



April Showers ... Blessings on Us!

Dear Readers,
Sai Ram

The past month has seen a quarterly 'Wings Meeting' of the National Wing Co-ordinators with their Regional Wing Co-ordinators in North London on March 11th. It was especially good to see a strong representation from Region 8 (Scotland) as these meetings require a great effort on their part to attend – in fact they all flew down for the day! This was a much-appreciated act that brought a great sense of completeness to the meetings.

The UK Medical Committee has met in March, on the 14th, and reviewed the activities of the past 12 months and once again, the staggering number of patients seen and treated abroad in Medical Camps amazed me. Often these Camps are held in the most difficult of areas in very deprived environments – some in places without water or electricity that present considerable obstacles to the teams but somehow they win through and achieve miracles! There is still quite a strong flavour of education prevailing within the Organisation – perhaps stimulated by the marvellous international conference held here in January. Two films have been made on DVD: one highlights the two Sathya Sai Schools (in Leicester and St Andrews) and the other draws attention to SSE and its forthcoming curriculum revamp.

You will see further on that the two Sathya Sai Schools are steadily developing as unique beacons of excellence. Hoe and Usha Lim founders of the Sathya Sai School Leicester (Usha is Head Teacher there) have been bringing to life the day-to-day realities of the Leicester Sathya Sai School by taking time from their already busy schedules to present talks around the country.

The aim of these is to raise awareness and understanding of both schools over the coming months and achieve 81 talks before the end of October. All those who have heard the talks have been fired up with a newly kindled enthusiasm and inspired by the evolution that is quietly taking place. On Saturday 7th March 200 youth (16 – 35) got together for the inaugural Satsang for the World Youth Conference, it was a real pleasure to attend.

Continuing with the theme of education - yesterday I was privileged to meet Mr Vedanarayan from his flight into Heathrow. He has a distinguished career as an academic with wonderful qualifications and is recipient of the prestigious highest teaching award in India as described in the next article about his visit. To have him giving talks to us all is a great gift that we should all try and receive with open arms.

Love and Light,
Rosemary Perry, National Chair

Four Talks around the Regions: The SSSSO UK warmly welcomes 'Vedam'

We are very honoured to have Mr Kallengode Vedanarayan ('Vedam') give four talks to us during his personal and very first visit to the United Kingdom this month.

Vedam is a distinguished and esteemed Sanskrit scholar and teacher of Vedam Chanting at Swami's Higher Secondary School in Prashanti Nilayam.

His talks will touch upon some of the following: 'Namasmarana', 'Swami on Surrender', 'A parallel between Swami's Teachings and what the Scriptures have to say', 'Accounts of personal and other experiences etc.' He will follow his inspiration to select what he focuses upon in each talk. Vedam came to know of Swami through his parents in 1965, as a small boy aged three years. He had Swami's first Darshan on 22nd Aug 1968.

After the tenth grade he joined Swami's Brindavan College in 1976, and graduated in Science in 1981. By Swami's direct instruction, Vedam did a Masters Degree in Philosophy at Bangalore University and in 1983 received a First and was awarded the University's Gold Medal. Then Swami asked him to teach Vedam Chanting to all the boys in the school for one year. Subsequently in 1985, Swami asked Vedam to join the Higher Secondary School in Prashanti Nilayam as a Sanskrit teacher. Later in 1992, again under Swami's direction, Vedam did a Masters Degree in Sanskrit at the University of Mysore. Vedam went on to receive the 'National Award for Best Teacher for the Year 2004' from the President of India himself.

More than any of these things he most values that he has been kept close to Swami's Lotus Feet for the past 31 years and has been permitted by Swami to chant the Vedas for which he is ever grateful to Him.

