“In the field of science today, there is great emphasis on research and discovery. But unless the results of research are applied in practice, it will be an expensive futility. If all the time is spent on research, when is it to find useful application in practice? Nor is there any sense of discrimination in the promotion of research.”

**Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba**
Revered Founder Chancellor

The Bhumi Pooja and Ground breaking Ceremony for the forthcoming Sri Sathya Sai Centre for Advanced Studies (SSSCAS) of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL) took place on 17 February 2014 at the Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of the university. SSSCAS is a culmination of the Revered Founder Chancellor, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba’s vision for advanced multi-disciplinary research at the university.

The Chancellor of the University, Justice M N Venkatachaliah (former
Chief Justice of India), the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. J Shashidhara Prasad, members of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust, members of the Board of Management, teachers, doctoral research scholars, students and administrative staff of the University, along with invited guests were present.

The ceremony commenced with Vedam chanting and Bhajans at 11.45 a.m. At 12 noon, the Honourable Chancellor, accompanied by the Vice-Chancellor sought the blessings of Bhagawan and broke coconuts and shoveled a handful of earth, signifying the ceremonial ground breaking. The members of the Trust and other senior members of the University also took part in the Ground Breaking Ceremony.

This was followed by talks by the Registrar, Vice-Chancellor and Chancellor of SSSIHL.

In his introductory talk, Dr. Naren Ramji, Registrar, SSSIHL, said that SSSCAS was a manifestation of Bhagawan Baba’s vision for His University. He briefly reviewed the growth of research at SSSIHL, stating that the 78 Doctoral Research Scholars currently represents
6% of the student population at SSSIHL, which is eight times the national average of 0.7% per institution. He highlighted the effort made towards interdisciplinary research at the University in the past few years as well as collaborations with Sri Sathya Institute of Higher Medical Sciences (SSSIHMS) and other external agencies leading to translational research that will benefit society.

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. J Shashidhara Prasad then elaborated on the genesis of the Centre for Advanced Studies, dating back almost ten years ago and how Bhagawan Baba Himself guided the process; and even though initially SSSCAS was proposed to be separate from the University, He approved it to be as part of the University.

He elaborated on the collaborations touched upon by the Registrar, and quoted some of the actual projects initiated in the past few years, many of which will help causes such as the eradication of HIV, ease of knee joint pains, Rheumatoid arthritis, early detection of coronary heart diseases, etc.

He recalled how many of India’s leading scientists were astonished
to see the quality and amount of scientific and interdisciplinary research being carried out at SSSIHL and SSSIHMS and communicated that most of them are willing to lend their expertise to the cause.

He clarified that the Centre is called Sri Sathya Sai Centre for Advanced Studies (as supposed to Advanced Research Centre) because it will include non-scientific research from Humanities and Management also.

The Chancellor of the University, Honourable Justice M N Venkatachaliyah then offered gratitude to Bhagawan Baba for blessing him to be a part of this great human experiment in human values and excellence.

He spoke on promise of science for the 21st Century including extension of the human life, physiological advancement for humanity and the rule of technology over human life and activities but cautioned that the development of knowledge without a corresponding development of wisdom is a sure recipe for disaster. He said that power in itself is neutral and it is up to us to either
manifest its wickedness or goodness. He stated that this Centre for Advanced Studies will not entertain any science that is harmful to humanity because Baba will prevent it. It will add a new dimension to the relevance of research in a world increasingly dependent on technological singularity and artificial intelligence and will promote the purity of thought towards man’s eternal spiritual quest; an area which is arguably India’s greatest contribution to the world, he said. He fondly recalled his interactions with Bhagawan and prayed that with His blessings, this Centre for Advanced Studies will help save science from itself, and humanity from itself.

Prof. V Chandrasekaran, Professor (Hon.) and Head, Dept. of Mathematics & Computer Science delivered the vote of thanks. On the behalf of all the faculty and scholars of the university, he prayed that all remain connected with Bhagawan and thereby be committed to His vision and undertake research in a manner that satisfies Him.

The function came to a close with Bhajans followed by Mangala Arati to Bhagawan.
The Sri Sathya Sai Centre for Advanced Studies (SSSCAS) will focus on multi-disciplinary research in the field of Computer Sciences, Nanoscience, Medicinal Chemistry, Cell Biology and Structural Biology. The Centre will also encompass advanced studies in Management, Economics, Leadership and Human Values, Philosophy and Indian Culture. The Centre will have a service-based attitude in line with the Founder Chancellor’s vision. It will undertake research that helps people and benefits humanity.

This modern 43,000 square feet (4000 m2) Centre will be located at the Prasanthi Nilayam Campus of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning (SSSIHL) in Puttaparthi, Andhra Pradesh.

The major objectives of SSSCAS

- To promote the value systems espoused by the Revered Founder Chancellor, Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba, in the field of Science, Business Management, Economics, and Education through thought-based and empirical research.
• To establish a think tank consisting of eminent personalities – both academics, scientists and practitioners – to pursue interdisciplinary research in Science, Management, Education and Economics, perceiving and approaching these fields of study from various theoretical perspectives, based on the notion of methodological plurality.

• To establish and pursue collaborative relationships with other like-minded, reputed national and international institutions, and encourage faculty and researcher dialogue and collaboration in the Centre’s fields of activity.

Some of the activities of the Centre will include cutting edge translational healthcare research focused on diseases relevant to Indians, such as diabetes, obesity, coronary heart disease, etc.

In the long term, the Centre will help create a new culture in drug discovery by developing unique service-oriented multi-nodal research approach and make it available to the biomedical
community. The challenges of achieving this by a single laboratory will be offset by the collaborative efforts with the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Medical Sciences (SSSIHMS), support of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust (SSSCT) and the strong focus on research by the various departments of the university. The large number of visiting faculty, doctors and scientists to both the university and the hospitals each year will also contribute towards the resources needed for this to be accomplished.

Visiting fellows and collaborators

Scientists and faculty members from the organizations listed below have agreed to support SSSCAS:

Indian Institute of Science
AIMS
BARC
NAAC
TIFR
DFRL
Cornell University
IIT
Arizona State University
AT&T Labs
CSIR – OSDD
DRDO (ADE)
DRDO ER & IPR
HP Labs
Honeywell
ARM Embedded Technology
Oracle
Cell Bioinformatics