

MA ANANDAMAYEE
AMRIT VARTA

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

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MATRI - VANI

Question- Where to find Guru?

Ma - Find inside, there is thirst but no water (available), it is never possible.

* * *

Question - How can one become a disciple?

Ma - Complete surrender to Guru (should) be the sole desire, (then) the disciple will be made for Guru and when such a disciple is found, the Guru cannot but accept the desciple wholly. The whole world is illuminated by Him only. He is Himself the sole Light. Whatever happens it comes to light itself automatically. This will do the *Guru-karan*. The stage where one is, He reflects light according to his stage. It was so in the past, it is in the present now and also will be in the future. He is himself the Guru, the sole Light - Guru is this, Self-luminous. There are several opinions, *Ishta Granthi Chid Granthi*. Some say that there is no God - this body says that He is present in Naught also. His 'Being' (hasbeen) unrevealed (to us). There will be disagreement until and unless we rise above 'yes' and 'no'. The Guru will bestow everything on the true disciple as is required-total handover.

* * *

Who is known as *God-Chentan* (Consciousness) *jñān* (Knowledge), the one who is Knowledge incarnate - the one *Chetan Nitya* (Eternal Consciousness) - is called *Chetan Jagrata* (The Wakeful Conscousness) - Wakeful means ever-awake. (He) is Full-Consciousness.

* * *

Following Guru's advice is to follow instruction word by word as per one's strength. The rest He will do Himself. He will not present himself according to your doing. He is Ever-Present. By (following) Guru's advice, the things that should be destroyed, (are destroyed automatically). He is Self. Self is Ever-Pure, Omniscient, (and) Eternal.

* * *

Question - Does the questioner need diverse *Sadhan* (disciplines)?

Ma - According to one's *sanskar* (past-life imprints) there are so many. He is a yogi himself. One who is *Nitya Yukt* (ever connected) will appear by oneself. You

are a young man. Yogi - take him for a youth - so he is that youthful Mahayogi - that self-reveals itself. Everyone possesses it. Everyone possesses that child. A tree has innumerable seeds - seeds potent to produce innumerable trees.

* * *

Questioner - The mind is a lifeless entity.

Ma - (Its) character. The Consciousness is present in everybody - to find him - one has to take '*kriyā*' form Guru; to find the Self in one's own self - Even if it is a mindless entity - the mind should be employed in the Service of God - Mind is perishable - cling to your '*Ishta*' - whatever is bound to perish will perish automatically; it is limited to its perimeter and nature. Mind should be driven by reason; a human being's duty is to seek the Self.

* * *

If one is totally immersed in the thought of *Paramātmā* (God), then the thought of material body does not bother him.

* * *

Question - How to identify *Brāhma* stage?

Ma - If He does not let, nobody can know Him. Follow the scriptures and you will know.

* * *

Question - We strive for happiness - do not want sadness - still the gloom of sadness engulfs us - why?

Ma - To strive for happiness is like lighting fire. When ablaze, it will destroy everything. *Eko brahma, dvitīyo nāsti* (Brahma is One, there is no Two) - everything will be burnt to ashes - melt it by *Bhakti* (Devotion) - Conscience and Detachment, the Knowledge of self will reduce everything else to ashes.

* * *

The power of *Sādhanā*(spiritual discipline) tears down the curtain (of Ignorance).

*

SHREE SHREE MA ANANDAMAYEE PRASANG

VOL - 5

—Amulya Kumar Datta Gupta

(continued)

(3)

Some Days Spent in Jhusi

Tr. - Km. Mandira Kar

Monday, 15/11/48

Just within 5-7 days after Shri Shri Ma went to Jhusi, Gurupriya didi returned to Kashi from Jhusi due to indisposition. I was wondering if Ma sent any message through her but she said nothing. Nonetheless, after a few days I received order to go to Jhusi.

Today, around noontime I reached Jhusi. I rented two horse-carriages and along with family and luggage arrived at Prabhudutta Brahmachari's ashram. A few rooms have been allotted for Ma's devotees at one side of the ashram. I went to Ma and prostrated before her. Ma asked, "Have you come alone?" I replied, "No, I have come with everyone except Manomohan. Arun Prakash Bandyopadhyay was talking with Ma. I sat in front of Ma for a few minutes then went to bathe. When I came back, I heard that Ma was inquiring about me, I hurried to her. Ma, Prabhudutta Brahmachari, Swami Paramanandaji, and many others were having their lunch. Alongside them, food was also kept for me. I took the *prasād* there. Ma has to take her food in Prabhudutta Brahmachari's company, and always has to keep food in her mouth until he finishes his food. Otherwise, he will also stop eating. It's surprising that Ma has to satisfy so many people in such myriad ways!

It was around 2'o clock when we finished our lunch. At around 2:30 discourses began. A *pundit* did *pātha* (scripture - reading with commentary) of *Bhāgavata* and *Gītā*. Haribaba and Prabhudutta Brahmachari were present. The reading session continued till 5'o clock in the evening, and it ended with *kīrtan*. We came back before the *kīrtan* ended.

Peculiarity in Question-Answer in front of Ma

After dinner, we sat in front of Ma and many things were being discussed. It revolved round a point that whenever any question is asked, Ma never gives a clear-cut answer. Instead, on many occasions Ma opines that the questioner is right from

his viewpoint. This, therefore, neither creates a meaningful debate nor is any clear solution obtained. Ma, hearing this, replied, "This body says that everyone is right according to one's own view; but this is said not to flatter anyone. There is a stage, when it can be seen that the 'position' from where someone says something is absolutely right. If someone says 'yes' to it and another says 'no' then also it is perceived that they both are individually right according to their respective stage. Again, 'yes' and 'no' both are correct at the same point - this can also be seen. This is called *dvandvāṭīta* stage. Nothing is said here just to please anyone."

Me - People say that it is futile to say anything to you as you only hear and never object to anything.

Ma - (smiling) Do I only hear and tell nothing? Again, I neither hear nor tell.

Me - Then is it futile indeed to tell anything to you?

Ma - (smiling) The way you are taking it is wrong. When I say that I do not listen it means that I have no interest that one feels when hearing something new; there is no *bhāva* of apathy or interest apart from this. It is always said that this body is like a gong, the way you drum it so will you hear. If a questioner is really eager to know, answer spurts out from this body. Here, as there is neither reverence nor apathy towards the question, the same is for the answer. I meant this when I said that I never hear or tell anything. But, sometimes, when the questioner is eager to find a solution, this body tells something that solves his problem. But, if someone definitively presses his point, then, on many occasions, this body tells nothing.

Me - Then if someone falsely assumes something and strongly professes his view, will you not rectify him, Ma?

Ma - No, what I mean is that many times it happens that this body does not present any opposite view. Again, it also happens that to rectify someone something is said. The reality is that-whatever happens. Today, there was a question, what is a *Jīva*? What is *Brahma*? it is not that this body never says anything on *Jīva* or *Brahma*. This body said so many things on this matter before. But, nothing such happened today. There are many who want to know what is in the scriptures. So I said that this body heard such and such thing about *Jīva* *Brahma*.

(to be continued)

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MOTHER AS REVEALED TO ME

—Bhaiji

There are many photographs of Sri Ma, their number may be several thousands. But what is surprising is that no two are alike. S. Subodh Chandra Dasgupta of Dacca, and S. Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta of Chittagong amongst many other photographers, took numerous snapshots. In October 1926 Shashi Bhushan came to Dacca during the Durga Puja celebrations and some of us went to Shahbag together to take a photograph of Sri Ma early in the morning.

On reaching there, we found that nobody knew where She was. At last we discovered that She lay in a dark room in a state of *samādhi*. It had been arranged that Shashi Bhushan would leave Dacca the same afternoon. He was therefore very anxious to take a photo of Sri Ma that very morning. *Pitāji* was specially requested to approach Her for permission.

He himself with my help brought Sri Ma outside and seated Her for an exposure and we withdrew from the range of the camera. She was still in a state of self-absorption, with Her body and limbs slackened. Suspecting that She might have moved during the exposure, Shashi Bhushan used eighteen plates. He then left for Chittagong. Subsequently he wrote to say that of the eighteen plates only the last one produced a good portrait, which contained a moonlike ball of light on Sri Ma's forehead, and what was still stranger, my figure appeared behind Her. An extract from Shashi Bhushan's letter written to me long after, is given here :

"When Ma's photograph was being taken, I loaded six plates at a time and in three shifts eighteen plates were exposed. In the first few plates there were no impressions, only a ball of light covered each plate. The next few plates showed some hazy outlines ; it was only on the last plate that the figure of Ma came out in full relief. You were far away beyond the range of the camera and on one side. From there you gave me the signal for giving the exposure. From the very outset I was feeling nervous when taking the photos, as I had a dim suspicion that things were not all right, which caused me much pain. When the last plate was exposed , I felt a flood of joy filling my heart. At that time I just began to approach. Ma's feet as my only refuge. During those days an incident like the one mentioned above almost overwhelmed me."

When the photograph was received at Dacca, people suspected some trick of the photographer in developing it. But when Sri Ma was approached about the matter,

She expressed Herself thus :

“When this body lay in a dark room in an almost frozen condition the whole room was flooded with light. When you brought this body out into the sunshine, the radiance was there, but it gradually shrank into a ball of light on the forehead. There was an impression in my mind that at the time Jyotish was standing behind me. Now it is for you to judge what made the photo come out as it did.”

Ashram

Everybody was feeling the need of an Ashram at Dacca. Once when I went to Shahbag on a moonlit night, Sri Ma said : “Let us have a stroll in the grounds.” *Pitāji*, Mataji and I went out. We sat down on the grass just near the place where a building stood in ruins (the present site of the Dacca Ashram). I most humbly told Ma that Shahbag was the property of the Nawab of Dacca, and as it would not be possible for us to have *kīrtana*, *pūjā*, etc. there for much longer, it was necessary to start an Ashram. Sri Ma replied : “The whole world is full of Ashrams, what will you do with a new one?” I said : “We do not require any big project ; we just want a small place where we may assemble round your blessed feet and sing *kīrtana*.” *Pitāji* supported me. Ma said : “If you feel like erecting a building of this kind, the site of the old house that you see over there will be the best. It is your old home.”

She laughed and remained silent. At that time there was a Siva temple in ruins standing amidst heaps of rubbish, bricks and stone with jungles all around. The place was infested with snakes. After the Ashram premises were built, we saw many big snakes there. At that time Sri Ma used to offer milk and bananas in that deserted Siva temple on certain occasions.

One Monday some raw milk with five or seven bananas were offered in a new earthen pot. After seven days at about 9 or 10 P.M. Sri Ma went there and found the milk and bananas in exactly the same condition as when they had been offered. Not even a single ant had touched the pot. Ma said She would have a sip from it. Many people tried to stop Her, thinking that the milk might be contaminated. But Ma must have Her way. She had a sip and many took Her *prasāda*. What remained in the vessel was left there. Next morning it was found that the entire contents had been licked up. Not a drop remained.

