

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 Berlin, Kharagpur and Bangalore.

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

Health: We cover medical centre activities at Chennai and Satkhol.



(above) Revered Master during the special bhandara held on 15 August 2012 at Chennai

Programs at CREST, Bangalore

In the third quarter of 2012, two Sadhana programs for abhaysis, one for Prefects, one for Youth and one training program for International Facilitators were conducted at CREST, Bangalore.

Sadhana Programs for abhaysis (3 – 8 July 2012 and 28 August – 2 September 2012)

The first program had fifty-seven participants. It started on the auspicious Guru Poornima day. The second program had thirty-four participants.

Both programs covered topics on all aspects of Sahaj Marg practice like meditation, cleaning, prayer, constant remembrance, diary-writing, individual sitting, satsangh and the Ten Maxims. Other topics dealt with were Sahaj Marg philosophy, the Role of Master in Human Evolution and Sahaj Marg - a way of life. Certain practical aspects on how to develop faith, love and surrender towards the Master were also dealt with. Facilitators discussed the topics for ninety minutes; the group discussion was followed by presentations by selected group leaders.

There was a session on *"Speaking from the Heart"*, where participants were asked to express their views on

a topic close to their hearts. All were required to utilise the library for an hour every day. They were asked to pick any book of their choice, read one chapter with minimum ten pages and write precisely what they understood.

International Facilitators Training Program, 27 July 2012 - 2 August 2012

In this program, fifty-six abhaysis from all over the world participated. A team of seven organisers and coaches namely, Br. Santhosh Sreenivasan, Br. Alberto Lafranche, Br. Ferdiand Wullimere, Sis. Elizabeth Denly, Sis. Lalitha Sreenivasan, Sis. Poonam Babber and Sis. Chavi Sisodia conducted the program.

Founder's Day Celebration, 9 August 2012

The 9th of August, saw the beginning of the seventh year of CREST, Bangalore. About one hundred people gathered on the occasion including faculty members and volunteers. The program started with a satsangh, and was followed by a video show on the birth and growth of CREST. Br. Jaganathan, the first director of CREST conducted the satsangh and delivered a talk. He spoke about the nostalgic memories of his years in CREST.



(above) Participants of Sadhana program held during 3rd – 8th July



(above) Shram daan by abhyasis

Sadhana Program for Youth, 12 - 19 August 2012

A discussion on the topic “*The role of youth in society*” was held on the evening on 12th August, the UN International youth day. It was followed by a discussion on the topic “*The role of abhyasi sisters in today's society.*” The Sadhana program continued on Thursday the 16th August after the special bhandara at Chennai on 15th August. There were three lectures and a group discussion every day.

The youth program had different topics catering to the needs of the youth in facing difficult situations in society. Some topics discussed were:

- *Personal excellence*
- *Importance of money in the life of an abhyasi*
- *Relationships in life,*
- *Role of an abhyasi in the society*
- *Importance of family*
- *Life management*
- *What is success*

There were talks on different aspects of sadhana, an overview of the Ten Maxims and Sahaj Marg Philosophy.

Shram daan was held on the 18th and 19th of August in which the participants planted badam and silver oak saplings around the parking area.

Sadhana Program for Prefects, 17 - 23 September 2012: Sixteen prefects attended this program. Following topics were discussed:

- *Importance of reading Mission literature*
- *Personal excellence*
- *Religion and spirituality*
- *Subtle aspects of the Ten Maxims*
- *Subtle aspects of sadhana*
- *Balanced existence*
- *Prefect's work*
- *Prefect as an administrator*
- *Sahaj Marg philosophy*
- *How to prepare abhyasis before meeting Master*
- *How to keep Master happy under all circumstances.*

Three outstation faculty members were invited; they shared their experiences with the delegates.

UN International Peace Day, 21 September 2012

On 21st September, all participants gathered in the classroom before 9 p.m. The letter written by Revered Babuji Maharaj was read out to the participants and they were asked to sit and pray for the peace of all humanity.

Source: Sis. Seetha Kunchithapadam



(above) Participants of Sadhana program for Prefects



(above) Participants of the International facilitators training program

CREST Centres are resident schools where abhyasis in batches of 50-100 undergo intensive training in different aspects of human existence--physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual. Two CREST centres are in India, one located at Bangalore and another at Kharagpur. One CREST centre is located at Berlin Ashram, Germany.

