

MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

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

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Didi writes :

Ma lays a great deal of stress on Gayatri japa for Brahmins. She tells each one to do as much Gayatri japa as he possibly can. In Solan Ma had explained the meaning of the Gayatri to me which I have recorded as follows :

The meaning of Gayatri :

'He who creates, preserves and destroys, whose form is universal, He Himself inspires our intellect, He Himself is Parabrahma and the Knower within each creature; I meditate on His venerable effulgence.'

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayji



*With respectful pranams at the lotus feet of Ma
from
Elizabeth Roy*



MATRI - VANI

Be at it all day and night. Repeat the name of the lord, meditate read the scriptures and sing hym's. Every other desire should dry up like the desert, when the mind is parched of all the desires and the thirst (for God) becomes unbearable- the cries get heard - there would be rain, peace, tears in the eyes — the mind gets still and ego vanishes. Ego (Pride) - the pride of knowledge — If you donot find God by calling on him (for a period of time), it doesn't mean falling prey to other desires — like a stubborn obstinate 'Be at it all day and night'.

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It is very nice to do penance and austerities. Do it for the sake of God. For example you have children. You feel that if you give them or do things for them they would be happy and healthy. Similarly, is'nt the soul your life of life — that's why it is necessary — to do things so that God reveals himself and unveils your soul — your life of life — He should be satisfied — so that he reveals himself.

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By practice, obtaining the benefits of pious company — penance and austerities — discarding wordly desires — to get your beloved you have to be stubborn and obstinate to that end — repeat the name of God and meditate — practice staying in pious company — do it even if you donot feel like it and have to push yourself — look back. So much time have elapsed and I couldn't do enough. After all who attains peace — some one's son, someone's daughter though not related and in their union (marriage, love) are ready to give their life for each other. In this world ... by keeping pious company, God contemplation, discussing the thruth and by reading the scriptures (daily routine) the way to God attainment is revealed.

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Restlessness — nothing has happened — If you don't have restlessness (for God) you don't have rest. Eternal rest is in the lap of your mother (God) and in the arms of your beloved God. Being desperate to attain God will give you restlessness. Be in pious company, repeat the name of Lord and meditate — as much as you achieve (desire to attain God) will entice you to achieve more and that is very good.

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I have done penance and austerities — now say that God should reveal himself. This is a good feeling. If you bargain like in a shop — that I should do this much that

is not good. By this you will go further away from God attainment. Do as much of God contemplation — singing hymns in his praise is your duty. Till you attain that always feel that I couldn't do as much.

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Question — How does one fall in love with someone whom he has never seen ?

Shri Ma — Like marriage (like olden days) — he is like this and like that — it was all in the mind and marriage took place. God is always with you. You don't know about it. You have a veil covering you. You must contemplate. What you always have you are not interested in it — and that is not your beloved. He is like that — How do I attain him — because it is his habit to go to the one who pines for him and is his beloved — He cannot rest without his beloved. By knowing him you attain the habits of a real beloved.

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Who is the eternal servant ? Who is the whole ? Isn't it him. Who do you surrender to until you understand and believe him to be your own. One must surrender to God — understand him to be all (prevading). God and devotee are not different. Whom are you surrendering to, your own God, yourself. That's why surrender and oblate to your God, your chosen deity and your teacher (Guru) — there is nobody other than this.

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Baba, why are you worrying, you keep doing your meditation. The one who has created you is yourself and nobody else. Whom will you worry about? Be engrossed in yourself. Meditating on God is meditating on your own self. You only can think about yourself as your own. The cause of your anguish is when you contemplate on others. When you have two there will be a difference — You and It contemplate on yourself and be happy and be engrossed with your own.

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SHREE SHREE MA ANANDAMAYEE PRASANG

Vol - 5

—Amulya Kumar Datta Gupta

(Tr. Ms. Mandira Kar)

(continued)

Is there any rebirth ?

After this discussion went on and was diverted to the question whether there is rebirth or not. I said, "Ma, Chhoto Ma says that there is no rebirth" Ma said, "There is rebirth and there is no rebirth — you can say both. Each and every moment change is taking place in you; you may consider that change as birth and death. You were a child first, then a youth and now an old man. Your childhood and adulthood are dead now, but you retain the sense that you are the same. Similarly, leaving a body and taking up another, this concept is called reincarnation. Now, if you do not consider the change from childhood to adulthood as rebirth, then the abandonment of one body and the procurement of another can also not be considered so. The rebirth is similar to changing clothes; if you think as such, then there is only one birth and one death. When the *jīva* got its life is its birth and its dissolution into God is its death."

Me - Ma, the way you explained it is not the way Chhoto Ma thinks. Her viewpoint is different which I will not be able explain properly as I myself did not understand it well. She says that when an organism dies, its molecular components are left behind, only the vital life-force goes upward but it is unable to merge itself with the supreme life-force as it is slightly impure for its association with molecular particles. The supreme life-force is always flowing downwards. The earthly particles get combined with it and this is called previous *karma* etc. After death, the life that goes up never returns, therefore there is no question of rebirth. For this reason, Gopibaba opines that reincarnation is nothing but a play of particles.

Swami Paramananda — This theory will contest the existence of *karma*, the past deeds and results.

Ma - The thing you just said is also another viewpoint. If ever this body starts saying something about this, there are so many things to say about this. You'll see there are infinite points about this too.

It was about 11 o'clock at night, so we took leave as Ma needs rest. I came to the room where Girin (Mitra) dada was staying. This room is separate from the other rooms, allotted to Ma's devotees and is close to the road. Another person named

Durgamohan Das is also staying in the same room. He has come from Dehradun, and wishes to spend the rest of his life in the divine company of Ma. The room is big enough to accommodate the three of us.

Tuesday, 16/11/48

Usha kirtan started at 4 o'clock in the morning. It is quite chilly in the morning here. Ma has to be present in the *kirtan* in this cold weather. The *kirtan*-room is open on all sides, so we all were trembling with cold. Haribaba and his disciples ended the *kirtan* around 5 a.m. Ma returned to her room to rest, we also did the same. At around 10 o'clock in the morning, Ganesh babu (Sen) has come to visit Ma from Allahabad. Ma went to the *kirtan*-room even before any discussion to take place. At 10 a.m. Haribaba starts reciting from Chaitanya Bhagawat. I understand it almost next to nothing but since Ma is present there, we also have to be present. The lecture continued till 11 o'clock. After that, I took everyone to bathe in Ganga. The river is almost a mile away from the ashram. Today is Karthik Purnima, so the Ghats are quite crowded. Returning back after the bath I met Ma near the ashram gate. After I prostrated in front of her, Ma said smiling, "Let's see if we can stay even for seven days, you have come when the fair is about to be wound up." Ma went away to have her lunch, and so did we.

The recitation of scriptures started around 2 p.m. After the recitation of Srimadbhagawat and Gita, a boy started reading Bhagawati Katha written by Prabhudatta Brahmachari. It took place yesterday also. The boy recites quite well. The Bhagawati Katha has 108 chapters in total. The writing and publishing are going on simultaneously. The childhood exploits of Sri Krishna are being read today. Since it is written in easy Hindi, I could understand some part of it.

Haribaba wants to go from Jhusi to someplace else. His disciples are waiting for him to take him to Bandh. But, Haribaba has still not decided where to go. Ma will also leave along with Haribaba. It was initially decided that Ma and Haribaba will stay till 29th, but since they are leaving early, Prabhudutta Brahmachari is quite upset. The boy read out a speech written by Brahmachariji. It was named "Sudden Notice". In this, Brahmachariji explains his lack of wisdom, devotion and detachment and that the likes of Haribaba come to him only out of *kripa*. Moreover, whatever the saints vow to do they obviously perform, but they may recede back according to their *kheyal* (Supreme Will). Tears rolled down Brahmachariji's cheeks when the speech was being read.

to be continued

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MOTHER AS REVEALED TO ME

—Bhaiji

Some of Her (Ma's) sayings have been published in *Sad Vāṇī*.^{*} A few more are noted here below. In the course of Her everyday talks, in the shape of smiling suggestions and parables, She expresses ideas and thoughts about life and religion, that, if collected would make a wonderful volume of spiritual treasure. Sri Ma chooses the tiny incidents of everyday life as vehicles to express lofty truths and principles of human conduct. That our small social unit is a part and parcel of the great family of mighty worlds, that all beings dwelling here below are through all the storm and stress of life moving onwards in quest of the infinite Master of creation, are truths that always find expression through Her words, smiles, songs and hymns and psalms as well as in all her sweet ways of life. What She says or does is full of hints for our guidance and is applicable to our conduct both in the worldly and religious life. If we make one of Her many-sided virtues the ideal of our life, it will be sufficient to lead us to Self-realization. To those who have a great desire for spiritual uplift, She appears to have taken on this physical body for the welfare of man, to help him in his struggle for freedom from the miseries and distress that chain him down here for ages.

The central theme of all Her words and expressions is this :—

Life and religion are one. All that you do to maintain your life, your everyday work and play, all your attempts to earn a living, should be done with sincerity, love and devotion, with a firm conviction that true living means virtually perfecting one's spiritual existence in tune with the universe. To bring about this synthesis, religious culture should be made as natural and easy as taking our food and drink when we are hungry and thirsty.

