
God is complete. Thus for full revelation One has to go to Him. Only because of the nation of God's absence is there sorrow in the World. Where God is manifest there are no 'two'—sorrow has no place.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

He saw God in everything and in loving everyone he loved God or in loving God, he loved everyone.

—Shree Shree Sitaramdas Onkarnath

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ANANDA VARTĀ

*The Eternal, the Ātman—
Itself pilgrim and path of Immortality
Self contained—THAT is all in One.*

Vol. XXXXI

● OCTOBER, 1994 ●

No. 4

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Matri Vani

God, the Self, is all-pervading. Where is He not ? In all forms and in the formless, in all names and the nameless, in all places and conditions, at all times is He. When the desire for Realization awakens, this is an actual manifestation of Him, of the indivisible One. Since all names are His indeed, He will let Himself be grasped by any one of them. The keen desire to attain to the goal must be conceived. The very fact that Self-realisation is one's goal means to seek and to find.

It is the will of the Almighty that prevails at all times such verily is the law of creation. 'World' (jagat) means a ceaseless round of sorrow, temporary happiness and affection : to experience this, man is born. Do you not see that the world is nothing but this in infinite variety ?

For him who has set out on his life's last journey with the name 'Durga' on his lips, there should be no grief, no tears ; at any rate try your utmost to hold this attitude. If weep, you must weep for God. Blessed is he who breathes his last pronouncing God's Name. One must strive to keep one's mind ever concentrated on His Feet. Pray, for the Guru's Grace and constantly remember His Lotus feet.

If you are able to love God really—this is the consummation of all love.

Jagaddhatri Puja at "MATRI MANDIR"
Shree Shree Anandamayee
Charitable Society

CALCUTTA ZONAL OFFICE
"MATRI-MANDIR"

57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road,
Calcutta-700 019

Phone : 74-8504

Dear Brother/Sister,

We have great pleasure in informing you that we have organised Jagaddhatri Puja on the auspicious day of 10th November, 1994 Thursday (Bengali 23rd Kartik, 1401) and on the following day i.e. on the 11th November, 1994 Friday (Bengali 24th Kartik, 1401) with special Pujas of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee, Shree Shree Narayanji & Shree Shree Onkarnathji in MATRI-MANDIR. After the Purnahuti the assembled devotees will be entertained with prasads.

We look forward to your active participation in this auspicious programme.

Yours

In the Service of Ma,
Members

Dated :
The 31st August, 1994
(14th Bhadra, 1401)

(Executive Council)
Shree Shree Anandamayee
Charitable Society

Sad Vani

Medical students have first of all to make a detailed study of the bones, the skull and the different organs of the human body. This is done with the help of models which they dissect and investigate in various ways. Likewise, in order to learn the first steps of the science of spiritual life all kinds of practices and rites are necessary. The physical and mental discipline that these outer observances provide, usually serves as an aid to the inner quest. In order to get to know what lies within, it will not do to ignore what is without ; for behind the semblances of the world the Supreme has concealed Himself. This universe may also be called a reflection of the One who is ever wakeful. Do not let the fleeting pleasures of the world entice you ; endeavour to abide in Him, the Supreme Dweller of the heart.

*

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Many people say : "I do not like the clangour and agitation that are characteristic of kirtana. I prefer to sit quietly in a solitary place and meditate." As a matter of fact, if in solitude you can obtain communion with God, it is excellent. But watch and note carefully whether your mind is seeking God or wandering away among the perplexities of the world ? If you take no notice of

the boisterousness of the kirtana but concentrate on God's Name ; if you do not listen to the various tunes and to the rhythms of the drums and cymbals, but let yourself be wafted away at the final note of the music, you will become aware that a contemplative mood has spontaneously awakened in you. For the average person it is most important to raise the vibration of his physical body in order to be able to penetrate into subtler levels of consciousness. Bring together your friends and relations whenever you can and unite with them in singing God's Name or His praises ; or, if this is not possible, visit places where religious music is being performed. By chanting God's Name regularly and repeatedly, you will get into the right mood for kirtana and by engaging in kirtana you will become more and more disposed to practise japas, meditation and contemplation. To be effective, all worship must be carried out with faith and regularity ; kirtana also should be practised in a similar attitude. It will be very good if those who take part can keep in tune and rhythm. Invoke the Presence of Him whose name you are chanting, otherwise it will be merely a musical pastime instead of Nama Kirtana.

We do not know one another, He alone knows us all. Stand near a mountain and you will observe how earth, rocks, trees, roots, creepers are interlaced in such a way as to give the impression that if one of them gets loose and fall off, the whole conglomeration will follow. But does this happen ? The mountain to which they belong has hugged

them all to its bosom and holds everything in its place. When an earthquake or a similar catastrophe shakes the mountain, no particle of it will remain unaffected. In the same way, though you may think you have built up and are holding together family, society, civilization and so forth, in actual fact He alone is the Great Preserver who controls the fabric of life. Hence to know Him is essential. To know Him means to know all and thus to be freed from the conflict of want.

AN APPEAL

To overcome the present financial crisis and for the development of the Society's projects, your heartfelt co-operation is solicited and we appeal to your goodself to come forward and to donate generously.

D. Pal

General Secretary

To invoke THAT, to be constantly intent on realising it,
is man's duty. At All times in Her arms, in Her
embrace within the Mother. On finding the Mother,
everything is found.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

I love because I must love
I know not why I love
Love is all Japa and Tapa
Love is real Sadhana

—Shree Shree Sitaramdas Onkarnath

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U. S. A.

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Volume VI

(Translated by Tara Kini)

(Continued from previous issue)

March 12, Saturday

Ma rose early. Yesterday her body appeared ill and therefore she was moved upstairs. In the morning a batch of thirty to thirty five men and women arrived from Delhi to sing *kirtan*.

At ten a.m. one hall in the Doctor's house was decorated and *kirtan* was started. Ma came down as the *kirtan* commenced. Devotees anointed Ma with flowers, garlands and sandal paste. Then they all donned garlands and sandal paste and started moving around singing.

'Shri Krishna Chaitanya Prabhu Nityananda

Hare Krishna Hare Rama Shri Radhe Govinda.'

Mridanga and cymbals were played in accompaniment and the whole house reverberated to the sound of God's Name chanted by the devotees. This house is always pervaded by the gurgling sound of the Ganga and now the vibrations of the Name added to it to heightened the joy in the hearts of the devotees. Above all Ma was present and her power seemed to fill the devotees with renewed enthusiasm as they sang—

'Shri Krishna Chaitanya Prabhu Nityananda

Hare Krishna Hare Rama Shri Radhe Govinda.'

At four p.m. Ma again came down and sat in the verandah adjoining the *kirtan* room. She was surrounded by the women. The *kirtan* had gained momentum. Many *sadhus* and *sannyasins* arrived and participated in the singing. After dusk Ma went into the *kirtan* room and began moving around amidst the singers. Her face took on a wonderful glow and at that moment there was not a trace of illness on her countenance. As soon as the Name was chanted, some *kriya* began to manifest in her body and she kept controlling it. Seeing Ma moving around some of the women joined her amidst the group of men, without any inhibition, for Ma was amidst them. As soon as Ma's condition began changing she moved aside and then went and sat down in her place. Even as she was seated she was controlling the *bhava* rising within her. As she stood up *kirtan* was sung even more vigourously and the devotees took up the refrain of 'Jai Ma, Jai Ma, Jai Ma' in between. *Kirtan* was sung for a very long time before it was finally concluded.

Ma was taken to her bedroom. Devotees stood around and talked to her. Charu Babu said, "Ma seemed to attain a strange *bhava* during the *kirtan*. We wondered if the condition which occurred in Simla was coming on again. I can never forget what I witnessed in Simla. Alright Ma, is not this *bhava* full of bliss?"

Ma replied, "The *bhava* is identical at all times. There is no question of bliss or the absence of bliss. Even without *kirtan* the body assumes various states. And may be it is necessary, so

the body responds to the Name with such manifestations.”

In the course of conversation Ma again said, “Look, there are any number of *bhavas*. In some cases, perhaps, the body experiences *kriya* in accordance with the form of the worshipped deity when *kirtan* is going on. For example, those who worship Krishna or Kali may, while in ecstasy during *kirtan*, pose like Krishna or Kali. That may be followed by a *bhava* of inertia when the body just lies inert—people think it is *samadhi*. But it is just not *samadhi*. It could just be that the joy of hearing the Name renders the limbs numb. People mistake it for *samadhi* but actually it is a gross manifestation or worldly *bhava*. This gross *bhava* is just not *samadhi*. While living in the world of joy and sorrow, the seeker cannot attain the *samadhi* state. These *kriyas* occur in the body one at a time because of fragmented bits of *bhava*. Though these bits of *bhava* do elevate the mind beyond the ordinary level, they are by no means capable of raising the individual anywhere near the great *bhava*.”

It was nearly ten p.m. and so the doors were shut.

March 13, Sunday

The devotees from Delhi will stay on today. A Seth who lives next to the Doctor's house heard about the *kirtans* going on here and requested that *kirtan* be performed at his residence. So today *kirtan* was to be sung there. Biren started ‘*Nimai-*

sanyas' kirtan in the Doctor's house. Early this morning Bholanath arrived. As soon as '*Nimai sanyas*' was concluded Bholanath started singing the Name and once he starts he does not let anyone else stand by quietly but persuades each one to participate. He can lead *kirtan* for hours on end and when the *kirtan* gains momentum he also becomes incensed with it. At eleven a.m. Ma said, "There is no need to stop this *nama kirtan*; let it be carried across to the Seth's house." And so it was. The *kirtan* was continued next door.

That house was also situated in the lap of the Ganga. An uninterrupted fire is being protected in that house, and everyday five brahmin boys perform sacrificial rites. We went to see the sacrificial fire. The sacrificial rites are performed in a part of the house situated in the lap of the Ganga. The brahmin boys wrap a cloth with the Name of Rama on it and perform the worship—it looked very nice. At two p.m. Ma came to listen to the *kirtan*. At dusk many *sadhus* and *sannyasins* also arrived and some of them joined in the singing—there was a veritable flow of bliss. Some time in the night the *kirtan* was concluded. A group of devotees sang 'Ma, Ma,' and accompanied her back to the Doctor's house. Some of them returned to Delhi. Many stayed on for the ritual Purnimā bath in the Ganga and to enjoy Ma's company.

March 14, Monday

As soon as Ma awoke, devotees sat surrounding her. When the sun rose higher Ma went for a stroll

on the terrace. At eleven a.m. during Ma's *bhoga* some men and women arrived from Jasidih. They were disciples of Balananda Swami of Deoghar. They had heard of Ma's exalted state from Prangopal Babu and had come for her *darshan*. After *bhoga* they came and sat near Ma. They asked, "Ma, what action leads to peace?" Ma replied, "Follow your *guru's* instructions unquestioningly. Just as a tree whose roots are watered, grows gradually, shedding old leaves and spouting new ones automatically, so must you go on. You will see that slowly whatever has to be shed will be relinquished and whatever has to be gained will be attained. Do not resolve to give up this or that. Just cling to one Name. You will find that everything happens of its own accord."

