



# Sanathana Sarathi



AUGUST 2008

# Sanathana Sarathi

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SATHYA • DHARMA • SANTHI • PREMA • AHIMSA

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"God is without any attributes. He has no birth or death, although He incarnates on earth in human form. Daivam Manusha Rupena (God is in the form of a human being). Therefore, man is nothing but divine. When someone asks you your name, you should always reply, "I am God, I am God."

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## THE BHAGAVADGITA IS THE BREATH OF GOD

*It is the power of love that makes the earth revolve without the support of any axle. It is the power of love that holds the stars in their positions without falling down. It is the power of love that withholds the ocean from submerging the earth. It is the power of love that makes the wind blow over the seven worlds. This sacred love is eternal, most amazing and indivisible. That love is the life-breath of man.*

(Telugu Poem)

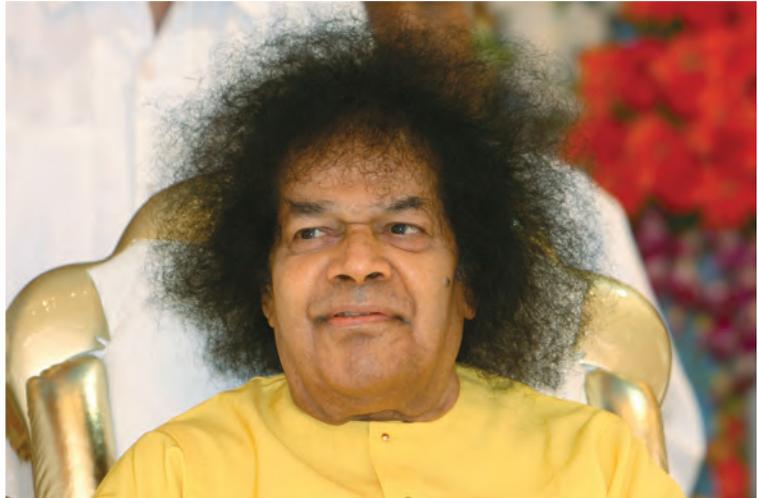
**C**ALL IT TRUTH, call it love or call it Aham (I), all are the divine names of God. When you ask God His name, He will say, *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman); He will not tell any other name.

*The creation emerges from truth and merges into truth,  
Is there a place in the cosmos where truth does not exist?*

*Visualise this pure and unsullied truth.*

(Telugu Poem)

God is the cause of everything that happens in the world. Shivraj Patil has written the commentary on the Bhagavadgita after contemplating on the inner import of its contents and assimilating it in his heart. Generally, you find many people writing books. But the book written by him has a special significance because he has put on paper what was imprinted on his heart. During



*The Bhagavadgita is a sacred book. In fact, it is the breath of God. Everybody should have firm faith in God. But people sometimes worship God and then start hating Him because they lack firm faith. Such people cannot be called human beings in the true sense of the term; they are verily demons. Man can attain peace of mind only when he has firm faith and sense of total surrender.*

the course of his writing, he showed the script to Me and sought clarifications. Full essence of the Bhagavadgita is contained in this small book.

### **Real Meaning of Guru Purnima**

What is the real meaning of Guru Purnima? Purnima is the day on which the mind is pure, steady and blemishless like the full moon. Whatever originates from such a sacred mind is the true word of God. People take Mantra Deeksha (initiation) from a holy man or a Sannyasi by offering him some money and consider him their Guru and worthy of their worship. But you cannot consider such a Guru as true Guru nor his teachings as true teachings. Consider the sacred feelings and deep truths that emerge from your heart as the real teachings of the Guru.

*Gurur-Brahma Gurur-Vishnu Gurur Devo  
Maheswara;*

*Guru Sakshat Param Brahma Thasmai Sri  
Gurave Namaha. (Sanskrit Sloka)*

(Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu, Guru is Maheswara. Guru is verily the Supreme Brahman. So, salutations to the Guru.)

Who is the true Guru? True Guru is the Trinity – Brahma, Vishnu, Maheswara. In other words, it can be said that God is your true Guru.

Once when the Kauravas and the Pandavas were playing with a ball in their childhood, the ball fell into a nearby well. The children tried many methods to bring the ball out. At that time, Dronacharya was passing that side along with his wife and son. Coming near the children who were surrounding the well, Dronacharya asked them, “My dear children, what is the matter? Why are you standing around the well in this manner?

What has happened?” The

children replied, “Swami, our ball has fallen into the well.” “Do not worry at all. I will bring your ball out.” Saying this, Dronacharya took out an arrow and shot at the ball. The arrow pierced the ball. Then he shot another arrow which got into the first arrow. In this manner, he shot consecutively one arrow after the other, made a rope of the arrows and brought the ball out. Seeing this wonderful feat of Dronacharya, they all fell at his feet. They thought they had at last found someone who was a great expert in archery. They conveyed this news to Bhishma who appointed Dronacharya as the teacher of Kauravas and Pandavas.

You know the story of Ekalavya. He approached Dronacharya with a request to accept him as his disciple. But Dronacharya refused to accept him saying, “I do not teach hunters and forest dwellers. I impart my teachings to princes who are courageous and valorous.” Even after hearing this, Ekalavya offered his salutations to him and resolved to accept him as his Guru. Though he did not receive any instructions from him, he made an idol of his Guru and started worshipping and contemplating on him. He had the idol of his Guru as his only companion and none else. By virtue of his faith and unflinching devotion to his Guru, he became the master of archery.

Once Dronacharya went to a forest along with all his disciples for hunting. As their hunting dog started barking, a shower of arrows came from somewhere and stuck into its mouth so that it was silenced. When Arjuna saw this, he marvelled at the skill of the unseen archer. Arjuna searched for this archer and found Ekalavya. When he asked him wherefrom he had learnt the art of archery and who his Guru was, Ekalavya pointed towards Dronacharya and said, “He is my Guru.”

Arjuna was very perturbed



at the reply of Ekalavya and complained to Dronacharya, "You gave me word that you would not teach Sabdabhedhi technique (the art of hitting the target by hearing the sound) of archery to anyone else except me. I believed your words and was confident that nobody knew this technique except me. But it seems that you have taught it to someone else also." Then Dronacharya said, "My dear one! I am not his Guru and I have not taught him this art." When Arjuna questioned Ekalavya again, he said, "It is true that Dronacharya refused to accept me as his disciple. However, I imprinted his form on my heart and learnt the entire art with deep feelings of devotion for him."

On hearing this, Arjuna became jealous of Ekalavya because he felt that there was someone who was superior to him and excelled him in the art of archery. Then he wanted Dronacharya to demand Guru Dakshina (offerings to the Guru) from Ekalavya. Arjuna said to Dronacharya, "You are responsible for Ekalavya mastering the art of archery. Therefore, you should see to it that he loses this art once for all." Dronacharya felt that Arjuna was feeling very much hurt. In order to satisfy him, he asked Ekalavya, "What Guru Dakshina will you give me?" Ekalavya replied that he was ready to give anything asked for by his Guru. Thereupon, Dronacharya asked Ekalavya to give his right hand thumb as Guru Dakshina. Ekalavya immediately obeyed his command and cut off his right hand thumb to offer it to his Guru.

*As he offered his right hand thumb to his Guru, he could no longer wield a bow in his hand. Thus, his skill of archery faded away and Arjuna's ego was satisfied.*

(Telugu Poem)

Ekalavya was least perturbed by offering his thumb to his Guru. In fact, he was very happy that he had



***Many people today try to understand the principle of the Atma. But howsoever hard we may try to understand the Atmic principle, it is not possible unless we get rid of the feelings of 'I' and 'mine'. First and foremost, we should give up our ego. This will open our eyes of wisdom. You know that the cross is made by cutting the 'I' from the middle. Then only it becomes an object of worship for the Christians. Ego is the cause of all our sorrows, worries and difficulties. Everybody says, 'mine, mine, mine'. This feeling of 'mine' should be given up once for all.***



fulfilled the wish of his Guru. From that day onwards, Ekalavya did not wield his bow and arrow. This made Arjuna very happy because there was none other in the world who could excel him in the art of archery. This sense of superiority can become the cause of ego in man.

### **Give up Ego to Realise Atmic Principle**

A Guru may bestow certain powers on his disciple but all disciples are not able to receive what their Guru gives them. Similarly, there are very great teachings in the Bhagavadgita, but all those who read it may not be able to understand everything properly. However, true teachings come from one's heart only. Shivraj Patil wrote such a good commentary on the Bhagavadgita after experiencing its teachings in his heart. Though he studied many books, yet all his doubts were not cleared. Ultimately, he wrote whatever

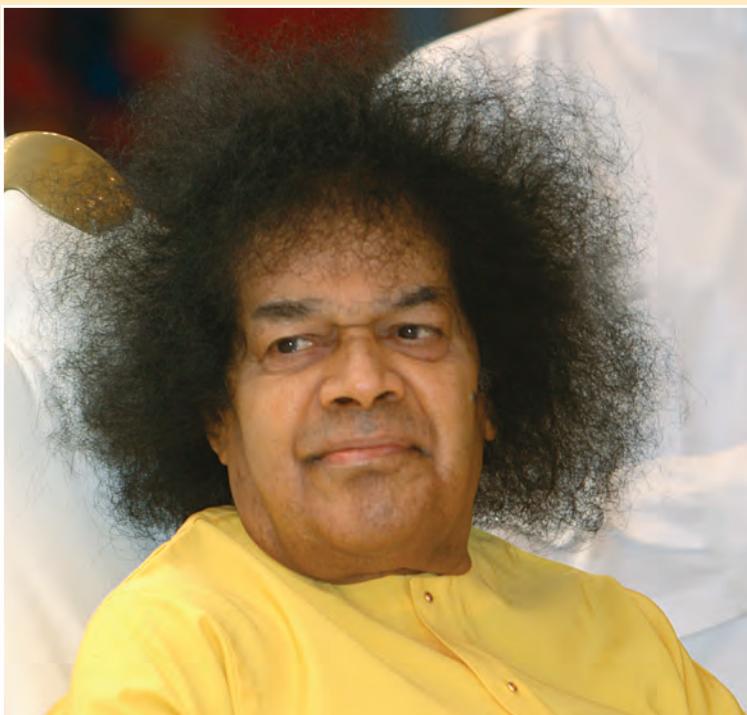


he believed in and what his heart prompted him to write. He neither sought clarification from others nor did he study the commentaries written on the Bhagavadgita by others. He could complete this task successfully on the basis of his self-study. He has covered all the important aspects of the Bhagavadgita in his book.