On enquiry we were informed that the Siva temple and the adjoining lands belonged to the Ramna Kali Estate. When the priest Sj. Nityananda Giri was approached, he said that he would not part with the property for less than Rs. 6,000/-

When Niranjan was transferred to Dacca a few months later, we tried to raise the money, but we did not succeed. Towards the beginning of 1927 I was bed-ridden

with a serious illness. One day Nirranjan came to see me and said that the Zamidar of Gouripur, Sj. Brojendra Kishore Roy Chowdhury had sent Rs. 1,000/-. Nirranjan added : "First try to recover soon ; we shall then make an effort to raise more funds." Nirranjan collected more money gradually, but Nityananda Giri insisted on Rs. 6,000/- being paid for the property. After suffering from ill-health for over a year and a half, I resumed my duties in the Agricultural Department at Dacca. We inspected many sites for building an Ashram. But none appeared to be better suited than the one suggested by Sri Ma.

We were in a fix. Towards the early part of 1929 Ma was in Calcutta. Sriman Benoy Bhushan Banerji went there and had a talk with Her about the starting of the Dacca Ashram. When he came back and told me all about his conversation with Mother, my hopes revived. I decided one day that I must see the priest of the Ramna Kali Temple and accomplish at last the purchase of the plot of land. When I stepped out of the house I saw the image of Ma floating over my head, which gave me the conviction that our purpose would be fulfilled. The priest said : "As you are unable to pay the large sum required for an out-and-out sale, let there be a temporary lease with Rs. 500/- as *salāmi* and Rs. 300/- as yearly rent. The Kali temple is also yours. Some permanent arrangement may be made later on." After a good deal of discussion it was finally decided to take the plot of land on lease for the time being.

(an excerpt)

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"There is ONE unchanging indivisible REALITY which, though unmanifest, reveals. Itself in infinite multiplicity and diversity."

—*Shree Shree Ma*

SVAKRIYA SVARASAMRITA

Vol II

MA UNFOLDS HERSELF IN THE PERFECT PATTERN WHICH EACH SITUATION DEMANDS :

When Ma was under the household discipline, then, in those days, there were strict rules of conduct on the part of a bride, and the custom of remaining behind the purdah was also of this kind. For Ma, all, indeed, was a play, as befitting a particular occasion. She would adopt the appropriate pattern and ways (of action, etc.) from the point of view of perfection in a situation which presented itself at any time, and then unfold Herself in the form of that aspect. Whatever the environment and situation there was at any time, the relevant necessary advice and instruction (to be issued) would be created by Ma and then observed by Herself.

NO ABHINAI : ALL STATES, ASPECTS, PHASES, CHANGES- MA ALONE

Having heard Ma's words, and after observing Her behaviour and also hearing what little he could about Her *sāadhanā* etc., the venerable Gopinath Kaviraj Mahashaya remarked one day, "Ma, all these behaviours and *sāadhanā* of yours which followed an order and system were just *abhinai* (acting of certain roles), was it not?

Ma : Acting - that is, only for the exhibition of that which had not been made public. When there is a drama, it is a series of actions in a performance at an appointed time for entertainment. A programme is made to entertain the spectators fully during specified hours. This is what is in vogue. When the desire arises to give a perfect shape to the drama, then a regular and systematic preparation (for its performance) i.e., a rehearsal (is first held). That is, that, which did not exist, was given shape by the preparation through *kalpanā* (imagination).

(However, where the Reality is concerned), a *jīva* is identical with *Shiva*, so also is a woman with Gauri (Divine Mother). *Jagat* (world) is but Hari only and Hari is but *jagat* only. *Jagat* and Hari are not separate entities. *Purna** and *ansh* (whole and part) : when the whole is subtracted from the whole, the remainder is the whole only.

*. *Purna* is the eternal undifferentiated whole. So there can be nothing besides it. That is why the question of any addition to or subtraction from it does not arise. As Ma says, 'He in Himself only is (both) whole and part.'

What a spark can burn, the fire itself too does the same. But the spark issues forth from fire, and so it has its own form - just as whole and part.

When Mahavir was questioned (about his *bhava* towards Sri Rama) you all, indeed, say that the reply he gave was, "In identity, there is only the One Self, undifferentiated. Again, He is the whole and I am a part, and when He is the master, I am His servant." Therefore, you should understand as to who is in identity. He in Himself only is (both) whole and part. Again, it is He only in the form of master and servant too. So where there is *lilākhelā*, in that realm, even being One, there are the three, One alone is in those three- Self, Self, Self, thrice Self. In these three, there is revelation of the particular aspect in the context of a particular place pertaining to the same One Reality.

When you talk of *lilākhelā* of *Bhagavān*, He Himself is there as appropriate to a particular place. He alone is also within the realm of *lilākhelā*, where there is only the Truth eternal. Again, the world as such has never been created. When, with form, on whatever the eyes rest, only Krishna is revealed there.

Now, see the place of Master and servant too. The One Self whole and part, Master and servant-within the realm of *jīva*, accepting the aspect of Master and servant, one should proceed in *sādhanā*, aiming at the realization of Self-wealth, that is getting established in that One Self. So one should understand who is whole and who is part, who is Master and who is servant. In other words, He alone is the One Self in Oneness; and, in the form of the whole and part also, is 'That' alone. Again, He who is the Master, the servant also is He. That is why there was that reply of Mahavir. The three, indeed, are in the One, the One alone is the three-indeed, that objective alone. In the realm of *jīva* too, one, who treads this way, undertakes that activity of *sādhanā* in order to realize the wealth of his own *Svarupa*, the Self-wealth.

Moreover, understand this that in *jīva-jagat*, where the domain is of mental conception, there is transitoriness. Again, consider the side pertaining to *khelā* within the realm of *Bhagavān*. Of course, within the domain of mental conception, we have observance of good manners, modesty, acting, etc. *Jīva* means bondage, world means motion-within That (are good manners, modesty, etc.) But, in the *lilākhelā* of *Tat* (That), He alone is in Himself, remember this. Where there is no question of place or no place, whatever *svarūpa* in whichever particular form, in an expressed idea and language, in letters (of a language) no letters-who is it and where is it in manifestation, find out. And that unmanifest, beyond mind and speech- what does your *Shastra* say? Understanding is in the realm of mind only, where you understand a thing through investigation to the best of your abilities in the process of acceptance and non-acceptance by mind, within the purview of thorough continuous search. On the other hand,

is not your enquiry about this body (i.e., Ma's body)? - well, as *Bhagavān* plays. Indeed, here, the happenings are as He in Himself." Having spoken in this manner, Ma kept quiet.

FEELINGS OF REVERENCE DUE TO A MOTHER AROUSED TOWARDS MAU MA

Reverting to the previous subject, when later, the family of the Assistant Station Master arrived, whenever he felt any discomfort at home, he, it is reported, would say, "There, at such odd hours, the food etc., was served with such care as if with the loving hands of a mother". When (later) Ma was in the midst of all, he once came to have Ma's *darshan*. She, whom he had one day seen behind the veil of a *vadhū* (newly married girl), whose hands and feet only were then visible, today he saw Her without veil, in the form of Mother. What a feeling of respect and devotion for Ma was noticed in him! It was heard that the food served by Ma's hands had aroused in him (for Ma), for the first time, the feeling of respect and devotion due to a mother.

A DEVI OR A HUMAN BEING?

When the wife of the Assistant Station Master first came to Narundi, she saw Ma in Her kitchen from her own quarter. Later, when she came to visit Ashu's mother, she said, "That day I saw a *bau* (daughter-in-law) through the window of your kitchen- so beautiful, like the image of a *devī*; where is She?" Pointing towards Ma, Ashu's mother said, "There, She is in the kitchen!" She was not able to believe it in any way and said, "Yes, probably it is She, but that day, I saw through that window someone like the celestially beautiful image of a *devī*. She does not resemble her correctly." Who knows what form Ma had shown to her!

The wife of brother of this Assistant Station Master had embroidered, on a carpet, a very beautiful *vigraha* of Sri Krishna playing the flute. Whenever Ma had some leisure, during that time, She also would copy a part of that *vigraha* on a separate piece of carpet. By the time Ma would finish Her nightly duties, it would be almost eleven-thirty. After this, She would light up a kerosine lamp and carry on this handicraft for a while. The soot from kerosine had naturally its reaction in the nostrils, but who cared for such things? Meanwhile, there was a talk about their transfer, so they too helped Ma to finish Her embroidery work on the carpet hurriedly. They also loved Ma very much.

ESSENCE OF RELIGION TRANSCENDS ITS DOCTRINAL LIMITATIONS

When he was transferred from Narundi, a Muslim employee came in his place. His sister used to discuss many good aspects of their religion with Ma. In that discus-

sion, there flowed a stream of joy, as if there was no question at all that there were different religions. The relationship with them developed so much that their friendship was eternal, at it were. Through the spirit of talk, etc., the *bhāva* of Ma too used to take a different turn. Because the talk was on religion, there the ideas and language were of *tanmayatā* (absorbing interest). So long as religion was the subject of talk, no matter what religion, that was all that counted with Ma.

(an excerpt)

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LIST OF FESTIVALS

1. Shri Shri Samyam Saptaha Mahavrata - October 31 to November 6, 2014
2. Shri Shri Jagaddhatri Puja - November 1, 2014
3. Ras Purnima - November 6, 2014
4. Gita Jayanti - November 29 to December 2, 2014
5. Paush Sankranti - January 14, 2015
6. Shri Shri Saraswati Puja - January 25, 2015
7. Maha Shiva-ratri - February 17, 2015
8. Dol Purnima (Holi) - March 5, 2015

PILEGRIMAGE TO KAILAS

—Gurupriya Devi

Monday, 8 July

By ten thirty a.m. we finished our meals and set out. Ma rode a horse while father sat in the *dandi*. At one spot Ma's horse went down to the ground; Ma slipped but was not hurt. By two p.m. we reached a spot called Gauri Pahad. It is the custom to camp wherever there is a good supply of grass and water. Today many of us developed breathing trouble, the cold was also excessive. We managed to spend the night somehow or the other. On the way we saw a star during the day time, but I could not find out whether Jyotish Dada spotted it or not. I have heard that those who do not see that star do not live for long in this world.

Tuesday, 9 July

We drank hot tea and set out. We were accompanied by some people. Today after covering a distance of ten miles we are to reach Manasarovar. The guide had warned us about dacoits on this route. As Swamiji was having great difficulty in breathing, Ma rode a horse and made him sit in the *dandi* again. Last night I also found it difficult to breathe. By three a.m. it became very difficult to exhale. It grew worse and the cold was also unbearable in spite of wrapping on innumerable warm clothes. By eight thirty a.m. we set out. Even before this we had encountered dacoits on this route but by Ma's grace nothing untoward had happened. Our men were carrying guns and other arms. Today as we went ahead we met two armed men. They began walking by our side with their right sleeves rolled up—this is supposed to be a sign of their being ready to use their arms. A little further we saw two more men standing in the mountains. The men who were walking beside us signalled to them and they descended and sat by the path we were traversing. Our guide was heavily armed. He broke into a gallop and went right into their midst where he sat conversing with them. After all our horses and *dandi* had crossed the spot where the men were seated, our guide galloped towards us, smiling, and joined us. Obviously he had managed to talk the dacoits into sparing us.

