

Sewa Fellowship: Capacity Building Initiative from Sewa



Sewa International's Global Coordinator, Shyam Parande, and guests Dr. R. Balasubramaniam, Dr. Jagadish Mamidala, Phoobasan Bai Yadav, and (left to right) participated in the Sewa Fellowship launch at India International Center, New Delhi on May 16, 2022.

Sewa International, India launched "Sewa Fellowship," an organizational capacity-building initiative, on the occasion of Buddha Purnima, May 16. Sewa Fellowship is a transformational program for young adults that seeks to prepare youth to serve society.

Dr. Jagadesh Mamidala, Chairman, University Grants Commission (UGC), Government of India, Dr. R. Balasubramaniam, Member, Capacity Building Commission, Government of India, Phoobasan Bai Yadav, a Social Worker, and Gaurang Prabhu, a leader of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) attended the event held at India International Center, New Delhi. About two hundred representatives from various organizations, professionals, and Sewa volunteers participated in the event.

Admiring the service rendered by Sewa International, Dr. Jagadesh Mamidala, Chairman, UGC, expressed hope that the Sewa Fellowship would prepare thousands of youths to realize the vision of Swami Vivekananda and serve the nation throughout their lives.

"Youth are change makers. Sewa Fellowship is a brilliant step towards building many men and women who will not only transform the destiny of India for better but also of entire humanity," Dr. R. Balasubramaniam said in his address.

Referring to the 100-week curriculum of Sewa Fellowship, Gauranga Das of ISKCON said, "Sewa Fellowship rekindles hope for the better future of India by creating social workers and entrepreneurs who will serve people."

Driven by the spirit of service or *sewa*, the Sewa Fellowship bridges curriculum-driven learning, experiential work at the grassroots, and one-on-one mentorship by experts. The first batch of Sewa Fellowship runs from 2022-24 and will include 25 young men and women. Each Sewa Fellow will receive Rs. 30,000 per month during the training. An interdisciplinary curriculum, training from experts, and live projects are part of their 100-week journey.

Dr. Balasubramaniam, tribal development activists Mahesh Sharma and Milind Thatte, Stanford University Adjunct Professor of Medicine and President of Sewa International's Bay Area Chapter Dr. Anurag Mairal, UGC member Prof. M.K. Sridhar, and Founder and CEO of 1BRIDGE Madan Padaki are mentors of Sewa Fellowship.

DARSHANA - A Colorful Overview of Hindu Philosophy and Practices



A volunteer describes the posters on display at the 'Darshana' exhibition on Hindu civilization at the Capitol in Washington D.C., May 2022.

Darshana – a Glimpse into the Hindu Civilization is a traveling exhibition that provides a close look at many aspects of Hindu civilization. Designed and developed by the volunteers of Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), a non-profit, voluntary, cultural and community organization, 'Darshana' was hosted in 200 cities across the United States.

Darshana depicts Hindu civilization's many contributions, including such as yoga and vegetarian diet. Envisioned as a mobile exhibition, Darshana's posters were sent across by courier to various cities and the exhibitions were organized by local HSS units. The event on Capitol Hill in the nation's capital, Washington DC, on May 10 and 11 was a great success. Staff from over 32 Congressional offices, two US Senators, and seven Members of the House of Representatives visited the exhibition.

King Abdullah II of Jordan paid a surprise visit to the Darshana exhibit on the Capitol Hill. Joined by all Darshana exhibition volunteers, he walked around and viewed the posters with great interest and appreciation.

In April and May of 2022, over 200 events were organized across the United States to educate political, civic, educational, and interfaith leaders about Hindu Dharma or Hinduism.



King Abdullah II of Jordan (second from left) listens to the National Joint Secretary of Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh, Darshan Soni, as he explains one of the posters at the 'Darshana' exhibition at the Capitol in Washington D.C..

The posters provided glimpses into the Hindu way of life, and displayed the rich heritage of knowledge of ancient Hindu civilizations in areas such as architecture, science, mathematics, administration, time measurement, art, and the medical science of Ayurveda.

Ancient Hindu civilization had world-renowned schools and universities that catered to a diverse student body, where various sections of the society were well represented, and established forms of leadership where women could obtain positions of power and leadership.



A visitor listens intently to a volunteer at the 'Darshana' exhibition at the Capitol in Washington D.C.

