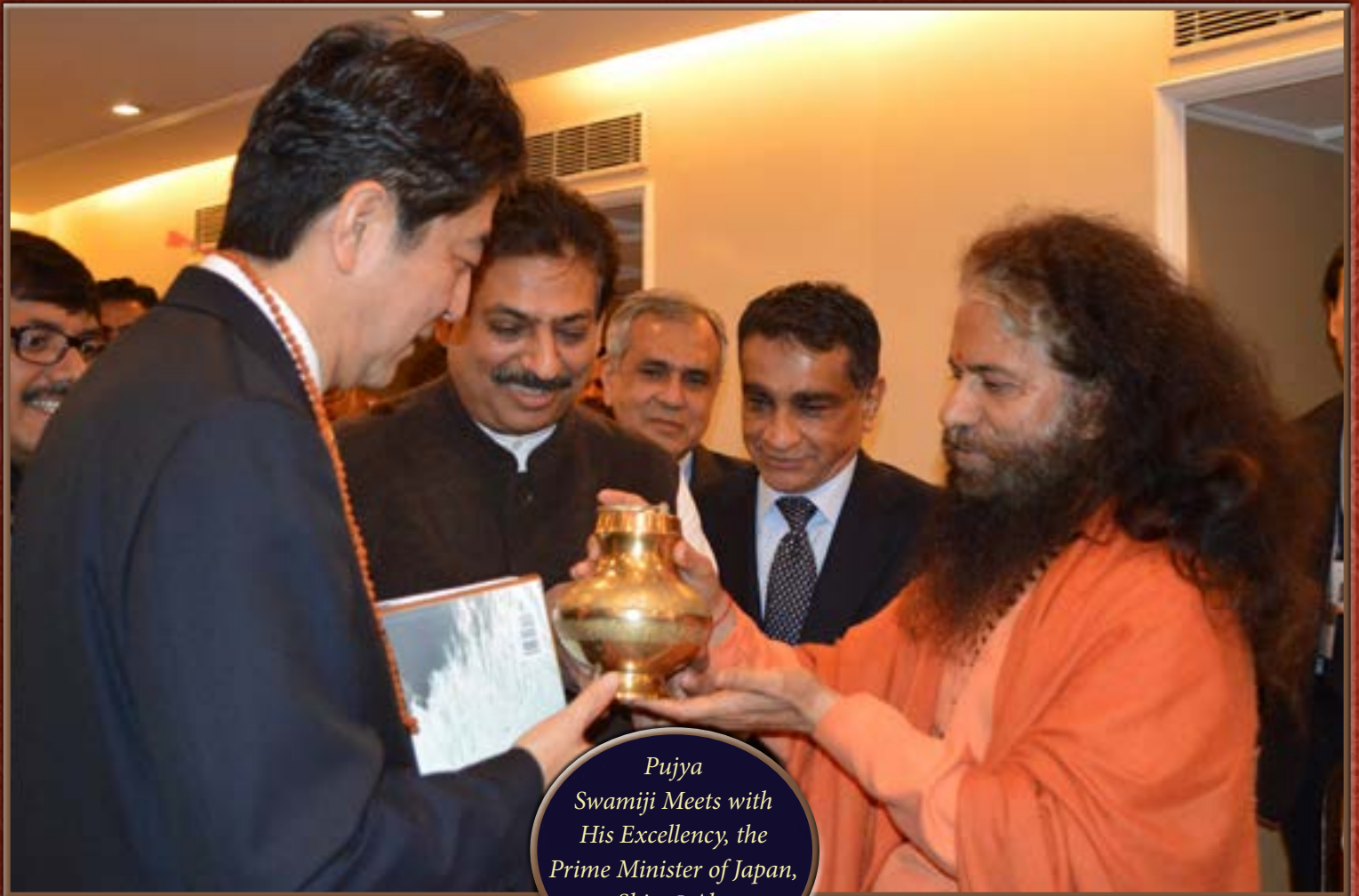


PARMARTH

H.H. Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji
LATE WINTER/EARLY SPRING 2014 NEWS MAGAZINE



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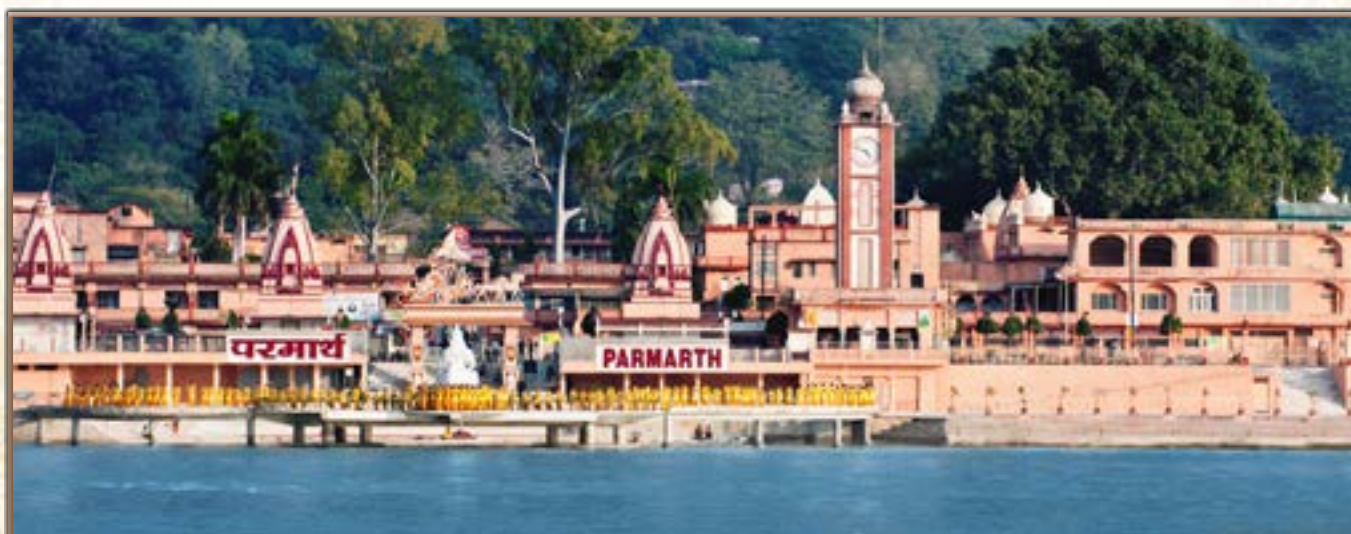
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LEARN MORE. VISIT OUR WEBSITES BY CLICKING:

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)

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MEETING WITH JAPAN'S PRIME MINISTER

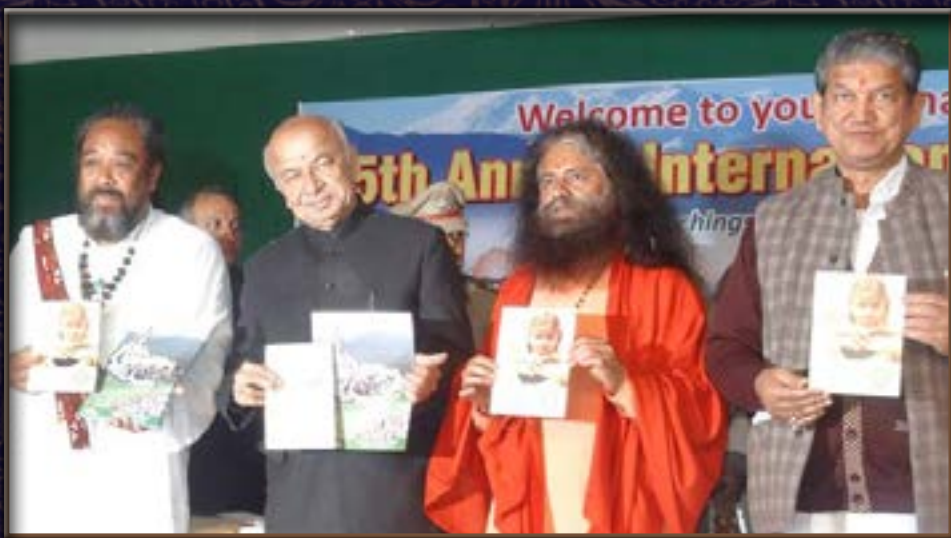
H.E. Shinzō Abe and Pujya Swamiji
Discuss the Ganga and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene



Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, met with Hon'ble Prime Minister of Japan, H.E. Shinzo Abe, recently. They discussed ways in which Japan and India could collaborate to exchange and share ideas and innovative solutions between both countries, especially in regards to WASH and the protection of crucial aquifers, such as the Ganga and Yamuna Rivers.

