



SAI BRINDA

Spreading the Divine Fragrance



E-newsletter from Chennai Metro West

September 2022



AUM SRI SAIRAM

Dear, Dear Loved One

You ask:

How will you know when I am near you?

*When on a sultry night
Everything is hot and still
The first cool breeze
I am caressing you
THINK OF ME*

*When the pangs of hunger are satisfied
And loneliness is pierced by happiness
THINK OF ME*

*When your mouth is parched
And you can hardly speak
The first sip of cool water
I am soothing you
THINK OF ME*

*When the cloud of death disappears
First on the opening of a baby's smiling eyes
THINK OF ME*

*When I sprinkle your face with rain
And wash the earth, the dry brown leaves
The first smell of clean rain
I am cleansing you
THINK OF ME*

*When pain dissolves
And fears disappear
THINK OF ME*

*When steadfast eyes are horrified
By the cruelties of life
The first glance of the silent setting sun
I am comforting you
THINK OF ME*

Then you ask:

How will you know when you are near Me?

*When the burning sun
Has scorched you and earth
The sand and dust fill your eyes
Not a sliver of shade about
AND YOU LOVE ME*

*When loneliness is accompanied by hunger
And not one can be satisfied
AND YOU LOVE ME*

*When your lips are cracked
Your tongue feels like clay
Your throat seals up
There is no water about
Not even a mirage in sight
AND YOU LOVE ME*

*When you hold a dying child
With eyes pleading
AND YOU LOVE ME*

*When I stir the ocean to a crescent
You flounder in its depth like a leaf
AND YOU LOVE ME*

*When pain becomes unbearable
You smile
AND YOU LOVE ME*

*When I take from you
Your most cherished possession
On the first loss of your sight
Darkness envelops you
AND YOU LOVE ME*

For everything you see, hear, smell, taste or touch belongs to me. So, how can you give to me what I already Am but your Love? And THAT I gave to you before time began as your sole possession. When you return it to ME, then I will know you are truly mine and I will dissolve your sorrow and happiness into ME. That ...being ME, I will place you in Bliss forever. For, I love you and think of you constantly.

From your most loving,

Father

WARM GREETINGS & BEST WISHES - EDITORIAL TEAM

GUEST COLUMN

Smt. Padma Rao - Former District Educational Coordinator



MY JOURNEY WITH SRI SATHYA SAI BALVIKAS

Pranams at the Lotus feet of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

My heartfelt gratitude to Swami for bringing me into HIS FOLD and showering me HIS bountiful Blessings to serve Him as a Balvikas Guru.

I joined the organization in 1990 as an ordinary member of Kodambakkam Samithi and slowly became attracted towards Swami's teachings and my family members also developed steady faith in HIS core principles. I must admit that the strong SAI foundation laid in us, helped me to handle Bal Vikas classes in our Samithi and later on enabled me to serve as District Educational Co-ordinator with immense satisfaction.

Of course, I am happy to write that I am still continuing BalVikas classes in our Kodambakkam Samithi. HE wills...

For the benefit of SAI BRINDA readers, let me recall and share the moments during my three decades of Sai JOURNEY.

As I was a teacher by profession, teaching values to kids in the School premises appealed to me a lot and gave me a sense of satisfaction generally. When I happened to come across Sai Literatures and specifically Sai Balvikas Group Books, my joy went no bounds as I have become an avid reader of Sai Balvikas texts to study the fundamentals of values clearly explained by our Supreme Teacher..

The term "Balvikas" means "the blossoming of a child". Baba beautifully describes the unfolding of the values as the blossoming of a small bud into a lovely flower spreading its fragrance far and wide. The values which the children imbibe in their formative years to carry them forward to grow into worthy citizens of the Motherland.

The first and foremost task of the Guru is to inculcate these lofty ideals and values in the minds of innocent children for their better future. I am sure that all the Gurus feel proud that she was chosen by HIM as an instrument to accomplish HIS MISSION. Indeed, I am very grateful to our Lord for selecting me as one of HIS Instruments.

Another important milestone in my spiritual life was my selection as District Educational Coordinator of Chennai Metro West in the year 2003. Undoubtedly, by our Beloved Swami's immense guidance and cooperation from all the Gurus, we were able to contribute to the growth of Balvikas in our District - qualitatively and quantity-wise.

GUEST COLUMN Cont..

