

PARMARTH NEWSLETTER



October - December 2008

Creating Peace & Interfaith Harmony

New Delhi, India

On the 8th October, in response to the tragic violence which had erupted in Orissa between Christians and Hindus following the murder of a Swamiji and some of his disciples, Pujya Swamiji organized a meeting between top Christian leaders with top leaders of the BJP party. Archbishop Vincent Concessao, the archbishop of Delhi and President of United Christian Forum, Archbishop of Orissa Raphael Cheenath and Rev. Dr. Dominic Emmanuel, spokesman of the Delhi Catholic Archdiocese were the Christian representatives. They met with Shri L.K. Advaniji, the leader of the Opposition and the Prime Ministerial candidate for BJP, Smt. Sushma Swaraj, former Chief Minister of Delhi and one of the leaders of the BJP party along with other BJP leaders.

The meeting was not only very amicable but also very fruitful, and a joint declaration was signed at the end by all parties. Pujya Swamiji's efforts in bringing peace and understanding between the Hindus and Christians (as well as amongst all peoples of all religions) is still ongoing and further meetings are planned in the near future.



Pujya Swamiji & Shri Advaniji



Pujya Swamiji with Archbishop Concessao



After the meeting, in Shri Advaniji's garden

Special Events & Guests at Parmarth

President of Mauritius



Sir Anerood Jugnauth, the President of Mauritius, came to Parmarth Niketan on the 17th December to participate in Ganga Aarti and have darshan of Pujya Swamiji. He mentioned that he had been wanting to come to Rishikesh, to the banks of the Ganges, for a very long time. During his visit, the Hon'ble President and Pujya Swamiji spoke about 2 programs which they will jointly do together in Mauritius – a Mini-Kumbha Mela and also Ganga Aarti on the banks of the Ocean. Pujya Swamiji is world famous for initiating Ganga Aarti in so many places – Rishikesh, Badrinath, Gangotri, Kanpur, Jwalapur and more in India and abroad. The Hon'ble President requested Him to come and have a divine Ganga Aarti in Mauritius and Pujya Swamiji agreed. Dr. Ramesh Pokhrialji, health minister of Uttarakhand, and Suresh Ramburn, Chairman of Federation of Hindu Organisations, Mauritius also came with the Hon'ble President.





Sir Aneroodji and his wife were so touched and transformed by Parmarth's Ganga Aarti that the Hon'ble First Lady said it was the highlight for her. The Hon'ble President gave a beautiful, effusively laudatory speech after the aarti.



Later, he and Pujya Swamiji spoke about the Ganga "Clean, Green and Serene" program which Pujya Swamiji has initiated in so many places along the banks of Ganga and which is now gathering national steam also. He was very glad to hear about Pujya Swamiji's efforts in mobilizing a clean up program.



Pujya Jaggi Vasudev

Pujya Jaggi Vasudev of Isha Foundation, Coimbatore, came to Parmarth Niketan to meet with Pujya Swamiji and participate in the Divine Aarti. He also brought a large group of his devotees with him, and they all were deeply touched by the beautiful ceremony. Pujya Jaggi and Pujya Swamiji also discussed numerous social service, humanitarian projects that they are each engaged in. They agreed deeply and wholeheartedly that the only true spiritual path in today's day and age is one that involves service of humanity. They shared the different humanitarian and charitable projects that they are working on. It was a beautiful meeting of hearts, minds and souls of two divine saints.



Mittal Family



Shri Mohanlal Mittal, founder of ISPAT steel and father of Shri LN Mittal, came to Parmarth Niketan to meet with Puja Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji. They discussed numerous projects and activities including the World Youth Peace Forum at the United Nations, at which Puja Swamiji serves as a mentor. They also discussed the spiritual center which Puja Swamiji is opening in Brazil as well as the ashrams Puja Swamiji has created in the sacred land of Mansarovar and Mt. Kailash.

