

PARMARTH

November 2017 Newsletter



This beautiful News Magazine highlights Pujya Swamiji's leadership and vision during numerous Swachhta Hi Seva activities and events, including a massive clean up of the iconic Lakshman Jhula, and several mass awareness programmes, concluding into a 12-hour Banega Swachh India Cleanathon with the legendary Amitabh Bachchan.

It includes the launch of the Swachh Bihar Yatra, Kailash Satyarthi's visit home to Parmarth Niketan as part of his Bharat Yatra mass awareness campaign, meeting with the President of India, as well as Pujya Swamiji's visits to London, Myanmar, Nepal, the Netherlands, Rajasthan and so much more.

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VISIT OUR WEBSITES

www.washalliance.org (Global Interfaith WASH Alliance)
www.parmarth.org (Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh)
www.gangaaction.org (Ganga Action Parivar)
www.divineshaktifoundation.org (Divine Shakti Foundation)
www.projecthope-india.org (Project Hope)



Cleanathon with Amitabh Bachchan: Banega Swachh India

GIWA's Interfaith Leaders come together for Clean Air, Water & Soil

Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, President Parmarth Niketan, Co-Founder Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA), led a diverse and beautiful delegation of GIWA's interfaith leaders for Banega Swachh India NDTV, a 12-hour cleanathon anchored by Campaign Ambassador, the legendary Amitabh Bachchan, and Mr. Vikram Chandra, CEO of NDTV. The campaign is aimed at spreading awareness about sanitation and empowering citizens by providing better hygiene and sanitation facilities across the country.

The theme of the cleanathon this year is to take a holistic approach to swachhta and to engage people to implement solutions.

With a focus on Swachh Zameen, Swachh Hawa and Swachh Paani (clean land, clean air and clean water), the interfaith leaders attending (including: Mahmood A Madani, Secretary General, Jamia Ulama-i-Hind, Imam Umer Ahmed Ilyasi, President, All India Imam Organisation and former MP Rajya Sabha)

elevated the importance of hygiene with the equivalence of marriage, saying that adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities in people's home should have the same level of importance as marriage has. He said it was a new revolutionary approach, but the shift that needs to take place in people's awareness.

Amitabh Bachchan spoke about the need to introspect on why the voices of Swachh are still not reaching millions of people out there. He said we should work every day towards



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cleanliness, that the efficiency of the implementation should also be looked into, and that we must get together and think alike and inevitably become a better and cleaner nation.

Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, Secretary General, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance and President of the Divine Shakti Foundation, shared that through the World Toilet College, WaterSchool and the massive interfaith work for WASH initiatives by GIWA, there is a deep commitment to bring this change.

Shri Nitesh Kapoor of Reckitt Benckiser and Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Archbishop of Bombay, shared the importance of faith leaders coming together for a clean India. Pujya Swamiji concluded the panel with a beautiful interfaith pledge stating that when we come together as one family, we relate a very strong message that if we can be together, then not only our communities and congregations, but our entire country can join together to make a Swachh aur Swasth Bharat. Together we are the solution, and when we start with

our own homes then the change will be reflected in our world as well. Pujya Swamiji and Sadhviji also spoke in a panel prior to the interfaith panel with a focus on Swachh Hawa and shared several solutions to crop burning and the air pollution that it creates.

The Cleanathon brought together revered saints, celebrities, singers, Chief Ministers of states, government officials, schools and many sectors of society to raise awareness of this vital cause.

Namami Gange! Yatra flagged off by CM Yogi Adityananthji & Pujya Swamiji

A Clean Ganga Yatra organised by the Uttar Pradesh Home Guards



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Pujya Swamiji, together with the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, the Honorable Mahant Yogi Adityanathji, were present to bless and waive off the Namami Ganga Yatra as it started its tour to bring awareness and inspire all in the urgent need to take care of Ganga and Yamuna. From just outside the CM's residence in the state's capital of Lucknow, the Honorable Mahant Yogi Adityanathji, together with Pujya Swamiji, Shri Suresh Khanna, Parliamentary Affairs & Urban

Development Minister of GoUP, Shri Anil Rajbhar, Minister Sainik Kalyan, Food Processing, Home Guard and PRD of GoUP, and Shri Surya Kumar, DG, spoke of the importance of this Yatra and gave their blessings.

The yatra was organised and planned by the Uttar Pradesh Home Guards and consisted of 100 Home Guards who travelled from Lucknow to Haridwar, Rishikesh and many more towns in UP to help inspire industries,

local organisations, youth, pilgrims and concerned civil society to connect with this mission and take ownership in keeping Ganga and Yamuna clean and free flowing. The yatra route covered the cities where the Ganga is most endangered and polluted, and was planned from the 9th August to the middle of September.

Pujya Swamiji blessed everyone at the opening ceremony by saying, "This Yatra (journey) by the Home Guards illustrates that we

must each start this movement from our own homes, protecting the fast depleting lifeline of our nation - Maa Ganga. The change has to start with us and it must start now!" He also gave a clarion call to everyone to make their traditions, festivals and celebrations green as well as to work to green both sides of the river bank, so that the rivers flow freely and are recharged.

Pujya Swamiji lauded the Honorable CM'S great leadership in creating a cleaner and greener UP and

shared that citizens of UP were truly very fortunate to have him at the helm of their state, which has a population equivalent to many countries combined.

The Honorable Chief Minister shared in his inspiring address, "My government is committed to this vital and noble pledge that our Honorable Prime Minister has taken, but we must all do our part to contribute towards the Namami Gange mission. I encourage the UP Home Guards to take this Ya-

tra with great enthusiasm, energy and commitment towards completion; connecting with everyone to ensuring a free flowing and unpolluted Mother Ganga for all." During the event Pujya Swamiji gifted the Honorable UP CM a sacred elachi mala, as a symbol of his ever green leadership, and also a special Peepal tree, as a symbol of his commitment to making the banks of Mother Ganga clean and green for all.

Samvad II: Conflict Avoidance and Environmental Consciousness

Interfaith Leaders inspired to join together for environmental preservation



An International meeting to promote conflict avoidance, which was jointly organised by the Vivekananda International Foundation, India, Sitagu International Buddhist Academy and University, Myanmar and the Japan Foundation, in association with the Acharya Sabha, was attended by Pujya Swamiji in Myanmar, Burma.

Pujya Swamiji joined Junapeethadishwar Pujya Acharya, MM Swami Avdheshanand Giriji, Pujya Swami Parmatmanand Saraswatiiji, Pujya Swami Madhavpriyadasji of

Swaminarayan Gurukul Parivar, Respected Syed Salman Chisthyji (Head of the Chishty Foundation), Dargah Ajmer Sharif and many revered Hindu and Buddhist saints from Cambodia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Japan, Myanmar and India. The delegates graced and blessed the Samvad II: Global Initiative on Conflict Avoidance and Environmental Consciousness, which was inaugurated by the Governor of Uttar Pradesh Shri Ram Naik on the 5th August. The event was attended on its conclusion by the Chief Minister of UP, Honorable Mahant Yogi Adityanantj on the 6th August.





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UNICEF 1st South Asia Religious Leaders' Platform for Children

For Every Child a future in which they can not only survive but truly thrive

Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi Bhagawati participated in and shared the exciting work of the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance India at the first UNICEF South Asia Religious Leaders' Platform for Children in Kathmandu. Pujya Swamiji shared, "When 83.6% of our world identifies as belonging to a faith, and in many South Asian countries the role of faith is far greater, with 90-99% subscribing to a faith, faith leaders have a huge role in solving the challenges that face our world.

Hence, when interfaith alliances and dialogues occur they must be to protect our most vulnerable communities, our women, children, indigenous and tribal populations. Thus, it is a great Initiative by UNICEF to bring interfaith leaders together in Nepal for this two-day workshop to deliberate on and commit to working towards protecting and advocating for child rights. Our children are our future and faith leaders are today committed towards working to-

wards this end." Sadhvi Bhagawati said, "We saw in all the sectors in which we were already working for years education, child welfare, women's upliftment, health care - that water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) played a huge, foundational, inextricable role in the success of these programs. Without adequate WASH, no other humanitarian/development initiative in almost any field can be successful. This is why we embarked on a new focus of WASH and uniting the

leaders of the major faiths to come together for the health of the children and therefore the country and the world. It's been a great honor and joy to partner with UNICEF in this initiative. Their technical support has been instrumental in providing us the materials, education and opportunity to take this crucial initiative to the grand level."

"Religious communities and UNICEF have a long history of shared values and goals of advancing

children's rights and enhancing their well-being. They continue to be our indispensable partner especially in our focus on reaching the poorest, most vulnerable and hardest to reach children and families. If we can fully tap the enormous potential of our partnerships by building on each other's strengths, we can achieve tremendous results for children," said Jean Gough, regional director of UNICEF South Asia, during her opening speech.

"We, at UNICEF, will now proactively nurture and expand this network of religious communities. We will also ensure that the discussion carries beyond the meeting room and find ways to translate our commitment to child rights into results, for every child in South Asia," said Philippe Cori, deputy regional director of UNICEF South Asia, in his concluding remarks, as he closed the two-day South Asia regional conference in Kathmandu.

Bharat Yatra in Dehradun Pledges to Protect Every Child

Children's Rights Must Be Protected For A Secure Future

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Shri Kailash Satyarthi's nationwide Bharat Yatra was warmly welcomed to Uttarakhand. The first part of the day was held in the state's capital Dehradun and had their evening/night halt at the beautiful Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh.

Whilst in Dehradun, a special rally and conference was organised at the Graphic Era University with Kailash Satyarthi. Pujya Swamiji graced and blessed the occasion, Sadhvi Bhagawatiiji addressed the children, and State Cabinet Minister Shri Prakash Pant and many others graced the occasion, joined the yatra, and shared their support for the noble mission.

Kailash Satyarthi, addressing the students at Graphic Era University, called for India

to formulate strict laws to prohibit human trafficking as well as invest more on child education.