During the meeting, His Excellency, the Hon'ble Prime Minister was presented with water from the Ganga River, the life-line for some 500 million people, which is also one of the most threatened rivers in the world. He was also given a letter from GIWA urging the nation of Japan to strongly support WASH as a key sustainable development goal in the United Nation's post 2015 agenda and in the United Nation's upcoming Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Framework.

HON'BLE HOME MINISTER, SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE COMES HOME TO PARMARTH NIKETAN



"Pujya Swamiji, for the last so many years has worked to maintain the piousness of the Ganga and to keep Ganga clean. It is unparalleled in the history of humanity that Pujya Swamiji is doing this work."

- Hon'ble Home Minister
Shri Sushil Kumar Shindeji

Honourable Shri Sushil Kumar Shinde, the Honourable Home Minister of India and Honourable Shri Harish Rawatji the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand came to Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh to welcome and address some 600 participants from more than 51 countries who were participating in the 15th annual world famous International Yoga Festival at Parmarth Niketan Ashram.

Hon'ble Shri Shinde said he was very impressed to see all the people who have come from every corner of the Earth to imbibe the divine nectar of yoga in its birthplace in the lap of the Himalayas.

The theme of the program, explained Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, "Safe Uttarakhand, Sacred Uttarakhand."

Pujya Swamiji emphasized that the International Yoga Festival, with



its blossoming success and expansion year by year is a wonderful way to show that this holy land of Uttarakhand is both safe and sacred.

Hon'ble Shri Shindeji said: "Pujya Swamiji, for the last so many years has worked to maintain the piousness of the Ganga and to keep Ganga clean. It is unparalleled in the history of humanity that Pujya Swamiji is doing this work....I have been seeing Pujya Swamiji since the days when I was CM of Maharashtra. He believes in action. Whenever He came, He talked less, but believed in action."

Hon'ble Shri Harish Rawatji said: "Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji is the roaming Ambassador of Mother Ganga. All over the world, through the message of Mother Ganga, He is giving the message to humanity that we should preserve water for not only today, for the future also. For the future of mankind, as well as the survival of the entire humanity and the entire globe. This is wonderful."

Prior to the event, Hon'ble Shri Shindeji, Hon'ble Shri Harish Rawatji and the revered saints performed a Water Blessing Ceremony led by Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji in which sacred water was poured onto a globe as a prayer that all people, from all countries, all cultures and all walks of life should have access to clean, sufficient water.

MEETING WITH HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT APJ ABDUL KALAM

*Pujya Swamiji and India's Revered Former President
Come Together to Discuss WASH and Mother Ganga*



Pujya Swamiji discusses the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance with HE Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.
Download the full GIWA brochure at www.i-wash.org

HH Pujya Swamiji met with His Excellency, Former President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam at Dr. Kalam's New Delhi Offices this February.

During the meeting, Pujya Swamiji and Dr. Kalam discussed the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA), which is bringing together the power of our world's faiths to ensure even the most marginalized people have access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). Every day, some 1,600 children die mostly preventable deaths due to deplorable WASH conditions. For this reason, India leads the world in the number of children under the age of five who die every year.

Said Pujya Swamiji, GIWA's Co-Founder, "we can no

longer sit idly in our prayer rooms while children are dying painful and preventable deaths due to unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene. That is why the faiths are combining forces to ensure everyone has access to clean water and proper sanitation and hygiene. In light of our nation's growing population and the rapid degradation of our natural resources, the need couldn't be greater than it is right now."

WORKING TOWARDS THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF DISASTER-TORN UTTARAKHAND

GIWA is working alongside Ganga Action Parivar and other partners to ensure sustainable disaster risk reduction and rebuilding in the disaster-torn

Himalayas, under the umbrella of Project Hope, which was founded by Pujya Swamiji in the aftermath of the 2002 South Indian Tsunami.

Among the plans being carried forth by Project Hope is the promotion of the planting of trees and organic farming in the area, in order to improve economic growth, stem landslide-inducing soil erosion and protect fragile natural resources, such as the Ganga River, from toxic agricultural run-off.

Said Pujya Swamiji, "every day, one billion litres of toxic chemicals pour into the Ganga River due to industry and agriculture. Because of this, our beautiful natural resources are decaying and far too many people are sickening and dying. This is why when we chant, 'Jai Jai Gange,' we should also say, 'Jaivik Gange,' so that our Natural River and those who depend on Her are protected through the planting of trees and practices including organic farming."

THE NATIONAL GANGA RIVER RIGHTS ACT DISCUSSED

Near the conclusion of their meeting, Pujya Swamiji presented to President Kalam a draft of the proposed National Ganga River Rights Act. The Act, which was drafted by Ganga Action Parivar, GIWA and the renowned Community Environmental



Former President, HE Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, reviews the National Ganga River Rights Act with Pujya Swamiji. Sign the petition in support of the Act and Mother Ganga's rights at www.gangarights.org

Legal Defense Fund (CELDF), is the first of its kind to place our National River within a legal rights-based framework.

Said Pujya Swamiji, "The National Ganga River Rights Act is reflective of the fact that when Mother Ganga's rights are violated, for example, by polluting or draining Her waters, all of our rights are violated. Water, in and of itself, is a basic human right, which we all need to survive. When it is threatened, we are all threatened, because disease and preventable suffering ensues. That's why so

many people from around the world are now coming together in support of the Act, saying, 'Ganga's Rights are Our Rights.'"



President Abdul Kalam was deeply encouraged by Pujya Swamiji's sustainable action plans and stated his full support to spread its messages to the masses, especially to the youth of India, beginning in the Himalayas.

**SIGN THE PETITION
FOR THE NATIONAL
GANGA RIVER RIGHTS
ACT. CLICK:
GANGARIGHTS.ORG.**

- HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji

SONU NIGAM CELEBRATES A DAY WITHOUT WASTE AT PARMARTH



Parmarth Niketan celebrated the International Day Without Waste with famous Bollywood singer and artist, Sonu Nigam, visiting Pujya Swamiji and being inspired by Him to lead everyone in a green pledge to preserve and protect our Mother Earth, Mother Ganga and Mother Nature.

For centuries India has described its fertile and rich soil as sona-as gold- and associated the health of the soil, their sacred rivers, the air and their environment as the true wealth of their communities and their lives. Sonu Nigam, whose name literally means precious as gold and whose beautiful voice and popularity he has been able to connect and touch millions of youth, said that the true heritage our Earth is being polluted everyday with our waste.

Pujya Swamiji honoured Sonu Nigam and his sisters, Teesha and Meenal, with a sacred Rudraksh plant and said: 'The love and sacred bond between you is your true wealth, the greatest way to honour your mother and to live the values that she has raised you with. Similarly, our Indian traditions and values have empowered us to honour our sacred rivers and sacred land as our Divine Mother. With your divine example you can truly inspire everyone to connect to their roots and preserve and protect the rich soil and heritage of Mother India.'

On the occasion, Pujya Sadhviji brought light to Mahatma Gandhiji's famous quote: 'There is enough for every man's need but not enough for even one man's greed.' Today, unfortunately our natural heritage, our sacred soil and rivers are under severe threat from being littered, polluted and neglected. Non-biodegradable plastic and



waste fill landfills, float in rivers, clog up sewage pipes and kill stray cows as well as many other animals. Statistics from the UN show that one million plastic bags are used and disposed every minute.

Furthermore, the lack of awareness, poor implementation of legislation and lack of wide-scale access to effective technologies to safely dispose of this waste have led to thousands of people unknowingly burning polythenes and non-biodegradable waste, releasing toxic/carcinogenic gases into the environment and contributing significantly to rising air pollution and global warming.

Pujya Sadhviji shared: 'Excess waste on our planet is a manifestation of our greed; of taking more than what is actually required for our basic needs. When we consume more than we need and make life-style choices such as eating meat, we actually unconsciously are contributing significantly to polluting the world. But, the hope lies in the fact that simply by making wiser decisions towards our consumption and our life, assessing our carbon and water footprint, we actually can contribute significantly to preserving our environment, protecting our future generations and thereby improving the quality of our own lives.'



SPIRITUALITY IN ACTION

America's Top Recording Artist, Macklemore, Comes to Parmarth, Performs GIWA Blessing Ceremony for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All



Famed American musical artist, Macklemore, Pujya Swamiji and others perform a Global Interfaith WASH Alliance water blessing for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for all

Famed American music artist, Macklemore, his beloved fiancée, Tricia, and dignitaries including Isaac Tigrett, Founder of the Hard Rock Café and House of Blues, joined Pujya Swamiji for a Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) Water Blessing Ceremony, with prayers for improved and accessible water, sanitation and hygiene for all. The majority of child deaths worldwide can be attributed to the lack of good water, sanitation and hygiene, making this cause so very crucial.

Later in the evening, a wonderful discussion was had about Ganga Action Parivar's and the Global Interfaith Alliance's Ganga Rights Movement, which is bringing together the people of the world to help ensure the clean and green future of our beloved National River.