He has stated in this book that one can experience the principle of the Self only when one gets rid of the feelings of 'I' and 'mine'. Many people today try to understand the principle of the Atma. But howsoever hard we may try to understand the Atmic principle, it is not possible unless we get rid of the feelings of 'I' and 'mine'. First and foremost, we should give up our ego. This will open our eyes of wisdom. You know that the cross is made by cutting the 'I' from the middle. Then only it becomes an object of worship for the Christians. Ego is the cause of all our sorrows, worries and difficulties. Everybody says, 'mine, mine, mine'. This feeling of 'mine' should be given up once for all. When you think, 'so many people are my disciples', that also makes you egoistic. Never entertain the feelings of 'I and mine'. Then only can you understand the Atmic principle.

### **Put the Teachings of the Bhagavadgita into Practice**

Shivraj Patil has been coming to Swami for the last thirty years; he is not a new devotee.



*What is the real meaning of Guru Purnima? Purnima is the day on which the mind is pure, steady and blemishless like the full moon. Whatever originates from such a sacred mind is the true word of God. People take Mantra Deeksha (initiation) from a holy man or a Sannyasi by offering him some money and consider him their Guru and worthy of their worship. But you cannot consider such a Guru as true Guru nor his teachings as true teachings. Consider the sacred feelings and deep truths that emerge from your heart as the real teachings of the Guru.*

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He had Swami's Darshan for the first time in the house of S.B. Chavan. Thereafter, both of them came together for Darshan not only at Prasanthi Nilayam but at other places also. This firmed up his devotion for Swami. First he was a Minister in Mumbai. Thereafter, he went

to Delhi and held high positions as Minister in the government and Speaker of the Lok Sabha. In this way, he came up in life and attained a high position. But despite holding positions of high authority, he did not have any desires. Whenever he was asked what he wanted, he never expressed desire for anything. Hence, he earned a great reputation in the government also. That is why the government has great faith in him.

First and foremost, you should have firm faith in God. First is the self-confidence; then come self-satisfaction and self-sacrifice. When you have all these three, you can progress on the path of self-realisation. Shivraj Patil surrendered everything to God. Whatever work he did, he considered it as God's work. That is how he has been able to write such a beautiful commentary on the Bhagavadgita in appropriate words. The Bhagavadgita also lays stress on these three steps – self-confidence, self-satisfaction and self-sacrifice. The study of the Bhagavadgita helps you to develop self-confidence. After that, everything comes to you on its own. All worldly aspirations are like castles in the air. The Bhagavadgita is a sacred book. In fact, it is the breath of God. Everybody should have firm faith in God. But people sometimes worship God and then start hating Him because they lack firm faith. Such people cannot be called human beings in the true sense of the term; they are verily demons. Man can attain peace of mind only when he has firm faith and sense of total surrender. Only such people are held in high esteem in the world. You may read any number of books and you may even give talks, but unless you put your knowledge into practice, you will not be able to assimilate what you have studied. First you have Darshan of God. Then you develop faith. Thereafter, you worship. Similarly, there are

three steps to self-realisation – self-confidence, self-satisfaction and self-sacrifice. When man develops these three, he can attain Purnatvam (total perfection). This is the real meaning of Purnima (full moon day). Only such a state of perfection without any blemish symbolises Purnima. You can realise truth only when you develop harmony of thought, word and deed. Lack of harmony between these three amounts to falsehood. Such a person cannot attain perfection. Shivraj Patil wrote what he himself experienced. Then he published it in the form of a book. Since he has written this book for self-satisfaction, it is sure to earn high reputation.

There is no use of storing all information in your mind that you gather from reading books. You should share this knowledge with all including your teachers and parents. You should have cordial relations with your parents. When you love your parents and obey their command, you will be successful in all your endeavours.

The last Sloka of the Bhagavadgita contains its entire essence.

*Yathra Yogeshwara Krishno Yathra Partho  
Dhanurdhara  
Tathra Srirvijayo Bhutir Dhruva Neetirmathir  
Mama.* (Sanskrit Sloka)

(Where there is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, and where there is Arjuna, armed with mighty bow, there lie wealth, victory, glory and everlasting morality.)

Where Krishna and Arjuna are together, there is sure to be victory. Today Shivraj Patil has given you the blissful and nectarine teaching of the Bhagavadgita. It is your great good fortune to hear such things day after day.

People write many types of books.

Some of the students who



go to the library read spiritual books but there are others who read trash books like novels. Some students hide novels in their textbooks and spiritual books and read them. They show to others that they are reading spiritual books but in reality they read trash stories. In this way, they practise deception which is not good. That is why we have not put any such book in our library. Even if such books are kept there, our students will not touch them. That is why their heart is pure and sacred. When you have such sacred feelings, you will attain the highest state of sacredness and achieve peace of mind. All our students are very good. However, due to the influence of their age, sometimes they develop mental aberrations. Such aberrations are like passing clouds which come and go. As soon as such thoughts enter your mind, you should drive them out.

One of our faculty members Gowri Shankar from our Physics Department has been invited to Hungary to present his paper. Everybody is not invited to such conferences. There is a high-level committee which scrutinises the papers submitted to them and invites only those people who are really very competent. He is highly educated and virtuous. The organisation that has invited him will bear all his expenses. He has earned such a great honour. (At this juncture, Swami called Sri Gowri Shankar and

blessed him saying, “Earn a good name.”) In the same way, you should also develop your capabilities so that other universities invite you and honour you. That will make Me happy. Your parents will also be happy. You should all become such good students.

When you go to the other universities, you should share with the people there what you have learnt in this university. You can emulate the example of Shivraj Patil who has put it in the form of a book what he has enjoyed reading and shared his happiness with all. In the same manner, you should also share with others the practical knowledge that you have acquired here and the disciplined life that you have led here. Similarly, two students of Anantapur Campus have been invited to America for their academic excellence. The organisation that has invited them will bear all their expenses. They said, “We will also bear the expenses of your husband if you are married. Otherwise, you can bring one female companion with you and we will bear her expenses also.” In this manner, our university students are receiving many such invitations from overseas organisations. All of you should earn such good name. Very happy.

– **From Bhagavan’s Guru Purnima Message in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 18th July 2008.**

Remember three things always. Continue Seva, wherever you are. Seek chances of helping others. Never lose an opportunity of using your skills and enthusiasm for the alleviation of sorrow, pain or distress. Again, do not omit or neglect or postpone your own particular Sadhana – study, Japa, Dhyana, Bhajan, Namasankirtan and other such disciplines. Above all, have the faith that Swami is with you at all times and at all places.

– *Baba*

# GURU PURNIMA AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM



MAMMOTH GATHERING OF devotees came to Prasanthi Nilayam from all parts of the world to offer their tributes to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on the holy occasion of Guru Purnima. The Guru Purnima function was conducted in Sai Kulwant Hall which was befittingly bedecked for this important event.

A Panchavadyam group of students welcomed Bhagavan with blowing of conches as He came to Sai Kulwant Hall in a sparkling yellow robe at 8.50 a.m. on Guru Purnima day, 18th July 2008. Bhagavan then showered the bliss of His Darshan on the huge congregation of devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall amidst Veda chanting while Panchavadyam and



*Bhagavan graciously released the book on the Bhagavadgita written by Sri Shivraj Patil on Guru Purnima day, 18th July 2008.*

Nadaswaram teams of students played sweet music. On arriving in the verandah of the hall, Bhagavan cut cakes and lighted candles on them amidst a loud applause of the devotees. After coming to the dais, Bhagavan graciously released the book on the Bhagavadgita written by Sri Shivraj Patil, Home Minister of India and blessed the devotees with His Guru Purnima Message. Before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan, Sri Patil addressed the devotees. Sri Patil observed that it was due to the blessings and inspiration of Bhagavan that he could write this book on the Bhagavadgita. He expressed his deep gratitude to Bhagavan for His inspiration, guidance and blessings and also for releasing the book on the holy day of Guru Purnima. Dwelling on the teachings of the Bhagavadgita, Sri Patil remarked that



*A mammoth gathering of devotees came to Prasanthi Nilayam from all parts of the world to seek the benedictions of Bhagavan on the holy occasion of Guru Purnima. The picture shows a section of the gathering in Sai Kulwant Hall on 18th July 2008.*

*Continued on page 249 ...*



## RAMA IS THE DIVINE ATMIC PRINCIPLE

*Embodiments of Love!*

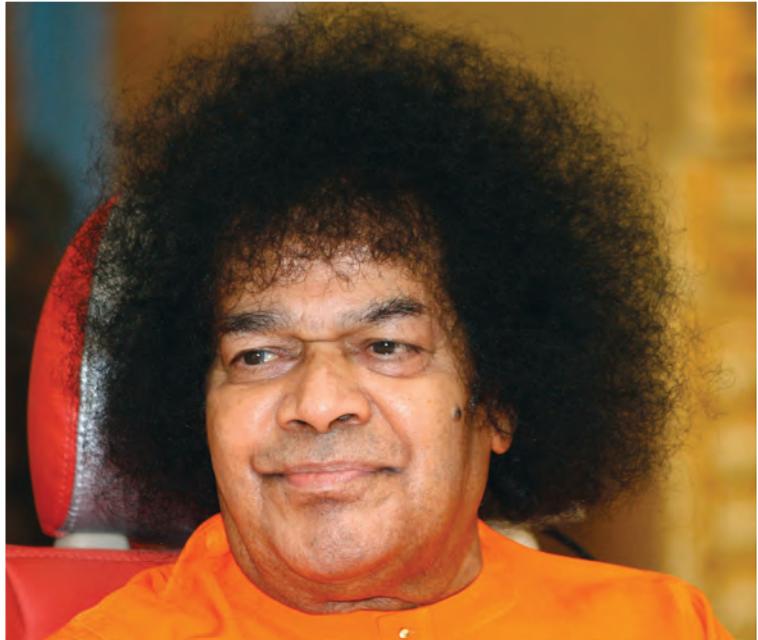
**T**HE RAMAYANA SAPTAHA  
(weeklong Ramayana function)

has been celebrated with great joy during the last seven days in which all of you participated. The devotion and earnestness of the learned speakers who gave talks and the priests who conducted the rituals made it a grand success. Sri Setty who organised the entire function provided all facilities for its smooth conduct and made everyone happy. (Bhagavan sang three Bhajans and continued His Discourse.)

### **Contemplate on Rama and Sing His Glory**

Constant contemplation on Rama and singing His glory confers peace and prosperity on all. It is better if all join and sing together instead of singing individually. Guru Nanak therefore started the practice of group singing. Singing individually is not so gratifying as compared to community singing. When many people join together,

sing the glory of Rama wholeheartedly and contemplate on Him, the prayer of a few at least may reach the Lord and all may earn His grace.



