

PARMARTH

GIWA Assam Special / February 2017 News Magazine



GIWA Assam Special

The Global Interfaith WASH Alliance's (GIWA) leaders, were led by GIWA's Co-Founder HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, to join the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, Shri Sarbananda Sonowalji and Hon'ble Minister of State Drinking Water & Sanitation, Government of India Shri Ramesh Jigajinagiji to inaugurate a state led, two day Assam Sanitation Conference with an Interfaith Pledge for Swachh Assam, Swachh Bharat.



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Sanitation Conference in Assam Begins with Interfaith Pledge

#ASCOSAN2017

GUWAHATI: Renowned faith leaders of the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) inaugurated the two day Assam Sanitation Conference in Khanapara Field, Guwahati, with the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Shri Sarbananda Sonowalji and Hon'ble Minister of State Drinking Water & Sanitation, Shri Ramesh C Jigajinagiji, along with many other ministers, secretaries and eminent representatives of UNICEF India. The GIWA India delegation was led by its founder, HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji and included prominent and revered interfaith leaders, including HH Jagadguru Shankaracharya, Swami Divyanand

Teerthji, HH Maulana Mahmood Madaniji, HH Ven Lama Lobzangji, HH Acharya Lokesh Muniji, HH Rev Dr Rogerji and many others (please find the full list of faith leaders below).

The event was designed to engage and inspire gram panchayat heads, local faith leaders and stakeholders in the efforts to make Assam completely open defecation free by and/or before October 2017 and to support the Swachh Assam, Swachh Bharat Mission.

After the success and impact of the Global

Interfaith WASH Alliance Summits in Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir and Patna, Bihar, the state of Assam had invited GIWA to host a Sarva Dharma Swachhta Evam Sadbhavana Sankalp (Interfaith Pledge for Harmony and Cleanliness) in Assam.

The event began with a beautiful lamp lighting ceremony and water blessing ceremony, in which GIWA's interfaith leaders were joined by the Hon'ble Chief Minister and other dignitaries. They offered sacred water onto the globe as a symbol that people all around the world should have access to clean

water, sanitation and hygiene. GIWA's interfaith leaders also blessed the Hon'ble Chief Minister with a sacred tree sapling, as a symbol of his green, dynamic and dedicated leadership.

The highlight of this historic event was a mass Swachhta Pledge led by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji and GIWA's interfaith leaders, as well as a Swachh Assam declaration and oath to inspire the thousands of village heads (sarpanchs of gram pranchayats) to take this mission forward with full commitment and conviction.



HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, Founder/Chair, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance India said, "Assam will reach the heights of the asman (sky)! I am confident that the Swachh Assam pledge to achieve a complete open defecation state will be achieved sooner than the target date. This is why GIWA's interfaith leaders have come together to emphasize that total sanitation should be our meditation. No longer can we neglect high infant and maternal mortality rates to go on due largely to poor water, sanitation and hygiene. Our presence here today is a powerful message of oneness and our commitment to this vital cause and our support to your mission."

Said Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam, "While a person may have to go through the cycle of birth and death, a cause of truth is immortal. Let this cause of Swachh Assam be such an immortal and vital cause. Today, our conviction is strengthened by the presence of India's revered interfaith leaders showing us that we are not alone, even the faiths and even all forms of the divine and the Creator also love cleanliness. I am grateful to Pujya Swamiji and GIWA's faith leaders for telling us that today nothing can stop Assam from progressing or growing to truly touch the asman (sky)."



