

# Ananda

Newsletter of the Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha

Issue No 18 – March 2021

Contents – First part of October 2019 Amrita Varta



Sound file:

<http://www.anandamayi.org/mmedia/mp3/NewKrishnakesh.mp3> Sri Ma sings Krishna Keshava

Source of sound recording: Anandamayi Ma. Recordings. DIV\_bMS00556\_AU\_002\_B\_Del\_Side\_1. Performed by Anandamayi, 1896-1982 Unidentified track -Repository: Andover-Harvard Theological Library, Harvard University. Digitized content accessed via <https://sds.lib.harvard.edu/sds/audio/430374097>

Text file:

<http://www.anandamayi.org/new/Madras.pdf> Sri Ma's visit to the South of India in 1952, by S.S. Cohen

Talk in Hindi with English subtitles:

**In memoriam Swami Nirvanananda (who attained Sri Ma's lotus feet on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021).**

<https://youtu.be/a15XmUrxwjw> Sw Nirvanananda talks about how he came to Sri Ma.

**Sangha website** <http://www.shreeshreeanandamayeesangha.org>

# MAANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

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

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### NOTICE

In order to ensure receipt of Amrit Varta, it was decided in the Governing Body meeting that the annual subscription of the journal be enhanced from Rs. 150/- to Rs. 300/- w.e.f. January, 2019. Your cooperation is earnestly solicited.

**COVER PAGE : Matri Mandir, Kishenpur Ashram, Dehradun**

### REQUEST

Efforts are being made to make the journal more attractive and interesting and to widely preach the sayings, biography etc. of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee. All are requested to send their suggestion that may be complied, if considered worthy, so that we can make it more lucid and appealing for the readers belonging to every age group of modern time.

Thanking you and Jai Ma.

Address : The Managing Editor, Amrit Varta  
Shree Shree Anandamayee Ashram  
Bhadaini, Varanasi-221 001



## Matri– Vani

1. Let the thought of God remain with you and do service with the conviction that while serving whomsoever it may be, you are serving the One who alone exists.
2. Silent *japa* should be continued at all times. One must not waste breath uselessly; whenever one has nothing special to do one should silently practice *japa* in rhythm with one's breathing. In fact this exercise ought to go on continually until *japa* becomes as natural as breathing.
3. It is man's duty to ever meditate upon the One Reality.
4. It is possible to practice God's Name under the most adverse circumstances. He causes everything to happen and hence is ever near.
5. At all times let patience be your stronghold. Say to yourself, "Lord, everything Thou doest is for the highest good." Pray for the power of endurance. Nothing happens that is not an expression of God's grace. Verily all is His Grace.
6. During spells of misfortune it is necessary to rely on Him with even greater fervor. There is no knowing through what mishap He may wipe out peril. Sometimes He actually removes danger by adversity. This is why He is called the Dispeller of danger, the Saviour.
7. Be truthful in speech and rigorous in self-discipline at all times and devote yourself to the study of books of wisdom and to *satsang*. Cultivate the company of those who are helpful in your quest, avoid those that distract you; in other words, associate with the good and shun the merely pleasurable. If you live in this spirit the help you need will come to you naturally, unasked.
8. If man endeavours to live his life in the world according to *Dharma* (the dictates of religion and righteousness) he will gradually overcome sorrow and will progress towards peace. Without Him Supreme Peace cannot be attained.

9. The true aim of man's life is to realize God. Obviously the question of renunciation arises, but only with regard to that which can be renounced. That which is Eternal that which is the Truth, has to be embraced.
10. If you stay distant from God, evil-tendencies (or evil-mindedness); evil-perception; misery; coming and going; birth and death. If one dies with desires (*vāsanā*) in mind, then to fulfill that one is born again. Whom-so-ever keep their wishes behind, again becomes an organism (i.e. has to come back, is born again) and this cycle continues; birth-death, birth-death.
11. As long as there is a tendency of a doer – you will get misery. One who has created you, if you dedicate yourself on to Him, within you God Himself is the instrument and the player. As said in the Gīta – the instrument plays as the player plays it, O Lord, whatever You get done (the acceptance of this is Man's duty). There should be no doer. What you have to do? Remember Him, respect Him, and contemplate on the Truth.
12. In which ever line you progress, contemplate Him. What will happen; one will become free from conflict, darkness and sorrow. The divine feeling should be – young children as *Bāl Gopāl*, wife as form of *shakti* (power), and the wife will think her husband as the Supreme husband, family and relatives as divine forms. Where there is the feeling of divinity there itself He will appear.
- Why does one go to pilgrimage and temples? To increase the knowledge of divinity, is it not? In which state, in whose company it will increase in intelligence and in divinity?
13. What God does? King to a beggar – beggar to a King. What is not there within God! – One who can create a King. That is why it is said, 'Call the Lord. On attaining Him all is attained, there is no deficiency.
14. According to the knowledge of divinity, within everyone, God alone is (*jone jonārdan*). If 'everyone' is not ok, God exists 'everywhere'. Within everybody God Himself exists. Where God is, what is not there?

## Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Prasanga

Prof. Amulya Kumar Dutta Gupta

(continued)

### Discussion on India's Future

On visiting the Ashram in the evening found Ma sitting in the verandah on the edge of river Ganga. Two *sannyāsīs* had arrived from Ramakrishna Mission. One of them, was comparatively young and seemed to be formerly known to Ma. Ma enquired as to from where they have arrived at Kashi and how long they would be staying here. Swamiji replied that he has arrived from Belur Math and would be staying here for few days. The swamiji's voice was melodious and could speak quite systematically. From his gestures it seemed that he was habituated in delivering lectures in public. He said, "Ma, there is no peace in our country, only turmoil everywhere. Will this turmoil end shortly, nor, because of its growing intensity day by day, everyone will get terminated by large scale destruction?"

Ma: Baba, this body does not say what will happen or not in the future, but if something is ever spoken, so it be.

Swamiji: Once upon a time, India did not have close relations with other countries. Now communication is easily available between various countries and because of it, exchange of thoughts has become easy too. India is called as a place of religion; but presently the effect of this faith on a vast society of India is very low. Interest on spirituality is not visible among the Indians; on the other hand foreigners are now exploring a little bit of Indian religion and spirituality. And the Indians are copying foreign custom and behaviour.

Ma: It should be called as the effect of company. On staying together one copies the good and bad qualities of each other depending on their *samskāras*.



Swamiji: Rise and fall is observed in all caste and race. Once, India was at the helm of the world in all matters. Now that glory does not exist. Have been hearing for so long, from holy men that, India would retain its past glory. But presently, observing the situation all around, have only become disappointed. The Indians are spreading the importance of forsaking religion. The public who are in contact with the foreigners are finding them to be quite powerful without sacrifice and religion. Hence now they are doubtful on Indian literature and religion. That is why they are now considering money as the only coveted item. That is why there is such an increase in black-marketing. Over and above lakhs of east-bengal men and women are in such a miserable condition! If this happens to few people then it can be said that it has occurred because of their (*karma-phal*) fruits of action. But where thousands and lakhs of people are affected, how can one say that, all these are, due to their *karma-phal*. How to console them? Can we tell them that whatever they have lost, they will get back again? Of course we are consoling them by telling something. But on receiving a message of hope from you all, those who are exalted; we can convey our speech with much more force. We can explain that Ma Anandamayee also is saying in this manner.

Ma: This too is a future related question. Baba, what do you say to give consolation?

Swamiji: That I will not tell you. (Everybody laughs).

Ma: So that, I may tell your speeches to others, you are not informing me? (Everybody laughs). See, this is the world, hence here everything changes. What existed, that is no more now! What is present now will also not exist. The world is only, going and coming. Again because of this going and coming there is existence. Hence nothing is everlasting here. You called India as a place of religion? Actually it is still like that. Hence those who want religion here, they are getting it. If the foreigners receive this religion then what is the cause for sadness? As they are your brothers. Why, brother? They are you yourself. You talked of misery, all these are His play. There is no second other than Him. In your *Gītā* too it is written that, He exists in everybody's heart and is managing everybody. He is playing in various ways in various forms with Himself. His play is now of this type, later it may be of some other type, because He does not play in a single manner. His method of play is also infinite.

And if you believe in *Shastrās* (scriptures) then you will have to believe in *karma-phal*. The misery is because of people's action (*karma*), where is the doubt in that? That which is true for one person is also true for a group of people. On observing that, lacs and lacs of people are suffering in the same manner, it cannot be denied that these are because of *karma-phal*. In war also numerous people die at the same instant, there people gather knowingly. Don't you speak of accident or something? In a vehicle or a boat so many people die collectively. God's boat is not small. Hence, what is there to be surprised if thousands of people die at the same instant?