More details are available on our Mission's website at: <http://www.sahajmarg.org/smww/crest-overview>

The schedule of training programs is available on the CREST, Bangalore web page. <http://www.sahajmarg.org/smww/crest-bangalore>.

Interested abhyasis can apply for training programs using the guidelines on the web page.

Abhyasis who are interested in making use of the CREST library are welcome to CREST. Minimum period of stay at CREST would be two months, at the end of which they will have to submit a monograph on a chosen subject. Interested abhyasis should write to the email address crest.bangalore@sahajmarg.org with their application.

Upcoming program at CREST, Berlin

CREST Berlin will host a seminar on the topic "*Love, The Grihastha-Adventure*", from 22nd to 28th November 2012. Abhyasis who have completed one year of Sahaj Marg practice are eligible to participate in this seminar. The number of participants is limited to fifty.

In five days, the participants of the program will dive into a spiritual vision of a life - here and now, under today's oppressive conditions.

- *How to keep the flags of integrity, truthfulness, compassion and love for all humanity flying?*
- *How to live such values?*

The discussion will be around the following sub-topics:

- *Man meets Woman: A spiritual perspective*
- *What is a successful life: Work-family-spirituality*
- *Trust and respect: The need to work on ourselves*
- *The journey: Youth, parenthood, wrinkles: Our evolving roles*
- *The need for harmony*

For further information please contact crestdirector.berlin@sahajmarg.org

Source: Br. Christian Macketanz

Programs at CREST, Kharagpur



(above) Participants of seminar held during 10-14 July 2012

CREST Kharagpur has been established with a firm focus on issues dealing with Character Formation. The seminars here are structured so that candidates will get the chance to reflect on their priorities and set specific goals and plans to achieve these goals once they return to their homes.

More details are available on our Mission's website at:

<http://www.sahajmarg.org/smww/crest-kharagpur>

The third quarter of 2012 saw five seminars on character formation at CREST Kharagpur.

(I) Roots of Character Formation (Telugu): 10 - 14 July 2012: Fifty-six abhyasis from various centres in Andhra Pradesh participated. Topics were:

Day 2 – Traditional bondages: Sis. Pushpa said that idol worship and rituals leave behind the real idea of God and bar our spiritual progress. Master has given a call to all spiritual aspirants to go beyond these rituals and get rid of these traditional bondages. She quoted Master who has said *“Tradition is only for those who do not have a Guru. For those who have a Guru, He is the tradition and they should forget everything else.”*

Day 3 – Open the doors to your heart: Br. Krishna Rao said that the way of reaching the real goal becomes fast when we open our hearts. Basic reasons for a closed heart are negative thoughts, ego, fear, prejudice, doubt and samskaras. For opening the heart, one has to be receptive to His teachings, transmission and be obedient. Our meditation facilitates this to happen.

Day 4 – Service is the easiest way to reach him: Br. Sairam said that we are not really capable of love in its true sense and thus are left with only one way - service. True meaning of service, levels of service, how service should be done, attitude and understanding when doing service were discussed. Service is the only way to express our gratitude to Him.

Day 5 – Sahaj Marg as a way of life: In this session, conducted by Sis. Padmalatha, effective living was stressed and was compared to good living. To reach the goal of life, we need to learn to respond naturally under all circumstances of life, and we need to be in a state of balance at all our levels of existence, from physical to spiritual levels. How to arrive and maintain that balanced

state, responsibilities of a person towards his own self and to society and means of achieving balanced state were discussed. The session ended with a reading of messages from Babuji Maharaj.

(II) Roots of Character Formation: 7 - 12 August 2012: Fourteen abhyasis participated in this seminar.

Day 2 – Morality and Ethics: Sis. Chanderkanta Arora started by touching upon different definitions of Morality. She quoted Babuji Maharaj who has said that misuse of any faculty is immorality. One's attitude to one's own self is essentially what we understand by morality in the Sahaj Marg system. Love makes morality possible; where love exists, there is no exploitation and there is no indulgence.

Day 3 – Obedience, the way of life: Sis. Roopali Garg explained the meaning of obedience and aspects of obedience vis-à-vis love and freedom.

