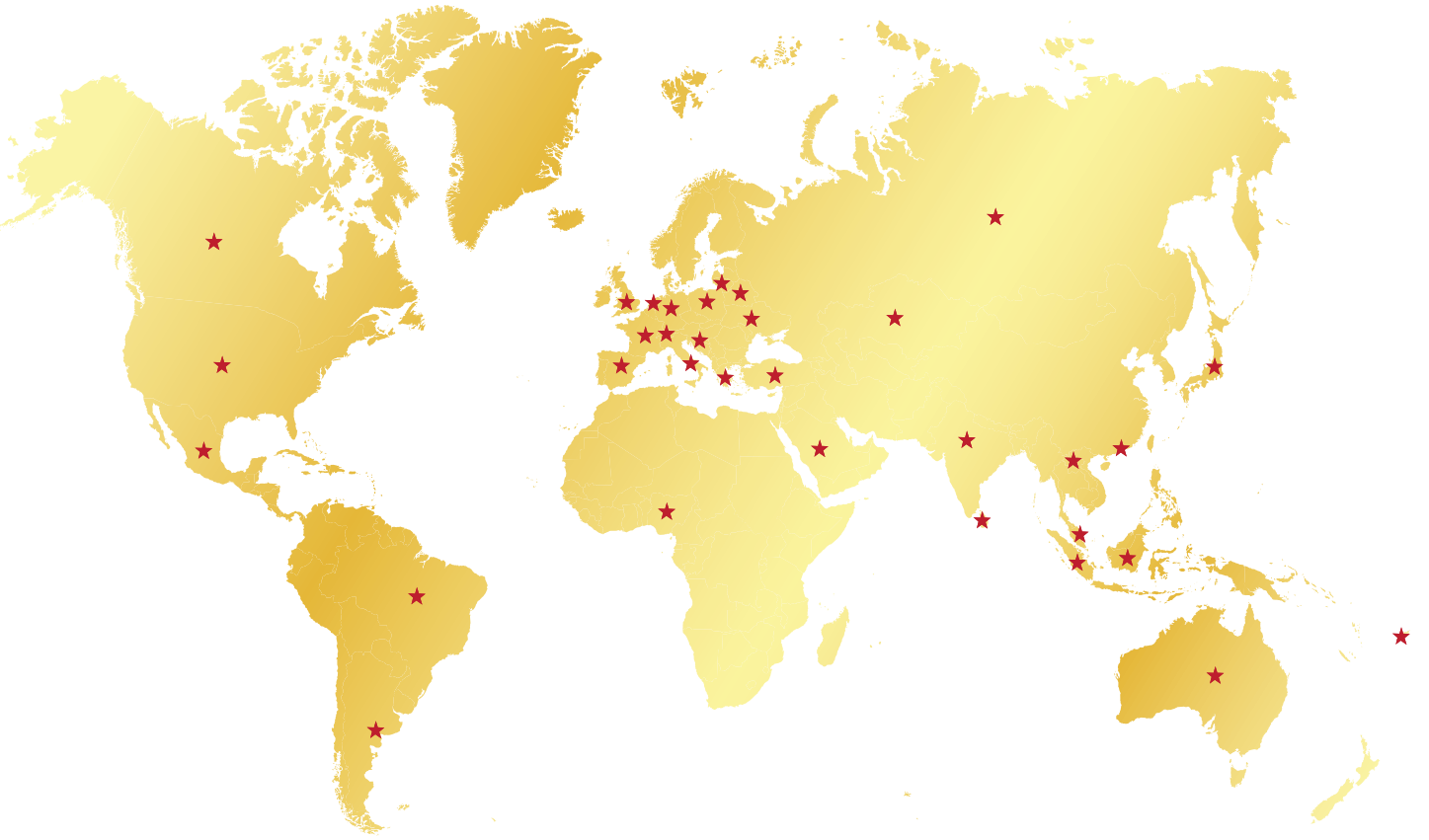




वसुधैवकुटुम्बकम्
vasudhaiva
kutumbakam

MONTHLY GLOBAL NEWSLETTER



Issue 29

August 2023



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Message from *Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai*

vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam – An Idea Whose Time has Come

As India concluded G20 meetings with the world leaders descending on this sacred land, the new Delhi declaration was adopted covering a range of issues from climate to cryptocurrency, from sustainable development goals to economic corridors. However, the underlying theme of G20, borrowing from the ancient *maha upaniṣad* declaring the whole world as one family – *vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam* echoed all through the meetings and that was special about this G20.

It's truly a blessing to be living in these times, when our mission and its motto – One World, One Family – *vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam* adopted much before G20, is now officially the leading thought for so many nations of the world.

However, while such meetings do end and life goes on, for us this is the very life breath which shall sustain this mission for all times to come much beyond our lifetimes.

As I travelled around the country meeting people from all walks of life, from political leaders, to policy makers, from bureaucrats to business tycoons, from simple hearted devotees to spiritual leaders in the month of August 2023, this one message of the *upaniṣads* – *vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam* was the centre of all our discussions. When a seasoned diplomat of Delhi expressed his wonderment about our selfless service initiatives in developed countries like the USA, I had only one answer for all his questions about why we do what we do for the world, and that was – *vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam* – our mission, motto, and the very name of this global newsletter.



At the Forefront

27 August 2023 – Inauguration of Sri Sathya Sai Anandaniketanam (for boys) – A Temple of Learning atop the Hills of Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu

The Princess of Hill Stations, Kodaikanal is now prepped up to be a learning and living centre for 'Little Princes.' **Sri Sathya Sai Anandaniketanam** is the name of this newly inaugurated campus under the Sri Sathya Sai Loka Seva Gurukulam Group of Institutions, which was inaugurated by Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai on the 27 August 2023.

The school is perched atop the picturesque highest inhabited peak in Kodai, which also is crowned by a century-old-edifice, which was previously the home to Dr Ida Scudder, the missionary Founder of Christian Medical College in Vellore, and then became **Anand Ashram** in May 2014, and today has blossomed into a school campus for little boys.

This morning, the inauguration was held in the presence of Mr K Karthik – the District Munsif-cum-Judicial Magistrate, Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai, Sri B N Narasimha Murthy, Sri B G Jayaram and other government officials.



Boys who come from several rural areas from in and around Kodaikanal are an enthusiastic lot, eager to learn. Their frankness and confidence are striking and yet their simplicity and innocence is endearing.

Two little boys, the new joiners of Sri Sathya Sai Anandaniketanam addressed the gathering in their mother tongue of Tamil and expressed their gratitude for the opportunity of education at this hallowed Campus.

Staff and students from Sri Sathya Sai Meenakshiniketanam Campus had also attended the event. Two girls' students from the Campus expressed about their family condition and how this education system has embraced them selflessly to bestow the highest good on them.



Mr K Karthik, who was the Chief Guest, spoke about how our life has been given to us as an opportunity to serve others. He quoted many verses from the *vedas* and advised students to understand the value of what is being given to them and utilise it in an appropriate manner. He mentioned that in his leisure time he would like to come and teach *vedas* and *upanişads* to the students.

Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai, in His inaugural address started by quoting a poem of the famous Tamil poet, Subramanya Bharatiyar 'Olipadaita Kanninai Vaa Vaa Vaa' which He had learnt as a young student. Bharatiyar uses optimistic words in this poem to encourage children of the country to awaken to their potential, to be fearless and selfless, and take part in the development of the nation—those were the times when India was under British rule.

Sadguru went on to say, "Tamil Nadu has produced many great men, from saints and sages to the most intelligent scientists to philosophers and poets. Our Late Former President, Bharath Ratna APJ Abdul Kalam is from Tamil Nadu. This is one of the ancient lands and has had a very great history."



Addressing the students, Sadguru said, "You all have a great responsibility. But without food, education or good health, you will not be able to fulfil your responsibility as you cannot reach your true potential. Hence, my belief is to provide all this to the children of our country. We work for those children who do not have the ability to access these basics. You must get educated, reach your true potential, and then uplift many more like you all.

Here (in our institutions), it is not only about education, but it is about spiritual education too. For our gurukulam, I have borrowed the ethos from the *bāla kānda* of Valmiki Ramayana, where Sage *vaşiṣṭa* elucidates the four characteristics displayed by Rama, Lakshmana, Bharatha and Shatrugna to King Dasharatha –

- *sarve vedavidah dhīrāḥ* – Knowledge about ancient Indian wisdom (the Bharatiya culture)
- *sarve lōkahite ratāḥ* – Ever engaged in the welfare of the world
- *sarve jñānōpa sampannaḥ* – Knowledge about all the subjects and skills concerning the world
- *sarve samuditā guṇaihi* – Repositories of all the good qualities that emanate spontaneously



At the Forefront

27 August 2023 – Inauguration of Sri Sathya Sai Anandaniketanam (for boys) – A Temple of Learning atop the Hills of Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu

Apart from academics, all the students are also expected to learn other skills like music, singing, sports, cooking, and use it for the welfare of others.

bhagavad-gītā says śraddhāvān labhate jñānam – those who have deep interest and intense desire to learn will excel. Many have worked very hard for this new campus, so be mindful of the opportunity. Judge Karthik prayed for a boys' campus here and it has manifested because of his prayer. The next will be healthcare, with a day-care clinic.



Thanking all the authorities of Kodaikanal who extended all the support towards this initiative, Sadguru concluded His talk.

Akhilan who hails from Tamil Nadu, and a gold medallist in MSc Physics from the Sri Sathya Sai University for Human Excellence, has been appointed as the Chairperson of Sri Sathya Sai Anandaniketanam.

Indeed, this is another shining example of students taking the mission forward in their own native lands.



Sadguru with the first batch of boys who have joined the Sri Sathya Sai Anandaniketanam, Kodaikanal

In Focus

Date: 04 August 2023

Venue: Sathya Sai Grama, Muddenahalli

A National Conclave on Good Governance in Healthcare for Global Welfare 'Call to Action'

Organised by United Nations Global Compact Network India and Prashanthi Balamandira Trust

A national conclave on the adoption of ethical practices and strengthening governance in the healthcare ecosystem was organised by UN Global Compact Network India and Prashanthi Balamandira Trust on the theme – 'Promoting Good Governance, Transparency, and Ethical Practices in the Healthcare Ecosystem.'



NATIONAL CONCLAVE

GOOD GOVERNANCE IN HEALTHCARE FOR GLOBAL WELFARE: "CALL TO ACTION"

"PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY AND ETHICAL PRACTICES IN THE HEALTHCARE ECOSYSTEM"

FRIDAY, 04 AUGUST 2023

SATHYA SAI GRAMA, MUDDENAHALLI, KARNATAKA (INDIA)



Below From Left to Right:

Mr Deep Chandra Papnoi – Deputy Director, UN Global Compact Network India

Dr R Kishore Kumar – Chairman, Cloudnine Group of Hospitals

Dr Swarnalatha S – Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Fortis La Femme, Bengaluru

Ms Aishwarya Sitharam – Associate Director, Corporate Biocon Limited

Dr Somnath Singh – Deputy Director, UN Global Compact Network India

Mr Venkata Phani Kiran – Associate Vice President, Corporate Compliance, Dr Reddy's Laboratories Ltd

Dr A Velumani – Founder, Thyrocare

Dr Vishal Rao – Group Director for Head and Neck Surgical Oncology and Robotic Surgery, HCG Cancer Centre

Dr Karthik Ramesh – CEO and Founder, SAIMA Labs (Sentinel AI Machine Learning Quantum Labs)





Date: 04 August 2023

Venue: Sathya Sai Grama, Muddenahalli

A National Conclave on Good Governance in Healthcare for Global Welfare ‘Call to Action’

Organised by United Nations Global Compact Network India and Prashanthi Balamandira Trust

The conclave discussed:

- Practices of good governance, transparency and accountability
- Ethical practices to be adopted by hospitals, doctors, pharma companies, and other members of the healthcare sector
- Importance of stakeholders’ engagement in addressing healthcare challenges and corruption
- Innovative approaches to ensure good governance
- Role of compliance as an anti-corruption measure
- Curbing graft by extending support to organisations that adopts responsible business practices
- Grave impact that unclean businesses have on the company, common people, and all the stakeholders associated
- Forging multi-stakeholder partnerships to tackle and solve the perennial sustainable development goal problems

An Extract from the speech of Mr Ratnesh Jha, Executive Director of United Nations Global Compact Network India

“UN Global Compact is about trusting each other and forming a community of like-minded global corporate citizens. Together with corporate members, academic institutions, and civil society organisations, we will walk together hand in hand to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It’s a win-win partnership with this institution (Prashanthi Balamandira Trust) which has similar goals. The methods of achieving them are also pure, and we would like this partnership to grow so that we are able to cover more area (geographically) and benefit more people. To do something in an innovative way, break the barriers and boundaries, and reduce the struggle and problems that we face, is the way of United Nations Global Compact.”

Key Messages from Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai’s Discourse

- The core essence of the UN Sustainable Development Goals derives its substance from the ancient India prayer which said – *sarve bhavantu sukhinah* (may all be happy), *sarve santu nirāmayāḥ* (may all be healthy), *sarve bhadraṇi paśyantu* (may all see auspiciousness everywhere), *mā kaścid duḥkha māpnuyāt* (may no one experience any sorrow). In this way, India has always been the leading light
- All change begins from the intention to serve and make a change. Empathy and not sympathy; **empathy that leads to action is the need of the hour**
- ‘Love All Serve All’ – the teaching of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is our guiding principle. **‘Love All’ is empathy and ‘Serve All’ is the action that follows empathy**
- Healthcare is one such basic need which everybody can empathise with. Good governance in healthcare depends on good people at the helm of affairs. Good people are produced by good educational institutions, which again has to be governed in a good way. Hence, in this cycle, **good governance at institutions plays a major role**
- Good governance doesn’t just mean best industry practices, auditable and accountable financially stable organisations, but it signifies the kind of governance that can deliver healthcare to the needy in the most affordable, accessible, and acceptable way
- Healthcare is a global problem that needs local solutions. It’s delivery slightly differs based on the culture of the country, their expectations and approaches. **Good governance must also address such quality in healthcare delivery**
- Medical graduates who will turn to be healthcare professionals will play a key role in the good governance of healthcare institutions
- Almost 20 lakhs children write NEET exams in India, and half of them are almost qualified, but the seats are just one-tenth of the qualified numbers; there is a huge demand and supply gap, and good governance is gone out of the window
- Good governance in healthcare starts with making healthcare education available and accessible to passionate students who want to become doctors and serve the society. Hence, a completely free of cost medical college was built to give an opportunity for such students

