

MA ANANDAMAYEE
AMRIT VARTA

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

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1974 - Mrs. J. J. ...

MATRI - VANI

Talk about God is the only worthwhile talk, all the rest is pain. People call him the life of like (*Prana* of the *pranas*). By realizing Whom one no longer remains poor, one no longer has paucity. To awaken that Essence of Immortality. To awaken that Eternal Spirit.

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Always pray to God – You alone are my shelter, open the way for Your Revelation to take place. All should pray thus.

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This mentality of hankering— Give, Give* this identification with the body, sense of want, this is the form of emptiness (*abhava*). By praying to Him this emptiness goes away and one's true being (*swabhava*) is manifested. One should adhere to truthful speech, dedication to Truth and keep the company of sages/seekers of truth, In order to be established in the state of one's True self, Each one should proceed along the path suggested by one's Guru, no that unhappiness goes away.

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Unhappiness is the result of friction between two; mine and thine gives rise to conflict. There is one *Atma* which is omnipresent. To realize Him be a traveler on that path alone. God's name always purifies. Remembrance of God in all work-no artificiality; keep it inside; (I am) an instrument in your hand. You yourself are Master. You yourself are receiving. Try in this manner. The more the serious effort so much will be (the experience of His Grace). Wherever you are, whichever way you live, remember His name.

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I will do – I am doing, these words that you have – this is ego. The real ego – who am I – while there is *kriya* (creative action), till then there is method. This method is for the realization of God. By doing this (*kriya*) you will realise God – Realising God means to realise oneself and by realising oneself one realises God. This question that arose to know oneself, this question arose from Him. (If) you walk on this path you will realise Me and if you walk this (other) path, then you will be in a cycle (*chakra*) of confusion (says God). Those who walk (on His path) will get Wholeness. The way of Destruction will give Destruction, Death, and if you walk towards the Eternal you will realise Me. (By) following the method of realizing me the cycle (*chakra*) of birth and death will be destroyed. And if you walk the path of destruction (then) you will fall into utter confusion of cycle of rebirths.

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While there is the *bhava* (inner disposition) of independence and dependence, walking ahead He will himself let you know. (You) will come to the point. (Then) dependence/independence will be self-illuminated. But when one does not know oneself then this type of question (arises).

* * *

Q – How does concentration come?

Ma – Keep trying. Do not stop trying.

* * *

There are previous births. What has been done in previous lives – this fate that (one is) undergoing, this *bhog* (consequence of one's past lives good or bad actions) takes one towards truthful action. The actions of past life, such actions (so) one is performing truthful actions now. Yet one puts obstacles; until God is the doer such *bhava* (internal disposition) comes – God (by) what you are doing, You are blessing us: (By) taking immediately, he takes away sorrow.

The earlier and (even) earlier consequences of previous births. What was done in the previous birth (one) is suffering/undergoing its consequences. Such *sanjog* (co-incident, providential happening) that the consequences of the actions of previous and even previous births-with whoever whatever *sanjog*. In this way suffering takes place. God is far away from me* this feeling leads to suffering. This *bhog* (consequence of our past lives, good or bad actions); suffering from this-within His play-what he does not do – *kriya* of *sat buddhi* (truthful intent), does not meditate on truth, does not walk on the path of Truth, one who does not act according to *dharma* that is why there is suffering and suffering is (further) generated. One who does inmodest action receives suffering. We have done such actions the consequence of which is giving one pain. It is washing/cleaning (because), you are the sons and daughters of the Eternal Nectar, progeny of the Rishis, so.

* * *

God accepts all *kriya* (creative actions). Until He accepts, the subject keeps suffering. Suffering is the fruit of *karma* of past many lives. By performing auspicious actions now, actions (*kriya*) for God will be properly performed disbelief in God will not arise. Conflict arises from ego. The actions done (in the past) to arouse love for God – God in that form. Some such actions had been done-the one who takes away calamities has given the (right) action, is doing good (by reforming he wrong-doer). If one has the right devotion then such obstacles should be considered as God's blessings – One should endeavour to realize the One omnipresent self, supreme Peace, Supreme Knowledge, centered in all.

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*. a play upon words deo-give and deho-body A play upon the words durbuddhi and durbhog

SHREE SHREE MA ANANDAMAYEE PRASANG

Vol – 5

—Amulya Kumar Datta Gupta
Translation – Br. Niranjani

(continued)

Saturday 23/10/48

Today we reached Kashi at 7 a.m. I had taken Late Viren Mukhopadhyaya's house on rent in the neighbourhood of Ramapura, but I did not know its location and the correct address. Therefore Khukuni Didi and Manomohan accompanied us to the house. In making arrangements for food etc. it became 12 noon. We went to the Ashram in the evening. As we entered the Ashram we met Gurupriya Didi. Didi said, "Today you all were not requested to take *prasad* in the ashram, therefore Ma chastised us. Tomorrow you all will take *prasad* here in the afternoon."

Death of Mashi Ma (Aunt)

The next day I took *prasad* in the Ashram. Trigunacharan Bandopadhyaya came here from Srirampur. Ma went for a boat ride on the Ganga, in the evening, we too went with Ma. *Kirtan* etc. took place on the boat itself. Ma's younger sister was suffering from T.B. for many days. In this condition, Ma asked Didi Ma to give her *sannyasa*. Mashi Ma's *sannyasa* name is 'Jayananda'. Our *bajra* (large boat) stopped next to Mashi Ma's boat. Mashi Ma's condition was delicate, it was difficult for her to live even for two to four days more. Ma laughingly called out to her from the terrace of the *bajra* "Mashi Ma! Mashi Ma!" "Jayananda! Jayananda!" Khukuni Didi took Ma to Mausi Ma's boat. This was her last meeting with Ma.

Ma told me some days after Mausi Ma's death, "Your Mashi Ma had come to Kashi prepared, that if she dies everything will be over and even if she recovers, she would not go back to the household, this was decided. The day she passed away her subtle body came to me in Jhusi and repeatedly kept saying, 'Ma take me, Ma take me.' I did not at all feel like sleeping that night". After spending some more time on the boat ride we returned to the Ashram.

Monday 25/10/48

Today also *path* and *kirtan* took place in the evening in the Ashram. A gentleman came and requested Mataji that he wants to give *bhandara* (to feed) to the sadhus, so he has come to invite the ashram sadhus. Ma replied that those who are working

for the *Yajna* will not be able to go but others like Prabuddhanandaji will go.

The gentleman – “What is the benefit of this *yajna*?”

Mataji asked Swami Shankaranandaji to tell him about the fruits of the *yajna*. Sw. Shankaranandaji said. “As is the fruit of action done without the desire for fruit (*niskama karma*) so also the fruit of this *yajna*. This *yajna* was not begun with any desire in mind.” Mataji – “This *yajna* is to please the Lord of all beings, animals, birds, trees, plants, etc. When he is pleased what is to happen will happen. Clouds gather in the sky. What happens when clouds gather in the sky? It rains. All get the benefit of rain. The benefit of this *yajna* too will be gained by all.”

The gentleman – *To do Yajna* to please God is also a desire, how can it be called desireless?

Mataji – There is a kind of desire which is the cause of bondage, there is another kind of desire which becomes the cause for the removal of bondage. Desire to realise God, desire to please God, this is another kind of desire. It is as if accepting desire to become free from bondage. Desire is always arising inside humans, we have to live with these, that is why one should accept those kinds of desires so that later be one could, be emancipated.

Savitri Mahayajna in Kashi Ashram –

The *yajna* that the gentleman mentioned has been going on in Kashi Ashram for twenty two months. When we were coming with Mataji by rail, then I had begun this topic. I had asked Mataji on whose request this *yajna* had been started. Then Khukuni Didi had said it was difficult to say on whose request this *yajna* had been started. An old Brahmin from Mirzapur had requested Ma to start a *yajna*, but Ma did not talk about it at that time. Many in Kashi too had talked with Ma about doing a *yajna*. In this way the topic of the *yajna* was ushered in. When the *yajna* fire was lit in Shahbag during Kali Puja it was not extinguished. Ma had said this *yajna* fire would be used in a huge *yajna*. I remembered all this, then listening to the talk by people on *yajna*, I too felt a desire to do a *yajna*. Then such incidents started happening as if by itself the organizing of the *yajna* happened. Manomohan dada just then, took leave and came to Kashi from Dhaka. He was given the responsibility of constructing the *yajna* kund. The *yajna* kund would be made in the centre of the Ashram courtyard. Dada asked Ma to point the centre. When measured from all directions it was found that it was truly the centre of the Ashram courtyard. On this topic Ma had said. “After purchasing this place for the Ashram, the Higher Beings – Mahapurush (who were not in human body) were seen dancing at the place, I had pointed out the same place for the construction of the *yajna kund*. Now it is seen that the same is the centre of the Ashram courtyard”. Later it was known that there was once a huge Shiva temple here.

Manomohan dada had followed the instruction of pundits expert in Shastra (sacred texts) and constructed a beautiful *yajna kund*. Ma had repeatedly said that it was made expertly. The collection of wood for the *yajna* was an expensive task. A gentleman had said that he owned a large forest of *palash* trees. He could provide all the wood required for the *yajna*. But he could arrange only once a few hundred maunds (one maund = 40 kg) of wood. Later that forest land got entangled in court cases. He could not arrange for more wood. Then came the question of pure *ghee* of cows milk. In such difficult times (Second World War) it was extremely difficult to collect such large amounts of *ghee* (purified butter) from cow. In an unimaginable way such *ghee* kept coming from Patna, Mumbai, Ahmedabad and other places. One crore, (i.e., ten million) oblations would be given. The *yajna* was begun with this *sankalpa* (resolution). There was no preparation of any kind from where will the money or articles be collected. Nothing was fixed, but the *yajna* began. Ma often used to tell me, “Khukuni, what is this that you have started? You have jumped into the ocean. When you have begun then you will have to give everything to keep it going. When the need arises your clothes too will have to be sold to keep it going”. The *yajna* has been going on for nearly two years. In between very tight situations of need arise. The day the *yajna* began and pandits sat in four cardinal directions and began chanting the four Vedas then Ma told me. “Khukuni who knew that the *yajna* fire (of Dhaka) will be converted into this? Who knew it?” Actually that scene (at Kashi) was very enchanting. The Brahmin of Mirzapur who had first talked about *yajna* was searched for before the *yajna* began, but it was found that no one of that name exists there.” I had said to Mataji in the train, “Ma, till this *yajna* of yours ends there will not be peace in the world”.

Mataji – “What is this that you are saying?”

I – “This thought has come to my mind the day this *yajna* began. You are getting this *yajna* done for the good of the world, can this be fruitless?” Khukuni did also agreed with me.

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MOTHER AND HER PLAYFUL ROLE

—Bhaiji

At the loving request of a Muslim Begum, Mother performed *Namaz* (prayer) at the same grave. The Begum was an educated lady. She said that there was wonderful correspondence between what Mother said and the sacred texts used during *Namaz*. Mother said, "Some four or five years back when I was at Bajitpur I saw the ethereal body of the Faquir* whose grave was over there. After we came to Shahbag I met him and some of his disciples. He was a stalwart figure, an Arab by descent." On enquiry this was found to be correct.

Once Mother went to the house of Rai Bahadur Jogesh Chandra Ghosh. There was *kirtan* that day. Suddenly a change was observed in Her. Some 150 to 200 cubits away a young Muslim dressed like a Hindu sat in the dark, quite unnoticed. Through the crowd Mother forced her way to the youth and began to chant "Allah, Alla-ho-Akbar". The young man was moved to tears and joined Mother in saying the usual prayer. He told us afterwards, - "The ease and distinctness with which Mother invoked the name of Allah was beyond our best achievements. And such joy as I felt that day when uttering the name of God together with Mother was never experienced by me before."

Mother introduced the name of Hari (God) in a very respectable Muslim family. While reciting the name they were moved to tears. They had great regard for Mother. In this connection Mother said, - "Hindus, Muslims, and all other communities in the world are one; they all worship one Supreme Being and call for His mercy. *Kirtan* and *Namaz* are one and the same."

