



SRI SATHYA SAI INSTITUTE OF HIGHER LEARNING

(Deemed to be University)

Summer Course in Indian Culture & Spirituality 2023 at Prasanthi Nilayam Campus: A Brief Report

The Summer Course in Indian Culture and Spirituality for the year 2023 was held at the Prasanthi Nilayam Campus, SSSIHL from 13-15, July 2023. The theme chosen for the three-day event was 'Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaye', a Vedic dictum that roughly translates to 'The one who knows, is liberated.'

Day 1:

The Summer Course in Indian Culture and Spirituality was inaugurated with a ceremonial procession from the foyer of the auditorium, led by the Vedam students holding the auspicious Poornakumbham. The proceedings of the day began with the ceremonial lighting of lamp by dignitaries followed by a talk setting the context for the summer course by Dr Shailesh Srivastava. His talk, laced with true incidents from the yesteryear summer course events, was a reminder to all the students and staff of the great opportunity that was bestowed upon us, to be in Swami's university, which has an extremely different perspective on knowledge, conduct, and life.

Following his talk was the inaugural address by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Raghavendra Prasad who dwelt on various aspects of Swami's educational institutions, the purpose of such events, and the duty and expectation of every student. The audience then had the good fortune of listening to the Divine Discourse from the revered Founder Chancellor, Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba.

Following a short break, Sri Vinay Kumar, Trustee, of Sri Sathya Sai Karnataka Trust, addressed the gathering on the topic "Living with God is True Education". Recollecting his experiences with Swami, he emphasized how Swami considered even the minutest of details when it came to any task and how we can emulate such a mindset through practice.

The post-lunch session started with the Divine discourse delivered on Taittiriya Upanishad. Post-discourse, the students and staff divided themselves into various groups, where they discussed and debated the topics that Swami highlighted in the discourse. Later in the evening, Shri. C G Sai Prakash, SSSMC, shared his experiences with Bhagavan Baba in a parayanam session, organized by the Sri Sathya Sai Senior Boys Hostel.

Day 2:

The second day began with invocatory vedic chants followed by a brief recap of the previous day's proceedings. Following the recap was a vibrant quiz on "Indian Knowledge Systems" organized by Dr. Chandrahaas and Shri R.



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Sai Naveen from the Department of Management and Commerce wherein 4 teams, namely, Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva comprising 24 students across different classes participated. The two-pronged benefits of the quiz included the ignition of the spark of curiosity towards Indian culture, and more importantly, our beloved Bhagawan's life, mission, and teachings.

Subsequently, everyone had the good fortune to listen to Bhagawan's Divine Discourse which was followed by an insightful talk by an alumnus and founder of Yousee.in, Shri Gunaranjan. His talk "Education is for life; not for a living", was woven around the seva activities he and his team do, the help he received from the SSSIHL alumni, and finally how the current students must focus on building adaptability, resilience, and change management skills in their lives. This concluded the forenoon session.

The afternoon session marked the culmination of the two-day study circle on the Taittiriya Upanishad. The day ended with a magical, musical treat- the Bhajan Antakshari session hosted and organized by Dr. Siddhartha Raju and Dr. A S Viswanathan, wherein, we got a glimpse of the breadth & depth of Sai bhajans. The major takeaway was the need to harness the power of music, of Sai bhajans in particular, to reach the lotus feet of our beloved master.

Day 3:

The third and final day saw eminent speakers grace the stage to share their thoughts on the Summer course in Indian culture and spirituality. The first speaker Shri. Vijay Menon, a doyen in the field of human development partnering, competency development, leadership, innovation, and strategy, spoke on the topic, "From Vishyarthi to Vidyarthi to Vinayarthi.". Apart from training several IAS officers, judges, and MDs of various countries worldwide, he is also a personal strategy coach and advisor to many CXOs across the country. His talk dwelt on the importance of remembering the life of Swami's devotees like Karanam Subamma, the Yadalam family, and Shri Tirumalachar who dedicated their lives, with humility, to the mission of the Lord and the service of his devotees. He inspired the current students and faculty of the university to build knowledge that transforms them into beings of humility and service rather than those of arrogance so that we can make Swami proud.

Following their talk was a musical offering by the students and staff of the Department of Music. Their ensemble performed 5 songs across different genres, languages, and styles interspersed with narrations.

The valedictory proceedings for the annual Summer course in Indian culture and spirituality were marked by a speech by Dr. Sai Shyam Sharma, Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics & Computer Science. He began by outlining the process of learning- first by rote and memory; soon, we seek to understand what we memorized and finally, to put into practice that very learning. He ended the session by thanking all the teachers, scholars, and students across various SRD departments whose efforts made the event a grand success.



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This year's Summer Course in Indian Culture and Spirituality 2023 inspired the students to gain a different perspective on knowledge - of how it should lead to humility; the importance of reading, understanding, and dwelling on Bhagawan's life, message, and teachings, and finally by emulating his devotees who have made a mark in His-Story by adhering to His words.





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