*Develop Ekatma Bhava (feeling of oneness). That is real devotion. Do not develop the feeling, I am different and you are different. If you want to have the vision of the Atma, consider 'I' and 'we' as the same. Then you will see oneness of all. Give up the differences of thine and mine. Consider, "We are all one." All are one, be alike to everyone. This is the essence of Vedanta.*

Therefore, community singing is much more beneficial and elevating than individual singing. It is the contemplation of the Lord that gives peace and happiness to man. It is therefore enough if you contemplate on Rama. Rama is not any particular individual. Rama is the divine Atmic principle that is present in all. Rama is, in fact, Atmarama, the other name of Atma. Therefore, right from a child to an old man, all should contemplate on Rama. We sometimes see even visually challenged people chanting 'Rama, Rama, Rama'. It is the Name of Rama that confers peace and happiness on man. Wealth, property or anything else cannot give him peace and happiness. Therefore, chanting of Lord's Name is better spiritual practice than all others. Chanting of the Lord's Name and its contemplation frees man from all worries.

*To be born is a worry, to be on the earth is a worry; world is a cause of worry and death too; all actions and difficulties cause worry; even happiness too is a mysterious worry. Devotion to Sri Rama alone will put an end to all your worries.* (Telugu Poem)

Therefore, whatever worry afflicts you, do contemplation on Rama. Contemplation on Rama is not a new practice. It was started by Dasaratha thousands of years ago. He undertook many vows and performed Putrakameshti Yajna (sacrifice for the birth of a son) as a result of which Rama was born to him. Kausalya was the first wife of Dasaratha. She first gave birth to a female child who was named Santha. Dasaratha gave her to one of his friends, who adopted her as his daughter. She was married to Sage Rishyasringa who conducted the Putrakameshti Yajna of Dasaratha.

When oblations were offered in the sacrificial fire with chanting

of related Mantras for the Yajna, an effulgent being came out of the fire and handed over a vessel containing Payasam (sweet pudding) to Dasaratha with the instructions to distribute it equally among his queens. Accordingly, Dasaratha distributed the Payasam to Kausalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi. Kausalya and Kaikeyi took their share of the pudding to their respective Puja rooms. Each of them was happy thinking that her son would be the future king of Ayodhya. Kaikeyi thought Dasaratha would crown her son as per the promise made by him at the time of marriage. Kausalya thought, she being the first wife, her son had every right to become the king. But Sumitra had no such claims. She was a paragon of virtues. Her name 'Su-mitra' itself signifies that she was a good friend to one and all. She carried her bowl of pudding to the terrace and placed it on the parapet wall while drying her hair in the sun. Suddenly, an eagle swooped down and carried away the bowl and left it on a mountain. Anjana Devi, not cinema Anjali Devi, found the bowl and partook of the sacred pudding. Consequently, she became pregnant and gave birth to Hanuman.

### **Bond of Love between Rama and Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna**

Sumitra ran down and informed Kausalya and Kaikeyi about what had happened. Kausalya and Kaikeyi came to her rescue and shared their pudding with her. Kausalya gave half of her share to Sumitra. Kaikeyi did the same. In due course, Kausalya gave birth to Rama, Kaikeyi to Bharata, and Sumitra to Lakshmana and Satrughna. Kausalya and Kaikeyi had one son each, whereas Sumitra had two sons. The sons of Kausalya and Kaikeyi were happily playing in their cradles whereas Sumitra's



sons were crying all the time, and were not taking milk. When we enquire into the reason, we can understand the mystery behind it. Sumitra was at a loss to know the reason for their crying. Ultimately, she went to Sage Vasishtha and told him about her predicament. Sage Vasishtha closed his eyes. His yogic vision enabled him to know the truth. He said to Sumitra, "As you partook of the sacred pudding given by Kausalya, you gave birth to Lakshmana who is an Amsa (part) of Rama. Similarly, Satrughna is born out of the share of pudding given to you by Kaikeyi. So, he is a part of Bharata. Put Lakshmana by the side of Rama and Satrughna by the side of Bharata. Then they will rest peacefully." Sumitra did as instructed by Vasishtha. Both Lakshmana and Satrughna stopped crying and started playing blissfully in their cradles. This was the basis of the intimate relationship between Rama and Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna. Both the sons of Sumitra, namely, Lakshmana and Satrughna, were always in the company of Rama and Bharata. In this manner, all the four sons of Dasaratha grew up in an environment of love and happiness. Sumitra was very happy because she thought her son Lakshmana would serve Rama and Satrughna would serve Bharata when they grew up.

### **Lakshmana's Highest Ideals of Ethics and Morality**

When Rama, Lakshmana and Sita were staying at Panchavati during their exile in the forest, a demon named Maricha came there in the guise of a golden deer at the behest of Ravana, the demon king of Lanka. Fascinated by the charm of the golden deer, Sita persuaded Rama to catch it in spite of Rama's admonition to her against this desire. When Rama went after it and



***The same God is present in all beings. You may worship different names and forms of God, but you should develop the faith that God is only one. Offer your salutations to everyone you meet. Even when you come across a beggar, offer your salutations to him. His physical body may appear to be that of a beggar, but in respect of the Atma, he is bigger. Therefore, offer your obeisance to all because the same Atma is present in all. Never consider anybody your enemy; never hate anyone.***



shot a fatal arrow at it, it assumed its real form of a demon and shouted the names of Lakshmana and Sita in the feigned voice of Rama. Hearing this, Sita forced Lakshmana to go to the help of Rama. Before leaving the hermitage, Lakshmana drew a line around the hermitage and asked Sita not to step out of it, pronouncing the vow that nobody would be able to enter the hermitage by crossing it. At that time, Ravana came there in the guise of a mendicant and asked for alms. When Sita wanted to offer food to him from within the line drawn by Lakshmana, he declined to accept it, urging her to come out and give food to him. As he pretended that he was suffering from acute hunger, Sita crossed the line to offer food to him. Assuming his real form, Ravana took her to Lanka in his aerial chariot. On the way to Lanka, Sita tied her jewels in a cloth and dropped down this bundle to enable Rama and Lakshmana to know her whereabouts. Sugriva, a monkey chief, who found this bundle gave it to Rama and Lakshmana when they were searching for



Sita in the forest. Rama showed these jewels to Lakshmana and asked him, "Lakshmana! Whose jewels are these?" Modern husbands would maintain a list of the jewels of their wives, but Rama was not like that. When Lakshmana saw these jewels, he said to Rama, "Rama! I cannot recognise the other jewels but I do recognise the anklets of mother Sita because I used to offer obeisance at her feet everyday" (*loud applause*).

### **Desire Caused Sita's Suffering**

When Ravana confined Sita in Ashoka grove of Lanka, Sita repented at her mistake and lamented, "Oh! Why did that sinful animal

demon in the guise of a golden deer." But what was the use of worrying at that stage when she was in the captivity of Ravana? She was surrounded by fearful looking demonesses who were appointed by Ravana to guard her and intimidate her. But there was one demoness among them who protected Sita and spoke comforting words to her to lessen her suffering and make her agony bearable. Her name was Trijata. Sita wondered that there were such good people also in Lanka!

Though Sita was imprisoned by Ravana in Ashoka grove, he dared not touch her lest he should be burnt to ashes. He tried to frighten Sita into submission by threatening her. But



*Rama is not any particular individual. Rama is the divine Atmic principle that is present in all. Rama is, in fact, Atmarama, the other name of Atma. Therefore, right from a child to an old man, all should contemplate on Rama. We sometimes see even visually challenged people chanting 'Rama, Rama, Rama'. It is the Name of Rama that confers peace and happiness on man. Wealth, property or anything else cannot give him peace and happiness. Therefore, chanting of Lord's Name is better spiritual practice than all others. Chanting of the Lord's Name and its contemplation frees man from all worries.*

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come in the vicinity of our hermitage? Why did I develop fascination for that golden deer? I have fallen into this sad state because I sent Rama to fetch it and was thus deluded by a

Sita never even looked at him. When he started denigrating Rama, Sita took up a blade of grass in her hand and said to him, "You are so mean and wicked. You are not worth even

this blade of grass. How dare you talk ill of Rama?” In fact, Sita was destined to be the cause of destruction of Ravana. According to the story of her previous birth, she as a young girl was performing penance when Ravana, in the course of his conquests, saw her and forcibly tried to take her to Lanka. As a result, she vowed that she would be the cause of his destruction in her next birth and burnt herself on a pyre. Sita was born from her ashes and was brought up by King Janaka as his daughter. The other name of Sita was Vaidehi, meaning one without body attachment. Janaka gave her in marriage to Rama. There are many subtle secrets in the story of Ramayana like this.

### **Hanuman, a Matchless Devotee**

When Hanuman was sent to Lanka in search of Sita, he was given certain clues for the identification of Sita since he had not seen her. He was told that Sita was endowed with divine beauty who could be recognised because she was totally different from the demonesses of Lanka in her demeanour. Hanuman entered Lanka at night and searched for Sita everywhere. He even looked into the inner chambers of Ravana’s palace where some scantily dressed demonesses were drinking and dancing. Perfect celibate as he was, Hanuman overlooked all of them. His mind never wavered even a bit by seeing such scenes since it was focused on the form of Sita as described to him by Rama. Ramayana is not any ordinary story. There are many such subtle truths ingrained in it. Hanuman was the epitome of many noble qualities. He was valorous, serene, virtuous and noble. There is none who can equal him in qualities of head and heart. In fact, there is no master like Rama and no devotee like Hanuman. Both of them are truly unique and without any parallel in the world (*loud applause*). Together they achieved victory over Ravana.

Yesterday, a speaker gave a talk on the Sundarakanda of the Ramayana, describing Hanuman’s qualities as a matchless devotee of Rama. When the students just now sang the Bhajan, “*Rama Lakshmana Janaki*”, the audience responded in chorus, “*Jai Bolo Hanuman Ki ...*” which indicates special significance of Hanuman as an ideal devotee. It is by worshipping such ideal devotees of the Lord that we can cultivate good thoughts, good qualities, good conduct and good character. *The end of education is character*. The great heights of character found in Rama and Hanuman are worthy of emulation and contemplation by all at all times. More particularly, we should follow their ideals in critical situations in our life (*loud applause*). Call Him by any name – Krishna, Rama, Vishnu or Siva, all are the names of one God.

*Jewels are many, but gold is one,  
Faiths are many, but goal is one,  
Cows are many, but milk is one.*

(Telugu Poem)

In the same way, names are different, but God is one. When you ask different people their names, one may say, “I am Ramaiah,” the second may say, “I am Lakshmaiah,” another may say, “I am Govindappa.” But when you ask God, “What is Your name?” He will reply, “*Aham Brahmasm*” (I am Brahman). You should also give the same reply and say, “I am Atma, I have no other name.” Atma is attributeless.

*Nityanandam, Parama Sukhadam,  
Kevalam Jnanamurtim, Dwandwateetam,  
Gagana Sadrisham, Tattwamas-  
yadi Lakshyam, Ekam, Nityam,  
Vimalam, Achalam, Sarvadhee  
Sakshibhutam, Bhavateetam,  
Trigunarahitam* (God is the embodiment of eternal bliss, wisdom absolute, beyond the

pair of opposites, expansive and pervasive like the sky, the goal indicated by the Mahavakya Tattwamasi, one without a second, eternal, pure, unchanging, witness of all functions of the intellect, beyond all mental conditions and the three attributes of Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas).

