

Love and Light

SSSSO (UK) - monthly update



9th June 2006

..England's Green and pleasant land..

Dear Readers,

Sai Ram, May was another busy month in the Sai Calendar with the UK's first National Medical Conference (please see this month's 'Special Feature'), overseas speakers in the form of Dr Suresh Govind, Dr Rajeshwari Patel ('Special Feature') and Arthur Hillcoat; who shared their treasured experiences of being in Swami's fold. I was fortunate enough to be able to attend one of Auntie Rajes Sivayogan's 'Satsangs', which was truly inspiring. June this year will be no ordinary month either, especially with an extra activity that will mesmerise the world from today - the World Cup!

I was thinking about how each qualifying country will be represented by ONE team that will have players from different teams in their own countries and abroad. These players would have played against each other during the year and now they will perform their duty to be ONE to play against the rest of the world. I am reminded of how we have many centres and groups across the country - and around the world - but we are all ONE Organisation. Thinking of the coat of arms worn by England - the 3 Lions - Bhagawan has talked on many occasions, especially to the Youth during the first World Youth Conference: *'I want you to be leaders to protect the world. Leaders like lions: self-reliant, courageous, majestic and just. Lion is the king of animals and I want you to be king among men.'* Baba.

Love & Light

Shobhna Patel, UK Chair

Memories of Harry Mansbridge

Harry Mansbridge, who died peacefully on Sunday 7th May 2006, aged 83; was born in 1923 in South London. Harry had many careers eventually culminating in training as a surveyor. He set up his own business as an estate agent and surveyor in Tavistock, retiring in 1987. Harry's spiritual journey developed early in his life when he attended meditation classes and retreats together with his wife and spiritual companion, Jackie.

When he came to Swami in 1980 he became an active devotee and served on the UK Council when Lucas Ralli was President. At that time, Harry was in charge of all the study groups in the UK. He started to take groups of devotees to the ashram. Harry then became Central Coordinator for the UK and Ireland and also served on the Sri Sathy Sai UK Trust. Harry was on the Christmas Committee at Prashanti for several years, becoming

very close to Swami who used to call him affectionately 'coconut tree' as Harry was very tall! Harry was a very conscientious devotee and Baba used to tell him "Don't worry, Harry!" When he retired from office, he continued to run a study circle from his home in Cornwall and was instrumental in organising visits for Sai speakers to the South West. With his characteristic warmth, humour and humility, Harry gave spiritual encouragement to so many devotees, especially the early Sai Youth. Among the many tributes at his funeral, performed by Arthur Hillcoat, Galina Hay, from St Petersburg, said how grateful many Russian devotees are for the articles Harry used to write for them about Swami, which were translated and distributed when spirituality was not officially allowed in Russia. Harry was also a devoted family man and he leaves three grown children and six grandchildren. For so many people, Harry was one of the early, irreplaceable, devotees of Swami who gave loving service and spiritual encouragement to everyone around him.

Aime Levy, former UK Chair

Sathya Sai Schools

The **Sathya Sai School Leicester** will be holding two events in July 2006: An Open Day on Saturday 24th June, from 10.00am to 4.00pm. This will give all parents and devotees the chance to see the school at first hand, meet the staff and ask any questions. All are welcome. Also at the school, on Saturday 8th July 2006, from 5.00pm to 7.00pm, there will be an entertainment programme comprising music, dance, drama and poetry. To attend, please contact head teacher, Mrs Usha Lim, on 1006 268 1987 or 07929 660098 or email: sailimuk@yahoo.co.uk

The children of the **Sathya Sai School in Scotland** have adopted the 'Easwaramma Mother and Child Programme', based upon the Prashanti model, as their community project this term. All children have been busy sewing - by hand and on machine - essential items for newborn babies in the villages selected by Swami. The packs will be delivered to the ashram in July. To learn more, contact head teacher, Lesley-Ann Patrick: sathyasaischoolscotland@post.com

Prab Mistry, Sathya Sai Schools Committee

BISSE

A lot is happening in Leicester - Dipak Fakey Kumar is taking the children of the Leicester Good Values Club to visit the Houses of Parliament on the 17th of June and he and the children are organising a 'British Day' programme on the 18th of July.

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

BISSE Overseas Training is Morocco Bound

Carole Alderman and Christina Wilson are facilitating a two-day training course for 170 teachers on the 1st and 2nd of July in Casablanca, Morocco, in joint partnership with TAISSE (The Africa Institute of Sathya Sai Education). BISSE will be demonstrating the 'Direct Method' and TAISSE will be teaching how to integrate values in the curriculum subjects of Language, Maths and Science.