His itinerary is as follows:

For access by Regions 2 & 3: Finchley, North London, Saturday April 14th 2007 from 6.45pm to 9pm

For access by Regions 1 & 6: Merton Park, South London, Sunday 15th April 2007 from 6.15pm to 9.30pm

For access by Region 7 (and 6): Bristol Saturday 21st April 2007 from 9.45am to 1pm

For access by Regions 4, 5 & 8: Leicester, Sunday 22nd April from 1pm to 4.30pm

Please contact your Centre Chair for details

'The Vedas are God's breath and can be transmitted from person to person only by voice. In all of India there are only a handful of people who can recite the Vedas correctly.'
Sathya Sai Baba

Please use your initiative to distribute this monthly newsletter as widely as possible to all devotees and interested parties.

'Being and Doing'
A 'Training and Refresher Day'
for
SSSSO UK Office Bearers
Sunday May 13th 2007
Milton Keynes

There has been much interest in having another of these successful days for Office Bearers – the last was in 2004. A varied day has been put together. It includes the following talks:

- 'Protocol is Just Good Manners',
- 'Managing Media Matters',
- 'Spirituality and Rules DO Go Together!'
- Various aspects of 'Being an Office Bearer'.
And there will be workshops on the following:
- 'Divinity and Diversity',
- 'How Do We Subliminally View Our Organisation?'
- 'How to Keep Yourself Centred in Your Centre'.

Your Regional Chair has circulated, to all Centres and Groups, all the details and the Registration form, which should be returned by April 18th latest.

Region 1
Spiritual:

Centre Activities and Events:

A Bhajan Workshop was organised by Merton Sai Centre on the 17th March, for devotees in the Region. It focused on absolute beginners, (i.e. those who have never sung a Bhajan before,) up to regular Bhajan singers. The day comprised mini-workshops with one-on-one help and guidance, short talks from experienced musicians and Bhajan singers; and general advice on keeping the voice in good condition.

Service:

Regional Activities and Events

Received a letter from the Refugee Council, thanking the Organisation for their support.

Youth Wing:

Regional Activities and Events

An Interactive session with Sai Students was held on 11th March for the youth in Region 1.

Regional Office Bearers' Conference

The Regional Office Bearers' Meeting was held on the 24th March 2007. It was well attended by Centre Chairpersons and Wing Coordinators. The various Wings held separate meetings, before coming together for feedback.

School Visits

In March this year 415 children ranging in age from 6 to 16 years, from seven schools, visited the 'Sai Mandir' in Merton. All the children are taken into the Mandir as part of school visits to the Shree Ganapathy Temple, where the majority of the teaching takes place, as it is a quiet and calm atmosphere for them to listen and learn. As the Merton Sai Centre volunteers do all the work with the children, the teachers, parents and helpers often take this time to look at the permanent exhibition of Swami's life and teachings displayed on the walls of the Mandir. Swami's teachings on 'unity in diversity', the form of worship that takes place in the Mandir, the altar, the Multi-Faith (*Sarva Dharma*) emblem, the SSE classes and the

service done by the Merton Sai Centre are all explained to the children. All are fascinated by what they hear and are very taken by the representations of so many faiths and the religious symbols that make up the altar. They often spend time drawing the deities and various aspects of the Mandir as part of their extension work, and we even sometimes do a bit of focused meditation for silent sitting, using the paintings on the ceiling of the Sai Mandir as a focal point! The children and teachers are very appreciative of what Swami's message is and how it transforms His devotees to do so much good work within the community and are amazed at the number of children and youth that attend the SSE classes and activities in the Mandir.

Raj Rajasingam, Chair Region 1 and team

Region 2
Regional Office Bearers' Conference

Region 2 held their annual Regional Office Bearers' Conference (ROBC) on a glorious sunny afternoon on Saturday 17th March 2007.

It provided an opportunity for all the Centre and Group office bearers and their shadows from the Service, Spiritual, Sai Spiritual Education (SSE) and Youth wings of the Region to come together as one unified force, to decide on a 'road map' for the year 2007.

Members of each wing spent an enlightening and spiritually uplifting afternoon brainstorming and reflecting, introspecting and discussing all avenues that might be pursued to bring not only a greater awareness of Swami's teachings to the wider community but also to add to the growth and prosperity of all the related fields of activity.

