



Echoes of Oceania

January 2009



Photo: Taken at Malampuzha Retreat Centre (MRC) in Masters Cottage

Masters News

(Extracts from Sahaj Sandesh)

Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh)

Master left Chennai on the 19th of January morning, for Ramapuram, where He had inaugurated the ashram in 1991. After conducting satsangh for the assembled abhyasis, he left for Chittoor. He conducted satsangh there immediately upon arrival with about 1,100 abhyasis present. Following satsangh, He inaugurated a cottage prepared for His stay. In a private conversation, while speaking about death, he drew a parallel with people travelling in a train, where people get down and new members join, and we don't worry about anyone. In a similar way, when dear and near ones pass away, their demise should be treated in a way which does not affect the inner serenity and purity of abhyasis. After a brief rest, Master conducted another satsangh in the evening and also gave a talk in which he exhorted people to accept change, for which we should meditate. On the 20th morning, Master conducted satsangh at 6:30

AM and left for Tirupati by road at 8:15 AM. After a satsangh for about 1500 people assembled, he gave a talk and returned to Chittoor, where he rested for a while, then conducted evening satsangh. He mentioned that real *darshan* is the *darshan* of the Reality within, and asked this to be translated in Telugu (local language) for those present. The following morning, after satsangh, he left Chittoor for Chennai.

...and Ahmedabad, Gujarat

Master arrived on 23rd January afternoon amidst tight security at the airport on account of the impending Republic Day event. On 25th after the satsangh Master decided to spend the day at the Ashram premises. Master was casually mentioning that 'It is Love and Brotherhood' which creates atmosphere conducive for spiritual growth. In the afternoon he came out and sat on the veranda. Very soon, over 1000 abhyasis had assembled in the open area beside the apartment. After the evening satsangh, Master agreed to witness a Solo dance followed by a 'Quawali' and an 'English' song. On the 26th of January Master conducted a meeting including about 140 prefects from Gujarat and neighbouring states. Besides giving a sitting to the prefects assembled, Master also gave a talk. A few paraphrased excerpts relevant for everyone:

We are trying in 'Sahaj Marg' to bring discipline from inside ourselves – not like the Police or army where reward for indiscipline is punishment. It is the fear of withdrawal of benefits or fear of punishment that makes them toe the line in armed forces – not Love.

Truth is only reflection outside of what we are inside. If in everything a person does, he reflects his inner condition, he is true to his inner nature at that moment. A murderer or liar is expressing his inner nature at that moment and it is certainly not manifestation of the 'True Inner Nature'. That is because the true inner nature is obscured and clouded by 'samskaras'. Thus cleaning is to be systematically and meticulously done so that the true inner nature is revealed and behaviour, response to situations etc. would then act as real indicator of the blissful inner condition or inner effulgence.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Overseas abhyasis are permitted to stay in the Ashram for 15 days with prior permission. Extension of stay beyond this requires permission which may be given based on special reasons/ considerations, provided that there is a valid visa and a confirmed return ticket. Prior permission for stay in the Ashram may be obtained by sending your request by filling the attached travel request form and sending it via email to travelrequest@srcm.org

All Travel Request forms MUST be signed by the Preceptor. NO APPROVALS WILL BE GIVEN WITHOUT A PRECEPTOR'S SIGNATURE

The approval for stay will be conveyed via email, and a copy will be sent to the Ashram Manager at sraman@srcm.org for his information. Any requests for special accommodation or other queries may be directed to the Ashram Manager at the above address.

All overseas abhyasis are required to mention their time of arrival so that the appropriate arrangements may be made for late arrivals.

The Mission's ID card is mandatory and MUST be shown at the time of registration, along with the letter conveying travel approval.

All overseas abhyasis must bring a copy of the first page of their passports and a copy of their visa page, to be submitted to the Ashram Office during Registration. Registration and reception offices at BMA function daily between 6.00 hrs and 21.30 hrs. Those who are likely to reach the Ashram outside the office hours, should inform the Reception office by telephone at the following numbers:
+91 (44) 22521099/ 42171111/ 42014420

Master's Travel Plans

Master returned from Satkhol to Delhi and on the 7th February travelled to Rajasthan and Mumbai and he will travel back to Chennai by 23rd February. He will stay until 12th March then travel to Pune for 4-5 days.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today on this auspicious day, the Birth Anniversary of Rev. Lalaji Maharaj, here in Satkhol, Rev. Master Chariji has announced that the book – WHISPERS OF THE BRIGHTER WORLD, VOLUME - 2 will be released on 30th April 2009, containing the Messages from mainly Babuji Maharaj, Lalaji Maharaj, but also from highly spiritual entities. We all know that the first volume was released a few years back and this one is the second volume. The third volume will be released in 2010 and the fourth volume in 2011. The importance of these messages cannot be explained in words but one has to read and feel it. This priceless book containing the Messages has no value attached to it but will be reserved for all those abhyasis in USA and Rest of World (excluding India and Europe) who give a donation of USD 300.00 (Three hundred dollars only) towards the Corpus Fund of SAHAJ MARG SPIRITUALITY FOUNDATION.