Sri Kali Prasanna Kushari and his wife Sm. Mokshada Sundari Devi, Pitaji's sister, loved Mother much. In her company they found a great deal of delight. At one time Sri Kushari came to Dhaka, but was staying somewhere else. He had discussed religious matters with Mother and was about to depart. He said with a laugh, "You are credited with great power. If you have such power, just burn me to ashes." Saying this he lighted some *agarbati* (incense sticks) and started for his place with the sticks in his hand. Pitaji and Mother were to go to a different place and all started together. The sun was very hot. Sri Kushari held his umbrella over Mother. The two were walking ahead. Suddenly Kushari started up and exclaimed, "Alas, from where

*A Muslim Saint

is fire raining down upon my head ? Are you burning me ? Are you really ? Please stop the fire. I have got ample proof of your power.” To his consternation he found a portion of the umbrella burnt away.

On a different occasion a gentleman laid some flowers at Her feet. She picked up one of them and pointing at its petals, pollens and alluding to its scent etc. She illustrated the material, astral and spiritual aspects of life and made people understand the eternal play of the Divine.

Mother is always on the move from place to place. She said in that connection, “I find one vast garden spread out all over the universe. All plants and animals, all human beings, - all higher mind-bodies are playing about in this garden in various ways, each has its own uniqueness and beauty; their presence and variety give me great delight. Everyone of you add with your special feature to the glory of the garden. I move about from one place to another in the same garden. What makes you feel my absence so keenly when I happen to leave your part of the garden for another to give delight to your brothers over there ?”

Towards the middle of 1931, while walking in the Ramna fields, Mother said, - “Prayer is an essential part of the practice of religion; its power is irresistible; prayer reveals the life of human beings. All the thoughts that arise in your heart should be offered to God. Pray for His Grace with all earnestness and in a spirit of self-surrender.”

Just at that time I was reading in the news paper that before Lord Irwin came out to India as Viceroy and Governor-General, he asked his father's opinion. The latter replied, - “Don't worry about the outcome of events; we have no control over them. Pray to God and you may get some glimpse of the future.” Both father and son went to a church to pray. While returning from there, the father said, “You will have to go to India.” The son confirmed, “I also feel the same.”

When Mother heard it, She said, - “This is a good instance of the efficacy of prayer. But one must have deep faith like a child. By constant practice the foundation of faith becomes strong; when pure faith takes root in the mind, sincere prayer issues forth from the soul. Through devotion the real spirit of prayer awakens in one's soul, then the Divine Grace manifests itself in the desired results.”

On another occasion Mother said, - “When you talk of Divine Grace, it implies that something descends on man without any intelligible cause. At its own time it comes of its own volition. You find a child forgetting his mother when deeply absorbed in his play; but the mother, out of her own motherly love, bends down over him and takes him on her lap. The Divine Grace blesses a man just like that. A mother's affection reveals itself before the child has time to think of her. You will

certainly say that blessings in the shape of Divine Grace are the result of one's good acts in previous births. From one standpoint this may be true, but from a different view-point one may say, as God is absolutely free from all chains of cause and effects, one must not enquire about His motives; though such search for reasons often disturbs us, His mercy descends on all beings evenly. But when one develops a higher vision, one begins to feel the Divine Touch. Have something to rely on. Try to be in vital contact with it and you will find the free flow of His blessings upon your soul, just as a bucketful of water comes out of a well only when the rope to which the bucket is tied is being pulled."

In this connection a question was put to Mother,—"Can a person who has seen God, make others see Him?" She replied that a man could have a vision of Him only when the time was ripe. One who has that vision himself, can help others towards it only to a certain extent. The vision itself is possible through God's Grace alone.

On another occasion there was discussion about man's past lives. Mother said,—"Past births are real. There is no doubt about it. When a cataract in one's eye is removed by an operation, one's eye-sight is restored. Likewise by deep concentration on the Divine, when the veil that obscures our intelligence is removed and the mind purified and focused on the Self, the significance of Mantras and of the allied forms of gods dawns on us and the impressions of previous births flash upon our consciousness. Just as while at Dhaka, you can have a mental picture of what you have seen in Calcutta, so also you can project a more graphic image of your past lives upon your present mental screen." She added,—"When I see you, I can get a vision of a series of pictures of your past births." On one occasion while in Calcutta, a gentleman and his wife came to Mother with their son, aged about seven or eight. On seeing the child Mother remarked, "This boy was related to this body as a brother in his past birth." One of Mother's brothers died very young. He had a severe hurt on his arm and it was bent. The above mentioned boy also had a crooked arm.

(an excerpt from *Mother as Revealed to Me*)

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PILGRIMAGE TO KAILAS

—Gurupriya Devi

(continued)

Monday, 1 July

This morning the sun made an appearance—this place usually receives very little sunshine. Misty envelopes cause darkness most of the time. Ma went for a walk after washing her face and hands. Seeing the sunshine, our spirits were lifted. I had been feeling very cold ever since we reached this place. But in a little while clouds gathered again, darkness drew on and rain poured incessantly the whole day.

Today many hill folk people arrived with dal, rice, ghee and other items that are necessary for our journey to Kailas. They also had Ma's *darshan*. They brought with them silver plated bowls and other offerings. They do not understand Hindi properly. They stayed for some time, did *pranama* to Ma and left. A local resident named Sandel Singh is to be our guide—the local people are making all the arrangements. The luggage to be loaded on mules had been weighed in the evening. It is a rule that a mule should not carry more than one and a half maunds. We heard that the charges are being gradually hiked—Swami Jnanananda heard about this. However, all the arrangements have been made and we are to leave tomorrow morning for Parvati's house. In response to their earnest request, we are to spend one night there. On Wednesday morning we are to start for Kailas. Packing in yet another novel manner, it was again late before we retired for the night. We are carrying fuel to last us fifteen days because we shall not get anything on the way. Managing and organizing so much luggage is driving us crazy. What a terrific pilgrimage!

Tuesday, 2 July

We had some refreshments in the morning and set out at 10 a.m. for Parvati's house. We had to cross a river. Field surrounded us on all sides. Above us we saw snow capped mountains all around us. The path went up and down. Ma was in a *dandi*, while we walked. By the time we reached Parvati's house we were tired and exhausted. A tent had been put up for us. Somehow, we managed to spread blankets in the tent and lay down. Parvati's mother came and fed Ma with milk from their home-bred cow and other eatables; she also brought all the requirements for us to cook a meal. At night it began raining. Rain water began dripping into the tent. We somehow managed to spend the night.

Wednesday, 3 July

Today we are to set out from Parvati's place after meals. We cooked, ate quickly and got ready for the journey. Twenty one horses accompany us. One *dandi* is being taken for Ma. Sandel Singh is our guide. His fee is to be forty five rupees in all. By 1:30 p.m. we reweighed all our luggage and set out. Today's path was truly terrible. We were astride horses and feared we would fall any moment. The horses stumbled against stones and rocks and pebbles-there was really no well defined path or road. Ice and snow surrounded us and there was absolute silence. As far as we could see, there was not a sign of human life. The place seemed very lonely and calm. We followed, one behind the other on horse back, moving slowly. Ma's *dandi* was left some distance behind. The path was very bad and we had to dismount frequently. We had to cross the Kali Ganga. All around, torrents gushed out of the mountain sides and a swift stream flowed down. In between, we had to cross water falls, ice blocks, as huge as mountains, had formed on the edges of our path. Our bodies were chilled by the cold. When we crossed the Kali Ganga, we left behind the Nepal Raja's kingdom and proceeded further.

We reached a place called Kalapani, seven or eight miles away, where four tents were pitched for our use during the night. We had got wet on the way and it rained throughout the night. Most of us did not eat anything; Dasu and Tunu ate some *khichdi* and the servant Keshav Singh also got a share. They finished their meal somehow and lay down. The guide said, "Tomorrow we must go at least five miles before we camp for a rest. The route is very bad and therefore we must eat before we start."

On all four sides there was nothing but a swiftly foaming river and enormous mountains for company. This was probably the first night we had spent thus. The ground was damp, so we spread the thick dotted rugs that we had brought with us. When we were astride our horses, wearing rain coats, caps and pyjamas like Punjabis, it was still and quiet all around. That was a unique journey! Our apparel was novel, the scenery was novel and our thoughts were novel too!

Thursday, 4 July

The morning was spent in cooking and eating. Though we had to cover only five miles, the route was so bad that we had to set out early. By eleven we were off, but it began to rain. However, what could be done-there was no other solution, so we wore suitable clothing, got on to our horses and proceeded in the rain. Ma was in the *dandi*. The route was bad enough to begin with, but with the rain it was even worse. We had to take the help of the grooms most of the time. In short, there was no longer any path to speak of. We heard that people would let loose goats which would lead

them through these mountains. The situation did seem to be so! The hill folk were showing us the route to be taken; in between, we had to cross torrential waterfalls. In this lonely place, traders sit here and there with sheep and goats in tents. The down-pour increased. The mountain residents were saying that they had never seen such torrential rain before. We have observed that Ma is always accompanied by storms and rains during her travels. Whenever she starts on a journey, rain follows inevitably. In the bitter cold we were now swimming in water. Our bodies were numb and our feet were almost lifeless. Somehow, we managed to hold on to the reins and sit like blocks of wood. Such a state is difficult to describe; it can only be understood by those who have experienced it.

By 1:30 p.m. we reached a place at the foothills of a mountain and discovered that to be the site of our camp for the night. All our luggage was drenched. Somehow, the guide managed to get his men to put up three or four tents for us. Parvati who had accompanied us, took the help of the grooms and lit a fire with the wood that we had with us in a small ramshackled goat pen which consisted of rough pile of broken stones and rocks. Some of us went and sat around that fire and felt as if we had been granted a new lease of life. We did not even bother to see where we were sitting. After some time we realized that the pen was filled with the droppings of goats and sheep. The door of this pen was a small opening through which we had to squeeze in with bent head. In any other place, we would have found it impossible to enter such a room but in that freezing cold, for the sake of the warmth of the little fire, I sat there till evening. The rain did not let up. We took some fire into the tent and dried the clothes that Ma, Bholanath, Jyotish Dada and Swamiji were wearing. But no wood was available there and it was difficult to light a fire with the ice and water all around. Water was dripping into the fire that we had lit. we cooked some food, wrapped ourselves in blankets and lay down. Yet our bodies would not get warm. What an unusual journey! Since Jyotish Dada and father were suffering from upset stomachs again, we boiled some beaten rice for them to eat. Thus we spent another night in the mountains. The name of the place is Dobra.

(to be continued)

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THE UNIQUE MOTHER

(Personal Reminiscences)

(continued)

—Br. Niranjani

27/8/65

Devi Bhagwat Saptah (A week of Discourse and Readings of the Holy book on the Divine Mother) began today at Baghat House in Haridwar. Ma was in her own True Form throughout, unlike on other such occasions when She would come only for half an hour. She would be present punctually from the start and for long periods, to make up for the organizers who would invariably come late. Panditji (the speaker) would welcome Ma with "Jai Ma Amba Paramba." During Arati conch would be blown for an extended time sending good vibrations all around, electrifying the atmosphere. Batuda would recite Devi Stuti (Chants) with great *bhav* (feelings). On such occasions I observed divine light emerging from the mid of Ma's eyebrows. Panditji would touch on various topics specially those for women, and also *sadhak* (seeker) like anger, attachment, greed, lust. Ma would bless all with Her loving, smiling divine looks. Panditji would pray, "Hail be to *dharma* righteousness and let *adharma* (unrighteousness) be destroyed. Let us live lovingly with each other." Such auspicious words uttered in the Presence of Ma – Divine Mother – would take a special meaning. Ma would be in Her Anandamaya form, very cheerful, purifying the whole atmosphere. Ma was the Divine Mother Herself – out of the world, Beautiful, Loving!

One day Ma's very close devotee Sevaji had come. She was heard advising an ashramite and relating a relevant story. The moral of the story was : Do not pay heed to what others say; do not keep hurts within yourself, do not nurture them, it is harmful. The story goes like this : Once a young beautiful woman was sitting on the bank of a river. Replying to queries as to why she was sitting there, she said, "My clothes will get spoilt so I want someone to carry me on the shoulder to cross the river." No one was willing. Later two upright, simple, pure-hearted brahmacharis came. She told them the same thing. One of them agreed and granted her wish. The other kept quiet and thought that his companion was stupid and wondered at his action. He did not talk to the first one. They went to the ashram. The first one asked him, "Why are you quiet? The reply was that his deed was such. The first one replied, "I kept her on my shoulder for a short while, with a clean heart, and crossed the river, but you are

carrying her even now. I did not even think about her.” Sevaji was inspired by Ma to tell this story as she was a very pure soul, known to all devotees. Amidst all this Ma would joke and laugh with devotees close to Her. Affectionately she would say, “Whenever Prabhudatta Brahmachari comes to the ashram, whatever is in dearth he will ask for only that and further laughingly, insist upon it.” All knew that he being one with his Lord Gopal, behaves similarly. The story of Raja Harishchandra touched all; some were seen crying too. The topic of Renuka Tirth arose it was said that it is located on the shore of Renuka lake in Sirmur state in Himachal Pradesh. Ma – “It is a Siddha Peeth.” (a place spiritually charged by Shakti).

