

**MA ANANDAMAYEE**  
**AMRIT VARTA**

A quarterly journal dealing mainly  
with the divine life and sayings of  
Shree Anandamayee Ma

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## MATRI VANI

Man thinks he is the doer of his actions, while actually everything is managed from "There", the connection is "There", as well as the power-house ---yet people say : 'I do'. How wonderful it is ! When in spite of all effort one fails to catch a train, does this not make it clear from where **all** one's movements are being directed ? Whatever is to happen to anyone, anywhere ,at any time, is **all** fixed by him; His arrangements are perfect.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Infinite is contained in the finite, and the finite in the Infinite, the Whole is the part and the part in the Whole. This is so, when one has entered the Great Stream.

\* \* \* \* \*

Oh, how beautiful is the law of God's creation! Do you not know the feeling of delight, of deep bliss, when in a new way you experience a glimpse of Him, the eternally new!

\* \* \* \* \*

A stage exists where the distinction between duality and non-duality has no place. He who is bound by a particular angle of vision, will speak from the stand point that happens to be his at the time. But where Brahman is, the One-without a second, nothing else can possibly exist. You separate duality from non-duality because you are identified with the body, which means you are in a condition of constant wanting.

\* \* \* \* \*

Besides, it has to be pointed out that if, through sense-preception of any kind, anything arises which is not THAT alone, then this is due to avidya. If you say "there is only one Visnu", when you do not behold him everywhere, \_what have you accomplished? Again, whether you say Sabda Brahma hence Brahma, or whether you call it Visnu or Siva---these are only various manifestations, necessary along different lines of approach. Thus all names are His names, all forms His forms, all qualities His qualities. The nameless and formless is also He alone.

\* \* \* \* \*

Suppose you have modelled a doll in butter; whichever aspect of it you may survey, its shape, peculiarity, or appearance---butter it remains, and nothing but butter.

As butter is one indivisible substance, by division its integrity would be lost ;thus division is impossible.

\* \* \* \* \*

Very well: you call transient that which never stays fixed anywhere,do you not?But what does not stay? Who does not stay ?who comes? Who goes? Change ,transformation--What are they? Who? Grasp the root of all this ! Everything passes away,that is to say ,death passes away—death dies. Who goes and whither? Who comes and whence? This ceaseless coming and going—what in essence is it? Who? Again, there is no question of action,no question of coming and going;where does birth come in. Where death? Ponder over this!

\* \* \* \* \*

It is your nature to crave for the revelation of That Which IS,for the Eternal,for truth, for limitless knowledge.This is why you do not feel satisfied with the evanescent, the untrue, with ignorance and limitaion.Your true nature is to yearn for the revelation of what you Are.

\* \* \* \* \*

The beauty of it is that man's very nature is to long for reality,Supreme wisdom, Divine Joy; as it is his nature to return home when the play is over. The stage of the play is His, the play His as well, and so are those who take part in it. Friends and fellow-beings-everything is He alone.

\*

## SHREE SHREE MA ANANDAMAYEE PRASANGA

—Late Amulya Kumar Dutta Gupta

[Translation—Sanjoy Ghosh]

Date : 18 April 1946

At about 9 A.M. in the morning Ma along with Haribaba and his band of followers went to Shahbag. The *Jhau* trees which had the aroma of sandal were shown to Haribaba and his disciples. All were astonished at this happening of an amazing phenomenon. Haribaba commented that he had seen the same species of *Jhau* tree in Punjab but those trees did not possess any such aroma. Khukuni didi narrated that Ma had said that as a result of extensive *namkirtan* at Shahbag together with thought of divinity the *jhau* trees have acquired such divine aroma of chandan. Amulyada questioned why the other trees of Shahbag have not undergone the same change. In reply Ma said that as in case of human beings all humans are not capable of adopting the same level and quality of divinity so is the case with trees too. That is the reason why some trees have adopted material changes while the others have remained unaffected despite being grown in the same place and sharing the same climate.

From Shahbag we went to visit the tomb of the Arab Fakir. Ma accompanied by her devotees sat around the tomb of the said Arab Fakir. One Maulavi was present there. As it was Thursday he had come to offer candle and agarbatti to the Fakir. A conversation followed about how Ma had 'seen' the Arabian saint and how She had come to the site of his tomb and recited Namaz here. The Maulavi also narrated the hearsay about the Fakir Sahib. He said that in the past this part of the garden was covered by forest. One day the Nawab visited this garden and saw to his surprise Fakir a strolling in the garden on the back of a tiger. On meeting the Nawab the Fakir, without giving any opportunity to the Nawab to say anything, said, "Go and see who is there at the gate of the garden". The Nawab immediately left for the garden gate in solemn obedience to the command of the Fakir. However, on reaching the gate the Nawab could not see anyone. On his return to the garden he could see neither the Fakir or the tiger. It appeared to him that somebody was lying down in the garden totally covered with a white sheet. The Nawab lifted the white cloth to find no one there. The Nawab was very much astonished at such an incident. It occurred to him that the place where the white cloth lay must be a *samadhi* of some *mahapurush* and accordingly raised a monument in honour. Infact neither did any Fakir in mortal form ever lived in this garden nor was there any *samadhi* of any Fakir.

The Depot Commandant of Pioneer Corps, Sri. Jamini Mohan Chattopadhyay was still at Shahbag. He had secured a new employment at Coochbehar. On hearing the news of arrival of Sree Ma in Dacca he had stayed back at Shahbag to meet Sree Ma. From Shahbag Sree Ma went to Siddheswari. The history of Siddeswari Ashram was narrated to Haribaba. Haribaba was shown the oil painting of the Saint Sumeruban Maharaj and other notable articles of his. From Siddeswari Bari Sree Ma returned to the Ashram.

In the evening there was a performance of Ramayan song. The famous couple of singer brothers "Dui Bhai" who have accompanied Sree Ma also performed singing. The said singers are famous in Kolkata. They also performed well here.

#### 19.1.46 (Friday)

Today Ma accompanied Haribaba to Dhakeswari bari. Haribaba was desirous to visit the notable places of Dacca City. For this reason alone Ma has accompanied Haribaba. Ramayan Gan was again performed in the evening. Namkirtan accompanied by *path* continued through the entire day.

The devotees who have accompanied Haribaba perform dramatic acts for short spans of time. This performance is known as *lila*. Sree Sree Ma said that no special make up or costume is needed to perform the *lila* and also there is no specific time or place for performance of such events. Suppose Haribaba is going to some place accompanied by his devotees and being tired and exhausted has taken refuge in the shade of a tree. The *lila* commences under the tree then and there. The sole objective of the devotees in performing such *lila* is to entertain Haribaba suitably as Haribaba by nature is a very serious person. If Haribaba occasionally grins and smiles as a result of such *lila* performance it is deemed to be a performance of success by the devotees.

One of such *lilas* commenced at 9 P.M. to night. The story ran as follows— A Guru visited the house of one of his disciples, 'Dhanya'. On his arrival at his disciple's house he started to worship his '*salgram:shila*'. As Dhanya was a *gwala* (milkman) by caste he knew nothing about *puja* performance. Fascinated by the action of his Guru he also urged to perform *puja* by himself like his Guru. The Guru however discouraged his disciple to indulge in such brahmanical rites not befitting his caste. As the disciple was adamant in his intention the Guru gave him a piece of stone and said, "Accept this stone as your God. You are expected to bathe your God and offer *bhoga* and after your God has accepted your *bhoga* you will accept the same as *prasad*." The Guru left after discharging the command. Dhanya started performing *puja* from the next day with great enthusiasm. He performed the bathing rites by washing the stone with water and offered *chapattis* as *bhoga* and implored his God to accept and eat the *chapattis*. But his God, i.e. the piece of stone, did not accept the *chapattis* as *bhoga*. Dhanya felt very sad at this. He said, "When my Guru offers

you *bhaga*, you readily accept it, but why are you not accepting the same readily now? If you do not accept this then I will also refuse to eat." However, no response was obtained from the end of God. Then he wrapped his God, i.e. the piece of stone, in his turban and left for his work. He also fasted as his God was also fasting. The same event was repeated the following day. He fasted for seven consecutive days. God was impressed by the devotion and faith and revealed Himself before His devotee. Dhanya was overjoyed. He fed Bhagwan and chatted with Him as a close friend. On the assurance that God would perform all his daily work he appointed Him to rear his herd of cows and supervise the agricultural field. God continued to discharge the responsibilities thrust upon Him by Dhanya.

Some time elapsed. Dhanya's Guru revisited his place. On meeting his Guru Dhanya commented, "Guru, you gave me such a Bhagwan who initially refused to eat any food. For Him alone I had to fast for seven days." The Guru replied, "Fool! Does God really eat or accept food? It is a practice to place food at His disposal for some time. Bhagwan eats or accepts food by this method." Dhanya said, "This is not true. Bhagwan accepts and eats food normally like the humans." The more the Guru disbelieved Dhanya, the more he continued to affirm confidently what he believed to be true. Exasperated the Guru said, "if you are able to make your Bhagwan meet me then only I would believe your story." Dhanya said, "Bhagwan has gone with the herd of cattles to graze them; anyway I can call Him." He proceeded to call Bhagwan. Although Bhagwan came He remained invisible to the Guru. As the Guru was unable to visualize Bhagwan Dhanya requested Bhagwan to appear before his Guru. Bhagwan said, "Your Guru will not be able to visualize me in this birth because he has neither faith nor devotion." But Dhanya remained adamant. He continued to say, "Unless my Guru visualizes you he won't believe that I have met you. Hence you must appear in front of my Guru". Bhagwan said, "If you make your guru sit on, Your lap then only he can visualize me". Dhanya complied exactly with the God's command. On visualization of God the Guru began to chant devotional hymns and hugged Dhanya repeatedly saying, "By obtaining a disciple like you this inferior person is liberated from the mortal bondage of the mundane world and is able to obtain *mukti*."

The *lila* terminated at this point. Both Dhanya and the Guru performed excellently. The spectators were extremely pleased at the performance. All the conversations were in Hindi. Abhay translated the Hindi text and explained it to others.