Below From Left to Right:

Dr Raghupathi AR – Director, Medical Education, Sri Sathya Sai Sarla Memorial Hospital
 Dr C Sreenivas – Chairman, Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospitals
 Dr Subramanya Kusnur – Founder Chairman & CEO, AquaKraft Group Ventures
 Sri Madhusudan Sai – Chairman, Prashanthi Balamandira Trust and Founder, Sri Madhusudan Sai Institute of Medical Sciences and Research
 Mr Ratnesh Jha – Executive Director, UN Global Compact Network India
 Dr Somnath Singh – Deputy Director, UN Global Compact Network India
 Mr B N Narasimha Murthy – Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai University for Human Excellence



In Focus

- Healthcare must be modified and customised to the needs of the people based on their geographical and cultural context
- Anybody who needs healthcare services deserves those services, and to deliver is the collective responsibility of all organisations, starting from the United Nations to the governments to civic bodies to corporates, NGOs, faith-based co-operatives, and all kinds of healthcare systems that must walk the talk; come together to deliver health care to the doorsteps of the needy in the most affordable, accessible and acceptable way.
- The one who protects *dharma* is protected by *dharma*. Doing what is right is governance. Doing what is right is to make sure that healthcare is not made into such a business that it becomes out of reach for the common man. That is why good governance should address all our healthcare problems
- One can't make profits from people's problems. Make profits only on other things, such as luxury, the wants and desires of people; but not on their needs. This is the basic healthcare governance that the world should consider.
- Healthcare has to be a not-for-profit venture. Everyone must do it as a service, and not as business. From the prism of *seva*, the entire perspective changes from transactional to transformational

Know and Empathise

One common section of society is the rich who can pay for themselves, another is the poor who subsists on subsidies from government schemes, but there is a huge missing middle class who are neither here nor there. Neither can they pay for healthcare in corporate hospitals because they don't have insurance, nor are they so rich or poor that they can fall under government schemes. There are about 40 to 50 crores of people in India who belong to this category, where they go bankrupt and the whole family/ children fall apart. This leads to a downward spiral of poverty or deprivation and other social evils.

Unless healthcare is released and freed from the shackles of commercialisation, corporatisation, and profiteering, no good governance is possible in the healthcare sector in the truest sense.

10-12 August 2023 – India Startup Festival 2023 (The Second Edition)

Innovation at the Bottom of the Pyramid in Rural Innovations and Entrepreneurship

India Startup Festival's (ISF) mission is to reimagine the startup revolution by empowering entrepreneurs and fostering a robust startup ecosystem that will enable them to reach their full potential.



500+
VCs, HNIs and
Angel Investors



100+
CEOs & CXOs



30+
Speakers



10,000+
Startups



**INDIA
STARTUP
FEST'23**



- Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Manufacturing**
Dr Galla Ramachandra Naidu –
Founder, Amara Raja Group



- Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Healthcare**
Dr D Nageshwar Reddy – Chairman,
Asian Institute of Gastroenterology
and AIG Hospitals, Hyderabad

In Focus

10-12 August 2023 – India Startup Festival 2023 (The Second Edition)

Innovation at the Bottom of the Pyramid in Rural Innovations and Entrepreneurship



3. Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Telecom
Dr P Raja Mohan Rao – Chairman and Founding Member, United Telecoms Ltd



4. Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Agritech
Mr Sivakumar Surampuri – Chairman, Technico Agri Sciences Limited



5. Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Impact Investment
Mr Vineet Rai – Founder and Chairman, Aavishkaar Group



6. Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Agrochemistry
Dr Kazuhiro Chiba, President Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, Japan



7. Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Fintech
Mr Sri Atluri, Managing Director, Global Head of Enterprise Quality Engineering at BNY Mellon

In Focus

Excerpts from Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai's Discourse

Startups in an ashram! Let's see the Connection

To us, spirituality is not a secluded activity to be done in solitude or in silence. Spirituality is a way of life. It is an attitude with which we do everything – ordinary or extraordinary. The correct attitude is to think and do selfless good for all.

While startups do well for themselves and for the customers who can pay for their services, spiritual startups like ours do good for all, whether one can pay for it or not. This is why spiritual ashrams are important even for startup festivals.

Temples – Abode for Gods and Goods

Temples were the nerve centres of socio-cultural and economic activities when India was at its peak of spiritual glory. Markets happened at temples, where people would bring their produce, market it and exchange products, which was known as the Barter system. People appreciated each other's products, talents, and creativity. They did not weigh it in dollar terms, but they weighed it in terms of the efforts behind it—the creativity, the innovation, and the solution each of them brought for each other.

A porter could exchange his pot in a barter system with a weaver who would give clothes in return. A producer of rice might be able to barter his rice with a goldsmith who could provide him with some ornaments in return.

Thus, temples were like marketplaces with a vision and a purpose.

Economy Valuation and Culture Devaluation

With modernisation and usage of currencies, banks became more important than places of worship. When everything started getting monetised, respect for craftsmanship was lost, unless there was a monetary value attached to it based on demand and supply. This led to the deterioration of culture.

The idea of startup festival is not just to show the monetary value behind products, but also to create a sense of respect and responsibility in each of you for each other. This is *arthasāstra* – the economics of India.

The goal is to bring back the Indian ethos of respecting each other's craftsmanship, value systems, talents, and culture. Unless that happens, we will be chasing money endlessly, without any concern for societal welfare and prospects.



In Focus

Good Will is Far More Grander than Profits

During the COVID crisis, India produced vaccines not just for itself but for the entire world. It extended a friendly hand to many other countries without expecting anything in return. This created tremendous amount of good will, and new relationships based on trust with Indian business men and ecosystem.

Similarly, businesses have to think beyond profits and build value for all in the society; it has to nurture the needed element of trust in the society. A completely profit-based venture will lose the element of trust from people. It is absolutely fine to recover costs to make two ends meet. However, startups have to work beyond profits and think of the greater cause of societal good. This will create a lot of good will in the society.

Look at those who are Seldom Looked at

Beyond the call of duty, startups must keep aside a little bit of their company's profit for social good.

We can start a foundation under the India Startup Festival to do social good. Such models of social entrepreneurship will make a difference in the lives of those at the bottom of the pyramid.

Startups have to start investing in climate technologies, agricultural technologies and sustainable technologies which supports and sustains the bottom of the pyramid. Even while working for profits, we have to be mindful of those who are working for us and benefitting us indirectly, and hence these are the ones who should not be left behind in this race to prosper and grow.

Patience is a virtue when you invest at the bottom of the pyramid, for example through an Agri Startup. It might take time, but when it happens, it will do an irreversible, simple, yet a positive change in the society. For that sake, some of us must dedicate our time and energy.

