

# ANANDA VARTA

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

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# Reminder

**Re : Renewal of Annual Subscription of  
ANANDA-VARTA for 1996**

Dear Brother/Sister,

Kindly note that with this October, 1995 issue your annual subscription for ANANDA-VARTA ends. You are so requested to renew your subscription for the year 1996 and remit the required fees to reach this office *on or before the 31st of December 1995 without fail*—in order to enable us to mail your journal regularly from January 1996. Subscriptions are to be sent to the undernoted address either *by M.O. or by DRAFT only on any Calcutta Bank along with your Subscriber Number and present address.*

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In case, you have already paid your renewal fee in advance, please ignore this reminder which is being issued as a routine to all our subscribers.

This also carries our best of wishes and Vijaya/Diwali greetings to you. You are sincerely requested to contribute your experience when and how you came in touch with MA. We will gladly publish that in our English Ananda Varta.

**Sri Debabrata Pal**

Secretary

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Shree Shree Anandamayee

Charitable Society

“MATRI-MANDIR”

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October, 1995

# Matri-Vani

Man must aim at the superman, at real greatness. The traveller on the supreme path may hope to attain to the ultimate Goal. This is man's main duty.



At all times to be vowed to the search after Truth and consequently to be completely truthful in every respect is man's duty. God's grace streams forth at all times.



Man is born in order to experience the happiness and sorrow of this world. Those who have the good sense of wanting to go beyond happiness and pain must take their sole refuge in Him.



Pray for God's mercy. Under no circumstances must you allow yourself to be knocked down. It is God's law to end suffering by suffering. Your present condition is His gift of the results of your past actions. Bear in mind that it is because God will take you into Himself that He is purifying and cleansing you.



In wealth and property there is certainly no peace. What then does give peace? My own true nature is peace, knowledge, divine consciousness—unless and until this is realized, how can there be peace? In order to find your Self you must become revealed to yourself. How beautiful.

God keeps milk ready in the mother's breast before the baby is born; in Him put your whole trust; seek refuge in Him alone.



There is only one book and everything is contained in it. Once it has been mastered nothing else remains to be studied. Sadhana has to be practised for the sole purpose of discovering one's own true Wealth (Svadhana).



God is the breath of life, the heart of hearts, the Self. To find Him means to find one's Self. What is called the world is dragging man towards foolishness and misery — away from the Divine. Therefore, the only excellent path is the one that leads to Self-knowledge, Self-realization.



God is complete. Thus, for full revelation one has to come to Him. Only because of the notion of God's absence is there sorrow in the world. Where God is revealed there are no "two" — sorrow has no place.




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### Programme of Ceremonies

1. Sri Sri Durgapuja — 25th September to 3rd October, Kankhal (Hardwar)
  2. Sri Sri Laxmipuja — 8th October, Sunday (Hardwar)
  3. Sri Sri Kalipuja — 23rd October, Monday (Kalkaji, New Delhi)
  4. Annakut — 24th October, Tuesday
  5. Sanjam Saptaha — 31st October to 6th November, Tuesday to Monday
  6. Sri Sri Jagaddhartipuja — 1st November, Wednesday (Matri Mandir, Calcutta)
  7. Makar Sankranti — 14th January, '96.
  8. Swarasatipuja — 25th January, '96.
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# Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

Volume VI

(Translated by Tara Kini)

(Continued from previous issue)

## March 30 Tuesday

Early this morning a gentleman arrived from Dhaka and began singing *kirtan*. Ma woke up even before he arrived. *Kirtan* went on for nearly two hours and everyone joined in. The local women performed *arati* for Ma and sang a song for the ritual.

Ganesh Babu's wife, Jatu and many others had come from Dhaka today. Yesterday Shankarananda Swami and others had come from Kashi. The whole house was filled with guests.

After the meal Ma lay down. I sat near her. Ma spoke softly. She spoke in detail about her earlier *bhava*. She spoke about the many states in a single *pranama*. Although we had seen all this her, we had not noticed anything particularly. With Ma's explanation our attention was attracted to many details. We realized that an entire book could be written on the subject of a single *pranama*.