Smt. PadmaRao - Former District Educational Coordinator

An estimated 151 New Balvikas Centers were inaugurated during my tenure as DEC. In addition to the regular Balvikas classes, we focussed more on conducting cultural programs which provided the impetus to channelize the students' talents. Interestingly, Balvikas Children from the three groups viz., Group - I/II/III participated enthusiastically in these "Festivals of joy" as they showcased their other areas of skills in singing, dancing and acting. Every festival of joy turned out to be a successful one with the colourful participation of kids and their parents.

The regular holding of events at the District level gave us a kind of confidence and belief in us as we were blessed by HIM to fulfill our lifetime dream of offering "Festival of Joy" in the immediate Divine presence at Puttaparthi, in October 2005. As many as 16 BV students across the District were given the chance to represent in the dance drama from Tamilnadu. We could still hold the joy and satisfaction to make our Bhagawan happy as HE blessed all the participating Balvikas kids and Gurus profusely.

Another important event that still lingers in our minds was the staging of the dance drama "Skanda Vaibhavam" at Puttaparthi in 2015. 180 students took part from all over Tamil Nadu and delighted devotees with their amazing dancing skills. I was asked to take charge of Chennai Metro students. I am indebted to Swami for the grand success of the event and my loving core Guru members Smt. Vimala / Smt. Priya Sridhar made the huge tasks simple.

Our Chennai Metro was given another dance program titled as "Krishna Ganam" at Puttaparthi in January 2017 during Balvikas Convocation and Alumni meet. Chennai West was also blessed by Swami to conduct two State level Talent Search competitions for Balvikas Students.

With abundant grace from Swami and the support of elders at home, I was able to accomplish the tasks entrusted to me. My Mother-in-law, Smt. Thulasi Bai has been a pillar of support and inspiration for me in all my Seva activities.

The fact that Balvikas bring about transformation in a child's life is practically seen in day-to-day life. I wish to narrate the transformational attitude of a BV student, in the interest of SAI BRINDA readers.

One boy by name Ranjith Kumar, a Balvikas student, who unfortunately lost both parents was brought to me by his grandmother with the request to find his admission in any school. I got him an admission in Sai school, Chrompet where he finished IX and X standards. Then continuing in Erode Sai School, he successfully finished school education and graduated in Sathyabama Engineering college with the aid of a scholarship and now looking for a job. When I asked him about his future plans after getting a job, he said "I will provide education to an orphan like me". What words of wisdom. This is only due to the value-oriented education that he was imparted during his formative golden period as a SAI BALVIKAS STUDENT..

GUEST COLUMN Cont..

Smt. Padma Rao - Former District Educational Coordinator

“The end of education is character” - Swami has said. For a strong house, the foundation must be strong. For the mansion of our life to be firm and secure, good conduct and character are the prerequisites for the child's wellbeing. Sathya Sai Balvikas aims at providing LIFE education based on the five values - Satya, Dharma, Shanthi, Prema and Ahimsa. I appeal to all parents to help their children grow physically, mentally and spiritually by enabling them to receive Balvikas Education.

There is clearly a change in the attitude of parents now. Before the pandemic, they were unwilling to send their children for any other activity except attending Balvikas classes. During the pandemic, children had to sit at home since their schools were closed. They have got into the habit of spending most of their time with gadgets. Hence, nowadays, parents prefer to send them to bhajans and Seva activities, so that kids will spend their time more fruitfully rather than hanging around with mobile phones.

This change in the attitude of parents should be well utilized by the Gurus and other members in our Organization to create a new generation of Balvikas students who will become torchbearers of Swami's message of Love and peace.

JAI SAI RAM

NEW OFFICE BEARERS



Sri. Vinod Kumar. N from West Mambalam, will be our District IT Coordinator with immediate effect. Sri. Vinod, is from Chennai, an IT professional with 25 years of experience focused in IT Security (Cyber Security) for Mphasis Ltd. He started volunteering for SSSSO since 2016 through West Mambalam Samithi (SSSSO MH, AIT, Prashanthi Service, etc..). His Spouse is a Doctor who supports SSSSO Mobile Hospital and SSSSO All India Telemedicine Sevas.

INFORMATION BOARD

Pradosha Pooja

As a part of LOKHAAKSHEMAA prayers, Pradosha Poojas are religiously performed at 'Sai Pushpanjali' the District Bhajan Hall Centre, by the students of Veda Scholar Sri. Srinivasan. The well attended Pooja is fervently conducted by performing Abhishekam to Lord Shiva, chanting of Rudram followed by Sai Bhajans.

