

# MA ANANDAMAYEE

# AMRIT VARTA

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

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1. This journal is published in four separate languages – English, Bengali, Hindi and Gujrati, in the months of January, April, July and October.
2. The journal mainly publishes articles related to Shree Shree Ma. We invite articles from devotees about their divine experience of Shree Shree Ma and also on religious literature of any country or religion.
3. Efforts are being made to make the journal more attractive, interesting, appealing and lucid and to spread the nectorial preaching of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee for the benefit of mankind in all fields of life, whether worldly or spiritual.
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*Hari-kathā hi kathā aur sab vrīdhā vyathā*  
- Ma Anandamayee  
(\*To talk of God alone is worthwhile;  
all else is in vain and leads to pain\*)

## Contents

1. Ma'si Vani	- Editor	1
2. Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Prasanga-5	- Prof. A.K.DuttaGupta	4
3. Aunt-Kathā	- Bhaiji	8
4. Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee (Vol-18)	- Gurupriya Devi	11
5. Vedas and Upanishads	- Sri Chinmoy	18
6. List of Festivals	- Editor	20
7. Padpeetham Smarāmi (Puri Ashram)	- Brehini. Geeta	21
8. Ma is Omnipresent	- Brehini. Jaya	23
9. Few priceless Reminiscense	- Brehini. Indu	26
10. My first <i>darshan</i> of Ma	- Brehini. Sunanda	28
11. Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Prasanga-10	- Prof. A.K.DuttaGupta	31
12. GurupriyaDi's Treasure Trove	- Editor	36
13. Visit to Dhaka for Ma's <i>darshan</i>	- Sw. NarayananandTirth	37
14. Reminiscence of my early days with Ma	- Brehini. Bishuddha	41
15. The story of Gopal and his Mother	- Devipriya Roy	44
16. <i>Satsang</i> - and its effect	- Sw. Shivananda	48
17. In Memorium	- A devotee	49

COVER PAGE (Backside)  
MA'S ASHRAM - VARANASI

*God often gives a trivial suffering and thereby prevents a much graver misery. Sufferings too are one of His forms, by which He attracts jiva towards Himself. Those who can convert a suffering into His remembrance and offer prayers to Him, for them suffering is a true friend.*

*- Ma Anandamayee*

### Path to Self Realisation

On asking Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee as to how we can achieve the path to Self-Realisation, Ma advises:

"If you wish then you can do like this. At all instances, it is essential to follow all these. If there is a shortage of time, then also try to achieve these as much as possible, and during free time or during holidays give your total effort."

1. *Satkriyā, Satsang.* (Virtuous actions, Spiritual discourse).
2. *Satyavachan kahnā.* (Truthful dialogues).
3. *Tat gyān mein sevā – jan janārdhan.* (Serving with a noble thought to all).
4. *Sadgranth pāth.* (Reading scriptures).
5. *Kirtan.* (Singing the praise of God).
6. *Kriya Yog.* (Ma says, for Self-realisation, that is to know oneself; with the advice of the Guru, whatever actions are observed, that only is called as *Kriya Yog*).
7. *Puja.* (Worship).
8. *Japa.* (Repeating the 'name').
9. *Bhagwat Kripa Prārthanā.* (To pray for Divine Grace).
10. *Smaran.* (Divine contemplation).
11. *Sharanāgati.* (Self-Surrender).
12. *Tat Dhyān.* (Divine meditation).

It is our sincere request to all readers who have not sent their subscriptions for the year 2021 and ahead, to send the same at the earliest. Curious readers are also requested to subscribe for the magazine.

— Managing Editor, 'Ma Anandamayee Amrit Varta'



*Jay Jay Jagatāṅ Mātā Tridevārchita Yā,  
Jay Jay Sagunā Yā Nirgunā Srishtirupā.  
Jay Jay Mahaniyā Yā Supunyāṅghripadmā,  
Jay Jay Jay PurnaBrahmaNarayan: Sā.  
Survarmunibandyānand Murti: Prasannā,  
Sitsarsijvarnā Shwet Shubhrāmrā Yā.  
Asit Mridulkeshairmouliramyākritir Yā,  
Kardhritsitshankhā Tatpadang Noumi Nityam.*

## Compassionate Words of Shree Shree Ma

Question: Ma, yesterday when I had asked, 'What is the easiest way to attain salvation'. You had then advised, 'Ask this question to your inner self'. But later I pondered, how can my impure mind engrossed in worldly matters, indicate the path to salvation. Hence I now ask again, 'Can this impure mind give me the whereabouts of God? Ma, You are an enchantress, You speak in such a manner that we become mesmerized.

Ma : Baba, you have spoken so much evil to this daughter of yours? Do you think that if you even slightly love This Body you will fall into the worldly cycle? The worldly children meet their worldly parents with worldly thoughts and their parents too love them in a worldly manner. Whatever relation develops between them is all purely materialistic (*vishay*). Their love or affection creates a passion (*Moh*) between themselves. But This Girl of yours does not demand anything materialistic. What is *vishay* (materialistic)? That which is *vish* (poison). Hence if you love This Girl a little bit where is the question of passion? But that which had been said yesterday, that 'ask your mind the easy path to self-realization', that is true in this sense that, *mon* (mind) itself means *mene newa* (to accept). If by this *mon* (mentality) you accept God, then He Himself will show the easiest path to attain Him.

## Matri - Vani

1. During the early stages of *sanyam*, it is wise to keep away from temptations. If not done so, paralysis may set in, that is to say, one may be unable to control the senses at all. Later, when one has become somewhat firm, it is better to try and practise self-control by having desirable objects near at hand. Why should the need ever arise to run away at the sight of desirable objects? And even when fleeing to the jungle, is there any deliverance? There also the desirable objects may make their appearance. So it is necessary to remain concentrated on one's Goal, under all circumstances. It is He who appears before us in all forms; if one cultivates this attitude and arrives at this true knowledge, only then can one be totally at rest and peace.

\* \* \*

2. There is difference of opinion among *sadhus* regarding *Kaal* (period of time). You say that certain *sadhus* have remarked that *Satya Yuga* has already arrived. Again some say that this is the last stretch of *Kali Yuga*. The real thing is - *Kaal* (period of time) may seem to be different to different persons. One recognizes *Kaal* according to his own *bhāva* (essence).

\* \* \*

3. Similarly *bhāva* has connection with *āsana* and other things also. When bodily action and *bhāva* become one, then bodily complications do not exist. The fact that you cannot sit in one *āsana* for a long period is because of the fact that your action has not been unified with your feelings. When that becomes unified then you will see that there will be no fatigue in whatever you do. After sitting for quite a long time, when you move again, you move without any disturbance.

\* \* \*

4. *Baba*, the situation at present is continuing like this only. It was heard that people are dying without food. Some not being able to bear the pain are committing suicide. To what extent are you able to see, the sorrow and pain which has been going on all over the world? This too is His play. He

himself is clapping with both His hands. It is He Himself who is creating and again He Himself is destroying. But, God is also said to be Benevolent. What is the purpose of all this sorrow, misery and death? There surely must be some benefit in all this. But we cannot understand that. It is hard to understand God's *leelā* (play). That is beyond our comprehension. That is why we have to remain dependant on Him. Misery will occur if expectations and desires exist. When that is forsaken then there is nothing like sorrow.

\* \* \*

5. Again, that you are speaking of the wellbeing for everyone, but that too cannot occur. The world consists of both good and bad. Is it not so, *baba*? If someone at some place wants to do good for all, he is unable to do that completely though he may be able to do it to some extent. Similarly, if somebody wants to destroy everyone, that also he cannot do. Again observing it from another angle you will see that, whatever good or bad is occurring that is happening in totality. While doing good for all even if one person is benefitted, then that too is occurring in totality. For example, while calculating, if there is a problem with even one zero then everything becomes wrong. When you are going to calculate in totality, then even that zero is needed. Because totality occurs with the inclusion of it's parts too. If even a minute part is left out, it is not complete. Hence while doing good for all if even one is benefitted then that too is required for the sake of welfare of everyone.

\* \* \*

6. Question : Is there life after death?

Ma: Yes, there is.

Question: So rebirth occurs because of one's *karma-phal* (fruits of one's action in the past lives). But when the human being was first created, then from where did his fruits of past life arise?

Ma- When God revealed Himself in the form of creation, then whatever has happened, will happen and is happening, a certain trend of this creation naturally arose within Him. *Karma* (action) or *karma-phal* (results of all actions), whatever you call it, that also is a development of that very trend.

\* \* \*





## Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Prasanga (Vol-V)

Amulya Kumar Dutta Gupta

(continued from before)

### Triveni Puri Maharaj

3rd Chaitra 1355, Thursday (17-03-1949). For almost a month Ma is away from Varanasi. Today at ten in the night (Brahmachari) Kamalakanth Dada came to my house and informed that Shree Shree Ma has arrived in the Ashram. Immediately I went to the Ashram and while paying my obeisance to Ma, Ma asked the welfare of everyone here including GopiBaba.

While conversing Ma said, "This time in Khanna (Punjab) I met a saint, who was may be 70 to 75 years of age. He had a built like him (pointing at NepalDada). He had only one woollen blanket wrapped on his body and that too upto his knees only. Otherwise he was completely naked. This attitude of nakedness was so natural that he seemed like a child. Even though several others stay naked, however occasionally they get feelings of hesitation, hence then others too feel hesitated while being near them. But he is totally free of any emotions. Hence nobody feel's any hesitation while being near him. He has memorised the 'Granth-Saheb'. Everyone considers him as a great saint. Someone said that before seeing him, he had no idea of a real saint. I observed the *sadhu* was truly good. Also heard that his name is Triveni Puri."

Ma was speaking while strolling in the courtyard overlooking the River Ganga. After conversing for some time Mr. Petit arrived. Most probably he had gone to the station to receive Ma, but while returning must have lost the way and had gone somewhere else. Hence this delay in his arrival. He paid his obeisance to Ma and said to Swami Paramanandji to inform Ma that he had lost his way because he had left Ma's company. He was coming to Varanasi from Moghulsarai in a horse carriage (*tongā*), when suddenly the wheel of the carriage had broken. He had to face so much

trouble just because he had left Ma's company. All these he was trying to explain by various gestures, which was quite comical and made everyone laugh. Ma too was laughing a lot. Ma said, "While coming from Punjab to Vrindavan he (Mr. Petit) had to travel in a bullock-cart. Again while moving from Vrindavan to Delhi, due to shortage of space in the cars, he was asked to go in a train. But he was in total anger to travel in the train. He complained, 'Once I had left Ma's company and had lost the way. If I lose Ma's company now then I will lose Her forever. Hence I will not leave Ma's company'. He could come safely to India from abroad but here he cannot search me out." So saying Ma started laughing again. Just as observing Mr. Petit's childish behaviour, evokes laughter, at the same time, observing his sincere affection towards Shree Shree Ma evokes reverence for him. As he neither understands Hindi nor Bangla, he has no way of conversing freely with Ma. He has also no way of feeling Ma's proximity other than having Ma's *darshan*. Still he has such a strong attraction towards Ma that he has drowned all effects of aristocracies and by bearing infinite sufferings he has surrendered himself at the lotus feet of Shree Shree Ma.

Being late in the night, Ma got up to rest in Her room and we too departed to our lodgings.

*4th Chaitra 1355, Friday (18-03-1949).* Today Ma arrived at the lower Hall at around ten in the morning. Since Ma's arrival in the Ashram has not been informed to all the people, the crowd in the hall was at a minimum. Along with few others, Sw. Paramanandji and Sw. Shankaranandji were only present. A conversation arose with a question that if a Brahmin sacrifices his *Janaiv* or *Upavit* (sacred thread) and becomes a *sanyāsi* on his own and later if he doubts himself whether he has properly taken the *sanyās*, then what should he do? Ma asked Sw. Paramanandji and Sw. Shankaranandji to answer this question. Both of them jointly agreed that the person should follow the strict rules of *prayashchit* and then wear the *Janaiv* again, and later on should accept *sanyās* by conducting the *Virajā-Hom* as indicated by the scriptural experts only. However, the rules of the omniscient may be different.

**A story narrated by Ma – "one's imagined son and one's own son".**

A little later Ma said, "I have heard a story which I am narrating to you all. A husband and his wife were lying on a bed. The wife questions, 'Suppose a child is born to us, where will he lie down? The husband moved a bit further from the wife and said, 'Why? He will sleep between

us'. The wife again questioned, 'If one more child is born where will he lay down?' The husband moved further away and said, 'Why he will lie down here'. The wife again questioned, 'If one more child is born where will he lie down?' The moment the husband shifted back to make some space, he fell down from the bed and fractured his leg. Immediately a commotion occurred and people were called for help. On arriving, all these people surprised, wanted to know how he got the fracture within the house. The husband then replied, 'The imagined son fractured the leg, who knows what the real son will do'." Hearing this story everyone started laughing.

### **Trapped in a spider's web**

Sw. Shankaranand was talking about his sons and their children. Hearing that Ma smilingly said, "Due to your conversation I remember one more story. There was a person, as long as he was alone he had two legs, when he married then there were four legs, when a child was born then six legs, when the grandchild was born, then eight legs, that is, then he became a spider, as the spider has eight legs. Becoming a spider means getting trapped in one's own web. That is way it is said that, when grandchildren are born then he gets trapped in his own web."

Conversing in this manner it was eleven in the morning and hence the reading of the scripture was started by Baidyanath Shastri Mahashay.

In the evening Ma was strolling on the courtyard overlooking the Ganga. There wasn't much of a crowd. Few ladies from this area had arrived. One of them conversed with Ma for some time. I learnt that she was from somewhere near Almora. She questioned Ma, "How can one realize the Divine (*Brahma*) while living in this world (*Jagat*)?" Ma replied smilingly, "If the world exists then how can the Divine exist? As long as there is expectation and creation, till then the Divine cannot be realized. Again when the Divine is realized, the world does not exist, then only One Divine exists." When the lady started reciting few verses from the Upanishad, Ma smilingly said, "Oh! So you seem to know all this too. This Body does not have any knowledge of all these." The lady further questioned, "Why, cannot the Divine be comprehended while existing in this world. There must be a way here to realize the Divine." Ma replied, "Yes, of course there is. And that path is to follow the *Guru's* dictum." Conversing in this manner for some time when the lady departed, Ma said, "This is what will happen if one tries to understand God with his mental intelligence. Trying to understand by reasoning gives only a partial knowledge. Because it is

the nature of the mind to observe everything partially. Only then, these type of reasoning develops that, this will occur and that will not. But when knowledge is realized in totality then it is understood that, whatever one says is all true. There is no discrimination anywhere.”