(to be continued)



## MOTHER AND HER PLAYFUL ROLE

—Bhaiji

Whoever has watched Mother's bright face ever radiant with a smile, Her child like simplicity, Her playful jokes flowing from a heart ever brimming over with joy, must have been charmed beyond measure. In all Her words and expressions, in Her every glance and gesture, a sweetness reigns, the like of which cannot be found anywhere else. A divine perfume always emanates from Her body, from Her every breath and from Her clothes and bedding. When She sings, divine thoughts and ideas well up from the inmost fountain of our hearts.

Completely free from all ties, She lives a life of detachments like the serene blue sky above, far away from the world below, yet shedding its calm serenity over the things of this earth, and producing heavenly reflections upon lakes and tanks as well as upon a small bowl of water. She envelopes all created things and draws them closer and closer to Her heart. She recognizes the play of one absolute life in the peoples of all races and creeds, in every animal and plant and looking upon all beings as ripples of one universal bliss; She treats them with equal loves, regard and sanctity. No distinction of high and low, rich and poor, colours Her vision.

Mother always says,—"There is nothing new for me to see, hear or say". Still we find that even the commonest trifles absorb her attention to a degree that makes one inclined to compare her to a child enchanted with a lovely doll.

There is no end to Her playful frolics with Her devotees. On one occasion they desired to see Her dressed up as Sri Krishna as a boy and also as a youth on the threshold of adolescence. The devotees combined to dress Her up. There are two pictures showing the two different roles. How striking are the expressions of Mother in those two different poses! The beauty of Her face reveals the charm of Sri Krishna as a child and when growing into youth: It is really inconceivable from what hidden sources such a divine glow shone forth to give Her looks so much tenderness, Her forehead such a peaceful and a gracious expression, Her face such a halo of purity and sweetness and Her limbs such light suppleness. It is not only uncommon but supernatural and beyond all precedents.

A photo of her smiling face as boy Sri Krishna is seen. In her hearty laugh every fibre of Her being joined and danced as it were. Those who were present at the time could see the glow of a sacred light that illumined Her figure; such a pure hearty laugh could hardly be found in a human being. The photograph very imperfectly discloses only a fraction of her actual expression. Wherever Mother goes, Her presence carries an exquisite sweetness pervading the thoughts and ideas of people flock-

ing around her. Whatever might be the nature of one's thought, one feels pleasantly surprised to find one's mind being purified and refined by her subtle influence. The sight of Sri Krishna awakened motherly affection in Yashoda, friendly feelings in Sridama and Sudama and selfless love in the hearts of the milkmaids of Brajadhama. Mother's presence too induces different phases of devotional love and adoration in different souls.

From Her very infancy She has been playing upon the mainspring of human life. Her comrades knew no joy without Her company. Whoever came in touch with Her, children, youth or old people, were so charmed that they would often ask when parting, 'When shall we meet again?' Wherever She happens to be a joyous multitude assembles; a wave of intoxicating delight stirs hundreds and thousands of men and women with a new inspiration and their souls dance, as it were, in response to her sweet words and expressions. The moment she leaves a place it feels empty. It was also noticed that people who, seeing Her dishvelled clotted hair, Her slovenly dress and careless ways, came to look upon Her as an erratic woman and tried to avoid Her presence, yet in spite of themselves could not take their eyes off her.

Countless and manifold are the uncommon powers that are constantly manifesting themselves through Her playful activities. When She was questioned about them, She used to say, "This body is always in the same mood, without any change whatever; your attitude alone leads you to consider any particular phase as ordinary or extraordinary." She added, "The universe is a Divine Play, you have a desire to play, and hence in all playful activities of this physical body,— in its smiles and frolics, you interpret its ways according to your own light. Had it assumed a grave motionless posture, you would have stayed away from me. Learn to merge yourself in Divine Joy, in all its manifestations and you will reach the final goal of all play. Do you understand?"

What is beyond the experience of the ordinary person is called extraordinary. To him who has dissolved all thoughts and emotions into the one absolute, supreme bliss of Atman, which sometimes takes on the role of an individual being, sometimes of Ishwer or Supreme Ruler of the universe or sometimes of the Impersonal Absolute Para-Brahman,—all these phases are but the casual manifestations of one self-initiated Divine Play. Mother has no desires, no likes or dislikes. Sometimes supernatural powers play their part in arousing devotional attitude or awakening pious thought in Her devotees. Sometimes their extremely prayerful attitude induces corresponding manifestation in Her simple behaviour. Mother says, "This body is like a drum; just as you will beat it, it will produce a corresponding sound. I find that there is but one playful master-tune ringing through the whole universe."

[Taken from Mother as Revealed to Me — Bhaiji]

## RAM NAGAR, RISHIKESH, SAMYAM SAPTAH

### Sri Hari Babaji's Kirtan

Ma softly joins in the singing of :-

"Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya, Jai Ram, Siya Ram". Later Ma sings a song of Maha Prabhu :

"Lord of compassion, Oh Merciful Gaur, You will have to reveal Yourself."

The Maharani of Balrampur had earlier expressed a keen desire to Rani Sherkot to hear Ma sing and now their ardent wish was fulfilled.

Pandit Sunder Lal, a devotee and a learned scholar, asks, "Ma, what does one do when one wishes to surrender oneself"?

Ma : To whom does one surrender ?

To God, to one's chosen deity, to the Guru, the atma (self) within oneself.

There is only one Brahma and no other, therefore the surrender is to oneself.

Q. : Where does the ego go?

Ma : It is absorbed into one's own self. You keep concentrating on the ego, I, and mine and thus court sorrow and distress in this ever changing world.

But when the desire for the Ultimate Reality arises, by surrendering yourself, the self will be revealed by following the regular routine and disciplines.

For this is the Samyam, to discover who you are in reality.

But your entire energy and strength must be concentrated towards the Revelation of your True Self. You alone and no other.

He Who is one's own—God alone—Surrendering oneself to oneself.

Q. : How does one get engrossed in the name of God ?

Ma : By the constant repetition of God's name. As you keep on digging deeper and deeper, at last water spurts forth. By constant friction fire appears.

During the morning meditation Ma saw Sree Mahavir (Hanumanji) lying in the Shav Asan, also Sree Ram, the one in two forms, Mahavir and Sree Ram and a small child. Ma said : "Thus to the banks of the Ganga only those who were destined to come were able to come."

### 18.4.59

Q. : Why have we come here for the Samyam Vrata?

Ma : The banks of the Ganga, and the influence of Rishikesh are there so that the Rishikesh

Rishikesh which is within you may be revealed and the Ganga of Divine knowledge that is within you may pour forth.

Lakshmi : During the meditation I heard a pigeon's sound.

Ma : (Laughingly) what deep meditation! In some Puranas the atma (self) is referred to as a pigeon.

Another said : I saw a snake.

Ma : Under trees, some great soul may be found in the form of a snake.

Another : I saw an old man with a white beard sitting near Ma.

Ma : As long as you are absorbed in worldly matters it is not possible to have visions of divine saints and seers; as the attraction of the world declines and you practise intense religious disciplines, forms of the Divine will appear and you will be blessed with divine insight.

Q. : Who was the man in white ?

Ma : You yourself - One is to realise that God alone is in all forms and there is no other.

Q. : Why is the darshan (revelation) for such a brief interlude?

Ma : For a brief interval of time your mind was intensely concentrated on the Divine. God has not withdrawn Himself. The vision is in accordance with the intensity of your concentration.

As one wears glasses to correct one's vision there is a stage when one's gaze is fixed constantly on the Divine. Samyam is for attaining this state.

What is there to fear?

There is no other. In all forms you alone are there.

Q. : If it is God's wish why is all this happening?

Ma : If you feel a certain person has a very good job and think, 'Why didn't I get it?' the reply would be that it is because he deserved it. If a child is ill and the mother gives it just a light soup it is because the mother knows he would not be able to bear rich food. In God's dispensation there is no partiality. He gives a jolt, a little pain, to turn your mind towards the Eternal.

To think all this is mine, children, etc., is the way to death. Turn your thinking to the conviction that all this is God's and you will become immortal.

\*

## THE MOST GRACIOUS PRESENCE SRI MA ANANDAMAYEE

—Bithika Mukerji

Vol. VII

### The Coming of Paramananda :

After the death of Bhaiji Sri Ma had "seen" the face of a young sadhu in a vision. It seemed to her, "One has gone, another is coming". She sometimes visualized future events in this way. In the summer of 1937 Bholanath had met Paramananda on the road in front of the Kishenput Ashram. Bholanath recognised him as the young sadhu he had met previously at Uttarkashi. Bholanath invited him in and introduced him to Sri Ma. She recognised the face of her vision. She said, "If you ever feel inclined you may come to me wherever I am." Paramananda acknowledged the gracious invitation but right then he was not prepared to settle down anywhere. He went back to Uttarkashi. He lived for many years in Gangotri (summer) and Uttarkashi (winter) practising his sadhana and studying the scriptures with the learned mahatmas, notably Devigiriji Maharaj. Sri Ma met him again at Gangotri (May 1939). After about six months of this meeting Paramananda came in search of her to Vindiyachal (January 1940) and quietly joined her entourage.

Swami Paramananda in time became one of the managers of Sri Ma's hectic and confusing affairs. It became his onerous duty to create order out of chaos, make impromptu arrangements at odd camping sites, provide provisions and if necessary cook large meals for the ever increasing crowds milling round Sri Ma. He had an uncanny knack of overcoming obstacles and making something out of nothing. Swamiji was always gratefully remembered by Sri Ma's entourage of young women as the last resort when it came to putting up the mosquito net for her at the end of a long day and very often in a very inconvenient place, as for example, an open terrace, the roof of a barge, a lawn near a devotee's house. Swamiji would come and somehow find supports where none were visible before.

Bhaiji in his time had sometimes taken the initiative and suggested modes of travel or courses of action to Bholanath. Unless Sri Ma had a different kheyala these would be carried out. Now Paramananda waited on Sri Ma's kheyala never putting himself forward for any decisions big or small. Lately Sri Ma had got into the way of

saying, "Go and ask Paramananda." Swamiji would listen to the proposal or controversy and give his opinion (as far as he was able) trying to align it with Sri Ma's kheyala for or against it. Very rarely he suggested disciplinary action against a few of Sri Ma's wayward retinue but she was either too kindhearted or it was not in her svarupa to take offence or find fault. Once she had said, "If I were to take note of shortcomings none of you would be able to stay here (in her vicinity). But karma takes its own toll."