The function was presided over by state BJP president Ajay Bhatt and President of Graphic Era group Prof. (Dr.) Kamal Ghanshala. Hitesh Shankar, Mahendra Pandey also addressed the gathering. State coordinator of Bharat Yatra, Jaya Mishra coordinated the event. Sumeda Satyarthi of Kailash Satyarthi Foundation, Chancellor of Graphic Era University Dr. R.C Joshi, Vice Chancellor of Graphic Era University Dr. L.M.S Palani, Vice Chancellor of Graphic Era Hill University Dr. Sanjay Jasola, BJP leader Umesha Agarwal and other several dignitaries were present during the occasion.



On this occasion Shri Kailash Satyarthi along with Pujya Swamiji gave the message of "Save Childhood" (Bachpan Bachao) by releasing balloons into the air.





Sharing the alarming statistics of the National Crime Record Bureau, Shri Satyarthi said, *“15,000 cases of child sexual abuse have been registered; only 4% of the culprits have been punished in these cases, in 6% of the cases the culprits were acquitted, and 90% of the cases are pending in the court. For dealing with such criminal cases there should be exclusive courts in every district of the country.”*

Giving instances of the various rape cases, he showed his concern for the victims of child abuse. He also said that there has been a decrease in the cases of child abuse in the World, but in order to completely abolish child abuse, it is necessary to break the silence of lakhs of child labourers.



Pujya Swamiji gave the simple yet powerful mantra, *“Surakshit Bachpan, Surakshit Bharat. Surakshit Sanskar. Surakshit Sansar. Value education, instilling our spiritual cultural teachings, is key to ensuring this problem is addressed at the core. We must work to instill values in our homes, our communities and in our schools.”*

Pujya Swamiji then led everyone in a massive pledge to protect both our inner and outer environment.



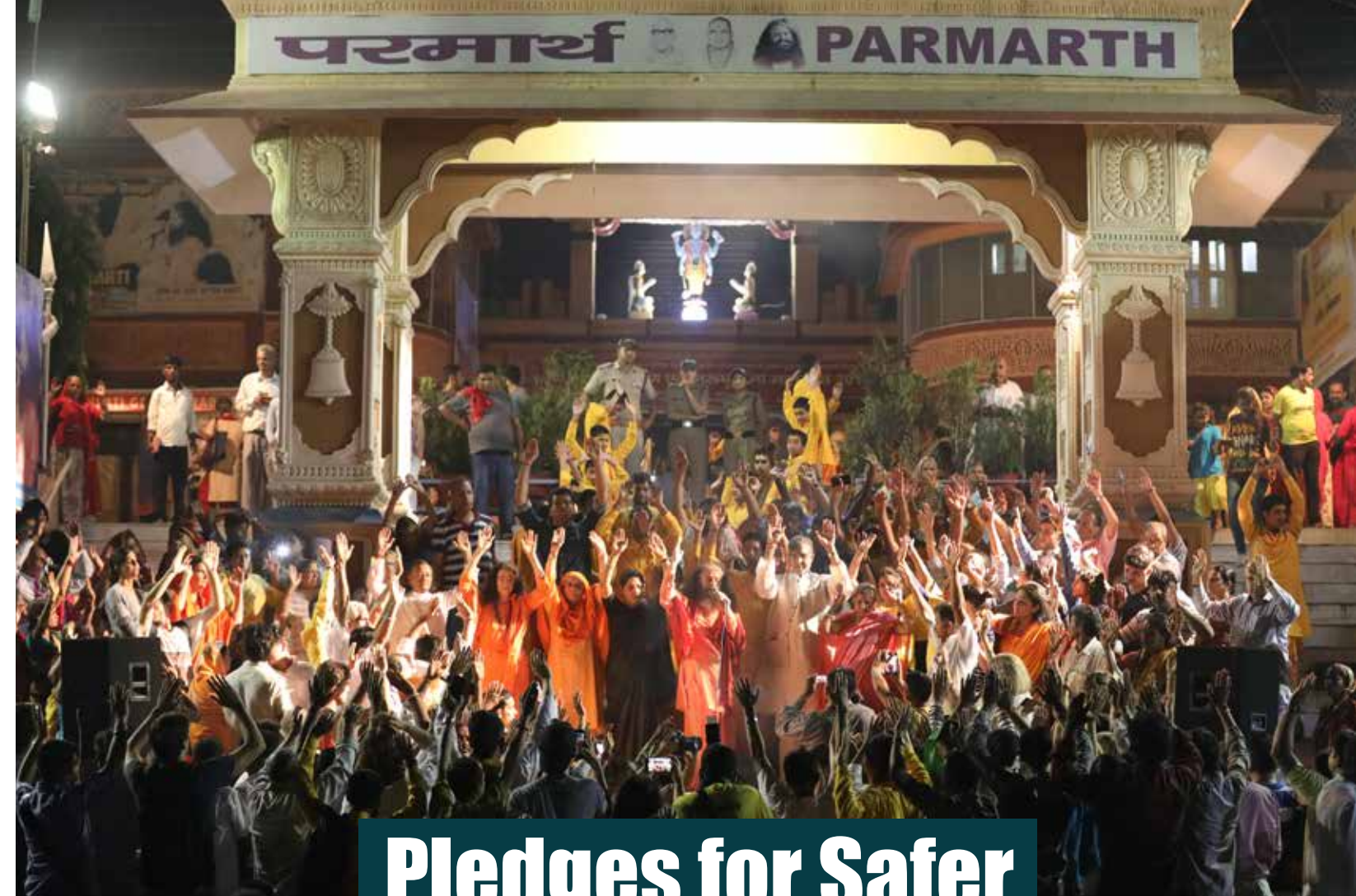
Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji said, *“Let us ask ourselves are our children in our country really free? What we will find is that tragically they are not. Until we ensure a childhood free from slavery, child labour, poverty and poor WASH, our children will never be free. Let us pledge to protect our children and protect their future.”*



Giving the statistics, State Commission for Protection of Child Rights chairperson Shri Yogendra Khanduri said that though Uttarakhand stands far better than other states in cases of child sexual abuse and child labour, the commission is committed to work relentlessly in this area. Additional Director General of Police Shri Ashok Kumar informed the gathering that the Uttarakhand police had rescued 1,266 child labourers as part of Operation Smile in the last three years.



Cabinet minister Shri Prakash Pant promised that the journey of Shri Satyarthi will get more light and energy in Devbhoomi Uttarakhand. Representing the Chief Minister, Shri Prakash Pant said that Indian culture does not and Uttarakhand would not support sexual harassment.



Pledges for Safer and Healthier World for All Children

Kailash Satyarthi Visits Parmarth Niketan (Rishikesh)

Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi Bhagawatiiji, along with pilgrims from over 15 countries and all across India, welcomed Nobel Prize Laureate Shri Kailash Satyarthi and more than eighty members of his Bharat Yatra against Child Sexual Abuse and Trafficking to the banks of the River Ganga at Parmarth Niketan (Rishikesh). The Yatra had been travelling the entirety of India since early Sep-

tember with its concluding weekend being held at an awareness event Dehradun, before returning home to Parmarth Niketan to celebrate their historic pilgrimage and sharing poignant messages of hope in eradicating the suffering of children. The last leg of the yatra concluded Delhi at the Rashtrapati Bhawan on the 16th October. According to experts there, India has some very saddening statistics



Pujya Swamiji blesses Nobel Laureate Shri Kailash Satyarthi and the Bharat Yatra at its completion ceremony, shortly after their tour to Uttarakhand, at the Rashtrapati Bhawan with the Hon'ble President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind.



The call for action was for us all take care of our children and talk to them about their concerns and looking out for any signs of abuse. People can call the Child helpline on 1098 or call the Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation on +91 11 49211111-12.

Most children are abused in domestic spheres and by people they know, so look out for this and protect them. Take collective action in your community to protect children from any form of abuse.

around child cruelty and abuse. Every day, 40 children are raped and 48 children are sexually abused. Every 6 minutes, a child goes missing. More than 4.5 lakhs children have been victims of trafficking, bought and sold for commercial and sexual exploitation. "Children represent more than 40% of our country's population, yet merely 4% of our country's budget is spent on their education and security" said Pujya Swamiji. "Our children are not only our next generation, they are our NOW generation. Hence, it is our duty to protect them from harm, whether it be through child abuse, child labour, child marriage, slavery, sex trafficking or the lack of adequate water, sanitation and hygiene which are taking the lives of nearly 1600 di-

vine children everyday, with countless more malnourished and stunted". This Bharat Yatra, having now traversed nearly the whole of India, symbolizes a bright ray of hope for raising our voices and joining our efforts to create safer, happier and healthier lives for all of our children."

Shri Kailash Satyarthi said, "It's a plea-

sure and honour to be blessed here on the banks of Mother Ganga. Pujya Swamiji is protecting all of creation not only by His teaching but also through His doing. His compassion and passion is always to inspire us all and to protect our environment, trees, rivers and all of Mother Nature. Coming to the banks of Mother Ganga, to Parmarth Niketan, has washed away any tiredness in our body from this

more than 11,000 kms yatra. Today, we are even more committed to make this world a better, safer place for all. "

Sadhvi Bhagawatiiji shared that we have celebrated 70 years of Independence, yet, as many as nearly 3.5 crore (330 million) children have never attended a day of school because of being forced into labour and more than 10 lakhs (one million) are forced into

prostitution each year. "We cannot truly call ourselves a free country. I feel that only when every child is free to walk out of someone else's farm, factory, mine or from the pavement and receive an education, only then can we consider ourselves truly a free nation."

