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Seminar of Latin American and Iberian Peninsula abhyasis at the Babuji Memorial Ashram, Chennai, India

The seminar of Latin American and Iberian Peninsula abhyasis at the Babuji Memorial Ashram, in Chennai, India is planned to take place from 9th to 15th of February, 2015.

Interested abhyasis should contact the coordinator for their region as soon as possible, to get information regarding procedures for the trip and stay at the ashram.

In Brazil, interested abhyasis should send an e-mail to srcmbr@gmail.com.



Beloved Master's Birthday Celebrations in India

Source: Echoes Special Issue – July 2014



“Celebrations should never end, because a celebration is not for pleasure (good food, good company, music).

A celebration is the heart's expression of its gratitude for the great presence in our lives, in our hearts, which is keeping us alive and active on the spiritual course which has been set out before us, so that we can cross the ocean of samsara [life] safely, effectively, successfully, in this lifetime. Please remember. The celebration, of course, is a joyful occasion. Of course we must enjoy the good food that we get here, but we should never forget that it is our expression of gratitude, and gratitude has no end. We cannot say I am grateful for half an hour and then I go back to my life.”

P. Rajagopalachari

A Celebration – The Heart's Expression of its Gratitude (Jabalpur, 2 February 2010).

Babuji Memorial Ashram, Manapakkam, Chennai

It was a low-key celebration in Chennai this time. Owing to the fact that Master's health had suddenly taken a down-turn before his 88th birthday, he was confined to his cottage. This meant that the 3,000 strong gathering of abhyasis in Babuji Memorial Ashram, Manapakkam, were unable to see him.

However, they could experience his grace and love as they moved around in the ashram. This was especially felt in the twice daily satsangs held at 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on the three days from 23rd to 25th July 2014.





Diamond Jubilee Park, Tiruppur



Like the birth celebrations held earlier this year for Lalaji and for Babuji, our Master's 88th birthday celebrations were hosted at the Diamond Jubilee Park in Tiruppur. Abhyasis from all over the world were invited to attend this important event.

Under Master's guidance, the initial planning for the celebration was made for around 20,000 abhyasis with a budget prepared accordingly. Until shortly before the event, registrations had reached a little over this number. However, when Master fell ill just before the celebrations, a Sahaj Sandesh message was sent out encouraging all abhyasis to go to Tiruppur to attend the bhandara. This led to an unexpected last minute increase in arrivals at the venue.

By the afternoon of the 22nd, more than 15,000 abhyasis had turned up, but buses and trains continued to arrive during the night, especially from centres in South India. As abhyasis streamed into the site in thousands, the organizers were stretched to provide accommodation for everyone.

Throughout the night, coordinators from various areas – accommodation, transport, security, meditation hall, children's centre, book-store and the comfort dorm – all worked together to generate more space for the incoming flow. The final count, including children, reached the impressive total of 33,000 participants.

Over the three-day celebration, a total of seven satsangs were held, at 6.30 a.m., 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. in the huge meditation hall.

Brother Kamlesh conducted all the satsangs and gave a total of four talks. In one, he asked a very sobering question for reflection, "For the past three years, we have been celebrating Master's birthday and he has not been well all these times. Then what are we really celebrating?" He also touched upon various aspects of Sahaj Marg and spiritual values, with particular emphasis on the importance of regular and heartfelt practice, stating that lack of development is directly related to lack of practice.

On the subject of surrender, he said that the state of surrender is an individual affair with one's nature. We should realize that this state is not guaranteed by the number of years we have been in the Mission! To cultivate a state of surrender requires mutual trust and respect, which enables us to develop empathy and, in turn, emotional intelligence. Surrender cannot be artificially created – it has to be developed, and in the process we have to 'become'. This too is possible only through correct practice.

In his last talk, brother Kamlesh said we should never look this way or that way, but keep our eyes focused on the goal, come what may. Life's difficulties will be there, enjoyment will be there, joys will be there – we must participate in all of them with equal attention, thanking our great Master in the process and continuing our onward march. He concluded the celebrations by thanking all the coordinators, volunteers and abhyasis for participating, and wishing everyone well for their journey back home.



