



# Echoes of Oceania

August 2008



## Master's speech ~ Calais, France

**A:** We put rules and mathematics everywhere.

**M:** Yes, everywhere. Too much. No soul, even in meditation. That is why people are finding it difficult. (...) Last night I was thinking about the difficulty of Westerners and the facility of the Easterners. Pour les autres, Eastern, comment dit, it is très facile. [For the people of the East it is very easy.] I have come to a decision, a conclusion, you know, based upon my thinking for thirty-five years that in the Occident, in the western world, you have masters of art, craft, engineering, et cetera, all external, where you can see what you produce. (...) So in the West you have masters of the external world where there is no discrimination between what is important, what is not so important. And in this process you lose sight of what is really important and what is

apparently important. (...) So you have too many masters.

In the East we do not concern ourselves with the external world... There is half the world doing it for us. No? So we go inside. We have been going inside all our lives, for thousands of years. But it is a very difficult world. (...) So in the East we have masters, but very few because this world is not a tangible world. You cannot feel it. You cannot assess it. In the East there is only one subject and few masters. (...) Because it is a subject which is not only difficult to assess, it is infinite. You know? .. In this world there is no end. So mastery goes on and on and on. Now, in the western mind you are used to starting something and finishing something. No? You have the week beginning and you have the week ending. Monday-Friday, vacances? No? In spirituality n'existe pas [it doesn't exist]. Toujours, chaque jour, pour éternité. [Always, every day, until eternity.] When will it end? There is no end. Therefore Babuji wrote a book, Towards Infinity. (...)” SM

Dear Brothers and sisters, Pranams.

We are blessed to host the APAC seminar in **Singapore** from **14th November** to **17th November**, this event where we shall all gather and be blessed to be in Rev Masters physical presence.

Rev Master has kindly given the theme "**Evolution - The Divine Plan**" for the Seminar. All the abhyasis of Singapore centre thank our beloved Master for granting us this wonderful opportunity to host the APAC seminar and bask in His divine presence. We hope that a large number of abhyasis from our region will participate in this Seminar.

Details of the APAC Seminar will be sent to you soon. Thank you.

Yours affectionately Brother MV.Rajesh Singapore SM

## News in brief

A new bell was commissioned at CREST during Rev. Master's stay in June. The bell was offered by the Mission in France, as done previously for Manapakkam and other Ashrams. Manufactured in France, it weighs around 250 kg. Installation of the bell was completed over a period of 3 days under the guidance of Rev Master. Set at a height of 20 feet on a fabricated ornamental MS column with more than 6 feet of concrete foundation it is said when the bell rings, the sound lasts for more than a minute. SM

On June 22 Master made the Library at CREST accessible to all Abhyasis. Membership will be required to access the library. All members will be issued a library card which entitles the holder to spend 3 days at the CREST library; books are not available for lending. Cards have a lifetime validity. Enquiries please email Brother John Smith at [johnsmith@primusonline.com.au](mailto:johnsmith@primusonline.com.au) SM

**Master will be making His first visit to China** itinerary as follows:

Master will be departing **CHENNAI Sunday, September 14, 10.30 Hrs** by IC.737 flight to **BANGKOK**

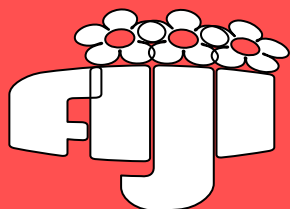
**Wednesday, September 17,** departing **BANGKOK 11.00 Hrs** to **SHANGHAI**

**Wednesday, September 24,** departing **SHANGHAI 11.05 Hrs** to **BEIJING(PEK)**

**Saturday, September 27,** departing **BEIJING to BANGKOK 21.45 Hrs**

**Wednesday, October 01,** departing **BANGKOK 11.20 Hrs** return **CHENNAI 12.50 Hrs** SM

**Important message** for those wishing to travel with Master **ALL** travel related inquiries **MUST** be sent to Brother Satbir Bakshi who can be reached at [travelrequest@srcm.org](mailto:travelrequest@srcm.org) SM



Picture: Open House

**Exciting times!** Nasinu area which is 4 - 9 miles from the Capital, Suva now has 10 new abhyasis since May and we now have an additional weekly satsangh every Thursday, at an abhyasi's residence in Nasinu. The Sunday satsangh which was held in Suva has been moved to Laucala Beach Estate halfway between Suva and Nasinu area to cater for abhyasis from both areas.