They sat for some time and then left. They were very happy to have Ma's *darshan* and kept saying so. Before dusk everyone sang *kirtan* for some time. At twelve midnight the doors were shut.

March 15, Tuesday

While speaking to me casually Ma said, "When a variety of *kirtans* began manifesting within the body the kind of *asanas* that gods and goddesses are observed to assume, began to take place within this body. Each god was seated on his vehicle (*vahana*) in a particular posture and that would be replicated by the body. Seeing one such posture your Didima was greatly frightened and called out to your Dadamoshai to have a look. But though

he came he did not observe it ; perhaps it would serve him no purpose.”

March 16, Wednesday

Today is Holi Purnima. Some people have come from Delhi ; Jotish Babu and his wife have arrived from Jamshedpur. They all began playing with colours with Ma. Ma was weak but she just did not seem to notice it. Happily she made everyone sing the Name, “Jaya Radhe, Jaya Radhe, Jaya Radhe”. Bholanath, steeped in joy, enthused everyone to sing. There was a flood of bliss. After some time Ma sent everyone to have a dip in the Brahmakunda. Before playing with colour, Ma and Bholanath were photographed on the bank of the Ganga. Bholanath looked at Ma for some time and sang the *kirtan* “Ma, Ma”. When the devotees raised the subject of photographing Ma and Bholanath together Ma suddenly went to a slightly elevated spot, sat down and told Bholanath, “Just saying ‘Ma, Ma’ is not sufficient—sit near me like a son” and she laughed. Bholanath also laughed and the devotees broke into laughter. Bholanath then went and actually sat at a slightly lower level near Ma. I said, “Very good now take a photograph of mother and son.”

When Bholanath went to the Brahmakunda he had departed singing *kirtan* and now he returned with the rest, still singing. They had all had a dip and Ma proceeded to anoint their foreheads with sandal paste and vermillion. The devotees felt blessed by Ma’s grace ; they put their heads at Ma’s

feet and did *pranama*. *Kirtan* was concluded after a very long time.

At twelve noon the doors of Ma's room were closed as per the routine. Ma had not been given her meal because the bath and the *kirtan* had delayed the chores. Ma said, "When a particular routine is being observed it should continue, so shut the door now. Wake me up when the cooking is done." That was done. At the time of *bhoga* when Ma sat up, she was surrounded by devotees. After her *bhoga* there was a scramble for *prasada*. Ma returned to her bedroom and fell silent saying, "Unless I observe *mauna* you people do not stop talking". Actually every activity Ma performs is beautiful in every aspect. She performs all kind of *leela* just to set examples for people.

Before they started playing with colours, the devotees made Ma and Bholanath sit on two chairs placed side by side, so that they could offer vermillion at their feet. When they put flower garlands around Ma's neck, she smiled and indicating Bholanath said, "Put garlands around this boy's neck as well." Then turning to Bholanath she asked "Shall I bless you?" And then stroking Bholanath's head with her hand she said, "Let there be good thoughts and good intelligence, leave the house in a good manner." Bholanath began to laugh. The devotees were staring at Ma and watching this *leela*. I do not know what emotions rose within the people, but they were all dazed. Ma laughed again and turning towards all present she said, "Why are you all staring at me like this?" So saying she laughed again.

Today again *kirtan* was sung before dusk in Ma's presence. All those who had come from Delhi departed except for Panchu Babu.

March 17, Thursday

This morning even before Ma opened her eyes, I started massaging her feet with mustard oil. With her eyes shut, Ma smiled sweetly and said laughing, "Listen Khukuni, people like you were singing the Name for me just now." Ma then hummed, "Jaya Guru Jai Ma, Shri Madhusudana, Gopala, Govinda, Nama, Bhakta, Narayana." I asked, "Ma who sang for you?" Ma laughed and replied, "I saw many little children—some were naked, some had no buttons on their garments, some were very dark—they were all like that. They got themselves together and sang the Name. Some were dressed in dirty clothes, some in clean clothes—but they all swayed and moved like children and sang the Name wholeheartedly. The room is still reverberating with their singing." Indicating her body Ma continued, "They made this body stand in the centre and went all round singing. Sometimes they folded their palms. None of you was present in the room."

Other people entered the room and other different topics were raised. Ma mentioned the unbroken intense *bhava* (*akhanda bhavaghan*) of the previous night. "See, like the sun and its rays, these forms began emanating at that time. The radiance may have been greater at certain spots and less at others. See, even when we cannot see the

sun, it is still present on the other side of the earth, so I have heard ; therefore the sun is without beginning and without end. Even during *pralaya* (ultimate dissolution) the seed remains intact. It then leads to light. This coming and going is without beginning and without end. Therefore I say, everything worldly is also without beginning and without end. For after all, everything is That. Therefore everything is without beginning and without end.”

Professor Satya Babu arrived from Dehradun accompanied by the young relative who had donned the saffron cloth since seven years and is a *brahmachari*. Satya Babu had brought him to meet Ma. In this course of conversation there was mention of the spot where the Brahmakunda is situated. Ma said, “You must imagine that you are actually bathing in the Brahmakunda.” The *brahmachari*, understanding the deeper import of Ma’s comment asked, “Ma, I will be able to bathe in the Brahmakunda, will I not ?” Ma said, “You are going on that path alright. Why do you let doubts assail your mind ? Keep doing your work.”

This morning Niraj Babu arrived. He will visit Ma again on his way back to Amritsar.

At four p.m. when the doors of Ma’s room were opened, everybody assembled around her. From the last two or three days people were commenting that Ma’s health had improved because of *kirtan*. Ma had herself said, “See, food is being eaten from the very next day after *kirtan* was started.” Actually Ma’s digestion has not been good at all, and there has been a feeling of heaviness because of which

she eats very little. The Doctor has been requesting her to eat a little more, but she was unable to do so. From the day after *kirtan* was started, she has been eating just a little more. Her heart beat also seems steadier. Ma remarked, "Your *kirtan* has improved the state of my body."

She then continued, "You people always complain, 'The mind cannot become steady—the mind cannot become steady'. Why does it not become steady? You do not understand that. It is because your mind is constantly dwelling on impermanent objects. How will the mind become steady when it is thinking of unsteady matters? It is a question of imbibing the qualities of the objects whose company it keeps. You constantly think of impermanent objects and then sit in the puja room for an hour or two and then complain, 'I did so much, yet the mind refused to become still'. Medicine and a correct diet are both necessary to cure the body of a disease. Thoughts of worldly objects only cause a feeling of loss (*abhava*), they do not allow you to enter your true nature (*svabhava*)."

The conversation then turned to the subject of God's mercy. Satya Babu, wanting to hear Ma's opinion on this said, "Ma, do emotions like compassion and the feeling of possession exist in God? If so, then He must also experience sorrow. But how can that be?" At first Ma hedged the question, saying, "Son, then can you explain the aim of all these prayers and invocations?" These discussions did not seem to answer the question raised. Then Ma said, "Why do you think there

could be no feeling of compassion or feeling of possession in God? Everything is in Him and again nothing is in Him. Both these situations can play within Him simultaneously." The *brahmachari* then addressed Satya Babu, "So, now your question has been fully answered, has it not?" Satya Babu remarked, "Only by making such comments do we get anything out of Ma about herself." Ma explained, "That is absolutely true Baba—you are the ones who get anything out—I am your daughter after all." And Ma laughed sweetly in her own natural manner. Everyone was charmed by Ma's smile and her talk. After a while Satya Babu and the *brahmachari* did *pranama* and departed. The *brahmachari* prostrated fully on the ground (*sashtanga pranama*) and begged for Ma's blessings.

A *sannyasin* had come. He mentioned that he owned a house in Delhi. Niraj Babu asked, "Why should a *sannyasin* have such feelings—house, *math*, temple?" Ma replied, "Look, the saffron clad *sannyasin* you observe now is just someone who is trying to become a *sannyasin*. Therefore he has adopted the grab of a *sannyasin*. Sometimes some householders have more elevated *bhava* than saffron clad *sannyasins*. Again, lowly *bhava* may be apparent in some of these *sannyasins*, time and again. In the householder the elevated *bhava* rises in the mind and is then absorbed in the mind. But sometimes there is evidence of this being useful. Just as the glowing embers of a sacrificial fire may be used to ignite and start another sacrificial fire."

After conversation of this nature, *kirtan* was sung for an hour before dusk. Then people left gradually.

March 18, Friday

Today Ma rose a little late and was immediately surrounded by devotees. At eleven a.m. Ma was offered *bhoga*. Ma has been suffering from a cold and cough from the past few days. Today *dal* has been cooked with tender mango in it and Ma ate a little of it before partaking of other vegetables. Panchu Babu was present. Ma told him, "Just call Bholanath." When Bholanath arrived Ma said, "See, the bowl full of *dal* with tender mango—shall I eat it all?" Bholanath asked, "Is it very sour?" Ma replied, "Taste it and see." Bholanath began humming and hawing. Ma told me, "Just put a spoonful into his mouth." I laughed and did so; everybody laughed. All enjoyed this *leela*. Bholanath said, "Alright eat it—it is not too sour." Ma immediately piped up with, "You will feed me, won't you?" Bholanath said, "I will not be able to scoop it up properly." Saying that he scooped it up expertly and fed Ma. Ma laughed and said, "When the Doctor comes I shall tell him that Bholanath asked me to eat the sour *dal* and fed me, therefore I ate it." Bholanath also laughed and replied, "Alright, the fault is all mine."

Ma did not allow any food to be left over in the plate. She made Panchu Babu, Benu and Abhay sit closer and had the *dal*, rice and vegetable distributed in their hands. Having finished the meal thus,

Ma stood up. After a wash she went and sat on her small bedding. As per the Doctor's injunction to shut the door at twelve there remained only another half an hour ; yet everyone sat out, refusing to budge from Ma's presence even a minute before the scheduled hour. At twelve, however, the doors were shut.

At four p.m. when Ma rose, a large group of ladies came for Ma's *darshan*. Ma made them all sing *nama kirtan*. Abhay started singing first, followed by others. Ma was seated with all the people in the small room overlooking the Ganga. Since Ma ate the *dal* with tender mango, her cough had stopped. Everybody joked about the fact that Ma took an excellent medicine to cure her cough—how could the cough persist after this treatment? As on other days the doors were shut at ten p.m.

(To be continued)

Just as without the help of teachers and experts one cannot become proficient in the worldly knowledge that is taught in universities, so the sublime knowledge of the Absolute does not come without the guidance of a competent Guru. To find Him is the problem, whether it be for spiritual progress, liberation, or any other matter, however insignificant it may seem.

Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Ma Anandamayee and my experience

Shree Pandurang Wasudeo Chachire (B.A. Nag. Uni.)
Subhash Chouk, Tumsar 441912

Somebody said "Create a great sensation in the world and do immense good in humanity. I am leading my life accordingly uptill now.

My college life was full of surrounding with saints and sages. A great saint 'Shri Gajanan Maharaj' Shegawn (Calcutta-Bombay Road) has given me great spiritual impression in my life in 1964.

After my graduation I left Nagpur and settled at my native place Tumsar. I have travelled with my good follower to meet (Darshan) MA Anandamayee at Kurkushetra but unfortunately my bag was stolen by somebody at Mathura-Vrindavan. Again one or two years later I travelled as a pilgrim to meet (Darshan) MA Anandamayee at Haridwar.

I have read many spiritual books at Ramakrishna Ashram, Nagpur but I found much good high thinking in MA Anandamayee as a spiritual master.

When I returned from Haridwar and halt at Mathura, I saw MA Anandamayee on Bhagavati Vision. MA Anandamayee was a great real Bhagavati in true sense.

Pandit Gopinath Kaviraj who was a well qualified, Educated, Sanskrit Scholar and Master of

master too had played a important role in Editing of the "Anand Varta".

The definition given by the Ex-Editor of "Amrit Bazar Patrika" was the most remarkable on the Life of MA Anandamayee.

I read the Life History of Shri "Lehe Maharaj" who was Sadguru of Shri Yogi Arvind and Life History of "Nuri Baba" of Bombay who was very important spiritual master.

The teaching of 'Bhagavat Gita' and 'Bible' is also same as of Lord Christ and Lord Krishna who proved moral teaching of the God and their human feeling in it.

Nagpur is situated in the centre of India where lakhs of people visited every year on 14th October for "Dharma Chakra Parivartan Day".

I visited my father in law time to time, there is temple of Rukhada Ashram ऋखडा आश्रम and Kamakshidevi कामाक्षीदेवी. Historical measurement had been made by Nagpur University and Archaeological Department, Government of India also for facts.

Political views and saints are related each other. Saints are not separate from politics. Our culture is not limited upto the political view only they are related to each other which is the most important role of the saints for universal brotherhood.

I pray to God to help the devotees of MA Anandamayee and noble thought may go to the every corner of human beings.

Holy Reminiscences*

1. My First Darshan of Ma

Swami Joyananda Giri

It was in the last week of November, 1955, that I had my first darshan of Ma. The place was Kali Bari, near Birla Temple in New Delhi, where a *shamiana* (large tent) had been put up specially for the *Samyam Saptah* which was held there from 22nd to 29th November.

I had been interested in spiritual things right from my college days, the lives of saints, the speeches and writings of Swami Vivekananda and Swami Rama Tirtha being my favourite subjects of study. This interest had grown with the passage of time and in 1951, when a new job brought me to Delhi, I found better opportunities for satsang.

Prayer for Darshan of a Realized Soul

By 1954, that is just a year before my darshan of Ma, the Unseen had begun to attract me so much that mere studies failed to satisfy me. I, therefore, started praying to God to give me a chance to meet someone in flesh and blood who had actually seen Him. In those days I would often sit alone and pray fervently somewhat as follows :—

* Ananda Varta (E) Vol. XXI No. 4 (Oct. 1974) Pp. 235-241.

“O Lord, I wish to see you, but I realize that I am totally unfit to have your darshan, as, being a householder, I do not possess the right quality of purity for it. In the circumstances, since I cannot have direct communion with you, please let me have an indirect experience by meeting someone who may have seen you.”

I did not know then what I was praying for, as God is not seen and known by anyone other than Himself. It is only when the ego dies that God is seen and when the ego is not there, he who sees Him is He Himself.

Meeting an Intermediary

Anyway, determined to pursue my objective, I began meeting mahatmas and saintly people more frequently than before, but nobody made me feel that he had seen God, until one day chance took me to an ashram, then called ‘Nirbhay Dham’ near the bank of the river Jamuna in Delhi. There I met a whitehaired man dressed in a loin cloth, whose name was Biharananda. His talks and looks impressed me much and I began visiting him almost daily in the evening after office hours.

In the course of my close association with him, I learnt that he had been a very wealthy man with a flourishing cloth business in Chandni Chowk, Delhi, and that his son Balkishan Das was still carrying on that business. Biharananda, who is no more now, was Seth Biharilal when he met and took diksa (initiation) from a great mahatma, the son and disciple of the famous late saint Nirbhayananda of

Nirbhay Ashram, Barot (Meerut), whose compositions, as recorded in "Nirbhay Vani" are well-known in that area.

I hear about Ma

Biharananda, whom I called Swamiji, had travelled extensively all over India, and had for some time, as he told me, even stayed with the outstanding sage of Uttar Kashi, the late Swamiji Tapovanam. After several months of satsang at Nirbhay Dham, I happened to ask Swamiji one day, "Sir, you have seen almost the whole country and met many great mahatmas. Who in your opinion, is today the foremost among them all in India?" He replied that he had not moved out of the Ashram (Nirbhay Dham) for some 10 to 15 years, but when still a wandering sadhu, he had found that the consensus among the leading mahatmas then was that in the spiritual hierarchy in India there were four sages on the top. Anxious to know who they were, Swamiji satisfied my curiosity by mentioning their names as Mata Anandamayi, Sri Aurobindo, Maharshi Ramana and Swami Tapovanam. At the time I had put the question (early in 1955), Sri Aurobindo and Maharshi Ramana had already taken mahasamadhi, and so there were only two left, namely Mata Anandamayi and Swami Tapovanam.

After I had learnt this, a keen desire seized me to have the darshan of at least one of them. Swami Tapovanam, I was told, never came down below Uttar Kashi, and to a man so such immersed

in the world like myself, Uttar Kashi, in those days appeared too distant. On the whereabouts of Mataji, Swamiji was unable to throw any light. And so several months passed and I continued visiting Nirbhay Dham as usual and having Swamiji's Satsang.

Then one day, in the fourth week of November, 1955, I learnt that Mataji was in town and I could have Her darshan in Kali Bari in New Delhi. I was naturally thrilled to know this and decided to go there with all the members of my family.

I go for Ma's Darshan

It was around 11 a.m., I believe, when we arrived at Kali Bari and found Ma seated on the right of a raised platform at the far end under a shamiana, the right half of which was filled with women and the left half with men. We at once went right up to where Mother was seated and paid our respects individually by pranams. Although I did avail myself of the opportunity to look straight at Mother's face, I failed to notice anything extraordinary in it, despite my great expectations. Fortunately, however, we did not leave the place immediately after the pranama, but sat down among the assembled devotees, my wife and children in the women's section and myself among men.

My thoughts, after I had sat down there, were somewhat as follows: I was certainly "lucky to have had the darshan of one of the two greatest living sages of India. Of course, I had not noticed anything miraculous in Mother, but that did not

really matter much. I had wanted to see such a big saint and God had graciously fulfilled my keen desire. So I was now one of the privileged among the seekers in the country.” Just when thoughts of this kind were coming to me, I noticed that someone near Mother was requesting Her to say something, and so far as I recollect, She was replying that “this body” (meaning Herself) does not say anything, that is, does not make speeches. However, it soon became clear that Mataji was going to sing a bhajan or do some Kirtan.

Ma Reveals Her Divinity

What Mother sang that day I could not make out, as it was in Bengali and I was then a total stranger to that language. But the effect which Her voice produced on me was utterly unexpected and of a most extraordinary nature. As the words of the devotional composition, which came out of Her ‘Srimukh’ (lotus mouth), reached my ears, they purified my entire being. Tears began to flow freely and my physical frame began to tremble. This reaction, which continued unabated while the singing lasted, made me feel that the voice I had heard was not a human voice and, therefore, Ma was not only the greatest among the living Indian sages, but also a Being of another dimension.

I was then 48 years old and had heard many a devotional piece, including highly uplifting recorded music, but never in my whole life had any vocal programme produced such a spontaneous reaction

in me as I had experienced that morning. And so I found myself saying again and again in my mind that Ma was superhuman and that Her darshan, which I had had a few minutes earlier, although from very close quarters, had really been no darshan at all, for I had failed to catch the Divine in Her.

Just then the bhajan stopped and I noticed that Ma was preparing to leave the place. As I saw Her getting down from the dais and covering the short distance to the narrow passage between the shamiana and the compound wall of Kali Bari on the right, rushed out from where I was seated and took up a position just outside the entrance to the shamiana and at a distance of some 15 feet from the passage (between the front right corner of the shamiana and the compound wall) out of which Mataji was shortly to emerge, accompanied as usual by a few girls in white.

I was still trembling and my eyes were wet with tears when I had planted myself in that position, with my entire being awaiting with hundred percent concentration the moment when Ma would again become visible and I would have Her darshan with my new faith about Her divinity firmly planted by Her in my heart and mind.

And when She did emerge from that passage, Her eyes met mine, and this time the effect was even more pronounced than what Her voice had produced a little earlier. I found myself quivering as I had never experienced before, with tears flowing spontaneously and without a break, as the divine vision passed before my eyes. leaving me

speechless and spell-bound. I kept on turning in the direction in which the party was moving till the never-to-be forgotten sight disappeared from my view.

Ma as Mt. Everest, I, a grain of sand

After gradually calming down, I began to take stock of the astounding situation in which I had found myself. First of all, I felt completely convinced that I had, for the first time in my life, come face to face with someone, who though moving about in the world like human beings was certainly not an individual like anyone of us. Secondly, the inexplicable experience, which I had gone through, made me feel that I was like a grain of sand at the foot of Mount Everest which Mataji was in the spiritual field. From this I concluded that there was nothing in common whatsoever between Her and myself and therefore, the question of my entertaining any thoughts of coming nearer to Her just did not arise. Any attempt on my part at seeking Her company, I clearly felt then, would be as absurd as that of an unskilled and useless village urchin wanting to have acquaintance with, say the President of India.

And, therefore, I did not stay back at Kali Bari to enquire as to who Ma was, where She lived and whether it was possible to spend some time in Her blessed presence. My thoughts went back to Nirbhay Dham, and Swamiji appeared in my eyes as one functioning on the human level and therefore, as someone with whom I could mix freely.

Firmly convinced of the unbridgeable and hopeless inequality between Ma and me, and considering myself as a miserably insignificant creature when compared to the Divine Being that Ma was, I returned, with my wife and children to our world of ordinary human beings to which I belonged, with absolutely no plan or even a thought of ever attempting to meet Mother again in this life.

(To be continued)

The love of God is alone desirable for a human being. The One, whose offspring you are, who is your Mother, Father, Friend, Beloved, Lord, who has brought you forth, has nourished you with the nectar of mother's milk — by whatever Name you invoke Him — that Word you should keep in mind at all times.

— Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

SAI RAM SAHAI

Akhand Sai Nam Saptahas

R. Ramachandra Rao

In Gita Chapter IX V-14 Lord Krishna says,

“Constantly chanting my names and glories and striving to attain me and bowing again and again, to me, those devotees of firm resolve ever united with me through meditation, worship me with single-minded devotion”.

