



## SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR

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### GLOBAL INITIATIVES

2014

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 152 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.



2014  
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.*

## BRINGING PEACE TO CONFLICT REGIONS

### Peace in the Middle East

Erbil, Kudistan, Iraq, November 19-21



Sri Sri Ravi Shankar visited Kurdistan to give solace to hundreds of displaced Christians, Kurds and Arabs. The International Association for Human Values, a sister concern of The Art of Living Foundation (AOLF), along with a few NGOs, have been working in Iraq providing material aid and trauma relief.

The visit, which was Sri Sri's third to Iraq, saw him deliberate with various leaders, bringing them on a common platform to discuss peace. He addressed the Kurdish parliament and met the Speaker of Iraqi

Kurdistan, Dr. Yusif Muhammad Sadiq and senior Yazidi leader and advisor to the government of Erbil, Dr Mirza Dinaayi. Mr. Abdul Hussein Abtan, Minister of Sports & Youth, Iraq flew in from Baghdad to meet the spiritual leader and commended the sincere efforts of the organization's volunteers.

Sri Sri talked about co-existence, compassion and commitment to peace at The IAHV-hosted conference titled "Protecting Women and Bringing Stability and Peace". He said: "Dark forces are creating conflict and havoc in the world. In 21st century, people want to drag us back to the dark ages."

"Kurdistan is a bouquet of culture and we must preserve it. Yazidis and Shabad who are facing persecution need to be preserved. Co-existence is the Divine design for the planet." he added. "We want to send a clear message to those who think violence is the way that they are wrong," he said.

Sri Sri also visited and interacted with the inmates at AOLF's relief camp in Sinjar mountains and listened to their plight. "We could not speak the language at the camps, but we could communicate. We felt their pain," he said.

Giving solace to the inmates languishing in inhuman conditions for months, Sri Sri said, "Your life will get on track soon. Please know you are not alone, there are lots of good people on the planet with you."

**WORKING TOWARDS INTER-FAITH/  
INTER-CULTURAL HARMONY**

**‘Sneh Milan’:  
Exchanging Love & Belongingness  
Bangalore, India, February 10**



In an effort to bring together communities and ease communal tensions, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar has been regularly interacting with and bringing together interfaith leaders at his events in India.

One such event, ‘Sneh Milan’ was organized at the Bangalore International Centre of The Art of Living. Muslim clerics and decision makers present at the event spoke about the oneness of God and highlighted the Quranic injunction of a peaceful and harmonious co-existence among people of all faiths. The event started with the recitation of verses of the Holy Quran that invoke the virtues of peace.

Addressing the gathering, Sri Sri emphasized the need for spreading the wisdom of the ancient Indian ideal of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, which says the whole world is one family. He says, “God has created us one.”

Several guests from Iraq, Pakistan, Israel, Oman, the UAE and Afghanistan were part of the event. They applauded Sri Sri’s work in promoting harmony in their country.

**Peace Foundation Deputation Calls on Sri Sri**

**Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, India, July 28**

State and matters relating to maintenance of peace and normalcy in all parts of J&K.

Many representatives of some NGOs also met with Sri Sri. Many Muslims expressed their appreciation towards his work and that of The Art of Living.

At an interactive meet in Srinagar, Sri Sri said: ‘We must work together for unity and peace.’

**Honoring Cultures & Traditions at the Community Levels**

**Bangalore, India, January 26**



Sri Sri Ravi Shankar’s efforts in creating bridges continued as he flagged off a peace rally to promote unity between the conflicting Tamil and Kannada communities.

He applauded the youth gathered at the rally for keeping the culture and traditions of their communities alive and encouraged them to actively build a stronger nation.

**Art of Living Foundation Hosts Japanese Minister of Education, Culture and Sports**

**Bangalore, India, August 7**



The Art of Living received H.E. Mr. Hakubun Shimomura, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan at its International Center.

Welcoming the Chief Guest, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar said, “The Japanese have a great message to offer about teamwork, cleanliness and perfection in everything

they do." He also emphasized that the East has a long tradition of harmonious co-existence of different faiths and this message should be taken all over the world.

