



Veda-Poshana

in

Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations





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FOREWARD

“My love towards the Veda is equalled only by my love towards Humanity. I have come to instruct all in the essence of the Vedas, to protect the ancient wisdom, and to preserve it. If the injunctions given in the Vedas are followed by mankind they will be free from affliction. The welfare of the nation and the prosperity of the world are dependent on the Veda

Every human being must revere the Vedas. Whether everyone knows this or not, the Vedas pervade everything. It is the very foundation of life. One can experience immense happiness by merely hearing these Veda mantras being chanted. In fact, that nectarine sweetness is there in the very sound of Veda mantras. Veda is the very life-breath of every human being. Simply because one cannot chant the Veda mantras, one should not deny the very existence of Vedas. The inhalation and exhalation are to be considered as the Veda mantras. The inhalation of air constitutes the word “so” and exhalation “ham”, together, they make the “Soham” mantra, which means ‘I am that’, thus establishing the identity of the human being with Divinity. ”.

- Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba

Yugavathar Bhagavan Baba, You gave a fillip to the revival of the Vedas and Veda Dharmas as one of the important aspects of Your Divine Mission. Undoubtedly, this will remain etched in the annals of human kind for aeons. You invited renowned Vedic scholars to Prasanthi Nilayam and initiated the *Veda Purusha Saptaha Jnana Yajna* for the very first time in the year 1962 during *Dasara* celebrations at Prasanthi Nilayam to revive the Veda Dharma. By Your Divine Sankalpa (resolve), till date every year it is conducted along with *Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabha* in which renowned Vedic scholars participate thus You created a platform to deliver enlightening lectures by the Vedic scholars on Vedas & Upanishads.

With the above inspiration in line with Your Divine commandment, the Sri Sathya Sai Veda-Poshana has been initiated under the aegis of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations India and being deeply pursued to foster the Vedas. A large number of children, young men & women apart from adults take to learning Vedas which gained momentum and with Your Divine blessings, assumed Veda movement across the length & breadth of the country. The small golden, brilliant sapling of Veda that you had planted has grown into a huge tree announcing and heralding the voice of Vedas, forgetting the difference of caste, creed and religion. People have joined as one voice; there is only one God who is the embodiment of the Vedas as You declared in Your nectarine voice that the whole mankind is beholden to the Vedas.

With love and humility the State Veda coordinators of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations assuming the responsibility of Sri Sathya Sai Veda-Poshana of various states, for the first time offer at Your Divine Lotus feet an account of various Vedic activities on the auspicious occasion of Your 94th Birthday celebrations.

Swami, you are the Veda Purusha as the Veda emanated from You and is verily Your Divine breath. With folded palms we pray to You to keep engaging us in Your Divine Mission, to spread the sacredness and importance of the Veda and it's teachings of love and unity to all. We pray to You for Your Divine benevolence to Let us be Your effective instruments in the Divine mission of Yours through our engagement in learning, recitation, teaching of ancient Veda mantras.

The nationwide team pursuing Sri Sathya Sai Veda-Poshana under the aegis of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, engages in various activities of fostering and nurturing Vedas such as Tutorial Classes, Creating a learning platform at various places with trained teachers in the respective states, Mass recitation of Vedic hymns, Ekadasha Rudram, Rudrabhishekam and Vedam Shibir (camps) to create the awareness of Vedas among the people and the grandeur of Vedas, its supreme glory through Yajnas and Yagas.



This booklet of Sri Sathya Sai Veda-Poshana provides the glimpses of loving, heartwarming propagation of Vedas rendered by the national team of Sri Sathya Sai Veda-Poshana across the country. Swami, we humbly place this at Your lotus feet, seeking Your Divine guidance and blessings on the path that lies ahead.

I, on behalf of all the State Veda Coordinators offer my humble gratitude to Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba for this blessed opportunity to be part of this Divine Mission. Jai Sai Ram.

National Veda Coordinator



1. Genesis

With the Divine grace of Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, this booklet attempts to give an overview of the beginnings of the Sri Sathya Sai Veda-Poshana movement, Baba's key message around the Veda-Poshana, the opportunity for member sadhakas of the Sathya Sai Seva Organisation and a summary of the Veda-Poshana activities carried out across the states of India and way forward.

1.1. Early Indications

Bhagavan Baba had given indications even in the forties after the avataric declaration, that He will rebuild Vedic Dharma on a stronger foundation. In 1955, Swami Amrithananda long time disciple of Ramana Maharshi, said that he had a big sum of money in the Benares Bank, which was advised to be used for Vedic revival by Ramana Maharishi. He consulted Madan Mohan Malaviya, Bhagawan Das, and Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the likes about the scheme but somehow his plans did not fructify. On the first day of October, at 9.30 a.m. 1955, after an interview with Baba he told Prof Kasturi that, unasked by him Baba told him, all about his unfulfilled yearning, and asked him not to worry any more as the task of Vedic revival is no longer his but it is Baba's". Amrithananda died, peacefully, within two months of this transfer of burden!

In January, 1960, a great Sanskrit scholar from Sorbonne, France, Valestin by name, who was in India to translate the commentaries on the Vedas into French, arrived at Prasanthi Nilayam. One evening, during an interview with Baba when Prof Kasturi too was there, Valestin suddenly caught Baba's hands and pleaded "Baba!. East and West were looking at the need to revive the fast declining Vedic scholarship in this Holy Land. You must revive it, you must foster it". And Baba did not disappoint mankind. He said, "I have come for that very purpose, for Vedic revival. It shall be done. I will do it. Wherever you are, you will know of it. The world will share that joy, that light".



1.2. Vedapurusha Jnanasaptaha Yajna

In Dassera 1962, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba in clear unmistakable way told and defined that HIS avataric mission encompasses "**Vedasamrakshana, Vidwathposhana and Dharmasthapana**" tasks. All three are interdependent. The Vedas are the bases of Dharma. The Vidwans are the instruments. Dharma is the panacea for the illness of mankind. In the Bahgavad Gita, Lord Krishna has affirmed that He embodies Himself and incarnates among men in order to fulfil the task of Dharmasthapana. The resuscitation of the holy places where millions gather to draw solace and peace is only one of the many means of Dharmasthapana. The repositories of that Dharma, the interpreters of that Dharma had to be inspired to a greater awareness of their responsibility. The twin objects of Vidwathposhana (Fostering of Scholarship) and Vedasamrakshana (Preservation of the Vedas) can be gained only by drawing the Pundits of the land into the circle of His Grace.

The assurance then; the fulfilment now! Let us keep our eyes open and wide, to bear witness to the wonders of the advent as they unfolded. Like all acts of Baba, this shower of Grace came about in a quiet spontaneous manner, no one noticing the 'grand design' or the harvest of precious grain.

1.2.1. Hard times and Prayers

Those were the days when the scholars from the deltaic region of the Godavari basin which is the home of classical learning in Andhra Pradesh, were struggling to keep the flag of Vedic learning flying and are finding it hard to brave the buffetings of economic distress and social neglect. The pundits were losing the faith in Vedas and the determination to continue the practice as the burden of worldly responsibilities and the triviality and mockery of the need for rituals was on the increase. The influence of western lifestyle and psuedoism has caughtup with the Indian milieu and the very purpose and cultural roots were looking questionable. Religious organisations didn't have leaders who were practicing what they are preaching and have become an item of ridicule and mockery

Devotees prayed to Baba that a Yaga be included as one of the functions He might attend when He visited the East Godavari District, Baba replied that they could as well celebrate the Yaga at Prasanthi Nilayam itself during Dasara. This will, Baba said make the thousands visiting Prasanthi Nilayam from all over India sway in joy and thrill of witnessing it.

When lists of qualified ritualists, reciters, Pundits and Sastris were sent, Baba saw that they were all selected from the Kona-sima (delta area) only. He set them aside with the remark that "**His Sima (area) is not Kona-Sima only; it was Veda-sima (all areas where the Vedas are revered)**".

1.2.2. Divine Grace

The lists were revised and Vedic scholars and Pundits were invited from Benares, Bangalore and Hyderabad, besides the contingent from the Godavari Basin were invited for participation. These savants did not know how epoch-making the journey was, both for their own lives and for the life of the country and its culture, for, each one returned



home vastly richer in faith, more firmly established in courage, more steadfast in loyalty to the Vedas which were the source of sustenance for himself as well as for the people.

He said that Vedas are essentially for all time and all mankind The Vedas belong to those who value them, who are moved by thirst for spiritual uplift, who desire to practice them and who have faith that they will benefit by that practice. No one else has the right to talk patronizingly of the Vedas or disparage them. For, all such talk will be hollow and insincere. The southern states of India (Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Kerala) had the unique blessed opportunity of physical nearness and proximity to the ushering of the Sathya Sai advent and epochal incidents of the divine mission.

In the Subhakrit year as per the Telugu calendar , 1962 on the first day of dassera the VedaPurusha Jnana Saptaha Yajna was started at Puttaparthi . This marked the beginnings of a new chapter in the Sai avataric mission.

The Yaga to promote, according to the Vedas, the welfare and peace of the world. "**Santhi kaamasthuhomayeth**" called Vedapurusha Saptaha Jnana Yagna consisted of two sections,

- ✓ the morning sessions for seven days of Athi-rudrahoma with all its complementary rites (under the stewardship of Veda-samraat (Undisputed Master of the Vedas) Brahmasri Cherkumalli Kamesvara Ghanapati as Sarvaadhyaksha
- ✓ the evening sessions of a Jnana Yajna, where distinguished exponents of the Vedas explained to the vast gathering, the meaning and significance of the scriptural rites led by septuagenarian scholar Sri Uppaluri Ganapathi Sastri, (Aamnaaya arthavachaspathi, Vedabhashyavisarada and Vedabhaashyaalankaara)

✚ The Yaga that Baba presided over is no ordinary Yajna

- The Kamandalu or Watervessel of Shirdi Sai Baba which has miraculously found its way into Prasanthi Nilayam was placed on the Yagamantapa to hold the ceremonial water used for most of the mystic rites; the continuity of the two Sais was thus symbolized.
- When the officiator required images of the navagrahas for installation, Baba created them by a wave of His Hand; when he held out His hand for a plate of gold to be deposited with the relevant manthras in the water-vessel, Baba made it on the spot and gave it to him;
- When the time for the Valedictory Offering approached, Baba created the Nine Gems and placed them in the plate held out before the officiator.
- The pundits as well as the thousands who attended the Yaga had also another glimpse into His Divinity, when Baba one evening got down from
- His seat and moving out of the roofed area, looked up at the growling sky which was bent on a heavy downpour of rain, (as at Shirdi, Baba must have rebuked the skies) and said "Stop your fury and be calm", for the sky was stunned into sudden calm and clarity.



- The unique tenth Day which they named "Thribhuvana Vijayam" Triumph over the Three Worlds!" A strange thing had happened, unawares, in preparation for the "Thribhuvana Vijayam"! A devotee had a dream in Bombay a few weeks previous. She saw Baba as Narayana on the Primeval Serpent (Sesha) Couch. So, she got ready a magnificent Serpent Couch in wood, complete with coils and hood and her kinsmen brought it to Prasanthi Nilayam, in a motor vehicle specially reshaped for the purpose. The Pundits were happy that the very thing they needed to make their function realistic, the throne, had come, through the will of Baba.

Ganapathi Sastri himself described the scene; "When Baba reclined on that Seshathalpa, with the Yagamantapa as the background, each Pundit and Sastri who was a master of one chosen branch of a scriptural lore stood before Him and represented as previously arranged, the importance of his field of knowledge and the urgent need to foster it, everyone saw Mahavishnu in Vaikuntha reclining on the Sesh Serpent and of Brihaspathi and all the gods and sages displaying their scholarship and attainments for His Glorification and praying to Him to save the Sastras from decline.