On the same verse Jnaneswar Maharaj says,

Bhagavad Gita Chapter IX ; Verse 14 :

“Ever proclaiming my glory and, steady of purpose striving for attainment, rendering homage unto me, with constant application, they in devotion meditate upon me”.

Lord Krishna said : “Such devotees dance with the joy of devotion to God while singing my praise and make all the talk of penance empty. Since not a trace of sin is left in them, to say that they have to control the mind and body is meaningless. Yama, the punisher of the wicked, wonders whom to restrain and whom to judge ; Dama wonders whom to subdue ! The sacred waters are at a loss to find out what to wash and cleanse, for not a jot of sin remains ! In this way, the high-souled ones, merely by singing My praises, heal the miseries of the world and make it resound with the purest bliss of the self.

They give light without a dawn, bestow everlasting life without ambrosia, and confer God's vision without Yoga practice. They heal the rich and the poor alike, they do not make any distinction between the high and low, and open freely the whole kingdom of pure bliss to all creatures. Hardly, if ever, a soul reaches the abode of Lord Vishnu—Vaikuntha, absolute freedom and bliss—but these devotees have brought absolute freedom and bliss within the reach of all.

“Thus have they flooded with light the entire universe by virtue of singing of Lord's Name. The Sun is brilliance itself and yet it suffers from the drawback of setting; these God's favourites are perfect and shine for ever. The Moon appears full on full-moon nights only; but these devotees are perfect at all times. Merciful are the clouds indeed, but they are emptied before long and hence cannot match the unending treasures of mercy. The great souls are as strong as lions and as free as birds. The glory of uttering My name even once, is the reward earned at the end of a cycle of meritorious lives; yet that name is ever dancing on their tongue to their breath's tune. For this or that once even the Vaikuntha or the region of the Sun may be without Me. I may even pass by the minds of the Yogins. Yet, if ever I appear to be missing, I may unmistakably be spotted out in that abode—where My devotees are singing devotedly My praise. They are so enrapt in singing My praise that they forget the place and the time when they are absorbed in the supreme bliss. There is constant

and unbroken stringing together of the names— Krishna, Vishnu, Hari, Govind, accompanied by holy and open talk about my divine self and they sing songs of My praise to their hearts' content. In this way, singing My praise, these Saints live and move in the world : and then, O Arjuna they gain complete mastery over the mind and the life-winds and keep them under control.

(The Vision magazine), October 1987).

Adi Shankaracharya drank the ocean of Advaita but the great Acharya atlast, understood that Advaita is only for the intellectuals and it was not easy for the average men to follow it—so he considered that gradual progress through Bhakti or devotion was more practical. Hence the Acharya directed his attention to the composition of several devotional poems, or stotras on the deities which were commonly worshipped. One of those pieces is bhaja govindam. It contains simple and musical stanzas addressed to seekers as instructions to help them walk the path to their goal. Though it looks simple the fundamental vedanta also is filled in.

Bhaja Govindam is also called Maha Mudgara. Opening stanza starts with Bhaja Govindam, Bhaja Govindam. It is a chant, that is generally sung in congregations.

The meaning of the 1st stanza is “Seek (worship) Govind, Seek Govind, Seek Govind. O fool when the appointed time comes (death) grammer rules will not save you.

Swami Chinmayananda writing commentary, on Sri Shankaracharya as Bhaja Govindam states :—

True bhajan is a total subjective surrender, in love and devotion, at the altar of the Lord as conceived by the devotee.

This process of self-liquidation at the feet of the Lord has been classified under nine types, according to the means adopted: (1) listening to the glory of the Lord (sravanam); (2) singing the glory of the Beloved of your heart (keertanam); (3) constantly thinking about his nature and beauty (smaranam); (4) adoring the feet of the Lord in spirit of self-obliteration (paadasevanam); (5) with the help of selected mantras and sacred Vedic hymns, employing the necessary things prescribed for worshipping the Lord (archanam); (6) to pay obeisance to the Lord (vandanam); (7) serving the Lord (daasyam); (8) to invoke the Lord affectionately and to discuss with Him as a friend (sakhyam); and lastly (9) to offer oneself; in total self-surrender to the Lord, as a humble gift at His altar (aatmanivedanam).

In all of them there is a spirit of worship (bhaja), employed. The essence in all worship (bhajanam) is 'service' (seva). Isvaraseva is Isvara bhajanam; no doubt, jana-seva is certainly Janardanaseva.

One gentleman from Poona by name Anantrao Patankar who had studied Vedas, Vedantas and Upanishads but has no peace of mind came to Shirdi Baba and stated his condition. Baba instructed him by parable to follow Navidha Bhakti to get peace of mind.

Singing God's name continuously for 7 days is called 'Nam-Sap-Tha'.

Sai Baba made devotees sing god's name continuously day and night for 7 days in his presence. Once he asked Das ganumaharaj to do the Nama saptahs. He replied that he would do it provided that he was assured that Vithal (his istadevatha) would appear at the end of the 7th day. Then Baba placing his hand on his chest assured him that certainly Vithal would appear, but that the devotee must be earnest and devote. Vithal is here only when the devotee is burning with love and devotion, Vithal will manifest himself here (Shirdi).

The Nam saptahas should not be mechanical and showy. If they are done with burning love and devotion God will appear at the place of Nam saptaha.

Nam saptahas. As far as my little knowledge goes that Sri D. Shankaraih, a staunch devotee of Baba conducted Nam japas at many places in Andhra, Tamilnadu and North India. He is the exponent of Nam saptahas.

I would like to quote some of them.

1. Akhand Sai Nama Saptaha from 26-12-1985 to 13-02-1986 (49 days) at Vijayavada (A.P.)

2. From 19-03-88 (Saturday) to 26-03-88 (Saturday) 7 days at Sri Rama Sainager Condapah dist. (A.P.)

3. From 5-4-1990 (Thursday) to 24-05-1990 at Sri Shirdi Sai Baba Dhyana Mandir, Chilkalapudi Machilipatnam (A.P.) (seven weeks).

Apart from these at a number of places in Andhra Pradesh Nama saptahas were conducted.

In the North India at Faridabad and Garhwal namjapas were conducted.

At the sacred place Kanya Kumari (Tamil Nadu) 15-07-91 to 18-07-91 Nam Saptaha was conducted successfully.

Seeing participating in Nam Japas some of the staunch devotees resolved to form a committee to conduct Sai Nam Saptahas in Karanataka. So Akhand Sai Nama Saptaha Samithi was formed.

1. Under the auspices of this Samithi a Nam-japa was conducted from Thursday 16th March 1989 to 23rd March 1989 at Sri Sai Spiritual Centre, Sri Sai Baba Mandir Road, Thyagarajnar, Bangalore-560 028. Holy mother Sivamma Tayee who is now 103 years old graced the occasion by blessing the devotees.

2. (28-05-1990) 24 hours Non-stop Om Sai Sri Sai Jaya Jaya Sai Nam Sankeerthana was conducted by different Troops and groups of devotees, Om (29-05-90). This day, 100th birthday celebrations of Sri Shivamma Tayee were performed. Sri Hasan Mathaji, Sri Nityananda Ashrama, Mysore and Sri Purushthamanandaji of Sri Rama Krishna Ashrama, Bangalore addressed the devotees to follow the holy mother's footsteps.

3. Under the auspices of Akhanda Sai Nama Saptaha Samithi 72 hours from 23-07-92 to 26-07-92 Akhanda Sai Nama Triaham was conducted at Vyisya Hostel, Ibrahim Saheb Street, Bangalore. Holy mother Sri Shivamma Tayee inaugurated the function.

4. On the occasion of Parama Poojya H. H. Sri Narasimha Swamiji's marble Idol. Installation celebrations (24 to 27-1-93) 72 hours Akhanda Sai

Taraka Nam Bhajan was conducted at Sri Sai Spiritual Centre, Tyagarajanagar, Bangalore. Senior devotees Sriyuth M. Rangachari, Hyderabad, R. Parthasarthy and T. Keshav Rao, Madras, and R. Radha Krishan, President of Nam Saptaha Samithi graced the occasion. Thousands of devotees participated in the function.

5. At Bangalore city in the south west there is Sai Spiritual centre, the eldest sister institute, at Malleswar in the north Sai Mandali, at the east Sri Sai Samaji Ulsoor and in the south east Shirdi Sai Baba Mandir in Rupan Agrahara, Madivala, these Sai Institutions are working to propagate Sai cult but there was no such institution for the people of Jayanagara 9 Blocks and J. P. Nagar 6 Blocks in the south so the Sai devotees of these parts desired to have a Sai Institute. Hence Sri Sadguru Sainath Seva Samithi was formed and got registered on 1-4-1992. This Samithi first got translated into Kannada Sri Gurudeva Datta Vaibhavam originally published in English by Sai padrenu Sri M. Rangachari of Hyderabad (A.P.) and released at Sri Sai Spiritual Centre, Tyagarajanagar, Bangalore on 25th December 1992.

The same Samithi proposed in their committee meeting to hold Akhand Sai Nam Japa for 24 hours but felt for want of the place, but one of the committee members Sri Janardhan secured a place at Lions Club of Sarakki community centre J. P. Nagar. The members of the Samithi and devotees came forward and commenced the divine yagna at 9 a.m. on Sunday 9-5-1993 to 9 a.m. Monday

10-5-1993. This function was successfully conducted. The Sai sister institution, Sai Spiritual Centre, Tyagarajanagar, Sai Mandali Malleswaram's groups participated. Sri R. Radha Krishan, President Akhand Sai Nam Saptahas, Sri B. S. Ananthakrishnan, Smt. C. Sharada, Sri Chamraj, Sriyuth D. N. Murthi, Nagesh, V. S. Kuber, D. G. R. Vijayakumar, Puttam and devotees of J. P. Nagar and Jayanagar graced the occasion. Thanks are due to them.

A philanthropic Sai devotee (Khodya) supplied a bag of rice and half bag of dal to feed the poor. Accordingly hundreds of poor people were fed.

This Samithi is childlike. It is not even two years old. It is but natural for this institute to solicit the help from generous public and Sai devotees.

Likhit Nam japas :

A staunch devotee of Sai Baba Sri Puttanna has taken up the Sri Saikote Mahathraka Nama Yajna. By April 1991 nearly 1000 devotees had offered Likhit japa and grand total contributed was more than three crores and ten lakhs. Sri Sai Koti Mahamantra Nam yagna was thus celebrated by the will of Sri Sai from 6-4-91 to 8-4-91 and Sri Sai Likhit Japa was immersed in the Holy Sangam of Kanyakumari (T.N.) on 11-4-1991.

As the day Ramanavami (24-03-91) for receiving the Likhit Japa was nearing Sri Sai prompted Sri Sai Mandi (Regd.) Malleswaram who started the second

Sai Koti Mahataraka Nama yagna on Guru-poornima day the 26th July 1991.