Ma was taking interest in the menu for *Sadhu bhandara*. Once Swamiji was also participating from the first floor, bending over the terrace wall, Didi was telling the names of vegetable dishes to be made the next day. Among them there was one very unusual name 'Ghanto' (it sounded like 'ghanta' which means 'bell') Everyone laughed. Ma enumerated its preparation – 'Cut the vegetables fine, grate coconut put lentil (ground) balls after frying and, make it slightly dry. It is called 'Ghaunto' in 'Bengali' Ah! Ah! So that's what it is! All now knowingly laughed. Ma gave instructions for the old Sadhus, very caringly. Ma gave the responsibility of cooking to Udasji and Lakshmi. Udasji replied she does not know anything. Ma 'She is becoming slave (*das* from Udas) to even humility itself. Actually Udasji was sad that Ma was leaving her behind in Haridwar and not allowing her to accompany Ma. We had such kind of informal *darshans* too. It was decided that food would be served on leaf plates instead of steel plates. Ma saw to all the details of the layout of *chowkis* (wooden cot) for Mahatmas from where the Bhagwat Manch (decorated rostrum) would be visible, the spreading of carpets, the *asanas* (She sat and saw the practicality of each one thus charging them with her vibrations too, I felt) Ma was Herself helping with alacrity.

Ma's motherly *leela* with a young girl devotee went on alongside. Such *darshans* too happened side by side.

The next day Ma was awaiting the arrival of the Mahatma Chetan Giriji before the *path* (reading/discourse). A devotee, Darshanji was doing *japa*, but her rosary was touching the ground. Ma admonished her and showed her how to do *japa* with hand near the heart. With the blowing of the conch for the Arati, Chetan Giriji too arrived. What co-incidence! Ma went out to welcome him and seated him and directed his male and female devotees to sit separately. Later he spoke on happiness and unhappiness. – “Happiness is inside us. People search for it outside so are unhappy. Happiness belongs to us” and so on. In brief one is never satisfied. “The rich are more unhappy than the poor, with a higher rate of suicides. Leave everything

to Him like a child who sits on his mother's lap free from worries. He told a story of a Sadhu who realized that just for the lack of a little more effort he lost the worth of all that he had. He then talked about the death of the body-change of clothes – experiencing two bodies while dreaming; the number of bodies (births) we have taken is countless, we can count stars, drops of water in the ocean but not the number of bodies (births) we have taken. Then he told the story of Trinavarta. Just then Chidanandaji from Shivananda Ashram, Rishikesh arrived. He sat in a small place available with Chetan Giriji in a very humble brotherly fashion. His group showed old cinema reel on welcoming Sadhus from the South in Shivananda Ashram, Prabhudatta Brahmachari with his typical infectious laughter, Haribabaji and Ma. Ma watched smilingly and commented that Sadhus have come to the Devi Bhagat in this manner too. Ma was looking after the comfort of all the Sadhus as well as young and old devotees, rich and ordinary. Ma came to the hall even after Chetan Giriji departed, to the pleasant surprise of all. Panditji requested Ma to rest but She smilingly replied, "After sometime" but one overenthusiastic lady repeated the request and Ma retired in haste. She did not like the interference in her mood, nor did we.

During the whole Devi Bhagwat Ma showered us with Her otherwise rare 'darshan', physical proximity and 'leela' play with her children. Ma insisted that we should take *Prasad* (food blessed by the deity/Ma) in the Ashram, not once but several times and stated, "You are like the ashram girls (brahmacharinis). Tell all, 'Ma considers us like ashram girls.' Tell all." Ma invited us to talk privately with her. All this revealed that Ma knew us inside out, past, future. She was motherly love and affection incarnate.

At times Ma would reply to questions and ease out confusions about different matters as to why Ma takes food from a certain kind of people, why foreigners are treated differently etc. Ma replied that for Herself it does not matter "I am the same (spiritually) from childhood till now." She has eaten from the hands of Muslims, but not cereal. She is different, meaning that the rest should not imitate Her. Everyone does not have the same faith in Her. She encourages ashramites to follow *Shastra* (holy texts) at every step. Ashramites live very austere and pure lives e.g. Dandi Swamis. They would in that case not be able to partake of food (that they would not take Ma's *prasad* in the Ashram). Panditji would daily hail Ma on her arrival for the *path* with 'Jai Para-amba' etc. with great feeling which would charge the atmosphere. Chidananda Swami would always do *sashtang* (lying fully prostrate on the ground) *pranam* to Ma. He would refuse to sit on a higher seat than Ma's. His health did not permit yet he came despite refusing the invitation initially. Ma : "All have received your *darshan*." Swamiji "I received everyone's *darshan*." Someone said, "At your

place Hathyoga is taught” Chidanandaji-“Yes, but our Guru stressed on *jnana* and *bhakti* together with a little Hathyoga to develop good health.” Then a discussion took place on Kriya yoga and its initiation by Lahiri Mahashaya of Benaras, Yukteshwarji and Yoganandaji. Babaji was a unique being. Ma It is heard that *diksha* (initiation) also takes place two three times.” After some thought “Yes! Yes! Yes! Came once, twice, thrice and more also. Yes its correct.” Ma “After observing symptoms” He approved strongly to this.

Chidanandaji “I had Ma's *darshan* in 1948 fifteen/sixteen years back. Then a very big *yajna* was taking place (i.e. Akhanda Maha *Yajna*-for three years) Guru Maharaj made the Ashram in mid town so that he would be able to give (*satsang*) to the people. Now there is too much noise. A road passes in between the Ashram.” Ma answering in the affirmative said “This body too would go on that route years back. It was not a motorable road then, only upto Haridwar, then by foot.” Then she described the footpath.

Hridayanandaji requested Ma to sing, Chidanandaji too supported “Never heard (you)” Ma “Never? Not even once?” Then he remembered “Yes once, you sang, but then I used to run hither and thither to organize things” Hridayanandaji and other South Indian ladies sang *bhajans* in South Indian language, then Chitradi, and then Ma sang : “Hey Bhagwan” ”Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma” during which Chidanandaji meditated. Due to indifferent health he spoke a little, sang one/two lines. *Maun* (silence) took place. Then Ma told Him “take the juice of the fruits given.” He “Chetan Giri is coming on Friday. I thought you could be together.” All in Chidanandaji's party, agreed and left with “Hail (Jai) to the Mother.”

(to be continued.)

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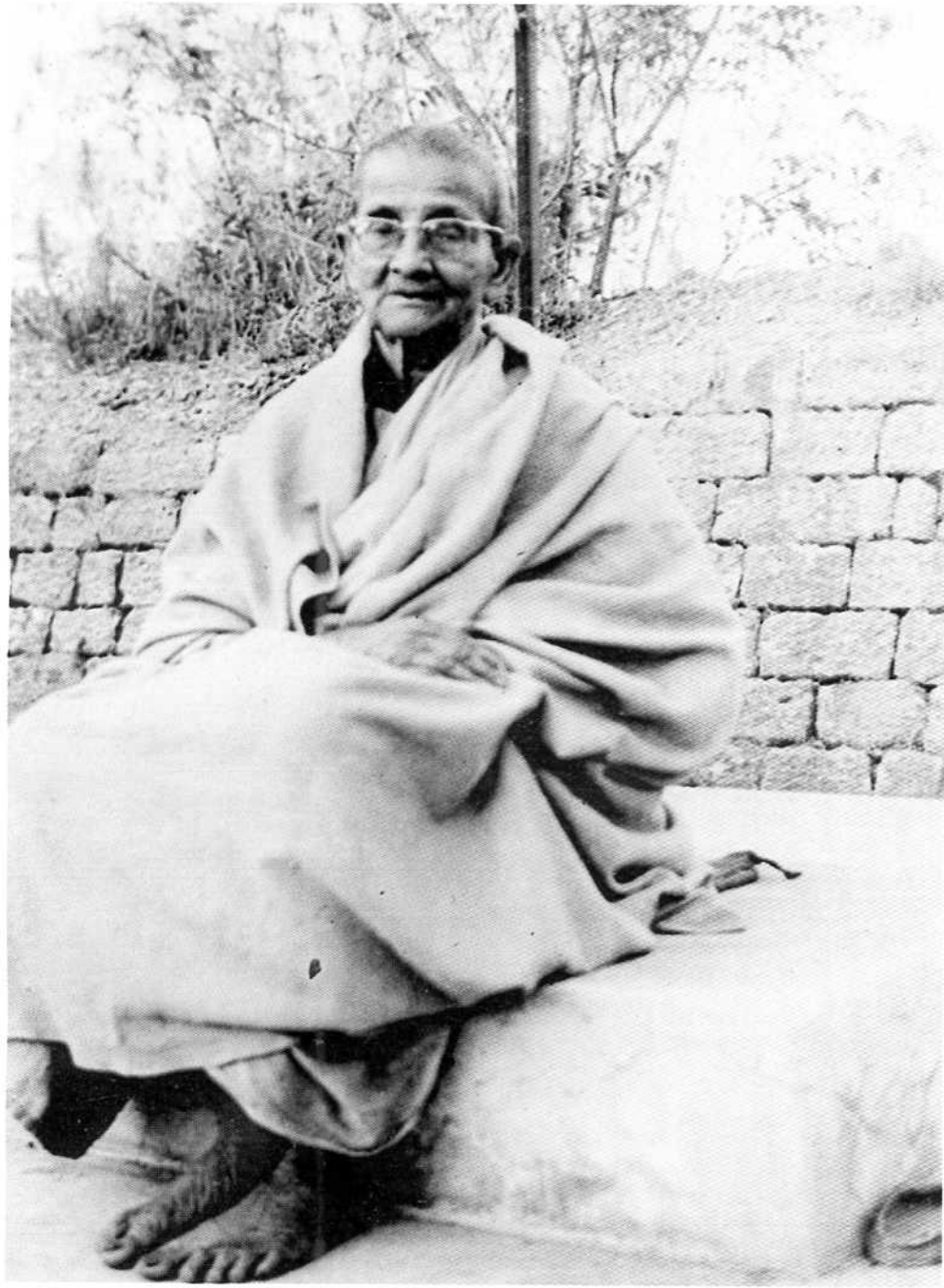
IN MEMORY OF SWAMI MUKTANANDA GIRIJI

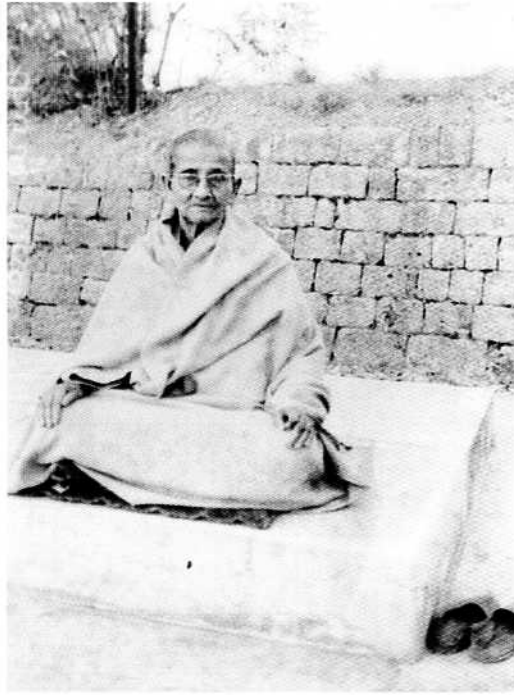
—by Somesh Chandra Banerjee

When the Almighty out of compassion descends in this world, it is possible that the great arrival takes place in more than one form in order to facilitate performance of His '*leela*' (The divine play) in a more convenient manner. In our ancient scriptures, we find that Lord Rama descended in four forms. Apart from Himself, He appeared in the form of His three brothers – Laxman, Bharat and Shatrughna. Lord Krishna also appeared in four forms – Krishna, Balaram, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. Similarly, Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee had appeared in this world in five forms. Apart from Ma Herself, Her four other physical forms were – Her own mother Mokshada Sundari Devi who gave birth to Ma, the father Bipinbihari Bhattacharya in whose house Ma was born and brought up, the grand mother Tripura Sundari Devi on whose divine prayer Ma had descended in this world and Baba Bholanath who as husband and a disciple, protected and served Ma's physical body so long as he was alive. Therefore, Ma's own mother who was known as 'Didima' amongst the devotees was factually a part of Ma Herself.

