



Featuring:



International Yoga
Festival 2013
celebrates yoga,
meditation and
ancient wisdom



Pujya
Swamiji's
travels
abroad to
the USA



Pujya
Bhaishri's
Bhagwat
Katha

PARMARTH

H.H. SWAMI CHIDANAND
SARASWATIJI

JUNE 2013 NEWSLETTER



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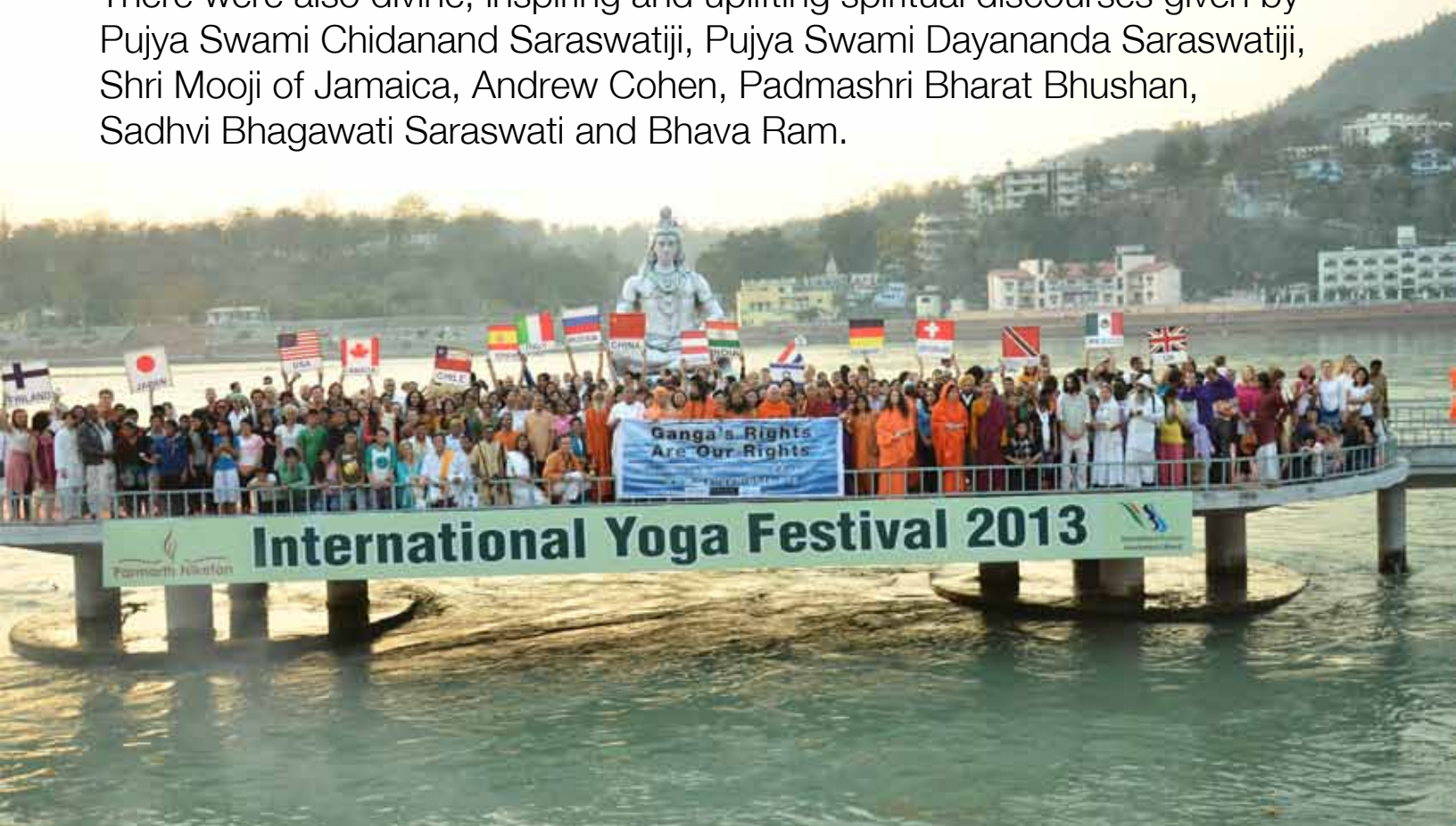
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International Yoga Festival 2013

The annual International Yoga Festival was held from the 1st to 7th March at Parmarth Niketan in Rishikesh, Yoga Capital of the World. There were more than 475 official participants from 41 countries; however, taking into consideration those who came just for a few classes or programs, the total number of participants was nearly 800 people from 50 countries!

Yoga offerings included Kundalini Yoga, Iyengar Yoga, Sukshma Yoga, Jivamukti Yoga, Vinyasa Yoga, Ashtanga Yoga, Yoga Nidra, Kriya Yoga, Somatics Yoga, Sivananda Yoga, Bharat Yoga, Arkaya Yoga, Tulasidalam Yoga, Kalari Yoga, Yuuva Yoga, Iyoga, Yogi Yoga, Deep Yoga, Ganga Yoga, and Kaivalayadham Yoga as well as variations on the theme of yoga including Reiki, Acupressure, Ayurveda, etc. The more than 30 yogacharyas came from a variety of cities and countries around the world including USA, China, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Germany and Australia.

There were also divine, inspiring and uplifting spiritual discourses given by Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswatiji, Shri Mooji of Jamaica, Andrew Cohen, Padmashri Bharat Bhushan, Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati and Bhava Ram.



International Yoga Festival 2013

Inauguration



International Yoga Festival 2013

Classes



International Yoga Festival 2013



International Yoga Festival 2013



International Yoga Festival 2013



Pujya Swami Dayanandaji



Spiritual Discourses

Pujya M.M. Swami Kailashanandji, Mooji,
Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi Bhagawatiiji



International Yoga Festival 2013



Mooji and Pujya Swamiji



Andrew Cohen



“Embracing the Divine Shakti” Panel



International Yoga Festival 2013

Ganga Aarti



International Yoga Festival 2013



International Yoga Festival 2013



Sivamani



A special drumming performance given by world-famous percussionist Sivamani. Sivamani enthralled the yoga festival participants, whether he was playing on a drum kit or a water jug! Participants joined Sivamani on the Shankar Bhagavan Ghat to dance to his rhythms, and many joined in and sang along on an open microphone to his music.



International Yoga Festival 2013

Concluding Ceremony



The concluding ceremony was graced by the presence of the Honourable Governor of Uttarakhand, the Hon'ble Minister of Finance, Smt. Indira Hridayeshji, the Hon'ble Minister of Education, Shri Mantri Prasad Naithaniji, the Hon'ble Minister of Health, Shri Surender Singh Negiji, Respected Imam Umer Ahmed Ilyasiji, the President of the All India Imam Association and many others. Many of the female participants donned sarees excitedly for the first time.