Carole Alderman, Director, BISSE

Region 5 Launches New Monthly Calendar

We are about to launch a monthly update (Regional calendar), in an attempt to portray a clear overview for both office bearers and centre members, thereby helping to prevent duplication in the planning of events and hopefully, encourage lots of contact between different centres and groups. It will shortly be on the national website for other Regions to access.

An Open Day was held on Saturday 29th April to attract new parents and children to the SSE classes in Manchester. A varied programme of prayers, devotional songs, story and poetry readings, an explanation by children of SSE benefits, a demonstration of silent sitting and a lively interactive quiz involving the audience. It was much appreciated by all present – mainly parents of existing children, the SSE teachers and Regional SSE Co-ordinator, Tara Mistry.

Peter Boyd, Region 5 Vice Chair

Region 7 Easwaramma Day

About 50-60 devotees, many of whom had travelled far for this special day, attended this event, held on Saturday 6th May 2006 at Patchway High School, Bristol. The theme was 'Mother Easwaramma – The Universal Mother'. The children and the teachers of the Regional weekend Sai School had spent many weeks working hard on the script, preparing the children and creating costumes and props. The children performed plays and sang devotional songs that were enjoyed by all. There was a wonderful presentation on Mother Earth that gave everyone much food for thought about how not to abuse Planet Earth our '*Bhumi Mata*'. There was also a wonderful PowerPoint presentation about Mother Easwaramma and her selfless love for not only Swami but for the whole of mankind.

Jey Sivaloganathan, Chair Region 7

R8 Office Bearers' Conference and Satsang

This was held on Saturday 13th May in Dundee at the residence of Vinesh Chandra. Attendance from all over Scotland was about 50. Prof. Suresh Govind gave an inspirational talk, a presentation on 'Meditation and Spirituality' and study sessions. After lunch (lovingly prepared by one of the Youth with several enthusiastic assistants) the members of the Regional Committee moved upstairs to take part in the Regional Meeting, which lasted until 6.30pm. All those who were not

participating in this meeting were treated to a 'Question and Answer Session' with Prof. Suresh Govind. Later, after devotional singing everyone enjoyed dinner together.

Ram Konar, Region 8 Vice Chair

Region 2 Has an Audience With a Doctor!

Probably best known for his books 'Hari Bhajna Bina' and 'The Divine Life Style', Dr Suresh Govind moved in a slightly different but holistic direction to talk to a group of about 120 devotees on 'The Spiritual Relationship to Encourage Devotees to Think and Start Meditation' on Saturday 20th May at Sai House, Regent College, Rayners Lane, North London.

The programme lasted over three hours and consisted of a PowerPoint presentation, a 27-minute guided meditation, a short question and answer session, concluding with prayers. Dr Govind delivered a humorous, informative and motivational speech on the importance and process of meditation to achieve the ultimate goal in life. Dr Govind stressed the importance of living in the 'present' to experience divinity and bliss and described how happiness causes the brain to release chemicals known as endorphins that relieve stress and pain naturally, giving a euphoric feeling.

Gayatri Bikoo, Region 2 Service Co-ordinator.

National Youth Pilgrimage Update

On Saturday 27th May 2006, Youth from all over the United Kingdom gathered in Harrow for the fourth monthly meeting of the 'National Youth Pilgrimage 2006'. The programme commenced with devotional singing. Six inspirational young people (Fram, Pari, Manish, Abbey, Yogesh and Vasee) had been chosen to share their experiences. Their talks were based on their personal experiences coupled with how they were putting into daily practice the Youth Pilgrimage 'Sadhana Programme'. A beautiful presentation on Swami, by Mathan, was shown. Mathan went on to give a very well researched talk on the various characteristics of a Purna Avatar and how each one of these sixteen divine characteristics perfectly fits Swami. Mathan asserted that despite many claiming to be Purna Avatars, it is only Swami who is capable of meeting these extensive criteria. Shitu then shared some recent news from Prashanti, that Swami, having been moved by the wonderful work performed by the youth during the Youth Service Camp in 2004, has requested that this time the Youth should undertake a Spiritual Camp. Shitu asked, 'What is a Spiritual Camp?' and elucidated that it is the period of Pilgrimage when each individual pilgrim is able to consolidate and intensify his/her spiritual relationship with the Lord. Ultimately, it is one's spiritual practice or '*Sadhana*' and the relationship with God that will help bring about one's spiritual transformation. Ishver Patel concluded inspiringly.