Regards, Ajay Bhatler

Australian Regional Gathering 21st—24th November

Theme "Character Formation—My Job"



Ashram



Our Australian Regional Gathering was held 21-24 November with the theme, "Character Formation -My Job". It was a very special one for us as it was our first held at the "Ashram of Peace and Goodwill", located in Sydney's Southwest.

From all Australian centres a total of well over 100 abhyasis and 40 children (aged from 8 months to 14 years) attended and enjoyment in the ongoing activities for children and youth over the whole weekend left them not wanting to leave!

Preceptors Program held on 21st was attended by 18 preceptors from centres Australia wide. Each centre was given a topic to present over two, 2 hour sessions on Discipline, Developing Moral and Behavioural Codes, Developing enthusiasm and growth at our Centres and Team Building. This offered a wonderful opportunity for learning, interaction and developing brotherly and sisterly ties. Our team building exercise was to prepare the evening meal.

A strong focus during the seminar was on working together. Saturday some abhyasis fenced the Dam area, while others worked on the removal of the prickly pear from the woodland and another team weeded and added necessary compost and mulch to the vegetable and flower gardens.

A United Nations Event was held Saturday afternoon for the International Day of Tolerance (see report United Nations Day for Tolerance). This was followed by a presentation on Value Based Education in which the children participated and after the evening Group meditation we had an interactive presentation on the value of keeping a diary.

Sunday morning after Group Meditation we held the Australian Annual General Meeting followed by an Ashram Update and discussion. The afternoon session continued with further work activities in the Ashram grounds and in the evening we had some heart felt presentations on the seminar theme.

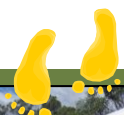
The Seminar concluded after Monday morning group meditation, although a number of brothers and sisters left Sunday evening to return to their jobs. It was a wonderful seminar with abhyasis working together reflecting their love for our beloved Master and for developing our ashram for our spiritual welfare. A special thank you for the wonderful meals that were so well prepared and received during the seminar, to the transportation team, and our brothers and sisters who offered their homes for interstate abhyasis to stay comfortably over the 3 days.



Working around the dam



Getting ready to work in the vegetable garden



Meditation Hall during the gathering



Preceptors and one of our beautiful babies



.....And Our Beloved Master

United Nations International Day for Tolerance

Shri Ram Chandra Mission Australia marked the day at the Ashram for Peace and Good Will 22 November. The aim was to encourage participants, through a short workshop, to take note of their feelings during the prayer prescribed by Ram Chandra in his letter to United Nations Organisation (UNGO) in 1957. Tolerance finds its roots in the individual mind and heart and is enhanced in a context where peace within and without is part of one's spiritual endeavour. During this programme, children presented collage's and skits, Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon's message was

read out and the speaker presented the vision and meaning behind such a programme.

All participants were invited to join in a silent universal prayer and to note in their journal the feelings experienced from focusing on the thought of peace for humanity.



Photo top left
Presenters

Photo Bottom
Children and Abhyasis
waiting for UNIDT program

UNITED NATIONS HIGH-LEVEL GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY FOR ALL

Meeting in Madrid, 26-27 January

Background Information:

The welfare of billions of people has been threatened by the recent sharp increases in food prices, while at least three billion food-stressed people will bear the brunt of the crisis. High prices threaten to undermine progress towards the Millennium Development Goal of eradicating hunger. They could set back the fight against poverty by seven years and risk pushing over 100 million people back below US\$1 a day poverty line. Moreover, they will make it difficult to achieve other Millennium targets, particularly for education, child and maternal mortality reduction, and containing the spread of major diseases.