Brilliant and thoughtful minds put ideas forward on how to combine a realistic work plan for the year and organising events on a Regional level, all the while ascertaining the levels of commitment to projects at national level, ensuring that their energy and focus did not sway from the continued success of many ongoing projects that have been initiated in the Region.

Time was well-spent co-ordinating and deciding upon the implementation of many projects whilst abiding by the guidelines of the SSSSO UK.

The Regional Wing Co-ordinators clarified any confusing issues that arose during discussions.

The Region's Youth Wing were especially honoured to have the National Youth Co-ordinator in their midst, who invoked intense and diverse discussion on the role of youth in the Organisation.

The fruitful afternoon was concluded with feedback from each Regional Wing Co-ordinator, who provided a synopsis of their particular group's outcomes during the conference.

Aarthi was performed to our Divine Guide Swami and the enthused regional team left inspired and raring to go, as always Swami's Love is indeed "infectious"!

Anila Kumar Modi, R2 Youth Co-ordinator

Region 4

Honouring Mahashivratri:

Centres and Groups throughout the Region marked Shivaratri with gatherings (some held jointly), ranging from two-hour events to full 9-hour programmes. In addition to the performing of the traditional Hindu 'Abhishekam Puja' with offerings of milk and flowers, devotees of all ages entered the spirit of contemplation with the chanting of Slokas, Mantras and Bhajans interspersed with silent sitting and meditation. Nearly 450 spiritual aspirants from Leicester attended one of these events in Leicester along with members of other Centres and Groups from the Region.

CRB in R4:

The Organisation's efforts to ensure that nationally only Police-checked volunteers deliver its Service activities - especially those for children and vulnerable adults - took a huge stride forward with the verification and countersigning of two hundred and eighteen CRB applications at two specially organised events in Coventry and Leicester. This involved devotees from most R4 Centres and Groups, who were processed by Ramesh Mistry (new Region 4 Chair) with Sharmila Parikh (National SSE Co-ordinator and a CRB Counter signatory) in Coventry; and by Mukund Patel (CRB Counter signatory) with Bharat Handa (National Service Co-ordinator and ID Verifier) in Leicester.

Youth Satsang and

Region 4 Officer Bearers' Conference

Sunday 25th February 2007 brought Region 4's Youth and its office bearers and active workers all to the Broadway School, Birmingham, for two conferences. The Youth Satsang/Conference in the morning was followed by the Regional Office Bearers' event in the afternoon.

Region 4's Youth Satsang:

The R4 Youth conference was attended by 45 Youths from our Region. On a day when similar conferences (ROBCs) were simultaneously being held in other Regions, it seemed that Region 4 had captured the Organisation's National Team to grace its active workers and youth with poignant and inspiring words and presentations by Rosemary Perry (National Chair), Mathan Arulvel (National Youth Co-ordinator), Bharat Handa (National Service Wing Co-ordinator), Raj Selvakumar (National Spiritual Co-ordinator), Sharmila Parikh (National SSE Co-ordinator), Kiran Patel (out-going National Spiritual), Hoe Lim (Sathya Sai School Leicester). What a coup and privilege experienced by Region 4! The R4 Youth conference theme 'Ideal Sai Youth - Messengers of Sai Love' is the theme of the World Youth Conference (WYC) at the end of July 2007. The WYC taking place represents Swami's assent for Youth from all over the world to come to Puttaparthi. It gave youth in Region 4 an opportunity to start their preparations for participation in the WYC as Swami's guests along with thousands from around the world. The inspiration and enthusiasm generated in the Youth by Rosemary and Mathan permeated the shared lunch that followed.