Several dignitaries from the government, the judiciary, the business world were present at the event.

*"Wherever there is sustainable, affirmative, and positive cooperation, there is justice and peace and the Holy Spirit dwells in us. And when that happens, we become the ultimate, beloved, economic community. And to me, Sri Sri's community is all about the above."*

~ Dr. Lawrence Edward Carter, Senior Dean of Morehouse College, USA.

*"As I go back to America, I go back a changed person because I was here, at the heart of the Art of Living."*

~ Dr. Gerald L. Durley, pastor of the Providence Missionary Baptist Church in Atlanta, GA

Among his different engagements in Canada (Oct. 10-19), Sri Sri visited the Cathedral Basilica Notre-Dame de Québec.

## ENVIRONMENT

Over the years, Sri Sri has launched projects that help restore the balance in nature and its ecosystems. Cleaning of River Yamuna in north India, rejuvenation of River Tawarja and River Gharni in the East, rejuvenation of River Kumudavathi in the South to name some.

Taking this to neighbouring Nepal, Sri Sri inaugurated the Bagmati River Cleaning Campaign with hundreds of volunteers: teachers, students, Nepal's armed police forces, civil servants. They had gathered on the banks of the river and pledged to restore River Bagmati's lost glory.

Sri Sri, during his earlier visits to Kathmandu, had urged the people to clean River Bagmati and inspired the Bagmati River Cleaning campaign in 2014.

The Art of Living volunteers conducted free Breath-Water-Sound workshops (that lay emphasis on clean environment) for slum dwellers, special workshops for children, and launched an awareness campaign regarding the project.

More than 100 organizations and 100,000 volunteers have been engaged in the campaign. Around 500 tons of garbage has been removed from the river so far.

## Art of Living Hosts Farmer's Convention Bangalore, India, February 22

Villagers from 278 Karnataka villages in Karnataka came together at the Kumudavathi Utsav and Farmers Convention at Mahimapura village hosted by The Art of Living.

The seminar emphasized the importance of river rejuvenation and shared the success and learnings of The Art of Living's Kumudavathi River Rejuvenation Project.

## BRINGING RURAL DEVELOPMENT TO FOCUS

### Taking Free Education to the Grassroots Bhubaneswarnagar, Assam, April 9



After successfully running 404 free schools in rural and tribal India that educates 40,000 underprivileged children, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar opened yet another in the backward regions of north-east India.

He addressed the inaugural ceremony of Sri Sri Gnan Mandir, free school by The Art of Living in Bhubaneswarnagar, Assam that will provide free education to over 400 children.

He also visited and interacted with the children from Art of Living's free schools in Nalbari and Barduarbagan near Guwahati.

"We don't have good facilities in our villages but the standard of education in this school is so good that we feel we live in a developed town," says Sapna Deb of Shantinagar, Tripura, whose daughter studies in one of the Art of Living schools.

“It is very encouraging to see parents who have never gone to school lining up to get their children educated. The response of the parents is so overwhelming that we have decided to start classes for adults too,” said Mitra Agarwal, The Art of Living’s Project Coordinator.

**Promoting 'Natural Resources Management' in Farming**  
**Bangalore, India, November 16**

Over 2,000 farmers from various states of India discussed "Natural Resources Management in Farming" and model village training at a 3-day meet organized by the Sri Sri Institute of Agricultural Sciences & Technology Trust (SSIAST).

While inaugurating the meet, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar said, “We need to make ‘kisan sangh’ (farmers’ group) in every village. More and more farmers need to adopt and implement the techniques of Natural Farming. Our earth has plenty for everyone. We only have to manage its resources well. Chemical-free farming is a new hope for the farmers in India and we will work with vigor to spread this knowledge.”

Held at The Art of Living International Center, the meet focused on the importance of saving indigenous cows, using natural ways of farming and chemical-free farming.

**Sri Sri Spreads Waves of Happiness**  
**Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, April 12**

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar visited another important northeast Indian state - Arunachal Pradesh.