The *dandi* moved slowly; we waited every now and then for it to catch up with us. The guide was moving cautiously. A little further, in that extremely desolated spot, two more men were standing and waiting. Not a plant or tree broke the contours of the vast expanse around us—only mountains could be seen as far as our vision stretched, nothing else. We went a little further and found a group of people in a tent. The guide again galloped ahead and went up to them. After we had gone past the

group, he joined us again. We heard that the tent was the den of dacoits who lived there with herds of goats and sheep. Thus did we continue to tread this path with the constant fear of dacoits. But as we sighted the Manasarovar lake, we all totally forgot all our fears. What a marvellous sight- the enormous lake with a multi-coloured sky in the background! The lake looked like a duplicate of the sky spread on the ground.

Gazing at the Manasarovar we walked quite a distance. At some spots we encountered very steep ascents and descents. The rather unusual sight of Ma riding a horse was unbearable to us, but in view of Swamiji's condition Ma refused to travel in the *dandi*. The route was terrible and there seemed to be no end to our troubles. Ma travelled ahead smiling. We had come far ahead leaving the *dandi* way behind. Suddenly, in that desolate spot Ma descended from her horse. Bholanath, Jyotish Dada and I were near Ma. She told us, "You three proceed and halt wherever the tents are pitched. I shall wait here for the *dandi*," Tunu and Dasu Dada had also not reached.

We were loathe to leave Ma alone in such a deserted spot but she reiterated gravely, "Listen to what I say, you proceed." Bholanath protested a couple of times but finally went ahead with Bhaiji towards Manasarovar. Similarly, I also went forward for quite a distance till I finally reached the shore of Manasarovar where Parvati Devi and the guide were in the process of pitching our tents. Having reached around two p.m. we all alighted. In this manner our group had split into three batches. We sat down on the shores of Manasarovar awaiting the arrival of Ma and the others.

Swans of every possible colour were swimming in the waters of the Manasarovar. Finding some time on my hands, I moved away from the shore of the lake to the spot where our tents had been pitched and sat down to write. What a spot this is - it is just as beautiful as it is dangerous. All around stand the magnificent mountain ranges decorated in different colours and at our feet is the vast lake. The wind blew gustily. It was so cold that though the sun had emerged we hardly felt the warmth of sunshine. The guide was saying, "By Ma's grace we have reached here safe and sound. Sometimes the wind blows so strongly here that a person cannot even stand erect." Kailas is now three days away. The peak of the Kailas mountain is radiant with a temple-like structure of ice which glistens like silver. The people with us started calling out, "*Kailas Pati ki jai*" on spotting the peak. Where have we reached - seeing these sights and musing over them we are filled with an indescribable joy.

After all other arrangements are made, the cooking will start. For a few days we have not been getting fire wood. But on this mountain are a few thorny bushes. The grooms have gathered the dry dung of yaks with which a fire has been lit for cooking. Nothing else is available as fuel-these plants are not quite dry. Because of the breeze it is not possible to light a stove. All of us are finding it difficult to breathe and we have to inhale camphor to overcome the problem.

At Almora Ma had asked us all to take a pair of woollen trousers each and we had

obeyed. Ma had also ordered woollen *kurtas* from Bareilly. Now I realize that if we had depended only on the stock of woollens that we had brought from Calcutta and not brought the extra woollens as per Ma's instructions, we would never have been able to survive the cold here. I also realize how important are all the other items, like comphor, which Ma made us bring with us. It was only after reaching this place that I came to know that inhaling comphor eases the problem of breathlessness. There is no doubt that Ma is completely perfect and all powerful. What can I try to prove about her greatness in connection with these paltry matters? Still, I enjoy writing about them and hence I am doing so.

The tails of the yaks that we have been seeing on the way are very beautiful. According to a superstition in this part of the world, if you ride a yak you face some misfortune or the other; therefore we came on horseback. All the horses are let free to roam in the forests and their owners fetch them whenever necessary. Sitting in that absolutely quiet spot I was overawed by the scenic setting of Mother Nature. A little later Ma and the others arrived. We all had a dip in the waters of the Manasarovar. Ma touched the water and sprinkled some of it - a few drops fell on me.

Before Bholanath bathed, he called Ma aside and spoke to her. Parvati took *diksha* from Bholanath. As I returned to the tent, Ma was strolling on the banks of the lake, absorbed in some mood. Then Bhaiji joined Ma. When Ma came back to the tent, I was busy cooking. The wind was strong and it was indescribably difficult to cook on a fire lit with raw sticks. With much trouble, some sort of a meal was consumed at night. By ten p.m. we had all retired for the night. Later I heard that in the evening when Ma had gone and sat by the lake it was absolutely still - there was not a single ripple on the surface of the lake.

Near this lake, at the foot of the Kailas mountain, we could see yet another lake which the guide informed us was called 'Rakshas Tal'. It was named after the Rakshasa King Ravana who had performed penance there. I also heard that the King of this land does not award punishment to the dacoits because dacoity is their way of life. It is said that the King had told them, "Whether it is by force or by any other means, look after your needs." Therefore, even though these dacoits commit crimes on travellers they get away unpunished. The grooms also told us that they wear dark glasses so that the dacoits cannot notice the fear on their faces - if they do, the dacoits harass them even more. So they hide their eyes and pretend to walk past the dacoits nonchalantly. They also said, "These dacoits first ask for food; if the travellers don't oblige, the dacoits use their weapons."

We saw many *chakravak* birds around the lake as well as other varieties of birds that we had never seen before. Today we travelled about ten miles.

Wednesday, July 10

There was talk of finishing our meal before starting. The wind was compara-

tively calm in the morning and that would make the trek easier. Yet the cold was intense and walking out would still be difficult. However, we finished cooking quickly, ate a little and set out by twelve noon. I have already mentioned that no one here has any accurate estimate of a mile and we travel between places by roughly gauging the distance and camping at some suitable spot on the way. Today again, around six thirty p.m. we pitched tents at a place called Jugumfa.

We must have walked about eight miles today. We walked a long distance along the bank of Manasarovar, crossed a mountain and entered a valley. We saw a cave with lamas in it and a temple. The cave was quite big and very clean. We saw a statue of Buddha and many other statues which had been installed there. Many scriptures were laid out and they were being preserved with great care. A lamp with ghee was burning. In front of the idols, many small bowls of water had been kept. A new priest is appointed every three years and all the items in the temple are handed over to the new priest. We also saw a number of musical instruments.

Some people perambulate around the Manasarovar, which is a distance of about sixty miles. This takes at least five or six days and we did not have the courage to attempt it. At a particular spot, not far from the lake, is a hot spring. Now we are only two days away from Kailas. One mountain merges into the next and the highest peak is Mount Kailas. It was evening by the time we pitched tents and unpacked our luggage.

It was bitingly cold. Neither could we procure any wood, nor could we light the stove because of the wind. The lanterns were all spoilt. We just ate some maize-barley flour and went to sleep. Everyone was in such a state of exhaustion that Ma and Bholanath were served wheat flour instead of the maize-barley flour, because no one had the strength to even see which was which. All of us were fagged out, especially Swamiji who was suffering from breathlessness. We all felt that Ma was being put to a lot of trouble riding on horseback but there was no other solution. We just had to put up with everything and anything - we were in such a state!

We reached the peak of the mountain and felt that gardens had been laid out on all sides. Other than the earlier mentioned thorny bushes there were no other plants but the bushes were laden with tiny, beautiful inflorescences. The bushes were so exquisitely ornamented that it seemed as if some gardener had pruned and maintained them. They were so neatly and tidily arranged. We were seeing sights and forms which are beyond my ability to describe. The path has undoubtedly been difficult and hazardous.

(to be continued)

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Pada Peetham Smarami

(Sweet Remembrance of Your Lotus Feet)

—Br. Geeta

(Tr. - Km. Mandira Kar)

Siddha Peeth Siddheshwari

Siddheshwari according to Ma :

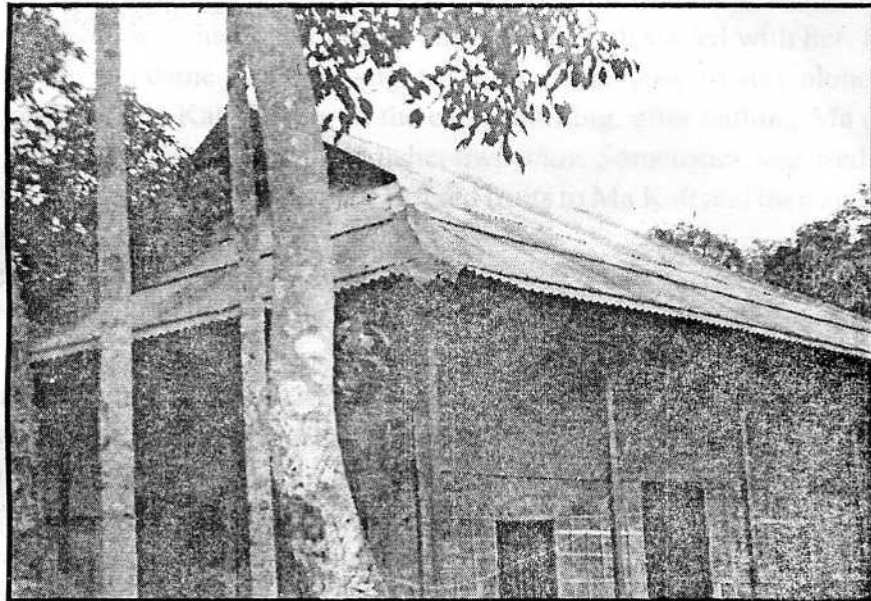
“This place is very sacred. After every 5,505 years sages of high-order come here.” Baba Bholanath was also one of them. In Siddheshwari, in one of his previous births, Baba Bholanath used to do his *sadhana*. Adiguru Shri Shankaracharya too has a special connection with this sacred place, as revealed in Ma’s words. Due to their prayers, this time God came in the form of Mother.

Ethereal Vision of Siddheshwari and Ma’s first arrival :

In 1923, Ma came to Dhaka from Bajitpur with Baba Bholanath for the first time. They were still known as Nirmala Sundari Devi and Ramanimohan Chakraborty. Shahbag was then an ownership of Nawab estate. Bholanath worked as a care-taker of this garden. Siddheshwari Kali Mandir was then far from Shahbag, hidden and unknown. Shri Ma one day asked Baba Bholanath, “I see there is Siddheshwari here. Is there any tree by this name?” At that time, no one knew anything about the tree. One day, while conversing with his old friend Baul Chandra Basak, Bholanath came to know about Siddheshwari Kali temple. Then, accompanied by his friend, Ma and Baba Bholanath came to Siddheshwari for the first time. In front of the temple there was a huge Pipal tree, seeing which Ma exclaimed, “This body saw this place and this tree in vision in Bajitpur. There were more trees.” Baul Chandra Basak recounted that it is heard there were three trees- banyan, pipal, and sandalwood, which combined into one and were called ‘Tintiri’ by locals. He divulged more of the mystery, “One could see ethereal Light in it, also in the form of Ma Siddheshwari. Sometimes the Light would travel to and fro from the Siddheshwari temple.” Ma touched the tree and fondled its leaves. Baul babu narrated more, “There was no temple, nothing. Once, a Sannyasi named Sumeruban or Sambarban first built the temple here. There was also a *Panch-mundi asan*.” In the verandah of this very mandir, Pramatha babu and his coachman saw Ma in Chhinnamasta and Dashamahavidya avatar in vision. This place is very potent for a sadhak, even though the temple has been destroyed by the infidels and natural calamities repeatedly.