International Yoga Festival 2013

The concluding program included a pledge from all the participants to work to keep the rivers of the world clean. Gabriela Bozic of Germany led the pledge to work for Mother Ganga and all rivers wherever people live. Laura Plumb from California, USA, spoke about the founding of the Ganga Yoga Foundation by the inspiration and blessing of Pujya Swami Chidanandji. Deepika Mehta of Mumbai, the yoga teacher to the Bollywood celebrities shared her feelings of being so blessed to come and teach at the Yoga Festival. Andrew Cohen of USA and Shri Mooji of Jamaica also shared their words of feeling so blessed and happy to be part of the Festival.



EVENTS

Each month Pujya Swamiji's presence is requested at innumerable events, functions and ceremonies. While He is unable to accept most invitations, due to time constraints, each month He does grace many special events and functions with His presence. A few of these are captured here in these next pages. Wherever He goes, His divine presence and wisdom not only inspire those present, but bring light and upliftment to all.





“Sounds of Peace” Event in Mumbai

Pujya Swamiji graced an event entitled “Sounds of Peace” in Mumbai. This event was organized by famous singer and composer Aadesh Srivastava and brought together Bollywood and India’s top musicians, including Amitabh Bachchan, as well as international musical groups like the London Philharmonic. The event was also attended by numerous celebrities. The show was put together for the release of an album called “Sounds of Peace”, which is full of songs dedicated to bringing peace to the world.

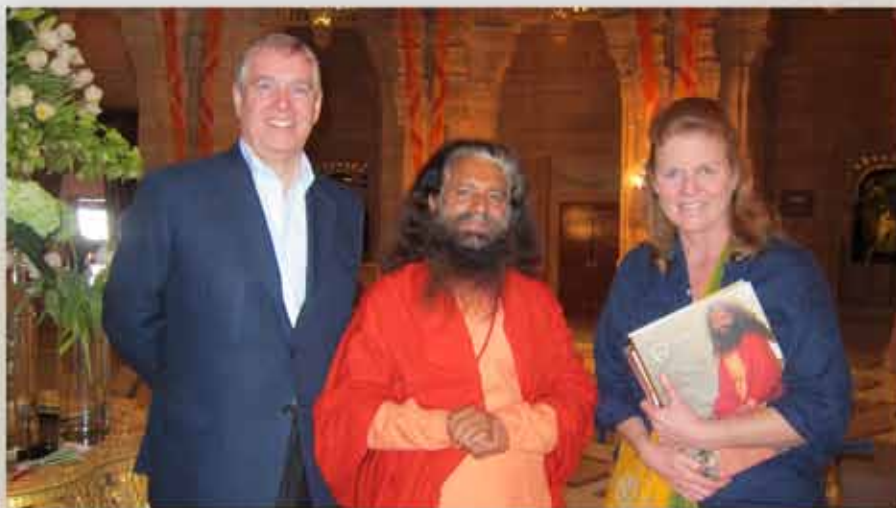


One World Retreat in Jodhpur

From the 8th - 10th March, the Maharaja and Maharani of Jodhpur hosted a large event with the theme "One World Retreat." It brought together spiritualism, music, art, culture and even shopping to raise awareness and funds for the Indian Head Injury Association which they founded several years ago after their beloved son injured himself severely in a fall. They committed themselves to bringing high quality care for the brain as well as modern physical therapy and rehabilitation techniques. The event included spiritual discourses on the theme of "A beautiful mind", art shows, auctions and a private music concert by renowned singer/musician Sting.



Pujya Swamiji with Trudie Styler,
wife of Sting



Pujya Swamiji with Prince Andrew and Duchess Sarah Ferguson



Foundation for Universal Responsibility of HH the Dalai Lama

Sadhvi Bhagawatiji gave a talk in Delhi on the 13th March as part of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Foundation for Universal Responsibility. The theme of the talk series was "Women on the Path," but was of course applicable to both men and women.

Points such as what the spiritual path is, how we can each walk it in our own individual lives, livelihoods and lifestyles, and what the spiritual journey means to each of us and how can it deeply enrich every aspect of our lives.

**THE FOUNDATION FOR
UNIVERSAL RESPONSIBILITY**
of His Holiness the Dalai Lama
in collaboration with
India Habitat Centre
presents a series of talks

WOMEN ON THE PATH
with
Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati

Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati is a graduate from Stanford University, USA, and has a PhD in psychology. She came to Parmarth Niketan Ashram, Rishikesh, in 1996 and took *aryas diksha* in 2000 from Pujya Swami Chidananda Saraswati, marking her pledge to a life of service, renunciation, purity and devotion. She is president, Divine Shakti Foundation, dedicated to bringing education and empowerment to poor women and children, oversee humanitarian programmes run by India Heritage Research Foundation, and was managing editor of the Encyclopedia of Hinduism.

13th March, 2013, 7:00 pm
Casuarina Hall, India Habitat Centre
Lodhi Road, New Delhi – 110003

OPEN TO ALL

Details at www.furhhdl.org and IHC Programme Desk
For queries call: 011-24648450 ext. 104 & 102
For email alerts, send an email to info@furhhdl.org

Pujya Swamiji's Travels to USA

Agape International Spiritual Center

During Pujya Swamiji's short visit to Los Angeles in April, He was invited to speak at the Sunday morning services at Agape International Spiritual Center, a trans-denominational spiritual community headed by divine, beautiful, wonderful souls Rev. Michael Bernard Beckwith and Rickie Byars Beckwith. Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi Bhagawati both gave talks during the services.



Pujya Swamiji with Rev. Michael Bernard Beckwith and Barbara Fields



Pujya Swamiji, Sadhvi Bhagawati, Rev. Michael Bernard Beckwith and Rickie Beckwith



Pujya Swamiji's Travels to USA



Satsangs

While Pujya Swamiji was in LA he also held satsang at the home of Dawn Baillie and a private darshan/satsang at actress Demi Moore's house.



TECHMA Conference at ITM-Mussoorie



On the 16th of April, Pujya Swamiji was the keynote speaker and guest of honour at a technology conference at the Institute of Technology Management - Mussoorie, which offers training and workshops to the nation's top scientists of the DRDO.

Pujya Swamiji inspired all the attending senior scientists that they should also dedicate their 3T's (time, talent, technology) to the welfare of the nation and its sacred heritage. He said that their talent and innovations can give a new shape to the nation, and that their puja was their research. Pujya Swamiji invited all to join Ganga Action Parivar and to visit the divine Ganga Aarti at Parmarth.



TECHMA Conference at IIT-Mussoorie



Pujya Swamiji, Director of ITM-Mussoorie
Dr. SB Singh and Dr. G. Malakondaiah
light the inaugural lamp





Inauguration of Patanjali Yog Peeth Gurukul with Shri Narendra Modiji



On April 26th, Pujya Swamiji graced the inauguration of a new Gurukul at Patanjali Yog Peeth in Haridwar, which was also graced by numerous saints such as Pujya Swami Gurusharananandji Maharaj, Pujya Morari Bapuji, Pujya Swami Ramdevji, Pujya Sant Rameshbhai Ozaji (Bhaishri), and Pujya Pranav Pandyaji, as well as the Chief Minister of Gujarat Shri Narendra Modiji.



Pujya Swamiji applauded the great leadership efforts of Shri Modiji and the way he has brought eco-friendly development to Gujarat. He encouraged Modiji to continue work now not only for Gujarat, but also for all of humanity.



