

Sewa MOS Workshop Emphasizes Collective Purpose and Learning



Sewa's Advisor Venkatesh Murthy, (fourth from left - second row from front), aggregator of philanthropic organizations DM Kiran, President Arun Kankani, & yoga instructor Diganth Dash, with attendees at the MOS workshop in Nagpur, India

In its second Mission Oriented Staff (MoS) workshop Sewa international focused on nature of work, collaboration, effective tools and techniques to improve productivity and creating impact.

Sewa's President, Arun Kankani in his inaugural speech, he emphasized the importance of understanding the collective purpose. Working together with other MOS and Sewa teams, sharing life stories and challenges and learning from them will help make our work effective. Reflecting on the previous year's focus in the US, Kankani noted the shift towards training to build upon the foundation laid previously. Kankani emphasized the significance of one's actions and their influence on outcomes, and the importance of taking positive steps toward achieving one's goals and recognizing the impact that our actions have on the world around us.

Kankani highlighted the importance of crafting well-thought-out strategies that are grounded on solid principles and values. He emphasized the need to execute the right actions using proven approaches for achieving prosperity.

Furthermore, he underscored the significance of implementing innovative ideas discussed during the workshop.

In a session on tips and tricks, Kankani urged participants to share how it added value to their work, attitude, or life. He highlighted the spiritual upliftment experienced through selfless actions and encouraged participants to engage with new people during break sessions, fostering openness and dialog.

Arun Kankani Engages in Transformative Discussions and Meetings



Sewa's President, Arun Kankani engaged in a discussion with Shailesh Joglekar, the CEO of the National Cancer Institute (NCI), Dr. Anand Pathak and DM Kiran, at the NCI in Nagpur

President of Sewa International, Arun Kankani, during his latest visit to India, met with executives of "Apna Ghar" in Vasai, Mumbai, a "home for homeless" initiative that has rescued over fifty people from the streets of Mumbai and nearby areas and reunited three individuals with their families. Kankani also shared Sewa USA's 20-year journey at Sewa Maasik Milan (a monthly gathering) in Mumbai with over seventy attendees.

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Arun Kankani Engages in Transformative Discussions and Meetings

In his meeting with Mrugank Paranjape, President of Sewa International Bharat (SIB), he discussed various developments at Sewa USA. He also discussed global initiatives and work with Ratan Sharda, author, consultant, and a senior RSS member. During this visit, Arun Kankani met with volunteers of the Sanskruti Samvardhan Sansthan, FANS, and Hema Foundation in Mumbai. The organizations are involved in value education, security awareness, and creating educational materials for children.

In Delhi, Kankani visited IIT Delhi, met with professors, and learned about Sewa Yatra's impact. He had discussions with Dr. Nomesh Bolia, Dr. Parag Singla, DM Kiran, and others. Kankani spent a day with the SIB team, discussing Sewa's progress with its global coordinator Shyam Parande, and the Marketing Program Manager, Jinesh Lal. Kankani visited Mumbai, Nagpur, and Delhi to meet Sewa trustees and volunteers, strengthening their network. He also visited Sewa Mission Oriented Staff (MoS) families in Nagpur.

Sewa Honors Youth Volunteers at Sewa Milan 2024



Sewa honored the 2023 LEAD youth volunteers in its Sewa Milan event in Schaumburg, IL

Sewa International celebrated its annual Sewa Milan event in Schaumburg, IL. The event honored the 2023 Leadership, Education, and Development (LEAD) youth volunteers and welcomed the new 2024 team. The 2023 LEAD volunteers dedicated over 7,200 hours of service, partnering with more than 40 community organizations in Chicagoland (Chicago Metropolitan Area). The event organizers thanked volunteers, parents, and community partners for their support in making Sewa initiatives successful.

Sewa and Oracle Organize Yuva Mahotsav in Magadi, Karnataka



SHE team with guests at Yuva Mahotsav in Magadi, Karnataka

Over 1,200 students and teachers from twenty schools attended Yuva Mahotsav in Magadi, Karnataka. Oracle funds supported the event. Sewa's Sanitation, Hygiene, and Empowerment Project for the Girl Child (SHE) team organized a program with cultural performances by students, a walkathon, sapling plantation, and inspirational talks by distinguished guests. Additionally, the Sewa team shared insights on its collaboration with Oracle over the past four years.

Sewa-AmeriCorps to Honor 9/11 First Responders with Eco-initiatives



Sewa International and AmeriCorps are partnering to honor 9/11 first responders with environmental stewardship projects until September 2024. The initiative will begin on March 2 with an event hosted by Sewa Austin that will include sapling distribution and a 5K run/walk.