Day 4 – Tolerance begets love: Br. Gandharba Behare said that the more we contemplate, we see merit in tolerance and that makes us more compassionate to the outside. Out of our love for Him, we should love His creation. Thus where there is love, there is no intolerance.

Day 5 – Relationship between Guru and Disciple: Sis. Suman Mishra conducted the session. She said that the most fruitful relation one should have with his Master is that of a mother and a son.

(III) Roots of character formation (Bangla): 15 – 20 August 2012:

This was the first ever seminar on Roots of Character Formation to be conducted in Bangla. It was attended by fifty-one abhyasis. Participants represented many centres in West Bengal, Assam, Jharkhand, Orissa and Gujarat.



(left) Participants of the seminar held during 7-12 August 2012

When asked by a child as to how does one know that his/her heart is open, Master said – “It is not something that is like a zipper, you know. You will know when you can speak fearlessly. When you can speak only one thing – it is not the truth, it is not a lie. It is what it is. Then your heart is open.”

Below are the session topics and the presenters:

Day 2 - Power of thought: Br. Shekhar Roy
Day 3 – Discipline and obedience: Br. Sudip Sarkar
Day 4 – Unity and brotherhood: Br. Parimal Jana
Day 5 – Guru, the real friend: Br. Asoke Sengupta

Br. Shekhar Roy said that habits are formed by suggestions and thoughts. Br. Sudip Sarkar stressed that discipline is the basic block required for character formation. Br. Asoke Sengupta shared his personal journey and this touched everyone's hearts.

(IV) Seminar in Hindi: 4 – 9 September 2012: Forty-seven abhyasis from various centers participated in this seminar. Following were the topics:

Day 2 – Willingness to change – Change is inevitable: Sis. Leena Dave said that spirituality is to become what we ought to be from what we are. It is a slow process and willingness means attitude and action. If we have willingness to change, it turns into surrender, then becoming constant remembrance and culminating in love. This alone brings about the ultimate change.

Day 3 – Brotherhood: Sis. Roopali Garg examined the

sixth maxim in detail. The greed to acquire is the basis of all conflicts among all human beings. Our behavior must be respectful; simplicity helps to establish brotherhood. The maxim, *“Expect not for thou shall not be disappointed”* is a tool for creating harmony.

Day 4 – Tolerance: Sis. Chandrakanta talked about the role of miseries in spiritual growth. A video clip of a caterpillar's struggles to come out of the cocoon in the process of becoming a butterfly was played to highlight the need of miseries and afflictions for growth. Virtues of forgiveness and capacity to absorb in face of provocation leads us to live life as our Masters want of us.

Day 5 – Balanced existence: Sis. Shobhna Jagdish conveyed the essence of the Ten Maxims and how they are tools to lead a balanced existence. She told the audience that Master wants us to stay in constant remembrance; he is a *“chit chor”* like Lord Krishna, because we are incapable of keeping our mind (*chit*) in the mode of balanced existence.

(V) Roots of character formation for functionaries (Hindi): 25 – 30 September 2012: This was attended by forty-five delegates from different centers across India.



(above) Participants of the seminar held during 15 – 20 August 2012



(left) Br. Uma Shankar Bajpai delivering a talk in the seminar on "Roots of character formation" for functionaries

Calendar, CREST Kharagpur: October - December 2012

- 9 -14 Oct: Fundamentals of Character Formation (Telugu)
- 26 - 31 Oct: Roots of Character Formation (English)
- 20 - 25 Nov: Fundamentals of Character Formation for youth (English)
- 18 - 23 Dec: Fundamentals of Character Formation (Hindi)

Day 1 – Acceptance and Co-operation: Br. Arjun Pandey said that when we are in a state of gratitude, we are in a state of acceptance. The way to cooperate is to do our sadhana; willingness to be one with our environment will change the environment around us.

Day 2 – Commitment: Br. Kaushal Kumar Saxena explored the benefits of commitment. He cited "*Whispers from The Brighter World*" with focus on the need for commitment.

Day 3 – Love - Duty and Responsibility: Br. Alok Tandon said that if there is an anti-thesis to love, it is being judgmental. Only when we surrender ourselves beyond country, place and time, love can happen. The more we give the closer we are to becoming absolute love. Love is the foundation that makes us fulfill our duty and responsibility for our spiritual growth.