The Ethos of ISF

The ethos of ISF must be 'selfless good.' It cannot be only based on making a company a unicorn, making somebody prosperous or filling the pockets of investors. Need-based start-ups and not greed-based should be the motto.

Much innovation chases the top 10% of the customer data base, who can pay for it. Very little innovation chases the second tier of consumers, who are picky and choosy. Hardly any innovation happens at the bottom of the pyramid.

In Focus

It is not about valuation. It is about value creation

A startup is for solving a societal problem. To solve it in an affordable, accessible, acceptable, sustainable way, but more importantly, in a selfless way is the greater purpose. If you have a purpose, you will never get tired or bored. Your work itself is your relaxation when you love it so much.

Learning to love what we have to do and finding what we love to do is the key to doing anything in life, including starting a company and making it big and transformative.

Purpose is Powerful

Find your life's purpose. Once you find that you will align all your energies towards it. You will become very powerful. You will have the energy of God with you to execute what you have set out to achieve. Find the right kind of purpose and do some soul-searching. Don't simply follow people like a sheep; be a lion in your might, and that is how you find the meaning. That is how you find the power to execute that purpose.

Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come. Take an idea and make it your everything— live, breathe, eat, talk, sleep that idea, and give your everything to that idea. That idea will happen sooner or later because the universe conspires to help those who know what they want to do, and when that happens, you see magic happening.

Have an idea, solve a problem, and build a billion-dollar enterprise, but build it on the foundation of doing selfless good for everyone's sake, and this is spirituality as we think of everybody's happiness.

Sacrifice is a Virtue

Vidura Neeti says that our minds, intellects, and actions should be guided in such a way that the decisions we make are not just good for us, but for our families, our communities, our world at large and ultimately something that would please the divine within all of us and also the divine in all around. Sacrificing smaller interests for the greater good of all is the key.

grāma swaraj

Mahatma Gandhi Ji's concept of a self-governed village is a revolutionary idea. Each village should be independent, self-governing, self-sufficient, and self-sustaining. There is balance required between industrial revolution, grassroots-level innovation and self-governance.

Today, where India stands, it is one of the best times for India to achieve grāma swaraj because of the penetration of technology in the rural areas, be it communication technology, information technology, transportation, digitisation, financial inclusion, and the amount of education and other facilities infrastructure that has reached the villages.

We have to shift the balance and provide equitable opportunities even to rural geographies.



In Focus

16 August 2023

- Prashanthi Balamandira Trust files application to be listed at Social Stock Exchange India Ltd

An event on the Social Stock Exchange segment jointly hosted by Prashanthi Balamandira Trust, National Stock Exchange of India Ltd, and Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC Ltd., was held on 16 August 2023. The Social Stock Exchange segment provides new avenues for social enterprises to finance social initiatives, provide them visibility and bring in increased transparency in fund mobilisation and utilisation by social enterprises.



The event saw a large audience from the financial sector, banking sector and the NGO community. Mr Ashishkumar Chauhan – MD and CEO, National Stock Exchange of India Ltd, presided over the event along with Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai who is at the helm of affairs of Prashanthi Balamandira Trust; Dr R Balasubramaniam, Member – Human Resources, Capacity Building Commission, Govt. of India; and Mr A Balasubramanian, MD and CEO of Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC Ltd.



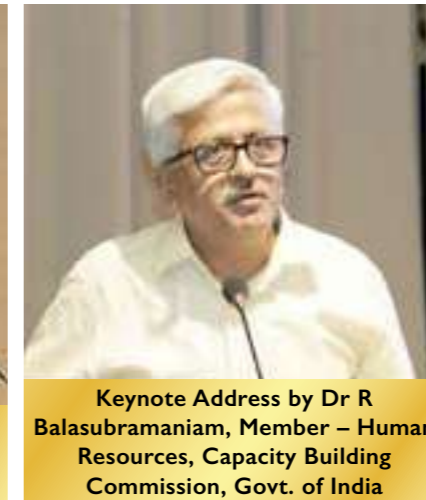
With Mr Ashishkumar Chauhan, MD & CEO, National Stock Exchange of India Ltd

There was a panel discussion, where inspirational panellists delved into the multifaceted dimensions of the Social Stock Exchange, under the topic – Understanding Donors' Perspective.

In Focus



Mr Ashishkumar Chauhan, MD & CEO, National Stock Exchange of India Ltd



Keynote Address by Dr R Balasubramaniam, Member – Human Resources, Capacity Building Commission, Govt. of India

Hon'ble Finance Minister, Govt. of India, Smt Nirmala Sitharaman, as part of the Budget Speech for FY 2019-20 proposed the idea of an electronic fund-raising platform 'Social Stock Exchange', under the regulatory ambit of SEBI for listing social enterprises and voluntary organisations working for the realisation of a social welfare objective.

The Prashanthi Balamandira Trust spearheaded by Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai has applied for registration at the Social Stock Exchange, and firmly believes that meeting the mandated regulatory compliance helps in building credibility, and being early adopters, it will certainly help in brand positioning and awareness.

Panellists:

- Moderator – Sri Nikunj Dalmia, Managing Editor, ET NOW and ET NOW Swadesh
- Ms Dhruvi Shah – Executive Trustee and Chief Executive Officer, Axis Bank Foundation
- Sri Shailesh Haribhakti – Chairman, Shailesh Haribhakti and Associates
- Sri Raman Malik – GM Admin and CSR, CO, BPCL
- Sri J N Gupta – Founder and Managing Director at Stakeholders Empowerment Services
- Sri Anuj K Agarwal – Chief Operating Officer, ICICI Foundation
- Dr Harish K Ahuja – Senior Vice President, National Stock Exchange

Panellists and Dignitaries with Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai



16 August 2023 – Prashanthi Balamandira Trust files application to be listed at Social Stock Exchange India Ltd



Mr A Balasubramanian, MD and CEO
of Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC Ltd

A humble recipient of many recognitions and accolades, the Prashanthi Balamandira Trust is also an Organisation in Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since June 2023. ECOSOC is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, responsible for bringing people and issues together to promote collective action for a sustainable world.

The event was not just a gathering of individuals or organisations, but it was a collective force driven by a common goal – to foster positive change that transcends boundaries and uplifts communities.

Excerpts from Sadguru Sri Madhusudan’s Discourse

Let’s apply this prayer to the larger society

There is an ancient Indian prayer, which is recited when a teacher and a student comes together to learn. It says – “*May we be protected together; May we together enjoy the process of learning and acquiring knowledge; May we work together with great energy and vigour; May our intellects be sharpened; May there be no animosity amongst us; Let there be peace!*”

This prayer could be applied to the larger society as well. Let’s come together, work together, be protected together, enjoy our resources, abilities, and opportunities together, and exert together for collective prosperity by helping each other. Let’s relish our prosperity and happiness together.

The 3S Formula

sarkār (Government) formulates right kind of policies

samāj (Society/ Industries) provides right kind of resources

samstha (Charitable Organisations) implements social welfare schemes

samāj – An Etymology

sama ajaḥ – Those who are born equally. We are all equal in the eyes of God. Thus, equality is the basis on which we need to do charity, and not out of a sense of superiority.

Charity – It is in the DNA of Indians

Charity is a fundamental quality that every human needs to practice.

