



...So, what do YOU think?

Dear Readers, Sai Ram!

I'm sure you will enjoy what has turned out to be a 'bumper' edition of 'Love and Light' this month! Some quite significant events that have taken place recently have been written about as well as forthcoming ones. I hope many of you will attend the National Spiritual Day on November 3rd. The venue is large and it will be a lovely day for deepening one's connection with the true inner self in the presence of kindred spirits.

Please do take advantage of the request to YOU for constructive comments in the ad. on page 2 for next year's 'NOBC', which will become simply our 'Annual National Conference'. One of the questions asked at the March Council meeting re NOBC was: "Are the members taking anything back to better equip them with serving the Centres within the Region?" Is this what you want from an Annual Conference? Or do you think it should come from Office Bearer Training Days in the Regions?

It is certainly true that, 'You can't please all of the people all of the time,' but if all the people who have really strong feelings contribute their ideas into the 'melting pot' then they can be taken into account as far as is possible.

The question of what we call 'zero-balance charging' for events is a highly contentious one. What do you think about it? If we don't charge and we don't request grants from the Trust - where do you think the cost of running a National Conference should come from?

Last year - thanks to a really very last minute rush of 80 bookings over the break-even point, we achieved a surplus of £1,600. The UK Council was invited to utilise this money for a good cause and at its March meeting it was allocated to SITA and the SSLTP team for items of equipment that would benefit professionalism, and be used by both.

...However, at one point - not far from the NOBC event date itself we could just as easily have made a loss! The word 'contribution' is often used in order not to ask for money, what are your views on this?

Nobody, quite rightly, ever declares that they have financially supported an event and most of our events are indeed supported financially

by individuals. In the past year the following events at National or 'Joint-Regions' level have taken place without any charge:

- 'National Ladies Day' - October 14th 2006 (120 involved/attend),
- 'National Spiritual Day' - 29th October 2006 (around 500+ involved/attend),
- Post European Regional Consultation Meeting - February 11th 2007 (around 70 attend),
- All the lead-up meetings to the World Youth Conference 2007 (average attendance around 200),
- Vedam Narayan's four main talks in April 2007 (reaching around 1,800 people),
- SITA Training Day - April 2007,
- 'OB Training & Refresher Day' on May 13th 2007 (around 140 attend),
- 'Sacred Sound, Sacred Dance' (a Joint Regions 1, 2, 3 & 6 Interfaith event attended by 80+) - May 19th 2007,
- SSLTP ongoing meetings, 'Family Values Days' in July (several hundred in total attended them in 4 Regions around the country),
- 'SAI-UN Symposium' - October 6th 2007 (270+ attend).

This list, of course, does not include all the many, many, large Regional events etc that regularly take place around the country, as well as highly significant events attended by considerable numbers at some Centres.

At almost all these events - National, Regional, Centre - food is provided as well as the special hiring of halls etc. That is not cheap these days. E.g. the hiring of a large secondary school hall in North London costs around £1,000 solely for the hall for a full day and extra for other rooms required. Catering does cost a few pounds per head when everything concerned e.g. plates and drinks, is taken into account.

So, it is understandable that some people may stay away when a charge is made for an event but, generally, the charge or suggested 'contribution' is as close to being an accurate per capita cost, based upon expected numbers, as can be, in the planning stage.

If it is really unwanted or unacceptable that a charge is made for NOBC-type events - what is the solution?

**Love and Light,
Rosemary Perry, National Chair**

Chaitanya Jyothi Museum

As you are all hopefully aware: the SSSSO UK has been allocated the month of November each year to provide volunteers at the Museum at Prashanti Nilayam to practice the gift of service as 'love in action' by serving at the Museum. Names need to be gathered within the next 2 - 3 weeks. If you are interested, speak to your Centre Chair who will put you directly in touch with your Service Co-ordinator who will let you know the commitment involved.

Bharat Handa,
National Service Co-ordinator

Sai Spiritual Education

**'SSE Carousel Teacher
Training and Refresher Course 2007'
Saturday 13th October**

Ashlawn School, Ashlawn Road, Hillmorton,
Rugby, Warwickshire, CV22 5ET
9am – 5pm

Very last minute registration (!) please email:
sathyasaieducation.org.uk or your Regional
Co-ordinator who will forward it to:

Sharmila Parikh,
National SSE Co-ordinator

National Spiritual Day 2007

**'Our Life is Your Message'
Saturday November 3rd 2007**

It is now the last opportunity for us to give you a complete update with the latest information on this programme. Times have been allocated to all the different wings of our organisation so that they too will be represented on the day to exemplify the underlying spiritual principle of unity in the diversity of all our many activities.

Hopefully, all of you have now noted and reserved the date in your diaries to be there with us at the **Zoroastrian Centre Hall** in Alexandra Road, Rayners Lane, Harrow Middlesex HA2 9TL.