She says : "With earnestness, love and goodwill carry out life's everyday duties and try to elevate yourself step by step. In all human activities let there be a live contact with the Divine and you will not have to leave off anything. Your work will then be done well and you will be on the right track to find the Master. Just as a mother nourishes her child with all possible care and affection and makes him grow into a healthy boy and a handsome youth, so you will find the subtle touches of the Divine Mother shaping your inner life and making you reach your full height and stature. Whatever work you have to do, do it with singleness of purpose, with all the simplicity, contentment and joy you are capable of. Thus only will you be able to reap the best fruit of work. In fulness of time, the dry leaves of life will naturally drop off and new ones shoot forth."

^{*}A small booklet in Bengali translated in Hindi, English, French, German and Spanish.

We have often heard from Sri Ma that when She used to attend to Her household duties She was fully absorbed in the work and had not the slightest thought about Her dress, food or even body. She would devote Herself wholly to the tasks assigned to Her and carry out the orders of Her elders in the family with scrupulous care. Her neighbours would often say : "This newly married girl lacks all common sense."

Sri Ma says : "Just as there is a definite time-table for work at school, office or the shop, so should we set apart for divine contemplation a few minutes out of the twenty-four hours of every day, preferably in the morning and evening. One must make a fixed resolve that this little time shall be dedicated to God throughout life. During this period no worldly activity should be allowed to encroach upon the contemplation of God. A fixed time for prayer or meditation must be allotted to all the members of the family including the servants. If this practice is continued for long, divine contemplation will become a part of your nature. Once the habit is established, the future course of your life will be made quite easy. You will feel the flow of the mysterious Divine Grace feeding all your thoughts and giving you new strength. You get a pension or bonus after years of hard work, so that you need no longer earn your livelihood. In the spiritual realm the reward for good, sincere and selfless work is even far greater and can be obtained more easily.

"Your earthly pension expires with your life, but the divine pension continues long, long after death. Those who amass money, store it up in a hidden chamber of their house, add to this store what they can save from time to time and keep a constant watch over their treasure. So also reserve a little corner of your mind and heart for God and always steal an opportunity to add to your stock in the shape of the invocation of His name or some pious work of divine thought."

One day Sri Ma was showing the various ways of saluting God and said : "Lose yourself altogether when bowing down to God with a single-minded devotion and you will obtain joy and power in proportion. If you cannot do anything else, at least morning and evening at the appointed time, lay down your body, mind and life before Him in salutation and surrender, and think of Him just a little." In this connection She added : "There are two kinds of *pranāmas* : Offering to Him your whole body and mind with all your thoughts, desires, sense-impressions, love, affection, devotion just like emptying the contents of a full pitcher to its last drop. The other way is like scattering face-powder through the minute holes of a powder-box : the major portion of your thoughts and desires is kept back in a hidden chamber of your mind and only a little dust is allowed to escape."

(an excerpt)
to be continued

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PILGRIMAGE TO KAILAS

—Gurupriya Devi

Thursday, 11 July

It was drizzling right from morning. Normally it hardly ever rains here. The rain made our progress even more difficult in addition to increasing the severity of the cold which rendered us all numb. The coolies drink alcohol and trek—they were also getting overpowered with the cold and could not move fast even when they were called. Because of this cooking and eating became nearly impossible.

We were supposed to set out this morning but the cold seemed to have paralysed us all. It was decided that we should somehow manage a meal before we set out. By eleven thirty we ate and got ready. The wind was very chilly as we began our trek through an enormous field with utmost difficulty. We could not see any division in the field. By six p.m. we had pitched tents at the foot of the Kailas mountain. The beauty of this mountain has to be seen to be known. It looked like a huge silver temple covered with snow. The surrounding mountains stood like the walls of the temple. Ma remarked. "See, the mountain has turned around like the Kali Gauri-peetha." The sight was marvellous. The name of the place was Boond and we spent the night there.

Friday, 12 July

We are to trek five miles today and cross Dhankena, which is quite a famous place with some shops and other facilities. We are to eat and set out. A little distance away, on the flat ground, some people could be seen with their yaks and sheep. Our perambulation starts today. By twelve noon we had finished eating and set out. We stopped to see Dhankena on the way. The King of Bhutan owns a residence there—this place may be a part of his kingdom.

Around four p.m. we pitched camp in a spot amidst the mountains. we have trekked about six or seven miles. Today everyone is physically exhausted, mainly because of the difficulty in breathing. We felt we might die of cold. No one is in a state to even look at any one else. Even the slightest movement caused us to pant so much that we felt our breathing might stop suddenly. As we could not find firewood, we could not light a fire and it seemed impossible to keep out the cold with our clothes. My hands is so numb I can hardly write. It is hard to remember that we are now perambulating the Kailas mountain—such is the state of the body! The cold is

making all of us feel lifeless.

I must mention an incident. A black dog has been following us from Taklakot. When Ma's horse set out, it started trotting alongside. Wherever we rested on the way, the dog sat near Ma. One day Ma stroked its head and fondled it. The dog ran behind Ma's horse. Whose dog was it? We never came to know, but it certainly did not appear to belong to this region.

Today we encountered snowfall three or four times; it has been snowing every now and then. The mountain tribals live in tents with their yaks and sheep. They have huge, fierce dogs. Whenever we walked past the tents, the people emerged out and gazed at us in astonishment. Their costumes seemed to be a mixture of Nepali, Tibetan and Bhutani.

I have lost count of the number of mountains and rivers we have crossed. The beauty of the landscape is limitless. We could not follow a word of the conversation between our helpers and the locals of this place. The manner of worship of these people is also unique; the beggars here raise a thumb to beg for alms. The higher we climb the more difficult the path becomes. Swamiji's breathing trouble has become acute. By Ma's grace we are still managing to advance somehow or the other. Jyotish Dada is extremely fatigued, riding on horseback, but what can be done? We are trekking on and on. Tomorrow again we have to advance further before halting. The day after, we are supposed to reach Gaurikunda which is at a height of twenty two thousand feet. A very steep climb of one or two miles has to be negotiated. I know not how we are going to reach our destination. Our faith rests in Ma alone.

Saturday, 13 July

The name of the place is Sarson. By twelve noon we set out. For the past few days we have been moving through enormous plains with some ups and downs. By four p.m. we camped at another spot. We could see the peaks of the Kailas mountain on three sides. At one place Bholanathji indicated a rock which seemed like a pair of statues—he had halted while walking to show us the rock. He showed us whatever he saw in his visionary mood; he also showed us the foot print of Siva—but all this is a question of faith, a matter of one's *bhava*. At many places we saw piles of rocks embedded in the ground with some inscriptions carved on them which we were told were the Omkar and other great mystical sayings.

We could hear a waterfall some distance away from our camp. Here again we could not get firewood and we lit a fire with dried dung. We also managed to light a stove. In between it was snowing. A little further we came across a cave. Legend has it that Parvati Devi had fetched some incense of Kailas and the ash of sacrificial fire from this cave. After leaving Garbiyan we had not been able to get any milk. Day

before yesterday we had got some yak milk and butter. Tomorrow we should reach Gaurikunda.

The route is also supposed to be very bad. Tomorrow we may spend almost the whole day on horseback. The *dandi* cannot be carried any further and so Swamiji will have to travel on horseback. Seeing his condition people suggested that he and I should be left behind. But Bholanathji coaxed everyone into agreeing to let us all proceed together. Whatever has to happen will happen. Ma again distributed camphor and dried fruit to overcome breathlessness and also some other items to tide over the difficulties on the way. Tomorrow we may not be able to find any place suitable for cooking and so we cooked something for the next day as well. We felt as if we were preparing for a great war! The wind was strong. We wrapped ourselves in blankets and retired for the night.

Akhandananda Swamiji had a beautiful dream in the night. He saw a group of dark, naked ladies approaching him. He told one of them, "I am in poor health...now I shall not be able to complete the perambulation of the Kailas mountain." A dark lady pointed to a fair lady in front of the group and said, "Tell her." Swamiji saw a radiant, fair lady in front of him. He asked, "Ma, will I not be able to make it?" The fair lady said nothing.

(an excerpt)

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PADA PEETHAM SHARAMI

—Br. Geeta Banerjee

(Tr. by a Devotee)

Siddha Peeth Siddheshwari

(2)

Ma's Incredible Lila in Siddheshwari :

Once, on that altar, Ma reduced her body in such a way that only the clothes were left and Ma could not be seen. Everybody was held by anticipation as to what would happen next. Slowly, Ma stirred, and then sat upright. Later, looking upwards for almost half an hour Ma said, “**You people brought this body for your own sake (through your good deeds and *sadhana*).**”

The building of initial Ashram in Siddheshwari :

One day in Shahbag, while doing *kirtan*, Ma was in *samadhi*. Suddenly, staring at Bholanath, Ma lisped, “It was told to built a room in Siddheshwari.” Since, it was not clearly heard, Swami Akhandanandaji asked Ma through another devotee, “How to build that room?” Ma said, “Ok, it will be told later.” The day after when she asked again, Ma told everything about how to build that room. Moreover, Ma ordered, “Pay attention that the bamboo fencing should not be removed. Fence it from outside, and I will stay in mud-house only.” When asked about the altar if it should be built by putting mud on it, Ma said, “Let the work begin, other orders will follow.” Akhandnandaji started building the room, after a hand-over of the land from the Siddheshwari Mohant (high-priest) Motilal Goswami. Ma said, “Build the room in a week, and don't put mud within the altar; it should be left vacant, it will be like a pit.” The orders were followed diligently.