### **The Political scene :**

The decade of the forties was crucial for India as well as the world. Europe suffered the Second World War and India the ravages of political unrest, riots, the truncating of its land and its aftermath. Sri Ma's presence on the soil of India at the time exercised a calming and benign influence, the magnitude of its effects, no doubt, will be appreciated by later generations.

Sri Ma went back to Bengal in February. She came to Puri where a new Ashram had been built near the beach at Swargadwar. She also went to Kheora later in the year; from there she went to Siddheshwari to grace the occasion of the installation ceremony of Shivalingam in the Ashram. The "hollow" was now hidden completely under the Shivalingam.

From the villages of Bengal Sri Ma again came away to Raipur, Dehradun. She visited nearby places. The Zamindar of Doonga, Chaudhury Sher Singh, was a devotee. She visited this remote estate with a small group of people. Doonga was like a forest retreat for everyone.

Indian leaders intensified their demand for freedom. All political leaders of the time, sooner or later, came to know Sri Anandamayi Ma and to a lesser or greater degree carried away the memory of her vibrant presence. In retrospect, one factor emerges distinctly with regard to Sri Ma's reception of politically important people. Some of her devotees had hoped that she would speak to them about national or international affairs. But we see that Sri Ma never deviated from her main theme of engaging everyone's attention on God-remembrance, the highest calling for man. She listened attentively to everyone, was quick to appreciate the various aspects of a political situation, showed care and concern for the efforts made by patriotic men and women. She, however, remained singularly untouched by the eddying forces of temporal power. The oneness she spoke of was not a message. It was she herself. She saw no other, neither as a person, nor a province nor a country : how should she then address herself to a conflict situation?

It so happened that during the war, an old gentleman asked her about it and whether it would affect the fortunes of India (Kishenpur Ashram 1941). Sri Ma broke out in one of her loud ringing peals of laughter (attahasa). She said, "Is there a war? It requires two to fight, does it not? How can there be a war without an enemy? Is there more than One, that there should be two contestants? The war you describe is a clapping of hands by the same Person. Pitaji, why do you worry? Try to accept whatever happens as a manifestation of the Divine!"

The decade of the Forties saw an unprecedented influx of young men and women in the Ashrams being built all over the country by devotees for Sri Ma. Many of the future ascetics and office-bearers who were close to her came around this time. Swarup Bhai (Swami Swarupanandaji) and Prakash Bhai (Swami Prakashanandaji) were two friends who came to visit and stayed on. Shailesh (Shivananda), Kusum (Nirvanananda), Subodh and Bhupen, the four brothers from Allahabad, joined Sri Ma's entourage from time to time. Bharatbhai (Swami Bhaskaranandaji) came as a young man and stayed on. Tapan (Nirmalananda) began as a student of the Vidyapeeth. Panuda and Mriunmayda originally came as tutors in the Vidyapeeth. They were all followed by others. Bibhuda and his sister Bindudi were seen in Sri Ma's company regularly. Bibhuda became well-known as the singer who could nearly always invoke Sri Ma's kheyala to sing for the congregations.

Other names which should be recorded here are Shobhan Brahmachari and Hiru Brahmachari who were both fine singers.

Among Sri Ma's earliest girl companions was young Buni to begin with. Buni was joined by Bilas (Udasji), Swarnalata (Billoji), Savitri (Kshamadi) and Renu. The younger sisters of Renu, Kawna and Bithu, were soon joined by Chhabi, Moni, Gini, Tara, Buba and Sati and many others.

All these students clustered round Sri Ma during vacations. All visits gradually began to become familiar with Buni and Renu as Sri Ma's regular companions.

During the years 1941-42 Sri Ma also came in close contact with many people who were totally involved with their country's affairs. She displayed the same equable acceptance of their total devotion on the one hand as in the case of Jamnalal Bajaj or just respectful obeissance on the part of many others.

## "YAGNOPAVITAM PARAMAM PAVITRAM"

—S.N.Sopory

It was after a fairly long sojourn in Calcutta that towards the end of 1949 Mataji visited Jagannath Puri for some time. The visit, if I remember correctly, was arranged by Shri Bindu Niogi of Calcutta, an old devotee of Mataji. As my wife and I were remaining close to Mataji those days we took permission from Her to accompany Her to Puri.

The Puri Ashram located on the sea level was merely a two roomed dwelling those days with small narrow verandahs on two sides. No one had gone there for a long time and the only inhabitant of the Ashram was an old lady, mother of Dasuda, who is the master of all trades in the Sangha at present. The locality of the Ashram is known as Swargdwar, on the sloping sea beach. The cremation ground is just next to the Ashram.

On detraining at Puri Station I saw a Station Wagon Taxi and immediately a thought arose in my mind that how nice it would be if we could take Mataji for an outing in the Station Wagon. I booked it immediately. On reaching the Ashram I took the first opportunity to request Mataji to accompany us to places like Bhuvaneshwar and Sakshi Gopal and take an outing the next day. Mataji readily agreed. This involved two unusual things, firstly I never used to approach Mataji directly with any such request and always consulted Swami Paramanandaji or Didiji, even so Mataji's reply used to be "Jo Ho Jai" and hardly ever a definite Yes or No. In this instance She said "yes" without the slightest hesitation and both Swamiji and Didiji felt surprised and somewhat disturbed that I had taken sanction without consulting them, as according to them Mataji needed some rest for a few days after the strain of the hectic programme at Calcutta. However Mataji's consent given to me remained unchanged and the next morning Swamiji, Didiji, my wife and myself started with Mataji for the trip. There was one more person with us in the Station Wagon and that was Swami Krishnanandaji who used to do kirtan "Prem Se Hari Ka Naam Bolo". He also had accompanied Mataji to Puri and had been put up in a small thatched hut next to the Ashram. We stopped at several places on the way and Didiji gave 'Tal Phal' (tender palm fruit) and Dahi to Mataji. We visited Bhuvaneshwar and other places including the Ashram of Gangadi's Guru Maharaj. It was a most wonderful and enjoyable trip.

On the way Mataji told us so many stories about the old days; my wife had asked Mataji whether the offerings made by us to Pitris (ancestors) during Shradha etc.



reached them, and Mataji had explained in some detail that it was definitely so.

Just before we were about to reach Puri Ashram at the end of the trip, Swami Krishnanandaji told Mataji that in reality this trip to Bhuvaneshwar and Sakshi Gopal along with Mataji was in answer to a strong desire he had felt while coming to Puri to go with Mataji to these places. So, the readers will see that as soon as the idea took shape in the mind of Swami Krishnanandaji, Mataji knew about it and also transmitted it to my mind creating an overpowering urge to request Mataji for the trip.

In fact it was all to fulfill the wish of Swami Krishnanandaji.

During that period Mataji's visits to Puri became quite frequent and we too used to take long weekends off to visit Puri. On one such occasion Mataji asked me if I was wearing a Yagnopavit or had discarded it. I felt rather guilty and explained that previously I was wearing the Yagnopavit and also used to do Sandhya regularly, but at that time I was not wearing it. Mataji very sweetly and kindly said that some time, at some good holy place, I should put it on again. I promised to do so and made mental note of it.

Next week-end, as usual, we were in Puri and I mentioned to Mataji that as instructed by Her I was going to Shri Jagannathji's Temple which was such a holy place, and would put on the Yagnopavit there. Mataji appeared to be happy and approved the idea. She called Didiji and asked her to give me a Yagnopavit and also to write out the Mantra for reciting before putting it on.

After that my wife and I took a rickshaw and proceeded to Shri Jagannathji's Temple. There we did the usual Pooja and then I received the appropriate Mantra and put on the Yagnopavit given by Didiji. No sooner had I put it on than I noticed one broken string of the Yagnopavit dangling in front of me. I was shocked and felt very upset considering it a bad omen. I rushed out of the temple asking my wife to leave immediately. We sat quietly and without exchanging a word we reached the Ashram. The road level near the Ashram at Swargdwar is much higher as the Ashram is almost at sea level. According to the daily routine Mataji used to be sitting in the sea-side Verandah of the Ashram at that time as Bhagwat Path used to go on then. On that particular morning Mataji was standing alone in the verandah facing the road, as if waiting for the arrival of some one. It was like a split second timing as we reached there just then. As we walked down and were near the Ashram Mataji did not say anything, or ask any thing, but just beckoned us by the motion of her hand to go to her room. She followed us and closed the door.

I hurriedly tried to relate the story to Mataji, but she did not appear to attach much

importance to what I thought was an ill omen. She merely called Didiji and asked her if she had another Yagnopavit. Didiji said that she did have another spare one as she had prepared two.

Didiji went to her room and brought the Yagnopavit and tried to open it to give it to me. Strangely the Yagnopavit got entangled and the more Didiji tried to disentangle it the more it became like an entangled mess of a twin ball. She got so frustrated that she did not know what to do, and in a gesture of helplessness she just threw the knotted ball in the hands of Mataji saying in Bengali "Do what you like". It appeared that Mataji was just waiting for that moment. She merely took the Yagnopavit in her hands and ever so softly, and without any obvious effort, just pulled the strings which opened up nicely as if nothing had happened at all. As I watched in amazement She put the Yagnopavit with her own hands over my head and across my shoulder. It was then that it dawned on me that this was what Mataji had in mind all the time but like an ignorant man I was going elsewhere to look for a holy place and to chant Mantras.

What Mercy ! What Kindness  
What Love!  
What Kripa ! What Daya !  
What Khyal..... !

\*

## ABOUT PURI ASHRAM

For information of readers : My daughter Aparna completed her M.B.A. in College of Bhuvaneshwar in 1996 and about March/April my wife and son accompanied me to Bhuvaneshwar to join her at her passing out. Being so close to Puri we made the trip to visit this Holy City, the Jagannathji Temple and Mataji's Ashram there.

From old memories of Puri we searched for the Ashram on the sea beach. We were however not able to locate it. Enquiry elicited that the sea has receded about a kilometer or more leaving the small ashram inland with a narrow lane approaching it through a market place around it. So, we made our pranams at the Ashram in the changed scenario and carried away fresh memories of Puri.

\*

*nihatya dhārtarāṣṭrān naḥ kā prītiḥ syāj janārdana  
pāpam evā śrayedasmān hatvaitān ātatāyinaḥ*

In slaying the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, O Janārdana, what good will come to us? Only sin will overtake us in slaying these, though they be reprobates and confirmed criminals.