Again there is a need for sorrow and pain. Do not people say, without pain there is no learning. You all beat your children, the aim being not to give pain, but to rectify them. In the same manner, God too through pain and sorrow brings the people to the path of righteousness. If seen in this manner pain and misery also will be felt as His grace.

Swamiji: What you have said that is from the direction of justification; but every country's people want to develop their country, as Hitler wanted to develop Germany. All other foreign people also want to develop their own country. In the same manner we too wish to see our India developed. Will India not get back its old glory again?

Ma: Don't you call God as benevolent. Whatever He does is for the good only. It is not proper to take support of invalidity. Didn't you say that the holy men have given hope that India will develop again. One should only think, what the holy men have proclaimed, that will come true. Hence it is proper to hope that, the way you want India to progress and expand, in that manner it will occur. Maybe God will make changes in that manner and hence He has appeared as thoughts in everybody's mind.

Swamiji: You have replied to my question like an especially intelligent woman, nothing more than that. (Everybody laughs).

Ma: Baba, you can talk very neat and tidily, this body does not have any education hence it talks rubbish.

It was past evening. Observing that everybody was feeling cold Ma got up. I thought that, maybe discussion was over for today. I came down to the hall. Saw Ma

standing there. Ma saw me and asked, "Have the Baba's (Swamis) left or not?" I went up and found that the swamis were still present. I told them, "Ma is calling you." They then came down with me to the hall and sat down. The Swami who had earlier conversed with Ma again said, "There is everlasting desire for *ānanda-lok* (world of bliss). People have been desiring bliss from time immemorial. But has anyone ever received it? The scriptures also confirm that an organism is born from pleasure; its existence is in joy only. But where is this joy? How so ever great a person maybe, within him, all the time there is only lamentation. Everyone desires for joy, but are not receiving it."

Ma: If the people had not received joy at all then, could they have remained alive? Whatever one is demanding, he is receiving in that form. However, question of eternal bliss is different. If in that specific manner, somebody can crave for that bliss then he can acquire it too. What do you want to say that, people demand for it, but do not receive it?

Swamiji: Yes, people demand but do not receive it. Assume that there are travellers on two banks of the same river. The travellers on this side of the bank are crying saying where is the bliss, where is the bliss, and the travellers on the opposite bank are saying everything is bliss, everything is supreme bliss. But the question is that, those who are saying that they have received bliss, what is the proof that they have truly received bliss?

Ma: The proof of this bliss is bliss itself. Who will accept this proof? It cannot be understood by the mind. One who becomes manifested with bliss he alone can understand it. He does not require any proof. After passing M.A. the knowledge one attains, that can be understood by only one who has passed it.

Swamiji: One who has understood a little of it by the power of meditation and realization, he should say.

Ma: It will only be a description of the path. The actual feeling cannot be expressed.

Now, the Swamiji's took leave. Ma gave them two oranges each. They returned back one each to Ma. They were told to accept *prasād* (food offered to God) in the

ashram on the forthcoming *Paush-Sankrānti* (festival). The Swamiji said, "Inviting for *Paush-Sankrānti* means that we will get to eat *peethe* (a sweetdish made of rice flour)." Ma replied, "What the ashramites have arranged that I cannot say."

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### List of Festivals

- |   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. Shree Shree Samyam Saptaha Mahavrata | November 5-12, 2019 |
| 2. Shree Shree Jagadhatri Puja          | November 5, 2019    |
| 3. Ras Poomima                          | November 12, 2019   |
| 4. Gita Jayanti                         | December 5-8, 2019  |
| 5. Makar Sankranti                      | January 15, 2020    |
| 6. Shree Shree Saraswati Puja           | January 29, 2020    |
| 7. Maghi Poomima                        | February 9, 2020    |
| 8. Maha Shivaratri                      | February 21, 2020   |
| 9. Holika Dahan                         | March 8, 2020       |

