

Celebrating a Century of Selfless, Universal Love

A 14-year-old adolescent Sathya in the remote hamlet of Puttaparthi in the then Madras Presidency had a vision for mankind even as the country was struggling for independence.

Born as Sathanarayana Raju as the fourth of the five children of Easwaramma and Pedda Venkama Raju in Puttaparthi, the young Sathya announced at the age of 14 that He was Sai Baba and that He had come for His devotees. People listened to this pronouncement, some with scepticism, some with fear.

In the summer of 1947, in order to allay the fears and anxieties of the family, a 20-year-old young Sai Baba wrote to his brother Seshama Raju that He had a task, a vow, a work.

During the next six decades, this vow took shape into a global and sacred mission, transforming lives and societies. It gave the world replicable models that brought dignity to human life, unity among men, and peace to the society.

"I do not belong to any place; I am not attached to any name. I have no "mine" or "thine". I answer whatever the name you use. I go wherever I am taken. This is My very first vow. For me, the world is something afar, apart. I act and move only for the sake of mankind," he said in the letter dated May 25, 1947.

India was even then known for its saints, spiritual heads, and holy men. However, when people came to Sai Baba it was not in search of panacea for their physical ailments, family issues, business challenges, or mental agitations alone. Some came to challenge His divinity, some came out of curiosity, and for some others it was just another stop in their pilgrimage.

Yet, He said to everyone, "Come, See, Experience, and Believe."



Bhagawan
Sri Sathya
Sai Baba
CENTENARY
CELEBRATIONS

What more - This call saw no difference in gender, religion, caste, or language. For He said,

“There is only one religion, the religion of love;

There is only one language, the language of the heart;

There is only one caste, the caste of humanity...”

Soon people started flocking Puttaparthi as they took their first step for spiritual renaissance.

“Though I warned myself against being carried off my feet by the exaggerated adulation poured on this Baba by my kinsmen, I dare not deny or decry or defy. I held on to my first love, with stuttering hands and fainting faith,” writes N. Kasthuri, Swami’s biographer, in “Loving God”, about his first darshan..

“I arrived at the stadium (in Mumbai) too late to get in and had to content myself with observing through a gate. Far in the distance, making a slow circular gesture with his hand, palm up – raising it slowly in a gesture directing attention heavenward – was Baba. I watched him for a moment and then he began to walk slowly in my direction. His face reflected gentle compassion and love and an unusual inner gaze, an expression seeming to mirror his being both in this world and in another. I felt that he radiated some sort of inner rhythm, as if the chanting of bhajans by the crowd actually originated within himself. People reached out to touch his feet. He stepped back gently, motioning for them to stop. I saw the intensity of man’s deepest desires and innermost needs reflected in the pleading, searching eyes of the crowd, arms and hands out-stretched desperately for contact. Then, without noticing me at all, he turned and walked back, some hundred yards away,” says American Samuel H. Sandweiss in “Sai Baba The Holy Man...and the Psychiatrist” again about his first darshan.

Millions were thus drawn to Sai Baba and, the Sai Mission, as it unfolded over the years, turned out to

be a journey from “I” to “We” for each one of them who are a part of it.

Swami, as He is fondly called by His devotees, always advocated unconditional love towards everyone. “Love all; Serve all”, “Help ever; Hurt never”, He often said.

And, it did not stop with words. These manifested as mega projects when a general hospital was opened at Puttaparthi to offer quality health-care to all free of cost. Hospitals established by Swami are temples of healing without any billing counters.

He then launched a college for women at Anantapur in 1968 to offer integrated education, again free of cost. Education is based on educate (human values and integrated development of the students) at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning.

Then came the Sri Sathya Sai Water Project in 1994 that was designed to provide drinking water at no cost to nine lakh people in 750 villages in Andhra Pradesh. Water turned holy (Sai Ganga) as it flowed through pipelines to these villages.

Puttaparthi, the Janmabhoomi and the Karmabhoomi

In the early decades of the twentieth century, Puttaparthi was a hamlet by the Chitravathi River and rocky hills filled with anthills leading to its name. Roads were few and resources were scarce. Yet in this arid corner of Andhra Pradesh, in 1926, was born Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba who would redefine development – social and physical. Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba transformed this obscure hamlet for it to become the heart of a global movement rooted in selfless love, service, and sustainability.

When the young Sathya declared at the age of 14 that he had come to serve mankind, His mother, Easwaramma, feared that people might one day take Him away from their small village. With characteristic gentleness, He reassured her that He would never leave Puttaparthi - that this would remain His home and the

centre of His work for all time. True to that word, He stayed, and in doing so, transformed His birthplace into a haven for millions.

How many cities in the world are centres that give and serve people from across the globe? Puttaparthi does.

And what started it all are three simple requests of a mother to her son. Mother Easwaramma sought three simple things for Puttaparthi - a small school so that the village children can learn without walking long distances in sun and rain, a hospital for the sick, and drinking water for those who walked miles under the scorching sun for a pot of water.

Bhagawan fulfilled her prayers on a scale that the world could not have perceived: a vast movement that provides integrated education free of cost from primary education to post graduation and doctoral levels; super-specialty hospitals where complex surgeries are performed, again free of cost; and drinking water projects that bring life to the parched lands of Andhra Pradesh and beyond. What began as a mother’s concern for her village became a blueprint for the upliftment of humanity.

From the time Bhagawan chose to remain in His birthplace, Puttaparthi became the axis around which countless lives began to turn. The world’s seekers and statesmen, the humble and the learned alike, found their way to this quiet valley, drawn not by spectacle but by His presence and service projects. Over the decades, the once-forgotten village grew into the living heart of His mission - the cradle, classroom, and continuing pulse of the Sri Sathya Sai movement. Puttaparthi was not merely where Bhagawan was born; it is where His message took form, and where it continues to breathe.

The founding of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust in 1972 gave structure to that dream. The village with a few families has evolved into a self-sufficient township of schools, hospitals, hostels, museums, solar plants, and



The Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences at Prasanthigram, Puttaparthi, and Whitefield, Bengaluru, two general hospitals and two telehealth centres have completed over 9.45 lakh surgeries, 30,000+ bypass surgeries and procedures completely free of cost and offered consultations to more than 2.03 crore patients.



The Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust will continue to uphold and advance the noble mission of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba by sustaining and expanding the major projects He initiated, while embracing new technologies and best practices.



- RJ Rathnakar,
Managing Trustee,
Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust.

public services - all run free of cost, sans donation drives.

Inside Prasanthi Nilayam, the ashram that means “Abode of Supreme Peace,” life flows to the rhythm of selfless service. The Sevadals, a disciplined volunteer corps, are its lifeblood. Organised by the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, groups of men and women from every Indian State arrive in rotation throughout the year to serve pilgrims.

They guide crowds, maintain order, cook, clean, and care - with humility that dissolves all social boundaries. Industrialists may sweep corridors beside daily-wage workers; scholars may serve meals with students. The only rank here is sincerity.

Service in Prasanthi Nilayam often begins in its three vegetarian canteens - the South Indian, North Indian, and Western Canteens - established over time to meet diverse tastes. Every meal, prepared and served in silence and gratitude, is treated as Prasadam rather than food. Alongside them stand the bookstore, general stores, bakery, and small kiosks, all run on the same principle: simple, pure, and affordable.

Together they form a quiet economy of love, proving that even routine acts - serving rice, selling soap, or sharing a smile - can become sacred when done in the spirit of offering.

Outside the gates, Puttaparthi has grown into a graceful town that still retains its spiritual stillness. Clean guest houses, modest hotels, and vegetarian eateries accommodate the steady stream of visitors from every corner of India and over a hundred countries.

The town’s landmarks trace the chronicle of a miracle that unfolded in real time.

- ♦ Bhagawan’s birthplace, still preserved with simplicity
- ♦ The Old Mandir, where the first bhajans once echoed
- ♦ The Meditation Tree planted by Him to help seekers to enhance concentration
- ♦ The Wish-Fulfilling Tree where countless prayers were made and answered
- ♦ The restored banks of the Chitra-vathi River, once the playground of His early leelas
- ♦ The refurbished Chaitanya Jyoti



Mahasannidhi at Puttaparthi, which is the birth place of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba and is located on the banks of the Chitravathi. It is today the headquarters of the Sri Sathya Sai District in Andhra Pradesh.

Museum narrates the life and message of Bhagawan through art and digital storytelling

These are not tourist spots; they are touchstones of faith and continuity, reminding visitors that transformation begins from within.

A century after the birth of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Puttaparthi stands as a living proof that faith can build infrastructure, and love can govern an economy. A village once defined by want has become a town defined by giving.

In fulfilling His mother's prayers, Bhagawan fulfilled the deepest aspirations of humanity - for knowledge, health, and water, the essentials of dignity. The world still journeys to this Janmabhoomi not merely to worship, but to witness how one glorious individual's compassion reshaped a community.

As twilight settles over the Chitravathi and the evening bhajans rise from Sai Kulwant Hall, the air itself

seems to affirm His quiet assurance: "My life is My message."

The legacy continues

Now, did all this end when Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba attained Maha Samadhi in 2011?

No. The mission continues and is a model for sustainable, inclusive growth. It is also an inspiration to all devotees of Bhagawan who serve with compassion and love through the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations in India and the Sri Sathya Sai Global Council in other countries.

The Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, now headed by the Managing Trustee RJ Rathnakar, is taking the mission of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba forward be it in the focus areas of healthcare, education, and drinking water or new areas such as housing needs, disaster management, environment, and child nutrition.

In the last 14 years, the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust has taken up new

initiatives and joined hands with the government or other organisations to launch new projects.

It constructed 300 additional houses in the flood-affected villages of Odisha in 2012-2013. After the floods in Kerala in 2018, the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust embarked on renovating the 'nursery schools' at Cherthala, Chettikulangara, Thamarakulam, Chengannur, Mannar, Punnappara, Kandallloor and Mararikulam at ₹ 1.5 crores approximately.

Nine Anganwadi centres are constructed in the flood affected areas of Alappuzha in Kerala. Some of these centres are located in remote areas that lack motorable roads.

On the drinking water front, it extended the project in Anantapur district to cover 118 more habitations.

In 2016-2017, the Trust installed 52 Reverse Osmosis (RO) plants in villages around Puttaparthi, which had acute drinking water problems. Under the Sri Sathya Sai NTR Sujala



The Sarva Dharma symbol, including all main religions of the world, was drawn by Bhagawan during the Shivarathri in 1967.

The symbol, which is the official logo of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, also symbolises that the doors of Prasanthi Nilayam, His abode, are open to people of all faiths and countries, underlying the fact that unity is strength.



Pathakam, eight water purification plants were set up to provide safe and clean drinking water to 1,690 households in rural habitations with a majority of the population being poor.

The Trust has installed two drinking water plants in two remote hamlets of Kendrapada district in Odisha and five plants in Nuapada district in the same State.

As part of its commitment to School education, the Trust approved financial assistance in 2019-2020 to Sri Sathya Sai Gurukula Vidya Nikethan, Bejjanki (Telangana), Sri Sathya Sai Vidya Vihar, Palasa (Andhra Pradesh) and school run by Bhagawan Baba Mahila and Makkala Koota Trust, Mysuru (Karnataka). It also gave Rs. 50 lakhs to Sri Sathya Sai Trust, Andhra Pradesh for construction of a building for Rural Vocational Training Centre (RVTC) at Tadipatri.

The Trust also launched in 2021-2022 a nine-year Sri Sathya Sai Inclusive Education Project at an outlay of ₹5.6crores. Meant to benefit the vast section of differently abled children of India, the project owes its mandate to the Government of India, which requested the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust to initiate the campaign based on the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

The Trust signed an MoU with the Government of Andhra Pradesh to feed school students Ragi Malt. It provides Ragi flour and jaggery powder to make Ragi Jawa that is served in the schools in the morning sessions to about 30 lakh students studying from Classes I to X in 43,500 Schools across 26 districts of Andhra Pradesh.

In healthcare, when the pandemic struck, the Trust rose to the occasion and set up one of the first private quarantine centres in the district on at Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences, Prasanthigram, and provided medical supplies to all the quarantine centres of the Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh at Rs. 2 crore. It also contributed Rs. 5 crore

each to the Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations Fund (PM CARES Fund) and the Chief Minister Relief Fund, Andhra Pradesh.