### **Realise the Unity of Mankind**

Hence, God is without any attributes. He has no birth or death, although He incarnates on earth in human form. *Daivam Manusha Rupena* (God is in the form of a human being). Therefore, man is nothing but divine. When someone asks you your name, you should always reply, "I am God, I am God." Ramaiah, Lakshmaiah, etc., are the names given to you by your parents; you were not born with these names. In fact, you have no specific name. All are essentially divine. Whether God assumes the form of Rama, Krishna or Siva, all these are, in fact, human forms. God is present in every human being, nay, every living being in the form of Atma. *Ekatma Sarva Bhutantaratma* (one Atma dwells in all beings). The same God is present in all beings. You may worship different names and forms of God, but you should develop the faith that God is only one. Offer your salutations to everyone you meet. Even when you come across a beggar, offer

your salutations to him. His physical body may appear to be that of a beggar, but in respect of the Atma, he is bigger (*loud applause*). Therefore, offer your obeisance to all because the same Atma is present in all. Never consider anybody your enemy; never hate anyone.

Everyone refers to himself as 'I'. We say, "This is my body, my mind, my intellect, my Chitta (mind-stuff)." Then, who are you? You are God. The same 'I' represents different names. When you cut this I from the centre, it becomes cross which is the symbol of Christianity. It signifies the cutting of man's small 'I' or ego. We say, "I came here", "I am going", "I am coming"; coming and going are different, but there is the same 'I' in both. Therefore, all of you are one. Develop *Ekatma Bhava* (feeling of oneness). That is real devotion. Do not develop the feeling, I am different and you are different. If you want to have the vision of the Atma, consider 'I' and 'we' as the same. Then you will see oneness of all. Give up the differences of thine and mine. Consider, "We are all one." *All are one, be alike to everyone*. This is the essence of Vedanta. Very happy.

– **From Bhagavan's Discourse in Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam on 28th June 2008, the concluding day of Srimad Ramayana Sudha Pravachana Saptaha.**

There is no discipline equal to service to smother the ego and to fill the heart with genuine joy. To condemn service as demeaning and inferior is to forego these benefits. If a wave of service sweeps over the land, catching everyone in its enthusiasm, it will be able to wipe off the mounds of hatred, malice and greed that infest the world.

– *Baba*

# SRI SATHYA SAI WORLD EDUCATION CONFERENCE 2008

**S**RI SATHYA SAI WORLD Education Conference 2008 was held at Prasanthi Nilayam from 20th to 22nd July 2008, in which more than 2,000 delegates from 90 countries including India



*More than 2,000 delegates participated in Sri Sathya Sai World Education Conference 2008 held at Prasanthi Nilayam from 20th to 22nd July 2008. The picture shows a section of the delegates in Sai Kulwant Hall.*

took part. Bhagavan blessed the delegates with His three Discourses. Many cultural and music programmes were also organised on this occasion, and an exhibition, "Sai Vidya Jyoti" was set up in Poornachandra Auditorium. The conference stressed the need for value-based, spiritual education directed at developing the character of the students right from their childhood. It assessed the role played by Sathya Sai Schools, Institutes of Sathya Sai Education, Sai Spiritual Education and Bal Vikas movement in all parts of the world and devised guidelines to unify and strengthen all Sai educational institutions to enable them to play a

decisive role towards orienting the modern society and nations of the world towards human values and spirituality under the guidance of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

## **Inaugural Session**

In a glittering function held in Sai Kulwant Hall, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba graciously inaugurated the conference by lighting the sacred lamp at 4.25 p.m. on 20th July 2008 amidst a thunderous applause of devotees and delegates to the conference. Bhagavan also blessed the gathering with a very inspiring Discourse, outlining the fundamental principles of Sathya Sai Education and providing guidelines for the deliberations of the conference.

Before the Divine Discourse of Bhagavan, two distinguished speakers addressed the delegates. The first speaker was Dr. Michael Goldstein, Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation. Dr. Goldstein reminded the delegates that this conference bore the Divine Name of Kali Yuga Avatar Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba who is the source and inspiration of Sathya Sai Education and has incarnated on earth to unite, transform and redeem mankind by inculcating human values and spiritual principles in the heart of man. Dwelling on the main theme of the conference, Dr. Goldstein observed that this conference aimed at bringing about spirituality in education and spirituality in man's life. In conclusion, the learned speaker exhorted all, particularly those connected with Sathya Sai Education, to observe the



highest spiritual principles in all that they did and become the worthy instruments of Bhagavan. The next speaker was Sri V. Srinivasan, All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations. At the outset, Sri Srinivasan extended a hearty welcome to all, and especially to overseas delegates who had come from many far off countries of the world. Referring to the large number of delegates who had come from 90 countries of the world, the distinguished speaker observed that Prasanthi Nilayam is the home of all where people of all faiths, races and nationalities get united in Sai, reflecting the unity of mankind. Bhagavan, he said, had pioneered Sathya Sai Education to bring about transformation in man and help him realise his inherent divinity. Answer to all the problems of the world today, the learned speaker observed, was Sai and Sai education. Referring to the Bal Vikas movement started by Bhagavan nearly 40 years ago, Sri Srinivasan informed the august gathering that there were at present nearly 16,000 Bal Vikas / Sai Spiritual Education Centres providing spiritual and values-oriented education to more than 3,00,000 children in the world. In conclusion, Sri Srinivasan observed that Sai Education is the gift of Sai to mankind for its transformation and redemption, and is poised to bring about an era of love, peace and harmony in the world.

Bhagavan in His Discourse which followed these speeches observed that there were crores of educated people in the world but their education had made them so selfish that they had little concern for society and their fellowmen. Bhagavan delineated the need to reorient education so that educated people became sensitive to the needs of the poor and needy in the world. Selfishness of men, Bhagavan said, was the

cause of widespread sorrow and misery in the world, because big and advanced countries were exploiting and impoverishing the people of small and weak countries. Bhagavan stressed the need for human values in education so as to lead modern man on the path of selflessness, self-sacrifice, love, peace and harmony. (Full text of Bhagavan's Discourse will be published in the next issue of "Sanathana Sarathi"). After the Discourse of Bhagavan, Saisymphony Orchestra presented their devotional music concert. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 7.05 p.m.

### **Proceedings of the Conference on 21st July 2008**

On 21st July 2008, the proceedings of the conference were bifurcated into two sessions, plenary and working sessions. While the plenary sessions were conducted in Sai Kulwant Hall, the working sessions were held in conference halls for overseas and Indian delegates separately. The first plenary session of the conference was held on the morning of 21st July 2008 and the second, on the afternoon of the same day.

*Plenary Sessions:* The subject of discussion in these plenary sessions was: "Sathya Sai Educare: The Spiritual Principles Underlying Sathya Sai Education". In the first plenary session, four speakers addressed the delegates. The programme started at 10.30 a.m. after the Divine Darshan of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall. The first speaker of the plenary session was Dr. Tom Scovill of U.S.A. Referring to Bhagavan's saying that truth is one, Dr. Scovill observed that like truth, true education is one; it inspires and elevates and is based on heart-to-heart relationship between the teacher and the student. The teacher, he remarked, must



teach by example; he should be an example of human values in thought, word and deed. The second speaker was Dr. B.G. Pitre of Mumbai (India). Giving the analogy of a seed becoming a fruit-bearing tree, Dr. Pitre observed that the children should be nurtured in a protective environment at home and school by both parents and teachers. He emphasised that love should be the undercurrent of all activities at home and school for healthy growth of the children. He thanked Bhagavan for the gift of educare to the world, which indeed was the Veda of 21st century. The third speaker of this plenary session was Dr. Dalton de Souza Amorim of Brazil who narrated his experience of starting a Sathya Sai School in Brazil and how it had earned the love and respect of the community. He also described how Sathya Sai institutions had grown in Latin America, where there were at present 12 Sathya Sai Schools and seven Sathya Sai Institutes. At the end of Dr. Dalton's talk, Bhagavan blessed him and materialised a gold chain for him amidst a thunderous applause of the listeners. The last speaker of this session was Sri G.S. Srirangarajan of Sri Sathya Sai University, Prasanthi Nilayam. Describing his experience of teaching in Sri Sathya Sai University, the speaker observed that educare found fulfilment in this university because the students and teachers here were fortunate to have Bhagavan as perfect role model in their midst who is not only the Chancellor of this university but the Chancellor of the entire universe. After his speech, this session concluded at 11.50 a.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan.

The second plenary session of the conference was held on the afternoon of 21st July 2008 in Sai Kulwant Hall where four speakers addressed the delegates and Bhagavan answered the

questions of the delegates. The programme started at 4.30 p.m. after the Divine Darshan of Bhagavan. The first speaker was Sri Victor Krishna Kanu of Ndola, South Africa. Sri Kanu reminded the delegates that this was not an ordinary conference convened by some educationists, but it was an extraordinary conference held under the guidance of the Poornavatar Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and was designated to reform, uplift and redeem mankind through educare as per the Divine Plan of this Incarnation of God on earth. The next speaker was Sri Jeremy Hoffer of U.S.A. Sri Jeremy observed that looking at the sad state of affairs of the world, one could easily surmise that man, family, society and world today needed human values which could cure the ills afflicting the world. The speaker felt that no institution or government could do this. Bhagavan is the only refuge of man in this situation, he said. In conclusion, he prayed to Bhagavan, "Bhagavan! The children of the world need You more than anybody else." The third speaker of the session was Sri M.K. Kaw who described how human values programmes were being conducted at Sri Sathya Sai International Centre for Human Values, New Delhi. In this regard, the Centre had so far conducted 35 orientation programmes for Kendriya Vidyalayas, Navodaya Vidyalayas and other institutions, Sri Kaw said. The last speaker of the session was Sri Sanjay Mahalingam of Sri Sathya Sai University, Prasanthi Nilayam, who narrated the story how Ananda, the constant companion of Buddha, understood the teachings of Buddha through silence after Buddha left his mortal coil. Stating that educare taught silence, he emphasised the value of silence which connected man to his inner being and opened up infinite possibilities for him.



After this, Bhagavan answered the questions of the delegates and resolved their doubts. This was followed by a musical programme presented by Sri Sathya Sai Organisation of Russian speaking countries. At the conclusion of this programme, Bhagavan materialised a golden Hiranyagarbha Linga to the delight of the entire congregation. The programme concluded with Arati to Bhagavan at 7.20 p.m.

