Indians are tenacious; there is hope

By Vidhya CK

A Wondrous stone carving of Lord Krishna playing the flute adorned one of the walls in the room, but aesthetically designed. As he entered and gracefully took his seat, another stone carving rendering from a corner of the wall, his magical presence was almost palpable.

The spark in his eyes was unmistakable and Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev of Isha Foundation spoke with passion in an exclusive interview with Express Weekend, on a slew of issues like culture, social welfare and futurology of the country.

This is only the beginning, Sadhguru said in his remarkable deep voice, while referring to the rejuvenation clinics launched by the Centre in Gobichettipalayam. "The scheme will soon be Implemented in other districts too."

Sadhguru explained that Isha Foundation had been thinking about the clinics for the last 14 years. "It is a scheme for which we needed highly inspired volunteers."

He was confident that in seven years, these clinics would develop into full-fledged units with a yogaala, library, gym, volleyball courts for men and throwball for women. "There would be five volunteers for every 1,000 villagers."

The volunteers would be introduced to simple yogaanasanas for ailments like asthma, gastroenteritis, diabetes or contraceptive problems. Medicines, that too home remedies, would be given to treat infections.

With several doctors voluntarily offering their services, the scheme took off with great momentum at Gobichettipalayam. "Overwhelmed by the response of the villagers, the volunteers are now offering free service," Sadhguru noted.

"It’s quite unfortunate that though the government had invested a lot of money and schemes to develop villages, a fraction of them reached the villagers. It was told by government authorities that crores of rupees allocated for the schemes remained unutilised. That’s where Isha volunteers would step in. They will form an unbroken chain linking the villages. The government cannot reach out to people without support from the people themselves,” he emphasised.

When asked about his successful trip to Pennsylvania to conduct yoga for the prisoners, Sadhguru said, “In the US, unlike in our country, criminals are so by choice. Criminals sentenced for life realise they stood no chance to be free again. Prostration turns them violent and they engage in brutal fights inside the prison. But when our team conducted yoga for the prisoners, the refreshing change in them was visible in just three days. hardcore criminals wept and pleaded with us no to go away,” Sadhguru smiled.

True, there is too much consumerism, especially amongst the youth. But consumerism will lead to disaster, he warned. “These days, life is ‘gros’. Other living beings survive on their own, but human beings, despite their superior capabilities and brain, are far from independent. Everything in nature is exploited to serve the humans.”

Sadhguru did not have any separate message for the youth. “We cannot look at people as young and old. The youth is the future and old is past youth. What is important is one should know what are the ‘right things’ and just stick to doing the ‘right things’.”

Sadhguru laughed when asked why the centre was more drawn to Siva than the other gods. “Says who?” he shot back.

“Lings do not mean the Sivalings; it means the ‘form’,” he explained. “Siva was the first yogi and Sivapuranam is pure science.”

Is he optimistic or pessimistic about India’s future? Compared to the people in the West, Indians are mentally balanced, tenacious and capable. They lead happy lives, that too within their means. So, there is hope.”

He, however, warned of the impending ecological disaster that would strike our country. Pointing to the case of Tamil Nadu, he said, the state will soon become a desert. Five rivers have gone dry. “Take care of your country. Even now, it is not too late to bring about a turnaround,” he advised.