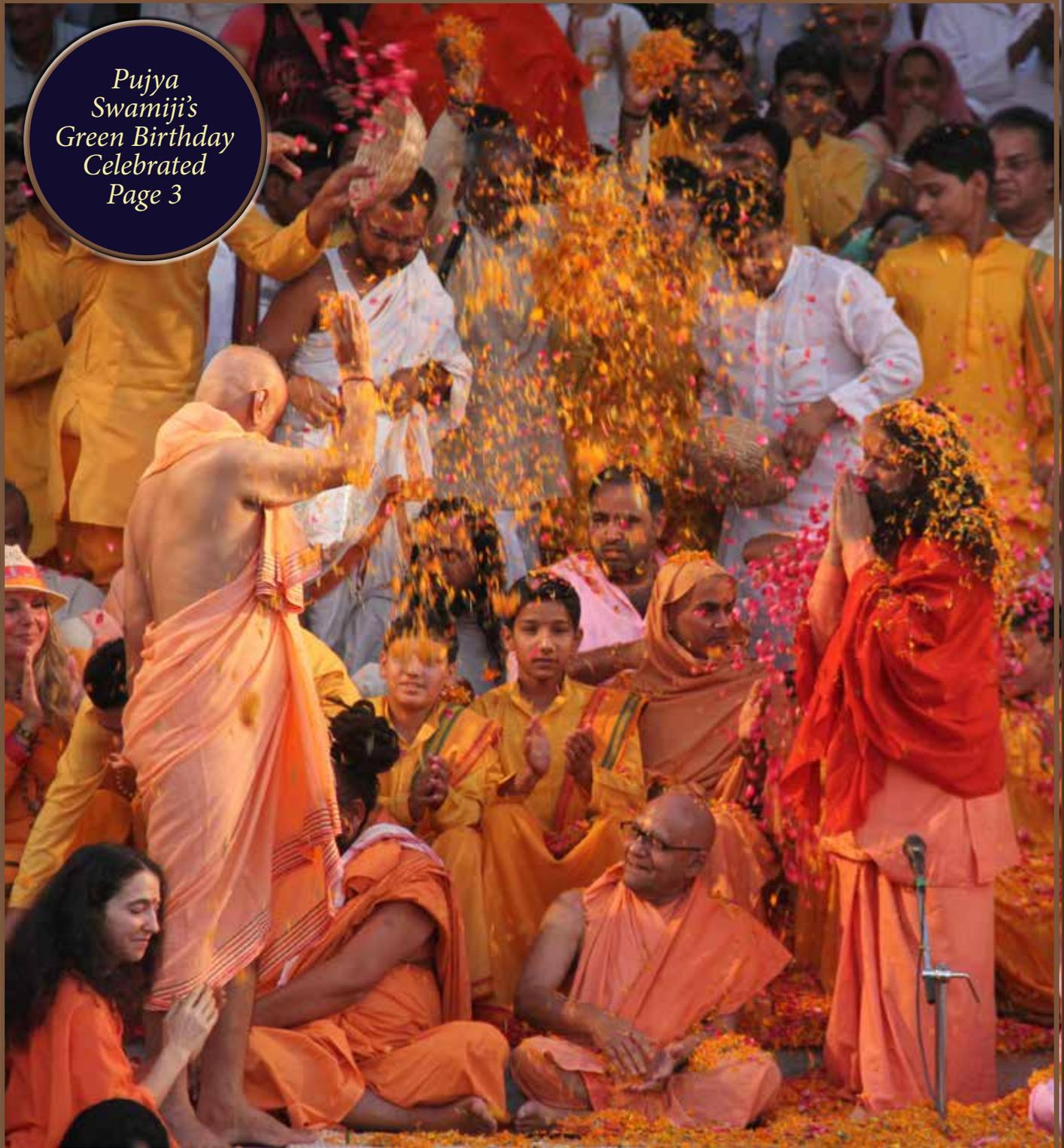


PARMARTH

H.H. Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji

LATE SPRING 2014 NEWS MAGAZINE

*Pujya
Swamiji's
Green Birthday
Celebrated
Page 3*



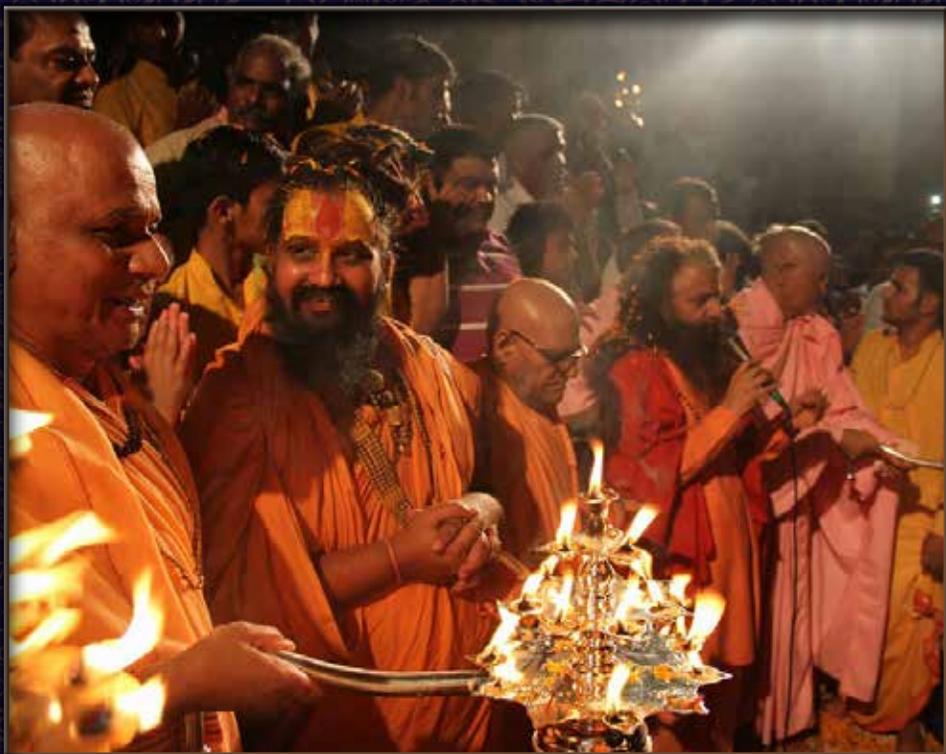
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www.parmarth.com (Parmarth Niketan Rishikesh), www.gangaaction.org (Ganga Action Parivar), www.i-wash.org (Global Interfaith WASH Alliance), www.projecthope-india.org (Project Hope), www.divineshaktifoundation.org (Divine Shakti Foundation), www.ihrf.com (India Heritage Research Foundation)