The Indian thought is that the entire universe is permeated by the Divine. Hence, we need to sacrifice and consume. **It is not – Consume and then Sacrifice**

Sacrifice First, Consume Later

Charity has its rules

The *taittirīya upaniṣad* lays down the rules of charity.

śraddhayā’deyam – Give with sincerity with selfless and pure intentions

aśraddhayā’deyam – Do not give with sincerity, when you are not convinced

śriyā deyam – Give in abundance so that the person’s need is fulfilled

bhiyā deyam – Give with the fear that what you give may not be sufficient for the other person

hriyā deyam – Give with humility by considering it as an opportunity

saṁvidā deyam – Give with the knowledge about why you are giving. Giving something to the wrong person for a wrong cause could be misused

SSE for need, and not for greed

Social Stock Exchange (SSE) is a policy decision, which is an evolvable concept and will be strengthened in the years to come based on feedback from different sections of the society like charitable organisations, investors, funders and policy makers

SSE is a completely need-based venture, where we are able to provide for the other who needs it more than us, and the return that we get is ‘**satisfaction**’

Aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals, NITI Aayog initiatives or the other Government policies of social welfare, and including it all in our portfolio of social welfare schemes should be the way of implementation

SSE should be answerable about their costs to both the beneficiaries and the investors. Social Credit Scores will help in creating the necessary trust

The SSE platform gives an opportunity for charities to be validated and verified, and it creates visibility. By this way, the investors are happy since due diligence is taken care of.

Efficiency of Implementation of Charities

The effective implementation of a charity depends on keeping the administrative costs as low as possible, so that every rupee donated by the donor is utilised for the beneficiary

There has to be a framework for charities to be rated and ESG scores to be given based on their governance, accountability, transparency and disclosures

The Case Study of Prashanthi Balamandira Trust

The Prashanthi Balamandira Trust has been keeping its administrative cost at only 2.5%, because it is largely a volunteer-based organisation, and everyone works from their heart selflessly.

Ours is a hybrid model where we pay for our staff, but at the same time there are many who work on a voluntary or honorary basis. There are many youngsters who have taken to this path.

80% of our donations come from foreign countries.

The Trust has built CAPEX worth 900 Crores during the last ten years in schools, colleges/ university and hospitals. All these have come from internal funding.

A postpaid model will be really helpful. For example – I have a hospital worth 100 Crores built from internal resources 10 years back. Now, the hospital is worth 250 Crores. There is an opportunity for people to participate in this by giving only 100 Crores, yet getting full credits for it. This will be a post-paid model where both benefits.

Since, we are a completely free charitable organisation, our OPEX is very high year on year. Hence, a post-paid model where we are reimbursed for our previous work will help. This is also validated work, as you can see it in front of your eyes.

16 August 2023

– Prashanthi Balamandira Trust files application to be listed at Social Stock Exchange India Ltd

Let's Make it Easy for Charities and Investors to Come Together

One common disclosure format or agreement for CSR, SSE, FCRA...etc. will do a great deal of help to evade additional costs spent in different kinds of audits and disclosure formats

If CSR can be integrated into SSE, it will be a win-win situation for all, because everything will be validated information, and there will be no need for additional due diligence

During the last five years, almost 80,000 crores has come from abroad to NGOs in India. Hence, foreign investment is inevitable

Regulations like CRR, FIS...etc., can be integrated. While FIS invests in NSE, it must also do for SSE

Integration of tax benefits throughout the year and not just at the end of the financial year in March will ensure that retail investors invest during the course of the year, and not just at the end to get tax benefits

With financial inclusion, digitisation and UPI happening in India, there is a great potential for small investors and donors to come in, and this should be encouraged

A postpaid model for releasing a bond and getting people to participate is essential



“Service is the ultimate expression of Love”, says Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The Centres for Human Development of the Sai Global Federation of Foundations are the beacons of hope for the world with the twin goals of spreading the light of love and the joy of service.

Sai Global Federation of Foundations (SGFF) brings together an international community of organisations which share the common goal of alleviating human suffering, promoting

environmental responsibility and creating new opportunities for those in need. It is a non-religious, non-denominational, non-political group promoting harmony by serving humanity, transcending the barriers of gender, caste, creed, ethnicity, nationality and colour. All Foundations and Trusts under SGFF work independently, collectively and in collaboration by exerting efforts in a focussed and purposeful manner, creating significant impact, throughout the world.

“Service is the ultimate expression of Love”

Region 1



Sai Prema Foundation



Healthcare

Saving Little Hearts in Fiji and the South Pacific

Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Children's Hospital in Fiji hosted seven visiting surgical teams from several countries to save little hearts. The hospital provides a ray of hope not just for the children of Fiji, but also for the children of nearby island nations in the South Pacific region.

In July 2023, a surgical team from National University Hospital Singapore led by Dr Laszlo Kiraly, performed surgeries to mend little hearts with Congenital Heart Disease.

Nurses from Australia and United Kingdom, a paediatric cardiologist from Sai Sanjeevani Hospital in Mumbai, India, and a clinical pharmacist from New Zealand supported the Singapore team.



18 little hearts that were operated upon with love and care, received a new lease of life. The children operated upon were from Fiji and nearby South Pacific Islands – the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

The Sanjeevani Children's Hospital also created history by giving new life to a 5-week-old little heart – the youngest baby operated upon at the Children's Hospital in Fiji.

During this mission, a 3-month-old baby with Down Syndrome and Congenital Heart Disease, whom his parents abandoned at birth and now a ward of the State, received a new life. Hopefully, this special child will soon find a loving family and home that he truly deserves.

On the 12 July 2023, the President of Fiji, His Excellency Ratu Wiliame Maivalili Katonivere, graced the occasion of the 'Gift of Life' ceremony at Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Children's Hospital, Fiji.



Region 1



Healthcare

Saving Little Hearts in Fiji and the South Pacific



Region 1

Hong Kong



Nutrition

Feed Hong Kong

About 3,200 food packets were distributed in the month of July 2023. The food packets were prepared at the Feed Hong Kong kitchen, which is open thrice a week.



Region 2

India



15 August 2023 – Celebration of 77th Independence Day of Bharat

“Today, we recommit ourselves to creating a better future for generations to come. Bharat should be one where nobody goes to bed hungry and nobody is denied healthcare or education for want of money or access. Everybody should be treated equally.”

-Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai



Sri Madhusudan Sai emphasised on the need to empower villages and make them self-sustainable and self-sufficient.



Swacch Chikkaballapura (Clean Chikkaballapura)

Swacch Chikkaballapura (Clean Chikkaballapura) initiative was launched by the Prashanthi Balamandira Trust on this day of 15 August. An automated garbage collection machine that can collect an impressive **3,000 kgs of garbage per shift**, reducing the burden on manual collection efforts was inaugurated. This is a significant effort to help maintain a cleaner and healthier living environment for the community.



Mr Pradeep Eshwar Nimmondige, Member of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly was present at the august occasion.

Region 2



19 August 2023 – WMG CFO Elite Forum from Bangalore visited Sathya Sai Grama

40 senior Bangalore-based corporate leadership, including CFOs and other CXOs, met and interacted with Sri Madhusudan Sai.