After the demise of Ma's father and the marriage of Ma's only brother Makhan, Didima had become free from all family responsibilities. Therefore she expressed her desire to spend her remaining life in the company of Ma. Hearing this proposal Ma told her that it would be feasible if she would prefer to opt for *sannyas* to which Didima willingly agreed. As per Ma's arrangement, she received *sannyas* from the reputed saint and Mahant of Nirvani Akhara Mahamandaleshwar Swami Mangalananda Giri on the 14th of April in the year 1939 at Kankhal in Haridwar. Didima received the monastic name 'Swami Muktananda Giri'. Since then 75 years have passed. Therefore, the 75th Sannyas Utsav (festival) is going to be celebrated in Ma's ashrams on the auspicious day of 'Chaitra Sankranti' on the 14th of April in 2014.

Giriji, who gave birth to Ma - the 'Purna Brahma Narayan', was it necessary for her to go for *sannyas*? She possessed all the qualities of a *sannyasi* since her early life. Possibly Ma desired to establish her as the 'Deeksha Guru' of the ashram, as no one was capable of performing this highly responsible job after the demise of Baba Bholanath. Giriji performed this highly responsible religious duty with utmost care, taking full responsibility for her disciples. Whoever came to Giriji with an earnest





desire to take *deeksha*, She gave them *deeksha* without caring about their caste, creed, wealth or poverty, etc. She would even give *deeksha* accepting only a small 'Harar' (Haritaki - a sort of small dry medicinal fruit) as *dakshina*. Giriji did not consider it the end of her responsibility; after imparting *deeksha mantra*. She would continue doing *japa* most of the time for those who failed to give time for doing *japa* due to their personal incapability or due to any other reason. What a kind Guru our Giriji was!

Giriji had all the ten spiritual qualities that ought to be in a self realized Sad-Guru. These qualities are – purity, kindness, compassion, fortitude, forgiveness, self control, knowledge, truthfulness, deep understanding and lack of anger. Convergence of so many qualities within a person is no doubt very rare. She was simple and gentle by nature, deeply contented, and was totally dedicated to truth in every aspect of life. There was never a touch of anger in her because she had no desire. Her compassion for the poor and the suffering was a lesson for others to follow. Shree Shree Ma had commented about Giriji that she was an extra ordinary lady. When she was passing life in 'Grihasthashram' (family life), her way of life was similar to ancient Rishis and Munis. There was no trace of the feeling of self, I-ness or ownership in her behaviour.

Although Giriji was the mother of such an illustrious daughter - Ma, yet she had opted for a very simple living without any pomp or show. In earlier days, when she was leading a family life, her household-means were indeed very slender bordering on poverty but truly she was rich at heart and was contented under all circumstances. It filled her heart with joy to feed a guest or a poor and forego her food.

It was very difficult for anyone to assess her spiritual elevation. However, the realized saints were able to recognize her competence in spirituality. When Giriji was on tour to South India with a Brahmachari disciple, she visited Pondichery to meet the reputed saint Sri Aurobindo in his ashram. Like other visitors, Giriji was also waiting in the long queue. In her turn when Giriji came near Sri Aurobindo, he exclaimed in great delight, "What a wonderful flower she is." It is said that a perfect jeweller makes no mistake to recognize a real jewel.

Another incident happened in Ma's Varanasi Ashram. Once while staying in that ashram Ma suffered a serious ailment, but She had no *kheyal* (divine will) to cure Herself. When Ma's condition deteriorated and became alarming, the devotees then finding no other way called the then reputed saint of Varanasi, Shankar Bharatiji. After meeting Ma when he came out of Ma's room, seeing the morose devotees there he pointed towards Giriji who was sitting inside Ma's room and told them that so long as Giriji was alive, one should not be worried about the survival of Ma's physical body.

Giriji had a strong inclination to help the poor and the distressed persons. An orphan poor girl used to work in the ashram kitchen to make flour dough for preparing bread. One day she sought leave for a day as she was suffering from fever. Her leave was granted but she had to hear the pinching words that many persons are visible when food is served but none is visible when help is required in the kitchen. The poor aggrieved girl sat at a corner of the hall and was doing *japa* there. She was keenly hearing the sweet songs of the reputed singer Chhabi Banerjee. The sound was coming out of a nearby room where a tape recorder was being played. The poor girl had a great desire to enter into that room and have the pleasure of hearing the songs. But, she was hesitating and could not dare to enter. Suddenly, she found that Giriji was calling her and asked for a *morha* (stool made of canes). Thereafter, Giriji entered into that room along with the girl where the tape recorder was being played. She sat on the *morha* there and asked the poor girl to stay with her. Besides, Giriji also held the end of the sari of the girl so that she would be unable to go away out of hesitation. In this way Giriji took care to fulfill the wishes of the poor girl for whom none else was concerned.

Once, a poor disciple at Delhi had a great desire to go to Vrindavan and to have *darshan* of Ma. But, due to lack of money it was not possible for her to go there. Later, she was greatly surprised when Giriji came and gave some money on her own to the disciple and said, "For your visit to Vrindavan". The devotee was perplexed and refused to accept any money from her own Guru. However, Giriji convinced her by saying that if the Guru gives anything on her own that is acceptable. In this way the intense desire of the poor girl was fulfilled. There were several such incidents which depicted Giriji's kindness towards the needy persons and also revealed her capacity to know the facts which were not even communicated to her. Giriji had unlimited spiritual powers. But, she had no interest to use or display them.

Ma never revealed Her own true identity. The holy mother Giriji revealed the real *swaroop* of Ma before she passed away. She said that Ma is the '*Purna Shakti*' (The Complete Power of the universe and beyond it). Giriji had a great *bhava* (Inner feeling) that all humanity, living creatures like animals, birds, insects etc. should gain liberation and need not take birth again and again. She had a great feeling that until all are liberated, where is liberation for her? In her divine vision, Giriji had taken word thrice from Ma to take all her disciples across the ocean of '*bhava sagar*' i.e. to liberate them from taking repeated births and deaths). Only a realized Guru is capable of having such a great divine assurance. Ma had said that Guru is not a '*Vyakti*' (Individual) but a '*Shakti*' (Divine force) which unites the '*jeeva*' with the Almighty. Giriji was the embodiment of this divine force.

We all bow to the lotus feet of such a great universal Guru (*Jagat Guru*).

- Jai Ma -

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DIDIMa : SHREE SHREE 108 SWAMI MUKTANANDA GIRIJI

—Premlata Srivastava

Didi Ma with Ma

The relationship of Ma with Didima was supernatural. Didima used to refer to Ma as 'Your Ma', while Ma called her 'Giriji'. Ma held Didima in great esteem.

Before going out from the ashram, Ma always used to touch Didima's feet in great reverence. Once, in a hurry at Kashi ashram she forgot. However, immediately after coming out, She remembered the mistake and then and there in the lane she prostrated as if before Didima.

According to eyewitnesses Ma used to do this prostration in a spring-like action. Later, on Didima's insistence, she stopped this practice.

Calm and quiet, Giriji was always busy in doing *japa*. When asked 'for whom she was constantly busy in doing *japa*, she would reply : for the welfare of her dependants. When devotees came to pay obeisance to her and touch her feet she would bless them by touching their head with both the hands. She would discuss religious topics with them. But Giriji was most happy in Ma's company. She took *sannyasa* to be in Her constant company. On devotees' repeated queries about Ma's earlier life she disclosed with great hesitation. "Your Ma is the personification of several *avatars*". She saw the *avatars*, not as images but full of life, in action."

Ma used to say, "Don't say all this in my presence." Didima once recounted a Shahbagh incident.

"It was during Kali puja (1925) which Ma agreed with difficulty to perform on Bholanath's request. First your Ma put vermillion (*sindur*) on Kali and uttered hymns in praise of Kali, then started the *puja*. Gradually, she went into a trance. Asking Bholanath to give Her flowers meant for *puja* she tried, but actually could not offer them to Kali. Then she asked Bholanath to perform the *puja*. She sat beside the image of Kali.

"Before Bholanath took his seat-he saw Ma in a special ecstatic state. Ma asked all devotees to close their eyes. Everybody obeyed except the gardener's wife who was standing out in the garden. Your Ma called her aloud to comply with the request.

"When Bholanath sat for *puja*, we all opened our eyes. We learnt the reason why we were told to close our eyes. There was change in Ma's appearance; Her clothes fell off, Her face turned bluish like Kali's Her tongue hanging out. I saw Her

intensely and left the place.”

We asked Didima that it is said she intended to touch Her feet at that moment but changed her mind.

Didi Ma said “Yes, that is true. But then I thought how could I give ‘Anjali’ to my daughter? Therefore, I offered the holy leaves of Bel and flowers to Kali instead. At the time when Bholanath and Ma were having their *prasad* after Puja somebody indicating me said, ‘Ask Ma, whom she was offering her Anjali?, I said to your Ma— ‘I intended to give you, but offered it to Kali.’

Srimad Bhagavat relates that Sri Krishna showed his mother Yashoda the entire universe in His mouth and as soon as her parental emotions were replaced by Sri Krishna’s majestic grandeur He put a veil of *Maya* before Yashoda as He was to perform many *leelas* later. Similarly Didima also felt at that moment that Ma was, after all, her own daughter.

On Jhulan festival day at Vindhyachal ashram in 1943, a manifestation of Ma’s *leela* was witnessed. In the afternoon, three virgin girls were worshipped (Kumari puja). After The *arati* when the priest began to touch their feet Ma asked them to bless the priest by keeping their hands on his head and wish him well.

Didi was sitting close by. She requested Ma to allow all of them to pay obeisance at Her feet and she would bless them and say something in similarity. Ma said with a smile to Didi — “What have you started now?”

Prompted by Didi, everybody started paying obeisance at Ma’s feet. Taken aback however, Ma readily consented to give Her blessings by putting Her hand on their head. Those who were not present on this occasion were also called. Didi watched with great admiration this magnificent *Leela* of Ma and said “Whenever you start doing something, perfection and beauty blend so splendidly that, the delight of the occasion is intensified manifold.

Meanwhile a devotee asked whether Didima too will come to seek Ma’s blessings. Ma said, “Yes, please call her too.” Then she muttered, “Now this body, and Giruji’s body will be united into oneness. Yes, it is one and the same. See, if Ma could do it.....”

When Didima came to the venue, Ma got down from Her seat, asked Didima to lie down on the ground upside down. Curious devotees looked on as Ma too lay down Herself in opposite direction in a manner, so that Ma’s head touched Didima’s feet and Didima’s head too touched Ma’s feet. Lying in that position, Ma said “Who blesses whom? Everyone is One only. I pray to Him.” She further said, “only one” it is from one to two, and from two comes out one. He is the one who despite limits is limitless. He is also the one who has no restrictions, but appears to be restricted and being limitless looks like limited.”

Watching this bewildering *Leela*, devotess fell at Ma's feet. For sometime, they all were in a unique serious mood.

Once, Ma was going away from Vrindavan ashram where Didima was staying. Before leaving the ashram, Ma asked Didima—

“Stay well.”

“You too, Ma,” Didima said, “Come back soon.”

Ma said, “This body is only due to your blessings. If you keep yourself well and bless, this body will keep well.”

Ma's words filled Didima's eyes with tears. “NamōNarayan, Namō Narayan, Namō Narayan,” Saying so, Ma touched Didima's feet and left.

How intensely beautiful and heart touching *leela* was of Ma and Didima !

A BRIEF LIFE SKETCH

Didi Ma is known as Giriji to seers, Mahatmas and disciples. Ma too called her Giriji.

Born in Baisakh (April-May), 1877 in east Bengal, she was the eighth child of her parents.