Region 4 Office Bearers' Conference:

110 delegates from our Region attended ROBC in the afternoon. The conference was transported to Prashanti with refined chanting of Vedam followed by melodious Group Devotional Singing (GDS) and raised the spiritual energy of the conference to sharpen the focus of the participants. They were soon spellbound by the Dragon Dance performed by younger members to mark the special Chinese 'New Year of the Golden Boar' and the distribution of auspicious red envelopes containing spiritual quotations. A double act youth compere team introduced each speaker with interesting related anecdotes and points. Ramesh Mistry as the Regional Chair opened the deluge of inspirational messages from the Organisational National elite, and captured the challenges and mission for the Region in 2007. Four Wing workshops were held to discuss work plans for 2007. NWCs took part in these workshops and there was a lot of enthusiasm and active participation by all. Ketan Gokani (Regional Vice Chair) concluded the conference with the call for active workers to come together in Unity and make our lives Swami's message.

Ramesh Mistry, Chair Region 4

Region 4 SSE Teacher Training Day

'I do ...and I understand'

This session was held on 31st March 2007 in Coventry with 42 participants. Although the training was primarily aimed at newcomers to SSE teaching, all teachers in the Region were invited to the day that had as its theme: 'I Do and I Understand', a quote from Confucius.

This theme had a two-fold purpose: firstly that the teachers should first "Do", and practice themselves what they are going to teach, and only then teach. Secondly, that the child learns by "doing" in a fun way, to make the lesson creative and interactive.

The session started with the 'Aims of SSE' being outlined, and explaining how to evaluate the progress of the children. All the forty-two participants were asked to undertake a self-evaluation based on the following questions, which are used to evaluate the SSE children:

- Do you show respect for parents/elders?
- Do you do well in your job/study (Did you get a good rating in your appraisal/high marks in exam or test)?
- Are you well behaved?
- Do you show concern for society?
- Do you have a good character?
- Do you use your time in a balanced way – e.g. Work, play, and prayers?
- Are you willing to help others?
- Are you honest?
- Are you kind and loving (even to people who annoy you)?
- Do you love God (...even when things don't work out the way you want)?

One person said they scored 10 'Yes's', but most got 6 to 7! SSE teachers have to continue their personal development!

The next session was based on presentation, and here the delegates were shown various ways to deliver a lesson, or undertake a talk. During this it

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was stressed that teachers should learn to use all the technology that is available, and also keep abreast of current news/interests pertaining to the age group of the children they teach, so a relationship is established between the lessons and their environment. The five teaching techniques were covered, and here, once again, the facilitators encouraged the teachers to get creative, and use the wide range of resources available. In the last session, all the participants were asked to move around every five minutes in a session called 'Tips and Tricks, where they were shown examples by experienced teachers of how to use tried and tested skills that work.

Overall, the feedback was very good, and the organisers were left with a challenge: "When can we have the next one?!"

Pravina Patel, SSE Coordinator Region 4

Region 5 - Youth Activities **Visiting the Inner Sanctum**

The Sri Sathya Sai 'Inner Divinity' classes in Region 5 continue to help the Sai youth move deeper into connecting with Swami – or Divinity - within. The second class took place auspiciously on Mothering Sunday, and the theme of the class was our relationship with our real Divine mother, God – perfectly embodied by Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Do we really put our relationship with Swami and His teachings first, or merely pay lip service? As with everything in this amazing class, every event seemed divinely orchestrated. The Regional Youth Co-ordinator had brought some flowers to the class. When asked whom they were for, he replied that they were for his mother. When asked which mother, he replied his physical mother. But when asked about whether he had brought flowers for God, the true Divine Mother, he realised that he had forgotten to bring any for God. This small event helped him realise the need to deepen his relationship with God as the only Universal mother that we have ever had. Do we truly honour Her?

There was a wonderful meditation when the youth were able to journey back in time prior to their birth when they were able to experience their personal connection with Divinity. They then drew pictures of this enlightening experience, which for some, lasted several days.