Reinstatement of Siddheshwari Mahasirvari by Ma :

Ma once accompanied by Bhairavacharya, Siddheshwari Kalihati. Ma herself cooked bhog (food offering) and offered it to Ma Kali. Bholanath said, "Do as your bhairava says, you will be blessed." In Curmish, Ma offered bhog to Ma Kali. When the bhog was offered to Ma Kali, Ma was celebrating getting bhog offering in the day of Ekadashi. In Kasir Ashram, starting from 1953 till 1954, the bhog was offered for Devi on the occasion of Basanti Puja. Moving to the previous context, the preparation of bhog and its tabling took much time.



Siddheshwari Ashram

Ma started uttering words. She started drawing a circle round her. Ma pressed the ground, and lot her hand started going inside. She felt a hole. When it was about her shoulder level then Baba Bholanath pulling Ma by the hand, "What is happening? Everything is going inside!" Within a matter of a second, rapid blood-red water started spouting outside. It was so red that even Ma's conchshell bangles were stained with red colour and it stayed for a few days. On Ma's insistence Baba Bholanath put his hand inside, he felt it was warm. When he pulled his hand outside, the same red lukewarm water spouted out. After half an hour he rushed Ma back to the Kali Bari. Baba Bholanath threw the hand object taken out from the hole into the nearby pond. Next day they came back to Shubhog.

Reinstallation of Siddhapeeth Siddeshwari by Ma :

Shri Ma once accompanied by Bholanath went to Siddheshwari Kalibari. Ma herself cooked bhog (food offering for God) and offered it to Ma Kali. Bholanath said, "Do as your *bhav* lets you to present the food-offering."

In Gurupriya Didi's diary we come to know that on the first day Ma offered *sona moong dal*, fried coconut chips, and boiled potato and rice to Ma Kali. So, when the ashram was built here and the first Basanti Puja was celebrated similar food offering was made to the Deity on the day of Saptami. In Kashi Ashram, starting from 1944 till today, the same menu is fixed for Devi on the occasion of Basanti Puja, on Saptami.

Moving to the previous context, the preparation of bhog and its offering took much time and it was almost late night. Next day too Ma stayed there, in the morning Ma's father stayed with her, and in the evening Bholanath stayed with her. For 2-3 days Baul babu too came to stay at night. Ma that time used to stay alone in the adjoining room of Ma Kali's *asan*. In the early morning, after bathing Ma entered that room, and stayed all day and night in her own *bhav*. Sometimes, she used to take a stroll in the temple. Only, at night, she offered fruits to Ma Kali and then again went back to her small toom.

This continued for seven days, and after taking the *bhog-prasad* at late night, Ma said to Bholanath, "Let us go now." Saying this Ma along with Bholanath came to the site of the present ashram and went to the place where there is a Shivalinga now. Baul babu used to stay awake all night at the temple-gate. But, surprisingly he didn't even stir when Ma and Bholanath came outside the temple. This is the first time Ma saw the place in reality. It was kind of an abandoned spot, a termite's mound was near it and was marshy because of excessive rain.

It was raining torrentially. Bholanath accompanied Ma drenched in the rain. Circumambulating three times, Ma sat on the middle of the high mound (where now the Shivalinga is situated) pressing her right palm on it. Drawing a circle round her, Ma started uttering various *Stotras*. That time Ma was keeping *mauna* (vow of Silence). Ma pressed the ground, and lo! Her hand started going inside. She felt a hard object. When it was almost her shoulder level then Baba Bholanath, pulling Ma back, exclaimed, "What is happening?. Everything is going inside!" Within a fraction of a second, tepid blood-red water started spouting outside. It was so red that even Ma's white conchshell bangles were stained with red colour and it stayed for almost seven days. On Ma's insistence Baba Bholanath put his hand inside; he felt it empty and warm. When he pulled his hand outside, the same red lukewarm water spouted out. After half an hour he rushed Ma back to the Kali bari. Baba Bholanath threw that hard object taken out from the hole into the nearby pond. Next day they came back to Shahbag.

Ma ordered Baul babu to cover that spot and to safeguard it. First, a small boundary was made and it looked like a square piece of land, then after cementing it, an altar was made on it about the height of a man in sitting position. Later a Shivalinga was built on it.

The place where Ma's hand went inside, that is the original *peeth-sthan*. This way, the long forgotten *siddhapeeth* was revealed by Ma.

Conservation of the *Siddhapeeth*:

Ma ordered Baul Babu to regularly visit that place. Later on when Prangopal babu heard about it, he gave him 10 rupees. With that money, according to Ma's command, the altar was built in stages: first, a bamboo fencing of ten hand perimeter was built round the place, then a brick-and-mortar altar was made at the previously mentioned position. Ma frequently visited that place and sat there, and regular *kirtan* was held.

Christening of Ma in *Siddeshwari Peeth-sthan*:

In this place, Ma's christening was done by her saintly devotee Shri Jyotish Chandra Roy. The incident is as below:

One day, around noon-time Bhaiji (Jyotish Chandra Roy) was in his office, Ma called him to Shahbag suddenly. That day, the director of his office was coming on a visit. Without any hesitation, Bhaiji followed Ma's order. Ma took Bholanath and Bhaiji to Siddheshwari.

There inside the place (where the altar was built) Ma sat smiling. It was full-moon night, and Ma's smile contagiously spread happiness to everyone present; it was simply heavenly. At this time, Bhaiji emotionally exclaimed to Baba Bholanath, "From this day onwards, we will call Ma as Shri Shri Ma Anandamayee!" This way, in this *Siddhapeeth* Ma's christening was done by her ardent devotee.

Later, when Bhaiji asked Ma why she had called him that day, Ma said, "To see how much is your improvement (in spiritual matter); also how else would I have gotten my name? Saying this, Ma laughed aloud.

(to be continued)

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FROM THE LIFE OF SRI ANANDAMAYI MA

—Dr. Bithika Mukerji

Mataji's first visit to Gujrat :

Mataji stayed in Hardwar for three days only. She visited the ashram of Mangala Giri Maharaj and also went to see Swami Asimanandaji. She reminded Swami Asimananda that he had once offered to escort her to holy sites on the banks of the river Narmada in Gujrat. He expressed his readiness to do so at any time convenient to her. He had reckoned without his guest, because Mataji immediately said, "Let us then start today, by the first available train!"

Initially thrown into considerable disorder by her suggestion, everybody got used to the idea very quickly, and when they steamed out of Hardwar that evening, it was realised that it was not such an impossible scheme after all. Didi and Swami Akhandananda had joined Mataji's party at Hardwar in response to her invitation. Mataji accompanied by a comparatively smaller party came to Chandod, a small town near the river Narmada on October 18, 1937. Swami Asimananda was quite well known in this part of the country. He made arrangements for their stay at the Vishnudasa Temple.

The visitors found the local people very hospitable and courteous. The temple catered to people of all denominations and welcomed all travellers who were desirous of visiting the famous sites for *sadhana* near the shores of the holy Narmada. Down the centuries ascetics of great repute had practised austerities in these places. The entire region is sprinkled with temples, shrines, ashrams and also less frequented huts and caves where one may spend years in absolute solitude. In one of these caves Sri Balananda Brahmachariji of Deoghar had spent several years. Mataji visited the ashram of the Guru of Sri Balananda Brahmachariji where she was made welcome by Sri Kailashanandaji.

Mataji went to other places of interest, travelling by boat after sunset. This seemed to be the usual mode of procedure because the sun made the open boats very uncomfortable during the day. The local people could not speak Hindi and nobody in Mataji's party (excepting Swami Asimanandaji) knew any Gujrati. Conversations therefore were limited. This however did not prevent Mataji from exercising her ineffable attraction on men, women and children. Slowly but steadily the number of people

visiting Mataji's camp site increased.

Mataji's party included Naresh Chakravarty, a professor from Calcutta, and Shachi Babu, both very quiet and seriousminded men. On their way to Chandod, Mataji remarking jokingly on the grave aspect of Shachi Babu, had said, "You seem to have become quite a *Gmbhirmath babaji*,"* Mataji's use of the word "Gambhirmath" stirred the memory of Shachi Babu who recalled with some surprise and a great deal of excitement that long ago while reading a biography of the saint so named, he had experienced a great longing for visiting the sites of the saint's *tapasya*. He now realized that he had come to the Narmada but had quite forgotten that he had once been very keen to do so. His wishes were fulfilled in a manner quite beyond his expectations.

Mataji went to Ahmebabad and to Baroda for a few days, then returned to Vyasa and Karnali on the Narmada in the first week of November. She became known to people from all strata of society, business magnates from Ahmedabad, professional men and women, and also the villagers from along the banks of the river. The town's people could talk to her a little in Hindi and she spent as much time with all those who came to seek her advice as she always did wherever she might be. One educated young lady asked Mataji, "Is there need for a Guru in one's life?"

Mataji replied, "Consider the fact that all one's life one is subject to the influences of people around one. To begin with, the parents, then the teachers, in fact there is no end to the number of persons from whom we require to learn something or other. So a teacher is always necessary, a teacher who will direct one's effort in the right direction. You may look at it from another angle too. Supposing you wish to undo a difficult knot. You have to bring it under focus and study the twist of the chords so that you may unravel it. Similarly, in order to achieve freedom, one must bind oneself down (under the supervision of the Guru), in other words, one must accept discipline."

Another young girl said, "Mataji, I cannot meditate on any form of God. As a matter of fact I do not care for any symbol whatsoever. How can I get control over my mind?" Mataji answered, "In that case, you may just sit still and concentrate on the natural rhythm of breathing. If you train yourself to do that, this itself will act as a symbol for you." The girl professed herself very pleased with this answer.

(to be continued)

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*. The word "gambhir" means serious or profound; in other words, Mataji's statement meant "Why are you looking so serious?"

MATRI-LILA DARSHAN

—Dr. Deba Prasad Mukhopadhyay

(Tr. — Jiban Mukherjee)

CHAPTER ONE

Prologue

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi, the incarnation of the Supreme Brahman made her sudden appearance in my life when I was just an ordinary young man without any special knowledge or devotion. This evidently happened to allow me to humbly participate in her Divine lila which brings liberation from the wheel of recurring birth and death. This privilege has come to me quite undeserved - it is entirely due to the causeless grace and immaculate stream of compassion of the Great Mother who is the embodiment of mercy and love for her children.

It is beyond me to recount the attributes of the omnipotent Divine Mother, invested as she is with forms and attributes (gunas) being at the same time formless and beyond the three qualifying attributes (gunas). Nor can I probe the depths of her supremely subtle and wonderful divine self-revelation. In the eleventh skanda, fourth chapter of Srimad Bhagavata, there is a verse attributed to the sage Drumila which can be roughly translated as follows :

“God is without limits and so are his attributes. A man arrogating to himself the power of describing all his qualities is a fool, betraying his naivete and puerility. Even if it were possible to count all the sand-particles on earth, it is impossible even to imagine the magnitude of the attributes of God-Almighty. Mahamahopadhyaya Sri Gopinath Kaviraj wrote: “It is futile to attempt to understand Sri Ma through this book or through other books or even through teaching uttered by Ma herself. Is she then utterly inscrutable? That is not true either. Extremely difficult to attain or understand, she sometimes does reveal herself, over-flowing as she is with motherly love, She cannot remain without responding to the heartfelt cry of her children.” *In the same way the present writer, devoid of either knowledge or intuition, can only send up a desperate cry for Ma. Therein lies his only hope.