In the March of 1926, the room was built. On the seventh day, Ma told everyone to do *kirtan*. It was day and night *kirtan*, Ma and Bholanath also did *kirtan*. Next day early morning, Ma returned to Shahbag. Whenever Ma went there, Ma used to sit in that small vacant place. It was told earlier that there was a termite's heap in proximity. When Akhandanandaji ordered the labourers to smash it, they were too frightened to do so. Then, according to Ma's order, Bholanath broke it. The mud of this termite's heap was mixed with the clay for the building of idol during the first Basanti Puja.

* This song depicts motherly love of Ma Yashoda for Gopal, the divine child Krishna. She is here telling her husband Nanda

It was revealed through Ma's words that in his previous birth Bholanath did Durga puja here and immersed the idol in the nearby pond.

Basanti Puja at Siddheswari Ashram

In the ever pure and radiant Siddheswari Ashram, the first Basanti Puja was held in April 1926. Baba Bholanathji once said to Shri ma. I wish to perform Durga Puja. will this desire not be fulfilled ? Shri ma replied "Yes, it will be fulfilled". Twice due to religious injunctions, Durga puja couldn't be performed, hence it was decided to perform Basanti Durga Puja this time. The idol was made to the real size of Sri Sri Ma. Her mother had come for the occasion. Sri Ma Anandamayi had revealed herself in all her splendour is the lap of Sri Ma Mokshasundari (Didima) dispelling all darkness and bringing in divine enlightenment. Didima was later rechristened and known to the world as Swami 108 Mukutananda Giri Param Guru. Her husband Shri Bipin Bihari was Shri Ma's father. Though he was a householder, he had attained knowledge and spiritual advancement much more than saints in Orche clothes. Both the parents of Sri Ma had graced the occasion.

Saptami

On the day of Saptami, on completion of her ablutions and on her way to the worship room. Sri Ma gave instructions in detail for food offerings (Bhog) to be prepared including the menu, quantity etc. Though she was always in a state of constant bliss, she took care of the trivial and routine needs of the devotees and surroundings. Saints, Seers and sages in their quest are absolved of all worldly responsibilities, but it will be seen that though being in constant bliss and ever enlightened, Sri Ma took equal care for instructions even in small worldly matters for her devotees. For the seers and sages who were in a very advanced stage of spiritual achievement, only a few in a million were able to understand the enormity of God's Play of being present in both the realms simultaneously and constantly.

In the Ashram the place of the Divine Seat (Siddhapeeth) was one cubit deeper than the platform of the house there and was a square shaped seat. Hence it was seen as a squarish hollow. On the days of worship Shri Ma used the space for her rest, either sitting or lying. During the time of instilling life (Pran Pratistha) into the idol, she instructed the priest not to pronounce the 'Beeg Mantra' (Seed Mantram) and other ritualistic pronouncements, Shri Ma kept looking at the idol for a long time and 'Beej Mantra' and other pronouncements were being automatically uttered by her. Beej Mantra is the divine utterance of the creator's thought which is beyond mistake, doubt, analysis, debate, duality etc and is the source of creation. In the days of yore

the utterances (Mantra) came on its own to the appropriate devotee. Thus also came to Shri Ma the Beej mantra on its own. The mantra was so potent that the spectator saw the spectacle as if the idol had become live. Everyone present couldnot possibly understand the spectacle except for a few fortunate and blessed devotees. The food offerings were offered to the Goddess. Every one present were fortunate to partake of the prasad. In the evening there was thunderstrom. The Saptami evening passed eventless.

Ashtami

Next day after giving suitable instructions for Bhog etc. Shri Ma came to the puja room. Ashtami puja was completed and everyone was blessed to partake of the prasad. On the Ashtami day the splendour of Shri Ma Annapurna was revealed. With the small portion of cooked prasad everyone present was fed adequately. On completion of the meal, some one announced that a large number of people had arrived and prasad was to be served. Whatever prasad was left would not be sufficient to serve 40-50 people who had arrived. They were students of the local Medical college and were invited for the occasion.

Shri Ma instructed to get all seated and serve whatever was left in the utensils. The concerned people thought that if the prasad fell short, it would be a matter of shame and hence two pots of 'Khichuri' (Rice and lentils boiled together with vegetables and spices) was put on the oven and it was decided to get the guests seated after it was cooked. Later it was seen that whatever was left in the utensils was more than adequate for the guests and the two pots of 'Khichuri' remained unused. Shri Ma had previously said that all the people who came for the worship should be served prasad and no one should be denied prasad. No one should leave without prasad. Bhog will be cooked only once and everyone should be served from that portion. There would be no cooking for the second time. Since the organisers couldn't remember Shri Ma's instructions properly and doubts existed, cooking was done the second time and wasted.

This was like a miracle, prasad was more than adequate and never finished — as it could be compared to a river, which even after torrential rains flows into the sea, but this never increases the level of the sea. Similarly due to the intense heat of the sun all the evaporation takes place, but this does not decrease the water level of the sea.

In remembrance of the episode and following the rituals, even today, Basanti puja is celebrated in Varanasi (Kashi) Ashram and special Bhog is served to Ma Annapurna.

To be continued

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FROM THE LIFE OF SRI ANANDAMAYEE MA

—Dr. Bithika Mukerji

(continued)

One gentleman asked Mataji one day, "Is transmigration of souls a fact or not?"

"Yes, but only for those who have such a *samskara*; those who are not determined by their belief in this matter are not re-incarnated in other bodies."

"In that case, it would perhaps be better to be born as a Christian or Muslim, who does not believe in re-incarnation and for whom all is over in just one life-time."

Mataji smiled and said, "I did not mean the *samskaras* engendered by one's religion. Predilections may cut across religious faiths. It all depends upon the status achieved by the individual soul. What is thought to be true is that all souls are not necessarily reincarnated."

One day Mataji out of her own *kheyala* explained at some length the Vrindaban life of Sri Krishna. She said, "Unless the mind has attained a level of being in rapport with the Divine, one cannot hope to understand the *lila* of Sri Krishna. In the state of union or *samadhi*, the senses are transcended and then only one may experience the bliss which is sublime. Some people, unable to grasp the nature of this spiritual experience, try to impose upon it their own understanding of such matters and thus reduce it to their own level. This is why we hear so often people voicing their reservations regarding the *lila* of Sri Krishna. The fact of the matter is that unless one transcends totally the mundane sphere one cannot step on to the divine ground of Vrindavan."

Naresh Chakravarty, the professor from Calcutta, found himself very much at home with this discourse. Perhaps, Mataji had spoken for him alone, because he agreed enthusiastically and said, "It is my conviction that the Achintyabhedabhedavada of Sri Chaitanya has touched the ultimate heights of human yearning for God. Whatever one may say, the Advaita Vedanta of Sankara leaves one with a feeling of dissatisfaction because the heart plays a very small role in it."

Mataji, however, did not agree and said rather forcefully, "Only those who do not have a proper understanding of these matters, will hold such opinions. There is no contradiction involved." Naresh Chakravarty was very pleased with himself for having elicited from Mataji her definitive preference (as he saw it) for the Advaita Vedanta. He said, "I feel Ma prefers the Advaita point of view. But how can that be

when she has just now given such a heart-warming discourse on the *Krishna-lila!*" Then a little ruefully he added, "I see that I am only beginning to get a glimmering of the scope and range of Ma's understanding." Mataji said with a smile, "Do you know what *maya* is? "*mai aya*" (मै आया)*that is, "I have come." *Maya* is coterminous with the experience, "I am." If there is no "I" there is no *maya*."

During this visit to Gujrat the foundations for future contacts were laid. Mataji moved amongst the people as if she had known them for a long time. She seemed at home in all these new places and the local most cherished object of worship. Their total acceptance of her was matched by Mataji's attitude of being completely at ease with them, as if with friends of long standing.

Mataji, accompanied by her party, left Gujrat at the beginning of December and, travelling right across the north of India, she came to Tarapeeth on December 9th, 1937. She had sent away Didi again ahead of her to Varanasi, but this time without Swami Akhandanandaji. It came to Didi's mind that perhaps Mataji wanted her to be trained in the ways of travelling alone and becoming quite independent of escorts. This was probably true because she was asked to join the party of travellers at Moghulsarai after a few days only.

During her travels in Gujrat Mataji spent a lot of time with her own father and mother. As written earlier, Dadamasai (Mataji's father) was a music lover and a singer of some considerable ability. On many evening, he filled the hearts of the congregation by his rendering of beautiful devotional songs. Sometimes Mataji would join in, as she had done in childhood. One of the songs which many people have heard from Mataji herself is as follows :

"Can I ever abandon that one, who desperately calls 'Mother where are you, where are you'. The one who remembers (Me) in his heart and fills his life with the Name,

Sees nothing in the universe excepting the form of My Image

One who does not speak of any other (than of Myself) and is pained to see the sorrows of others,

One who remains tranquil in his own sorrow and joy and does not hearken to calumny of others,

When a child cries for his mother and his tears flow, can I then stay away?

Immediately I give him the shelter of my arms."

* In Hindi "मै आया" sounds somewhat like *maya*.

At this time Mataji inaugurated a new *nama-sankirtana* amongst her companions, adding a line of her own to the line which was more familiar to the ears of the northerners, namely : “Raghupati Raghava Rajaram, jayati Siva Siva Janaki Ram, patita pavana, jay Siyaram.”

This period of quiet life on the banks of the holy Narmada, spent sometimes on temple verandas, sometimes in dharamsalas, was made specially memorable by the devotional music sung by Dadamasai.