It was indeed the Devasabha the Divine Durbar and we forgot all about ourselves in the supreme joy in which we were submerged. It was an occasion to be personally gone through and experienced; the joy they felt, Sri Sastri said cannot be communicated to others by even Brihaspathi, the all-knowing preceptor of the Gods, or by the Four-faced Brahma or the 6faced Kumaraswamy or 1000 tongued Adishesha".

- For the Sarvadyaksha of the Yaga, Sri Kameshwara Ghanapati, it was a fruitful revelation. He came, he saw and he was conquered. He left his native home in the far-off Godavari delta, he turned his face away from his village home set in the midst of the coconut gardens he cherished, and stayed on at the Prasanthi Nilayam, where he found the Vedapurusha whom he had been extolling with manthras for sixty years!

1.2.3. Learnings from the Yajna

- ✚ Baba drove home the points that
 - ✓ Yaga was a revival, a revelation, revolution, resurgence, a symbol of cultural renaissance and clarion call for the uplift of humanity
 - ✓ A Yajna, celebrated according to Vedic Formulae will certainly grant the fruits promised by the Vedas
 - ✓ Yajna is the sacrifice by each one with a resolve to give up bad qualities, thoughts, words, deeds, evil, egoism and degrading attachment when the valedictory offering is poured into this sacrificial fire as sign and secret of all life
 - ✓ Participants need to recapture the ancient ascetic simplicity



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1.2.4. The Transformation

The Yaga achieved many results, chief among them being the transformation it brought about in the outlook of the Pundits of the land. Many of them came infected with the prejudice that Baba was only an adept in magic, a hardy prejudice that had unfortunately kept Sisupala, Duryodhana and millions of others away from Grace in previous eras. But, it was not all wonder and admiration! The Pundits were made aware of the worth of the treasure that they were preserving; they were told the reason for their poverty and for the neglect which is their meed lies in themselves! They were induced to examine their own lives and beliefs, their own attitudes and prejudices, their own preferences and foibles.

❖ *Sri Ganapathi Sastri - who has 50 years of experience of Vedic Yagas and Yajnas stated sincere gratitude that Baba was the Vedapurusha after he had the privilege of witnessing such a scrupulously correct Yaga, which could pass the most rigorous tests of orthodoxy and upholding the Vedic Injunctions, quoting Vedic manthras in what looked like 'casual acts', reference to the rithwiks as 'gods', order of distribution of white silk clothes(to reciters) and red silk clothes(to those engaged in other rites)*

Confesses that he too was thus affected, but, "as a result of the constant association with Him for many days during this Jnanayajna, and observation of the ever fresh and unique examples of His Glory and the depth and width of His knowledge", I realized that he was incapable of gauging Baba's reality, who was undoubtedly the incarnation of God".

❖ *Darsanabhushana Chathusthanthri Kolluri Somasekhara Sastri who had a similar experience began addressing Him soon as Bhagavalleelaavaathaara, Leelamaanusha-vigraha, meaning that He was indisputably Divine.*

❖ *Vidwathkavi Vemparala Suryanarayana Sastri* revealed before a large gathering of devotees, that he had refused to place faith in the theory that Baba was an incarnation of the Lord; he was not convinced when many people told him that their lives were saved by the Vibhuthi that Baba had materialized and blessed them with; even when his friend, Sri Kamavadhani had shown him the gifts that Baba had created and given him at Rajahmundry, he had turned a blind eye. But, before the Yajna concluded he confessed that "the conviction that Baba was Krishna, come again, was rooted deep in him".

❖ *Adwaitha Vedantha Siromani, Meemaamsavisarada Mallavajhala Venkatasubba Sastri* of Warangal, who was also a doubter, turned into an ardent advocate of the Avatharhood of Baba. He applied the various tests prescribed by the Sastras and concluded that Baba is Bhagavadavartahaara-murthi and so, he exhorted all to worship Him with steady devotion and sincere Love, to select Him as their Teacher and Guide and by these means to save themselves.

❖ *Mallavajhala Venkatasubbarama Sastri* analyzed the reactions of his colleagues thus: "In all His speeches there was not the slightest deviation from the Sastras nor the faintest whisper contrary to the trend of their teachings. And, the subjects



He handled! They were indeed the most profound! The methodology of exposition was in strict conformity with the canons laid down in the scriptures. There was no repetition of argument, no irrelevant digression, no jeering criticism, no jarring adulation, no over-emphasis".

- ❖ *Kalluri Venkatasubramanya Dikshith* reacted similarly. "The nectar of His Love filled every word of His parables and explanations. It was overpowering Grace that made Him pity the poor understanding of the listeners and search for tiny tasty stories that could clarify the profundities He was unravelling, the Goals He desired to picture". In short, the scholars found in Baba the Master-Mind that was guiding and shaping their own.

Since the first yajna in 1962 Baba ensured that every year the Vedapurusha saptaha jnana yajna is continually performed every year as part of Dassera celebrations at puttaparthi.

1.2.5. Other notable Yajna events

- ✓ Atirudra maha yajnam was performed under Baba's watchful supervision where in 121 ritwiks chant the Rudram and namakam 11 times a day for 11 days. Lord SriRama and Sri Krishna are supposed to have performed the same during their times
 - From 9th - 29th Aug'2006 at Prasanthi Nilayam
 - In jan'2007 at Chennai
- ✓ Maha Sudarsana Homam was performed by 15 priests on 17 Jul'2010 at prasanthi nilayam in the presence of Bhagavan Baba



1.4. The Mass Upanayanams

Baba saw that the rampant decline in private and public morals is due to the neglect of the discipline prescribed in the Vedas. The Varnas, burdened with greater worldly obligations the rite spiritual initiation - called Upanayana, 'leading near to the Guru or spiritual preceptor for Brahmopadesam, to be done according to the Sastras by the teaching of the Gayathri manthra, has suffered drastic decline and is postponed until as late as the marriage rite, or completely overlooked.

The Dharmasthapana for which Baba has come in human form, we have to devote special attention to the academy of Vedic Scholars (established under His Guidance) was fast spreading from one State of India to another since 1962. Its beneficent activity, the very spring of spiritual discipline was allowed to go dry. How then can the call of the ancient ideals raise any response in the heart?

Man should not be allowed to remain a beast, caring only for feeding and breeding. The Gayathri manthra is a prayer to the Universal Intelligence to awaken the Dheesakthi in you, your faculty of discrimination, of analysis and synthesis, so that you may realize who you are and why". The study of the Vedas is the highest learning for it leads to the conquest of Death itself. Today, these, your children, are set on the road to explore their Inner Realm and Innermost Reality

Therefore, as a great step forward in the revival of Dharma, Baba announced that He will be granting members of the varnas - dedicated to a second birth - the great chance of being initiated into the spiritual life, by Himself

For parents He used to say that "This is an important day in the history of Sanathana Dharma, for it is a great step in the restoration of Varanashrama Dharma.

At Prasanthi Nilayam on February 3, 1963, when 35 boys were "led near Him" and became Brahma-charis (pilgrims on the path of Brahma-realisation) through the sastraic process of receiving the sacred Gayathri manthra, Baba performed them upanayanams.



- ✓ Baba gave each of them ceremonial clothes, ritual vessels, momentos, books and after introducing themselves in traditional style; mentioning their Gothra, Suthra and patron Rishi, pray "Bhavathi, Bhikshaam dehi", "Ma, give me alms", Baba as Vedamatha and Annapurna, fills their plates with grains of ricethe inaugural Bhiksha (alms)
- ✓ Baba insists that the newly initiated prostrate themselves before their parents; He explains to each boy, at that particular moment, the Vedic commands "Mathru devo bhava" and "Pithru devo bhava" meaning "May your mother be your God", "May your father be your God". The boys as well as the parents are, visibly moved by this act, which Baba considers, as important as any other item in the ceremonial.
- ✓ The students of the Veda pathasala got opportunity to enact three dramas in 1962 and the sakkubayi drama in Mar'1966 in Mumbai and again in Sep'1968 bhakta dhruva drama all written by Swami. These are opportunities for the students of the pathashala to reflect on the inner significance of all their Vedic learnings under the direct divine guidance of Baba
- ✓ Baba performed mass upanayanam's again in feb'1965&17 mar'1983 in prasanthi nilayam and on 12 Jun'2005 Sai Ramesh Hall, Brindavan



1.5. The Prasanthi Vidwan Mahasabhas

On the sacred day of Ramanavami of 1965 Baba took a batch of Veda pundits and scholars at dusk in a motor launch on the Godavari river in rajamundry to a patch of dry sand, an island bathed in cool moonlight, set in the dark blue background of the river above the Dhowaliswaram anicut. He created from the sand before Him, resplendent idols of Rama, Sitha, Lakshmana and Anjaneya, charming idol of Nataraja, Then, in the climax of that Sublime Silence He announced that He had decided on the establishment of the Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha, an All India Academy of Vedic Scholars who will strive to awaken humanity to the need to attain the Prasanthi (Inner Harmony and Equipoise) which has its Nilayam (Above) in the Sanathana Dharma, enshrined in the ancient scriptures of India. Baba spoke on the state of the world and of India, which must guide it, with the lamp of Sanathana Dharma. The need to reform the habits of man; re-construct his character; recondition his ideals and modes of living; help him regain the spiritual heritage which he is now encouraged to ignore by protagonists of material prosperity and monetary happiness".

- ✓ The Sabha was formally inaugurated at the Swadhyaya Saptaha Yajna during the Dasara Festival, 1965. The purpose of the Akhila Bharatha Prasanthi Vidwanmahasabha was clarified The watchword for the Sabha should be the prayer that is mentioned in the Vedas as arising however indistinct, from every human heart, "Thamaso maa Jyothir gamaya ... From darkness, lead me unto light".
- ✓ About 200 Pundits had assembled at Prasanthi Nilayam for the Convocation on 20th October and said this "Siva-Sakthi" is today giving these Pundits the sword of Courage and commissioning them to go forth and revive Dharma in the world- the true sense of values and faith in the Divinity of Man and it is contributory to HIS Work.
- ✓ The members of the Sabha were already famous over the length and breadth of the land. Dr. B. Ramakrishna Rao, Telugu and Sanskrit scholar, a great social worker and political leader who served the people as Chief Minister of Andhra and Governor of Kerala and Uttar Pradesh, was the President of the Sabha, Uppuluri Ganapathi Sastrigal, Kolluri Somasekhara Sastry, Darsanalankara Bulusu Appanna Sastry, Remilla Suryaprakasa Sastry, Varanasi Subramanya Sastry, Ghandikota Subrahmanya Sastry, Pisipati Krishnamurthi Sastry to name a few
- ✓ The nextinaugural meeting held in the immediate Presence of Baba Himself at Venkatagiri Town, in the Palace Quadrangle, under the chairmanship of the Raja Saheb of Venkatagiri.
- ✓ That divine call for conducting the vidwan mahasabhas was irresistible. Towns and villages vied with each other in asking for the chance to arrange meetings and seminars for the benefit of their citizens. Then the Madras State, Mysore state, Maharashtra, Hyderabad, Rajamundry venkatagiri, maharashtra and other eastern and western states of India followed and took the spread of spiritual



2.1.Divine interactions with Students- Incident 1

After the Sai educational institutes were established at Whitefield, Bangalore and Puttaparthi, Baba in the initial days once Baba asked few of His students to start learning from Ghanapati Sri Kamavadhani Garu. Swami arranged special classes in the rooms behind Poornachandra Auditorium. Baba Himself used to participate, in the classes, make them chant individually and correct them. When somebody in the group who wasn't confident preferred to chant in group Bhagawan clearly said **“each one need to learn, and chant individually”**