### Establishment of the Vrindavan Ashram

I learnt from Khukuni Didi (Gurupriya-Di) that, after purchasing an acre of land in Vrindavan, a small hut has been constructed and an Ashram has been established. For this occasion several devotees had arrived from Delhi. Ma then said, “UdiyaBaba (His actual name is Purnanand Tirth) had once told me, ‘*Mataji*, Your Ashram is present everywhere, why not one in Vrindavan? Establish an Ashram here too.’ Then I had told him, ‘*Pitaji*’s Ashram is also My Ashram’. To that *Babaji* had replied, ‘Of course You can stay here. But when I don’t stay here, not even a dog enters this place. Otherwise You may reside upstairs and all of us downstairs’. But now an Ashram has been established in Vrindavan. How Khukuni managed to purchase the land after talking with Jogendrababu. After that she managed to construct a small mud-hut. Whatever was required to establish the Ashram all that too she got done with the help of UdiyaBaba. I had to stay permanently in HariBaba’s place. Hence I was not involved in this work.”

Some more discussion on Vrindavan ensued. Because of the program that HariBabaji had planned out, Ma had to be confined for most of the time within their Ashram. This program used to begin at four in the morning and continued till twelve midnight. Again starting from two in the afternoon, with the oration of the scriptures and *kirtan*, etc., it continued till six in the evening. Again beginning from eight it culminated at ten in the night. Ma was supposed to be present at all times. Heard from Ma that on several occasions She did not get enough time to wash Her face or have Her meals properly. After this the tour of the town (*nagar-parikramā*) while singing also took place. In spite of HariBaba’s wish Ma did not entertain the *parikramā* because Ma’s health was not in a good condition. However, the devotees of Ma joined the tour. Whatever be the results of this tour, every member of the tour had to engulf a large quantity of dust. During the *parikramā*, whenever the hail of dust swept over everyone and then if anyone tried to cover his face with their clothes, immediately HariBabaji’s devotees would shout aloud, “Don’t do like that, it means to show disrespect to the land of Braj.”



(to be continued)

## Amrit - Kathā \*

Bhaiji

(continued from before)

### **Kirtan and it's stages**

Just as one renounces the world in order to become an ascetic, so does one sing and hears *kirtan* in order to become immersed in *kirtan*. But you all can neither sing *kirtan* nor hear it, because you all are always immersed in external matters. Hence you cannot absorb the joy of *kirtan* into your inner self. That is why you remain the same before and after the *kirtan*. The joy in-between, i.e., during the *kirtan* is not able to transform your inner self. Just as after sowing the seed one has to keep a protective watch over it, till it develops into a seedling. In the same way when even a fraction of Godly essence arises within you, then following strict rules and dedication, one has to earnestly make efforts for its further growth.

In general seven types of essence (*bhāv*) arises in those who sing *kirtan* with true devotion.

1. Initially *kirtan* is sung with a deity in mind. While getting engrossed in the thoughts of that deity, for a short concentrated moment a divine joy and ecstasy is experienced. During that moment the body seems to look unconscious but within he is fully conscious. It is just an inert state of the body.

2. Again by one's intense desire, there is further development of one's essence. For a short span of time, he develops joy and attachment towards that deity. His mind becomes ecstatic. It is simultaneously the combined bound state of the temporal body and mind.

3. When the mind becomes further captivated towards the deity, his attitude becomes similar to that of a child, occasionally crying and sometimes laughing with joy. He feels attracted towards all deities. Sometimes rolls on the ground or sometimes become still. Since these states are temporary these should be considered as a mere glimpse of the divine essence.

4. Gradually when the ecstasy cools down and starts to stabilize, he observes his chosen deity everywhere. During *kirtan* though he seems to be unstable, he steadfastly remains engrossed inwards, with the aim of attaining his

chosen deity. Hence he only speaks of high level thoughts. He may also observe some divine powers. This can be considered as the blossoming of one more knowledge of divinity. This is the state of spiritual ecstasy.

5. Like water converting into frozen ice, when this attitude becomes thick, he does not relate himself to any chosen deity. His days pass in bliss, remaining engrossed in a state of manifested entity. There is no demarcation of caste, religion, etc. Even though he may seem to be in an unstable or unconscious state, his thoughts are natural like breathing. There is no thought of mine and yours. This is the middle stage.

6. Discarding all thoughts he becomes engrossed in the One. This is called the supreme state.

7. Finally he goes beyond the form and the formless, desire and desireless and attains the *avyakt* state or the *māhā-bhāv* state.

Again within these seven states there are numerous sub-states. This inward journey begins with relations like god-devotee, god-servant, etc, and until the Supreme is attained the *sanskārs* remain.

#### ***Guru-bhāv* and other aspects of a *sādhak***

*Guru-bhāv* is a state of mind. Just as it is natural for a human being to teach or serve others, similarly compassion towards all living beings is naturally observed within an aspirant. Some *sādhak* (aspirants) even after attaining the state of *Guru-bhāv*, being totally indifferent towards it, make efforts to reach their goal by pursuing their actions systematically according to their aim in life. A true aspirant just observes as a spectator all the exalted and supernatural stages occurring in his spiritual path. All the time he is busy preparing himself to become immersed in a divine entity. Either it is a feeling of 'I' – 'I' or a feeling of 'you' – 'you'.

The fact is that, one person without giving any pre-planned thought, without observing the road, just moves towards the Ganga and takes a dip in it, and another person plans and selects the appropriate road leading to a famous *ghāt* (river-bank) and then takes a bath. There is a lot of difference among these two. If in the first person, *sanskār* or attributes of bathing in a special *ghāt* remains within him, then he will have to make efforts to free himself from that *sanskār*. These would not be required for the second person. After taking the ultimate dip nothing further is required.

For attaining supremacy it is essential for the aspirant to attain command in all fields. Either in self-indulgence or in self-denial. Hence, even though the Ganga flows in several places, a huge crowd accumulates in the

*brahma-kund*. An emperor king is well informed of all the surrounding kings. One who is omniscient inspite of educating others does not get attached in the bondage of a *Guru*. A stage arrives when an aspirant feels that he is all-powerful and that all is within him and he is within all. A stage higher than this also occurs where the aspirant even though being in all, is only One. Then there is no feeling of thinking in fragments that, I am this, I am that, I am all. In the state of manifesting oneself in fragmented sense implies that, he is still bound in fragments. Omniscience has not been attained. Just by attaining knowledge will not do, one has to go beyond knowledge and ignorance. An aspirant cannot be regarded as God, just because with rigorous aspiration he attains spiritual enlightenment. Because God is unique and complete. He cannot be explained by any known vocabulary.

### *Māyā*

The meaning of *māyā* is, *mein āyā*, e.i., I have come. Again coming and going implies the same thing. From where you came, going there only. On arrival, you will have to depart and on departing you will have to return. Because from that house, have come to this house. This also implies that departing from here have returned back here. One more meaning of *māyā* is, saw just now but again nothing is seen. *Māyā* is perpetual and eternal. Don't you all say, in such and such period there was a mango tree, how its seeds are being taken care now also. This remark has to be mentioned because the play of Nature is continuing in this manner. But if the aspirant doesn't progress above Nature, can he realize the One? No, never.

### *Sansār*

In this world (*sansār*), disguise (*swang*) is the only essence (*sār*). There is nothing other than this nature (*sār*) of being in camouflage (*swang*). We have understood the world as being the very essence of life. That is why there is so much sorrow and pain. It has to be remembered that everyone's mental development is not the same inspite of working piously. We perceive other's work according to our individual attitude. Hence the person working, does not get accolade every time. When you are prepared to obey orders, it is your duty that you should happily follow the orders. You don't have the authority to judge the Almighty God. Don't even ponder the views of God.



(to be continued..)

\*('Amrit Katha' - a book published in Hindi, from an old manuscript of Bhaiji, where Shree Shree Ma in Her own words enlightens Bhaiji about various incidents in Her life.)



## Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee

Vol-18 (Bengali)

Gurupriya Devi

(continued from before)

5th February 1965. Today Ma reached Rajgir. Didima, myself and several others reached here two days ago directly from Kashi. Rajgir has a very special natural surrounding. It has been heard that Lord Buddha had spent several years (seasons) on the Griddhakoot hill very near to Rajgir. It is also the place where Lord Buddha had delivered and spread a few of His significant teachings or sutras. It will not be exaggerating to mention that on this hillock, His presence can be felt even today. Only the individual has to come here and sit quietly and calmly. Only then will he get immersed in the tranquility of deep meditation. So it is not surprising at all that Ma likes Rajgir and Ma has also said that this place is conducive to the practice of meditation. The Ashram *Sadhus* sat with Ma in solitary after nine in the night. One day at dusk the Ashram ladies meditated for half an hour sitting in front of Ma. A few days after reaching Rajgir Ma used to go out for a stroll accompanied with someone or the other. One day while strolling outside, Ma reached the Mahavir Dharmshala. Ma had once stayed here, before the construction of the Ashram. Ma had actually arrived here to give *darshan* to a very sick person. This person had become extremely desperate to have Ma's *darshan* but was unable to even get up from his bed. Hence Ma herself arrived here and graced him with Her *darshan*. Ma consoled him saying, "Have faith in the Lord and handover all your burden of worries to Him."

### **Establishment of the Rajgir Ashram.**

Thirteen to fourteen years ago when Ma was in Patna, Ma had come to Rajgir to witness the famous hot springs. MuktiBaba, the oldest *sanyāsi* of our Ashram had then told Ma, 'Ma, construct a small cottage here'. His proposal was approved and for this purpose, a devotee had donated rupees five thousand to Ma. With Ma's Grace a small land was procured and in 1952 the construction of the Ashram was started.

### **Inauguration of the newly built Guest House.**

Recently a double-storeyed Guest House has been constructed within the Ashram premises. The inauguration of this Guest House was completed

on 5th, just after Ma arrived in Rajgir. On the day of *Basant Panchami*, on 6th, *Saraswati Puja* was held in one of the rooms of this Guest House. This function was quite enchanting, and was held in a detailed and devoted manner, which is very rare in our Ashram now-a-days. Other than the Ashramites, only six outsiders were present for this function.

### **Inauguration of the Shiv Mandir and Nāt Mandir.**

Adjacent to the Guest House, a small and beautiful *Shiv Mandir* and behind it a delightful *Nāt Mandir* for satsang etc., have also been constructed. An old devotee of Ma, Smt Rama Saxena after bathing in the hot spring had completely recovered from her fifteen year old arthritis complaint. Hence she expressed a desire to build the Shiva temple. In the meantime her husband also passed away. Then she finally decided to built a Shiva temple in memory of her late husband. The construction work got under way within a few days and it was also decided to hold the inauguration on the auspicious day of *Shiv-Ratri*. Hence Swami Paramanandji had stayed back to look after the construction work.

It was decided to install three *Shivlings* within the temple. The first, in the memory of the deceased husband of Smt Rama Saxena, the second, in the memory of the deceased son of Shri Subimal Dutta (retired Secretary to the President of India) who had recently passed away in Russia, and the third in the memory of the deceased husband of Ma's devotee Smt Hansa-devi of Dehradun.

There is a proverb that in the banks of the River Narmada 'as many pebbles so many *Shankar*' (i.e. Lord *Shiva*), that is, all pebbles in the banks of River Narmada are *Shivlings*. Hence last December, when Ma was in Vrindavan, three *Shivlings* for Rajgir were brought to Vrindavan from the banks of River Narmada. But the *pundits* of Vrindavan for some reason did not consider these three *Shivlings* suitable for installation. When Ma enquired, 'What should be done with these *Shivlings*?' They replied, 'These should be immersed in the Ganga.' But the River Ganga is nowhere near Vrindavan, hence somebody said, 'Immerse these in the nearby Yamuna River'. After the immersion, Ma suddenly started shivering due to cold. Ma felt so much chill that She could not get up from the bed that day. Ma realized within Herself that the *Shivlings* were immersed in water. Ma then called for those *pundits* and told them, to retrieve out those *Shivlings* from within the Yamuna River. Surprisingly the *pundits* retrieved the same three idols that were immersed. Then those *Shivlings* were transported to

Varanasi and from there sent to Rajgir. Ma then said that Lord *Shiva* has a natural relation with the River Ganga. But these three idols were immersed in the River Yamuna. By this, an understanding was obtained about their love for *Shree-Krishna* and their affection for Rajgir.

### **Inauguration of the *Shivlings* in the *Mandir*.**

It was decided to hold the inauguration of the *Shiv-lingas* in the temple in Ma's presence on 28th February and or 1st March 1965. In the absence of a ceiling in the *Nāt-mandir*, a canvas was hanged from the top. And the devotees sitting here could enjoy the whole program of the inauguration. Ma Herself was keeping a strict vigilance over every detail of this function and was regularly giving instructions for the perfect and smooth conclusion of the rites. Slowly slowly numerous devotees started arriving from all over north India to attend this function. Smt Rama arrived with his son *Virbhai* and his family. Shri Subimal Dutta also arrived but unluckily Smt *Hansadevi* couldn't come. Hence a Brahmachari of our Ashram carried out her duties. The inauguration of the temple and the installation of the idols was finally held on 1st March. Among the *mantras* being recited for the rites, one *mantra* was very heartening. 'O Lord *Shiva*, stay here as long as the sun, moon and the stars are in the sky. O Lord! Get rid of all the sorrow and grief. Enlighten the world with true knowledge. Bestow ultimate peace to all'. At the end of the rituals, Ma smeared *vibhuti* on everyone's forehead. We were lucky that a senior Sanyāsi of the Shivananda Ashram while returning from BodhGaya, arrived here for Ma's *darshan*. He was present both for the inauguration of the temple as well as for *Shiv-Ratri*. When *Virbhai* crowned his *Shivling*, a *bila-patra* (*Bel* leaf) fell down from the top of the *Shivling*. Ma said, 'Shiva is the symbol of renunciation. He is satisfied with Ganga water and *Bel*-leaves only. He does not ask for anything else. Hence if He is decorated with royal attires, then it is very natural that the *Bel*-leaves will fall off.' Then Smt Rama poured Ganga water (brought from Gangotri) over the *Shivling*.