Didima's parents called her Mokshada Sundari who was very clam and quite. She loved to spend time alone. Even as a child, she did not like games. Instead, she spent time in the religious environment of her home. As per the tradition of those days, she went to school to study upto second standard. Her parents died early, therefore further studies were done at home. She would read Ramayana, Mahabharata and Puranas in Bengali. At times she expressed her spiritual feeling through verses. She recited a number of such verses, which were her own creations.

She was indifferent to her domestic comfort. Though there were problems in plenty, including that of finance, they never reflected in her behaviour. She was habitually an excellent host, who would give her own food to the guest and retain the charm of a very satisfied, content personality. This quality of kindness and compassion was the main virtue of her character.

Ma's father late Bipin Behari Bhattacharya frequently left home out of his passion for spiritual pursuit. He was brought back home by relatives and friends. Even during those situations, Didima never lost her composure, her patience. Whatever financial trouble she may be in, Didima never made it a point for lamentation.

Giriji hailed from the Shaiva Shakta Sampradaya; Durga Puja and Kali Puja were regularly held at her home. Narayan Shila was there too, which is now being worshipped by Brahmacharini Chandan Bhattacharya at Kankhal ashram.

From her childhood, Didima took interest in *puja* and its related ceremonies. She also had *darshan* of God in her dreams. She had a special fascination for Narayana

and was very fond of the name of Narayana. She once had *darshan* of Lord Gopal who asked her to “offer Batasa Bhog worth one paisa”. From then Didima regularly offered Batasa Bhog to Thakur.

Didima first had her Mantra initiation in her dream. She did the *japa* of this mantra for several years. In 1905 she was formally initiated by family priest Shri Kalikrishna Vidya Vinod. Didima always carried with her the picture of her family priest as her initial Guru and also that of her *sannyas* Guru.

Nobody has ever seen Didima angry. Nothing could antagonise her! Once Ma said, ‘Dear Ma, what do you have in your brain that never loses its cool.’ Didima laughed at this attribution.

On another occasion, Ma spoke about her patience and perseverance, “She is the mother earth.”

Didima had infinite compassion for her devotees. It is learnt that when she was very old, one day Didima was found reading the Hindi alphabets. To a devotee’s query why she was bothering to read them at that age, Didima said, “I myself want to read several letters in Hindi which I get from my disciples, and reply to them suitably.”

Her service and perseverance, love and affection particularly for the helpless poor and needy was unparalleled. Whoever came in contact with her was overwhelmed by her innocence and decent behaviour. Ma did not initiate her disciples in the customary way. It was Didima who in turn became the Guru for innumerable devotees. At times, the devotees barely got a chance to touch Ma’s feet; they were happy touching Didima’s feet, and Didima too spread her arms in the gesture of blessing the devotees.

Didima drew the devotees close to her, irrespective of their position, stature and intelligence. She did *japa* non-stop. When asked about it, she said this was being done for the welfare of the devotees. Once she said, “How can I get Nirvana, until others (my devotees) attain it?” what a marvellous expression!

In 1936, when Dadamoshai breathed his last and the only son was settled in life Didima expressed her desire to live with Ma. Ma suggested *sannyas diksha* for her.

Haridwar was the venue for Kumbha in 1938. Ma had put up at the Peet Kuti of Dr. Pant. During this Kumbha, Didima was initiated by the well-known Saint Mangalananda Giriji on 13th April, the Maha-Vishub Sankranti. She was christened Shri Swami Muktananda Giriji.

Mangal Giri Maharaj did not like the hustle-bustle and crowd. He preferred tranquil atmosphere. For this reason, he did not allow outsiders in his ashram. And ladies were kept out of the ashram’s bounds for sure. But he took Ma there, most

respectfully with Her devotees, at a time when she was yet to be recongnised by the sadhu-samaj. In the way a male brahmin is initiated with Merumantra of *sannyas*. Mangal Giriji bestowed the same on Didima.

Next morning, when Ma found Didima dressed as a renunciate, Ma said, "You say, 'You give spiritual advice to all, but you do not advise me to do anything' What is good has been said. People get into family problems daily. How many people manage to get out of it? Now be absorbed in meditation for the relisation of the Self. Nothing will happen until you attain the power of wisdom and realisation of the Supreme Being."

The divine attributes were observed in Didima even when she was young. She really deserved to take *sannyas*. What is described in the Upanishads, etc. about the liberated soul was seen in Didima. She was very clam and quiet. While maintaining her composure for the devotees from outside, she delved into deep spiritual thoughts. Sometimes in 1963 Sri Ma mentioned in some context that uninterrupted *japa* of Sannyasa Mantra was continuing inside Giriji.

For sometime, she kept a failing health. But she always pined for Ma's company.

The Mahaprayan of Muktananda Giriji Maharaj, came on 9th August 1970 on the banks of the holy Bhagirathi in Hardwar. The end came naturally to the 94-year-old Giriji in Ma's divine presence.

Didima's Mahasamadhi is at Kankhal ashram.

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SHREE SHREE MA'S DIVINE CONVERSATION

Collection – Kirpal

(Translation:- Mrs. Rohini Purang)

(continued)

Ma : Momentary happiness, momentary sorrow. Like the sun and moon (give) light (but) they do not move – only shadows move. That which is moving, in the midst of that there is eternal happiness, eternal peace. Whatever you take – a person, a house... (if) a person: there is a fight, (if) money: (there is) the fear of a thief or theft (and thus) there is no happiness in the world. The world is a place of doubts – to expect happiness from it (shows that) we are fools. Thus the fundamental fact (*katha*) (about the world) is that expectation (of happiness) from the world is futile (*vritha*), absolutely useless. This fact is not understood.

If (it is) realised that this (world) is fire, (then) one would not place one's foot into it – it is fire, one would be cautious. That it (the world) does not give happiness – if this fact were to be clearly seen – (just like) when seeing fire one does not place one's foot into it – by this process of clearly and continuously seeing (*dekhte dekhte*) and of constantly remaining in one place (i.e. in a place that is not within the world) (*ramte ramte*), Rama is realised (*Ram ho jata hai*).

Bhagavan's kingdom is so beautiful – wherever the eye falls, there Shiva appears; wherever there is woman, it is a manifestation of Gauri.

(One) clings on to even momentary happiness – (because) it is one's own, you see. This material world – whose is it? (It has been) created by me – my ego, my understanding – my desire translated into my action. As I desire to make (it), thus I make it. If (I am) worried about security, I get married – (or, rather,) marriage takes place – then one becomes two – then 10 – for some, even 18 or 20.¹

In the world – the sorrow of this world. Who created this world? God created it – therefore God will remove the sorrow of this world – (thinking in this manner) we blame God. But if you think about what happens in your world – you eat, you read, I write, I pass (an exam), I experience happiness, my actions give me money to keep me happy...²

1. This means the expansion of the family after marriage.

2. It is as if we accept doership for all other worldly activities but do not want the responsibility of taking action to remove from our lives the sorrow of this world.

Ma replying to the previous night's question about who/what She does *dhyana* upon: The absolute truth (is that I do *dhyana*) solely on Myself – there is no one else, only Myself – there is no one else. That which you asked – who you do *dhyana* on – I do *dhyana* on Myself only – that is the absolute truth.

Some (do *dhyana*) on things they consider 'mine' - my mind, my body, my house – so much 'my, my' – my money... Even sitting here they worry (about those things) – how much to teach – even if one tells them (to stop worrying), (their) mind runs – runs where? – there only – into the world. Why does it go?

(Because) there is nothing (there) except the mind.

Last night Pitaji had said that this (talk) is too high (difficult) for us – Pitaji, if something of a lower level was said – it remained at that level – how did it remain like that?

How beautiful! This little girl³ – so much affection (and) respect (for her) and (then) all are God (Himself).

And it was asked – how will it⁴ sustain? So much affection and respect – where am I? As you play (the instrument) so shall you hear.⁵

Q: How should one sustain it?

Ma: If you had not sat in *samyam* this matter would not have arisen. You have sat in the *samyam* – so you asked – some do not know how/what to ask if they have not 'studied' earlier – and (some) do not know how/what to ask if they have 'passed' – only an ignorant one will ask. And only he will ask who has 'passed' – (i.e.) knows how/what to ask – has 'studied' (the matter of) 'How will it be sustained?'

In oneself only, by oneself – (making) oneself 'pass' – serving oneself, enjoying oneself. You think God is far away – this feeling of distance gives rise to sorrow – this wrong notion leads to distress. This body tells each and everyone – look! God sits in your heart – in whichever manner He moves us, we move. So it is God only who moves me, I have no power: if you accept this! (But) within this is one (other) thing – as God moves me thus will I move – you do not have this realization – you hear of this and (merely) repeat it.

Like a traveller travels to Badrinath – (similarly) *samyam* is a journey – where the (goal of the) traveller is to make manifest his true nature. Your journey has begun – lead a life of *samyam* – there are many obstacles on this path.

The cry of 'give, give'⁶ that comes from you – that arises because you want to

3. Ma often referred to Herself in this way.

4. Any spiritual state/realisation reached by an aspirant.

5. Ma often said this to show that Her response matched the quality of the question/questioner.

6. In Hindi 'do' means both 'give' and 'two'.

obtain your (worldly) desires. (But) the cry of 'give, give' that leads you to obtain the Highest (as yet unobtained) – pray like that – (pray that) I do not want anything else – I want that without God I should just go to *narak* – some have this sorrow – the life of my life, my only beloved: God – He Who is everything within me – (about Whom) I have heard from spiritual texts and sages.

I am within 'you' – (this) you do not know. For that (to know that) do *satsang* and read elevating books and do the daily prescribed *japa* and *dhyana* and, as much as possible, the spiritual mood – try to stay in the spiritual mood.

This sitting (for *japa* etc.) – while sitting thus some experience pain in their legs – their back feels as if it will break – that is the (experience of) the burden of the body – (because) the mind is everywhere (else) – the mind travels (to other places). You worry about yourself – (you) do not have faith in God – as God moves us, whatever He does – you do not have faith (in that) – (you feel) 'I am the doer.'

When you perform actions for which you assume doership, the mind travels here and there – for that reason attach your mind to God. When *dhyana* becomes deep, the body feels light – thus some can do *dhyana* for eight hours – so one can easily do *dhyana* on the *asana* for three hours.

Look, *asana siddhi* is reached and later beautiful experiences occur – some get (experiences) according to their *samskara*. From today do *dhyana* in this *samyam saptaha* – you sit and try – practice will help the body of an elderly person (to sit) – just like at a young age if a child passes, it is done – even in old age if *dhyana* happens (there is success) so do not worry. Do it – who knows at what time you experience the grace of God – in old age, youth or childhood – the practice that was not done for so many days – make that (practice) into a habit (now).

One may sit in a chair, too, and attach one's mind to God. One should not move – (if your) back pains – change (your position) if you want – (but) preserve your spiritual mood (*bhava*) – (resolve that) even if I am sleepy I will not open my eyes – in this manner if one can get into *dhyana*! Movement removes (one) from the state of *dhyana* – whichever way *dhyana* goes deep, sit in that way.

A still *asana* (posture) means an attraction to the *asana*. (Then,) speaking of outer (worldly) things, seeing outer sights, hearing outer things – it is as if I do not like it – as if there is restlessness. The self – acts by itself – in an effort to find itself – the mind becomes intoxicated – (and) joy arises for That (only) – moving around or talking of outer things gives no happiness.

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MATRI SATSANG IN VRINDABAN

(continued)

—Samyam Mahavrata

November 23rd , 1969

Having succeeded in reaching a state of faith where one is able to accept the Guru's injunctions fully, what happens then ? That state of faith manifests if the Guru is one's real Guru. Our relationship with the world is born of delusion, while the relationship with the Guru is of the Self (*atmic*). Thus, to start with, one did not obey the Guru's instructions. By persistent practice, by acquiring the habit of it, by striving to improve oneself, by the desire for God-realization, one comes to repent of one's doubts and disobedience. Now the disciple cannot help carrying out the Guru's orders. Every word, every utterance of the Guru that comes to his notice—unless he puts it into practice he does not feel at ease. This is not the ease of the world. In such a situation he feels dejected, engulfed in a void, when he has been unable to put into practice the Guru's orders. A stage ensues where unless and until he has succeeded in carrying out the Guru's instructions he cannot be at peace. He feels completely blank, it seems to him that there is nothing left for him until he has obeyed fully the Guru's bidding. He feels miserable for having failed to comply with the Guru's orders. And what does this misery bring about ? The *karma* of disobedience is consumed by his suffering. Now a state will result where the aspirant will act exactly according to his Guru's instructions, will carry out to the letter every hint, and thereby his own direct path will open out by itself. In this everything is contained.