Outline of the Programme:

The Start: The day will start at 9.15am with Vedam Chanting by 'Sai Students' combined with members of Region 8. Devotional songs to welcome Swami to the gathering then follow this. There is an 'Inauguration Ceremony' for the National Spiritual Day when the Spiritual Wing Co-ordinators of our eight Regions will each light a lamp to acknowledge the presence of our beloved Lord and reverentially accept HIM as the Chief Guest for the day.

The Speakers: We have lined up four wonderful speakers who will take you all into new realms of spiritual awareness. In fact

some of them may even take you into spiritual realms hitherto unexplored by many. They are:

~ **Phil Heaton**, former National Chairperson will speak on 'Effective Spiritual Communication'.

~ **David Ash**, well-known scientist, spiritual speaker and writer will speak on the subject of 'The New Physics of Consciousness'.

~ **Sonam**, a 'Sai Student' and well-known singer and speaker.

~ **Suresh Govind** from Malaysia will speak on the theme of the day.

Drama: We have a drama/play presented by the SSE student children of Region 4.

PowerPoint presentations: There will be two short PP presentations on **UK Service Wing activities** and **Youth Wing activities**.

Devotional Songs: Sonam will sing and we also have a young lady from the youth (*name withheld for now on her humble request*) who will sing her heart out with some scintillating songs.

The Finale: Our own **Sai Youth** will thrill you all with an uplifting devotional singing session and make you all definitely feel the presence of Swami in the hall so that you carry the divine vibrations with you all when you leave the hall at about 4.45pm

But once again - we need YOU there on this day. Please come over and share the happiness of the day with the rest of the devotees. A day not to be missed!

**National Spiritual Day Organising Team
Submitted by Raj Selvakumar,
National Spiritual Co-ordinator**

National SSSSO UK Annual Conference 2008

Venue: Bentley Wood High School,
Clamp Hill, Stanmore,
Middlesex, HA7 3NA

Saturday February 2nd 2008

A Planning Group has been established and has already held one planning meeting for next year's National Conference. "...Is this conference the same as the annual 'National Office Bearers Conference'?" "Yes! It is!"

The PG all feel unanimously that the annual 'NOBC' event sounds restrictive if it is indeed just for 'office bearers'.

...Especially, when registration is opened out to everybody eventually, each year.

The day will be a nurturing day, a day of review and taking stock, a day of looking forward and it is certainly hoped that as many office bearers will attend as are able along with anyone else who would like to.

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Confirmed Guest Speakers for the Conference are: Dr Thorbjørn Meyer and his wife, Marianne.

They both have a wealth of experience of working at many levels within the Sai Organisations in Europe and have many insightful stories and much wisdom to share. They both sit on the Education Committee of the Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation and Thorbjørn is Chair of Zone 7 and the Director of ESSE (the European Sathya Sai Education Institute).

More details on the conference and on booking arrangements will be circulated soon. If YOU have any views that YOU would like to share regarding what YOU would like to have as part of this National Conference and what you think has been successful/unsuccessful in the past, please send them (by October 23rd 2007) via your Centre Chair to your Regional Chair to be passed on to the Planning Group who will give them all due consideration.

National Conference 2008 PG

Region 2

**'From ... Trishna (desire) to...
...Krishna (love)'**

"Whenever and wherever a decline of righteousness and a predominance of unrighteousness prevails, at that time I manifest myself personally, O descendant of Bharata." (Lord Krishna to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita - Chapter 4, verse 7).

On Tuesday 4th September, we were blessed with an opportunity to celebrate the advent of Lord Krishna at the Dennis Jackson Hall in Wembley.

Whenever the hearts of human beings become barren, because of unrighteousness and lack of love, God incarnates in order to sow the seeds of love and propagate the principle of love. Thousand of years ago, Lord Krishna incarnated to uphold righteousness, to uproot evil and raise universal consciousness through his message of love. In a divine discourse on 11th August 2001, Sri Sathya Sai Baba announced that Lord Krishna was born 3228 years before the Christian era on 20th July at 3 a.m. As it is now 2007 A.D, Lord Krishna is 5235 yrs old!

The common meaning of the word Krishna is 'one who is dark' but Swami explained that the word Krishna has three deeper spiritual meanings: 'The one who cultivates' is Krishna – meaning the cultivation of our heart to clear the weeds of evil qualities and replenish it with divine love. 'The one who attracts' is Krishna - Krishna attracts by his every action and calms the hearts of those even filled with hatred, and makes them rejoice. And the

third meaning is – 'the one who is always blissful' - our true nature.