Many finer aspects of Hindu civilization have been adapted by modern societies, albeit centuries later. The exhibit demonstrated how the knowledge from Hindu civilization is manifested in all aspects of human endeavors.

Darshana was created to raise awareness about Hindu philosophy, metaphysics, cultural contributions, and everyday practices. Compiled by a group of Hindu-Americans, it seeks to clear misconceptions, introduce some key terms, and inspire further research into the rich culture that has found its home in the United States and globally.

Google for Toilets: Some of North Karnataka's Successful Projects



The 'SHE' Project -- Sanitation, Hygiene, and Empowerment -- focuses on building toilets in government and non-profit schools in India.

Sewa International's 'SHE' project for the girl child was conceived to provide sanitation and hygiene facilities for underprivileged girls who belong to vulnerable sections of Indian society. Along with sanitation facilities, the program focuses on menstrual hygiene, education, and empowering women and girl child through skill development workshops. Here, is an Impact Story from "108 Impact Stories" - Google for Toilets: Some of North Karnataka's Successful Projects.

The school offers education to some 1,500 children, from 7th to 12th grades. For these many children, the school had only six toilets and ten urinals. It caused a lot of inconvenience to both the children and their teachers. There are about 35 women teachers and 500 girl students in the school.

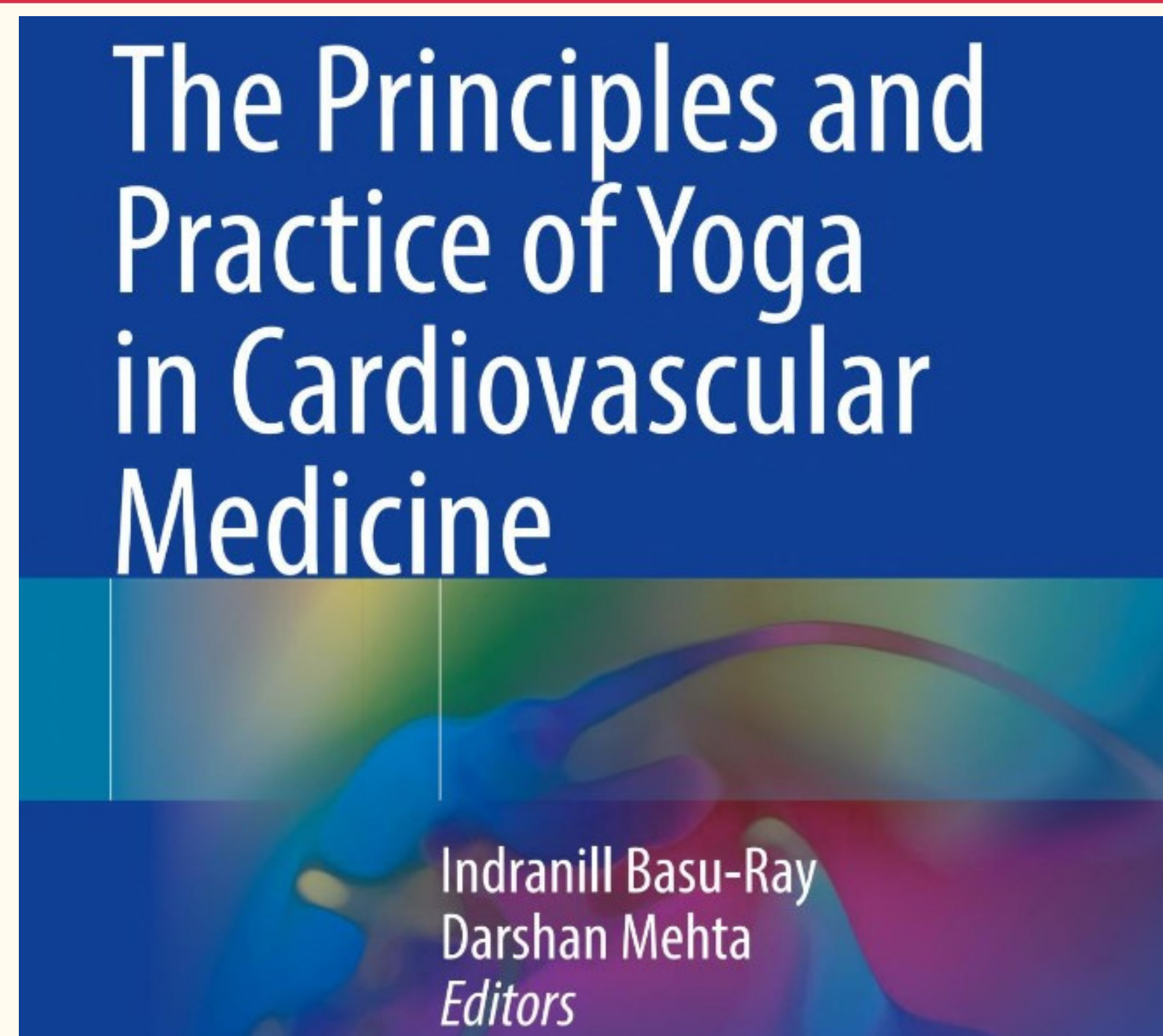
Due to the lack of toilets, they were facing many health issues. Lack of access to sanitation was a leading risk factor for infectious diseases, including cholera, diarrhea, dysentery, Hepatitis A, typhoid, and polio. Sanitation is more than just toilets. It involves the facilities and performances that inhibit viruses caused by contact with human defecates. Sanitation denotes the etiquettes that can improve hygiene and lead to well-being.