There was an exercise in which all the participants were shown how to realise their own divinity by, as Swami continues to exhort the youth, the increasing self-confidence and faith. Our Regional Vice-Chair, who is unable to walk unaided, through his sheer self-confidence in himself and his faith in Swami was able to do just that for a short period. He also experienced the love that we all share with each other and for Swami in an exercise where we projected onto him our pure feelings for Swami. The whole day made him feel exhilarated and he experienced a deep sense of himself, expansive and unburdened. This course is highly recommended for any Sai youths serious about embarking upon the inner journey to 'Prasanthi Nilayam' – the 'Abode of Highest Peace' to discover the Temple or Mandir within their own hearts and communion with God right there.

Region 5 Youth Satsang

The second event was our Regional Youth meeting which took place on the 1st April and which our National Youth Co-ordinator, Mathan Arulvel, attended. This was an informal and very warm gathering of a small number of youth - and one or two 'evergreen' youth!

Mathan began by sharing with us the love he had experienced when he met the Russian Sai youth and the example they set with their dedication, humility, generosity and simplicity. He told us how some had trekked several days to attend that conference which took place in cold weather, without warm water and with basic food. Despite these external conditions, the love they exuded from within was out of this world, which was a reflection of the connecting love of the global Sai family. We have to ask ourselves as 'ideal' Sai youth, whether our own actions can really compare to those of our sisters and brothers in other parts of the world?

The meeting went on to discuss the challenges of Service activities in Region 5 and what can be done to help. There were helpful suggestions such as keeping a record of how events are organised and ensuring that, nationally, people are aware of activities so that they can have access to the template if they want to do the same activity as a service to their community.

We also heard some wonderful news from Newcastle that fifteen schools are asking for Sathya Sai Education in Human Values courses to be taught there, which is a tribute to the very hard-working volunteers who have dedicated themselves to this work over the years. The establishment of SSEHV teaching is a service activity that Region 5 is dedicated to championing and the Sai youth are becoming more and more enthusiastic about teaching SSEHV to help bring about peace on earth through the teaching of the intrinsic human values of truth, right conduct, love, peace and non-violence to all people.

After the meeting, there was a tray of sandwiches and a bowl of fruit left over. This was given to a homeless man sitting outside HSBC bank in the city centre. What was the lesson here? There is always the opportunity to serve with... Heart and Soul which Builds Character (HSBC!).

Finally we discussed the Sri Sathya Sai World Youth Conference and the auspiciousness of this event - the fact that this is the opportunity of a lifetime for Sai brothers and sisters from all over the world to answer the call of our Divine parent, Baba, to be together before Him, as one family and to seek His blessings and guidance to help sanctify our lives and uplift humanity.'

Neil Bisarya, Youth Co-ordinator Region 5

'God is like a postman. The postman delivers one letter to one address and the people in the house rejoice over the good news contained in it. He delivers another letter at a second house and there is lamentation over the sad news contained in the letter. Is the postman responsible for the joy or the sadness of the recipients of the letters? No. It is the content of the respective letters that is responsible. What you experience by way of joy or grief is a consequence of your own actions. God is only a witness.'

Sathya Sai Baba

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National Youth Wing From Russia ...With Love

The annual Zonal Youth Conference of Russian-speaking countries (Zone 8) took place between 8th and 10th of March. 56 young adult members from five countries came to share their experience and love. They came from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan and the United Kingdom. That's right you did read right! The UK was given a kind invitation to attend the conference to share with the youth of Zone 8, the experiences of the Sai youth in the UK and the work we do here. By Swami's grace I was given the opportunity to represent the UK and attend the conference, and what an experience it was.

The theme of the conference was 'Your life is my message' and the youth explored various topics centred on this. There was traditional Russian dancing, heart-rending plays, soul-stirring musical pieces, deep and thoughtful discussions, devotional singing, and inspiring talks! I was lucky enough to have a very good youth translator throughout the programme and also many other enthusiastic youth who were keen to translate through sign language and broken English.

However, it was the youth themselves that inspired me the most, with their simplicity and sincere love for Swami and each other. The stories I heard from the youth of how they travelled from all around Russia and surrounding countries left me deeply humbled at their sacrifice to be part of Swami's sacred Organisation.