Indianapolis Chapter Observes MLK Day with a Day of Service



The Sewa Indianapolis chapter celebrated MLK Jr. Day

The Sewa Indianapolis chapter celebrated Martin Luther King Jr. Day as a National Day of Service. A team of 32 Sewa volunteers dedicated their day to unloading, sorting, and packing food items, contributing to the community's welfare. Sewa thanked Fishers Parks and the Fishers Indiana Government for providing this opportunity.

SHE-CAF Phase 2 Helps over 4,300 People across India



Beneficiaries of SHE-CAF Phase 2 program displayed course completion certificates

Sewa's Sanitation, Hygiene, and Empowerment Project for the Girl Child (SHE) and Covid Affected Families (CAF) Phase 2 program helped 4,328 people across seventeen states in India. Among them, 146 beneficiaries are undergoing training.

Sewa, with funding from Ekam, North Jersey Leadership, Education, and Development (LEAD), Sewa LA Chapter, and individual donors like Dr. Kamal Gupta and Rama Lakshmi, constructed 36 toilets in nine schools across Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Chhattisgarh states. Recently, Horanadu Annapurneshwari Temple Administrator Bheemeshwara Joshi inaugurated the new toilets in rural schools in Horanadu, Karnataka.

Sewa held menstrual health and hygiene workshops for 250 adolescent girls in schools across Karnataka and Jharkhand.

The workshops included the distribution of reusable and eco-friendly sanitary napkin kits, a 7-day yoga workshop, and personality and mental wellness sessions for students from grades 6 to 10.

The SHE and SHE-CAF programs empowered over 100 women through skill-based training in Phulia and Jhalong, West Bengal. The trainers prepared them in weaving, tailoring, silk spinning, dyeing and twisting, Nakshikantha embroidery, livestock rearing, and beauty and wellness courses. Workshops, health camps, events, and market linkages have helped them earn a livelihood and support their families.

Beneficiaries of SHE and SHE-CAF programs celebrated Makar Sankranti and Pongal festivals through rituals, festivities, and kite-flying in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka, fostering cultural knowledge and the joy of celebration among children.



High school Students of Horanadu, Karnataka, displayed kites which they made for Makar Sankranti/Pongal festival

PSVP Schools Educate over 2,500 Children yearly in Manipur



Kids of Pou Shankar Kane Vidyalaya, Tamenglong, Manipur displayed their art

Purva Seema Vikas Pratishthan (PSVP), a partner organization of Sewa International, runs three schools, including Oja Shankar Vidyalaya, catering to around 350 students from communities such as Rongmei, Zemei, Liangmei, Tangkhul, and the Kuki in the state of Manipur, bordering Myanmar. A team of 32 teachers supports these schools, offering classes ranging from pre-primary to the eighth grade, and over 2,500 students have benefitted.

In January 2024, a team of four volunteers from Maharashtra, including Veena Bedekar, from Sewa International, visited PSVP schools to conduct teacher training and plan for the upcoming year. They also trained teachers for Nisargamitra, a project-based education initiative by Jnana Prabodhini, Pune. PSVP Trust has been providing education in remote tribal districts of Manipur since 1971.

Serving in Manipur's beautiful hilly landscapes, PVSP faces many challenges, including basic facilities, infrastructure, connectivity, and quality education. Founded by Shankar Dinkar (Bhayajji Kane) and continued by students after his demise in 1999, PSVP aims to bridge the gap between Northeast India and the rest of the country through quality education.

Despite the religious conflict in Manipur recently, the three schools managed to stay operational due to the dedicated efforts of local teachers and the positive support from parents. However, the schools require funds for various purposes such as recurring expenditures, infrastructure development, educational materials, sports equipment, science and computer labs, and more. Sewa supports by raising funds through its Sponsor a Child program, and donors can participate in it by contributing INR 15,000 per student annually to help a child receive quality education. Donors can support this initiative by following this link: <https://sewaua.org/SupporttoOjaShankarVidyalayaKharasomManipur>



Sewa's help reached the village of Kharasom, district, Ukhrul, Manipur

Workshop & Training for Sewa Staff in Nagpur

The Mission Oriented Staff (MOS) varg (workshop), held on February 10 and 11, 2024, at Smruti Bhawan, in Nagpur, brought together Sewa International's India staff for two days of learning and collaboration. The event commenced on February 10 and engaged over forty participants in a series of insightful discussions, activities, and knowledge-sharing sessions aimed at enhancing team collaboration and personal development.

The first morning began with a yoga health session and games, promoting physical and mental well-being. Sewa's president, Arun Kankani, reflected on the previous year's workshop, highlighting key learnings, actions, and outcomes. He spoke about the Sewa vision and mission, emphasizing the organization's commitment to service and community development.