After identifying the Vadgaon School, Sewa and Google procured the necessary materials to start the construction. Within the stipulated time, they constructed 25 toilets. The teachers and the girl students are happy to see the improvement in basic amenities in the school. Teachers are especially grateful that their girl students have access to these toilets in the rainy season, which is quite a long one in Belgaum. Earlier, their plight was bad. The headmistress of the school, V.P. Appajigol, said, "Toilets are essential for the well-being of all individuals, let alone kids. So are sanitation facilities and services to maintain hygiene. Open defecation had polluted the school environment and caused health issues and diseases. We are happy as Sewa International partnered with Google to provide us with the most required facilities for both boys and girls and the staff."

108 Impact Stories: Google for Toilets: Some of North Karnataka's Successful Projects



Sewa International partnered with Google to construct toilets under the "Toilets and Hygiene Project for the Girl Child" in Belgaum, in the Indian state of Karnataka. Belgaum, a large town, is 300 miles north of Bengaluru, the capital of the state. The school in Vadgaon, Belgaum, was identified by Sewa International for the construction of new toilets.



A reference book on cardiovascular diseases -- The Principles and Practice of Yoga in Cardiovascular Medicine -- edited by Indranil Basu-Ray, Darshan Mehta, and 73 other doctors was released on May 27, 2022. Dr. H R Nagendra, Vice-chancellor, Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (S-VYASA), Bengaluru, and Maharaja Karan Singh, Member of the Upper House of Indian Parliament, Rajya Sabha, have written a foreword to this book. Dr. Basu-Ray also participates in Sewa International's Doctors for Sewa initiative.

This reference book, the first of its kind in the world, offers insights about the role of yoga in the prevention of cardiovascular diseases and provides easy-to-follow algorithms, illustrations, and highlights in each chapter including those on heart failure, cardiac surgeries, and cardiovascular health in HIV patients. The role of yoga in alleviating and managing cardiovascular diseases is discussed in this book.

The book covers the epidemiology, physiology, pathophysiology, prevention, and therapy of cardiovascular illnesses based on the current scientific understanding of yoga.

Seventy-five professionals from four continents contributed to this first complete reference literature on yoga in cardiovascular medicine, including some of the most well-known physician-scientists from Harvard Medical School,

Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, the Veterans Health Administration, Washington, DC, and India's top medical colleges like the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, AIIMS Rishikesh, and the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh.

Yoga is practiced not only in India but also across the world. Many practitioners are trying to propagate yoga -- not just physical postures but as modern medicine to cure many diseases. Since the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi established International Yoga Day, yoga has been practiced and promoted by many American physicians and researchers to understand how it is a practice that integrates the mind, spirit, and body through the process of meditation and controlled breathing.

Guru Vandana Celebrated by Bhutanese Children in Dallas



Guru Vandana - an event that honors teachers and celebrates the teacher-student emotional bonding, as enshrined in the Hindu tradition, was celebrated recently in Dallas, TX. Inspired by previous successful Guru Vandana events, two Dallas school districts organized the event themselves. Hundreds of students including many from the Bhutanese immigrant community and a few principals, assistant principals, and teachers attended the event.

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