During his two-day stay in the capital, several dignitaries and bureaucrats called on him and discussed ways of establishing a peaceful and prosperous Arunachal Pradesh. Sri Sri also met the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh Lt Gen (Retd) Nirbhay Singh. Thousands travelled from far-off places to attend his public event.

**FURTHERING EDUCATION**

**Sri Sri University Celebrates Its 1st Convocation**

**Bhubaneswar, Orissa, September 3**

The Art of Living’s Sri Sri University celebrated the graduation-day ceremony of the pilot batch of graduates of the MBA Program 2012-2014 in Bhubaneswar.

Addressing the distinguished invitees and students, Sri Sri said, “One of the main purposes behind setting up this university is to provide the best of the East and the West. But science, when clogged with prejudice, slows down and spirituality, when clogged with superstition, loses its utility. We need to break the spirituality of superstition and science of prejudice.”



This is the uniqueness of Sri Sri University that has been achieved in a short span of its existence as Dr. Pradeep Kumar Panigrahi, Honourable Minister, Higher Education, Science and Technology, Odisha pointed out, “The University keeps alive the ancient spirit with modern technology.”

The Honourable Chief Minister, Odisha, Mr. Naveen Patnaik, who was the chief guest at the convocation, lauded the progress and performance of the University saying it had “established itself as a promising and an excellent institute”.

The convocation also saw the launch of its new graduate and post-grad programs in Financial Markets, in Good Governance, in Performing Arts and in Yoga.

**EMPOWERING WOMEN & SPREADING AWARENESS**

Over 400 villagers from Chomu village vowed to fight against female feticide, on Sri Sri’s behest. They committed themselves towards the cause of women empowerment. The village heads spoke with Sri Sri about their conditions in the village and sought Sri Sri’s advice.

## INCULCATING ETHICS IN DIFFERENT WALKS OF LIFE

### Address at the Business Summit 2014 New Delhi, India, October 7



Sri Sri was invited to address the Global SME (Small & Medium Enterprises) Business Summit 2014, organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry. The two-hour session with Sri Sri included a talk, followed by a brief question & answer session amidst an audience of about 560 people.

### At the 1st World Summit For Ethics On Sports Zurich, Switzerland, September 18



At World Forum for Ethics in Business initiative, for the first time, leading decision-makers from sports, politics, business, academics and NGOs converged in Zurich to define the role of sports in solving societal problems and to celebrate ethical sportsmanship.

Addressing the gathering, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, co-founder, World Forum for Ethics in Business, said, “The

tremendous energy of the youth of the world must be channelised through sports. If we replaced guns with a football or a cricket bat, this would be a step towards global peace. Engaging athletes in peace building initiatives and in community service gives a sense of higher purpose. Sportsmen having a higher cause will keep them out of depression when they are no longer playing.”

This unique platform witnessed renowned sports stars like Katarina Witt, Sven Hannawald, Alain Sutter and Brazilian multiple Olympic medalist Gustavo Borges.

### Speaking at the Stanford University San Francisco, USA, July 1



Sri Sri addressed a captive audience at the Stanford University with Dr. James Doty, Founder Director of CCARE (Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education).

### Talk at the American Enterprise Institute Washington D.C., USA, June 24



Sri Sri emphasized the importance of ethics and compassion in economic models at the interview-cum-talk, titled “Human flourishing: A conversation with Sri Sri Ravi Shankar”. Arthur Brooks, president of American Enterprise Institute (AEI) asked him questions ranging from individual well-being to the importance of ethics in the capitalist model.

An estimated 350 Washingtonians packed into the hour-long event at AEI's headquarters in D.C. to watch the rare co-mingling of economic policy and spirituality.

*“Whether capitalism, communism, socialism or whatever ‘ism’ it is - no ‘ism’ will work without humanism.”*

~ Sri Sri

## Corporate Culture & Inspiration

Rome, Italy, May 4



“Happiness is that when one is enthusiastic from inside. The combination of awareness & enthusiasm is most needed in life or in any setup” – Sri Sri

Sri Sri was the keynote speaker at the Maruti Suzuki Convention to inspire the crowd on ‘The Way of Life’. He underlined the importance of a cordial and stress-free atmosphere at the work place. He showed few ways of achieving this: by involving employees in social projects, sharing meals, enhanced communication, occasional gatherings and meditation.