Bharatiya Gramin Vidyalaya

On May 10th, Pujya Swamiji visited Bharatiya Gramin Vidyalaya in Lucknow. This school was started more than ten years ago by Shri Shiva Balak Mishra and Smt. Nirmala Mishra who wanted to build a school in their village so that children would not have to walk 24 kms everyday to and from the nearest school, so they approached Pujya Swamiji and requested Him to sponsor the program through His foundation. With the generous donation of Bina Stevenson of Australia, we were able to sponsor the addition of a junior school, high school and women's vocational training programme, and improvement of their already established programmes.



Pujya Swamiji with Shri and Smt. Mishraji





Puja Swamiji and Dr. Kalbe Sadiq Sahib, Vice President of the Muslim Personal Law Board

Puja Swamiji Spreads Message of 'Haryali' in Lucknow

While in Lucknow on May 10th, Puja Swamiji and Shri Anil Singhji, convenor of Lok Adhikar Manch, met with Lucknow University's NSS and NCC Scout Representatives to discuss plans for cleaning and greening the banks of the Gomti River.



Puja Swamiji later went on to meet Respected Maulana Dr. Syed Kalbe Sadiq, Chairman of Unity College and internationally renowned Islamic scholar, thinker and reformer to discuss the efforts to come together and bring to the state's capitol and India true "Haryali". "Haryali" – which means "green" in Hindi – is needed for the true progress of the nation, and that "Haryali" can only happen when "Hari" (representing Hindus) and "Ali" (representing Muslims) come together. Amongst many other things, they scheduled Puja Swamiji's next meeting to address the students of Nadwa University, the largest international university in Lucknow for Islamic studies, and their collective efforts to work together to implement more bio-toilets and clean and green the banks of Gomti.

Bharat Mata Mandir



On May 12th, a beautiful programme was held at the Bharat Mata Mandir to bring in Swami Govind Giriji as the official “successor” to Swami Satyamitranand Giriji. Many revered saints, including Pujya Swamiji, Pujya Avdheshanand Giriji Maharaj, Pujya Gurusharananandji Maharaj, Pujya Acharya Balkrishnanji as well as many others graced and blessed the occasion.

Pujya Swamiji spoke at the event in which He inspired everyone to serve Mother Ganga and Bharat Mata, all ashrams and mandirs working together to make our pilgrimage sites cleaner and greener.





MEETINGS & WORKSHOPS

Just as Mother Ganga flows continuously with no hesitation and no vacation, so too does Pujya Swamiji serve tirelessly for the various causes He has taken up, in particular His efforts to restore and protect Ganga, Yamuna, and the environment.

Every month, Pujya Swamiji graces numerous meetings, conferences and workshops to further these causes, from meetings with top government leaders to small NGOs doing their part to help the environment and spread awareness.



Meetings for Yamuna with Ministries of Water Resources and Environment, Government of India

For three days from 11-14th March, high level meetings took place with the Government of India's Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Environment, pad yatri from the Vrindavan/Braj area, representatives of the union of farmers and other concerned parties over the dire situation with the Yamuna river. These meetings and discussions paved the way forward as historic agreements were reached regarding Yamuna.

The two-day discussions were attended by Water Resources Minister Shri Harish Rawat, Environment Minister Smt. Jayanthi Natarajan, National President

Pujya Swamiji, Baba Jai Krishna Dasji, and members of Yamuna Rakshak Dal meeting with Shri Harish Rawat and Smt. Jayanti Natarajan



of Yamuna Rakshak Dal Baba Jai Krishna Das, President of Bharati Kisan Union Thakur Bhanu Pratap Singh, Narayan Swami, Radhajivan Poddar, Harish Thenua, Pankaj Baba, and Rakesh Yadav.

Pujya Swamiji acted as a mediator in the negotiations.

Shri Harish Rawat agreed to construct canals on both sides of the Yamuna river which will carry the sewage so that it does not enter Yamuna. The sewage will be treated at various sewage treatment plants along the way.

Shri Harish Rawat also assured that he would do whatever is in his capacity as Minister and working alongside with the Ministry of Environmental Affairs to ensure that a significant percentage of Yamuna water remains flowing “aviral” in the Yamuna riverbed rather than being diverted. He effusively appreciated the role of Pujya Swamiji as mediator, with clarity and vision for ways to solve problem that are acceptable to all sides. He also appreciated Pujya Swamiji’s tireless and complete dedication to Ganga and Yamuna.



The official statement was signed also by Smt. Jayanti Natarajan.

Pujya Swamiji speaking with Smt. Jayanthi Natarajanji



Save Ganga Movement Meeting at Rajghat

Pujya Swamiji with Pujya M.M. Swami Kailashanandji, Pujya Acharya Lokesh Muniji, and others gathered for the meeting



The annual meeting of Save Ganga Movement was organized in Mahatma Gandhi's Samadhi in Rajghat on March 12th, Delhi to bring together all supporting Ganga organizations and bhakts to a common platform to discuss the past years activities and projects taken by organizations and the course of action for the future. Amongst the eminent speakers of the meeting were Pujya Swamiji, Pujya Swami Kailashanand Bhramacharyaji, Pujya Devikanand Takhurji, Dr. Lokesh Muniji, Dr. AK Merchantji, Shri MC Mehta, Dr. Vinod Tare and many more esteemed and respected Ganga Sevaks, experts, scientists and leaders.





Shri KPS Gill

On April 11th, Puja Swamiji met with respected and now-retired two-time Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab, Shri KPS Gill, who has dedicated the last 15-20 years to the service of Yamuna.

Deeply pained by the dire situation of the River Yamuna in Vrindavan, which is a sacred pilgrimage site very dear to his heart, he pledged to support Yamuna Action Parivar to implement solutions. Known as a man of action, he was very happy to meet Puja Swamiji and they discussed plans to formulate a nodal agency dedicated and empowered to address all the issues and challenges that face Yamunaji in a time-bound approach.

Meeting with DRDO and FICCI

Directly after His meeting with Shri KPS Gill, Pujya Swamiji was warmly received and welcomed by the Director General of DRDO, Dr. VK Saraswat, and members of the DRDO and FICCI team. They discussed the recent approval of a cluster of 108 bio-toilets and clean water taps in key locations in the state of Uttarakhand.

They also spoke about the need for applying more new and innovative technologies so that India can become a model to the world for innovations in not only technology but also spirituality, where true progress and advancement sustains and honours the welfare of all.





Shri Harish Rawat, Minister of Water Resources

Also on the 11th April, Pujya Swamiji met with Shri Harish Rawat, the Minister of Water Resources, and discussed with him everything He had planned in the day, from the action plan for Yamuna to the plans for applying innovative technologies and solutions to address the water crisis of our times. Shri Rawat said he is most willing and happy to move forward on the suggestions and ideas presented by Pujya Swamiji and Ganga Action Parivar to restore and protect Ganga, Yamuna, and all the water bodies of India.