# SHREE SHREE MA ANANDAMAYEE

Vol. VI

[Translated by a devotee]

—Gurupriya Devi

Wednesday 25 May, 1938...

Today we received Shachibabu's letter. He has returned to Kolkata on Monday. He has written, "I had gone to Ma for two days. I had experienced so much joy, even in those two days. Ma had fever during those two days. Now She is well." Today Swamiji has given *diksha* to two people.

Thursday 26 May, 1938 ...

Bhupatidada has written in a letter, "In the Dhaka ashram, a site is to be consecrated to the memory of Bholanathji. Ma has pointed out a certain place for this, on people's insistence."

Today through Yogeshdada's letter, it was known that Ma is well. There is some pain in Ma's hand, though. The *bhandara* (feast) went off well on Saturday. Ma will probably go somewhere else quite soon. There is no other news in particular.

There has been torrential rain and very strong winds since yesterday. In spite of this, the ladies had no problem in coming to the ashram. Today too, they came to the ashram to do *kirtan*.

There is never any obstacle for Khuki (Nagendradada's daughter) to come for *kirtan*. She experiences a great deal of joy during *kirtan*. Khuki, Belun and Belun's Mother do *kirtan* very well. That is why one of them plays the harmonium and sings the name and the others sing together with her. The ladies decorate Ma's photograph with sandalwood and garlands and sing *kirtan* in front of it. Kanu Brahmachari has started to do *kirtan* with the boys on Saturdays. Each Saturday, the *kirtan* of "Ma Ma" is sung without a break for 24 hours. Kuladadada starts the *puja* at the Mandir from dawn. After reciting from the scriptures, and after the *havan*, he goes to his office at 11 O'clock. Nowadays, he eats fruits and *kheer*. Kanu does the Shiva *puja* and carries on with his own studies, Atul Brahmachari also starts work at dawn, cooking, performing *puja* of Ma's footstool. He also does the *puja* at Siddeshwari. All the work in the ashram is carried out with regularity.

Kalachanddada and his old mother have come and have been living in the ashram for the last six months. Kalachanddada, after looking after his mother, cleans Ma's cottage and looks after the accounts of the ashram. Brahmacharies are forbidden even to touch money. Some of the devotees of Ma, who are householders, on

returning from office, come to the ashram. They wash their hands and face and sit down to do *japa* or meditation in Ma's cottage, or in any of the small rooms. After the evening *arati* is performed, at the end of the *kirtan*, on everyone's departure there is an atmosphere of profound serenity and purity reigning in the ashram. For one thing, there is the importance of the place itself as well as the silence of the huge field.

#### Friday 27 May, 1938 ...

The storm and the rain are continuing relentlessly. It seems as if everything will be swept away. In spite of this one or two persons came to meet us. Today, there is no news of Ma.

#### Saturday 28 May, 1938 ...

Today is Amavasya (newmoon). According to the usual rules, today late at night Kuladadada performed worship of Ma in the temple. The storm and the rain have subsided somewhat after dusk. A few persons have come to partake of *prasad*. Shri Hemchandra Naag's wife and Dhirendrababu's mother have come to perform *pūja* even at this time of night. They were sitting in the verandah of the temple, watching the *pūja* and doing *japa*. At about 12.30 midnight everybody had *prasad* and went home. Today in the evening we received a letter from Manik. In the letter dated Jyeshtha 10th, he had written, "It is possible that Ma will go to Massouri next Wednesday." It is said that She will stay in the Arya Samaj Dharmashala. Virendradada, Bhupatidada, Abhay, Dasu and Ruma Devi are accompanying Ma, I may also go with her. Ma has sent Nishibabu and Mausiji (aunt) to Solan and Godavari to the Sevashram in Haridwar. In that letter Shri Shiv Shankar Kaviraj has written, "Didi, I am going to Dhaka today with Nidhu. There may be a delay of 2-3 days on the way." There is no other news.

#### Sunday 29 May, 1938 ...

It was hoped that Shri Shiv Shankar Kaviraj would arrive today, but he did not come. We had decided that we would leave for Kolkata tomorrow, but we wanted to know all the news about Ma from Shri Kaviraj. That is why the journey was put off.

#### Monday 30 May, 1938 ...

Amulyadada and Charudada (the lawyer) came this morning. There was talk about Ma. After that, a lot of ladies came and Hirandidi also arrived. She is feeling a little upset. She does not like being a householder. Her mind is always restless. She wants to be with Ma. She has begun observing austerities. You feel angry with the person whom you love a great deal. You sulk and even hurl blames on that person regarding her food habits and her life in general. This has happened due to her attraction towards Ma, She says, "If I cannot meet Ma then I shall not be able to lead a householders's life. After this, I will myself leave the house. I will pay no heed to any obstacles." In the afternoon, Yatinbabu's wife, Shri Manomohan Niyogi's wife

Nagendada's wife as well as the wives of Shri Varada Sen, Amulyadada, Akhilbabu, Hembabu, Kuladdada and Dhirendada's mother and other ladies came with their daughters. These ladies come everyday. They feel very happy even to meet me. They talk about Ma and perform *kirtan*. We all sat in the *kirtan* hall. A lot of gentlemen had also come. They sat in Swami Akhandanandaji's room. Bhupatibabu's wife is very unwell. She had come in spite of that, even though she is in such a state. Everybody was talking about Ma

Amulyadada's wife said something and I liked it very much. I can not help noting it down. While talking she said 'See, Didi, we often feel angry with someone we love. That is why today I went into the *pūja* room and talked quite angrily to Ma. I said, 'Ma, why do You create so much restlessness in the heart, if You are not going to give *darshan*? Since You have created restlessness in me, give me Your *darshan*. At least make me experience Your nearness. In truth, sister, there is so much restlessness in the heart, that I even forget about my daughters and my husband. There is such an emotion arising for Ma, that I become very restless. "I was entranced by her words and by her *bhava*. Honesty and straightforwardness seem to shine forth from her. I have heard many people saying, "We do not know what Ma has done for us." I feel like telling them what I have heard just now. Nowadays many persons are experiencing this kind of *bhava* in greater or lesser degree. Many people are trying to lead a pure life in their own houses. Some have even succeeded in doing this. Shiv Shankar Babu has not come even today. The day of our departure has been postponed, since we cannot leave without having news about Ma in detail from him.

#### **Tuesday 31 May, 1938 ...**

Shiv Shankar Kaviraj has arrived this morning after his visit to Manikganj. We have heard news about Ma from him. We have come to know from Manik's letter that Ma has gone to Mussoorie. There is still pain in Her hand. Day after tomorrow, on 19th Jyeshtha as a remembrance of the date of Ma's leaving Dhaka, the ladies will offer saltless *bhog*. This takes place every year. It is Babydidi, who is most diligent in carrying this out. It was decided that we shall spend the day here and leave for Kolkata the next day. (20th Jyestha, Friday) It was due to the people's request that we shall stay here on the day of the *bhog*.

#### **Wednesday 1 June, 1938 ...**

There was nothing special to note down.

#### **Thursday 2 June, 1938 ....**

This morning some ladies arrived after taking bath. This *bhog* is given by the Kayastha and Vaidya ladies only. Since they cannot cook rice, pulses etc. for Ma, they cook saltless vegetables and *purées* and offer them to Ma on this day. Whether it is because they cannot always do this, or for some other reason, a great deal of

eagerness is seen in them on this day. They are very happy today. After cooking the food together, they offered it in front of Shree Ma's photo at one o' clock at midday. After that everybody had *prasad*, *Prasad* was also distributed at night. About a hundred and fifty people got *prasad* and the ladies performed *kirtan* in the evening.

All the people were expressing sorrow since they know that we are leaving tomorrow. They were experiencing a lot of love towards one another because they had got together at Ma's feet. This attraction towards one another seemed to be greater than the attraction one experiences towards blood relations. This is why Ma says, "The spiritual relationships are stronger than those forged by birth." In fact, This is what I see the way the *bhaktas* from this place try to render service to us, the amount of trouble they experience while coming to the ashram everyday to meet us: it is difficult to receive such selfless love from our own relations. Only the ties of *dharma* can be so beautiful. Everything is so beautiful because it is Ma who is at the root of all this bond. Everyone remained in the ashram till late night with us. Everybody including the younger girls sat with us and told us everything that was troubling their minds. Kuladadada's younger daughter said on leaving, "Khukunididi, do not forget us, return soon, O.K.?" I am speechless and enchanted on seeing Ma's grace in everything that is taking place. She showers Her grace in so many different ways. We are blind, so we cannot see or understand this. Tomorrow is *Shashthi puja*. That is why some people were unhappy that they would not be able to come and see us off.

### Friday 3 June, 1938 ...

Hirandidi arrived very early this morning. She was not able to sleep at all last night. She left all her work and arrived at dawn. After some time Nagendada came with his daughter. Ganeshbabu's wife has finished her *puja* quickly and came. Manomohanbabu's wife is not in good health. In spite of this she has come in this heat, somewhat out of breath. A lot of other people have come, including Amulyadada and Shiva Shankar Kaviraj. Yatinbabu's wife, as well as some other ladies are unable to come. They have sent letters expressing their sadness. We started on our journey. Kanu, Jatu, Makhan (Chintaharan babu's son), as well as some other boys came with us to the station to help us board the train. Hirandidi had already left before we left for the station. We saw that Atulbabu (Bhramar's father) and Charubabu (Bhramar's uncle) had come to meet us at the station. Hirandidi and her daughter Belun had come again. I had noticed that Hirandidi's restlessness for Ma had become very great; since she had not met Ma, She was not prepared to let me go. One is not able to predict the way Ma's grace works on our lives. Sunitididi (Babydidi's sister-in-law) came with us upto Narayanganj.

(to be continued)

## MEMORIES WITH PANUDA

Anandita Sen (Rini)

When Gunita di told me that Panuda was no more, many memories came rushing back and I felt quite dumb. I could not imagine Ashram, particularly in Varanasi, and Kanyapeeth without Panuda. I did not realise that it would be so difficult to share my experiences with Panuda as I struggled to find the right words. My attempt here will be very sketchy as I am overcome with emotion and a deep sense of loss.