The programme started at 9pm with a welcome to our inner divinity followed by a brief explanation on the significance of this auspicious occasion by Sarah Banfield. A ceremonial bath (*abhishek*) of Lord Krishna and the recitation of the 108 names of Lord Krishna were reverently performed by Pandit Gowri Shankar from India. Thereafter, devotional songs in praise of Lord Krishna and describing his achievements were sung with deep devotion and love culminating at midnight when a blackout heralded the divine birth. Then, with a soft light to dispel the darkness, we welcomed the divine birth, the 'Light of all Lights'. The cradle was then rocked gently and 'Baby Krishna' was fed with his favourite foods while devotees sang welcoming hymns with great fervour to celebrate the advent of the Lord.

Sri Krishna Janmashthami commemorates not merely the birth of a great and divine teacher of mankind a long time ago but the lighting of the spark of Divinity in every one of us for our heart is the birthplace of Lord Krishna. Through this divine love, we can attain God and through the principle of love and its practice, we can recognize and realize our true nature - embodiments of love and like the Gopikas, may we be totally immersed in the adoration of our beloved Lord Sai Krishna!

Gayatri Bikoo,

Region 2 Service Co-ordinator

Harrow East Centre's

11th Birthday!

The Sai Centre of Harrow East, (in Region 2 of the SSSSO UK), celebrated its 11th anniversary on Sunday 9th September with a Civic Service. In addition to the regular Centre attendees that are around 250 every week it was attended by: the Worshipful Mayor of Harrow, Councillor Jean Lammiman; Tony McNulty MP; John Purnell, the Deputy Lieutenant, (this is the person who is the Queen's representative in each of the London Boroughs and Counties of the UK); 26 councillors from the local Councils of both Harrow and Brent; many people representing charitable, service and spiritual organisations that the Centre works with in its activities; and, in keeping with the multi-faith ethos of the Sai Organisation, representatives from various different spiritual and religious groups. The event took place at Whitchurch School, which has been the regular meeting place for the Harrow East Sai Centre since the Centre's inception in 1996.

The members of Harrow Council in its entirety, led by an official carrying an ornate

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mace, ceremonially entered the hall in procession all wearing impressive full regalia, including fur-trimmed robes that are over 50 years old.

Mr. Nilesh Khatri, the Harrow East Chairperson, highlighted the achievements of the Centre in terms of promoting Sai Baba's universal spiritual message of love and service. Through activities such as spiritual meetings, educational classes and youth focus, the Centre has successfully highlighted the essence of Sai Baba's teachings which can be encapsulated in the five human values of Love, Peace, Right Conduct, Truth and Non-Violence. Over the last decade, members of the Centre have also been involved with numerous service projects in the local community and at a national level. The Council knows one such project as 'Ashiana' set up in the Borough some seven years ago to help children and young adults with learning and physical difficulties and which is currently recognized as a voluntary service group.

The National Chair of the SSSSO UK, Rosemary Perry, also addressed the audience and outlined the global achievements of the worldwide organisation on humanitarian and charitable levels. She said that Sathya Sai Baba is a universal world teacher who brings humans a sense of their true identity and an understanding of their real purpose and that his stated mission is to enable all of mankind to bring out their inherent nature - which is actually Truth and Goodness - and to realise their full potential as happy, loving beings full of compassion and concern for the welfare of their brothers and sisters, locally and throughout the world. She said that Sai Baba invites us to transform ourselves into the highest human beings we can be, with unconditional love constantly flowing from our hearts to all - not the easiest path! However, she said, the process of endeavouring to change oneself by learning to love others equally and unconditionally, naturally leads to a healthy yearning to pro-actively change society itself, by trying to alleviate any form of distress whether it be social, economic, medical, educational or through natural disaster. She closed with: "It is time for good people to stand up and be counted - and for them to realise that they really can make a difference when we all put aside petty differences. This energy for good that is within us all, goes far beyond individual religions and yet it is at the heart of all of them - this is a universal current that connects us all and the message in that current is that the time is now - to bring

heaven to earth! That current is not electricity ...it is simply unconditional LOVE!"

This was further iterated by a 10-minute DVD on such achievements which included, an extensive project to supply pure drinking water and adoption of thousands of villages in India, the establishment of Super Specialty hospitals extending to over 1300 beds and also maintaining over 250 charitable medical clinics all of which provide services without charge. In addition, Sathya Sai Baba has also been the inspiration for the set up of a system of education in schools, colleges and universities in India and throughout the world, all of which are cost free.

There was next a marvellous presentation by some of the SSE students of the Centre on the environment and the issue of recycling. And the last presentation was a dance by a member of Ashiana demonstrating how the Centre is involved in looking after the vulnerable people in the borough and how such a person can flower and gain confidence. In response to the day, Madam Mayor of Harrow addressed the audience with the traditional greeting of "Sai Ram" and commended the Sai organisation for their wonderful achievements and presented a gift to the Chairperson on behalf of the Borough. In her conclusion, she assured the organisation that the Mayor's charity will look forward to working with the Sai organisation. Then she happily performed 'Arathi' to conclude the programme before lunch was served.

