

## Health

# For inner balance

by Manjula Ramakrishnan



Dr Isaac Mathai

Soukya, near Bangalore (India), offers the natural way to find the mind-body equilibrium

INDIA IS NO LONGER JUST AN ATTRACTIVE tourist destination rich in its heritage offering. Among India's myriad attractions are the various time-tested systems of medicine, each complementing the other and working in tandem as one large integrated whole.

History documents the camaraderie and co-operation that existed between India and the Arab World. Arab physicians studied Ayurveda and Indian medicinal plants were listed in the Arab *Materia Medica*.

"Nature has equipped our body to live in a controlled and healthy manner. Unfortunately over the years, with fast-paced lifestyle, bad eating habits, wrong choice of foods and negative thinking, we accumulate mental and chemical toxins that enhance the degenerative process. Our role as practitioners of integrated medicine is to teach people to elevate themselves by primarily cleansing their body of all the mental and physical damage inflicted by themselves," says Dr Isaac Mathai, chairman and medical director of Soukya, the international holistic health centre in Bangalore, India.

Situated 22 kilometres away from the city and its hustle-bustle, Soukya is spread out over 300 acres of picturesque, scenic beauty. It is the only one of its kind in the world, offering under the same roof, a combination of alternative therapies ranging from Ayurveda, Homeopathy, Allopathy, Naturopathy, *Siddha* and *Unani*.

Ayurveda stresses on correct diagnosis as well as treatment of illnesses. Since it has no side effects, it is indeed a much sought after therapy. Ayurvedic massages such as *Uzhichil*, *Pizhichil* and *Dhara* are today renowned worldwide.

Naturopathy uses the natural elements such as air (breathing techniques), water (hydrotherapy), earth (mud therapy) and fire (heat therapy) in its various treatments.

Further, vegetable and fruit packs



handpicked from the organic farm at Soukya adds pabulum to this mode of treatment that relies on totally on Nature. The mudpacks comprise of local mud, Dead Sea mud, clay, moor mud from Europe or the Turkish Rusool.

When a person registers himself at Soukya, he or she is first put through a case study or holistic evaluation that stretches over two hours. Comprehensive details about his lifestyle, dietary regimen, mental state, sleep patterns, his temperament and emotional state, phobias and much more are carefully recorded.

Thus the mind-body-spirit aspect of each individual is assessed. Based on this evaluation, any sickness or disease is wholesomely treated, designing a module and drawing from a rich menu of alternative, complementary therapies. Thus the various aspects of a person are treated as a comprehensive whole and not in isolation.

"Our treatment module that is arrived at after careful case study determines what is right for each person's specific condition. We then combine it, if need be, with the modern advanced Western medicine and this integrated system of treating patients, drawing from the rich resources of a variety of alternative complementary therapies is what makes Soukya unique and different," affirms Dr Mathai.

At Soukya, the menu that is provided to the residents under therapy or rejuvenation is lacto-ovo-vegetarian, comprising of milk, milk products, egg and vegetables.

Vegetables and fruits are grown in the organic farm inside Soukya using natural fertilisers and controlled pesticides. Coffee, alcohol and tobacco are taboos and herbal tea, soups and salads are the preferred menu.

Television is provided only in the common area, for watching news or sports.

Thus, the holistic experience offered





# PANORAMA

The Gulf Today

September 6 — 12, 2002



by Soukya is a total balance of mind, body and spirit components, which in turn is harmonised with the physio, psycho, socio, emotional, nutritional, ecological and environmental aspects of a person. This result is good health.

Along with the aforementioned six branches of integrated medicine Soukya offers various complementary therapies. These range from acupressure, acupuncture, aroma and auriculotherapy, Bach flower remedies, mud and music therapy, pranic healing, yoga therapy and zero balancing to name but a few out of a long list.

Besides, Soukya offers several health packages, such as stress management programme, weight management module, detoxification programme ideal for smokers, alcoholics and drug addicts, rejuvenation programme, diabetes, arthritis, asthma, cardiac-hypertension management programmes amidst others. These health packages are again a combination of several therapies and systems of medicine, each designed on the basis of the findings of the individual's holistic evaluation or case study.

These integrated medical facilities offer accommodation, dining and spa facilities, a therapy centre, a yoga hall, gymnasium, swimming pool, table tennis, football courts and pool table. Other facilities include diagnostic laboratory, lecture halls, a travel desk, gift shop, library and an open meditation and yoga hall.

A 1.5-km walking and biking track amidst pristine natural beauty and flowers in verdant bloom is recommended as a good form of exercise by the therapists. "The walking that we advise is 'mindful walking' as we have coined it. For we want our guests to be conscious of every step, give himself total space, focus on his breathing and use it as a time to think, to thus cleanse himself," explains Suja Mathai, executive director of Soukya.

Dr Mathai comes from a family having a tradition of homeopathic practice

spanning four decades. A graduate from the ANSS Medical College, Kerala, Dr Mathai took his MD (Homeopathy) from the Hahnemann Post Graduate Institute of Homeopathy in London. This was followed by a MRCH (London) and the next decade found Dr Mathai joining Europe's first and largest Holistic Health Care clinic. Dr Mathai is also a visiting consultant at the holistic centres in London and the USA. His patient network of over 10,000 stretching over 30 countries across the US, UK, Australia, France, Switzerland and Africa.

Soukya is conceived and developed as a model to be showcased by the medical world. Watching his dreams come true with the establishment of Soukya, Dr Isaac Mathai sums up, "We help calm the mind, balance the body and nurture the soul, so that the body is fortified and the mind strengthened, making it possible for you to renew your vigour for life. We make you believe in yourself, initiate change, be motivated and learn to live life, rather than drift through everyday existence.

"We want you to enjoy every moment of the grace of life, the gift of breath and make a celebration of life. This would be achieved by the fusion of the charm of traditional healing skills, the precision of modern medicine and the bounteous gift of the self-healing powers present in every individual. The power to heal is within you and is waiting to be tapped. Healing is essentially spirit in origin and we hope to facilitate that at Soukya."

It thus becomes evident from the integrated functioning of Soukya that the holistic therapy in modern day parlance combines the best of the ancient systems of medicine. Further, it offers a palliative to the present day aggressive and fast-paced lifestyle, prepares well for a healthy future and provides one with a comprehensive insight into one's own body condition.