(an excerpt)

*

LIST OF FESTIVALS

- | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|
| 1. | Shree Shree Saraswati puja | — | 25 th January, 2015 |
| 2. | Maghi Purnima | — | 4 th February, 2015 |
| 3. | Shri Shri Basanti Durga Puja | — | 25 th March to 30 th March 2015 |
| 4. | Ram Navami | — | 28 th March, 2015 |
| 5. | Shri 108 Muktananda Giriji
Sanyas Utsav | — | 14 th April, 2015 |
| 6. | Shri Shri Ma's Birth
Anniversary | — | 3 rd May to 8 th May, 2015 |

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MATRI-LILA DARSHAN

—Dr. Deba Prasad Mukhopadhyay

(tr. Jiban Mukherjee)

CHAPTER TWO

Kali Puja at the Varanasi Ashram : Initiation

Sri Sri Ma appeared to me first in a dream. (I had never before had her *darshan* in the physical). I was then twenty-nine. In those days I often had to go on tour in connection with my official work. One day I went to Gorakhpur from Varanasi. At night I dreamt that the portrait of Sri Ramakrishnadeva whom I worshipped was overlaid by an exquisite form of a goddess seated in Padmasana and absorbed in meditation. She was clad in immaculate white and radiated a brilliant light all around. her face was beaming with a delightful smile.

When I woke up. I sat up in my bed and tried to recollect whether I had seen this celestial lady ever before and came to the conclusion that I had not. What goddess was this? It was not the image of Bhavatarini, well-known to me. I have not so far confided this experience to anybody else; perhaps it is Sri Sri Ma who inspires me to do so now, being a part of her Divine *lila* with this unworthy child of hers.

Some days after this event I noticed the identical image of Sri Sri Ma in a newspaper and read her life story for the first time. It was, I guess in 1971 during her diamond jubilee celebrated at Varanasi. This was when I saw Sri Sri Ma for the first time and received her blessings as I prostrated myself at her lotus feet. Gracious Ma tossed a lotus to me at the end of the Kumari Puja, though. I was then quite an ordinary young man come to her unasked. Little did I understand then that Sri Sri Ma was soon going to bind me for ever with the tie of causeless grace and love.

Many call Ma 'Kidnapper Mother'.¹ Perhaps this epithet applies to my case. As Ma herself says, "No one can approach this body (that is how she refers to herself) unless it is my *kheyala*. Whoever has come in contact with me must need some sort of link however subtle, dating from the past in unbroken continuity."

Soon after this event, I had the opportunity of Sri Si Ma's *darshan* three or four times. A glimpse from a distance was all I could get, but this gave me satisfaction and filled my heart and soul entirely. At that time I had the rare good fortune of a *darshan*

1. *Anandamayi Ma*—Ganga Samiran

of Ma's supernatural self-revelation at the Kalkaji Ashram, Delhi, where she was then staying for a few days. It was 1975 and I was in service at the Delhi office. One day I decided to go with family for Sri Ma's darshan leaving the office early. But I could not get away and reached the Ashram very late at about 4 p.m. Normally, it was not the time for *darshan*. Very disappointed I entered the Ashram muttering to myself, "We shall not be able to see Ma now." We had entered by the bigger gate and had reached the cemented yard, with the temple on our right and the hall on the left. All of a sudden we found Sri Sri Ma standing before us with only two or three attending girls—it was a tremendous surprise. It seemed as if with lightning speed she sailed through the air before taking her stand before us. Our companions were a little behind. In my bewilderment I at once knelt down and made my obeisance to her. As I rose, I found Sri Ma's face radiating unearthly light all around and for a second I perceived a halo round her head — It was as if a wonderful radiant goddess had descended to earth and appeared before me. By that time my companions had come up and offered their salutation. Sri Sri Ma only said, "You have come very late." With my eyes dimmed with tears, I found no words. Sri Ma went towards the temple.

In the evening of 7th November, 1977, Sri Ma came to Varanasi by 81 up Vestibule Express. At Varanasi Ashram I had met several times the aged sannyasi Narayan Swamiji. He was very affectionately disposed towards me. One day he said, "Mataji is coming, why don't you get yourself initiated?" To speak the truth, I did not feel strongly inclined towards this, but I was both happy and eager at the prospect of having *darshan* of Ma, and decided that my wife and I would go to the railway station to receive her. Narayan Swamiji remarked, "You can bring Sri Ma in your car." I said "I am yet a stranger to her, having had only very short *darshans* of her from a distance. Why should she condescend to ride in my car?" To Ma a man's heart holds no secret, perhaps she knew my heart's desire for later, she honoured me by allowing me to drive cars for her. It was a mark of her infinite favour, which was ill deserved. For me, it was a rare good luck.

Anyway, I went to the railway station in the evening. With the help of Panuda, I an old disciple of Ma and my friend Upadhyayji and above all through the infinite grace of Ma — she straightaway took her seat in my car. My wife also felt greatly honoured, being allowed to sit behind Ma's holy feet. With extra caution I slowly drove the car along the narrow, crowded lanes of Varanasi and reached the Bhadaini Ashram. In the meantime, my wife abruptly broached the proposal of initiation to Ma who only said, "The man at the steering wheel is your husband, isn't he? All right, you may ask Bhaskarananda to find out an auspicious day." I could not bring myself

to say anything, utterly unworthy as I was, but Ma's grace was causeless and infinite as will be born out by later events.

10th November, 1977 was a new moon day and Kali puja was celebrated that night. It was Diwali, the festival of lights. That day at about 10 a.m., the time was opportune for initiation. As Mahamahopadhyaya Gopinath Kaviraj says, "This is the time when light beams forth and infinite lamps flash into flames in the inner world — it is a favourable time for a variety of rituals. It is the best time for a mantra to reveal itself or to be caused to reveal. This time has a special virtue—it is sutable for calling into activity any mantra whether *Shakta*, *Shaiva* or *Vaishnava* — energy in general. This time is imbued with the spirit of awakening — best suited for stirring up dormant power into wakefulness while the new moon lasts. This involves less time and the place also is significant according to the superambient, pure (*Satwik*) radiant energy. For, this-Kurukshetra is good but Varanasi is better."

The evening before the Kali puja, Narayan Swamiji took me to Ma and mentioning some inconvenience my wife had asked Ma if any other day would be just as well. Sri Sri Ma seemed to know everything — before the Swamiji could finish, she said, "Why, he (pointing to me) will come tomorrow. Alone." I was speechless. I felt as if I was being wire-pulled like a puppet. I had no say in what was going to happen. I bowed and withdrew.

The next day I was in the Ashram by 9 O'clock in the morning. I saw an image of Goddess Kali set up in the 'Chandi Mandap'. Arrangements for the *puja* were being made by the girls of the Kanyapeeth under the supervision of Ma herself. What a superb sight! The human Kali (Ma) was presiding over the worship of her own image.

In 1924-25, at the intense prayer of all, Sri Sri Ma had performed the worship of Kali in the garden of the Nawab of Dhaka. While the puja was on, Ma asked all to close their eyes. When after sometime they opened their eyes, what did they see? Ma was sitting attached to the image of Kali while Baba Bholanath, on the worshipper's seat, was laying with both hands, at Ma's feet an offering of China rose and bel leaves, with sandal paste. It was the flower-offering of a husband at the feet of his wife! So Narayan Swamiji has sung.

Who has witnessed such a sight with his eyes,
or heard it with his ears?

—The mother nestling up to the image of Kali,
with her tongue lolling out!

The place of initiation was an upper storey room of the Kanyapeeth. The window overlooked Ganges flowing northwards, the building was just on the lap of

the Ganges. Ten to twelve persons were to be initiated that day. Having arrived later, I took my seat at the back. Suddenly I saw Ma enter the room in the twinkling of an eye and with lightning speed walk across unaided to the window opening out to the Ganges. Once again I found that she was able to move as fast as the wind. But a greater wonder was in store for me. Turning round, Ma noticed me from the distance and said, "You come along, let the others wait outside."

I felt that Ma was very close to me and had known me for a long time. That was how she called me like that. I also noticed that the mark of weariness I saw on her face the day before had disappeared. Her face was beaming with radiance and energy. I proceeded and took a low seat before her. Bhaskaranandaji was to my right. The details of initiation being super secret cannot be disclosed. Sitting at Sri Ma's feet I wept for more than an hour. It seems to me that Sri Sri Ma purified my body and mind by my tears purging me from all dross. With a Sadguru to guide me, new life had been instilled into me.

(to be continued)

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LETTERS WRITTEN BY BABA BHOLANATH FOR DEVOTEES

Nainital
27. 4. 37

26/4/37

Handwritten text in Hindi script, appearing to be a letter or a list of notes, written in a cursive style. The text is somewhat difficult to decipher due to the handwriting and some fading.

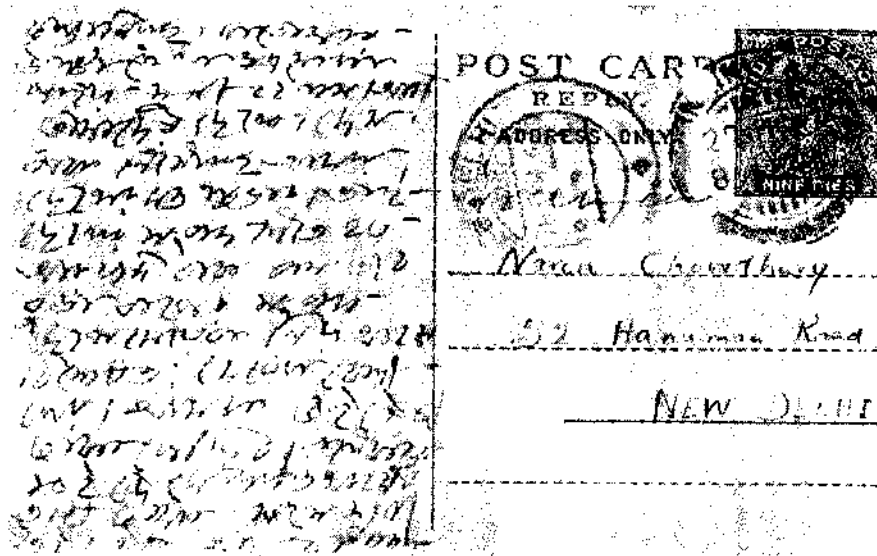
Nainital
27.4.37

May well being be with you.