Famed American music artist, Macklemore, his fiancée, Tricia, dignitaries including Pujya Swami Nalinanand Giri Maharajji, Isaac Tigrett, Founder of the Hard Rock Café and House of Blues and others during a visit to Parmarth Niketan

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Uttarakhand's Governor, Dignitaries, Bestow Puja Swamiji with the Surya Ratna



Puja Swamiji receives the Surya Ratna Award from Dr. Aziz Qureshi, Governor of Uttarakhand, Padma Vibhushan Dr. R. A. Mashelkar, CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow & President, Global Research Alliance and Prof. Dr. Sanjay B. Chordiya, Founder and President of Suryadatta Group of Institutes

Puja Swamiji was the recipient of the prestigious Surya Ratna Lifetime Achievement Award conferred upon Him by His Excellency Dr. Aziz Qureshi, Governor of Uttarakhand, Padma Vibhushan Dr. R. A. Mashelkar, CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow & President, Global Research Alliance and Prof. Dr. Sanjay B. Chordiya, Founder and President of Suryadatta Group of Institutes, at Suryadatta's Campus in Pune, Maharashtra. This great honour was given to Puja Swamiji for Excellence in Innovative Spirituality and for His exceptional service to Humanity and the Environment.

This award was conferred on the auspicious occasion of the Foundation Day "Suryadatta Annual Celebrations - SURYOTSAV" a week-long celebration of excellence in academia, athletics, and culture

which commences every year in a grand event commemorating the extraordinary achievements and contributions of exceptional individuals. Nearly 5,000 eminent dignitaries and students participated in the gala awards ceremony to inaugurate the Suryostav.

Dr Chordiya said, "The motive behind felicitating such eminent personalities is to mould the mind sets of the students and offer them an opportunity to choose their own role models." He further said, "These personalities who are to be felicitated have done a remarkable work in their fields. Students will take inspiration from them and explore the world. Even if 20% of the students in India try to imbibe values from such stalwarts, they can carve a nice niche in the world".



"In true giving, there is no suffering. One does not forego anything. The giving in itself becomes its own reward."

- HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji



Meeting with the Vice President of India

HON'BLE SHRI M. HAMID ANSARI

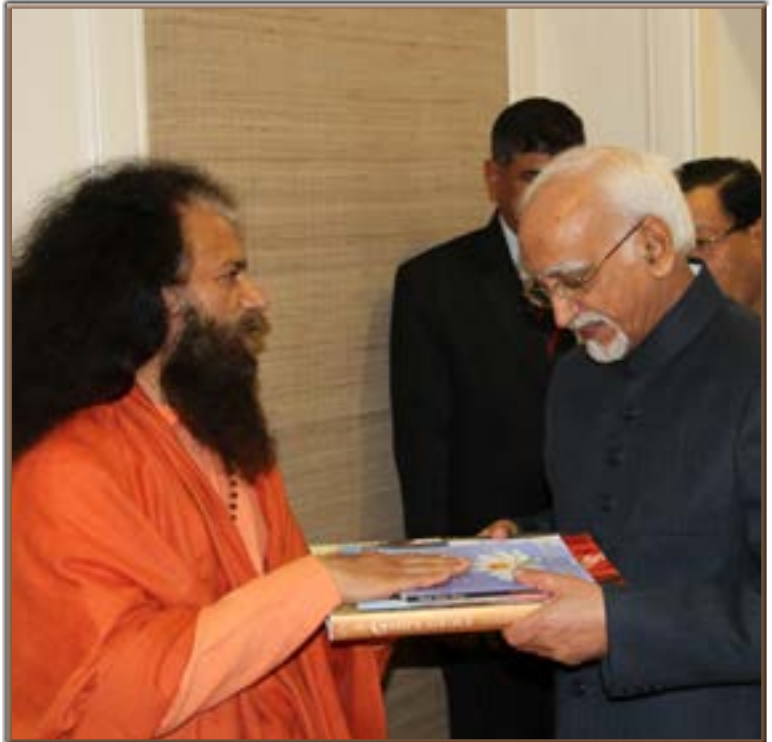
Pujya Swamiji shared the stage with the Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri M. Hamid Ansari at a key meeting in Delhi this spring.

The meeting brought together some 1,500 delegates from around the world, who focused on a green vision for India through the cultivation of medicinal plants.

"When we say 'har har Gange,' we should also say 'her-bal Gange,'" said Pujya Swamiji. "Together, let us remake the banks of the Ganga, so that they are green with sweet-smelling, life-giving plants, which will keep us and our ecosystems healthy."

Later, Pujya Swamiji and the Hon'ble Shri M. Hamid Ansari met in private, where they discussed the activities of Project Hope and its many partners, including Organic India and THDC, to enable survivors of last year's tragic Himalayan floods, to establish happy new lives through organic and zero-budget farming.

Said Pujya Swamiji, "we must all be proud that India has a green Vice President, who cares deeply for the issues of our environment and humanity, and brings together people across all boundaries in harmony."





Pujya Swamiji lights the lamp and inaugurates a beautiful publication on medicinal herb and organic farming with His Excellency Vice President of India, Shri Hamid Ansari and other dignitaries.



Pujya Swamiji discusses environmental preservation with Senior BJP Leader, Hon'ble Shri Murli Manohar Joshi



Pujya Swamiji discusses medicinal herbs farming, cleaning and greening the banks of Mother Ganga with Dr. RA Mashelkar, former chief of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Chairperson, National Innovation Foundation



Pujya Swamiji discusses organic and green culture all along the banks of Mother Ganga with the Hon'ble Vice President of India

HON'BLE MINISTER OF BHUTAN VISITS PARMARTH NIKETAN



Bhutan's Economic Affairs Minister, Hon'ble Lyonpo Khandu Wangehuk, visited the banks of Mother Ganga for the divine Ganga Aarti. During the ceremony, he warmly pledged to work towards bringing India and Bhutan closer together, so that both nations may spread cultures of peace and serenity to the rest of the world.

He declared that the two countries should illustrate that the true growth of a nation should not merely be based upon its GDP, but should also include a Gross Happiness Index that takes into account the well-being of its citizens. Pujya Swamiji agreed that a Gross Happiness Index is a wonderful innovation, which could be used towards changing the course of development for all of humanity.

Pujya Swamiji bestowed Hon'ble Lyonpo Khandu Wangehuk with a Rudraksha mala, a shawl and a Rudraksha tree, saying that the tree should be seen as a symbol of the strengthening of friendships between nations and peoples.



Global Citizen's Forum

TOGETHERNESS IN SINGAPORE



Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji traveled to Singapore for the Global Citizen's Forum event hosted and organized by Dr. BK Modi, head of SpiceCorp Global and many other organizations. The Global Citizen's Forum is a forum of global leaders who are coming together in the name of commitment to living as citizens of the world, rather than as only patriotic towards only one country. The Forum is also focused on uniting India, the US and China as leaders of the unfolding world of today, focusing on how India can play its crucial role on the world stage. Officially launched at the Ganga Action Parivar Camp during the Maha Kumbha Mela, the Global Citizen's Forum has had numerous large, successful events in major cities throughout the world over the last year.

Many students who had been present at the Global Citizen's Forum evening event requested Pujya Swamiji and Sadhvi to come to their school and address the audience, so before leaving for the airport, they spent the morning with students, inspiring them how they, too, can be Green Global Citizens.

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE AT FICCI

Leaders Gather and Share



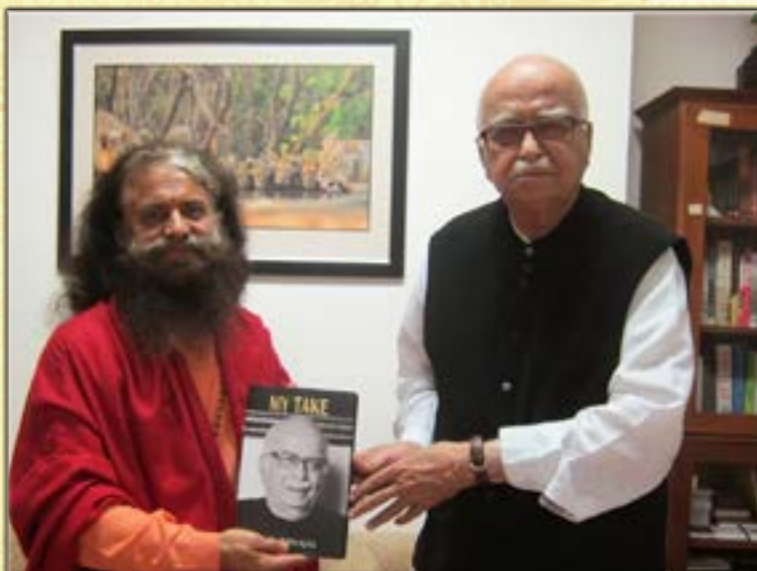
The women's wing of FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry), called the FLO (FICCI Ladies Organization) celebrated thirty wonderful years this April. For their Annual General Meeting, which celebrated FLO's historic anniversary, they invited Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswatiji to give the keynote address. Speaking on the theme of "Inner Journey: Strong, Secure and Centered" to the FLO chapter heads from across India, Sadhviji spoke about how to find strength, security and centering first within ourselves and then how to live that in the world. After the discourse, Simran Bhargava, moderated a compelling question-answer session after the discourse in which audience members asked Sadhviji several questions on everything ranging from raising strong, secure and centered daughters to bridging spirituality and professional excellence.

