in the exploration of our shared spiritual journey.



(above) Participants of the seminar held at CREST, Berlin from 7 to 11 November 2014

On 9<sup>th</sup> November 2014, celebrations were held in Berlin to mark 25 years since the fall of the wall. It reminded all that change on a global scale is possible and that to bring about change in the world we must look to change ourselves, bringing down the walls we

have created within ourselves and those we have knowingly or unknowingly created between each other. This change is necessary for the realization of human integration and unity.

*Report by Anthony Cullen and Ruby Carmen*

## *Activities at SPURS*

SPURS Ranch Retreat Centre hosted twenty-six abhyasis for the quarter ending December 2014. The SPURS library was put in order and numerous new books were catalogued and placed on the shelves. Other volunteer activities included placing handicap assist bars in the small bathroom, helping to winterise the Retreat Centre, filling in holes in the field, tree trimming and some water management effort.

A sample of some of the feedback expressed by retreat participants is below:

- *I feel much lighter and much more like a lion not a sheep.*
- *By the third day, time was non-existent.*
- *The best thing about being in retreat is that I am free from all distractions, so I can maintain the condition and be absorbed in His grace all day long.*
- *I feel Master's presence here. I am completely different - a lot of changes took place here. I got so many answers to so many questions that I had. I highly recommend this.*
- *I let go of a good bit of sadness and anger. It reinforced the strength and power of love.*
- *I have heard many people talk about this place but until you experience it, you don't really feel the gratitude for such a place.*

*Source: Sister Suzanne Garner, SPURS Ranch Retreat Centre 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 programme and the facility. Please e-mail [austin@sahajmarg.org](mailto:austin@sahajmarg.org) for any questions or information.

## Activities at Pune Retreat Centre



(above) A scenic view from the Pune retreat centre

During October to December 2014, 135 abhyasis stayed at the Pune retreat centre. Pune retreat centre is now available for stay throughout the year without any break. During the months of January to March, the weather will be a mix of morning chill during January, slowly getting into much warmer afternoons during March. Abhyasis coming during January are requested to come with warm clothing.

It is recommended that abhyasis prepare themselves by reading the prescribed material, taking individual sittings and getting into the retreat mood, a week before the retreat starts.

Pune Retreat is surrounded by a lake and hilly areas. The facility has lush green lawns, fruit bearing trees, flowers and bushes and one can hear the melodious chirping of birds in the morning. The retreat centre is



(above) Garden inside the Pune retreat centre

a very calm and beautiful place to turn one's focus inwards.

Senior citizens are required to obtain a fitness certificate from a doctor in order 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.

After the first three days of stay, abhyasis can contribute their services in some way for about an hour, in the kitchen, garden and other places. Walking along the pathway, sitting beneath a tree or on a swing or in the covered sit-out of Master's cottage, are some of the places where abhyasis can spend their time in introspection.

Source: Brother Prem Apte

## Activities at Kharagpur Retreat Centre

During the quarter ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014, 34 abhyasis stayed at the Kharagpur retreat centre.

Like Pune, the retreat centre at Kharagpur is now available for stay throughout the year without any break. Abhyasis are requested to prepare themselves by reading prescribed material, taking individual sittings and getting into the retreat mood, a week before the retreat starts.

The facility has lush green lawns, fruit-bearing trees, flowers and bushes. One can hear the melodious chirping of birds in the morning. The retreat centre provides a very calm and beautiful environment to turn one's focus inwards. After the first three days of stay, abhyasis can contribute in some way for about an hour, in the kitchen, garden and other places.

Source: Br. U. P. Dhawan

### Applying for Retreats

Abhyasis who wish to apply for retreats either at the **Malampuzha, Pune** or **Kharagpur** 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](mailto:rgokula@hotmail.com) or [smgp@sahajmarg.info](mailto:smgp@sahajmarg.info)

### Services of Free Medical Centre at Manapakkam during the period from October 2014 to December 2014

The FMC served 25,559 patients during this quarter. Details of the activities in this period are given below.