On the other hand there are certain states that do not let a man proceed or act in the direction. Due to *samskaras* (tendencies) accumulated and strengthened in many former lives he is made to suffer. He feels the impulse to remain in the world, to continue in the round of birth and rebirth. "What to do," he says, "I am unable to accept the Guru's advice. If I can't achieve in this life, what of it ? Let it take another ten or twenty births." He is so deeply involved that he wants to continue with his worldly pursuits.

Here something has to be made clear : There is the one God but there is also *maya* (delusion) which keeps man entangled so that he does not wish to leave it. "Let me be born again!" He wants to remain in the world. For instance, people like to go on living with their families, it gives them extreme happiness. "If I am to marry next life, I want a husband exactly like my present husband, a son just like my present son." Several people have talked to this body in this strain.

But what happens by God's inexplicable grace ? Their minds are weaned away from this kind of thing. Slowly and gradually God is brought to their memory- it is His nature to cause this. They start repeating His name, contemplating Him, doing *japa*, they seek *satsang*, read religious books-in fact become engrossed in spiritual pursuits. Just as when a tree is well watered a new shoot grows. Then the state that should come about, namely to aspire after the Supreme, is achieved. And from there the path to complete fulfillment opens up.

People's conditioning has become so powerful, it brings them nothing but sorrow. They have no energy left to tread the path that leads away from misery to final beatitude. Being without strength, what can they do ? They say : "We are all right where we are !" This is what happens by the force of tendencies and habits piled up in former lives.

Yet man's duty is to go forward, to tread the spiritual path, to endeavour to find himself, to know himself. This is so at all times and for every man and woman. To be born in a human body is a great boon, difficult to obtain. Who can tell at what auspicious moment, due to the power acquired in some past life, the time will be ripe for full revelation, when everything will become possible. By persistent digging, water is finally touched, by prolonged rubbing fire flares up. Having obtained a human body one must not kill the Atma. The path that leads to the Realization of the Self, which is free from all danger, must open out.

To expect peace from worldly life is in vain. Try to live exclusively in His presence and do all service from a sense of duty. The world is certainly not an abode of happiness. The sole hope of peace is to take refuge at the Feet of God.

Mata Anandamayi

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Children's Pages

SWAMIJI IN THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS, CHICAGO, SWAMYI VIVEKANANDA'S THUNDEROUS AND MIND BLOWING EXPOSITION TO MANKIND

Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa by his supreme spiritual knowledge foretold his devotees that Narendranath (i.e. Swami Vivekanand) would spread the Light of spiritual wisdom.

Narendra was himself an image worshipped by younger followers. His devotees were much influenced by his wisdom. Narendra was enjoying a very high status of spiritual development.

Shri Ramakrishna left for his heavenly adobe on August 16, 1886 leaving his spiritual legacy with Narendra.

On Monday September 11, 1893 Swami Vivekanand delivered his brilliant, famous and thunderous speech in the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, U.S.A. He was wonderstruck to have a 'darshan' of the smiling face of Shri Ramakrishna through just before delivering his speech. This enforced him morally and spiritually.

The first session of the Parliament was held in the great hall of Columbus. It was filled with representatives of various religions followed by millions of mankind. In the centre sat Cardinal Gibbon, the highest Priest of the Roman Catholic Church on the Western Continent. He was accompanied by the delegates of Oriental faiths with Mrs. Annie Besant. Vivekananda was sitting among them. He became the centre of attraction for his noble dress, face shining with wisdom and confidence. Vivekanand was for the first time facing such a huge gathering of scholars. One by one every delegate stood up, gave his introduction and speech in short, before the assembly. They read out written speeches. Then Swamiji stood up and without any preparation spoke extempore, as he was inspired to speak. He was very lovingly and seriously heard by the gathering.

When he stood up from his seat to speak out in the afternoon, his eyes were bright like stars. He cautiously took a glance of the gathering before him. His speech was like fire, vigorous but resourceful. He was highly appreciated and applauded by his simple opening address, "My Sisters and Brothers of America." He got a standing ovation by the gathering. The audience had gone mad with those words of address.

He could not start his speech for two minutes as the zeal and joy of the audience filled the house with pleasant noise.

He was the first orator who left the formalities of the congress and used the simple but touching language for the audience; when the public became calm Swami welcomed the youngest of the nations in the name of the ancient Vedic order of Sanyasins. He declared Hinduism, the mother of the religions which taught the lesson of both tolerance and universal acceptance. He gave examples from the scriptures of Hinduism :

“As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so O Lord, the different paths which men take, through different tendencies, various though they may appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee.”
 “Whomsoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him, all men are struggling through paths which in the end lead to Me.”

This short speech of Vivekanand captivated the whole assembly. Its universal appeal of spirituality and broad mindedness had a magic spell on the people. The other Hindu delegates represented some society or churches or sects but Swamiji stood for India as a whole. He talked about the religions and their realization. Through his esteemed speeches in the Parliamentary Sessions, he propounded that Vedanta tells us the religion of humanity, which is the most significant and universal truth.

He said, “If there is ever to be a universal religion, it must be one which will have no locations in place or time; which will be infinite, like the God it will preach, and whose sun will shine upon the followers of Krishna and Christ, on saints and sinners alike; which will not be Brahminic or Buddhistic, Christian or Mohammedan, but the sum total of all these, and still have infinite space for development; which in its catholicity will find a place for every human being, from the lowest groveling savage not far removed from the brute to the highest man towering by the virtues of his head and heart almost above humanity. It will be a religion which will have no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity; which will recognize divinity in every man and woman, and whose whole force will be centered in aiding humanity to realize its own true, divine nature. Offer such a religion and all nations will follow you.

“The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth.”

The Parliament of Religions concluded with the fact that holiness, purity and

magnanimity are the basic principles of every religion and not only of churches. Every religious stream had given outstanding men and women. Hence no religion should consider itself the supreme one and rest of the other religions to be washed away.

There should not be war among the religions of this world like 'survival of the fittest.' In that case, they have to keep the banner with them, "Help and not fight", "Assimilation and not destruction", "Harmony and peace and not dissension." These mighty words had an indelible effect on the official heads of religions sitting there. Soon Swami Vivekananda became a distinct orator and a man of letter. He came into limelight for the press of America.

He was titled as a 'Prophet and a Seer' in the most conservative and metropolitan newspapers. The reputed paper, "New York – Herald" honoured him as, "Undoubtedly the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions." It further said, "After hearing him, we feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned nation."

The news of this unique success soon spreaded in India. All the Indian journals and magazines from all over India, quoted the American report of his triumph at the Parliament. The shaking of the Western World with this religious storm by their loving young monk, enthralled the followers of Ramakrishna Order in Baranagar (W.B.). the citizens of Kolkata organized a great representative meeting in the Town Hall to show gratitude to Swamiji and Americans. The name of Vivekananda spread all over India. He was regarded as the savior of the world. This ascetic enraptured the world with his deep knowledge and became a 'Man of the hour.' In spite of this immense love, appreciation and recognition through the people of the world, Swamiji never forgot the poor and downtrodden masses of India. Once Swamiji was invited by a wealthy and well known man in America to stay in his luxurious house. But Swamiji could not enjoy that materialistic comfort as he was thinking of the poor native people. He left the cozy bed and rolled down on the floor. He cried out in pain, "O Mother, what do I care for name and fame when my motherland remains sunk in utmost poverty? Who will raise the masses in India? Who will give them their daily bread? Show me, O Mother, how can I help them?"

Swamiji tried to inspire his pupils and admirers in India enthuse them for activity with full patriotic love through his letters. He said, "Gird up your loins my boys." He had been given this human life by the Lord to do this work. He travelled many distant places to seek help for suffering mankind. He had faith in God to get help. His life might come to an end due to cold and hunger but his followers would

have to sincerely continue their struggle for the poor, ignorant and the suppressed people. He said, "These three thousand millions have to be uplifted by us. Life is nothing. Death is nothing. Our guide and guard is the God, so march on onward and onward."

Vivekananda accepted the offer of a lecture bureau in United States so that he could carry the message of humanity to more and more mankind. During this religious campaign in America, he talked about the spirituality, wisdom and grandeur of Indian Culture.

Narendra carried forward the spiritual wealth of Shri Ramakrishna. He spread his message of humanity and divinity in his own effective and novel way. The students of Philosophy of Harvard University were his intellectual audiences of his dignified lectures on, "The Philosophy of the Vedanta."

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Children's page

ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS

—R.K.Das

Namu, a young boy entered the courtyard with his profusely bleeding foot. He was holding an axe in his hand. He was not crying but visibly suppressing the pain of deep cut. His concerned mother asked him, 'How did you cut your foot? I just told you to get some bark of the palas tree from outside.'

—I axed my foot.

—But why did you do so? Are you mad? Isn't it hurting you?

—It is hurting too much. While peeling the bark from the tree I thought, isn't the silent tree getting hurt when I am axing it? Let me see what happens when I peel off some skin of my leg. Thus, I cut my foot with the axe.

The mother began shedding tears while listening to her son. She admitted, 'Yes, my son, there is life in every living being including all plants and trees. They also suffer when they are under torture. I am really sorry for causing so much pain to you.'

The boy, Namu, later became a well-known saint, Namadeva (1270-1350) of Maharashtra.

(from *Inspiring Stories*)

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MATAJI'S KRIPA ON THE LAST DAYS OF A BELOVED DEVOTEE

—by S. N. Sopory (Late)

(One of the articles written for the Souvenir of Mataji's
80th Birth Anniversary in 1975)

My old grandmother, the eldest sister of Laxmiji Tankha of DchraDun (From the family of Tankha Haveli at Anand Chowk – named after Anand Narayan Tankha – where Mataji and Bhaji stayed in the Haveli's Shiv Temple in 1932)* had great reverence for Mataji – and it was largely due to her that in the early days I got a chance of meeting Mataji.

As I was the only child in the house and my mother and father had expired in 1917 and 1918 when I was very young, she used to take me to so many places of pilgrimage and also to Mahatmas. It was with her that I first went to Vindhyachal and also to Benaras where there is a Samadhi of her Guru, Swami Bhaskaranandaji in Anand Baug near Darya Kund. Mataji was fond of her and often used to enquire about her.

My grandmother was nearly 92 years old in 1956 and was staying alone in Allahabad. She was very orthodox in her habits and inspite of her age she used to attend to daily chores. She got slightly hurt in one of her toes which she did not see properly owing to poor eyesight. The wound developed into serious gangrene. By the time some relative who was in Allahabad brought in a Doctor to see her the condition had already taken a serious turn. Gangrene poison spreads rapidly and the patient does not usually last long. In this case telegraphic information was sent to me at Mumbai, but three days passed before we reached Allahabad. It was really surprising how she could last that long in the condition that she was. Moreover, she was conscious till we reached her. She asked us to go and have a bath and have our meal – just like she always used to do. We finished our bathing etc. quickly but by this time she went into a coma.

At night she passed away, while I was sitting by her side with her head near my lap – doing my *japa* and thinking of Ma. My wife was putting Gangajal in her mouth. Mataji's picture, which had remained with her from about 1932 was hanging on the wall alongside. In the end she uttered a sound twice which appeared to be

*. Note added by Ajay Sopory

Ram-Ram and passed away. On the third day Mataji suddenly arrived in Allahabad and put up in the compound of Shri Gopal Thakur. We went to see Her. The moment we were in Mataji's presence, and neither of us even uttered a word, Mataji hastily said "Did it all happen the way she wanted?". I said "yes" my meaning of this was that my grandmother was very anxious that at her death we should be near her and also that her last rites be performed properly.

This became possible absolutely and entirely due to the Grace of our Mataji. How else can one explain the extraordinary fact that a serious gangrene patient on verge of collapse remained not only alive but also conscious for nearly three days?

Jai Ma.