The conference took place in St Petersburg and travelling to the venue for many of the youth took two or three days, by bus and train. It meant that to come to the three-day conference, many would have travelled for over three days! The vast distances mean this is normal journey time for many Russian devotees travelling to conferences and events. How lucky are we, that the most we have to worry about is the couple of hours up the M1 or the annoying ½ hour traffic jam at Hangar Lane on the A406!

The youth are also not well off and by the time travelling costs are taken into account, there is limited budget for accommodation and food. To bring costs down, the youth have chosen to hold their conference annually in a dilapidated out-of-city hostel. By offering to improve the hostel (as a service project), they have managed to reduce the hire costs by half. Unfortunately, the buildings were not heated, meaning we had to rely on portable heaters (bearing in mind it was -2°C outside!). The shower block, which was situated a short walk from the main accommodation building, unfortunately were not fully working and so we all had to have cold showers and then walk back along the icy pathways.

Amazingly, I was told the hostel this year was apparently so much better than previous years!

The food was also extremely simple. It was a small dish, a soup and plain sweetened herbal tea for lunch and dinner. Breakfast was normally some dry porridge with tea too.

However, the love which saturated the environment, made those three days always warm

and the food always sumptuous. The youth were always full of smiles and laughs and for them the cold ice would not diminish the joy of being with each other!

There was so much that I learned from this experience; it's hard to express it in words. Maybe the most profound lesson was when I sat and sang bhajans with the youth. As I sat in front of the picture of Swami, I suddenly realised something. Here I was in a strange, faraway country, in a different culture and unable to speak the language. Yet I felt I was actually nowhere else but at home, and with no one else but my own family. For that moment, I experienced in a small way the meaning of Swami's words, "the brotherhood of man, and the fatherhood of God".

This is an experience I will always treasure and I thank Swami for giving me this most amazing opportunity to experience His love and omnipresence through the youth of Russia.

Satsang: 'Living the Sai Way'

World Youth Conference 2007 Update

On the 7th of April, in Totteridge, North London, the Sai Youth of the UK began their formal preparations for the planned delegation to the World Conference. Over 200 youth from around the UK participated in the Satsang on a warm Saturday afternoon.

We were treated with the following inspiring talks: Rosemary Perry, our National UK Chair, on the meaning and significance of 'youth'.

Then our National Spiritual Co-ordinator, Raj Selvakumar, took a thoughtful look at the Sadhana programme, which youth from all around the world are practising as part of the world conference preparations.

Finally, our Central Coordinator, Ishver Patel, addressed us on 'Will and Resolve', leaving all the youth with the appreciation of the inner power and strength that lies within us, if only we choose to use them through effort and determination.

As well as bhajans, there were some moving videos and also more information about the conference provided through a 'Q & A session'.

For youth wishing to take part in the World Youth Conference, there is now the chance to fly with a specially organised flight, which is being kindly arranged for us by Mr Ajit Popat, under the banner of the Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation UK.

The proposed group dates are from Saturday 21st July 2007 to Saturday 4th August 2007. Places are limited and seats will be offered on a first come first served basis. Application forms are already available and can be downloaded from our website: www.saiyouth.org.uk.

Youth still have the opportunity to take part in various offerings to Swami as part of the conference. But time is rapidly running out to be involved. Opportunities are available for joining the International Youth Choir, the world youth exhibition and the souvenir booklet. Please visit the website for more information or speak to your Regional Youth Co-ordinators or, alternatively, please contact: mathan@arulvel.co.uk

Mathan Arulvel, National Youth Co-ordinator and National Youth Co-ordinating Committee

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British Institute of Sathya Sai Education Leicester:

The Good Values Club has moved to Abbey Primary School. Values education has progressed beyond the Saturday and lunchtime club into every class within the school during the week. Abbey Primary School now has a set 'value for the week' and correspondingly the same value is discussed in each session at the club on the Saturday. This coherence is encouraging for the teachers and youth as it allows them to prepare lessons together and share ideas.