## Inauguration of Dehradun Ashram

Gurpriya Didi

In the year 1936, before the inauguration of the Ashram, devotees from several places consecrated for a wonderful function with joy and enthusiasm. As decided, a *yagna* was started in the new Ashram on 19<sup>th</sup> *Baishāk*. Shri Bholanathji started the *yagna* with four other *Brāhmins*. Doctor Upendra mahasaya and Turiyanand Swamiiji arrived from Mirzapur on 18<sup>th</sup> *Baishāk* itself. Kamalakanth *Brahmachāri* also arrived the same day from Dhaka. He had become mentally impatient so he left Dhaka and came near Ma. Whatever Ma's instructions are that he will obey here. Me and Upendra doctor were responsible for doing *japa* during the *yagna*. Gradually devotees started arriving from various places. Prof. Trigunath Baidopadhyay from Srirampur, Prof. Virendra Chandra Mukhopadhyay from Agra, Shri Nepal Chandra Chakravarty, Nirmal babu's wife and son and Manik from Kashi, Swami Shradhanand from Mirzapur, Brahma Ghosh, Virendra Maharaj and others from Calcutta, all gradually arrived at Ma's holy feet. Ma used to visit the *yagna* site at sometime at dawn and then used to return back to the Ashram temple. Ma used to have her meals in the Jakhan temple.

Several devotees used to come in the afternoon and have *Mātri-darshan*. Devotees like Sharda (lady doctor), Narasingh, Hariram, Hans Gopal etc. used to come daily. Hariram and Hans had labored a lot for the construction of this Ashram. This Ashram was built because of their encouragement only. They were always in the fore front for managing the function during the ceremony too. Among the devotees of Dehradun, Hariram was the first to visit Raipur and get introduced to Ma. Many people got the chance to come at the lotus feet of Ma only after getting information from him. Anybody coming near Ma used to receive too much bliss, as if they were mad with Ma's name. An old Kashmiri lady along with her daughter and son-in-law arrived from Delhi.

Today is 25<sup>th</sup> of *Baishāk*. Hans and other devotees were busy in decorating the Ashram with flowers, leaves and paper. *Mangal kalash* and banana plantations have been placed too. The centre hall has been reserved for *kirtan*. A huge photo of Ma is placed in that hall. It was decided that at the conclusion of night (i.e. at Ma's birth time), Manmath babu will start *pūjā* on that photo of Ma. Everybody is extremely busy in the various tasks of the function. An Ashram has been built for Ma with too much effort, today it will be worth praising. Because Ma will set Her foot in the Ashram. The efforts of all the people who constructed it will also be gratified.

The devotees started arriving from Dehradun just after the completion of two *prahar*'s of the night. This place is around 4 miles from Dehradun. At Ma's birth time (i.e., end of night) Bholanathji and Ma along with the devotees entered the new Ashram. Immediately sounds of the conch shell, bells and *ulu* started. There were many Bengali ladies too. Hence there was no shortage of the sound of *ulu*. Ma and Bholanath were seated in the centre room (in the ground floor) kept for *kirtans*. Everyone started performing *ār̥ti* with garlands and *kapur*.

Shri Manmath bahu started the *pūjā*. Ma's *pūjā* was done with *shodshopchaar*. With new clothes, garlands and *sindur*, the hue of Ma's enchanted form had brightened the area and an extremely beautiful divine form had emerged. What else can I say about that enchanted form! As if it was spreading all over. One who has not seen it has lost a very important chance in his life. Time passed and the *pūjā* was over. Many devotees left and many new devotees came in. All were excited to get Ma's blessings. After some time *kirtan* started. Occasionally Ma was laughingly talking with everyone. And sometimes sat motionless in a state of trance. Everyone were just gazing at Ma. This *kirtan* hall was in the centre of the ashram. There were four rooms at four corners of the hall. Ma's sleeping arrangement was made in one of the rooms in the north. The other room in the northern side was kept locked. Ma's instructions were that nobody will talk while entering or being present in that room. Later on *vyas gaddi* was installed here. Everyone entering the room had to keep *maun* (silence). It is kept locked all the time.

After the *kirtan* went on for some time, Ma went to Her room and lying on her bed, conversed with the devotees. The devotees were also given *prasād*. After enjoying the whole day the devotees went back to their homes. Few people stayed

back like, the family of Gopalji, family of Kashi Narayanji (he is a contractor and he had taken the responsibility of constructing the Ashram), etc. Hariram's wife is no more alive, only two young kids are there. Hence Hariram stayed back in Ashram.