### ***Shiv-Ratri* Muhotsav in Rajgir.**

1st February 1965. Just after the completion of the inauguration of the temple everyone engrossed themselves with the arrangements for the *Shiv-Ratri Puja* and the rites which would begin from six in the evening, continue for the whole night and conclude in the morning of 2nd February. *Āsan*'s were laid in a big circle covering the whole of the *Nāt-Mandir* behind the *Shiv-Mandir* for the *vratīs* (the devotees taking part in the rites while

fasting for the whole day and night) and the *pujaris* (the priests conducting the rites). *Puja* rites will also be held in the *Shiv* Temple. Ma's sitting arrangement was made on the verandah of the Temple. Ma was brought here at the favorable time and the *Puja* was commenced. After the completion of the *pratham-prahar* (first phase) at around nine in the night, Ma went back to Her room and again returned back at around one in the night. In the early morning after the completion of the rites, Ma distributed fruits to the fasting *vratis*. The *vratis* who had fasted for about thirty-six hours received the fruits first and after that all others had their share of fruits from Ma.

There is a speciality of the *Shiv-Ratri* function. In this function an awesome ambience is created all around. A feeling of intense concentration is observed in all the *vratis*. Several devotees arrive from far and wide just to attend this function in Ma's presence as a *vrati* and conduct the rites throughout the night. Several arrive on the very day of the function and depart just after completion of the *puja*, without staying in the Ashram for even twenty-four hours.

Two excellent lectures were held on the day after the *Shiv-Ratri*. *Pundit* Agnihotri'ji (Batuda) spoke on the importance of each and every portion of the Temple. He said that the temple should resemble just like the all-embracing God installed inside the temple. After that Prof. Bireshwar Ganguly (of Patna) explained with simplicity the importance of *Shiv-Shakti* according to the ideology of the Tantras.

During Ma's stay here in Rajgir for the next ten days a lot of devotees arrived for Ma's *darshan*. Everyday Ma spent most of the time in the *Shiv* temple explaining in detail the various rites of the temple, so that after Her departure all these rituals are conducted piously following all regulations. Every day, someone or the other was offering *bhandara* (variety of food) to Lord *Shiva* in the temple and everyone in the Ashram were having delicious *prasād*. One day during *satsang* time, a *Bhikshu* (Buddhist monk) arrived from Nalanda. On Ma's request he explained the importance of meditation according to the Buddhist order and the life style of the *Bhikshu*'s in Nalanda. Nalanda which is just fourteen kilometers from Rajgir is reckoned for the last two century's as the main learning centre of Buddhism. It is quite clear from the ruins in Nalanda that there were three universities in various centuries. Also that in every century each university was developed over the foundation of the earlier one. The ruins of the earlier university

can be seen very near to the present Buddhist University which has reopened very recently and this Buddhist *Bhikshu* is a Professor there. Several old manuscripts of Buddhism are preserved in this University and students, teachers and researchers come here from all over the world to acquire knowledge on Buddhism.

#### **Arrival of the President of India in Rajgir.**

6th March 1965. His Excellency Dr. Radhakrishnan, the President of India and Smt Indira Gandhi arrived in Rajgir for the foundation laying ceremony of a Japanese Buddhist Temple. This temple is being constructed almost two kilometers from Griddhakoot. Dr. Radhakrishnan also addressed a huge gathering over there.

#### **Ma's stay in Patna.**

10th March 1965. Today afternoon Ma and Her group departed for Patna by car, which is almost hundred kilometers from Rajgir. On arriving in Patna, Ma first went to the house of Jalan, which is near the banks of the River Ganga. They have built an extraordinary museum adjacent to their house, which has a collection of precious artifacts of several countries like China, Tibet, and India. Some very old artifacts have been collected by Jalan's father. Ma was also taken to this special museum. Staying in Jalan's house for almost two hours, Ma next went to Prof. S Choudhury's residence. For Ma's stay, they had constructed a *Puja* room upstairs with a separate staircase for Ma. Ma stayed in this room for the night and gave *darshan* to quite a large crowd while sitting in the adjoining terrace till late in the night. On 11th in the early hours of dawn, Ma was escorted to the railway station where She boarded the four a.m. train for Jalandhar.

#### **Ma's stay in Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur.**

Very few people were selected by Ma to travel with Her to Punjab. All others including Didima and myself got down at the Kashi station. Ma stayed in Jalandhar for quite some time in the Ashram of Savitri'devi. From there Ma travelled by car to Hoshiarpur.

#### **Ma's attends *Holi* in Haribaba's Ashram.**

Ma was invited to Hoshiarpur for the 80th birth anniversary of Haribaba. Just like *Gourang Mahaprabhu*, Shri Haribaba'ji was also born on the full moon day of Holi. The festival of Holi is celebrated with great pomp in Hoshiarpur and continues for quite a few days. Several eminent *Mahatmas* arrived and gave inspiring lectures on these days. Some among them were Shri Chaitanya Giriji, Shri Akhandanandji, Shri Krishnanand Avdhootji,

etc. *Rās-līla* used to held in the morning and *Ram-līla* in the evenings. Shri Haribabaji and his devotees had welcomed Ma with great respect and devotion for this function. Ma too sang *kirtan* on numerous occasions.

### **Ma's stay in Doraha.**

20th March 1965. Today for a short interval, Ma along with Her devotees visited Doraha, a small city in Punjab. Twelve to thirteen years ago Ma had stayed here for two three days for *Jannotsav*. *Ram-līla* was also held here every day. The gentleman, who had invited Ma and Haribaba'ji along with the devotees, had himself arrived along with his wife and older son to greet Ma and everyone else. The gentleman seemed to be quite unhealthy. On that day there was a huge storm and hence in the evening Haribaba'ji sang *kirtan* in his own room. In the night when Ma was lying down in Her room, She observed a shape less form which was passing thru the doors and walls without any obstruction. At two a.m. in the night, Shri Avdhootji informed Ma that the landlord's health was deteriorating; anything can happen at any moment. Ma then had a *kheyāl* 'If something happens in the presence of so many *Mahatmas*, then it will be truly fortunate'. That gentleman breathed his last at around five in the morning.

### **Ma's stay in Chandigarh and Delhi.**

23rd March 1965. Today Ma stayed in Chandigarh, in the newly constructed Ashram of Shri Lakshmanji, a Sikh *sadhu* and an ardent devotee of Ma. The Ashram has been named after Ma and its surrounding is also quite beautiful. Shri Lakshmanji belongs to the same family that looks after the Savitri'devi Ashram in Jalandhar. Ma also visited the lake near Chandigarh. Several devotees came to the Ashram to have Ma's *darshan*. Today night, Ma and Haribaba along with the accompanying escorts, departed by train for Delhi. The devotees of Delhi were awaiting Ma's arrival in the station along with their cars, as Ma, Haribaba and all the arriving group members would depart from the station for Vrindavan in those cars.

### **Ma's stay in Vrindavan.**

24th March 1965. The main reason for coming to Vrindavan was an invitation by Shri Prabhudut Brahmachariji to visit his new Ashram where *satsang*, *kirtan*, *Rās-līla*, etc, was continuing everyday for the last few months. Several *Mahatmas* were also giving discourses.

During Ma's stay in Vrindavan, an exceptional incident occurred. A Parsi devotee Shri Puliya Saheb came to Vrindavan to have Ma's *darshan*.

While visiting the Nitai-Gour Temple in Vrindavan, he observed that the eyelids of Shree Gouranga-Dev were blinking just like human beings. Though astonished he felt it to be inconceivable. The next day too he observed the same unbelievable incident, and searching for the priest of the Temple, questioned him angrily, 'Why have you all fitted such a machine within the idol so that the eyes blink and look so lively'. The priest surprised at his behaviour kept quite. The Parsi gentleman then informed this incident to Ma. Ma asked him to repeat the incident in front of *Haribaba*. Also, Ma informed the gentleman that Shree Gouranga MahaPrabhu has blessed him and given him *darshan* in this manner.

### **Ma's stay in Bairagarh, Bhopal.**

27th March 1965. After departing from Vrindavan on 26th March, Ma today morning reached Bairagarh, six kilometers from Bhopal, on the invitation of Sir Data Singh, who was a senior govt. officer and an intense devotee of Ma. He has recently constructed an Ashram for Ma near his house. The Ashram building consists of three rooms, a kitchen, a bathroom, and few other rooms. The surrounding area is quite fascinating. From the Ashram complex, far away the green hills and a huge lake is also visible. Sir Data Singh was very earnestly waiting for Ma's arrival because he sincerely wished to inaugurate the Ashram in Ma's presence. On arrival, Ma too seemed to like the Ashram and its surrounding. It seemed as if Ma is comfortable here. Ma remarked on several occasions that the atmosphere of this place was similar to that in Vindyachal. As the owner of this place was a Sikh, Ma arranged for the recitation of the *Guru Granth-Saheb* every evening in the larger room. Several high officials of Bhopal and the *Begam* of Bhopal also arrived for Ma's *darshan* and all were extremely pleased to be in Ma's presence. Few of the people who visited Ma, also sang *bhajan* and *kirtan* for Ma. Ma too sang *kirtan* on two occasions. The four days in the peaceful atmosphere of Bhopal were spent by Ma in total rest, especially after the busy schedule of Punjab and Vrindavan.



(to be continued)

*As long as you have the energy make efforts to attain Him only.*  
- Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee

## Vedas and Upanishads

Sri Chinmoy

*(continued from before)*

In Vedic times people lived with nature and played with intuition. This intuition gave birth to their poems which are direct knowledge of the Truth. A great many Vedic seers were householders, and several of their pupils after completion of their studies also became householders with a family. The Vedas are divinely practical and these seers taught their students the secret of eternal life. Hence the Vedas consist of the divine duty of the earthly life and the divine beauty of the heavenly life. The Vedic people knew and learnt the divine art of self-renunciation and were dedicated and disciplined to follow it, being aware that this was the only means to attain the End, that is Supreme *Ānanda*, Joy.

There are two methods of studying the Vedas. When we study with the mind, we are constantly pricked by our conscience. When we study with the heart, we are inspired by our consciousness.

There are two words in the Vedas which are as important as the Vedas themselves. These are *Satya* (implying the divine or eternal Truth) and *Rta* (the divine or eternal Law). Truth and Realization symbolize each other. Law and Manifestation also symbolize each other. If we do not live the Truth we do not realize the Goal. If we do not follow the Law, we cannot manifest the Goal.

The Vedas hence inspire us to rise and go beyond the body consciousness. There are four Vedas. The Rig Veda deals mainly with forms of prayers and hence inspires us to make the world great and perfect. The Sāma Veda deals with music and inspires us to become one with the divine melody and cosmic rhythm. The Yajur Veda inspires us to develop self-sacrifice and also how to perform various sacrifices properly. And the Atharva Veda deals with medicine, science and magic formulas and hence inspires us to go along the path of continuous progress guided by *Brihaspati* the Divine *Guru*. It teaches us how to control the spirits and lesser deities, and how to protect ourselves from evil spirits. There are several scientific truths in Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda which modern science has not yet acknowledged.



The concept of sacrifice looms very large in the Vedas. We should sacrifice to God what we have, i.e. ignorance or ego. Sacrifice means to offer oneself to God. And self-offering is self-fulfillment, i.e. always being satisfied, which is the Truth. When we make this sacrifice we come out of the domain of binding desires and enter the domain of liberation.

Two other words are one of the principal teachings of the Vedas, namely *karma* and *gyān*. *Karma* means 'work' or 'service' and *gyān* means knowledge. Through *gyān* we realize the absolute Truth and through *karma* we demonstrate our realization. Whatever we realize, we try to put that into service.

Each Vedic hymn is an invocation to a particular God or deity and is a discovery of a Vedic poet or seer or sage. Each Vedic discovery is a boon from God. They saw the Truth of the God and revealed them in form of hymns. Quite often their revelations are not identical. The difference exists in the realization and revelation of the Truth, there cannot be any difference in the Truth itself. Thus the hymns in the Vedas are the direct revelation of the seers' enlightenment.

As mentioned earlier, the Upanishads are the final part of the Vedas, i.e. the *Vedānta*. According to Indian tradition, there were once 1180 Upanishads, each arising from one branch or *sāka* of the Vedas. Out of these 200 made their proper appearance and at present 108 Upanishads are traceable. Among these, there are 13 principal Upanishads, studying which a genuine seeker can get abundant light and Truth and by following this Truth in his life, he will be able to feel the Divinity. These thirteen principal Upanishads are: *Īūā*, *Katha*, *Kena*, *Prashna*, *Mundaka*, *Māndūkya*, *Chāndogya*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, *Taittirīya*, *Aitareya*, *Shvetāshvatara*, *Kaushitaki* and *Maitrī*.

Each Upanishad is the unfoldment of the Supreme Knowledge. According to the Upanishads, the entire universe of action of movement, lives in the meshes of ignorance. Only by the knowledge of the Supreme Self one can destroy this ego or ignorance. The Upanishads mention that there are three states of ordinary consciousness, i.e. *jāgriti* - the waking state, *swapna* - the dreaming state, and *susupti* - the state of deep sleep. Another state of consciousness is also mentioned, which is called *turyā* - the state of pure consciousness, of the transcendental beyond, of *Sachchidānanda*. It is here, in *Turīya*, that a highly advanced seeker or a spiritual Master can actually hear the soundless sound *Aum*, the Supreme secret of the Creator.