A Green Birthday FOR A GREEN GURU



Pujya Swamiji inspires and guides so many thousands and thousands of people, of all cultures, all religions, all walks of life, from all over the world to serve humanity and the environment.

It is Pujya Swamiji's divine message of 'Giving is Living and Living is Giving' that has brought not only teachings but divine touch and transformation from the banks of Mother Ganga into people's everyday lives. He continues to show us that by serving to make our environment clean, green and serene we are actually transforming our internal environment to also be clean, green and serene.

The special day of Pujya Swamiji's



birthday begun with a special havan in honour of His green birthday followed by a purnahuti by Pujya Swamiji. He actually forbids any kind of celebration, function, festivity or anything in honour of His birthday saying that He would prefer people to use their time, energy and resources in serving the world. However, a magnet cannot help but attract, and similarly Pujya Swamiji's divine magnetism attracts love, devotion and the urge to celebrate the day upon which our Guru took birth in the physical form.

During the special Shreemad Bhagawad Katha, kathakar Shri Rajendra Das Devacharya Ji Maharaj from Vrindavan spoke beautifully and reverentially about Pujya Swamiji for truly being the perfect vessel and instrument of the Divine tirelessly reflecting that Divine Light and bringing the Divine message to all.

The Parmarth Rishikumars, Parmarth Ashram and Ganga Action family as well as so many from all over the world offered their love and gratitude, through flowers, fruits, trees and plants, as a symbol of the priceless gifts He filled their lives with. The beautiful rishikumars had written special Sanskrit prayers and shlokas for Pujya Swamiji on this day, expressing their love and devotion.

During Ganga Aarti, Pujya Swami Govind Giriji Maharaj shared his profound experience of being with Pujya Swamiji in the United States for 40 days on tour and many occasions thereafter and how deeply moved he still continues to be from the divine example and life



that Pujya Swamiji leads. Pujya M.M. Swami Asanganandji blessed Pujya Swamiji for taking the meaning of Parmarth, which literally means for the Welfare of All, and truly transforming it into a universal message of love, peace and serve for all. Pujya Sadhvi shared her immense love and devotion to her Green Guru and offered, on behalf of all devotees, sacred tree saplings and a fruit tree sapling to Pujya Swamiji as a symbol of the life-giving sacredness, divinity, wisdom, nourishment and juiciness (raas) He brings to all of our lives.



Many other revered saints and dignitaries as well as devotees expressed how much Pujya Swamiji has changed and impacted their lives. As a symbol of His unconditional grace and love everyone joined together to shower Him with flowers.



Pujya Swamiji also offered His simple and deeply profound message to the gathering. He said it was so beautiful the love and affection that people showered upon Him on this special day. However, He reminded everyone that the true gift to Him was when we take the green message into our own lives, serving the creation as a symbol of our deep love for the Creator. He also inspired everyone to find ways to make all birthdays and festive occasions green, by planting trees as well as continuing to protect and preserve our environment and all of divine creation. Pujya M.M. Swami Gurusharananandji, Pujya Ramanandacharya Swami Hansdevacharyaji and Pujya Swami Guruduttsharananandji from Pathmeda also all offered their deepest love to Pujya Swamiji on their visits at the time of His birthday.

This year, Pujya Swamiji's birthday took place during a beautiful green week with World Environment Day (June 5th) and Ganga Dussehra/Gangaji's Birthday (June 8th). Therefore it was a whole green week filled with celebrations to reaffirm our own commitment to making every moment and every minute of our lives, as exemplified by Pujya Swamiji, full of giving, giving and giving with no discrimination, vacation, hesitation or expectation.

THE POWER OF PEACE: *Non-Violence And Environmental Protection: A Very Special Event*



On the 20th anniversary of the tragic passing of Pujya Acharya Sushil Muniji Maharaj, Pujya Swamiji traveled to Delhi to take part in a beautiful program organized by Pujya Vivek Muniji at the Acharya Sushil Muniji Ashram with the theme of “Non-violence and Environmental Protection.” The program was also graced by the presence of many revered saints and sadhvis of the Jain and Hindu faiths, including Pujya Swami Gurusharananandji, Pujya Swami Gyananandji, Pujya Acharya Lokesh Muniji, Pujya Acharya Amrendra Muniji, Sadhvi Bhagawatiji and many Sadhvis from the Acharya Sushil Muniji lineage and ashram.

Pujya Swamiji also brought with him, Bharat Mitra, the Founder and President of Organic India and Dr. Bruce Lipton, world renowned scientist, author and motivational speaker, both of whom had just been at Parmarth planning beautiful ways to bring upliftment to Uttarakhand, to India and to the world!