### **Open House/Introductory Meditation Seminar**

An Open house/introductory meditation seminar was held on Sunday, 29th June 2008 at Sister Sanjana Devi Raj's residence, in the town of Nasinu and was attended by 6 abhyasis, 2 Guests and a Child. The program commenced with the viewing of a DVD from *He Hookah & I* series and was followed by a welcome address given by Sister Sanjana then there were introductions all round.

An informal and fun quiz session was facilitated by Sister Rita. This was followed by a reading about the GOAL from the book, 'Welcome to Sahaj Marg' and a lively discussion followed. Everyone was then divided into 2 groups, each group asked to discuss and prepare presentations on the 2 topics 'Cleaning &

'Transmission or 'Meditation & Prayer'. Group meditation followed and then refreshments were served. **SM**

### **World Environment Day Celebrations**

**Lautoka** Fiji's event in Lautoka's University of South Pacific Campus attracted more students and visitors than SRCM members and presented inspirational talks to the audience: Dr Pramila Devi with opening remarks, Director USP Dr Joseph with remarks on environment and spirituality followed by presentation by Sis Sashi, universal prayer and questions and answers.

**In Suva** a second event was conducted in Fiji, Laucala Beach Estate, in Suva. Sis Ilana Burness traced the beginnings of UN events and shared about Babuji's letter to UNO in 1957. Ms Alison Lazarus, Course Director of Pacific Institute of Peace Building Development (PIPAD), a project under Crisis Prevention & Recovery of UNDP Pacific Centre in Fiji, did welcome remarks on "Environment and Spirituality" and spoke on Spiritual Intelligence. Following the Universal prayer, Ms Alison was presented a Sahaj Marg book as a token of appreciation from SRCM Fiji. **SM**



Picture: WED Celebrations



Picture: Alison Lazarus and Youth

## World Environment Day Celebrations

**On World Environment Day**, prayer programmes were conducted in 8 centres throughout the Oceania region including Australia-Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth- , New Zealand (Auckland and Wellington) and Fiji -Lautoka and Suva-, with over 320 participants. On this day the theme *Be plain and simple to be identical with Nature*, our maxim 4, provided a focus. Contributions by adults and youth stressed certain aspects of the theme through poems, plays, instrumental/vocal recitals, discussions on nature, conservation etc and issues such as how to live a simple life using less internal and external resources and minimizing needs, were addressed. Discussion on how to apply maxim 4 in our lives were backed up with the video *Fragile Planet* and a power point presentation on *Spiritual Principles for Environmental Stewardship*.

**During the open forums**, guests were invited to join with us in prayer, thinking that all people of the World are growing peace loving and pious.

This universal prayer suggested by Ram Chandra in his letter to the United Nations Organization in 1957 is, He states, *"highly efficacious in bringing about the desired result and weaving the destiny of the miserable millions."* As abhyasis, we need to recognize the depth of this message and conduct our UN events in such a way that it spreads our CORE message to the wider public. Additions should be minimal and should not dilute or change this core message. The power of thought through prayer is a means at our disposal of promoting change and we are encouraged to extend this awareness to wider public, as our primary aim as a spiritual organisation. This prayer aims to play a role in restoring a state of balance and a respect for His creation, targeting inner change in individuals. Changing individuals will ultimately expand to changes of global concern such as the environment, human rights, children, refugees, tolerance, health, etc....in our world

Our next programme for 2008 will be United Nations International Day of Peace on 21<sup>st</sup> September. Let us all unite again in the region to commemorate this event with our focus on peace and our spiritual aim. **SM**



### Environment

Green as it can be, nobody realizes it  
Colorful as it can be, nobody realizes it  
Gives all resources, nobody realizes it  
Does one little harm, EVERYBODY realizes it

Give it what it deserves  
It gives you what you preserve  
The most loved thing in your heart  
Can even be your seven year old car  
Made from pure tree wood  
That once stood in a forest  
That used to give us oxygen  
For us to live  
So life isn't like the holes on a sieve  
The real horrors aren't shown  
Or else you would be blown  
That is why you are still here  
Drinking a six pack case of beer  
Which is also from the nature  
Give it some respect  
Without any defect  
You will deserve it  
And you won't regret a bit

Arjun Murthy Age 15

Top Picture: Sydney

Middle: Brisbane Youth

Bottom: Perth Youth



## Centre News

### Centre News—Sydney

Monthly Gatherings held first Sunday of the month. We continue to watch and enjoy Master's Hookah DVDs and lunch following.