Specialty wise	Patients	Panel of Doctors	
Allopathy	23,472	Dr U. Ravindran, Dr Anamay K. Bidwai, Dr S. Kishore, Dr R. Sulochana, Dr V. Vidyavathi, Dr JegdishKumar, Dr Swati Raju, Mr Jibu George Varghese, Dr Elanchezian, Dr R. Sudharani, Dr Jaya Prasanthi, Dr Vikram Srivatsava, Dr N. Parkavi	
Cardiology	101	Dr V. Vanaja	
Dentistry	1,251	Dr Jagadish Kumar, Dr Vikram Shrivatsava, Dr. Swathi Ragu, Dr N. Parkavi	
Dermatology	664	Dr M. Jayaraman	
Endocrinology	47	Dr M. Ravi Kiran	
Gastro-enterology	79	Dr M. Manimaran	
General Surgery	266	Dr Anamay K. Bidwai	
Physiotherapy	859	Sister P. Kiranmayee	
Homeopathy	1,422	Dr V. Janani Mukundan Dr Vidhi N. Shah	
Nutrition	75	Sister G. Srilatha	
Ophthalmology	217	Dr Harshitha Bakshi	
Orthopedics	113	Dr D. Narendra	
Optometry	78	Mr. Arun Prasath	
Paediatrics	3,338	Dr Natwar Sharma Dr S. Kishore	
Psychiatry	0	Dr A.P. Mythili	
Pulmonology	12	Dr G. Raja Amarnath	
Urology	38	Dr Sanjay Sharma	
Gynecology	0	Dr Jayanthi Mohan	
Neurology	0	Dr R. Padmini	
Spirometry	9	Courtesy Lupin Laboratories	
Ayurveda	496	Dr C. Jayasree	
<b>Categories</b>	<b>Patients</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Patients</b>
Male	9,248	Abhyasis	7,462
Female	13,074	Others	18,198
Children	3,338	Total	25,660
<b>Other details</b>	<b>Patients</b>		
Services outside regular hours	230		
In patients	166		
Clinical Laboratory investigations	1,582		
<b>Staff</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Volunteers</b>
V. Sandhya (Lab Technician) K. Kavitha (Lab Technician) K. Jaya (House-keeping) Sis. P. Kiranmayee (Physiotherapist) R. Abinaya (Receptionist)	A. Krishna Kumar (Pharmacist) S. Dhanalakshmi (Pharmacist) D. Eswaramma (Nurse) S. Divya Barathy (Nurse) A. Uma Maheswari (Nurse)	M. Sathya (Nurse) P. S. Soniya (Nurse) R. Manikodi (Nurse) V. Buvaneswari (Nurse) P. Nandhini (Nurse)	Dr. U. Ravindran Dr. R. Sulochana Dr. R. Sudharani Dr M. Umakanthan Dr Shreevidya Sister Janaki Sudha

Source: Br. Dr Ravindran Ulaganathan

### Free Medical Camps at Tiruvallur during the period from October 2014 to December 2014

During the last quarter, two camps were conducted in October and November 2014, details of which are provided below. Regular medical checkup is being provided to children from a nearby orphanage from August 2014 onwards and a pediatrician has been designated to take care of the children.

Date	Patients	Abhyasis	Others	Consultants
5 October 2014	521	44	477	13
2 November 2014	630	35	595	12

### CREST Calendar

Below is the calendar of CREST for coming months in 2015.

Programme	Session Date
Faculty Development Program	10 to 14, January 2015
	12 to 16, May 2015
Library Exploration Program	13 to 15, February 2015
	17 to 19, April 2015
	11 to 14, June 2015
Ashram Life	24 to 28, February 2015
	26 to 30, May 2015
Respect for Guru	10 to 14, March 2015
	23 to 27, June 2015
Time Management	7 to 11, April 2015
	4 to 8, August 2015
Economy and Equanimity	24 to 28, March 2015
	7 to 11, July 2015

For more details, visit CREST section in <http://www.sahajmarg.org>