Master's Birthday Celebrations in Centres in Latin America

Brazil



Garopaba

Sahaj Marg Brazil celebrated Master's birthday with a national seminar in Garopaba - SC from 23rd to 27th July. The event was held in two places – Hotel Las Ondas and the Private Nature Preserve Passarim.



Rio de Janeiro

While in the daily life of the city it was just another normal day, for the local abhyasis there was something special in the air since the early morning. Everyone gathered at 6:45 a.m. for a special satsang at sister Lea's house. The atmosphere was superb and very soon everyone was absorbed in His all pervading love. After satsang some stayed for a joyful breakfast and then everybody followed their way, with hearts full of love and gratitude. It was indeed a very special day.



São José dos Campos – SP

In São José dos Campos, two satsangs were held at 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. A short text about the life of Chariji and some of his sayings were read.



São Paulo - SP

The evening of July 24th was cold and wet in Sao Paulo. However, it did not prevent abhyasis gathering to celebrate beloved Master's birthday! A profound meditation warmed their hearts, creating an atmosphere of deep gratitude and devotion.

Two young abhyasis, Nayana and Juliana presented an amazing performance of songs composed by them, with special lyrics honoring the masters and nature. They also played the guitar and the drums, inviting all to sing along. To close the celebration, a cake was shared like prasad!

Jamaica

Twelve abhyasis enthusiastically and lovingly came to participate in the usual Wednesday satsang that was scheduled in sync with the celebration in India. The moment was charged with Master's presence. The mood was celebratory. Each abhyasi's heart chimed its own resonance.

The beautifully decorated cake was shared in His remembrance. The birthday song was sung heartily in folk style accompanied by drums. There was laughter and much festivity.

We are growing in the awareness that distance never separates us. Thanks for your never ending sacrifice in affording our advancement towards the goal.



Colombia



Neiva

Maria Augusta Cervantes Vélez – Neiva

All Neiva abhyasis took an individual sitting on the days before the birthday celebration and thus were prepared in the best possible way. They wanted to make a sincere and very loving tribute to Master and thought the best way was by making an emphasis on practicing with conviction, love and devotion. They worked on the importance of the Spiritual Diary, with an exercise on 'To read our condition' and completed the activity with a brief biography of Master.

It was very simple but there was a lot of love and Master's presence could be felt in each one, in the environment, in everything; which was most sublime.

They left feeling very motivated to continue the practice with perseverance and dedication. It was not just a special week but a heartfelt and wonderful celebration.



Cali

L, Marcela Alape - Cali

On a sunny afternoon of 24th July 2014, abhyasis got together, at the home of one of the prefects, to celebrate the 88th birthday of Master. The Cali group gathered in silence, surrendering in love to the Master, immersed in the satsang. The transmission enlightened the hearts of all participants, filling them with grace. After the satsang they shared the reading of a message from the *Whispers from the Brighter World*. Master's wisdom inspired all to move forward and to continue with the goal in their spiritual life. Afterwards, they talked about Master's work as they enjoyed some tea and snacks.

With hearts open, full of love, we thank Master for all his kindness, and blessings that he is pouring out on all of us during this celebration.

Venezuela

Maria Lorenzo – Venezuela

Abhyasis from many centres started early in the morning to the place of gathering in the centre of Caraballeda (La Guaira) in the house of sister Teresita Bravo. Abhyasis from centres such as Valencia, Los Teques, Caracas and La Guaira greeted each other with joy and respect. There were twenty-two sisters and brothers and just entering to the meditation hall, seeing the portraits of the Masters, made them feel the energy and the calmness. The first satsang was at 7:30 a.m., after which sister Teresita spoke about the privilege of having a living Master and to have the opportunity to celebrate his birthday. Many abhyasis took this

opportunity to express their opinions. Everything was flowing with harmony and they had time for sharing during breakfast also. The activities continued until a second satsang at 11:00 a.m. followed by lunch and the traditional birthday song for Master.

There were celebrations in other centres such as Merida and Maracaibo where satsang was held and there was time for sharing between abhyasis.

We didn't want this day to finish. There was so much love surrounding us and we felt the presence of Master that we didn't wanted to leave. Thank you Master for your blessings for all of us, we wish you good health.