Region 2



Excerpts from Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai's Discourse

Let's Begin with our Innate Inevitable Need – 'Happiness'

Happiness is the most sought-after thing in this world. But people use wrong routes to achieve it and finally meet with disappointments.

The surest and shortest route to happiness is to follow your heart and serve a purpose. Do everything from your heart, and head and hands will follow. Firstly, the heart should feel, and only then the head should think and hands should execute.

If 'We' Triumphs, 'I' also Flourishes

WMG (We Make Good) Forum can also be interpreted as 'We' first, 'Me' next, which will always lead to 'Growth' and Prosperity. This principle is always applicable to every aspect of our life. When we think about the collective good, over and above individual good, then things start happening in the society. This alone can lead to a sustainable and an irreversible progress in the society.

Beyond Profit is Purpose and People.

Our Alterity

The sanctity of our work is sustained by keeping all our services completely free of cost, without charging even a penny.

Administrative costs are only 2.5%, which is extremely low compared to the industry standards of 8% to 15%, or global standards of 30% to 35%.

Most of our staff are volunteers who have dedicated their time, energy and resources for this mission, without expecting any monetary gain. In turn, the needs of our staff are taken care of by the society.

Sentient of the Ancient

This takes us back to the ancient Indian way of life where temples were centres of spirituality, culture, social and political activities. It acted as hubs of educational activities too where education was given completely free of cost. Food was served to all and even healthcare was provided within the temple premises.

'gurukula' was a place where the kula or community or family was centred around the guru. Like in a family, everyone was treated equally and education was given to all without expecting any fees in return or without any preconditions.

Wealthy kings supported the temples and its social activities. They did it out of their own interest in order to protect the structure of the temples which were providing for different kinds of needs of the society for a healthier, happier, and productive society.

This is how service organisations thrived in spiritual enclosures. Spirituality and Service were not seen as different from each other. Within one premises, food, education, healthcare, cultural activities, spiritual wisdom—all were given to all.

Our organisation is a similar set up where service activities are performed with deep spiritual understanding. It is supported by kind hearted philanthropists who do it not for name and fame, but from the firm belief that their personal welfare depends on societal welfare.

Region 2

Our Codes of Service

- Building a progressive nation on the foundation of spiritual principles is very important
- Building the nation from the bottom up, where most of our children live. By giving them good education based on spirituality and values, we will be able to build an ethical society and a prosperous nation tomorrow
- 2:1 is the proportion of girls and boys in our institution. Girls' education is given paramount importance at our institutions
- A thorough succession planning of creating the next generation of leaders, academicians, educationists and entrepreneurs who shall serve in spiritual and social sectors is our plan of action
- Our medical college will give free medical education to all those who cannot afford it, with only one condition that the students will have to serve in rural geographies, at least for the duration of their study at our college, and they will be paid on par with public government pay scale

Obligation towards the donor and being donor conscious are the two primary pointers that we follow to give the best value to our donors. Hence, we try to keep our administrative costs very low.

- Construction of our buildings are done very quickly. Our medical college has been built in just a matter of one year. In the last 10 years, we have completed close to 2.5 million square feet of construction, which includes schools and hospitals
- Inflation in construction industry is really high, and hence we construct our buildings very quickly for the judicious use of our donors' and investors' money

- Our project management cost is only 0.0004%, which is very low
- Giving the highest value to our donors and beneficiaries is our purpose

Correctness, Efficiency, and High quality are the three watch words of our service towards our beneficiaries.

- Of the \$250 million that we have spent in just the last one decade, only 5% of it is donation from the Corporates, remain 95% is from retail individuals from around the world who have rallied behind us to protect and promote this cause of selfless work

Corporates' Conation

- CSR is mandatory in Corporates now. Hence, they have plenty of options to choose where they would like to invest to create a lasting impact in terms of efficient use of their funds and volunteering opportunities
- Volunteering is very important to improve employee engagement. Volunteerism should be counted as part of CSR. Whatever hours the employee clocks in at an NGO, will be the voluntary hours contributed by the company for the betterment of the country. Though its impact is intangible, it will lead to a lot of transformation and employee engagement. Corporates should allow some paid time for employees to do some good work
- Matching contribution is a great model. By this way, ESR (Employee Social Responsibility) will be complemented with CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)

You cannot do charity better than us. We cannot do businesses like you. Hence, let's partner and work together for the greater good of all by drawing inspiration from each other and inspiring more people.

Region 2



22 August 2023 – A Music Recital by students and staff of Sri Sathya Sai University for Human Excellence at Kalakshetra Foundation, Chennai



The students and staff of Sri Sathya Sai University for Human Excellence performed at the Sunadam Music Festival that was held at Kalakshetra Foundation in Chennai.



Region 2



25 August 2023 – An Evening Divine, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

The Manchester of South India, Coimbatore, an industry cum nature hub, surrounded by the cosy Western ghats and centred around the hubbub of machineries' clangour, hosted an evening with Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai. Cricket Legend, Krishnamachari Srikanth welcomed Sadguru at this event called 'An Evening Divine' which was attended by a group of key entrepreneurs and social leaders from in and around the city of Coimbatore. Pertinent questions from Krishnamachari Srikanth pertaining to industry, society and spirituality, were given promising answers by Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai.



A Heart-to-Heart Conversation (An Extract)

Does God exist? If He does, who is He?

In the *ṛgveda*, precisely the *hiranyagarbha sūktam*, man expresses his love for all creation and desires to offer his salutation and gratitude to the one who created the beautiful creation all around him. Then, he asks the question – Who created all this? Whom should I offer my worship to and my gratitude to? This led to a search for an answer. The answer could differ from one person to another. Every person can have a different understanding about God.

The *vedas* have been very clear in affirming that God exists, and that He exists as 'Consciousness' irrespective of the different names given to God (Rama, Krishna, Narayana, Shankara...etc.).

prajñānam brahma – the ability to understand anything is itself God. The ability to speak, listen, and understand is itself God. All abilities are only God's power working in us.

Further, the *brhadāranyaka upaniṣad* talks about *saguṇa brahma* (God who takes a form and has got attributes) and *nirguṇa brahma* (God without a form). *sanātana dharma* gives the option for people to choose which ever way they prefer to worship God.

God is a supreme existence or consciousness that permeates everything.

God is pure selfless love. Whomsoever manifests pure love manifests God. All who manifest selflessness are expressing God's presence in them. To experience God, one has to develop selflessness.

Region 2



29 August 2023 – Visit to CODISSIA (Coimbatore District Small Industries Association) Trade Fair Complex, Coimbatore

Sri Madhusudan Sai visited CODISSIA (Coimbatore District Small Industries Association) Trade Fair Complex at Coimbatore and was warmly welcomed by President V Thirugnanam and the core committee members.



Sri Madhusudan Sai appreciated their work in promoting small industries and encouraged them to also focus on social responsibility, referring to it as 'CODISSIA Cares.'



Region 2

India

30 August 2023 – Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai met the Hon'ble Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman at Delhi

The discussion between Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai and Smt Nirmala Sitharaman revolved around recognising and acknowledging unsung women working at the grassroots level across various sectors, women in higher education, women empowerment, and bringing affordable healthcare to tier two towns and cities.