Shri Mittalji has a very close and strong connection with Puja Swamiji, Parmarth and Mother Ganga.





A few days later Shri Vinod Mittal, son of Shri Mohanlalji also came to Parmarth with his wife Archanaji. They stayed over night and performed both the sacred Ganga Aarti as well as a special Shiv Abhishek puja on Monday morning, before departing.

Pujya Swamijis

H.H. Pujya Swami Mahant Rajendra Dasji, M.M. Brahmachari Kailashanandji and other saints came to Parmarth Niketan to discuss the Ganga Preservation and Protection plan with Pujya Swamiji and also to invite Him for the inauguration of a Bhagawat Katha in Haridwar. They stayed and performed the divine Ganga Yagna and aarti also on Parmarth's Ganga ghat.



Swamini Kaliji

Kali Ray, the founder of the famous Tri-Yoga system of yoga, based in Malibu, California, USA and with nearly 30 centers around the world came to Rishikesh with a large group of students as part of their yoga in India tour. They all took part in the Ganga Yagna and Ganga Aarti and had a beautiful satsang and question-answer session with Pujya Swamiji after the aarti. Pujya Swamiji shared with them about how to bring yoga into every minute and every moment of their lives, so they can truly become “yogis”.



Groups from Around the World

Every month so many guests come from abroad, sometimes individually and sometimes in groups. In October and November we had several large groups come and bathe in the divine nectar of Parmarth Niketan. Some of them are below:



Group from Iran



Group from Poland



Group from Russia



Group studying hypnotic therapy led by Aarti Khosla



Hindu Heritage Pratisthan Students from dozens of countries



Group of Initiatives of Change delegates from several countries



Yoga Teachers Training Students from USA



Seva and Sanskaras

Every month innumerable people and families come to Parmarth to perform sacred rites ceremonies, primarily mundan ceremony (the first hair cut) and the final ash immersion puja. People also come for the auspicious and beautiful events of marriage, sacred thread ceremony and other rites of passage. To see the way these events are performed at Parmarth see: www.parmarth.com/sanskaras.html. Further, so many people come to Parmarth filled with the desire to perform seva (selfless service) for the divine rishikumars of our gurukul, or the wandering sadhus, or the children in our free schools or innumerable other projects. It is impossible to list here all those who come to perform sacred sanskaras (sacred rites) or seva, but following is a small sample of those who have come during this time period, with an emphasis on those who have traveled thousands of miles away to perform these ceremonies or celebrate these special events on the holy banks of Mother Ganga.

Free Medical Camp

A free medical eye camp took place in which eye doctors and surgeons came from Australia, led by Dr. Purnima Roy to perform free eye testing and operations. Hundreds of poor patients were treated and operated. All patients received the latest lenses implanted with the latest phaco technology.

The camp was inaugurated by the Health Minister of Uttarakhand, Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyalji and Shri CM Bhandariji the ambassador of India to Poland, with Pujya Swamiji and the Parmarth medical team



Official Inauguration



Nishit and Sonal Kotecha from London came to Parmarth to celebrate Diwali on the banks of Mother Ganga and at the feet of their Guru, Puja Swamiji. To them, the greatest relaxation and celebration is seva; thus, as Nishit is an optometrist, they spent their days testing the eyes of the rishikumars in Parmarth's gurukul as well as any other ashram inmate who needed it



Recovery from eye surgery



Nishit checks rishikumars' eyes



The line was so long of needy patients



The medical team



Ganga Clean - Up



Rishikumars and the rest of the team clean up every inch of Gangaji's banks

CM Bhandariji & Dhanush from London

To celebrate the new year, Pujya Swamiji organized and led a huge Gangaji clean up and "Clean, Green Swargashram" program. All of the rishikumars of Parmarth's gurukul, many guests from all over India and from many countries abroad (USA, UK, Germany, Mexico, South Africa) joined together. Also, Shri Suresh Oberoi and his family and Yashji and Avantiji Birla and their family, and Shri CM Bhandariji, India's ambassador to Poland all joined together to clean the banks of Mother Ganga.