Father Naren. We had gone to Almorah. Yesterday at dusk we returned and was pleased to receive your letter. Father, informed that you had gone to Kolkata after I gave my post to Bauku. Father you are not at fault. Can a father ever find fault to his son ? a son never finds faults with his father. Father we shall be leaving this place on 28th April night for barielly. From there, on the 30th night we shall start for Jamsiedpur. Shall reach Kolkata on the 5th of May. This was to keep you posted. Do reply. we are fine. Hope all is well at your end.

Your's Ramapagla Kumar

* These invaluable treasures were handed over to us by Kumari Moni Choudhury and we consider it a blessing to be able to share it all the bhaktas.
* This letter was written to Shri Naren Choudhury of Delhi, a devotee of Shri Ma. during their sojourn during the period.



Dharchula
28.7.37

May Well Being be with you.

Ma Jutika ! today I recieved your letter dated 20th July. We were to be to you on reaching Garviang. We reached here Yesterday. Jyotish babu had fever in Garviang hence the delay enrout. We have to progress by taking adequate rest for days enrout. Today and tomorrow we shall rest here. Day after tomorrow we shall start again. We have come to know that due to heavy rainfall, one of the bridges have been washed away and people are not able to progress further. Hence we shall not start tomorrow. If we start the day after tomorrow, we expect to reach Almorah in 6/7 days. We wish to rest for a few days in Almorah after reaching there. We donot wish to leave Almorah till Jyotish recovers sufficently. Your Mother crossed the Lipu-Pass on a dundee. Rest all is fine. Please get my watch repaired. Madness of your mad son. This time when we meet in Almorah, you will understand how mad is your son.

Your Rampagla

* This letter was written by Shri Bholanathji enrout on their return from Kailash. Smt. Tulika Choudhury is the wife of Shri Naren Choudhury and the couple were ardent devotees of Shri Shri Ma.

Shri Naren Choudhury
28-7-37

Dear Mother,
I received your letter of the 27th April 1937 and was very glad to hear from you. I am your son. See, Father wrote that my nature is like a child. So you must find out about the well being of your son. If you call me 'Father', then children do enquire about the well being of their aged Father. Specially, the daughters are more concerned. We shall reach Dacca on the 5th of May. If you stay till 10th May in Kolkata, we shall be pleased to see you.

Your Ramapaglia

38

Nainital

27.7.37

May well being be with you.

Ma, I was extremely pleased to receive your return reply. I am your son. See, Father wrote that my nature is like a child. So you must find out about the well being of your son. If you call me 'Father', then children do enquire about the well being of their aged Father. Specially, the daughters are more concerned. We shall reach Dacca on the 5th of May. If you stay till 10th May in Kolkata, we shall be pleased to see you.

Your Ramapaglia

This letter was posted on the 27th April 1937 and received by the Choudhury's in New Delhi in the first week of May 1937. The reference to 'Father' in line two above is to Shri Naren Choudhury.

ENCOUNTERING BLISS

—Melita Maschman

(Continued)

I decided to cancel all my other places of travelling and to go to Kishenpur where Mā was expected in the next few days. There she used to keep herself free in forenoons and evenings for a public *darśan*, mostly for about two hours. She was then constantly exposed to the onslaught of her worshippers. Several times, she took care that I could sit in her proximity in spite of the crowd. I felt like an enthusiastic music-lover: while he is open to the magic of the sound with all his heart and soul, he still follows the way the instruments are conducted. Mā's presence filled me with irresistible and mysterious fascination, as I have never experienced with any other person before.

And yet, I clearly saw the utter mundaneness in her. I saw, how her eyes lit up, when a friendly familiar face emerged from amongst those who threw themselves on their knees before her. I saw, how she was suffering because of the heat. I felt a gentle repulsion, when she withdrew her feet from an importunate devotee. I observed (informed by a woman staying in the *āśrama* about the situation), how she enjoyed making a pun. I saw, how she sent away a Parsi woman, who wanted a miraculous cure: "Take your husband to a good physician and pray for the peace of his and your soul." In this moment, she appeared sad and almost merciless. I saw also, how fatigue was expressed in her attitude and in the shadow of her face which was becoming deeper, before she got up and fought her way back through the crowd.

The Christian painters of the early Middle Age had a simple and effective way of expressing saintliness, when they wanted to paint a scene from the life of Jesus or a saint: they painted the figures against the background of gold. This gold expressed the inexpressible mystery of saintliness. One who as a painter wanted to bring the news of a saint was not allowed to let his brush become loquacious. He could only silently point out to the mystery of the shining backgrounds.

I am feeling like these painters. What can be described of Mā is what is generally human, familiar. I do not have any medium of expression for the other, the numinous. But I could also use a similar cipher like the painters. Sometimes, I believed to have seen a beam of light coming from her eyes. But just at that time, I was also pained to feel that I was blind. I knew that, if only I were more able to see I would recognise her whole being in this light. I felt it, however, albeit not seeing it, and I registered its effect in the complete peace which gradually gained power over me.

The mystery should remain untouched behind its veil, But I may perhaps try to

come closer to it by a couple of steps. I felt that this light must have a connection with Mā's selflessness. It comes from the eternal fountain of all that exists, and it flows through Mā because it is not turned away in her by the opaque web of egoism, which we all carry - more or less closely - within us. Mā's secret power lies in her being, and not in her action. She is not what she is because she does good things. Her life happens as pure being, reposing in itself.

Probably, I should say: being resting in God. To that extent, Mā meets our highest idea of what is good. When I sat among people at her feet, and nothing happened except that we were looking at her, I felt the presence of the Holy, many times more powerfully than ever in a solemn ritual of a church. I believed, I understood that the divine presence is indispensable for all religious rites, as a gesture of wistful yearning for the one who cannot be compelled to come. But where the Holy *is*, even the prayers become silent. The religious ritual extinguishes in the mysterious presence of the divine reflection.

The filled void of this looking (at Mā) is a strange experience which cannot be shared: seeing with closed eyes, and yet also with eyes wide open. Many times, I become aware of something which can be hardly understood by an accidental brain, particularly when one is thinking: I do not know how Mā understands herself. Certainly not, as we would express it, like a man, in whom the divine spark shines particularly brightly, for she lives in union with *Brahman*. Thus, I believed to realize that Mā - in whom the Holy was incarnated right in front of us - agreed with us in a reverential contemplation of the Holy that she *is* herself. There is a clumsy sentence in my diary: Sometimes one gets a feeling that Ma worships herself. But this attitude is something absolutely superpersonal!

This summer, I had Mā's *darśana* only three to four times. Thereby the numinous did not diminish, but, to my surprise, something changed basically: the initial feeling that one has got into a complete alien dimension of reality became reversed. I now felt that I actually discovered for the first time the true - man's very own - reality. I saw more and more clearly: what distinguishes me from Mā is what distinguishes the light of a candle from that of the sun. This was really an enormous discovery.

I remember Mā's last evening in Kishenpur. It was to me like a great festival. I saw her standing in the yard of the *āśrama* distributing *prasāda*. Not solemnly, but smiling like a mother whose greater happiness lies in quenching the hunger of her children. It was, as if she was distributing herself, and she did it with hundred hands. Never have I seen the beauty of the immortal shining more purely in the mortal flesh.

This is, on the whole, my report of the year 1962.

I again started my journey in 1963 to live for several months in Mā's proximity.

The following notes in my diary beseech the reader to accompany me in this

venture. It will be inundated by the same wealth of strange impression which made me afraid at the beginning that I would never succeed in scenting even only an iota of the spiritual base of the world into which I have forced my way. I ask the reader to follow me patiently into the confusing, incomprehensible, not only stage, but at times disconcerting of that world, although this adventure will bring him very little "book learning" at the beginning, or perhaps no "book learning" at all. Hinduism has in its doctrine, in its paths of salvation and in the forms of its cult, a polymorphism, which a Westerner can hardly imagine. One a very small aspect of it will come into picture here.

What I hope to communicate, by way of hints, is my encounter with the numinous in a non-Christian realm. Without my giving a special attention to, it appears that my notes also offer a certain clue as to which phenomena appear, when an ancient great religion comes face to face with the conditions of the modern age.

The only form in which I can attempt such an account are diary-notes. Only in this way can also what is inchoate, tentative, erroneous and even the ill-feelings, in short, the inadequacy of the one who has ventured into this encounter, get a chance to speak and explain what he has experienced.

Thus I request my reader not to expect more than what such notes can offer. Notes of this type - if their diary-form is not distorted - can only gradually get their dimension in depth; at first one is completely preoccupied in finding one's way into the phenomena. Finally, I ask my reader not to get irritated by my notes which reflect the constant change of my opinion between an unquestionable openness with respect to the numinous and an attempt of an intellectual examination of what was experienced.