Each Sunday breakfast is prepared and eaten by willing takers for a small donation and funds are accruing from this much enjoyed activity. SM

### Central Coast Training

Sunday 29 June 2008 Following satsangh at Holgate, a training session for the Central Coast/Hunter Centre was held on "Diary Writing and the Inner Condition" with 7 abhyasis attending.

The session was facilitated by Sisters Margaret Churton and Kerrie Anderson and included a practical exercise in diary writing, and being mindful of the inner condition, before, during, and after satsangh. There was much lively discussion and interest in the topic, a shared lunch was enjoyed. Since the workshop many abhyasis are now writing in their diaries regularly! SM

### Centre News—Brisbane

27-29 June 7 abhyasis volunteered to speak to 250 members of the community at the Mind Body and Spirit Festival in Brisbane. Follow up is planned shortly with an introductory course. This was a refreshing experience to be able to approach many individuals, a majority of which were from a Western background.

Preceptors Sister Rani & Brother Nagesh Dronavali will return to the Melbourne centre in July, it was nice having Brother Nagesh support the Brisbane centre for the past 6 months.

### Mapleton sub-centre:

Sis Helen Wood has now moved to Peachester, Sunshine Coast hinter-land) the centre is now approximately 30km south of Mapleton. Now that we have settled into our new home, abhyasis are getting back to having regular sittings and attending Satsangh. SM

### Centre News—Perth

Brother Sanjeev Sharma has accepted the position of Centre Co-ordinator, taking over from Sister Sujatha

Menon. There were 2 study days held during May 2008, on Babuji's book "Reality at Dawn".

World environment day was held on 8th June 2008 in Perth. A Study day was held on 15th June – "preparing for Master's birthday". Three abhyasis from Perth visited Europe in May/ June to be with Rev Master first at Vrads and followed Him to Germany, France and Italy thereafter.

An open day is being planned in Mandurah south of Perth shortly (details to follow). SM

### Donnybrook & Busselton centres

The new centre in Busselton continues to grow by Master's grace and Sis Loraine's efforts. Sis Lulu from Perth visited Busselton and Donnybrook centres in July. A retreat weekend held on 13-14/7/08 in Donnybrook. SM

### Centre News—Melbourne

Over the last 2 months there has been plenty of activity in the Melbourne centre. Brother Vikas Sharma has been filling in while Sister Vinitha Shettigar has been working in Chennai. Br Vikas will continue in the role for another 6 months while Sr Vinitha and her partner Mohan will be working overseas in Sweden.

25th May we held a discussion on the theme "My Centre". In this discussion we were invited to pool our collective thoughts on issues such as that we can do to make better use of our centre, activities of the centre, the significance of being in the centre and the impact that it can have on one's condition, and the implications for one's own practice, as well as generally anything that promotes brotherhood amongst us.

A concerted effort by preceptors to discuss the practice with abhyasis in depth and give clarifying talks after satsangh about the practise is seeing

good results. 22nd June Brother Mohan gave a presentation on "The Power of Thought" in which all present actively participated by sharing their thoughts. Sister Susheela Sannidhanam has volunteered to do the kids' corner and has organized various activities, with abhyasis taking turns to be with the children and we plan to introduce Value Based Education in our kids corner very soon. The children are busy making a special card for Revered Master's for His Birthday. We continue to view and enjoy Master's talks in the HE, the Hookah and I DVD's. SM



*Mind Body and Spirit Brisbane*

Centre News—New Caledonia

**Weekend on the 10 Maxims:** 20-22 June 2008. Work and introspection were interspersed with many convivial moments around meals and walks in the countryside. On Sunday we watched a DVD from "He, the Hookah and I" and then shared the final venue clean up. For some, it was an opportunity to focus, introspect in a quiet and focussed environment, for others a great feeling of being closer to Master. Every such weekend spent together brings us closer and gives ample opportunity for cooperation and increases willingness for us to contribute to life of the centre.