Sunday Bhajans at Sai Pushpanjali

Keeping in view that Sai Bhajans are the first windows for Sai Organizations, Sai Bhajans - group singing is held regularly at 'Sai Pushpanjali' the District Bhajan Hall Centre, on All Sundays. We invite all the members / general public / readers for the Bhajan sessions. For further details, please contact the nearest Samithi.

Temple Seva at Sundaram - (Sundays)

A rare opportunity is provided to all the interested members/general public / readers alike, to serve at Swami's Abode in SUNDARAM, Chennai. Please contact the nearest Samithi Convenors.

Temple Seva at Guindy (Thursdays)

Those members / general public / readers who desire their participation in Sai Bhajans at Guindy may contact Samithi Convenors for further details.

Veda chanting at Sai Pushpanjali

Every month, coinciding with Swami's Birth Star (Thiruvadira), a mass Veda chanting is being done exclusively by Mahilas in our District. The collective chanting is performed at Sai Pushpanjali. If the reader of this newsletter is interested in joining the program, may contact us.

Prasanthi Seva at Puttaparthi

We invite the readers / members & all the spiritual aspirants for Prashanthi Nilayam Seva as per the table furnished below. The Seva is open for all the spiritual seekers (Gents & Mahilas). For further details, please contact Mobile No.93807-98154 (Gents) & 97907-02659 (Mahilas).

Oct - Nov'22 Seva	Reporting Date	Seva Starts on	Seva Ends on	No. of days
Batch 1	19.10.2022	20.10.2022	28.10.2022	9
Batch 2	27.10.2022	28.10.2022	06.11.2022	10
Batch 3	05.11.2022	06.10.2022	15.11.2022	10

SAMITHIS - SPIRITUAL WING ACTIVITIES



Silver Jubilee Celebrations by Nesapakkam Samithi

Members of the Nesapakkam Samithi celebrated the completion of 25 years, starting off with Nagar Sankirtan. Special Homams (Maha Ganapathy Homam, Navagraha Homam & Sai Gayatri Mantra Homam) were performed by Sri. Veda Srinivasan to mark this celebration.

The Balvikas children along with members presented a garland of bhajans as an offering to Bhagawan.

22nd Anniversary Celebrations by Thirunagar Samithi

Thirunagar Samithi celebrated its 22nd Anniversary on 4th Sep'22. Following the Nagar Sankirtan in the morning, Sahasranama Archana was performed by the members.

The Balvikas children in the evening begun with Veda chanting followed by a skit on the importance of Brahma-panam sloka & the 5 human values. The Speakers Sri. Anandkumar (Senior Guru), Sri. Sriram (Convenor - Nesapakkam Samithi) & the District President delivered their speech. The prescribed books on slokas & stories were distributed to Group 1-3 Balvikas children, the event concluded with MangalaAarti.



Onam Celebrations by Valasaravakkam Samithi

Valasaravakkam Samithi celebrated Onam at Lord Rama's temple on 18th Sep'22. The function started off with Veda chanting followed by the bhajans. Sri. Harishankaran (Balvikas alumnus) spoke about the significance of the Onam festival, Sri. Anandkumar (Senior Guru) stressed on the essence of this festival to uproot one's ego.

The Balvikas children along with the members have artistically depicted the traditional Floral designs (Pookolam) on this occasion with devotion. The expressive & impressive diminutive figure of the Vamana avatar was brought alive by Muralikrishna, (Balvikas student). The traditional Kerala items were distributed as prasadam.

SAMITHIS - SPIRITUAL WING ACTIVITIES Cont..



Special Bhajan at Voice Snap by T.Nagar Samithi

As a golden opportunity to sing HIS Glory during the Navaratri Celebrations the members of T.Nagar Samithi held a bhajan at Voice Snap (a T. Nagar-based Start-up) at the request of the management. The bhajan session was attended by 22 members including 3 Balvikas children. Products from our Vocational Training Center (VTC) were displayed at the venue.

The previous issues of Sanathana Sarathi were distributed to the participants to step up its subscription.