In another meeting, Sri Sri also discussed the issue of human trafficking with the Global Freedom Network Association. approach towards business.

## Promoting Ethics in Business

Kathmandu, Nepal, January 18

“Businesses that exhibit and promote a strong corporate code of ethics can prosper in the long run because they show a commitment to sound professional behavior.”  
– Khil Raj Regmi, Chairman, World Forum of Ethics in Business.

At the World Forum for Ethics in Business conference with the theme Business Ethics for a Prosperous Nepal, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar emphasised that only ethical practices provide happiness. ‘Wealth without happiness would do nothing,’ he said, urging people to change their mindset.



The theme stemmed from the need to reconsider business ethics styles and strategies in the face of the social and economic challenges in Nepal.

### Conference Highlights:

- Sustainable ethical practices for profitability
- The role of business, government / judiciary / youth for sustainable collaborations
- Experience sharing on the value of an ethics-based approach towards business

## URGING YOUTH TO PARTICIPATE IN COUNTRY BUILDING

Spirituality and nation-building are related, says Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

During the election year in India, Sri Sri inspired his volunteers to educate citizens about the impact of voting on the government, its governance and on the quality of life they will lead.

He actively promoted environment-friendly projects like ban on plastic, tree plantation, chemical-free farming, preservation of water resources and community development projects like beggar rehabilitation, blood donation camps and creating a violence-free, corruption-free society. Awareness campaigns, rallies, surveys, public talks were a part of this massive nation-building activity.

## On Independence Day, Sri Sri Urges Youth to Take Pride in their Roots

Bangalore, August 15

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar exhorted the Indian youth to take pride in their roots as India celebrated its 68th Independence Day.



“This will increase your self-esteem. Be creative, equip yourself with different talents along with your educational qualifications and become unstoppable in taking India forward.”

*Come together, make a group and do social work. Wherever you find injustice in the system, put collective pressure but with a smile. The Volunteer for a Better India initiative can bring about a positive change in many areas.*

~ Sri Sri

### **Giving Blood Donation a Boost** Madgao, India, June 4



Sri Sri Ravi Shankar launched the ‘Save Life India’ project, a special blood donation initiative.

Over 2000 people pledged to support blood donation and work towards community welfare at the event - ‘My India, My Vision’.

Sri Sri also appealed people to donate blood on social media.

### **City of Joy Urged to Vote for a Better India** Kolkata, India, April 8



Sri Sri interacted with more than 10,000 enthusiastic volunteers who worked dedicatedly for the Volunteer for Better India (VBI) Campaign. The campaign was to raise public awareness about voting and to encourage people to exercise their vote. Some of the volunteers were engaged in the voter awareness initiative that resulted in 3,912 new voter registrations.

Sri Sri also inaugurated new service initiatives for slum development, diagnostic centre, blood donation camps, zero budget chemical farming and tree plantation.

*“If we give seven hours per week to the nation, we can do a lot for the country.”*

~ Sri Sri

### **Encouraging Community Service** Mumbai, Maharashtra, April 6 - 7



Volunteer for community welfare was the single message that resounded at the ‘India First’ conference as well as a volunteer convention that was attended by over 10,000 people.



## Calling on People for Community Service Pune, Maharashtra, April 5



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“This will increase your self-esteem. Be creative, equip yourself with different talents along with your educational qualifications and become unstoppable in taking India forward.”

## Inspiring People Towards a Better Governance

Buldhana & Nagpur, Maharashtra, April 4



Over 3000 people pledged to work towards Volunteer for a Better India in a conference with Sri Sri. He also urged the audience to avoid the use of plastic, and educated them about the benefits of chemical-free farming.

## Serve the Nation

Aurangabad, Maharashtra, April 3

Over 8000 people from Marathwada, Vidarbha and Nashik participated in the Volunteer for a Better India (VBI) Convention with Sri Sri.

The group shared several service initiatives which they had undertaken, after the launch of the VBI program in February 2013.