*Working Sessions:* Working sessions of the conference were held in eight conference halls. Some of these were conducted in specially constructed Pandals. The overseas delegates discussed the guidelines and action priorities prepared by the Education Committee of Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation on the following subjects:

- ❖ Sathya Sai Schools, Standards, Accreditation, Inspection
- ❖ Institutes of Sathya Sai Education
- ❖ Sathya Sai Education In Human Values
- ❖ Sai Spiritual Education (SSE)

The Indian delegates held their deliberations and prepared action plans on the following themes:

- Developing Bal Vikas to Mould India's Younger Generation.
- Developing Sathya Sai Schools into Centres of Excellence through Sathya Sai Educare.

### **Valedictory Session**

The Valedictory Session of the conference was held on the afternoon of 22nd July 2008 in which Bhagavan blessed the delegates with His nectarine Discourse. Before the Discourse of Bhagavan, three distinguished speakers addressed the gathering.

The programme began at 4.55 p.m. with the talk of Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Director, Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation. Referring to the value-based system of education pioneered by Bhagavan, Dr. Reddy observed that the students of Sri Sathya Sai University had set an ideal before the world by their exemplary character and by practising human values in their life. Quoting the sayings of Bhagavan, "the purpose of education is to serve society", "the end of education is character", "the goal of education is self-realisation", the distinguished speaker exhorted all delegates to follow these principles and make their students as exemplary and ideal as the students of Sathya Sai institutions at Prasanthi Nilayam. The next speaker, Sri Nimish Pandya, District President of Mumbai Sai Organisation, informed the gathering that there were at present 99 Sathya Sai Schools in India which were providing value-based education to nearly 50,000 children from all sections of society. The Indian delegates, he said, had resolved that these schools should be further developed into centres of excellence through Sathya Sai Educare. The delegates had also resolved that Bal Vikas programmes should be developed and expanded further to mould the younger generation of India, he added. The last speaker of the session was Dr. Michael Goldstein, Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation. Presenting a summary of the proceedings of the conference before the august gathering, Dr. Goldstein expressed deep gratitude to Bhagavan for providing the most precious and unique opportunity of His Divine proximity to the delegates and showering His limitless love and grace on them. He exhorted the delegates to live the divine principles given by Bhagavan.

Only then could they render genuine service to mankind, he added.



After this, Bhagavan blessed the delegates with His Valedictory Discourse and exhorted them to understand the true meaning and power of love which was the only cementing force to unite the entire mankind. It was necessary for man to control his mind and this could be done by focusing it on God, added Bhagavan.

### **Sai Vidya Jyoti (Light of Divine Knowledge) Exhibition**

On the occasion of Sri Sathya Sai World Education Conference 2008, Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation and Sri Sathya Sai Organisations of India jointly put up an



*Bhagavan graciously inaugurated on 20th July 2008 "Sai Vidya Jyoti" exhibition set up in Poornachandra Auditorium on the occasion of Sri Sathya Sai World Education Conference 2008.*

exhibition on Sathya Sai Educare and Human Values in Poornachandra Auditorium. Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba inaugurated the exhibition at 10.55 a.m. on 20th July 2008 by lighting the sacred lamp. Bhagavan spent nearly one hour in the exhibition, visited all the pavilions and saw a film in the video section of the exhibition.

The exhibition portrayed an overview of Sathya Sai Education programmes all over the world including India. Divided systematically into various sections, the exhibits showcased the significant work being done in the field of education by the following institutions – Sai

Spiritual Education / Bal Vikas, Sathya Sai Education in Human Values, 138 Sathya Sai Schools in 27 countries and 24 Institutes of Sathya Sai Education in as many countries. Besides, the exhibition highlighted Bhagavan's sayings on education which were displayed beautifully in lighted panels. The exhibition also had a video section where video films on education were screened.

### **Sai Choir, Austria**

On 19th July 2008, Sai Choir of Austria comprising 28 ladies and 9 gents presented a melodious and elevating programme of devotional music in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan. Though the audience were not familiar with the Austrian language, they experienced divine ecstasy due to the richness of the music and melody of the songs. They even joined the singers in singing certain numbers, such as Mozart's "Alleluja", "Gurudev Gurudev" and "Lob and Preis". The rich variety of compositions and their feelingful rendering enraptured one and all. The programme which started at 5.30 p.m. came to a close at 6.30 p.m. Bhagavan sat through the entire presentation and blessed the singers at the



*Sai Choir, Austria gave an excellent musical performance in Sai Kulwant Hall on 19th July 2008.*

end of their presentation. This was followed by Bhajan and distribution of Prasadam. The programme concluded at 6.50 p.m. with Arati to Bhagavan.

### **Saisymphony Orchestra**

On the evening of 20th July 2008, Saisymphony Orchestra comprising 70 musicians from 22 countries led the audience in Sai Kulwant Hall to a musical journey with some of the great masters of Western classical music when the orchestra presented its instrumental music concert in Sai Kulwant Hall in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The programme which comprised five selected compositions of renowned composers of 19th and 20th century, viz., Shostakovich, Ottorino Respighi, Felix Mendelssohn and Benjamin Britten, commenced at 6.30 p.m. and kept



*The devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall were led to a musical journey with some of the great masters of Western classical music when Saisymphony Orchestra comprising 70 musicians from 22 countries presented its instrumental music concert on 20th July 2008.*

the audience spellbound for about 30 minutes who applauded joyously time and again to express their appreciation of the concert. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 7.05 p.m.

### **The Message of Love: Russian Folk Music**

On 21st July 2008 evening, 85 musicians and singers from nine Russian-speaking countries presented a programme of Russian folk music in six languages in Sai Kulwant



*Musicians from nine Russian-speaking countries presented a delightful programme of devotional songs in six languages in Sai Kulwant Hall on 21st July 2008.*

Hall in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan. The programme commenced at 6.40 p.m. with a Russian song “Good Signs” and came to a conclusion at 7.15 p.m. with a Kazakh song “Tugan Dzhirim”. The singers and musicians in their colourful traditional costumes poured out their heart to express their love and devotion for Bhagavan through melodious songs and captivating music, saturating the entire milieu with purity, sacredness and devotion. Bhagavan sat through the entire presentation and showered His profuse blessings on the singers and musicians when at the conclusion of their programme at 7.15 p.m., He materialised a large golden Hiranyagarbha Linga which filled each heart with awe and devotion. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 7.20 p.m.

### **Jayadeva: A Drama**

This beautiful drama enacted by the students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar, Always,



*The students of Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar, Alwaye, Kerala presented an enrapturing drama on the life of saint poet Jayadeva on 22nd July 2008.*

Kerala in Sai Kulwant Hall on 22nd July 2008 on the life of Jayadeva, a poet devotee of Lord Krishna, marked the grand finale of the proceedings of Sri Sathya Sai World Education Conference 2008. Through the portrayal of the main events of the life of this great devotee of the Lord, the drama depicted the power of faith and devotion. It also demonstrated through the portrayal of the character of Padmavati,

*... Continued from page 236*

the Bhagavadgita teaches man to perform good actions without worrying about the fruits of his actions. When Sri Patil gave a copy of the book to Bhagavan, He lovingly signed it. After Sri Patil's speech, Bhagavan gave His nectarine Discourse (full text given elsewhere), exhorting the devotees to follow the teachings of the Bhagavadgita and develop the qualities of self-confidence, self-satisfaction and self-sacrifice to attain self-realisation. After the Guru Purnima Message of Bhagavan, the students of Sri Sathya Sai University recited Stotras in praise of their Sadguru Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The morning programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 10.50 a.m.

On the afternoon of 18th July 2008, Malladi Brothers of Vijayawada presented a soul-

Jayadeva's wife, that service, surrender and chastity were the greatest virtues of a woman. Superb acting and dances of the children, melodious rendering of the lyrics of poet Jayadeva, excellent sets and costumes, perfect choreography and meticulous direction made the drama an outstanding presentation. The drama which commenced at 7.00 p.m. came to a close at 8.00 p.m. At the conclusion of the drama, Bhagavan showered His blessings on the children, posed for group photos with them and gave mementoes to them with His Divine Hands. The programme came to a happy conclusion with Arati to Bhagavan at 7.50 p.m.

This also marked the conclusion of Sri Sathya Sai World Education Conference 2008, which would be cherished for long as a landmark step in the annals of Sathya Sai Organisations towards spiritualising mankind through educare – the invaluable Divine gift of Bhagavan to man for his transformation and redemption.

elevating programme of devotional vocal music. The programme began at 5.25 p.m. after the Divine Darshan of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall. The singer brothers, Sri Sriram Prasad and Sri Ravi Kumar, commenced their programme with a Sanskrit verse in praise of Guru. What followed this was a captivating rendering of devotional compositions in the mellifluous voice of the singers which kept the listeners spellbound for nearly one hour. At the end of the programme, Bhagavan blessed the singers, honoured them with shawls and posed for photographs with them. Prasadam was then distributed to the entire assembly of devotees in the hall. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 6.40 p.m.

# ASHADI EKADASI AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

**A**RICH VARIETY OF CULTURAL programmes from 13th to 16th July 2008 marked the celebration of Ashadi Ekadasi at Prasanthi Nilayam. The programmes included two musical dance ballets by Bal Vikas students of Maharashtra and Goa and three presentations of devotional music by renowned singers. Sai Kulwant Hall, the venue of these celebrations, bore a festive look with decorations of buntings, festoons and flowers on this occasion. A beautiful idol of Lord Vitthal adorned the dais which was beautifully decorated with flowers.

## **Bhagavan Inaugurates Ashadi Ekadasi Celebrations**

On the morning of 14th July 2008, Bhagavan came to Sai Kulwant Hall at 8.50 a.m. and showered His blessings on the huge gathering of devotees. As soon as Bhagavan entered the hall, a group of Maharashtra Youth welcomed Him with blowing of conches. Simultaneously, a song on the theme of Ashadi Ekadasi offered Him reverential welcome. At 9.00 a.m., Bhagavan inaugurated the function by lighting the sacred lamp placed on the dais in front of the beautiful idol of Lord Vitthal. Soon after this, the entire Hall reverberated with the Kirtan "Jai Jai Vitthal, Jai Jai Vitthal" which a group of Varkaris (pilgrims) sang while entering the hall with traditional palanquin from Gopuram Gate. Colourful dance of the Varkaris and their soul-stirring Kirtan saturated the entire milieu with sacred vibrations. The dancers delighted one and all by



*Varkaris in their traditional dress dancing and singing Kirtans in Sai Kulwant Hall on 14th July 2008 on the occasion of Ashadi Ekadasi.*

their excellent formations and wonderful feats during their dance performance.