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LIST OF FESTIVALS

1. Shree 108 Muktananda Giriji's Sannyasa Utsav	14th April 2014
2. Shree Shree Vasanti Durga Puja	April 5th to April 9th 2014
3. Shree Shree Annapurna Puja	April 7th 2014
4. Akshay Tritiya	May 2nd 2014
5. Adi Jagatguru Shankaracharya Jayanti	May 4th 2014
6. Baba Bholanath Nirvan Tithi	May 7th 2014
7. Buddha Purnima	May 14th 2014
8. Shree Shree Ma Janmatithi Puja	May 17th-18th 2014
9. Shree Shree Ganga Dushehra	June 8th 2014
10. Guru Purnima Mahotsav	July 12th 2014
11. Sri 108 Muktananda Giriji Nirvan Tithi	August 3rd 2014

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THE DREAM

—by Vyas Hale

Peace,
The unity, for which deep inside mankind craves.
Peace,
The oneness of us all.

Listening to it within ourselves.
Spreading it throughout the land,
Eliminating warfare, anger and hate,
Until everywhere is composed and pure.

The best part of all individuals.
And takes courage to express it daily.
Deep inside everyone, even the challenged, you can listen to the heart and
soul of pure goodness and change.

Ripple it,
Through forest and city.
Ripple it,
Through the sea and mountains.

Join the side which is championing right and good,
The side which love shines bright and true.
Help peace resonate throughout the world,
Radiate harmony and freedom everywhere.

The moment is NOW!
To make Earth a serene, tranquil place.
The moment is NOW!
To make this dream REALITY!

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SHREE SHREE MA ANANDAMAYEE KANYAPEETH PLATINUM JUBLIEE CELEBRATION

Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Kanyapeeth Platinum Jubilee Celebrations this year in 2014 began with Shree Shree Ma's special *Shodashopchar puja kirtan, bhajan plus puja* and feeding of seventy five kumaris on February 23 in the presence of the General Secretary Sri Somesh Chandra Banerjee and Additional General Secretary Sri Swapan Ganguly of "Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha".

However, a more formal Celebration of the Platinum year of Kanyapeeth was organized on Tuesday March 11 at 3pm in the hall of Ananda Jyoti Mandir. The Chief Guest the Vice Chancellor of Kashi Vidyapeeth Sri Prithvish Nag Padmashree Sri Deviprasad Darvedi president over the function. mahamahopadhyaya Professor Sri Kamaleshdutta Tripathi was the Guest of Honour. The learned Ascetic from Shree Ramakrishna Mission (Varanasi) Sri Lakshmeshwaranandaji Maharaj graced the occasion as the Saraswata Guest. Justice Sri Karunananda Bajpai of the High Court and Sri Ramyatam Shukla were among the special speakers. The programme was organised by the brahmacharinis and kumaris for an extended period of four hours in which Sanskrit the divine language, was given the most important place. Besides the mother of all languages Sanskrit, five different Indian languages had their place, which was praised by the eminent guests. The programme unfolded thus:-

First of all the items according to Kashi tradition, Ved recitation- *Yajagrato dura mudaiti daivam* took place; then Swagat geetam which was based on classical *raga bahar*; welcome speech was given by Brahmacharini Acharya Jaya Bhattacharya, who has received special grace from Ma since her early childhood in Kanyapeeth; kulgeetam in which the aim of Kanyapeeth set up by Ma's very close devotee Gurupriya Devi ie Didi was sung; Saraswati vandana set on raga *bhairavi* was sung very sweetly. Amongst the musical items this was undoubtedly the best; Ganesh Stuti was performed in a dance form ie Bharat Natyam style by smaller girls; subsequently the culture, beauty, and greatness of Bharat was described lucidly in a song in Malayalam language; then came the very appropriate and special item based on Shree Shree Ma's life story- a question answer in a drama form on the theme based on Ma's famous saying *Hari Katha hi katha*- between the Child Ma and her Father. Its message was that God /Hari is omniscient and omnipresent; thereafter the beauty of dawn was recited and enacted by the youngest of all girls in Samskrit; then came the Samskrit drama based on Panchatantra story Jaradgava Vidalanow was the turn of

Hindi poem by Maithilisharan Gupta . It was indeed very inspiring, arousing the spirit within man in a powerful yet touching manner- *Nar ho na nirash karo man ko;* the Punjabi devotional song to motherland due to its lilt and beat was very popular; next followed a hymn in English "Lead kindly light.." sung by a large group in unison, which was an achievement in itself. Subsequently an item of rather a serious quality i.e. a debate among three contestants on the fault in Anyonyashraya in Halantam Sutra in Vyakaran ie Samskrit Grammar, conducted entirely in Samskrit, that too in front of Samskrit Pandits! Definitely it was of a high order indeed. The pundits later appreciated this effort, in their speeches. After such a deeply thought provoking item, a lighter item, a melodious song Hori- a mixture of *ragas*, was sung by expert trained voices, which was a beautiful tribute to Ma and a treat to human ears. To end this offering at Shree Ma's feet, a devotional song was sung in Samskrit "Bala sarve Sri Ramah."

In this entire programme respected Brahmacharini Niranjani Di's contribution was special.

The excellence of the programme appreciated by esteemed guests goes far to show that our beloved dear and great Shree Shree Ma's guidance in the conceptualisation of Kanyapeeth and its actualisation by our respected Gurupriya Didi has not gone in vain. Had it not been for character building, faith in Indian culture, strength derived from Shree Shree Ma's words plus humility to say the least, such a programme could not have been visualised nor materialised. All achievements happen only and only due to Sree Ma's 'ahetuki krupa'-Causeless Grace. This was enumerated in Brahmacharini Gunita's speech- She is the present Principal and one entrusted by Shree Shree Ma to carry on Her work in Kanyapeeth-She described and presented an overview of Kanyapeeth.

Brahmacharini Dr Gunita said "Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Kanyapeeth is an institution in which the seed is sown for the brahmacharya ashram in childhood itself, to make the foundation of life strong. Shree Shree Ma had said 'There are many schools and colleges to impart learning in the world outside, remember, the aim here is the building of ideal character' It is ideal character which is the biggest gift in a human being's life. Taking help and strength from these words of Ma and her feeling of surrender to Ma, that Didi Gurupriya gave Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Kanyapeeth its form in reality.

"Today Kanyapeeth has crossed its Diamond Jubilee and is completing its Platinum Jubilee year. Its foundation had been laid in the year 1938. Though being affiliated to Sampurnananda Sanskrit University, yet the educational system followed here has its own importance. Together with practical subjects like Music, Art, Math-

ematics and English, Ved Path , Bhagwat Geeta , Saptashati, Ramayana are regularly studied as a matter of routine. Parents who have faith in Indian culture and in Shree Shree Ma, daughters of such goodhearted people get admission here in their early childhood itself. The girls select their future course of life (*ashrama*) themselves after they complete their education from here.

“In Annual Function the Hon'ble Raja of Kashi had said 'I want that, just as one flame lights many others, in the same way each and every girl from here should in an enlightened form- by Ma's education- go out and enlighten homes, society and nation. Their light should spread in the whole world". This expectation of the Honourable Raja of Kashi was realised by several girls in the educational line. They received, Gold Medals , Doctorates and places of eminence in the examinations conducted by Sampurnananda University. Even today girls from here are doing PhD.

“Economically this temple of education has been receiving government grants and grants from the National Institute of Sanskrit Language New Delhi. Donations and economic help received from Ma's devotees have helped this educational institution to reach its Platinum Year. Here I want to mention that due to the changes happening in the governmental rules and regulations, it is becoming extremely difficult to maintain the traditional gurukul system. Therefore it is an appeal to all the great personalities present here that in this difficult situation, co-operation and consultation from you all will give us strength.”

This was followed by Prize Distribution ceremony. First of all elderly Brahmacharinis who have served Ma and Kanyapeeth selflessly for innumerable years were awarded and honoured with a shawl, Ma's framed photograph and Bhaiji's *Matri Darshan* in Bengali. They received the gifts as Ma's blessing, though initially some were shy, as can be understood in the Kanyapeeth cultural context. The names are as follows according to seniority in descending order : Vanidi , Maladi, Jayadi, Geetadi and Gunitadi . However Gunitadi did not consider it appropriate for herself as she is still in office as the Principal, but on insistence by other senior members she graciously accepted to respect their feelings. They had come to Kanyapeeth in their childhood and grew up here receiving Ma's grace. Theirs is an inspiring presence indeed! They got space for their inner talents to flower and each one achieved a high place of honour in culture , learning , behaviour and administration. Their achievements have been time tested. It goes without saying that they were honoured appropriately by the Learned Ascetic of Ramkrishna Mission Varanasi chapter Tapomurti Swami Lakshmeshwaranandji Maharaj. Later all kumari kanyas of Kanyapeeth received prizes according to their abilities by the Chief Guest Vidyapeeth Kulapati Sri Prithvish Nag. He revealed his understanding of Ma, as his mother was

closely associated with Ma in Dehra Dun!

The High Court Judge Sri Karunananda Bajpai said "All present here are related to Ma. You are present here due to your *punya karma* in the past" Then the President spoke on the importance of Kashi, whereas the special guest Kamlesh Tripathi encouraged the girls thus" Kanyapeeth rishi kanyas will spread Sanskrit language and culture in the world" The Special Speaker Ramyatan Shukla who is known as the Modern Panini of Vyakaran(Sanskrit Grammar) was pleased by the girls' effort at Debate in Samskrit and said" In the outside world students do debate, but here even girls are conducting debate in Samskrit .This is to be appreciated" Additional General Secretary Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Sangha Sri Swapan Ganguly said, "In all girls and those present here Shree Shree Ma is here"

In this manner Kanyapeeth's efforts were humbly offered at Shree Ma's feet. Brahmacharini Dr. Geeta thanked all the guests and requested them, in , that in future they keep in touch with Kanyapeeth

In organizing the programme the contribution of Smt. Kshama Chaturvedi, Km. Kalpana Chowdhary, Smt. Sujata Chatterji, Smt. Sangeeta Sharma ,Smt. Stuti Karanjayi, Smt. Ratna Roy, Smt. Jaya Roy, Smt. Lakshmi Maitra, Km. Mahua Bose, Smt. Namita Saraswat was appreciable. In this way the Annual Function of Kanyapeeth under the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations which was completed successfully by Shree Shree Ma's Grace.

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JAI JAI MATA ANANDAMAYI

The earlier editions of the Hindi/English booklet "Dwadash Pradeep" containing twelve important points worth remembering about Mataji, written by Bhaiji in his book "Matri Darshan" (in Bengalee) were distributed by Shri S.N. Sopory on two of Mataji's Janamotsavas.

Shri Sopory translated this into English with encouragement from Mahamahopadhyaya Kaviraj Shri Gopinathji.

This third edition was to be offered to Ma's devotees on Tuesday 15th May 1979 at Bangalore. This time the Hindi and English translations were given and Bhaiji's photograph with his prayer "Jai Hridaya Vasini" was added. A picture of Bholanathji with Ma was also given.

Sopory Bhai, as he was affectionately known in his long association (from 1933) with Mataji and Her Matri Santan, added pictures of himself kneeling at the feet of Ma and of his wife Padma Behn kneeling before her Guru Maharaj Shree Shree Muktananda Giri Maharaj (Didi Ma) whose right hand rests on Padma Behn's head. He also included a Kirtan he wrote named "Jai Jai Mata Anandamayi".

(Sopory Bhai little knew this booklet would be placed in Mataji's hands before publication after Sopory Bhai's sudden passing away).

Shri B.K. Shah, President of S.S. Anandamayee Sangha, requested Sopory Bhai to go to Bangalore from Mumbai to advise Shri Govind Narain, Governor of Karnataka and Eliya Raja Marthanda Varma of Travancore (Trivandrum) on the arrangements for their joint celebration of Mataji's birthday at Bangalore in 1979.

Shri S.N. Sopory left work on the booklet and went to Bangalore to guide the two sponsors of the Janmotsava.

Later, due to ill health he was unable to complete the work of printing and binding of the booklet, nor go to attend the Janmotsava at Bangalore. He suddenly passed away on 27th October 1979.

In early 1980 the Sopory family took the opportunity of Mataji's visit to Mumbai to put the proofs of the booklet "Dwadash Pradeep" prepared by Shri S.N. Sopory in Mataji's hands. She turned the pages and studied the booklet with some thought, and directed the younger son Ajay to give it to Swami Bhaskaranandaji. Ajay

subsequently gave the blocks and proofs to Sw. Bhaskaranandaji. The booklet was published by Ma's Kripa through the Shree Shree Anandamayee Charitable Society, Kolkata.

Years later, retired and settled in Pune, Ajay placed the Kirtan "Jai Jai Mata Anandamayi" in the hands of the devotee and blessed singer Shri Ardhendu Bhattacharya who was inspired to sing it at Pune Ashram during Mataji's Janamotsava in 2013.