International Peace Palace: *Pledge for Water & Peace*

India and Netherlands celebrate both countries joint aspiration for Peace



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Many international spiritual luminaries and political leaders took part in the celebration of 70 years of diplomatic relationships between India and the Netherlands on September 13th. The event was sponsored by the Universal Sufi Council, lead by Dr. Professor Johannes Witteveen, former managing director of the In-

ternational Monetary Fund, along with Ambassador Venu Rajamony, Ambassador to the Indian Embassy to the Netherlands. Pujya Swamiji, Pujya Sadhviji, and spiritual leaders from Pakistan, Greenland, Africa, Turkey, UK, Germany, the Netherlands and the US gathered and heard a message from Prime Minister Modi, given by the Indian

Ambassador supporting the Peace Initiative. The main theme was of spreading message of loving kindness and compassion throughout humanity, expressed through the "Peace Pledge".

Water experts from the Netherlands talked of the need for water purification in India. Pujya Swa-

miji spoke about the relationship between water and peace and that the growing water crisis with countless drying water bodies and lack of clean accessible water is actually a concern for every individual and nation. Without access to safe, sufficient water there can be no peace. He said that it is time for us to join together across faiths to work as one

for clean water, sanitation and hygiene for all, so that every child is allowed the opportunity not just to survive, but to truly thrive.

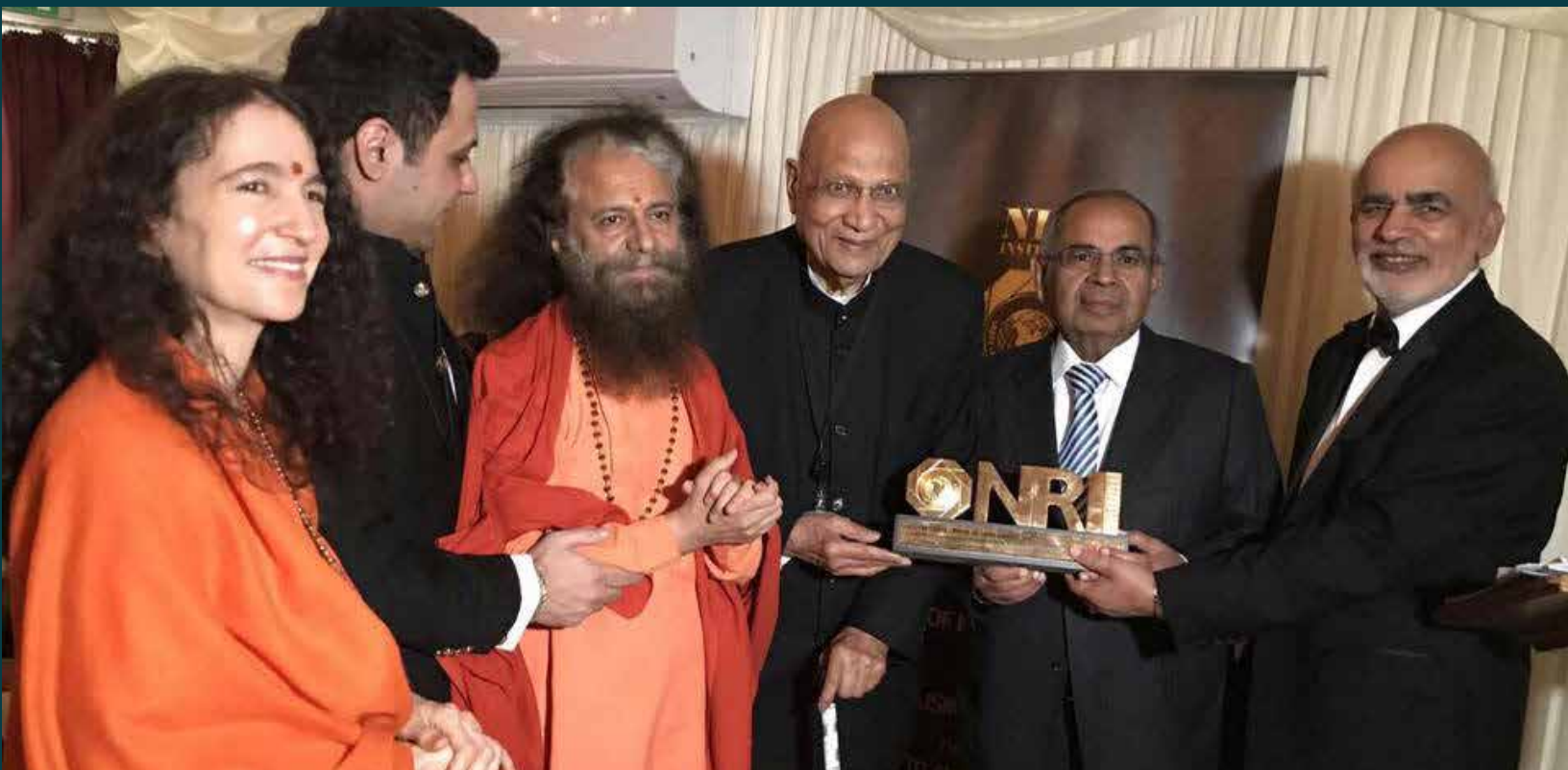
Pujya Swamiji and Sadhviji encouraged the heads of major corporations of the Netherlands to offer their 4T's - Time, Talent, Technology and Tenacity - for the protection

and rejuvenation of the River Ganga.

Just after the ceremony, Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi Bhagawatiji presented the Honourable Ambassador with a copy of the Encyclopedia of Hinduism, to be placed in the Ambassador's Offices for everyone to benefit from the comprehensive compendium.

NRI World Summit & Awards

*Celebrating NRI contributions and achievements
at the House of Lords, London, UK*



The NRI Institute on Friday, September 15 hosted the NRI World Summit and Pride of India Awards to give recognition to the people of Indian origin living in India and abroad for their outstanding achievements in their chosen fields of activities and their contribution towards the development of India and their adopted countries. The gala event was held in the Cholmondeley room of the House of Lords, London, UK.

Pujya Swamiji and Pujya Sadhvi attend-

ed along with various dignitaries including Lord Swarj Paul, Lord Diljeet Ranas and GP Hinduja, Co-Chairman of the Hinduja Group of Companies.

Pujya Swamiji was especially awarded by Manu Jagmohan Singh, International Chairman of NRI Institute, for His immense contributions to the Indian community both within India and all across the world. He listed Puya Swamiji's incredible services including environmental preservation; carrying forth large scale humanitarian projects; interfaith

engagement to improve water; sanitation and hygiene (WASH) through the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance; the Ganga Action Parivar; the construction of four Kailash Mansarovar Ashrams; the Encyclopedia of Hinduism and so many other projects dedicated tirelessly to the welfare of all. These were all appreciated by those attending.

Pujya Swamiji joined Hinduja in honouring Lord Diljit Rana for his accomplishments and contributions to the NRI community in the United Kingdom.



Pujya Swamiji said, "The time has come for all Indians every where to give back to India. It is time that we offer our time, talent and technical expertise (3T's) to find effective solutions to the many challenges that India faces. Many of us have learned and become well-educated in India, earned immensely in many countries, but the time has come to give back to

our motherland. Today, under the visionary and able leadership of our Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, the impact and significance of our contributions can truly be felt. Hence, I call upon all NRI's to contribute to the Government of India's noble initiative, the India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI), and play our vital role to making the India of our dreams."

Sadhvi Bhagawatiiji shared, "I may have been born in America but I have been deeply attracted to and influenced by the Bharatiya sanskaras (Indian spiritual culture and values), but as NRI's and Overseas Indians you have inherently been given this culture and values. I strongly believe whether you can give

your children material goods or not, you must impart them with your sanskaras, as they will add great meaning and great purpose to their lives. I also urge all NRIs to encourage your children to travel to India, to engage in giving back to India, as well as to reconnecting with and experiencing their roots."

IDF
India Development Foundation
of Overseas Indians

www.idfoi.nic.in
www.facebook.com/idfoi
[@givingtoindia](https://twitter.com/givingtoindia)

Learn more about IDF-OI



Pujya Swamiji was invited by the Government as a new board member of a government-established body to facilitate contributions by overseas Indians for social and developmental projects in the country, better known as the India Development Foundation for Overseas Indians (IDF-OI) earlier this year. He gave his valuable suggestions and ideas at the 8th annual Board Meeting of the IDF-OI at the External Affairs Ministry, which was presided over by the Hon'ble External Affairs Minister, Smt .Sushma Swaraj earlier this year.

Sadhvi Bhagawatiji shares about GIWA at the United Nations in New York

Plan of Action to prevent incitement to violence that leads to atrocity crimes



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Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji was in New York for programs connected to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) where she spoke at an event organized by the United Nations Office of Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect on implementation of the Plan of Action, to prevent incitement to violence that leads to atrocity crimes.

It was co-organized and sponsored by the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect and the Holy See with UNDP, UNFPA, and many other organizations.

It was blessed by the presence of H.E. Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States of the Holy See, Mr. Adama Dienga, Under Secretary General of the UN and Special Adviser to the Secretary General on the Prevention of Genocide.

The event focused on the role of faith leaders, faith-based organizations, and people of faith in preventing incitement to violence and atrocity crimes. She had the joy and honor of presenting the work of the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance at the gathering of the leaders of the Moral Imperative to End Extreme Poverty, a World Bank initiative founded by World Bank President Dr. Jim Yong Kim with the United Nations.



[See video from the session](#)



tGELF's LIFE 2017 Summit: Innovate to LEAD

Interfaith Conversations & Spirituality for an Innovative Mindset

Sadhvi Bhagawatiji was a keynote speaker at the 2-day tGELF LIFE conference, giving a beautiful session on the importance of spirituality in innovation and entrepreneurship. She also spoke on an interfaith panel moderated by Chairman of tGELF Shiv Khemka with faith leaders Salvatore Martinez, President of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, and Syed Salman Chishty, Gaddi

Nashin of the Dargah Ajmer Sharif for a session on “World Wisdom Traditions: An Interfaith Conversations.”

She also lead a special Spirituality & An Innovative Mindset workshop during the three-day event. It was designed to help youth leaders focus on the long day ahead of them and teach them the importance of keeping a balanced mind.