Meeting with GAP Experts in Delhi

On the 12th April Pujya Swamiji met with some of Ganga Action Parivar's dedicated experts. Some issues discussed were the upcoming Ganga Yamuna conference (see *later in newsletter*); legal cases passed, pending or pressing for the rivers; sewage waste and solid waste management; eco-flows and hydropower; energy management and green crematorium systems amongst many others.



Pujya Swamiji with Pujya Swami Gyan Sanandji



Pujya Swamiji and Shri Paritosh Tyagi, Former Chairman, Central Pollution Control Board of India



Meeting with Minister of Urban Development, Shri Pritam Panwar Singh

On the 17th of April, Puja Swamiji and members of GAP met with the Minister of Urban Development Shri Pritam Panwar Singh and officers from seven districts to discuss the construction of a cluster of eco-friendly biodigester toilets and Waterlife Clean-water taps in Uttarakhand.





Pujya Swamiji Meets with CM Shri Vijay Bahuguna, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal and the Ambassador of Tanzania



On the 20th, Pujya Swamiji was called for a meeting with Chief Minister of Uttarakhand Shri Vijay Bahuguna at his residence in Dehradun. While there, He also helped welcome the Ambassador of Tanzania.



Pujya Swamiji also met with former CM Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank to discuss plans to strengthen Uttarakhand. He presented the beautiful biography on His life 'By God's Grace' written by Sadhvi Bhagawatiji to Shri Nishank.

Top: Pujya Swamiji with Chief Minister Shri Vijay Bahuguna

Middle: Pujya Swamiji welcoming the Ambassador of Tanzania

Bottom: Pujya Swamiji with former Chief Minister Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal



Workshop with Paul Stamets on Restoration of Ecosystems with Mushrooms

On the 27th of April, Pujya Swamiji was cordially invited to participate in a special talk by renowned scientist Paul Stamets who shared with all the potential for mushroom technology to save lives and restore the ecosystem. The talk was followed by a panel discussion led by Dr. Naresh Trehan, Chairman of Medanta, and moderated by Sunita Narain, Director General of Centre for Science and Education, with William Bissel, Managing Director of FabIndia, and Bharat Mitra, Founder President of Organic India.



Pujya Swamiji's Travels to Lucknow

On the 28th April, Pujya Swamiji was the special guest at a gathering of experts, organizations and individuals working for small tributaries of Ganga and Yamuna in Lucknow. The meeting was organized by Lok Bharti and brought together dedicated volunteers working for conserving their sacred waterways. Pujya Swamiji asked all to submit their ideas and solutions and join together as one Ganga Family, working together to preserve our environment.

The meeting was followed by a visit to the Organic India farm in Lucknow and a small meeting with the team who would be working to bring the success model of organic farming all along the banks of Gangaji and Yamunaji.



Pujya Swamiji's Travels to Lucknow

Shri B.L. Joshiji, Hon'ble Governor of Uttar Pradesh

After visiting the Organic India farm, Pujya Swamiji, Paul Stamets, Bharat Mitra and Krishan Gupta of Organic India proceeded to the Governor's House to share their action plan. His Excellency the Governor of Uttar Pradesh Shri B.L. Joshiji was very receptive of the idea and pledged to support the cause.



Shri Ambika Chaudharyji, Minister of Revenue of Uttar Pradesh



Pujya Swamiji also met with the Hon'ble Minister of Revenue for the State of Uttar Pradesh Shri Ambika Chaudharyji on ways that initiatives to sustainably develop and conserve the banks of the river could be undertaken by the state. Amongst the important topics of discussion were the prospect of alternative energy generation through solar, biomass and bio-gas as well as bringing bio-toilet technology to Uttar Pradesh.



The eventful day concluded with an Aarti ceremony at the Kurdhi Ghat on the sacred banks of the River Gomti.



Asia Development Bank Meeting in Delhi

From the 2nd to 5th of May, special meetings took place in Delhi, co-organized by the Asia Development Bank, FICCI and CII, attended on behalf of Pujya Swamiji by Swamini Adityananda. The topic was Inclusive Economic Growth of the Nation. The Ganga Action Parivar was invited to attend these discussions and to share the impact that restoration and protection of Mother Ganga and Her tributaries had in the economic and environmental security of the nation.



Meetings with Ministers of Uttar Pradesh



Pujya Swamiji, Pujya Swami Kailashanand Brahmacharyaji and Pujya Swami Narendra Giriji met on 10th May with State Minister of Irrigation, Shri Shivpal Yadavji, State Minister of Revenue, Shri Ambika Chaudharyji and Principal Secretary of Irrigation, Shri Deepak Singhalji, to discuss ways in which religious and spiritual leaders can work together and support the government in addressing the many challenges that the nation and the environment face today. Later in the evening a meeting with State Minister of Forest, Environment and Horticulture, Shri SP Yadavji, was also held discussing ways in which he can support these efforts.



Pujya Swamiji discussed, in particular, the following five points: keeping our waterways free from waste, meeting the growing energy demand of Uttar Pradesh, implementing organic farming and smarter water practices, greening pilgrimage sites and developing eco-tourism, and bringing an International Yoga Festival to U.P. to attract tourists and help improve the state. They also discussed tree plantations in Lucknow during the upcoming monsoon season and installing bio-toilets in regions of Uttar Pradesh.



National Ganga Yamuna Workshop



From the 8-10th of May, Ganga Action Parivar, Parmarth, Sarva Dharma Sansad, Green Pilgrimage Network, The Clean Ganga Initiative, World Conscious Pact and many other organizations held a two-day national workshop to find and implement innovative and effective solutions and suggestions to address the challenges that face the National River Ganga, led by Pujya Swamiji.



With a strong belief that by bringing people together, including scientists, members of the government, organizations or spiritual and religious leaders from all the world's top religions, this world Ganga family is gaining momentum and reaching out to connect everyone.



This particular two-day workshop brought together some of the most eminent and dedicated experts, scientists, and professionals to address critical issues faced in the waste-water solid waste, agriculture, energy and ecological management of the Ganga River Basin (GRB). By coming together all sectors of society are committing to taking the first steps to making the GRB clean and green once again.



Among those present were Dr. Vinod Tareji, Coordinator of Ganga River Basin Ecological Management Plan (GRBEMP) and an esteemed professor from IIT Kanpur, Shri Paritosh Tyagiji, Former Chairman Control Pollution Control Board (CPCB), and Shri RP Sharmaji, Former Joint Secretary of the Rajiv Gandhi Mission and CEO of Mokshda.

Ms. Niharika Singh, Former Ms. India Earth, an ardent supporter of the preserve Ganga movement, also participated in the workshop and pledged her commitment to the vital cause.

Ganga Action Parivar experts will present the suggestions decided on in the workshop in a letter to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources, and Hon'ble Minister of Environment and Forests, as well as all other concerned central and state governing bodies, urging them to act now before it is too late.

THE CALL OF MOTHER GANGA

Every day the holy, sacred waters of Mother Ganga and Pujya Swamiji's inspiring presence attract innumerable visitors and pilgrims to Parmarth Niketan. Revered saints, government leaders, industrialists, celebrities and devoted pilgrims of every age, every culture, every religion and every walk of life come to bathe in the waters of Mother Ganga, to perform aarti and to have Pujya Swamiji's divine darshan. A very few of the innumerable esteemed visitors are highlighted in the following pages.