On 27th *Baishāk*, the *puṇnāhuti* (completion) of the *yagna* took place. Shri Bholanathji and the other *Brāhmins* sprayed *shanti-jal* (pious water of the *yagna*) on the devotees assembled there. It was a day for Ma to partake food also. In the afternoon in one of the corner rooms on the southern side of the hall Ma and Bholanath had *bhog* (food) and then all devotees had *prasād*.

After that it was decided to give some rest to Ma, but it was not possible. Crowds of devotees were arriving to have a *darshan* of Ma's lotus feet. Ma was also laughingly conversing with them. There was no sign of tiredness. Everything of Ma is extraordinary. I have seen Ma several times in Dhaka, Calcutta, Kashi and other places conversing with devotees continuously for day and night without any sign of tiredness. Devotees in groups were coming and going, even at 2am and 3am in the night the visits of the devotees did not stop. Saw Ma sitting in one *bhāv*. Not one day but for several days I have seen this sequence being followed. At last Ma took rest at late night. People who had arrived from far took rest in the Ashram itself.

Three to four days after the ceremony the renowned wrestler Shri Rammurtiji sent his car and personl to pickup Ma for a visit to his 'Shakti-ashram'. Ma went there in the afternoon. He welcomed Ma with full of respect. One day he himself came to meet Ma with his devotees. Ma called him as 'Baba'. Sweets were offered for snacks. He fed Ma with his own hands and Ma too fed him. All were in joy. Coming in the presence of Ma everyone becomes overwhelmed with joy. After that he wanted to hear some *kirtan*, Triguna babu sang *kirtan* for him. After some time he bowed to Ma and departed. Because of an injury in the leg he could not walk. With a lot of difficulty with others support he climbed into the car and departed.

## Aphorisms of Ma

Anil Ganguli

***Jār jemon bhāva tār temni lābha* (as one's emotions thus are his gains)**

It postulates that the seeker's *lābha* is commensurate with his *bhāva*. With regard to the context, *lābha* means gain, reward, acquisition, advantage, etc., and *bhāva* implies feeling, condition, emotion, sentiment, love, intension, idea, etc.

Ma says that God appreciated and accepts all kinds of *bhāvas* offered to Him and gives evenhanded justice precisely what one deserves. Ma also says that in some instances God is over-indulgent in granting *ahetuki kripā* (grace which cannot be accounted for); adding that in any event, if a seeker sincerely tries to proceed one step towards God, He responds by coming ten steps towards the seeker.

What really matters, Ma emphasizes, is the seeker's sincerity of purpose, his *bhāva*; the reward, the *lābha*, will follow as a matter of course. This aphorism is very true in our relationship with Ma; She is revealed to us according to our respective *bhāva*.

***Ek nīsvāser viśwās nei* (there is no idea of that one breath)**

This aphorism reminds us that in the midst of life we are in death. It suggests that we must not allow a single moment to be wasted. Breath is the symbol of life which is so transitory. Indeed, one cannot be sure that the present breath would not be the last. Citing the well known dictum that spiritual pursuits must proceed (or precede) along with the awareness that death has caught the aspirant by the forelock, Ma teaches that awareness of the imminence of death at any moment induces whole-hearted preparation for the final exit. What is the fate of a person departing from this world without preparing himself for the next? According to the *Isopanishad* he is 'a self murderer and goes to demonic worlds enveloped in blinding darkness.'



*Yamaraja*, the god of death, asked Yudhisthira, in the Mahabharata, "What is most surprising?" Yudhisthira's answer was, "Day in and day out people are dying, yet the survivors hanker after everlasting life. What could be more surprising?" Here is Ma's word of caution and admonition, "The day that is gone returns not. To be a human being means to be Self-aware. Do not squander invaluable time. Beware of becoming a 'Self-murderer'; realize that you are none other than the immortal Self."

"The joys and sorrow of the world," says Ma, "are fleeting shadows of your own self; playing with the divine forces brings in everlasting peace and happiness."

***Jemon bājūbe temni sunbe* (as you play thus you hear)**

This aphorism is Ma's almost invariable answer to a common question as to Her identity and spiritual status. She compares Herself to a musical instrument and smilingly says, "What you hear depends on how you play the instrument." Thus a violin gives out notes not of its own initiative but in response to strokes and vibrations received from outside, and the music that is heard as a result depends on the skill of the player, the instrument remaining the same.