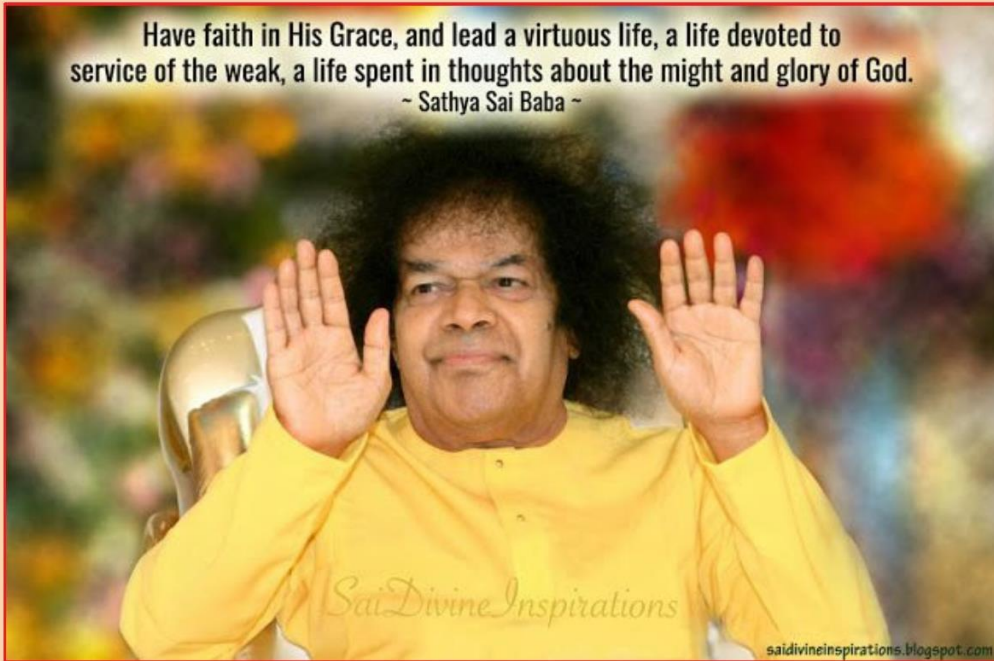


Vilakku Pooja by Kodambakkam Samithi

Kudos to the Parents of Balvikas children of Kodambakkam Samithi.

It was celebration time at the BE Colony campus. Parents of 39 Balvikas children performed Vilakku Pooja organized by the members of the Kodambakkam Samithi on 30th Sep'22, by the Grace of Beloved Sai Maa. Special mention is to be made about the stupendous efforts of the Balvikas Gurus ably assisted & guided by the Convenor of Kodambakkam Samithi for conducting this program in a commendable manner.

SAMITHIS - EDUCATIONAL / YOUTH WING ACTIVITIES



Exemplary Team Work - Kodambakkam Balvikas Gurus

An inspiring and motivating video clipping, a novel initiative to highlight the significance of Scribe Seva. This presentation may rope in more volunteers for this service.

[CLICK ON THE LINK TO VIEW THE VIDEO.](#)

[Scribe Seva Video](#)

Certificates Awarding Ceremony at T.Nagar Samithi

Balvikas students of T. Nagar Samithi who completed Group 2 & Group 3 were awarded certificates.

There was an offering of Bhajans by 23 Balvikas students in addition to 38 members who attended the function. Certificates were also distributed to the winners of SLBTS competitions held at the District & State levels.



DISTRICT - EDUCATIONAL / YOUTH WING ACTIVITIES



Participation of Balvikas Children in NNS

The participation of Balvikas children of Thirunagar Samithi in the National Narayana Seva needs special mention. The new initiative to involve the potential Sevadals of the future in Narayana Seva is a welcome feature in our District.

Gurus Meeting

Gurus meeting was held on 11th Sep'22 at Sai Pushpanjali. The meeting was attended by 50 Gurus.

DEC Smt. Sai Priya in her welcome speech was highly appreciative of the Gurus for successfully conducting the summer camp and attributed the same to the effective coordination of the three wings of the Samithis.



Of the 565 children who attended the camp, 276 children joined the Balvikas. Two Balvikas Centers were opened by Krishnapuram Samithi & Nungambakkam Samithi in addition to a residential Balvikas Center at Shreya School by KodambakkamSamithi.

