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Master's News

While we in North America are eagerly awaiting respected Kamlesh bhai's tour to meet with us in our ashrams and centers, we have been reading loving accounts of his tour in Europe, and before that, his tour through much of India. He has kept a rigorous schedule of visits, conducting satsang for large and small groups of hearts opening to experience ever more profound depths of the divine within. Several of his talks are available on the sahajmarg.org website, and the details of some of his informal thoughts have been written in the accounts emailed as Abhyasi Bulletins. Through photos (see page 2) we can see the care and love he is sharing with us all in every kind of venue. We welcome him with open hearts to North America.







You're Invited:



88TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF

Pujya Chariji Maharaj

THIRUVALLUR, TAMIL NADU, INDIA



Major gatherings that are coming up are very promising - grace will pour down, one might say: it is invoked in such auspicious circumstances and we respond with all the love possible. We encourage such events that bring together and further unite our abhyasis in an extraordinary impulse of fervour.

- Babuji Maharaj

(Friday, March 27th 2015, 10:00am)

We invite our dear sister and brother abhyasis worldwide to participate wholeheartedly on the occasion of our Pujya Chariji Maharaj's 88th Birth Anniversary Celebrations from 23rd - 25th July, 2015 at 'Vrindavan', Thiruvallur, Tamil Nadu.

Affectionately,
P.R. Krishna, Chairman Celebration Committee
Trustee, Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation





Ashram Inaugurations

Richmond Ashram Inauguration

Ashley Tucker & Phaninanth Potharaju, Richmond, VA

On Wednesday April 30, 2015, about 150 abhyasis gathered with respected Kamlesh bhai at 2230 E. Parham Rd., Richmond, VA, to inaugurate the new Richmond Ashram. For weeks before the official inauguration, brothers and sisters had dedicated their evenings and weekends to completing the finishing touches in a heartfelt and exemplary display of brotherhood.

At 7:30 a.m., Kamlesh bhai inaugurated the meditation centers at Richmond and Dayton, OH, via videoconference. He gave a short talk expressing his happiness over the completion of these projects and congratulated the abhyasis. He said, "There are no laws in the field of spirituality. A seeker has to accept, obey and follow Master. Seekers can test Master once, twice and even ten times; and from then onwards the seeker must follow the Master with courage." Kamlesh bhai then conducted the satsang in concurrence with the evening satsang in India.

Following morning satsang, brother Murali gave a moving talk on the privilege of having an ashram and the importance of using it. Abhyasis watched videos commemorating the birth anniversary of Babuji, spent time getting to know other brothers and sisters from nearby centers and listening to heartfelt talks.

Brother John Barlow spoke on taking an active role in our spiritual progress, emphasizing the importance of journaling and taking time to reflect on the lightness one feels after completing a cleaning. Abhyasis were challenged to ponder the following: "How am I different today than I was yesterday?" John likened spiritual progress to the metamorphosis of a caterpillar in a co-

coon. As abhyasis, our hearts are at the center and we are covered in layers, just as a caterpillar is covered in a cocoon. As we develop in our practice, layer by layer, the true state is revealed. Each day, we further our spiritual progress.

The newly inaugurated ashram is poised to become a catalyst for spiritual change in the greater Richmond community. The ashram doors were opened to the community throughout the week of April 30th. Brothers and sisters distributed flyers, created groups and announcements on social media and spoke to family and friends to invite them to experience heartfulness. The prefects led experiential sessions for those in attendance, first leading them through a relaxation exercise to prepare them for the meditation that followed. Participants were introduced to the concept of transmission and were invited to have three introductory sittings to begin the practice. All were invited to stay for dinner, creating a lovely atmosphere for abhyasis and interested aspirants to get to know one another and to ask questions about the practice and Sahaj Marg as a whole. We are excited and feel blessed to have the opportunity to share meditation with everyone. The Richmond Ashram has community outreach events scheduled for the upcoming months and will continue to host open houses so all may experience the benefits of meditation.