The program was a beautiful tribute to the life and message of a great saint, and the theme was so perfect because true non-violence cannot take place without environmental protection. When we are exhorted by our scriptures (and our human values) to practice non-violence it doesn't only pertain to our immediate family and friends. It pertains to all life on Earth. Therefore, sitting back and not acting while our brothers and sisters are suffering and dying due to polluted water, air and soil or due to starvation or drought is violence. Allowing our animals, our rivers, our mountains and our forests to be abused, used, destroyed and discarded for our own pleasure or usage is violence..



Election Day, 2014

CELEBRATING DEMOCRACY



The historic elections in India came to a close with a sweeping victory of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) with 334 seats out of 543 seats in the House. People's favorite and charismatic Prime Ministerial candidate, Shri Narendra Modiji, led the historic victory. People all over the India joined in celebration and joy at the divine prospect of creating a new clean, green and serene nation together.

In the weeks leading up to the elections Pujya Swamiji called upon people to exercise their democratic voice and make sure to vote, thereby helping to shape the nation's future. Pujya Swamiji also wrote several thought-provoking articles in some of India's leading newspapers inspiring the nation to pave the way for a better and brighter India -- heralding in an era of peace and sustainability that the nation was desperately seeking.



Pujya Swamiji gave riveting speeches during the election period about the need to work together in the next few years, not thinking of our individual agendas but rather serving together for our nation's agenda. He said the sweeping victory to one colour -- saffron, the colour of the NDA -- indicated that the nation was ready to come together as One above all parties, castes, creeds, races and regions. He emphasized that the time has finally come that we must join hands together, walk together and work together as people of one nation and one world.

Watch Pujya Swamiji's inspiring and uplifting speech on the banks of Mother Ganga online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7NwP7pHAuQ>

GANGA DUSHERA

The World Comes Together to Celebrate Mother Ganga



On the occasion of Ganga Dusshera, a glorious day of celebration of the day in which Goddess Ganga came onto this Earth in the form of a sacred river to liberate the souls of the sons of King Sagara (and therefore all of us....), we had a beautiful Ganga Dusshera puja with the chanting of stotras, prayers and hymns for Mother Ganga who gives and gives with no hesitation, no discrimination, no vacation and no expectation! During the aarti, Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi Bhagawatiji gave inspiring messages of how, as we worship Mother Ganga and sign Her glories, we should also take Ganga's messages into our own lives, and we too should continue to flow, flow and flow, regardless of the hurdles or obstacles, regardless of what turns or sharp banks our lives encounter, regardless of whether people worship/revere and love us or not. Ganga just keeps flowing with her divine flow, and so should we....

Also, on this joyous occasion, we prayed and paid homage to all those who lost their lives in last year's tragic floods of Uttarakhand where the rushing waters of Mother Ganga rose to heights unseen in over 100 years, at the very time of Ganga Dusshera. We remembered the tragic flooding and subsequent landslides swept away homes, businesses, whole villages, bridges and road in which tens of thousands of people lost their lives either in the floods themselves or by



being subsequently stranded for days in the mountains without shelter, food, medical aid or water.

In this remembrance, we also remember the message that Mother Ganga and Mother Nature taught us during the tragedy. 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 gets washed away into the rivers.

On Ganga's birthday last year, 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."

This is why in honour of this important lesson, under the banner of Project Hope, Pujya Swamiji is leading, guiding and inspiring Ganga Action Parivar, Divine Shakti Foundation and Global Interfaith WASH Alliance to continue projects for sustainable rehabilitation and reconstruction in the affected regions. Some of these projects include:

- Kedarnath Memorial Katha- in honour of those who lost their lives in last year's floods
- Sustainable Livelihoods: from handicrafts to organic farming in order to empower and reignite the spirit of entrepreneurship in the hearts and minds of the Himalayan people, especially the youth. Three livelihoods centers -- at Triyuginarayan, Guptakashi and Rudraprayag -- will be opened in the first phase.
- Kedarnath Smriti Van: International Memorial Gardens- Planting thousands of indigenous trees as a symbol of the resilient spirit of the innocent lives lost. Just as the trees grow and thrive so to do their spirits remind us to heed the lessons of Mother Nature and grow in harmony with the very soil that sustains our roots and our lives.
- A New Beginning and Divine Union- sponsorship of sacred marriage ceremonies for the widows who



Just as the trees grow and thrive so to do their spirits remind us to heed the lessons of Mother Nature and grow in harmony with the very soil that sustains our roots and our lives.

- A New Beginning and Divine Union- sponsorship of sacred marriage ceremonies for the widows who lost their husbands at a very young age.
- School Rehabilitation and Reconstruction- Plans are already underway for two schools in Uttarakashi and Guptakashi as well as to incorporate green technologies and programmes into every school in Uttarakhand so that children are proud of their traditional heritage, equipped with the basic necessities and green values to lead their future as green ambassadors of change.



- Biosand Filter and Clean Water For All: providing every gram panchayat and school with clean water to drink
- Mid-Day Fruit Programme: planting fruit trees in every school so children are nourished and nurtured into strong and thriving adults
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All

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

Revered saints, experts, media and all stakeholders continue to be brought together by Pujya Swamiji's divine vision and leadership. Let us take Mother Ganga's 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.

BUDDHA JAYANTI

Pujya Swamiji and dignitaries come together to remember and celebrate Lord Buddha

Pujya Swamiji shared the message of the Buddha at a beautiful and grand celebration of Buddha Jayanti organized by Spice Group's Chairman, Dr BK Modi, a renowned industrialist, philanthropist, and global citizen.