In another noteworthy move, the Trust provided financial support of Rs. 1 crore to the Sri Sathya Sai State Trusts across the country to feed the poor and needy, including migrant workers who were affected by Covid-19.

The Trust has been extending financial and logistic support in phases to the Mahabodhi Karuna Charitable Hospital run by Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre, Choglam-sar, Leh (Ladakh). It has spent more than Rs. 2 crore so far so that the hospital could buy state-of-the-heart medical equipment and infrastructure to not only revive the 40-bed facility but also significantly enhance its capability to provide advanced healthcare to the local population.

The Sri Sathya Sai Mission has always been inclusive. It sent seven truckloads of provisions to various parts of Anantapur district serving over 1,450 Devadasis/Joginies in 195 villages. Under this Seva project, each selected family was presented with a hamper containing 25 kg rice, 2 kg atta, 1 kg toor dal, 1 litre sunflower oil, 1 sari and vibhuti prasadam along with a photograph of Bhagawan.

In 2022-2023 the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust along with the Sri Sathya Sai Global Council launched 'Sri Sathya Sai Prema Tharu' an initiative to plant 10 million trees as an offering to Bhagawan for His centenary year.

There is no sunset on the Sai Mission for it is based on the principle of "Service to Man is Service to God."

The centenary year of the birth of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba is a step into a era where the edifices will be built on the strong foundation of human values.

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of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.**



COVER
STORY

SATHYA SAI BABA

LORD WITH
INFINITE LOVE
Sathya Sai Baba



THE DIVINE WHO MOVED HUMAN HEARTS

AS PUTTAPARTHI RESONATES WITH CELEBRATIONS OF SATHYA SAI BABA'S BIRTH CENTENARY, THE WEEK LOOKS AT HIS LIFE AND LEGACY, AND EXPLORES WHY MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WORSHIP HIM AS GOD

BY ANIRUDHA KARINDALAM/Puttaparthi



light breeze sweeps across Puttaparthi, the headquarters of Sri Sathya Sai district that was carved out of semi-arid Anantapur in Andhra Pradesh three years ago. The town, about 150km northeast of Bengaluru, nestles against the rolling foothills of the Eastern Ghats, with the Chitravati river flowing quietly alongside.

Everywhere in Puttaparthi, one can feel the presence of Sathya Sai Baba, who was born here in 1926 and built free residential schools and colleges, free super speciality hospitals and massive drinking water systems. His words and images adorn the walls and shopfronts, and millions of people visit Puttaparthi every year. Millions more worship him as God. They speak of his love, how he transformed their hearts and lives, and how vibhuti (sacred ash) spontaneously appears on his photographs in their homes. Fourteen years after he breathed his last, he continues to draw seekers from around the globe—rich and poor, famous and unknown. Come November 23, Puttaparthi will resonate with the birth centenary celebrations of its beloved numen.

The heart of the town pulsates in the Prasanthi Nilayam ashram that

'I AM GOD; YOU ARE ALSO GOD'

Baba giving darshan at Prasanthi Nilayam decades ago

Sathya Sai Baba built in 1950. Thousands gather in the Sai Kulwant Hall here every day to sit crosslegged and listen to devotional songs, and then stand quietly in neat queues to touch his samadhi with their foreheads — at the very same spot he had stood and taught about divinity in human life. He sauntered slowly through the hall, accepting letters from devotees, stopping to talk to them, blessing them, producing vibhuti for them from his open palm.

Men and women sit separately in the hall, a large screen on both sides displaying visuals of the singers and listeners. Bhajans are sung here for 30 minutes twice every day, after an hour of veda chanting by teachers and students from his schools and colleges. The bhajan sessions resemble music classes: the lead singer sings a melodious line, and the other singers and many in the audience repeat it after him. Most of the bhajans praise Baba and Hindu divinities. Many other songs extol Allah, Jesus, the Buddha, Nanak and Zoroaster.

The Sathya Sai emblem is truly secular. It carries five religious symbols around a pillar of light: the OM, the dharma chakra, the Zoroastrian fire, the cross, and the crescent and star. Baba never once asked his devotees to renounce their religions; instead he told them to hold on to their own faith and deepen it through love, service and devotion. Muslim devotees talk fondly of the mosque he built in Puttaparthi in 1978; it was the first mosque in the village. A large number of longtime devotees live in the ashram, many of them non-Hindus. They aver that they do not miss Baba



as he still appears in their dreams.

A majestic university, a planetarium, an airport and a cricket stadium are among the marvels that greet visitors to Puttaparthi. The town was a tiny hamlet of a hundred people when Baba was born there in a thatched house and was named Ratnakaram Sathyanarayana Raju. The hamlet was so primitive that, as a child, he walked 4km to primary school and lived with his elder brother in a distant part of Anantapur



GETTY IMAGES

A LARGE NUMBER OF LONGTIME DEVOTEES LIVE IN THE ASHRAM, MANY OF THEM NON-HINDUS. They aver that they do not miss Baba as he still appears in their dreams.

while in secondary school.

No one believed him when he indicated at the age of 13 that he was the reincarnation of Saibaba of Shirdi, the saint-fakir whom both Hindus and Muslims revere. Raju took the name Sathya Sai Baba (meaning True Mother Father) and asked his father to worship him. The boy had been behaving strangely after recovering from a scorpion sting two months before. He had lost interest in his studies and daily routines,

displayed prescience and was talking deliriously of divinity.

Raju's relatives and neighbours grieved for the bright little boy who they thought had gone mad or had become possessed. They took him to medicine men and then to an exorcist who tortured mental cases. "I have seen the scars of torture on his head," says the distinguished physicist G. Venkataraman, who was vice chancellor of the Sathya Sai university, in a video talk. The torture did



not make the boy change his ways. In October 1940, a month before he turned 14, he quit school as well as home, and declared that he was an avatar of God. No one believed him.

Four years later, still in his teens, he built a small ashram near Puttaparthi. He frequently travelled in south India, staying at the homes of newfound devotees, and giving them rings and pendants taken out of thin air. "Miracles are my visiting cards," he famously said years later. But his greatest miracle is the transformation of human hearts.

Early accounts of the miracles spread by word of mouth. Visitors trickled in from Bangalore and Madras, travelling by bullock-cart the last stretch of a stony mud path after wading across the Chitravati river. They looked upon him as a guru with supernatural powers, one who could heal their ailments, read their hearts and visit them in their dreams. A spiritual master who had no guru, had not learnt Sanskrit, yet could quote from the Upanishads and explain the essence of several religions.