Sadhvi shared, “Spirituality says we are interlinked and interlocked. Your pain is my pain; your hunger is my hunger; your thirst is my thirst. If we serve through that, not only are we able to benefit the world, but we end up benefitting ourselves.”

Pujya Bhaishriji's Shasti Poorti Samaroh

Saints & Leaders Gather for a Grand Celebration of Pujya Bhaishriji's 60th Birthday in Ahmedabad



[Watch Sadhviji's speech](#)



[Watch Pujya Swamiji's speech](#)

Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi Bhagawati-ji graced Pujya Rameshbhai Ozaji's (Bhaishriji's) 60th Birthday Celebrations in Ahmedabad and wished him a very blissful, bountiful and beautiful 60th Birthday.

The grand celebrations were blessed by Karshnipeethadhishwar Pujya Swami Gurusharanandji Maharaj, Brahmavihari Swamiji from BAPS, Pujya Ramanandacharya Swami Hansdevacharyaji, Pujya Swami Paramatmanandaji, Imam Umer Ahmed Ilyasiji, Acharya Lokesh Muniji and many other revered and respected saints.

The event also had inspiring wishes and speeches by Shri O.P. Kohli, Hon'ble Governor Shri of Gujarat, Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani, Parsottambhai Rupala Minister Of State (Independent Charge) Agriculture & Farmer Welfare, Panchayati Raj.



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Pujya Dada Vaswaniji's 100th birthday

Centennial celebration themed with "Be Love, Live Love."

Sadhvi Bhagawati-ji graced a special celebration in London in honour of Pujya Dada Vaswaniji's 100th birthday. Pujya Dada Vaswaniji is a respected spiritual leader who has dedicated his life working in the field of promotion of vegetarianism and animal rights. The theme of Pujya Dadaji's centenary year has been "Be Love, Live Love."

The evening began with beautiful music and Pujya Dadaji's inspiring talk, entitled "Switch on the Light," followed by a Question & Answer session. He shared, "If you build your life in faith it will influence those around you. Arguing with people about these

matters won't produce good results. One a holy man can change the lives of a whole town, because he lives that life. Our problem is we talk of the wisdom but we don't bear witness to the teachings of the great masters in our daily lives. Therefore there is so much confusion and anarchy around us. Let your daily life bear witness to that ideal."

He spoke about education and the role of education to shape our future generation. He said, "In the name of science, we have lost reverence for nature. Reverence is the root of education. Service is the fruit of education. This is what we need to regain."

Sadhvi Bhagawati-ji expressed her deep love and reverence for Dadaji and reflected Dadaji's discourse in saying, "Science gives us the speed but spirituality gives us the direction. Dadaji you are our compass - our GPS - who gives us the direction in our lives. You give us not just the teaching but the touch that transforms our lives and our worlds."

She concluded by offering him a sacred elachi mala from Rishikesh, blessed by Pujya Swamiji, and requested Respected GP Hinduja to join her in this divine offering. The beautiful event and special celebrations were organised and sponsored by the Hinduja Foundation.



3H: Health, Hygiene & Harmony Medical Camp in Mayakund

Medication (Vitamin A and Albendazole) & Sanitation Education provided to Mayakund Slum Children

Under the guidance and inspiration of Pujya Swamiji, a health camp was held in Mayakund slum, Rishikesh. Hundreds of young children and families gathered at the camp, which was jointly organised by Seva Child International, Rural Development Institute (RDI), and the Himalayan Institute Hospital Trust to administer much needed Vitamin A drops and Albendazole (de-worming pills) to young children under 5 years old.

According to internationally recognized guidelines, children from 6-11 months of age need one dose

of 100,000 IU (International Units) vitamin A and two doses between the age 12-59 months annually. Vitamin A supplements make immune systems stronger, helping to maintain good eyesight and fight off life-threatening diseases for children who lack access to foods with vitamin A. When children do not have this nutrient during the early stages of growth, they can fall ill, remain underdeveloped, go blind, and even die.

Parasitic intestinal worms in children can not only cause pain, uneasiness, and poor health but

also lead to malnutrition. Children infected by worms are at risk of malnutrition, even though symptoms are not always obvious. Regular de-worming allows children to absorb the important nutrients needed for good health. Long-term solutions to the spread of intestinal worms include better sanitation and hygiene. Vitamin A and de-worming tablets, given to at-risk children under the age of 5, lower the immediate risks of illness or death faced by those lacking regular access to healthy foods, and help build children's foundations for long-term success.



[Click Here to see more!](#)



Pujya Swamiji talked about how every child in the country deserved a strong start in life and how we must all work together to ensure that every child can start their lives with access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene together with access to timely and effective medical support. Pujya Sadhviji said that for our lives to be truly happy, we have to be healthy and for that, we have to have hygiene. She said, "If we are ill with diarrhea or cholera we cannot attend school, work or fulfil our potential. For this reason: health, hygiene, harmony and happiness all go together, and the purpose of today's

camp is to fulfil this reason."

Shri Prem Chandra Agrawal, Speaker of Legislative Assembly, Government of Uttarakhand, lauded the social vision and commitment of Pujya Swamiji and Shri Deep Sharma, Chairman of Rishikesh City. He announced that 15,000 dustbins will be installed by the Municipal Corporation along the Ghats in this area of Rishikesh. Mr. Rick Carlton and Mr. John Gideon talked about the work being done by their NGO, Seva Child, which is working across India to administer Vitamin A and Albendazole to children under 5.

Volunteers from GIWA also educated the assembled children and families on the importance of safe water, sanitation and hygiene for a healthy and peaceful society. Rishikums from Parmarth Niketan's Gurukul entertained and inspired the gathering with a colourful puppet show and songs on the importance of safe water, sanitation and hygiene. The programme concluded with a mid-day meal in which over 400 people, including children, parents, volunteers and distinguished guests, sat down together, ate and mingled with each other.



Swarovski WaterSchool Coordinators Meeting

Indian Film Actress Shamita Shetty learns about the exciting programme

Parmarth Niketan welcomed the Swarovski WaterSchool Coordinators from seven countries for a five-day workshop. It was the first time in the history of the Swarovski WaterSchool that the coordinators were meeting anywhere other than their international headquarters in Austria.

The participants included the WaterSchool's country coordinators from Austria, Brazil, China, India, Thailand, Uganda and the USA. The Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA), founded by Pujya Swamiji and headquartered at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh, is a partner in the internationally acclaimed

Swarovski WaterSchool programme.

WaterSchool aims to teach school-going children the principles of sustainable water management, sanitation, and hygiene, so that they can become ambassadors for the water cause. GIWA is implementing the WaterSchool in the Ganga-

Himalayan region of India.

The five-day workshop focused on finding a common ground and opportunity for all the coordinators to work as a global team. The workshop sessions were filled with fun and laughter as well as intense discussions and experience-sharing. Each day concluded with Ganga aarti and satsang. There were special moments of grace and wisdom with Pujya Swamiji. By the end of the workshop, several participants revealed that they felt they

had found a second home in the Himalayas.

During the workshop, the WaterSchool coordinators also visited three of the participating schools in GIWA's WaterSchool programme in Rishikesh to interact with the students and review their activities.

The visitors were joined by acclaimed Indian film artist, Ms. Shamita Shetty, and Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji. At Sarasvati

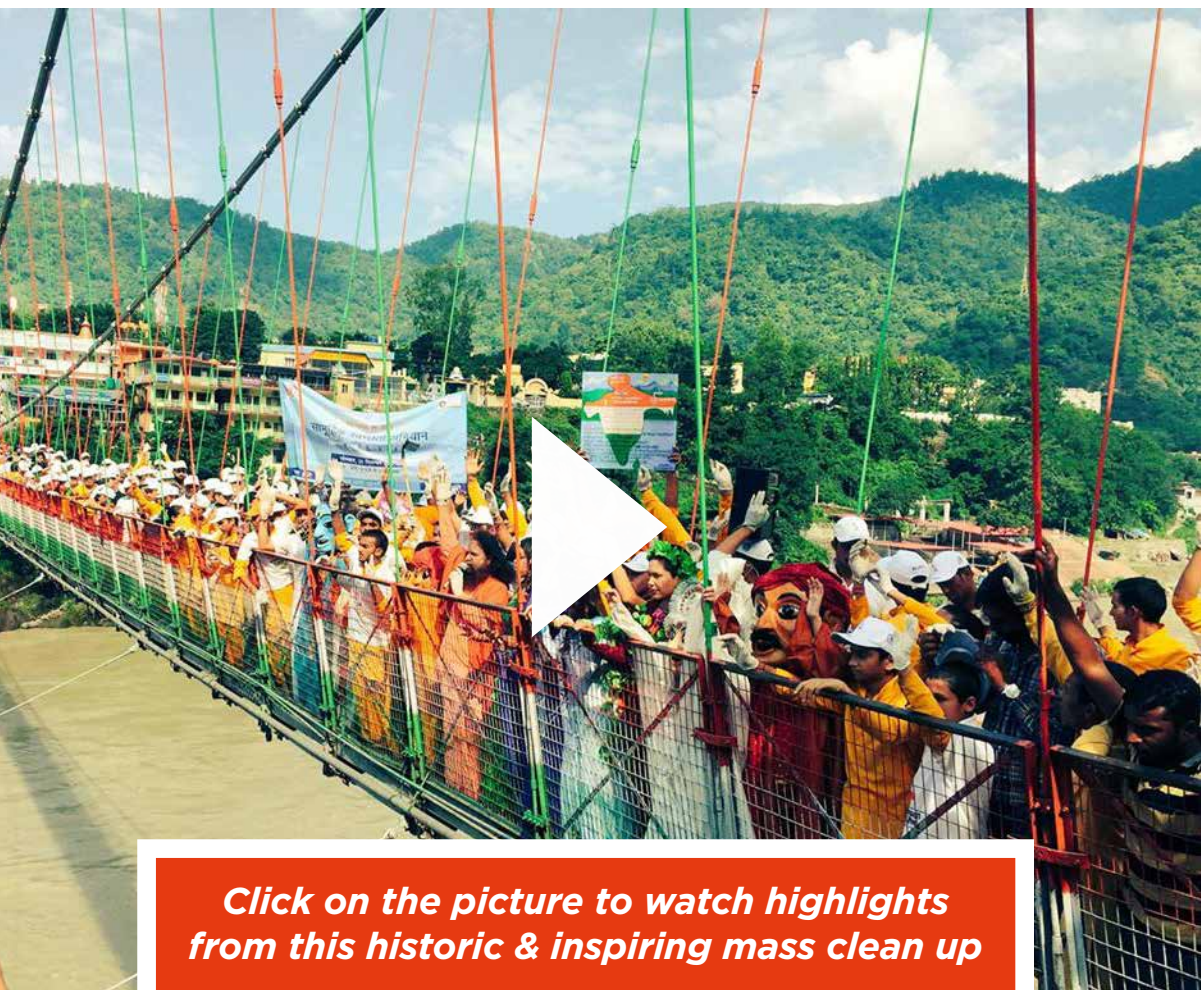
Vidya Niketan, the students performed scientific experiments on water that they had learnt through the WaterSchool curriculum. At Rishikesh Public School, the children entertained the visitors with songs and a humour-laced play about the importance of water for human life. At Prakash Bharti School, the coordinators joined the delighted children in an impromptu group dance, followed by tree plantation and a tour of the art exhibits made by the students using recycled waste material.