There was a time when Ma bowed down to all — even to cats and dogs. Whenever she stepped on any object she would instantly do *pranama*. Ma said, "Ma had told me that if I touched anything with my feet, I should do *pranama*. Therefore in my childhood, whenever my feet touched any object I would bow down immediately. So much so that when I climbed on to a mattress I would do *pranama* to the mattress. Again before getting off on to the floor, I would now down to the floor. With the knowledge of That being all pervading I began doing *pranama* to all. Then it so happened that I would not accept *pranama* from anybody but would offer *pranama* to all. This was followed

by a phase when I could neither do *pranama* to anyone nor could I accept it from anyone. To whom could I bow down and who was to bow down to me ? Later all this ceased. People would bow down and so would I. You people have seen that sometimes. I would do *pranama* to Ma and Baba or to Bholanath and then touching my forehead to the ground I would bow to all. Then it so happened that for the next five minutes I would offer *pranama* to all and when suddenly cease to do so. All these are stages which occur in the lives of *sadhakas*. Joining these palms together happens in temples of Gods, it happens before you all as well. The *bhava* is the same everywhere. May be you have observed at times that my head has not bent down in a temple, yet this body has touched the feet of its parents and Bholanath."

When I asked what the reason for that was, Ma replied, "Whoever has been offered *pranama* has had the feeling to receive *pranama* in that spirit at that time. Whatever feeling arises in anyone at anytime, the *kriya* (action), in perfect response to that feeling occurs within this body at that very instant. You all have observed that happening all the time. Then again you may have noticed that my head has not bent down while doing *pranama*. Bowing or not bowing the head is one and the same thing. Again, the moment someone brings a hand forward to touch these feet, my head bows down at that person's feet. You all have observed that. These are all levels in a spiritual seeker's progress. Such sport has occurred within this body."

Therefore it cannot be categorically stated that Ma does not do *pranama*.

Ma continued, "Hands and feet are the same, wherever you may touch them. And if anyone were to do *pranama* to this body or kick it, it is all the same!" So saying she laughed.

In matters concerning diet, all that I have heard as 'divine *bhava*' and '*sadhaka bhava*' has been enacted in

Ma's body. When the prevailing rule was that she would not accept food from anyone, she accepted nothing from anybody. So much so that she could not even touch vessels belonging to other people. Ma explained it saying, "I could not use vessels belonging to others, because whatever wear and tear my usage would cause in the vessels, would be counted as my acquisition." In this manner all the levels of a spiritual aspirant manifested within her one by one. At one stage she could not eat anything tasted by others; not even a fruit pecked by a bird. If anybody's gaze full of longing happened to fall on any edible item, it would not be offered as *bhoga*. We had to prepare Ma's food with great care and until she ate it we feared as to whether she would accept it or reject it. Ma would eat with such strict rules of purity at that time. But within a few days she readily ate leftovers from anybody's plate. She even ran towards a dog to eat what it carried in its mouth. Such are the absolutely contrary emotions that mingle within Ma which we had witnessed earlier and which we continue to observe from time to time. The instances are simply innumerable.

At four p.m. the doors were opened after the noon's rest period. All the devotees gathered around Ma. In the evening Bholanath sang *kirtan* with all those present. *Kirtan* was being sung on the other side of the Ganga. Bholanath took everybody there and sang for some time. Bholanath enjoys singing *kirtan* greatly.

In the night Ma conversed at length about the state of *samadhi*. In connection with the *bhava samadhi* that occurs after the gross (*jada*) state and before the *savikalpa* (with form) *samadhi*, Ma said, "While worshipping an idol during spiritual practices the involvement causes the *jada* state. In that state sometimes a touch of the *Brahma bhava* is possible. That is also called *bhava samadhi*. It is one thing to stabilize in that state and quite another to experience its touch. It is very difficult to understand this difference."



