



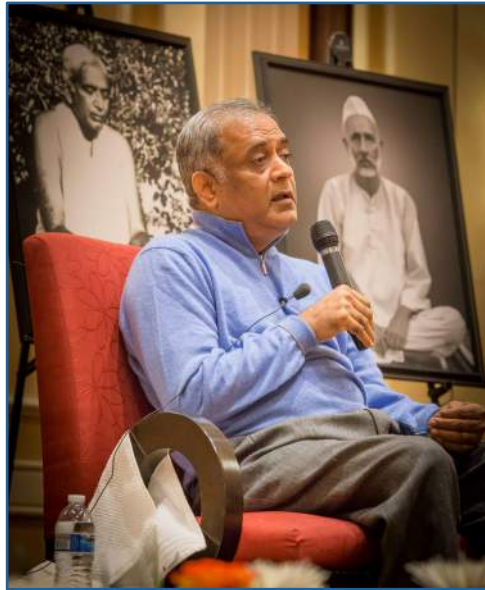
SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION

ECHOES

OCEANIA
NEWSLETTER

Bhandara in the US

The abhyasis of North America were overjoyed to spend the 23rd to 25th of January with Kamleshji in his new role as spiritual Master and president of Shri Ram Chandra Mission. The impromptu bhandara, on the occasion of Basant Panchami, in New Jersey, turned into a North American gathering attended by over 1100 abhyasis from across the continent. A core group of fifty volunteers worked together on the arrangements.



Editor's Note

As we come to terms with the passing of our beloved Master Chariji, we are also in the process of getting to know His successor respected Kamleshji. He has not wasted any time in setting the pace for his work, in bringing about changes in the way abhyasis are to approach him and work for the Mission while maintaining their focus on their own sadhana. His updates to us via Sahaj Sandesh are comforting and give us a glimpse into his vision for the Mission. The visit to France and the gatherings in New Jersey have already brought about many changes in the functioning of the Mission. In this issue of the newsletter we bring you highlights of this tour.

The gathering took place in a hotel, which became an ashram for three days. Its large ballroom became a spacious and very aesthetic meditation hall. Almost all outstation abhyasis stayed there, as did Kamleshji.

On Friday evening, the gathering opened with a 5 p.m. satsang, followed by a heartfelt talk by Kamleshji on the call by his Master, Chariji, for the

urgency of sincere practice. He mentioned that Chariji was very candid in his diaries and exhorted abhyasis to be absolutely honest, especially with themselves. At the close of the talk he invited all abhyasis to reassemble in the hall for the Friday night sitting at 9 p.m.

On Saturday morning, on the occasion of Basant Panchami, Kamleshji inaugurated the Toronto Ashram at 7.15 a.m. via Skype, addressing a



SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION



ECHOES OF OCEANIA NEWSLETTER

gathering in Toronto of two hundred abhyasis from across Canada and the US, followed by a wonderful sitting.

After the 9 a.m. satsang and another short talk, Kamleshji sat at the registration desk for several hours taking pre-registration orders for a new book to be released later this year on Lalaji's life, and interacting with abhyasis with touching warmth, directness and humour. He later met with around 150 prefects from North America, where he mentioned some of the new changes the Hierarchy of Masters have permitted in the Mission, as have also been indicated in recent messages from the Brighter World.

He also mentioned that in keeping with the changing times there is a need to reach out to seekers in simple ways, and encourage them to meditate and experience the changes for themselves. He gave a sitting to all the prefects present. This was followed by his meeting with new abhyasis at 8 p.m. The day ended with satsang at 9 p.m.

Kamleshji held a Q&A session after the morning satsang on Sunday. One could feel the heart-to-heart bonding between the new Master and his abhyasis. There was love, humour, patience, joy, as well as commitment to a deeper practice and interiorisation, and to a constant connection with the Master through thought. As the session progressed, many abhyasis saw in Kamleshji a true reflection of Chariji, and they were so touched and moved that they were in tears as the session ended. As one abhyasi said, "I feel it in my heart. They are truly one."

After leaving the venue, Kamleshji visited the nearby Monroe Ashram with the local volunteers. He gave them a sitting there and had lunch with them before leaving for his home.

For more news from India please check <http://www.sahajmarg.org/newsletter/india>



SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION

ECHOES OF OCEANIA NEWSLETTER

Sydney Centre News

The beginning of the New Year for the Oceania region started with the Worldwide Webinar hosted by Sydney centre's network team. This major event in the Sahaj Marg family took place on Saturday, the 17th of January 2015. Arjun, from the Sydney centre, coordinated this for Australia. The webinar theme was 'Imbibing Master-like qualities and moving towards Divinity'. The objective was to invite everyone from anywhere in the world to meet on a common platform and share, listen to and ponder over vital spiritual matters.