D.M. Kiran, who previously led the Youth For Sewa (YFS) program, and then headed the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) Foundation, delivered an informative talk on the non-profit sector in India and globally. Ram Vaidya, who serves as the Vishva Vibhag Sangh Sanyojak (International Coordinator for the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh), with his center based in the UK, shared insights on Sewa's Global Vision, showcasing the organization's impactful work worldwide.



Interactive sessions, friendly chat and yummy food at the MOS Workshop, Nagpur



In the post-dinner session, participants had an interactive session with Padma Shri Dr. Dhananjay Diwakar Sagdeo, gaining valuable insights and perspectives.

Dr. Sagdeo, a hematologist, currently works as the Chief Medical Officer for the Swami Vivekananda Medical Mission (SVMM) in Wayanad, Kerala. He was the first to discover Sickle Cell Anemia among the tribal population of Wayanad.

On the second day, Arun Kankani led a review, revision, and alignment session on "Objectives and Key Results" (OKRs), ensuring clarity and focus on organizational and individual goals.

Member of Sewa's Board of Advisors, Venkatesh Murthy, shared insights on managing energies for a healthy SELF (Sleep, Exercise, Living in the Present, Food & Diet), emphasizing the importance of well-being. A yoga instructor in the US, Diganth Das, offered a talk on tyag (sacrifice) and sewa (service), inspiring participants to embody the principles.

DM Kiran conducted an interactive session on conflict resolution, providing practical strategies for addressing conflicts effectively.



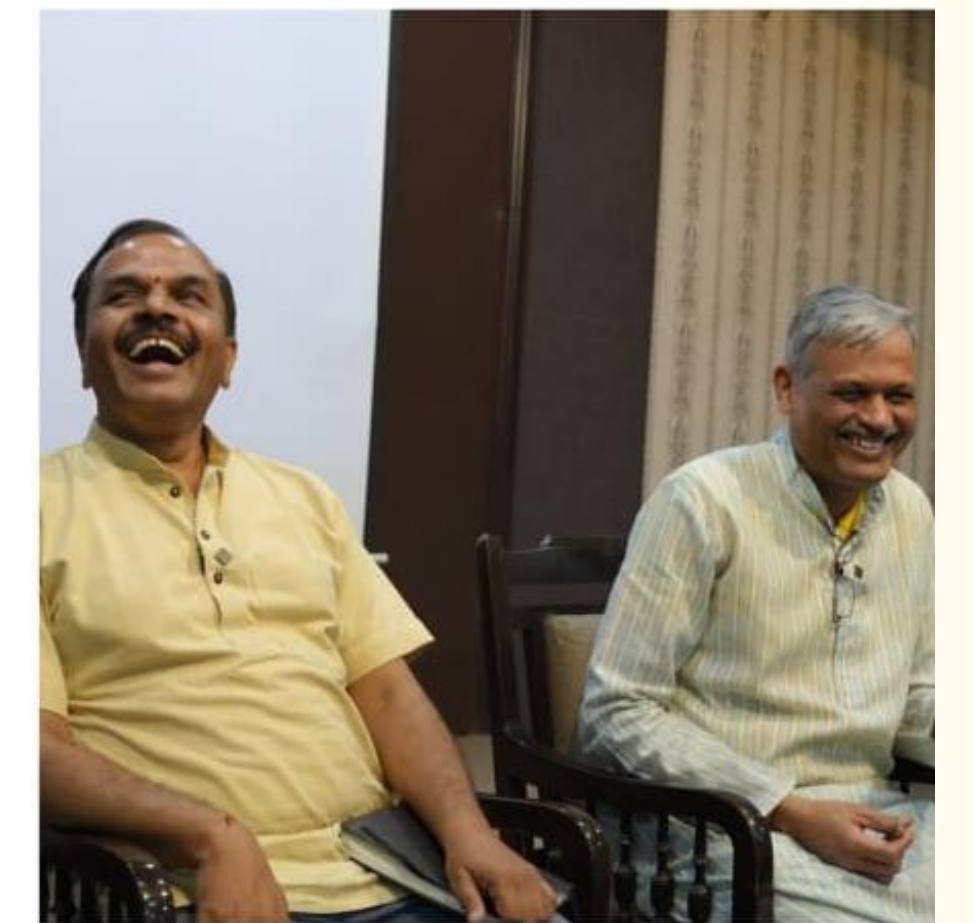
Participants engaged in one-on-one and group discussions with the resource persons during the workshop in Nagpur

Sewa President Visits Projects in India

Arun Kankani, President of Sewa International, visited several projects in India on his recent visit there. In Jawhar, Maharashtra, he visited Divyang Vidyalaya, a school offering education to eighty divyang (specially-abled) children from nearby villages. The school focuses on educating and developing skills to make the children self-reliant. Meeting the founder and the team, Kankani said that meeting the children, teachers, and Kauteek, a psychology student doing his internship there, was a moving experience.