It was my good fortune that at a very young age, I had to visit the thrice-holy

*. *Shri Shri Ma Anandamayi* by Gurupriya Devi, Vol. I Introduction by Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Gopinath kaviraj.

Varanasi three times successively. I have realised that the soil, water and air of this place are imbued with a unique radiation which impels a man towards the spiritual, orients him to the quest for self and prompts him to seek real knowledge. Varanasi is a common centre to which people thirsting for knowledge automatically converge. It is a specially sanctified place for spiritual exercises. Almost all Divine Incarnations of India have been repeatedly drawn to Varanasi - Adi Shankaracharya, Lord Buddha, Goswami Tulasidas, Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Trailanga Swami, Babaji Maharaj, the great Yogi Shyamacharan Lahiri, Bhaskarananda Saraswati, Sri Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansadeva, Vijay Krishna Goswami, Swami Vishuddhananda Paramahansa and his initiated disciple, the great saint scholar Gopinath Kaviraj and others- all of them performed some of their *lila* in Varanasi and broadcast the pearls of their knowledge and yogic attainments for the proper guidance of man over the ages.

In the present century, Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi, the perfect incarnation of the Divine Mother, having enacted the first part of her *lila* in Dhaka, singled out Varanasi for the next stage of her self-revelation. Thus a whole set of establishments came into being- the Ashram of Bhadaini, the temple of Annapurna, the Kanyapeeth Girl's School, the temple of Gopala, the Charitable Hospital for the service of God in the guise of the disease-stricken, and lastly there was the performance of Savitri Mahayajna*, declared to be the first of its kind in Varanasi; this involved a ten million repetitions of the Gayatri Mantra spread over three years (1947-50) offered as oblations. A whole band of devotees and ascetics gathered around Sri Sri Ma on the crescent moon shaped bank of the holy Ganges flowing northwards. Ma's Ashram was the venue of *Satsang* day in and day out. Saints and devotees from all over India, seeking the feet of Ma, listening to the nectar of her words and being immersed in her grace, regarded themselves as blessed beyond measure. They were like bees humming around a fullblown lotus in their eagerness to gather honey. Sri Krishna Avadhuti, Devi Giri Maharaj, Triveni Puri Maharaj, Chakrapaniji Maharaj, Swami Krishnanandaji, Prabhudatta Brahmachariji, Haribabaji, Gopinath Kaviraj, Mukti Baba, Kalida, Swami Akhandanandaji, Vishnu Ashramji, Swami Sharananandaji, Gopal Thakurji and others - all saints of all-India repute - flocked to the Varanasi Ashram and added to the *Satsang* new dimensions of sweetness and depths.

By God's infinite grace and perhaps by some predestined auspicious *karma* - I had the rare opportunity of staying at Varanasi from 27th to 41st year of my life. It was indeed a privilege, for this is the city of cities where liberation is bestowed by its presiding deity, being Vishwanath himself. Though I was yoked to the post of man-

*. Akhanda Mahayajna - Gurupriya Devi, published from Shree Shree Anandamayee Charitable Society.

ager of a reputed foreign company, God found some strange way of gradually weaning my attention from worldly things and making me turn within. The result was that I was drawn to seek the company of saints, till I found my true guide, my Sadguru.

During the first stage of my stay at Varanasi, Ramakrishna Paramahansadeva and Bhavatarini, the goddess he adored became the sole objects of my devotion. Sitting in a meditative posture I worshipped them twice a day and read "Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita"^{*} whenever I could find time. I was convinced that the collection of immortal utterances issuing from the mouth of Thakur contained the wisdom of the whole of the Vedas, Vedanta and Puranas. There was no need to read anything else. As Thakur said, "Scriptural polemics lead one nowhere".

Seated before the portrait of Sri Ramakrishna. I communed with him and there was an exchange of ideas and words. To me Thakur was a living presence. I felt that right from my childhood, he had held me by the hand and was saving me from all ills. Japa, mantras, the prescribed modes of worship were unknown to me. But mere recollection and meditation gave me ineffable joy. Gradually I became closer and closer to Thakur, he became immanent in all my works; it was as if I were being directed by an invisible power. Mother Bhavatarini invested with life, presented herself in the portrait before me, with a world-captivating smile on her lips. I cannot say why she took pity on me, her unworthy child and filled my mind and heart. Thus passed ten years or so.

During this time I never felt that I was not initiated or that I needed initiation; nor did I approach any saint or holy man seeking initiation. Did I not have Thakur, the most gracious one, holding me by the hand? Why should I worry then? At the same time I knew that one must wait till it is time for initiation. When a man pines for God - He Himself appears before him as the spiritual guide. The disciple need not seek out the Guru; on the contrary, the Guru presents himself before the disciple in the fulness of time. Relationship with Guru is a necessity; without it purification of body and mind cannot be achieved.

Today I am inclined to think that though at the time I was not initiated externally and formally, yet Ramakrishnadeva enthroned in my heart acted as my spiritual guide. As later events show conclusively, it was he who led me by the hand to my destination. About the inner Guru Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi said, "The inner Guru ever resides in the heart of man, and directs him. He is always present within the hearts of all, but man cannot realise it at all times. Yet even when his influence is unsuspected,

*. "The Gospel of Shri Ramakrishna."

unknown postures (*asanas*), gestures and mantras emanate spontaneously. Even one unlettered utters words of profound wisdom, can give correct answers when questioned - many abstruse principles and visions are conjured up before him. Many events occur and there are potentialities for many more events." She further said, "Not mere answers, but answers to the particular visions and unknown ideas." Mantras, principles, the spiritual guide, the goal (*ishta*) and knowledge - all are revealed when the time is ripe. These are the mysterious ways of the inner Guru.

(to be continued)

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"How long do you want to stay in the wayside inn ? Will you not go to your own Home ? How nice to think you are yourself your home, you are also the pilgrim, and at the same time a foreign visitor !"

—*Shree Shree Ma*

GREAT SAINTS AND BHAKTAS — ASHRAMS GROW UP IN VARIOUS PLACES

—Hari Ram Joshi

A couple of days after our return from Jageshwar, on November 17th, 1944, *Mārgasīrsha Krishnā Panchamī*, I received a wire from Lucknow announcing the death of my father. I was to leave Almora a day before with Sri Arun Banerji, but I did not do so as it was *Sankrānti*, the first day of the Hindu month *Mārgasīrsha*. Arunda however stuck to his programme. Had I left Almora with him, I would have reached Lucknow in the morning and been present when my father breathed his last. When I went to Mataji to inform Her about my father's death, She told me that when I had entered Her room in the morning to do *praṇāma*, She had the *kheyāla* to enquire from me about my father. However, for some undisclosed reason She had kept quiet. She directed me to go to Lucknow and perform my father's last rites and then to meet Her again at Pataldevi. It is my personal feeling that my father must have remembered Mataji at the time of his death and thus had his salvation. My conviction is based on Mataji's statement that She saw my father die, although he was in Lucknow and Mataji at Almora. This is another illustration of Mataji's Divine Mercy. My mother died two years later in Allahabad where, shortly before her death, Mataji went to see her along with Didima, who was my mother's Gurudeva. Both my parents were devoted to Mataji and so they both died in peace and in constant remembrance of Her. After performing the *kriyā* for my father, I returned to Almora about a fortnight later and related to Mataji how my father had passed away in the morning hours in his *pūjā* room, while sitting for *Gāyatrī japā*, and how my mother, with the help of a priest, perforce had taken him to a cot nearby in spite of his protest. I also told Mataji that at the time of my father's death, Bhai Govinda Prasad Pande of Dehradun had been present. He was to leave the previous evening but postponed his departure at my father's request. My mother called Govind Prasadji. On seeing my father's condition, he fetched Mataji's *charaṇāmrit* which he always used to keep with him, and poured it into my father's mouth. He also applied to father's forehead some *vibhūti* (ashes) of the *havan* performed in Dehradun in the presence of Mataji several years back. He arranged to take my father's body to Kanpur and thus fulfilled my father's desire to be cremated on the bank of holy Ganga. Mataji only smiled on hearing all this.

In the second fortnight of December, Mataji with me and others descended from Almora. We went to Varanasi where arrangements had been made for the construction of an Ashram. A building of imposing size has now been constructed at Bhadaini on a ghat purchased from the Court of Wards, U.P. for Rs. 23,000/- or so. This ghat is now known as Ma Anandanayi Ghat and is located between Harischandra and Assighat, just at the spot where the holy Ganga starts flowing northwards (*uttarabāhinī*). After the setting up of the Varanasi Ashram, Gurupriya Didiji established there a *Kanyapeeth* which is imparting education to girls upto the *Śāstrī* and *Āchārya* standards. The brahmacharinis do not attend any other Government or private school, but are mostly taught by qualified lady teachers, who are unmarried and have dedicated their lives to Mataji's service. A good number of highly educated, unmarried women belonging to the best families of almost all parts of India, such as Bengal, Gujarat, Bombay, U.P., Kashmir and the Punjab, who have dedicated their lives to the search after Truth, are staying in Mataji's Ashrams and practising their *sādhāna* in the manner prescribed by Her. They are also discharging such duties as are assigned to them by Mataji from time to time.

The Anandamayi Ghat was badly damaged by the high flood of 1948. Mataji's devotees contributed about hundred fifty thousand rupees towards the repairs of this ghat. An equal amount was spent by the U.P. Government when Pandit G.B. Pant was the Chief Minister. However, the ghat could not be properly reconstructed and was washed away soon after. A part of the Ashram buildings had to be destroyed. The Government therefore refunded to the Ashram the contributions of the devotees. The Government later reconstructed that ghat in several phases. A temple of Annapurna was built in this Ashram to accommodate the images brought from Dacca after the partition. A large block for girls was constructed on a plot purchased out of funds offered by the Rajmata of Tehri. An extensive charitable hospital is still under construction. The outdoor department was opened several years ago. One wing of the hospital has been completed and the hospital has started functioning. Its opening ceremony was performed by Srimati Indira Gandhi in December 1968, in Mataji's Presence. A big temple of Gopalji with an adjoining *satsang* hall costing about six lakhs, has also been built recently. The temple of Gopalji is considered to be unique in its architecture. Before its consecration the image of Bal Gopalji was taken out in procession by Sri Gourinath Shastri, the then Vice-Chancellor of the Varanasi Sanskrit University. Mataji and all the sadhus who had assembled on that occasion joined the procession.

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(an excerpt)

ENCOUNTERING BLISS

—Melita Maschmann

Chapter 2

Prelude

It was the summer of 1962, when I came from Afghanistan and wanted to travel through India for a few weeks. Sheer coincidence brought me straightaway to Mā. I came to know in the meantime that Mā is regarded as the most significant saint in present-day India. She is known by the name *Ānandamayī Mā*. Its meaning is; "The mother who is imbued with bliss." I met her in her *āśrama* in Kankhal near Hardwar.

I have recorded the spontaneous impressions of my first meeting with Mā for my Indian friends. I am reproducing them here in excerpts.