Third Retreat Centre in India - Kharagpur, West Bengal

Sahaj Sandesh n° 2014.30 – Tuesday, 8 July 2014

Dear sisters and brothers,

Rev. Master has designated Kharagpur, West Bengal to be the third retreat centre in India, in addition to the existing retreat centres at Malampuzha, Kerala and Pune, Maharashtra. The facility at Kharagpur which was serving as a CREST institute will now function as a retreat centre. Abhyasis may start coming to Kharagpur for a spiritual retreat starting from the 15th of August 2014 and may start applying immediately through the Sahaj Marg website at:

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

<http://www.sahajmarg.org/smww/retreat-center-overview>

The new retreat centre at Kharagpur will provide



abhyasis with the necessary seclusion and silence to discover the essence of Sahaj Marg in the core of their heart.

Abhyasis are invited to utilise the retreat centres and experience how this enriches their spiritual journey.”

With regards,

Retreat Centre Coordinators

Activities in the Centres of Latin America

Brazil

Sahaj Marg National Seminar

17th to 19th October 2014 • Maristela – Tremembé – SP

Dear brothers and sisters,

It is with great pleasure and joy that we invite you to the National Seminar which will take place from 17th to 19th of October 2014, at the Maristela Inn, in Tremembé – SP, Brazil.

The reading of selected messages from *Whispers from The Brighter World* will permeate this meeting, which will be another opportunity for inner deepening, during a spiritually wonderful period, full of grace, as are all Sahaj Marg meetings.

Foreign abhyasis interested in participating should e-mail srcmbr@gmail.com for further information.

Additional information regarding this seminar will be sent in the next newsletter (Boletim Informativo/Brasil).



Reunião Administrativa da SRCM América Latina – 17/10/2014

No dia 17 de outubro, antes do início do Seminário Sahaj Marg, acontecerá na Pousada Maristela – Tremembé, São Paulo – Brasil, uma reunião administrativa com voluntários, encarregados regionais e locais da América Latina.

Maiores informações favor fazer contato através do e-mail srcmbr@gmail.com.



Activities in the Centres of Latin America

Brazil

Extended Day

Rio de Janeiro - RJ



On Sunday, 31st August, after the satsang and breakfast, the abhyasis from Rio de Janeiro participated in a study on the subject 'Special Meditation Techniques on Point A and Cleaning of Point B'. After the study, the group read and reflected together on some quotes of Master on 'Character Formation'.

Abhyasi from Moscow Visits

José Luis Cardieri – São Paulo – Brazil

In June we had the pleasure of having among us sister Liliya Gasilina from Moscow. She had met sister Joana in Satkol, who invited her to visit Brazil, mainly São Paulo. Liliya accepted the invitation, and while here, attended satsangs and was given sittings. This was another opportunity given to us by Master to enable abhyasis from around the world to get together and, in such way, strengthening the Sahaj Marg family.

Prefect's Meeting

Americana – SP

From 15th to 17th of August, twenty prefects participated in the meeting, which took place in Americana – SP. Two abhyasis collaborated, as volunteers, in the coordination and preparation of meals.

During the meeting, the prefects exchanged sittings, four satsangs were conducted, there were readings from the "Whispers" and exhibition of DVDs with Master's talks to prefects. A workshop took place, in which the group split in five sub-groups, of four participants in each, with the purpose to reflect and summarize the subject proposed.





Activities in the centers of Latin America

Martinique

Evening Reflection

Lyvia Aribot-Sebastien, Fort de France, Martinica



Abhyasis of St Esprit gathered on Saturday, 30th August 2014, to spend time reflecting on Constant Remembrance. About ten abhyasis including sister Jacqueline Barrington and brother Fabrice Montlouis-Felicite had gathered. They read a Whisper from the Second Revelation dated 13 July 1999 and everyone was given time to absorb and reflect upon it.

Then they focused on the importance of Constant Remembrance before reading an SMRTI article. They read it one after another; sometimes adding clarifications or making comments or just talking about a related experience.

The gathering closed with a reading the same Whisper message which was a very uplifting moment.

The next evening exchange is scheduled on 27 September 2014.