Shantadas Baba's disciple Shishir asked Ma, "Alright Ma, can a spiritual seeker acquire the nature of the God that he is meditating upon?" Ma replied, "There are many explanations regarding this matter. Raise this topic some other time." Later Ma once mentioned to me, "Look, at some spots a *sadhaka* meditating on a form acquires a feeling of oneness with it. At that instant the seeker takes on the stance of the God he is meditating upon, be it Kali or Krishna; then the seeker walks and moves like his idol. But as soon as the *bhava* of being one with the idol disappears, it all ceases. There is yet another *bhava* — do you know what that is? Without any meditation the *bhava* of various gods and goddesses manifest in the body of the *sadhaka*. The difference between these two states is like the difference between night and day. As I said earlier — one implies stability in the state and the other merely a momentary experience of the state. As soon as the experience is over the seeker finds himself in the previous state. Why doesn't he acquire the form of that?"

The conversation again veered towards Gola's sacred thread investiture. But nothing could be finalised. Ma remarked, "Whatever has to happen will happen!"

### March 30 Wednesday

Early morning *kirtan* was sung. Ma had a wash and was then made to drink some milk. At noon when *bhoga* was offered she was surrounded by people. All were keen to have some *prasada* from Ma's plate but hesitated to voice their desire. Ma said "Will you all eat? I am receiving *prasada* — so must you all. All people receive *prasada*." So saying she laughed.

In the evening a *sannyasin* arrived and questioned Ma, "Ma, we have all come from the same place and will all return to the same place. All are one — then how did this feeling of difference arise?" Ma replied, "Actions cause this feeling of difference and actions will cause this difference to disappear." Again he queried, "Where is worry located?"

Ma smiled, stroked her head with her hand and replied, "It originates here." He averred, "I say it comes from the heart". Ma laughed and said, "Baba, the heart experiences joy and sorrow. God is to be installed there. Does not everything lie in the root? The head is the root of the body, yet again the root is present in all locations."

Another person asked, "Is it proper to maintain caste differences?" Ma asked in reply, "What is your opinion?" He replied, "In my opinion it should be observed." Then you must observe it, because it is not right to spoil one's belief. Whatever beliefs you possess because of your *samskaras* (past actions), you must behave according to their dictates. There is no one path which suits everybody. Just see, what a Hindu observes as pure and impure behaviour and thinking is not observed by a Muslim or a Christian. Because of this can you say that there are no great personages amongst them? Whatever be the *samskara*, each one should behave accordingly. Again one should also try to see how these *samskaras* arose. Sometimes it so happens that certain rules are not observed because of lethargy. Yet again some habits are inculcated from childhood and they continue later. But the *samskara* from within is of another kind. That *samskara* may cause doubts in your mind but habit does not allow you to function according to your *samskara*. Many other thoughts also prevail on this matter."

This evening *kirtan* was sung. At night Ma told me about *samadhi* in the course of conversation, "See, it is difficult to understand how many kinds of *samadhi* there are. Sometimes brass is mistaken for gold and at other times gold is mistaken for brass. "After saying so much Ma sat still for some moments and then proceeded to speak in detail. Finally she said, "Look, all the *bhavas* that you have now heard about, help to move along this path though they are not *samadhi*. *Bhava* manifesting restlessness and immobility does not appear in those within whom the

existence of the *atma* is illuminated by intellectual thought alone. *Bhava* may blossom to a greater extent in the feeling of *bhakti* (devotion) within some people, and in some people, according to their *samskaras*, the ability to maintain a sharp thinking attitude to reason out intelligently is limited."

### March 31 Thursday

Shishir Babu was here today, he visits almost everyday nowadays. Dr. Pant returned from his home today. In his absence his servant Sur Singh had lost a *durree* in the Ganga while washing it. He was nervous about what the doctor would say about it on his return.

Meanwhile there had occurred another incident when Ma had come here and stayed at the *dharmashala* and was very unwell. At that time the doctor had told Ma, "Ma, today I have prayed to Ganga that you should have the *bhava* to get well. Ma you should get well and save my honour!" After this when the doctor took Ma to his house, Ma stood on the floor and changed the *dhoti*. She then had the doctor throw away the *dhoti* she had relinquished, in the Ganga.