My tryst with Jai Ma began very early in my life when I lost my father and my mother decided to go to Varanasi to my grandparents. My mashi (Pushpa di) was instrumental in our coming to Varanasi. Though I could sense that something was wrong, I was too young to understand the change in my life but felt very secure near Jai Ma and Kanyapeeth became my second home. I was showered with immense love and affection by everyone. My mother was very keen that I get good education, more specifically education that was imparted in English and she pleaded with Jai Ma to show the way. Jai Ma entrusted Panuda with the responsibility of finding the right place for my schooling. My first impression of Panuda was one of a very strict person and I remember being very quiet when he took me to Smith Day School for admission. I remember to this day when he took my hand and walked with me to the school office, I felt cared for. Thus began my long journey with Panuda.

My early fears over, I found it very easy to talk to Panuda helped by the fact that Panuda was extremely fond of me and he would make allowances for me even though he was known to be a strict disciplinarian. Panuda became my mentor and even in those early days impressed upon me the importance of studying hard. My impression of Panuda was that of a person who was in control of any situation and who cared for all who depended on him. About four years later we moved to Chandannagar but I kept in touch with Panuda through letters.

During one of my visits to Varanasi I had the opportunity to catch up with Panuda. Since he was not rushed for time, he told me about his own education and his aspirations when he was young. When he met Jai Ma, he was preparing to appear for the Civil Services and the effort continued even after he came to the ashram. Then one day, Jai Ma chanced upon him studying and asked him, "Ekhono ki icche aache baba?" He said that at that very moment he took a call and gave up his efforts on



realising that Ma wanted him to spend his life in a different way. He said that though many of his college mates went on to become IAS officers he did not regret his decision. Having told me this, he inspired me to aim for Civil Services and I remember how happy he was when I was selected. With passage of time I haven't been able to keep in regular touch with him but informed him of every important event in my life.

Panuda's passing away is a personal loss for me. I feel as though I have lost someone whom I could turn to whenever I wanted.

\*

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ANANDAMAYEE SANGHA —  
SUNDARKAND FROM RAMCHARITMANAS  
ENGLISH TRANSLATION*

By Ravi Shankar  
Price Rs. 60/-

## MEMORIES OF PANUDA

—Mohua

I remember traces of Panuda's name to my ears when I was still a child. I had heard about him being known as a very strict ashramite with an upfront attitude. Instances of people avoiding to even tread the way where he would be, would trickle into my ears.

Sometime later, events led to getting acquainted with him, though not so deeply. I happened to start writing whenever I could, for Ma. And with someone's suggestion my writings were given to be published in Amrita Varta, the quarterly magazine of our Sangha.

By Ma's grace they were found to be publishable, and Panuda would keep asking me for my contribution to the forthcoming edition.

There would be time when I wouldn't be writing for months together. Then whenever we would meet, Panuda would smile and ask me in a humorously reprimanding tone, "Why nothing from you, you have become too busy now-a-days.". We would just enquire about each other and nothing more.

He would be found sitting in the enclosed passage outside the ashram's office whenever he was at Kankhal. In the initial years of knowing him when I was younger, I would wonder and think that he must not be knowing me and would try to pass by on the sly. But he would notice me and brighten up with a smile. He would start asking if I have written anything new. He would always ask me to keep writing.

Knowing that he has departed is really disheartening. That he is no longer amongst us is really sad. It was a pleasure to see him sitting in the verandah sometimes, in all white, and other times going about his work so dedicatedly and tirelessly. His stern voice will no longer be heard piercing through a room full of people, directing someone with some task.

The void that the departure of Panuda as an ashramite has created will be irreplaceable. We all will be truly and deeply missing the person that he was.

## GOD AS LOVE

—Late Rai Sahib Akshoy Kumar Datta Gupta  
Kaviratna, M.A.

God is Love, say the wise. But it may be asked : Is not there also Law, the natural antithesis of Love, which rights wrongs, decrees penalties, and upholds the moral order of the world? So it has been said in the Gita that the Lord incarnates Himself from time to time in order to protect the good and destroy the wicked for the rehabilitation of dharma. Here certainly the Lord speaks more of Law than of Love as the *raison d'etre* for His direct personal intervention in the affairs of this world.

So here you have Ma Anandamayee come to give you the much needed spiritual succour. A tiny peaceful village in a remote corner of remote East Bengal district, Tippera (Tripura), was elected to have the glorious privilege of first receiving Her on its lap in the holy month of Vaishakha of the Bengali year 1303; that is, 30th of April 1896 A.D.

Here the reader will kindly put up with a little digression. The district of Tippera, like most East Bengal districts, has long had a preponderatingly Mohammedan population, mostly descendants of converted Hindus. But when Mother was born, there were as yet no base communal feelings rampant in any part of Bengal and little religious acrimony. Indeed there had been a few well known and esteemed members of that community in the Tippera district who sang of and worshipped the goddess Kali. The house where Mother was born was surrounded by houses of Mohammedans, mostly illiterate peasants, and was some years later purchased and occupied by a Mohammedan family. Mother in Her childhood used frequently to visit the houses of those Mohammedan neighbours who all loved and liked Her, as She also had a soft corner of Her heart for them. No religious scruples were violated. At one time the revered Ramani Mohan Chakravarti (later called Bholanath), Mother's late husband was employed as keeper of Shahbagh, a garden at Ramna, Dacca, belonging to the well known Nawab family of that town. He had his quarters within the extensive compound of the garden. Mother had already attracted many devotees who performed Kali Puja within the garden without any objection raised by or on behalf of its owners. Indeed some members of the Nawab family, both ladies and gentlemen, soon learnt to appreciate and respect Her. There was within the compound of Shahbagh the grave of a siddha fakir supposed to have hailed from Arabia. On one occasion Mother had the Kheyala to go quite close to the grave and at once felt like performing

namaz, uttering words She knew not of what language. A Mohammedan worker in the garden saw all this & soon a report of the incident reached the ears of the owners. They came in great curiosity and the ladies among them earnestly requested Mother to repeat the performance; and though She at first declined, the old feeling came upon Her again when She was taken by them to the vicinity of the grave. They recognised that She was repeating portions of the Quran. Mother gave out later that the long, long departed Fakir had revealed himself to Her with a disciple in his company at Bajitpur, the former place of Bholanath's employment, and invited Her to come and stay in Shahbagh where later She again saw him.

Another long departed saint, not a Mohammedan, who also played some, though not fully revealed, part in Mother's Lila, may be mentioned here. He followed Mother in the not very attractive form of a cobra at Vindhyachal (U.P.) and Dacca and lastly when She was going in a boat along a river in Tippera District. He also was accompanied by a disciple. He bit a toe of Mother's foot at Vindhyachal, and at Dacca meekly allowed her to tread on his reptile body. About the bite Mother said later that it had been no more than a caress. The saint had been interred at a spot in Ramna Ashram which later was chosen to be the site of Mother's Ashram in Dacca. The Snake was given architectural commemoration and honour round the top of a small temple erected over the spot where the mortal remains of the saint were supposed to have been buried. A lingam was installed in the temple.

The whole of East Bengal and Dacca town in particular, falling someyears later into the jaws of a rabid communal spirit, it is small wonder that the above ashram has not been spared by the fanatics and this was in spite of the fact that Mother was held in great respect not only by many members of the Nawab family of the town but by many other highly respectable persons belonging to the Mohammedan community there as well as elsewhere.

(an excerpt)

\*

## **SWAMI NIRVANANANDAJI MAHARAJ PRESIDENT OF SHREE SHREE MA ANANDAMAYEE SANGHA**

On the occasion of the 62nd year of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Sangha on 8th May, 2012 during Shree Shree Ma's Janmatithi Pooja Swami Nirvananandaji was elected unanimously as the President of the Sangha. This is the first occasion in the Sangha's history that an Ashranite Brahmchari Sannyasi was elected for this post.

Earlier highly capable administrators who had made their mark in the world had been elected as President plus those who had saintly characteristics like Solan's Rajasaheb 'Yogi Bhai'.

Swami Nirvananandaji was born on March 31, 1922 in Allahabad, U.P. They were five siblings-four brothers, all devoted to Shree Ma, and one sister. He lost his mother at the tender age of 7. He is a highly qualified person with a B.Sc from Allahabad University and M.Sc from St. Stephen College, Delhi University.

He had Shree Shree Ma's darshan when he was 20 yrs. of age in 1942. Since then he devoted his life to Shree Shree Ma. Both he and his elder brother surrendered themselves at Shree Shree Ma's feet and never looked back. He was appointed as a teacher in the boys' school, Vidyapeeth, in Almora with his brother Shailesh Brahmachari as the Principal. However, Brahmachari Nirvanananda preferred to be near Shree Shree Ma's holy presence. He participated in the Savitri Akhanda Mahayagna in Varanasi for 3 year period, then had the privilege to travel with Ma and Haribaba on the South India tour. Having perceived a simple and pure spirit in Kusum (Nirvanananda) Brahmachari Shree Shree Ma selected him to be trained under the expert Karma Kandin Pandit Agnisvatta Shastri (Batuda). In this way Shree Shree Ma changed the life of the intellectually inclined student of chemical science to that of the Chief Pujari of Shree Ma Anandamayee Sangha. In this role he performed very special Pujas of Shree Shree Ma on several occasions — specially the Diamond Jubilee Birthday Celebration in Varanasi in 1956 when Shree Shree Ma was enveloped in Divine Bhava and no mortal would dare to come close to Her vibrant and charged proximity. Such Pujas took place on an annual basis on the Tithi Puja occasion and during Sharadiya Navaratri. All those who have witnessed these Pujas have felt uplifted to a different world altogether. Kusum Brahmachari became one with the deity and the Puja. Shree Ma showered him with blessings and motherly affection after he broke his long hours of fast each time. During 1962 Purna



श्री श्री आनन्दमयी संघ के नव निर्वाचित अध्यक्ष स्वामी निर्वाणनन्दजी महाराज  
8.5.2012



कनखल, हरिद्वार के महामण्डलेश्वर द्वारा अभिनन्दन



स्वामी निर्वाणानन्दजी को सश्रद्ध प्रणाम करते हुए स्वामी ज्योतिर्मयानन्द जी



आनन्दमयी संघ के नर्वानर्वाचित अध्यक्ष एवं साधारण सचिव  
श्री डी.पी. मुखोपाध्याय के साथ ब्रह्मचारी एवं साधकगण

Kumbha Shree Shree Ma initiated Br. Bhaskarananda, Br. Kusum and Br. Tapan into Naishthik Brahmacharya for 3yrs - a life of difficult Tapasya and thereafter they were known as Br. Bhaskarananda, Br. Nirvanananda and Br. Nirmalananda. Shree Shree Ma nourished them spiritually throughout the 3 yrs. After Shree Muktanandaji— Shree Ma's mother, left her mortal body, in 1970, these three Brahmacharis were given the responsibility of giving Diksha to Shree Ma's devotees in Shree Shree Ma's Presence.