Richmond Ashram Inauguration



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Beavercreek Meditation Hall Inauguration

April 30, 2015

Julie Gallagher, Dayton, OH

Babuji's birth anniversary celebration was a double delight for the Beavercreek Meditation Center, because we also inaugurated our new meditation hall extension. What a joy it was to hold a gathering in our own brand new space, after using a rented community center for the last two years! The new space comfortably held the 150 or so abhyasis who attended, with room to spare. Abhyasis came from many states, including Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Georgia, Virginia, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Iowa and Massachusetts.

A small tent with tables for meals was set up outside. Food was served outside under a new overhang that was added as part of the extension. The tent was also used for some children's activities, including a birthday party for Babuji and a youngster, Ram Chandra, who shares his birthday. The children also enjoyed face painting and henna hand painting.

In the new hall a sacred silence was maintained throughout the gathering, as there was now ample space for socializing and for the bookstore activities just outside the doors in the old meditation space.

Respected Kamlesh bhai joined our gathering on the morning of April 30th, via Skype from Lucknow, and congratulated both the Beavercreek and Richmond, Virginia meditation centers on their new spaces. The Skype connection allowed the Beavercreek and Richmond abhyasis to greet each other and our Master. The sound and visual quality of the new audio-visual equipment was excellent, enabling everyone to clearly hear Kamlesh bhai.

The gathering's theme was 'Purity Weaves Destiny', based on a quotation from Babuji when, in 1982, he said, "This and that are gone now. There remains

the purity alone in all His work, an environment that weaves the spiritual destiny of the persons with the Ultimate." Attendees were given a booklet of *Whispers* that mention purity, including the *Whispers* messages that were read after each satsang.

The Masters have given us several daily practices to help us bring about purity of heart, which were reviewed in depth during the program.

Eight special guests joined us for lunch on Thursday, including Brian Jarvis, Mayor of Beavercreek, Vicki Giambrone and Deborah Wallace of the Beavercreek City Council, Dennis Evers, Beavercreek Chief of Police, and four contractors who helped build the addition. Gifts of artisanal chocolates were presented to them. Mayor Jarvis spoke briefly, saying that things are tense across the country these days, and there's a need for services like meditation that contribute to peace. The visitors agreed to participate in a 10-minute heartfulness meditation experience that was quite refreshing.

In an email after the inauguration, Kamlesh bhai asked for a continuing dynamic and proactive approach to the local government bodies, saying, "We can make the difference for sure. Let one town be the example and let the entire USA watch the impact through simple meditations."

The local television station did a report on the new meditation hall, featuring comments from Janmarie Connor and Mayor Jarvis about the contributions meditation can make to a community.

The gathering itself was a gift not only to those who attended, but also to the broader community since Master's grace flows outward from the hearts of those who are meditating to infuse the surrounding community with blessings and light.



Beavercreek Meditation Hall Inauguration



Skype call with Kamlesh bhai.



Heartfulness

Heartfulness Takes Flight in the Space City *Ragini Miryala, Seabrook, TX Center*

As centers around the world are opening Heartfulness Meditation to local interested seekers, Houston has made much headway in this endeavor. Thanks to the bold efforts of Heartfulness Committee volunteers in Texas, many libraries in Houston have granted ongoing use of space, free of charge, for holding public heartfulness meditation programs. One library of note is the Houston Public Library Central Branch in the heart of bustling downtown. The libraries have graciously agreed to post our events on their weekly bulletins or TV displays to reach library patrons.

In addition, Heartfulness Committee members are strengthening the bond between centers by traveling to Dallas, Austin, San Antonio and Houston to share ideas and clarify questions about how heartfulness meditation sessions differ from satsangs and sittings as we know them. One goal of these visits is to standardize the format for conducting and publicizing sessions so that new volunteers can lead meditation with the comfort of mentorship from more seasoned abhyasis. Members of the committee would like to share one key message with all abhyasis who are signing up to do open houses, public talks, conduct heartfulness meditation or organize events to invite new members. That message is that we should simply focus on our efforts to make the heartfulness experience available, and not concern ourselves with how many people attend on any given day. Success is not determined by numbers but by the diligence with which we work for the Mission.