Today when the doctor returned, Ma spoke to him alone and said, "Look, you had prayed to Mother Ganga to arouse the *bhava* of good health within me and had offered my cloth to Mother Ganga with your own hands to achieve that purpose. And then Mother Ganga also took away your *durree*." Understanding the spirit in which Ma said this, the doctor replied, "That was just as it should have been Ma. The cloth was taken and the bedding was also desired. Therefore it was taken." Ma laughed and agreed with him. On the day that the *durree* had floated away, at four p.m. Ma was strolling on the terrace. She said, "Mother Ganga took it away," and smiled. I asked, "Did she say to you?" Ma replied in a low voice so that no one else could hear, "Absolutely clearly—just as you people speak, so did I hear her speak."

Today Shishir Babu cooked a vegetable and fed it to Ma. Today was also the day of the new moon ritual bath. The *sadhus* took out a procession (*Shobha Yatra*) which was a wonderful sight. I commented that it appeared to be Lord Shiva's entourage. All the *sannyasins*, many of them naked, all besmeared with ash, yet without any shortage of horses and elephants and other decorations. We stood on the terrace and watched it all. The *sadhus* walked in a line on the banks of the Ganga. Some riding elephants, some seated in palanquins, some on horses with a band of instruments marching alongside. In between police officials walked about. This *shobha yatra* went on till five p.m., appearing like an ocean of humanity.

By ten p.m. the doors to Ma's room were shut as per the rule. For several days now Ma's body has been refusing to lie quietly.

The *sannyasins'* glory and esteem are revealed during the *Shobha Yatra*, enormous gather in Haridwar during this time to witness the Brahma Kunda bath and the *Shobha Yatra*. There is barely any space on the road sides to stand and watch. If a person squeezes into someone else's encampment, he does not then show any signs of leaving. A certain amount of aggressiveness is prevalent. What can be done? There is insufficient room, yet merit has to be earned. Therefore even when chased away, nobody wants to budge. That is the state of things. But at the same time each one tries to serve the travellers to whatever extent possible. Daily *bhandara* (feasts) for the *sannyasins* and donation of clothes goes on somehow, we hear. This festival takes place on a mammoth scale. The first ritualistic bath is on *Shivaratri*, the second on the new moon day and the third is the *Kumbha snana* which is on the *Shankaranti* day of the month of *Chaithra*. The mythological significance is that a drop of the immortalizing nectar fell on this spot and therefore the Brahma Kunda is a great pilgrimage spot for the Hindus.

Ma's devotees have been arriving group after group, in the event of the Brahma Kunda bath for Ma's *darshān*. But because of Ma's ill health the routine of keeping the doors closed between twelve noon and four p.m. and also after ten p.m. is continuing. Yet Ma's body does not recover at all. We cannot understand the reason for this. Ma says, "It is the feeling within you all that causes this." Tonight again the doors were shut at ten p.m.

#### **April 1 Friday**

Today Vimala Ma, Anandbhai, Sachidada's sister, Didima and others arrived. There was no incident particularly worth mentioning.

#### **April 2 Saturday**

Ma awoke at the crack of dawn — she did not appear to be in the mood for sleeping. Even when she is made to eat she seems to be least interested in eating and starts talking about other matters. Although this *bhava* is prevalent all the time, it is more noticeably manifest at some times. It is very difficult to feed her, she almost always wants nothing to eat. From many days she has been saying, "See Khukuni, forgetfulness — like illusions will be noticeable in this body during this time. "And in fact that is what I will perceive now. Referring to that Ma said, "Look, does the condition of forgetfulness usually occur within any body with prior warning? Do you know how it happens in this case? It is like the game of Holi. People play intensely, slapping on mud, ink and what not and turning themselves into demons. But they know that they are only playing and they keep water ready for a bath before they start. They know very well that after playing for awhile they will wash it all off. They do not hesitate to apply colours generously and also wear old, tattered clothes in preparation for the games. When the game is finished they bathe with soap and warm water and sit back as they were before. "Laughing, Ma continued, "It is just like that, what else!" It is just a question of a variety of *bhava* within Ma; these *bhavas* perform *kriyas* within Ma's body.