Br. Nirvananandaji took Sannyasa, thereafter from Mahant Shri Girdhar Narayan Puriji a few years back and since then he is addressed as Swami Nirvananandaji. He is the seniormost saint of the Sangha.

All devotees of Shree Shree Ma are joyous at the selection of Ma's beloved son Swami Nirvananandaji as the President of the Sangha. We pray for his good health and long life in service of Shree Shree Ma.

\*

*"Set apart a few minutes definitely each morning and evening for divine contemplation. Dedicate this brief time to God, wholly for all time to come. No thought, no action of the world, should encroach upon this brief span. Keep up this practice long. Once the habit gets settled in your soul, you would feel a call from the above at the appointed time and a mysterious flow of Divine Grace will stir up new strength in every fibre of your being."*

*—Matri Darshan (English Edition)*



## ANANDAMAYEE

—Richard Lannoy

By the time I met her, Anandmayee's 'genious' went into her public and private discourses as well as her on-going tutelage of innumerable *sadhikas*. Her large followers included many distinguished and impressive people. Because they had known her, and each other, for a great many years and had witnessed many extraordinary scenes associated with Mataji, there was a vast repository of oral history at the disposal of anyone like myself who was interested in the anecdotal level of so lively a scene. I learnt more about India's living spiritual culture in this way than by any other means. My own anecdotes are few; I include some here to amplify what I think my photographs express more vividly.

During the 59th birthday celebration in Almora, a very large number of people gathered daily for *satsang*; the hall would be absolutely packed. In the morning, distinguished speakers gave talks while Anandamayee sat to one side listening. There was always a pile of recently offered flowers beside her on the dais and I watched her one day playing with these flowers abstractedly while someone sang *bhajans*. She selected one particular handsome bloom, a big dark red dahlia, so dark that it was almost black. She started to smooth down its petals and sway from side to side, shaking out her hair which had been coiled up on top of her head. Now she went into a wild *bhava*, she herself darkened and the structure of her head became noticeably different. The *bhava* was somehow secretive, indrawn, particularly when she began, with accelerating speed, to pull off each petal, one by one. When, finally, she had pulled off the last petal she held the dahlia by its stalk, fingered the golden centre and then for a long time gazed at this with the most rapt and delicate attention. Had she, I wondered, made the connection between what she had just done and an incident recorded by her beloved disciple, Bhajji? The ashram, after all was built beside Bhajji's last resting place, his *samadhi*, in 1937:

"One day at the ashram, Sri Ma took a flower and plucking away all its petals, said to me: 'Many of your *sanskaras* [psychic traces] have dropped away and many more will fall like the petals of this flower, till I shall remain as your main prop, just like the one stalk of this flower. Do you understand?' 'Saying this, she began to laugh. I enquired, Ma, how can I reach that state? She replied: 'Everyday remember

this once; you need not do anything else."

One of the morning speakers of that season in Almora was an eminent and powerful monk who headed the Shankaracharya Math in Bombay. A very tall and imposing figure with bald head, bull-neck and ash-smudged brow he was an intimidating presence on his dais in the centre of the hall while Anandamayee was seated well to one side taking no part at all in the proceedings. She was in a restive mood, looking about her, apparently not listening to what the monk was saying. He was lecturing on Vedanta, larding his words with formidable Sanskrit terminology in a somewhat hectoring tone. Playing with the string of a flower garland, very casually, almost in an absent-minded aside, Mataji interjected a one-sentence remark addressing the Swami respectfully as Pitaji ( father), but in the lightest of tones. The Swami stopped in mid-sentence, paused, looked down and suddenly burst into tears. To everyone's astonishment the giant monk just crumbled before our very eyes. With a word to an attendant, Mataji swept the girls of the ashram school into *bhajans* and everyone joined in. The mood relaxed, the Swami regained his composure and was soon rattling on. What had touched him to the quick nobody could tell.

During *satsang* in Varanasi about 50 of us were gathered while Mataji listened to someone talking. In the background down below in the courtyard, two men were talking, their voices rising in a crescendo until they were bellowing angrily at each other. Hitherto no row had erupted in any of my stays in the ashram. The noise was now beginning to wreck the peaceful atmosphere in the hall. Mataji looked at me, beckoned an attendant to her side and sent him over to speak to me. Would I, he whispered, please go and stop the argument. I had no alternative but to do as I was bidden. I went to the yard and found that the row was between the senior Swami and Mataji's brother. It suddenly dawned on me why I in particular had been selected to remonstrate with the culprits. The plain fact was, I realised, I could not speak their language nor could they mine ! Thus are the winning ways of Anandamayee! She knew I would not become ensnared in the karmic net of other men's disputes and that everyone's self-esteem would remain intact. It ended with both protagonists reduced to helpless laughter by my futile remonstrations.

One drowsy afternoon at Vindiyachal there were very few people about; nothing stirred. Up on her balcony, Anandamayee was having her hair carefully combed by an attendant who had just washed it. A young doctor from Allahabad came too take his leave. "What train do you intend taking?" Mataji enquired. The doctor indicated which one. "And where will you change trains to get the Allahabad connection?"

Mataji persisted. The young man gave a seemingly reasoned reply, but this did not satisfy Mataji and she questioned him further concerning his connection suggesting—with some emphasis—that he not take the train he had first proposed, but the alternative which she was now proposing. She was most meticulous about this, yet the doctor just could not see any logic in her suggestion. Mataji was not looking at him, her head bent to the comb as it was passed through her hair. Selecting a long strand, she tautened it as she talked. The eyes of all three of us were now fixed on the strand of hair. Holding it in her right hand she began, very slowly, with the most attentive care, to wind it round the first joint of her left index finger. She wound it with such precision that it made no more than a fine millimetre-thick circuit of her finger. She wound it thrice in overlapping coils without looking up and again addressed the acutely discomfited young man. 'Everything I say.....', and at this she made a further turn of hair tightly round her finger, '.... and everything I do has ..... one more turn. '.... meaning'. She looked up, the man raised his hands in *namaskar*, bowed, and departed without saying another word.

If I had to find one word with which to describe the most outstanding characteristic of Anandanayi's teaching it would have to be 'inclusiveness'. But to account for why I find this word the nearest approximation possible I would have to make my reply inclusive too! I will attempt no more than a rough sketch.

In the simple terms of her life story, she had passed, level by level, through the entire gamut of spiritual development by the age of 30-- from childhood piety to humble religious ardour, to worship of gods, recitation of God's name and service to others in the name of God, to visionary experience, to meditation, to initiations, to glossolalia and prophetic utterance, to the practice of advanced yoga at the highest level of perfection, to ecstatic rapture, *kirtan* and the dance of the *bhakta*, to *sanadhi*. In addition, she had emerged as an exponent of contemplative esoteric, or mystical, religion through direct experience and personal awareness, where the inward sense of the self is one with the feeling of the external world.

At this latter end of the process, her teaching became like the delta of a great river system, an infinity of tributaries, each one flowing towards the unanimity of the human spirit. In short, she encompassed the particularistic states and stages within a unitive whole. She carried with her, as she raised awareness from one level to the next, all those who retained their divergent beliefs, but she then reached beyond these surface differences to the transcendental unity of all religions. It was not just a matter of mouthing platitudes about 'the oneness of all religions'; she gave detailed

instructions to people of different faiths and at different stages of development which were precisely in tune with their own particular situation. Her teaching certainly did point to the unity hidden beneath all the outer symbols, affording a glimpse into a universalistic stratosphere without departing from down-to-earth detail. She was always precise-never vague.

She was the unassuming country girl from a dirt-poor village home who became the cynosure of all eyes. Yet still she would say: 'I am always the same'— We don't know that we also are where she is. There is no need for us to 'become' liberated: we are already free. Most graphically she shows us how to find this out for ourselves. The clarity of the way she does this is revelatory: 'I do nothing of my own volition.' Nothing? Surely this is a trite remark-or mediumistic? It is nothing of the sort. If we could only realize it, she is saying, she can do nothing by her own volition and *nor can we*. All action is His action.

Bhaiji puts it this way: "Her life is an eye opener to us all. She shows by her everyday activities how we can link every minute detail of life to the Infinite and how we can cultivate a new outlook in our relations with men and make this world a place of new joy and hope and peace. .... She has devoted herself wholly and completely to the good of the world. All living beings are her own kith and kin. "If you think that there is something peculiarly my own, I must tell you that the whole world is my own."

Here is a strangeness, an indefinable rarity, an uncanny, ineffable quality which comes so near the limits of the recognizably human as to call for a revision of what we mean by that very word 'human'. Some would undoubtedly find her behaviour very strange, and her freedom to behave strangely both audacious and disturbing. She was throughout her life, in every domain, the acme of effortless perfection. Were it not for her life long exertion for the good of all, this perfection would be insufferable. And 60 years of total accessibility must surely have been unendurable had not Anandamayi herself sustained a marvellous balance between effort and effortlessness 'There are no others. All others are like the limbs of this body.'

Douglas Harding who met Anandamayi, told Anne Bancroft that the essence of her life and doctrine was 'to care and not to care':

"She was totally detached from what was going on and paradoxically totally united with it. And these two are both necessary, for if you have one without the other-look out! She was free of the world in the sense that her essence was the Source of the world and she was not limited by its products or involved in them. Intrinsically

she was freedom itself that was one extremely important half of the truth. The other half was that she was so involved in everything. You see, to be totally separate from everything, to be space for it, capacity for it, is to be it. Paradoxically if one is free of a thing one is free to be it. She exhibited this paradox—to be free of the world is to be the world. To be free of grief is to be grief. A woman came to her who had lost her son and they sat together weeping for hours and then the woman went away comforted. At the same time her teaching was totally uncompromising when it came to the essence of things, very tough but absolutely gentle and generous with people's efforts."