The guests were impressed with all the information and presentations and intrigued as to how such monumental projects could have been funded and supported by volunteers. A number of councillors, spiritual and service organisations expressed their wish to work with the Centre in partnership on more projects helping the wider community.

Nilesh Khatri, Chair Harrow East Centre
Region 2 articles submitted by:
Satesh Melwani, Chair Region 2

Region 4

Ladies Wing: 'Supper with Sai'

On the 1st September 2007 the ladies from Leicester Central Sai Centre and the Narborough Road Sai Centre came together to celebrate the setting up of the women's wing in the SSSSO UK. The two co-ordinators of the event welcomed all the participants and reminded the audience of what Swami has said about women:

"Embodiments of Love! In this infinite universe, among the myriads of living beings,

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*humanity is eminent. Among human beings,
it is a privilege to be born as a woman."*

The address also said that the Ladies Wing would play an active and integral part within the Sathya Sai Service Organisation, through its many programmes, service activities and the living of Swami's teachings.

This was followed by the youth Ladies chanting the Vedas, which set the atmosphere for the rest of the programme.

Next came an 'ice-breaker' where each lady stood up, introduced herself, and also shared which of Swami's teachings has been her favourite and why. It was very interesting to listen to all their experiences.

A game of 'Charades' followed to get the ladies active, moving around and working as a team. Now that everyone had got to know each other they were divided into two teams and given a list of Swami's teachings. The opposite team had to guess the teaching to score a point. The miming resulted in a lot of laughter, chatter and general merriment all round.

We were fortunate to have with us a visitor from South Africa, who shared with us how the women's wing works there - their service activities etc. it meets every 19th of the month and all the women do a lot of service work with the women and children of the nearby shantytowns.

We also talked about the itinerary for the Ladies Day celebration on 18th November 2007.

These were the requests we received for study circle/workshops that the members would like: time management, health, alternative therapies, support systems e.g. bereavement, depression, public speaking and for our younger members how to live in today's environment and follow Swami's teachings

We also decided on a group Sadhana "To be happy" for the time up to the Ladies Day - further Sadhana to be decided later

The meeting ended with the ladies sharing all the delicious food that they had brought! (Each lady was asked to bring a dish) We had food for the soul and the body that evening!

Ladies meeting at Soar Valley 19th September – 28 ladies attend

Discussion Topics:

National Launch feedback

'Supper with Sai' feedback

November preparations feedback

Group sharing ideas for Ladies Wing

Feedback from each group

All present to share their feelings/thoughts

Closing remarks:

Swami's message from Ladies Day 2006

Ideas Offered and Gathered:

- PA training
- Instrumental training (tabla)
- Time Management
- Learn new languages – Telugu, Gujarati, English, Sanskrit, Hindi
- Games/Sports sessions
- Ladies etiquette
- Confidence workshops
- Public speaking (English – Gujarati Translation)
- Vedam class
- Car maintenance
- Cooking lessons
- Ladies retreat
- Motivation classes
- Study circles
- Outings/Fun days/Pampering sessions
- Team building & Unity events
- Reiki/Yoga sessions
- Basic first aid training
- Health/Nutrition awareness
- Service opportunities
- Events for Mothers Day
- Stress the '9-Point Code of Conduct'
- Parenting/Grand-parenting skills
- Flower arranging
- Basic stitching & sewing skills
- Hair and beauty sessions
- Reading Sai literature
- Computer classes

Outcomes:

- All present would like the 19th of every month to have a Ladies Session.
- Ladies wing to operate as a united wing for all Leicester ladies. Through our Unity - our Divinity will shine!
- A database needs to be compiled of skills and contact details of all ladies.
- Oct 19th 2007 will be during Navaratri, so it was suggested to either have an earlier, shorter, session on the significance of this holy time or to come together and celebrate the evening with a full session of 'Satsang' and 'Garba'. (tbc)

Submitted by

Ramesh Mistry, Chair Region 4

Region 5 Newcastle Special! SSEHV Training

We are glad to inform that we will be having the six-day Sri Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) training programme in Newcastle-upon-Tyne this month. The training is scheduled for three consecutive weekends on the following dates: 27th/28th October, 3rd/4th November and 10th/11th November. If you are interested in participating in the training programme, then

please contact Praveena, who can also help to arrange any required accommodation, on 07841 354590.

Swami's 82nd Birthday

To celebrate Swami's 82nd birthday this year, we have decided to have 8+2 (10) house bhajans (in addition to the regular devotional singing in the Centre) before the 23rd of November. This has helped to strengthen the relationship among members and spread the aura of love & positive vibrations in the houses. Many felt Swami's loving presence more in their houses during the singing.