After the discourse, Smt. Najma Heptullahji and FLO outgoing President Malvika Rai distributed awards to 12 inspiring women from across India who had truly excelled in utilizing micro-loans to propel forward empowering programs and projects in their villages.

THE DANCE OF MOTHER GANGA

Pujya Swamiji and dignitaries come together to enjoy an unforgettable performance

A beautiful Ganga Avataran ballet took place in Delhi narrating the story of Mother Ganga coming down to Earth from the Heavens and liberating the souls of the son of King Sagara. Arushi Nishank gracefully danced the role of Mother Ganga along with her troupe. Pujya Swamiji, Shri LK Advani, Senior Leader of BJP, Shri Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishankji', Former Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Shri Birju Maharaj, World-renowned Classical Indian Artist, Acharya Balkrishan, Pratibha Advani, daughter of Shri LK Advani, and many others were present at the event. They were filled with great pride for the young dancers and the beauty in which they were dedicated to preserving the rich cultural and spiritual heritage of the nation.



Pujya Swamiji met with Shri LK Advani and they spoke in depth about the need to prioritize issues of health, education and the environment. Shri LK Advani shared with Pujya Swamiji the recent books he wrote including, "My Take," through which he offers his wealth of experience and political wisdom to the world. Pujya Swamiji lauded his vision and insights into creating a better India for all.



Pujya Swamiji shared with Shri Anna Hazare His vision of how Anna can lead the clean and green revolution in India. Pujya Swamiji lauded his efforts as well as his great dedication and devotion to his nation and its values. Pujya Swamiji invited him home to Parmarth Niketan again and plans to celebrate his upcoming birthday in June with uplifting and inspiring green messages.

VIVEK OBEROI BUILDS SANITATION FOR INDIA WITH PUJYA SWAMIJI



Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji and Vivek Oberoi, famous Bollywood actor and humanitarian, laid the first foundation stones for a new bio-toilet complex in a school for girls which did not have adequate sanitation facilities.

The complex has been made possible by the generous support of the Emami Foundation, Shri RS Agarwalji and Shri RS Goenkaji, as an exemplary example of corporate social responsibility towards vital need of health and sanitation. It will be constructed and designed with the dedicated and committed partnership of Arkin Creations Founder, Shri Manoj Jhaji, who has offered his time, talent, technology and tenacity for this vital cause. It has been and continues to be supported by local and state administration, including recently when Hon'ble Minister of Youth Welfare and Sports, Shri Dinesh Agarwalji, joined for the bhoomi poojan (ground-breaking) of the complex a few weeks ago.

During the divine event Pujya Swamiji emphasized that "time has come that we must not only worship the creator but also His creation, servicing humanity and the environment. It is so wonderful that the beloved action hero of millions of youngsters has dedicated himself to raising awareness towards water, sanitation and hygiene issues. It is time that we all must become action heroes in our own schools and communities."

Vivek Oberoi's shared, "Rishikesh is the most beautiful place in the world. Let us come together with the blessings of Pujya Swamiji to keep it clean and green, starting with our own schools and streets." Some 4,000 students pledged their commitment to Green Action and promised that the next time Vivek Oberoi visits the campus, it would be a clean and green one.



**“Do not wait for miracles. You ARE the miracle!
Never forget the miracle of yourself.”**

- HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji

दैनिक जागरण

शौचालयों के निर्माण को क्रांति की जरूरत

महाराष्ट्र सरकार के अंतर्गत
महाराष्ट्र सरकार के अंतर्गत

शौचालयों के निर्माण को क्रांति की जरूरत

महाराष्ट्र सरकार के अंतर्गत
महाराष्ट्र सरकार के अंतर्गत

हिन्दुस्तान

तस्करों को चादिर जया बजरिया

तस्करों को चादिर जया बजरिया

तस्करों को चादिर जया बजरिया

अमर उजाला

अपना शहर

अपना शहर

अपना शहर

अपना शहर

दैनिक जनवाणी

ऑटोनोमस कॉलेज में जैविक शौचालय का शिलान्यास

ऑटोनोमस कॉलेज में जैविक शौचालय का शिलान्यास

ऑटोनोमस कॉलेज में जैविक शौचालय का शिलान्यास

Pujya Swamiji and Pujya Sri Sri Ravi Shankarji ON WORLD HAPPINESS DAY



Pujya Sri Sri Ravi Shankarji visited Parmarth Niketan and coincidentally it was also World Happiness Day. Pujya Swamiji said what a beautiful way to celebrate the day but with a spiritual leader who has brought so much happiness and peace in so many people's lives.

Pujya Swamiji and Pujya Sadhvi Bhagawatiji mentioned that it's so fitting that World Happiness Day falls at the same time as World Forest Day and World Water Day. They emphasized that without forests, water and nature happiness and peace are unattainable.

Pujya Sri Sriji was deeply touched by the innovative ways in which Pujya Swamiji is bringing a green touch to spirituality and was happy to join in the sacred water blessing ceremony, pledging to work together to provide water, sanitation and hygiene wherever possible.. Pujya Swamiji gifted Pujya Sri Sriji a beautiful Rudraksh plant and an eco-friendly elachi mala as a green memento.

COMING TOGETHER. CELEBRATING TOGETHER.



It is through coming together that communities are formed.

It is through community that the world is shaped.

Every day, Pujya Swamiji brings together people from across India and around the globe, inspiring all to reinvent the dreams that have become our world, so that everyone, everywhere may enjoy a cleaner, greener, more sustainable life.

AMBASSADOR OF PEACE AWARD

*is Bestowed upon Pujya Swamiji
at United Nations Centre*



Pujya Swamiji received the prestigious Ambassador of Peace Award recently at a function organized by the United Nations Center for India and Bhutan and the Universal Peace Federation.

The Award was presented to Pujya Swamiji in honor of His contributions to interfaith harmony, as part of United Nation's World Interfaith Harmony Week.

Renowned for His many decades of interfaith leadership, Pujya Swamiji is the founder and chairman of the India Heritage Research Foundation, which has been actively engaged in the promotion of interfaith harmony for more than twenty-five years. He is also the founder of several strongly interfaith organizations, including the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, Ganga Action Parivar and the Divine Shakti Foundation.

Said Pujya Swamiji, "we must all learn to cultivate divine vision. We must pray for the sight that shows us God in everyone, so that we can serve all and love all, thus creating a more harmonious world."



A BEAUTIFUL FESTIVAL

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Pujya Swamiji, Honoured at the Lohri Festival



Pujya Swamiji and Shri Harish Rawatji, then Water Minister of India and now Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, were present at a very special Lohri celebration in Rishikesh. Lohri is the celebration of the coldest day of winter in which communities get together as one family to light bonfires and to sing and dance; celebrating that even in the harshest temperatures the warmth of their relationships and connection with each other brings them together.

At this event Pujya Swamiji was felicitated by the Hon'ble Shri Harish Rawatji, as well as the Director of AIIMS Rishikesh, Dr. Raj Kumarji, and members of the local community for guiding, leading and directing Rishikesh to be on the spiritual capital of the world, so that truly in every season people are pulled and drawn to the sacred land in celebration of their oneness and unity.



CHINESE NEW YEAR

Celebrating an Ancient Tradition. Together.



As the sun descended over Mother Ganga, Shri Mohan Bhandari, a yoga teacher from Parmarth Niketan who is now renowned for his classes in China, as well as people from across China and around the world gathered on Parmarth Niketan's beautiful ghats. Pujya Swamiji inspired all to take the Green Pledge and start Chinese New Year with a vow to plant more trees and preserve and protect their local water bodies.

Sadhvi Bhagawatiji also encouraged all of those present to take the pledge to let go of all the habits, regrets and all that was old and blocking them from being their full divine selves.



A GREEN VALENTINE'S DAY

Cultivating a Greener, More Loving World Together.



On the banks of Mother Ganga, Pujya Swamiji inspired everyone to dedicate Valentine's Day, not only to their loved ones, but also to the divine and unconditional love that Mother Nature showers us with every day. He shared that this love is always on, has always been on and will continue to be on with no hesitation, no expectation, no discrimination and no vacation.