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Maulana Mahmood Madaniji, Secretary-General, Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind declared, *“No Toilet, No Nikah. Maulvis and muftis in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab have decided not to solemnize marriage in a house where there is no toilet. I feel that all religious leaders from all the religion throughout the country should decide that they will not conduct any rituals in houses where there are no toilets. There are two types of cleaning - one is external and the other internal. Both are interconnected, we will only be able to achieve the internal cleaning if our body is clean.”*

Said Lama Lobsang, Secretary General, International Buddhist Confederation, President, Asoka Mission, India *“Good hygiene is very important for good health and India needs better hygiene for people of all walks of life and every religion.”*

Jain Leader Acharya Lokesh Muni shared that ahimsa (non-violence) and sanitation must be seen as going hand-in-hand. *“Unclean choices are causing the deaths of countless children every day. This suffering must end. It is up to all of us to be the change.”*

GIWA and UNICEF dignitaries present for the inaugural ceremony:

Shankaracharya Swami Divyanand Teerthji, Bhanpura Peeth,

Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, Founder/Chairman, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) India, President, Parmarth Niketan and Founder, Ganga Action Parivar,

Mahmood A. Madaniji, Secretary-General, Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind,

Ven Lama Lobzangji, Secretary General, International Buddhist Confederation, President, Asoka Mission, India,

Rev. Dr. Roger Gaikwadji, General Secretary, National Council of Churches in India,

Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji, Secretary- General, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, President, Divine Shakti Foundation,

Sufi Shah Peer Mushahid Uz Zaman Khan Chishtiji, Founder and President of International Islamic Sufi Foundation,

Sadhvi Kalpanaji, Sadbhavana Ashram, Madhya Pradesh,

Swamini Adityananda Saraswatiji, Director, Programmes, Policy and Development of the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance,

Giani Sant Singh, Head Priest Guru Sri Guru Singh Saheb, Guwahati,

Sankar Kumar Sanyalji, President of Harijan Sevak Sangh (HSS),

Mufti Nasihur Rahmanji, Principal Al Jamiatul Islamia Banat, Madrassa, Mangaldai, Darrang, Assam,

Acharya Lokesh Muniji, President, Ahimsa Vishwa Bharti,

Dr. Tushar Rane, Chief of Field Office, UNICEF Assam,

Nicolas Osbert, Chief of WASH, UNICEF India,

Mr James Gitau, Deputy Representative Operations, UNICEF India.

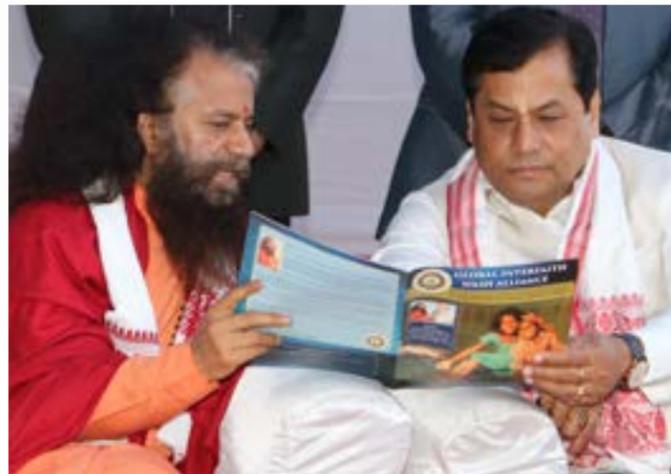


Meetings for Scaling and Sharing the Mission of GIWA

GIWA's Founder Inspires and Engages Peace Makers and Policy Makers for Improved WASH



Mahmood A. Madaniji and Pujya Swamiji discuss bringing namaz to the samaj (bringing our prayers and teachings to the masses).



Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam listens intently to the exciting and innovative work being undertaken by GIWA.



Pujya Swamiji meets and greets Mr James Gitau, Deputy Representative Operations, UNICEF India.



Pujya Swamiji meets the Hon'ble PHE Minister of Assam Rihon Daimari and officials to discuss WASH in Assam.



Pujya Swamiji speaks to Sankar Sanyalji, President of HSS, to engage harijan and tribal leaders in GIWA's efforts to improve WASH in India.



Discussion for GIWA Bhopal launch are underway with Sufi Mushahid Uz Zaman Khanji.