Avantiji Birla cleans with the rishikumars



Rishikumars with the tempo for carrying away the trash



Pujya Swamiji, Suresh Oberoi and some rishikumars



Pujya Swamiji guides the team



Divine Marriages

On the 13-14 November, Meghna Oberoi, daughter of bollywood actor Shri Suresh Oberoi and sister of bollywood actor Vivek Oberoi, got married to Amit Bamb, at Parmarth Niketan, on the holy banks of Mother Ganga. It was a beautiful occasion attended by hundreds of friends and relatives from India and abroad.

His Holiness Shree Shree Raghaveshwara Bharati Swamiji also graced the occasion with his blessings.



The saints and family bless the couple

Pujya Swamiji & Pujya Shree Raghaveshwara Swamiji



Wedding mandap on the (actually in the) waters of Mother Ganga



Amit has his Ganga snan



Bhandara for rishikumars



Pujya Swamiji blesses them



Vivek bathes Meghna, in Gangaji, after her haldi



Sacred Gangaji aarti



Whole family with Pujya Swamiji and the Hon'ble CM



Sacred havan/yagna ceremony

The 2 day event included Ganga snan, special bhandara for the rishikumars on the banks of Ganga, the essential haldi ceremony (with Ganga baths afterwards), Sangeet, barat and ultimately the wedding vidhis, performed in a beautiful lotus flower, constructed on the ghat in the middle of Ganga, at the holy feet of Lord Shiva



Wedding mandap



Arrival of barat

The wedding eventng began with the tradi-
tional barat, leading to the banks of Ganga
for the divine Ganga Aarti. After the aarti, the
soon-to-become bride and groom received
special blessings from Pujya Swamiji and
Pujya Shree Shree Raghaveshwara Bharatji
before walking up to the wedding mandap,
on the ghat in the midst of Gangaji's holy
waters.



Sacred pheras take place around the fire



Vivek feeds sweets to his sister



Sadhvi Bhagawati with the newlyweds



Wedding ceremony



Projects

Under the inspiration, guidance and leadership of Pujya Swamiji, Parmarth Niketan Ashram and India Heritage Research Foundation run innumerable charitable and humanitarian projects in the fields of youth services and education, women's upliftment, health care, vocational training, rural development, ecological preservation, disaster relief and much more. See www.parmarth.com and www.ihrf.com for more details and www.projecthope-tsunami.com for details on our widescale tsunami relief work

Encyclopedia of Hinduism

On the 18th November, a historic event took place in the life of the project of the Encyclopedia of Hinduism. Founded and inspired by Pujya Swamiji, and led by Chief Editors Dr. K.L. Seshagiri Rao and the late Dr. Vidya Niwas Mishraji, EH is now being brought to completion by the Executive Editor Dr. Kapil Kapoor, former rector at JNU university.

On the 18th November, a CD of the completed articles of A, B and C (over 1500 articles) was handed over to Rupa publishers, the publishers for EH. These are the first articles to be 100% completed and ready for final copy editing, layout and design by the publishers. D-K will be handed over in January, and the remainder by summer 2009 for a Kumbha Mela 2010 release!



Dr. Kapil Kapoorji presents the CD to Shri RK Mehraji



Pujya Swamiji feeds sweets to everyone!



Dr. Kapoorji and Shri Mehraji feed sweets to each other



Dr. Kapoorji frequently runs workshops at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh where the scholars and editors come to perform their seva on the banks of Mother Ganga. The atmosphere at the ashram is so peaceful, divine and very conducive to accomplishing the historic task.

Ganga Conference

From the 12-14 December, Pujya Swamiji organized a large conference on Aviral Ganga, Nirmal Ganga at Paramrth Niketan. Top environmental scientists, river experts, engineers and legal experts came together to discuss a variety of aspects pertaining to the protection and preservation of Ganga. Ganga has been named the Naitonal River of India, now the questions remain though of how to ensure Her protection. The conference was very fruitful, and by the grace of God will lead to legislation, regulation and enforcement that makes a difference.