More than 1800 devotees all over the country got inspired and offered this time 4 crores Sai Likhit Japa. Sri Sai through a miracle prompted Sri Sai Mandali to keep the sacred likhit japa in the specially constructed Dhyana Mandapa.

12 hours Sai Nam Japa was conducted on 18-07-93 at Vasya Hostel, Ibrahim Saheb Street, Bangalore under auspices of Sai Nam Saptaha Committee.

It is the duty of every devotee to participate in these sacred Nam Saptahas and contribute their might.

PRAAYER

Baba I am not a man of might or merit.
 Make me follow thy words in true spirit.
 Let me praise thee with all adoration.
 Guide me in this world of trial and tribulation.

Isvara, the Lord of the world is not a thing to be perceived by the senses or grasped by the mind. By contemplating the Divine, peace is won. God Himself draws you towards Him.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

The recent two incidents

Sree Shibananda

A

The birth anniversary of Shree Shree Maa was being observed by devotees at Kankhal in the month of May '91. A lady devotee from Asansol narrated a fact to Udasjee which was experienced by her husband.

The gentleman was a Government employee at high post and he had been to Hyderabad in 1990 for some official job. He stayed in a reputed Hotel, arranged by his employer.

One day when he was sleeping in his room at about 1-30 a.m. suddenly the fan and light were off due to load shedding. At that time he heard knocking at the door from outside. He asked the name of outsider and a male voice was telling "open the door as we want to search your room". He was astonished and replied it was time for rest and he should not be disturbed. Searching is done at day time and not at night. In the meantime Hotel Generator was started and the light was on.

The stranger again said "we have no time to talk to you, open the door immediately as we have order for searching and further delay will cause you danger".

Her husband felt no alternative but to open the door and immediately four persons rushed into the room—two of them stood at the door and the other

two took out revolver from their pocket. They asked to hand over 50,000 Dollars from him which he possessed.

The gentleman did not really have this amount and told the stranger gently they were wrongly given this news. They may search if necessary. They immediately caught him by neck and held the revolver on to his chest asking to give 50,000 Dollars without wasting their time. The gentleman was so frightened, thought about his only son at the face of death. Immediately he remembered the name of Shree Shree Maa Anandamayee.

Here the reader of this story be assured that this gentleman never saw Anandamayee Maa nor had any connection with Maa's Ashram. Some of his relatives were disciples of Maa and he only saw Maa's picture at their houses, heard a little about Her which attracted him to Shree Shree Maa. He then used to keep a locket of Maa always with him.

At this stage soon he remembered Maa Anandamayee, he took out the locket from his bed, held it at his chest and observed his fear of death is gone as also thoughts about his son. He murmured "Maa if I die, die with you along". On such magic utterance, the two persons standing at the door flew away and the two persons holding revolver rushed out like drunker. A minute or two later they again came back into the room and asked her husband what was in his hand. The gentleman straight out his hand and showed Locket of Maa. Suddenly the two strangers trembled with fear, gave salute to Maa and ran away saying 'Oh God Oh God'.

B

It was the first week of June '91 at the end of Maa's birth anniversary at about 9/9-30 a.m. in the morning a news spread out that two long, black coloured dangerous snakes were rounded up the Jaba Tree just behind Samadhi Mandir of Maa.

Hearing this, many of Ashram people at Kankhal and the outsiders gathered to visit that scene but the two snakes did not make any movement and were there still. Later when the sun was very hot, the visitors left the place and after some time the two snakes disappeared but the Ashram people did not forget their appearance.

In the evening, just after the Sandhya Arati, a Sadhu wearing gerua cloth was on his way to Sadhu Kuthia, south side of the temple. It was deep dark due to cloudy sky and when he reached near the Jaba Tree, power was off due to load shedding and nothing could be seen nearby. At once he remembered the sight of the two snakes of morning and got very much frightened thinking of their reappearance now, they may be in front of him or back or by his side very near. Leaving all hope, he took Maa's name but Maa was far away from that place.

A little later the lights were on and he saw one of the snakes was lying just in front of him and had he stepped out he would have died by snake bite. He then ran away from that place.

He observed that it was Maa who may be far off but taking Her name he was saved.

Ma used to say "who has seen Her body or who take only Her name, he can observe Her reality".

Matrideva Bhaba

Manjulika Chaudhuri

Man after all is a rational animal. This rationality leads him to the necessity for having a sense of his own identity. As knowledge is the prime ingredient of the society, I find no other way but to probe into the nature of crisis. In exploring the nature of crisis in health care, I painfully observe that the etiology of ill health lies not in an individual itself. Individual is a part of our society. If society itself is contaminated, it infects the elements lying in it. The various other problems of pollution, a rising wave of violence, crimes, inflation and unemployment energy crisis are nothing but the leakages of the container—society. The ecological imbalance of the society gives a blow on the individual's physique which ultimately creates a deep injury in the inner world, mind.

This very word 'WORLD' reminds us of the fact that what is true in a small society is true about the whole world as well. The modern era of the society reveals the fact that we are globally interconnected. This ecological apprehension leads us to a further concept, cosmic. The analytic approach regarding every problem of worldly affairs makes the the world very narrow, rather familiar at the same time very far from us. It is a contradic-

tory proposition ; but this is the inherent imbalance which is the roots of all evils of today. The menace is so great that it has the power to extinguish our civilization. Time has come to reconsider and recapitulate our cosmic analysis and re-arrange.

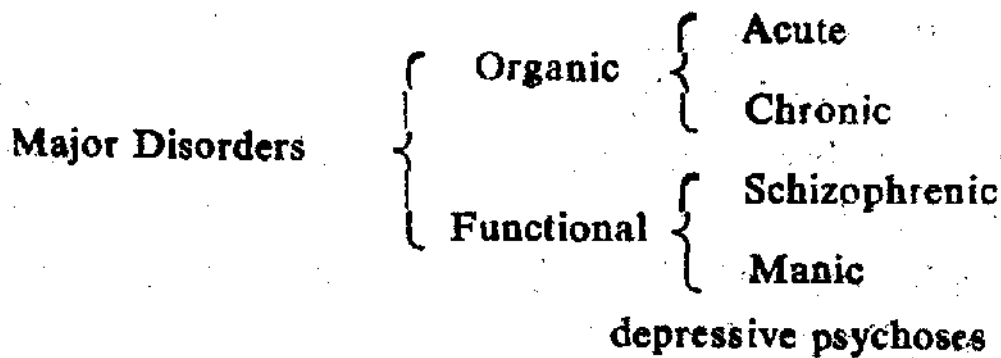
The best equipment of man as the best creature of this universe, rationality, enables me to orient myself towards the worldly phenomena. I follow the path of religion as Erick Fromm defines it "an attempt to answer the problem of human existence". In course of time, I tried to keep on watching mental patients. I have enough time to watch physically ill patients too, being attached to a Medical Institution. Leaving aside the mentally ill patients I came to understand that most of the physically ill patients not all have an etiology of mental origin. Anyway, medical colleagues express many times that they are quite aware of this fact or of illness. In the process of curing diseases, they prescribe tranquillizer in addition to the specific drug. Let them remain satisfied with the motto of the hit popsong 'DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY'. Regarding mental patients, I have never experienced a fully cured sane person. It would not be out of place to mention a case of my friend's relative who time to time suffered from mental illness. Coming back from a famous lunatic hospital in a sane mood he told me once that if he had to remain in this place, at this familiar situation, he would have to go back again to the hospital. I was greatly surprised at that moment, but now I understand what

is the reason behind. 'DEPRESSION' is the only term which can be related with any cosmic event. It is the by-product of modern civilisation. Any global problem can be described in a single word 'DEPRESSION'. 'DEPRESSION' is commonly used in meteorology. It is formed by warm tropical air meeting and rising above cold polar air. It brings unsettled rainy weather. It is nothing but the crisis producing element. It is true in the field of economics, politics and sociology. It is true about human beings as well. In psychology it refers to an ordinary emotion. But as it goes deeper, it creates problem. Any global disturbance can be easily explained with the single term 'DEPRESSION'.

In Davidson's *Principles and Practice of Medicine*, a text book for students and doctors, we find the classification of depressive disorder, in a fine manner. It may be either organic or functional.

ORGANIC PSYCHOSIS : It may be acute or chronic. The acute organic brain syndromes are due to a physical lesion (trauma, tumor or infection) or due to a toxic or degenerative processes. Acute stages are known as irreversible brain lesions which have occurred, are the dementias. The most common are those associated with ageing—cerebral atherosclerosis and senile psychoses.

Except these two, there are other psychoses which are merely functional. There are the major psychiatric illnesses occurring without brain disease or impairment.



Minor disorders :—

Psychoneuroses

Personality disorders

Psychosomatic disorders

Sexual deviations

Addiction

Alcoholism.

What is important here, as Michael Balint wrote in *The Doctor, His Patient and the Illness* is that—The 'small but necessary personality change', the doctor has to make, for purposes of psychiatric interviewing, is to be more passive, less decided in advance about matters to be explored and more ready to receive private disclosures from the patient.

Davidson correctly reminds that the doctor's personality is his Chief Clinical Tool. It is always in his personal capacity that the psychiatrically ill patient will respond to him, over and above the clinical expertise he exercises when engaged on the exploration, diagnosis and management of any disorder of the patients' mind or personality. In treating the mental illness, doctors generally use sedatives, tranquillisers and anti-depressants accordingly.

From the above depicted picture it should not be difficult to realise the nature of our health prob-

lems all over the world and especially in the third world. Man is a living organism. He has before him two things—nature and society. When a person becomes ill the disease causing his ailments lies not in the individual himself. We have to consider his surroundings also. ‘Health as WHO defines’ is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. But a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being is an unattainable ideal. Cosmic health depicts a different picture. It shows that physical well-being and mental illness vary directly. As Social well-being has improved both within and among countries, disparity between wealth and poverty has become more pronounced. Being a citizen of a third-world country, I have the direct knowledge of the fact that two-thirds of our population lie beyond the domain of health care. It is no doubt a deplorable condition. But let me focus my attention on what is happening in the so-called developed countries.