Pujya Swamiji explained: 'Buddha's life was his Divine message to the world. Through his determination to find the truth he brought so much light to the world. Most people all over the world say the same thing. They all say, "I want Peace, I want peace." I always tell them their solution is hidden within their own statement of "I want peace." If you remove the 'I' – the ego, attachments and false identity; and if you remove the 'want' – never-ending desires, then all that is left is 'Peace.' So the way to find peace is simply to remove 'I' and "want." Buddha's message and life teach us how to remove the 'I' and the 'want' and live in Peace – not pieces. This is also the need of our nation and the world today to live in Peace and promote a culture of Peace and oneness'.

At the event Pujya Swamiji met with many interfaith leaders and dignitaries and discussed the plethora of green actions that GIWA, GAP and Project Hope are engaged in as well as inspired them to come together at this exciting time in the history of the nation to contribute towards the work of nation building.



WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

People from Rishikesh and Around the World Come Together for a Cleaner, Greener Tomorrow



On World Environmental Day, under Pujya Swamiji's leadership, Ganga Action Parivar volunteers came together with the local children and adults from the Kali Ki Dhal Village in Rishikesh to help clean up the local Rambha River.

The day was a huge success, with over 50 community members joining together to volunteer both their time and green thumbs for the day. Everyone was full of enthusiasm and dedication to their "green pledge," and as a result a total of 14 loads of garbage was removed from the Rambha River.

After the clean-up, the students along with the volunteers met together at the local school to talk about current environmental problems affecting India, especially Mother Ganga and the polluted state of her waters.



The children and volunteers were able to talk and chat about the day, stories and laughs were shared and many photos were taken.

The result was remarkable and the children were able to see the importance of keeping their local village clean and the positive impact this has on their environment, their health and their families. They were empowered and excited by the difference a few hours of their time and energy could have on their surroundings.

While volunteers were busy out in the field, meetings were continuously on in Pujya Swamiji's jyopadi (hut) for a variety of environmental initiatives, including eco-crematoriums on the banks of Mother Ganga, especially in Varanasi, plans for improving the Char Dham Yatra and making the pilgrimage a clean, green and serene one. Other topics ranged from plans to provide rehabilitation and livelihoods to the people in the Kedar Valley as well as creating films and infomercials to raise people's awareness on a wide variety of pressing environmental concerns. As Pujya Swamiji says, "We must provide information AND inspiration. The information is crucial for people to know the problems, but they must also be guided and inspired on how they can make a difference."

During Ganga Aarti, Pujya Swamiji and Sadhviji gave inspiring messages of Environmental Day, urging us all to: "Treat every day as World Environment Day." Also they emphasized the parallel between our external environment and internal environment. Sadhviji explained that "When our internal environment is clean, green and serene, then that is what we spread and share in the world. So we must not only pledge to clean the environment around us, but we must also commit to going within and cleaning the internal garbage of ego, anger, jealousy, and grudges." Pujya Swamiji concluded the beautiful program with His blessings to all and told the thousands gathered that "Your efforts, your time, your talent, your tenacity, your experience, energy and expertise in every area are greatly appreciated and go towards a cleaner, greener earth which benefits all of us."



CELEBRATING MOTHER'S DAY AND MOTHER EARTH



A very special Mother's Day was celebrated at Parmarth Niketan where Pujya Swamiji emphasized the importance of coming together as Shakti for Shakti and Shakti for Prakriti (the environment). Mother's Day is not only a day to celebrate our physical birth mother, but it is a day to celebrate our Divine Mother, the Mother Goddess who is embodied on Earth in the forms of Mother Ganga, Mother Nature and Mother Earth who provide us not only with birth but who also sustain our lives, every moment and every breath.

Nearly twenty five members of the Rescue Foundation, including twenty young girls, came from Mumbai to seek Pujya Swamiji's blessings and to be on the holy banks of Mother Ganga.

Rescue Foundation's President Mrs. Triveni Acharya was so impressed to hear about the Divine Shakti Foundation, an organization founded by Pujya Swamiji (www.divineshaktifoundation.org) dedicated to providing education, upliftment and empowerment

to women and children, and she discussed with Pujya Swamiji ways in which the Rescue Foundation can join hands with Divine Shakti Foundation to help empower more and more young girls and to start a center on the beautiful and sacred banks of Mother Ganga in Uttarakhand.

Pujya Swamiji explained: "Our scriptures have always said that we must respect, revere and honour the Divine Feminine - the Divine Shakti. In Hinduism the Divine Feminine is always placed before the Divine Masculine that's why people chant, Gauri Shankar, Sita Ram and Radhye Shyam. Unfortunately, today the neglect and exploitation of our young girls and women is not different from the neglect of Mother Ganga and Mother Nature. On the occasion of Mother's Day we have the opportunity to renew our pledge to stand up for the protection and preservation of all forms of the Divine Feminine - including stopping exploitation in the form of human trafficking or pollution and degradation of Mother Nature".



The young girls were tearful of leaving but promised that on the occasion of Mother's Day they would bring what they had learned back to their sisters in Mumbai and inspire them also to pledge, as Pujya Swamiji said: 'Shakti for Shakti' and 'Shakti for Prakriti'. Their weeklong stay at Parmarth was filled with yoga, meditation, satsangs, self-study and divine Ganga Aarti.

Mrs. Acharya said: 'It is such a joy to have a home on the banks of Mother Ganga and to recharge and renew our efforts and to continue on this path with the blessings of Pujya Swamiji.'

On the special day, the life and spirit of recently deceased Smt Vijaya Garg, husband of Shri DP Garg, and disciple of Pujya Swami Shukdevanandji Maharaj, Founder of Parmarth Niketan, was also honoured and celebrated with a beautiful recitation of the Sundarkand Paath.