According to the Upanishads, The Supreme Self or the Transcendental Self or the Soul, in this world is covered by five *koshas* or sheaths which together comprises of three types of *sharīrs* or bodies. The first is the *sthula sharīr* or the gross physical body comprising of the *annamaya kosha*, the material substance. The second is the *sūkshma sharīr* or the subtle body, which is the body of the vital breath, mind and intellect which keep the physical body alive. It comprises of the *prānamay kosha* (vital breath or energy), the *manamay kosha* (mind) and the *vijnānmay kosha* (mental or intellect). The third is the *kāraṇa sharīr* or the casual body which comprises of the *ānandamay kosha*, the sheath of Bliss.

We are all aware of the Sun. When the sun appears, it chases away all darkness, it makes the light of the moon or the stars or the glow-worms moving in the darkness diminished into insignificance. This is the outer sun. But each one of us has an inner sun, which is infinitely more illumining than the outer sun. When this sun shines, it destroys the darkness of the millennia. This sun shines through Eternity. This inner sun is called the Self, the Transcendental Self, the Soul.



(to be continued)

#### List of Festivals

1. <i>Gangā Dussherā</i>	June 20, 2021.
2. <i>Jagannāth RathYatra</i>	July 12, 2021.
3. <i>Guru Purnimā Mahotsav</i>	July 24, 2021.
4. Shree 108 Swami Muktananda Giri <i>Tirodhān Utsav</i>	August 15, 2021.
5. <i>Jhulan Utsav</i>	August 18 - 22, 2021.
6. <i>Bhaiji Nirvān Tithi</i>	August 19, 2021
7. <i>Jhulan Purnimā</i>	August 21, 2021
8. <i>Rakshā Bandhan</i>	August 22, 2021
9. <i>Janmāshdami</i>	August 30, 2021

**Pādpeetham Smarāmi**  
**Puri Ashram - In the Land of Lord Jagannāth**

Brchini. Geeta

(continued from before)

In *Skand Mahapurān*, in the section describing the importance of Lord *Purushottam (Jagannāth)*, it is clearly mentioned how Indradamna, the King of Malwa, arrived in *Jagannāth-dhām* (the land of Lord *Jagannāth*), and by His divine inspiration had built the magnificent temple and had installed in it the divine *Daru-Brahma* idols of Lord *Jagannāth*, *Subhadrā* and *Balarām*. Finally he too had settled down in this *Jagannāth-dhām*.

Swargdwar the locality in Puri where Ma's Ashram is situated is a famous crematorium site and is reckoned as a land of salvation.

Once during Ma's presence, the Ashram management distributed new clothes to the destitute sitting in front of the Lord *Jagannāth* temple.

On 9th January, 1964, Shri Jagan Prasad Rawat'ji, an MLA of Uttar Pradesh visited Ma in the Puri Ashram and then accompanied Ma to have *darshan* of Lord *Jagannāth*. Shri Jagan'ji had actually arrived to attend the All India Congress Session in Bhubaneswar. Later several other Congress leaders visited Ma and all of them were blessed to have Ma's *prasād*.

*Nām-yagna* has been celebrated several times in Ma's presence in Puri Ashram. HariBabaji too has arrived here several times along with Ma and has held *Rās-Lilā*, *kirtan* and *satsang* regularly.

Gajapati Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb, the current titular King of Puri had also visited Ma in the Puri Ashram. His wife and mother are truly dedicated to Ma and have visited Ma several times.

The festival of the Swing (*Dolā-Yātrā*) is celebrated every year in the Lord *Jagannāth's* Temple. There is a special reason for this festival. In the 42nd chapter of the *Purushottam-kshetra-māhātmya* of the *Vaishnav-khand* of the *Skand Purān*, from the 21st to 43rd *sloka* (verse), it is mentioned how Indradamna first celebrated *Jhulan-Utsav* in Vrindavan. It is mentioned as the *Dolārohan Parva*. In Sanskrit *jhulā* (a swing) is also called as *Dolā* or *Hindol*. These verses explain that Lord *Brahma* had first

narrated this story of *Krishna-Leelā* being celebrated by *Rājarshi* Indradyumna in Vrindavan. In Vrindavan's Nikunj-Dham, in tune with the humming of the intoxicated bumblebees, a swing is constructed adorned with jewels and flowers and Lord *Govinda* or *ShreeKrishna*, also beautifully adorned with garlands and various ornaments is seated and consecrated on this swing, with *Rajrajeshwari Devi Rādhikā* seated on His left. The *gopikā's* and *gopābalak's* (cowherd girls and boys) are swinging *ShreeKrishna* and *Rādhikā*. One gets salvation by the very *darshan* of this enchanting *leelā*. During the festival of the Swing it seems as if Vrindavan has been transplanted at Puri.

In 2005, a special *Jhulan* Festival was organized in the Puri Ashram. Along with that *Nām-yagna* was also held. This *Jhulan* festival is celebrated in Puri Ashram every year also as *Matri-Smaran-Utsav*. The aim being to joyously contemplate and meditate on Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee during each and every moment of that day.

On the western side of the Puri Ashram, on Ma's instruction, Shri Jadunath Bhattacharya (*Mamu*, youngest brother of Shree Shree Ma) had purchased some land and had constructed a small house on it. Later on when he settled down in Varanasi then that land and house were legally handed over to the Ashram and was utilized as the Ashram's Guest House. Recently it has been renovated into the "Matri-Bhakt-Niwas" and has been finally inaugurated on 19th March 2016.

Due to Shree Shree Ma's blessings, this Ashram is being further developed and several special functions are regularly being organized here. Devotees from Kolkata and Agarpara Ashram come here quite often and enjoy the Ashram and its surrounding beauty.



Regarding Lord *Jagannāth's* appearance, Ma once said, "Do you know what has happened? Seeing Radha or the absolute devotee, whatever you can think, Lord *Jagannāth* is overwhelmed with love and His eyes remain wide opened in astonishment and His limbs melt in devotion."

## Ma is Omnipresent

Brchini. Jaya

Our Ma is eternally Blissful. It is joy only, which resides in the innermost hearts of every human being. There also exists an eternal Truth, The Self, The *Sachchidānanda*. The very moment one bows down and offers himself at the lotus feet of Shree Shree Ma, that eternal Self, blossoms forth. Just meditating on Ma's Blissful appearance, a surge of joy flows through our innermost thoughts. Ma has said, "A living being by nature craves for *Ānandam*, Joy. Since this joy is already within them they crave for it, otherwise this desire would not arise. It cannot rest without attaining that joy. The desire for this joy and peace can be observed in all living beings. Even the tiniest of insects do not want to move towards heat or affliction. They too want comfort, security and peace. All beings desire shade and cool water after being scorched in the sun. Humans too scorched by the three afflictions search for the abode of peace, the source of *Ānandam*, Joy, The God Almighty."

The whole universe is Shree Shree Ma's one and only one Ashram. Ma has said, "This body does not construct an Ashram." But due to Ma's infinite grace, a pious thought had arisen in the mind of Dadabhai (Gurupriya Didi, as she was called by the residents of Kanyapeeth), that those women especially *kumaris*, those who have the desire to follow the path of *sādhana*, should have a desirable Ashram. With Ma's complete consent that wish of Dadabhai took the form of the Kanyapeeth. Ma had a special *kheyāl* of imbibing the sense of *brahmacharya* onto young girls and boys. And hence because of this *kheyāl*, just like Dadabhai who had a wish to form the Kanyapeeth for young girls, Bhaiji too had a wish to form the Vidyapeeth for young boys.

As for Kanyapeeth, Ma had given instructions and had personally trained the girls for everything, how to move around, how to talk, what would be the daily routine, what and when to have meals, what clothes to wear and when. With Ma's guidance the girls or Brahmacharinis of Kanyapeeth were also given prizes during the Kanyapeeth annual day. The prizes were not only for the exam results or for the handicrafts or for Yoga exercises, etc.,

but also for speaking the truth, good behaviour, politeness and devotion to service or *seva-bhāv*. And the inmates got their best prize when Ma Herself praised them and that too in front of others.

**1957, May, Varanasi.** During the *Bāsanti Durga Puja*, an elder sister of the Kanyapeeth narrated to me the conversation that she had with Ma on the day of *Shasti* (sixth day of *Navratri*). She narrated: During lunch time in the afternoon Ma called for me and when I went, Ma asked me, "Have you taken *Panch-gobya* ? (the sacred mixture of 5 items, meant to purify oneself before attending any rituals). I said I hadn't. Ma then asked, "How much *Japa* have you done? Don't fool yourself." I replied that I was not sure. I had not counted while doing *japa*. Ma asked me to guess. I thought and said that in some day's maybe for 30 minutes and on some days 10-15 minutes. Ma said, "This feeling of neglecting, not knowing, not showing interest, not being mindful, all these too are a type of fooling, isn't it?" I agreed. Pleased Ma said, "Good girl, so you have understood. It is good to accept the faults." Again in the night I requested Ma that I wanted to talk to Her. Ma said, "Well, when I will go upstairs, then you can come along." The moment I entered Ma's room, Ma said, "So, you sing quite well. I was not aware of it."

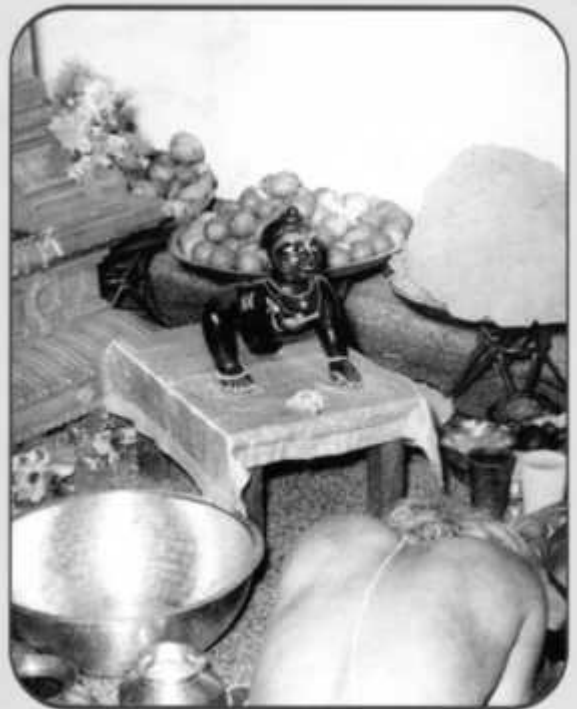
I said, "Ma, about my *japa* that You had mentioned earlier. I do not maintain a fixed count while doing the *japa*. The *dwadash mantra* (*mantra* having 12 letters) that you had given, I had tried to repeat that more than 300 times, but I don't remember the exact count." Ma then said, "Well. Daily repeat it 2000 times. Tomorrow before repeating the *mantra* take a bath in the River Ganga and then do *japa*, 6000 to 8000 times. And tomorrow while *Devi Shashti-Puja* is being conducted, after *Durga Devi's* bathe is over, swallow a bit of that *Devi's* bathing water, because it contains everything, it is a Divine bath. It will not be necessary to swallow *panch-gobya* after that. I then requested Ma to give me a specific number of *japa* to be performed. Ma advised, "You will of course repeat the *Ishta-mantra* 108 times daily, morning and evening. And besides that, whether in one month or in three months complete one lakh *japa*. How so ever you can, in whatever time available."

I then requested Ma to rectify my mind. Ma asked me how I felt. I replied that sometimes I ponder whether I have gained anything in coming to the Ashram. Ma consoled me by saying, "You have accepted a sanctified and spiritual life. Whether you wish or not, *kirtan-pāth* (religious songs





Shree Shree Ma Annapurna Devi,  
Varanasi Ashram



Shree Shree Bal Gopal,  
Varanasi Ashram



*Daridra-Narayan Bhojan* during Ma's 60th Birth Anniversary  
at Varanasi in 1906





Shree Shree Ma's awesome countenance just after the 60th *Janmotsav Tithi Puja* in 1966



Shree Shree Ma's *Tula-daan*  
in Varanasi in 1966



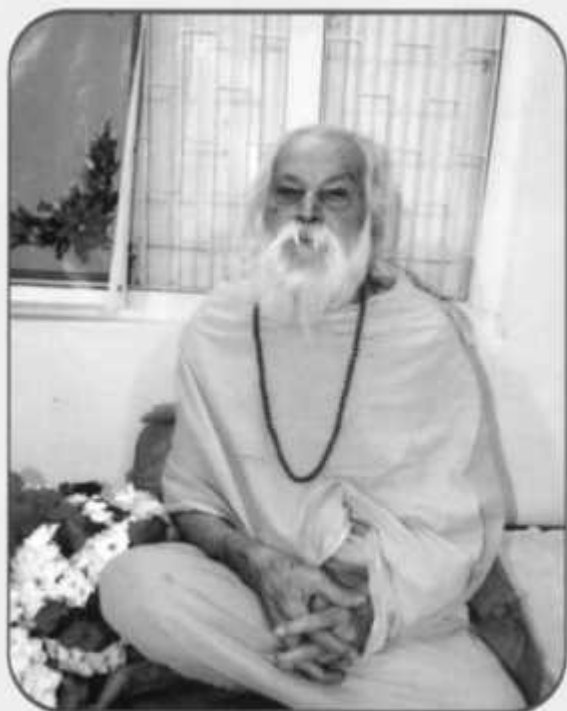
Didima, Narayan Swamiji and Br. Kusum 'da  
in 1965 *Janmotsav*



The festival of Holi in Varanasi Ashram



Shree Shree Ma with devotees  
in Varanasi Ashram



Swami Nirvananandji Maharaj



Shree Shree Ma with Didima



Shree Shree Ma with Didima and Dadamoshai (Ma's parents)



and scriptures) is passing through your ears. This too has a positive action.” I then said that I didn’t like to do any work. But sometimes after completing the work I felt good and again sometimes I liked to work too. What could be the reason. Ma said, “Yes, this is because of laziness. Such a feeling occurs during this period. Why should you be afraid of ‘work’? You should think, ‘Work should be afraid of me. By continuously working, I will swallow up work. What can work do to me?’” I asked Ma as to how I could get rid of this laziness. Ma replied that it could be overcome only by regular *japa*. Ma further advised, “Study with dedication. Didi wishes that, you all should stand on your own feet. Take care of everything properly. Strengthen your mind, restrain your mind.”