Shitu Chudasama, National Youth Co-ordinator



A SPECIAL TWO-PAGE FEATURE comprising write-ups on a talk on 'ANCIENT WISDOM' and on the SSSSO UK's 'FIRST NATIONAL MEDICAL CONFERENCE'

The Ancient Wisdom of the World

At a venue in Rayners Lane, on the evening of Saturday June 3rd, a very lucky group of devotees gathered to hear a talk by Dr Rajeshwari Patel, a teacher at Sai Baba's Anantapur Girls College, Andhra Pradesh, India. Having been blessed by much proximity to Sathya Sai Baba she began to investigate the Ancient Wisdom of India and the world. Swami certainly guided her in this direction and encouragement also came from the esteemed writer Dr John Hislop. Rajeshwari described how the majority of Ancient Wisdom is lost. However, what remains is guarded as 'sacred wealth' – much of it in the form of 'Palm Leaf Books' that are revered and preserved by the Rishis or Indian Mystical Sages. Those who recorded the Ancient Wisdom belonged to a scientific age of bygone times. Rajeshwari progressively guided us, through the known, and the rapidly being rediscovered, history of the long-gone ways of every branch of knowledge. Excitingly (to those of us on a conscious, questing, mystical journey in the 60s and 70s), she referred to the much-pilloried works of Erik von Daniken – such as 'Chariot of the Gods' – without scepticism! In fact she endorsed the concept of a previous civilisation where 'space travel' was normal and cited many examples from around the world to back the premise, such as legends from the Ancient Greek civilisation that describe man travelling to the moon and several kinds of air transport. She incorporated a mass of data in her talk and encompassed the Global Deluge, Alchemical Metallurgy, Yogic Breathing, verified a Race of Giants (apparently Rama was 14' tall!), light bodies, Madam Blavatsky, and much more. However, the 'time' cycles of our planet Earth were dwelt upon in depth. The age of the Earth is 195,585,485 and the Kali Yuga (according to Sai Baba) began on February 20th 3102 BC! To end she emphasised that the message at the heart of all the Ancient Wisdom is the development of recognition of one's True Inner Self.

SSSSO UK First National Medical Conference, 'Humanisation of Medicine', 21st May 2006, London

The SSSSO UK's first National Medical Conference took place on a very rainy Sunday 21st May in Rayners Lane, North London. The conference room, though surrounded on three sides by large windows, was

beautifully swathed in white light-giving material – thus protecting us from the sight of the grey, wet day outside. Rita Chudasama guided us smoothly through the packed programme, punctuating it with both humour and serious, pertinent points. The Central Co-ordinator for the UK and Ireland, Ishver Patel, opened the conference with an explanation of its purpose. One of the main aims of the day was to cover three important Organisation areas: International Medical Camps, the Prashanti General Hospital rota and our own United Kingdom medical activities. The stringent strategies and protocols that are being implemented by the Sathya Sai World Foundation regarding these areas would be explained so that delegates might have a clear understanding of them. He elucidated upon the vital necessity of such procedures to protect both Swami's good name and the Organisation.

The first speaker, Dr Suresh Govind, Specialist in Tropical Medicine and Parasitology, and Vice-President of the Sai Organisation Malaysia, spoke on the Conference's theme. He drew together a variety of diverse, leading edge concepts on the holistic approach to medicine and covered a wide area of thought-provoking topics in his twenty-five minutes. He asked us how the animal kingdom keeps its balance and is not prone to modern day health problems such as heart disease, high cholesterol and diabetes. Then he developed a theme to show how disease (basically, the absence of ease) occurs when we are out of rhythm with the fundamental laws of Nature. Therefore the 'humanisation' of medicine requires the 'harmonisation' of man. By attending medical camps in deprived areas, doctors themselves gain tremendously because they gradually gain a simple, compassionate, holistic approach towards each individual they treat. Dr Govind spoke about the importance of food, its qualities and how 'food' is literally everything we ingest through our senses. He referred to the exciting work of Japanese researcher, Masaru Emoto, demonstrating the power and influence of positive or negative thought and prayers on water, revealed by the changes in crystalline structure seen with a microscope. Water exposed to 'love' forms beautiful patterns whereas the word 'hate' creates a darker chaotic shape. Vibrations, biophotonic energy, Kirlian photography, how to encourage endorphin release for bliss – all this and much more were covered in his extensive roundup!