## **Atma Ramayana: A Ballet**

The next item of the morning programme was a musical dance drama entitled "Atma Ramayana", which was presented by the Bal Vikas, Ex-Bal Vikas and Pre-Seva Dal students of Pune region of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations of Maharashtra and Goa. At the outset, the entire story of the Ramayana contained in a single Sloka (verse) was portrayed through acting and dance of the children along with the chanting of this famous Sloka. Thereafter, all the events of the story of the Ramayana were described and enacted through dialogues between a teacher and her students, acting and dances of the children and through comments of the various authors of the Ramayana, viz., Valmiki, Kamban, Tulsidas,



*Deeper truths contained in the story of Ramayana were portrayed in the ballet "Atma Ramayana" performed as part of Ashadi Ekadasi celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam on the morning of 14th July 2008.*

Thyagaraja and others. The cumulative impact of these dramatic devices was that the ballet not only portrayed the main events of the story of the Ramayana, but it brought forth clearly the spiritual undertones and deeper truths contained in the story of Ramayana. The ballet therefore was able to convey successfully the main message of the Ramayana, that is, self-realisation, thanks to the talented direction of the ballet. Excellent sets, good acting and dances of the children, perfect stage management, appropriate music and good commentary added to the value of the ballet.

At the conclusion of the programme at 10.30 a.m., Bhagavan blessed the children and posed for group photos with them. He also materialised a gold chain for the child who enacted the role of Rama. After a brief session of Bhajans, the morning programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 11.00 a.m.

### **Tripura Rahasya: A Ballet**

On the afternoon of 14th July 2008, Bal Vikas students and Gurus of Mumbai, Maharashtra presented a musical dance drama entitled "Tripura Rahasya" revealing the secret and inner meaning of worship of goddess

Tripura who manifests as Divine Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, Siva and Lord Dattatreya and takes the form of Dasha Maha Vidyas (ten goddesses representing ten forms of knowledge). These subtle truths were depicted through mythological stories and analogies which highlighted the entire spectrum of man's spiritual pursuits and attainments through faith, devotion, knowledge, enquiry, grace of Guru and God by realising this primal energy present in man in the form of Absolute Transcendental Consciousness. Superb direction, excellent dances and acting of the children, appropriate make-up and costumes of all mythological characters, efficient stage management, fabulous sets and excellent rendering of appropriate Sanskrit verses and songs enabled the organisers to handle this



*A scene from the musical dance drama "Tripura Rahasya" presented by Bal Vikas students and Gurus of Mumbai on the afternoon of 14th July 2008 on the occasion of Ashadi Ekadasi.*

subtle theme most successfully. The ballet which began at 5.00 p.m. came to a close at 6.00 p.m. Bhagavan sat through the entire presentation, blessed the cast at the end of the ballet and posed for group photos with them. He also materialised a gold chain for one of the children. After this, there was a brief session of Bhajans. The programme came to a close at 6.35 p.m. with offer of Arati to Bhagavan.



## Excellent Musical Presentations

Musical presentations were made on 13th, 15th and 16th July 2008 as part of Ashadi Ekadasi celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam. The first programme of devotional vocal music was presented by renowned singers, Smt. Gayatri Ganjawalla and Sri Kunal Ganjawalla of Mumbai on the afternoon of 13th July 2008. The programme began at 4.25 p.m. after the Divine Darshan of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall. The first item was an invocation song in praise of Lord Ganesh presented jointly by both Smt. Gayatri and Sri Kunal Ganjawalla. This was followed by choicest devotional compositions rendered solo alternately by the husband and the wife, both of whom excelled each other to the delight of a huge assembly of devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall. This one-hour presentation was as excellent in melody as rich in variety, comprising Kirtans, Shirdi Sai Bhajans, Sai Bhajans, Vitthal Bhajans, Tulsidas and Mira Bhajans. The programme came to a close at 5.25 p.m. with a loud applause of appreciative audience. Bhagavan sat through the entire presentation and blessed the talented couple at the conclusion of the programme. He also materialised a gold necklace for the wife and a gold ring for the husband. Besides, Bhagavan posed for group photos with them and distributed clothes to them and to the artistes who provided befitting instrumental support to the singers. Bhagavan accepted Arati at 5.40 p.m., marking the conclusion of the day's programme.

The programme on 15th July comprised Sufi songs by the renowned Sufi singer, Sri Kailash Kher of Mumbai. Commencing his presentation with a song devoted to the unity of all mankind, the artiste kept the

audience spellbound for over an hour with his powerful rendering of Sufi songs of pure love, depicting the intense yearning of the soul for union with the Lord. The programme which began at 5.15 p.m. came to a close at 6.25 p.m. with a loud applause of the audience, expressing their delight and appreciation of this lively and vibrant presentation. Bhagavan blessed the artiste at the conclusion of the programme, materialised a gold chain and a ring for him and gave clothes to him and the accompanying artistes who provided instrumental support to him. Offer of Arati to Bhagavan marked the end of the day's programme.

The music programme on 16th July 2008 comprising Hindustani classical devotional songs rendered by well-known Hindustani classical Dhrupad singer, Pandit Falguni Mitra marked the grand finale of the four-day Ashadi Ekadasi celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam. The programme began at 5.30 p.m. after the Divine Darshan of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall. Commencing his presentation with an invocation to Lord Ganesh, the talented singer sent the audience into raptures with his masterly rendering of devotional compositions in various Ragas for nearly one hour. Significant among these were Sai Stotra "Jai Jai Sri Sathya Sai ...", "Japa Mana Sankar Mahadev", "Braj Mein Dhoom Machi Hai" and "Chalo Man Ganga Yamuna Teer". At the conclusion of his presentation, Bhagavan honoured the artiste with a shawl and materialised a gold ring for him. Bhagavan also distributed clothes to the artistes who provided instrumental support to him. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 6.40 p.m., marking the happy conclusion of Ashadi Ekadasi celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam.



# CELEBRATIONS AT PRASANTHI NILAYAM

## A Programme of Talks on the Ramayana

**A**S REPORTED IN THE PREVIOUS issue of "Sanathana Sarathi", a weeklong programme of talks entitled "Srimad Ramayana Sudha Pravachana Saptaha" was held at Prasanthi Nilayam from 22nd to 28th June 2008. In all, six talks were delivered by six learned scholars, each scholar covering one particular chapter of the Ramayana. On 28th June 2008, the concluding day of the programme, Bhagavan blessed the devotees with His Divine Discourse on the inner import of the story of Ramayana. Besides the talks, worship of the idols placed on the dais in Sai Kulwant Hall was performed daily by the priests. The programme concluded on 28th June 2008 with Pattabhishekam (coronation) ceremony of Lord Rama followed by a devotional music programme.

The first talk was delivered on the afternoon of 22nd June 2008 by Sri Nidumamidi Srikanta Rao of Bangalore who spoke on the Balakanda (first chapter) of the Ramayana and gave an overview of the programme of talks. The learned speaker observed that the Ramayana is the essence of all the Vedas and its study elevates man and leads him to attain the abode of Rama. The second talk was given by Sri Malla Pragada Sriman Narayana Murthy of Guntur on the Ayodhyakanda (second chapter) of the Ramayana on 23rd June 2008. The learned speaker compared human body with the fortified city of Ayodhya and remarked that man



*Worship of the idols that adorned the dais in Sai Kulwant Hall was performed daily by the priests during the function on the Ramayana from 22nd to 28th June 2008.*

should protect and fortify his body because it enabled him to perform good deeds. Worship of Sandals of Rama by Bharata, he said, symbolised devotion to Rama and following the ideals set by Him. On 24th June 2008, Dr. Ranganath of Bangalore spoke on the inner significance of the Aranyakanda (third chapter) of the Ramayana. Quoting the Sanskrit Slokas (verses) of the Ramayana, the learned speaker dwelt on the beauty of Sanskrit language and its poetry, which is the source of inspiration for all future poets. He concluded his talk by stating that the values propounded by the Ramayana have transformed generations of mankind for thousands of years and will continue to do so. On 25th June 2008, the speaker was Dr. Thangirala Venkata Subbarao of Bangalore who recounted all the events of Kishkindhakanda of the



Ramayana from the point where Hanuman met Rama and Lakshmana, killing of Vali by Rama and Hanuman reaching the seashore to embark on his journey to Lanka in search of Sita. The learned speaker dwelt at length on Vali's dialogue with Rama who explained to Vali what was Dharma and what was Adharma. Dr. Mylavaram Srinivasa Rao of Guntur was the speaker on 26th June 2008 who spoke on the Sundarakanda (fifth chapter) of the Ramayana. Dwelling on the inner import of Hanuman's journey over the ocean to Lanka, the learned speaker compared it with man's inner journey from Mooladhara to Sahasrara Chakra (psychic centres in human body). Sundarakanda of the Ramayana, he observed, was like the sacred Ganga; and the study of it was as purifying and sanctifying as bathing in the Ganga. Through the portrayal of the character of Hanuman, it was shown that man could overcome all obstacles in life with faith and devotion, concluded Sri Srinivasa Rao. The last speaker of the programme was Dr. Gariki Pati Narasimha Rao of Kakinada (Andhra Pradesh) who spoke on Yuddhakanda (sixth chapter) of the Ramayana on 27th June 2008. Victory of Rama over Ravana signified victory of Dharma over Adharma, observed Dr. Rao. Despite all the penance performed by Ravana, he could not control his senses which was the cause of his defeat and destruction, added Sri Rao. The Ramayana, learned speaker said, propounded the principles of ethics, morality and goodness which man should adhere to in order to redeem his life.

*Pattabhishekam and Devotional Music:* Pattabhishekam (coronation of idols) ceremony was performed on the morning of 28th June 2008. The programme started at 9.10 a.m. after the arrival of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall. As soon as Bhagavan was seated on the dais, the



*Pattabhishekam (coronation) ceremony of the idols was performed on 28th June 2008. The picture shows the idols after Pattabhishekam.*

priests started the Abhishekam ceremony by bathing the idols with several items and water of sacred rivers along with the chanting of the sacred Mantras. Thereafter, the priests brought an idol of Lord Rama in a palanquin and placed it on the dais. Worship of the idols continued after the idols were dressed and decorated by the priests. In the end, gold crowns blessed by Bhagavan were put on the idols of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana with chanting of Mantras and Nadaswaram music. At the conclusion of the rituals, Bhagavan distributed watches to the priests. Bhagavan also materialised two gold chains for two priests. Finally, all the priests worshipped Bhagavan by offering flowers at His Lotus Feet. While the university students led the Bhajans, Prasadam was distributed to the entire assembly of devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall. At 11.30 a.m. Arati was offered to Bhagavan which marked the conclusion of the function.

In the afternoon, the idols were placed on a swing and worship was offered to the idols by the priests. Thereafter, Sri M.G. Venkataraghavan

and party enthralled the devotees with classical Carnatic devotional music. The programme began at 4.40 p.m. in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan. The artiste immersed each heart with ambrosia of Rama Nama through his sweet classical songs devoted to Lord Rama. After the invited artiste concluded his presentation, Bhagavan blessed the students to sing a few classical pieces which they did to the immense delight of the devotees. This classical music programme concluded at 6.15 p.m. Bhagavan then honoured Sri Venkataraghavan and his accompanying artistes with shawls. The grand finale of the seven-day Ramayana function was the nectarine Discourse of Bhagavan. (Full text of this Discourse has been given elsewhere in this issue.) At the conclusion of His Discourse, Arati was offered to Bhagavan at 7.50 p.m. Thus, concluded Srimad Ramayana Sudha Pravachana Saptaha at Prasanthi Nilayam.