Day 4 – Harmony: Br. Gyan Sarin used the example of

music and said that soul-stirring music results from harmony of musical instruments and notes. Master is like a music conductor. Outer harmony is difficult to achieve because we live in the middle of absolute chaos and confusion. We have no choice but to create inner harmony.

Day 5 – Closing session: Br. Uma Shankar Bajpai spoke about the need to learn constantly. He said that to read Sahaj Marg literature with the mind is like eating without digestion. He shared his personal experience when he realised he had erred in following one of them: he ran to meet the guru as a critically ill patient runs to the doctor. Master took away all anxiety with a mere pat on his shoulder. He stated that the *Bhagwad Geeta* says that if you cannot surrender to Master, do your sadhana. If you cannot even do abhyas for the love of Master, work without expecting results.

Source: Br. U.P. Dhawan

Activities at Pune Retreat Centre

Pune Retreat Centre hosted sixty-two abhyasis for the quarter ending September 2012. A few comments by retreatants are given below:

- "I feel closer to Master and I can see him in everything. This retreat also helped me to internalize the power of love and to learn how to love more."
- "Retreat gave me the time for myself and I think that I will be able to take this spiritual atmosphere along with me."
- "When I came here, I felt that I entered into another world."
- "It has changed my way of thinking as well as my practice. I am feeling a significant change in my inner condition."
- "Practice of constant remembrance has developed and I was taking the shower of Master's grace all the time."
- "Meditation and cleaning were extraordinary. My thinking has totally changed and I have taken a decision that I would align my career in such a way that it ultimately leads to service of the Mission."
- "I realized that silence alone can bring out the answers we always seek. I am also feeling that certainly I have crossed one more level due to the concentrated dose of spirituality."

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/smw/w/retreat-center-overview>

Abhyasis who wish to enroll for retreat programs may now apply online at the address given above.

Report of activities at SPURS during July to September 2012



(above) A group photo of volunteers who constructed a garden area for meditation in the meadow in front of the retreat center

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.

Those who retreat at SPURS often comment about the impact its natural setting has made upon them during their time here. The two following observations were offered recently:

- *"The physical space is really beautiful and its acreage is wonderful for walking. I would find myself in wonder at the physical surroundings."*
- *"I have been surrounded [during my retreat] by nature – greenery, animals. This is a real environment. Nature has entered me. It has helped me to focus on my practice."*

To further support the purpose for which SPURS has been prepared and get the experience of being outdoors here, a troop of some thirty volunteers (boy scouts, their parents and some siblings) arrived at SPURS on the morning of 11 August 2012. They came to help Br. Shreyas Khanjee with his Eagle Scout project, that of constructing a garden area for meditation in the meadow directly in front of the Retreat Center. Durable landscape edging was installed to form a pleasing shape. Diligent

workers with shovels and wheelbarrows filled the area with thirteen tons of crushed granite. A wooden bench was put in place and a five-foot wide wooden swing was hung from a tree limb with care taken to protect the limb from abrasion. A path to the seating area and around the meadow has been mowed and can be completed with crushed granite. This new site invites sisters and brothers to make their way to another quiet area to meditate, reflect, contemplate, surrounded by the beauty and wonder of this precious natural setting.

The environment at SPURS is not only "beautiful" and "natural" but has been specially prepared by our Master for our use for our spiritual growth. All abhyasis are invited to consider a stay at SPURS, keeping in mind that one must have been practicing for a minimum of two years. Abhyasis can stay for a minimum of three days or any number of days up to thirty. Sisters retreat on even-numbered months, while brothers come on odd-numbered ones.

Source: Br. Asheesh Bajaj

(below and right) Volunteers working in the garden area



Medical Centre News

Free Medical Centers (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.

Services of Free Medical Centre at Manapakkam during July 2012 to September 2012

The FMC served 18,049 patients during this quarter. Details of the activities in this period are given below.