Wales:

At the moment there are about 13 schools actively using SSEHV in Carmarthenshire. The hope is that these schools will satellite out to other schools.

Egypt:

Thirty-six hours of training was held in Cairo, Egypt, over eight days from Saturday 17th to Saturday 24th February 2007. Carole and Bob Alderman facilitated this training. 150 teachers attended in part with about 70 attending the whole course. They ranged from Kindergarten, through Primary and Secondary levels to University lecturers.

Germany:

Carole and Bob Alderman attended a weekend seminar run by European Sathya Sai Education (ESSE). They gave a set of the UK SSEHV CDs to one of the speakers, a music teacher, Anna Mantus, who reports, "When I arrived home I listened to the first songs from your CDs and immediately fell in love with the very first track: 'PEACE'. Today I told my kids at school that English pupils have a wish for world peace and that German pupils can wish for the same".

SSEHV Course:

An SSEHV Training Course was held from March 11th to March 16th in Maidstone. *Feedback from a participant:* "This course totally motivates the soul. I was struck last April on this course by the 'power of presence' produced by the awareness exercise. Again, this year, the same power has been multiplied by the addition of the power of universal peace, and the ease with which one's own inner peace can be challenged. I have been made uncomfortable by my own attachment to inner peace as a 'what I am' statement. I have benefited by the growing realization that responding to the present moment without thinking of my response is the way to experience the five values within me." - John Spencer

BISSE Charitable Status:

Bob Alderman reports that the Charity Commission has now granted charitable status to BISSE. **Carole Alderman, Director BISSE**

Sathya Sai Schools

'Sathya Sai School Awareness' Talks

Momentum is gathering towards achieving the 81 talks that have been planned at Centres and Groups in the United Kingdom – all are to be undertaken by the 31st October 2007. Some nineteen talks have now been done. The primary aim is to raise awareness of the schools and to inspire members

to link more closely with them. So far, the talks have taken place at:

- Region 2: Hounslow, Harrow East and Wembley
- Region 3: Milton Keynes, Hatfield, Thurrock and Luton
- Region 4: Wolverhampton, Coventry, Nottingham, Birmingham and Rugby
- Region 5: Preston, Bradford (LG), Manchester, and Warrington

Other talks: at the pre 'Regional European Consultation on Sathya Sai Education' meeting and at the Region 4 ROBC meeting. Several other talks are planned and more being planned.

Invitation to Sathya Sai School Leicester:

All Centres, Groups and supporters are invited to the Sathya Sai Leicester School function on Saturday 14th July 2007, from 5.30pm to 7.30pm and ending the evening with dinner. So please keep this date free in your diaries. The venue will be the 'Sanathan Mandir Hall' (two streets away from the school itself). For more information contact: Usha Lim, Shree Sanathan Centre, Belper Street, Leicester, LE4 6ED; sailimuk@yahoo.co.uk

Sathya Sai School St Andrews:

Sathya Sai EHV spreads to four more schools in Scotland

SSS St Andrews has completed two days of training for 18 teachers from four schools in the Fife Region. The first day was spent on the theory behind Sathya Sai Education in Human Values and the second day was spent on personal development aspects of teachers. The Director of Education for the Fife Region also attended the training. Following the training, the staff of the Sathya Sai School St Andrews, are undertaking a series of visits to the four schools to observe the trainees in their respective schools. During the visits further help and support will also be planned as appropriate. The same training format will be repeated for another set of schools in the Fife Region, in September 2007. Sathya Sai School St Andrews is an excellent example of how centres of education are approaching Sathya Sai School St Andrews to learn more about SSEHV and in order to implement it in their own schools.

Prabodh Mistry,

Sathya Sai Schools Representative

Sathya Sai Bookshop

The bookshop has a regularly updated website
Please find it at:

www.srisathyasaibookcentre.org.uk

The SSSSO UK Website

is to be found on:

www.srisathyasai.org.uk

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SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

Remaining Unanswered Questions From National Office Bearers' Conference 2007:

Q: Study circles are very unpopular at Centre level with devotees wishing to attend bhajans only. How can we better promote study circles in our Centres?