**Open House evening:** 19 June 2008. Seven newcomers were welcomed to our presentation and question and answer session. All have taken their introductory sittings. Brother Bernard Fadda who joined Sis Danielle in Delhi in July, met Master for the first time and was made a preceptor in Kolkata. He attended Chariji's Birthday Celebrations in Lucknow and is now happily supporting Sis Beatrice in Noumea and working for the development of New Caledonia. There were many moving moments for Bro. Bernard that he will surely remember and cherish for a long time! SM



## A Book Review of the 'Spiritual Yatra' – by Toni Bernadi:

Review by Sister Ilana Burness (Fiji)

This book is a truly beautifully written account of an Italian woman's search for her Spiritual Master. Her name is Toni Bernadi and 'Spiritual Yatra' is written by herself, about her search for a Master from her childhood through to the year when Babuji passed away; on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1983. Toni includes excerpts from her diary in 'Spiritual Yatra', as well as beautiful hand sketches and paintings she did of Master, Babuji's home and other images of her trips to India.

In the introduction of this book, Toni highlights her family's experience during the War; her two brothers were killed in the Winter of 1943/44 outside the ancient medieval walls that surrounded her village. Post war, she came across some books in a palace where she and other children were playing; among the books, one by Rabindranath Tagore, titled, 'Sadhana'. She came across a line by Tagore, 'Whoever feels thirsty will, by himself, come to the river'. This quote was Toni's start in the search for a Spiritual Master and in the years ahead, Toni remembered Tagore and craved to read more of his writings. Toni, finally met a man, she terms as her 'Messenger of God' in 1971. This man lead her to Sahaj Marg meditation and she wrote her first letter to Babuji, also known as Shri Ram Chandraji Maharaj of Shahjahanpur in November 1971, which began a series of

correspondence letters to him. Finally, Toni meets her Spiritual Master, Babuji in 1972 in Italy. This trip by Babuji was his first trip out of India.

Toni visits Shahjahanpur five times, all for the purpose of seeing Babuji.

The concluding chapters of Spiritual Yatra highlight Babuji's teaching and Vision of Creation as well as 'Sahaj Marg today'. The chapter entitled, 'His Teaching and Vision of Creation,' this section highlights Babuji's view of the earth's current existence; how temperatures are varying from high to very low, how fish are dying and water tables are polluted. Babuji's instruction for mankind is to practice meditation, in order to regulate the mind and expand the heart.

The concluding chapter discusses Shri Parthasarathi Rajagopalachari, known as Chariji. Chariji has now taken over the Spiritual work of Sahaj Marg since Babuji's passing. Interestingly, Chariji grew up as any normal person, having a family, children and working in a Sales position. The chapter also points out that thanks to Chariji, there are now Sahaj Marg ashrams and centres all over the world and accessing Sahaj Marg information is so much easier than ever before.

I can strongly relate to Toni Bernadi's own search for a Spiritual Master in this book, as I am currently on my way to one day meeting Chariji in India, to complete my search for a Spiritual Mentor. SM

Dear Sister/Brother:

### Applications to visit Satkhol during winter 2008 batches

We are happy to announce that Satkhol Applications for the Winter Batches for the year 2008 ( Batch 232 to 248) are now available online at: [http://www.srcm.info/satkhol/satkhol\\_home.htm](http://www.srcm.info/satkhol/satkhol_home.htm) Applications will be processed on a first come first served basis. Please go through the Guidelines carefully BEFORE filling out the application form. Those who have no internet access, may contact their Preceptors, CIC or ZIC for assistance. You may also contact the Satkhol Admin Office at 044 2252 1099 or 044 4217 1111; ext. 218, between 10 am - 12 noon or between 3 pm - 4:30 pm for any queries.

Coordination and contact: Waireti Amai and Libby Crichton

Please email all articles to [ecrichton@optus.net.au](mailto:ecrichton@optus.net.au)

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