Lessons to be learnt

- ✓ **Learn in groups**
- ✓ **Teacher should personally monitor progress**
- ✓ **Everyone should learn(practice) and chant individually**

2.2.Divine interactions with Students- Incident 2

Once during Navaratri time students who learnt from Sri Kamavadhani Garu were asked to chant Rudram along with Kamavadhani Garu. The chanting went well and after the function in the green room of Poornachandra Auditorium Swami was clarifying the doubts of seniors. The collector of Anantapur who too was present was pleased to see students chanting Veda. Baba told him that the students do this along with secular education. Do these students know the meaning of the Vedic mantras. Students at that time didn't know and were internally and fervently prayed to Swami to save them out of the situation. Swami told the collector, “yes they know”. He gave a beautiful analogy. Each time a mother sings the lullaby, the child doesn't know the language, raga, tala, meaning of the lyric. But it enjoys the sweet love of the mother through the lullaby and goes to sleep. Similarly even if one doesn't know the meaning of each line of the Vedic hymn they are chanting it is enough “as long as it is done with devotion and fervour it will give peace prosperity and happiness”

Lessons to be learnt

- ✓ **Need not stop learning or chanting Veda if meaning isn't known Important to chant with devotion and fervour**
- ✓ **Chant Veda everyday as it will give prosperity and happiness**



2.3.Divine interactions with students – Incident 3

Vedic chants at Nagarsankeerthans In those days, the decades of sixties and seventies Veda chanting was confined to only in the early hours after Suprabhatam before Nagarsankirtan. To encourage students to learn more, Swami told Sri Kamavadhani garu to chant only those which the students knew. Swami used to stand near the window of His Bedroom and give His darsan as a bonus to the students who used to participate in the Veda chanting in the early hours. For long time mantras were fixed to Rudram, Chamakam and Purushasuktam till the students moved to learn other Vedic hymns. Precious were those humble beginnings and the way Baba used to encourage and motivate everyone to learn and chant Veda. In long processions Swami used encourage by saying, it is ok to repeat the known chants as the crowds will be different. Chant them again and in procession new people will think you know a lot. During 1962 Birthday celebrations Swami started the VedaPathashala. Baba said on that day that – **“One day this will become aUniversity”**. People didn’t believe seeing Puttaparthi of those days. His students are a testimony to that declaration of Baba.

Lessons to be learnt

- ✓ **Start with small steps**
- ✓ **Give encouragement to learners till they stabilise**
- ✓ **Sincerity and quality are important than the quantity**
- ✓ **Gods plans will unfold and stand as testimony with time whether or not we believe at that point of time**



2.4.Divine interactions with students – Incident 4

In 1982 Swami called SriVedanarayana Kollengode and instructed him to go to Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School and teach all the students Veda. During the Vinayaka Chaturthi celebrations that year for the first time all the students started chanting Veda in the Divine presence and that was the beginning of en masse chanting of Veda by students . On 18thSeptember 2003 Swami sent specific instructions that Veda chanting in Kulwant Hall should be done duringDarshan time. Daily mass Veda chanting started from that day in the divine presence. In 2006, during the Atirudra Maha Yajnam celebrations Swami repeated **“Rudram Bhadram and told that there needs to be Rudram chanting done by all”** and then the en masse learning and chanting of Veda started across the SSSSO across the globe Then mass learning started. In 2008 Swami gave specific slot for Veda in Saikulwant Hall. One hour in the morning and one hour in the evening paving way for the current Veda chanting schedule at Prashanti Nilayam

Lessons to be learnt

- ✓ **Students need to compulsorily learn and chant Veda**
- ✓ **First en masseVeda chanting in divine presence by students happened in Sep'1982**
- ✓ **Veda chanting during darshan time started on 18 Sep 2003**
- ✓ **Schedule of Veda chants at Parthi started at this time**
- ✓ **En masseVeda learning by devotees started post Ati Rudra Maha Yajnam -ARMY in 2006**
- ✓ **Slots for Veda chanting in Kulwant Hall(1 hour in morning and evening) were given in 2008 by Baba**



2.7.Divine Interactions - Udharet Aatman Aatmanam

Baba always ensured that practice is more important than preaching in life and more so for spiritual sadhana. He always used to say that his key focus is always on the transformation of humans to realise his innate divinity. He is a hard task-master, intent on maintaining the moral standard of those who claim to be masters of the ancient scripture. An example of how Baba brings in real change in people is visible from the letter written by Baba to a Pundit from the East Godavari District.

The pundit was desperate financially. In his despair he denied his wife the permission to write to Baba asking for succour. Two days later, he was amazed to receive a letter from Baba who was at Prasanthi Nilayam, 420 miles away. In that Baba severely reprimanded him for it. "Why did you tell your wife no permission to write a letter to me? Will I not know if she doesn't write a letter? you went to Ramachandrapuram expecting to collect some little money through discourses on the Gita and that you returned home having incurred loss. Do I not know that you then started condemning yourself that all your learning and experience was a waste? Is it a burden for me who is provider for all this world, to provide for you and your family. I am placing all these hardships on you only to teach you a few lessons". "When life flows merrily on, people claim that it is due to own effort and forget the Lord. When failure resists the flow, they grow desperate, start cursing and lose faith. This is insulting the Atmathatwa, Vedic principle which you really are, that knows no pain or joy. Engage yourself in your duty to practise it courageously and gladly. Strive experience the highest truth to gain the Purusharthas. For remember, Sai is in every person. So when you decry another, you are decrying Sai Himself". Baba closes the letter as **"He who resides in your heart, Sai". "Nee Hrudayanivasi, Sai"!**

This vigilant supervision of the workings of the inner consciousness of the Pundits who have come within His Orbit is another of the many ways in which this Vedaatha (Providence which revealed the Vedas) seeks to promote Sanathana Dharma, for, unless, we have a brave band of Vedic scholars who live the Vedic life, the world cannot be enthused to honour and accept the Vedic teaching of Fundamental Oneness.

Lessons to be learnt

- ✓ Learning Veda without practice is of no use
- ✓ We need to trust not just believe Vedic principles in daily life



4. The Opportunity

Baba said that Veda is neglected as there is nobody or very few who can chant. Veda is not poor it is rich. Nothing is beyond Vedas. A man's position, vital conditions are all detailed in Veda. Not just for Brahmins or an area or India. God gifted Vedas so that all can chant. Baba said it is His decision and will **“To make every state, race, nation to chant Veda”**.

This is the opportunity for the member Sadhakas and the Veda wing of the SSSSO to encash the opportunity and render the service of fostering the learning and chanting of Veda

5. The Resolve

Post mahasamadhi of Baba the SSSSO looked at formalizing various activities across the organization to ensure that all the activities are continued as per the dictums laid down by Bhagawan. As part of this exercise the Veda-Poshana was resolved to be taken up to the next level in line with the avataric mission of Veda Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. In order to ensure that the Learning of Vedas, so dear to our Lord, is promoted across the country, a dedicated National level Coordinator was appointed in March 2016 by the All India President Sri Nimish Pandya with a resolute determination. This role was entrusted with the responsibility to lead the learning and awareness of Vedic Knowledge all over the country with the help of experts and scholars from within the organisation with an objective to hold State level and National conventions so that the inner significance and the scientific basis of this learning is also understood across the board by children, youth and elders.

After deliberations and consensus it was agreed in the year 2016 Veda that this role is to oversee, guide and support various activities all over India in turn to be supported by the State and District Veda Coordinators.

The objectives are laid down as follows

1. Increase awareness of Veda as a spiritual discipline for Lok Kalyana in the organization and in the society at large.
2. Create a pool of high quality chanters in the organization who have knowledge of the meaning of the Veda Mantras
3. Motivate and facilitate Veda chanters to become Veda trainers who can then serve the Avataric mission of Veda-Poshana in the Society.

The objectives of the program will be realized through regular workshops on the different Vedic Hymns. Each workshop focuses on a particular Vedic Hymn and targets to:

1. Train chanters to become new trainers of the Hymn
2. Bring in new aspirants to the Hymn.

The curriculum of the program and the method of instruction used in the workshops will align completely with the Vedic education system created by Bhagawan Baba in HIS educational institutions.



6. Movement of Veda-Poshana across SSSSO

Baba traversed the length and breadth of the country multiple times to ignite the spirit of seva, sadhana and love amongst the masses. Ever since Baba initiated the Veda-Poshana activities through the Yagna and pathasala the opportunity was seized by the Sadhakas across states and devoutly started performing various activities from time to time like

- ✓ Starting of every event of the organization with Vedic chants
- ✓ Chanting Vedic hymns before bhajans
- ✓ Parayana of the Vedic hymns during festivals and other auspicious occasions
- ✓ Performing the yagas and homams during auspicious occasions
- ✓ Felicitating the learned Vedic scholars and obtaining their inputs
- ✓ Supporting the activities of VedaPathashalas
- ✓ Teaching the Balavikas students the Vedic hymns in accordance with an accepted national syllabus

In HIS physical frame He would have traversed about 300 thousand kilometres length of trips across the country untiringly out of HIS compassion and love for Humanity.

This section attempts to give an account of some key incidents across the nation that paved way for the spread and sustenance of the Veda-Poshana and Vidvat Poshana throughout the SSSSO

6.1.South

Thanks to the physical proximity to Prasanthi Nilayam , we understand from the genesis section above we can understand how the Veda-Poshana movement unfolded and spread across in the southern states of India in Baba's physical presence.



6.1.1. Karnataka

Starting from the North Mysore trip aka Amamrapuri yatra covering 60 villages, the visit to Hubli and Dharwad in 1968 and the multiple visits to Bangalore, Madumalai Chikballapur, Muddenahalli, and other places alike, Baba conducted multiple Vidwan maha sabhas across the state of Karnataka till 2009. Subsequent to the Atirudra Mahayajnam in 2006 the Veda-Poshana and chanting momentum catapulted manifold across the state of Karnataka . The state of Karnataka is one of the pioneering states in terms of conducting systematic and periodic Veda-Poshana workshops at the state and district level. As part of these specific Vedic chants are taken up, detailed to the last word from meaning, chanting nuances, common errors to be avoided and miracles and key events from Baba's life around the Vedic chants. These workshops also include the train the trainer sessions and a rigorous certification session where chanters are graded for their chanting skills. Focus however is more on facilitating the chanters to know and correct their intonation oversights. All these are well recorded and available on the website of the SSSSO Karnataka for practice, guidance and reread purposes.

Every day the Rudra parayana and Abhishekam happen at the Trayee Brindavan for the Sai Trayeeswara lingam blessed by Baba the the core chanters without fail.

Another Unique Veda-Poshana that happens in the state of Karnataka is the **“no cost frills and devotion focussed”** ERP sessions that happen almost twice a month across various samithis. This activity is emulated by other states as a worthy lesson as this helps to spread the Veda-Poshana at the grass roots level of the organisation and adds more and more chanters, learners and enthusiasts to the spiritual sadhana world. The state continues to foster not just the learning of Vedic chants as per the schedule at Prasanthi Nilayam, but also learning of advanced chants across the Rig, Yajur Vedas on a weekly basis



6.1.2. Kerala

The God's own country as Kerala is known in the annals of history has etched itself a unique place in the sathya sai avataric mission. In Dec 1966 Baba visited Palghat, Kollengode, Ernakulam and Tripunittura. Baba stayed back at the Kollegode palace and blessed the devotee family there with the Murali Krishna statue. This is the place from where Baba's chosen student Sri VedaNarayana Kollengode hails from and who was blessed with a telling role in the Sathya Sai Veda-Poshana movement. Veda learning was started in the state Sai Organisation by Sri T N Natarajan, the former SSSSO Kerala President in 1980s. He had several direct experiences with Baba as a member of the bhajan team in Parthi when Swami Himself was leading bhajans in mandir in 1950s. As a Vedic scholar Sri T N Natarajan after he became State President in 1985, introduced Veda chanting in Kollam district under his direct supervision. Many Balvikas Students got trained in Vedic chants by him. Since then this is spreading across other districts of the state.