Veda Class

Mr Sridhar Govindarajan from Manchester started a 'Veda class' in the month of June and it now regularly takes place on the fourth Friday of every month. An audio CD was initially given to all members of the class to get them familiar with the intonations of 'Purusha Suktam' and some literature was also provided with word-for-word meanings and the overall essence of the verses.

Guru Purnima Celebration

Region 5's Guru Purnima celebration went off very well in Newcastle upon Tyne on the 21st of July 2007. The programme started with the 'Chanting of Rudram & Chamakam' by Sridhar Govindarajan. Swami's ex-student Navin Patel from Leicester was the guest speaker and Graeme Hunter from Newcastle was our local speaker. We had Pt. Vishnu Sharma sing some solo bhajans and concluded the programme with Sai Bhajans by Newcastle Sai Centre. A free stall was set up for people to take books, pictures, articles and marmalade. A sumptuous meal was served as Prasadam.

Improved communications!

To improve communications amongst the members of the Newcastle Centre a 'group email' was set up. This has helped save a lot of time spent on announcements during bhajans. A Library with a modest collection of 80 books was started on the 10th of August. Members are now making good use of this valuable resource.

'Narayan Seva'

This was started during the month of July. We have collected and distributed rice, semolina, sugar and chopped tomatoes to two refugee organisations in Newcastle. Members of the centre each buy 2 kilos of the rice/semolina every month consistently and take the opportunity to spread their love to the needy. Clothes and other household articles like lampshades; plates etc are also collected and given to help women to set up their houses after getting refugee status.

Sanjay Vaja, Vice Chair Region 5

Region 7

Stress Management Workshop

At 10.30am on Sunday the 9th of September, in Callington Town Hall, Cornwall, we in the South West were delighted to be able to participate in an enlightening workshop led by Professor Suresh Govind, from Malaysia, ably supported by Sai Giridhar from Wales, on the subject of 'Stress Management'. The workshop was aimed at Youth in this area, the 16 to 36 year olds, although there were in fact more thirty sixes than sixteen year olds, but this being the ninth day of the ninth month Swami, as always, knew exactly what He was doing and all the 'right' people were there. Professor Govind is a brilliant Scientist but is also truly spiritually aware – a rare combination, these two do not usually come in tandem – he is exciting and stimulating to listen to as he brings fun and humour into his fast moving and concise reasoning behind the need to deal with stress in modern day living. The outcome of this gathering of twenty five souls, is that we are now able to put together a programme that will bring together Schools in this area, through Theatre, to introduce the Values through plays, written, produced and staged by the students of those establishments. All very exciting and, with the first fifteen minutes of the Grand Finale, already organised – it's always best to start at the end and work backwards! Watch this space!

The workshop was over all too quickly, but the delicious refreshments that followed were just perfect for promoting the conversation to bring about the embryo form for the next stage of this project. By 1.30pm the meeting was over, the Hall cleared and everyone had left feeling uplifted and excited by the possibilities which lay ahead.

Caroline Vasey

**Submitted by Jey Sivaloganathan, Chair
Region 7**

YOUTH

Sri Sathya Sai Leadership Training Programme (SSLTP)

Alumni Reunion 2007

The 22nd September 2007 marked an auspicious day for the Sri Sathya Sai Leadership Training Programme (SSLTP) as it held its first 'Alumni Reunion' evening in the heart of Harrow at the Harrow Civic Centre marking 10 glorious years of delivery of the programme.

In October 1997, the Sathya Sai Leadership Training Programme was offered at the Sai

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Baba's lotus feet and was launched in 1998 as a direct implementation of the First World Youth Conference resolutions. That conference passed the resolution that every country should groom leaders to play an effective role in shaping the future of the Organisation. The programme draws inspiration from the eternal teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba with emphasis placed upon his 'Mahavakya' (great utterance) on leadership that is:

"To Be : To Do : To See : To Tell. "

To date, the programme has groomed 49 leaders. The evening started with a heartfelt dedication to the late Sean Lynch who was the first SSLTP co-ordinator in 1997. Our present SSLTP co-ordinator, Priya Balaraman, commenced the proceedings for the evening with her welcoming address talking about the success of SSLTP over the last 10 years, paying tribute to Sean Lynch and congratulating all the graduates on their success in undertaking this journey of self-awareness and transformation. Priya's welcome address was followed by a short heart-warming presentation taking everyone present down memory lane looking back over the last 10 years.