The evening yagna (fire) ceremony was performed for World Peace & Environmental Protection, a prayer that all people may be free, not only of the peril of death by gun, bomb and grenade, but also free of the perils of polluted air, toxic water and nutrient-depleted soil.



Thereafter, a sacred water blessing ceremony took place in which people from Brazil, Indonesia, America, Canada, Europe, Spain, Argentina, Austria, Uruguay, Mexico, Cyprus, New Zealand, Italy, Palestine, China and many other nations joined to pour sacred Ganga Jal (Ganga Water) onto a globe, a symbol of the need for water, sanitation and hygiene for the whole world. From the vital fluid which nourishes us in utero, to the rain which irrigates desiccated fields, to the rivers which quench parched mouths and bring livelihoods to those living along the banks, to the oceans which house an entire rich world of their own, every moment and every aspect of our lives, no matter our caste, creed or race, is inextricably linked to water. They then collectively prayed to that all beings and all creatures on Earth should have access to sufficient and safe, life-sustaining water because water is life.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE VIDEO FROM THE CELEBRATION ONLINE](#)
[CLICK HERE TO SEE PUJYA SWAMIJI'S DIVINE VALENTINE'S DAY MESSAGE.](#)



A JOYOUS HOLI

People from Around the World Gather Colourfully

The divine colours and festivities of Holi filled the air at Parmarth Niketan recently. For the special occasion, the Kumaon Cultural Club of Uttarakhand celebrated with all of the visitors, yatri and yoga students who have come to Parmarth from many countries across the world. They filled the air with traditional singing and dancing in which all, young and old, reveled and played with joyous hearts.

With the blessings of H.H. Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji, the auspicious occasion brought together and connected the local culture with the global community.

Pujya Swamiji blessed everyone with words of inspiration and upliftment: "It is so beautiful how we have come together -- the global connected to the local! All of our brothers and sisters from abroad with our brothers and sisters from these sacred Himalayas. It is this connection of people that leads to true union (yoga), of the north and the south, the east and the west. Let this Holi celebration be one in which we play together, pray together and pledge to work together to bring strength and stability back to this rich, traditional and sacred land."

As participants danced and sang with the divine music of Holi, they covered each other's faces and filled the air with the auspicious, organic, herbal colours of the festival. Organic jaggery sweets were also distributed to all. Afterwards, everyone joined together in a sacred water blessing ceremony, offering prayers that the entire world should have access to safe, life-giving and sufficient water as they poured the holy waters of Mother Ganga over a globe, symbolizing all people and places everywhere.



In honor of Sadhvi Bhagawatiji's birthday, Pujya Swamiji blessed her with an elaichi mala, saying that it's a "green" (eco-friendly) mala for Sadhviji's tenacious dedication and commitment to environmental preservation for world peace. Just as the elachi is fragrant and promotes health and happiness so to may Sadhviji's life continue to bring the fragrance and ever-lasting colours of health and happiness to all that she teaches, touches and thereby transforms.



WORLD WATER DAY

Parmarth Niketan Joins the United Nations in Celebrations



World Water Day was celebrated in a thoughtful and festive ceremony this March on the beautiful banks of the Ganga River. The celebrations, organized by Ganga Action Parivar and the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, were dedicated to the theme of saving energy to save water.

Explained Pujya Swamiji “We are always taking from our water sources, such as the Ganga, and as a result, they are becoming increasingly dryer and tragically polluted to the point where some of our water bodies can no longer support life. The celebrations today send a message that now is the time to conserve water, to keep our rivers clean, and to give back to nature. For all of our lives, water has nourished us as a mother nourishes a child. Now, just as an adult child would care for his elderly parents, we must also do the same for the rivers, lakes and other aquifers that have given us so much.”

At the onset of the celebrations, a special water blessing ceremony took place in which participants from all over the world offered the waters of the sacred river Ganga to a large globe in a collective prayer that everyone, everywhere, should have access to sufficient, safe and life-giving water.

A grand procession was next held in which women took the lead, carrying decorative pots of water atop their heads as they journeyed to the Ganga River. On the banks of Ganga, the water was offered to the sound of Vedic hymns for peace.

Said Sadhvi Bhagawatiji, “just as we sacrifice our time, our energy, and our strength in the protection of our countries and in the protection of our own lives, it is now time to use that same energy, strength and commitment to protect the life of our planet through protection of our water bodies and forests. Thus, today let us all raise our hands in a pledge to protect and preserve





forests, water and energy to bring about true world peace.” She led all the participants in a pledge to use their time, energy, expertise and experience to help protect the water bodies and the forests wherever they live, in all countries across the globe.

The theme for this year’s United Nations’ World Water Day, “Water and Energy,” was declared by the United Nations out of concern for the enormous strain that conventional energy production places on our world’s diminishing water supplies.

According to the United Nations, energy production accounts for some 15% of water extracted worldwide. Unless changes are made, this is expected to rise to 55% by 2050, increasing the risks of conflicts between using water for energy versus conserving water to sustain life.

During the World water Fay event, bio-toilets were showcased by the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance as important answers to our world’s increasing water and energy needs. Technologies, such as the Bio-Digester system, convert all human waste into clear water for use in agriculture. They also produce bio-gas, which can be used to power homes, communities and even automobiles.



HANUMAN JAYANTI

Lord Hanuman is lovingly celebrated through song and inspiration



This year's Hanuman Jayanti celebrations at Parmarth Niketan began with the Hanuman Chalisa (a devotional song that highlights the glories and tales of Sri Hanumanji) lead by Pujya Swamiji and joined by all pilgrims and Parmarth Rishikumars. Later in the evening, a yagna (fireside ceremony) and Ganga Aarti were also dedicated to Sri Hanuman and His divine spirit of single-minded devotion to Lord Ram.

Sadhvi Bhagawatiji shared that Hanuman Jayanti is a celebration of devotion, a celebration of sacrifice, a celebration of surrender. The day commemorates the life of Sri Hanuman, a divine incarnation who embodies the perfect devotee. The day of Hanuman Jayanti is not meant to have a beginning and ending but rather it is an eternal message that we must take into every minute and every moment of our lives.

She shared the message and prayer for this special day, explaining stories from Hanumanji's life and how they can inspire and guide us in our lives and devotional paths: "On this day of Hanuman Jayanti, let us strive to be as single-minded in our devotion as Hanumanji. Let us realise, as Hanumanji teaches, that where God is, everything is, and where we are not connected with the Divine, no amount of riches or rubies can bring fulfillment. Let us pray that our hearts and minds may be filled only with the "raas" (divine essence) of God and our Guru. Let us seek to emulate Hanumanji's boundless faith and devotion. For, when God is with us and within us as much the love of Lord Rama filled every cell of Hanuman's being, then we too will find that we are showered with all that we need to succeed, thrive and attain divine bliss."

To read Pujya Swamiji's divine message and blessings for Hanuman Jayanti click the link below:

<https://www.facebook.com/notes/parmarth/singleminded-devotion-hanuman-jayanti/10152358229217351>

HINDU ENVIRONMENT WEEK

Celebrated With an Interfaith Green Mass Wedding, Water Ceremonies, Eco-Toilet Building, Tree Planting and More, Alongside Oxford University



India's first ever Hindu Environmental Week was celebrated this February at Parmarth Niketan, signifying a growing movement of faiths coming forward for the conservation of our natural resources.

Hindu Environmental Week, an initiative of Oxford University's Bhumi Project, was organized collectively here as an intergenerational effort by Ganga Action Parivar (GAP), the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, the Green Pilgrimage Network (GPN), Alliance for Religions and Conservation (ARC) and the Bhumi Project.

Said Pujya Swamiji, **"Beginning now, on the first day of India's first Hindu Environmental Week, let our every moment be dedicated to serving the Creator though serving His creation. The splendour of nature is a precious and irreplaceable gift, which we all must do our utmost to protect."**

Distinguished delegates from Delhi's Senior Citizen Counsel opened the week alongside HH Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji with a heart-felt Water Blessing Ceremony, in which the sacred waters of the River Ganga were offered to a multi-hued globe. The observance symbolized the crucial need for our water resources to be protected and maintained in their pristine form. In India, nearly 100 million people have no access to clean water.

Youth from Parmarth Niketan's Gurkul next took the Hindu Environmental Week banner to the rural village of Veerpur, where they installed a Bio-Sand water purification system that they personally fabricated. The system, which will soon be installed in the schools of Uttarakhand under an initiative of the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance and Ganga Action Parivar, will help ensure that the state's four million students are protected from deadly water-borne diseases, such as cholera and dysentery.