During January, a number of presentations were given by abhyasis on the life and teachings of our Adi Guru, revered Lalaji, as well as reminiscences narrated by Babuji. The last in the series was presented on Sunday 1st February during the monthly gathering. This was followed by a presentation by Shalini and Raghu on aspects of Lalaji's personal life, his house and place of *mahasamadhi*.

Pujya Lalaji's 142nd birth anniversary was celebrated on 2nd February at the North Epping Scout Hall. It was a full-day programme with three satsangs. Activities included some informative video sessions on Lalaji Maharaj and Babuji Maharaj, and thought-provoking presentations by Dipak Joshi and Srivatsava Katakam. These presentations were around the theme of the 'Principles of Conversation' proposed by Lalaji. A complementary topic 'Search Within' was presented by Ramesh Metikala. The total attendance for this celebration was 82 people.



A weekend workshop, led by the Centre-in-Charge John Smith, was held in Sydney on the 14th and 15th of March. Saturday focused on the recent changes in prefects' work. Sunday was a workshop on deepening our involvement and reflections on suggested meditations by respected Kamlesh bhai. Both days were well attended and an atmosphere of togetherness and brotherhood made the time valuable and enjoyable as well.

SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION

ECHOES OF OCEANIA NEWSLETTER



"Happiness in itself is real existence. Really speaking, happiness alone exists, and all else, namely sorrow etc., is nothing but illusion."

— Lalaji Maharaj
Truth Eternal (5th edn., 2010), pg. 70



Perth Centre News

The birthday celebration of our Grand Master, Lalaji Maharaj, was held at sister Lulu and brother Ram's place. And what a momentous day it was!

A lot of spiritual preparation had been done, with individual sittings being taken beforehand. Even though it was a working day, many abhyasis were able to stay for the whole day. The meals provided with love during the celebration were utterly delicious. During the celebrations, three group meditations were held.



SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION

ECHOES OF OCEANIA NEWSLETTER



The 6.30 morning meditation was utterly peaceful and Master's Grace engulfed us all. During the day, a talk given by respected Kamlesh bhai in the US, was watched many times over with joy and excitement. It was a wonderful thought that we could spread Divine love and blessings to our surroundings through prayer.

The evening group meditation was attended by 50 abhyasis. The entire atmosphere was felt to be so charged that this feeling continued the next day and hopefully will remain for a long while to come. Altogether, the celebration was attended by 50 adults and 12 children.

Melbourne Centre News

On 1st February, we arrived at the Community Hall in Brighton at around 8.30 a.m. Among those present on this joyous occasion were brother Uprethi, a prefect from Uttaranchal state in northern India, brothers and sisters from other centres of India, some newly introduced participants, and a bevy of beautiful children as well as the old stalwarts!

The first of the group satsangs was held at 9.00 a.m. After a beautiful and blessed meditation, brother Vikas conducted a question and answer session on 'The Principles of Conversation' that was recommended by Kamlesh bhai.

After lunch, some videos were played and a discussion on the teachings of Lalaji Maharaj was conducted by sister Seema. Participants expressed how they felt and talked about why there was a need to practice if Divine Love was natural and Master's grace sufficient to convey us to the highest. Our words found resonance in the teachings of Lalaji, "First practise and then read books, otherwise Reality will be lost upon you."

We watched a presentation on the life of Lalaji Maharaj with rare photographs of his family, his house and his samadhi at Fatehgarh as well as the visit paid by our revered Master Chariji. It kept us immersed in the remembrance of our Grandmaster.

Evening meditation was held at 5.00 p.m. followed by dinner. This was prepared by a team of volunteers; they told us that they had reminded themselves of the importance of keeping the 8th Maxim in mind at every stage of buying, preparing and serving food.

Monday, 2nd February started with showers of rain. We gathered at brother Vikas and sister Sudha's house. The morning satsang was held at 6.30 a.m., so that those who had to work that day could attend. After the group meditation, we watched via a live video link, respected Kamlesh bhai's talk from the US. He spoke of the need for all to get an adequate night's sleep, because otherwise health problems could develop and we wouldn't be able to receive the full benefit of morning meditation.

SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION

He pointed out that, during the day, the right nostril should be dominant in our natural breathing and at night the left one. If it reversed, it indicated a suboptimal level of health and inadequate sleep.