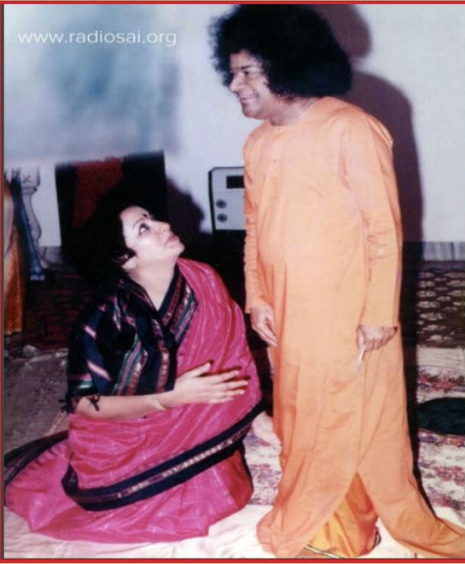
- The fifth session of Prema Pravaham was held on September 1st. The response for this session especially from the parents has been heart warming.*
- Group III Intensive Training - Plans to conduct this program on 2nd & 4th Saturday were also proposed.*
- With the objective of enabling the participation of Balvikas children in the National Narayana Seva, a schedule was drawn allotting the dates for different Samithis in the District for this Seva. Time & again Swami has emphasized the importance of this Seva. Sharing her experience, a parent expressed her desire to start a Balvikas Center at her residence.*
- The online Veda classes which are drawing to a close have proved to be beneficial to a large number of Balvikas students as also to the Gurus who coordinated the program. The Balvikas students were blessed to chant Veda at Sundaram and their chanting with clarity was appreciated by the senior members at Sundaram as well.*
- Gurus were requested to motivate the participation of children in different competitions in State Level Talent Search, to draw out their innate talents.*
- National Cleaning Program - This Seva activity is to be undertaken by Group III Balvikas children shortly.*
- Sai Brinda - DEC called for efforts to step up the circulation of the e-newsletter Sai Brinda among the parents, to offer insights into our activities.*
- New Educational Coordinators - Ms. Swetha (Past Balvikas Student) & Sri. Shankar Subramanian (SSSIHL Alumnus) - the newly inducted ECs were introduced at the meeting.*

SPECIAL ARTICLE

A Tribute to Soundarya Aunty

“Install the lord in your heart and offer him the fruit of your actions and the flowers of your inner thoughts and feelings. This is the worship I like most the devotion I appreciate most”

- Baba



Smt. Soundarya Krishnamoorthy fondly and respectfully called Soundarya aunty was, for our Organization a priceless treasure chest. She was an ideal example of a true devotee of Swami, whose devotion conformed fully to His expectations.

Before embarking on any activity, she would test it deep within against the touchstone of Swami's declared preferences. Just before she shed her mortal coil she said, “I am proceeding towards Swami and wrote “Sairam” on a piece of paper, even as she breathed her last. Her whole being was suffused with this deep devotion, otherwise, the curtains could not have come down in this manner on her earthly sojourn. When she was in the presence of Swami whatever be the occasion, however large the jostling crowds, swami never failed to have a word with her such was their relationship and bonding between her and Swami.

Her family's association with Swami dates back to HIS previous incarnation as Shirdi Sai. Her paternal grandmother had spent many days with Shirdi Sai.

She completed her L.L.B course and enrolled in the Chennai Bar Council. However, she found herself not inclined to pursue a legal career. Instead, she dedicated herself to serve at the Lotus Feet of Bhagawan. She was the State Spiritual Coordinator for many years and had been instrumental in the growth of SSSSO, to a larger extent.

She was a strict disciplinarian forthright in her outlook and speech and had no mental reservations in being articulate. She left no stone unturned for HIS mission. Her passion for perfection was reflected at times as intolerance toward the violation of norms and lack of discipline. Yet the undercurrent of love in her interactions was quite evident. Her moral courage knew no fear, in upholding values and principles.

She would strive tirelessly with that singular force of concentration in serving Swami. To her is due the credit for toiling day and night in the recording theatres to bring out 60 cassettes of Sundaram bhajans. The discipline and decorum maintained by the Sundaram bhajan singers are to be attributed to her. She has put up more than 40 plays by the Balvikas children, at Prashanthi Nilayam in the Divine presence of Swami. Every play was an experience by itself, preparation for the play would begin, well in advance in the month of June for the event to be held in November. Selecting a devotional theme for the play, deep study of the materials related to the subject, writing of dialogues, training the children in acting and effective dialogue delivery, music, recording, costumes, make-up, stage settings, etc. Every aspect of the program was planned by her meticulously to ensure that the same would be in accordance with the expectations of the Divine Master and win HIS approbation. She inculcated values in the children, especially the need to be disciplined and following the dress codes. Children adored her. These cultural programs were beneficial in many ways. Swami interacted with all the participants prior to the staging of the play. To some, HE gave away gifts which HE materialized in their presence. Due to her unrelenting perseverance, Swami cancelled HIS Joola program on one occasion in which Smt. M. S. Subulakshmi was to sing and had the play on

SPECIAL ARTICLE Cont..