**1961, June, Pune.** If one genuinely has complete faith in Ma and is totally dependant on Ma, then all threat and perils get eliminated. I myself have witnessed several such incidents. Ma was in Pune. Suddenly the rain started falling with great force. Within few minutes the adjoining grounds were flooded with water. The rain continued the next day too. The government administration alerted everyone and informed that flood water is rising at a great pace. Prakash’da and other local *sadhus* informed Ma, “Ma, the local police and officials are claiming that the flood water is rising alarmingly and that we should move over to some safe place.” Ma called Pushpa’di and said, “Go and inform Didi.” On informing Dadabhai about it, Dadabhai said, “Our saviour is sitting in the next room.” Dadabhai was totally unagitated! Ma then said to discuss the matter with Swami Paramanandji. On informing him about the flood, he replied, “Who said so? Tomorrow is *Bhandāra* (a special feast). None of those people want to work, hence they are giving an excuse. Tell everybody to start chopping the enormous quantity of vegetables required for the *bhandāra*.” After that Swamiji went near Ma and said, “Ma, if the flood water increases then we will dig a canal. The water will flow away.” Hearing this Ma kept silent for some time and then Ma suddenly started laughing a lot. Ma then spoke in Hindi, “When news arrived that the flood water was rising with great force, then this body had a *kheyāl* that the water should be told, ‘now gradually descend’.”



(to be continued)

## Few Priceless Reminiscence

Brhini. Indu

During a function of the distribution of awards, along with Shree Shree Ma, several invited dignitaries were also present. The Hall (in Gopal-Mandir) was jam packed with spectators. The Kanyapeeth Brahmacharinis were presenting debates and various cultural programs in Sanskrit. I too had participated in the debate. During my oration, for a moment I got nervous and forgetting my lines I had fallen silent. Though I had later narrated the whole speech again, I was quite ashamed and felt humiliated. I came to my room and fell asleep while crying. The next day, *Belu-di* the younger sister of Dadabhai (GurupriyaDidi) informed me, "Yesterday at twelve midnight I had been to your room as Ma had called for you. Since you were fast asleep, I didn't disturb you. Ma has informed everyone, 'She has not said anything wrong, everything was correct. She had just forgotten which nobody could understand'. I was totally amazed to hear these consoling words of Ma. My agony was immediately dissolved. Ma had so much *kheyāl* towards small kids like us too.

\* \* \*

Once during Geeta Jayanti Ma was also present in the Ashram. During this four day function, six chapters of the *Srimad-Bhagwat-Gita* was recited every day. Since I had been given duty in the *Puja*-room of the Kanyapeeth, one day I reached the Hall a bit late. Ma sitting ahead called me and scolded me for being late and then later consoled me too. Ma had a special *kheyāl* that the Kanyapeeth girls should always cautiously and strictly follow the religious rules, so that their future thoughts will be built on this foundation only.

\* \* \*

The following incident I had heard from Brahmacharini Geeta:

To attend Ma's *Janmotsav* in Ma's Uttarkashi Ashram, I was escorted by *Madhu-bhen* and *Debu-da* from Varanasi reaching Kankhal Ashram a few days before the function. And from there went to Uttarkashi along with the other Kanyapeeth girls already present there. After the *Janmotsav*

on 27th May, Ma departed for Kankhal. From there on 28th May, Ma went to Raipur after visiting the Kishenpur Ashram. I too reached Raipur along with the elder *Didi's* (Sisters). In Raipur, since there were few members, I helped Udas'ji in serving Ma and also cooked the meals for everybody. Ma's health was not quite well.

*Bhandāra* was held one day. While I was in the kitchen, Ma suddenly called me and asked, 'When do you all wake up in while staying in Kanyapeeth? When do you all sing the *Ushā-kīrtan*?' After I replied, Ma again said, 'Why was *kīrtan* not held here today? Did you all not feel that Ma's health is not well, sitting outside Ma's door sing some *kīrtan* for Ma? *Gita, Chandī-Pāth* was also not held today'. Earlier night I was awake all night in Ma's room with Udas'ji, and the next day was *Bhandāra*. Hence after waking up, I had rushed to the kitchen. I had to help Udas'ji too in Ma's room. Ma said; 'You could have at least read one *sloka* of the *Gita* after putting the water with the pulses for boiling? I returned and informed the elder *Didi's* to chant *Gita-Chandī* outside Ma's door. Once they started the chanting I returned back to the kitchen. Immediately Ma called me and started scolding again, for instructing the *Didi's* to chant the scriptures. I started crying and returned to the kitchen. After some time Ma came to the kitchen and observing some flaw scolded me again. Due to non-stop crying I started getting hiccups. Somehow I managed to finish cooking the meals. Ma sent instructions through someone, 'Tell Geeta to meet me after finishing her meals'. I immediately rushed to Ma's room, where Ma asked me to shut the door. Ma lovingly caressed me and said, 'You are young, who else could I scold? Did you not see? The elder Sister's were standing nearby only. I scolded you so that they can hear and learn a lesson from these incidents'. In this manner Ma consoled for quite some time. Ma further said, 'This Body wants you to cook My food, but they take to that (*Shuddhachāri* kitchen) kitchen'. That day itself after caressing me a lot, Ma sent me to Naimisharnya Ashram along with Atmanand'ji. Ma said; 'This Body will reach there later'.

Just the 'name'; by the 'name' itself everything occurs. The 'name' and the 'named' are identical. The 'name' is His form only. Consciousness arises when you repeat the 'name'. Just as when seeds are sown, trees are born.

--- Shree Shree Ma Anandamaye

## **My first *darshan* of Shree Shree Ma (In Ma's Varanasi Ashram)**

Brehini. Sunanda

In 1977, *Baba* (my father), was then posted in Dumuriya, Jhadgram in Mednipore, as the Head Master of a teaching institution. From my home town, I went to Jhadgram to see my father. A friend of *Baba*, affectionately presented me with a book in Bengali named '*Bharoter Sādhok o Sādhikā*' ('Saints of India'), written by Ganesh Chakravorty. In this book there was an article by Dinesh Chakravorty – 'Shree Shree Anandamayee Ma'. This article touched me deeply and I had deep desire to see Her. How she looked, whether She talked with the common man and other similar thoughts kept occurring within my mind. There was no one to discuss or ask. *Baba* had a fixed routine. One day after classes when he came home, washed himself, and was taking a rest, I asked him about Shree Shree Ma. He replied, "Ma is still alive and has an Ashram in Kashi (Varanasi). Shree Shree Jogeshwari Mahadevi Ma and Shree Shree Anandamayee Ma are both from Dhaka, however Jogeshwari Ma is not alive now." So I politely requested *Baba* to accompany me to have *darshan* of Shree Shree Ma.

*Baba* replied, "The final exams of my students are about to start in ten fifteen days. Both of us will depart for Varanasi after their exams are over." I could not accept this statement of *Baba*. I returned back to my home town. Then without informing anyone and carrying some cash with me, I departed for Kashi in the hope of having *darshan* of Shree Shree Ma. I took a bus to Kharagpur railway station and stood in front of the ticket counter. A gentleman asked me where I wanted to go. When I said Kashi, he again asked whether I had purchased a ticket or not. On giving a negative answer, he asked some cash from me and said that he would purchase the ticket for me. I handed over my moneybag to him and he left. He returned back after sometime and carrying my luggage asked me to follow him. We crossed the overbridge and reached a platform where a train was standing. We boarded the train and it started running. When the train reached Bhodrob, he asked me to get down as I had to catch another train for Kashi. Another train Doon Express was already standing here in



another platform and the travelers were boarding the train with the help of the police personal. He handed over my baggage and moneybag and asked me move ahead towards the police. The police helped me in boarding the train and train started off soon. I could not see that gentleman anymore. The train was too crowded and I was standing perplexed. Suddenly saw three strongly built men guarding me by holding their arms in a circle and said to me in hindi, "*Bhenji, darnā nahi*" (Sister, do not fear). And were saying to the others coming near, "*Dekhtā nahi, samne bhenji hai.*" (Don't you see, sister is standing here). After sometime had passed in this manner, they managed to get a vacant seat for me and asked me to sit down. After that I could not see them anymore. Sitting in this manner the night passed away and dawn was nearing. A girl and a boy came and sat down next to me. The girl asked me politely as to where I was going. When I replied Kashi, they were overjoyed and said that their house too was in Kashi. I asked them, "There is an ashram of Shree Shree Anandamayee Ma in Kashi. Do you know its whereabouts?" They replied that they knew about it and that it was only a ten minutes walk from their house. I requested them to help me in reaching Ma's Ashram. They agreed to it. On reaching Varanasi station, after we got down, they took me to their house and offered me tea and biscuits. But I was in a hurry to reach the Ashram. So an aged person by the name of Sitanath Ustad accompanied me to Ma's Ashram. After showing me the entrance of the Ashram he bid me farewell and departed. Cautiously I entered the Ashram. Ahead was an office, an open space and a big Shiv-linga at the opposite end. Standing from there I paid my obeisance to Baba-Bholanath. Just ahead across the boundary wall I saw the enchanting u-shaped *uttar-bāhini* (northernly flowing), guilt-destroying, River Ganga. I prayed to Her too. In the office room was seated in white clothes a white-bearded, white haired gentleman, busy with his writing. On seeing me he asked, "What do you want? Whom do you want? Will you say something?" I informed him that I had come in search of Shree Shree Anandamayee Ma. He then enquired where I had come from, whether I had any correspondence with Ma and whether I had a place to stay here in Kashi. I replied, "I have come alone from Mednipore and have no written correspondence with Ma. Also I do not have a place to stay in Kashi." He then said, "At present Ma is in Kailash Ashram, Haridwar and will arrive here in November. Since you cannot meet Her now, you will have to leave." Standing numb I was just hearing and was not even

aware of the time passing by. Suddenly I heard him calling, "Bula, Bula." A young boy in his teens wearing a half-pant and half-shirt came and stood in front of him. Later I learnt that this kind old gentleman was Sailen-da. He wrote a letter and handing it over to Bula told him to take me to the nearby Ganga-Ma's Ashram and that he should first hand over the letter to Ganga-Ma and only then should I be introduced. On reaching Ganga-Ma's Ashram, I saw a lady sitting on a cot in an open verandah. Bula paid his obeisance to her and handed over the letter. After reading the letter she told Bula to inform Swamiji to be relaxed and not to worry at all for me. Bula departed with the assuring reply and then Ganga-Ma asking my name and whereabouts and looking me over for a while, took me inside her room. She called a girl and told her to take me to a guest room. Ganga-Ma told me to have a bath, and after taking some food, to rest for a while. The girl took me to a room and brought some snacks too. After having bath and the snacks while I was resting a lady came and asked me to hand over my purse and cash to her. After sometime the earlier girl came and took me to see the evening *ārti* as ordered by *Mai'ji* (Ganga-Ma). On reaching the *Puja* room my mind and body became relaxed and calm with the on-going *kirtan*, *bhajan*, *ārti* and finally *pranām-mantra*. After the completion of the *sandhyā-ārti* the girl took me to *Mai'ji's* room. *Mai'ji* after telling me to sit down, asked me whether I was comfortable and whether I liked the *ārti* or not. I said it was splendid.

(to be continued)



*"Without worldly agony, the desire to be acquainted with the engineer of this Universal machine is not awakened. Hence diseases, sorrow, shortage, repentance, etc., are all essential for the human life. Just as fire destroys all garbage, etc., similarly by tritaap (triple sufferings – bodily pain, natural disaster, divine outbreak), all garbage of the human mind are destroyed and the concentration towards God arises. When there is pain in the heart due to the remembrance of one's own weakness, and indiscipline, etc.; when due to agony, poverty, bereavement of wife and children, dishonour, etc., one feels futile to stay alive, only then faith and belief arises within, and then one becomes restless to prostrate and plead before the holy feet of the Lord. For this reason only, heartily accept all sorrows and pain. The rays of moonlight in no other occasion, seems so very pleasant as in the heat of the summer."*

--- Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee.

**Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Prasanga**  
(Special issue on MA's 61st *Janmotsav* – Vol-10)

Amulya Kumar Dutta Gupta

**MA's 60th Birth Anniversary ( 61st *Janmotsav*) in Varanasi Ashram**

*19 Baisakh, 1363, Wednesday (03-May-1956)*. Today Shree Shree Ma stepped onto Her sixty-first year. Hence this time Ma's sixtieth Birth Anniversary and sixty-first *Janmotsav* will be celebrated with great pomp and festivity. This festival commencing on 3rd May (*19th Baisakh*) will culminate on 25th May (*14th Jyashth*). During this period like every year various celebrations and festivities have been organized. The festivities for this special Anniversary has been divided into five groups: (1) Holistic Rituals (*puja and havan*); (2) Special function by Mahatma HariBaba'ji; (3) Religious and spiritual discourses; (4) Program on dance and music; (5) *Sadhu, Brahmin and Daridra Seva*.

All these festivities are being celebrated in two different places – within the Ashram and in the temporarily constructed Pavilion tent or *Pandāl*. The rituals and *Sadhu Seva* are being held in the Ashram and the rest of the programs in the Pavilion tent or *Pandāl*.

The *Pandāl* has been constructed in the open vacant land of around 13000 sq.mts (5-6 *bigha*) very near to the Ashram, towards the main road. Presently the 'Shree Shree Mata Anandamayee Hospital' is situated on this land. This land has been properly leveled and after clearing off all debris, a huge Pavilion tent or *Pandāl* has been erected whose dimension is 130 hands length wise from North to South and 90 hands from East to West. The main entrance to the *Pandāl* is on the southern side and on the northern end a vast stage has been erected from where the eminent *Mahatmas* gave their discourse and the singers sat with their musicians. A brick wall surrounding the *Pandāl* has been covered with straw mats (*khus-khus*), which are kept wet all the time. Adequate arrangement of electric lights and fans has been made in the *Pandāl*. Hence, inspite of the presence of hundreds of spectators or devotees within the *Pandāl*, nobody had to suffer from the heat. Besides, in the morning and evening, the area around the *Pandāl* is watered and kept wet. Hence, after entering the *Pandāl* one

felt as if one has entered a new pristine land where the intense power of the Sun-God has also been thwarted.