We then had breakfast and very soon it was time for the second group meditation at 11.00 a.m. During the course of the afternoon, a video recording was played with Kamlesh bhai's message. This gave us some suggestions which can be adopted in addition to the daily practice. One of these was that we should think whenever possible that everything around us is deeply absorbed in Godly remembrance. Another was that all sisters and brothers are developing correct thinking, right understanding and an honest approach to life. A further suggestion we can make is that all beings are benefitting from Master's Grace and that all sisters and brothers with a sincere craving for the Ultimate are being attracted or drawn towards the Master. He said that if the craving was not present in anyone, they should just pretend it is there and act accordingly with conviction. After the video,

ECHOES OF OCEANIA NEWSLETTER

some of us went for a short walk in the nature reserve nearby, getting an opportunity to put one of the suggestions into practice.

When we returned, brother Abhijeet led a session of 'heart talk' based on the responses of brothers and sisters to Babuji's writings on the life, appearance and personality of his beloved Master, Lalaji Maharaj. This was followed by the song 'Aftaab e Maarfat', composed by a disciple of Lalaji Maharaj after his *mahasamadhi*. It begins:

Aftab-e-Marfat ei Nukta dan-e-Maarfat (O Thou Sun of Spirituality! O Thou connoisseur of its intricacies/knower of its refinements)!

Rahnuma-e-Saalika ei Jism-o-jaane Maarfat (O Pathfinder and Supreme Guide of the Guides of Life! O Thou embodiment of the Life Spiritual!)

A full translation and explanation of the ode, which is in Persianised classical Urdu, was given by Abhijeet Gupta.

The last group meditation of the day commenced at 6.30 p.m.

Brisbane Centre News



Youth Weekend

On the weekend of the 24th-26th January, we took the last opportunity of the holidays to invite the youth of South-East Queensland to Toowoomba before they commenced University. A few of them would be starting University for the first time.

This was a wonderful gathering which offered all the participants time to reflect and examine their practice. Apart from two group meditations held each day, there were various activities, including bowling, swimming and exploring the local parks. On Saturday night everyone enjoyed a movie and then retired to prepare for the next day.

SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION

ECHOES OF OCEANIA NEWSLETTER

Brisbane News continued....

Basant Celebration



We gathered on 1st and 2nd February for a longer celebration than usual to remember Lalaji and be together on this auspicious occasion.

On Monday, after the morning group meditation, we had a picnic in the natural bush setting of Mt Coot-Tha and bravely faced the heat to walk on the Aboriginal Art Trail. This was followed by a reward at an ice-cream shop where we enjoyed the view in a convivial atmosphere. Back at base, we read and reflected on Lalaji's 'Principles of Conversation' and concluded with a group meditation and dinner.

On Tuesday, most of us discovered his house and mahasamadhi memorial with a presentation sent to us by sister Shalini.

Spring is a time of renewal. We marked this by listening to the latest talks of respected Kamlesh bhai and his suggestions 'for the benefit of one and all'. It was decided to view the video again after group meditation the following Sunday and also to conduct an interactive workshop to allow a

practical approach at the monthly gathering in March.

Moree Visit

We decided to join brother Kumar on his visit to Moree, leaving at lunchtime on Saturday and reaching there at around 6 p.m. Sittings were given to some of the local abhyasis. It was a pleasant surprise when two new people decided to take introductory sittings. The original plan was to leave Moree after Sunday group meditation but we changed our plans to leave later in the afternoon.

After group meditation we listened to an audio talk from 'Kindle the Heart'. There was also a discussion about the new changes in the practice. In the afternoon, while the new couple received their last sitting, we enjoyed the very hot springs of Moree! We finally arrived home rather tired at 8 p.m. Brother Kumar and sister Vani, however, were already discussing their next trip to Moree!

New Zealand Centre News



In February we faced the many organisational challenges of the New Zealand national seminar held on the 20-22 March in Auckland. It was a demanding task but also very enjoyable.

A few abhyasis arrived on the Friday morning and so, with much love, our gathering started. On Saturday, the day began with a flow of energy which continued till the end of the weekend and cannot be expressed in words. One of the main themes of this seminar was discussion on the 'vision for a New Zealand ashram'. An important outcome is that the youth have come forward to

volunteer their services to conduct a survey with the abhyasis.

We also had some enjoyable entertainment! A skit and a demonstration of 'magic' was performed by the kids and appreciated by everyone, including our visiting guests. The relationship between brothers and sisters was strengthened through this gathering, and when the time came to disperse, we all felt a pain of separation. The seminar definitely conveyed a sense of purpose, and we hope that we will have the chance to come together again soon.

Announcement

Abhyasis in the Oceania Region

We invite you to be a part of the Echoes Newsletter team. If you would like to be part of the core team to collect, refine and put together the issue or contribute articles and photographs from your centre, please contact us at echoes.oceania@srcm.org

We would also like to have your feedback and suggestions on the Echoes Oceania Newsletter.