A Tribute to Soundarya Aunty

“Azhwars” from Tamil Nadu staged that day. Yet another play on the “Ashtalakshmis” was enacted after four years, about which much an essay can be penned by itself. Celebrating Mahilas Day on March 19th is in vogue only in Tamil Nadu on account of her initiative. Yet another service! She was honoured with the Life Time Achievement award at Parthi and at Chennai at the SLBTS meet.

She started the Bhajan Vikas programme for the Balvikas students, encompassing different Sadhanas for them. An old age home was also run under her guidance for five years.

The Vocational Training Centre was started with the wholehearted concurrence of her entire family desirous of championing this noble cause. The center was inaugurated after she went in person and sought the blessings of Bhagawan. If this center is appreciated by all for its services to the Mahila for more than two decades, the credit goes to Shri T.G. Krishnamoorthy uncle and Smt. Soundarya aunty the prime movers. To them, our gratitude. The last words spoken by her were about V.T.C. - “The responsibility for fostering the growth of V.T.C. and expanding its reach rests with you mahilas”. Her blessings coupled with the unstinted cooperation of every member would certainly pave the way for the center to spread its branches far and wide. Our grateful thanks to this devoted couple for having given us an ideal place in the heart of the city to construct a spacious bhajan Hall - Sai Pushpanjali for the West District of our Organization which serves as the venue for many important events.

In short, the term Soundarya connotes beauty. Aunty's magnetic personality did radiate the glow within the inner recesses of her heart, for her love for Swami was fathomless. To her, Swami was more than a mother and dearer than her very life. Her innate aesthetic sense, eye for that elegant touch, and zeal for artistic approach characterized all her pursuits.

She believed in spreading goodwill and cheer and wanted everyone to be donned in bright attire and to forge ahead happily on the path of our beloved Bhagawan.



Our obeisance to this noble soul who was at the helm of our family - “V.T.C”

Bhagavad Gita:

The soul is never born-never dies once it comes into being it never ceases to be unborn, eternal abiding primeval, it does not perish when the body is slain.

Jai Sairam

STATE - LED / NATIONAL INITIATIVES

Music Concert by Balvikas students at Sundaram

Kumari. Bhargavi is a Past BV student from Saligramam Samithi, a Master's Degree holder in Carnatic music, and has won several competitions. She loves singing Sai Pancharathna Kritis and also trains youth mahilas in our District.

She has performed a music concert on 26th Sep'22 at Sundaram along with Sri. Sai Srinath from the West Youth Wing, a Past BV student (Saligramam) played the Mridangam, and was accompanied by Sri. Mukundan on Violin.

The performance of the youthful team at Bhagawan's altar was well received and appreciated.