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Next, speaking about the Prashanti General Hospital rota was Dr Puvanachandra, member of the International Medical Committee. He gave a detailed background to the evolution of the hospital, a succinct synopsis of the criteria for enrolling on the roster and the benefits to be gained by working in the 'Temples of Healing' instigated by 'God, the Supreme Healer'. He then invited the following: Dr Srikanth Penumetsa, to give a firsthand account of three weeks recently on the rota in January 2006; Dr Pinakin Shah to talk about being a dentist on the rota; Dr Sivalogeswary, an anaesthetist; Dr Gjanes Lingam a respiratory physician and Dr Veeru Rao a maxillo facial specialist. Amongst all the facts on typical diseases and illnesses, we heard clearly how very much you feel the Divine presence in Prashanti, so that you are overwhelmingly conscious of treating any patient as divine too. It was moving to hear that the patient is asked to chant 'Sai Ram' before being anaesthetised and that the prep room to the Operating Theatre has in it a chair for Swami, to which all Theatre staff pay devotional respect before any operation. Unanimously, all the doctors evoked the sense of Swami's transforming power to make them more caring practitioners through joining the roster and how blessed are those who work in His hospitals.

Sri Ajit Popat, speaking on the Rajkot Hospital, posed some deep questions and issued some challenges: How often people say, 'Swami doesn't really need us to fulfil His mission', Mr Popat refuted this and described how vital the devotee is to the Avatar. 'We have been given the most marvellous opportunity', he said. He invited us not to dwell on achievements but, rather, on that which has not yet been achieved. He advised us that we are unable to make everyone happy; therefore we should endeavour, instead, to make the Lord happy. Mr Popat asked us all to carry ourselves with a true dignity that comes from knowing of the Avatar. 'If the son of a billionaire behaves like a beggar on the street corner – where is the sense in that?' Similarly, 'How can we be aware of the Avatar and yet only half live our lives?' Instead, we should embody His splendour in conscience-triggered service. Mr Popat spoke at length about the pitfalls of attachment in all its guises.

Another member of the International Medical Committee and leading exponent of setting up Medical Camps, Dr Surendra Upadhyay, regaled us with numerous anecdotes about the camps, about Sai Baba and about the late Mother Teresa with whom he had a close friendship for around two decades. When he warned Mother Teresa of the dangers involved in her treating, without gloves, a wound seeping with foul pus, she movingly retorted, 'Does a mother handle her own son with gloves?' He demonstrated the omniscience of Sai Baba in a story where Swami questioned a doctor regarding his treatment of an elderly lady in a remote medical camp. Swami described the patient and all that

took place in accurate detail. Swami asked why the doctor sent the lady for costly, distressing, time-consuming X-rays when the use of a simple, old-fashioned, diagnostic technique (percussion) could have been used to ascertain the state of her lungs and whether she had TB. Finally, Dr Upadhyay assured all the delegates that when you commence on a Medical Camp, Swami showers all involved with grace and energy and takes care of all the problems in extraordinary ways.

Assistant to Dr Upadhyay and Co-ordinator of the International Medical Camps undertaken by the United Kingdom, Ms Urvi Shah, outlined the whole process from pre-camp, receiving the request from the host country, right through to the cataloguing of the tons of boxes and their contents that invariably accompany the team. All the needs and requirements must be assessed, identified and evaluated in advance along with recruiting the correct number of local translators. Every volunteer's credentials need to be in order and all criteria regarding Customs and Immigration anticipated and met. The volunteer medics limit their own personal luggage to allow for more boxes of equipment. Dr Upadhyay then introduced optometrist, Dr Khanti Mistry and gynaecologist Dr Uma Gordon to give their personal recollections of being on International Medical Camps.

National Service Co-ordinator, Mr Bharat Handa, summarised the United Kingdom Service activities and explained the key aspects of 'selfless service'.

Using two screens simultaneously, Professor Keith Critchlow (esteemed architect and sacred geometer of the Super Speciality Hospital, Puttaparthi) spoke on, 'Temple of Healing and the Divine Architect'. We were shown pairs of related and sometimes contrasting images and symbols from nature, architecture and literature to stimulate logical and intuitive reactions. Also, we saw photographs of the very first sketch of the Puttaparthi hospital released in a twenty-minute freehand, intuitive outpouring. It is quite remarkable how identical to the finished hospital the initial sketch actually is. Inspired by a view of Swami's embrace, as seen from above, drawing patients into His heart, the wings of the building reach out to wrap around those who approach. Some inspiration was taken from the sublime Taj Mahal at Agra. All the subtly perceived elements of a hospital designed using sacred geometry, are there to uplift and arouse the healing force of the Divine within. A full and very comprehensive day was brought adeptly to a close by Shobhna Patel, the Chair of the United Kingdom, who drew all the threads together and obligingly reminded us of some of the crucial core elements that could have been lost in such a full, varied and fascinating day.

Both articles by Rosemary Perry, National Vice Chair