“Every day, 1,600 children die because of diseases associated with deplorable water, sanitation and hygiene conditions. Today, youth themselves are taking matters into their own hands by installing a water purification system that will help keep them, and their peers, safe,” Said Pujya Swamiji

Afterwards, the youth planted trees to signify a green future for all, and to recognize the importance of trees for protecting our world’s soil, air, and water.

Later in the day, students assembled at a nearby PG college in order to begin construction of a biotoilet complex, which will provide the institution’s 3,000 female students with the benefits of protective sanitary facilities. Some 70% of India has no access to toilets, presenting a major threat to the environment and public health.

Simultaneously, a green interfaith wedding ceremony, overseen by Hindu priests and Muslim Imams, was held for twenty-one couples in Uttar Pradesh, under the inspiration of Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati-ji. Of the couples, sixteen were Hindu and five were Muslim. The joint nature of the ceremony resulted in decreased environmental impact, while also bringing together the faiths to celebrate the joys of a beautiful wedding ceremony in harmony, as a united community. Afterwards, the happy couples planted trees alongside their families in celebration of their green wedding.

Hindu Environmental Week’s first day concluded on the banks of the Ganga River at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh, with sacred homa and Ganga Aarti ceremonies for world peace and environmental preservation. As the sun slowly descended over the serenely-flowing river, which provides sustenance for some 500 million people, prayers were held that all people of all faiths may come together to ensure it is protected and preserved for all generations to come.





From top, Parmarth Niketan Rishikumars plant trees and enjoy naturally-filtered water through GIWA's and Project Hop's Bio-Sand System. Bottom: senior citizens celebrate Hindu Environment Week joyously

INTERNATIONAL MOTHER EARTH DAY CELEBRATED

Parmarth Niketan Ashram hosted very special International Mother Earth Day Celebrations this spring, under the divine inspiration of Pujya Swamiji.

As part of the day's activities Pujya Swamiji inspired local schools and colleges to encourage each student to engage in green actions, such as planting and watering trees, environmental drawing competitions as well as slogan writing/awareness raising campaigns. Ganga Action Parivar and GIWA volunteers helped the schools plan and execute these fun and creative activities.

During the commencement of a week-long Bhagawat Katha at Parmarth Niketan, led by Pujya Shri Mridul Krishan Shastriji of Vrindavan, Pujya Swamiji said: 'It is time that we come together to not only worship the Creator but also serve and preserve His Creation. Today on the occasion of International Mother Earth Day, let us pledge to protect Mother Earth and Her sacred rivers that nourish and sustain all of life. Let us make a commitment to work together with our 4T's: time, talent, technology and tenacity to bring the sacred Rivers Yamuna and Ganga, beloved to Lord Krishna, to life again.'

Pujya Shri Shastriji shared: "As Pujya Swamiji has suggested, just like Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), let us also have a Kathakar Social Responsibility (KSR). I think its a great idea! I pledge to take this with me and encourage more and more Kathakars to spread this vital green message through their Kathas, so that we can collectively preserve and protect our sacred natural, cultural and spiritual heritage for our coming generations."

Sadhvi Bhagawatiji added: "Our divine rishis, saints and sages have always revered Mother Nature as the Divine Feminine. Thus, it is so fitting that the United Nations has declared this day as not just Earth Day but Mother Earth Day! The Earth is our Mother, giving and giving life and sustenance to us. However, today we are facing a major crisis in Mother Nature -- our water bodies, trees, mountains and soil are being destroyed and decimated. It is time that we go back to these teachings of our ancient sages who taught us to worship Nature and bring





these teachings back into practice. Most importantly, it is time that the divine feminine -or Shakti- in the form of our young girls and women be empowered and encouraged to lead this green mission to protect and preserve Shakti and Prakriti, upon which Creation depends.”

Also taking part in the activities was Bagus Mantra, the leader of the Songs of Dharma musical group from Bali. He said, “in Bali we call Mother Earth, Ibu Perthiwi, and it is so beautiful that this stems from the Sanskrit roots of Prithvi. The land, culture, language and spirituality of India, especially originating from the Himalayas on the banks of Mother Ganga, have connected all of humanity to Mother Nature. Therefore this movement that Pujya Swamiji is leading to protect and preserve the environment is really one that belongs to all. It calls for all of us from every corner of the Earth to come together as one world family- Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam- to protect our most precious heritage.”

In the afternoon, pilgrims and seekers from all across the world joined together for a special world water blessing ceremony in which holy waters of Mother Ganga were offered to the globe, with Vedic mantras for peace in the world and with prayers that all of our brothers and sisters everywhere may have access to safe and sufficient water for drinking, cooking, bathing, irrigation and the earning of livelihoods.

In the evening, the Songs of Dharma group performed divine songs, dances and recited mantras to Mother Earth and Mother Ganga.

The evening concluded with a collective prayer to stay connected to Mother Earth, to practice an “attitude of gratitude” for Her bounties and gifts, and to serve in preserving and protecting Her for this and future generations.



Let's make concrete jungles a thing of the past.
Let's create green cities.

Earth Day
April 22

So let us pledge to

- Plant more trees
- Recycle waste
- Save Water
- Reduce air and water pollution
- Grow and eat organics



THE SAINTS GATHER AT PARMARTH

A Holy Bhandara Leads to a Saints' Pledge to Join Forces and Help Mother Ganga

During a massive bhandara hosted by Parmarth Niketan, Pujya Swamiji inspires hundreds of saints to take up innovative means of spirituality and to come forward in keeping their water bodies and nearby areas clean, green and serene.

Pujya Swamiji shared that if each of the saints took a pledge to look after their locality and monitor their sewerage than they could alone be pivotal in keeping Mother Ganga and Her tributaries clean.

Many saints shared their green suggestions with Pujya Swamiji and pledged to join the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance, the Green Pilgrimage Network and Ganga Action Parivar in this vital movement.



A GREEN AND HOLY BIRTHDAY

Pujya Swami Nalinanand Giriji Maharaj and 500 Devotees Celebrate on a Beautiful Birthday on Mother Ganga's Loving Banks



Pujya Swami Nalinanand Giri Maharajji from Patiala, Punjab, came to the banks of Mother Ganga with 500 of his loving disciples on the occasion of his birthday.

Swami Nalinanand Giriji shared that it was a true blessing to come home to Mother Ganga and to be in the divine presence of Pujya Swamiji, in which he said he saw the strength of a father and the gentleness of the Divine Mother.

As the River Ganga flowed serenely past, Pujya Swamiji and Pujya Swami Nalinanand Giri Maharajji took part in a special sunset water blessing ceremony, with prayers for water, sanitation and hygiene for all. Later in the evening, Pujya Swami Nalinanand Giri Maharajji, with his devotees, pledged to take the message of environmental preservation and green action with them wherever they go, and to celebrate all of their birthdays, holidays and festivals as green ones.



NATIONAL GANGA WORKSHOP

Saints Come Together to Pledge for Mother Ganga



Saints and experts from across India came together for a National Ganga Workshop organized by Swami Jitendranandji of Ganga Mahasabha. In attendance were luminaries including Pujya Swamiji, Pujya Shankaracharya Vasudevanandji, Pujya Swami Hansdevacharyaji, Maulana Sahid Fazlur Rahman Nadwi Sahib, Swami Gyan Swarup Sanand (formerly Dr. GD Agrawal), Swami Jitendranandji and many others.

Said Pujya Swamiji, “all rivers connect to the oceans, which connect to all continents, thereby connecting us all. Mother Ganga is for everyone, and must be protected as a sacred trust for the sake of all.”

To learn how you can help Mother Ganga, visit www.gangaaction.org.



Pujya Swamiji, Swami Gyan Swarup Sanand and Dr. Vinod Tare of IIT Kanpur discuss Mother Ganga



Pujya Swamiji, Muslim leaders and Pujya Shankaracharya Vasudevanandji, together, in support of Mother Ganga

MEETINGS FOR CHANGE



Through His mission in service of God and Humanity, Pujya Swamiji brings together some of the world's most brilliant minds, so that together, new concepts and plans may evolve for the well-being of all.

ORGANIC INDIA CONFERENCE

Organic India Combines Forces with Project Hope and Ganga Action Parivar to Bring Opportunities to Disaster Survivors



Bharat Mitra, President and Founder of Organic India, with Dr. Bruce Lipton, an internationally recognized leader in bridging science and spirituality and author of best-selling books including *The Biology of Belief*, *Spontaneous Evolution* and *the Honeymoon Effect*, and his lovely wife Margaret Horton visited Parmarth Niketan to spend some time on the banks of Mother Ganga.

They were inspired and deeply touched by Pujya Swamiji's green mission and message and were eager to join Him and to provide viable environmental solutions that were both scientifically and spiritually grounded. During their visit they were profoundly touched by the natural, cultural and spiritual heritage of the Himalayas and eagerly joined in Pujya Swamiji's mission to heal the River Ganga and provide their time, talent and technology to implement viable solutions to challenges that threaten the very existence of India's national river.