Communiqué from National Information Officer, United Nations Information Centre in Canberra

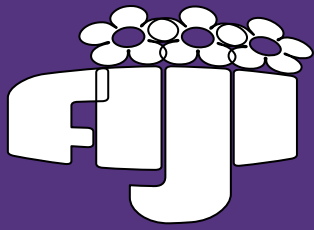
The next step in the UN's response to the continuing crisis in food consumption and agricultural development, 26 - 27 January meeting in Madrid on "Global Food Security for All". This meeting was proposed by Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero of Spain at the June 2008 "Food Summit" in Rome and Spain is hosting and organizing the meeting. The UN is co-sponsoring, via the Secretary-General's High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis. The Secretary-General will co-chair the concluding plenary with Prime Minister Zapatero Information on the Madrid meeting is posted on the Spanish website, www.ransa2009.org and the Task Force page on the UN website at www.un.org/issues/food/taskforce

SRCM's response comes with an invitation to pray, addressed to all brothers and sisters:

"We will offer prayer for the success of the program and shall inform our members of the task force's recommendation to propagate the UN message



Photos LEFT AND FAR RIGHT Children performing skits on 'Tolerance' **CENTRE** Children presenting posters on what tolerance means to them



My Journey to Master

Master is like a raft
when you're adrift
on the ocean.

Master is there
When I'm
lost for words,
get it all wrong,
despair
at the state of the
world.

when anger surges
through my veins,
Master is there
to turn my head
the other way.

why am I so human
breath deep,
breath
constant remembrance.
By Sr. Peni Moore (Suva)



Photos from Fiji

Growing up we had scripture reading at home for various festivals and I loved reading the religious books. Of course I did not understand much. The thing that kept being emphasized in the text was the need for a Guru for God realization. Trying to understand Hinduism we formed a youth group in mid '90s where we used to invite different pundits and visiting sages to answer our questions on the 'whys' of rituals, our questioning attitude made some of the religious leaders annoyed with us.

I was once told that one of the visiting sages had come all the way from India in search of disciples in Fiji but I still did not understand how to find a Guru, as I was not impressed by what I had seen so far. In 2003 an abhyasi and now a preceptor Br Rakesh Sharma for whom I had a lot of respect, called me. He said he wanted me to meet someone since I was always searching for spirituality. I met Sr Elizabeth Denley from Australia who explained the system of Sahaj Marg and gave me three sittings. For me, searching for spirituality meant harder work than that surely, so I would listen to Mr Sharma and attended satsanghs but did not do my practice until I attended a seminar in Nadi (again under loving pressure) to which Br Kamlesh Patel came. I saw the reverence he had for

Master and the tone of the seminar was full of love and reverence. This became the turning point in my life and I became curious about Master. I read the book 'My Master' and was moved by the overflowing love and reverence of Guru written by our Master Shri P Rajagopalachari. I began wondering about our Guru and yearned to meet him. As the stirrings in my heart began I was given the opportunity to attend the Scholars program (2004-05) and got my first opportunity to meet Master. I was shocked and just stared at Him when I first saw him in our classroom. There were mixed feelings, the question that kept popping in my head - is He the Guru I was searching for? Before the end of my five weeks at Manapakkam Ashram in Chennai, I was confident that He was. Being made a preceptor I was given an opportunity to serve in this way. The following year in 2006, I got an invitation to attend the CREST Training program at Bangalore and Master was with us for two weeks. This in itself felt like a big miracle as we saw Him everyday and got the chance to sit at His feet as he talked to us in front of His cottage. A very special memory of that year is Christmas as Master sat with us enjoying the Christmas carols sung by the participants of the CREST program. Every time I visited

Master the feelings were different. Attending His 80th Birthday celebrations in 2007, I felt as if I was floating on air, spending time at the ashram in 2008 brought very different feelings of being deeply loved and having the opportunity to meet with Him yet again in January of 2009 the feelings I cannot describe. On my last visit I kept thinking this must be the bliss we read about that I'm feeling being at His feet. I don't know whether it is this; but I felt loved and very happy. Each visit for me is special and different! Since I first saw Master in late 2004 I can't help but feel so much wonder and gratitude. He found me, so far away on a tiny Island Nation in Fiji. He has provided me with resources to be able to visit Him. The last two times I met Master I can't help but feel so much gratitude and am so thankful to be found. It's absolutely incredible and now I understand when I was being told that if I yearn enough My Guru will find me no matter where I am. I will never be able to express my gratitude enough for all His love and care and am blissfully happy to be at His Feet. **Prepared by Sister Sashi Kiran Lautoka**

Centre News—Suva, Fiji

26th October

Read Master's "Letter from the Heart". The group then enjoyed a diwali breakfast followed by a group discussion and workshop on our understanding of Master's letter.