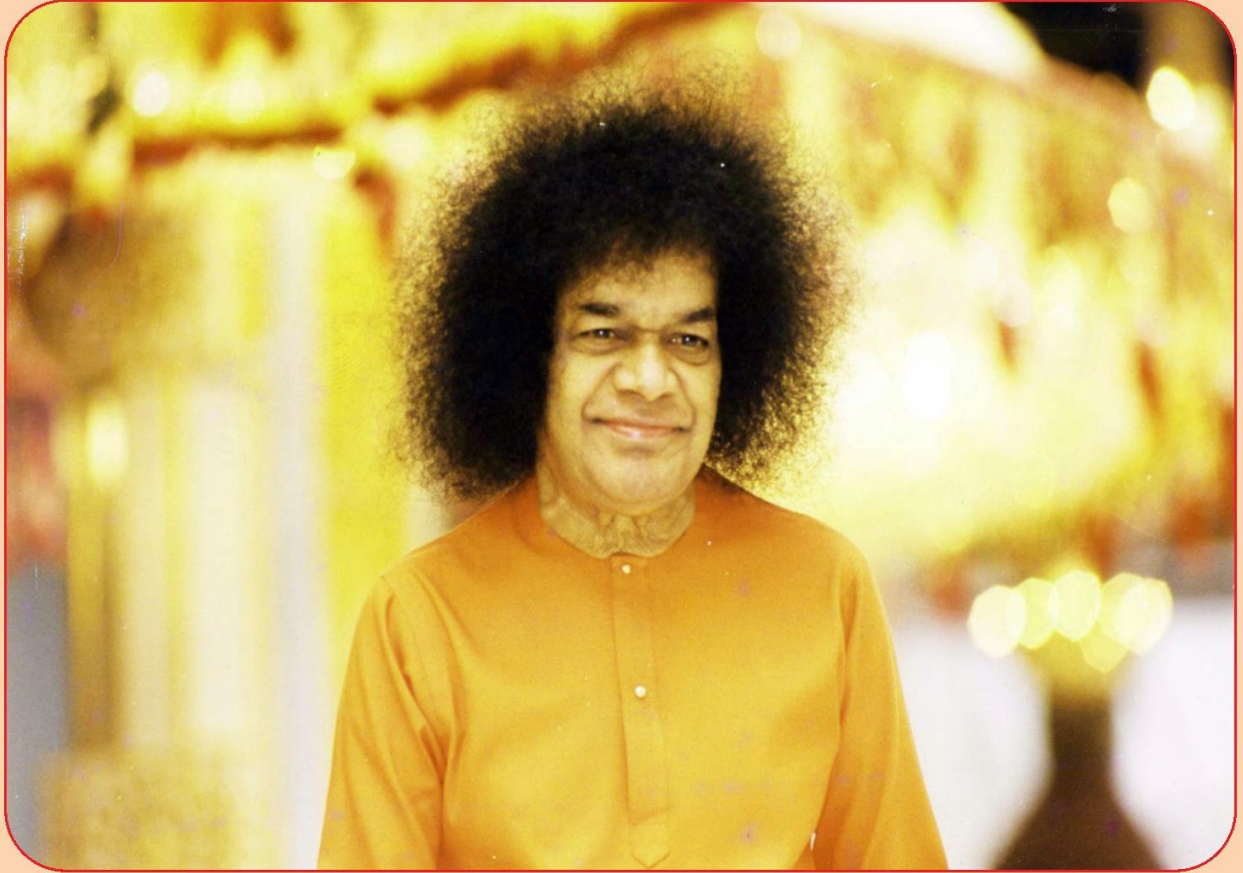
Sadhana Shibir of DPs, SLOBs & NLOBs

More than 700 members (including District Presidents, State Level Office Bearers, and National Level Office Bearers of the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organizations (SSSSO), India, gathered at Prashanthi Nilayam for a 3-day (16th Sep 2022 to 18th Sep 2022) Sadhana Camp - Back to Basics Following Divine Foot Prints.

Right from Bhagawan's Divine Charter to Roles & Responsibilities of Office Bearers to Seva as Sadhana to Bal Vikas Expansion to Grama Seva - Bhagawan's Birth centenary goal to Financial Management etc. were covered in 11 different sessions spanning over 2 days.

The objective of Sadhana Shibir was to ensure all the office bearers are equipped with the basics that were propagated by Bhagawan way back in the 1960s so that they are able to perform the day-to-day responsibilities in a more effective and efficient manner in the process contribute towards achieving the goals of Vision 2025 and beyond as part of the Birth Centenary Celebrations of Bhagawan.

DIRECTIONS FROM THE DIVINE ON SEVA



Avoid the ego marring your sadhana

We require today those who take delight in selfless service, but such men are rarely seen. You who belong to Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organization, every one of you, must become a Sevak (servant), eager to help those who need it. When the Sevak becomes the nāyak (leader) the world will prosper. Only a Kinkara (servant) can grow into a Shankara (master). Of course, one has to eliminate the ego totally. Even a trace of it will bring disaster. However long you may do Dhyana, however constant your Japa (recitation), a little ego will render them barren of results. Bhajan done with egoistic pride will be as harsh as the crow's caw. So, try to avoid the ego marring your sadhana, even to a small extent.

You all know the story of sage Vishwamitra, who had as a result of severe tapas (penance) for years, earned the power even to create another Heaven amenable to his will. His ego made him intensely passionate and short-tempered (rājasik). So, he was known as Rāja-yogi and Rājarishi. He was jealous of the sage Vasishta who was adored as a Brahmarishi and sought that title for himself. This made him even more rājasik. The wilder his desire, the higher rose the ego flames.

Jai Sai Ram