Shri Anna Hazareji

On May 14th, respected and beloved Indian leader Shri Anna Hazareji came to Parmarth to meet Pujya Swamiji and attend the Ganga Aarti ceremony. In August, 2011, when Annaji was on his hunger strike in Delhi, Pujya Swamiji had gone to visit him and had urged him to take a little nourishment in order to save his life for service of the nation. Pujya Swamiji had told him he was needed not only to get a “bill” passed, but also to change the “dil” (heart) of the country!

Pujya Swamiji reminded Annaji that just as Swami Vivekanandji had guided him to serve the nation, so too does Annaji now pull young and old alike to lead lives dedicated to the service of humanity. Annaji thanked Pujya Swamiji, saying that while Swami Vivekanandji had inspired him many years ago, today, Pujya Swamiji inspired him to continue on his path of service and to be renewed with the strength and vigor of a youth even at the age of 75. He took a pledge that he would continue on his path of service to the nation and to humanity as long as he lives, and would consider it a blessing and an honor to give his life in this service.



Pujya Swamiji honored Annaji with a Rudraksh sapling, symbolizing a small and simple beginning that has the potential to change and transform the world for the welfare of all.

Annaji returned to Rishikesh in June and spent three days, from June 9-12th, at Parmarth, where he led a special training and inspiration shibir. *See the next update for details.*



Shri Balmiki Prasad Singh, Hon'ble Governor of Sikkim

On the 31st of March, the Governor of Sikkim, Hon'ble Shri Balmiki Prasad Singh visited Parmarth Niketan to perform a special puja in memory of his beloved wife. Shri Singhji comes annually to perform this puja here at the banks of Mother Ganga.





Cast and Crew of C.I.D.



The cast and crew of one of the longest running Indian television thriller series “C.I.D.” joined for a very special Ganga Aarti on May 17th, the auspicious occasion of Ganga Saptmi. Puja Swamiji shared with them that the unbridled pollution in Gangaji and Yamunaji is an environmental crime that is taking more lives than bombs or terrorist attacks, yet remains unnoticed and neglected. Puja Swamiji said that through Media Social Responsibility and the power that they have as actors they can bring light to these issues that are challenging our nation and our world. The C.I.D. Parivar pledged to support the preservation and protection of Mother Ganga and Her tributaries.





Shabnam Singh, Mother of Famed Cricketer Yuvraj Singh



On the 2nd of April, Smt. Shabnam Singh, mother of famous cricketer Yuvraj Singh, visited Parmarth to attend the evening Ganga Aarti ceremony.



Group from Bangkok

A group from Bangkok which comes each year to Parmarth attended the evening Ganga Aarti on the 21st April, and took pledges to stand for the protection of rivers, the environment and the divine feminine around the world. Special prayers were given by the group for Gudiya, the young rape victim who was battling for life at the time in Delhi.



Team from the World Bank

On April 23rd, the Inspection Panel from the World Bank, who were on their way to inspect the Pipalkoti Hydroproject, stopped in Rishikesh to see the social cultural connections that the river has with its people.

They attended Parmarth's evening havan and Ganga Aarti ceremony, and were deeply touched and transformed, pledging to remember their divine experience in their final report.



East Meets West Program

Delegates from Italy, coordinated by Gabriella Lavorgna, visited Parmarth on the 16th of May for a short documentary screening and release of an Italian book "India in my Heart," written by Vittorio Russo about his journey and love of Indian culture and values.

Pujya Swamiji spoke about how an important aspect of Indian culture is the idea of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" - the world is one family. He welcomed the delegates from Italy to the global Ganga family saying that time had come that we join hands and work together to protect our Mother Earth.



OTHER IMPORTANT EVENTS





Pujya Swamiji Awarded Noble Person's Award

Pujya Swamiji was honored with the Noble Person's prestigious award in Lucknow on the 10th of May by Noble Parivar, a national family that brings together divine souls that are excelling in their respective fields and are giving back to society. Pujya Swamiji was awarded for excellence in the service of the environment and humanity.

Pujya Swamiji was also requested to bless some distinguished individuals with awards in the fields of education, healthcare, literature, journalism and leadership. Pujya Swamiji commended the initiative and the committee and said that these noble souls are doing the true puja (worship) every moment by serving not only God but also God's creation. Pujya Swamiji also said that it was their service and spirit of giving that makes India great and the reason why, despite the many challenges that the nation faces, there is hope and strength in its people, its culture and its heritage.

Rishikumars Win Debate Competition

On 19th April, Rishikumars of the Parmarth Gurukul earned third place in a debate competition based on the theme of “Youth Empowerment and Possibilities of Ethical and Untainted Leadership to succeed in Indian Politics.”



Pujya Bhaishri Gives Divine Bhagwat Katha



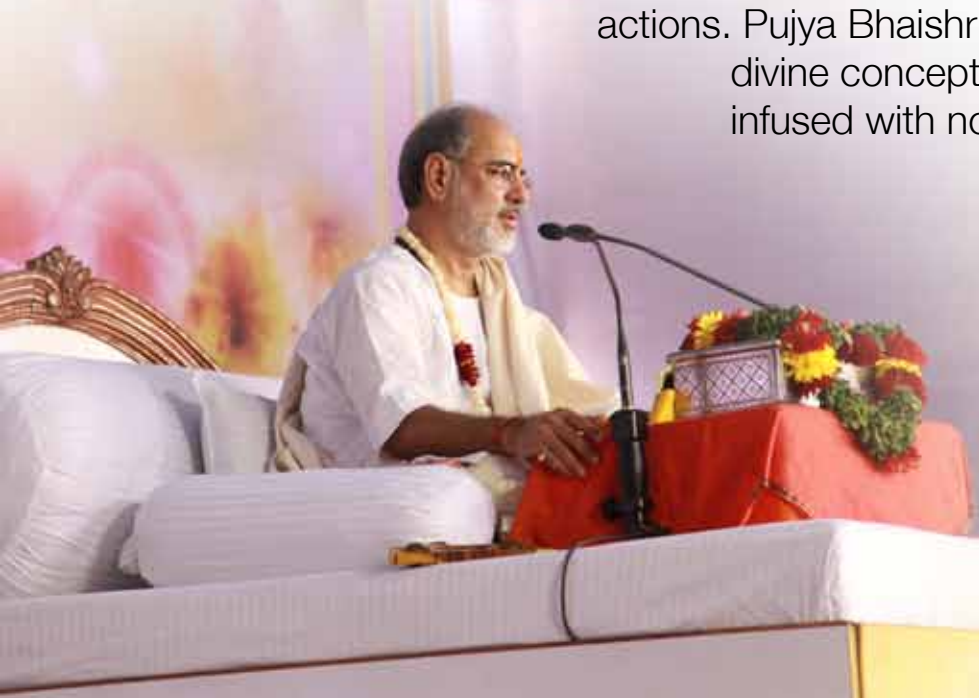
Pujya Sant Rameshbhai Ozaji (Bhaishri) gave a very sacred Bhagawat Katha Gyan Yagna from the 19th through 26th May at Parmarth. The katha was organized by the Jalan family of Varanasi in memory of the late industrialist and philanthropist Shri Deen Dayal Jalanji.