# Holy Reminiscences

Swami Joyananda Giri

*(Continued from the last issue)*

## 5. At Allahabad during Durga Puja

In 1958 Durga Puja was celebrated in the presence of Ma, at the residence of the late Sri Baleshwar Prasad, Advocate of the High Court of Allahabad, from the 18th to the 22nd October. Ma had gone from Varanasi to Allahabad on the 14th, but two days earlier, on Her way to Varanasi from Hoshiarpur, She had halted in Delhi for a day. The following morning I had gone to the railway station to see Her off, and when the train had just started moving, She graciously asked me to come to Allahabad for the puja celebration.

So I had gone there, accompanied by my second son Ajoy, then only fourteen, his three younger sisters and their mother. On arrival we had found a fairly spacious room reserved for our use in one of the houses nearby. Ma had just shifted from the Ashram of the late Sri Gopal Thakur, after spending three days there, to the residence of the late Sri N.N. Mukerji, where, in the midst of his beautiful garden, a separate small bungalow had been newly constructed for Her use. When we went there for Ma's Darshan after settling down in our new temporary home, She generously enquired about our lodging, showing thereby Her compassionate solicitude for the comfort of those, in particular, for whom She may, at any time, have the *kheyala* to ask them to come.

The Pandal (large tent) and its main entrance at Sri Baleshwar Prasad's residence had been artistically decorated, the general arrangements were also very good and by Ma's grace the entire function turned out to be a great success.

### **Caught and Brought**

One day, during the celebrations, when hundreds of devotees had gathered in the pandal for Ma's darshana and sangha, an exchange of ideas on our spiritual future had taken place among those in whose midst I happened to be seated. When many had seemed to agree that only a few among the thousands who come to Ma could hope to attain to spiritual heights, an old and well-known devotee, Sri S.N. Aga, from our group, suddenly addressed Ma loudly thus: "Ma, so many of us come to you. Are all of us going to pass, or will some fail also?" And Ma replied back immediately, "Do you come by your own free will? You are caught and brought here."

### **Mother's gracious Responses**

Another day, when we had gone in the morning for Ma's darsana, Ma was sitting beside the Durga Pratima (Image), which had been installed on a raised flooring at one end of the pandal. To prevent unauthorized persons from entering this sanctified area (puja mandap), a one-foot-or-so high latticed barricade had been put up above and along the lengthwise edge of the mandap, with proportionate pillars rising a few inches higher at intervals in between.

In this situation, since the devotees in general could not go very near Ma, they came up to the barricade, did pranama (obeisance) and such of them as had garlands to offer, hung them on the pillar nearest to Ma. Accordingly, when we came, we did the same except my eldest daughter Vijay Lakshmi, then just twelve years old, who, to our horror, threw her garland at Ma before we could prevent her from doing so. But to our sheer amazement, as the garland reached Ma, She burst out laughing. Disapproving of Vijay Lakshmi's action, I reprimanded her, but started smiling myself when I heard her say, with her characteristic innocence: "Everyone was garlanding the pillar as if it was for worshipping the pillar that they had

brought their garlands. But I had brought mine for offering it to Ma and not to the pillar." Evidently, Ma's gracious response was due to Her having been aware instantly of this delightful reasoning, while ignoring, with divine mercy, the child's consequent impulsive action.

The following small incident provides a glorious example of how Mother encourages struggling beginners like me. One day Ma was sitting in the pandal at a place where devotees could approach Her without any restriction. A couple of few yards away I was standing behind Ma at an angle from where I could see her but She could not see me. As usual, the devotees were coming to Her with fruit, sweets, flowers, etc., and were doing pranama, one after another. As I was watching them my attention was drawn towards a girl of about ten years or so. She had come to Ma and offered Her a flower, with a remarkably graceful poise and affection. In return, I noticed Mother giving her a richly-deserved full measure of gracious love and blessing. The sight thrilled me, fusing my entire mental and emotional being into oneness with the inspiring rare veneration of an innocent bhakta and the divine grace of Bhagavan. But just when I was thus lost in witnessing this purifying lila, Ma suddenly turned round and threw a garland at me.