Faith Community & Organisations come together for a Clean India

#SwachhataHiSeva

Swachhta Pakhwada Kicks Off with Massive Clean Up of the Iconic Laxman Jhula

#SwachhataHiSeva



Click on the picture to watch highlights from this historic & inspiring mass clean up



Click Here to see more!

Countless people came together to from Lakshman Jhula and Ram Jhula in Rishikesh to clean the banks of Mother Ganga in solidarity with Honorable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Swachhata Ki Seva (cleanliness is our selfless service), in the lead up to the third anniversary of Swachh Bharat Mission, India on the 2nd October.

Discussions between the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) Co-Founder, Pujya Swamiji, Swamini Adityananda Saraswati, the Minister of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar and the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MoDWS) Secretary, Shri Parameswaran Iyer led to this clean up in support of the mission in the state of Uttarakhand to clean and green the banks

of Mother Ganga.

With great enthusiasm and energy, the MoDWS, Government of Uttarakhand's Namami Gange and Swachh Bharat Mission, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance's (GIWA), and many other local faith organisations, ashrams, schools, women sanitation ambassadors, residents, and tourists visiting from more than ten countries joined hands and hearts to

clean both sides of the bridge, climbing down steep waterfalls and rocky landscape to pick up tons of plastic and waste.

The massive clean up efforts started from 9am and concentrated around Lakshman Jhula but spread across to Ram Jhula, ending in a massive pledge for a Clean India at Parmarth Niketan Ashram with a water blessing ceremony, symbolising our solidarity

to protect our sacred water bodies.

Pujya Swamiji shared, "A clean India starts with each one of us! When we change, the world also changes." Pujya Swamiji said that it was wonderful that people have joined together across faiths, across borders and boundaries to bring together our minds, bodies, intellects and spirit in building a cleaner and greener India. He led a pledge for "Swachhata Hi

Seva. Swachhata Hi Dharma. Swachhata Hi Karma. Swachhata Se Hi Shakti Hai."

Pujya Swamiji reminded everyone, "Today, this is only one step towards a Clean India. Let us take every step towards a Clean and Green India. Let us live our lives more conscious of our footprint on this planet, ensuring that our waste is disposed responsibly."

Ancient Rajyoga: For a Healthy & Happy Bharat

*Brahmakumaris inspired to Clean and Green India as a way
to truly celebrate the Prime Minister of India's Birthday*

#SwachhataHiSeva



[Click Here to see more!](#)

Pujya Swamiji was warmly welcomed to the Brahma Kumari's congress entitled "Ancient Rajyoga: For a Healthy & Happy Bharat". This large event was held at the Indira Gandhi Stadium and aimed to bless and inspire the thousands of followers and members of the organisation. The event started with a beautiful video message by Honorable

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, who acknowledged the incredible contributions of the Brahmakumaris and called for their continual efforts towards a Solar India.

Pujya Swamiji lauded the power of Brahmakumaris under the divine vision of Brahma Babaji as well as the able leadership and selfless

seva shakti of Dadi Jankiji, Dada Lekhraj Kripalaniji, Dadi Ratan Mohiniji, Dadi Hirdaya Mohiniji, and so many divine Brahmakumaris and Brahmakumars.

He also appreciated the thousands of devotees who had come from all across India to attend. He shared that India's real GDP was this power of devotion and enthusiasm



Highlights from the Event >>



to create a better India for all.

Pujya Swamiji gave a powerful and passionate speech which concluded by saying that on Vishwakarma Jayanti and on the auspicious occasion of Honorable Modi's birthday, we all salute our Honorable Prime Minister for being a true yogi and, like Vishwakarma, working on moulding a healthier, happier, cleaner, greener and more prosperous India for all. Pujya Swamiji shared that this programme was testimony of the

sankalp (pledge) of the "Made In India Programme" to promote our produce, culture and wisdom in the world.

Thereafter, the beloved BK Shivaniji shared her profound words, catalysing each person present to introspect and pledge to not only connect with the purity and divinity within themselves but to also, adding to Pujya Swamiji's words, take India into a Golden India, powered and charged by this deep realisation of our true nature.

Many incredible speeches and deep insights were shared by other eminent dignitaries present on the dias, such as Respected Dr. H.R. Nagendraji, Vice Chancellor of SVASIA, Rajyogi BK Brijmohanji, Addl SG, Brahmakumaris Mt Abu, Rajyogi BK Mruthyunjayji, Executive Secretary, Brahma Kumaris, Mt Abu, Rajyogini BK Ashaji, Director, Om Shanti Retreat Centre as well as divine music, inspiring songs and dance performances which filled the programme with divine energy.



Pujiya Swamiji leads pledge on International Day of Peace

Pujiya Swamiji expands the definition of peace to include improved WASH and inspires pledge for working #TogetherforPeace!



Meditation & Sanitation come together

54 countries & thousands pledge for Swachhata Hi Seva & commit to cleaning their inner and outer environment!

Pujiya Swamiji blessed, graced and inspired the 24th Global Interfaith Conference on Meditation and Mysticism held in Sant Darshan Singh Dham, Delhi on International Meditation Day, which was attended by thousands of delegates from more than 54 countries. Inspiring messages were given by respected faith leaders from every major faith tradition in India.

Pujiya Swamiji shared on the occa-

sion, "Time has come that we must make sanitation as important and vital, if not more important, than meditation. For me, sanitation is more important and fundamental than meditation, and in many ways meditation is sanitation but for our inner self. When our inside is truly clean, then our outer environment must also reflect this reality. Therefore, let us pledge during this fortnight of this beautiful Swachhata Hi Seva theme given to us by the Swachh Bharat Mission,

under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, that we will work together to ensure our communities and areas around them are kept clean and green. To me this is the true worship and the true pooja." Thousands joined enthusiastically and energetically with their hands raised up to show their unanimous support and commitment to these simple but profound words of wisdom and divine action.



On International Day of Peace, from the Himalayas Pujiya Swamiji delivered a powerful message for inner and outer peace with a clarion call to expand the definition of peace, so that improved WASH, access to toilets, and a clean & healthy environment could be maintained, so that everyone could truly be guaranteed safety, respect and dignity.





[Click to see more! >>](#)



Swachhta Shakti: Women for WASH Training

10-day Training of the Motivators in Community Approaches to Sanitation (CAS) & Sanitation Technology, Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC)

In conjunction with the Government of Bihar and UNICEF India, the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance trained Jeevika Leaders from 10 districts from across Bihar as Master Sanitation Ambassadors at its World Toilet College at Parmarth Niketan (Rishikesh). During this 10-day-long training, some 35 women leaders who were hand-picked by the Government of Bihar were trained to become master mobilizers for a Swachh Bihar and a Swachh Bharat. The 10-day curriculum included Community-Led Total Sanitation, Toilet Building 101, Social and Behaviour Change Communications, and other crucial components towards mobilizing, enabling and motivating entire communities to build and use toilets.

Said GIWA India Founder Pujya Swamiji, “this training represents a new way forward by enabling women to become change leaders in their own communities and beyond.”

Said GIWA Secretary General, Sadhvi Bhagawati, “We are delighted to welcome these delegates home to

our World Toilet College at Parmarth Niketan, and look forward to their stellar results.”

Said GIWA Director of Programmes, Swamini Adityananda Saraswati, “Now is the time for women to rise up for a Swachh Bharat and a Swachh Bihar. It is a joy and honour to be hosting this very important, first-of-a-kind training, and we look forward to many more to come.”

Experts and Teachers for this training included: Raman Shukla (Manager of Health & Nutrition at JEEViKA at Bihar), J P Shukla (Knowledge Links), Shashi Bhushan Pandey (UNICEF, Bihar), P K Anand (Unicef, Bihar), Anupama Verma (Knowledge Links), C M Pandey (Knowledge Links), Ragini Kumari, Veena Kumari, Munnu Lal, Shalini Kumari, Archana Kumari, Ashish, Ajmal, Nishikant, Manas and others. Supporting the programme were Shruti Pant, James Toppo, Ravindra Bohra, Samuel Herbert, Renuka Rana and Vishal Bhatt.



1000 Birth Anniversary Ramanujacharya Maharajji

Sant Sammelan in Bihar & Masses Pledge for ODF Bihar



[Click Here to see more!](#)

A massive celebration of the 1000 birth anniversary of Param Pujya Ramanujacharya Maharajji, organised by Pujya Geeyar Swamiji Maharaj, concluded in Aara, Bihar with a massive Sant Sammelan. The celebration, which commenced on the 25th September, was graced by Honorable Chief Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar and blessed by Pujya Swamiji and many other eminent and revered saints from across India.