Heartfulness in the Heart of the Indiana State House *Abhyasis of Columbus and Indianapolis, IN*

All sisters and brothers are developing correct thinking, right action and an honest approach to life. A prayerful suggestion like this isn't bound by place, time, or space. But what might happen if sincere abhyasis were to plant such a loving intention right in the heart of the institution from which an entire state is governed?

Brother Randhir Jha, a member of the Indiana Legislative Services Agency, often takes breaks from the hectic and sometimes-contentious legislative environment in the space reserved for meditation, prayer and reflection. The problem, he noted, is that this space is usually empty. It was natural for him to imagine the room filled with abhyasis meditating on divine light in the heart – the light that restores correct thinking, right action and heart-full living. And so, it was not a surprise to anyone that his vision became manifest.

On a recent spring evening, brother Randhir greeted each abhyasi at the entrance of the state capitol building, which houses the Indiana General Assembly, the State Supreme Court and the office of the governor. As he led the group to the Meditation Room, he shared wonderful facts about the people, events, and decisions made in this historic place, which have shaped Indiana history. Randhir's office is non-partisan, so the group joked that we needed to bring an Indian to the Indiana State House to ensure a non-partisan climate.

Even though there is little space to be had in the building for carrying out government work, the Meditation Room is respected by all as off limits for mundane activity. The sanctity of the room could be felt. The sitting ended with sunlight streaming in, illuminating one and all, and leaving an even lighter atmosphere than before.



Heartfulness in the Heart of the Indiana State House, *cont.*

One could wonder what might happen as a result of our efforts in the capitol building. Fortunately for us, we are simply asked to open our hearts; and by doing so we plant the seeds for future generations to reap. In the process, we have the supreme blessing of sitting together in this spectacular place, quenching our spiritual thirst.





Babuji's Birthday Celebrations

Youth Activities April 25-26, Austin, TX

Christina Moses, Dallas, TX

Linda Didsbury, College Station, TX

Children, ages five to ten years, participated in three activities. They made artful cards for Master on which they wrote their own messages. In another project they each drew a heart and described what they felt inside it. They also made sock bunnies and paper snowflakes, after which they practiced a play, *Trouble on the Ark*, and performed it on stage for everyone.

Those aged ten and up formed two teams to construct a three-dimensional object from cardboard, duct tape, markers and scissors. With great teamwork, they ended up constructing a car and a flower vase.

Their second activity was a discussion on the topic: Are Religion and Spirituality the Same? After reading materials that were given to them, they had a spirited discussion on the subject.

On day two, the older children had a VBSE lesson on self-awareness and self-management. 'Making an Effort' was a theme sparking a discussion on the questions: "Can someone be the best they can be if they don't make any effort?" And, "What does it take to be the best you can be?"

They talked about famous people like Mahatma Gandhi and Abraham Lincoln, and the character Po from the movie Kung Fu Panda, identifying the qualities these beings possessed that helped them in their life's journey.

To foster responsibility and ownership, Liaa, Reeya, Aditi, Anket, and Sujay, ages eleven to fourteen, were tasked ahead of time with conducting an early Earth Day program for the thirty younger children.

During their presentation, each of the five presenters shared the task of keeping the little ones' attention, helping them feel included, while helping them to understand aspects of Earth Day. All children actively took part in understanding the 3 R's, reduce, reuse, and recycle through a well-moderated question and answer session, enhanced by a well-organized Power-Point presentation. The presentation ended with all the children standing up and promising to be better earth people.

Babuji's Birth Celebrations at Molena Ashram

Claudia Russell, West Palm Beach, FL

Atop Buzzard Mountain on April 30th there was a familiar, sweet and delightful atmosphere as we gathered once again as a spiritual family, this time to celebrate the birth anniversary of our beloved and revered Babuji. The condition created was so light and deeply peaceful that we hardly felt a difference as our attention shifted from the external world to the inner world of wonder. It was effortless and buoyant, creating the feeling of heaven on earth. The day was perfectly peaceful. Even the unpredictable climate in the Molena countryside was very pleasant, with a slight chill and a generous amount of sunshine. The rolling hills provided a perfect setting for us to enjoy the sunset above the lush tree-tops – in silence and in remembrance of the Great Master. The scene served as a metaphor for how short human life is with its rise at birth and its setting as we depart this earthly existence. There was a feeling of deep gratitude in realization of our good fortune to be 'here and now' and with the opportunity for advancement under the watchful and ever-so-loving care of the Hierarchy of Masters.