"...It was towards evening, when we - about fifteen people had gathered with me - were conducted to the roof garden of the *āśrama*. When Mā came, I had no choice to decide, whether it would be against my views to kneel before a human being. 'It' forced me on my knees. It can hardly be expressed in words what I experienced in the next few minutes. I can explain it only in imageries. Say, something like this: imagine that a tree- a beautifully well-grown beach tree - is quietly approaching you. What would happen to you? 'Am I mad', you would ask yourself, 'or am I dreaming?' Finally you would have to know that you have entered here a dimension of reality that is completely unfamiliar to you. Well, that was exactly my situation."

As far as we know, it is in the nature of a tree that it is rooted to a particular spot. According to Western thought, man's nature is determined by the fact that he has an "ego". Here I suddenly saw a person in front of me, of whom I at once felt that she has no "ego", and just because of this, she was not less, but more than all other persons I have ever met in my life.

Later, I read some comments on the subject and learnt that absence of an ego is an essential characteristic of a *jīvanmukta*, of the one "who is redeemed in his lifetime". At that time, I did not know anything more about all this than what I saw with my own eyes. I tried to record in my diary what I had experienced. It is said there: "... This human being belongs to the category of *Mātā Gangā and Pita Himālaya*. Ma has the superpersonal personality that speaks to us, when we stand near an ocean or at the foot of a mountain. But what is talking to us there?"

For about ten minutes, Mā went slowly up and down on the opposite narrow side of the roof garden. Sometimes, she would stand still and observe the sky. It seemed that she was not aware of us. The evening clouds were reflected in her eyes. What I saw then, was beyond the sphere of rationality: the cloud, the woods, the peaks of the Himalayas entered this gaze, as if entering their abode. The moon which was re-

flected in a pool caused by the rains, was becoming tiny and pale. But Mā's eyes reflected the sky, as only an ocean reflects it; sisterly, of the same rank in the order of creation...

Later, she sat on the bed and talked to people. The alien, bewildering part of her existence faded, but it did not disappear completely even for a moment. One could try to forget it. Then, there sat between the pillows, a woman in a white *sārī* - I could have placed her in the midst of her fifties -, who carried a lively conversation, which was, at the same time, pleasant and forceful. Sometimes, she was engrossed in deep thought sometimes, she would suddenly burst into a laughter that had something of a storm sometimes, her eyes would sparkle with a friendly delight while bantering others.

How should I describe her face to you? There are millions of faces like that in India. Its contours correspond to a full, regular oval shape. Every individual feature is powerful accurately marked out (there is no vagueness) and harmoniously fitted into the whole. The classical tripartition between the forehead, nose and the mouth/chin is well-balanced. The eyes below the strong, uncurved brows have a form which is called almond-shaped. The iris is presumably black, but often gives the impression that it is peculiarly bright. There is a shadow over the eye-lids which have a certain heaviness. The shadow is dark also under the eyes. The nose is straight, strong and "right" in its length. The mouth is curved and clearly marked, I found that a great clarity is expressed in it, and it has the gift of knowing rightly when to talk and when to remain silent. There were moments, when Mā's face suddenly became the face of Buddha: narrow-eyed, full of equanimity, concealing the wisdom of the chiliads, representing an unfathomable Asia. But at the same moment, Mā was again a beautiful, motherly creature, who could be distinguished from many mothers of the West only by the colour of her skin.

You see that it is beyond me to give more than a couple of hints. I shall give perhaps the last one: while I was trying to portray Mā, I hesitated, when I wrote the word "strong". In a certain sense, her features are anything else but strong, when we understand by it something that is rude. Her features are rather delicate. Let me say: this face, like the whole personality, is simultaneously delicate and strong. She does not have that delicateness which results from a physical shortcoming or anemia, showing weakness. Her delicateness is rooted in the openness of the beautiful, strong body to the spirit: vitality, nimbleness and charm interwoven by the spirit and made transparent for the numinous.

(to be continued)

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SHREE SHREE MA'S DIVINE CONVERSATION COLLECTION — KIRPAL

Translation - Mrs. Rohini Purang)

(continued)

Ma : Behind the 'I' (lies) the momentary world. In the material world, the non-material that is in you the kingdom of consciousness - while that is not manifest... To make that manifest (is this) life of discipline. Your veil will be (ready to be) removed - make the effort to change your style of living - do not shave (etc.) - you are a big officer - do not wear hat and coat - it does not matter who comes - a king or a minister : you are a *vрати*; do not do your hair (etc.)- (you may appear) like the poorest of the poor - (like someone) very low - here (during this *samyam saptah*) there is none who is wealthy or poor, just one atma. It is in the material form alone that there are different natures and forms - there is only one God, one form. (At home if a visitor comes you think) I cannot wear these clothes and go - (but) anyone (who comes) - (it is) the one Lord only, none other.

Whether (as) in the *advaita* line (of thought is said) '*eko brahma dvitiyo nasti*' - (and) 'not this' - whatever is correct for that particular line - whether the constant (repetition of the) name of the Lord - that line - (if) *karma* - the appropriate *karma* - it is 'That only in the form of *karma* - it is *prabhu dasa 'eko brahma dvitiyo nasti*' — one atma - in whichever line one goes, there is only That - like father and son - it is the same. In the formless and the formed, it is only That - like water and ice - the (same) Brahma is formless - whichever line the Lord has given you, follow that line and a disciplined life - this is the foundation.

When you construct a house you will have to lay the foundation. (Now) just sit - so much of the building has been constructed - (arrange) to sit - to find yourself within yourself - whether the *atmarupa* or *prabhu dasa* or *nitya dasa*.

Q : You gave a very beautiful speech !

Ma : I did not give a speech. (I speak with) so many (of my) fathers and mothers and they have come in front of you in the form of the Lord.

Ma : Where has the 'I' gone ? Wherever the eye falls, there Sri Krishna appears -

this is the best thing that is said - (a) very good (thing to say) - the Lord is bigger than the biggest, smaller than the smallest, greater than the greatest - it is He only Who goes downwards, and He only Who goes upwards. Call out to the Mother - to Him Who is the Mother. And how should the son be? - he should be perceived to be the child of immortality. Call out to the father - call out to the mother - it is the same thing - He does not (actually) become anything - it is just play - he becomes something just for play - (but) that what He is - (He continues to remain) that. You do not want to understand the words of *mahatma* : what is, is - there is only one way - Pitaji (even) if you change the name it still remains the same - He appears in every form.

Q : Ma, we cannot take the infinite *rasa*, we want Ma's *rasa*.

Ma : Certainly - you are Ma - certainly you - I said 'Ma' - (but) why will 'I' give? - you are Ma.

Q : The same *vishvavypaka* is in the *ahamkara* of the entire *prakriti*...

Ma : Whatever is desired, that will be obtained - is is - not not

He cannot remain without giving of Himself.

Q : (If only we could) become Ma!

Ma : (One) can never 'become' Ma - is, is - it is 'is' - does not ever 'become'.

Q : These are all your children- you have taken it (all) in the form of the *atma*...

Ma : Everything is the *atma* alone.

Q : This is going around in circles ...

Ma : How to straighten it then ?

(Everyone laughs)

And who is greater than a friend ?

Hiroo (a devotee) : What am I ? Not friend or mother or father ...

Ma : You are *atma* - if you say child, then you are also a child - I am also a child. You are also the mother, you are the father, friend, master - you only.

Q : Since we are going around in circles ...

Ma : Pitaji, then straighten it out. (Laughter) Pitaji, you spoke - by speaking, you spoke for the benefit of (this) child.

Q : Ma, why all this...

Ma : Pitaji, one must laugh also - taking this vow of discipline, drinking only Gangajala - one must laugh also !

Where are fetters - I do not know (about) fetters - Pitaji is saying that we are all your children - what happiness is greater than relative happiness ?

If you become a child, the Lord cannot but come to you as a father - because he is the Lord - (you say to Him) you are mother, father, friend, relative - (and) He

becoems that - the one who becomes is the Lord (even if) you do not want the Lord Himself who becomes (mother, father, etc.)

Q : All these are your children, you are the mother the foundation. you have taken it (all) in the form of the *atma*.

(to be continued)

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"There is one centre in your being from which come vibrations of Mantra (sound symbols); images also are revealed there from together with the Truth underlying them. Who is it that does all this ? Reflect ! He dwells within you and does everything - He awakens enthusiasm; He inspires without your knowing it. He is the omniscient being. Why speak of self-realization in the future ? It is here and now-only the veil That hides it has to be destroyed."

—*Shree Shree Ma*

MAHATMA GANDHI

(1869-1948)

Father of the Nation

—Khokan Chakravarty

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869, at Porbandar, a small fishing town, in district Kathiawar of Gujarat state. He belonged to a bania family. His father Karamchand Gandhi was a diwan (minister) in the state of Rajkot. Mahatam Gandhi's mother Putli Bai was a religious and intelligent lady and taught religion to her son and told him to lead a pious life.

Gandhiji's initial education took place at Rajkot. He was not a bright student but was sincere and hard working. He was also an introvert type and did not like to move around much with his friends. He depended upon his own hard work in the class room and did not like to copy from other students' answer sheets. He passed his matriculation at the age of 17 and after studying in a college at Bhavnagar for a short period he went to England for higher education on the advice of his mother. Gandhiji remained a strict vegetarian and a teetotaler for all his life. He studied law in England and became a barrister. He returned to India with the intention of setting up practice in Mumbai.

During the course of investigation of a case in 1893, he went to South Africa. There he saw the Indians living in a pitiable condition. They were humiliated by the Britishers every now and then. It was his second visit to South Africa which proved to be the turning point in his career. He took a vow to fight injustice. He settled at Durban in Natal and founded the Tolstoy Farm and Phoenix Colony and spent nearly twenty years there. In 1906, he started the Satyagraha movement and exhorted the Indians and downtrodden to oppose the Black Act and fight for their independence. He told the Indians to fight for the rights the Britishers enjoyed.

In 1915, Gandhiji returned to India. In India also the condition of Indians was very miserable under the oppressive British rule. He jointed the Indian political activities under Gopal Krishan Gokhle, the great leader.

Gandhiji started the Swadeshi Movement and gave the call to the British to leave India. This movement gained momentum and turned into a widespread mass agita-

tion from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. The masses by and by turned anti-British. He exhorted the Indians to observe nationwide strike and oppose all the anti-Indian laws. The British government passed Rowlett Act to suppress the people.

A great massacre took place at Jallianwala Bagh at Amritsar on April 13, 1919, in which several hundred innocent Indians were killed and thousands injured in the police firing ordered by General Dyer. Gandhiji started his non-cooperation movement in collaboration with Khilafat Movement of Ali Brothers. The people refused to co-operate with the British. They stopped paying taxes. The movement was a great success, but Gandhiji suspended it in view of the violence at Chauri-Chaura in U.P. in which the people burnt down a police station.

In December 1929, the Congress passed the complete Swaraj resolution. Gandhiji started the civil disobedience movement on April 6, 1930 by organising the famous Dandi March or Salt Satyagraha which was joined by lakhs of people. It caused an immense anti-British feeling among the Indians. Soon thereafter Gandhi-Irwin pact was signed on March 4th 1931.

Gandhiji attended the Round Table Conference in London. The conference proved a failure and he returned to India disappointed.