Pujya Swamiji said on the occasion: 'It is so fitting that on this occasion we recite the Sundarkand which reminds us that our life is made sundar (beautiful) by being a vessel and an instrument in the hands of the Divine. We can all make our lives beautiful by recognizing that we too are instruments. When we live our lives as tools in God's hands then every moment and every minute becomes beautiful and divine.'

WORSHIP TO WASH

Pujya Swamiji and UNICEF Meet on GIWA



Executives from UNICEF came to visit Pujya Swamiji to discuss the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA), of which Pujya Swamiji is the co-founded, and which was launched at UNICEF World Headquarters in New York this past September during the United Nations General Assembly Meetings. Pujya Swamiji discussed GIWA's many accomplishments in India, through which faith leaders are working to inspire the entire nation towards realizing the vision of improved water, sanitation and hygiene for all.

During the meeting, they discussed joint plans for GIWA's "From Worship to WASH Summit", scheduled to take place this autumn. In so doing Pujya Swamiji said: "the theme, from Worship to WASH is truly an innovation in spirituality that the world needs today. Simply by washing hands, providing access to clean water and sanitation facilities, many innocent lives can be saved. People of all faiths and religions should come together to serve for this mission."

To learn more about the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, visit www.i-wash.org.



SERENE AND GREEN KATHAS

On the Banks of Mother Ganga



The beautiful summer time is a time in which the grounds of Parmarth are filled with the joyous sound of the rendition of Katha -- the sacred recitation of the Shrimad Bhagavatam, Ramayana, Mahabharat, Devi Bhagawati and so many other holy books. Renowned kathakars come from across India and fill the air with the message and the lives of Bhagawan Krishna, Bhagawan Rama, Bhagawan Shiva and the Divine Mother Goddess, with song and inspiring commentary.

In the last month there have been three beautiful Shrimad Bhagawat kathas at Parmarth -- by Pujya Shri Rajendra Das Devacharyaji from Vrindavan, Pujya Swami Govind Giriji from Pune and Pujya Shri Mridul Krishna Shastriji from Vrindavan. The gardens of Parmarth became the gardens of Vraj and the melody of Shri Krishna's flute could be heard on the winds as they blew across the waters of Mother Ganga.

Pujya Swamiji gave a beautiful message in each Katha about making the Kathas "Green Kathas." He said, "Let us bring Lord Shri Krishna's message into action and start by preserving and protecting our trees, cows and Mother Earth, the time has come to make the Hari (Bhagawat) Katha also a Hari (Green) Katha. We should come together to not only worship the Creator but also serve and preserve His Creation."

Pujya Swamiji emphasized that Kathakar's have a social responsibility in creating awareness, as they provide society the knowledge on how to lead a holistic spiritual life -- guiding them on how to connect to the Creator and His Creation.



SANJIV CHOPRA, JOINT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AT PARMARTH



Shri Sanjiv Chopra, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, came with his family to visit Pujya Swamiji and perform Ganga Aarti. Shri Sanjeevji had previously been posted for many years in Uttarakhand and had even traveled on Kailash Mansarovar yatra with Pujya Swamiji, during which time his daily articles in the newspapers of Uttarakhand about the yatra and the ashrams built by Pujya Swamiji in Kailash/ Mansarovar became highlighted and much-anticipated reading material for so many people who couldn't personally travel to the sacred land but were able to go vicariously through Sanjeevji's daily journal posts.

During his recent visit, he discussed with Pujya Swamiji ways in which the nation could provide healthy, nourishing and organic produce for not only every Indian, but also people all around the world.

Pujya Swamiji discussed with him ways in which organic farming and techniques could truly transform the Himalayan land and provide a diversified source of livelihoods to the people of this land. They discussed ways to bring about an "Organic Revolution" and how Pujya Swamiji's slogans of 'Jai Jai Gange!' 'Jaivik Gange' and 'Har Har Gange' 'Herbal Gange' can be spread along both sides of the river bank, transforming them into green corridors filled with rich and lush trees, medicinal plants and greenery that will not only sustain the health of the river, but also the health of the people along its banks, curb climate change and even prevent soil erosion.

Shri Sanjeevji pledged his full support to the cause and pledged to do his utmost to take these divine efforts forward.

JAGDISH STORE TO TRANSFORM LIVES DEVASTATED BY DISASTER

with Project Hope

Pujya Swamiji inspired Jagdish Store's Founder and President, Shri Jagdish Khandelwal, and his entire family to take a Green Pledge to transform their business into an environmentally conscious and eco-friendly green business, inspiring each and every one of their clients to bring about meaningful and sustainable changes in their own lives to reduce their carbon and water footprint.

When Jagdishji heard about Pujya Swamiji's projects through Ganga Action Parivar and Divine Shakti Foundation, under the banner of Project Hope, for the upliftment and empowerment of the widows of the region of Kedarnath and Guptakashi, especially regarding the provision of vocational training in handicrafts and handloom products so that they could weave not only sweaters and shawls but actually the fabric of their lives back together, he generously offered his full support to buying back their finished products. Furthermore, he also pledged to offer his businesses' support in acquiring and providing the initial raw resources, as well as research and development to enhance the finished products and training for all those women in the Kedar Valley who had lost their families and/or their husbands in last year's floods and were left with no source of income.

Deeply touched by the genuine and tireless efforts of Pujya Swamiji Shri Jagdishji stayed back one more day at the ashram and visited the nearby Jute and Handicrafts Manufacturing Unit with Pujya Swamiji to plan ways in which they could collaborate and enhance the scale of benefit that the Himalayan women and their families could get from viable livelihoods so that they could light the candle of hope and healing in their homes and their hearts.

To read about more of Project Hope's efforts, be sure to check out www.projecthope-india.org and stay posted in the next issue of the latest updates of the manufacturing plants being inaugurated in Guptakashi and Kedarnath at the completion of the one year anniversary of the terrible and tragic Himalayan tsunami.



