



CHINMAYA MISSION TORONTO

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President's report for the year 2010 presented at the AGM on March 19, 2011

Respected Swamini ji, CMT board members and Chinmaya family members, I personally welcome you all and thank you for attending today's meeting.

"To provide to individuals, from any background the wisdom of Vedanta and the practical means for spiritual growth and happiness, enabling them to become positive contributors to society."

Above is Gurudev's vision expressed in simple words, lucidly pointing to the goal and clearly recommending the path. With such clear directions, there should be no diversion from the goal.

We at Shivalaya strive to follow the path and hope to get closer to the goal and participate in fulfilling Gurudev's vision. 2010 was a rewarding year in many ways but most significantly the acquisition of larger premises on Gore Road in Brampton although it will be another few months before we actually move to the new premises. The lack of space had visibly become a handicap in delivering our programs and inhibited our expansion and growth. We can now engage in expanding our programs with renewed energy and adequate facilities.

Board Changes

Please see the attached sheets for the board of directors proposed for election for 2011-2012. Amar Sharma had kindly stayed on the board after stepping down as President in 2009 as a non-voting member responsible for special projects. He has now resigned from the board. Once again, I would like to express our deep appreciation for his years of valuable and dedicated service to CMT and of course hope to see him and his family to stay involved with CMT activities. Pritesh Kot also resigned last year because of some urgent work demands on his time and physical availability. We gratefully acknowledge his contribution to providing much needed AV technical support to the programs. I am happy to say that Pritesh is still a very engaged member of CM family and remains available for seva in a number of areas. Lastly, Prabhat ji has now returned to "civil life" as Nishant Mhatre, is staying in Ottawa and of course remains very much a part of Chinmaya Mission. It has been our privilege to know him and work with him and we hope that our association will continue albeit on a different basis.

Festivals and Celebrations

New Year's day, Mahashivaratri, Ram Navmi, Hanuman Jayanti, Chinmaya Jayanti, Guru ji's birthday, Guru Purnima, Chinmaya Mahasamadhi day, Deepavali, Janamashtami- all these significant events were celebrated beautifully with devotion and love. Some of these events were celebrated twice because of lack of space, BV children and parents often had to hold their events on different days. Although all programs were well organized, attendance at events like regular Shiv Puja and Hanuman Chalisa has not been very good. This requires revisiting the format for some of the programs to encourage wider participation. Secondly commitment to volunteer time and seva is often lacking ahead of the event but participants once there always come forward to help. Thirdly not all events are sponsored despite repeated requests.

Adult Education

Swami Shantananda and Swami Ishwarananda were in Toronto for full week Yagnas. Swami Prakashananda was able to conduct programs over three days and Swami Chidatmananda kindly accommodated us by conducting a full day retreat. In addition, Swami Siddhananda conducted several Bhajan programs in GTA. Typical of CM, each and every program was of very high caliber and received rave reviews from the attendees. Having to hold these events off Shivalaya was not only expensive but also resulted in a great deal of additional work. Again, attendance could be better and the work could be shared by more sevaks. Help is specially required in the area of publicity, creative material preparation, AV services and obtaining sponsorships.

Adult study groups- eleven in GTA continue to offer a much- needed forum for learning. Approximately 150 people benefit from these groups on a regular basis. GTA can use several more of these groups but the study group leaders can learn a lot from sharing their experiences with each other and perhaps from a more structured training program.

Bal Vihar

Both Vaughan and Mississauga Bal Viha programs are now held in rented space at local schools. There are approximately 125 children in both programs. The program has not grown exponentially as we had hoped and more effort needs to be made to advertise the excellent curriculum and uniqueness of the program. The 25 plus teachers are really dedicated and committed but more teachers need to be recruited and trained. The Vaughan BV program will continue to be operated at the present location but Mississauga program may move to the new location.

CHYKs

The CHYK program has steadily been growing over the last few years but grew by leaps and bounds in 2010 with the dynamic leadership of Vivek ji of Chinmaya Missio Niagara. It has become a very active and vibrant program. The average attendance at the two discussion groups (one in Mississauga and the other in downtown Toronto) totals 45. A very successful CHYK camp was held in Niagara Falls last year with 50 participants, some from South of the border as well. In addition to the regular discussion groups and camp, various "social " events like nature hikes, overnight campouts, barbeques, movie nights were also organized. Another camp has been planned for May of 2011. The CHYK presence has been very visible at all CMT events- not only lending a hand but providing a fresh and dynamic perspective.

Financial Situation

The Dufferin Street property was sold for 4.2M, CMT receiving app. 2.78M as its share. The Gore Road property was purchased for 4.8M- the actual cost of the purchase was close to 5.2M with HST and other closing costs. The purchase was made possible through some very generous donations from individuals, from our reserve funds of \$900,000 and assumption of a mortgage of 1.1M (on very favorable terms) and some interest free loans.

The 2009 audited and the 2010 preliminary financial statements may be obtained on request but will be posted on the bulletin board once finalized. Please note that 2009 statement is atypical because of the Mahasamadhi camp held in 2009. There are serious concerns about the declining donations and projections of higher expenses- this needs to be addressed urgently.

Challenges and Opportunities in 2011

- Concerted efforts for fund raising
- Inspire and involve more sevaks in all areas of Seva
- Increase attendance at all programs and events
- BV- more enrollment, more teachers, more training for teachers
- Adult Education- more regular programs like retreats, guest speakers, systematic support to study groups
- CHYKs- more involvement in CMT programs so the transition from CHYKs to CMT takes place smoothly

- Expand the scope and range of general programs e.g. language classes, yoga, music classes, library and many more
- Plan and deliver more seva to the community at large

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to all the volunteers for hundreds and thousands of hours of selfless, dedicated service with a smile. For a 100% volunteer run organization with extensive programs and services – we can all feel very gratified and blessed for the opportunity provided to us for seva. I feel very privileged to be working alongside such wonderful and dedicated colleagues on the board. There is much love and mutual respect present to make working together a pleasure. And in how many different ways can we thank our own Swamini ji for her patience and guidance, Guru ji for his leadership and love and to Gurudev for his legacy helping us to transform our lives and providing a glimpse of a higher vision.

Thank you again.

Vijaya Sadana
President, CMT