Many of those devout disciples could not comprehend it when he said, "I am God. You are also God. Only, you have not realised it." As he explained it, even a worm can turn God.

How does a human being turn God? Numerous people have asked him this question over the years. Simple, he replied: love all, serve all. As his ardent devotees elaborate, one has to energise with pure love every cell in one's body and serve everyone selflessly. It makes one divine.

One of his followers in the 1940s was N. Kasturi from Tripunithura in Kerala, who taught history in a college in Mysore and served as Ramakrishna Mission secretary for many years. Kasturi was in his early fifties when he accepted 22-year-



old Baba's command to write his biography—*Sathyam Sivam Sundaram*, published 12 years later. Kasturi also became the English translator of Baba's Telugu speeches and the editor of the ashram's publication, *Sanathana Sarathy*. The editor had a famous assistant and successor—V.K. Narasimhan, who had been editor-in-chief of the *Indian Express* during the Emergency and had retreated to Puttaparthi after his retirement from journalism.

Another eminent early devotee was Suri Bhagavantam, who was director of the Indian Institute of

Science and DRDO, and scientific adviser to the defence ministry. He was initially sceptical. One day in 1959, as they were on the dry river-bed, Bhagavantam mentioned to Baba that the scientist Robert Oppenheimer had recited a verse from the Gita as the nuclear bomb exploded in New Mexico in 1945. Do you want a copy of the Gita from me, Baba asked him. "I said yes, and he took a handful sand from the river-bed and put it into my own hands, and the sand turned into a text of the Gita," Bhagavantam recounted to his family and friends, and much later in



UNITED IN LOVE

A 2011 photograph of people celebrating Eid in Prasanthi Nilayam

Howard writes in his book *Man of Miracles*, published in 1968:

“Today his robe was old-gold in colour, but like the red one it fell from shoulder to floor in a simple line with no pockets, appendages or folds. All his robes are of this same style.... Under the robe he wears a dhoti and this has no pockets in it either. I now know these things for sure because, later on when we were staying at a guesthouse with Sai Baba, my wife used sometimes to iron his robes and dhotis in our room....

“From the doorway Baba pointed his finger at me and said, “Did you bring your wife?” I was pleased that he had remembered. He took us both into another room and talked to Iris about her health. He seemed to know just what was wrong with her and the basic causes of the trouble. He gave her much advice and then with his hand-wave produced from the air some medicinal ash for her to eat.

“I was, standing close by keenly watching the production because I still doubted that it was genuine magic. Now he turned to me, smiled, pulled his sleeve up to his elbow, and waved his hand under my nose. As

a Swiss documentary film. “It was the first shocking miracle I had seen, and it was beyond scientific explanation,” he said.

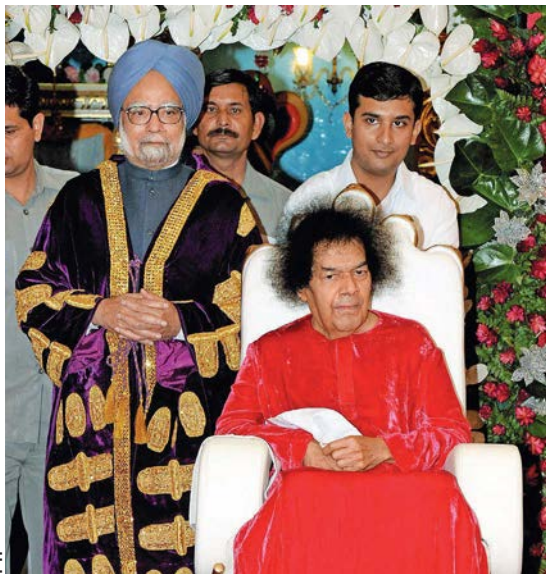
An Australian seeker, Howard Murphet, and his wife, Iris, were at the Theosophical Society in Adyar, Madras, in 1966 when they felt the urge to meet Baba. As they made it to Puttaparthi, Iris was indisposed and did not accompany Howard to a devotee’s house where Baba was staying. As he watched Baba create vibhuti, he suspected that it was the conjuring trick of a stage magician. Next day, Iris went with him.



NO ONE IN MY FAMILY HAS EVER TOLD ME TO STOP PRAYING TO BABA. I remain a proud Muslim, but Baba is God for me, too.

—Zuberat Sultanovh,
interior designer, Dagestan, Russia

SRI SATHYA SAI MEDIA CENTRE

**HIS GRACE, THEIR STRENGTH**

Sai Baba (from left) with prime minister Manmohan Singh, industrialist Ratan Tata, prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and cricketer Sachin Tendulkar

he turned the palm up I expected to see the usual ash, but I was wrong. Lying in the middle of his hand was a little photograph of his head with the full address of his ashram. The photo had a freshly-glazed look as if it came straight from a photographic laboratory. He handed it to me saying: 'You've been asking for my address. Here it is. Keep it in your wallet.'

A professor from UCLA, John S. Hislop, had in his teens lived for two years with theosophists Annie Besant and Jiddu Krishnamurti in the USA. In 1958 he visited the Himalayas to identify the right spot for an ashram for Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. Hislop found it in Uttarkashi, but the government would not part with it. The Maharishi later founded his ashram in Rishikesh, which is popularly known as The Beatles ashram.

Hislop spent years practising Vipassana meditation in Burma before gravitating to Baba in 1968. The seeker had finally found his master. Baba manifested a crucifix for him and later corrected his wife's misshapen foot which surgeons in America had declared as untreatable. Hislop wrote three books on Baba's

miracles and his philosophy, and published his conversations with Baba and the letters they exchanged.

They conversed and wrote letters in English, though Baba sometimes used interpreters. His devotees say he did not need interpreters. Yong Kongwhy, an oil and gas engineer and the Mandarin coordinator at Puttaparthi, is an ardent Buddhist. "I have known Baba since the late

1980s. He transcends place and country," he said. "I once took my mother-in-law to meet him. She spoke to Baba in Mandarin, and he replied in English. Yet, they understood each other perfectly." As we spoke, Kongwhy was overseeing a Mandarin recording session for his YouTube channel—a bhajan translated by him and sung in Mandarin by another devotee. He said the ashram



THE SATHYA SAI EMBLEM IS TRULY SECULAR. IT CARRIES FIVE RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS AROUND A PILLAR OF LIGHT: the OM, the dharma chakra, the Zoroastrian fire, the cross, and the crescent and star.



turns red during Chinese New Year, when devotees from China gather to celebrate.