November

Watched "He Hookah & I" DVDs weekly Saturday afternoon, followed by a group discussion. Suva had two seminars in this quarter on the 26th October and 28th December, based on Rev. Master's letter to abhyasis on "Character Formation", discussions on what impacts our character, what aspiration we have in life and how this aligns with improving our characters and living truly spiritual lives

28th December

Seminar and Christmas celebrations
2 new abhyasis welcomed

Lautoka-Fiji

There have been exciting and some sad moments with the Lautoka group during the past 4 months. We miss those who have left and wish them the very best in future and may our Beloved Master continue to guide them in their quest for the ultimate spiritual goal.

Centre News from Australian Centre's

Sydney October

19th Yoga

Expo stall set up with a number of enquiries from the public.

Open House conducted over 3 weeks at Dee Why.

Value Based Education at monthly gatherings, loosely structured but effective programme with part of it included in the kids program on regular Sundays.

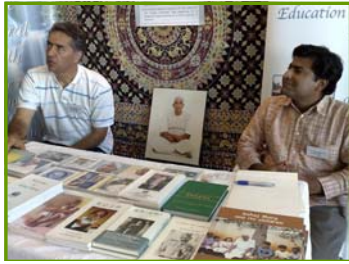
November

21-24th First regional gathering held at the Ashram of Peace and Goodwill, Bringelly.

21st Preceptor's seminar.

23rd UN Day for Tolerance programme and AGM. Character formation, Diary Writing and lots of work around the ashram formed the focus of the weekend.

From December, regular Sunday satsangh is held at the ashram at Bringelly.



Yoga Exhibition

Brisbane

November

Gold Coast

5 new abhyasis, with a total group of 8 living from Labrador to Byron Bay hinterland.

November

21st—24th Seminar Bringelly: 20 abhyasis and children from Brisbane area attended the Sydney seminar and children made, decorated and laminated bookmarks with the 10 maxims and these were for sale at the seminar. Monthly gathering- workshop on diary writing

December

2nd A 2 hour presentation on Sahaj Marg at the Multi-Faith Centre on December 2nd, Griffith University, Nathan was conducted with a presence of 14 attendees, including Professor Toh Swee-Hin, Director Multi Faith Centre and Laureate UNESCO Prize for Peace Education 2000, who handed out a certificate of appreciation to Br John for his inspirational presentation.

The monthly gathering was on Discipline; a follow on from discussion at the November



Bookmarks made by the children

seminar and readings from Salient features were used to clarify and provide a foundation for discussion .

Perth

October

11th An informal gathering and discussion

about Sahaj Marg with new abhyasis. Preceptors conducted an Open day at Kalgoorlie and 3 started the practise. Subsequently preceptors visited Kalgoorlie November and December to give sittings and satsangh

November

21-24th Six abhyasis from Perth centre attended the regional seminar in Sydney. Preceptor from Perth has visited Bunbury and Donnybrook centres to support Sis Loraine

Melbourne

October

The focal point for this month was to read and put into practice the 10 Maxims. Friday evenings abhyasis are welcome to come to the centre and read, contemplate, discuss any of the Maxims, individual cleaning and then sit for the 9pm sitting.

12th Talk on "Guidelines and clarifications on individual sittings".

19th Hubble Bubble DVD "A Unified Approach to the Almighty"

November

2nd Centre cleanup day. Encouragement given re preparation for the upcoming regional seminar Sydney 21 – 24 November

16th Open house at centre

30th Viewed another of Master's talks.

December

Theme for month, 'silence'

7th Centre cleanup

21st Study session on 'silence' theme.

Centre News New Caledonia Centre

November

21-23 Weekend workshop

at the home of Sis Colette New Caledonia at La Foa where the focus was on the topic of Character Formation and the practice. Sis Beatrice, who was the first local preceptor in Noumea is leaving the island and moving to France. We wish her all the best!



New Caledonia

Centre News New Zealand

December

13th/14th

AGM held in conjunction with a two day seminar, organized by the Auckland centre. Abhyasis from all centres of New Zealand including Auckland, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch, Dunedin and Queenstown participated. Morning and evening satsanghs held both days. The venue was in a forest setting surrounded by New Zealand wildlife, so that, coupled with the warm feelings generated by abhyasis from all over the country, made for a very special atmosphere during the satsanghs.

The AGM was held on Saturday afternoon and there were presentations and discussion as well as entertainment from Auckland abhyasis with singing, poetry reading, and a play about funny moments between Chariji and his Master Babuji Maharaj.