A last remark: it seldom emerges from the following account, and if at all, then only by way of a hint, how high are the demands which such an undertaking makes on the physical resistance and preparedness for a sacrifice. Besides, may everyone, who perhaps thinks that a religious tourism is enticing, know that the psychic pressures are enormous for the one who is "caste-less" and who is living together with orthodox Hindus.

(to be continued)

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SHREE SHREE MA'S DIVINE CONVERSATION COLLECTION

—Kirpal

Translation — Mrs. Rohini Purang
(Continued)

30.11.1959

Q : What is forbearance ?

Ma : Where there is happiness or sorrow. It is like this... in a situation of sorrow — (when one) responds from there — responding from there, it seems like that.¹

Q : What is consciousness in its innate form ?

Ma : What/who is called 'thakur' ? That which is awakened knowledge — which is awakeness in the form of knowledge. Awakeness, which is said to be eternal, in the form of knowledge-awakeness (that is) awake-(the state of) awakeness means (being) eternally awake-that which is eternally awake.

27.11.59

Udasji had caused the glass top of a table to creak by placing a hot griddle on it.

Bhaiyya : So it is in the world....

Ma : By the fierceness of sadhana, the veil is torn.

Ahmedabad, 6.12.59

Ma : This mind, which is a child — give pure food to the mind-child — pure food means the *sattvik* state — that which is one's own — that. Help your life to become pure

It (a child) sees (that) the parents have gone to watch the cinema — (and if it is) time for *darshan* — at that time (the child) cries a lot - it looks to see if its mother is there or not.² The mind has the nature of a child - its aim is joy, (but) it is this which it forsakes.³

The nature of the mind is (to want) to know — that which is wanting to know its

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1. Thinking in this manner helps one to have forbearance because one realises that it is only because of being in such a situation that the sorrow is experienced.
 2. Ma emphasised the need to maintain regular timings in one's spiritual sadhana. Here She is saying that the mind, used to dwelling on the Lord during sadhana at an appointed time every day, becomes like a child crying for its mother when the sadhana is not done at the proper time.
 3. The mind forsakes its aim when it indulges in worldly activities that lead it away from its goal of true happiness.

own svarupa — that becomes manifest. Give food to the mind-child — give pure food to the mind-child.

Q : The mind is inert...

Ma : That is its (the mind's) nature — (but) there is consciousness in everything. To find Him — doing that which will make Him manifest as one's own form, in the form of the atma — to make that manifest — (that is) the activity that has to be taken⁴ from the guru. Even if the mind be inert — but (for the person) who contemplates the feet of the Lord with this mind — then (for such a person) where is the mind? — it is non-mind. That which is destructible (the mind) is the one which holds on to the ishta — that which can be destroyed will by itself be destroyed. The nature of the mind, and the kingdom of the mind — till these exist — one will have to use the buddhi to work the mind. That which is oneself within oneself — to make that manifest is the duty of a human being.

The teaching of the guru has to be followed — as the guru says — (follow that) to the letter as is your strength — the rest the guru will fill in — by your actions⁵ He will not become manifest — (for) He is by Himself always manifest — the teachings of the guru — (will also) show that which is destructible — (to/for) you who is yourself pure, conscient, and eternal.

Q : For the seeker there are different paths...

Ma : According to (different) smaskaras (there are different paths) — a jogi is one who is just what he (actually) is — (in) eternal union — when the manifestation of eternal union takes place, then you will be youth⁶ — (and also) a jogi - if you understand it as (being) a youth, it is the same : a youth (or) a maha-jogi.

One's own state is manifested by oneself - that which is there with everyone — there is a child within everyone — a tree has an infinite number of seeds a seed can manifest an infinite number of trees.

Ma : (When), by dwelling mentally upon the Highest, there is advancement, (then) there is no thought of the body.

Q : Where shall we look for the guru ?

Ma : Within - search within - if you are thirsty yet do not find water - that cannot happen.

Q : If there is an atma, why is it not manifest ?

Ma : This that you are saying is just knowledge that has been heard — where

4. Meaning '... has to be learnt'.

5. Meaning those action done with the sense of doership.

6. There is a play here upon the word jogi (*jo-gi*) and the Hindi word for a youth, *javan* (*ja-van*).

there is also found the answer.

Q : How should one recognise the state of Brahman ?

Ma : If it itself does not allow you to recognise (it) then you cannot recognise it — (in which case) the signs that are given in the scriptures (about such a state) — use those signs to recognise it.

Q : We strive for happiness, and do not want unhappiness, yet it (unhappiness) comes. Why is it so ?

Ma : The efforts that are made for happiness — to light the fire — if the fire catches, then everything burns up — you will become (like) an (empty) field. There is only one Brahman without a second - everything will get burnt up - burn it by devotion — by knowledgeable discrimination and dispassion everything will be burnt.

Q : The sorrow experienced by the body of amahatma...

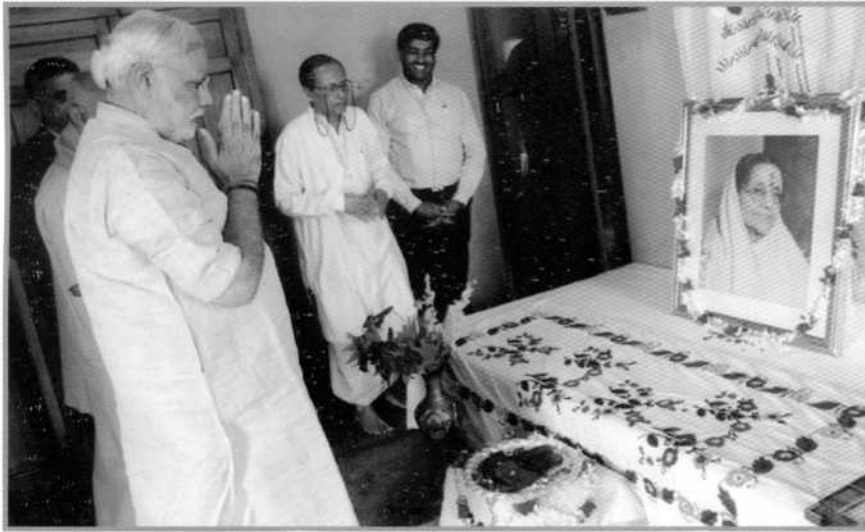
Ma : Mahatma — in the state of the (mahan) great (atma) soul the question of sorrow cannot arise - if sorrow is reported, then (the person) is still on the path — in that (ultimate) state the topic of sorrow or happiness cannot come.

Q : Does prarabdha exist or not ?

Ma : Where the topic of *prarabdha* exists — where the results of praradha are experienced — from that point of view it is ture — (but) in the real view everything is only a dream.

From the point of view of worldly existence sorrow and happiness — all are there— (but) if you strive for eternal bliss (for) Paramabrahma, why should you experience sorrow ?

*



Shri Narendra Modi offering prayers to Shri Shri Ma in her room.



Br. Jaya Bhattacharya, Secretary Kanyapeeth, presenting a photograph of Shri Ma to the Prime Minister



Shri Narendra Modi leaving Mata Anandamayee Hospital
for the Ashram being escorted by Shri K.N. Vajpayee,
Shri S.N. Banerjee and Swami Deveshananda



The Prime Minister being welcomed to the Ashram by the
Girls of Kanyapeeth

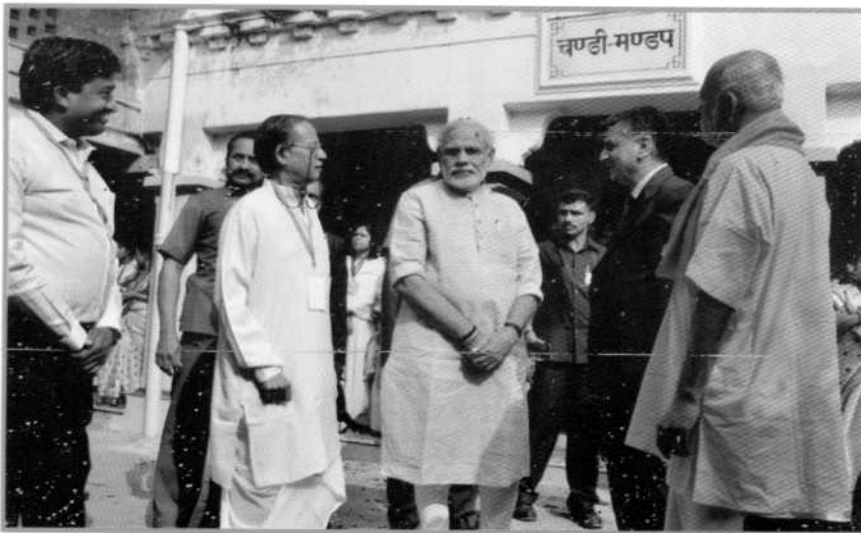


Prime Minister being shown the Ashram premises by Justice Vajpayee and Swami Deveshananda





Welcoming of Prime Minister by the girls of Kanyapeeth



Discussing with Ashram Authority in front of the yagna Shala

THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO MA'S VARANASI ASHRAM

—Sri Somesh Chandra Banerjee

Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee is the name of the Universal Mother. People from all walks of life, rich or poor, came to Ma regularly. Reputed Monks from all religions, persons of high prestigious position like President, Prime Minister, Governors, Ministers, High Govt. officials, Ambassadors of different countries, foreign dignitaries and persons from elite communities like Rajas, Maharajas, business magnates etc. also came to Ma to seek her blessings. All of them felt warmth of meeting Ma.