People have asked Baba how he could converse with people speaking alien languages. He said: “I speak the language of the heart.”

But there is a more mystical form of communication, too. Meeriya Hop, 80, born in the Netherlands, met Baba 33 years ago. Today, she works as a therapist in the podiatry department at the general hospital in Puttaparthi, which he opened in 1954. “I have seen him countless times in my dreams. We talk at length. I feel he is within me; we are one,” she said.

Klaus Lensson, 77, a retired teacher from Frankfurt, first saw Baba in a video in 1984. “I came to Puttaparthi soon after. He gave me *prasad* and a ring, which I still wear,” he said. “I keep coming here to seek truth.” Old devotees like him say you cannot leave Baba once he invites you into his fold.

Baba led a simple life, ate simple food, wore just an orange robe, sometimes white or yellow. He wore no ornaments, not even a *rudraksha*

bead, nor any kind of thread seen on religious Hindu wrists. His devotees say he slept very little, responded to all letters he received, gave numerous discourses which became dozens of books, and kept no personal wealth. All the riches, cars, buildings and other assets of the ashram were in the name of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust.

He studied every little detail in the institutions he built, choosing the right leaders to carry out work and setting clear, inviolable and almost impossible deadlines for the construction of buildings and their inauguration. Making everyone work hard, he stepped in to glide over hurdles that appeared. An unbelievably efficient CEO! Not the jet-setting kind. Baba visited many Indian towns and villages in his youth, but seldom travelled far in his later years. His only overseas visit was to Uganda, where he helped his devotees escape state repression. He never spoke ill of anyone, not even the Ugandan dictator Idi Amin. “My life is my message,” he often said.

If thoughts are good, the mind becomes good, he said. He explained

that anger arose from unfulfilled desires, and one moment of anger drained the energy earned from six months of good deeds. Put a ceiling on your desires and live frugal lives, he said, counselling people against splurging, smoking, intoxication and meat eating.

A reflection of his thoughts can be seen in the strict discipline enforced in Prasanthi Nilayam. No one speaks loudly, there is no maudlin display of emotion or devotion, no delirious dancing, no loud prayers at the small temples in the complex, no loitering at night—all the ashram gates remain firmly shut from 9:30pm to 4:30am. Men and women have separate cloakrooms and canteens, supervised by scarf-wearing volunteers, as well as regular staff of the ashram. They are polite but stern.

Like Baba, many of his close followers have been strict disciplinarians. Some had been IAS officers like K. Chakravarthy, the senior most in the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, or IPS officers like H.J. Dora, former DGP of Andhra Pradesh, who enlivened *satsangs*. They brought with them the rigour of their administra-



tive experience.

Numerous people from the defence forces came seeking Baba's blessing. Both the Field Marshals, K.M. Cariappa and Sam Manekshaw, were his devotees. Lt Generals M.L. Chibber and S.P. Malhotra worked closely with him. Admiral S.M. Nanda had a special meeting with Baba before the 1971 war. Air Chief Marshal N.C. Suri has written about how vibhuti poured from his home in Delhi.

Perhaps the military man closest to Baba was Brigadier Sisir Kumar Bose, who was the first director of IIT Bombay and then of IIT Kharagpur. He was in charge of the construction of the magnificent administrative building of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, the Save Dharma Stupa and the Chaitanya Jyoti Museum. His son Col Jayanto Bose has in a video spoken of a miracle: during a bhajan session in Prasanthi Nilayam his father, who was in the audience, fell down and the doctors felt no heartbeat. After a few minutes, Baba walked up to him, tapped him on the shoulder and said, "Bose, get up." He did, immediately.

Rationalists who called him magician were aghast when Baba invited one of them, R.K. Karanjia, to interview him. Karanjia was a stormy petrel among journalists and had interviewed world leaders, most



SRI SATHYA SAI MEDIA CENTRE

notably Nikita Khrushchev of the Soviet Union, Zhou Enlai of China and Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt. He published a lengthy interview with Baba in his tabloid magazine *Blitz* in September 1976, under the heading, 'God is an Indian.'

Fearless, Karanjia shot bold questions at Baba. A sample: "What makes you so sure that you are Shirdi Baba incarnate?"

Baba replied: "The knowledge of

my authentic experience, of course.... The very fact that I announced that I am Shirdi Baba 40 years ago, when I was only 14 and when nobody in this part of the south had known or even heard of Shirdi Baba, proves this fact."

After responding to a question about materialisation of objects from thin air, Baba asked Karanjia: "Now coming to your question about a ring or watch with a distinct mark to prove that it is my own creation, would you like me to materialise something for you?"

Karanjia said, "Yes, Swamiji, I certainly would."

Karanjia wrote: "Baba waved his hand in the air to produce a silver ring bearing the inscription OM in the centre, with Sai Ram marks on the sides, and held my right hand to gently put it on the third finger. It was an exact fit and it was precisely what I wanted from Baba."

Another famous editor, the irrev-



BABA TRANSCENDS PLACE AND COUNTRY. I ONCE TOOK MY MOTHER-IN-LAW TO MEET HIM. She spoke to Baba in Mandarin, and he replied in English. Yet, they understood each other perfectly.

—Yong Kongwhy,
Mandarin coordinator at Puttaparthi



TEMPLE OF HEALING

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences in Puttaparthi— the building design took three months, says its chief architect Keith Critchlow of London, famous the world over for his sacred architecture concepts. The construction, by L&T, took only seven months

erent Khushwant Singh, wanted to interview Baba but was ignored. He later wrote that he could not understand why his friend, the jurist Nani Palkhivala, kept Baba's photograph on his working desk in Bombay. Khushwant Singh also mentioned that the US ambassador Kenneth Keating "wears a ring which Sathya Sai Baba reduced to the right size by simply blowing through it."