A bit further away from the *Pandāl*, few stalls have been erected. In the first one Ma's photos and books, and in the second one, items hand-made by the Kanyapeeth *Kumaris* are being sold. The third stall is utilized as an office and a doctor is all the time present with few emergency medical aids. People could gather all required information of the Ashram and the function from here. A little further away two small *pandāls* have been erected. One of these is occupied by a fire-brigade unit with their equipments and the other by social service personnel who were taking care of the slippers and other items of the people entering the festival area. Quite a number of loud-speakers have been installed within and outside the Pavilion tent, so that the visitors who are outside the *Pandāl* can also listen to the discourses and the music. In fact, the planning and construction of this Pavilion tent has been done on a large scale and the engineers and construction workers have all arrived from Bombay. I have also heard that the total cost for its construction was around eleven thousand rupees and all of these had been managed and funded by Shri B.K. Shah, an old devotee of Ma staying in Bombay (Ma's Ashram in Bombay was actually situated in his compound). A brief account of the holistic rituals (*pujā and havan*) held during this festival is described below:

(a) *Ram archhā and Shiv archanā*: *Ram archhā* comprises of the worship of Lord Rama and *māhātmya-pāth*. This was a wish of Haribaba'ji Maharaj and it continued from the first day to the last of the function. *Shiv archanā* comprises of worship of Lord Shiva and *Mahamrityunjay-jap*. Along with the ashramites, outsiders too took part in this program.

(b) *Sahastra-Chandi-pāth*: This normal *chandi-pāth* repeated 1000 times was held in the *Matri-mandap* (an enclosed *pandāl* near the Ashram) during this *Janmotsav* period. Before the *chandi-pāth*, an idol of *Devi Chandi* was fabricated using 23.33 gms (2 *bhori*) of gold and installed on a silver throne with an umbrella. During the worship, several gold ornaments, silk dress and silver utensils were offered to the goddess. The *chandi-pāth* was daily read by 25 *brahmins*, twice a day, in front of this idol. Daily three *kumari's* and one *batuk* were offered *prasād*. After the culmination of this *chandi-pāth*, a *yagna* was held for five days.

(c) *Samputit Sahastra-Chandi-pāth*: The *samputit sahastra-chandi-pāth* was also held in the *Matri-mandap*. This recitation (*pāth*) was not

planned in the original schedule. It was suddenly decided and even though there was no earlier preparation, it was duly initiated. Since a separate golden idol could not be fabricated for this ritual, a 23.33 gm golden leaf was purchased and after inscribing on it the *Devi-beej-mantra*, it was installed on a similar silver throne and worshipped during the *pāth*. During this worship too, several gold ornaments, silk dress and silver utensils were religiously offered to the goddess. For this *chandi-pāth* and worship, 86 *brahmins* were appointed, including the main *āchārya pundit* and the *jāpak*. Daily three *kumari*'s and one *batuk* were offered *prasād*. After the culmination of the *pāth*, at the same instance *yagna* was held in five altars. Also a *kumari* decorated with golden ornaments was worshipped and later silver utensils were offered too. All the *brahmins* for both the above *chandi-pāths* were Maharashtrians.

Finally a joint *yagna* was held for both the above *chandi-pāths* and a bull and a cow with a calf were donated after decorating them with golden horns, silver hooves and copper plates. The *āchārya* and his wife were also honored by donating food items and a golden necklace and clothes for the *ācharyā* and golden ornaments, clothes, cot, table, utensils and loads of food items. For both the *chandi-pāths*, 200 *brahmins* were offered *prasād*.

(d) *Shat-Chandi-pāth*: In the temple of the Goddess *Chandi* in Lalita Ghat, *shat-chandi-pāth* was held as was proposed by Sw Avdhutji Maharaj. For this six *brahmins* were selected and *Ma-Chandi-Devi* was worshipped on a 23.33 gm golden leaf idol.

(e) *Rudra-abhishek*: From 6th May onwards *Rudra-abhishek* was started in the verandah of the Annapurna Mandir. For this program including the main *āchārya pundit* and the *jāpak*, 13 *brahmins* were selected from Varanasi district. A paste of *gulanch*, pepper, nuts and *siddhi* is mixed with Ganga-water and milk and then *Rudra-Dev* (Lord Shiva) is bathed and cleansed (*Rudra-abhishek*) with this mixture. On 17th May, *yagna* and *purna-āhuti* were done after the culmination of the ritual.

(f) *Vishnu yagna*: Immediately after the culmination of the above *Rudra-abhishek*, *Vishnu yagna* was started on 18th May and it continued till 21st May. For this program including the main *āchārya*, 17 *brahmins* were nominated. The 17 *brahmins* were from Varanasi district and as per the wishes of Avdhutji Maharaj, the *āchārya* was however brought from Rishikesh. Lord *Vishnu* and *MahaLakshmi* engraved on a golden leaf, and

God *Garud* engraved on a silver leaf, were worshipped during this ritual and both of these were installed on a silver throne. The *purna-āhuti* of this *yagna* was done on 22nd May. On that day too *go-dān* (donating cow) and *brahmin-bhojan* (offering *prasād* to *brahmins*) was organized.

(g) *Tulādān*: For this ceremony of *tulādān* (donating gold etc. equal to the weight of Shree Shree Ma), a thatched hut was constructed in front of the Kanyapeeth building having a wooden frame and pillars and the ceiling made of straws. This straw ceiling was covered with *mārkin* cloth (special white thick fabric) on the outside and with *shālu* cloth (red thin fabric) on the inside. The pillars were also covered with *shālu* cloth and then wrapped with *Jari* (silver/gold brocade). Inside the hut a dais was built with a *yagna-kund* (sacrificial-altar) and four smaller *yagna-kunds* for four *Veda*'s. The *tulādān* ceremony was held on 28th May. But the initiation of this function had started from the evening of 27th May and for this program including the main *āchārya*, 25 Bengali *brahmins* were engaged. On 28th the *yagna* in the five *kund*'s were finally over by two in the afternoon. After this for the *tulādān* ceremony, Shree Shree Ma was weighed individually with the following items: (1) Pieces of *Ashtadhātu*. This metal alloy comprised of 466 gm (0.5 *seer*) of gold, 28.9kg (31 *seer*) of silver, copper, brass, bronze, tin, lead and iron; (2) rice; (3) grain; (4) barley; (5) sesame; (6) *maskalai*; (7) ghee; (8) sugar; (9) *batasa* (10) fruits; (11) fabric comprising of both cotton and silk. Later on all these weighed items were distributed among the *brahmins*.

(h) *Ganga-puja* and *Ved-pāth*: The worship of Goddess Ganga and recitation of Vedas was also held on two separate days. During Ganga worship 37kg (1 *maund*) of milk and a huge garland from one bank to the other, was offered to Mother Ganga. On another day seven *brahmins* recited the Vedas and later each one of them were offered donation (*dakshinā*) of four rupees and also milk, sweets, etc.

(i) *Kumari-puja*: Twice during the function 108 *Kumari*'s were worshipped and offered donations. On the first occasion the *kumari*'s were donated one rupee and on the second occasion four annas and one scarf.

(j) *Shree Shree Ma's extraordinary and unique puja*: During the complete festival period Ma was worshipped and *ārti* was done both in the morning and evening by the young Brahmachari Kusum Banerjee (later known as Sw.Nirvananandji). (a) *Pushpa-Vatikā*: Two days on Sw. Avdhutji's request, Ma was seated within a hut beautifully decorated with

garlands. This hut was constructed on the stage of the Pavilion and was decorated by the famous flower decorators of *Biharilāl'ji's* temple of Vrindavan. These decorators were invited along with their accessories by Sw. Avdhutji Maharaj and the expense for it was in hundreds of rupees. However, Ma could not be seated in this wonderful hut for even half an hour. (b) *Singha-vāhini āsan*: Sw. Avdhutji had also seen Ma as (*Devī SinghaVāhini*) Goddess *Durga* riding on Her lion. So he had proposed that Ma should be worshipped on the *Tithi* day seated on a lion carved from *ashtadhātu*. Khukuni-Didi (Gurupriyadi) agreed to this proposal and initially this throne was being fabricated in Mumbai, but due to certain inconveniences the fabrication was handed over to the famous sculptor B.K.Pal in Kolkata, who made a huge lion shaped throne. The cost of fabrication of the throne was twelve thousand rupees and it was almost 1045kg (28 *maund*) and almost five feet in height. On the back of the lion was a velvet covered seat decorated with silver. The seat could be dismantled and used separately. The eyes of the lion could be lighted with a battery and hence these looked very lively. A staircase covered with velvet was also fabricated to reach the top of the seat. This throne itself was a unique thing of display and people from far and near used to be amazed after having a glimpse of it.

Ma's birthday worship was held both on the late night of 3rd May (birthday as per English calendar) and 25th May (birthday as per Hindu almanac). On 3rd May the lion throne was placed in the Chandi-Māndap. Several had a doubt that Ma would not lay down on the new lion throne, and that became true too. Ma insisted to sit on the staircase of the throne, instead of sitting on seat of the throne, in spite of several requests by Sw. Shankaranandji, Ma still kept sitting like a stone statue on the stairs with an unusual expression on Her face. We sat in front of Ma while Brahmachari Kusum worshipped Ma. Observing the effect of the large crowd during this worship and the *Tulādān* held earlier, it was decided to hold Ma's *Tithi-Puja* on 25th in the Pavilion. Gate-passes were distributed to the devotees and hence the crowd within the Pavilion could be properly controlled. The lion throne was placed on the stage of the Pavilion. When Ma was brought near the throne, this time too Ma sat down on the stairs of the throne and would not climb up to the throne. Avdyutji Maharaj and Haribabaji Maharaj came near Ma and with folded hands begged Ma to climb over to the seat of the throne. Unable to ignore their earnest request,

Ma was compelled to climb up and on reaching the seat, lied down on the seat of the throne. Ma was then worshipped in that manner only and later the devotees lined up and one by one came near and paid their homage to Ma.



### Gurupriyadi's treasure trove

- Editor

Sitaram *Baba* is an aged joyous and pleasing natured saintly person, a devotee of *Shree Ram*. A small hut has been constructed for him near to Ma's hut. For the past one and half years he has been bearing the extreme pain of cancer. Today around midday Ma came and sat down below a tree very near to his hut. Inside his hut *Baba ji* is shrieking due to the agony of the disease. Immediately Ma starts repeating the name of *Shree Ram*, "*Jai Ram Shree Ram Jai Jai Ram.*"

In his agony when he becomes aware of Ma's presence, he manages to come out and lies down in front of Ma to pay his obeisance. But Ma continued repeating the 'name' and by dusk HariBabaji also arrived and sat down beside Ma and started repeating the name of *Shree Ram*.

Sometime later Ma said to Sitaram*Baba*, "Only the 'name'. It removes all poison and malignancy. Just think, this is the final agony. There will not be any further affliction. In all conditions, just cry for Him.

Smilingly Sitaram *Babaji* said, "Ma, I do not have any sorrow for the dreaded disease, even though the pain of the disease is unbearable. But bless me so that I may not forget His name at the last moment."





## Visit to Dhaka for Shree Shree Ma's *Darshan*

Sw. Narayananand Tirth

While I was staying in Varanasi, Ma had not arrived here for a long long time and hence during 1930 or 1931, I had an intense urge to have Ma's *darshan*. I suppose during *Pitri-paksh*, just a few days before *Sharadiya Durga Puja*, I took three months leave from my work place and departed for Dhaka to have Ma's *darshan*. After a long time maybe around twenty-five to thirty years later I was going back to East Bengal (present Bangladesh). Staying for a few hours in my maternal auntie's house in Calcutta I boarded the Dhaka Mail at eight in the night. My auntie was depressed with my behaviour of not staying with her for some more time. But her persuasions could not stop me in Calcutta. After having Ma's *darshan* for the first time, the eagerness and excitement that arises to see Her again and again cannot be expressed in words. The joy of staying with Ma cannot be explained by writing to those who have never stayed with Ma. Staying near Ma, the bodily discomforts are not felt at all. This diseased body of mine has become an important obstruction for receiving Ma's proximity.

With all bodily difficulty I boarded the train to Dhaka from Sealdah station which departed exactly at 8 p.m. With how much mental uneasiness I had spent the night in the train, that was known only to my inner Self the Divine Lord and Shree Shree Ma sitting in Dhaka. At early dawn the train reached its destination i.e. Goalundoghat station, on the southern bank of the River Padma. Getting off the train and enjoying the enchanting view of the sunrise near the Padma River, I rushed to the jetty and boarded the Steamer to Narayanganj, across the River Padma. I boarded the train to Dhaka from Narayanganj station after getting off the steamer at Narayanganj ghat. From Dhaka station I sat on a horse-cart and after a lot of complexity reached Shree Shree Ma's Ramana Ashram. Finding a newcomer, the cart driver also charged excess fare from me. But I was in a hurry to meet Ma, and hence could not bother with all these mundane activities. If this type of urge and ardor is not present within a *sādhak* (aspirant) for attaining salvation then what is the value of being a *sādhak*? This yearning for the Lord is only the utmost *sādhanā*.

The Ramna Ground is a famous place of Dhaka. There is a famous race-course here, where horse race is held every year. Moving within the race-course I observed in the centre of the huge ground a large lake. I also saw an old and huge Temple on the northern bank of this lake. This is the famous Ramna Kali Temple. On the north-west corner of this temple is situated Shree Shree Ma's newly constructed smaller temple and Ashram. All around the Ashram area there are various types of flower plants, fruit trees and plantations. By observing the old brick ramparts of the Ramna ground nearby the Ashram proves that this place is very old. The Ashram area was once the burial ground of *sadhu-sanyāsis*.

Moving towards it, I saw the familiar face of Smt. Moroni *Didi* coming towards the lake. I remembered having seen her at Kashi as Shree Shree Ma's *sevika*. She too recognized me and joyously asked about my presence and well-being. I replied smilingly, 'I have just got off the train and arriving from Kashi to have Ma's *darshan*. Can I have Ma's *darshan*?'