Grounding in the Practice – Dairy Writing

Annick, Fort de France, Martinique



It has been two months since I was introduced into the Sahaj Marg system and I had the chance to participate in the Diary Writing module of 'Grounding in the Practice' on Sunday, 6 July 2014 at Trinité, Martinique.

I was impressed by the combination of Master's teachings, workshops and self reflection moments. I was also pleasantly surprised by the friendliness of the abhyasis, the quality of the meal and the palpable presence of Master's energy that accompanied us throughout the day.

The diary I started from the first day I was introduced was left on the side a month ago. With this workshop I feel more diligent. Since then I have noticed an increase in the ability to pay more attention to myself, my sincerity, of the illuminating subtle vibration of the heart and the understanding of my wanderings as well as Master's grace in the readjustment process.

Thanks to the facilitators and participants for their warm welcome with kindness and simplicity.



Activities in the centers of Latin America

Colombia

Back to the practice...

Sarak Alape Gomez - Colombia



This article is the contribution of some abhyasis from Colombia who have expressed their experiences. These abhyasis spent some time away from the practice, immersed in a path of their own learning, which brought them back again. The search for spirituality is an individual need, which frequently takes us across other disciplines until we find the one that identifies and strengthens us plentifully.

Initially, we are attached to our 'rational' ideas, we question the effectiveness of the process, the objectives and numerous concerns start to arise. We give ourselves the opportunity to start the practice, a unique process, in which we are not only getting closer to the Master but also to ourselves. We begin to redefine ourselves internally along with our daily life. We become aware of a number of internal characteristics that were visible to everyone else but usually ignored by us like selfishness, attachments, lack of trust and goodwill. It is understandable that these characteristics inhibit us from waking up before dawn to meditate, attend Sunday satsangs, etc. They bring out arguments disguised as excuses. I have heard a loud ego insistently asking me, "What am I doing here?" It is like watching from a front row seat, the flow of thoughts crossing my mind relentlessly.

Could it be a result of the fear that we have towards loneliness? Is this fear a reason to move away from the practice without trying to silence our thoughts? Do we fear to know ourselves openly, without masks?

While fighting this battle, we postpone the opportunity to look and recognise ourselves as beings full of contrasts, of thoughts and feelings that have framed our existence and without our knowing, have accumulated as samskaras. At the same time we feel like stagnant water that has lost its vitality and longs for the channel and the flow of the river. That's the same desire we feel when we want to meet Master, to forgive ourselves and experience his grace. We learn from people around us, even those with a temper and other negative traits. These are challenges that appear, not to deviate us from the Mission, but to test our tolerance. In spite of not agreeing with their ideas we can still learn from them just as the athlete who faces a formidable opponent and far from considering him an enemy, he becomes a reference to improve.

We need to set aside our pride and the desire to impose our will while seeking mutual agreement. We are not always right. We should learn to be clear



Activities in the centers of Latin America

Colombia

and frank in expressing our ideas. Maybe it is easier to write it down than to practise it. As social beings we feel empathy for some persons more than for others. Sometimes we are not willing to open our heart. Maybe we do it unconsciously. We need to understand that we are the product of past decisions and experiences that make us see the world in a specific way. We identify ourselves more with some and we differ from others but we must understand that we only enrich ourselves when we know each other, we also realise that we are not so different.

To develop a spiritual practice in the middle of a social and family environment is a way to test patience and service. The idea is that it is transformed into love for others, like grains of wheat which are ground in the mill in order to become food. The discipline and the sacrifice of our daily work, nurtures the foundation of families, institutions

and society. These situations challenge the time dedicated to meditation; they also encourage us to lose habits and interests such as the consumption of meat, liquor and other trends. Communication and respect for others' space and individuality can be helpful in not succumbing. Over time, in many cases, family members not only understand and support the process but they become interested and try to be part of it. It is beautiful to see how some parents take their children; brothers take their sisters and husbands take their wives to the practice. In this, they also discover a new space to share.

Maybe some of your reasons to come back, in case you left the practice before, are missing here. The important thing is that this represents an authentic path where there could be numerous reasons for wandering away but the thirst for spiritual life is always present in us.

Chile

Gathering in Chile:

Which is the goal of my life?