Shri Dinesh Shahra in Support of Sustainable and Green Livelihoods

Dinesh Shahra, Managing Director of Ruchi Soya Industries, one of the largest agri-business companies in India, came to spend a few days on the banks of Mother Ganga and to seek the blessings of Pujya Swamiji. For many years he has been associated with Parmarth Niketan and has been deeply inspired by Pujya Swamiji's efforts to clean and green the banks of Mother Ganga.

Upon hearing about all of Pujya Swamiji's programs, particularly those focused on saving the cows and providing upliftment/empowerment to young girls and women, he pledged to dedicate himself to the 3G's programme of Gau (cows), Ganga and Gauri (the female - Shakti). As Pujya Swamiji said, "Dineshji has come forward not only in a great step of CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility, but even more importantly in a great step of HSR - Human Social Responsibility.



ACTRESS PUNAM SINHA COMES TO PARMARTH NIKETAN

Joined by a delegation from Kazakhstan



Punam Sinha, well known Indian actress and producer, as well as the wife of famous Bollywood actor/politician Shatrughan Sinha, and the mother of twin brothers Luv Sinha and Kush Sinha and the mother of beloved Bollywood actress Sonakshi Sinha, came to Parmarth Niketan to perform Ganga Aarti with Pujya Swamiji on the banks of Mother Ganga, after visiting Kedarnath earlier in the day. She was so touched and moved to hear about the plethora of service projects that Pujya Swamiji is leading under the banner of Project Hope to bring hope and healing to survivors of the devastating Himalayan

Tsunami last year. She was especially eager to join the programs through Ganga Action Parivar and Divine Shakti Foundation to provide livelihoods and empowerment to widows who had lost their husbands and/or their families in last year's floods. Amongst many things, Pujya Swamiji inspired her to pledge and offer her divine shakti for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), starting with providing clean and safe water and sanitation in her own hometown of Bihar.

Filled with joy and gratitude, she shared, "Today is one of the most divine and beautiful

days of my life, having had darshan of Kedar Baba (Lord Shiva at Kedarnath). I am so glad to serve in this mission to provide health, healing and hope to all. I look forward to taking this shakti and blessing from the Creator and offering it back to His creation.”

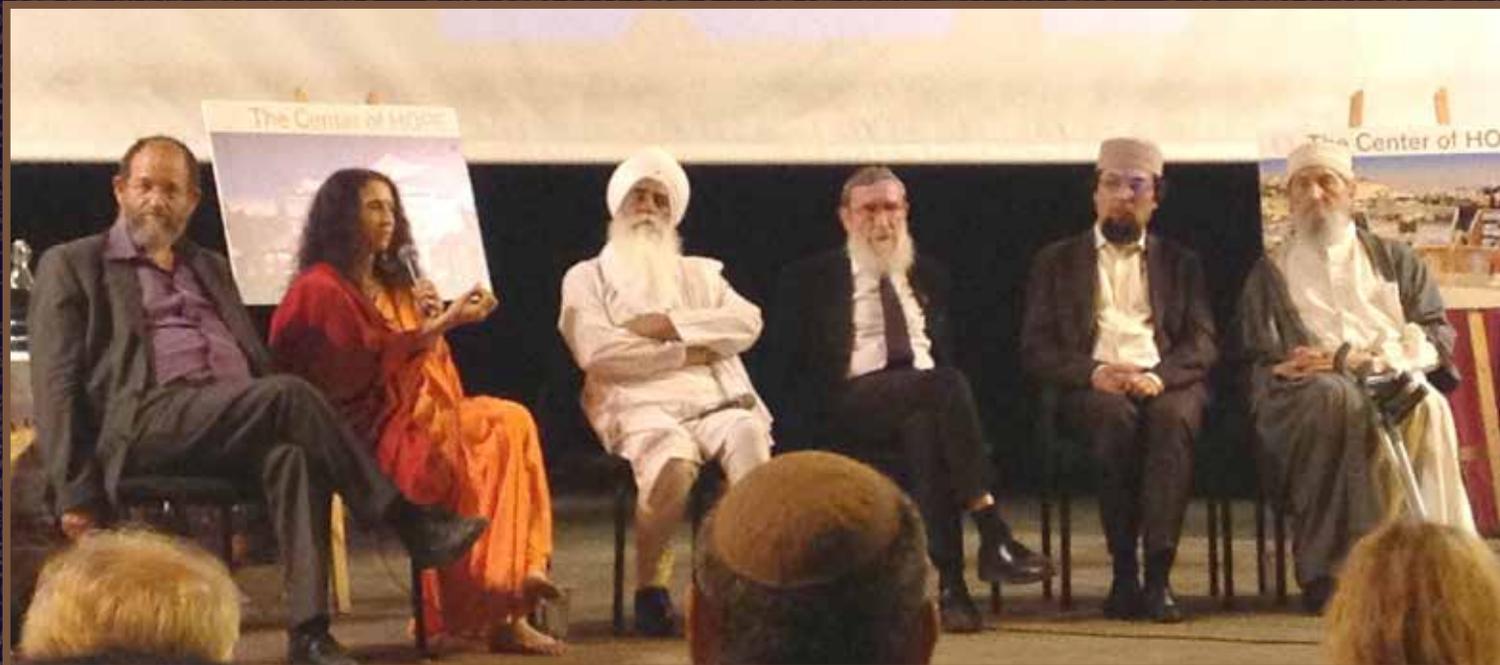
Also visiting on the day was a family from Kazakhstan which was so deeply inspired by Pujya Swamiji’s work for Mother Ganga and His divine vision of keeping India clean, green and serene that without speaking a word of English or Hindi, they eagerly vowed to take His universal message back home and to be green ambassadors in their communities. They were encouraged by Pujya Swamiji and Pujya Sadhviji to strengthen their commitment by taking part in a tree plantation and by offering their prayers in GIWA’s sacred Water Blessing Ceremony.