The inauguration of the katha was blessed by the presence of many divine saints, including Pujya Swamiji, M.M. Pujya Swami Asanganandji, M.M. Pujya Swami Gurusharananandji Maharaj, M.M. Pujya Swami Kailashanand Brahmacharyaji, Pujya Swami Satyamitranandji, Pujya Swami Govind Giriji, Pujya Dr. Pranav Pandiyaji, Pujya Swami Harichetnanandji, Pujya Acharya Balkrishnaji, Pujya Brahmaswaroop Brahmacharyaji, Pujya Mahant Narendra Giriji, and Pujya Mahant Shri Ramanand Puriji, among many other saints, spiritual seekers and devotees who came to bathe in the divine nectar and light of this sacred wisdom.

Pujya Swamiji introduced the idea that just as we have Corporate Social Responsibility, we should have Kathakar Social Responsibility, as kathakars also have tremendous potential to bring about social change and transformation, changing arts as well as

actions. Pujya Bhaishri agreed with Pujya Swamiji's divine concept and each day of the katha was infused with not only kirtan (divine song) of the

Creator but also kirtan of the creation, or as Pujya Swamiji said, "paryavaran kirtan" (devotional environmental songs). Pujya Swamiji also spoke to all the devotees gathered, encouraging them to live green in their own lives, and to do their part to help protect and restore Ganga and their local water bodies.



Pujya Bhaishri Gives Divine Bhagwat Katha

Several evenings were filled with diverse cultural programmes and events that brought diverse groups of saints, artists, poets, professionals, leaders and devotees together to sit alongside the banks of Mother Ganga.

Revered saints who came and gave their blessings and inspiring discourses at the katha

included Pujya M.M. Swami Satyamitranandji, Pujya Swami Govind Giriji, Pujya Swami Harichetananandji, Pujya Dr. Pranav Pandyaji and Pujya Acharya Balkrishnaji. Leaders who spoke included Shri Anna Hazare and the Minister of Urban Development Shri Pritam Panwar Singh.

The katha also took on several green initiatives, such as reducing and minimizing the use of plastics, giving all guests of honor tree saplings for prasad, and focusing on how the wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita sheds light on how one can be evergreen inside as well as out.



Pujya Swami Satyamitranandji



Pujya Swami Harichetananandji

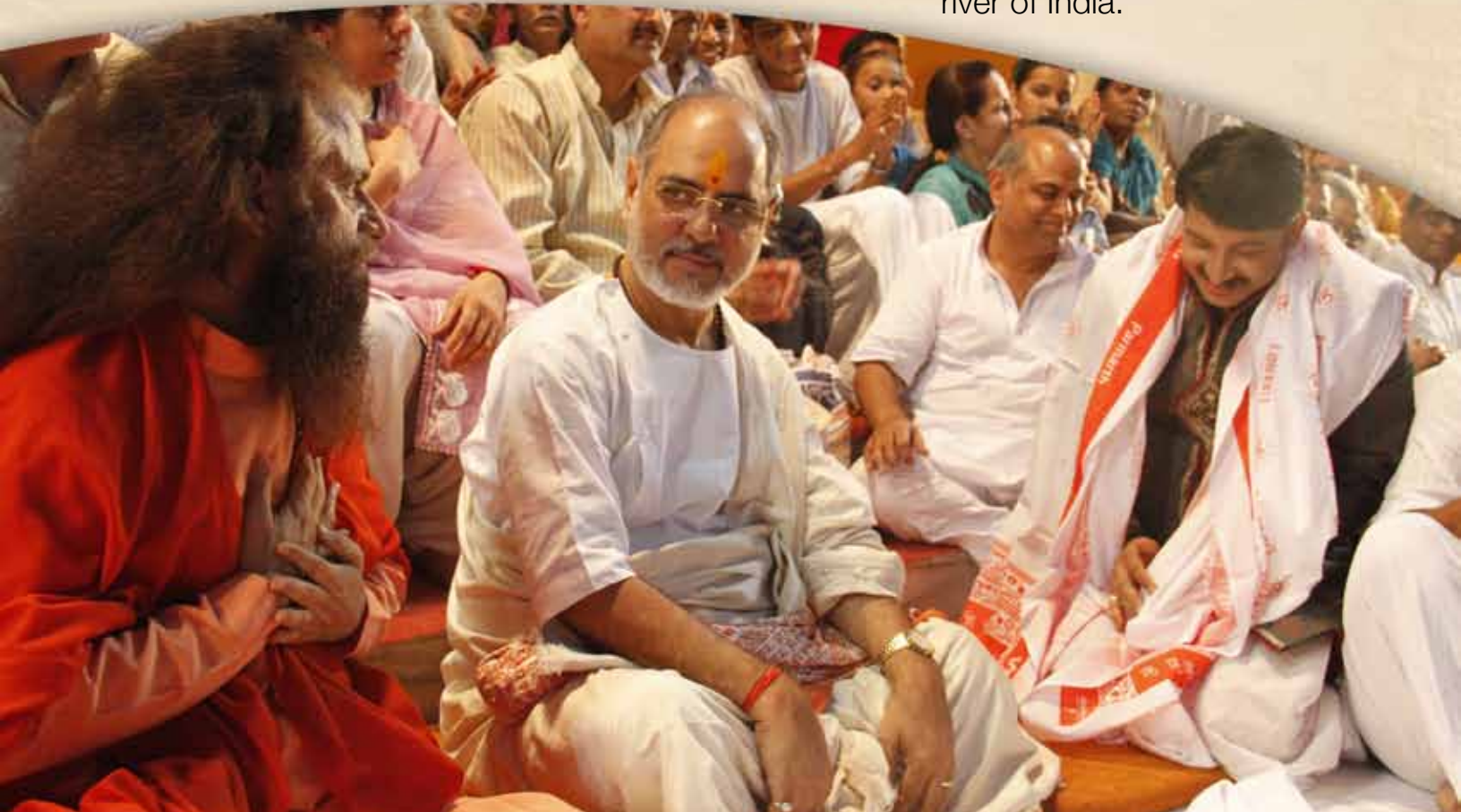
Pujya Bhaishri Gives Divine Bhagwat Katha



Pujya Bhaishri Gives Divine Bhagwat Katha



On the 22nd evening, a special programme was given by Shri Manoj Tiwari, popular Bollywood actor, singer and entertainer, whose dedication to Mother Ganga and natural charm touched the hearts of all. Manoj Tiwari declared in a press conference in Rishikesh on the 23rd that, inspired by Pujya Swamiji and Ganga Action Parivar, he pledged to dedicate ten minutes of every show that he does from now on for Mother Ganga. He also said that he would like to play Ganga Action Parivar's promos and videos on bio-toilets, Ganga pollution, trash, and many other topics in his shows and in breaks during his films to raise awareness. He said that he had recently done an album entitled 'Gangs of Wasseyapur;' but now within two months he would release an album on the banks of Mother Ganga called 'Gangs of Ganga Bhakt' inspiring all to learn about the plight of Mother Ganga and to act now to save the sacred lifeline and national river of India.



