

His Holiness Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji



Spiritual and Academic Education: H.H. Swami Chidanand Saraswatiji's motto in life is, "In the Service of God and humanity." Touched by the hand of God at the tender age of eight, Pujya Swamiji left His home to live a life devoted to God and humanity, spending His youth in silence, meditation and austerities high in the Himalayas. At the age of seventeen, after nine years of unbroken, intense sadhana, He returned from the forest—under the orders of His guru—and obtained an academic education to parallel His spiritual one. Pujya Swamiji has master's degrees in Sanskrit and Philosophy as well as fluency in many languages.

The Teaching of Unity: Unity, harmony, and the belief in infinite paths to God are the foundation of Pujya Swamiji's "religion." In this line, He has been a leader in numerous international, inter-faith conferences and parliaments, including the Parliament of World Religions; the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders at the United Nations; the World Economic Forum; the World Council of Religious Leaders at the United Nations; the World Conference of Religions for Peace; the Global Youth Peace Summit at the United Nations; the Hindu-Jewish Summit; and the Hindu-Christian Dialogue initiated by the Vatican. He is a leader of frequent pilgrimages for peace and harmony across the world.

Spiritual Leader and Inspiration: Pujya Swamiji is the President and Spiritual Head of Parmarth Niketan Ashram in Rishikesh, one of India's largest and most renowned spiritual institutions. Under His divine inspiration and leadership, Parmarth Niketan has become a sanctuary known across the globe as one filled with grace, beauty, serenity and true divine bliss. Pujya Swamiji has also increased

several-fold the humanitarian activities undertaken by Parmarth Niketan (www.parmarth.com). Now, the ashram is not only a spiritual haven for those who visit, but it also provides education, training, and health care to those in need. He is also the founder and the spiritual head of the first Hindu-Jain Temple in America. This beautiful, three-domed masterpiece is located on the outskirts of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and has paved the way for unity between Hindus and Jains across America. Pujya Swamiji is also the founder and inspiration behind many other temples in the USA, Canada, Europe and Australia.

Guide to Youth: Pujya Swamiji knows that the youth are our future, and He is forever changing the course of that future through His profound effect on every youngster with whom He comes in contact. Children and adolescents seem to bloom like flowers under the rays of His light. Additionally, He gives pragmatic tools to help them unite in the spirit of peace, harmony and global change. Pujya Swamiji runs youth sessions and camps in the USA, Europe and throughout Asia.

Ceaseless Service: “Giving is Living” is Pujya Swamiji’s motto; He is always in the midst of dozens of projects, each one a noble and tenaciously dedicated effort to make the world a better place for all of humanity. He is the Founder/Chairman of the India Heritage Research Foundation (IHRF), an international, non-profit, humanitarian organization dedicated to providing education, health care, youth welfare, and vocational training to the needy population (www.ihrf.com). Pujya Swamiji is also the Founder/Chairman of the Divine Shakti Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to using the energy, strength and capability of women to help bring the light of life, hope, education and assistance to the abandoned, orphaned babies and young girls, as well as widowed and impoverished women (www.divineshaktifoundation.org).

Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (Water, Sanitation, Hygiene): Pujya Swamiji co-founded Global Interfaith WASH Alliance (GIWA) at the UNICEF headquarters at the United Nations. The aim of GIWA is to harness the great power and influence of the world’s interfaith leaders of faith in effecting significant and positive change in the areas of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). Since then Pujya Swamiji has touched and inspired everyone from eminent personalities such as Prince Charles and Duchess Camilla to organizations such as United Religions Initiative (URI), Global Organization for Persons of Indian Origins (GOPIO) to FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) to join and bring about positive action to address WASH (www.i-wash.org).

Ganga Action Parivar: Pujya Swamiji is also the Founder of Ganga Action Parivar (GAP), a worldwide family of scientists, engineers, specialists, volunteers and devotees who are dedicated to working to make Mother Ganga’s waters not only nirmal (clean) but also aviral (free-flowing). Uniting people from across India and across the world in the service of Mother Ganga Pujya Swamiji has given a new direction to this crucial crisis (www.gangaaction.org).

Project Hope: Led and founded by Pujya Swamiji’s vision, dedication and leadership, Project Hope has been working continuously since the first day after the tragic Uttarakhand floods of June 2013,

when the rivers rose higher than they had in over 100 years. The initiative strives to inspire all stakeholders to come together as one team with one theme—serving to provide relief, green rehabilitation and sustainable reconstruction for the survivors of the Himalayan Tsunami. (www.projecthope-india.org).

Encyclopedia of Hinduism: A project of India Heritage Research Foundation, of which Pujya Swamiji is the Chairman, has been founded, guided, inspired and led by Him as a colossal product of more than 1000 esteemed scholars from around the world, totaling 11-volumes and approximately 7000 entries. The Encyclopedia has been nearly twenty-five years in the making and it is the first time in history that the depth and breadth of India’s great spiritual culture is made available in authentic, academic and scholastic form. (<http://www.ihrf.com/encyclopedia.html>)

Awards and Recognitions: Pujya Swamiji is the recipient of innumerable awards for both His role as spiritual leader as well as for His unparalleled humanitarian work. Some of the more noteworthy are as follows:

1. Ambassador for Peace by United Nations Center for India and Bhutan and the Universal Peace Federation
2. Surya Ratna National Lifetime Achievement Award by Suryadatta Group of Institutions for spiritual innovation and service for humanity and the environment.
3. Mahatma Gandhi Humanitarian Award, given by the Mayor of New Jersey, USA for outstanding charitable and interfaith work
4. Advisory Council to the Tony Blair Faith Foundation
5. Noble Persons Award for Remarkable Service to the Environment and Humanity
6. Recognition for Extraordinary Service and Vision by the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Uttarakhand for Relief Work done in the wake of the Himalayan Tsunami
7. Best Citizens of India Award
8. Hindu of the Year by the international magazine Hinduism Today, for masterminding the project of the next millennium, the Encyclopedia of Hinduism
9. Uttaranchal Ratan (“Jewel of the State of Uttaranchal”) Award
10. Bharat Vikas Parishad 1st Utkrishtta Samman Award
10. Devarishi Award, by Sandipani Vidya Niketan, under the guidance of Pujya Sant Rameshbhai Oza, for promoting Indian culture and heritage across the world

- 11. Bhaskar Award by Mystic India and Bharat Nirman, for Outstanding Humanitarian Service
- 12. Prominent Personality Award, by Lions' Club
- 13. Diwaliben Mohanlal Mehta Charitable Trust Award for Progress in Religion

Further, He has been given the title of Patron of the Russian Indian Heritage Research Foundation, Moscow, and is also a Patron of the Centre for Religious Experience in Oxford, UK.



The True Sanyasi: Pujya Swamiji seems unaffected by this incredible list of accomplishments and remains a pious child of God, owning nothing, draped in saffron robes, living a life of true renunciation. His days in Rishikesh are spent offering service to those around Him. Thousands travel from America, Europe and Australia as well as from all over India, simply to sit in His presence and receive His darshan. To them, the journey is an inconsequential price to pay for the priceless gift of His satsang. He travels the world, bringing the light of wisdom, inspiration, upliftment and the divine touch to thousands across the world.