Jageshwar & Ranikhet

In October Pujya Swamiji visited various places in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand.

The purpose of the visit was the inauguration of projects in a village of Ranikhet called Mawra, which is the home village of Shri CM Bhandariji, the ambassador of India to Poland. When Pujya Swamiji was in Poland, Shri Bhandariji had requested Him to grace the village with His presence and also to give a lecture on values, sanskaras and spirituality to the students at Khirket College. Further, Pujya Swamiji agreed that we would join hands and help Shri Bhandariji and his organization in the sponsorship of the village projects.

The trip began with darshan at Jageshwar temple where Pujya Swamiji offered to adopt the temple project and help in a variety of ways to improve and beautify it.



Pujya Swamiji with the priest & temple authorities at Jageshwari



Khirket College



Lighting of the Inaugural Lamp



Jageshwar Mandir



The college function at Khirket college included Pujya Swamiji giving out special scholarships to deserving students. Everyone was so touched by the students' eagerness and seriousness about their studies, even living in such a remote village. Pujya Swamiji gave them a beautiful, inspiring talk, filling them with hope in themselves and their futures.

The people of the village of Mawra captured everyone's hearts with their beauty and simplicity. One felt as though one were back in an untouched, story-book village; yet they were real!





The joy on all of the villagers' faces was a beautiful reminder that happiness does not come from modern technology or from high-rise buildings and shopping centers, but rather from living at peace with one's surroundings, and living a simple, earnest and honest life. Shri Bhandariji has started an excellent and very impressively planned and executed water harvesting project which he showed to all of us. Pujya Swamiji pledged to help the village in whatever way possible.

On the way to Ranikhet from Jageshwar, we had stayed the night in Almora where we had the darshan of a beautiful saint who is actually 116 years old! He even had the passport, with date of birth given as 1892 to prove it. When asked the secret to his old age, he answered very simply, speaking mainly about God's grace but also about the importance of healthy, pure food and a deep spiritual life. His serenity and wisdom were evidence of having lived and seen the passage of more than a century.



Pujya Swamiji's Travel

Each month Pujya Swamiji travels to several locations, invited to serve as the Chief Guest, Guest of Honour or other special role at inaugurations, installations, spiritual holiday celebrations and much more. The following is just a glimpse into the travels during this period. In addition to the functions listed below, He also was a special guest at a large program in Panipat run by Pujya Swami Hansdasji, the opening of a center at a large university in Bareilly, a conference of the Dharma Raksha Manch in Delhi and much more.

Porbandar, Gujarat

On the anniversary of the birth of the great soul Mahatma Gandhi, Pujya Swamiji traveled to Porbandar, Gujarat, Gandhiji's birthplace to inaugurate a beautiful statue of Gandhiji and his wife Kasturba. The function was organized by Pujya Sant Shri Rameshbhai Ozaji, and Gujarat Chief Minister Shri Narendra Modi was also present on the great occasion.



In front of Hari Mandir, the temple at Pujya Bhaishri's ashram

Pujya Swamiji, Shri Narendra Modi, Pujya Bhaishri



Pujya Swamiji with Pujya Sri Shankaracharyaji
& Pujya Didima

Pujya Swamiji traveled to Vrindavan in December for a large function held by Pujya Sadhvi Ritambharaji at the site of her beautiful project Vatsyalya Gram. Pujya Shri Shankaracharyaji, Swami Jayendra Saraswatiji, Shankaracharya of Kanchi Kaam Koti, M.M. Pujya Swami Parmanandji, Pujya Swami Ramdevji, M.M. Pujya Swami Handasji and many other revered saints, along with respected social and political leaders were present on the occasion.