In relating this holy reminiscence, I am reminded of what happened on another occasion at Delhi Railway Station a few years back. Ma had alighted from the train and was proceeding towards the main exit, accompanied by a large number of devotees. I happened to be just behind Ma, and after we had covered about half the way to the exit, the thought suddenly came to me that there had been a time when Ramaji lived on this earth and those with a rare-good fortune moved about with Him. And now Ma was here in our midst like Ram and we in this group were today as fortunate as they had been in the past. I remember clearly that as this thought crossed my mind, Ma turned Her head back and glanced at me without stopping. I am



sure this was not done just to tell me that She knew my thoughts, but, more important, to provide me with yet another gracious lila, by recalling which I could remember Her over and over again.

### **Darsana of Joyous Surprise**

Because of the four children in our party we took breakfast at our lodging before having Ma's darsana at the puja site. One night after dinner, I announced that I would not eat anything the next morning before having Ma's darsana. So, next day, when Vijay Lakshmi and I went out to buy something for breakfast, we purchased, among other items, just five pieces of a sweet, one each for the children and their mother. On our return trip, after we had passed by Anand Bhawan, the ancestral residence of the Nehrus, I thought of pointing out the building to Vijay Lakshmi, and so turned round in the rickshaw to do so. But when I did this, I noticed in the distance a car coming in our direction with a person in gerua sitting near the driver. Thinking that perhaps Ma might be in the car, I asked the rickshaw-man to pull the rickshaw aside to allow us to get down. He did that and we had an excellent darsana of Ma.

Afterwards, when we returned to our lodging this news was given to everyone. All the same, I failed to appreciate that Ma had graciously fulfilled my self-imposed condition for eating in the morning. For, in my mind the thought had been firmly planted that since Ma's darsana could be had only in the pandal in the morning, the question of eating could not arise before going there. And so I asked all others to go ahead and have breakfast without me. However, someone—perhaps my youngest daughter Jai Lakshmi—protested at once, saying “But papa, you have had Ma's darsana already”, and it was only then that I realized what Ma had done and so joined them with joyous remembrance of the welcome unexpected darsana. what was still more remarkable about this incident was that among the food

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articles bought we found six pieces instand of live of the particular sweet mentioned above — one extra for me — a moving token of loving omnipotence.

### **Nature's Fury Controlled**

On Ashtami (eight day of Durga puja) there was such a sudden and heavy downpour in the evening that almost the entire pandal was thoroughly soaked with water. A canopy of tarpaulin had no doubt been fixed to protect the Pratima when it had been installed a couple of days earlier. But the torrential rain produced a dangerous sag in the tarpaulin. The Brahmacharis responsible for the puja brought bamboos and tried to push up the sagging part in an attempt to empty it of accumulated water. But the moment Ma saw this, She asked them to stop that at once and directed them instead to "Pray to the Devi" (Goddess).

I was watching all this and when I heard Ma's directive, I felt quite sure that the rain would not continue and that no harm would come to the Pratima. Firmly convinced of this I even told my son Ajay, when we had returned to our lodging, that the rain would soon stop that night. And that was exactly what happened. Ajoy asked me next morning, "How did you know that the rain would not continue, Papa?" And I replied, "Durga Puja in the presence of Ma is not an ordinary affair. If the rain had continued, the canopy would have collapsed and the Pratima, when exposed to rain would have been runed. "This, I was sure, could never happen when Ma had directed us to pray and not to reply rely or our feeble efforts to save it."

And so, on the Navmi (ninth day), puja and arati were performed freely and final function on Dashmi (Tenth day) was also celebrated as if nothing of any consequence had taken place at all — a miracle of Ma!

Our memorable visit to Allahabad ended on the 22nd of October. We returned to Delhi having thoroughly enjoyed our participation in the puja celebration, in obedi-

ence to mother's command. Of course, the happiest in our group was naturally my second daughter, Ajay Lakshmi, who had been included in the group of blessed girls chosen for kumari puja and had thereby become a recipient of some presents and special attention of Ma.