### **Pilgrimage of U.S.A. Devotees**

A group of 160 devotees came on a pilgrimage to Prasanthi Nilayam from North East Region of U.S.A. from 29th June to 10th July 2008 to experience the bliss of Bhagavan's Darshan and to seek His benedictions. During their stay at Prasanthi Nilayam, they set up a photo exhibition in Poornachandra Auditorium and presented a music programme in Sai Kulwant Hall.

The music programme was presented by a group of these devotees, both ladies and gents, on 5th July 2008 in the Divine Presence of Bhagavan. The musical bouquet of the flowers of non-violence, sense control, compassion, forbearance, penance, peace, meditation and truth consisting of nine devotional songs was offered by these devotees at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan with deep devotion. The programme began at 5.00



*Devotees from U.S.A. presented a programme of devotional vocal music in Sai Kulwant Hall on 5th July 2008.*

p.m. after the Divine Darshan of Bhagavan in Sai Kulwant Hall with a song entitled "Who am I" and came to a close at 5.30 p.m. with the song "I am God, I am God, I am no Different from God." Bhagavan sat through the entire presentation and blessed the singers at the conclusion of the programme.

These devotees set up an exhibition "Sai Pilgrimage from i to I" in Poornachandra Auditorium which displayed beautiful thematic pictures along with important sayings of Bhagavan on devotion, spirituality, self-realisation, etc. Bhagavan graciously inaugurated this exhibition on the afternoon of 6th July 2008 and saw the exhibits for more than 15 minutes. Watching this exhibition was like going on a spiritual pilgrimage to self-realisation.

### **Distribution of Implements for Self-employment**

In a function held on the afternoon of 7th July 2008 in Sai Kulwant Hall, Bhagavan graciously blessed the distribution of various implements to provide means of self-employment to 240 beneficiaries from the villages of Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh. The implements included sewing





*In a function held in Sai Kulwant Hall on 7th July 2008, various implements were distributed to 240 beneficiaries to provide means of livelihood to them.*

machines, wet grinders, push carts, handloom weaving machines, seed planting equipment, insecticide sprayers, electrician and carpentry kits, iron boxes, etc. Among the beneficiaries were 160 ladies and 80 gents. The function was organised by the Sai Organisation of Anantapur.

### **Cultural Programme by Bal Vikas Children**

After this distribution, the devotees in Sai Kulwant Hall were treated to a feast of music, song and dance by the Bal Vikas children of Anantapur district, depicting the life and mission of Bhagavan through a dance drama. The drama beautifully portrayed how Bhagavan was promoting Vedic learning, encouraging Vedic scholars, protecting devotees and helping the poor and needy. Good acting of the children, excellent dances, sweet music, fabulous sets, appropriate costumes and superb direction made the drama a grand success. At the conclusion of the drama, Bhagavan blessed the children, posed for group photos with them and distributed clothes to them with His Divine Hands. After the drama, Bhajans in Sai Kulwant Hall were also led by the Bal Vikas children of Anantapur district. In the end, Prasadam was distributed to all the devotees in the hall.



*Bal Vikas children of Anantapur district presented an excellent dance drama on 7th July 2008 portraying the life and mission of Bhagavan in a beautiful way.*

The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 6.00 p.m.

### **Bhagavan Visits Super Speciality Hospital**

On 12th July 2008, Bhagavan went to Super Speciality Hospital, Prasanthi Nilayam and inaugurated the new Department of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy. On arrival at the hospital at 3.50 p.m., Bhagavan was offered traditional welcome with Poornakumbham amidst Veda chanting. After inaugurating the new department by lighting the sacred lamp, Bhagavan visited all the rooms of the



*Bhagavan inaugurated the new Department of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy in Super Speciality Hospital, Prasanthi Nilayam on 12th July 2008 and saw the equipment installed in the department for the benefit of patients.*

department and saw the latest equipment installed in them for the benefit of patients. Bhagavan also saw the exhibition on gastrointestinal diseases. After blessing the doctors and devotees who had helped in setting up the department, Bhagavan visited the Orthopaedic Department of the hospital where an Orthopaedic Conference was in progress. Here also Bhagavan lit a lamp and blessed the delegates to the conference and the doctors of Orthopaedic Department before leaving for Sai Kulwant Hall after receiving Arati at 4.20 p.m.

### **Instrumental Music by Sathya Sai School, Thailand**

On the eve of Guru Purnima, nine students of Sathya Sai School, Thailand made an offering of nine melodies of instrumental music on their violins at the Lotus Feet of Bhagavan and earned His boundless grace and blessings. The programme started at 6.05 p.m. on 17th July 2008 with the composition “Ganesh Saranam”, invoking the blessings of Lord Ganesh. It presented a rich variety of compositions which included some well-known Sai Bhajans, viz., “Sai Bhajana Bina”, “Hara Ganga Jatadhara”, “Love is My Form” and “Manasa Bhajare”. The audience had a pleasant surprise when Dr. Art-ong Jumsai, Director, Institute of Sathya Sai Education, Thailand started conducting the choir. Later, the conductor also joined and led the children’s orchestra to the delight of one and all. At the conclusion of this feelingful musical offering of the children at 6.45 p.m., the students of Sri Sathya Sai University sang Bhajans on the tunes rendered earlier by Thai children. At the conclusion of this delightful programme, Bhagavan showered His profuse blessings on the Thai children and



*The students of Sathya Sai School, Thailand presented an instrumental music programme in Sai Kulwant Hall on 17th July 2008.*

posed for group photos with them. After the distribution of Prasadam, Arati was offered to Bhagavan at 7.25 p.m., marking the conclusion of the programme.

### **Italian Devotional Songs**

More than 80 singers and musicians of Italy presented a very captivating programme of devotional songs in Sai Kulwant Hall on 23rd July 2008. The programme began at



*A section of the Italian singers and musicians performing in Sai Kulwant Hall on 23rd July 2008.*

5.30 p.m. with recitation of Om three times by the entire group. This was followed by Veda chanting by an Italian child who recited Vedic hymns of Ganapati Atharva Shirsham and Mantra Pushpam. Pleased with his recitation, Bhagavan called the child and showered His

*Continued on page 263 ...*



# NEWS FROM SAI CENTRES

## AUSTRALIA

**T**HE SECOND NATIONAL WALK for Values in Australia was held on 12th April 2008. In every state capital of Australia, people gathered together to walk and proclaim the universal appeal and power of the five human values – truth, right action, peace, love and non-violence. Six cities – Perth, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide



*Thousands of Australians participated in the Second National Walk for Values held simultaneously in six cities of Australia, viz., Perth, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Canberra. The picture shows a section of the participants in Sydney.*

and Canberra – hosted the walks. Thousands of Australians walked in unison through the heart of these six great cities carrying colourful signs and banners bearing the five values and singing songs with messages of these values. Brochures and balloons were handed out to passersby and spectators. Talks were given on the practice of human values, songs celebrating human values were sung, and children presented value-based plays. Guests of honour – many of them public figures, government

officials, celebrities and members of the Australian Sri Sathya Sai Baba Organisation – gave speeches on the relevance of these national walks to the practice of human values. In Melbourne, 400 people took part in the walk. In Perth, 500 joined. In Sydney, 1,200 people participated and in Canberra, 150 people joined the walk. During the walks, people from many communities observed the placards on human values with admiration. Inspired by this noble theme, some of them joined the walks.

## U. S. A.

On 6th May 2008, Sri Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Arcadia, California celebrated Easwamma Day by serving hot meals to the needy at the Union Station Foundation in Pasadena. Over 100 people enjoyed the home-cooked, nutritious, hot vegetarian meal served by Sathya Sai volunteers which included a gourmet “Sai Salad”. The volunteers treated the guests with love and respect. The guests expressed their gratitude by applauding and requesting the group to visit them again. Sai volunteers thanked Bhagavan who has been giving them this wonderful opportunity to do this service on Easwamma Day for the last twenty years.

On 27th January and on 10th February 2008, Sai devotees from Arcadia and Glendale Sathya Sai Centres braved unseasonal cold weather to distribute duffle bags filled with a blanket, a woollen toque, gloves, socks, a towel and essential toiletries for the homeless. These two Centres distributed about 500 such duffle bags in which the blankets were specially imported from

China. Another 150 blankets were distributed to the needy by the Torrance Sai Centre and about 250 blankets by the Karuna Sai Centre. For the past 25 years, Sai devotees of Arcadia, Glendale and Hollywood Sai Centres have been serving a hot nutritious meal every Sunday to the homeless in Los Angeles. The loving smile on the faces of the recipients was a divine blessing from Bhagavan for these selfless volunteers.

### U. A. E.

A cultural programme was organised by the Abu Dhabi Sai Centre at Sheikh Zayed Auditorium of the Abu Dhabi Indian School on 16th May 2008 to celebrate Easwaramma Day. The day's events began with lighting of



*Abu Dhabi Sai Centre organised a cultural programme at Sheikh Zayed Auditorium of the Abu Dhabi Indian School on 16th May 2008 to celebrate Easwaramma Day which was attended by about 500 people. The picture shows Bal Vikas children of Abu Dhabi presenting an item of the cultural programme.*

the lamp and an invocation prayer, followed by a welcome address. Among the dignitaries present on the occasion were Dr. Afsar Khan, Principal of Al Rayyan School, and Smt. Thergie, a veteran educator and a long-time devotee of Bhagavan from South Africa. The Principal underlined the importance of providing value-based education in moulding children's character. A report on the Centre's

SSE/Bal Vikas Education Wing activities was presented by the EHV Coordinator. The highlight of the programme was a drama entitled, "Easwaramma: The Chosen Mother," adapted from the book by Prof. N. Kasturi. The drama depicted the saga of Mother Easwaramma's concern for mankind and exemplified her role as Mother of the Avatar. More than 120 SSE children participated in the drama which was interspersed with songs, dances and video clips of Bhagavan's service to humanity. About 500 people attended the programme.

Another well-choreographed dance drama entitled "Glorious Krishna" was presented to the delight of spectators. The SSE children took a pledge to safeguard their mother and motherland. They were subsequently awarded certificates of appreciation for their participation in the day's events. Awards were also given to the winners of various SSE competitions.