Pujya Swamiji lauded Pujya Geeyar Swamiji for his incredible efforts in organising such a mass gathering and

said that this sangam (confluence of so many) was a true testament of Bharat's strong spiritual and cultural heritage. Pujya Swamiji said "I offer my salutations to the lakhs of people gathered here today for their great devotion and joining in such numbers, to have Darshan of our revered saints. I am so deeply impressed that with Swamiji's simplicity, humility, great penance and unwavering commitment, he has been able to show the power of spirituality and spiritual practice." He asked the Honorable CM to join Him in offering a sacred Elaichi Mala to Pujya Geeyar Swamiji. He then offered both leaders a beautiful Rudraksha saplings.

Successful Completion of

स्वच्छता शक्ति
हम हैं समाधान

Swachhta Shakti
We Are the Solution

Training of the Motivators in
Community Approaches to Sanitation (CAS)
& Sanitation Technology, Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC)

3-14 September 2017

Organised by Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) & UNICEF
at the World Toilet College - Parmarth Niketan (Rishikesh)



CM Nitish Kumar & Pujya Swamiji discuss Swachh Bihar & Clean Ganga

Making the State of Bihar clean & free from open defecation

Pujya Swamiji met with the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Bihar Shri Nitish Kumar during His visit to Patna to discuss ways to support the governments efforts to create an open defecation free and Swachh Bihar. Pujya Swamiji also shared about the successful completion of the 10-day training of Jeevika Women Sanitation Leaders from Bihar at the World

Toilet College in Rishikesh, in partnership with the Lohiya Swachh Bihar Abhiyaan (LSBA). They discussed continuing these efforts and bringing the GIWA team, WASH on Wheels and other awareness outreach programmes throughout Bihar, across different districts, to inspire an ODF Bihar.

They also discussed green technologies that could be installed to help clean up

the nalas and sewerage streams from polluting the River Ganga in Bihar. Pujya Swamiji deeply appreciated and lauded the Hon'ble CM's dynamic and dedicated leadership to truly transform Bihar and provide a cleaner, greener and more serene state to all. He honoured him with a special green sapling as a symbol of his clean and green leadership.



Historic Swachh Bihar Yatra Flagged Off by Pujya Swamiji

Three-Month Campaign to Inspire Masses to Build and Use Toilets through a Faith-Based Approach Begins.

With the singing of slogans under a Himalayan sky, the historic Swachh Bihar Yatra was flagged off at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh as the nation's first caravan to take the Faith-Based Approach for a clean and healthy India. The Yatra will be travelling throughout the state of Bihar for over three months of non-stop campaigning in support of Hon'ble Shri Narendra Modi's inspired Swachh Bharat Mission and the Lohiya Swachh Bihar Abhiyan.

The Swachh Bihar Yatra is being organized by the Global Interfaith WASH

Alliance (GIWA), under the guidance and inspiration of GIWA Founder, HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, President, Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh. It will travel far and wide: from huge festivals such as Patna's Chhath Festival, to rural villages. Along the way, the Swachh Bihar Yatra is offering:

- dynamic live performances
- lively audience interactions
- the screening of videos featuring India's foremost faith leaders
- mass pledges and more... on a daily basis.

Beyond its enticing daily events, GIWA

teams are providing on-the-spot follow-up activities to help promote the fast and effective building of toilets by communities that whole-heartedly welcome their presence. These will include:

- CLTS (Community-Led Total Sanitation) triggering exercises
- Capacity development courses for PRIs, Block Officers, and other officials
- The training of Swachhta Grahis and community members
- The skills-upgradation training of professional masons



Rally for Rivers in Haridwar, Uttarakhand

Saints & Seers gather together in Haridwar with Chief Minister of Uttarakhand to Rally for Rivers

[Watch Puja Swamiji's speech](#)

[Click Here to see more!](#)

Himalaya Diwas: Uttarakhand Sustainable Mountain Development Summit

September 9: Himalayan Diwas: A day celebrated across to state to spread the message of conservation in the Himalayan Ecosystem

Political leaders from across the spectrum are being encouraged to join together and understand the need to address the environmental and livelihood issues in the Himalayan region and to work for the conservation of the region as a whole.

Puja Swamiji attended the Uttarakhand Sustainable Mountain Development Summit yesterday with the Honorable Chief Minister Shri Trivendra Singh Rawat, Dr.

Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, Former Chief Minister Uttarakhand, Dr. Anil Joshi, Founder President HESCO, and Shri Sushil Ramola, Secretary, Integrated Mountain Initiative.

On the occasion, Puja Swamiji gave an uplifting speech on how each citizen and each state in the Himalayan Region can truly be the solution to the many challenges facing one of the world's largest water tower and oxygen bank, ie.

the Himalayas. He encouraged everyone to take the information and inspiration they gathered in the two-day Uttarakhand Sustainable Mountain Development Summi, to use it to find innovative solutions and then, vitally, to follow it through to effective implementation. He encouraged everyone attending the programme to use the programme initiatives, so that we could truly realise that "We Are the Solution."



[Click Here for Puja Swamiji's speech!](#)

Puja Swamiji joined Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttarakhand Shri Trivendra Singh Rawat, Puja Swami Ramdevji, Puja Swami Harichetanandji, Puja Acharya Balkrishanji and many other saints, pilgrims, devotees and citizens to welcome and support Sadguru Jaggi Vasudevji to the sacred banks of Mother Ganga as the Rally for Rivers campaign reached Haridwar.

A clarion call from all the eminent dignitaries was made to protect our sacred water bodies, to plant trees on all special occasions and festivals, and to live more sustainably,

as well as implement policies at the grand level that would ensure that our sacred lifelines are protected for our future generations. It was shared that when faith leaders took a pledge towards a common cause, the results would be for the well-being and welfare of all.

On the occasion Puja Swamiji shared, "Maili Ganga, Maili Nadiyo ke liye, this Rally is the need of the hour, to inspire a people's movement because if Ganga thrives, India thrives and if Ganga dies, India dies. Ganga is an Ambassador for all the rivers of this nation. Hence, its crucial to protect all of our fresh water bodies and all our life giving riv-

ers." The Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) and Ganga Action Parivar (GAP), of which He is the Founder, have been working tirelessly for many years for the conservation of our sacred Rivers as well bringing the power of faiths together for improving water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) for all.

Puja Swamiji offered a green Rudraksha sapling and a green Elachi Mala with all of the revered saints and dignitaries to Puja Jaggi Vasudevji for his green leadership. They also joined together in lighting the lamp that symbolised the light of hope and action for this vital cause.

Water Experts from Scotland Visit Parmarth Niketan (Rishikesh)

Change for a Clean & Green Ganga begins with each one of us.



A twenty-member delegation of water experts and water professionals from Scotland, led by Centre for Ganga River Basin Management and Studies (CGanga), Government of India Dr. Vinod Tare, came home to Parmarth Niketan.

They enjoyed special Ganga Aarti with Sadhvi Bhagawatiiji, as Puja

Swamiji was out of town at that time. They were honoured by her for their interest and concern for the sacred National River of India with a sacred Rudraksha sapling.

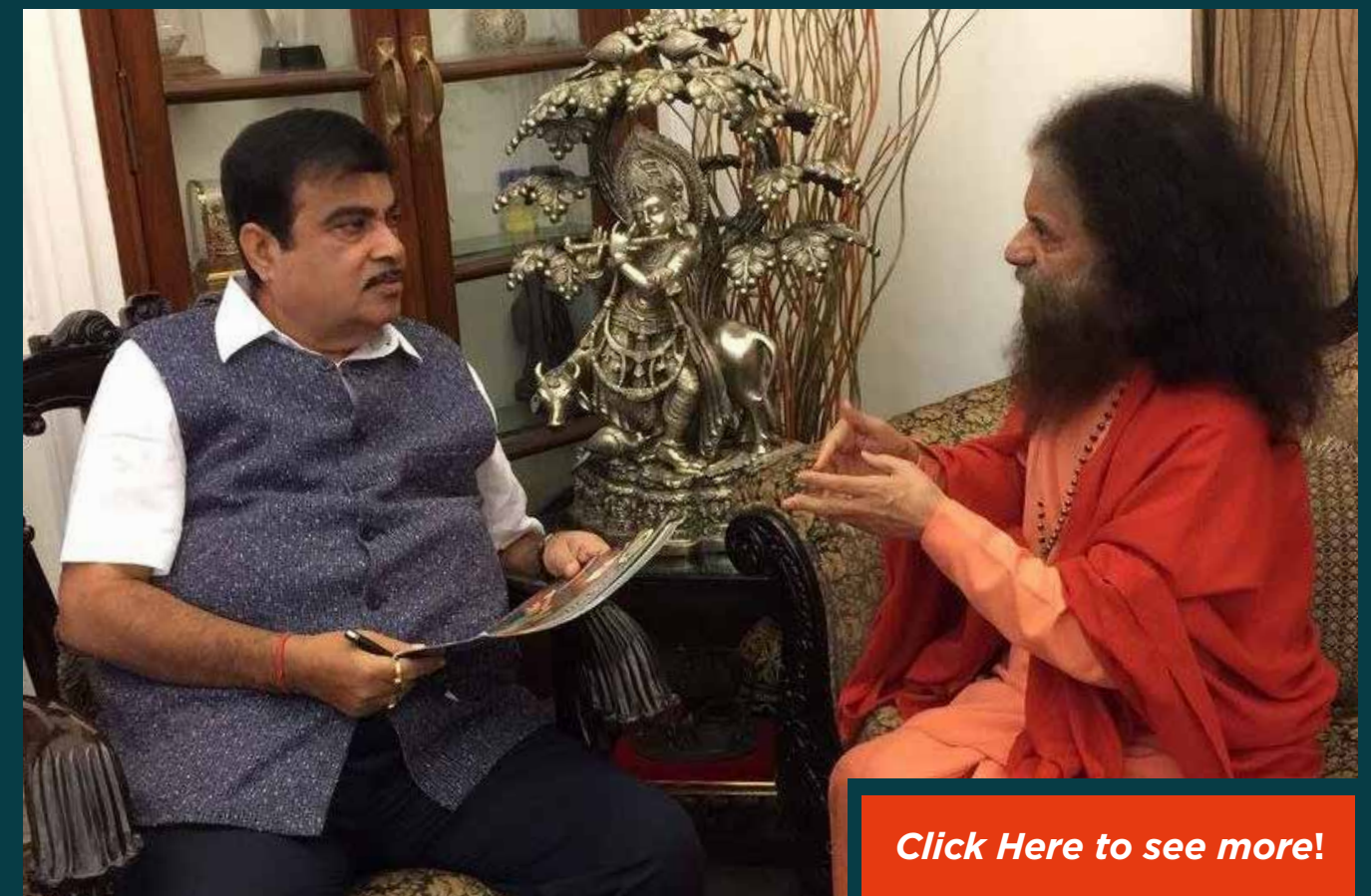
They also enjoyed a deeply insightful satsang, highlighting the issues facing the River and how each one of them could be the solution to the pollution plaguing our world.