Young green hero, ten-year-old Keshav from Bombay lead everyone in a pledge to stop using plastics and littering our waterways. Bhavnya and her brother from New Delhi also pledged to engage Youth for Ganga and for the Environment.



JOURNEY TO HOLY ISRAEL

Leaders of the Faiths Gather During the Pope's Historic Visit



On the 26th of May, HH Pope Francis paid his first official visit to the holy nation of Israel. During his visit, interfaith programmes connected to the Elijah Institute and the Institute's proposed new HOPE (House of Prayer and Education) Centre were planned.

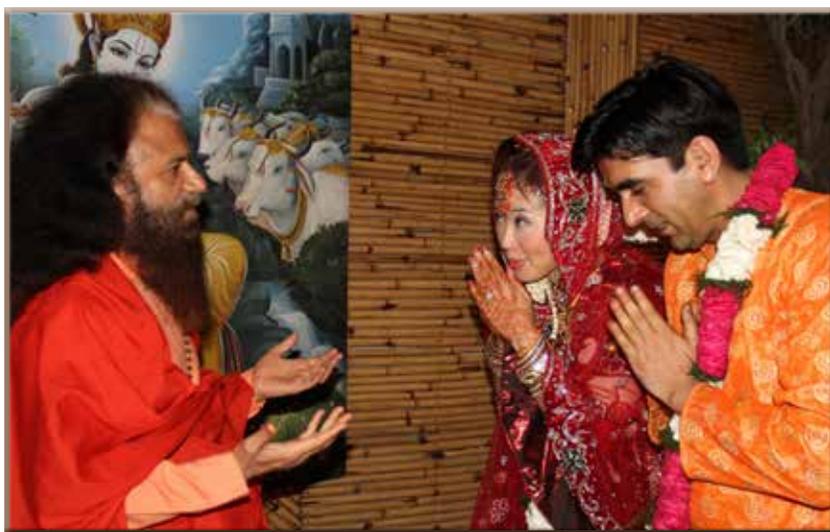
For these auspicious events, Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji travelled to Israel, on the invitation of Dr. Alon Goshen-Gottstein, Founder and Director of the Elijah Institute, along with renowned faith leaders, including Bhai Sahib Mohinder Singhji from Birmingham, UK.

During the visit, the group visited the proposed site for the HOPE Centre, attended the function of HH Pope Francis at the President's house and had an interfaith public dialogue programme in Jerusalem.

While in Israel, Sadviji also had a meeting with Eli Cohen of Ayala Aqua about his organization's wonderful technology for using beautiful plants to clean pollute waters and how he can work with Ganga Action Parivar and the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance to bring this beautiful technology to Uttarakhand. She also met with Rabbi Yonatan Nerio of the Interfaith Centre for Sustainable Development, as well as the United Planet Faith and Science Institute, of which Pujya Swamiji is a Founding Member and Sadviji is a Member. During these meetings, they discussed how all can join forces with Ganga Action Parivar and the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance to make the world cleaner, greener, healthier and happier.

A JOYOUS WEDDING

Celebrated at the Beautiful Banks of Mother Ganga



The beautiful banks of the River Ganga has drawn loving couples for their holy wedding vows for millennia. Today, people from around the world come to Parmarth Niketan for their nuptials and blessings from Mother Ganga and Pujya Swamiji.

This spring was no exception, as our serene ashram welcomed brides and grooms who will forever remember taking their sacred vows as the Ganga flowed in Her beautiful shades of silver and azure blue.



AS READ ON CNN

India Awakening: How a holy place and its people helped a Western woman find wholeness

Story by Jessica Ravitz, CNN

<http://www.cnn.com/interactive/2014/06/world/rishikesh/>

Shoes off and feet freezing, I fidget cross-legged in front of the first swami I've ever met.

He's draped in saffron robes, serene and still. His eyes are shut, his mind taking him to places I can't know. Vines climb the thatch wall of bamboo behind him. Around me, as the courtyard fills, women weep. The swami's eyes open and are as gentle as his smile. I feel the warmth, but I don't understand the tears.

I'm in Rishikesh, a spiritual hot spot nestled in the foothills of the Indian Himalayas, where ashrams dot the landscape and the sacred river Ganges flows toward the plains. Hindus have long made pilgrimages to this holy place, where saints and sages are said to have meditated for thousands of years. But ever since the Beatles came here in 1968, Westerners have made it their spiritual Disneyland. They roam the streets, dotted with shops, seers and more yoga classes than any yogi can possibly take, looking for enlightenment. I understand this hunger to find one's path. I've done plenty of searching in my years and wrestled with life more times than I can count.

I took off for Israel in my 20s to dig into roots I'd never explored. I struggled with the wounds of childhood, my parents' divorce when I was a toddler, a second divorce when I was a teen. I've lived in eight states and moved more than two dozen times. I've traveled a road rich with twists — and some potholes — on my journey to find a career that fit, face my father's sudden death and navigate a foible-filled search for Mr. Right. But I arrive in Rishikesh feeling fully formed. At last, I'm settled, happy, perfectly comfortable with where I am. At 44, I've cleared obstacles and found serenity,



which includes a profession, home, life and — to my surprise, I think — a man I adore.

I'm now on a far less personal mission: to write about this place and what it means to those who flock here. I plan to push myself out of my comfort zone, get my yoga on, try my hand at meditation. I'll meet with gurus, hear about past lives, dabble in some ancient therapies.

My overriding goal, though, is to study those around me, the people seeking answers I suspect I've already found.