What is the legacy of Gandhiji? He was a champion of "*Sarva Dharma-Sam Bhava*". He sought to eradicate caste system among Hindus. Men like Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela, respected his non-violence policy.

In 1942, Gandhiji started the "Quit India Movement" and decided to launch mass civil disobedience movement to force the British to leave India. All the prominent leaders were arrested. The Congress Party was banned. The army moved in to suppress the movement. Meanwhile, Subash Chandra Bose escaped from India and organized the Indian National Army to overthrow the British from India. In March 1946 a Cabinet Mission came to India and proposed setting up of an interim government in India. The interim Government was headed by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. The cold war between U.S.A. and Russia ended.

At the end of the Second World War the Labour Party headed by Clement Attlee came to power in England. Attlee took sympathetic view of the Indian people's inspirations for freedom of the country and decided to hand over power to the people of India. Lord Mountbatten, the then viceroy of India, presented a plan for the division of India into India and Pakistan.

The division of the country and the large scale communal violence thereafter gave a sense of acute agony to Gandhiji. His heart ached at the human tragedy. He

was an apostle of peace. He always worked for the Hindu - Muslim unity. He did not lose heart and continued his effort to establish communal harmony in the country. He toured the riot-affected areas bringing solace and comfort to the people.

In the evening of 30th January 1948, in Delhi, while he was proceeding to attend his evening prayer meeting he was shot dead by a fanatic, Nathu Ram Vinayak Godse. The entire nation was plunged into deep sorrow.

Gandhiji lived and died for peace and welfare of all mankind. He is revered as *Rashtrapita of India*. His autobiography, "My Experiments with Truth", brings him to the fore as a great author.

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"A worldly desire, if unfulfilled, makes you miserable; if fulfilled, it is almost invariably followed by some other desire and the chain of desires disturbs your peace of mind."

—*Shree Shree Ma*

WHAT ONE SHOULD POSTPONE

—R.K. Das

This is a touching anecdote from the Bengali Ramayana composed by the medieval poet of Bengal, Krittivas Ojha (c. 15th century). Lord Rama Chandra, the hero of the epic, had shot the demon king Ravana with *mrityu-vana*, the death arrow. Ravana was about to die when suddenly Rama turned to his younger brother, Lakshmana and said, 'Dear brother, our foe Ravana is dying. All enmities end with death. Ravana has been a great ruler, a mighty hero and a profound scholar. On the other hand, we are young and inexperienced. Besides, we have passed so many years in exile and couldn't even learn anything of the state-craft from our father. O Lakshmana, do go to Ravana and request him to give us some useful counsels out of his vast store of experience as a king.'

Lakshmana walked up to the spot where Ravana lay in the battlefield and humbly addressed him, 'O noble monarch, salutations to you!, Ravana's blurred vision caught sight of the visitor. He said in a feeble voice, 'Ah, you, Lakshmana. What brings you here?'

'O king, my elder brother Rama has sent me to you with his request for some advice that would help us rule our kingdom Ayodhya successfully when we go back there.'

'But why doesn't he come himself? Please go back and send him to me. I'm ready to talk to him.'

The poet Krittivas says that it was a moment of cryptic communication between Rama and Ravana. Shri Rama, an incarnation of Vishnu, wanted to bless Ravana in his last moments. Ravana, too, wished to breathe his last in Rama's hallowing presence. And so Rama himself now went to Ravana and stood by his side with folded hands. There was an exchange of sincere greetings and encomiums between the two outstanding warriors, who had been engaged in a long combat.

Rama said, 'O noble king of Lanka, please tell me in short how I should rule the kingdom of Ayodhya for the welfare of my subjects.'

Ravana spoke in his feeble voice, 'O Rama, try to follow the two golden rules of *Shubhasya shīghram*

And

Ashubhasya kāla haranam.

'You should perform all auspicious deeds at once without any delay and postpone all inauspicious deeds for an indefinite period.

'I give two examples from my own life. I once wanted to build a staircase from earth to heaven so that anyone could go there at anytime to enjoy the pleasures of paradise. I trusted my abilities but did not take any prompt action and kept on dreaming. Thus, my self-assigned task remained unfulfilled. Now I am dying with the remorse of failed mission. The steps to heaven could have opened the door of real happiness to the mortal.

'On the other hand, I abducted your wife, Sita, in great haste, in a fit of revengeful wrath and passionate desire. My conscience told me that the act was sinful and of ominous consequences, but I did not tarry. I did this crazy thing to satisfy my stupid ego. It caused the end of my life and the lives of all my relatives who fought in my support. Therefore, O Rama, If you follow what I have told you, you will never become unhappy in life.'

(form- *Inspiring Stories*)

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"You will have peace only if you can rise above worldly desires."

—*Shree Shree Ma*

KRIPAMAYEE-MATAJI

The Path of Self - Realization

—Mr. Shuddha Satta Chakravarty

On various occasions we heard Sri Sri Ma say the following :

"To see Mahadeva appear and dissolve Himself into your body, accompanied by a manifestation of light are undoubtedly good signs. Even the faint vision of a spiritual form (*chinmayī murti*) is very auspicious.

"The appearance of Kashi Vishwanatha in the center between the two eyebrows does happen to those who practise meditation. The seeing of figures in a great variety of shapes and presenting themselves in many different guises is quite common with *sadhakas*. When you have no definite proof as to the identity of a particular apparition, you must not, at the mere sight of his form, take it for granted that it is the one you assume it to be and no other. The fact is that the *sādhaka's* spiritual Energy (*Shakti*) manifests itself in countless ways- although in an obscure way-of that spiritual Energy which is intimately connected with man's innate urge towards God (*bhagavad bhāva*), it will lead you to God- centredness and help you towards the things that favour a consecrated life. It must be borne in mind that He manifests himself in everyone in this way through the development of His divine Energy (*tat sakti*). Heart and soul have to be put into the attempt to convert religious practices, such as *pujā, japa, dhyāna*, into living experiences so that their inner significance may be revealed.

"When you feel power within yourself, when new light dawns on you from within, the more you can keep it concealed in utter calm and stillness, the more will it grow in intensity. If it gets the slightest opening, there is always the fear of its escaping. Be vigilant! He Himself will provide everything that is necessary - initiation, instruction- whatever it may be."

Here are a few valuable words and advice from Mataji for humanity :

"Many feel the urge to create a new and better world. Rather than let your thoughts dwell on such matters, you should concentrate on that by the contemplation of which there is hope of perfect peace. It is man's duty to become a seeker after God or Truth."

"What is perceived in this world is in the nature of a dream. In dreams all kinds of things may be seen what the mind has been busy with ; also what has been thought about, but has occurred in the past or will come about in the future. In any case everything that happens belongs to the realms of dream."

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ASHRAM NEWS

Dear Anandaswarup Brothers and Sisters,

It is well known that Ma insisted upon everyone's taking part in Satsang. According to Ma's instructions we try to arrange regular spiritual events like *Japa, Kirtan, Puja, Bhagawat Saptaha* etc. so that the divine thread connecting God and us is perpetuated for Eternity. This time on 1st July, 2014, *Srimad Bhagawat Saptaha* was arranged by Sri Raghav Saxena and his wife Srimati Vineeta Saxena. Dr Shyam Sundar Parasar Shastriji's lectures on Bhagawat delighted everyone.

On 12th July, on the eve of Guru Purnima, Ashrams in Kankhal, Varanasi, Agarpara, (Kalkata) Agartala, Ranchi, Pune, Puri, Bhimpura, Delhi, Jamshedpur, Vrindavan, Uttarkashi etc. celebrated Ma's and Didima's *puja* with full grandeur. In Kankhal, *Bhajan, Kirtan, Guru-Pujā, Rudri-path, Vyas puja and Padmanabha Pujā* have been carried on by *pandits* with perfection. Last, the touching of Ma's *Samadhi* altar was done in a disciplined way where the devotees stood in a queue and touched the altar one by one and received the blessings of Ma. In Puri, *Brahman-sevā* was done by arranging *sevā-pujā* of 5 Yajurvedi Brahmans and 3 Brahman students in the Jagannath temple by *Mahaprasad* and *Dakshina*. On 9th, 10th and 11th August *Brahman seva* of 9 brahmans was done on Jhulan Purnima. Swami Golokanandaji completed 12 years in Puri. To mark the occasion, *sadhu-seva* of 12 sadhus was done by *Bāstra, Dakshina, and Bhandara* with splendour. On 3rd August, on Giriji's *nirvana tithi* every ashram celebrated the occasion with Giriji's special *pujā* and *sā dhū-bhandārā*.

From 5th August to 10th August, Jhulan festival was celebrated with full glory in different ashrams. On 8th August, Jhulan Dwadashi, Bhaiji's Nirvan Tithi was celebrated by special *pujā* and *sādhu bhandārā*, especially in Almora and Varanasi ashram. In Varanasi Ashram, on Jhulan purnima, Gopalji's special puja at night and Ma's self-initiation on the self-same day was observed with collective meditation at *Maha Nisha* (11:45 pm to 12:15am) and *kirtan* for 15 minutes before and after meditation. Rakhi Purnima too was celebrated by Gopalji's *pujā* and Rakhi thread was offered to Gopalji by Kanyapeeth girls to renew the divine friendship. In Vrindavan, the occasion of Jhulan Punima and Rakhi Purnima was celebrated with *pujā* of Krishna Chhalia, *Rāsa-Līlā*, chanting of Ramcharit Manas, special *pujā*, *sādhu sevā, Hari*

Nāma sankirtan etc. filling the heart of numerous devotees with contentment.

The Independence Day celebration was observed with full honour by Vidyapeeth boys in Kankhal, Kanyapeeth girls in Varanasi and in Mata Anandamayee hospital by paying homage to the freedom fighters, and worshipping our Motherland.

On 17th August, 2014 Janmashtami was celebrated in different ashrams. The 60th year of the arrival of Gopalji in Kashi Ashram was celebrated with profuse merriment on 18th August. 60 Bal-Gopals were worshipped on this occasion. They were given bamboo flute, crown, yellow dress and Makhan-misri (butter and sugar); everything that little Krishna liked. On Janmastami, at midnight, *Mahā-abhisek* and *sringār* of Balgopalji were done. The day next, Nandotsav was celebrated. In Kanyapeeth, the girls dramatized different *līlās* of Krishna and his devotees on 21st, 22nd and 23rd August in the hall.

1st September, on Lalita Saptami, Gurupriya didi's Nirvan Tithi was celebrated with special *pujā* and *sādhu bhandārā*. *Bhagawat Pārāyan* holds a special status in Ma's ashrams as it was scheduled according to Ma's *kheyāl*. It is done to uplift the ancestral spirits to higher planes. According to Ma's orders, it is reverentially carried on for seven days by doing Bhagawat puja, discourse on Bhagawat by a Brahmin, which discusses Krishna *Līlās* and their inherent philosophical and spiritual import holding good for devotees who want to pursue the divine path.