Perhaps this aphorism explains why Ma is seen differently by different persons, depending on the angle of vision of each - *Jār jemon bhāva tār temni lābha* (mentioned above).

***Haate Kaam Mukhe Naam* (work with hands, God's Name on lips)**

Ma does not ask the spiritual aspirant to turn away from his worldly commitments or to renounce the world. In fact, She says, action or work cannot, and need not be renounced. This aphorism only recognizes the principle laid down in the Gita that we cannot live for a moment without work. "Verily, no one can remain, even for a moment, without doing work. Every individual is made to work, by the impulses of nature, in spite of himself. Even the bare maintenance of your physical life will not be possible if you remain inactive."

So work we must. But work usually leads to bondage. Hence the antidote prescribed by Ma; work with the hand should be invariably accompanied by the repetition of God's Name on one's lips. According to Ma, God's Name is God Himself. His *Naam* acts both as a curative and a preventive of the disease known as *bhaav-*

*roga*, usually a concomitant of action. Ma is very emphatic that constant remembrance of God, through repetition of His Name, turns work into worship and ensures deliverance from the attachment to the things of the world.

Ma also says, “By whatever Name you may invoke Him, your effort will be crowned with success. The main thing is to cling to the Name with constancy.” “Whenever you possibly can, sustain the flow of a sacred Name. To repeat His Name is to be in His presence. If you associate with the Supreme Friend, He will reveal His true being to you. Just as a dancing girl fixes her attention on the water-pot that she bears on her head even when she is dancing on various tunes, so also a pious man does not give up his attention to the blissful feet of the Supreme Lord even when he attends to his many concerns.” We must engage in the work of the world retaining our consciousness of Eternity.

### ***Tapasyā māne tāpa sahā***

*Tapasyā* is austerity. The word ‘*tapā*’ literally meaning ‘heat’ is used by Ma as a symbol of misery. And the word ‘*sahā*’ means to bear. For every individual there are some spells of storm and rain, dreary days of unbearable misery. Ma says, “The distress that is experienced burns to ashes all pleasures derived from worldly things. This is what is called *tapasyā*. The heartache, the anguish over the effects of obstructions, is the beginning of an awakening to Consciousness.” To a weak man, suffering is usually a stumbling block; to a strong one it may be a veritable stepping stone leading to a higher level. Thus, suffering can be a blessing in disguise. Ma says, “Joys and sorrows are time-born and cannot last. Therefore do not be perturbed by these. The greater the difficulties and obstructions, the more intense will be your endeavour to cling to His feet and the more will your prayer increase from within. And when the time is ripe, you will gain mastery over this power. It is by crying and pining for Him that the One is found. In times of adversity and distress seek refuge in the One alone.”

## Shree Ma at Calcutta (Kolkata)

Somesh Ch. Banerjee

Shree Shree Ma came to Calcutta for the first time in 1927, on Her way to Haridwar. Shree Ma was accommodated in a vacant house, which belonged to the 'Bhagyakul Estate'. During that visit, the Nawabzadi (Princess) Pyari Bano, the owner of 'Shahbagh Gardens' in Dhaka, invited Shree Ma at her palatial residence in Calcutta. There, to welcome Shree Ma, she arranged for a *Hari Naam Kirtan*. During the *kirtan*, Shree Ma was immersed in deep *bhuvan* (divine mood).

Shree Ma visited Calcutta again, at the earnest request of Pyari Bano to grace the occasion of the marriage of her son and daughter. Amongst the several distinguished guests, Smt. Basanti Devi, wife of the renowned Congress leader, Shri. Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das was also present. Smt. Basanti Devi was overwhelmed by Shree Ma's dazzling and attractive presence and exclaimed that she had a vision of Shree Ma in her dream. She could not resist embracing Shree Ma lovingly and insisted Her to sit on her lap. Later, her daughter Smt. Aparna Ray became a devotee of Shree Ma and stayed several times in Shree Ma's Ashram to have Her divine company.

In October 1938, Shree Ma came to Calcutta for a short stay in the 'Dakshineswar Temple'. She was accommodated in the *Nahavat khana*, where Shree Shree Sharada Ma, wife of Thakur Ramkrishna Paramhansa Dev used to stay. During Shree Ma's stay here the renowned Congress leader Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose came to meet Her. About a year ago his eldest brother a well known patriot Shri. Sarat Chandra Bose had paid a visit to Shree Ma in Calcutta.