Pujya Bhaishri Gives Divine Bhagwat Katha



Pujya Swamiji, Pujya Swami Avdeshanand Giriji and
M.M. Pujya Swami Gurusharananandji



Right:

Top - Pujya Dr. Pranav Pandyaji

Second - Pujya Swamiji offers flowers to Pujya Bhaishri

Third - Pujya Acharya Balkrishnaji

Bottom - Pujya Swami Satyamitranandji

Pujya Swamiji, Shri Anna Hazareji, Pujya Swami Avdeshanand
Giriji and M.M. Pujya Swami Gurusharananandji



Pujya Bhaishri Gives Divine Bhagwat Katha



Shri Anna Hazare returned to Parmarth and attended Pujya Bhaishri's Bhagwat Katha as well as gave an inspiring talk. Together, Pujya Swamiji, Shri Anna Hazare, the saints present and the audience took a pledge to work in the service of the country and humanity. Continuing with the eco-theme of this katha, Shri Annaji was presented with a tree sapling as prasad by the saints present.



Pujya Bhaishri Gives Divine Bhagwat Katha



Divine Message from Puja Swamiji

Ganga Dussehra Blessings

The 18th of June marked Ganga Dussehra, the day we lovingly refer to as “Gangaji’s Birthday.” It is the day on which we commemorate the time when, answering the tapasya and incessant prayers of King Bhagirath, Ganga flowed down from the heavens to the Earth.

Ganga did not flow down merely because She wanted to, but rather with a very specific purpose - to serve

humanity. In the story of Her descent, She descended from heaven itself to flow onto the Earth to liberate the 60,000 sons of King Sagar, who had been turned to ash yet had not received final rites. Thus, Ganga’s waters flowed down and washed over the ashes, freeing their souls. Likewise, today Ganga is seen as a liberator, and anyone who takes a dip in Her waters is freed from all past karma.



Divine Message from Puja Swamiji

But Ganga doesn't provide just liberation, but also life itself, as She provides water for the hundreds of millions who live along Her banks. Over 500 million people live within the Ganga River Basin and directly depend on Her nourishing waters, as well as millions of animals and plant species. Her waters irrigate thousands of farms which feed more than one-third of India's population.

Ganga also teaches us so many lessons on how to truly live divine lives. First, Her waters flow for all. Whether one believes in Her sanctity and sings Her aarti daily or throws trash in Her, whether it is a Hindu's farm or a Muslim's farm or a Christian's farm, Ganga's waters provide for all. She quenches everyone's thirst, and irrigates everyone's farms. She never hesitates and never discriminates, but gives and gives and gives.

Yet, on this last Ganga Dussehra, Ganga also sent us a message. Tragic flooding and subsequent landslides swept away homes, businesses, whole villages, bridges and roads. Thousands of people lost their lives, and tens of thousands were trapped for days in the mountains without shelter, food or water.

Yet, we have to wonder why all this happened, and what message Mother Ganga and Mother Nature was sending us.

As the Himalayas get deforested, as the mountains are blasted with dynamite to make room for wider roads, we reap the consequences of fragile mountains and top soil that is no longer rooted to the ground. Hence, when the rains come, with no trees or rooted soil to hold the water, the mountain sides run into roads and villages, and our precious top soil runs into the rivers.

And what is this all being done for? Development. Precious resources are being blasted out of the mountains and the riverbeds, trees are being cut down all in the name of "development." And what is this development? Block-long shopping malls, product after product, plastic, building after building, all created in an effort to quench our desire for happiness. Yet, is this what true development is? Is this what will bring us happiness? Is the destruction of our Earth the price for happiness? Surely it is not.

Development is necessary. People need electricity, clean water, proper sanitation, jobs, and technology, and there is nothing wrong with these things. But the question becomes, at what cost? If our over-consumption and ceaseless desire for more and more leads to the destruction of our own Mother Earth, this is a tragic problem. If we continue to build in ways that damage the environment instead of building in eco-friendly, sustainable

Divine Message from Pujya Swamiji

ways, this is a problem. Not only are we hurting our Earth, we are hurting our fellow man. In the upper reaches of the Ganga, where people have lost everything, the people who are hurt the most are simple villagers and pious pilgrims. Whole villages have washed away, homes have been lost, yet surely these are not the people guilty of over-consumption or rampant unchecked development.

On Ganga's birthday, She gave us an ultimatum: "Care for me, care for my mountains, my trees and my tributaries and I will bring you life and liberation. Deforest my mountainsides, pollute the air such that the warmth melts the glaciers, dam and divert me, and you will reap the consequences."

It is such an important message Mother Ganga gave us: Nature is not ours to objectify, use and abuse. Mother Nature brings life when we treat Her with respect, care and love. But nature neglected and abused wreaks Her own havoc upon Her abusers.

The choices we make in our lifestyle have direct consequences for the planet we live in and that our children will inherit. What we eat, what we buy, where we go and how we get there all



play formidable roles in whether we will bequeath to our children a planet that is green, lush, healthy and able to sustain life, or one that is desecrated, polluted, poisoned and poisonous to its remaining inhabitants.

By Her grace, like a true Mother, Mother Ganga is giving us another chance. As Her waters have receded and rehabilitation efforts have begun, let us take Her message to heart and change our ways so that Mother Nature, Mother Ganga and all our brothers and sisters upon Her banks and around the world may live safe, healthy and nurtured lives.

To learn more about our efforts to bring relief and rehabilitation to those affected by the Uttarakhand floods, please visit www.projecthope-india.org.

Special Announcements

PROJECT HOPE

To learn about our relief and rehabilitation efforts, and to learn how you can help, please visit www.projecthope-india.org.

Upon seeing the massive amount of devastation caused by the June Uttarakhand floods and subsequent landslides, Pujya Swamiji, the Founder and inspiration behind Project Hope, without wasting any time, geared into action.

Project Hope has brought together various organizations, NGOS, administration, dedicated volunteers and doctors as one team with one theme—serving to facilitate rescue efforts, provide relief to pilgrims and local residents and finally to help bring long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction of some of the most severely affected regions.



Special Announcements

GANGA RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

To add your name to the petition, please visit www.gangaaction.org.

The National Ganga Rights Movement, which is being spearheaded by Ganga Action Parivar, is advocating for a National Ganga Rights Act to protect and restore one of the world's most precious and beloved river systems.

Mother Ganga is polluted by nearly 3 billion litres of sewage and chemical waste every day. Her rights are being violated, and in turn, our rights to clean water are being violated. People are getting sick. Children are dying. It's time we say no more. Ganga has the right to flow in Her clean, pristine form. Ganga's Rights are Our Rights.

Present environmental laws, which regulate the amount of allowable harm that may occur to ecosystems, have not proven adequate to protect India's National River, which also sustains the lives of some 500 million Indians. The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act of 1974, for example, calls for substantial jail time and fines for repeated polluters, yet pollution levels within the Ganga have grown progressively worse.