Babuji's 116th Birthday Celebration at Sunderland

Kathryn Schenkman, Rochester, VT

For me, the entire month of April felt like an intensive preparation for the Sunderland gathering celebrating the 116th birth anniversary of Pujya Babuji Maharaj. The Boston Center hosted the event and selected the theme of 'Babuji . . . of this world and beyond.'

While living in the Boston area, I began the practice of Sahaj Marg in 1980. During my twenties, I searched for a meditation practice that would help me to connect with the divinity within. During my initial sitting, I experienced a rarified energy felt only once earlier in my life, what I described as a divine rain that enveloped and absorbed me. I felt assured in those introductory sittings that I had found my path, and have never doubted it since.

It's often stated by abhyasis when enduring a difficult period that they are undergoing a lot of cleaning. In recalling the weeks leading up to Babuji's birthday, 'a lot of cleaning' seems an understatement. My heart felt a deep persistent pain that if unrelieved could drive one to utter despair. But I knew what to do. I prayed, took sittings from a prefect, and surrendered to Master. With abiding faith in Him and by His grace, I moved through it.

I arrived at Sunderland in a state of exhaustion. From the first satsang, I felt wrapped in a blanket of grace that lasted the entire gathering. The program included readings from Babuji's diary and recordings of him speaking to abhyasis, supported by projected transcriptions. Listening to Babuji's voice was the experience of continuous transmission. His grace flows in abundance in this world and beyond.

Babuji's Birth Celebrations Vancouver, BC

Lou-Anne Bryant, Vancouver, BC

April, Babuji's birth month, has become a time for me to submerge myself in the five volumes of *Whispers from the Brighter World*. They perch on every table and sleep beside me on my bed at night. I am inspired and motivated, feeling closer to Babuji each day as April 30th approaches. This year when I ran through the little rough patch that always seems to precede one of our major celebrations I was offered, "We are with you. Don't take your eyes off us; feel your heart permanently connected to ours. Stand up, Hieratic, in front of the divine flame. Become imbued with this vibration, let it suffuse in you completely, be offered and relish this nectar." [Volume II, Page 481].

Then the day of celebration, Babuji's birth anniversary arrived. In our centre local abhyasis gathered with visitors from Powell River and Victoria, BC, Bellingham, WN, and Ireland. Lakshmi Aravind gave a morning program, 'Balance', using calming images and contemplative written selections that led us to examine the topic as it was, or could be, reflected in our own lives. Lunch followed and afternoon walks during which our talk wove in and out of Master, Mission and Method: the relief still felt at the release of our dear Master mixed with a quiet joy in our new Master and the enthusiasm for the new directions the Mission is taking. We are so very blessed!





Regional Gathering

Annual Gathering in Jacksonville, Florida

Yolaine Rameau, Miami, Florida

On April 4, 2015, approximately 150 abhyasis from different states gathered in Chowenwaw Park for the annual gathering organized by the abhyasis of Jacksonville, Florida.

This gathering has become a much-anticipated event for adults as well as children. Even Mother Nature cooperated by offering beautiful, mild weather and fewer mosquitoes. Some of us were kindly hosted by local abhyasis, while others chose to stay at the park.

The theme of the gathering was ‘Inner Poise’, inspired by a talk given by our beloved Kamlesh bhai while in New Jersey in February, 2015, when he said that all our Masters of the past had one outstanding quality in common – their inner poise.

Between the two daily satsangs, we divided into small groups to ponder over this important topic. We departed on Sunday immersed in the thought that everything around us is deeply absorbed in Godly remembrance.