Recognizing the good work of The Art of Living, Sri Sri was honoured with the ‘Aurangabad Citizen Forum’.



One such service initiative was the rehabilitation of 250 former beggars. After a stress-elimination and vocational training program, the group began earning wages per month. They were felicitated and encouraged by Sri Sri at a special event, attended by 35,000 people.

## Villages in Bihar Follow Violence-Free Path Bihar, March 8 - 13



During his visit to Bihar, Sri Sri met youth from 100 villages around Bhagalpur who had given up the path of violence. The youth received a new lease of life, after having undergone The Art of Living program.

In Samastipur, Sri Sri urged a huge gathering to vote during the upcoming elections. He also emphasized the need to maintain a clean environment and undertake projects regarding the same. “Everyone must give one hour a day for the country,” he said.

## Supporting the Crusade Against Corruption

Thrissur, Kerala, February 3

“It is important that we vote for those who strengthen India,” said Sri Sri. “Corruption is the only reason why we are not growing. Development should be inclusive and complete.”

Sri Sri also spoke about environmental preservation. “Trees should be planted; water sources have to be protected. We need to give life back to our rivers.”

## Honoring a 75-Year-Old Crusader's Lifework

Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, January 29



“Let us all, irrespective of color, caste, region, and religion, work together for unity and a corruption-free society,” shared Anna Hazare, social activist and crusader, at a ceremony where Sri Sri Ravi Shankar honored him with the Gandhi Darshan Award.

While felicitating the 75-year-old Anna Hazare with the jury award for lifetime activities, Sri Sri said that people like Hazare kept Gandhiji's tradition alive.

## Encouraging People to Empower Others

Amravati, Maharashtra, India, January 14



Sri Sri sent out a strong message of service to the community and nation to a large gathering of villagers in Amravati, Maharashtra. Sri Sri urged every one to participate in the electoral process and enroll themselves in the voter list.

Inspiring individuals to make a difference to their communities, Sri Sri urged doctors and lawyers to take up at least three cases a year for the underprivileged, free of cost.

*“True service is not only giving food to someone, but enabling a person to stand on his / her feet.”*

~ Sri Sri

## SPREADING WELLNESS

Sri Sri has been encouraging research and development in holistic healthcare through the ancient Ayurvedic system of healing.

In December, Sri Sri College of Ayurvedic Science and Research Hospital held a two-day seminar in Bangalore on how Ayurveda could help diabetes, particularly diabetic complications relate to eyes, nerves, ulcers.

Hosting the meet in its decennial, the hospital brought together noted experts in the field and over 1000 doctors and students to revive the use of Ayurveda for diabetic care. A new Ayurvedic drug for diabetes, ‘Mehantakavati’ was launched. Doctors, ayurvedic exponents, academicians, politicians and medical experts attended the event.

## Sri Sri Inaugurates North American Ayurveda Conference

Bangalore, India, July 4 - 6

Sri Sri inaugurated the North American International Ayurveda and Yoga Conference at the Art of Living Ashram in Boone on July 4, 2014. Hosted by AAPNA (Association of Ayurvedic Professional of North America), doctors and professors from Harvard, Yale and other leading universities participated. Many expressed that the western world has been deprived of the benefits of Ayurveda due to prejudice against eastern philosophy and sciences.



Sri Sri Ravi Shankar received a Certificate of Recognition from the California Legislature Assembly on June 30, recognizing the efforts towards building a stress-free world by promoting love, peace and harmony through yoga and meditation.

## 33 YEARS OF SERVICE



### ART OF LIVING FOUNDATION AND IAHV

33 years of Service & Celebration

Presence in 152 countries

Have touched the lives of 370 million people

Run humanitarian projects in every sphere of life

Unite across religion, race, creed

Run 3000 centers across the world

Over 100 million man hours in developing the full human potential

Over 150,000 Stress Relief Workshops benefiting more than 5.6 million people

One of the largest volunteer-based networks in the world

Reached 40,212 villages in India

Developed 50 model villages in India

Run 407 free schools teaching over 40,000 children in rural areas across India



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