



## Activities from States

### Report on Tamilnadu State level Balvikas Competitions-2011

It was our Beloved Swami's Will that the Tamilnadu State Level Balvikas Competitions, 2011 should be held at Salem. Accordingly, elaborate arrangements were made to conduct the Balvikas competitions at Jairam Arts & Science College, Salem, on December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

The necessary preliminaries were made on 24<sup>th</sup> December. The participants were pouring into Salem from all directions. As soon as they landed at the railway stations, bus stations and on the outskirts of Salem, they were well received by the transport committee and were comfortably taken to the venue. Registration of sevadals, Balvikas children, gurus, parents and judges began at 8am at Rajeshwari Kalyana mandapam and it continued overnight. They were 1680 in total comprising 330 sevadals, 457 Balvikas children, 821 gurus and parents and 72 judges. At the time of registration, Balvikas gurus and parents were given crossword puzzle forms to be filled up and put in the boxes meant for them. All of them were provided comfortable accommodation and sumptuous food.



In the evening there was a cultural programme staged by the students of Vela Special School for the deaf, Viluppuram. Though deaf and dumb, the children danced rhythmically to music. The highlight of the programme was the dance that stressed the significance of eye donation. After dinner, Erode District President, Sri.Rajendran organized a campfire. He reminded the Balvikas gurus of their responsibility of moulding the children's conduct and character. He exhorted the Balvikas children to imbibe and practise the five human values.

With the Blessings of our Beloved Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, the D-day i.e. 25<sup>th</sup> December, 2011 began with Omkar, Suprabhatam and Nagarsankirtan. Flag hoisting was done by Sri. M.Bhoopal, Trust member, at Salem Town Samithi. After breakfast, all participants reached the competition venue, Jairam Arts and Science College, thanks to the untiring transport committee. The Trust Convenor, Dr.V.Mohan, an internationally acclaimed diabetologist, planted the saplings on the college premises.



The various competitions such as Story telling, Elocution, Drawing, Essay writing, Veda chanting, Bhajan singing, Shloka chanting, Skit, Group singing, Group dance, Instrumental music and Quiz began simultaneously at 8.30am. For the first time, most of the judges were the alumni of Sri Sathya Sai Educational Institutions and Balvikas.

Sri.K.R.Vedanarayanan, a Sanskrit teacher serving at Sri Sathya Sai Higher Secondary School and also recipient of the prestigious 'National Award for Teachers' addressed the Balvikas gurus and District Educational Coordinators highlighting the efficacy of Veda chanting. The State level Mahila Sevadal and Mahila youth coordinators' meeting was conducted by State Mahila Seva coordinator Srimathi.Chitra.



After a delicious lunch at the college hostel, the presentation ceremony began at the college auditorium. The function began with a group dance by Salem Balvikas children invoking the blessings of Lord Ganesha. The presentation ceremony was very spectacular and innovative in many respects. The presentation included mind blowing power point presentation which cohesively correlated our Beloved Bhagawan to various competitions.

A few examples: While announcing the winners of Bhajan competition, the audience could hear the bhajan 'Manasa Bhajare' in Swami's Divine Voice and the announcement of winners of Story telling was preceded by a video clip showing Swami narrating a moving Chinna katha. While distributing certificates to the winners of Essay writing competition Sri.Dr.N.Sivakumar, Faculty member, Dept.of Commerce,

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Brindavan campus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning recalled how Swami's letter to His brother effectively referred to His Avataric Mission. It is said that one picture is worth a thousand words. The effective use of technology in the presentation ceremony was really awe inspiring and made the audience feel the presence of our Beloved Bhagawan. This is the first State Level Balvikas Competition wherein winners of the first three places were distributed 'Certificates of Excellence' on stage. To all other participants 'Certificates of Appreciation' have been sent to the respective District Presidents. The State President Sri.N.Ramani conveyed his best wishes through a video message. The day's programme concluded with the offering of Mangala Arathi.



With the blessings of Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba Varu and under the guidance of the State Educational Coordinator, Ms.Ramadevi, the Salem District President Sri.K.R.Suresh, an alumnus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, with the full support of all sevadals, office bearers and devotees, was able to make the programme a grand success. The efforts of the entire team were crowned with Swami's abundant blessings in the form of Vibhuthi that materialized on Swami's photo kept at the entrance of the competition venue.