### THAILAND

The Sathya Sai Organisation of Thailand celebrated Easwaramma Day on 11th May 2008 with a programme to pay tribute to the venerable mother of our Beloved Bhagavan while showcasing the achievements of the SSE children. More than 600 people gathered for this holy event. The programme started by lighting the lamp followed by Veda chanting, Pushpanjali (invocation) dance and speeches by two graduating SSE students. A play entitled "The Happiest Man in Town" was enacted by SSE students which portrayed Bhagavan's teachings of love, contentment, ceiling on desires and service to humanity. More than 110 SSE children participated in the entire programme, and all of them received a gold medal inscribed with Bhagavan's golden words "Love All, Serve All." Those students who had



*The Sathya Sai Organisation of Thailand celebrated Easwaramma Day on 11th May 2008. On this occasion, Sai Spiritual Education children presented various cultural programmes including drama entitled "The Happiest Man in Town" which highlighted Bhagavan's teachings.*

completed their courses received their group I, II and III certificates on stage. The hall was charged with divine vibrations. After Arati and Prasadam, all left with their hearts filled with joy.

– Sri Sathya Sai World Foundation

### BHARAT

**Andhra Pradesh:** Visakhapatnam district conducted a blood donation camp at Vizag on 22nd June 2008 and gave 37 units of blood to the Indian Red Cross Society Blood Bank. It organised cataract operations for 11 selected eye patients from Korawada area. It also conducted a medical camp in Antada Girijan village on 8th June 2008, treated about 700 patients and gave medicines. It distributed monthly Amruta Kalasams (food provisions) to 18 poor families selected in Vepagunta area.

West Godavari district conducted a free medical camp in Perugu Gudem village on 8th June 2008, treated 520 patients, carried out 19 cataract operations and gave spectacles to all of them. It conducted a mega medical camp in Nimmala Gudem village on 8th June 2008,

treated 1,250 patients of different ailments and gave medicines. 17 of them were selected for the necessary surgeries. It organised another medical camp in Kappulavari Gudem village on 15th June 2008, treating 450 patients, arranging cataract operations for 6 people and examining 90 children for dental diseases. It conducted an 83-hour Akhanda Bhajan at Bhimavaram from 11th June 2008 to 14th June 2008.

**Gujarat:** Sri Sathya Sai Traffic Island at Tulsi Dham Char Rasta, Manjalpur, Vadodara was inaugurated on 19th May 2008 by the Commissioner of Police, Sri Rajan Priyadarshi. The lotus-shaped traffic island depicts symbols of all religions. The whole project was



*A beautiful lotus-shaped traffic island was constructed at Manjalpur, Vadodara by the senior citizens of the Sai Organisation of the locality and handed over to the police on 19th May 2008 in a grand function held at the site of the traffic island.*

undertaken by senior citizens of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Manjalpur Unit. A huge local gathering witnessed the inaugural ceremony.

Vadodara Sai Samithi of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Gujarat organised 14th Summer Course on Indian Culture and Spirituality for Bal Vikas students and children of Sai devotees in

the age-group of 14 to 18 years from 22nd to 27th April 2008 at Sri Sathya Sai Seva Centre, Vadodara. It was a 6-day residential course which included lectures on Indian Culture and Spirituality, cultural events, practical sessions, quiz and elocution competitions, Seva activities in rural and urban areas, visits to places of general interest, etc. The Summer Course concluded with a grand valedictory function on the afternoon of 27th April 2008. During the valedictory function, some of the participants spoke on their experiences in the Summer Course. Each participant was given a certificate of participation, a cassette/CD of Bhajans and Veda chanting, a Gujarati-English Dictionary and some mementoes.

**Jammu and Kashmir:** Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Jammu and Kashmir held a series of veterinary camps in villages, provided free treatment for various diseases of animals and organised awareness programmes to make the villagers aware of the diseases of animals and their cure. In the veterinary camp held in Gowshala Amphalla, Jammu on 7th June 2008, about 300 animals were provided treatment, in the camp held in Jeevan Nagar, Jammu on 8th June 2008, about 60 animals were treated; in the camp held in Panjbakhtar Gowshala on 12th June 2008, 67 animals were treated. Besides, such camps were held in villages named Chandan, Paribal, Malikpora, Gojigund, Shalbugh and Hathboro of Ganderbal district (Kashmir) in which the total number of animals treated was nearly 2,000.

**Karnataka:** The Bangalore Urban District of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Karnataka celebrated "Sri Sathya Sai Amruta Kalasotsava" on Sunday, 6th July 2008 at Brindavan. 108 beneficiaries from the disadvantaged sections of society were selected from the district and were escorted

to Sai Ramesh Krishan Hall, Brindavan where they participated in Bhajans, chanted Sai Gayatri and received the Amruta Kalasams (food provisions) along with clothes and utensils from the assembled dignitaries. Each couple also received Swami's laminated picture and Puja items, all neatly packed in a big carry bag. The function concluded with Arati and distribution of Prasadam. All the beneficiary couples and their guests, numbering about 450, were served lunch and escorted back to their homes. In addition, items like Idli cooker, iron box, sewing machines, push carts, etc., are being separately given to them at the zonal level to enable them to earn their livelihood.

**Orissa:** Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Orissa, conducted two State Youth Conferences to facilitate more youth to participate in Seva and other programmes of the Sai Organisation. The first conference was held at Bhawanipatna, Kalahandi from 12th to 14th April 2008 and the second at Soro, Balasore from 2nd to 4th May. 924 delegates (637 gents and 287 ladies) participated at Bhawanipatna whereas 970 delegates (600 gents and 370 ladies) participated at Soro. A clear understanding was given to the delegates regarding Sri Sathya Sai Holistic Health Seva, Sai Youth for Animal Integrated Care, Vocational Guidance and Self-employment Programmes, SSS-Village Integrated Programme, Divine Message Service, etc., in these conferences. As a follow up of these conferences, district level Youth Conferences have been conducted at Sonapur (Binika), Boudh, Khurda, Nayagarh, Debagarh, Bhubaneswar, Angul (Kaniha), Dhenkanal and Bargarh.

Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation of Orissa constructed a colony of 18 houses for needy families at Sabarsahi, Cuttack district. All India President





*A Sai Colony of 18 houses constructed by the Sai Organisation of Orissa for needy families at Sabarsahi (Cuttack district) was inaugurated on 18th January 2008. The picture shows the colony before and after construction.*

of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, Sri V. Srinivasan, handed over these houses to the beneficiaries in a function held on 18th January 2008 in the village. He visited each house and expressed gratitude to Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba by whose grace this complex named Sai Colony became a reality. Bhagavan's presence was seen when Vibhuti appeared in one of the houses.

**Punjab:** Easwaramma Day was celebrated by Hoshiarpur Sai Samithi at Anant Ashram on 6th May 2008. About 600 people attended the function in which Bal Vikas children presented a cultural programme, highlighting the ideals of service exemplified by the life of Mother Easwaramma. The Youth Wing and Seva Dal volunteers organised the entire programme. Amritsar Sai Samithi also celebrated Easwaramma Day on 6th May 2008. On this occasion, Bal Vikas students of groups 1, 2 and 3 presented a cultural programme, depicting the importance of moral education, human values and love. The Samithi organised a Bal Vikas and Parenting Camp on 1st June 2008. Faculty members in EHV and educare addressed the gathering, stressing the importance of Bal Vikas and human values in education.

Morinda Sai Samithi organised three eye check-up camps. Approximately, 100 patients in each camp were sent to Patiala for eye surgery. All the expenses were borne by the Sai Samithi.

Ropar Sai Samithi has adopted village Boothgarh for development. Since January 2008, a free medical camp is being organised in the village every month and free medicines are distributed.

**Tamil Nadu:** In order to solve the problem of potable drinking water for patients undergoing treatment at the Government Hospital at Tiruchengode, Namakkal district, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, Namakkal district installed a mineral water purification plant at the hospital on 28th March 2008. The plant has the capacity of 500 litres of purified water in an hour. This will meet the need of 300 outpatients and 175 inpatients of the hospital.

Sai Youth of Chennai Metro (North) District, conducted health survey in Erukkuvai Panchayat, a remote village on the outskirts of Chennai as part of Sri Sathya Sai Village Integrated Programme and found that a good number of women folk were suffering from gynae problems but being shy of divulging their ailments were not taking any treatment. Hence, Sai Youth decided to conduct gynaecology camps on regular basis. One such camp was held on 8th June 2008 at the Erukkuvai Primary School where two leading gynaecologists examined 260 patients. Those with severe abnormalities were identified and prompt medical treatment was organised.

... Continued from page 257

blessings on him. After this, there were two solo instrumental music presentations, one on guitar and the other on piano. The programme of devotional songs began with invocation of Lord Ganesh when the entire group sang beautifully "Om Sri Ganesha". After this, the Italian singers presented traditional Italian songs set to thrilling music and earned the appreciation of the audience. Towards the end, they sang sweetly "Sai Ram Sai Ram Sai

Ram, Om Sai Ram". At the conclusion of the devotional songs, the Italian devotees led the Bhajans. First, a singer from gents side sang the Hindi Bhajan, "Ram Rahim Ko Bhajane Wale ..." and thereafter a lady singer sang the Bhajan, "Durge Durge Durge Jai Jai Maa ..." Both the singers sang the Hindi Bhajans so beautifully that everybody marvelled at their perfection. The programme came to a close with Arati to Bhagavan at 6.30 p.m.

## NOTICE

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- Convener

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District Anantapur (A.P.)

## The Disease of Delusion

A PERSON SUFFERED FROM one disease or the other every now and then. He did not get sleep at night due to his illness. All the doctors that he consulted told him they could not find the



*The sick man surprised his neighbour by saying that he was not able to sleep at night because his (neighbour's) hen kept cackling the whole night.*

cause of his illness. He then himself started searching the cause of his illness. One day, he called his neighbour and told him, "Sir, you are the cause of my illness." Poor neighbour! He could not understand anything. Then the sick man said, "There is a hen in your house. This hen keeps cackling the whole night. Due to its cackling, I am not able to sleep at night. My health has been spoiled because I am not able to sleep at all. I beg you, stop the cackling of your hen and

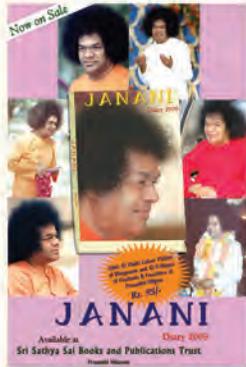
help me regain my health." Then the neighbour said, "Sir, we are all staying in that very house in which this hen is. And we all get very sound sleep. Moreover, this hen does not cackle the whole night. In fact, no hen cackles the whole night. Only it cackles early in the morning." The sick person replied, "What you say may be true. But I start worrying as to when this hen will start cackling from the moment I lie down in my bed. I have no other thought except this. I do not have even a wink of sleep due to this constant worry."



*Man's delusion is the cause of his worries and fears, and his consequent downfall.*

What is it that we can learn from this story? Everybody is the victim of some delusion or the other. This delusion causes fear which makes a man sick and weak. Delusion is the cause of man's downfall.

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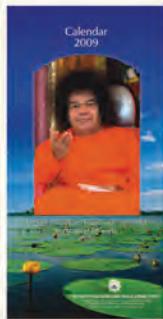
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– *Baba*

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