

10 February 2014

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The Swami Aseemanand Interviews

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The Caravan journalist Leena Gita Reghunath first met Swami Aseemanand at a court hearing, at Panchkula District Court, on 20 December 2011. She introduced herself to him as a journalist with The Caravan, and told him she wanted to do a series of interviews with him in order to write an extensive profile. Aseemanand spoke to her for roughly five minutes. He told her that he was happy that a journalist had come from Delhi to meet him. He agreed to speak to her one-on-one, but proposed to give the interviews inside Ambala Central Jail, where he was incarcerated. During this conversation on the court premises, Aseemanand also asked a series of questions about the journalist's background—her home state, her family, her education, and so on. When he learned that the journalist had a law degree, he suggested that would allow them more time to speak inside the jail. Aseemanand appeared pleased by the prospect of a set of long interviews that would form the basis of an extended profile. He asked the journalist to meet him for the first interview the following month. - See more at: <http://caravanmagazine.in/swami-aseemanand-interviews#sthash.GpTMsL0g.dpuf>

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Over the course of the next two years, the reporter interviewed Aseemanand, in prison, four times—on 10 January 2012, 22 June 2013, 9 January 2014, and 17 January 2014. As the interviews progressed, Aseemanand became increasingly open with the journalist. All four interviews were tape-recorded. Aseemanand consented to the recordings. In total, the recordings run to more than nine hours and 26 minutes.

What follows are English translations of significant portions of the interviews, which were conducted primarily in Hindi. In some instances, we have given the Hindi transliteration. We will be updating this page with additional transcripts.

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