Highly sophisticated disease-caring process with hard technology is going on in the developed countries. It is extremely expensive too. There the body is treated as a machine. In treating the physically ill patient physicians follow the analytic method of Rene Descartes, the founder of modern philosophy who himself was aware of the existence of mind and body as two parallel entities. Unfortunately, he says that “there is nothing included in the concept of the body that belongs to the mind and nothing in that of the mind that belongs to the

body." This paradigm has dominated the physician's attitude even today. The rise of modern scientific medicines is co-related with the great advances made in biology. Medical problems are analysed by proceeding from larger parts to smaller parts i. e. from organs and tissues to cells, then to cellular fragments and finally to single molecules. But this reductionist approach which has its emphasis on micro organism is not sufficient for comprehending the human condition in health and illness. This analytic approach in the field of Medical Science has achieved tremendous success in the areas of emergency medicine such as in dealing with accidents, acute infection and premature births, etc. But it does not make a significant difference for the health of the population as a whole. Being dominated by the concept of body as a machine, the physicians interfere in the process of defect. Thus with the application of specific drug, they successfully cure the body machine. In this way they remain far from the definition of health and limit themselves partly in "absence of disease". They forget that a human being has a body as well as a mind. They do never take into consideration the existence of mind as a distinct entity. Health has got many dimensions. It is a complex interplay between the physical, mental and social aspects of human nature. The combination of these multiple forces produces physical disease. A man can remain far from diseases, but not in the state of well-being. In the generation of illness a person's psychological state is ignored, albeit it is very cru-

cial in the process of healing. Healing is a process of art. Limiting themselves as they do to a mechanistic frame-work of the individual, the physician fails to deal with the interplay among body, mind and environment.

From another point of view if we keenly observe medical professionals of the developed countries, we find in them an un-wholesome and unhealthy attitude towards patients. Medical institutions are by far the most competitive of all professional schools. Like the business world they present high competitiveness as a virtue. They emphasise 'aggressive approach' to patient cure. In this connection I can not restrain myself from quoting from F. Capra, a Physicist—"A 'malignant' tumour is said to 'invade' the body, radiation therapy 'bombards' the tissues to 'kill' the Cancer Cells and Chemotherapy is often likened to Chemical warfare."

Anyway, this perspective in the world of medicine has led physicians to declare that the healthy attitude and healthy life style are beyond the domain of medicine. These are all philosophical issues. Medicine is supposed to be an objective science, not concerned with moral judgements. This belief system leads the professionals to under estimate the mental health of their patients.

Psychiatrists, on the other hand, under the influence of reductionist view analyse mental illness. They are convinced that mental problems are diseases of the body which has its location in the brain. The picture of the depressive disorder which I have presented earlier shows that psychiatrists are

successful in the cases of organic disorders. The rest which comprises about 95% mental illness never tends to be cured. Irrespective of physical or mental diseases it may be said that true therapy consists in the art of healing which means an emotionally supportive atmosphere for the patient. A patient must be allowed to continuous self-exploration rather than suppressed. Here we can turn out the analogy of depression of climate origin. After unsettled rains it brings a calm and cool temperature. Like unsettled rains, self-exploration in psychic cases is very much needed. We all know that tears season smile. Herein lies the importance of a clinical psychologist and health educators. But the world of medical Scientists represent a hierarchical system in which physical health professions come first and then psychiatrists. The Clinical Psychologists and health educators are mere auxiliaries in the sphere of medical science.

Not only in the developed countries, but in the underdeveloped countries also medical students are never oriented in the other variables of health except the body as a machine. Of course, with the development of germ theory, medical professionals have taken into considerations the influence of natural environment on health.

Improvement of personal hygiene, cleanliness, sanitation, disposal of succarage, nutritional food habits etc. clearly show the awareness about natural environment. Tremendous improvement on the control of infectious diseases deserve our attention. Third World countries are very much indeb-

ted to the micro-system of medicine. In a diametrically opposite way, heart disease, cancer, diabetes etc. which are called the diseases of civilisation are appearing on the scene. Physicians accept these diseases as inevitable consequences of modern civilisation for which there is no remedy.

But the answer lies in the psychological and social pathologies. Many issues such as nutrition, employment, population density, housing are never discussed in the medical practice. F. Capra's version regarding the mechanistic view of life in the field of life science 'led to the endless confusion about the relation between mind and brain and in physics it made it extremely difficult for the founders of quantum theory to interpret their observations of atomic phenomenon.'

This type of analysis of the body mechanism is of course the natural way of thinking. It is, as Edward D Bono remarks the vertical way of thinking. Most of the researchers proceed in this way overlooking its limitations in generating new ideas.

Let us turn upside down, that is to say, start horizontally—from molecules to human beings and human beings in relation to family, community, society and the nation. Of course, we have to admit from the above discussion that our criticism against the mechanistic theory is valid and tenable. Not only this modern scientific approach gives a great relief to combat many diseases which would be fatal otherwise. But the medical researchers need to be supplemented by the other variables regarding the health of

human being. More precisely, medical care must be liberated from pharmaceutical industry. The reader may be interested to know that medical researchers have invented a pill to prevent a woman from going to a doctor for suction.

The International Drug Administrators did not allow the production of such pill. With a great sign of relief it make them believe that at least in some people of the present society conscience still works. Establishment of Eye Banks is no doubt a blessing on human existence, but how can we explain the 'Sperm Bank' which is going to serve 5% of reproductive age group of the world to-day? And the ancillary project of surrogate mothers is a great hit on the very existence of Man who is completely detached from humanity itself. It has already created a Social problem. But what is the need of collecting such fallacious premises while considering the well-being of population at large of the vertical thinking world? It gives a greyish look on our horizon only. There is light. But it is unable to penetrate this stratified segmented dark clouds which reflect nothing, but the chains of depressive disorder, we find no reflection of glazing glow from our earth on the horizon not to speak of the happy flying series of birds. With tears in our eyes we vividly remember that ghastly picture of a gulf bird which lost its ability to saving its wings by the devastations of the gulf-war. That picture alone is eloquent enough to describe our modern world. Think of the face of our representative in the highest tribunal, UNO. Going against the

latent authoritative current he is trying to convince some paranoic persons of something. With an exhausted depressive pale look he, as if humanity itself is passing over the rocky earth, ours only beloved place. Whatever suffocation the chains of depressive disorder produces, it seems to have a function of its own elimination. Let us believe it. Any depression of any individual can be removed only if the individual is forced to reorganise his thinking to search for new ideas so that he can rearrange his life.

Psychological temperature has risen to such a degree that the human wing needs an 'infolding' exercise. Vibrations of earthly systems are coming out as noise. We have to turn the noise into a symphony, a happy and pleasing sound. This can help our present world from losing its way in the deserts. For this kind of exercise we need to be acquainted with newly coined terms, such as 'progress', 'rationality', 'intellect', 'co-operation' and 'co-ordination', 'flexibility' and 'rigidity', 'history of humanity as a continuous process', the development of personality to cross the threshold of self-consciousness and last but not the least the term 'cosmic'.

(To be continued)

The Central Teaching of the Gita

Sri Narayan Chaudhuri

The Bhagavadagita which forms part of the Bhisma Parva of the Mahabharata is the most popular religious poem of Sanskrit literature. It is a book conveying lessons of philosophy, religion and ethics. Its message of deliverance is simple. While only the rich could buy off the gods by their sacrifices, and only the cultured could pursue the way of knowledge, the Gita teaches a method which is within the reach of all, that of bhakti or devotion to God.

Lord Krishna of the Gita stands for the Infinite for the finite, the God in man concealed within the folds of flesh and the powers of sense. Krishna stands for the voice of God delivering his message in thrilling notes, warning Arjuna against dejection of spirit. Arjuna is the representative of men at a great crisis in his life. Arjuna comes to the battlefield, convinced of the righteousness of his cause and prepared to fight the enemy. At the psychological moment he shrinks from his duty. Arjuna is ready to repudiate his life if necessary. He does not know what is right for him to do. He is faced by a terrible temptation and passes through an intense inward agony. The mood of despair in

which Arjuna is found in the first chapter of the Gita is what the mystics call the dark night of the soul, an essential step in the upward path. The further stages of illumination and realisation are found in the course of the dialogue. From the second chapter onwards we have a philosophical analysis. The essential thing in man is not the body or the senses, but the changeless spirit. The mind of Arjuna is switched on to a new path. The life of the soul is symbolised by the battle-field of Kurukshetra, and the Kauravas are the enemies who impede the progress of the soul.

The opening chapter shows great insight into the heart of man, its conflict of motives, the force of selfishness and the subtle whisperings of the evil one. As the dialogue proceeds the dramatic element disappears. The echoes of the battlefield die away, and we have only an interview between God and man. The chariot of war becomes the lonely cell of meditation and a corner of the battlefield where the voices of the world are stilled, a fit place for thoughts on the supreme. In this background we have to appreciate the universal message of the Gita.

In point of popularity the Gita is second to no work in the world of Indian Thought. The Gita is the richest treasure amongst the spiritual possession of Hindu thought. This unique position it owes to a variety of causes. It forms a portion of an epic whose study has enraptured generations of men and women. The two characters that figure in it are most fascinating and the occasion

which calls forth its teaching is one of extreme seriousness when the fate not only of the country but of righteousness (dharma) itself is at stake. Apart from the formal excellences in the form of a dialogue which imparts to it a dramatic interest, it has a special message to give. The work breathes throughout a spirit of toleration which is an outstanding characteristic of Hindu Thought.

Gita not only concerns itself with the problem of conduct whose solution is a pressing need for man if he is to live without that inner discord which arises from consciousness of the ideal accompanied by mastery over self, but also is a treatise on metaphysics. Dealing as it does with a moral problem, the work necessarily touches upon metaphysical questions now and again, but they form only the background to the ethical teaching. To regard a consideration of ultimate philosophical questions as falling within the main aim of Gita, appears to us to misjudge its character. What is of much importance in Gita is its practical teaching. The occasion is a particular one and Sri Krishna, in enunciating a course of conduct suited to it naturally draws attention only to some of the principles on which right living should be based. On the present occasion let me explain the nature of the central moral truth inculcated in the work and point out its importance in the history of Indian Thought.

The central point of its teaching is activism or to use the expression of the Gita, 'Karma Yoga.' To understand what is actually meant by this

expression, it is necessary to consider separately the two terms constituting it. 'Karma' literally means 'what is done', a deed, and the word, of course, appears with this general meaning sometimes in the work. The word is sometimes used in the sense of that particular form of activity which is taught in the liturgical portion of vedic literature, viz. sacrifice. The word is also used in a fourth sense as divine worship, prayer etc. Of these several meanings, we should, when thinking of Karma-Yoga as taught in the Gita, take this meaning, viz. Social obligations which in one form or another are acknowledged in all organised society. The word, 'Yoga' means 'harnessing' or 'applying oneself to' so that Karma-Yoga may be rendered as 'devotion' to the discharge of social obligations. A characteristic of all voluntary actions is that they are preceded by a desire for something which is described as their motive or 'Phala'. Whenever we knowingly act, we aim at achieving some end or other. In the present case, for instance, Arjuna is actuated by a desire for sovereignty over his ancestral kingdom; and he has undertaken to fight for regaining that sovereignty which through the force of circumstances has passed on to his wily cousins. Such undertaking, however, would not be devotion to Karma. It is devotion to its phala, because the karma here, viz. fighting but serves as a means to bring about a preconceived end. For Karma-Yoga, the act should be viewed not as a means but as an end in 'itself'. That is, the idea of the result (Phala) must be dismissed altogether from the mind

before as well as during the act. The term signifies, as Sri Krishna is never tired of repeating, the doing of a deed without any least thought of reaping its fruit. 'Your concern is solely with action—never with its fruit.' There follows no doubt, a result from the deed that is done, but in the case of the Karma-Yogin, it ceases to be his end for the simple reason that it is not desired. Desire or self-interest when allowed to have its sway over us may bind us to what is right; and even when we succeed in choosing to do the right deed, undue eagerness to secure its fruit may induce us to swerve from the path of rectitude. The term 'Yoga' is, sometimes explained as signifying the 'balance of mind' (Samatvam). This teaching that we ought to engage ourselves in our work as members of a social order in the usual way and yet banish from our mind all thought of deriving any personal benefit therefrom is the meaning of Karma-yoga and constitutes the specific message of the Gita.