We were very fortunate to have amongst us our UK National Chair, Rosemary Perry, who was our first speaker for the evening to address the gathering. Rosemary, in her inspirational speech, talked about the Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation (SSSSO) and how the whole central pivot of the Organisation is that of transformation, spiritual transformation. Rosemary went on to say that the SSSSO is best viewed, as a container or a crucible and the volunteers who bear unpaid office should be seen as - and perform as - temporary custodians of the fire that burns in that crucible. It's our job to keep the transformative fire that is sometimes held latent within our hearts alive. Just as a crucible melts down many metals and reveals the dross or worthless substances that can arise at high temperatures during smelting, this organisation has the possibility of doing the same for those who seek a much higher purpose in life. Rosemary continued by saying that the bellows that heightens the process is that of God. The breath of God is the word of God. The word of God is that which arose in the beginning and that is truth. For us in this organisation that truth comes in the form of Sathya Sai Baba and it is his teachings we silently pledge to follow.

The next guest speaker was Barbara Swyer. Barbara works as a senior commissioning manager for the SE Prisons and Probation

services. During her encouraging speech, Barbara talked about leadership in a public service organisation discussing the important facets of leadership. She placed great emphasis on understanding that the task of a leader is to take people from where they are to where they have not been and stressed the importance of integrity and visible commitment in leadership by paying reference to the famous quote by Mahatma Gandhi, "We must first be the change we want to see in the world."

Following on from Barbara's speech, the programme manager, Sri Kandiah, addressed the gathering. Sri, as dynamic as ever, moved the audience in his powerful speech by paying gratitude to all the past and present members of the SSLTP committee and cohorts over the years that have worked with pride and compassion to help make SSLTP the success that it is today. Sri elaborated and reminded us that true leadership lies in one's character. A true leader is one who is in constant harmony with his words, thoughts and deeds and who seeks to 'grow' others through leading by example. He movingly stressed the importance of how we should take pride in our activities and be the role models by following the core principles and teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

A short 'questions and answers' session followed, with our UK & Ireland Central Co-ordinator, Ishver Patel, Rosemary Perry and our guest speaker, Barbara Swyer, on the panel. We were fortunate to also have present with us our National Spiritual Co-ordinator, Raj Selvakumar and our National Youth Co-ordinator, Mathan Arulvel, who fittingly concluded the evening by posing challenging questions to the panel on the future of the programme and exploring the relationships between leadership and spirituality.

The evening came to a close with Priya Balaraman giving a vote of thanks to all those present and summarising the way forward.

Sai Baba said,

"I want you to be leaders to protect the world. Leaders like lions – self-reliant, courageous, majestic and just."

"The Lion is the king of animals and I want you to be the king among men."

He says too, "My life is my message".

...Let us be the lions and make our lives His message.

Deviesh Tankaria
SSLTP Coordinating Committee

'Messengers of Sai Love': The Journey Ahead...

On Saturday 29th of September, about 80 youth from around the UK gathered in Milton Keynes to take part in a post-World Youth Conference programme to reflect on their experiences of the world youth conference and to consider our way forward as a youth wing.

We began the programme with the 'Maypole meditation' a meditation technique developed by Phyllis Krystal and demonstrated by her during one of her talks at the conference. The significance behind the meditation for us was the simple thought that all of our activities and events, whatever they may be, should always come from our divine inner-self and be guided by that love and light as opposed to our ego and that we are all connected.

We were all transported back to Prashanti through the meditation, and through a short video of our world youth conference journey. It brought back and enabled us to relive all those wonderful memories we gained over the three days of the conference and the two weeks spent in Prashanti. What were these memories? These were the memories of the unity and diversity of the thousands of youth that had come, the inspiring talks by various distinguished speakers, the wonderful food, and of course the love and blessings bestowed upon us by Swami.

During the programme we were lucky to have Shitu Chudasama, our national Vice Chair and the International Co-ordinator for the world youth conference, address the youth that had gathered in Milton Keynes. He gave us a glimpse of all the wonderful experiences he had whilst working on the planning of the conference. In particular, he spoke about how Swami had interacted with him to guide through the planning stages. All the youth were left touched to hear how much detail went in to making sure that the conference was perfect for us. Swami was involved in the meticulous planning of everything, from making sure we all had bed sheets, to ensuring that we all had good food and had the right number of desserts in the morning, afternoon and evening! Although we all know how much love Swami bestows upon us, hearing these experiences uplifted the youth as they were reminded of God's supreme motherly love in action.