## Notice/Announcement

We sincerely regret to inform our Subscribers that from the new-year 1996, the annual subscription of our quarterly journal ANANDA-VARTA has been increased from Rs. 30/- to Rs. 40/- only, though the actual cost of printing the journal is much more. We were reluctantly compelled to effect this enhancement to contain the mounting inflation in the cost of paper, printing, binding, postage etc.

Those who have already paid the journal subscription in advance at the old rate of Rs. 30/- may kindly remit the balance difference of Rs. 10/- now at their earliest. The life subscription for the journal in any language has also been raised from 500/- to Rs. 750/- with effect from January 1996.

Please do note in the front page the increased rates for the foreign countries.

**Debabrata Pal**

*Secretary*

Publication Division

1st October, 1995

# Mother Anandamayi

**Mahamahopadhaya Gopinath Kaviraj M.A.**

*Late Principal, Government Sanskrit College*

*Benares*

It was on a fine autumn morning in 1928 that I first came to know the name of Mother Anandamayi. I was getting ready to go to college, I had not then retired, when the late Mahamahopadhaya Pt. Padmanath Vidyavinoda, M.A. came and met me in my house and informed me that Mother Anandamayi of Dacca had come to Benares. He presented me with a pamphlet written by the late Mr. Kunja Mohan Mukherji alias Swami Turiyananda on Mother and on the miraculous deliverance of his son from an impending snake-bite through Her grace. He said to me that the sight of Mother absorbed in Samadhi was really an ennobling one and he asked me to go and see Her, if possible. This commendation from the lips of a person who was known to be a fastidious critic of men and things and who spared none from his attacks, seemed to me to carry special weight.

Mother was staying then in the house of Kunja Babu at Ramapura. I made up my mind to see Her there. Accordingly I went to Kunja Babu's place in the evening, where both Kunja Babu and his elder brother Sasanka Babu (the late Swami Akhandananda) very kindly undertook to help me in having Mother's 'darsana'. They introduced me to Bholanathji immediately and the latter took me to a small room on the ground floor where I found Mother absorbed in Samadhi surrounded by a number of bhaktas. Bholanathji was anxious to see Her come back to Her senses soon and made various unsuccessful attempts to that end. Knowing that a trance must be allowed to run its full natural course and that every artificial method of breaking it up was fraught with grave risks, I asked him to desist from doing anything calculated to interrupt it. I

was waiting for Her return to normal consciousness, but noting that even in two or three hours Her condition did not come down to normal and apprehending that it might take an indefinitely long time, I returned home with the intention of coming and seeing Her next day.

It was on the 6th September that I paid my first visit to Mother. I came to learn that She had come a day or two earlier and also that this was the second time She had come to Benares. Her first visit having been in 1927 on Her way to Hardwar on the occasion of the Great Kumbha Fair.

I came back to Mother's place on the 7th as already arranged. In fact I came twice every day during Her short stay at Benares till the 12th September. I remember I did not miss a single day on this occasion. It is difficult to analyse after a lapse of over 17 years my first impressions of Mother and to explain in words what exactly I then felt. I can only say that what I actually saw with my own eyes far exceeded anything of a like nature I had ever seen before — it was a dream, as it were, realised in life. During the few days Mother was at Benares, Kunja Babu's house presented a spectacle of festive jubilation where an unending stream of visitors continued to flow in every day from before sunrise till after midnight. The doors of the house were kept open all the time and everybody was always welcome. High officials, pandits, university students, shopkeepers, sadhus, sannyasis, priests, lay men and men in the street — all flocked in numbers, each in his own convenient hour, to have a glimpse of Her darsana, to pay their respect to Her and if possible, to exchange with Her a few words. People of both sexes, of all ages and of all ranks were to be found in the crowd. Some came to have Her darsana only, a few to have their doubts solved, while others still were there out of mere curiosity. The beauty of it was that all felt a sort of magnetic charm in Mother's personality, so that those who had come once out of curiosity which had been satisfied but owing to some