Region 2

Middle East

Nutrition

In the month of July 2023, close to **14,413 meals** were distributed by the volunteers of Sai Hrudayam.

17 Sai Love Kits containing one month's groceries were provided to needy unemployed workers. Each kit would serve about **1,530 meals**

One Meal a Day (OMAD):

283 meals consisting of biscuits, laban, tea, and freshly cooked food were distributed as part of the 'One Meal a Day' initiative



Seva for Needy Female Workers

Sai Hrudayam volunteers in collaboration with Indian People's Forum handed over a total of **140 kits** to the female blue-collar workers. The kits consisted of wheat flour, rice, pulses, oil, spices, condiments, along with regular household cleaning supplies. It will serve an equivalent of **12,600 meals**



Region 2

Nigeria

Spiritan Self Awareness Initiative

Joy Village Enugu, Nigeria



Healthcare

Aruike Specialty Hospital (ASH) runs two clinical facilities in remote rural areas in Enugu and Imo. These hospitals provide quality free healthcare services to rural dwellers. Both hospitals offer a wide range of paediatric and maternal healthcare services while treating children and adults from all age groups. In the month of July 2023, the following services were provided:

- Outpatient consultations were conducted for **636 children** and **727 adults**
- **135 patients** got their Ophthalmic treatment
- **11 deliveries** were performed
- **136 expectant mothers** were given the necessary antenatal care
- **26 children** were given immunisation
- **17 surgeries** were performed, which included caesarean section, circumcision, catheterisation, appendectomy, lumpectomy, herniorrhaphy, lipoma, and cervical repair
- **1,342 lab investigations** were conducted
- **47 patients** were admitted to the hospitals as inpatients



Region 2

Sri Lanka

Sri Sathya Sai Karuna Nilayam Foundation



Healthcare

Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital at Batticaloa in Sri Lanka has conducted **over 100 cath interventions** at the newly inaugurated Cath lab.

Nutrition

Food was distributed to **1,837 individuals** in the month of July 2023



Region 2

Sri Lanka



Sri Sathya Sai Karuna Nilayam Foundation



Healthcare

The Eastern Province where the Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Hospital is situated comprises of 03 districts with a population of over two million people. It was the only province in Sri Lanka that did not have Cathlab facilities and patients had to travel 450 kms for seeking services Jaffna.

During the Divine Visit of Sadguru Madhusudan Sai to Sri Lanka in January 2023, the SSSKNF facilitated an evening with many leading consultants from the Teaching Hospital, Batticaloa (THB) and from the Eastern University Medical Faculty. Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai made a promise to provide a Cathlab Facility. Within 6 months the Cath Lab was fully ready and functional and on the 1st of June the Cardiologist from the THB did Cath Lab interventions to 05 patients. By the end of August, the number of patients benefitted by Angiograms and Stenting are 211. This figure keeps rising weekly.

It is Divine Love which enabled Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Super Speciality Hospital in the village of Kirankulam to provide the patients from the entire Eastern province with the best services available for cardiac care.

Our gratitude to Sadguru Madhusudan Sai, the Divine Will Foundation, USA, the many donors who contributed to this facility and to consultants and staff of the Batticaloa teaching hospital and the staff of Sanjeevani Sri Lanka who provide dedicated services to the patients free of cost.



Region 3

Greece



'Ιδρυμα Μοιράζομαι' (Foundation of Sharing)

Nutrition

- During the month of July 2023, **80 boxes** (dry ration packages) consisting of legumes, pasta, rice, milk, oil, cereals, snacks, as well as other necessities, such as soap and washing powder were distributed to **80 poor families**, at the Anavyssos area, in the South of Athens. This amounts to approximately **1,840 meals** served
- **1,200** portions of yogurt, **720** liters of milk, and **40 kgs** of feta cheese, were donated to both the Old People's Homes of Athens and Palea Fokea
- **70 pizzas** were offered to the children and adults with disabilities of EGNYA Foundation
- **35 pizzas** were delivered to the children of 'St. Andrew Children's Home'



Italy



Nutrition

In July 2023, the Grace Kitchen in Rome prepared and distributed **1,692 meals** - pasta, vegetables, cheese sandwiches, packaged desserts, fruit juice and fresh fruits.



Region 3

Turkey

Karşılıksız Hizmet Vakfı (Selfless Seva Trust)



Nutrition

A total of **1,420 meals** were distributed door to door at Şişli, Pendik, Ömerli, and other districts of Istanbul. On a weekly basis, grains or pasta with legumes was cooked and served alongside milk or yoghurt and bread.

Sociocare

- In the month of July 2023, **337 animals** in need throughout several districts of Istanbul were provided with food, water, and, in some cases medical care
- In collaboration with the head of the Uskumruköy district, **10 families** were aided with washing detergent, soap, toilet paper, and paper towels
- **Two home rentals** and **11 utility bills** were provided for, to needy families



Region 4

Argentina

Fundación Sai Prema de Salud, Educación y Valores Humanos (Sai Prema Foundation for Health, Education and Human Values)



Nutrition

- In the month of July 2023, a total of **1,662 meals** and **3,152 breakfasts** were provided to the needy
- **829 meals** and **984 breakfasts** were provided to the soup kitchen – La Amistad at Escobar City, Buenos Aires Province
- Food assistance was provided to **three families** at Urbino (Escobar, Buenos Aires Province), Encendiendo Luceitas and Uguet Mondaca (Burzaco., Buenos Aires Province)
- At the city of La Plata, **833 meals** and **2,168 breakfasts** were delivered to several soup kitchens



Sociocare

All the soup kitchens in La Plata collectively distributed clothes to more than **30 people**, **5 pairs of shoes** to adults and children, along with **3 woolen blankets** made by volunteers and a **mattress**.

Educare

Volunteers of Amor Y Paz conducted a few activities in the Ashram, which were actively taken part by residents of Escobar area.

- TaKeTiNa – a musical meditative process to develop an awareness of rhythm
- Meditation meetings and sessions
- Chanting of Omkar
- Yoga Workshop
- Family constellation workshop (A therapy that helps to identify, understand, and reconcile events that led to breakdowns within the family)
- Workshop on how to focus
- Reiki Training - Level One



Region 4

Brazil

**Associação Corações que Amam
Mãos que Servem
(Loving Hearts Serving Hands)**



Nutrition

In the month of July 2023, **120 homeless brothers and sisters** were served **240 vegetarian sandwiches, sweets, cereal bars and bottled water**

Sociocare

Sandals and clothes were also distributed to the homeless.



Canada

**Sai Global Service
Foundation of Canada**

Nutrition

- **20 needy families** in Edmonton were served lunch packets consisting of sandwich buns, cucumber, tomatoes, lettuce, vegetarian mayonnaise spread and orange juice packets
- **Over 100 bottles of water** were served to needy friends on the streets of Edmonton

Sociocare

30 pairs of shoes were given to low-income families with children and teenagers



Region 4

United States of America

**Divine Will Foundation
Clarksdale, Mississippi**



Healthcare

Clarksdale, Mississippi

In the month of July 2023, **145 patients** were treated at Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Medical Centre at Clarksdale.