In 1996, he started a Veda Class in Kollam Samithi by Prof P V Vaidyanathan, a Vedic scholar. Professor Vaidyanathan travelled all around Kerala and started many classes across the state. He is the author of many Veda Books in Malayalam. Prof Vaidyanathan is still active in taking Veda Classes.

In 2001 Thrissur samithi also started Veda classes under Sri Harishankar, with chantings before regular bhajans. From 2005 onwards regular Veda classes were started in other districts by many trainers trained by scholars like Prof Vaidyanathan, Sri Padmakumar, Sri Hariharan and few others.



The state has a strong team of chanters who excel in multiple Vedic chants across the yajur and sama Vedas. The Veda-Poshana workshops, Vedic chanting learning classes happen on a weekly and fortnightly basis across the state. In the Sundram there will be daily Rudrabhishekam and parayanam offered to the Sai sundareshwara lingam blessed by Baba.



Veda Parayana by Children – Narikurava

The state also actively conducts the vedaparayana in the houses of devotees on holidays and occasions to bestow them with the divine blessings of Bahagawan baba. This activity has evinced lot of interest and increased the spread of veda patayana cross the steste on a faster pace.





Chanting of Vedic hymns, pradosham and ekadashini's too are preferred activities by the vedam team across the state. However, the teams are trying to find alternatives to see how they can ensure more frequency of this despite many of these events falling on week days





6.1.4. Andhra Pradesh & Telangana

The twin Telugu states of Andhra Pradesh & Telangana are fortunate to be the avatar pradesh's or the states where the advent of Baba unfolded. Chanting of Vedic hymns before bhajans is a common practice in most of the samithis. MahaRudrams were conducted five times across the state. Veda classes are conducted weekly in most of the districts of the states. Despite dialect issues there is widespread interest to learn Vedic hymns by devotees. Technology is being embraced actively by the learners by the use of sruti mobile app for learning purposes. Chanting of ekadasa Rudram is done on festive occasions in most of the samitis across the states. Learning mode of the Vedic hymns are distributed for the sake of uniformity and correctness of the chanting. Everyday Rudrabhishekam and chanting of other Vedic hymns happens in the siva m for the sai siva lingam blessed by Baba. As part of the sadhana camps Veda learning too is taken up .



Veda pathasalas are established in two places in the Krishna yajurVeda school of learning. Core group of chanters across the state pursue learning of advanced Vedic chants apart from the schedule given in parthi. The students of the Sathya sai schools in the state are taught the Vedic hymns by the members of the Veda wing on a weekly basis. As part of the parthi yatras the district Veda groups chant Veda in prasanthi nilayam as an offering to Baba after getting vetted by the core Veda team at puttaparthi.

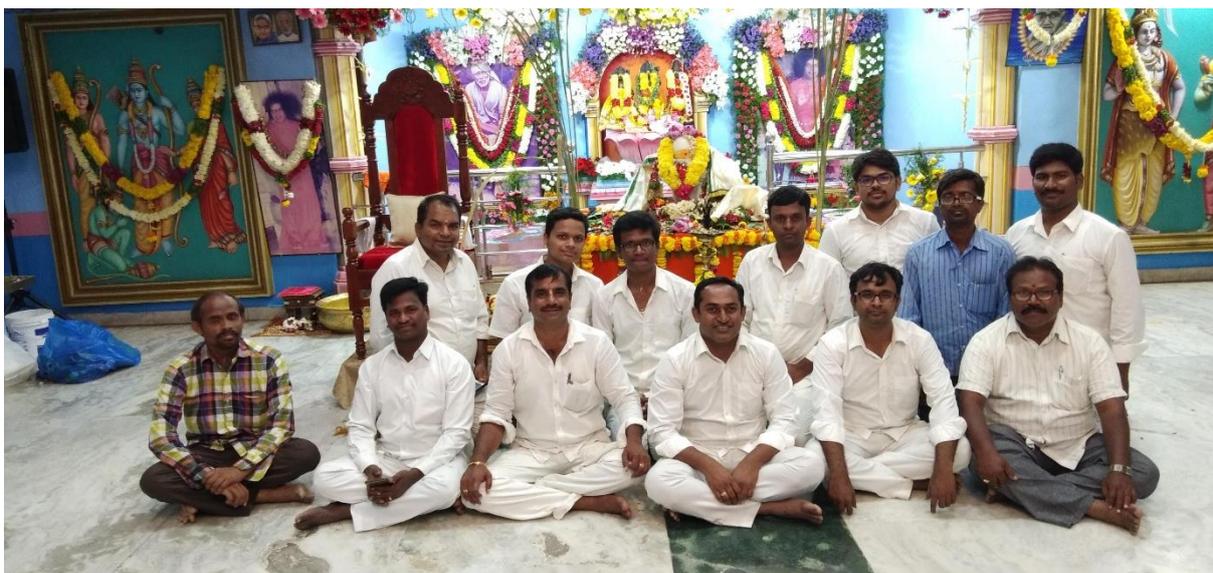




The state also has a unique activity of chanting of ekadasa Rudram and other Vedic hymns at the house of devotees is a practice that the Veda team continues to do in the state over the past decade. This is taken up so that the families of the devotees will bask under the divine blessings of Baba.



Post Atirudra mahayagnam when Baba asked the people to get into the regular chanting of Veda across the twin telugu states large number of devotees took to learning Vedic chants. Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, Tirupati, Vijayawada, rajamundry, Kakinada, vijianagaram, srikakulam , mahaboobnagar, khammam clusters of samitis tooklead and thereby hundreds of devotees took part in the Vedic chanting, in the subsequent events. It will be appropriate to remember services rendered in the context by sri.PV Ramakrishna, sri.AV Subrahmanayam, sri Gopi Krishna, sri.Kranthi Kumar, Smt Vijaya Lakshmi and Dr. Hariprasad





Twelve years went by in passivity after the chanting sessions were continued. In 2005-2006, on a cold winter morning, the state Veda coordinator unexpectedly had a sudden vision on the aspects of Vedic grammar and their implications on the learning/teaching process of Veda when he was going through a Veda book as a grace of Baba's divine intervention to fulfill His Avataric Mission. Heeding His divine beckoning, then the Veda chanting/discussion/lecture sessions began with a modest bunch of 8 youth devotees in Sikkim. Each of these two-hour-long sessions started at the break of dawn with Omkaaras and ended with meditation.



After observing the result oriented Veda classes of Kalimpong Samiti, Darjeeling, District presidents of Darjeeling North & South supported the conduct of Veda workshops in their districts. This resulted in getting a team of Veda trainers. By Baba's grace, on 23.11.2014, a Veda book with meaning in Nepali along with Veda CD, named 'VEDAARPAN', was released so that learners can use the same to accelerate the process



Veda Workshop – 24 Paraganas North



After a couple of months, Mr. Madan Kumar. Rai the then District Bhajan Coordinator of Sikkim also had a similar experience of being guided by Baba wrt the intonations etc of Vedic hymns so that they can be taught and actively took up the cause of spreading the learning of Vedic hymns in Sikkim.



Vedam Workshop - Purulia

In what was a first session of two learners turned out to be a class of 25 with grace of Baba soon as the initial learners were absolutely convinced about the importance of Vedic knowledge. The daily sessions were held at 5pm in a hall booked in the heart of the town. As the chapters progressed, the attendees felt the evening sessions to be inadequate. Hence, their unquenchable thirst for Veda led them to begin an additional daily session in the writer's residence at dawn (5am). Subsequently, the 25 attendees managed to learn all the 12 Veda Mantras prescribed in the Bal Vikas syllabus within a very short span of time.



Vedam Workshop - Birbhum



Veda workshops were conducted in the furthest corners of these districts. As a result of these workshops, many learners were transformed into good chanters who further metamorphosed into capable trainers. The first district Veda workshop incidentally happened when Baba left His mortal coil and reminded always the immense responsibility that Baba has bestowed for the proliferation of Veda Movement.

As part of Guru Poornima meet 2016, a three-year-long curriculum of Veda Mantras for all the states was given. This added structure to the accelerating pace of the Veda Movement. As Veda Mantras was a fairly unfamiliar concept for the rest of the twenty districts within the states, It was a daunting challenge. As a first step, with the unflinching support from State heads of West Bengal State organization, District Veda Coordinators (DVC) for each of those 20 districts were nominated. Following this, the State office released a calendar containing scheduled activities to be conducted by all the wings within the organization. Month-wise District-level Veda workshops for every single District were also included in the calendar. Due to the momentum that the Veda movement had already gained, 21 District-level Veda Workshops were conducted in 2017 alone. Services of Sri Narendra Ghimrey and Sri.Suman Gurung are worth mention as they laid the base for the spread of Veda movement across the state

The next phase of the Veda Movement in West Bengal began with the announcement of the 1st International Vedic Conference (IVC) where many chanters from the state were enrolled as participants who would chant Veda in Prashanthi Nilayam. Enwrapped in the blissful realization of this divine opportunity before them, the participants held no bars in perfecting Rudram.



Vedam Workshop – Howrah



6.2.2. Odissa

In Feb'1966 Sri Bramhananda panda had Swami's darshan and ever since became a devotee of Baba. He was made the state president of the Odissa SSSSO. Odisha always kept pace with the teachings of Baba in spirit and the organisation used to render yeoman service at prasanthi nilayam. Baba Himself referred to several times in His discourses that the quality of services rendered by the sevadal from odissa is exemplary. The organisation ensured that families were involved in the service activities and the transformation is holistic. Around 1973-74, Baba, in an interview with sri. Balagopalam, father of sri. Jagadish sevadal member from unit 4 of bhuvaneswar to learn the puja vidhanam ie the shodasopachara puja from the priest of prasanthi mandir. This milestone triggered members of the state organisation towards the Vedic activities apart from the service activities .

As a state odissa always kept pace with the developments taking place in prasanthi Nilayam. Be it SSSSVIP OR Balavikas or practice and promotion of Veda. As chanting of Veda was gradually introduced in Prasanthi starting from the early days of setting up of a Veda Pathasala, to a small group going round the Nilayam everyday chanting Veda before the start of Nagar Sankirtan, to teaching Veda to the students of the institute and their reciting the same in the Divine Presence in Kulwant hall before any meeting, to chanting during darshan, to making audio tapes and CDs available to the devotees and their carrying them to their respective places and learning Vedas with the help of those audio tapes and CDs.





These highlight the gradual evolution of Vedas as an important ingredient in the spread of the Divine Mission. The first Veda book with the title Veda Kusumaanjali in Odia was compiled by Sri Jagannath Prasad the next state president of Odisha, and current national council member, SSSSO and published in the year 2002 by SSSS samiti paradip. This was the first hand book to help the interested chanters learn the correct chanting of Veda. It was a small book containing Ganesh Atharvasirsam, Narayanopanisad, Narayan Suktam, Purush Suktam, Srisuktam, Mantra Pushpam Sarvadevata Gayatri n Kshama Prarthana. .



Maha Ruram - Jagatsinghpur

This book ignited interest in large sections of people, both rural and urban, and sowed the seeds of the Veda movement in Odisha. However realising the limitations of learning the chanting through books, the organisation initiated conducting of live classes in different parts of the state. At a time when our Organization was yet to make a beginning in Veda teaching, in west Bengal, the odissa state president of SSSSO took up classes in Veda to the youth of Malda, west Bengal, where he was officially posted.

Once Institute boys asked Swami about how to avoid and face the natural calamities and Baba out of his infinite compassion advised all to chant Rudram, the only panacea to face and avoid all natural calamities. Rudra parayanam started off on a daily basis across the world after this and in Odisha too. After the super cyclone devastated the entire state of Odisha Swami out of His compassion declared in Kulwant Hall to construct 1000 houses for all those cyclone victims who lost their houses and shelters and for this Baba disposed off one of the properties at Kodaicanal.



Maha Rudram Dhenkanal

Ati Rudra Maha yagnyam conducted in the year 2006 in the divine presence gave impetus to the Vedic movement when everyone young or old, male or female started learning and reciting Rudram everyday . After joining at Paradip, Sri Jagannath Prasad conducted Veda classes to the youth of Paradip everyday morning at 8am . Initially these classes started with four to five members and increased to about 20+ members.



MahaRudram - Kendrapara

Inspired by Baba's assurance that Rudram will avert the possibility of tsunami or any such calamity from taking place, devotees from Odisha , a state



ravaged by recurrence of natural calamities took up Rudraarpitam and even MahaRudram in times of impending calamities and were miraculously saved.



Maha Rudram -Bhubaneswar

It will not be out of place to mention here how a major cyclonic storm Phylina approaching Odisha at high speeds. By 8 am in the morning the then all India president Sri. V. Srinivasan called the then state president of Orissa Sri. P Jagannath Prasad, to enquire about the well being of the people on instructions from Baba. By 6 PM the cyclone Phylina is supposed to hit the coast. All the devotees of the Odisha from multiple districts of Gopalpur, Berhampur, Ganjam, Puri, Khurda, Jagatsinghpur and Bhadrak started fervently praying and chanting of Rudram. The wind was blowing at speeds of 300 nautical miles at which human life survival was doubtful. Sri Srinivasan told that prayers were going on in Kulwant hall for the well being of Odisha and across the world through Radio Sai. Everyone prayed to Baba for his grace and lo and behold 6 pm passed and the cyclone didn't cross the shores but stopped some 20 kms away from Gopalpur in Odisha, where it was to hit Odisha coast causing large scale destruction to

life and property. This baffled scientists all over the world, including those from NASA, as it was for the first time that a cyclonic storm of such magnitude stops in the mid sea for three hours and loses its speed in the mid-sea before going further and the mystery remains unanswered till date for the western community and scientists.

Over the years the number of chanters has multiplied by leaps and bounds and today a majority of the districts have become self-sufficient and are in a position to conduct Maha Rudram all by themselves. In this way the state has the distinction of conducting a number of Maha Rudrams so far, one of them at Prasanti exclusively done by the Mahilaas. In order to make Veda reach the homes of devotees the organisation initiated an outreach programme under the caption "Veda Parikrama".



Trees planting by Schoolchildren with names from Vedas

Under this programme, a samiti will have a panel of good chanter .every such chanter will approach a devotee and fix up a day when hewill be visiting the devotee's house either in the morning or in theevening as per their convenience and chant Veda with the activeparticipation of all members of the family and the neighbourhood.The Organisation has extended the Veda Parikrama programme to thehouses of Balvikas children during Aradhana Mahotsav ,and the Veda movement slowly expanding its wings to Sri Satya Sai Schools and toNon Satya Sai Schools too especially in Balasore and other districts...The history of Odisha is glorified by the advent of Sri Chaitanyaa ,who spent major part of his life in the state spreading the bhaktimovement in odishaa which has taken deep roots in the hearts ofits people. Today the Veda movement has captured theHearts ofthousands in the state and is spreading like wild fire, which givesone the feeling that Odisha soon will become a Veda Bhumi .





6.4. North

The Northern zone is comprised of Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh and Rajasthan states of India

6.4.1. Delhi

SSSSO DELHI NCR devotees have been participating in Veda Chanting since early 90s. It was during the Swami's Divine Visit to Delhi in 2010 when it actually blossomed. It was a real turning point. A big contingent of Veda Chanters lead the procession to welcome Swami to Sai International Centre on 09th April 2010. The chanters included – Bal Vikas Students and Gents (Including Swami's Institute Alumni). Learning of Veda is continuing ever since with the help of alumnus and senior devotees.





Three Vedam workshops were conducted over the last one year and it is interesting to see that the number of learners has been steadily increasing after this.



6.4.2. Himachal Pradesh

Source of Veda inspiration remained Yug Avtar Ved Purusha Bhagwan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. The credit goes to Dr. Shyam Sunder who used to take everytime huge contingent of devotees from every corner of Himachal Pradesh, to prasanthi Nilayam and get inspired for Veda chanting. Baba's alumnus Sri OSKS Sastri, Veda tutor from Prashanti Nilayam started Veda classes in Himachal Pradesh in June 2004 in Gambhir House, Shimla Sai Centre. He visited various units like Sanjauli, Summerhill. After teaching in various units and samithis, he continued teaching Vedas in various parts of HP like Kangra, Solan and Dharamshala. The learners from the state have picked up the Vedic chants ever since and are continuing the learning with support from alumnus members





Rudra Abhishek at Hamirpur



Veda Workshop at Anandvilas Pujarli Simla



6.4.3. Madhya Pradesh

The ongoing Veda-Poshana in the state of Madhya Pradesh was revitalised after the Mahila Convention held at Prashanthi Nilayam in September 2016. 22 chanters from the state participated in the convention. They were auditioned by Shri Vednarayan and had the good fortune to chant Sri Suktam, Durga Suktam and Medha Suktam. Following this, there were many steps taken both at the National and State levels to create awareness among devotees and help them in learning Veda chanting. It started with online classes being conducted from Prashanthi Nilayam by Shri Vedanarayan and was coordinated by Shri Subramanyam Gorti. This sowed the seeds of using technology to teach Veda chanting.



Veda Workshop at Omkareswar – Sri Vedanarayana & Sri Gorti Subramanyam

In Madhya Pradesh, the Veda coordinator for Mahilas created a novel way of imparting Veda trainings. The online training is imparted one to one using whatsapp audio. The coordinator chants the hymns and the student re-chants the same. Any mistakes in pronunciation, intonation are corrected. 2 or 3 shlokas are taught during one session. Post that, the audio of the shlokas are shared with the student for him/ her to practice. They are reviewed again in the next session and the next set of shlokas are taught. The days and timings for the training sessions are fixed in advance as per mutual convenience of the trainer and the student. Normally a student takes 2 -5 sessions in a week. This method has been found to be very effective and has helped in improving the number of chanters as well as their quality. Over 100 learners are trained using this technology based learning method.

In person trainings and trainings through whatsapp were conducted in the year 2017. Several workshops and individual trainings were conducted throughout the year culminating in the members of the state participating in Veda Chanting during the Parthi



Yatra of the state in September 2017. Allchanters were duly auditioned and approved by Shri Vednarayan. They also participated in the International Veda Conference held at Prashanthi Nilayam in November 2017. They chanted SriRudram en masse along with devotees from other states and countries. The workshops created an awareness of the importance of Vedas in our daily life.



Mahila day Chanting by Madhya Pradesh Chanters in Sai Kulwant Hall

The response from devotees were very encouraging. So much so that our State President Shri Bharat Jhawar declared the Year 2018 would be celebrated as Ved Varsh - The Year of Veda. Shri Vednarayan and Shri Subramanyam Gorti led from the front. They held a Veda Workshop at Omkareshwar which was well attended. Over 300 devotees participated in the workshop. The participants were taught the intricacies of Veda chanting. This was followed up by several workshops in different cities of the state by State Veda Coordinators – Shri Girish Ingle and Smt. Latha Raj. They were assisted by Dr. Aditya Bharadwaj. The movement got further impetus when a 2 day residential program for Master Trainers was organized at Gadarwara in April 2018. Shri Damrik Sai came all the way from Prashanthi Nilayam to help the devotees in the Veda chanting and training. The key to success in training the devotees was constant follow up by the coordinators. This has improved the number of good chanters in the state.

During the Spiritual conference held in November 2018 at Prashanthi Nilayam, chanters from the state also participated in Veda chanting at Sai Kulwant Hall. The trainings are continuing with the same vigour in the year 2019 also. Apart from regular online trainings and workshops, another objective was to have mediators in each district of the state, who would facilitate in chanting Vedas. Many Balvikas Gurus and students were also trained in Veda chanting. Balvikas alumni and students who were trained in Veda chanting got the opportunity to chant at Prashanthi Nilayam during Bal Vikas Swarna Jayanthi celebrations held in January 2019. The state also participated in the Veda Yagna held during Kumbh Mela at Prayag Raj in February 2019. Chanters from the state were also blessed with the opportunity of chanting during the first ever Veda chanting during Cheti Chand celebrations held in April 2019 at Prashanthi Nilayam. The Mahilas of the state also got the opportunity to chant Veda on both the days during the Parthi Yatra held in September 2019.



6.4.4. Rajasthan

By the Supreme will and divine blessings of our most beloved Bhagawan, when the importance of Veda chanting was detailed in 2003 and when the chanting became a daily activity at Prashanti Nilayam, the seeds of the Veda movement were first laid in the state of Rajasthan. Initially there were no trained trainers to initiate the activity but due to the divine will of Baba, it persisted and motivated the initial set of learners to hear the chanting through the CDs available at Prashanti Nilayam and later on started to learn while repetitively hearing the audios.



Vedam Workshop at Sanjhariya

At many places in Rajasthan like Jaipur, Jodhpur, Sri Ganganagar, Kota, Chittorgarh, Bikaner, Udaipur devotees who were self-motivated and started listening to Vedic hymns and then the help from neighboring state (Delhi) and/or a trainer helped them initially with very basic knowledge of chanting.

The most prominent feature of the Veda activities in the state is the School Veda activity. As described earlier, the schools have embraced the opportunity with both hands and students have never been so enthusiastic about learning Vedas. Hundreds of students are chanting Veda in the daily morning assembly and at other functions of the school. Students of Sai Horizon (Sanjhariya), Sai Maa (Chittorgarh), Sri Sathya Sai School (Jodhpur), Prarthana school (Bikaner), Prashanti Vidya Mandir (Kota) are in fact leading the chanting at any state level programs or samiti level programs.



Post IVC, devotees attended the Ekadash Rudram chanting and Abhishek program on 3-4th February 2019, conducted by the Organization on the auspicious festival of Kumbh at Prayag. More than 15 devotees have enrolled themselves for the mass chanting recitation of Vedas at the Ghaat of the Ganges when the inauguration program of Veda Paathshala will be taking place later this year



Vedam Workshop at Bikaner

The state team facilitated more than five Ekadash Rudram programs (especially on Maha Shivratri) and looks forward to conduct Maha Rudrams in the near future with the increase in the number of chanters





6.4.5. Chattisgarh

Vedam chanting in the state of Chattisgarh used to happen at individual level by devotees who were with the organisation for long time. En masse learning and chanting of vedam took off post international ved conference. Majority of the samiti's and Bhajan mandali's ensure that 15 minutes before bhajans vedam chanting is done with devotion and fervour across the state. Whatsapp based support by senior devotees is in practice for those who are active in learning vedic chants. State organisation is actively preparing to equip itself for chanting of Rudram during the parthi yatra. 3 Master training camps are conducted in the state at Jagadapur, Bhilai and Bhisrampur. About 50 + participants took part in each of these separately. The state now has reasonably robust number of trainers who are getting reviewed before formally taking up vedam classes and workshops across the state.

6.5. West

The west zone is comprised of Guajarat, , Maharashtra and Goa states of India

6.5.1. Gujarat

Swamy through his speeches on Veda coupled with His actions, was the main motivation to learn Veda from the state of Gujarat . Frequent visits of people from Gujarat to Prashanthi Nilayam for festivities and Prashanthi Seva gave them the first hand experience of Veda chanting and the exhilarating experience while chanting. This too added fuel to the fire of learning in the state. Every year our State was given a chance on Deepawali & Gujarati New Year to chant Veda in Prashanti Nilayam. This was a like an icing on the cake to push the motivational levels of learners and learn the Vedic hymns with more rigour. Sri Muralidhar State Veda coordinator was initially dragged into the Veda learning and chanting by Swami and slowly it got into teaching . The state regularly performs rudrabhishekams on all festivals and conducts Veda classes every month. Later on, there were some of the alumnus who completed their studies or posted in Gujarat for job who took up the cause of Veda teaching. They were natural teachers. Some of them like Shri C B S Mani were ever ready to fly down at any point of time to support the learning. Shri Maunish Vyas, whose book on Rudram was released by Swamy was also available to accelerate the pace of learning. The state is planning to conduct the train the trainer sessions to increase the base and reach across the length and breadth of the state.



6.5.2. Maharashtra & Goa

The Twin states of Maharashtra and Goa have a long history of the vedic chanting practices ever since the Dharmakshetra center was started in Mumbai. The devotees from these two states every year make a parthi yatra for the Ashadi festival. As part of this festivities there will be an en masse chanting of vedic hymns in the sai kulwant hall at Prashanti Nilayam. This is a big motivation factor and boost to the proliferation of the vedic chants across the states. As soon as the National vedam coordinator was appointed the state took up on a large scale the teaching of vedic hymns across the various samithis in the states. The year 2018 considered as an year dedicated to the spread of vedic learning. It is appropriate to record the services of Sri Rakha tai, Mohnish Pehalwani, Mounish Vyas, CBS Mani, Nagesh P rao in the context of spreading the learning and chanting of vedic hymns across the state. In Dharmakshetra there will be daily chanting of Vedic mantras with a parikrama around the Sathya deep Mandir. The state has conducted many Vedam workshops and conferences periodically to spread the awareness amongst the sadhaka community.



7. Rejuvenation

After the resolve to rededicate themselves to the Bhagavan Baba's vision to make the veda chanting a global phenomenon for the welfare of humanity, a need was felt to perform an event that will bring the members from across the globe onto a common platform and rejuvenate themselves to the cause of veda proliferation and sadhana. This is inline exactly with what the vedas exhort that all learning needs to be together "sahana vavatu. Sahanau bhunaktu..."



A mega event “ **INTERNATIONAL CONGREGATION FOR MULTI-FAITH PRAYERS & MASS RECITATION OF VEDAS FOR UNITY & WORLD PEACE**” was planned with the concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (We are One World Family to spread the message of love) to be performed on Nov 20-21 of 2017. Religious Leaders of five major religions of the world, Dignitaries, Delegates, Scholars & Intellectuals apart from tens & thousands of Veda chanters and devotees from all around the world were invited to participate in the mega event. The congregation happened in the holy precincts of Baba's sannudhi, Sai KULwant Hall and the purnachandra auditorium.. Mass recitation of Vedas (Rudram & Mantra Pushpam) by the chanters comprising of Balvikas Children, Youth, Adult, Ladies from all around the world apart from India which will be a first of its kind was done. About 20000 from India and another 1000 plus participants from overseas and across the globe participated in this mega event and the whole of prasanthi nilayam reverberated to the harmonious chanting of the vedic mantras by 20000 people. Along with them thousands



of participants across the globe chanted the vedic hymns at the same time at their respective places.

States	Chanters/Learners			Total	Trainers	Centres
	Ladies	Gents	Children			
APTS	315	735		1050	75	75
AS						
BHJH	90	40	20	150	3	3
DL	55	25		80	10	10
GJ						
HP	25	50	865	940	35	6
HR	161	113	269	543	16	11
JK						
KA	400	500	100	1000	75	20
KL				1398	29	65
MHGA	2578	682	240	3500	79	85
MN						
MPCG	504	517	219	1240	47	31
OD	3500	2500		6000	50	33
PB	20	30	150	200	2	2
RJ	15	10	300	325	3	5
SK	392	219		611	30	4
TN	300	425	125	850	70	60
UPUK						
WB	200	400	600	1200	23	18

This platform to herald the whole world that we are **One World Family & let us move together, speak in unanimity to be known as Children of One God with one thought & one accord to protect our planet** brought in the necessary rejuvenation for the participants who re-dedicated themselves to the cause of propagation of the vedas Ever since the learning and chanting of the vedic hymns across the organisation across the globe accelerated by elaps and bounds. The number of veda activities that were done subsequent to this mega event itself is an indication to the positive effect that this brought into the lives of all the sadhakas. On Nov.21st, 2017 an **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON VEDAS – Scientific Understanding of Vedic Knowledge** will be organized wherein some of the renowned scholars of the world who have done extensive research work on Vedas will participate to carve out the essence of message of Bhagawan Baba on Vedas.

Proceedings of 1st International Veda Conference and Multi-Faith Symposia

Day-1, Morning session:

The morning session was initiated with the chanting of- Narayana upanishad, Durga Suktham, Sai Gayatri and Swasti Mantra. This was followed by "God is One" - a Musical Rendering of Multi-Faith Prayer offered by students of SSSIHL. The themes



explored were The theme of the conference was enunciated as "Vasudhaivakutumbakam" - "We are one"

The small-minded distinguish by saying "He is my brother; he is not." The truly great minds consider the entire world as their family.

The same truth is perceived by different thinkers as many.

This statement has its origins in the Rig Veda. These supreme truths emphasise that there is only one religion - the religion of Love.

This was followed by a rally with flagbearers representing 20 different states of the Sri SathyaSaiSeva Organisations India, BalVikas children and alumni, students of Sri SathyaSai Schools from all over India, MahilaVibhag, Sevadal, students of the Sri SathyaSai Institute of Higher Learning, along with devotee representatives from over 42 different countries. The theme was "We are all one."

The Chief Guest for the inaugural session was the Hon. Governor of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Shri E. S. L Narasimhan.

The Leaders of various faiths were present for the inaugural session:

Maulana Abdul Rehman Mullah, General Secretary of the All-India Imam Association, West Bengal

Prof. Ali Mohammad Naqvi, Professor and Dean, Department of Shia Theology, Aligarh Muslim University

Shri Bharatbhai Mehta, Devotee and Trustee, BochasanwasiAkshardham Trust, Bengaluru
Very Venerable 7th ChungpoGyalton Rinpoche, PalpungSherabling Monastic Seat, Himachal Pradesh

Shri Dinesh Rao, State Baha'i Council, Karnataka

Rabbi Ezekiel Isaac Malekar, Honorary Secretary of the Judah Hyam Synagogue, New Delhi

Father Felix Jones, Secretary to the Commission for Inter-Faith Dialogue, Archdiocese of Delhi

GianiGrubachanSinghji, Jathedar of Akal Takht, Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar

Hon. Karma GelekYuthok, Kalon for Religious Affairs, Dharamsala

Shri Kunalbhai Bhatt, Trustee, Baps Trust, Bengaluru

Dr.Lokesh Muni, Founder President, Ahimsa VishwaBharati

Haji Syed Salman Chisty, Gaddi-Nashin, Dargah Ajmer Sharif

MaulanaShafiqueQasmi, President, All India Imam Association, Chief Imam, Nakhoda Masjid, Kolkata

Shri ShahriarVaquil, Vice-President, Zoroastrian Association, Bengaluru

Welcome Address by the All India President



This would be exemplified in the morning session with a mass recitation of the most powerful prayer - Sri Rudram - for world peace.

Book release - "Sri SathyaSaiVedamrutham"

The book "*Sri SathyaSaiVedamrutham: 92 Pearls on the subject of Vedas from Bhagawan's Discourses*" was released by the Hon. Governor in the presence of the Central Trust Members.

Padma Shree Dr. V. Mohan, Trustee, Sri SathyaSai Central Trust

The next speaker, Dr. Mohan, emphasised the importance of the multi-faith concept in the world. In this context, the Vedas - a large body of knowledge –is a gift belonging to all of humanity.



He also elaborated on the distinction between multi-faith vsinter-faith –where the latter is a broader concept involving mutual love, respect and acceptance. Ultimately, Love is the basis of all religions. Interfaith dialogue leads to the Ultimate by the pathway of Unity - Purity – Divinity.

Bhagawan's prime teachings "Love All, Serve All" and "Help Ever, Hurt Never" can be better easily understood, since Baba was "Om Sri SaiSarva Mata SammatayaNamah" – the one who treats all Faiths as one.

Baba always said "Hands that help are holier than lips that pray" –in this way, Seva as a Sadhana is the hallmark of true faith in God.

Inaugural Address - Hon. Governor Shri. E. S. L. Narasimhan

The Hon. Governor recalled that Bhagawan had told us in the 60s that "Veda-Ghoshana" would be heard one day in Prashanthinilayam - today is that Day, aGolden Day.Bhagawan's



four-fold Veda mission of “Vedaposhana - Vidvatposhana - Bhaktarakshana–Darmasamsthapana” started with that announcement in the 1960s.

In fact, Bhagawan's teachings comprise a 5th Veda. The speaker emphasised the need for inter-faith dialogue, since knowledge only grows by sharing. This leads to an insight into man's core nature, i.e. "Subhaava" – the ‘good’.

The speaker recalled the preceptor's advice to the disciple (Sheeksha-Valli of the Taittiriya Upanishad):

*"MatruDevoBhava, PitruDevoBhava, Acharya DevoBhava, AtithiDevoBhava"
"Satyam Vada, DharmamChara"*



The Hon. Governor concluded with an exposition of His Holiness Jagadguru Shri ChandrasekharendraSaraswati, Shankaracharya of KanchiPeetham:

"MaitreemBhajataAkhilaHridjayitrim"

By worshipping friendship (brotherly love), win the heart of the World.

Bhagawan's Divine Message

(Divine Discourse delivered on 28 Sep 1987)

In His Divine Discourse in Poorna Chandra Auditorium on 28th September 1987, Bhagawan exhorted all devotees to foster the Vedas. Bhagawan emphasises that the decline of Vedic study in India should be halted, and that one must be fearless in propagating the Vedas.

Bhagwan says: Veda is the breath of God. *Anantaavaivedaah* – the Vedas are beyond limit. The Vedas are described as “*Yatovachonivartante, apraapyamanasaasaha*” – that which is not describable in speech, nor attainable by mere thought. Without Veda (the ultimate Truth), there can be no Dharma (way of life).

“Na karmana,naprajayaadhanena, tyaagenaikeamrutattvamaanashuh”
Only through selfless sacrifice can the supreme be attained.



Mass recitation of Sri Rudram and Mantra Pushpam

This was followed by the mass recitation of Sri Rudram and Mantra Pushpam by thousands of chanters and devotees.

The session as concluded with Sarva Dharma Bhajans.

Evening Session: Multi-faith Symposium

The proceedings were initiated with the chanting of GaneshaAtharvaSheersham.

This was followed by a rendition of *Multifaith prayer for worldpeace and harmony*. The participants in this prayer, representing various faiths were:

Hinduism:

Swami Shantatmananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi.

Buddhism:

Hon. Karma GelekYuthok, Kalon for Religious Affairs, Dharamsala
Very Venerable 7th ChungpoGyalton Rinpoche, PalungSherabling Monastic Seat, Himachal Pradesh

Zoroastrianism:

Shri ShahriarVaquil, Vice-President, Zoroastrian Association, Bengaluru

Islam:

MaulanaMohd. ShafiqueQasmi, President, All India Imam Association, Chief Imam, Nakhoda Masjid, Kolkata

Christianity:



Father Felix Jones, Secretary to the Commission for Inter-Faith Dialogue, Archdiocese of Delhi

Sikhism:

Giani Grubachan Singhji, Jathedar of Akal Takht, Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar

Judaism:

Rabbi Ezekiel Isaac Malekar, Honorary Secretary of the Judah Hyam Synagogue, New Delhi

Jainism:

Dr. Lokesh Muni, Founder President, Ahimsa Vishwa Bharati

Baha'i:

Shri Dinesh Rao, State Baha'i Council, Karnataka



Multifaith Symposium - service as a unifying factor in all faiths

The multi-faith session was conducted by Shri. Kalyan Ray, Trustee, SSS Trust West Bengal.

In his introductory remarks, Shri. Ray invited all the participants and delegates to visit the Sarva Dharma Stupa - the confluence of all faiths at Prashanti Nilayam. He related the story of how Baba inspired Rabbi David Zeller to serve mankind by studying the scriptures of his own religion.

The speakers for the multi-faith symposium were:

Swami Shantatmananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi.

Hon. Karma Gelek Yuthok, Kalon for Religious Affairs, Dharamsala



Shri ShahriarVaqil, Vice-President, Zoroastrian Association, Bengaluru
MaulanaMohd. ShafiqueQasmi, President, All India Imam Association, Chief Imam, Nakhoda Masjid, Kolkata
Very Venerable 7th ChungpoGyalton Rinpoche, PalpungSherabling Monastic Seat, Himachal Pradesh
Prof. Ali Mohammad Naqvi, Professor and Dean, Department of Shia Theology, Aligarh Muslim University
Father Felix Jones, Secretary to the Commission for Inter-Faith Dialogue, Archdiocese of Delhi
Rabbi Ezekiel Isaac Malekar, Honorary Secretary of the Judah Hyam Synagogue, New Delhi
Dr.Lokesh Muni, Founder President, Ahimsa VishwaBharati
Haji Syed Salman Chisty, Gaddi-Nashin, Dargah Ajmer Sharif
Maulana Abdul Rehman Mullah, General Secretary of the All-India Imam Association, West Bengal
Shri Dinesh Rao, State Baha'i Council, Karnataka
Shri Kunalbhai Bhatt, Trustee, Baps Trust, Bengaluru
GianiGrubachanSinghji, Jathedar of Akal Takht, Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar

Shri. Jatinder Cheema, State President of Sri SathyaSaiSeva Organisation New Delhi and NCR, acted as the moderator.

Air Chief Marshall N. C. Suri, PVSM, AVSM, PM, acted as the Chairman of the Symposium.

Address by the Chairman:

Air Chief Marshall Suri emphasised the four salient aspects of the symposium:

- 1) Sri Sathya Organisations not a spiritual organisation, with spirituality not as an esoteric pursuit, but a way of life filled with human values
- 2) Nobody is born into a religion, rather a religion has to be born in you. Religion has to be repeatedly rediscovered till the quintessence of the religion is realised.
- 3) Air Chief Marshall Suri proceeded to display a dazzling example of truly multi-faith prayer in the form of important prayers from all faiths - he reiterated that he was convinced his prayers reached the one and only one God.
- 4) All previous multi-faith meetings (since Swami Vivekananda's journey in 1993 to Chicago for the Parliament of Religions) did not achieve the expected outcomes, since the focus was on the differences between religions. Air Chief Marshall Suri requested the panellists forthe Symposium to steer the discussion towards the common grounds of all religions.

The moderator Shri. Cheema outlined the 3 themes which would drive the discussion:

- 1) Service to Man is Service to God
- 2) Love All Serve All
- 3) Help Ever Hurt Never

The round of discussion proceeded as follows:

Hon. Karma GelekYuthok (Buddhism):

All the three themes are in tune with the "Buddha-dama" i.e. teachings of the Buddha. The Buddha-Dama begins and ends with the teaching of service to all sentient beings - serving



them is the same as serving the Almighty. The Buddha-Dama also provides analytical justification for the same.

Father Felix Jones (Christianity):

From Matthew 23:11 "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant." The last judgement according to St. Matthew - the good on His right, the other on His left. "Whatsoever you do to the least of your brothers and sisters, you did unto me." Service to human beings as an image of God - a cornerstone of the Christian Institutions.

Maulana Abdul Rehman Mullah (Islam):

With our first visit to PrashantiNilayam, we pray that the Inner Peace from this village of Puttaparthi may spread to the entire country and to the world. The Prophet Mohammed's heart would bleed for the poor and downtrodden. Islam teaches great respect to women, starting from the Prophet himself. Helping others is more important than the prayers (Namaz) in Islam. There are two stories from the teachings of the Prophet: Islam teaches respect even to animals - even the ill-will of an animal whom one does not help may curse one to a life in "Jahannum" (purgatory). Even a sinner who helped a stray dog to some drinking water could ascend to "Jannat" (heaven).

Rabbi Ezekiel Malekar (Judaism):

The presence of Baba can still be felt very strongly in PrashantiNilayam. Once gathered here, we do not experience our difference of faiths, but a common feeling of oneness with humanity. God created man in His own image and likeness. One must experience the God within and with the virtues of the almighty, one should serve society. Mercy, compassion, patience - these are some of the virtues one must inculcate for serving all. Service is not merely giving alms, food, clothes, charity - service is Love in action: see the example of SathyaSai Baba's hospital - that is true service. Baba's work for electricity, potable water, setting up a University, setting up a fully free hospital - that is true service. "Vaishnavjan to tenekahiye, je peed paraayijaane re"

Shri. ShahriarVakil (Zoroastrianism):

"Jhalakpardekithi, jisneudayehoshShahriarke... Aurnahinmalumki agar deedarhojata" [on visiting PrashantiNilayam for the first time, when Baba had already taken Mahasamadhi]. The simple and basic tenets of Zoroastrianism are: good thoughts, good words and good deeds. When we talk of service to humanity, we are really talking about service to God. The path to righteousness ("Ashaa") is by selfless dedication to service of mankind. Kind deeds lead to salvation for both the doer, and the receiver. It is said: "The proper study of mankind is man." Just as work is worship, serving humanity is the same as serving God. Amin, Amin, Amin.

Giani Grubachan Singhji (Sikhism):

The three themes for today's discussion are translated into reality in this wonderful abode of Sai. My experience after visiting the hospital and the SathyaSai Institutions is that the Grace of the Almighty is always on this place. Sikhism teaches that to help the sick is far more important than prayers in a temple. There is a story of how Guru Govindsinghji praised the Vaid (Doctor) Lal Singh who turned aside to serve an old lady who was not well even though he was originally going for Guru GovindSinghji'sdarshan. God is in everyone - to meet God, one must learn to perceive the God who is seated in everyone's heart. Service to man is service to this God.



Acharya Lokesh Muni (Jainism):

Salutations to the Golden Sun of the World that is Sri SathyaSai Baba. People say that the sun sets, but in reality, it never sets, but is merely hidden from our sight for some time. And that Sun (Sai) is still present in this Holy Place in the form of an inspiration for service to mankind. Man is not made great by Dharma (faith), but by Karma (deeds). Our greatest offering to the Almighty would be to come together, today, on this platform and promise to carry forward the great work started by Sai.

Very Venerable 7th Chungpo Gyalton Rinpoche (Buddhism):

Salutations to Swami, Bhagawan Sri SathyaSai Baba. Salutations to all the respected leaders of the faiths of the world gathered here today. A theme of Bhagawan's teachings is "Oneness", which is also a central pillar of the beliefs in Buddhism. In every individual, there resides an inner nature, a "Buddha-nature", which is beyond any limit or boundary. Loving, kindness, compassion - these virtues are repeatedly stressed in all faiths. According to Buddhist beliefs, these virtues should not arise out of a sense of pity, or looking down on or feeling sorry for the other person. It should arise out of a sense of respect for this spark, this Buddha-nature, which is in every individual. The twin tenets of Buddhism towards service are: loving, kindness, compassion based on respect for all, and suppression of ego to bring forth one's Buddha-nature.

Shri. Dinesh Rao (Baha'I faith):

Service has a very central role in the Baha'i faith, along with prayer. The highest form of service is selfless service with no expectations for oneself. Bhagawan's hospital is a standing example of such selfless service. Similarly, the Baha'i faith places great emphasis on the quality of service. In this respect, the perfect rendition of Vedic Chants in the morning session is indeed a prime example of service. Selfless service always reaps gifts from the Almighty.

Swami Shantatmananda (Hindu Sanatana Dharma):

Service has been an important Indian tradition. The Sanatana Dharma emphasises this in its teachings, and several seers have provided impetus to the importance of seva over centuries. Once, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, when discussing seva with his disciples, emphasised that seva must not be born out of a sense of compassion, but of worship of God in one's fellow beings. The Ramakrishna Mission was subsequently founded by Swami Vivekananda on the twin principles of "*Atmanomokshartham, jagadhitaya cha*". True Seva gradually bridges the gap of duality between the server and the served, till one realises one's true (non-dual) Divine nature.

Haji Syed Salman Chisti (Sufism):

KhwajaMoinuddinChisti (known as Garib Nawaz, uplifter of the downtrodden), says: To be close to the creator, one must spend one's life serving His creation, unconditionally. One must practice river-like generosity, earth-like hospitality and sun-like bounteousness in life. No action of man must be imperfect in any way so as to bring shame to the supreme master, that is God.

*"Teradayaarhaidaar-as-salaam, yaKhwaja...
Naitajalliyanhainsham, yaKhwaja...
Na fikrmein, na gam-e-jaamteremastonko...
Teri eknazar se chaltahaikaam, yaaKhwaja".*



Shri. Kunal Bhatt (Hinduism):

The modern intellectual asks the question: How to mix spirituality and humanitarian service? The answer of the masters is: How can they be separated? The verse "Ekam Sat, VipraBahudhaVadanti" was repeated several times in the morning session. Ekam Sat is the Divine presence of Bhagawan, while Vipraa are the speakers at the symposium. By coming together, we can share the spiritual joy, for in the Joy of others, lies our own. "UskoAssmaanmeinBhagwankyamilega, jiskoinsaanmeininsaannamila?"

Prof. Ali Mohammad Naqvi (Islam):

It is my considered belief that 80% of the teachings of all religions are common. It is indeed surprising that we spend time harping about the 20% which is different. Every faith has the following commonalities:

- 1) Belief in a supreme, eternal reality
- 2) Faith in the unseen
- 3) Belief that the universe is not just matter
- 4) Belief that there is a Divine spark in man
- 5) Man has a Divine purpose (mission)
- 6) Accountability for our own actions
- 7) There is some form of existence beyond death
- 8) A system of ethics (which is up to 90% common among religions)
- 9) Spirituality - this is in fact a common factor in all religions

These are the branches of the tree of religion. The fruits of any such religion-tree may be seen in the form of Bhagwan Baba's statement "Love All, Serve All."

Maulana Shafiq Qasimi (Islam):

*"Dard-e-dilkevaastepaidakiyainsaanko,
Varna taatkeliyekuchkamna the karrobayan".*

God created man to understand the nature of sorrow - otherwise the Angels are legion. Islam tells of the day of judgement, where the Almighty Allah would ask man why he did not help Him in need, for He is present in everyone. One of five principal tenets of Islam, i.e. Zakaat or alms-giving, is a reminder to man to be kind and helpful at all times. In fact, it is said that prayer only leads to Heaven, but service leads to God (Ibaadat se janatmiltihai, Khidmat se Khudamiltahai). Islam teaches that all of mankind is related by blood, being descendents of Adam and Eve, the first man and woman. In fact, even in the modern day, if a patient is in need of blood, we do not ask for the donor's religion. The blood of a Jew, a Christian, a Muslim - they are all human blood, which is the only important thing. With this feeling of brotherhood, and from this platform of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, let us spread this message of Love.

Summation and vote of thanks by AIP Shri. Nimesh Pandya:

The All-India President related a beautiful story of how service can bring multiple faiths together: A rath-yatra of Baba was to pass through several villages in Kerala. On the outskirts of one of the villages with a predominant Muslim population, it was decided to dim the lights and switch off the sound system, since it was the Anniversary of the Babri Masjid demolition. As the silent procession made its way through the village, the villagers stopped the procession, and the village Sarpanch asked the seva-dal team to restart the lights and music, only then they would be allowed to pass. On being asked the reason, the villagers replied that two people from the village had undergone heart surgeries in Bhagawan's hospital, and the villagers were sad that Bhagawan's procession was passing through their village in silence.



Thus, a small seed of service once sown with unconditional love can change the hearts of an entire village, or even an entire nation, or even the world.

The Leaders of all Faiths were felicitated by senior members of the Sri SathyaSaiOrgainsations and the Central Trust.

Haji Syed Salman Chisti in turn felicitated the senior members of the Central Trust with blessings brought from the Dargah Ajmer Sharif.

The AIP Shri. Nimesh Pandya was felicitated with a memento from Dharmasala.

The evening programme was concluded with sarva-dharma bhajans.

Day 2:

The morning session commenced with the chanting of NarayanaSuktham, DurgaSuktham and MedhaSuktham.

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. N. Gopalakrishnan.

The speakers for the session were:

Shri DatoJagadeesan:

Dr.Narendranath Reddy

Dr.Anuradha Chaudhary

Mr. George Bebedelis

Prof.Mohd. Hanif Khan Shastri

The session was concluded with bhajans.

Evening: Valedictory Session

The session commenced with the chanting of PurushaSuktham and DurvaSuktham.

The speakers for the session were:

Shri. VedanarayananKollengode

Shri. S. S. Naganand

Closing Address by AIP Shri. Nimesh Pandya

The All-India President brought the two-day conference and confluence of faiths to a close.

Post international veda conference Every year vedam chanters across the globe started assembling at Prashanti Nilayam to continue the annual mass chanting of vedic hymns on 20 & 21 of November . Trainers, learners, enthusiasts all of them worked seamlessly day and night to teach, learn, practice the vedic hymns. There were round the clock web based classes, reviews that took place for about 5-6 months and that gave the high quality of chanting that took place as part of the conference. As Baba always used to say the process and effort is as important as the end result. The journey is equally important as the destination. This event and practice sessions gave lot of insights, best practices as to how to go about with the mass vedam learning activities and subsequent chanting. We can see in the subsequent chapters of this book how the journey continues with the same spirit



8. Seva Blossoms

This section gives a summary of the Veda-Poshana services have blossomed across the states and zones. It also provides info wrt the no of chanters; trainers etc

8.1.Pan India

Following table provides the number of people involved in the Veda-Poshana activities across the states. Orissa as a state stands out exemplarily wrt every aspect of the Veda - Poshana. It is amazing to know the way they performed about 30+ Maharudrams, 200+ ekadasa rudra parayanams, multiple homams and abhishekams. The one pointed focus with which these activities are done in such magnitude reflect the importance and reverence with which they carryout swami's dictum and thereby reap the benefits. Karnataka too similarly does the Ekadass rudra parayanams- ERPs as a routine no cost frills event worth emulated by others The motivation and dedication across states has resulted in significant increase in the number of people who have embraced the Veda-Poshana seva post international veda conference across the country and the statistics vouches for the same

	Number of chanters	South	East	North East	North	West	Total
1	Gents	1638	3775	412	359	700	6884
2	Ladies	1607	3000	271	343	2590	7811
3	Children Boys	681	1250	8	844	240	3023
4	Children Girls	624	1850	6	771	2300	5551
	Total	4550	9875	697	2317	5830	23269

	Number of	South	East	North East	North	West	Total
1	Veda classes-state	35	1400	65	475	135	2110
2	Veda classes- Dist	55	50	19	32	25	181
3	Veda classes-Samitis	185	476	20	49	90	820
4	Teachers	202	384	18	53	75	732
5	DVC's	62	60	10	42	35	209

	Frequency of	South	East	North East	North	West	Overall
1	Classes	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly
2	Chanting-Samithis/Dists	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly
3	@11 Rudra Parayanams	6 Weekly	Weekly	-	Event	6 Weekly	6 Weekly



8.2. South

The Southern states have a linguistic advantage compared to the other states wrt the intonation and chanting styles for vedam. However the veda poshan movement pace is trying to overcome the societal boundaries of traditional do's and don'ts. Spreading the awareness and teachings of Baba where in it was clarified that vedas are for the humanity at large is the need of the hour for practice. Also, the need to shift and transform permanently, to balance out the ritualistic actions with the Bhava driven execution is more evident over the last couple of years. With these two aspects the movement for sure will progress to next level of Baba's vision to take it to all humanity

	Number of chanters	Kerala	Karnataka	Tamilnadu	Andhra Pradesh	Telangana	Total
1	Gents	250	677	211	250	250	1638
2	Ladies	340	510	157	250	350	1607
3	Children Boys	70	-	211	200	200	681
4	Children Girls	60	-	164	200	200	624
	Total	720	1187	743	900	1000	4550

Almost all the southern states with an exception of Karnataka have taken up to Veda teaching in schools. Each state on an average had taken up 5-6 schools. All students are taught vedic chants as per the Balavikas syllabus. The count of, children shown above are conservative figures as each of these schools teach about 500+ children. All the functions and events in these school start with vedam chanting. Efforts are planned to get the teachers from these schools certified wrt their vedam chanting proficiency so that the children will get quality inputs. Karnataka continues to conduct high quality quiz and chanting competitions annually.

	Number of	Kerala	Karnataka	Tamilnadu	Andhra Pradesh	Telangana	Total
1	Veda classes-state	80	25	46	100	100	351
2	Veda classes- Dist	14	12	9	10	10	55
3	Veda classes-Samitis	70	-	70	30	15	185
4	Teachers	52	75	50	15	10	202
5	DVC's	28	5	18	6	5	62

	Frequency of	Kerala	Karnataka	Tamilnadu	Andhra Pradesh	Telangana	Total
1	Classes	BiWeekly	Weekly	Weekly	Monthly	Monthly	Weekly
2	Chanting-Samithis/Dists	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly
3	@11 Rudra Parayanams	Monthly	9 Weekly	Quarterly	Monthly	Monthly	9 Weekly



8.4. North East

Perseverance and practice are two takeaways from the Veda-Poshana movement of the north eastern states. The states did go through a tough time in learning the intonations as they didn't have most of the syllables phonetically. In the process they came up with a linguistic grammar based scientific ruleset that revolutionised the learning and chanting for the north eastern states. This method is generic and can be used by anyone else from anywhere in the world. The Books and CDs released based on how aspect of this learning method found enthusiastic learners even in UK, USA, Nepal and Bhutan. Though the state is like a new kid on the block wrt vedam learning it is now poised to get into the mainstream soon

	Number of chanters	Sikkim	Assam	Manipur	Total
1	Gents	400	5	7	412
2	Ladies	220	29	22	271
3	Children Boys	-	4	4	8
4	Children Girls	-	3	3	6
	Total	620	41	36	697

	Number of	Sikkim	Assam	Manipur	Total
1	Veda classes-state	50	8	7	65
2	Veda classes- Dist	4	8	7	19
3	Veda classes-Samitis	5	8	7	20
4	Teachers	5	8	5	18
5	DVC's	54	8	2	10

	Frequency of	Sikkim	Assam	Manipur	Total
1	Classes	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly
2	Chanting-Samithis/Dists	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly
3	@11 Rudra Parayanams	-	-	-	-



8.6. West

Ashadi festivities at puttaparthi are a big motivating factor for the enthusiastic sadhakas from the twin states of Maharashtra and Goa to take up learning of vedic hymns. Every year about 2000 plus people travel to parthi ad participate in the mass vedam chanting in the sai kulwant hall as part og this. Across the states several districts rose to the call and started conducting vedam training classes. There is a remarkable increase in the no of lady learners who enthusiastically not only practice but all push others to learning vedic hymns.The results are visible from the data given below. After odissa, the states of Maharashtra and Goa have highest number of chanters of various categories. There are number of schools and colleges where this spark of the need to go through the vedam learning is getting accepted. The number of school children being taught vedam is a high 3000+ and will be a good base for the future activities to get accelerated

	Number of chanters	Maharashtra & Goa	Gujarat	Total
1	Gents	682	18	700
2	Ladies	2578	12	2590
3	Children	240	-	240
4	Children school	2300	-	2300
	Total	5800	30	5830

	Number of	Maharashtra & Goa	Gujarat	Total
1	Veda classes-state	85	50	135
2	Veda classes- Dist	20	5	25
3	Veda classes-Samitis	85	5	90
4	Teachers	70	5	75
5	DVC's	34	1	35

	Frequency of	Maharashtra & Goa	Gujarat	Total
1	Classes	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly
2	Chanting-Samithis/Dists	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly
3	@11 Rudra Parayanams	Monthly	Bi Monthly	6 Weekly



9. Way Forward

Various categories of Veda activities based on the focus group which are planned to be taken up across SSSSO are detailed hereunder

9.1. Organisation focussed Activities

	Veda Activity	Frequency
1	Mandatory Veda chanting before Bhajans	Weekly
2	Samiti level Veda classes	Weekly
3	District level Veda Workshop	Quarterly
4	Chanting of Veda in parthi yatras	Annual
5	Abhishekams and homams on festival days	Event based
6	Validating the database of chanters, learners	Monthly
7	Field visits by Veda Coordinators to support Veda classes	Monthly

9.2. Learners focussed Activities

	Veda Activity	Frequency
1	Vernacular Veda books distribution	Quarterly
2	Inclusion of more schools, colleges- chanters& Balavikas	Quarterly

9.3. Trainers focussed Activities

	Veda Activity	Frequency
1	Train the trainer sessions	Monthly

9.4. Balavikas focussed Activities

	Veda Activity	Frequency
1	Vernacular Veda books distribution	Need Based
2	Veda chanting before the science fairs	Event Based
3	Plantations citing names from Vedas	Event Based
4	Annual Veda competitions for balavikas students	Yearly

9.5. Public focussed Activities

	Veda Activity	Frequency
1	Mass Veda chanting programs	Quarterly
2	Rudrapitams during sravan and karthik months	Event Based
3	Improve public awareness by playing Veda audios in temples	Daily / Weekly
4	Organising Rudrapitams in non-devotee families	Event Based
5	Dedicated Veda meets for the youth using technology	Quarterly
6	Opening of Veda pathshalas in selected temples	Event Based
7	Regular Veda classes/ Chanting in selected temples	Monthly
8	Lecture cum demo sessions by pandits	Quarterly



9.6. Centenary focussed Activities

	Veda Activity	Frequency
1	No of Veda chanters in state	Plan TBD by 1 st Jan'2020
2	No of ERP sessions	
3	No of Maharudra sessions	
4	No of State level Veda conferences	
5	No of Veda workshops	
6	No of samiti's having Veda chanting capabilities	