During their visit to Rishikesh, they also had a very fruitful interaction with Dr. Raghav Langer, Program Director, State Program Management Group, NMCG Secretary, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj on issues and challenges to the River Ganga in the state of Uttarakhand.

Meeting with Honorable Ganga Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari

Ganga Minister meets with Puja Swamiji

Puja Swamiji had a constructive meeting with the Honorable Shri Nitin Gadkari, the Ganga Rejuvenation, Water Resources and Road Transport Minister, focusing on how all stakeholders can work together to contribute towards a clean and free-flowing River Ganga for all. They discussed Green Corridors, Green Crematoriums, Green Farming, Agriboard technology and decentralised solutions as well as other key points. Puja Swamiji gifted the Minister with a sacred Rudraksha sapling and congratulated him on his dedication, commitment and leadership for the Namami Gange! Mission and for his tireless service for the nation.



[Click Here to see more!](#)



RB Visits World Toilet College at GIWA Headquarters

Working Together for a Clean & Green India

Reckitt Benckiser's Regional Director of South Asia, Shri Nitesh Kapoor, Manager of External Affairs Shri Ravi Bhatnagar, and Ms. Indu Sharma, heading RB's PR and Marketing, made a two-day visit to Global Interfaith WASH Alliance's (GIWA) International Secretariat at Parmarth Niketan, home to the World Toilet College.

They had extensive meetings with GIWA's Co-Founder Pujya Swamiji, GIWA's Secretary General Sadhvi Bhagawatiji, GIWA's Director of Programme, Policy and

Partnerships Swamini Adityananda Saraswatiji, and GIWA's Director of Implementation Nandini Tripathi to plan innovative means to catalyze behaviour change, to expand the message and the inspiration of the Banega Swachh India campaign and so much more.

During their visit they participated in the classes offered at the World Toilet College designed to trigger behaviour change and create Sanitation Ambassadors. They also went with GIWA's extraordinary team, led by Ms. Shruti Pant, to the field into the villages

where they are working tirelessly to make the areas Open Defecation Free. In their Naya Gaon village visit, they held a community meeting with the villagers, especially the women and the children, distributed sanitation supplies, led a pledge to renew their commitment to an ODF village, as well as planted several fruit trees in its premises as a symbol of their clean and green pledge.

To learn more about the World Toilet College: www.worldtoiletcollege.org



GIWA Joins Interfaith Flood Relief Efforts in Assam

Plans with Government, Provides Relief to Remote Village

This year, hundreds of thousands of people were impacted by devastating floods in India's north-eastern state of Assam, claiming hundreds of lives and forcing countless people to take shelter in over 600 refugee camps across the state.

In direct response, GIWA joined the compassionate and unique interfaith delegation in order to respond to the disaster and lay the foundation for future plans. In so doing, they jointly offered their expertise to the government towards training communities, volunteers and agencies to create their own disaster plans in order to alleviate fu-

ture suffering. The delegation also addressed a state-wide planning meeting, discussing the importance of the faith-based approach in responding to and preventing disasters.

The team, led by Professor N Vinod Chandra Menon, founder member of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), included Swamini Adityananda Saraswati, Director of Programmes, Partnerships and Development, Global Interfaith WASH Alliance and the Interfaith Humanitarian Network, Father Frederick D' Souza, Executive Director of Caritas India, Brother Arun Kumar of Brahma Ku-

maris, Mount Abu, and Sibghatullah Ahmed of Islamic Relief India.

As a crucial part of their mission, the delegation distributed Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) kits to 1,600 families in rural villages within Morigaon district, to help enable families to stay healthy. The kits included water purification tablets, soap, buckets, toothpaste and tooth brushes, antiseptic and other crucial WASH provisions.

Pujya Swamiji & Policy Makers Discuss Environmental Preservation, WASH & Interfaith Harmony



Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Union Minister of Environment & Forest, Science & Technology, and Pujya Swamiji met to discuss the rising air pollution and environmental pollution and ways in which the masses can be inspired through a faith-based approach to be Clean and Green Ambassadors.



Abdullah Abdullah, Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan visited Parmarth Niketan (Rishikesh) and had a wonderful meeting with Pujya Swamiji on a range of topics including environmental preservation, promoting interfaith harmony and oneness around the world. They had been together previously at the World Economic Forum and it was a beautiful reunion.



Pujya Swamiji shared many exciting and beautiful programmes and projects being undertaken by the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) to inspire and motivate a Swachh Bharat with Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of Rural Development. Parameshwaran Iyer, Secretary, Minister of Drinking Water & Sanitation, was glad to learn about the wonderful work undertaken by GIWA to motivate and inspire a Swachh Bharat and offered the Minister's full support to work together towards the cause.



Satyapal Singh, Minister of State for Human Resource Development (Higher Education) & Minister of State Water Resources & Ganga Rejuvenation, and Pujya Swamiji discussed bringing WASH, environmental and value-based education into schools and shared the various initiatives that the HRD Ministry is engaged in.



[Click Here to see more!](#)

Meeting with Union Tourism Minister, Shri KJ Alphons

Promoting India as Yoga Capital of the World

Pujya Swamiji had a wonderful meeting with Union Tourism Minister, Shri KJ Alphons recently, in which they discussed Green Tourism, Yoga Tourism and Wellness Tourism. They also spoke about promoting India as the Yoga Capital of the World. Pujya Swamiji warmly invited him home to the banks of Mother Ganga to inaugurate the 30th Annual International Yoga Festival at Parmarth Niketan from the 1-7th March, 2018. Shri Alphons expressed his interest to meet Pujya Swamiji again soon to discuss these plans in greater detail.



Clean, Green & Serene Diwali

[See Diwali blessing here >>](#)

Wisdom to celebrate the light of Diwali everyday

Divine Diwali & Bhaiya Dhooj celebrations at Parmarth Niketan, with the blessings of Pujya Swamiji, brought together people from all across the world and around India. Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi Bhagawati's inspiring words encouraged people from all walks of life to reflect on the deeper meaning and purpose of this beautiful festival of lights. Pujya Swamiji shared how the Indian spiritual culture believed that everyday should be an *ustav* (a celebration) and explained that the root of the word *ustav* (uts) meant roots. He shared that these celebrations were opportunities to connect with our roots, with our true Self, and therein lies the foundation of making everyday a celebration.

Sadhvi Bhagawati shared about the

great significance of light in the Indian spiritual tradition. She encouraged everyone to take this time to let the light of truth and wisdom into our hearts and into our lives. She also shared how Diwali was also a day in which we celebrate the return of Lord Rama from 14 years of exile, but she emphasized how God is never really gone from our lives but that we just forget God's unconditional presence and so Diwali is a time to welcome the Divine, by any shape or any form, back into our lives. She emphasized that the true wealth, the true prosperity for which we pray to Maha Lakshmi is not physical wealth, not what's in our bank accounts, but the inner awareness and experience of abundance which comes from being connected to the Divine. People and pilgrims from

all walks of life and every part of the world joyously held the earthen lamps of Diwali. Before the special Ganga Aarti ceremony there was a divine Lakshmi Poojan by the banks of Mother Ganga.

Thereafter Lakshmi Ki Aarti and Gangaji Ki Aarti and sankirtan were held. There was also a pledge to serve our world by bringing the light of peace and love, especially to ensure that our sacred natural resources are protected and preserved for future generations.

Yogi Coudoux, born in Tibet, residing in Paris, France Master of the Pranayama Yoga, and Swaash Guru from Karnataka also joined in the beautiful and inspiring celebrations.