Specialty wise	Patients	Panel of Doctors	
Allopathy	16,432	Dr. Anamay. K. Bidwai, Dr. S. Kishore, Dr. R. Sulochana, Dr. E. Elanchezian, Dr. V. Vidyavathi, Dr. K. Sudeshana, Dr. Komal Gupta	
Cardiology	91	Dr. V. Vanaja	
Dentistry	492	Dr. Jagadish Kumar, Dr. Komal Gupta	
Dermatology	339	Dr. M. Jayaraman	
Endocrinology	23	Dr. M. Ravi Kiran	
Gastro-enterology	56	Dr. M. Manimaran	
General Surgery	90	Dr. Anamay K. Bidwai	
Physiotherapy	1,632	Sis. P. Kiranmayee	
Homeopathy	1,617	Dr. RamSubramaniam Dr. Vidhi N. Shah	
Nutrition	69	Sis. G. Srilatha	
Ophthalmology	169	Dr. Harshitha Bakshi	
Orthopaedics	26	Dr. D. Narendra	
Paediatrics	2,422	Dr. Natwar Sharma Dr. S. Kishore	
Psychiatry	19	Dr. A.P. Mythili	
Pulmonology	0	Dr. G. Raja Amarnath	
Urology	6	Dr. Sanjay Sharma	
Gynecology	19	Dr. Jayanthi Mohan	
Neurology	0	Dr. R. Padmini	
Categories	Patients	Categories	Patients
Male	6,810	Abhyasis	7,651
Female	8,817	Others	10,398
Children	2,422	Total	18,409
Other details	Patients	Remarks	
Services outside regular hours	219		
In patients	197		
Clinical Laboratory investigations	882		

Staff	Staff	Volunteers
Dr. S. Kishore (Doctor) Dr. Anmay K. Bidwai (Doctor) Dr. Vidhi N. Shah (Doctor) Dr. Komal Gupta S. Meenakshi (Pharmacist) K. Jaya (House-keeping) P. Gomathy (Receptionist) Sis. P. Kiranmayee (Physiotherapist)	A. Radhamani (Nurse) C. Ramya (Nurse) P. Kausalya (Nurse) R. Saranya (Nurse) D. Eswaramma (Nurse) D. Pattabiraman (Nurse) S. Srinivasalu (Lab Technician)	Dr. K. Sudeshana Dr. Umakanthan Dr. V. Vidyavathi Dr. R. Sulochana Dr. E. Elanchezian Sis. Rajeswari Sis. Janaki Sudha

Source: Br. Dr. Ravindran Ulaganathan

Sahaj Marg Physicians Group (SMPG)

It is an initiative involving physicians, medical students, residents, nurses and others in the medical community to offer medical services to the needy through SMSF Medical Centres. A database of names of doctors from all branches of medicine has been done.

Group email address is:
smpg@sahajmarg.info.

SMPG Contact is

Murthy Gokula
(rgokula@hotmail.com or
murthyg@msu.edu).

Activities at Satkhol Medical and Dental Centre

A specialist camp was held at Satkhol from 5 October 2012 to 7 October 2012. Detailed statistics of the camp are given below.

Specialty wise	Cases
Medical	99
Surgical	42
OBG	77
Cardiology	105
Dermatology	74
Pediatric	83
ENT	87
Orthopedics	303
Ophthalmic	206
Dental cases	193
Ultra Sound	105
Ayurvedic	121
Total	1495

Volunteers for the Specialist Camp

Dr. Asha Bansal, Dr. Usha Mohan, Dr. Urvashi, Dr. Rahul Mehrotra, Dr. Raj Mann, Dr. Tomar, Dr. J. P. Pandey, Dr. Palaniyappan, Dr. Padmalatha, Dr. V. S. N. Raju, Dr. R. N. Mishra, Dr. S. C. Gupta, Dr. Alok Tandon, Dr. Renu Tandon, Dr. Vinoth, Dr. H. K. Singh (Doctors)
Br. Mritanjay Mishra, Br. Rajufulara (Optometrists)
Br. Bhavin Patel, Sr. Rajashree Bhat, Br. Rajesh (Lab Technicians)
Sr. Rashmi, Br. Dhondiyal, Sr. Poonam Adhikari (Pharmacists)
Sr. Vinitha Mishra (Staff Nurse)
Br. Giridhar S. Bisht (OT Assistant)

Source: Br. Dr. C.K.Prasanna Kumar

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