



SRI SATHYA SAI INSTITUTE OF HIGHER LEARNING

(Deemed to be University)

Press Release

15 January 2020

Prasanthi Nilayam, Andhra Pradesh, India

Prize Distribution Ceremony of Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions Annual Sports & Cultural Meet 2020

The Prize Distribution Ceremony of the Annual Sports and Cultural Meet 2020 for the Sri Sathya Sai educational institutions was held on 15 January 2020, on the auspicious occasion of Makarasankranti, at Sai Kulwant Hall, Prasanthi Nilayam, Andhra Pradesh.

The ceremony celebrated the excellent performances in sports, cultural and fine arts events during the Annual Sports and Cultural Meet during the academic year 2019/20 by students of Sai educational institutions.

The programme commenced shortly after 8:20 a.m. with a grand procession comprising the University brass band, *veda* chanting group of students and a flag-bearing squad.

The Master of Ceremonies, Sri S Sai Manohar, Warden, Muddenahalli Campus and Asst. Professor, Dept. of Management & Commerce, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL), in his introduction, talked about the auspiciousness of Makarasankranti and its associated cosmic changes relevant to man, such as keeping God as a constant in our life. He requested all gathered to ask Bhagawan Baba to bless us with the ultimate trophy – the gift of offering all our efforts at His Lotus Feet.

The first talk of the event was delivered by Dr. (Miss) P L Rani, Associate Professor & Head, Dept. of English Language & Literature, SSSIHL. She likened the Sports and Cultural Meet to a spiritual allegory. There is much more to it than what meets the eye. The need for God and the longing for His presence, for example, is felt in the burst of crackers or the harmony in the various events between participants is akin to that of the thought, word and deed within all of us. When we achieve this, along with utmost humility, God enshrines Himself in the center of our beings and becomes the eternal witness to all we do.

She talked about the Sports and Cultural Meet being the process of purification and how it brings a synchronicity between intention and action. When you have purity of purpose, God responds in the same spirit, and more. Ultimately, just as when the student in a motorbike stunt, during his or her performance, forgets all the precise movements and mathematical calculations (achieved during the weeks of practice), and takes a leap of faith, life too is about taking the grand leap of faith, she concluded.

Her talk was followed by a series of brief talks by students of Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School (SSSHS) and of all four campuses of SSSIHL. The speakers were Miss Mudundi Amrutha, III B.Sc. (Hons.) in Physics of Anantapur Campus, SSSIHL, Sri Arvind Narayan of XII Std., SSSHSS, Sri Suhas Subramanya, III B.B.A. of Muddenahalli Campus, SSSIHL, Sri Rishikesh V S, III B.Sc. (Hons.) in Biosciences of Brindavan Campus, SSSIHL and Sri Sridhar K M, II M.B.A. of Prasanthi Nilayam Campus, SSSIHL.

The talks centered around the deep significance the Sports and Cultural Meet has for all Sai students. From chiseling their personalities by growing their inner qualities (such as patience and perseverance) to finding the real purpose *behind* everything they do. They cited examples of how the events bring out their latent talents, but more importantly, how it is all strung together—almost magically—in such a short period of time. In order to achieve the best result possible, students morph their personalities, often for events which are not natural to their talent or liking, thus moving them out of their comfort zone. All of this can only be achieved with teamwork and unity. In the end, ultimately, the Annual Sports & Cultural Meet becomes a grand journey of self-exploration.

Following the talks, the Founder Chancellor's Cups—symbolizing the grand effort put in by each institution given—were awarded by Sri K Chakravarthi, IAS (Retd.), Chancellor, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning. The respective captains and vice-captains of each Sai institution and campus received them.

After the Physical Directors of each Sai educational institution took namaskar of Bhagawan Baba and submitted the prize lists to Him, members of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust and the Vice-Chancellor, SSSIHL then awarded the trophies of the House and Individual champions of SSSHSS and each SSSIHL campus under various categories.

This was followed by the Divine benediction of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. His discourse focused on the power of the mind. "The one who can win over the mind can win over anything in the Universe. There is no greater power than the mind. Mind is the primal cause responsible for either bondage or liberation. Man is unable to control his mind today. If you control your mind, you will be able to control anything," He said. He appreciated the enthusiasm and dynamism with which the students approached the Annual Sports & Cultural Meet and how they did it with the intention of pleasing Bhagawan Baba.

He asked students to dedicate all their words, thoughts and actions to God in perfect harmony and consider everything as an offering to God. This is true Bharatiya culture, He said. He concluded by urging students to uphold and maintain the twin principles of Sathya and Dharma and lead an ideal life.

Following *bhajans*, *prasadam* distribution, and a few pieces by the Anantapur Campus Brass Band, the event concluded at 11 a.m.

Notes for Editors

The Sri Sathya Sai educational institutions include all the four campuses of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Sri Sathya Sai Primary and Higher Secondary Schools, Smt. Eswaramma High School and SSSIHMS College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences.

The Annual Sports and Cultural Meet is a stand-out event of the annual academic calendars of all Sai educational institutions. The event puts into effect all the underlying principles of the values-based integral education system practiced at these institutions for over thirty-five years. Perseverance, Self-confidence and team spirit are some of the traits that students develop during the lead to the event.

The prime motivation for this offering is to please the Revered Founder Chancellor, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Preparations for the event began a month in advance. The creative ideas, setups, props, practice and final performances were a combined effort of the teachers and students of the institutions with limited budgets and very little assistance from the outside.

During a public discourse on 14 January 2003, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba said, "Here, people have to understand the difference in the sports activities of our students and the students elsewhere. The students outside have only one goal in their mind, i.e. to win a prize or a medal, whereas our students' only aim is to please Swami."

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL) is a unique university established in 1981 to inculcate ethical and moral values in students. It is a modern gurukula that puts equal emphasis on both secular education and spiritual growth and the development of a student's character in an effort to fulfill the vision of education for human transformation of its Revered Founder Chancellor, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

The university hosts over 1350 students across four campuses in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, India. It has a merit-based open admissions policy for all, irrespective of income, religion or social status.

SSSIHL provides free education to all programmes of study. This includes waiver of all fees- including tuition, examination, laboratory, library, sports and medical.

Programmes offered include undergraduate, postgraduate, professional and research.

For further information, visit: sssihl.edu.in

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