Ved Narayan, 58, from Kerala, leads the daily veda chanting at the Sai Kulwant Hall. An excellent speaker in several languages, like most other Sai alumni, he has daily communion with Baba. "He tells me what to do, what not to do," Ved Narayan said. Five years ago Narayan was preparing to visit his brother in the USA. "Baba came in my dream and told me not to go," he said. "I thought he would change his mind—but he repeated it. Soon after, Covid struck and travel shut down. Had I gone, I would have been stranded.

Baba foresaw it."

What impresses most visitors to Prasanthi Nilayam is that they cannot find there any hundi, the box for offering donations. One may offer flowers or break coconut at the Ganesha temple under a banyan tree inside the main gates. Most visitors are unaware that they can leave a cheque at the trust office. Or offer much more, like Ratan Tata did: he made TCS give technology for Baba's Vidya Vahini education project.

The Sathya Sai Seva Organisation, run by volunteers known as Seva Dal, spread Baba's message to the world outside. They organise bhajan, hold Bal Vikas classes, run homes for the elderly, and conduct medical camps in their own towns. Every year they arrive, in rotating batches, to serve at Prasanthi Nilayam and the hospitals. They spend from their own pockets for their food and room.

"During Onam, volunteers from Kerala come. April and May are hot,

so those months are for devotees from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. July and August are for volunteers from Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Foreigners, too, have fixed rosters; in January, Chinese devotees paint much of the ashram red," said Bisweswar Prusty of the media centre. Seva Dals do every kind work here; one can see college professors mopping the floor and cleaning toilets.

The Seva Dal scarves are colour-coded: men wear blue scarves, women yellow or saffron, all bearing the Sarva Dharma symbol and the motto—work is worship. Their emblem has a lotus with five petals symbolising truth, right conduct, peace, love and non-violence.

Interior designer Zuberat Sultanov, from Dagestan in Russia, came to know Baba after her husband's death in 2005. "A friend gave me his photograph. I placed it near a lamp and soon Baba began appearing in



my dreams, guiding me,” she said. “I am a staunch Muslim. No one in my family has ever told me to stop praying to Baba.” She divides her time between Russia and Puttaparthi, often bringing her children along. “I remain a proud Muslim, but Baba is God for me, too,” she said.

Her friend Mariya Vrdoljak, a teacher from Moscow, visited Puttaparthi in 1997. “After returning, I experienced many miracles,” she said. “In 2006, I met my future husband here. Swami himself told me to marry him. He is from Croatia, and he too communicates with Baba. He intervenes and puts you on the right path. Problems I cannot solve, he solves for me.”

Seva Dal volunteers helped in Baba’s drinking water projects, too. In one project, water from the Tungbhadra was taken to 750 villages in Anantapur district through 2,500km of pipelines. Another project took water from the Godavari to Medak and Mahbubnagar districts. Naxalites guarded the workers from villagers who resisted pipe laying in certain places. Many Naxalites laid down their arms when they learnt of Baba’s work, especially feeding the poor. A third project took water from Andhra to quench Chennai’s thirst.

Compassion for fellow human beings is nurtured in Baba’s schools and colleges. Courses from class 1

to PhD are free for everyone, and value education is paramount here. Baba called it Educare. One of the first deemed universities in India, the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning at Puttaparthi, is designed to develop compassion, besides nurturing mind, body and spirit.

Oxford-educated Kannada writer and English scholar V.K. Gokak was its first vice chancellor. (He later received the Jnanpith award.) It was Gokak who shaped the university curriculum. Baba had told Bhagavantam in the 1960s that a university would come up in the tiny village. Bhagavantam, who had been at the IISc, said impossible. Baba told him: “People might be close to me, but they do not understand me, my mission and my determination.”

One of Gokak’s successors, the scientist G. Venkataraman, says Baba was the only university chancellor in the world who knew all his students personally and interacted with them closely. Baba himself conducted a residential summer course at Ooty for many years from 1971 for his students and other youth. It was intimate gurukula style.

In 2010 prime minister Manmohan Singh was the chief guest at the convocation at the institute. After delivering an inspiring speech, he broke protocol to stay on for a few more hours to listen to Baba’s discourse.

“THE LINE BETWEEN SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY IS NOT FIXED. When you go deep enough, there is no conflict—both are quests for truth. When we cannot explain something, we call it God.”

—B. Raghavendra Prasad,
vice chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning



SRI SATHYA SAI MEDIA CENTRE

Two years ago B. Raghavendra Prasad took charge as the 12th vice chancellor. For him, it was a homecoming—his father was the first faculty member and he himself graduated from the institute 40 years ago. An accomplished scientist, Prasad has contributed to key defence projects at the IISc and to space science at the Indian Institute of Astrophysics. Reflecting on the balance between his scientific career and spiritual roots, he said: “The line between science and spirituality is not fixed. When you go deep enough, there is no conflict—both are quests for truth. When we cannot explain something, we call it God.”

The university runs four campuses and currently has 1,600 students. “We maintain a teacher-student ratio of 1:8—the best in the country,” Prasad said. “We try to inculcate five dimensions—intellectual, service, physical, cultural and spiritual.”

In the school hostels, both male and female students learn cooking,





MELODY OF DEVOTION

A bhajan session in Prasanthi Nilayam; it resembles music classes

Spread over 104 acres, the hospital has 90 doctors. While regular doctors are salaried, visiting surgeons serve free of cost. Many of them come from abroad. Spotless and airy, the hospital has high ceilings, and exudes the serenity seen on Baba's face. A face that retained its composure even during a midnight attack in 1993 by four intruders who killed two persons in the ashram and were shot dead by the police.

The super-speciality hospital in Whitefield was completed in a year. "We worked at breakneck speed," said D.V. Chandrasekhar, coordinator of its executive committee. "This was in 2000. As [the brigand] Veerappan had kidnapped [the Kannada actor] Rajkumar, there were tensions between Tamil and Kannada workers at construction site. It temporarily slowed down the pace of work. Yet, it was inaugurated as scheduled."

He stressed its ethos, saying the hospital did not incentivise its doctors to push surgeries. "People come here for honest opinions," he said.

The hospital design is K-shaped, signifying *Karuna*, compassion. Inaugurating it in 2001, prime minister A.B. Vajpayee said: "I have seen many hospitals and in some I have even been a patient. I can honestly say that I have rarely seen a hospital as grand, magnificent and breathtakingly beautiful as this one. When I first saw its photograph, I felt it was not a hospital at all, but a palace—a palace of healing, equally accessible to both the rich and the poor."