A: All are facets of a diamond and necessary to enhance the lustre of the whole. Study circles reflect the coming together of different views on a particular topic and they help us to better understand Swami's teachings. They are both important but service is the most important of all. Practicing what we learn is by getting up in the morning, opening our eyes and seeing beauty and good, spending every conscious moment focusing on who and what we really are, and projecting love into the world. These are practices that help us to achieve a virtuous life. For example, a concert musician must practise for hours so that his fingers are nimble so that he can perform a virtuoso concert. In the same manner, we must also practice in our lives so that our whole lives are a virtual concerto.

'Take a point. Have everyone think about it and discuss it, and come to the final point where doubt is decreased. If only one person reads, there will be only one meaning. All misunderstandings, all points of view – after these are brought out, the study circle members will get confidence. There is no doubt of this. If each one only reads, this may go on for a year or two, and then an allergy to reading develops. Centres must have study circles in this way, and none will note the passage of time. Each one listens eagerly and many will give their point of view. The Bible, the Koran, the Gita, swami's books may be used. What is wanted is a study circle; rotating. Each one must be given a chance... Only those who are intelligent will think to bother with a study circle.'

Sathya Sai Baba

Q: Are we allowed to receive donations or grants to fund our Sai activities?

A: The Sai Organisation does not solicit donations although, of course, the Trust receives them freely given. Swami advises the Organisation not to take Government grants etc. These rules also apply to individuals representing the Organisation.

Q: What does the Organisation say about following other Gurus?

People who are office bearers should not. They should have single-minded focus on Swami's name and form. By accepting leadership they are accepting Swami's divinity. Office bearers should not flit here and there but instead should lead by example.

'Be your own Guru; your own teacher, you have the lamp within you. Light it and march on without fear.'

'He who seeks a Guru can find him in every word spoken within his hearing, in every incident that happens around him.'

'The best Guru today is God. In the spiritual world, the Guru is a doctor who takes the temperature and is able to gauge his condition and what is best for him. But if the Guru himself has a temperature, then the temperature of the aspirant would be distorted by the temperature of the Guru. So the best Guru today is God.'

Sathya Sai Baba

Q: Do Office Bearers need to be vegetarian?

During Swami's 70th Birthday he said, "Don't eat meat, don't smoke, and don't drink". As Office bearers provide administrative leadership, and are highly visible, they should therefore be exemplary. It should be recognised that some people take longer than others to change their habits and therefore should not be judged.

Members of Sai Organisations should cultivate certain desirable practices. For instance, they should regulate their diet, because one's food influences one's thoughts. Smoking and intoxicating drinks have to be given up. They are ruinous for the health. Meat eating should also be given up because eating meat promotes animal tendencies. The fourth evil that has to be got rid of is gambling. Those who take to the spiritual path should avoid as much as possible these four bad practices. It is sinful to slaughter poor animals for one's food. Sai members should follow the motto: 'Help ever; hurt never'. There is no meaning in professing to respect human values without observing the rule that you should cause no harm to others in any form whatsoever.

Sathya Sai Baba

Q: Why do we discourage male and females from sitting together at Sai events? Is this a cultural thing?

A: No. Separation of men and women is not Indian culture. It is part of spirituality. The Sai Organisation is a spiritual movement not a social organisation. We must conduct ourselves accordingly.

'Some members from Western countries do not seem to favour the rule of the Sathya Sai Organisation which lays down that at Bhajans and at other meetings, men devotees should sit apart from women devotees. The rule should be applicable to all members – whether they are Indians or non-Indians, in India or elsewhere. It is a part of the spiritual discipline that is necessary for devotees.'

Sathya Sai Baba

Answers collated by Shitu Chudasama, National Vice Chair with Quotes by Ed.