In a letter she sent to a group of *sadhikas*, Anandamayi reveals her own high-energy inclination :

"Those who are pilgrims on the path must develop great inner strength, energy, mobility and swiftness so that their lives may become beautiful, to fill their new life with a new current. It will not do to sit down and ride in a rickety, jolting bullock cart. At all times, the mind must be intensely vigorous, energetic and alert, then only can you forge ahead with great speed. Remember that every person has to mould his or her own life. Accept cheerfully whatever He may bestow on you or take away from you."

\*

## AN INDIAN SAGE

—Ethel Merston, O.B.E.

All books and articles about people are subjective to the writers, depending upon their attitude towards their comprehension of and their degree of capacity to contact the person of whom they write. Men and women are mostly so subjective that they can only know others in so far as they have found and known themselves, which is, for the greater number of us, scarcely at all.

If, then, we can so little know others who are more or less like ourselves, subjective, ego-ridden, desire-obsessed mortals, how much less can we know that rare Being, the ego-less, desireless, objective Soul? To be able to recognize His or Her Greatness is all that we can hope, and, even for that boon, we have much, indeed, to be thankful for. But to describe them, to explain their actions, to postulate anything about them other than a love and wisdom so different in quality and so far surpassing our own that they appear to us as God incarnate, is an impossibility.

Such a Being is Anandamayi Ma or Mataji as Her devotees call Her. Impossible to describe Her with a subjective mind—to each one She means something different according to how our limited ego-minds allow us to glimpse the whole that is such an ego-less Being. To some She is Love personified, to others God Himself, All-powerful, to yet others She is Wisdom, All-knowledge. In the stories told of Her, some see divine miracles and they worship Her, praying that She may exercise Her powers on their behalf; others, again, are attracted by the radiance of Her smile and the rippling, infectious laugh, free as a child's.

What is the real purpose of the incarnation of such as Mataji? Has She a mission to fulfil towards others and the world? Or some obligation towards Herself, during the course of which those who come into contact with Her can get in their turn, the help they are capable of receiving? Or is such an incarnation as purposeless as our own lives often appear to be? And, moreover of what concern is it to us? But what we can say is that we feel such an attraction to these rare Beings that we are ready to cast all the world to the winds to be near them, to live within their radiance content with a crumb of their Love and Wisdom rather than have all the riches of the earth.

In the West, too, men and women have given up the world for the Bliss that is Christ, and entered monasteries and convents to spend their lives with the Divine Name on their lips. In the East, to us living, the representative of God is adored; His or Her Name constantly repeated. In the West, Christ is one, although the methods

taken to contact God through Him are numerous. So, too, in the East different methods of approaches to the Divine have been recommended by sages from time to time. Be our *dharma* what it may, few, indeed, can attain without help from one such Great Soul, and, according to our *dharma* we find the Teacher we need to further us along our path.

In the world of today, as in that of four thousand years ago, when the Lord Krishna was teaching his disciple Arjuna, the way of devotion and worship is the easiest and most seekers take it, ever searching for an object through which they may worship the Divine, be the object wood, stone, a painting, or a living being.

Hence, most of the Hindu Sages of today are surrounded by devotees, adorers, and some of them, like Anandamayi Ma, apparently use this urge-to-worship to turn their followers away from selfish desires to selflessness and God. Through the trust Mataji inspires, verily as a mother is trusted by her child, we gradually become more sensitive to the impermanence and unreality of our cares, less identified with them, and so, more sensitive to the immeasurability of the power of Love and of its eternal quality; more gradually yet do we begin to feel that stillness and love within, which is beyond disturbance, apart from, yet infusing, life.

From the world over Mataji attracts seekers; French, German, Austrian, English, American, Dutch men and women are to be met in Her ashrams—all are welcomed by Her loving radiance. How often do we come to Her, worried by the cares of life, puzzled about ourselves and others, and in Her presence our problems resolve themselves, we find peace in the glory of Her smile and relaxed, we face life's cares afresh, energy renewed, understanding of ourselves and others deepened.

And even when devotion is not our *dharma*, and we cannot follow the *marga* of worship and *japam*, we recognize the greatness of all such Beings as Mataji, and, along with Her worshippers, but on our own path, find help and stimulation from the force of that Love which passeth understanding and which is Her Grace.

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## ASHRAM AND UTSAV NEWS

### 1. Vindhyachal Ashram

According to belated news received from Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashram, Vindhyachal, the description of the programme is as follows —

The programme can be divided into two parts :

- a) Daily routine
- b) Special Pooja etc.

#### a) Description of the daily routine :—

(i) Daily pooja of Shree Shree Ma and Narmadeshwar Shivalingam. During the summer season the Shivalingam is bathed with continuous stream of water.

(ii) A charitable homeopathy dispensary—Ma Anandamayee Karuna Seva rendering free service to the local people especially from the backward class and the poor was begun 10 yrs. ago. Subsequently it is becoming more and more popular. It is observed that there are a large number of patients on Sundays and Thursdays as on these days three doctors and five compounders give their services. It must be mentioned that on other days a Sadhu, experienced in homeopathy, renders this services. He is provided with biscuits and toffees for distribution among children. About 5000 patients were treated last year. Medicine is provided free of cost and even minor charges for receipts are not taken.

#### (iii) Weekly Satsang—

Satsang is organised every Sunday evening. It is going on regularly for the last 15 years. Devotional songs, kirtan, dhyana, readings from Matri Leela, Vishnusahasra naam, Shiva Mahimna Stotra, Geeta & Chandi recitation are done in the satsang.

#### b) Special Programme etc —

1. Shree Shree Ma's Janmatitha celebrations took place on the 20th of May 2011 which included Shree Shree Ma's special puja with shodashopchar paduka abhishek, havan etc. The next day innumerable devotees took prasad.

2. Gurupurnima was celebrated in the following way on the 15th of July 2011. Special Puja with Shodashopchar was performed on Shree Ma's murti with Paduka Abhishek, Kumari Puja etc. Nine Kumaris and one Vatuk were fed with much respect and affection. Akhanda Matri naam japa was done from sunrise together with naam kirtan/bhajan etc. Besides, a programme of recitation of Geeta, Chandi, Guru Geeta too was performed. Distribution of Awards to school students and college students also took place.



A special mention must be made of the effort made to distribute awards to school and college students from Mirzapur town on Guru Purnima for participating in essay competition on Shree Shree Ma's Divine Leela and Amrit Vani, on the occasion of the completion of the 60th year of the Sangha. It was organised on a grand scale. About 40 candidates had participated, their friends and relatives, important personalities from Mirzapur and Vindhyachal were invited. The programme was organised in the Hall and lasted for 3 hours from 11 a.m. onwards. Some special invitees who were blessed with Shree Ma's darshan or had studied Shree Shree Ma's literature very well or had spiritual experience spoke briefly. Cash prizes were awarded to the top 3 positions. Other participants were given Shree Ma's photo, a printed certificate, pen, diary etc., a book on Ma, Matri Vani and a packet of prasad. Special mention must be made of a capable student whose essay was awarded a prize in Central Competition on a larger scale. An expert dancer from Mirzapur performed and held the audience spellbound. Finally about 300 devotees participated in prasad grahan and felt happy and satisfied.

3. Geeta Jayanti — Mahashivaratri Vrata Programme — Both Geeta Jayanti and Mahashivaratri Vrata were organised in the Ashram. Four devotees kept fast and performed the four prahara pujas with all the rites and rituals interspersed with Shiva Mahimna Stuti, naam kirtan etc. Finally in accordance with tradition Shiva Katha was recited and food for breaking the fast was distributed.

4. On Vasanti Pooja this year Kalash Sthapana of Durga Ma was done and Puja was performed specially on Ashtami and Navami lithi, thereafter all the devotees partook of anna prasad.

### 5. Medical Camp

On 19th February 2012 a Medical Camp was organised in the Ashram. 20 famous doctors from Kashi Hindu Vishwa Vidyalaya and Mata Anandamayee Hospital Varanasi, plus 20/25 public assistant workers participated in this great work. Free medicine was distributed to the patients, E.C.G. and other special medical investigations too were organised free of cost. More than 1000 people participated in this camp and took advantage of the facilities provided. Biscuit packets were distributed to all the patients in the afternoon. More than 200 doctors and assistants took anna prasad in the ashram. Finally 5 patients were selected for free operation facilities in Shree Shree Ma's hospital in Varanasi.

## 2. Vrindavan Ashram

a) We are happy to report to all matri bhaktas that for the first time a Book Stall was inaugurated on Monday, 20th February, 2012. This work was done according to Pujya Swami Bhaskaranandaji Maharaj's wishes by the residents of Kheda, Nadiad, Gujrat and Matri bhakta Mahadevbhai Patel.

b) Another honoree Free Dispensary was also inaugurated on the aforesaid auspicious Shiva Chaturdashi tithi. This good work was done with the help of Shri Sanjit Chattopadhyaya, Secretary and a great devotee of Shree Ma of Ranchi Ashram, Jharkhand.

### **3. Five Day Programme in Delhi Ashram**

Due to Shree Shree Ma's great kripa a 5 day programme was organised from March 7, 2012 till 11 March 2012 consisting of Naam Yagna Adhiwas on the 7th and Akhanda Naam Yagna on the 8th of March. Thereafter everyone enjoyed a 3 day musical Ramayana Katha from March 9 to March 11, rendered by the Acharya of Sriman Gaud Sect, Sriman Rajesh Kishoreji Maharaj of Vrindavan Dham.

**4. Shri 108 Swami Muktananda Giriji's Sannyasa Utsava** was celebrated with Shodashopchar pooja, special pooja and Sadhu Bhandara in various Ashrams like Kankhal, Varanasi, Delhi, Agarpara, Ranchi etc. on Chaitra Sankranti, 13 April 2012. On the occasion of the installation of Shree Shree Ma's statue on Akshay Tritceya—a very auspicious tithi - special puja, bhog, arati, kirtan and partaking of prasad by all bhaktas in the afternoon took place on 28th April in Shree Shree Ma's Ashram in Jamshedpur.