Baba's devotees hold dear eight simple words inscribed on his samadhi: Love all, Serve all. Help ever, Hurt never. The flame of his love burns in their hearts, reminding them of their divinity. 🕯

plumbing, etc. In 1997 the trust hosted the first Unity Cup match at the Hill View cricket ground. The India XI, led by Sachin Tendulkar, prevailed over the World XI, led by Arjuna Ranatunga. "Life is a game," Baba often told his devotees. "Play the game," underlining the impermanence of the human condition.

Compassion is most visible in his super specialty hospitals: everything is free for the patients and their bystanders, even heart surgery.

Baba said hospitals for the poor must be as grand as royal palaces, and as well-equipped as the best in the world. "The grandeur was to instil confidence and pride in patients—so that healing happened through medicine and an uplifted spirit," said Dr Anil Kumar Mulpur, cardio-thoracic surgeon at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences in Puttaparthi. "Anyone can come here. You don't need to believe in Sai Baba," Mulpur said.

The building design took three

months, says its chief architect Keith Critchlow of London, famous the world over for his sacred architecture concepts. The construction, by L&T, took only seven months. Baba had set a date for its inauguration before it was designed. Everyone was jittery—even Critchlow and the Hard Rock Cafe founder Isaac Tigris, who lived in Prasanthi Nilayam. But everything was ready on the appointed day in November 1991. Baba received prime minister Narasimha Rao and straightaway led him to the operation theatre door. Neither Baba nor Rao delivered any speech. Baba simply asked the doctors to do a heart operation. They did four, all successful.

Aksnine Khan, 15, from Birbhum, West Bengal, recently had a successful valve replacement here. "Baba is my God. He saved me," Khan said. Dr Mulpur reassured him: "You will be back in school soon. Study well, become a doctor, and come back here to serve."

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SATHYA SAI BABA



INTERVIEW

DANA GILLESPIE,
Blues singer and actorJust
hearing
his
name
uplifts
you

BY ANIRUDHA KARINDALAM

Singer and actor Dana Gillespie is a blues icon, who began her career in the 1960s as a teenage performer. She has released 74 albums and collaborated with legends such as Mike Jagger and Bob Dylan. In 1972, she played the role of Mary Magdalene in the first London production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Jesus Christ Superstar*. She became a devotee of Sathya Sai Baba in the 1980s, a profoundly transformative experience. Since then, Gillespie has recorded several devotional albums in Sanskrit, too. She visits Puttaparthi every year to sing and participate in cultural activities. Edited excerpts from an interview:

Q What drew you to Baba?

I think I first saw a photograph of him when I was about 15 or 16. I never forgot that image—his halo of hair and those huge garlands. Forty years ago [in the 1980s] I knew I had found my answer. Within three weeks, I was on a plane to India. He completely ignored me—for 12 years! I used to come once or twice a year, always sitting at the back. Even if I saw just a flash of his orange robe or a wisp of his hair from behind a pillar in the hall, I was content.

After 12 years of silence, I wanted to take his music to a wider audience. I am a blues singer, but I recorded a cassette of bhajans, hoping somehow he might bless it. On my last day at the ashram, I hid the cassette under my clothes, as you weren't allowed to take anything into Sai Kulwant Hall.

That day, I suddenly found myself seated in the front. Baba walked straight over to me and said, "Ah, the singer! Give me the cassette." No one knew who I was or that I had hidden it there. From that moment, I was completely hooked.

Q You performed in front of him on his 70th birthday.

Yes, that was quite something.

He had just taken my first bhajan cassette, which I had recorded in a slightly trance-like style so westerners could connect with it. Soon after, I got a call inviting me to sing for his 70th birthday. I assumed it was for bhajans, but I was told he wanted me to sing blues!

So I turned up with my blues band. There were crowds beyond imagination. From then on, he asked me to sing at most of his birthdays. The 75th birthday was especially memorable—I had my full band and performed a song I had written, 'OM Shakti'. When the camera pans across the crowd, you can see a million people. Westerners I have shown it were astonished.

In those days, I wore salwar kameez with a dupatta, still very western in appearance. Baba would come backstage before every performance to check if my clothes were pinned correctly. During that birthday week, he gave me eight saris—his gentle way of saying it was time to dress more traditionally. Now, I can drape a sari in the dark without a single pin!

Q How did Baba change you as a person?

My life changed completely—for the better. I honestly feel sorry for those who don't know about him. Just hearing his name uplifts you, even if you don't realise it.

For me, he is always there. I may not see him sitting beside me, but I feel his presence constantly—guiding, protecting, leading.

After I sang at his birthday, he started calling me for interviews. Contrary to what people said, he did see women alone. Sometimes I went with my mother, who was 80 at the time. Those sessions changed my life. Once, he asked if I had any questions. I never did—what could I possibly ask when he was there? But I said, "Swami, what is the meaning



SPIRITUAL DIAMONDS

Dana Gillespie
presenting an
album



**SCAN TO
WATCH THE
FULL
INTERVIEW**

of life?" He smiled and said just five words: "Play the game, be happy."

He once told me, "I will give you spiritual diamonds, and you will take them all over the world." I thought he was joking. But within months, I was performing and speaking across Russia, Central Asia, Australia and America—places I never dreamt of visiting.

Q Have you witnessed any miracles?

Oh, many. Once, I wanted to change my flight because I was getting clothes stitched in Bombay. Computers were down, and the staff said they couldn't help. I silently prayed to Swami. Suddenly, the bells rang, the computers came alive, and they changed my ticket. The next day, the flight I was supposed to take crashed in Bengaluru, killing many, including members of the Birla family.

When I was five, I fell into the River Rhine after a terrible accident. I couldn't swim. Underwater, a being dressed in white lifted me out and placed me back in my garden. My face was so twisted in the accident, I couldn't speak for months. I didn't

know who had saved me then—but now I do.

Later, I survived an avalanche, escaped car accidents, and found help in impossible situations. People may call these coincidences—I call them miracles.

Q What would you say to people curious about Baba but still sceptical?

Even Swami said, "Be sceptical. Be inquisitive." Blind belief isn't the point; understanding is. You should question, but also observe. Meet those who have known him. Read. Reflect.