Following the function, Pujya Swamiji went with Pujya Shri Shankaracharyaji for darshan at the birthplace of Lord Krishna, and then stayed the night at the ashram of Pujya Swami Gurusharananandji Maharaj in Raman Reti (the sacred sand on which Lord Krishna played).



Pujya Swamiji with Pujya Sri Shankaracharyaji, Pujya Swami Parmanandji,, Pujya Sadhvi Ritambharaji and the other saints at the program



Pujya Swamiji with Pujya Swami Ramdevji



Pujya Swamiji with Pujya Swami Gurusharananandji



Last year, when Shri Sudarshan Agarwalji was still governor of Uttarakhand, he opened the Himjyoti school for poor girls of Uttarakhand. Pujya Swamiji was a special guest at that function. Now, Shri BL Joshiji has taken over as the Honorable Governor; however, Shri Sudarshan Agarwalji still holds the Himjyoti project and the girls close in his heart. Thus, on the one-year anniversary of opening, an anniversary function was held with Pujya Swamiji as the Guest of Honour.



On 6th December, the holy day of Gita Jayanti (the birthday of the Bhagavad Gita) Pujya Swamiji was a chief guest at a special Gita function in the land of Kurukshetra, where the war of the Mahabharat was fought. Other special guests at the function included RSS leader Shri Sudarshanji, the Nepali Ambassador to India and several other saints.



Pujya Swamiji gave a beautiful talk on the true meaning of the Gita, why was it spoken, for whom and how we can implement its teachings in our lives.



Pujya Swamiji discusses Ganga Clean up and Sanskrit projects with the Honorable Chief Minister, Honorable Education Minister and Pujya Dr. Pranav Pandayaji



Pujya Swamiji releases a special new book on Bharatiya Sanskriti at a large function in Haridwar

On the 4th November, Pujya Swamiji was the Chief Guest at a special function in honor of those martyrs who have given their lives for India. Three hundred sixty villages near Gurgaon in Haryana came together to organize the function which honored all those martyrs from these villages who have bravely fought and died for India.





Pujya Swamiji's Itinerary January - March 2009

January

1	Rishikesh
3-5	Gujarat
6	Delhi
7-12	Rishikesh
13	Delhi
14	London
20-24	Pittsburgh
27-29	Mumbai
31	Allahabad

February

1	Allahabad
2-9	Rishikesh
10-11	Bombay
12-28	Rishikesh

March

1-31	Rishikesh
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Please note: Pujya Swamiji's schedule is always subject to change.

Please email to bhagwati@parmarth.com for up-to-date information on His availability in Rishikesh

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International Yoga Festival

March 1-7, 2009



The Venue

Situated on the holy banks of Mother Ganga, in the lap of the lush Himalayas, Parmarth Niketan Ashram in Rishikesh, India is a true, spiritual haven.

Parmarth Niketan is the largest ashram in Rishikesh. Parmarth Niketan provides its thousands of pilgrims who come from all corners of the Earth with a clean, pure and sacred atmosphere as well as abundant, beautiful gardens. With over 1000 rooms, the facilities are a perfect blend of modern amenities and traditional, spiritual simplicity.

The daily activities at Parmarth Niketan include morning universal prayers, daily yoga and meditation classes, daily satsang and lecture programs, kirtan, world renowned Ganga aarti at sunset. There is also full Nature Cure and Ayurvedic treatment available on premises.

Additionally, there are frequently special cultural and spiritual programs given by visiting revered saints, acclaimed musicians, spiritual and social leaders and others.

There are frequent camps in which pilgrims come from across the world to partake in intensive courses on yoga, meditation, pranayama, stress management, acupressure, Reiki and other Indian, ancient sciences.

Further, Parmarth Niketan's charitable activities and services make no distinctions on the basis of caste, color, gender, creed or nationality. Instead they emphasize unity, harmony, peace, global integrity, health, and the holistic connection between the body, mind and spirit.

For more details:

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