**5. In Varanasi Ashram Shodashopchar Puja was offered to Ma in Ananda Jyotirmandir on the anniversary of Shree Ma's Murti installation on the auspicious occasion of Akshaya Tritceya.**

Pooja was offered to Giriji in Giriji's mandir. Pooja was also offered to Gopalji, Yogmaya and Shiva on the upper floor of the temple. Throughout the pooja bhajans and kirtans were sung. After the pooja, as per tradition established by Shree Ma's kheyala 28 sadhus were offered food preceded by offering of chandan mala, vastra, dakshina etc. In Agarpara Ashram too, on the occasion of Akshay Tritceya pooja was offered very beautifully.

Pooja was offered in all the temples in the Kankhal Ashram on the occasion of the installation day of Akshay Tritceya. The murti of Adi Guru Shankaracharya was offered special pooja on the occasion of Jagadguru Shankaracharya Jayanti on 26 April.

**6. On the Tirodhan Tithi (the day of the soul's departure for the Eternal Abode) of Baba Bholanathji**

On 28th April, special pooja was offered in various Ashramas—Kankhal, Varanasi, Agarpara, Dehra Dun, Uttarkashi etc.

7. 30th April was celebrated as the day of Shree Shree Ma's first stay in Agarpara Ashram.

**8. Shree Shree Ma's Janmotsav :**

Shree Shree Ma's 117th auspicious Janmotsav was celebrated beautifully from May 2 till May 9 in nearly all the ashrams like Varanasi, Agartala, Kolkata.

Jamshedpur, Pune, Bhimpura, Ranchi, Rajgir, Raipur, Dehra Dun, Almora, Uttarkashi, Bhopal, Vindhyachal, Puri, Naimisharanya, Tarapeeth, etc.

In Kankhal special pooja was offered after midnight on May 2 on the occasion of Shree Shree Ma's Janmatithi. From 2nd to 8th May Sri Shatachandi path and puja were performed and bhog was offered. From 3rd to 7th May Raasleela was performed. Discourses and satsang by Mahatmas also took place.

On 4th May, the day of the opening ceremony Shree 108 Swami Parameshwaranandji Maharaj of Sadhana Sadan Ashram and Mahamandaleshwar Shree 1008 Swami Vishwatmananandji Maharaj and Divya Chaitanya Maharaj of Varanasi were present. They offered their respectful offerings at Shree Shree Ma's feet in the form of beautifully worded and thoughtful discourses and satsang which made everyone happy. On May 5 Mahamandaleshwar Shri 1008 Swami Divyanandji Maharaj, the head of Kailashpeeth Ashram blessed the occasion with his presence and offered his respects at Shree Shree Ma's feet. On May 8 Mahamandaleshwar Shree 1008 Swami Shyamsundardasji Maharaj of Gareebdasji Math, Shree 1008 Vishokanandji Maharaj Mahamandaleshwar of Someshwardham of Kankhal, Mahamandaleshwar Shree 1008 Swami Vijayanandji Maharaj of Geeta Vigyan Ashram, all offered their respectful pranaam offerings at Shree Shree Ma's feet. On May 6 Buddha Purnima, pooja of 108 Kumaris and Vatuk took place with food offerings. On May 8 special Tithi Pooja took place along with Kumari Pooja, havan and pushpanjali, thereafter the distribution of prasad was held between midnight and early hours of the morning. On May 9, 108 Sadhu Bhojan and Bhandara were held, amongst the Sadhus, ascetics of Niranjani Akhara, Mahanirvani Akhara, Udaseen Bara Akhara, Kailash Ashram Rishikesh, Divyajeevan Sangh and Ramakrishna Mission were present. On May 9 Adhiwas, Naam yagna and Akhanda Naam Sankirtana took place for 24 hrs. till 10th evening including malsa bhog, Mahaprabhu anna bhog, evening kunjbhung and traditional farewell to the Mahatmas of Mahasankirtana. On the occasion of Shree Shree Ma's Janmotsav special pujas were offered in the local chief temples and fruits were distributed to the patients in local hospitals. Poor people were fed as Daridra Narayana.

Similarly Shree Shree Ma's Janmotsav was celebrated beautifully in various ashramas such as Varanasi, Vindhyachal, Agartala, Kolkata, Jamshedpur, Pune Bhimpura, Ranchi, Rajgir, Uttarkashi, Bhopal, Raipur, Dehra Dun, Puri, etc.

In Agarpara Ashram, Kolkata on the occasion of Buddha Purnima (May 6) special puja was offered in Shree Shree Ananda Dhyana Peeth as the day of Ma's statue installation.

### **9. Ganga Dushehra**

Shree Shree Ganga Puja was offered on the occasion Ganga Dushera on 30th May in Kankhal, Varanasi and Kolkata Agarpara Ashrams. Puja was also offered to Mansa Devi.

## OBITUARY

### Sri Govinda Narainji

Sri Govinda Narain, born in 1916, had a brilliant academic career completed in Allahabad University—B.Sc. (Hons), M.Sc., LLB (Pre)—all First Class First. He was a student of Dr. Megh Nad Saha. Subsequently he joined the Indian Civil Service in 1939. His wife Chandrajji was daughter of Dr. Panna Lal, ICS, an ardent devotee of Ma, fondly remembered for his keen intellect and penetrating question answer sessions with Shree Shree Ma. Govind Narainji had three daughters Chandan, Nandini and Vandana, all with professional training, settled in work and good families. The death of Nandini, working with Hindustan Times in 1981, was a devastating blow to the family.

Having been selected in the Indian Civil Service he held numerous high posts as a highly efficient and honest administrator. To quote a few - Govind Narainji was Home Secretary, Development Commissioner in the U.P. Government. He also served for three years as Advisor cum Secretary to King Tribhuvan in Nepal between 1951-54. In the Government of India from 1961 he was Chairman and Managing Director S.T.C. and M.M.T.C., Secretary Health and family Planning, Home and Defence Secretary till retirement in 1975. He was Governor of Karnataka from 1977 to 1983. He was awarded Padma Vibhushan for outstanding service to the country. He spoke French and German fluently and had travelled round the globe in the true sense of the term i.e. in the six major continents of the world. He settled down in Vasant Vihar, Delhi and served a large number of spiritual, academic, social and industrial concerns, keeping himself fully occupied. He wrote important chapters in 6 prominent books. As the author of Lectures on Internal Threats and National Security and Encounters with Men and Mothers he was well received. His work as President of Common Cause, Public Interest Legal Support and Research Centre brought him a great deal of laudation. He was President of Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha till the end i.e. April 3, 2012. He was also President of Poorna Prajna Public School, Sankirtana Bhavan Trust, etc. For such work he will be long remembered.

He leaves behind children, grandchildren and great grandchildren and a large family of friends. With his departure from this earth ends a Yuga. We pray for the everlasting peace for this very great soul who served Shree Shree Ma selflessly and with total dedication.

Jai Ma !

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## **Gitashree Km. Chhabi Bandyopadhyaya**

Gitashree Km. Chhabi Bandyopadhyaya left her mortal body to become one with her ishta Radha Madhav Yugal Kishore on 23 May 2012 in Kolkata at the very ripe age of 86 yrs.

She was a very special recipient of Shree Shree Ma's Divine Grace. There was no celebration with Shree Ma at the centre in which she did not render musical numbers in her blessed voice lifting the spirit of all participants and listeners including the visiting saints, who would often enquire, 'Where is Chhabi?'

She was born in a well-to-do family in 1926 and received training at home from her parents in her childhood. Thereafter she sang for 35 Bengali films, and was a well known radio artiste too. However she became famous after she sang Vande Mataram in her melodious voice in the presence of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Mahatma Gandhi and many other important leaders of the Congress Party at merely the age of 9 years.

During her tenure of 15 yrs as Head of Music Department in the highly esteemed Rabindra Bharati University she trained her keen students in Pada Kirtan and Bhakti Sangeet.

In her personal life she was exemplary in her tapasya & devotion to her ishta through her tireless seva despite her over busy schedule. She set an example in punctuality. She was an institution by herself. Shree Dilip Kumar Roy the famous spiritual leader-poet was full of praise for her style of kirtana and so was also the well known Thumri singer Naina Devi who praised her placing kirtana style at a high level. She had been honoured with many awards like the President of India's Award and the State of West Bengal's Award and as such she paid a befitting tribute to her highly esteemed Gurus of Dhrupad, Dhamar, Kheyal, Tappa, Thumri and Bhajan, not to forget her spiritually inclined music Gurus like Shri Dilip Kumar Roy, Shri Siddheshwar Mukhopdhyaya, Ratneshwar Mukhopadhyaya and Navodweep Vrajawasi. As such she was known as the 'Mozpaan' of Bengali music.

She lived with her brothers and sisters in an independent accommodation and took care of them after her parents', demise, yet she was in spirit a true ashramite. She was influenced by Shree Shree Ma since her teens and remained a highly respected member of Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha till the last. We can say with confidence that while Shree Shree Ma's national and internationally situated ashrams keep playing her morning and evening kirtans her devotion will keep purifying the environs the world over and lift the spirit of devotees to great heights. May her spiritual aims be fulfilled by the Grace of Ma.



The fifth PRESIDENT of Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha

Sri Govindanarainji I.C.S.

5 May 1916 — 3 April 2012



Geetshree Kumari Chhabi Bandopadhyaya  
Behind Shree Ma  
October 1926 — 23 May, 2012

### **Dr. Durgadas Sen Gupta**

On 9th February 2012 at a very ripe old age of 82 years Dr. Durgadas Sengupta left this world for a Divine Abode.

Dr. Durgadas Sengupta had dedicated his service to Shree Shree Ma and was a pillar of strength to Ma's devotees. From his childhood he was blessed by Shree Shree Ma as Shri Pankaj Sen, his father was the person responsible for facilitating Shree Shree Ma's stay in Delhi for several years. In his service to humanity he was inspired by Shree Shree Ma. He was true to his medical profession and never made any distinction amongst his patients on any grounds, nor did he allow success to deviate him from his path. He was absorbed in his work as an efficient surgeon and medical professor. Shree Shree Ma valued his medical advice and recommended her distinguished devotees and saints like Gurupriya Didi, Mahamahopadhyaya Gopinath Kaviraj, Sant Hari Babaji to consult him. He obeyed Shree Shree Ma and took full care of his two sons even as a widower.

In his last days he was under dialysis, yet he would regularly come to the ashram and serve the sick after every dialysis. He lived up to Shree Shree Ma's ideal of a 'doctor' i.e. a Godly Form for all his patients.

Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha pays tribute to such a great soul.

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