During the WYC, we were blessed to have Swami address the youth delegates twice. Swami's discourses, as ever, were deep in meaning and significance, but it takes reflection and thought to digest and understand each sentence. Swami had

several key themes in His discourse, which we studied and digested. We reflected on Swami's constant reminder to us about the significance of human life and its purpose. Swami spoke much about understanding our true nature and reflecting on the Truth of life, the oneness of all life. During the post-conference programme we considered the discourses that Swami had given and also the international resolutions that were sent out by Dr Michael Goldstein. We tried to think about what this would mean for our activities in the UK. The focus of this post-conference programme was to reflect on these discourses given by Swami and to explore what they meant for us in conjunction with the practical and relevant issues we are faced with in our day-to-day lives. All the youth present were split into small groups and given the challenge of coming up with a presentation on a specified case study. Each group was given a different scenario; examples included: 'Giving a presentation to the UN on Global Warming', 'Talking to teen youths in prison on human values and principles', and 'Addressing an interfaith gathering as an Ambassador of Love to speak on the unity of religions'. The National Chair and some members of the UKCC sat in and took part in these sessions. All the topics were very challenging and the question facing our youth was - how does Swami's guidance apply to the here and now? The discussions that ensued and the presentations that came out of all this were excellent. It left us considering how we as individuals could make a real contribution and difference in this world, in our country here. Many of the discussions that took place and themes explored will be looked at in detail and taken forward as future activities. We ended the programme focusing our thoughts on the journey ahead for us, as the UK youth wing, identifying the goals and activities that we will be taking forward in the coming year. There are lot of exciting projects on the horizon and we are looking for willing and hard working individuals to assist with developing these programmes. PowerPoint slides and a short synopsis of these projects will be sent to all youth co-ordinators shortly to share with all their youth around the Regions.

If you missed the programme and would like to know more about how you can get involved with projects and activities in your own area please contact your Regional Youth Co-ordinator or me. We look forward to hearing from you.

Mathan Arulvel,
National Youth Co-ordinator

Sathya Sai School Leicester ...completes several milestones!

The Sathya Sai School Leicester has now started the new academic year with 60 children, an increase of 15 from last year, and the classrooms and the teaching has been reorganised in a big way...

Three new teachers have taken up full time posts in the school. This year also marks the start of the secondary section of the school and two new classrooms that have been installed with a great deal of help from members of numerous Sai centres around the UK. The installation of the new classrooms will allow the school to increase the number of pupils further and expand over the next two years while we continue to find a more permanent venue for the school to expand to its capacity.

**Prabodh Mistry,
Sathya Sai Schools Representative**

National SAI-UN Symposium: 'Human Rights – Human Values'

Over 270 delegates participated in a joint SSSSO (UK) and United Nations related symposium on Saturday 6th October. It comprised presentations from distinguished speakers involved in humanitarian and medical projects as well as Sathya Sai Education. This followed on from two previous symposia held in 2000 and 2003. The aim of the symposium was to bring together speakers from the SSSSO UK and those connected with humanitarian projects supported by the United Nations, to explore the compatibility of human rights and Sathya Sai Human Values that drive the projects. Sadly, Justice Bhagwati, a member of the UN Human Rights Committee, was detained at the last minute as was Dr Funmi Olonisakin and they could not attend but sent their apologies and warm wishes for a successful conference.

Members of the Youth wing, led by Mathan Arulvel, were invited on to the Symposium Planning Group to be involved in the preparation and management of this event. The infrastructure for the event was well supported by youth.

The evening was inaugurated with the lighting of three candles near Swami's picture by the chief guests: the Mayor of Harrow (the borough in which the Symposium took place), the Mayor of Brent and Dr Randolph Kent, keynote speaker, former UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator, from Kings College, London.

The National Chair of the SSSSO UK, Reverend Rosemary Perry spoke about the myriad achievements of the worldwide Sai

Organisation in delivering humanitarian projects that start with self-transformation and go outward to the society at large. In conducting these projects the Sai volunteers rise above any petty hostilities and deliver services in areas of social needs, water provision and medical care. She acknowledged the interconnectedness of humanity and the five elements and the importance of bringing a respectful spiritual dimension to the delivery of service to those in need. She highlighted the fact that voluntary professional medics from the SSSSO UK alone has, over the past 5 years, treated more than 60,000 patients in war-torn, disaster and remote areas – often where other agencies cannot or will not go. She drew attention to the sad fact that one thousand million people on earth still have no direct access to drinking water – and more than twice that figure have no proper sanitation facilities.

Dr Randolph Kent, based at Kings College in London, spoke next, acknowledging how comfortable he felt being among the members of the Sai Organisation, where the principles of human values and practice converge. Until recently, Dr Kent served the United Nations as their Humanitarian Co-ordinator for Ethiopia, Sudan, Kosovo and Somalia, successively.

Dr Kent provided a deep insight into the changing quality of the service delivery as the United Nations has become more organised to expand their services in emergencies. In 1970 there were floods in the then East Pakistan (now called Bangladesh). A pandemonium broke out during this crisis as the service providers were overwhelmed by the intensity of the disaster. The UN personnel realised that in order to serve such situations better it needed to be better organised. But Dr Kent explained that whereas empathy was at the heart of the delivery until 1972, this was gradually eroded. The rapid organisational changes meant that several layers of co-ordination and managers had to be in place in order to have a high degree of preparedness, organisation and delivery of their services.