**Sathya Sai Sanjeevani Medical Centre
(Inaugurated in June 2019)**



My Inner Journey

*tvameva sarvam mama deva
deva – Dear Lord! You are my
Everything*

– Alessandra Craxi



Ms Alessandra Craxi studied from Grade 1 to BSc Physics (Hons.), at Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s educational institutions at Ooty, Prasanthi Nilayam, and Anantapur 1978 – 1996.

After completing her studies at Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning in 1996, she returned to her home country, Italy. She is presently collaborating with a global company that manufactures special products for the Italian Market. She also opened a horse-riding school 11 years ago, where equestrian skills are imparted to children and adults.

Alessandra regularly facilitates study circles that discuss Baba’s teachings by reading from His books, discourses and commentaries on the ancient Indian scriptures. The study time is used for contemplation of Baba’s messages and understanding its purport and practice in everyday life.

While trying to put in words this wonderful journey, I cannot miss offering my reverential gratitude to my Parents for having implicitly obeyed Swami when He said, He would take me and my sister to his school at Ooty.

Let me go back to the late 1970s. Imagine, a young couple from Italy, who had not long after meeting Swami for the first time, lost their first child and returned to their beloved Lord with their other three daughters for comfort and blessings.

My mother asked Swami, if in the future, He would bless them and permit their children to study in His schools, and His immediate answer was – “Yes, Next week!”

What a Divine Test!

My parents did not hesitate one bit. The very next week, my sister and I were admitted to the Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar school at Ooty. I was 3 years old and my sister was 4 years and a half.

To be honest, I do not remember much of the initial days and months at the Ooty school, although I very fondly cherish this great blessing that I received to be under Swami’s Divine protection from such a tender age. William Wordsworth best put it in these famous words, “Blessed it was in that dawn to be alive and to be young was very heaven.” This was indeed true because the Lord Himself took precious time out and travelled to Ooty school often to spend time with us tiny tots.

tvameva mātā ca pitā tvameva

You truly are my Mother and Father

tvameva bandhuśca sakhā tvameva

You truly are my Relative and my Friend

tvameva vidyā draviṇaṁ tvameva

You truly are my Knowledge and my Wealth

tvameva sarvaṁ mama deva deva

You truly are my All, My God of Gods

This was one of the prayers we chanted during our school assembly session every morning before entering into our respective classes. For His children, relating to this prayer was absolutely normal.

Swami was our Mother, Father, Relative, and Friend...We lived it every day of our life. Our teachers, with the Divine guidance of Swami, gifted us with the most precious jewel a young child can ever dream of and that was ‘Love for God.’ To love God was our strength, our life.

As years passed, this love grew—sometimes it was love for love’s sake, and many a times, it was love for one’s own sake; but it was anyway and always love directed to our loving Swami.

From Ooty, we shifted to Puttaparthi to continue our primary and higher secondary schooling. We then completed our University education at

the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Anantapur Campus.

After my final exams during the last year of my studies at the University, I went to Brindavan to take blessings from Swami before leaving for Italy. Swami gave me *pādanamaskar* and looking straight into my eyes (heart), He said thrice “Swamiji is always with you.”

I thought I was a grown up and was ready to be a part of the outside world, with a bag full of righteous values as my armament, and an enormous courage that I could face anything in life for I had been chosen to study in His schools and had been given all that was needed to lead my life on the path of *dharma*, and make a difference in the life of all those around me.

However, things weren’t easy, as Baba always said, ‘pleasure is an interval between two pains.’ My life was so, just as for anybody else, although I was fortunate for, I had my mantra “Swamiji is always with you” and I clung to it (in hindsight, I would say not often enough) when I needed it the most.

I tried with all my might to put into practice all that I had learnt...yet slowly and steadily a feeling of inadequacy started to linger inside me. Life seemed to be without a purpose. “Swami! What have I missed? Do please guide me”, was my prayer.

And the assurance that “Swamiji is always with you” kept ringing in my ears. Yes, I felt Him, I experienced Him, I Knew He was there with me, but this feeling of inadequacy also seemed to be a very loyal companion.

As time passed, I began to realise that ‘His always being with me’ was proportionate to how much ‘I allowed Him to be with me.’

My yearning increased; it was burning, and at the same time soothing for I knew that it was this burning sensation that would take me to my Lord.

Thank God! Time was ripe and Swami guided me to meet Him again as Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai.

Is this my second opportunity? Is it a continuation of my inner journey? No matter what it is, it is my time now to awaken to *aham brahma sarvam brahma*. All that I had understood took to a new dimension of higher understanding – “Swamiji is always with you” – Yes, He is always with me as we are not different. As days pass, this is becoming clearer to me. My limited understanding of Swami being my father, mother, friend, my knowledge and wealth, also began to expand.



My Inner Journey

*tvameva sarvam mama deva
deva – Dear Lord! You are my
Everything*

– Alessandra Craxi

I thought I was grown-up and ready, for I had been given everything; but a recipient can receive only as much as his capacity to receive. The rest is not wasted, but is waiting to be poured in as the capacity increases.

Today I am aware that this recipient can grow endlessly and the key words to this are Selflessness, Fearlessness, and Shamelessness.

There is no more space for inadequacy because we are Him.

He is here again to guide us, to accompany us, and take us to our final goal—each one of us at our own pace. I have gotten on good terms with this too, for where is the hurry to finish this wonderful journey when I have the “Divine mother, father, friend, spiritual companion, knowledge, wealth, always with me”?

Baba’s hand-written Prayer:

O Lord, take my love, and let it flow in fullness of devotion to Thee;

O Lord, take my hands, and let them work incessantly for Thee;

O Lord, take my soul, and let it be merged in One with Thee;

O Lord, take my mind and thoughts, and let them be in tune with Thee;

O Lord, take my everything, and let me be an instrument to work for Thee.



Lessons For Life

If a Master (who is the spiritual guide) stops speaking and withdraws into silence/maunam, how can the new disciples/devotees who arrive later learn His teachings?

There are four kinds of communication that are mentioned in the scriptures - the lowest type is *vaikharī* - spoken language, which is how most of the people communicate. The next is *madhyamā* - wherein the communication happens in the mind through thoughts, as in telepathy. The next higher level is *paśyantī* - where the communication happens through visions during an absorbed state of mind, and the highest of it all is *parā* - which is highest because the knower, the knowledge and the known become one. One knows because one becomes united with the absolute universal consciousness which is aware of everything.

A *guru* may use many ways to teach disciples. The *vaikharī* type of spoken communication is just one of them. *Sri Ādi Śaṅkarācārya* in his composition on the *guru Dakṣiṇāmūrti* says that the young *guru* teaches through silence and the doubts of the old disciples are dispelled. Nevertheless, it also depends on one’s yearning to learn the truth that makes one eligible to know the truth. Ekalavya learnt archery without the direct instructions of a *guru*. Likewise, a true seeker will find ways to learn from a *guru* even if there is nothing spoken, and a *guru* will find a way to teach his disciples even in silence. This apart, the seeds of the knowledge sown in the hearts of disciples will grow into trees of wisdom that will bear more seeds and thus the spiritual wisdom will perpetuate itself through worthy disciples.