**READ MORE OF THIS
FASCINATING CNN STORY FEATURING
PARMARTH NIKETAN, CLICK: [http://www.cnn.com/
interactive/2014/06/world/rishikesh/](http://www.cnn.com/interactive/2014/06/world/rishikesh/)**

**READ A WONDERFUL STORY FEATURING
PARMARTH NIKETAN IN
THE NEW YORK TIMES, CLICK:
[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/22/travel/unplugging-in-the-
unofficial-capital-of-yoga.html?hpw&rref=travel&r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/22/travel/unplugging-in-the-unofficial-capital-of-yoga.html?hpw&rref=travel&r=1)**

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS



HOPE IS IN YOUR HANDS

*Sign the Petition for the
National Ganga River Rights Act Today!*



Shri Anna Hazare and Muslim leaders stand with Pujya Swamiji to declare, "Ganga's Rights are Our Rights."



The National Ganga Rights Act draft being proudly held by Pujya Swamiji, HE Governor Shri B.L. Joshi of Uttar Pradesh and the Honourable Union Minister of Water Resources, Shri Harish Rawat

Founded by **Pujya Swamiji**, the National Ganga River Rights Movement is a coalition of concerned citizens and organizations that are taking a stand on behalf of the Ganga River and its tributaries—while there is still time.

For far too long, people have said there is nothing that can be done. But all the while, the water that nourishes us has become so polluted that it has become a hot-spot for cancers and other deadly diseases, such as typhoid and cholera. The beautiful river that has inspired poets and sages has sadly become one of the most endangered rivers in the world.

As a coalition, we bring a new and strong voice. Together, we stand for the National Ganga River Rights Act, which will help protect Mother Ganga and the 500 million people who rely on Her for life itself.

Mother Ganga Needs You. Sign the petition for the National Ganga Rights at www.gangarights.org, and help ensure Her clean and green future.



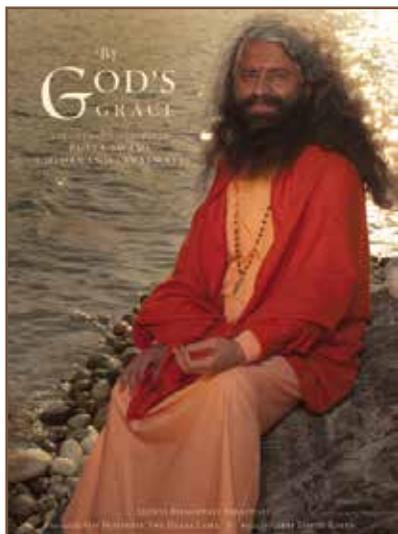
Emraan Hashmi, Huma Qureshi and Ekta Kapoor say "Ganga's Rights are Our Rights!"



The cast of C.I.D. stands for Ganga's Rights

BY GOD'S GRACE

The Life & Teachings of Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati



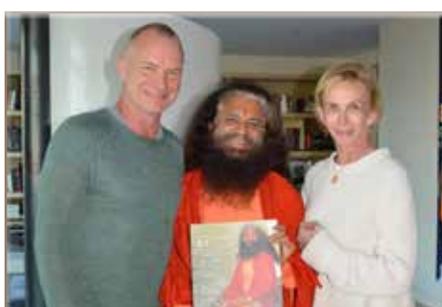
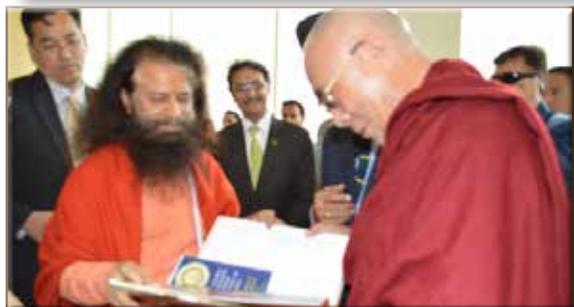
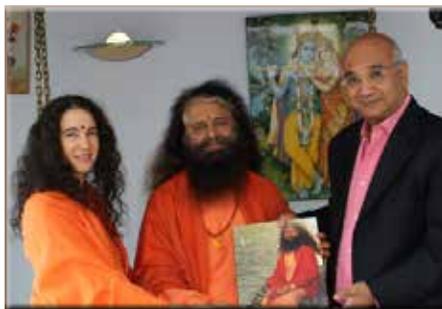
In this compelling biography, **Pujya Swamiji's** divine life is beautifully detailed chronologically. Upon its release, this book held the **NUMBER ONE** position as the best-seller in Amazon.com's Hindusim section, out of a total of over 17,000 books!

Illustrated with exquisite photos of Ganga, the Himalayas, and all of the saints and world leaders with who Pujya Swamiji has spent the first 60 years of His life, it 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 of 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.

Pujya Swamiji's very life is His message; the book also includes special "teaching" sections. 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.

Published by Mandala Earth Publications of California, USA, 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.

For more information including ordering information for this beautiful book please visit www.bygodsgracebook.org.



VOLUNTEER WITH US

Join hands in a global interfaith mission of peace



We are always looking for caring, hard-working volunteers to join us here at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh.

As our projects grow, so has our need for professional, inspiring, and productive individuals who wish to dedicate their time, talent, technology and tenacity for 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 application.



VISIT US ONLINE

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



VISIT OUR WEBSITES BY CLICKING:

www.parmarth.com (Parmarth Niketan Rishikesh), www.gangaaction.org (Ganga Action Parivar),
www.i-wash.org (Global Interfaith WASH Alliance), www.projecthope-india.org (Project Hope),
www.divineshaktifoundation.org (Divine Shakti Foundation),
www.ihrf.com (India Heritage Research Foundation)

