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DIVINE LIFE

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Great soul begins world tour at age 82

Energetic in mind and spirit, but increasingly frail in body, Swami Chidananda Saraswathi of Rishikesh, 82, visited the 19 Divine Life Centers (DLS) of Malaysia during March, 1999. Swamiji, who became president of the Divine Life Society following the passing of Swami Sivananda in 1963, met with thousands of devotees during the four-week tour coordinated by Swami Guhabaktananda of DLS Batu Caves Ashram, Kuala Lumpur.

Swami's visit coincided with the 33rd anniversary of the installation of an image of Swami Sivananda in the Batu Caves Ashram. Swami Sivananda lived in Malaysia for many years before renouncing the world, returning to India and eventually founding the Divine Life Society in Rishikesh.

A major event of Swami Chidananda's visit was the Youth Symposium on March 14 at Batu Caves. Twenty-five Hindu organizations joined with the DLS for the symposium, which attracted 2,500 people.

Swami Chidananda's keynote speech emphasized the importance of moral and ethical excellence in society. Swami is an inspirational speaker on the values of continence, or brahmacharya. He gave a number of suggestions to the youth, encouraging them to read books on self-development, prepare instructional Hindu slide shows and get them shown in cinemas between movies, organize events that bring youth together, develop spiritual study groups, propagate the practice of hatha yoga postures, and print and distribute pamphlets to educate youth.

Swami stressed in his concluding speech the character-building importance of daily prayerful moments combined with positive visualization. He said to create a mental image of yourself as you would like to become--a self-disciplined, ethical and spiritual person. Swamiji proceeded from Malaysia to Australia and Europe on a world tour of Divine Life Society centers. 1Ã2 1Ã4

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