Recently, the Honourable Prime Minister of India Sri Narendra Modi had visited his constituency in Varanasi on 7th and 8th November 2014 and paid a short visit to Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashram on the 8th morning around 9.15 A.M.

The ashram is situated right on the bank of the river Ganga in Bhadaini area. Seeing the narrow approach lane leading to the ashram, the Special Protection Group on security reason had rejected the possibility of Prime Minister's entry to the ashram through that lane. Accordingly, arrangements had to be made to receive the Prime Minister in the premises of nearby Ma Anandamayee Hospital. A beautifully decorated dais and a big pandal were erected for him and for the guests. However, Sri Modi himself came for the rescue and informed from Delhi that he would be visiting positively Ma's ashram and due to shortage of time it would not be possible for him to address the guests. Accordingly the entire set up was changed. The Dias was dismantled. Sri Khemka and other helpers decorated the main ashram and the Kanyapeeth overnight with flowers.

Sri Modi was received at Ma Anandamayee Hospital by Sri S.C., Banerjee, the General Secretary of Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha, Sri Karunananda Bajpai, an old devotee of Ma and presently a senior Judge of Allahabad High Court, and Swamy Deveshanandaji, the Secretary of Ma's Varanasi Ashram and that of the Hospital.

When Modiji entered the spacious court yard of the ashram, the brahmacharini girls of Ma Anandamayee Kanyapeeth sang the 'Swagatam geet' in Sanskrit language and sprinkled flowers on him. Overwhelmed Modiji too sprinkled flowers on them, picking up some flowers from their plates. He paid naman at the Gayatri Yajnasala where the great sacred Savitri Mahayajna was arranged for world peace.

That 'yajna' continued for three years from 14 January 1947 to 14 January 1950. The fire used for the yajna was that very fire which was lit by Ma Herself while performing the yajna on the occasion of the Kali-Puja at Dhaka in 1926 and it was kept live since then with daily havan. We admire that India had attained freedom after starting the great Savitri yajna and became republic immediately after its completion. The fire is still burning continuously without any break with daily havan being performed at this sacred yajnasala.

Modiji then visited Ma Annapurna Temple at the first floor of the ashram. He stood quietly for a while at the temple door in front of the deity, closing his eyes. The deity was sculptured at Dhaka in 1931 as per the vision seen by Ma and it was made with the gold ornaments and a silver 'kalash' which Ma had used personally. The deity was shifted just before the partition of India and was placed in the present Annapurna Temple when it was built in 1950. Sri Modi saws the elegant view of the river Ganga from the temple verandah. The sacred river turns touching this place to form the crescent shape and flows towards the North to become 'Uttar vahini' in Varanasi.

Sri Modi then went straight to Ma's room located inside the Kanyapeeth at the ground floor. Brahmacharini Dr. Geeta started reciting from Sanskrit stotras. Modiji bowed his head at Ma's bed and stood quietly for some time staring at Ma's photo there. Seeing the 'kharau' (Wooden sleepers) on a small decorated stool in front of Ma's bed, he enquired whether it was used by Ma. On getting affirmative reply he touched the sacred 'kharau' with his hand and then touched his own forehead. He also picked up some flowers from the plate kept nearby and offered them on the 'kharau' and on Ma's bed. Brahmacharini Jaya offered him a beautifully framed photograph of Ma which he had taken care while leaving the place.

While walking back to the hospital, Sri Modi narrated about the incident when he met Ma in Her ashram in Gujrat while performing 'Narmada Parikrama'. He said that he could not forget the way Ma had fed him and his companions with great affection when they were very much hungry.

At the hospital, Sri Modi went inside the canopy where a beautiful white statue of Ma Anandamayee standing on a white lotus was there. Two little Kanyapeeth girls were standing inside carrying the plates with flowers. Modiji after offering flowers on Ma's statue blessed those two little girls with great affection. Deveshanandaji offered him the garland made of sandal wood flakes. From Ma's canopy, he went straight to the waiting guests and public in the pandal and talked to them personally. When he enquired to the old Brahmacharini Maladi about her health, she was overwhelmed and was in tears. Modiji affectionately wiped out her tears and talked to her.

While leaving the place by car, the General Secretary requested him to find time from his busy schedule to come to Kankhal Ashram in Haridwar and visit the most sacred place 'Ananda Jyoti Preethan' Temple where Ma's sacred body has been placed underground forever.

The Genral Secretary also sent his letter of gratification to the Honourable Governor of West Bengal, Sri Kesri Nath Tripathi, who met personally the Prime Minister and handed over the letter of request to visit Ma's Varanasi Ashram. Due to his personal endeavor the visit of the Prime Minsiter in Varanasi Ashram could be materialized on such occasion when Ma Anandamayee Kanyapeeth completed 75 years of its successful existence, imparting education to its students in ancient 'Rishikul' way. Similarly, Mata Anandamayee Hospital also completed 60 years of its existence following Ma's inspiration of carrying on 'Jan Janardan Seva'.

We all Ma's devotees are grateful to the Prime Minister Sri Modi for his visit to Varanasi Ashram. We pray to Ma to bestow Her blessings to Him for his long prosperous life with good health.

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THE FRUITS OF MY PRAYERS TO GOD

—A Devotee

By the divine grace of Shri Shri Ma. Giriji, Gopalji, Ma Annapurna and Lord Shiva — The year 2014 during the celebration of Janmashtami, a devotee of Shri Shri Ma and Justice Vajpayeeji had come to Gopal Temple. The Devotee proposed to Gopalji that the countries Prime Minister should visit Shri Shri Ma Varanasi Ashram.

On 4th September the devotee dreamt that Shri Ma was getting the Annapurna Temple and 'Yogna Shala' cleaned by the devotee in her presence. That day the devotee met the Governor of W. Bengal and conveyed this desire.

From Allahabad Vajpayeeji and the devotee put in a lot of effort to this end.

On 30th October an application was submitted to the Governor regarding the visit of the Prime Minister on the 8th November the Prime Minister visited the Varanasi Ashram.

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MOTHER - THE INFINITE "ONE"

—Mr. Shuddha Satta Chakravarty

Those who can maintain self control even after victory/success, they get double success subsequently. — Bhaiji

Mother's words are concerned with various situations arising in a man's life when under the pressure of circumstances he feels himself utterly helpless, hopeless & forlorn. Bereavements, disillusionments & a feeling of frustration in life, attacks of hostile forces within, waning of faith, vagaries of an uncurbed & erratic mind, protracted physical ailments — these are some of the necessary evils incidental to ordinary human existence on earth. In every stage it'll be found that Mother has suggested practically the same sovereign remedy — viz. the culmination of the Untruth in one self, the cultivation of the habit of remembering God & taking His Holy Name supplemented by an unconditional surrender to His Will and an unshaken belief that all His dispensations are wise & for our good. She is the Whole One complete identity or entity if I may say whose utterances are so perfect in perception that they can't be ignored or waived off casually !

Her utterances & instructions have about them the ring of an external universal appeal to mankind, irrespective of caste, creed, sex, age or nationality. Those who have to good fortune of knowing Mother more closely are aware that She has not on Her part any personal bias towards a particular line of approach as against the others & that if in the case of a "Sādhakā" the exigencies of individual predisposition & competence demand exclusiveness in a particular direction, She never hesitates to recommend it.

Mother accepts the Supreme One ideal of man as one & the same. But She says that account of difference of outlook consequent on difference in tastes, capacities, environments & ways of thoughts, paths of attainment become necessarily different. All these differences are true; but they are only superficial. What really counts for in each case is, whether one has or has not the sincerity of heart, a truth-seeking spirit and a genuine thirst of the soul coupled with unceasing activity & undaunted faith & a stainless moral character. Detachment from world affairs & devotion to the Divine ideal are the chief assets for a pilgrim on the path of the infinite.

In every age, on every occasion, in every turn of fortune, in the field of action & in the stillness of solitude, a man should therefore have a single Aim before Him on

which his mind's eye may be set & it should shine as if it was the pole - star in his mental firmament. To him it should be like the majestic Lordship of the Supreme Father, like the abounding Grace of the great Mother, like the sweet every flowing Spring of the Eternal Beloved; it may also be like the impersonal but self - conscious Bliss of the Divine One Being; it may be like the hidden Essence of his own soul. It is the direction of this Supreme Objective that a man should always be consciously striving - through love, through action & through Knowledge.

At this stage I am fondly reminded about my grand parents, who according to Mataji's discretion were one of the most beloved devotees of Her's. My grandfather Shri. Dwijendra Kumar Bhowmick an eminent Pleader in Chandannagar in Bengal and his wife as humble and honorable as one can possibly be Smt. Chapala Ma mother of Late Shri. Brojendra Kumar Bhowmick mentioned in my earlier articles on Mataji. They lost all their children one after another except my beloved mother Smt. Bina Devi whom also mentioned earlier, who scarified her entire life for the welfare of her family. If she wished she could have opted for a lavish & easy life, but being a staunch devotee of Mataji, she lived the type of life Mataji wanted her to.

In whatever condition a man may happen to find himself at the moment of awakening he should bear in mind that his path really stretches out before him from there; he has only to exert himself to the best of his powers & proceed along the path.

Now, at this stage I would like to cite some of the utterances of Mataji as general advice to humanity :

1) Who are the truly wealthy ? Those who are possessed of the Supreme Treasure — they alone are really rich & live in abundance. Poor & destitutes must be called the man in whose heart the remembrance of God abides not. To depend solely on Him is man's one & only duty.