In Nagpur, Maharashtra, Kankani visited the Swami Vivekanand Medical Mission, a hospital serving the community for over three decades. The doctors provide multi-specialty care at the hospital which includes a state-of-the-art pediatric heart surgery department. Kankani also met Dr. Dilip Gupta, a retired cardiologist and former sanghchalak (RSS leader) of Nagpur, who now oversees the hospital and other sewa programs in the area.

Kankani also visited the National Cancer Institute, near New Delhi, which has been operational for the last three years. It is expected that the hospital will provide advanced cancer treatment facilities in India. He hoped that with its 700-bed capacity and state-of-the-art facilities, the institute would reduce the need for Indian cancer patients to travel abroad for treatment.



Arun Kankani, President of Sewa International, visited several sewa related projects in India



President of Sewa International, Arun Kankani, and his executive leadership team have been streamlining operations. Recent initiatives and engagements reflect Sewa's commitment to innovation and community service. Sewa International, Bharat (SIB) has adopted the ZOHO app to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Kankani said that he believes Sewa USA can benefit from this approach and plans to discuss implementing similar strategies.

Discussions on shared services and the Sewa Fellowship Program yielded valuable insights and action points. Four members of the Sewa Fellowship, two from Beed, Maharashtra, and two from Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, shared their experiences and details of the projects they are working on.

Eleven Sewa Fellowship members visited Mumbai, engaging in discussions to address their questions and concerns. Kankani also held individual meetings with various volunteers and plans to follow up on new ideas and initiatives that emerged.

Executives and resource persons with Mission Oriented Staff at the workshop in Nagpur

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Ankita Hegde is a junior at Homestead High School, Milwaukee, WI, who has participated in multiple service projects, including presenting talks at the Hindu Temple and Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, cooking for homeless shelters, community cleanups, temple events, and Havenwoods events at Havenwoods state forest in Wisconsin. She has also submitted over fifty greeting cards to the Ozaukee County Family Services near Milwaukee. As a leader in several service activities, Ankita Hegde is a Sewa community role model who inspires young leaders with her service.

Mallika Hegde, Ankita's mother, is a crucial part of Sewa Milwaukee's community projects. She has been a great support and mentor for many young volunteers, helping the organization achieve milestones and recognition. Her work ranges from promoting mental health awareness to serving the most in need.



Mallika (left), Ankitha (right) and Sania in a community cleanup event

Houston Chapter Launches 2024 LEAD Program



Sewa's President, Arun Kankani, addressed the LEAD students and their parents during the launch

The Sewa Houston Chapter launched its year-round Leadership, Education, and Development (LEAD) program on February 17, welcoming over seventy high school students. The kick-off event, attended by LEAD students and their families, introduced many newcomers to the Sewa family.

The program was inaugurated by Arun Kankani, President of Sewa International, followed by a detailed presentation by Kavita Tewary, Chief of Programs for the Houston Chapter. She highlighted the various Sewa service projects conducted globally and by the Houston Chapter.

The event also featured presentations from the Sleep, Exercise, Lifestyle Practices, Food and Diet (SELF) team, SERVE team, and Sewa Day of Service teams.

Rajesh Patwari, LEAD program coordinator, outlined the program's guidelines, encouraging parents to participate in service activities. The gathering featured engaging discussions where students shared their motivations for joining, experiences, and aspirations for the service projects.



Participants and their parents attending a LEAD session

Upcoming Events

- March 9, 2024: SMTS, LTSFA, HSS, Manabadi and Sewa - 5k Walk/Run | Tom Bass Park, Cullen Blvd, Houston, TX
- March 24, 2024: Sewa Austin: Volleyball Tournament 2024 | Millburn Park, Sun Chase Blvd, Cedar Park, TX
- March 24, 2024: Sewa East Bay - Holi Celebrations | Emerald Glen Park, 4201 Central Pkwy, Dublin, CA
- March 30, 2024: Sewa South Bay - Holi Celebrations | Baylands Park, Caribbean Dr, Sunnyvale, CA
- April 3, 2024 to Apr 12, 2024: Stop Diabetes Movement in Detroit | Virtual - Zoom Sessions
- April 3, 2024 to Apr 12, 2024: Stop Diabetes Movement in Chicago | Virtual - Zoom Sessions

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