Moroni *Didi*: Yesterday night Ma was telling me that somebody with a lot of anguish is coming near This Body. Now I have understood, Ma was talking about you only. Go and have Ma's *darshan*, She is sitting outside only.

Showing me the path to the Ashram she went off to bath in the lake. How vividly Ma knows and understands our mental thoughts, the proof of that was clear from Moroni *Didi*'s conversation. Realizing this fact that Ma sitting here in Dhaka knew the status of my mind gave me immense pleasure.

Climbing over the Ashram gate I found just ahead Shree Shree Ma Annapurna's temple. This temple is situated in the centre of the Ashram. In this temple along with Ma Annapurna Devi, the idols of Devi Ma Kali, Lord Shiva, Lord Vishnu and Ganeshji are also installed. (Just before the partition, all these idols were brought over to India and installed in the Ma Annapurna Temple in Ma's Varanasi Ashram.) On every corner of this temple were few underground rooms for the *brahmacharis* and *sadhus* for their *sādhana*. On the northern side of the compound was a tinned room with mud floor. On the north-east corner of the temple was built a thatched hut with an encircling verandah. This was Ma's room. There were doors on the east and west walls, and windows on the north and south walls of this room.

And seated on the verandah Ma was illuminating the Ashram. Ma was dressed in a red bordered white Sari with a small portion of it covering Her

head. A huge vermilion circular mark on the centre of the forehead, a golden necklace and a set of bangles made of gold and conch-shell on Her two hands. Ma seemed to be enthroned in the form of the Shree Shree Ma Annapurna idol. The moment I paid my obeisance by placing my forehead on Ma's lotus-feet, all the misery of my travels was obliterated. Just as I lifted my head Ma very affectionately with a smile on Her face asked me, "How are you?" I replied, "Whatever should be my status for not being with you, I am just like that." Ma replied concisely and also directed me to have a bath in the lake. It was quite late by the time I returned back to the Ashram after the bath and my (*sandhyā-tarpan*) daily rites. In the Ashram found that Baba Bholanath's younger sister Motori *Pishima* (father's sister is called as *pishima*) was sitting with my lunch. She is quite a simple and benevolent lady. She spent most of her life here in the Ashram and in her final days had moved over to the Kashi Ashram and had died there at the holy feet of Lord Kashi Vishwanath.

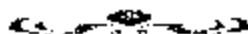
Next day waking up at dawn I was brushing my teeth in the open ground of the Ashram when I saw a middle-aged fair complexion gentleman coming towards the Ashram. He seemed to be highly learned and sober and wore a pure white ironed *dhoti* and shirt, white socks and white canvas shoes. While passing beside me with a slight glance he saw me too. He had an impressive and extra-ordinary figure with a broad forehead. Within the Ashram he learnt that Ma was asleep in Her hut. He hurriedly came out with a Brahmachari and stopping near the Ashram gate, he pointed towards me and said, "He has arrived here to become a *sadhu* but still hasn't stopped brushing with a toothbrush." Even though I felt hurt hearing him this early morning I smiled and replied, "*Mahashay*, you are misunderstanding me. I have not come here to become a *sadhu*. I have affection for Ma and hence I have come here for Ma's *darshan*." I felt that the Brahmachari accompanying him must have given false information about me. Hearing me he asked more gravely, "Have you arrived here yesterday?" I replied in agreement. He had just started conversing with me when he suddenly turned and went into the Ashram. I too entered the Ashram to wash my face and saw Shree Shree Ma coming out of the hut and going towards the open ground. The same gentleman rushed behind Ma and without touching covered Ma with an Assamese sheet. Ma wrapped the sheet tightly around Herself and moved ahead towards the ground. I too paid my obeisance to Ma by bowing on the ground. Later on I learnt

that that gentleman was none other than Ma's highly blessed supreme devotee Shri Jyotish Chandra Rai, who later came to be known as Bhaiji. It was Bhaiji's duty to take Ma for a walk at dawn every day. Within a few days my intimacy with Bhaiji became quite strong. He affectionately loved me as his younger brother and I too respected him as my elder brother.

One day Jyotishbabu arrived at dawn and found that Ma had not risen from the bed. When the sun came out, he departed to his house, because Ma usually never went out for a walk after sunrise. After some time a middle-aged Brahmin arrived to have Ma's *darshan*. Finally when Ma came out of Her room, She stood on the door way such that Her right foot was on the door sill. Suddenly the Brahmin with the *ram-nām* sheet covering his body rushed towards Ma and sitting on the ground started sucking Ma's right toe. He continued this act for almost two minutes. After that he suddenly got up, bowed down and paid his obeisance to Ma and staring at Ma slowly slowly departed from the Ashram. He was never to be seen again and Ma too did not explain this attitude of the Brahmin.

I had arrived here to have only Ma's *darshan*. So I slept and spent most of my time throughout the day in the southern verandah of Ma's room. And hence could Ma's *darshan* all the time. I kept my bed-roll and a small tin box in the tinned room in which Motori *Pishima* slept. And Shri Yogesh Brahmachari, Shri Kamlakanth Brahmachari and Shri Atul Brahmachari slept in the *Nāt-mandir* on three sides of the *Ma Annapurna* Temple. There were two small kitchens too. On the western side was deep well for the residents use. I was happily spending my days here in the Ashram being in Ma's proximity after a long long time. Thoughts of physical discomfort never arose at all. The afternoon *bhog-prasād* of *Ma Annapurna* was only taken by the residents here twice a day. There was no arrangement for preparing meals in the night. For Ma and Baba Bholanath, for the night, milk and puffed rice was arranged from the Ashram of *Shree Aadorini Devi* in Siddheshwari

(to be continued...)



You all observe This Body to be asleep on the bed but actually it is not like the sleep that you experience. While awake, the manner in which The Body hears, speaks and or sees, the same process is followed then too.

— Ma Anandamayee.

## Reminiscence of my early days with Ma

Brehni. Bishuddha

The Varanasi ashram is situated on the banks of the River Ganga and in the rainy season when the river was in spate it seemed as if we were in a ship. On the eastern portion of the ashram at the edge of the Ganga, there was a large kitchen and a dining hall at the basement, then on the next step was a large round satsang hall and Ma's room. On both sides of the hall towards the north and south were a few rooms for the brahmacharis and sadhus. On the top of these was a large round terrace. On both sides of this terrace there were two small temples. The northern end temple contained the sacrificial fire in a proper *kund* and the southern end temple had a *Viraja hom-kund*. An expert engineer, Shri Manmohan Ghosh from Dhaka, an ardent devotee of Ma had constructed these buildings. The scenic beauty of the Ashram was quite inexplicable for me. People other than Ma's devotees also used to come to take photos from the terrace.

Several functions like the first *Sanyam Saptāh*, Ma's *Janmotsav* etc., have been held in that spacious hall. On a *Amavasya* (new moon) night a special *bhog* was to be offered in the Annapurna temple. Ma was sitting in Her first floor room. When I was going to the temple to bring Ma's *bhog prasād*, Dadabhai (GurupriyaDi) came running to Ma with tears in her eyes and shouted, "Ma, have you heard, there is a big crack in the hall's wall." Listening to this Ma replied with a smile, "Didi, why do you mourn? The Building has been standing for a long time and now it is time for it be rejuvenated." Dadabhai said with a sigh, "Alas! To whom would I express my anxiety? There is a proverb – A mad person feels glad in slaughtering a cow." Afterwards on the advice of many expert engineers the most attractive portion of the Ashram was demolished which took about a year to complete.

Dadabhai was completely bedridden due to an acute pain in her waist. Ma was invited to visit Mumbai again at the cordial request of Shri. S.N. Sopory and a few other devotees of Mumbai. It was decided to take Dadabhai along for her medical treatment by specialist doctors in Mumbai. Didima not finding her name being mentioned, whispered in Ma's ears,

“Nirmala, Hemant Pathak (Ma’s devotee and a disciple of Didima) of Mumbai had once written to go there.” Ma expressed a naughty smile and said, “Oh! I see, Paramananda, let her visit Mumbai before This Body goes there.” Didima burst into laughter on being exposed of her wish, and all others there also joined the laughter hearing this sweet joke between mother and daughter.

It is said that Didima took *sanyās* only to be with Ma. After Mamu’s (Ma’s younger brother), Ma instructed Didima to stay with her married son. But Didima refused to leave Ma’s company. Then Ma said, “Then you will have to take *sanyās*.” And hence Revered Swami Muktananda Giri Maharaj’s (Didima’s) *sanyās* celebration took place on 13th April, 1956 (the last day of *Chaitra* as per the Bengali calendar) at Varanasi Ashram. She was born also in the month of April. On the same morning, Ma came down to Didima’s room along with the morning *kirtan* group. Ma sat on Didima’s bed for a while and then slowly lay down with Her head on Didima’s feet and Her feet touching Didima’s head. Ma remained in this posture for quite some time while the *kirtan* was going on. In between Didima’s first disciple Brahmachari Hiruda (later known as Sw. Tanmayanand’ji) performed the morning *ārti* to Ma and Didima.

As part of the *sanyās* celebration, in the afternoon, 108 *sadhus* were offered clothes, money and *bhog prasād*. In the afternoon Narayan Swamiji delivered a speech on Didima in the presence of Ma. Nobody ever witnessed any anger in Didima, a character rarely seen in human form. Once a girl made some mistake and Dadabhai and Ma were scolding her. Didima being present there could not bear this sight and said, “This girl is very simple and tells me everything she does or hears.” Hearing this Ma replied, “Oh mother! Can’t you find any fault with anyone, don’t you ever feel angry?” I was also standing near Ma. Looking at me, Ma said, “Do you understand? This girl says everything to her means She asks for things and complains against her inmates to her. This too is a good quality for the Mother of This Body.”

Didima always used to do *japa* (repetition of God’s name). One day I asked her, “Didima, you are the mother of the Universal Mother, then why are you doing so much *japa*?” She replied with a smile, “Those who take initiation from me are always busy in their work, are unable to do *japa* properly. After being initiated if one does not do *japa*, it is a sin, so I do *japa* for them.” Blessed are those who are initiated by such a compassionate

*Guru* (preceptor). Few days later, Dadabhai, Didima, Swamiji, Kamalda and many of us went to Mumbai with Ma. There we stayed in few bungalows at Juhu Beach. Above our cottage, a temporary abode consisting of a large room, bathroom and a spacious verandah has been constructed. And near to that another small room and a bathroom was built for Dadabhai, who could see Ma, from her room. After the *Sanyam Saptāh* function (18-24 Nov., 1954, Mumbai) it was decided to keep Dadabhai back in Mumbai for treatment while others would leave with Ma. But who would manage the treatment and where would Dadabhai stay? While these discussions were going on a new devotee Shri. B.K. Shah, who had arrived for Ma's *darshan*, said that he could arrange everything. How surprising, this was the first time he had arrived for Ma's *darshan* and did not even know who was Dadabhai, but had agreed to do everything possible for Didi. What else could it be but the infallible *kheyāl* of Ma. Other than Ville Parle, Shri B.K. Shah had a flat on the fifth floor of a mansion in Breach Candy. On Her way to station, Ma dropped Dadabhai and the rest of us at the Breach Candy house. Along with Dadabhai, Kamalda, Renudi, Beludi, Paruldi, Thakurma and myself stayed back. Several local devotees along with Shri B.K. Shah and his wife Smt. Leelabhen visited Dadabhai. Respected Haribabaji and Swami Avdhootji Maharaj also arrived occasionally. Dadabhai stayed here for treatment from October, 1954 to just before April, 1956. When Dadabhai was quite better we returned to Varanasi along with her. Along with her properly plastered body, that she should not have any problem in moving around with Ma, Shri B.K. Shah had also purchased a special trolley for her and also arranged for a first class compartment with four berths in the train to Varanasi. In the meantime full-fledged preparations were going on in Varanasi for Ma's forthcoming Diamond Jubilee *Janmotsav*, from 2nd May, 1956 to 24th May, 1956.

On Ma's instructions, we the Brahmacharini girls of Kanyapeeth wore on our forehead a circle of red *chandan* (sandalwood) paste and over that a smaller circle of white *chandan* paste. Ma had explained, "Red color is the symbol of *shakti* (power) and the white color symbolizes its  *jyoti* (splendor). For the *Janmotsav*, I had stitched a yellow colored triangular flag with a red and white concentric circle in the centre. This was hoisted over the Kanyapeeth building on 2nd May. I had also stitched for Ma a *Kānthā* (a hand-made blanket). Ma was extremely pleased to receive this gift from me.