A meeting took place during their visit with local experts and Project Hope Team to work together bridging the gap and bringing together traditional wisdom with modern technology. One of the plans discussed in detail was taking up 200 villages in the first phase as a pilot model to start organic farming and herbal farming as well as support with buyback programme. Another project taken into action was creating green zones with plants, herbs and trees that can clean and purify the pollution in the river as well as prevent soil erosion.

Watch at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OtgzAunmrd8>



SAVE GANGA CONFERENCE

Dignitaries and Faith Leaders Meet to Join Forces



Pujya Swamiji discusses Mother Ganga's crucial issues with Smt. Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee, Granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhiji. She serves as the Vice-Chairperson, Gandhi Smriti & Darsan Samiti, New Delhi and the Chairperson of the Save Ganga Movement



In honour of the 84th Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhiji's Dandi March, a meaningful Save Ganga & Save Himalayas Meeting took place in Gandhi Darsan, New Delhi this March. This auspicious event is held every year, thanks to the gracious and dedicated efforts of dignitaries including Smt. Tara Gandhi Bhattacharjee, Chairperson of the Save Ganga Movement, Smt Rama Rauta, Convener of the Save Ganga Movement and other caring people.

The meeting brought together revered religious leaders, dedicated experts and volunteers to reflect on the issues that are threatening Mother Ganga, the lifeline for some 500 million people. Also discussed were courses of actions that should be taken to save Mother Ganga's beautiful waters and banks for this and future generations.

The intellectual caliber and depth of opinions in the room made the discussions riveting and memorable. Afterwards, a special ceremony was held, in which Mother Ganga's waters were poured over a globe, with prayers for a healthy Ganga and clean and plentiful water everywhere.

To learn about the River Ganga, and to sign the petition to support the National Ganga River Rights Act, visit www.gangaaction.org.

A SACRED INAUGURATION

For a Memorial Remembering Punjabi Martyrs

A ceremony was held to inaugurate a national office of the Punjabi Mahasabha for the men and women who lost their lives in the partition between India and Pakistan in 1947. Plans were also unveiled to build a large memorial in Kurukshetra in honour of the nearly ten lakh Punjabis who had lost their lives at the time.

Pujya Swamiji in His inspiring speech said, “the Punjabi people are celebrated throughout the world for their hard-work and their strong connection to their culture and roots. They have been respected all around the world as the selflessly serve others and dedicate their lives to protect and preserve their motherland and its sacred heritage.”

He eloquently inspired that the people of Punjab lead a peaceful movement to preserve and protect Punjab’s natural resources, which are being quickly lost due to over-exploitation and unsustainable development. He emphasized that Punjabis can lead the way towards re-envisioning a new India with innovative ideas and solutions, whilst uniting all people as one family in order to realize the vision of a cleaner, greener, more serene future.



TOWARDS A NOISE-FREE RISHIKESH

Special Conference Held at Parmarth Niketan



Noise pollution has been determined by researchers to be directly responsible for high blood pressure, heart conditions, problems concerning immunity, the nervous system and hearing and more. The World Health Organization has also found noise pollution to be responsible for birth defects and learning problems.

Through the blessings, vision and leadership of Pujya Swamiji a meeting was held at Parmarth Niketan, bringing together key stakeholders and environmentalists to draft a policy that would effectively abate the rising problems of noise pollution in Rishikesh.

Many remedies were discussed for the Rishikesh area's burgeoning noise problem by the meeting's brilliant and caring participants.

In the days after India's elections this May, follow-up meetings will be held with the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttarakhand and other stakeholders to work out a plan of action to especially preserve and protect the city of Rishikesh as the peace and yoga capital of the world.

Saints Come Together in Delhi

UNITED FOR INDIA'S SACRED COWS



In India, where cows are revered as sacred, far too many cows are also suffering. Rapid modernization has meant that countless cows throughout the country are grazing on trash heaps instead of pristine grassland. A growing demand for leather goods also means that more cows than ever are being slaughtered for their hides. Tragically, some are even skinned alive.

This spring, saints and spiritual experts from throughout India came together for a Cow Outcry Rally in the Ram Lila Madan area of Delhi.

Pujya Swamiji eloquently said, **“the cow is the mother of civilization. She gives and gives like the sun, nurturing many of us since infancy. It is our sacred duty to protect her. Today is the day to begin. Make the vow to stop using plastic bags, which, when eaten by cows, slowly and painfully kills them. And stop using leather, so that India’s precious cows need not be killed only so that we may have nice shoes, sofas and car seats. Let this be a sacred duty remembered by all: Never should we allow anything or anyone to suffer simply for our own comforts.”**



MAYOR OF CUSCO, PERU VISITS PARMARTH NIKETAN



Parmarth Niketan was very pleased to have received the Hon'ble Mayor of Cusco, Peru for Ganga Aarti. Whilst Cusco (below), which is the closest city to the famed ruins of Maccu Piccu (left), is on the other side of the world from Parmarth Niketan, the Hon'ble Mayor and Pujya Swamiji shared the same drive to ensure cleaner, greener environments. Together, they raised their hands in a pledge to work in unison to bring about a more sustainable world for all.



VASANT PANCHAMI

Divine Celebrations at Parmarth Niketan



The auspicious occasion of Basant Panchami was celebrated with great love and dedication by everyone at Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh. Basant Panchami in Indian tradition marks the beginning of spring time. Parmarth Rishikumars celebrated the occasion with special pooja and a divine Upanayana ceremony (sacred thread ceremony). Just like the coming of spring marks a new beginning for Mother Nature, the sacred thread ceremony marks a new life for the young disciple. The child, traditionally, leaves the family home at this young age to live with the Guru at the Guru's ashram or in a Gurukul. Upa means "near to" and Nayan means "to take to," so upanayana is the sanskara that takes the child near to the master- the Guru.

Pujya Swamiji often explains that "Basant" means spring-time but "Bas Ant" can also mean, "enough, lets draw the line here and start anew." Thus its a time when we get to throw out all that is old and blocking us from blossoming and make way for the spring-time within our own Self. Pujya Swamiji also says that when you are in the company of the Guru or the saints, everyday is spring-time. Sadhviji emphasized that the festival reminds us to take the divine example and teachings of the saints into our own daily lives and transform our lives to be festive and joyous in every moment.



A DIVINE WEDDING

On the Sacred Banks of Mother Ganga



Suzanne and Jake, two beautiful devotees from America, got married on the banks of Mother Ganga. Theirs was traditional Indian wedding, joyously celebrated with their family at Parmarth Niketan and divinely blessed by Pujya Swamiji.

Suzanne and Jake have been part of the Parmarth family for many many years, doing seva for the International Yoga Festival, and they always pledged that when the time came to get married, they would return to their Himalayan home for the beautiful occasion.

As the perfect beginning of their newly married life, the loving couple immediately took on a pivotal role in serving for the sustainable organic programme that Project Hope was implementing in partnership with Organic India, THDC and many other organizations.



IN LOVING MEMORY

The Shah Family from Chicago Comes to Parmarth to Perform Heart-Felt Ceremonies for a Loved One



A beautiful and loving Asthi Visarajan ceremony was performed for Dr. Rajnikant M. Shahji by his son Shri Vikram Shah and his family, who came from Chicago and other parts of India.

Pujya Swamiji commended Dr. Rajnikantji as a man of great values and love for his motherland. He inspired the family to always remember that their father's spirit is ever-present in their connection with each other and with their Indian roots and heritage.



SERVING HUMANITY.



Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, President of Divine Shakti Foundation, along with David Cornsweet and GAP volunteer Lena inspire children in one of DSF's schools to become green ambassadors within their communities.

In serving humanity, we are serving the Creator Himself. Puja Swamiji's many projects in direct service to our fellow brothers and sisters enable people from all walks of life from around the globe to join forces in order to help ensure the poor and marginalized receive access to the loving care and support they need to live happier, healthier, more self-sufficient lives.

NEWS FLASH

GIWA/ Project Hope Inspiring Clean Water for the Schools of Uttarakhand

Project Hope, the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance and other partners will be working with the state of Uttarakhand, India to help inspire the bringing about of clean water filtration systems for every school in the state. The systems, called Bio-Sand Filtration, are made from all-natural materials through a process developed by GIWA/Project Hope partners, the South Asia Fresh Water Initiative, Friendly Water for the World and others



Hon'ble Health Minister of Uttarakhand, Shri Surender Singh Negi, at the Bio-Sand demonstration

and safe drinking water to all of Uttarakhand's, schools providing clean water to some 4 million children."