When I first saw him, he spoke to me inwardly: "Give up eating meat." I obeyed, and never went back. That small act of faith transformed me.

Scepticism means you are thinking—and thought can lead to truth. But if ever you are lost, if your loved one is ill and you don't know whom to pray to, call out to Sai Baba. Take one step in faith, and he will take a hundred steps towards you.

Q Howard Murphet in his book compared Jesus Christ to Baba.

Do you see that connection?

Absolutely. *Man of Miracles* is a timeless book. When I first read it, my hands were trembling. I knew it was the truth.

Comparisons to Jesus and Krishna make sense. Every few millennia, an avatar appears. Baba is what we call a Purna Avatar—a complete manifestation of divinity. I have met people in the remotest parts of the world who claim to have seen him. In Samarkand, a young boy recognised his picture and said, "I played football with this man yesterday." In Azerbaijan, a Sufi mystic told me, "Sai Baba has come to me many times. I don't need a photograph."

It's hard for most people to grasp these things, but I have seen truth walking this earth. Even if everything else is taken from me, I will still have Baba. That certainty makes life fearless.

Baba taught that God is in everything: every leaf, every blade of grass. I see him as the channel through which my prayers reach the source. I don't so much "pray to" him as "through" him. 🙏



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SATHYA SAI BABA



he managing trustee of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust since 2020, R.J. Rathnakar studied in schools and colleges founded by Sathya Sai Baba, and earned an MBA. His father, R.V. Janakiramaiah, was Baba's younger brother.

Edited excerpts from an interview:

INTERVIEW

R.J. RATHNAKAR,
managing trustee,
Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust

He walked the talk

BY ANIRUDHA KARINDALAM



SCAN TO
WATCH THE
FULL
INTERVIEW

Q What are your earliest memories of Baba?

I must have been six years old then; I remember him calling me and asking my name.

Q How was he at home, away from the crowds?

He walked the talk—he lived his entire life in perfect alignment with his teachings. Whether he was before thousands of devotees, in his private chambers, in his drawing room or dining hall, he was always the same—serene, radiant and divinely poised.

Ordinary human beings often act differently in public and in private. But with Baba, there was no difference. His divine nature was constant. Those close to him were always alert, reverent and deeply devoted, because his presence commanded that. He never indulged in casual chit-chat or lowered the bar of his conduct, even in private. He was consistently the embodiment of divinity.

Q Tell us about the recent initiatives of the Central Trust and upcoming projects.

After Bhagwan's mahasamadhi, the Trust has continued his legacy and maintained the great institutions he founded. Our priority has been to uphold the principles Baba laid down, ensuring that his vision remains at the heart of every activity.

While many suggested adopting new models in line with modern trends, we decided to retain the essence of Baba's approach, introducing innovations only where they

support the core mission.

Over the years, we have added new initiatives. For instance, several mobile hospitals have been launched to reach rural communities. We also undertook housing projects in Odisha. Another major initiative is the Sathya Sai Archives, which preserves his teachings for posterity.

We have preserved nearly 6,000 manuscripts of Baba, and 25,000 hours of audio and video recordings. Advanced clean-room technology has been used to ensure their longevity.

In Andhra Pradesh, we have launched a major nutritional programme for government schools. Around 34 lakh students in 45,000 schools receive a nutritious *ragi java* drink three times a week throughout the year.

We have also planted nearly three million trees.

We have built, at a cost of ₹50 crore, a state-of-the-art Central Research Instrumentation Facility at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. It provides advanced equipment for research, accessible to college and doctoral students alike.

We are now preparing to introduce robotic surgeries in our cardiac care department. In Prasanthi Nilayam, we have enhanced facilities for devotees, including battery-operated cars for easier mobility, improved canteens and upgraded accommodations.

Q Are there plans to expand the Trust's projects nationally and internationally?

The Trust primarily operates within Andhra Pradesh and India, but our service extends beyond geographical limits. Recently, we supported the Mahabodhi Hospital in Ladakh, equipping it fully to serve the local community. Our campus in Dhar-



SUSTAINING THE ECONOMY

Farmers, vendors and labourers have benefited

do a great deal to promote Puttaparthi as a pilgrimage destination. The Trust-owned airport is one such asset.

As a charitable organisation, we are not equipped to run an airport, but we are open to partnerships. Discussions are already under way with potential operators and government. If this materialises in the next few months, it will transform the local economy by creating jobs and making travel more convenient for devotees from India and abroad.

The airport was built to serve devotees when no other facility existed. It was established by the Trust as nobody locally was willing to take the initiative. Today, we don't require that asset.

SANJOY GHOSH

wad [Karnataka] provides quality education to the region. Similarly, in Aluva, Kerala, we have established a new college.

Q Puttaparthi's economy is closely tied to the ashram.

What is being done to ensure the town continues to thrive?

Yes, Prasanthi Nilayam is the heart of Puttaparthi's economy. What was once a small, remote village has become vibrant because of Baba's presence. The influx of devotees from across the world sustains local businesses—hotels, restaurants, taxi services, shops and more.

Farmers, vendors and labourers benefit from the ashram's activities. Construction work for new projects

provides local employment. Many devotees, especially retirees, have settled here, drawn by the peaceful atmosphere and spiritual energy.

Now that Puttaparthi has been made a district headquarters, named Sri Sathya Sai district, new government offices and services have further boosted economic activity. We continue to work closely with local authorities to improve infrastructure and create a better environment both inside and outside the ashram.

Q Can the government do more to promote Puttaparthi as a major pilgrimage centre? What about reopening the airport to the public?

If the government chooses to, it can

Q If Baba walked in our midst today, what would he say about the state of the world?

Throughout his life, Baba taught unity, love and selfless service. In today's troubled world—marked by conflict, division and even unrest within families—his message is more relevant than ever.

He would remind us—"Love all, serve all. Help ever, hurt never." That simple mantra holds the key to peace. If world leaders, and indeed all of us, lived by it, the world would be a more harmonious place.

Baba often said, "Nations are many, but the earth is one." We have divided this planet with boundaries and maps, but in truth, humanity shares one home. Only when we think as one people and act with compassion can we create a peaceful, dignified and mutually respectful world for future generations. **1**

THE AIRPORT WAS BUILT TO SERVE DEVOTEES WHEN NO OTHER FACILITY EXISTED.... Today, we don't require that asset.