He explained that there are other changes he has also seen – we used to regard disasters as acts of God but now we attribute blame to people by calling them man-made. With the attribution of blame we have also begun to identify 'victims', Man's complicity goes far and wide and we see discord between nations, and between the 'North-South divide' on the Earth. The organised giving is becoming so mechanised that we assume

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

knowledge of what the victims need and, without checking with the victims themselves, act to deliver it. He gave an example of what happened in Sri Lanka after the Tsunami. One organisation came and it launched into providing playgrounds for the children. When asked they said the children were most affected and they needed somewhere to play. The indigenous people simply watched while all this was going on and when they left they were able to express that the real need of the children was actually to have schools.

The UN bodies are guided by humanitarian concern and they deliver their services based on three basic principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence. But how are these values derived and promoted? It should be by the way one listens and engages with the people being served. But no two disasters are the same and we have had many in the last twenty years or so, including the genocide in Rwanda. The future will throw up more challenges such as water supply, disease, resource constraints, fighting between countries over scarcity and the consequences of our mismanagement of such things as nuclear or toxic wastes. What is the organisation that dares to listen to the victims and shows empathy? The Sri Sathya Sai Service Organisation is setting good examples of empathic service in various spheres.

Sarah Banfield of the Sathya Sai Weekend School of Wembley then beautifully described how the basic human values of truth, love, peace, right conduct and non-violence can transform society from its roots when we educate our children using the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values programmes, as the future of the society - and indeed the world - lies in their hands.

Dr Philip Heaton then talked about the value of the precious element of water. He emphasised that 5000 children die every day due to lack of water or lack of sanitation. He talked about 'WaterAid' and water supply projects of the UN and those initiated by Swami and delivered by the Sai Organisation in India. He compared and contrasted their achievements: that both have served 8.5 million people with water, yet the resources used have differed markedly and lasting and solid actions are those that have spirituality at the core. After this a short video was shown that depicted the service activities of the Sai Youth around the world.

After a break for refreshments, Dr Surendra Upadhyay, an ardent devotee of Swami, and a practising Ophthalmologist in London, gave an inspiring discourse based on Sai philosophy and how it helps to deliver an

integrated package of the best care to the needy. This not only provides the initial help but the patients are given the confidence, tools and training to carry on serving not only themselves but also their community. He cited an example from Africa where Meningitis had become widespread in a community. His team not only worked to contain the disease by treating the patients, but also managed to find the source of the problem. The water source for the villagers was being contaminated by activities such as washing, lack of sanitation and animal use. By providing physical barriers between these activities they were able to show that the disease was contained in a matter of days. Numerous other examples were given that showed that local customs and empathy were essential to provide lasting solutions to the needy.

Neil Bisarya, a barrister and the UK Region 5 Youth Co-ordinator, then provided a heart-rending account based on recent experiences in his professional work. He described how he had felt during conversations held with two persistent offenders and explained that the recidivist cycle of negative actions was being perpetuated by constant negative thoughts and the only way out of the cycle was to influence their conscience and character using the human values.

Towards the end of the symposium a question and answer session was organised. Professor Bhupendra Jasani chaired this forum. The speakers answered numerous questions. Mathan Arulvel closed the symposium by thanking everyone, including the volunteers who had provided and served delicious food during the break. The symposium demonstrated that the teachings of Sri Sathya Sai Baba are instrumental in inspiring ideal practises in the service of humanity. The voluntary nature of the service, suffused with human values, transcend all perceived impediments and deliver lasting solutions by seeing every one as a perfect part of the whole.

**Write-up by Prabodh Mistry,
Sathya Sai Schools Representative**

Sathya Sai Bookshop

The bookshop has a regularly updated website.

Please find it at:

www.srisathysaibookcentre.org.uk

The SSSSO UK Website

is to be found on:

www.srisathyasai.org.uk

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Love and Light SSSSO UK
Significant Diary Dates 2007 please ask your
Centre or Regional Chair for details

Month	Date	Event
Oct	13 th	Carousel SSE Training Day
Oct	14 th	BISSE Meeting
Nov	3 rd	National Spiritual Day
Nov	10 th	Akhanda Bhajans (TBC)
Nov	19 th	Ladies Day
Nov	23 rd	Sri Sathya Sai Baba's Birthday
Dec	2 nd	UKCC Quarterly Meeting
Dec	8 th	SSLTP Module 4 'People Leadership Communication'
Dec	9 th	NWC Meetings
Dec	15 th	Regional Meetings
2008		
Feb	2 nd	SSSSO UK National Annual Conference
March	1 st	UKCC Quarterly Meeting