

WHAT'S IN THE **NEW REVIEW?** CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT

THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

BUSINESS

19° London
Hi 19°C / Lo 11°C

Search

Go Advanced Search



E-BREAK TIME
Play the Independent
crosswords online
SEE CROSSWORDS

DATING
Looking for romance, THE INDEPENDENT

News | **Opinion** | **Environment** | **Sport** | **Life & Style**

UK ▾ Europe World ▾ Business ▾ In the News ▾ People Science Media
Education ▾ Robert Fisk Obituaries Corrections

Offers

from The Independent & The Independent on Sunday

[Home](#) > [Business](#)

At the feet of the business guru in a saffron turban

Top executives pay to listen to Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev preach happiness, joy and the power of inner energy

By Irene Hell
Sunday, 4 December 2005

It is not unusual to see a smiling chief executive in New Delhi - the Indian economy is booming. But the white-bearded top manager with the saffron turban, escorted by three women in red and blue saris at last week's Indian Summit of the World Economic Forum, seemed somewhat different.

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev's business is Happiness. Unlike other managers, he does not have to worry about high wages, union strikes or quarterly reports. The 250,000 people who staff his Isha Foundation work for free and wherever he goes he has his followers. Even at the summit, attended by the likes of WPP's Sir Martin Sorrell, Nandan Nilekani of

Print Email

Search

Go

Independent.co.uk Web

Bookmark & Share

Digg It del.icio.us facebook stumbleupon

What are these?

Infosys and the Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, some top chief executives had joyful tears in their eyes and they do not mind bending their knees for the guru.

Change font size:
A A A

"I don't need any money. I travel around the world without a dollar in my pocket," says Sadhguru, a modern mystic who is probably the only chief executive in the world who never needs a credit card. "Whichever part of the world I land, the US, Australia, Lebanon, Germany, England, wherever I go there are always people who arrange everything for me. When you live for everybody, everybody lives for you."

During the New Delhi summit held last week, his followers arranged a session called Inner Engineering: Mastering your Destiny. The conference room was packed with wisdom-seeking managers and politicians. For some managers, it was quite unusual to hear messages such as: "No matter how big a chief executive you are, you are never in full control. Not even dictators are in full control."

This lack of control creates fear, and fear creates wrong decisions and wrong decisions create disasters - a vicious circle, according to Sadhguru: "If you cannot manage your own mind, how can you manage the world?" And adding: "If you master your inner energy, you are 100 per cent in control of your life."

Sadhguru, 48, who was a coconut farmer in his "former life", offers a technique he calls inner engineering. He shows ways to channel and activate the inner energy with yoga and contemplation. "Karma is the software of God, but you can change it," he says.

Some of the chief executives who attended the Indian summit have booked to visit the guru's ashram in Coimbatore in southern India. "I can work twice as productively after I have spent time with him in the peaceful ashram," says Sammy Modi, the young managing director of the Modi Group, India's seventh-largest conglomerate. He booked a seven-day retreat in order to gain energy for a major expansion of the 110bn rupee (£1.4bn) family business. Mr Modi adds: "It is better to make 100 people happy than to make \$100m."

Robert Davies, the chief executive of the Prince of Wales International Business Leaders Forum, also showed great interest in the yogi. Companies such as Time Warner, Toyota and DaimlerChrysler have already booked the guru to talk to their managers.

His critics in India call him a "jet-set guru". But, he counters: "If the rich people are happy, the poor people in the world would not have a problem. When

you do not feel happy, everything is coming at an enormous cost. We are burning our planet."

A lack of inner happiness is often compensated for with aggressive economical and political wars and an excessive consumption. The guru warns: "The economic engine which is driving the world right now is just based on more and more and more, not understanding that every little thing that you sell or buy is being dug out of the limited planet. If we go on like this, we are committing global mass suicide."

According to Sadhguru, a shift in perception could solve all problems: "Every human being is in pursuit of his well-being. It is just the methods of seeking. One you call a spiritual person, another a chief executive, another a criminal. All business started with the intent of human well-being, somewhere on the way we got lost."

In order to fix this, Sadhguru and his globally operating philanthropic foundation, which provides medical care for poor rural Indians, builds houses for tsunami victims and maintains environmental projects, wants to reach as many people as possible.

"Everybody can be absolutely ecstatic and blissful every moment of their lives," he says.

 **Interesting? Click here to explore further**

 Print Article  Email Article

Also in this section

- [Former bosses 'tapped up' by BAA's predators](#)
- [HBOS to reveal new writedowns as investors fear rights issue](#)
- [City firms turn down Rock arbitrator role](#)
- [Bid spurs Throgmorton to seek other suitors](#)
- [EU court ruling threatens local minimum wages](#)

Advertiser Links

[Mortgage](#) | [Personal Finance](#) | [iPhone](#) | [Business Travel](#) | [Utility Bills](#)

Buy gift idea Online

1000s of Malts, Personalised Labels, Gift Service, Next Day Delivery....

www.masterofmalt.com

StrawberryNet - Gift Ideas

Visit StrawberryNet today for all of your cosmetic needs. We offer free gifts fo...

uk.strawberrynet.com

Independent.co.uk The

Web  Advanced Search