In Kankhal ashram, for the spiritual good of the expired ascetics, sannyasis and brahmacharis of the ashram like Tanmayanandaji, Sambidanandaji, Sarvanandaji, Arupanandaji, Yoganandaji and amongst the non-ascetic devotees Srimati Kamala Pandya, Bhagawat parayan was observed. In the Vyas-asana sat Swami Visvaswarupanandaji who blended Bhakti and Vedanta in a way to drive devotees to that heavenly path. In Kashi ashram, simultaneously, *parambhagawat* Shree Rajesh Kishore Goswamiji of Vrindavan carried on the Bhagawat Katha Parayan for the upliftment of the expired kin of Brahmacharini Sunanda and for the greater good of the devoted mass. It was held from 1st to 9th September in both the ashrams. Radhashtami was celebrated on 3rd September and was followed by collective meditation and kirtan during the night of Talnavami the next day.

8th September was celebrated as Sanskrit Divas on the Birthday of the famous Sanskrit scholar Sri Gopinath Kaviraj. Ma said about Kaviraj ji, "Never was anyone like him and never will be." Such was his immeasurable depth of knowledge that he was considered the *Jñāna Bibhuti* (sacred ashes of knowledge) of Lord Vishwanath. He was also considered as Lord Vishwanath incarnate. He was always apathetic to the showering of rewards, medals and honours by different nations. The most gifted disciple of Swami Bishuddhanandaji, he came to Ma according to his Guru's orders

and competently held many philosophical discourses as per Ma's command. He left his mortal frame in Ma Anandamayee hospital on the bank of river Ganga in 1976. With utmost deference, his birthday was celebrated by Kanyapeeth girls in the Gopal mandir hall with the chanting of Veda, Sanskrit shlokas, dance, music and drama. The Chief Guest was Mahamahopadhyay Shri Ram Ratan Shuklaji (known as Modern Panini to the contemporary Sanskrit scholars), Shri Kamallesh Jha ji and Shri Umakant-Shuklaji were among the distinguished guests. The most prominent feature was that right from the speech of the guests to various performances by the Kanyapeeth girls, all items were held in Sanskrit, the language of the Gods.

The Foundation Day of Kanyapeeth was celebrated on 25th September to observe the completion of 76th year. Quite unusually, the lunar date (tithi), the first day of Navaratri, on which the Kanyapeeth was founded in 1935, co-incided this year with the calendar date, 25th September and 8th Ashwin according to the Bengali calendar—a rare concurrence. The event was celebrated by a special *pujā* of Sri Sri Ma and an oath to carry forward the ideals of Gurupriyadidi, to produce modern Gargi, Maitreyi, Madalasa, to prove that girls too can equally pursue the path of Sanskrit Knowledge, if not better.

*

"A spiritual traveller must not allow his mind to be distracted by anything; he should proceed with firm determination towards his goal."

—*Shree Shree Ma*



Janmastami Puja - Diamond Jubilee (17.08.2014)



The worship of 60 Bal-Gopal in the Nandotsav Diamond Jubilee



The celebration of the completion of 75 years of
Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Kanyapeeth



Speech by honourable persons

PUBLICATION NEWS

The Universal Mother : Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee

Author — Somesh Chandra Banerjee

Published by Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha in October, 2013.

Price Rs. 50/-

As the sub-title of the book suggests, it contains a short life-sketch and teachings of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee. Its author, Sri Somesh Chandra Banerjee, Gen. Secretary of the Sangha, has made a commendable effort to present within a very brief compass the immeasurable and unfathomable Divine Lila of Shree Shree Ma on earth. In a simple and lucid language he has catalogued, described and commented upon all the major events and highlights of Her life, focussing specially on Her unparalleled teachings and various aspects of Her inscrutable *kheyāla*. In these busy days of our contemporary life, this short volume containing 183 pages and relevant photographs will easily provide guidance, solace and joy to its readers.

*

"Try to see God in everything and in every body, including yourself."

—*Shree Shree Ma*

ERRATA

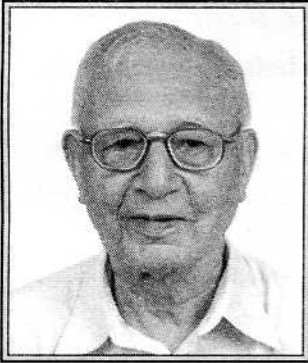
We regret that several printing errors have occurred in the July 2014 issue of English Amrit Varta. We offer apologies and promise to try our best to avoid such errors in the future.

A list of the errors with correction is given below.

page no.	line	incorrect	correct
2	6	thinkg	thinking
4	7	will	would
	18	āhnrik	āhnik
Notice between 4 & 5	8	merriment. Nesye...	merriment.
5	16	suppoce	suppose
10	9	is	was
photo no. 12 between p 12 & 13		imli tree	pipal tree
12	13	Sanskrit a	Sanskrit in a
	23	foreward	foreword
13	7	was	is
	9	was	is
	12	had	has
23	24	dictaiting	dictating
28	2		
	caption	(100 A.D. to 732 A.D.)	(c. 788 A.D. to c. 820 A.D.)
32	36	that is is	that it is
33	8	ashrarm	ashram
	17	madir	mandir
34	5	by	By
	26	they	he
36	15	dhayana	dhyana
39	6	inaugarated	inaugurated
	16	site	sits
	20	numcous	numerous
	24	lothus	l otus
41	6	belonged	belongs
	7	had, was	has, is
	14	uniformely	uniformly
43	30	incamtation	incantation

Shree Shree Mata Anandamayee Hospital

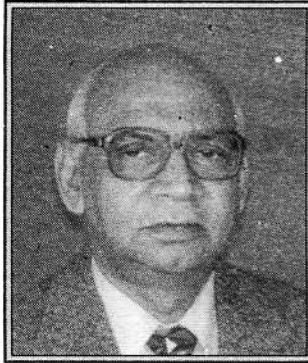
Dr. Prem Narain Somani



Dr. Prem Narain Somani born at Etawah, U.P., passed his M.B.B.S. in 1954 and M.D. (Medicine) in 1958 from K.G.M. College, Lucknow. Got Blumgart fellowship at B.I. Hospital, Harvard Medical School Boston. He Joined B.H.U. Medical Sciences as Cardiologist in 1962 as reader, Professorship in 1972 and Dean Faculty of Medicine/Director in 1975. He retired in 1991 and joined Mata

Anandamayee Hospital same year as Cardiologist/Physician. We wish him many more years to serve this hospital.

Dr. B.N.S. Bhatnagar



Dr. B.N.S. Bhatnagar
Date of birth April 12, 1932

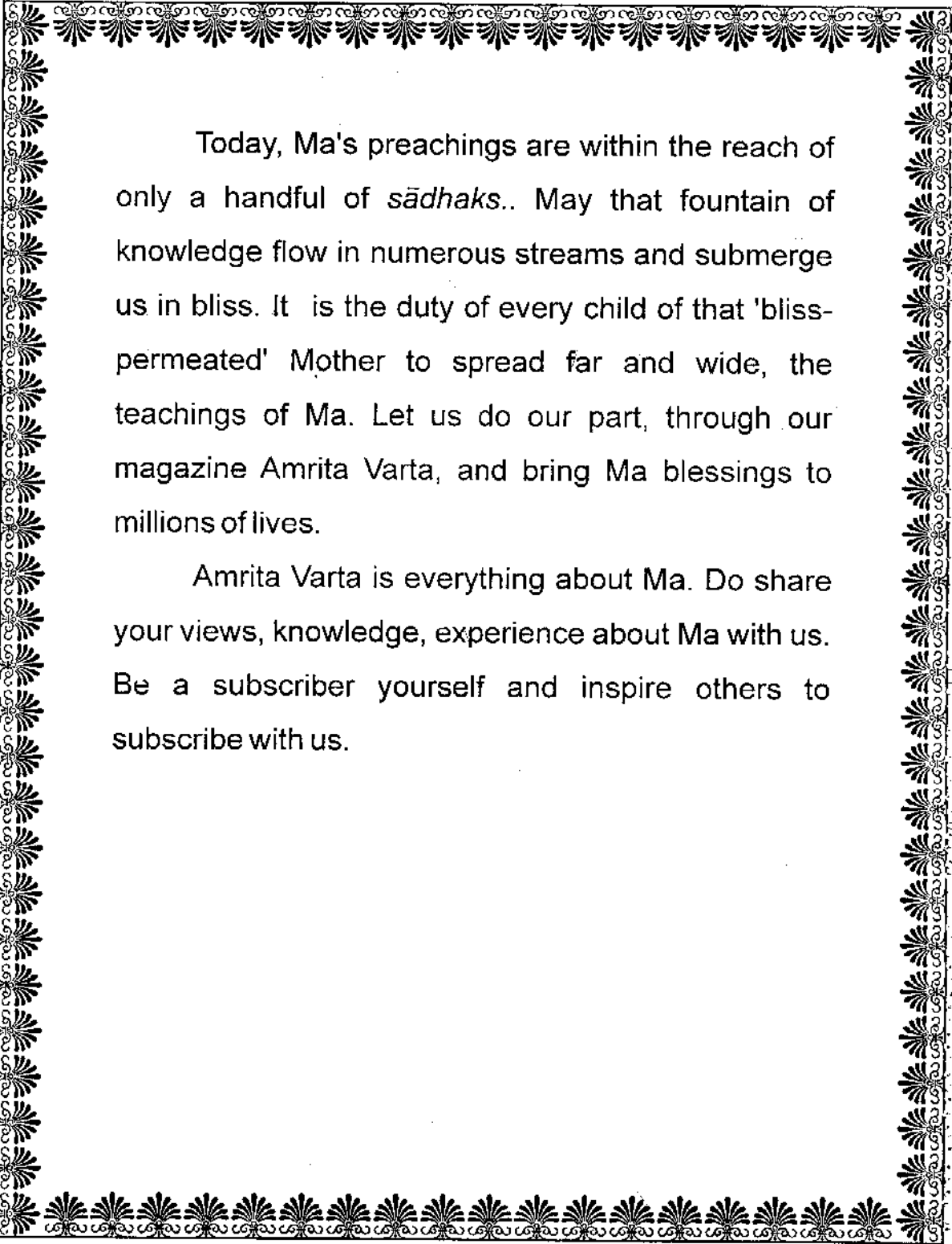
Qualifications :

M.B.B.S..... Lucknow University, 1954, M.S. (Anat)...Lucknow University 1959 F.R.C.S. (Edin.) Royal college of Surgeons of Edinburgh 1963 M.S. (Surg.)..Lucknow University...1969

Surgical Experience :

Training : U.K. 3 years, U.S.A. 3 years consultant status : 28 years, (GSVM Medical College Kanpur, IMS-BHU,, Jipmer, Pondicherry-Professor of Surgery 13 years) Retired as Professor & Head Deptt. of surgery IMS-BHU 1992. Hony. Senior Surgeon, Mata Anandmayee Hospital since 1992-93.

(Courtesy : Sri Swapan Ganguli)

A decorative border with a repeating floral motif surrounds the text. The motif consists of a central flower-like shape with multiple petals, connected by a thin, wavy line.

Today, Ma's preachings are within the reach of only a handful of *sādhaks*.. May that fountain of knowledge flow in numerous streams and submerge us in bliss. It is the duty of every child of that 'bliss-permeated' Mother to spread far and wide, the teachings of Ma. Let us do our part, through our magazine Amrita Varta, and bring Ma blessings to millions of lives.

Amrita Varta is everything about Ma. Do share your views, knowledge, experience about Ma with us. Be a subscriber yourself and inspire others to subscribe with us.