Pujya Swamiji said, "the time has come that we collectively shift our focus from temples to toilets, taps and trees. The need of the hour and the true worship is to work to provide adequate facilities for sanitation, clean water, and raise awareness about health and hygiene so that we ensure healthier and happier lives for all."

On the occasion of a historic MoU signing concerning the water filtration system, **Hon'ble State Minister of Education and Drinking Water, Shri Mantri Prasad Naithani** said, "It is truly a testament to the dedication of Project Hope, GIWA and Pujya Swamiji, who have been able to connect so many people from not only all over the nation but all over the world. I also believe that clean and safe water is a fundamental right that must be available in every school of the state. *Together we can provide clean*

Of this work, the **Hon'ble Health Minister of Uttarakhand, Shri Surender Singh Negi** (inset photo) said, "I continue to be so amazed by the exceptional services that are made possible with the dedication, devotion and leadership of Pujya Swamiji. I truly believe that clean and safe drinking water is the very cornerstone and foundation of health. Therefore, it is a true blessing for me to support this mission to ensure clean drinking water for the state of Uttarakhand."



Hon'ble Uttarakhand State Minister of Education and Water, Shri Mantri Prasad Naithani, at the Biosand Water Filter MoU signing, in which he announced that GIWA/Project Hope has inspired clean water systems for all of Uttarakhand's schools.

VISITING THE DISASTER ZONE

Pujya Swamiji and Vivek Oberoi Travel to the Heart of Uttarakhand's Flood Zone



Pujya Swamiji and Shri Vivek Oberoi visited areas of Guptakashi, Uttarakhand, which are still recovering from the devastating floods of last summer. While there, they distributed warm blankets and clothes for the families whose homes and lives had been destroyed by the floods.

They also met with widows and other locals, to listen to their needs and to understand the challenges and obstacles they face as they rebuild their lives. Afterwards, they surveyed and planned for how best to serve the affected villages so that they can inspire green and sustainable rehabilitation. During their trip, they also visited Kedarnath, the epicenter of the June floods, to plan for its green restoration, including the plantation of a smriti van (memorial orchard) in memory of those who tragically lost their lives.



PROJECT GIVE-BACK

Medical Camps and WASH Training for the Poor



Project Give Back and the Global Interfaith WASH Alliance continued serving under-served and needy populations in the slums of Rishikesh and other impoverished areas with our dedicated team of doctors and volunteers. In many of these places, children had not been to a hospital in years and were suffering from malnutrition and other maladies. Nutritional supplements, water purification tablets, health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) education was provided along with basic care. The devoted medical and educational team promised to continue their rotations and to do follow-ups in the locations that they were serving each month.





Clockwise from top: Parmarth Medical Volunteers stop on the road to help an elderly man; tending to children; checking an elderly woman's back injury; disributing sanitary pads to women; and teaching children to wash their hands

COMPASSIONATE CARE

A Spinal Camp Helps the Poor and Under-Served to Move From Pain to Wellness



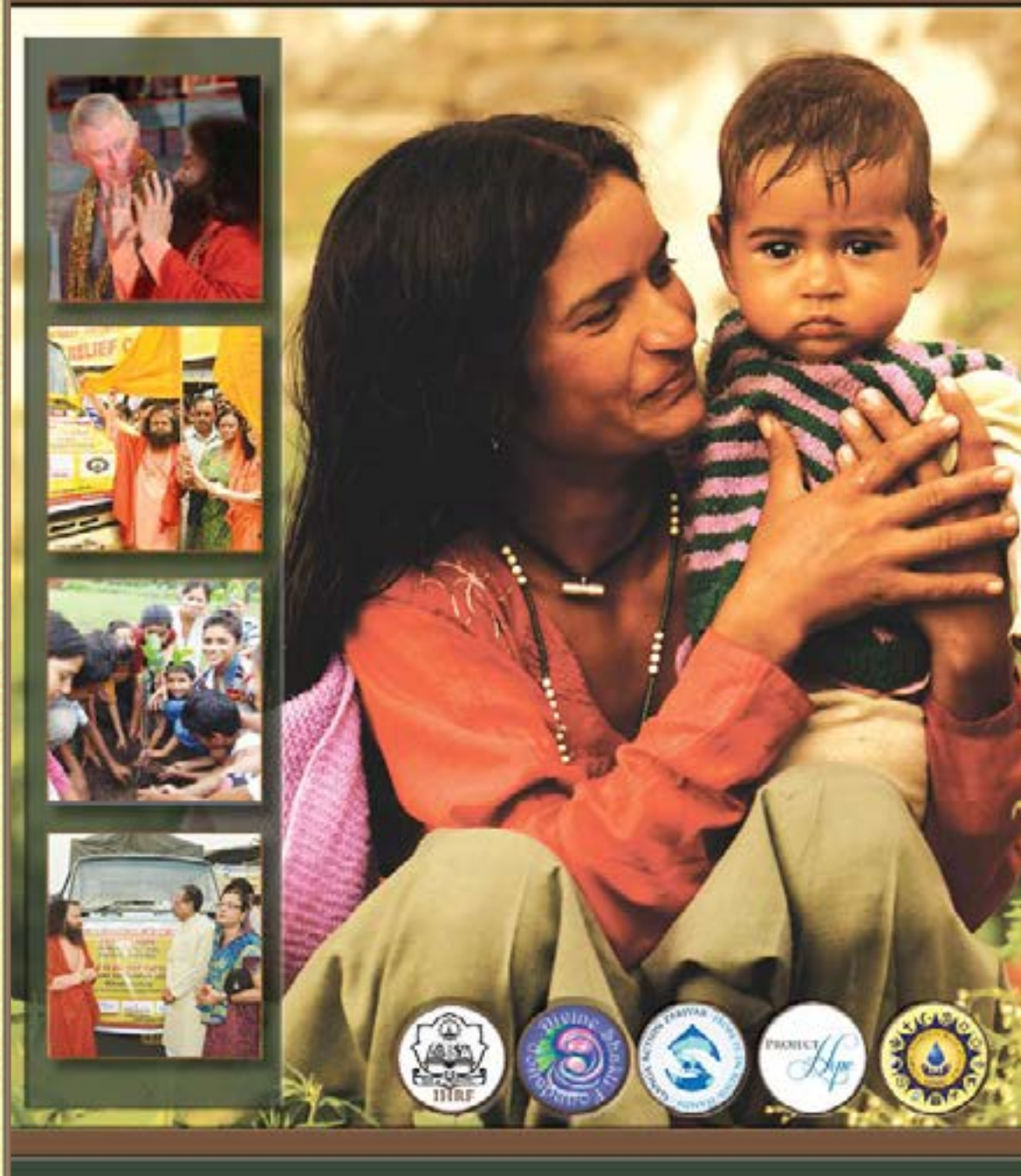
Project Give-Back continued serving under-served and needy populations through a special spinal camp, held at Parmarth Niketan's SS Hospital.

The camp, staffed by compassionate doctors from India and abroad, was long-awaited by countless men, women, and children, many of whom had been experiencing debilitating pain without any hope for relief. During the camp, patients received the best of care, including MRI scans, x-rays, medication and treatments. Some were also referred for surgery, which will be provided free of cost for all in need.



PROJECT HOPE

SERVING TOGETHER TO PROVIDE RELIEF, GREEN REHABILITATION & SUSTAINABLE RESTORATION FOR THE SURVIVORS OF THE HIMALAYAN TSUNAMI



*See the New Project Hope Newsletter and Learn about
our Work to Help Flood Survivors in Uttarakhand.
Click: <http://www.projecthope-india.org/>*

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS



In The Next Issue:

- Unveiling Plans for our Girls' Orphanage
- A Plan is Proposed for Disaster-Raved Kadarnath
- Introducing our Women's Centre for Happier, More Self-Sufficient Lives
 - Launching a WASH Revolution
 - A Forever-Memorable Mass Wedding Ceremony
- Planting the Seeds for an International Memorial Garden

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."

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.



The National Ganga Rights Act draft bring 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



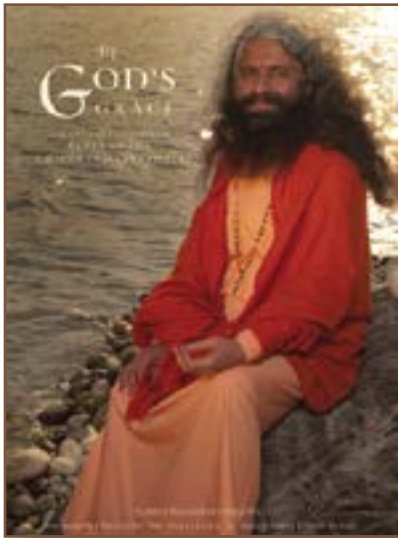
Emraan Hashmi, Huma Qureshi and Ekta Kapoor say "Ganga's Rights are Our Rights!"



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)