The Kirtan has been recorded and the words written in Hindi by late S.N. Sopory, are included on adjoining page. With some help Ajay has translated the Kirtan into English also for wider reach of devotees. This is also being published here.

The Hindi Audio CD is available to devotees on request from Ajay Sopory at Pune, Mobile : 0-9850879949.

Jai Ma.

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A VOCAL TRIBUTE TO DIVINE MOTHER HAIL, HAIL MOTHER ANANDAMAYEE

Hail, Hail Mother Anandamayee
Hail ever blessing Mother, Hail ever merciful Mother
Hail ever forgiving Mother, Divinely beautiful and sweet Mother
Hail Hail Mother Anandamayee - - -

Arrived in this world O' Mother of the Universe
A Divine Presence revealed to us
The sick, suffering, beggars, saints,
In all their minds Anandamayee
Hail Hail Mother Anandamayee - - -

Worldly attachments of Kaliyug Era are extremely difficult
The river of life floods its banks
For your devotees to cross over
You are the ferry man Anandamayee
Hail Hail Anandamayee - - -

We are distressed, deprived, ill and anguished
greedy with desires, spread worldwide
for these souls seeking sanctuary at your revered feet
You are the garland of redemption Anandamayee
Hail Hail Mother Anandamayee - - -

The Holy Dust of your Lotus Feet by us received
How blessed are we persons all
Your sacred image in our mind's temple
Now is enshrined O' Anandamayee
Hail Hail Mother Anandamayee.

Written by : (Late) S.N. Sopory

Sung as Kirtan by : Ardhendu Bhattacharya, at Mataji's Janamotsava, Pune
Ashram, 2013

(Hindi Audio/CD available on request from Ajay Sopory, Pune, India, Mobile :
91-9850879949

जै जै माता आनन्दमयी

जै जै माता आनन्दमयी
 जै कृपामयी – जै दयामयी
 जै क्षमामयी – माधुर्यमयी
 जै जै माता आनन्दमयी



जग में आकर हे जगजननी
 एक दिव्य रूप को दिखलाया
 रोगी भोगी साधक साधू
 सब के मन में आनन्दमयी
 जै जै माता आनन्दमयी

कलियुग के बन्धन घोर कठिन
 संसार कि धारा बाढ़ चढ़ी
 भक्तों को पार उतारन को
 तुम खेवनहार आनन्दमयी
 जै जै माता आनन्दमयी

हम दीन हीन रोगी भोगी
 मन के मैले जग में फैले
 ऐसे शरण्यगत जीवों को
 तुम तारण हार आनन्दमयी
 जै जै माता आनन्दमयी

श्री चरण कमल की रज पा कर
 अब धन्य हुए हम लोग सभी
 तेरी प्रतिमा मन मन्दिर में
 अब स्थापित हैं आनन्दमयी
 जै जै माता आनन्दमयी

– एस. एन. सोपोरी

– श्री अर्धेन्दु भट्टाचार्य के द्वारा स्वरबद्ध कर गाया गया।

ASHRAM NEWS

From the Editor's Desk

Dear Anandaswarup Brothers and Sisters,

We happily report in this news letter, that as always the main religious cum spiritual functions directed by Ma have been carried on in most Ashrams of the Anandamayee Sangha. In the present period the first occasion was of Saraswati Puja on February 4, 2014. It was performed by Kanyapeeth brahmacharini girls and teachers. The idol of Ma Saraswati was beautifully made and inspiring. It brought out deep devotion from all and a call to Ma Saraswati to accept our prayers, open our bonds and bless us with Her Supreme Power, enable us to differentiate between Truth and untruth. Those who had been fortunate to be in Her presence during this Puja remembered the powerful aura created by Ma, the unforgettable divine gaze, gestures of grace shed by her on the seekers, the divine music which removed the darkness of ignorance and gave us the insight into True Beauty. Such experiences are beyond description, everlasting, everpresent. The Divine Beauty of Ma Anandamayee Saraswati who was seated on the Swan signifying Divine Knowledge is Timeless, beyond words. The Pujari Chandan performed the *puja* under Br. Jaya's guidance with deep feeling, Br. Jaya contributed to the program a song in Bengali from deep within – "Dekh, dekh Mon Bhalo Kore, Alo Kore, Alo Kore Boshe Ke Acche Re Tor Bhanga Ghore". The decoration was unique and creative this year.

Maghi Purnima on 14th February was celebrated with the much awaited Satya Narain Katha and *puja*, Br. Geeta together with Kanyapeeth girls recited the Pachali (*Katha*) in Bengali and Pujari Chandan in Hindi. It was enjoyable as it was not mere passive watching, there was full participation

Mahashivaratri too was celebrated on a grand scale on 27th of February in Kanyapeeth, Varanasi. Shree Shree Ma's direction for the *puja's* preparation as well as *puja* was followed meticulously. The importance of Vishwanath's city Varanasi on the banks of Ganga flowing in the northerly direction is well known. Such experience is possible only by God's and Guru's *kripa*. The *puja* divided into four quarters, the whole night, was conducted beautifully by Br. Geeta. The description of Lord Shiva and his *gana* was out of the ordinary in Bengali – 'Ke ele Jogi, Chiro Bairagi'.

Br. Jaya too was able to do the four *puja's* by Ma's *Kripa* despite her recent illness. The success of the *puja* was entirely due to the loving prayerful hard work by the ashram *kanyas*. Maha Shivaratri was celebrated in all the Ashrams of the Sangha with enthusiasm and according to Ma's guidance specially in Vrindavan where

Rudrabhishek was performed on Lord Siddheshwar Mahadev and the devotees did *vrata* and mass *puja* as the report goes.

Again we must mention here that the Platinum Jubilee celebration of Kanyapeeth took place which was a special feature (dealt with separately in the earlier article).

Holi too was celebrated in many Ashrams, but Gopal Temple being in Varanasi this took a unique form. It went on for three days. The first day 15th March was Hari Babaji's birthday so *shodashopchar puja* of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was performed in Gopal Temple as Hari Baba was a great devotee of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. It was accompanied by *kirtan* for three hours, *bhog* and *arati* plus *sadhu bhandara*. The same evening *Narayan adhiwas puja* took place in the special courtyard of Kanyapeeth where Ma had a vision of many divine beings. Then Holika was burnt. The next morning again Narayan Puja was performed at dawn followed by *abeer* (red colour) offering to Narayan by all. Immediately Gopal was brought out of the Gopal Temple and placed in a large brass vessel amongst His own near and dear devotees who played Holi with Him freely, of course taking care that the child God is not hurt in any way. All touched His feet and took His blessings. Love and affection reigned supreme. After everyone had played Holi with Him, again He was taken into the sanctum sanctorum and bathed with gangajal, milk, curd, ghee (purified butter), honey and sugar. He was dressed in new clothes, offered His favourite delicacies specially coconut cum thickened milk *laddoos*, butter and misri accompanied by *Ved path, puja, kirtan* and *bhajan* in praise of Lord Krishna, including our Shree Shree Ma's favourites – Krishna Kanhaiya Anandalal Krishna kahanai (where is he not?), Prana Gopal Brahma Gopal, etc. Kolkata's Khoka Da and family were as always present for Gopal. Shree Ma's selflessly devoted Banidi and Maladi at this ripe old age, lent the occasion a special flavour, a touch of Ma. Gopal as usual was looking beautiful and pleased back on His throne after viewing the devotees' inner honest devotion it seemed. Finally after *bhog* and *arati prasad* distribution took place. On the 17th girls played Holi amongst themselves in Kanyapeeth.

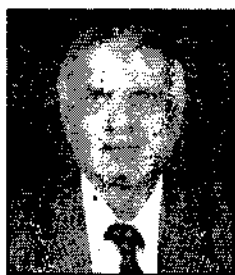
This year Holi was celebrated in Vrindavan in a special way from 11 to 15 March. Between 3 and 6 p.m. the famous *Rasag* roup of Sri Chandra Sharma performed *Rasa* on the 16th It was followed by *Akhand Nama Yajna* from morning to evening and offering of *bhog* in all the Ashram temples on the occasion of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's birthday. *Sadhu sewa* and finally the opening of the newly built Goshala (cowshed) concluded the celebration.

With this fairly detailed report we end the news for this issue. More in the next issue.

Jai Ma
The Editorial Board

ABOUT THE HOSPITAL

With Ma's blessings and motto 'SRI KASHI VISHWANATH DHAM MUKTI CHHETRA ROG RUPI JAN JANARDAN SEWA', the Mata Anandamayee Hospital, with perhaps the best frontage in the city, was inaugurated in Dec. 1968, by the then Prime Minister of India, Smt. Indira Gandhi, who along with her whole family was a staunch follower of Shree Shree Anandamayee Ma.



Prof. Dr. N. N. Khanna

Dr. N. N. Khanna from Dehradun (Uttarakhand) and M.B.B.S, M.S (General Surgery) from K.G.M.C. Lucknow, joined the college of Medical Sciences B.H.U as Lecturer in 1962. Then he became Reader, Professor, Head of Surgery Department, Dean and Director IMS, before he retired from there in 1994 and in the same year joined this hospital as Senior Consultant Surgeon. Since then he has been doing all sorts of general surgery, plastic sur-

gery, cancer surgery and sustaining the hospital since the time he joined this institution. He is a B. C. Roy awardee also. We wish to avail his services for many more years to come.



Prof. Dr. D. Sharma

Dr. D. Sharma originally from Rawalpindi (now in Pakistan) and M.B.B.S, M.S (Obs. & Gynaecology) from K.G.M.C., Lucknow, also joined the college of Medical Science B.H.U in 1962. Then she became Reader, Professor, Head of the Department (Obs. & Gynaecology) and for some time Acting Director also, before she retired in 1997 from there and joined this hospital as senior Gynaecologist in the same year. Since then she is working here to the best of her ability and dedication to the service of Humanity.

(Courtesy : Sri Swapan Ganguli)

OBITUARY

His Highness Eliya Raja Marthanda Varma :

We regret to inform that His Highness Eliya Raja Marthanda Varma of the erstwhile state of Travancore (Trivandrum) passed away on 23rd December 2013. He and his wife Late Rani Radhes Devi were close devotees of Shree Shree Ma. They were among the chief sponsors of Shree Shree Ma's Janmotsav (Birthday Celebrations) in Bangalore in 1979. They had specially invited Ma for the Laksh Deepotsav of the Great Padmanabha Swamy Temple in Thiruvananthapuram in 1972.

We pray that His soul attain Divine plane and may Shree Shree Ma grant peace to his family.

Shri Sachendra Singh Bist :-

Shri Sachendra Singh Bist Advocate and first President of Zila Panchayat, Uttarkashi was the secretary of Kali Mandir, Ma Anandamayee Ashram in Uttarkashi. He was dedicated to Ma and visited the Kali Temple daily. He was gentle and fair in his dealings with all. He held many positions in Government departments. He was a helpful person and took Kanyapeeth girls all around Uttar Kashi. He passed away on November 8, 2013. May Ma's blessings be with his soul and peace to his family.

Dr. Virendra K. Arora :-

Dr. Virendra K. Arora passed away on 11th November, 2013 at Kankhal, Haridwar on Akshay Navami, Monday, during Samyam Saptah in the Lunar month of Kartik. He attended the Maun from 3-4 p.m. and after a brief conversation with Adhyatmanandaji he left the hall. Within a few minutes his soul departed. At that moment he was right opposite Sri Ma's Mandir, his face was towards Ma's temple. By Ma's Grace two doctors were also present near him, by sheer chance.

He was the President of Shree Shree Anandamayee Vidyapeeth. He had his first *darshan* of Shree Ma with Swami Chidanandaji of Divine Life Society, his Guru at Kankhal Ashram, where Ma used to stay in Didi Ma's complex. He was extremely devoted to Ma. His Guru always did *sashtang pranama* to Ma which further increased his faith in Ma.

In 1982 when Ma's *Samadhi puja* was first started he provided the choicest flowers and bouquets daily from his garden at the Gurukul University where he held many posts like the Registrar, Dean of the Faculty of Sciences, Head of the Department of Mathematics, till he retired.

He was instrumental in providing help to Shree Shree Anandamayee Vidyapeeth and the Ashram through his students in several ways like as teachers or simply as devotees in whatever capacity they could.