The importance of this teaching will become clear if we refer to the two ideals of life that were prevalent at the time among the orthodox—the negative ideal of renunciation or 'Nivritti' and the positive one of active life or 'Pravritti'. The first deal of 'nivritti', advocating the giving up of all karma and withdrawing from the work of the world entirely. The second one of pravritti, recommended living in the midst of society undertaking all the obligations implied thereby, but did not exclude the elements of selflessness altogether. This is clear in the case of ritualistic activities. The object of the

Gita is to discover the golden mean between the two ideals of 'Pravritti' and 'Nivritti' or of action and contemplation, preserving the excellence of both. Karma-Yoga is such a mean. While it does not abandon activity, it preserves the spirit of renunciation. It commands a strenuous life, and yet gives no room for the play of selfish impulses. Thus it discards neither ideal, but by combining them refines and ennobles both. That particular attitude of the soul which renunciation signifies still remains; only it ceases to look askance at action. In other words, the Gita teaching stands not for renunciation *of action*, but for renunciation *in action*.

Arjuna who at the outset undertook to fight under the influence of one of these old ideals, has come to be influenced by the other. He has resolved on a sudden to renounce the world and withdraw from the contest. His detachment does not spring from true enlightenment, but from narrow-mindedness—viz. the love of kith and kin. It is the result of weakness—surrendering to the power of the moment. Arjuna's 'vairagya' is at bottom faint-heartedness as Sri Krishna characterizes it 'raga', not 'viraga'. The final test that Arjuna is not actuated by genuine detachment is the sadness and despondency that pervade his speech. Neither doubt nor sadness is a sign of true spirituality. Sri Krishna's teaching is that the narrow selfish impulses of which sadness and doubt are the sign should first be overcome; and the way to do it is not to resort to the loneliness of the forest, but to

live in the midst of the storm and stress of social life, doing one's duty without any thought of recompense.

This teaching has been traced by some to earlier sources (Isa Upanisad). Even granting that the ideal of Karma-Yoga is not altogether new, there is no doubt that its general acceptance is due to its impressive enunciation in the Gita. Detached action became the starting point of life's discipline according to all the orthodox systems of thought superseding virtually the earlier view of activity pursued for its fruit. In this transformation of the ideal of Prayritti consists one of the chief contributions of the Gita to Hindu thought. We may add that though the particular circumstances that called forth the teaching have changed, it has not been rendered obsolete. Ours is an age of self-assertion, not of self-suppression. Men are not now likely to give up their duty to become recluses, as Arjuna wanted to do. The danger comes from the other side. In our eagerness to claim our rights and exercise them, we may ignore our duties. Hence the need for the teaching of the Gita now is as great as ever. Its value has not lessened through lapse of time ; and that is a work of its greatness.

To work for no profit to oneself, but yet to exert oneself to the utmost is the highest form of self sacrifice ; and the finest exhibition of this spirit in the world is to be seen on a battle field. We should, however, remember that Sri Krishna is really addressing all men through his devotee, Arjuna, and the teaching is not restricted in its

application to the particular situation that gave rise to it. Its appeal is to all men that find themselves placed in a similar dilemma in life. More than once it is stated that no man can abjure activity altogether, but this natural activity needs to be properly directed.

What is the direction in which the activity should be directed? In answer to this question, the Gita enjoins on, all the performance of their respective duties. One should never abandon one's specific work, whether it be high or low.

From what we have stated so far, it appears that a karma-yogin works without a purpose in view. No voluntary action, however, seems conceivable without some motive or other. Will without desire, it has been said, a fiction. What then is the motive for exertion here? There are two answers to this question furnished in the Gita: (1) 'atma-suddhi' which means purifying the self or cleansing the heart; and (2) subserving the purposes of God (Isvara), a fact which, by the way, implies a mixture of teaching here. The spirit in which one engages oneself in activity is different according to the two aims. What is done is done in the one case for the sake of the social whole of which the doer is a member; but in the other it is done for the sake of God, resigning its fruit to him. But whether we look upon the work done as duty to others or as divine service, it is not disinterested in every sense of the term. The first keeps self-conquest or subjective purification as the aim; the second looks forward to the security that has been

guaranteed by God—that no godly man will perish. But if Karma-yoga is thus motivated by desire, it may be asked in what sense, it has been described as detached. In replying to this question, we may point out that the activity which is natural to man if not properly guided, will become the means of obscuring from him the higher and for which he exists. By such an and the Gita understands something more than moral rectitude. It aims at the elimination of worldly desire ; it means to spiritualise them. And Karma-yoga is disinterested only so far as it turns our mind from the worldly results and sets it on the path leading to the true goal—not that it has no end at all. It does not thus do away with motives altogether ; only it furnishes one end the same motive for whatever we may do viz., the betterment of our spiritual nature. This goal is to be reached in two ways, according to the double motive, that is set before the Karma-yogin. If the motive is cleansing the heart, the goal is self-realisation ; if, on the other hand, it is subserving the purposes of God, the end is God-realisation. Of these, the first is to be understood in the Upanisads. It is becoming 'Brahman.' The second is reaching the presence of God. Whichever be the Goal—becoming Brahman or attaining God's presence—'samsara' or the realm of good evil is transcended. Although there are statements in the work which indicate that the goal—particularly the second one is to be reached after death, the prevalent idea is that it is realizable within the limits of this life. In the eleventh chapter of Gita we find

a thrilling account of a direct perception of God by the devotee. Only the attitude is predominantly one of Jnana in the case of a person that sets before himself the ideal of self-realisation, and one of 'bhakti' or passionate devotion to God in the case of the other. If we describe the one as the ideal of enlightenment, the other represents the ideal of love ; only it is love of God, and through him, of his creatures. But whether we look upon the Gita as the gospel of enlightenment or of love, it is equally the gospel of action.

The point to which it is necessary to draw special attention is that the Gita requires man to continue to work even in this perfected state. Here we see the exalted position assigned to work by the Gita, it contemplates no period, when activity may be wholly renounced. Passivity, in its view, is almost as reprehensible as wrong activity. Janak, King of Videha, renowned in the Upanisads, and Sri Krishna are our examples here. The one has become perfect and the other has always been so ; and both alike are active. Such a view totally transforms the notion of Saminysa by dissociating it from all inaction ; and in this transformation of the ideal of nivritti consists another important contribution of the Gita to Hindu thought. It is Karma-Yoga which forms the essential theme of the Gita.

In the Gita, we find "Karma", "Yoga", "Jnana" and "Bhakti" i.e. all the different forms of Sadhana that are current. The Gita sums up its teachings in its last utterance, "Become me-

mind, devoted to me, to sacrifice and adoration ; infallibly thou shalt come to me.”

In this sloka Sri Krishna clearly tells us that Jnana, Bhakti and Karma are all Bhakti attracts and Jnana realises. The Gita really performs a wonderful task and offers us a synthesis of the concrete and the abstract at the Impersonal and the Personal, the saguna and the nirguna, of Bhakti and Jnana—which is as profound as instructive, as illuminating as useful. “*अमेव शरणं गच्छ*”—‘Tameva Saranam Gachha’—“seek refuge in Him alone”. In this sloka lies the entire substance of the Gita and the Upanisad too. The realisation of the Supreme Person, the source of the Sustainer, the Creator and the Destroyer—is all that is necessary. If the Gita praises renunciation, it is renunciation of desire and attachment and not the abandonment of work ; if the Gita praises Karma, it is only desireless works, if the Gita supports the worship of the personal God, it is Absolute and Infinite.

The Innermost Essence

NYING TIG

Jigme Lingpa

From the book "Mudra" by Chogyam Trungpa

"Jigme Lingpa lived at the time of the fifth Dalai Lama ; He was responsible for inspiring many people to study *Maha Ati*, which is the final and ultimate teaching of Buddha.

This teaching brings precise experiences of the awakened state. In fact, it surpasses concepts including the "idea" of Buddha-nature, which has an element of the not yet mature.

The difference between them seems to be that the achievement of Buddha nature is seen as a development, but with *Maha Ati* it is an experience all at once. The image of *Maha Ati* is the *garuda* (eagle) which emerges from the egg fully grown.

I have included these translations in the book even though they are advanced teaching because reading them seems to have inspired many people. There is no danger in presenting them because they are what is called self-secret, that is, one cannot understand what one is not ready for. Also they are incomplete without the transmission from a guru of the Lineage".

This is the Lion's roar which subdues the rampant confusions and misunderstandings of those meditators who have abandoned materialistic attachments to meditate on the Innermost Essence.

The *Maha Ati*, which is beyond conceptions and transcends both grasping and letting-go, is the essence of transcendental insight. This is the unchanging state of non-meditation in which there is

awareness but no clinging. Understand this, I pay ceaseless homage to the *Maha Ati* with great simplicity.

Here is the essence of the *Maha Ati Tantra*,
The innermost heart of Padmakara's Teachings,
The life-force of the Dakinis.

This is the Ultimate Teaching of all the Nine
Vehicles.

It can be transmitted only by a Guru of the
Thought Lineage

And not by words alone.

Nevertheless I have written this

For the benefit of great meditators

Who are dedicated to the Highest Teaching.

This teaching was taken from the treasury of

*Dharmadhatu**

And is not created out of attachment

To theories and philosophical abstractions.

First the pupil must find an accomplished Guru with whom he has a good karmic link. The teacher must be a holder of the Thought Lineage Transmission. The pupil must have single-minded devotion and faith, which makes possible the transmission of the Teacher's understanding.

The *Maha Ati* is of the greatest simplicity. It is what is. It cannot be shown by analogy; nothing can obstruct it. It is without limitation and transcends all extremes. It is clear-cut nowness, which can never change its shape or colour.

When you become one with this state the desire to meditate itself dissolves; you are freed from

* *Dharmadhatu* : All-Encompassing Space Wisdom.

the chain of meditation and philosophy, and conviction is born within you. The thinker has deserted. There is no longer any benefit to be gained from "good" thoughts and no harm is to be suffered from "bad" thoughts. Neutral thoughts can no longer deceive. You become one with transcendental insight and boundless space. Then you will find signs of progress on the Path. There is no longer any question of rampant confusions and misunderstandings.