By Jenny Maldonado

El Tambo centre is located one and a half hours south of Santiago. The natural environment allowed all to enjoy the flourishing needle bushes and many other trees. Abhyasis from Rancagua and Rengo were also present. The main objective was to strengthen the practice and the connection of love and compassion.

The hostess from El Tambo centre received us with abundant kindness. Fabiola Mejias welcomed the gathering. Each participant then introduced themselves and this was followed by a satsang.

The workshop on 'What is the goal of my life?' was coordinated by Jenny Maldonado. The topic reaffirmed the personal commitment with the Mission, with its principles and that it is love which acts as a fountain of inspiration.

Later, Alejandra Plaza shared a Whisper related to the conflict between the Jews and Palestinians. To us, this situation

expresse the necessity to work with a sense of urgency to contribute to a more humane world.

Finally all had a delicious lunch and Francisca shared pictures of the trip to India by a group of Chilean abhyasis who had the opportunity to be with Master.

It was a wonderful experience. These opportunities fill us with joy and everyday we feel the subtleness that meditation produces. We love you from this little and big country called Chile.



**Calendar of events 2014**

October			
05	Chile	family meeting	victoria.ferara@gmail.com
05	Guadeloupe	Extended Day 10 maxims	v.scala@wanadoo.fr
05	Brazil – São Paulo	Extended Day	srcm@gmail.com
11 - 12	Jamaica	Grounding in the Practice	unselfishlove2010@gmail.com
17	Brazil – Tremembé - SP	SRCM Latin America Administrative Meeting	srcm@gmail.com
17 - 19	Brazil – Tremembé SP	National Seminar	srcm@gmail.com
17 - 19	Los Teques-Venezuela	National Seminar	mlorenzo0503@gmail.com
25	Martinique	Evening Reflection	martine-calka@wanadoo.fr
26	Guadeloupe	Grounding in the Practice	v.scala@wanadoo.fr
26	Jamaica	Grounding in the Practice	unselfishlove2010@gmail.com

November			
07 - 09	Chile Pícarquín	international seminar	Victoria.ferara@gmail.com
08	Brazil – São Paulo	Open House	srcm@gmail.com
09	Guadeloupe	Extended Day 10 maxims	v.scala@wanadoo.fr
09	Jamaica	Grounding in the Practice	unselfishlove2010@gmail.com
09	Brazil – Rio de Janeiro	Grounding in the Practice	srcm@gmail.com
16	Martinique	World Tolerance Day	martine-calka@wanadoo.fr
18	Haiti	Grounding in the Practice	judithrj@yahoo.com
20	Martinique	International Children Day	martine-calka@wanadoo.fr
20	Jamaica	International children Day	unselfishlove2010@gmail.com
22	Jamaica	Mission's activity	unselfishlove2010@gmail.com
23	Brazil – Americana	Extended Day	srcm@gmail.com
29	Martinique	Evening reflection	martine-calka@wanadoo.fr

December			
05 - 07	Jamaica	Regional Gathering	unselfishlove2010@gmail.com
06	Brazil – São Paulo	Grounding in the Practice	srcm@gmail.com
07	Guadeloupe	Grounding in the Practice	v.scala@wanadoo.fr
10	Martinique	United Nations celebration Day	martine-calka@wanadoo.fr
14	Jamaica	Grounding in the Practice	unselfishlove2010@gmail.com
26	Jamaica	Friday social activity	unselfishlove2010@gmail.com
27	Martinique	Evening reflection	martine-calka@wanadoo.fr

We request all the abhyasis who have any article regarding their experience about spiritual journey through the Sahaj Marg to send them to us to the following e-mail: leatorres@casadalea.com.br. Frequently, our shared experience comes as an act of love and can be of help to other sisters and brothers.

We wish to clarify that our Latin America Echoes is a quarterly newsletter issued in the months of March, June, September and December, reaching abhyasis all over the world. It is published in four languages (English, French, Portuguese and Spanish), and distributed to all the abhyasis in Latin America. It can also be accessed in the four languages through the Mission's site: www.sahajmarg.org/abhyasi.

*Thank you, with love,
Latin America Echoes team*