Pujya Swamiji meets with Shri Rahul Devji, Managing Trustee, Samyak Foundation and media family to discuss Media's important role in improving WASH.



Pujya Swamiji meets with Deepak Vohra, Special Advisor to Hon'ble Prime Minister, with Tushar Rane, Chief of UNICEF Bihar, and Swaminiji to discuss tying state and national efforts for Clean India.



Welcoming UNICEF India's New Team

GIWA and UNICEF Discuss Partnerships & Projects to Serve Every Child

UNICEF India welcomed Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) with Founder Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji - Muniji, General Secretary Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji, Director of Programmes Swamini Adityananda Saraswatiji and Director of Implementation Nandini Tripathi to the UNICEF India office in Delhi.

The meeting was to welcome the new Chief of WASH Nicolas Osbert and Ms Alexandra Westerbeek (Sacha) - Chief of Advocacy

and Communication to India with a water blessing ceremony and also to discuss the work the two organizations will be doing together in 2017 for children.

Ms Henriette Ahrens, Deputy Representative Programmes, UNICEF India presided over the meeting and Mr Louis Georges Arsenault, UNICEF Representative for India joined the second half of the meeting, adding his valuable insights to the discussion.



Meeting with Members of Harijan Seva Sangh in Assam

GIWA's Faith Leaders discuss plans for a GIWA Assam Chapter

Pujya Swamiji, GIWA's Co-Founder, and GIWA's Inter-faith Leaders with Venerable Lama Lobzang, Acharya Dr Lokesh Muniji, Sufi Mushahidji, Sadhvi Kalpanaji and others met with Harijan Seva Sangh Assam members, led by Shri Sankar Sanyal, National President of Harijan Seva Sangh, an organization founded by Mahatma Gandhi in 1932 to eradicate untouchability in India. Tribal leaders of Assam and local faith leaders also were in attendance to better understand their challenges and concerns towards improving access to water, sanitation and hygiene in their state. During the group meeting, a road map was laid, ideas were shared and the concept of a GIWA Assam Chapter was planned.



Make in India & Make India Come Together



Faith Leaders bless and visit a New Emami Limited Plant coming up in Assam

GIWA's Interfaith Leaders joined Pujya Swamiji and Emami Limited Shri Sushil Goenkaji, MD Emami Ltd, to visit a new Emami Limited plant coming up in Pacharia, Assam. The plant would cater to Ayurvedic, healthcare and cosmetic products, bringing in many more jobs and opportunities to the people of Assam.

Pujya Swamiji shared His vision that in addition to Make in India we must also focus on Making

India. For that, He shared, improving water, sanitation and hygiene, providing access to toilets and ensuring the use and maintenance of these toilets was critical need.

Shri Sushil Goenkaji who leads many of Emami's CSR's initiative and who shares GIWA's mission for Swachh Bharat and improved WASH expressed his full support to this cause, not only in Assam but nationwide.



Assam Se Asman Tak: Building an Assam that Reaches the Heights of the Sky

*GIWA's Interfaith Leaders Visit Assam's
First and Only Aeronautic College*

On their way back to the airport from their two day short Assam Yatra (journey), GIWA's interfaith leaders met with students of Assam's only Aeronautic College in Guwahati. A group of more than 30 eager and enthusiastic students welcomed them and eagerly listened to the respected interfaith leader's blessings for progress in their lives, both personal and professional. They were also deeply inspired by GIWA's pledge for Sanitation led by GIWA's Founder. They joined Him in chanting the slogan that He had shared during the inauguration of the Assam Sanitation Conference, held the previous day, "Assam se Asman Tak," inspiring them to work tenaciously to build an Assam that could reach the heights of the sky. He inspired them not only to strive high but at the same time stay deeply rooted to the ground realities of their state and to serve tirelessly to ensure health and hygiene for all.