2) To concentrate only on Him, the remembrance of Whom brings release from all anxiety, is meet & right. At all times endeavor to sustain the contemplation of God & the flow of His Name. By virtue of His Name all disease becomes ease.

3) Let "I can not" be eradicated from your vocabulary. Time is gliding away swiftly : for a few days only lasts this reunion with friends & kinsmen. Gather up your possessions, brother . no one accompanies you in your final journey.

Jai Ma

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REAL CONCENTRATION IS UNIFICATION WITH THE LORD

A Guru had a disciple. He very often complained to his Guru that even after trying his utmost, he could not concentrate on his meditation. Guru also tried various ways and means for quite a long period, but all were in vain. Ultimately the Guru thought of another measure.

Next time when the disciple approached the Guru with the same complaint the Guru asked him whom did he loved most.

The disciple replied, "Guruji, I love my calf most. It is most dear to me and is very beautiful to look at."

Said Guruji, "All right, henceforth, at the time of meditation, concentrate your mind on your beloved calf."

This was very easy for the disciple and he returned home very happy.

Returning home he made all arrangements for the calf and when the meditation hour arrived he bolted the door from inside and sat on his 'asan' to meditate.

Now, as you can understand, it was very easy for the disciple to concentrate on his calf and as the experience was very pleasing to him, he continued to do it for a fairly long time. He became so much absorbed in meditation, that he could not even realise how much time had elapsed.

Next day, the Guru came himself to the disciple to enquire about his meditation. He found that the door was bolted from inside. He repeatedly called the disciple by his name, knocked the door again and again but there was no reply from inside.

Ultimately after much shouting the disciple was shaken up from his meditation. At his response, the Guru shouted, "Open the door, what are you doing?" The disciple replied, "Gurudev, I am running after my calf in the jungle, shall I come out?"

Guru replied, "No, not now" and left. The next day Guru came again and asked the same question, "Dear child, what are you doing?"

The reply came, "I am fondling my calf. Shall I come out?"

"No, not yet", replied the Guru and went back.

Another day passed, the Guru came again and shouted, "Do you hear me? What are you doing?"

In reply the disciple bellowed "Hamba".

This time the Guru said, "Dear child, open the door and come out."

The disciple left his seat and moved to the door to come out, and said, "Guruji, how can I come out, my horns will get stuck-up in the door."

The Guru caught hold of his hand and pulled him out of the room.

Coming out the disciple began to jump and move with two hands and two legs, just like an animal.

Guru immediately made him stand straight on his legs and said, "Here you are. Have you now followed how to concentrate your mind and meditate?"

Concluding the story Ma said — "This is how the concentration should be learnt and to attain the goal of human life."

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ASHRAM NEWS

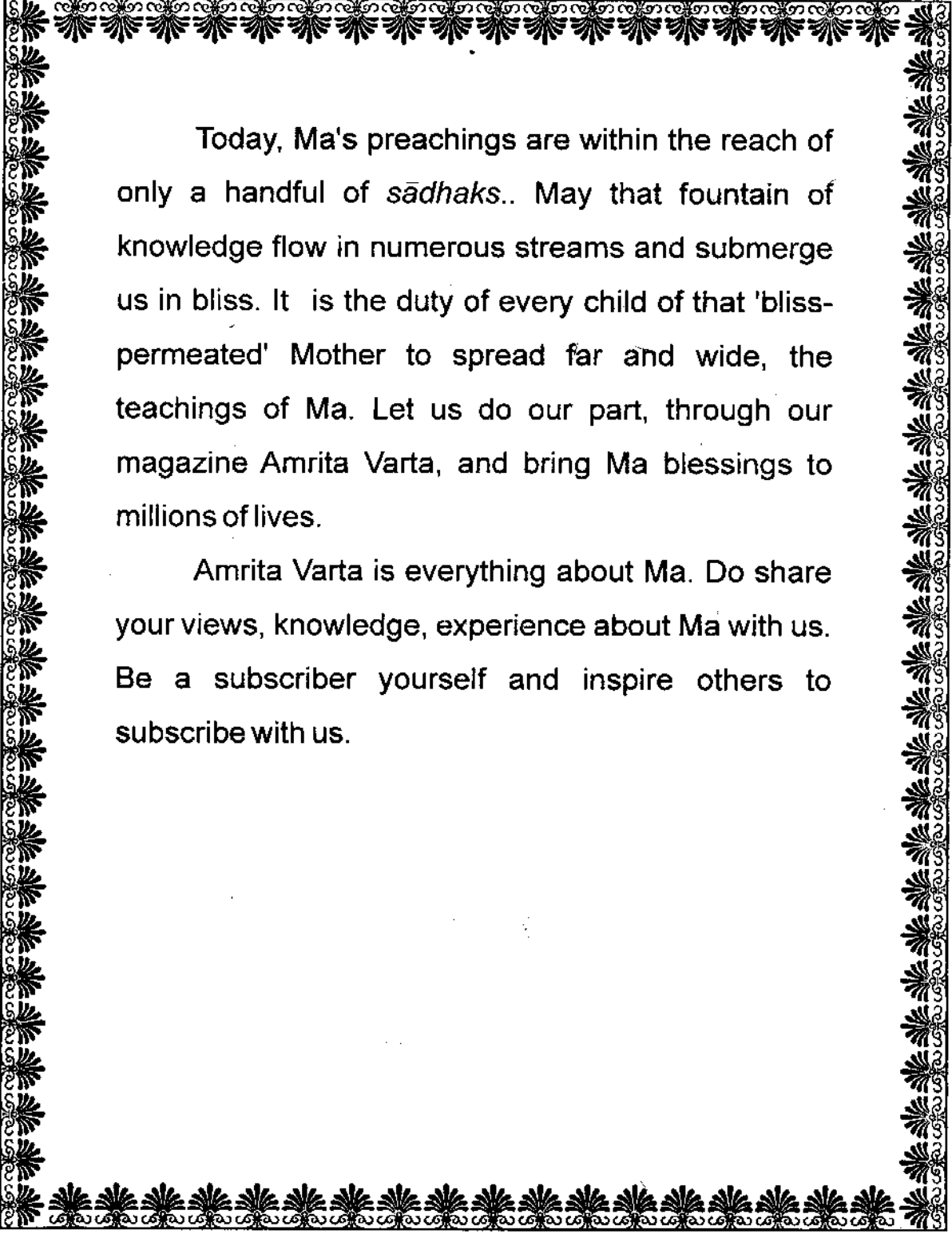
Dear Anandaswarup Brothers and Sisters,

The 65th Samyam Saptah was held in Kankhal from 31st October, to 7th November. The whole programme was carried out in a well organised manner reminding us of Shree Shree 'Ma's times' so to speak. Specially the morning and afternoon dhyana charged all the participants. Many felt Ma's Presence and Ahetu ki kripa very strongly, encouraging the sadhakas in the right direction, steering our spiritual course. Our Mother Our Guru.

The programme was maintained according to tradition, not to miss the chants 'Satyam Jnyanam ...' 'Hey hitah, hey pitah'. 'Hey Bhgawan" which transported us to higher spiritual levels out of this world. The Mahatmas spoke sincerely, lucidly on several topics. Special mention must be made of three Swamiji's from Kailash Ashram. Rishikesh viz Sw. Medhanandaji Maharaj - spoke on Kaivalya Upanishad, Sw. Umeshwar Devaji Maharaj spoke on Bhagwat Geeta and Acharya Sw. Vijayanandji Maharaj on srimad Bhagwat Mahapuran. Besides Vishweshwarnandji Giri Maharaj and Chaitanya Saraswatiji Maharaj of Ananda Krishna Dham with his prodigee Shishya Divya Saraswati caught the attention of devotees. Not to miss our very own mahamandaleshwar Sw. Shyam Sundar Dasji of Garisdasi Ashram attending Samyam Saptah from times immemorial i.e. since Shree Shree Ma's times. Parallely Anandamayee Jyoti Peetham's morning and evening Pooja and Arati went on as if jnyana yajna and bhakti complemental each other fullfillinng the devotees heart there were sadhakas from far and near. The foreign devotees were seen participating sincerely and with one pointed attention absorbing the charged atmosphere despite their handicap of language in a lecture filled day ! Purnahuti took place on the 7th morning same night Naamyajna Adhiwas took place with night long ladies kirtana taken over by gentlemen next day long with Malsha Bhog and wound up epitomising with intoxicating Krishna love of baurang Mahaprabhu in Shree Shree Ma's Presence.'

Many devotees actually felt Shree ShreeMa's Divine Presence and strong Gentle vibrations steering their spiritual lives Jai Ma Jai Guru ! Thus ended the 65th Samyam Saptah to continue next year. Gitajayanti was celebrated in a befitting manner in all Ashrams of the Sangha.

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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.

ERRATA

We regret the typos that have occurred in the October 2014 issue of English Amrit Varta. We offer apologies and endeavour to avoid such errors in the future.

A list of the errors with correction is given below.

page no.	line	incorrect	correct
1	08	reflets	reflects
1	12	unrevealed	revealed ??
3	06	Drahmachari's	Brahmachari's
12	Title	PILEGRIMAGE	PILGRIMAGE
12	03	reahed	reached
12	08	start	star
14	32	decoits	dacoits
16	Para 1	"not closed	close para with"
20	05	Gmbhirmath	Gambhirmath
21	20	defficult	Difficult
23	26	fulness	fullness
23	27	neccssity	necessity
33	18	Lagacy	Legacy
34	07	welface	welfare
38	08	Kalkat	Kolkata
39	30	nest	next