The proposed National Ganga Rights Act takes its precedence from other nations. Rights have been bestowed upon nature within the Constitution of Ecuador, have been granted to the Whanganui River in New Zealand, have been recognised for Mother Earth in Bolivia, and have been mandated within municipalities including Pittsburgh, USA.

The Act is necessary because laws decreeing the rights of nature also grant legal authority to residents and governments to enforce and defend those rights. These laws change the status of ecosystems from being regarded as property to being treated as rights-bearing entities.



Special Announcements



Says Pujya Swamiji, Founder of Ganga Action Parivar, "If Ganga dies, India dies. If Ganga thrives, India thrives. In violating Her, we are violating basic human rights, and we are putting at risk the bright futures our children so greatly deserve. Now is the time for action. Let us all stand up and say, it's time for the National Ganga Rights Act."

The National Ganga Rights Act is proposed with the purposes of establishing, securing, and defending the inalienable and inherent rights of the Ganga River, its tributaries, and watershed, and the rights of the people of India to a healthy, thriving river basin. Further, the Act establishes the rights of the people of India and their governments to defend and enforce the rights of the Ganga.

*To add your name to the
petition, please visit
www.gangaaction.org.*



Special Announcements



Special Announcements

GANGA ACTION PARIVAR

Clean Ganga, Green Ganga, Serve Ganga.



Officially launched in April of 2010 by the hands of Pujya Swamiji, H.H. the Dalai Lama and numerous other saints and dignitaries, Ganga Action Parivar is a global family of professionals, environmental engineers, scientists, activists, government leaders and devoted volunteers from all across the world dedicated to serving Mother Ganga. It is a sincere effort to provide effective and sustainable solutions for the millions of people whose lives depends on the purity of the river.

GAP is working in numerous areas - from “Grand Plan” scale to “Ground Plan” scale - to address the many issues that face Ganga and her tributaries, such as creating solid waste and wastewater management programs, building toilets, planting trees, cleaning and beautifying holy pilgrimage sites, spreading awareness on how to be eco-friendly, creating alternative environmentally-friendly energy plans, and so much more. GAP’s projects have been blessed and supported by saints, scholars, yogis, economists, scientists, environmentalists and agriculturalists, among many others.

Log-on to www.gangaaction.org to learn more about Ganga, about the issues, and about the programs and projects GAP is working on. Interact and share your ideas, and find out how you can truly help no matter where you are in the world! Together as a family, we can restore, protect and maintain a free-flowing and unpolluted Ganga!

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Parmarth Niketan is happy to announce a 3-month (minimum) residential service program for those interested in engaging themselves in seva (selfless service)!

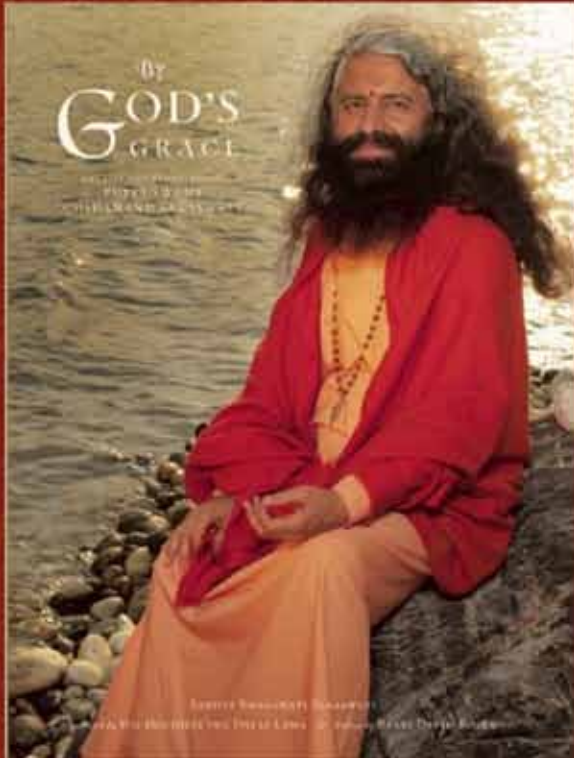
Volunteer in Parmarth and Ganga Action Parivar's numerous projects to restore and protect Ma Ganga, save the girl child, help animals, and much more. As our projects grow, so has our need for professional, inspiring, and productive volunteers who can work with us in our mission to achieve a greener, cleaner, and safer tomorrow for all humanity.

If you would like to get involved and volunteer in any one of our projects, please download our Volunteer Application Packet and send us your application.

[*Click here to download the Volunteer Application Packet.*](#)



Special Announcements



BY GOD'S GRACE

The Life & Teachings of Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati

A gorgeous coffee table biography of Pujya Swamiji has been published entitled *By God's Grace*. Upon its release, this book held the **NUMBER ONE** position as a best-seller in Amazon.com's Hinduism section, out of a total of over 17,000 books!

It is a nearly 300 page coffee table book filled with exquisite photos of Ganga, the Himalayas, and all of the saints and world leaders with whom Pujya Swamiji has spent the first 60 years of His life. However, it is more than just a beautiful beautiful book. It also tells the inspiring, uplifting and transformative stories of Pujya Swamiji's whole life — from meeting His Guru at the tender age of eight, to His youth filled with intense sadhana in the Himalayan forests and jungles, including standing on one leg for 11 hours a day.

By God's Grace then goes on to beautifully describe Pujya Swamiji's arrival into Rishikesh and choice to stay there, followed by the

history of His life at Parmarth Niketan, first as a young student and then as head of one of India's largest spiritual institutions. You will read about His travels around the world, touching and teaching people of all religions, all cultures and all walks of life. The book further details Pujya Swamiji's unparalleled projects and achievements including the eleven volume Encyclopedia of Hinduism, the construction of three ashrams in the sacred land of Lake Mansarovar and Mt. Kailash in Tibet, widespread tsunami relief work and now an unprecedented project to clean, preserve and protect the 2500 kilometer divine Ganga.

Lastly, even though for those blessed to know Him, we all understand that His life is His message, the book also includes special "teaching" sections in between the chronological chapters. Each special teaching spread takes one of Pujya Swamiji's most fundamental teachings and shares it, in His own words, through His own voice, on gorgeously illustrated pages.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has written the foreword and shares His own thoughts and experiences with Pujya Swamiji.

This book is perfect for personal reading and for gracing the top of your coffee table, and it is also the perfect gift for any friend or loved one who, whether they know Pujya Swamiji personally or not, is looking for a glimpse into the life of one of history's truest, wisest, deepest, funniest and most down-to-earth spiritual leaders.

Laugh, cry, look at yourself and your life in a brand new way.

Please visit www.bygodsgracebook.org for more information about the book and how to order.



Links

Please visit us on the web for videos and music from Parmarth Niketan, as well as information on upcoming programs and seva opportunities.



Links

Thanks to Eros Entertainment,
you can now watch videos of Pujya Swamiji online!
Click on the videos below to watch...



A Divine Life - Pujya Swamiji's
60th Birthday Film



Pujya Swamiji at
Shree Ram Mandir



Guru Purnima



Peace Through
Nonviolence



Sadhvi Bhagawati:
Power of Thought



Power of Prayer &
Divine Connection

...and click [here](#) to see even more videos online!