Inspiring Media Coverage



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SARASWATIJI



INTERNATIONAL YOGA FESTIVAL



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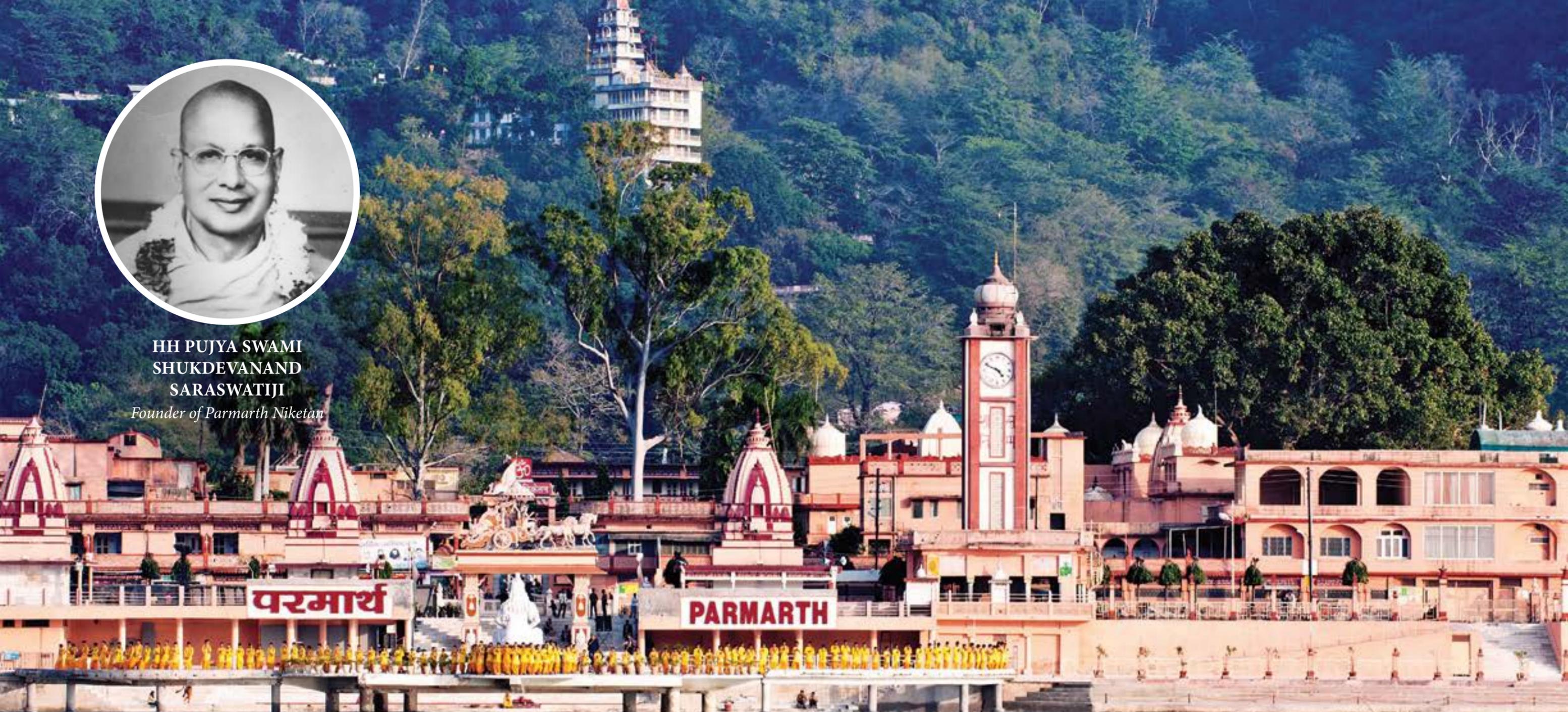
THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF HINDUISM





HH PUJYA SWAMI
SHUKDEVANAND
SARASWATIJI

Founder of Parmarth Niketan



**“You have the power to bring
the song of peace to the world.”**

- Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiiji