

## SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR

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### GLOBAL INITIATIVES

2013

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar is a renowned spiritual leader and global humanitarian whose mission of uniting the world into a violence-free, stress-free, global family has inspired millions of people to broaden their share of responsibility and serve society.

Sri Sri has devised practical tools and techniques that help individuals achieve calmness of mind and clarity of thought. Such a state of mind empowers individuals to achieve their goals and instills a sense of service and greater connectedness with humanity.

In 1981, Sri Sri established the Art of Living Foundation, an educational organization with a presence in over 150 countries. The Foundation's individual development programs offer powerful tools to eliminate stress and foster a sense of well-being.

In 1997, Sri Sri founded the International Association for Human Values (IAHV), a humanitarian organization, which promotes societal responsibility and human values in political, economic and social spheres.

IAHV and the Art of Living Foundation collaborate on several humanitarian initiatives, including conflict resolution, disaster and trauma relief, environmental conservation, anti-corruption, prisoner rehabilitation, youth leadership, women's empowerment and universal education. Both organizations enjoy special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations.

2013  
IN REVIEW

*The whole world is one family, so it is necessary that we live with naturalness and simplicity; only then life blossoms. The wall that we erect between ourselves and others needs to be demolished. From your side, drop all inhibitions between you and others.*

## SERVICE AND SOCIAL PROGRAMS

### Media, Governance & Societal Change

**Mumbai, India, February 22**

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar addressed the media at a special event organized by the Maharashtra Patrakar Sangh for editors and senior journalists, and emphasized the importance of a fair and free media.

He stated that the media, the government and other social organizations in the country need to come together to bring about an effective change in society. The Maharashtra Rajya Marathi Patrakar Sangh (MRMPS) honored Sri Sri with a Maanpatra (Letter of Honor) for awakening human values in society and spreading the message of brotherhood and peace.

Complimenting the media for unearthing major scams in a short period of time, Sri Sri said, “I am proud of the press in the country, especially the journalists of vernacular newspapers, who do not stop at anything to bring the truth to light. When you look beyond sensationalism and adhere to the noble values of journalism, you not only uplift society but also inspire people to fight injustice and corruption.”

### Spreading Social Awareness

**Mumbai, India, February 22**

It was an evening of music, meditation and knowledge. Sri Sri inspired people to awaken their inner strength and confidence and come together in a spirit of love to uplift the nation.

While underlining the significance of service, Sri Sri reiterated, “Service rewards you with tremendous strength and empowerment; you do not have to bank on black money to accomplish your goals. Today, political operatives are using alcohol and money to lure people to the polls, simply because they do not know any other way to strike a chord with the masses. They are not into meaningful service. It’s high time we started educating people on these malpractices, encourage them to develop a sense of responsibility for their nation. And more importantly, involve them in social service. Give one hour to your nation everyday.”

Sri Sri also voiced his concern about the rising incidents of female feticide and opined that the government must take the initiative of banning sex determination tests. In an engaging Q and A, he added that women had always enjoyed a position of respect and stature in Vedic India.

**Volunteer for a Better India**  
**Mumbai, India, February 23**



A wave of patriotic exuberance swept across the venue as Sri Sri addressed a huge gathering of nearly 1,00,000 people to garner support for Volunteer for a Better India (VBI), his latest social initiative. In a passionate address, Sri Sri said, “A revolution in India is in the offing. Whether you participate or not, India will still progress and prosper to its best. But when you become an instrument for change, it leaves you with a deeper sense of fulfillment. To experience this unique joy, you must become a volunteer for a better India.”

Sri Sri reflected on the times during India’s freedom struggle that claimed millions of human lives and spoke about sacrifices that people made at the time. The launch was attended by several dignitaries, who offered to support VBI. However, it was the presence of the youth that was more palpable, especially when they sang patriotic songs and cheered for the nation. Sri Sri urged them to come together on a common platform and fight injustice. “Don’t lose heart. Empower yourself and use your skills in the best possible way to tackle corruption.”

The event culminated in a pledge taken by lacs of people:

- To remove ignorance and bring literacy
- To not give or accept bribes
- Honor women and not allow female feticide
- Wipe away addictions to alcohol and drugs
- Care for the environment
- Vote without fail

Work together in harmony towards building a stress-free, violent-free India by giving one hour every day to the nation.

**Volunteer for Better Nepal**  
**Kathmandu, Nepal, February 26**

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar urged the Nepali youth and citizens to work for the rapid development of Nepal. Talking to journalists upon his arrival at the Tribhuvan International

Airport, Sri Sri said that each individual should set aside an hour a day for the development of their own country.



**Volunteer for a Better Croatia**  
**Zagreb and Split, Croatia, March 18-20**



During his visit to Croatia, Sri Sri launched Volunteer for a Better Croatia. In a public talk, he said, “Let’s give seven hours a week for helping the poor and needy.”

“First, we want a stress-free and violence-free society. We need to teach people how to be friendly, cooperative and help them get rid of violent tendencies.”

“Second, we need to help people with different types of addictions. Regular practice of Sudarshan Kriya and meditation will help people come out of addictions.”

“Third, we need a society that is free from corruption. It is where the sense of belongingness ends that corruption begins.”

**Volunteer for Better Slovenia**  
**Ljubljana, Slovenia, March 21**

Sri Sri’s visit to Slovenia marked the first time in 17 years that he had been to the country, and the 15th anniversary of the national Art of Living organization in Slovenia.

In his address to the media, Sri Sri called upon people to participate in the Volunteer for a Better Slovenia campaign.

He also spoke about the work The Art of Living has done in the country in the past 15 years. He encouraged the audience to set up a Slovenian institute of agriculture. Emphasising leadership programs, Sri Sri urged the audience to help youth with entrepreneurial initiatives.

This was followed by a public talk in Slovenia's capital, where Mr. Alojz Peterle, Member of European Parliament and former Prime Minister of Slovenia, inaugurated the event.

### **Encouraging Grassroots Culture** Bangalore, India, May 12-13



In an initiative to celebrate our grassroots culture, 1008 local deities from different parts of Karnataka were brought together at the Art of Living International Center. Entitled "Karnataka Vaibhava Celebrations", this cultural festival became a platform to celebrate, explore and showcase the rich splendor of Indian culture, vibrancy of its roots and wisdom.

### **Walk for Water** Bangalore, India, June 9



Sri Sri led a walkathon in Bangalore to tackle water woes of the city, which depends on the Cauvery River and nearby natural sources for its potable water needs.

The purpose of the 4-kilometer Walk for Water was to create awareness on the Kumudavathi river rejuvenation project initiated by the Art of Living volunteers in rural Bangalore.

"Hundreds of volunteers from non-government organizations (NGOs) have been dedicating their time every Sunday to work in the catchment area to breathe life into the river. There is a dire need for more citizen participation to restore the river", Sri Sri Ravi Shankar added. He called for illegal sand mining to be stopped and the people should be made aware of it. He also noted that, "Our teams of experts and scientists were able to revive springs in eight surrounding villages during the last two months."

Veteran freedom fighter Doreswamy, renowned environmentalist Yellappa Reddy and Gandhinagar civic ward corporator T. Gopalakrishna joined hundreds of farmers and volunteers in the walkathon under a cloudy sky.

### **Supporting the Fight Against HIV/AIDS** Geneva, Switzerland, July 2

During Sri Sri's official visit to the UNAIDS headquarters in Geneva on July 2, 2013, he engaged with staff and guests on issues around science, spirituality and health in responding to HIV.

Welcomed by UNAIDS Deputy Executive Director, Management and Governance, Jan Beagle and UNAIDS Deputy Executive Director of Programme, Luiz Loures, Sri Sri's remarks centered around key issues, including HIV prevention, sexual- and gender-based violence, community mobilization and stigma and discrimination. He said, "the noble cause is to stop HIV in our generation. It was discovered in our generation and it must end with our generation. We must not see it go on to the next. We must learn from the past, live in the present, and influence the future."



He stressed that collective action was required to mould and sustain optimal governance structures, enhance social justice and address prejudice. He also urged society to be guided by the identity of being human and a global sense of belonging.

During the visit to UNAIDS, Sri Sri also interacted with the Head of the Vatican to the UN in Geneva, HE Archbishop Silvio Tomasi and UNITAID Executive Director, Dr. Denis Broun.

That same afternoon, Sri Sri visited CERN (The European Center for Research in Nuclear and Elementary Particle Physics), where they discovered the Higgs Boson, also known as the “God particle”.

### **Inspiring a New Vision for a Better India** Bangalore, India, August 15

“At this time, what is needed for the country is a wave of happiness that will fill our hearts with new hope and our minds with a new direction. And we are all ready for this change.”

Sri Sri’s inspiring words on India’s Independence Day, August 15 - a day marked by inspiration for change and feelings of patriotism.

The ceremony began in the morning, where Sri Sri joined the students of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Vidya Mandir to hoist the Indian flag at the school grounds, leaving the children beaming with enthusiasm and a sense of pride in their country.

Mr. Vellapally Natesan, General Secretary of the SNDP (Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam); Mr. S. Krishna Kumar, former Union Minister; and Mr. Devan, Kerala film actor, were some of the dignitaries who spoke and emphasized on the increasing relevance of spiritual knowledge in today’s turbulent times.

### **Inspiring Rural Youth in Karnataka** Karnataka, India, September 22-24



Sri Sri visited the cities of Bijapur, Dharwad and Hubli and interacted with people from all walks of life through sessions of music, knowledge and meditation. In Dharwad, Sri Sri distributed solar lamps to the villagers from Konnur and Shiggon. For the families of the beneficiaries, it would be the first time that their homes would be lit after sunset.

In another program called Manthan, Sri Sri interacted with professionals at the Hubli Chamber of Commerce, and encouraged them to play a role in nation building and adopt measures to make India corruption-free.

Later that evening, thousands of people joined Sri Sri in a meditation for peace.

### **Promoting Organic Farming and Drug De-Addiction** Punjab, India, October 18-22



Sri Sri spoke extensively about drug de-addiction and female feticide and promoted organic farming during his four-day tour of Punjab.

Sri Sri met the Chief Minister, Prakash Singh Badal, for this purpose and offered stress-elimination techniques that would help youth overcome alcohol and drug addiction. They also spoke about the issue of female feticide. Youth from around the state attended the Volunteer for a Better India convention that was held at Anandpur Sahib on Oct 19. Sri Sri emphasized the importance of people enrolling themselves in the electoral roll and spreading voter awareness. Elaborating on his vision of a corruption-free India, Sri Sri asked the audience to pledge against giving or accepting bribes. He also shared the same message at an event at the Guru Gobind Singh Stadium on Oct 20.

Hundreds of farmers interacted with Sri Sri and discussed ways to promote organic farming during the Gyan Ki Lehar - Farmers’ Mahasatsang and Anand-di-Lehar - a Farmers’ Meet (Patiala, Oct 22). At the Sant Samagam (a get-together of spiritual leaders) at Hoshiarpur on Oct 19, Sri Sri spoke about the role of spiritual leaders in society.

## Big Ideas for Better India

Washington DC, USA, December 23



The 'Big Ideas for a Better India' event brought together key influencers of the Indian American community from across the United States. Over 100 Indian leaders from 25 major cities discussed solutions directed towards institutional and technological co-operation in India. Participation in the electoral process in the Indian sub-continent was another area of emphasis.

Sri Sri, who presided over the event as the keynote speaker, said that we should take pride in the heritage and language of India. He asked all Indians to come together to build the nation on the pillars of spirituality.

Hosted at the University of Maryland, this event was organized by the Overseas Volunteer for a Better India (OVBI), an apolitical organization. It was launched in May 2013 and is the overseas wing of the Indian organization VBI.

## LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS

### Sri Sri Calls on Nepal's President Dr. Yadav

Kathmandu, Nepal, February 26



Sri Sri Ravi Shankar called on H.E. President Dr. Ram Baran Yadav at the latter's office. President Yadav said

wherever Sri Sri went, peace prevailed, and expressed that the same would happen in Nepal as well.

Earlier, Sri Sri visited the Youth for Transformation Training Camp and interacted with the participants there. Around 200 youth of different communities from over 35 districts of Nepal participated in the training.

### Interaction with Community Leaders

Kathmandu, Nepal, February 26

Politicians, entrepreneurs and decision makers interacted with Sri Sri on a diverse range of subjects at the "Spirituality & Socio-Political Transformational Prosperity program."

Comparing Nepal with Switzerland, and giving the example of the preservation of Balinese culture in Indonesia, Sri Sri urged the politicians to work for the preservation and promotion of the diverse cultures of Nepal. "With the disappearance of cultures, the identity of the country itself will be lost", he said, adding that, "Nepal must maintain her identity."

"Promote tourism and prepare youth for the progress of Nepal. Developing the country is not a single man's job. The entire population should engage in it", he said.

The function was attended by CPN-UML chairman and former Prime Minister, Jhala Nath Khanla; Vice-President of the Nepali Congress, Ram Chandra Poudel; and CPN-Maoist leader, Krishna Bahadur Mahara; among others.

### Sri Sri Meets the Prime Minister

Kathmandu, Nepal, February 27



Sri Sri Ravi Shankar called on Nepalese Prime Minister Dr. Baburam Bhattarai at the latter's official Baluwatar residence.

The Prime Minister said that it was matter of pride for all Nepalese that Sri Sri was on a Nepal visit and his visit will be helpful in institutionalizing peace in the country.

## Meeting with the Croatian President Zagreb, Croatia, March 18



Sri Sri met with H.E. Prof. Ivo Josipović, President of the Republic of Croatia. Their conversation focused on reducing corruption and strengthening human values in society.

## Promoting Ethics in Business in Slovenia Bled, Slovenia, March 22 IEDC School of Management



The World Forum for Ethics in Business (WFEB) in Bled, Slovenia brought together leading individuals from the political, corporate, academic, media and NGO fields in dialogue on the pressing need to strengthen human values and good governance across all sectors.

During his keynote address, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, co-founder of the WFEB, said, “Trust is the backbone of business. We have seen the flaws in communism, now we are seeing the failings of unbridled capitalism. It is time for a new ‘ism’ - humanism. Business with humanism is what I would call ethics in business.”

Sri Sri also met with H.E. Mr. Borut Pahor, President of Slovenia.

## The Japanese Prime Minister Welcomes Sri Sri

Tokyo, April 23



Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo Abe welcomed Sri Sri Ravi Shankar to his country. Mr. Abe appreciated the work of The Art of Living in the country and lauded Sri Sri's vision of a stress-free, violence-free world.

A large audience comprising Indo-Japanese youth interacted with Sri Sri at a special seminar at the Indian Embassy. The Japan Entrepreneurs & Presidents Association (JEPA) awarded Sri Sri a special Certificate of Appreciation. Mr. Yamada Hiroshi, Member of Parliament, was also present at the session and felicitated Sri Sri.

## Encouraging Corporates and Decision Makers to Adopt Spiritual Practices

Tokyo, Japan, April 24



Mr. Hakubun Shimomura, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports and Science and Technology and the Former Prime Minister of Japan and Opposition Leader, Mr. Noda Yoshiko, met with Sri Sri.

He also interacted with entrepreneurs at a special seminar, encouraging the audience to embrace spirituality in corporate practices.

## A Call for Genuine Ethical Order in Business

Geneva, Switzerland, July 1



Wider realization that we need to change the players if we are to change the game was the major take-home of the International Leadership Symposium on Ethics in Business, held at the United Nations.

“Ethics cannot be cosmetic. It has to be authentic. In moments of crisis, we can gauge if ethics are genuine or cosmetic. If one can stick to ethical practices in tough times, I call that genuine,” said Sri Sri Ravi Shankar while reminding the gathering that the seed of ethics is already in all of us and we just need to cultivate and nurture it.

Organized by the International Association for Human Values in partnership with the World Forum for Ethics in Business (WFEB), the Global Partnerships Forum and the World Bank Institute, this symposium saw more than 300 world leaders from politics, business, academics, faith-based organizations and civil societies joining hands, pressing the need to strengthen human values and ethics in the private and public sector.

H. E. Néstor Osorio, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, President of ECOSOC, United Nations, New York and Dr. Sanjay Pradhan, Vice-President of the World Bank Institute, also spoke passionately around the topic of ethics.

As a symbol to mark the 10th anniversary of the symposium, Sri Sri, along with H. E. Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Former Secretary General of the United Nations, inaugurated the conference by watering a plant together under the motto Tree of Shared Values - Deeper Roots, Better Fruits!

## Honored for Work in Intercultural Dialogue

Stuttgart, Germany, September 13



On the first One World Family day in Stuttgart, Germany, brought together international personalities from science, economics, politics and religion, who presented answers to the requests and appeals for a better world. Dr. Auma Obama, sister of U.S. President Barack Obama presented Sri Sri Ravi Shankar with the One World Family Award and praised the global impact of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar’s tireless work towards harmony in diversity and intercultural dialogue.

## Honorary Doctorate from the Desh Bhagat University

Mandi Gobindgarh, India, October 21



The Desh Bhagat University in Punjab, India, awarded Sri Sri with an honorary doctorate for his humanitarian work. The honor marks Sri Sri’s 15th honorary doctorate.

PEACE INITIATIVES

**Inspiring Citizens to Stand for Non-Violence**

San Francisco Bay Area, USA, March 24



San Jose stood up in support for a stress-free, violence-free society on March 24, 2013, at the San Jose convention center, packed with around 10,000 people.

The campaign received support from Raj Salwan, Councilmember at City of Fremont; Mike Honda, Congressman, U.S. House of Representatives; Ash Kalra, Councilmember at City of San Jose; Dr. James R. Doty, M.D., the founder and director of the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education at Stanford University, to name a few.

**Launch of the NONVIO Movement**

San Diego, USA, March 25



Sri Sri launched the Nonviolence: No Higher Calling (NONVIO) movement in San Diego at the historic Balboa Park. March 25, 2013, was declared as Nonviolence:

No Higher Calling Day, committing to a billion acts of nonviolence. This act envisions a hundred acts of nonviolence for every act of violence that is committed.

**Inspiring Social Change Through Non Violence**

Los Angeles, USA, March 26-27



Los Angeles stood up for nonviolence with Sri Sri Ravi Shankar at the Art of Living Los Angeles Center. The Interactive Town Hall Forum highlighted the power of institutional leaders and decision makers in creating social change through nonviolence.

**Honoring the Spirit of Non Violence**

Chicago, USA, March 28

The NONVIO event, hosted at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, brought together thousands of Chicagoans. The state of Illinois felicitated Sri Sri Ravi Shankar for his tireless advocacy for building a violence-free Chicago and March 28 was declared Nonviolence: No Higher Calling Day by the state.



Among those honored were Carlos Javier Ortiz, Ronald Holt, Annette Nance-Holt, Ondelee Perteet, Ameena Matthews, Dr. Gary Slutkin and Levar Fisher.

Chicago's beloved group, The Voices, performed at the event, bringing back vintage Motown memories.

**Meditation at the Gateway to the UN**  
New York, USA, March 30

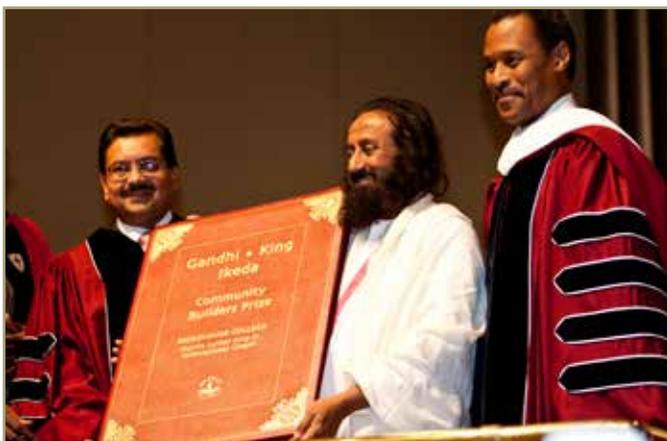


The Gateway to the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, known for its political rallies, had a new taste this time, with more than five thousand New Yorkers meditating and pledging a commitment for nonviolence with Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

**Honored with the Gandhi, King, Ikeda Award**

Atlanta, USA, April 3

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar's U.S. NONVIO movement culminated at Morehouse College, Atlanta, alma mater of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, where Sri Sri was awarded the Gandhi, King, Ikeda Community Builders Prize in recognition for being one of today's leading voices of peace and nonviolence.



**Spreading the Message of Nonviolence and Peace**

Regina and Saskatchewan, Canada, April 15



Sri Sri met with the Mayor of Regina, Michael Fougere, as well as the Minister of Parks, Culture & Sport, Kevin Doherty, who recalled the importance of the stress-elimination techniques taught, especially the ones post the bombings of the Boston marathon.

People from all over the province of Saskatchewan as well as others, such as Saskatoon, Yorkton, Moose Jaw, Kindersley, Kamsack, Langenburg, Manitou, Canora, Melville and North Battleford, came to the Connexus Arts Centre during his first visit here.

Sri Sri spoke about the need to end violence. He also spoke about the movement he was here to launch - NONVIO - 100 acts of nonviolence for every act of violence. He then expressed the need for creating a culture of spreading warmth and belongingness and also mentioned the importance of working with the First Nations communities in Saskatchewan and across Canada.

**Coming Together for Change**

Calgary, Canada, April 19



Several dignitaries interacted with Sri Sri at a special meet, which included political leaders such as the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General of Alberta, Jonathan Denis, who brought Sri Sri a message from the Premier of Alberta, Calgary; MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) Moe Amery; and Dave Rodney, Associate Minister for Wellness.

Past and present Seed Event speakers also met with Sri Sri - Sequoyah Trueblood, Native Leader; Sherry Strong, food philosopher and nutritional strategist; Theo Fleury, former Canadian professional ice hockey player for the Calgary Flames, founder of an NGO fighting against sex abuse; and Elisabeth Fayt, author, among others.

### **Honored by the Mayor of Calgary** Calgary, Canada, April 20



Calgary's Mayor Naheed Nenshi met Sri Sri and they spoke about how the city has grown. Earlier in the day, Sri Sri interacted with participants of the ongoing Art of Living courses and also gave a talk at a Hindu temple. He addressed 700 people and met local volunteers and inspired them to reach out to various ethnic communities and spread the spirit of peace and happiness.

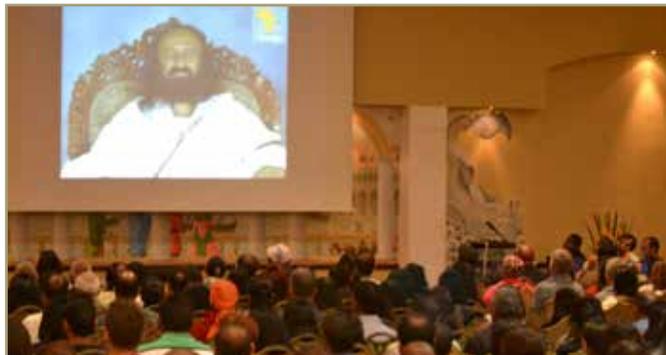
### **Bringing Harmony in Calgary** Calgary, Canada, April 20

Sri Sri's evening keynote address, entitled Enlightenment: The Answer to Everything, opened with spiritual music that set the room of 2500 people in harmony.



Mayor Nenshi then gave him the Calgarian welcome of a white cowboy hat and announced him an honorary citizen of Calgary.

### **Uniting People from 23 African Countries for Peace** Africa, May 23



Africa experienced spiritual unification on its 50th anniversary of political unity, as people from 23 countries came together to be a part of I Meditate Africa, the first-of-its-kind online meditation in Africa conducted by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

Urging the people to come together and pray for conflict-ridden Central and North Africa, Sri Sri said, "Prosperity is not possible without peace and peace is a far-fetched reality without prosperity; peace comes from within. Let's resolve to create a violence-free, stress-free Africa."

The event witnessed the participation of Ravi Pillay, Executive Committee Member and MPL Human Settlements and Public Works, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa and Dr. Ela Gandhi, granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi (at Durban), among many others.

### **Guiding Inmates for Prison Transformation** Bangalore, India, June 9



Thirty inmates serving jail terms were exempted for a few hours to come and visit Sri Sri Ravi Shankar at The Art of Living International Centre.

Riding a wave a transformation through trauma- and stress-relief programs of The Art of Living, these 30 transformed inmates have been instrumental in bringing smiles to 2500 fellow inmates. Lauding the efforts of The Art of Living, Mr. S. Ravi, IPS, Deputy Inspector General, State Police, said, “Their transformation is comprehensive. We have seen a lot of difference in the general well-being of prisoners through these programs. They have become more productive and their all-round personality has changed. Further, they were imparted skill training. Now, they will be absorbed in society easily without any social stigma. The training, which empowered them, set off a chain reaction wherein they began training other inmates”.

### Calling India and Pakistan to Resolve Issues Through Dialogue

Srinagar, India, August 6



Sri Sri, on his visit to Jammu & Kashmir, said he personally believes that the Kashmir issue can be resolved only through dialogue. “It would be good if both the countries come forward and have a purposeful dialogue on all issues. Separatist leaders of Kashmir should also take initiative and go for dialogue,” he said.

### Celebrating Harmony and Solidarity

Bangalore, India, August 11



Sri Sri called on people from all faiths and communities came together to celebrate harmony and solidarity on the occasion of Eid.

### Healing Touch for Riot-Torn Muzaffarnagar Muzaffarnagar, India, October 26

The only thing the victims of the recent communal riots in Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh, are longing for is a healing touch and the message of peace. And that was exactly what Sri Sri Ravi Shankar delivered during his visit to the riot-affected area on October 26, 2013.



Sri Sri was embraced with equal enthusiasm by people from either side of the hostile communal conflict.



Sri Sri called upon the people of Muzaffarnagar to unitedly stand up against injustice. “Make Muzaffarnagar, Mohabbatnagar (city of love)”. He added that not only were Hindus and Muslims killed during the riot, but humanness was also killed. He emphasized the need for restoring mutual trust among the communities. “Peace and harmony is needed to ensure progress and development”, he said.

Sri Sri was pained by the deep mistrust and scars in both the communities. He regretted the fact that the interference of politicians and failure of administration had caused colossal damage. But more than what he said, it was Sri Sri’s presence that touched the people.



## CULTURE AND CELEBRATION

### Celebrating Guru Purnima

Montreal, Canada, July 12-17

Hundreds of people gathered to sing, dance, celebrate Guru Purnima and participate in various Art of Living programs during Sri Sri's stay at the Canadian International Centre. Every day, people participated in special noon meditations led by Sri Sri and the evenings were full of spiritual music and knowledge (Satsang).



Emphasizing on the importance of singing and mantra chanting he said, "Spirituality is that which uplifts us". He also noted that while yoga and meditation are born out of ancient traditions, they are not a religion. They are a way of life.

### Keeping Culture Alive

Bangalore, India, August 15

The evening saw a recitation of Jnanappana, a traditional devotional poem of Kerala.

A soul-stirring choir of 12,000 sang the Jnanappana, written by the 16th century poet Poonthanam and a troupe of 170 performed Thiruvathirakali, a popular dance form of Kerala. Sri Sri said, "The nation is passing

through a difficult phase. The coming two to three years are very crucial. India is a spiritual country whose freedom has come through satsangs and sacrifice of the lives of our elders. Mahatma Gandhi travelled across districts organizing mass satsangs. We need to preserve that."



### Gathering for Peace

Bangalore, India, October 4-14

The Indian festival of Navratri became a global gathering for The Art of Living family as members from over 50 countries participated in the festivities at the International Center.



Thousands participated in meditations and prayers for global peace and harmony. Sri Sri led the gathering through meditations and inspired everyone to volunteer with their communities and work towards a stress-free, violence-free world.

### Christmas Celebrations: A Message of Sharing & Joy

Boone, North Carolina, USA, December 25

This December at the Art of Living's center in Boone, NC, Sri Sri united an audience of 1,500 people to celebrate the season with a direct experience of peace and joy. The holiday program included time in silence and a public

event of wisdom, music and meditation on Christmas Day. People travelled from across the U.S. and from as far away as South America, Europe and India, to join in the occasion. After the program, a participant shared. “I was stressed out and tired...now I am on top of the world. I want to make the world a better place this year.”



On Christmas Day, Sri Sri gave a universal message of good-will for the holiday season: “The Christmas tree is telling you, ‘Be like a Christmas tree, evergreen’. Let our life be like a Christmas tree (which means being equanimous). Whether in winter or summer, fall or spring, the Christmas tree remains the same. So in life, in every situation, keep yourself green!



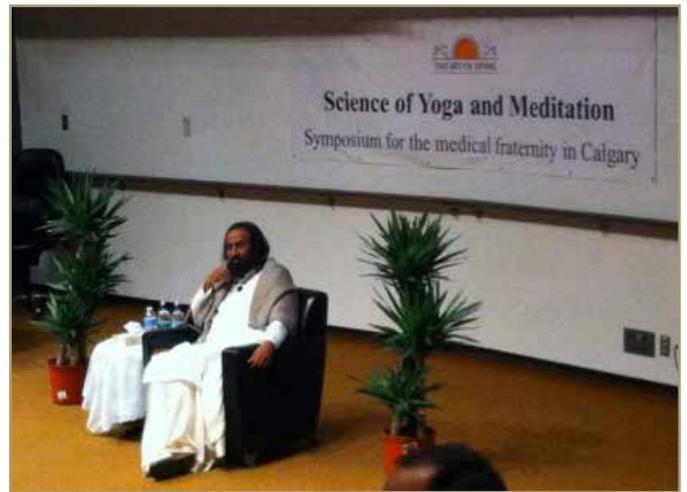
The Christmas trees bears gifts for everybody. All that you are given in life is for everyone...all your talents, all that

you have been bestowed with, it is all meant to help others. So serve, smile and celebrate!” After the program, many remarked that they were leaving with a lighter heart thanks to the program. As one participant shared, “I’m feeling a deep sense of gratitude for life and all its blessings.”

## SPIRITUALITY AND HUMAN VALUES

### Ayurveda, Stress Management and Wellness with Medical Professionals

Calgary, Canada, April 18



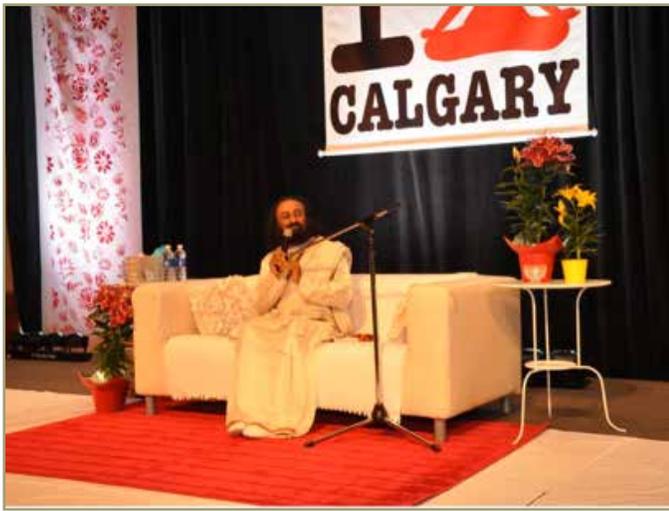
Sri Sri spoke with over 200 medical professionals through The Symposium for the Medical Fraternity of Calgary at the Libin Theater, Health Sciences Center.

Sri Sri’s talk was complemented by three scientists giving different perspectives on the science of meditation.

- Dr. Emma Sepalla, Associate Director of Research, Stanford University, spoke about the healing power of SKY® and meditation in at-risk groups, war veterans (PTSD) and high-risk adolescents.
- Dr. Ryan Punambolam, Neurologist, presented medical research on the mitigating effects of SKY® and meditation on psychoneuroimmunological (PNI) disorders and spoke about the benefits of yoga and meditation in health promotion.
- Dr. Bharti Verma, Physician, MA, MD, CCFP, presented case studies of some of her patients who have done SKY® and talked about work-related stress within the medical fraternity.

## I Meditate Calgary

Calgary, Canada, April 21



Sri Sri addressed 1000 people at the launch of the I Meditate Calgary campaign. Introduced by the Minister of Justice and Solicitor General of Alberta, Jonathan Denis, Sri Sri spoke about meditation, conducted Sukshma yoga for the head and then led a 25-minute guided meditation. This was followed by an interactive Q&A.

## 148 Countries Connect Online with Sri Sri Bangalore, India, June 24



A modern social network turned into a lively global platform where thousands came online face to face with Sri Sri Ravi Shankar to seek guidance on various issues.

On June 23, Sri Sri took to Facebook with a live event where people asked questions on issues ranging from love, relationships, maintaining faith in times of calamities, addictions, depression, success and societal violence.

Live stream data reported that 148 countries were logged in to chat for Face 2 Face with Sri Sri.

Questions poured in from various quarters of the globe, including many from eminent people such as Monika Griefahn, Former Member of the German Parliament and co-founder of Greenpeace Germany; Ricardo E Harvey,

Coordinator of the Program of Security, Corraentes, Argentina; Mrs Shirin Ibrihem Fattah Amedi, Secretary-General of Iraq, Kurdish Women's Union; and civil society members from countries like Korea, Turkey and Iran.

Talking about social uprisings in different parts of the world, Sri Sri called for making non-violence the guiding principle for any agitation and movement. "We need to see to it that the demonstrations are peaceful, because they are against a cause, not a person", he said, responding to a question from Marcelo Freixo, Congressman from Brazil.

To a question from a civil society group in Pakistan on how to eliminate terrorism from Pakistan, he emphasized the need for educating the masses about the oneness of Creation. "We are a one world family. Our first and foremost identity is that we are part of life. The rest of our identities are secondary," he told.

For most people, Facebook has been a casual medium for fun, but today it turned out to be a powerful tool for social transformation.

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