Although this teaching is the King of the *Yanas* (Vehicles). Meditators are divided into those who are highly receptive to it, those who are less receptive and those who are quite unreceptive. The most highly receptive pupils are hard to find, and it sometimes happens that Teacher and pupil are unable to find a true meeting point. In such a case nothing is gained and misconceptions may arise concerning the nature of *Maha Ati* .

Those who are less receptive begin by studying the theory and gradually develop the feeling and true understanding.

Nowadays many people regard the theory as being the meditation. Their meditation may be clear and devoid of thoughts and it may be relaxing and enjoyable, but this is merely the temporary experiencing of bliss. They think this is meditation and that no one knows better than them. They think "I have attained this understanding" and they are proud of themselves. Then, if there is no competent teacher, their experience is only theoretical. As it is said in the Scriptures of *Maha Ati* : "Theory is like

a patch on a coat—one day it will come apart”. People often try to discriminate between “good” thoughts and “bad” thoughts, like trying to separate milk from water. It is easy enough to accept the negative experiences in life but much harder to see the positive experiences as part of the Path. Even those who claim to have reached the highest stage of Realisation are completely involved with worldly concerns and fame. They are attracted by *Devaputra*. This means they have not realised the self-liberation of the six senses. Such people regard fame as extraordinary and miraculous. This is like claiming that a raven is white. But those who are completely dedicated to the practice of Dharma without being concerned about worldly fame and glory should not become too self-satisfied on account of their higher developments of meditation. They must practice the Guru Yoga throughout the four periods of the day in order to receive the blessings of the Guru and to merge their minds with his and open the eye of insight. Once this experience is attained it should not be disregarded. The yogi should henceforth dedicate himself to this practice with unremitting perseverance. Subsequently his experience of the Void will become more peaceful, or he will experience greater clarity and insight. Or again, he may begin to realise the shortcomings of discursive thoughts and thereby develop discriminative wisdom. Some individuals will be able to use both thoughts and the absence of thoughts as meditation, but it should be borne in mind

that that which notes what is happening is the tight grip of ego.

Look out for the subtle hindrance of trying to analyse experiences. This is a great danger. It is too early to label all thoughts as *Dharmakaya*. The remedy is the wisdom of nowness, changeless and unfailing. Once freed from the bondage of philosophical speculation, the meditator develops penetrating awareness in his practice. If he analyses his meditation and post-meditation experiences he will be led astray and make many mistakes. If he fails to understand his shortcomings he will never gain the free-flowing insight of nowness, beyond all concepts. He will have only a conceptual and nihilistic view of the Void, which is characteristic of the lesser *Yanas*.

It is also a mistake to regard the Void as a mirage as though it were merely a combination of vivid perceptions and nothingness. This is the experience of the lower Tantras, which might be induced by practice of the *Svabhava Mantra*.

It is likewise a mistake, when discursive thoughts are pacified, to overlook the clarity and regard the mind as merely blank. The experience of true insight is the simultaneous awareness of both stillness and active thoughts. According to the *Maha Ati* teaching, meditation consists of seeing whatever arises in the mind and simply remaining in the state of nowness.

Continuing in this state after meditation is known as "the post-meditation experience".

It is a mistake to try to concentrate on emptiness and, after meditation, intellectually to regard everything as a mirage. Primordial insight is the state which is not influenced by the undergrowth of thoughts. It is a mistake to be on guard against the wandering mind or to try and imprison the mind in the ascetic practice of suppressing thoughts.

Some people may misunderstand the term nowness and take it to refer to whatever thoughts happen to be in their mind at the moment. Nowness should be understood as being the primeval insight already described.

The state of non-meditation is born in the heart when one no longer discriminates between meditation and non-meditation and one is no longer tempted to change or prolong the state of meditation. There is all-pervading joy, free from all doubts. This is different from the enjoyment of sensual pleasure or from mere happiness.

When we speak of "clarity" we are referring to that state which is free from sloth and dullness. This clarity, inseparable from pure energy, shines forth unobstructed. It is a mistake to equate clarity with awareness of thoughts and the colours and shapes of external phenomena.

When thoughts are absent the meditator is completely immersed in the space of non-thoughts. The "absence of thoughts" does not mean unconsciousness or sleep or withdrawal from the senses, but simply being unmoved by conflict.

The three signs of meditation—clarity, joy and absence of thought—may occur naturally when a

Five hundred miles from the nearest habitation,
Would develop overweening pride.”

If the meditator is able to use whatever occurs in his life as the Path, his body becomes a retreat hut. He does not need to add up the number of years he has been meditating and does not panic when “shocking” thoughts arise. His awareness remains unbroken like that of an old man watching a child at play.

As is said in a *Maha Ati* text :

“Complete realisation is like unchanging space.”

The Yogi of *Maha Ati* may look like an ordinary person but his awareness is completely absorbed in oneness. He has no need of books because he sees apparent phenomena and the whole of existence as the Mandala of the Guru. For him there is no speculation about the stages on the Path. His actions are spontaneous and therefore benefit all sentient beings. When he leaves the physical body his consciousness becomes one with the *Dharma-kaya*, just as the air in a vase merges with the surrounding space when the vase is broken.

Ashram News

Dehradun

On June 25th Pt. Uma Shankar, chief disciple of Pt. Ram Kinkorji delivered a moving discourse on Ramayan based on 'Ma' at our Kishenpur Ashram.

On July 3rd 'Gita Satsang' was held at Ram Mandir in Kalyan Van Ashram.

On July 9th and 10th Akhand Ramayan and Bhandara was held at Raipur Ashram.

On July 15th and 16th on the occasion of anniversary of 'Ram Mandir Pratishtha' 'Akhand Ramayan and Bhandara' was held at our Kalyan Van Ashram. Pujari of the Mandir, Samar performed Puja with great solemnity.

On the occasion of Guru Poornima 'Akhand Ramayan Gan' with melodious tunes based on 'Ragas and different Raginis' was performed for three days and two nights on 20th, 21st and 22nd July by the famous Ramayan Party of Malti Bhargava and 15 more associates which held the devotees spell bound in great devotion and high spiritual emotion. Puja was performed by Pujari Samar followed by Bhandara in which unusually large number of devotees participated in spite of continuous rains.

On July 30 and 31 at our Raipur Ashram Akhand Ramayan and Bhandara was held in which large number of devotees participated.

Kankhal

On 22nd July, 1994—Friday, on the auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima, the Ashram complex was dressed in a festive mood with a large gathering of devotees. On this occasion Special Puja and prayer were held in Ananda Jyoti Pitham. After devotional songs and Arati the devotees from different States, offered floral tribute on the holy altar and thereafter prasadam were distributed among them.

On 13th August, Saturday, the 1008th Tirodhan (Final Samadhi) Tithi of Swami Muktananda Giri Maharaj was also celebrated. A Special Puja and Sadhu Bhandara were also performed.

From 16th August, 1994 to 20th August, 1994, on the occasion of Jhulan festival the complex was decorated with flowers. The Statutes and the pictures of Shree Shree MA, Gopal and Narayan were decorated gracefully, puja kirtan and arati were performed by the enthusiastic devotees during the time and prasadam were distributed among them.

On the 20th August, 1994, on purnima (Full moon) a Special Puja of Shree Shree MA was organised.

On 21st August, 1994, on the occasion of Rakhi festival the devotees offered Rakhi to MA and other devotees.

On 29th August, 1994—the Monday, Janmastami festival was celebrated with Special Puja, Kirtan, meditation etc. On the next day, i.e. 30th August, 1994 devotees celebrated the Nanda Utsab.

On 12th September, 1994—Monday, the 1008th Tirodhan (Final Samadhi) of Shree Shree Swami

Mounananda Parbat (Bhaiji) was celebrated with Special Puja, kirtan and Sadhu Bhandara.

Vrindaban

Like past years Jhulan and Janmastami festivals were performed in the Ashram with great enthusiasm. Rash Lila, Kirtan and Puja of MA and Gopalji were performed. In the midnight of Janmastami, the Special Puja of Radha and Krishna at Chhalia Temple and the following day Nanda Utsab were also held.

Agarpara

On 22nd July, 1994—Friday, on the auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima, the Ashram Complex was dressed in a festive mood with a large gathering of devotees. On this occasion a Special Puja and prayer were held and thereafter prasadam were distributed among them.

On 13th August, 1994—Saturday, the 1008th Tirodhan (Final Samadhi) Tithi of Swami Muktananda Giri Maharaj was also performed. A Special Puja and Sadhu Bhandara was also performed. From 16th August to 20th August, 1994 Jhulan Festival and on 29th August, 1994, Janmastami festival was celebrated with Special Puja, kirtan, meditation etc.

Matri-Mandir

Like past years, on 22nd July, 1994, Friday, on the auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima, Matri-Mandir was dressed in a festive mood with a

large gathering of devotees. On this occasion Special Puja and prayer were held and thereafter prasadam were distributed among them.

On 20th August, 1994, Saturday, on the occasion of Jhulan festival puja, kirtan and arati were performed by the enthusiastic devotees and prasadam were distributed among them.

On 29th August, 1994, Monday, Janmastami festival was celebrated with Special Puja, Kirtan, meditation etc.

On 13th September, 1994, Tuesday, on the occasion of Radha Astami (Tal Navami) a Special Puja of Shree Shree MA and devotional songs were performed and thereafter prasadam were distributed among the devotees.

Programme of Ceremony

From October, 1994 to December, 1994

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| 1. Mahalaya | — | 4 October, Thursday |
| 2. Shri Shri Durga Puja | — | 10th October, Monday to
14th October, Friday |
| 3. Shri Shri Laxmi Puja | — | 18th October, Tuesday |
| 4. Shri Shri Kali Puja | — | 2nd November, Wednesday |
| 5. Shri Shri Annakut | — | 4th November, Friday |
| 6. Samyam Saptah | — | 10th November, Thursday
to 18th November, Friday |

Gad is complete. Thus for full revelation One has to go to Him. Only because of the nation of God's absence is there sorrow in the World. Where God is manifest there are no 'two'—sorrow has no place.

—Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

He saw God in everything and in loving everyone he loved God or in loving God, he loved everyone.

—Shree Shree Sitaramdas Onkarnath

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Obituary

One of the favourite sons of MA, the fourth son Sri Ajit Dasgupta (Rajat), son of late Dr. Gopal Dasgupta and Smt. Gayatree Dasgupta, wife of Sri Ajay Dasgupta left their mortal coil on 17th July and 20th July 1994.

We all pray to our Mother to grant those souls to rest in peace at HER Lotus feet.

Smt. Uma Chatterjee, a worthy wife of Late Manoj Chatterjee an ardent devotee of Shree Shree Ma, has obtained the abode of the Lotus feet of Shree Shree Ma, consciously on 8th January, 1994.

Smt. Aruna Bhattacharyya, an ardent devotee of Shree Shree Ma breathed her last at Ramakrishna Mission Hospital on 12th August, 1994. Her pleasing manners had endeared her to all. May her soul rest in peace at the lotus feet of MA.