[Watch Ganga Aarti Video >>](#)



[See the Satsang! >>](#)

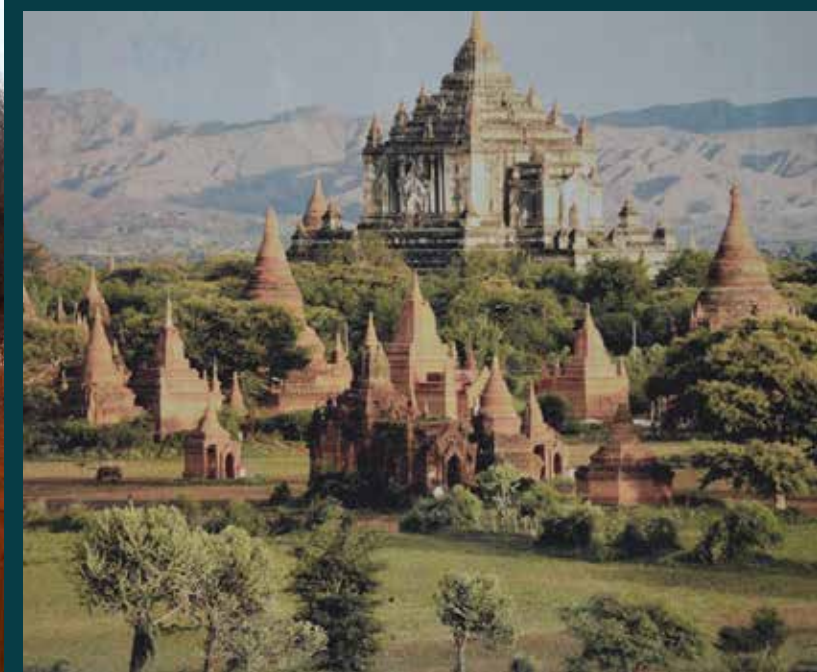


[See Video from Bhaiya Dhooj >>](#)



Interfaith Raksha Bandhan Celebrations in Bagan, Myanmar

Special Green Raksha Bandan during Samvad II conference in Myanmar



Special Raksha Bandhan celebrations were led by Pujya Swamiji with the multifaith leaders attending the Samvad II meeting on Conflict Avoidance. On the third and last day of the conference, Pujya Swamiji and the respected delegates visited the UNESCO Heritage site at Bagan, Myanmar to

exchange sacred red threads as a symbol of the leaders commitment to working together towards building a cleaner, greener and more peaceful world for all. They also pledged to protect sacred heritage sites, such as Bagan, and many other sites which carry great historical and archeological significance as well as

those close to the hearts of faith communities. After the rakhi tying ceremony, they held hands and pledged for a better world for all through the power of togetherness.

During their visit to Bagan, the delegation of interfaith leaders, scholars and members of Vivekanand International

Foundation visited several sacred pagodas, including the Htilominlo Guphaya, Shwezigon Pagoda, Anand Pagoda and the Bagan Archaeological Museum. The delegation took time to enjoy their bond and the glorious beauty of Bagan.



HH PUJYA SWAMI CHIDANAND SARASWATIJI MAHARAJ
PRESIDENT PARMARTH NIKETAN (RISHIKESH)

BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha's visit home to Parmarth Niketan

Swaminarayan Saints & Sevaks inspired to work toward improved WASH for all

Pujya Swamiji shared His inspiring and beautiful blessings with everyone during the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha's visit home to Parmarth Niketan recently. He encouraged the theme of #SwachhataHiSeva and encouraged all faiths to come together to inspire and encourage their congregations

to contribute towards a Swachh Bharat. During the nearly week-long stay of the group for their divine Sadhana Shivar, Pujya Swamiji joined them for the inauguration and for a beautiful water blessing ceremony, pledging to protect and work for all sacred rivers.

Pashupatinath Bagmati Ganga Aarti

Pashupatinath Committee honours Pujya Swamiji's divine inspiration & support to start the Aarti many years ago



Watch Pujya Swamiji's speech and video from the event:

Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi Bhagawati graced and blessed the Pashupatinath Aarti during their trip to Nepal. Pujya Swamiji especially appreciated the dedicated team who had been committed to keeping the Aarti going for the last 11 years. Pujya Swamiji mentioned that He had been inspired by the Aarti many years ago, whilst enroute to Kailash Mansarovar, and was so glad that it was continuing to inspire and touch so many pilgrims and yatri. Some of the singers and musicians in the Aarti were once Parmarth Rishikumars and they

were so thrilled to have Pujya Swamiji with them in Nepal.

Pujya Swamiji was so deeply touched to hear that every weekend volunteers gather to clean up the banks of the Bhagirathi River and ensure that it is clean and green for all. He led everyone in a pledge to protect and preserve our sacred spiritual and cultural heritage, which includes at its very core the protection of our sacred rivers and our environment, as the rivers and our lives are intertwined and interlinked.



Green Shri Ram Katha in Jodhpur

Tree Plantation, Clean Up and Mass Awareness Pledge for Swachh Bharat

Pujya Swamiji visited Jodhpur for Pujya Murlidhar Maharajji's Green Shri Ram Katha as well as having darshan at Junakhedapati Hanuman Mandir where the katha was taking place. Pujya Swamiji spent time with the members of the temple Trust and lauded their initiatives to protect and provide for stray cows, keeping the mandir premises clean and

green, and for inspiring devotees with the message of seva and selfless service.

On the second day, there was a beautiful morning stroll and clean up at the local park, with revered saints and devotees coming together to pick up trash and clean the park. The saints shared their support for Honorable Prime Min-

ister Shri Narendra Modi's vision for a Swachh Bharat and shared that Clean India begins with our homes and our communities. Thereafter, there was a beautiful tree plantation ceremony at the Shri Hanuman Mandir where the Shri Ram Katha was taking place. Local women from Jodhpur joined in by singing a beautiful song to honour and celebrate the occasion.

Pujya Swamiji's graces Green Shri Ram Katha in Jodhpur

Devotion and Dedication to Lord Shri Ram & All His Creation



Following the pledges taken during the month-long Green Shri Ram Katha at Parmarth Niketan, there was a beautiful katha conducted by Pujya Murlidharji Maharaj in Jodhpur. Pujya Swamiji warmly welcomed to bless, inspire and encourage everyone with the same green message of environmental protection and He saw that the seeds of environmentalism, planted in the hearts and minds of so many in Rishikesh, had taken fruit in

Rajasthan.

Thousands of devotees eagerly anticipated His visit and showered Him with flower malas. Dozens of devotees, who had heard the green message in Rishikesh, and were deeply inspired to start their own initiatives to clean and green their neighbourhoods, were called to the stage and blessed by Pujya Swamiji at the end of the katha. Pujya Murlidharji had made a beautiful picture of Pujya Swamiji as part of the Katha

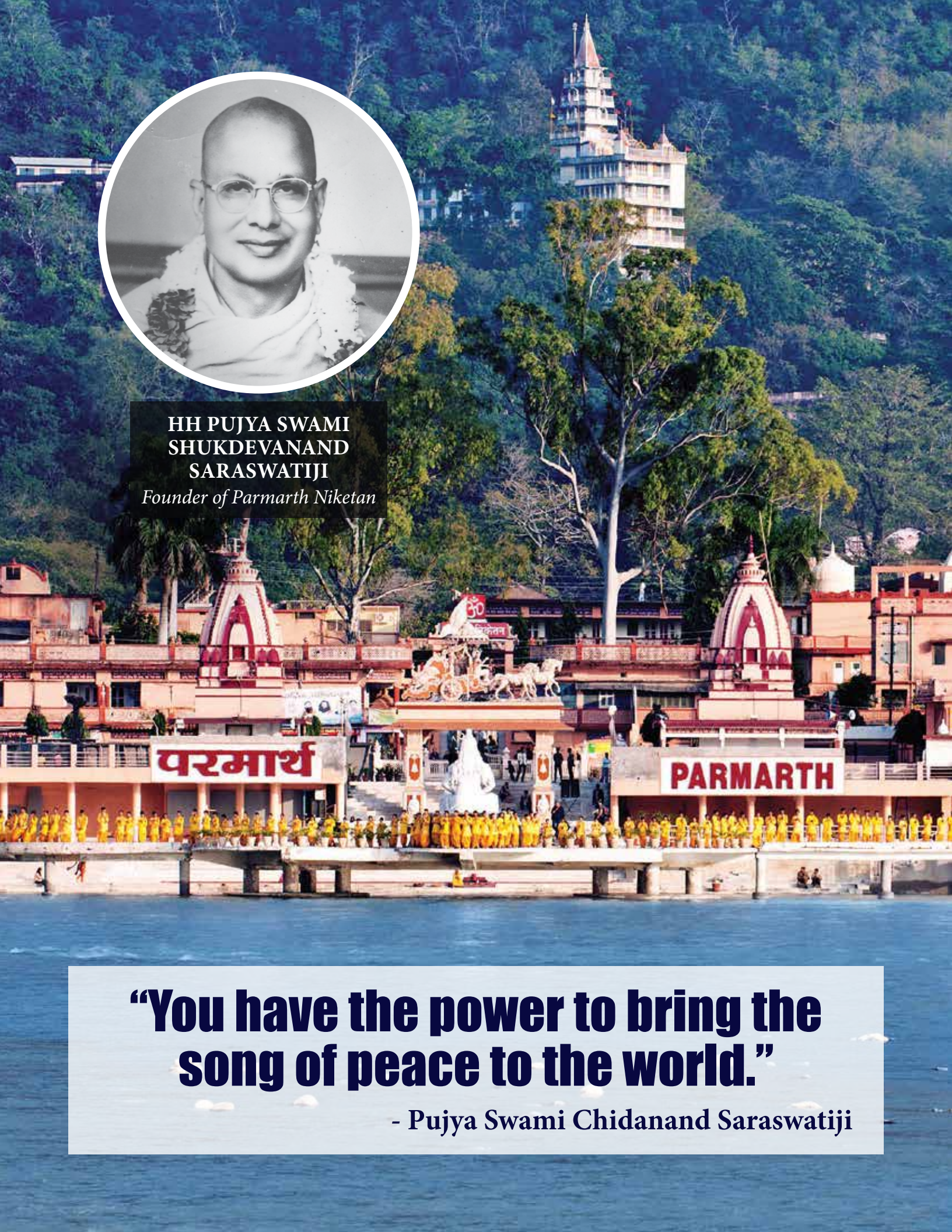
backdrop to ensure and reassure everyone that Pujya Swamiji would definitely grace and bless them during the katha, even amidst His incredible busy travel schedule. Hence, Pujya Swamiji's visit brought great joy and happiness to the thousands of devotees gathered in Jodhpur.

The Maharani of Jodhpur also attended the katha and Pujya Swamiji gifted her with a sacred Rudraksha sapling for Their Royal Highnesses green leadership.



HH PUJYA SWAMI
SHUKDEVANAND
SARASWATIJI

Founder of Parmarth Niketan



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

- Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji

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