The new role of Centre Coordinator was announced with three people assigned these roles in Auckland, Wellington and Dunedin. A Youth Discussion with 13 youth was organized during the AGM. Each person being asked to talk for 5 -10 minutes on various aspects of Sahaj Marg, a task found to be both

pleasurable and nerve racking! Lots of issues were raised, lots of learning was had and fun was the order of the day!



New Zealand Youth - Kia Ora

Scholarship Training Program with Master

I have so much love and gratitude to Master for being selected to attend the Scholarship Training Program (STP) held December 14th 2008 to January 11th 2009. 40 scholars from all over the world were selected, some from countries so foreign to us that we had to refer to the atlas.

The programme was originally to be held in Pune but Master moved it to Malampuzha Retreat Centre (MRC) for the first two weeks with the final two weeks at Babuji Memorial Ashram.

As scholars arrived you could feel the synergy in the group building as we were preparing for the programme. On Monday 15th December we embarked on what was to be for some their first train ride in India. Echoes of stewards calling "Chai Chai, Coffee Coffee" amused some who in their vain attempt tried to imitate them. On arrival at Coimbatore we were greeted with a lovely surprise, Master was on a private visit and arranged to see us. This was to mark the beginning of many things our Master gave us and there was no doubt in anyone's mind that we were being spoiled with so much love from Him.

As the programme progressed, I started to realize the depth of Sahaj Marg and it's teachings. Inspired and eager to learn more I found the Q and A sessions that followed presentations on talks such as Love, Meditation and Cleaning, Constant Remembrance to name a few, provided opportunities to clarify any uncertainties. Of course when Master was present the programme was suspended as we were encouraged to be 'Alert'.

We were growing in all ways, our love for one

another was strengthening day by day, which was so subtle, we were oblivious to it, as it seemed so natural. But, as nature goes, everything returns to balance. I awoke early one morning and realised that I had a fever; *I have no doubt during this fever that I plunged into the darkest depths within.* Fortunately the advantages of being cared for by those who were aware of what was happening helped with the healing process.



"I do not know the significance of this, but I held onto that piece of Prasad like it was gold....."

However the turning point was when I was in His presence. I believe Master sensed my suffering. As he was leaving the library He stopped outside the window where I was standing and looked at me and handed me the first piece of Prasad. I do not know the significance of this, but I held onto that Prasad like it was gold. There were many of these moments that we will hold in our hearts, including the experience of the volunteers who taught us a valuable lesson in hospitality, something unique to India. We moved on from MRC after two weeks and headed back home to Chennai. More lessons followed. We even had to prepare our own presentations on conducting an open house and a five minute talk on any Sahaj Marg subject.

To record everything that happened I would need to write a book. Every moment was special and it is with joy that I share a few of those cherished moments.

New Year's Eve Master requested all those outside the gate to go to bed. Not long after this, Bro. Lennon came into the dormitory telling us we had to go to the meditation hall, Master was giving a sitting. I raced along to the hall with other sleeping beauties, some in their pyjamas. When Master entered He looked so regal in a cobalt blue shirt. I could think of no better way of ending the old year and starting the new year than with Master saying "Please start meditation".

On the second last day of the programme we were treated to lunch at Sis. Paula's. My heart went out to the two sisters who had to fast because they were made preceptors. Following this, Master invited us all to afternoon tea. It was then that I realised what I was becoming. For the first time ever I felt so relaxed to be myself in His presence. I felt like a little kid sitting at His feet. The atmosphere in that room and as we left His cottage was so overwhelming, it was like no one else existed but us. On the last day of the programme we were presented with our certificates. As Br Alberto was speaking I held Sis Helena's (Brazil) hand as I could feel this surge of energy pouring into to me. Walking onto the stage I looked at my Master, I was so proud of what I had just achieved and I knew my Master was too, because there He was sitting with a smile so big my heart just sang in respect for this man who held me so lovingly over the last four weeks.

I knew this programme was going to be something special, but had no idea the magnitude of it. I came to realize that real love can heal so many things, being in your heart gives you better direction but most of all, being in Remembrance of Our Master everything else will just evolve.

Prepared by Sis Waireti Amai (Sydney)



Inauguration of Masters Cottage at Malampuzha



Walking outside accommodation quarters



Inauguration of Meditation Hall Malampuzha

Coordination and contact: Waireti Amai and Libby Crichton

Please email all articles to ecrichton@optus.net.au

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You received this email because you requested to receive emails from SRCM.

The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of SRCM.

Correction notice

The car shown in the last edition of echoes is not Rev Babuji's car but it belongs to Late Br Umesh, elder son of Rev Babuji.