## The story of Gopal and His Mother

Devipriya Roy

*In the 1950's a series of articles was contributed by my Grandfather (Late) Dr. Gopal Prasad Dasgupta to "AnandaVarta" the quarterly magazine of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayeee Ashram. The articles were titled "Ma Haariye Ma Peyechhi" (I have found the Mother I had lost).*

*Sentimental and euphemistic though the title sounds, it reflected the inner conviction of my grandfather's heart. Dadan, as we grandchildren used to call him truly believed that the Eternal Mother came to him personified as Ma Anandamayee to soothe him for the loss of his birth mother. He had lost her along with his other siblings to a cholera epidemic that had swept through his native village Bidgaon in Dhaka, East Bengal. Gopal Prasad was barely eighteen months old at the time. The disease had almost taken away young Gopal too but he survived by the grace of a sannyasi, who had asked his father to dedicate the child to Gopul, hence his name Gopal Prasad. Growing up under the care of his step mother, while taking care of his step siblings, little Gopal always had yearned for the loving touch of his own birth mother and had been in his heart searching her for his entire life.*

*At the time, he wrote the articles, Gopal Prasad was a distinguished and well known physician and a widely respected philanthropist in and around Varanasi. He had by then retired as the Chief medical officer of the princely state of Banaras, in which status he had served as the personal physician of the Kashi Naresh (the titular King of Banaras state) as well. Currently he was running a very busy private practice that attracted to his chamber streams of people from all strata of the society, kings, social icons as well as beggars. People believed that whatever their ailment, Dr. Dasgupta could snatch them away from death's door. He was universally addressed as "Babuji" (Dad) by all his poor patients as did his eight children. All his life, he had been the head and the mainstay of a large extended family. Yet beyond all these aspects of Gopal Prasad's persona, he was a mystic, who looked upon Ma with the innocent trust of a child and treated Her as his real mother. This is the story how Ma came in his life and transformed it.*



*The old copies of 'Ananda Varta', in which the articles were published rested in my mother's abmirah for a long time and then through the twist and turns of the years got misplaced. I am relying on my memory of reading the stories. I have supplemented those stories in this narration by the events personally witnessed by me and have added the stories that Dadan used to reminisce about.*

In the year 1930s, Ma came and spent some time in Varanasi. The grand building that houses her Ashram at present in the Bhadaini area was yet to be built. Ma along with Bholanath and Bhaiji were living in a houseboat, known in those parts as a *Bajra*. They were accompanied by Narayan Swami, a Sannyasi, who had early dedicated his life to Ma. One day around that time, Ma happened to fall sick with fever and stomach discomfort. Being new to the town, neither of Ma's companions knew where to seek medical help. As Narayan Swami went out looking for a doctor, he recalled that one of his old acquaintances from Dhaka, Gopal Prasad was practicing medicine in Varanasi. Gopal had known him as Nepal *babu* and the two used to be good friends. So Nepal *babu* traced his old friend Gopal Prasad and asked him to accompany him to the *bajra* (boat-house) to check up on Ma's health. He told Gopal that Ma Anandamayee was a highly regarded female saint from Dhaka.

Gopal hesitated to respond to his old friend's request. All his life he had never turned away any one seeking his help, but was unwilling to go in this case, because the early loss of his birth mother and his childhood experiences had robbed him of all faith in God or anything spiritual. His own wife Amala was a devout believer who performed elaborate *Pujas* at home every Thursday, preparing delicious *bhog* (offerings) for goddess Laxmi. While Gopal never stopped her from performing the rituals, he would simply tell her to distribute the *bhog-prasad* to the poor people of the neighborhood and not make it into a feast for the family members. He never visited any temples or any saints.

Unbeknownst to everyone though, Gopal did have a spiritual experience a few years earlier when he had suffered from a life threatening disease. He had been diabetic since his childhood, but the condition had never been diagnosed. So when he had developed a carbuncle on his neck, he had thought of nothing of it while one of his doctor friends, operated on the carbuncle. Soon his body became swollen up with diabetic septicemia and he was gravely ill. The attending physicians gave up all hope and left his

wife with the warning that he would not last the night. As Gopal lay there comatose with pain, he suddenly heard a sweet voice asking him, "Are you in pain, *Baba*? Do not worry. You will soon be well." With that a soft caring hand pressed something sweet on his tongue. Startled, Gopal opened his eyes and saw a veiled female figure in red bordered white saree, standing in front of him. Her veil covering her face, her features not visible, he asked her, "Who are you?" The figure did not answer, but a gust of wind came from somewhere and lifted a corner of her saree from her left foot. The nail of the little toe on that foot glowed bright. There was the sound of a sweet laughter and the figure disappeared, leaving behind only that sweet taste on Gopal's tongue. No one but Gopal had seen her, not even his wife Amala, who was resting her head on the bedframe unable to face the sad fate awaiting her, as mentioned by the doctors. By morning Gopal had totally recovered and went on to resume his daily life. He did not discuss the vision and his subsequent recovery with anyone, but he was convinced that it was his birth mother, whom he had lost as a baby, who had come to soothe away his pain. That had been Gopal's only spiritual experience so far. He worshipped his mother in his heart and avoided any other saints or miracle workers.

But now he could not deny his old friend Nepal babu's request for help. So unwillingly, he accompanied Nepal babu, known as Narayan Swarniji, to the *hajra*, anchored at a ghat. As Ma sat fully covered and veiled, he did not look upon her face, and performed his examination by asking questions to her companions about her symptoms and by checking on her pulse. After writing out a prescription for the medicines, he sent Nepal babu with the prescription to a nearby medicine shop.

While waiting for him to come back and make sure that the prescription was followed properly, he decided to smoke a cigarette. Hesitating for a while whether to leave his patient's presence while smoking, he forced himself to ignore her, reminding himself that he was an atheist and did not need to care or show any respect for any saintly figure. Turning his back on Ma, he faced the Ganges and lit a cigarette, his legs spread wide in defiance. As he took his first puff, he heard a familiar sweet laughter that he had heard so many years ago, "*Baba*, are you eating a cigarette (in Bengali "eating" is the term used for all kinds of solid, liquid or gaseous ingestion, i.e, smoking as well as drinking too). Be careful that the cigarette does not eat you up." The statement was made in that same sweet voice,

he had yearned to hear for such a long time. Gopal wheeled around and gasped, "Who are you?" There was no answer, but a sudden gust from the Ganges blew over the *bajra* and the little toe of Ma's left foot was revealed. It was glowing with the same brightness that he had seen on that sick bed. Gopal was convinced that he had found his Mother.

From that day onwards Gopal Prasad spent every free moment of his life in Ma Anandamayee's company. If Ma happened to be in Banaras, he would go there, accompanied by his wife Amala, after he was done with treating his patients. He would not talk much as the press of devotees crowded around Ma and asked Her questions, but would simply stand on one side and gaze upon Her. Whenever Ma went out of the city, he would follow her there, if time permitted. But he would not visit temples even after this experience, nor press garlands around Her neck. The strictures of the Hindu practices, followed at the Ashram never meant much to him. Donating all the resources, he had to the Ashram, he would often argue with Ma during private conversation sessions that the Ashram should take up service (*Sevā*) to the poor and above all to the entire humanity as part of its goals. "I am not your scholarly son, I am the stupid one", he would laughingly tease Ma, contrasting himself with the one of the greatest Indian scholars and earnest Ma devotee Mahamahopadhyay Gopinath Kaviraj (who later became my Guru). Yet surprisingly, he was too friendly with Gopinath Kaviraj. The two of them admired each other immensely and spent hours having friendly discussions. Ma used to address both of them together as, "Gopi Baba" and "Gopal Baba". So at Gopal Prasad's teasing complaints, Ma would just smile. She never persuaded him to change his beliefs and allowed him to follow the mission of his own heart attending and blessing the launch of the *Mānav-Seva* (humanitarian service) projects, that he started in Her name. This constant exchange between the Mother and Her son laid the ground for the future establishment of the Anandamayee Karuna, which later blossomed into the prestigious charity hospital "Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Hospital".

We will keep on following that journey of Gopal and his Mother.



## *Satsang* --- The Company of Holy Men

Swami Shivanandaji

Once, a great Sadhu came to the palace gates to beg for alms. The King was overjoyed on hearing the news. He summoned the Queen and instructed her to arrange for alms for the Sadhu. And he himself rushed to receive the Sadhu and welcome him into the Royal Palace.

The Sadhu sat down on the seat offered to him and suddenly asked the King, "Maharaj, you do attend *Satsang* (keep the company of holy men), don't you?" The King did not understand the purport of the Sadhu's question. Truthfully he replied, "No Sir, that I don't." As soon as the King said this, the Sadhu stood up and said, "Maharaj, I will not partake of a meal here. A sadhu does not accept food or drink at the houses of those who do not keep the company of holy men. I am leaving." Saying this, the Sadhu started to walk out.

Meanwhile, the Queen arrived to usher the Sadhu into the dining hall where she had exquisitely laid out the choicest of viands and refreshments. She felt very scared on hearing this. She feared that a terrible calamity would befall the kingdom if a guest, that too a Sadhu, were to leave the palace without having a meal. With hurried footsteps, she followed the holy man entreating him to accept her offering. The Sadhu would not budge from his resolve. He said, "No that cannot be! One cannot partake even water, let alone food, at the house of a king who does not keep the company of holy men."

At this point the queen said with firm conviction, "Your Eminence, there should be nothing to bar you now from accepting a meal at my home. Now that I have walked fourteen steps - twice the length of seven - with you." The Sadhu stopped in his tracks upon hearing the Queen's words. "Well, what of it?" he asked. The Queen replied in a humble voice, "If, according to the sacred ritual of "*Sapta Padāhu*", friendship is established by walking seven steps together, will not one have attended *Satsang* after walking fourteen steps with a sadhu?" The Sage could not refute her logic. He returned to the dining hall in a happy mood. After accepting with contentment the food offered to him, he blessed the royal couple and left. Such is the greatness of *Satsang*.

## In Memorium

A Devotee

The 125th auspicious *Ābhirbhāv* of Shree Shree Ma was observed from 2nd May to 30th May, 2021. As it happened many old devotees of Ma who had been in physical contact with Ma passed away during this period. One such example was Guru Prasad Brahma. He came in Ma's proximity at a very tender age owing to his father's (Nalini Kant Brahma) association with Ma. He had also seen Baba Bholanath with Ma at Kolkata.

He went along with his parents to Vrindavan to do *Bhāgwat*, for his brother (demised suddenly by a bus accident), in Ma's presence. At that time his parents, on the eve of their departure from Vrindavan, decided that after going back to Kolkata, he would be given *dikhsā* (initiated) by Srimat Mohananda Brahmachari. Next morning Ma told him, "Radharani never let go anybody empty-handed from Vrindavan." So saying, Ma gave him then and there *dikshā*, supplying Herself all the necessary things, including the rosary (bead garland) for the *japa*.

He was completely dependent on Ma throughout his life. Once Ma came to Kolkata and stayed in the house of Shri Dwijen Nag. Guru Prasad went there for Ma's *darshan* and while returning, as he opened the door of his car to enter, Ma suddenly appeared on the first floor balcony and calling him said, "Do not leave without taking *prasād* (lunch). That day there was an urgent meeting at his office. Executives from abroad would be attending the meeting and his presentation was important. He stood dumbstruck next to the open door of the car. And then he decided, 'even at the cost of my job, I shall abide by Ma's request and stay here'. By two p.m. when he reached his office with trepidation, he came to know that the meeting was abandoned for some reason.

Once while Guru Prasad was staying in Deoghar with his family, Ma came to Ranchi. As always he immediately proceeded for Ranchi alone, saying, 'On such a date I shall return'. In those days it was not safe for a young wife and children to stay alone by themselves. As was his custom, before leaving Ranchi Ashram to board the bus to Deoghar, he went to Ma for *pranām*. But Ma's door was closed, and by the time it was open, the

journey had to be postponed for the next day. Next day, while returning, he came to know that that the bus, which he was to take the previous day, had a severe fatal accident. He asked his wife upon his return, 'Were you not worried that I did not come back yesterday?' His wife replied, 'Why? You went to Ma, so there is nothing to fear.' (In those days there was no telecommunication in Deoghar)

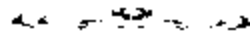
Once Ma came to Kolkata incognito. GuruPrasad somehow felt Ma's arrival at Kolkata and hence one early morning he went to Howrah station with his children and his mother. Ma arrived at the station and immediately proceeded for Ranaghat. As there was no other car available in the station, he immediately went along with Ma, leaving his family members at the station, without providing them the means to go back home (without *chappals*, which were left in the car, while doing *pranām* to Ma).

Once when GuruPrasad was in Ma's presence in Vrindavan, news arrived that a renowned Vaishnav Mahatma has arrived from a distant place for Ma's *darshan* and that their car is already at the gate of the Ashram. Ma wished to meet them at the Chhaliya Mandir to show greater respect, but the car was already in the compound, and Ma was in Her first floor room of the Vidyapeeth Bhavan. Seeing Ma's plight, GuruPrasad ran towards the main entrance path and stood before the car, to give Ma the requisite time. Naturally the Mahatamas were annoyed. They stopped the car and were about to ask him the reason for his insolent behaviour. In the meantime, Ma like lightning came down, crossed the garden and reached the Chhaliya Mandir. At the same time Yogesh Brahmachari came to his rescue and told them that he was conducting a Bhagwat (which was true) and wanted the presence of the Mahatamas in the Geeta Mandir. In his later life, he used to say that if Ma behaved with the Mahatmas in that manner then we should follow it too.

GuruPrasad was the Secretary of the Agarpara Ashram for more than a decade and his Sundays were always dedicated for having *Akhand Japa* and other Ashram duties. During his elder daughter's marriage, the groom's family was requested not to schedule any programme on Sunday. They were surprised as Sunday being a holiday was always a convenient day for functions. Then his mother replied that on Sunday the bride's father would not be available. Under all circumstances and whatever be the situation, he was never absent from his spiritual duty on Sunday.

At the terminal stage, GuruPrasad was admitted at a nursing home which was infested with Covid patients. But by Ma's grace he did not contact corona, so the mortal remains could be brought home for offering the last respect by the family members, including his wife. At death, there was such serenity on his face, with a *Namavali chaadar* on his body, it seemed as if he knew that he has left Earth for the heavenly abode, at Ma's feet.

JaiMa.



*The 'named' and the 'name' are the same. for He Himself exists as the 'name'. The akshar is indeed God's own disguise. If the 'name' that appeals the most is constantly repeated, one realizes that all 'names' are His 'name', all forms His form. Again, that He is without 'name' and form will also gradually arise.*

- Ma Anandamayee

### New publication

- (1) *SantānVatsalā - Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee* (in Hindi)  
 Author: Sw. Narayanand Tirth.  
 (translated into Hindi by Brhini. Gunceta)  
 Price: Rs.275.00
- (2) *Shree Shree Anandamayee Prasanga - Volume 7* (in Hindi)  
 Author: Dr. Amulya Kumar DuttaGupta  
 (translated into Hindi by Brhini. Gunceta)  
 Price Rs.275.00.

To be ready for dispatch within a few weeks.

- (1) *Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee - Volume 18* (in Bengali)  
 Author: GurupriyaDevi
- (2) *Aamaar Ma Anandamayee* (in Bengali) -  
 Author: Brhini. Bishudhha, Price :Rs.100/-
- (3) *Meri Ma Anandamayee* (in Hindi) -  
 Author: Brhini. Bishudhha, Price: Rs.50/-