Shree Ma said to Subhash Babu, "We have heard that you are a great speaker. Speak something here too." Denying the request he immediately replied, "I have come here only to hear you." Thereafter a long conversation ensued between Shree Ma and Subhash Babu in the nearby sacred 'Panchavati' garden. When he told Shree Ma, that he gets pleasure to serve the country, Shree Ma appreciated it but at the

same time told him that, such pleasure would remain for only a short time; while meditating on God, he would get eternal bliss. Receiving religious guidance and *prasād* from Shree Ma, he took leave with a desire to meet Her again.

Gradually the number of Shree Ma's devotees increased in Calcutta and they felt the need of an Ashram. In July 1944, a small Ashram was established in a small three storied building at Ekdalia Place in Ballygunj area. Seeing the shape of the building Shree Ma called it 'Govinda's Tiffin Carrier'! Later in 1958, a spacious Ashram was established for Shree Ma on the bank of the river Ganga at Agarpara. That year, Shree Ma's Birth anniversary (*Janmotsav*) was celebrated there. And the Ashram at Ekdalia Place was disposed off.

A huge function was arranged in September 1960 in the Agarpara Ashram to celebrate the establishment of the three temples. Several large functions have been held here in the presence of Shree Ma like *Janmotsav*, *Durga Pujā*, *Samyam Saptāhā* and *Bhāgwat Saptāhā*. Huge crowds were present whenever Shree Ma was present in the Ashram and it was a difficult task to manage them on such occasions. Sometimes Shree Ma had to be shifted elsewhere to provide rest to Her. There is a small hut in the Ashram near the bank of the Ganga, where Shree Ma would go for a short rest. It is said that centuries ago, Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, while proceeding to Panihati had taken rest here in the shadow of a tree.

An interesting incident took place during the *Durga Pujā* in 1960. A lady from a royal family while performing *Pujā* of Shree Ma, offered a costly necklace of pearls to Her. Standing nearby, an apparently poor girl with a dark complexion was watching the ceremony. She was fascinated by the beautiful necklace of pearls. Quite unaware of its value, she spontaneously begged Shree Ma to give her the necklace. Shree Ma asked her to come later. On the evening of *Vijayā-Dashami*, when Shree Ma was distributing sweets to the devotees with Her own hands, the same little girl came up again to have her share of sweets from Shree Ma. After she received the sweets, Shree Ma asked her to wait nearby. Shree Ma then asked one of Her attendants to bring the costly necklace of pearls and on receiving the same gave it to the little girl. Overwhelmed with joy, the little girl simply ran away.

Narayan Swamiji, a *dandi swāmy* and a senior monk of the Ashram, was sitting nearby and watching all these. He could not resist asking Shree Ma why She

had given the costly gift to the unknown poor girl. Surely, there was a secret behind it! Shree Ma smiled and replied that when She was running a household in Her early life at Bajitpur, the little girl in her previous birth worked there as a maid servant. She loved caring and doing chores for Her. Shree Ma further revealed that the little girl then belonged to a lower caste, but in this birth, she has gained a higher caste. Thus, the secret was revealed. Surely, all were happy at the little girl's good fortune! The incident also revealed that nothing was unknown to Shree Ma, even the details of the previous births of any one. Once Shree Ma told Gurupriya Didi that whatever desired facts the great saints like a *rishi* or *muni* could know by concentrated meditation, She was capable of knowing these instantly without any effort on Her part.

In February 1974, Shree Ma visited Calcutta for the *Bhāgwat Saptāh* at Jodhpur Park. Huge crowds in thousands, thronged to have a *darshan* of Shree Ma. After completion of the *Bhāgwat Saptāh* on the day of *Dol Purnimā*, Shree Ma along with the renowned saint Sri Sri Sita Ram Das Omkarnath were taken in a procession in an open carriage to Deshapriya Park. Shri. Tushar Kanti Ghosh, an eminent journalist and the devotees of the *Vaishnav Sampradāya* organized the procession. Lakhs of people gathered on both sides of the road to have *darshan* of Shree Ma and Sri Omkarnathji. In Deshapriya Park, She sang a few devotional songs at the request of the devotees.

Shree Ma visited the Agarpara Ashram in April 1982 for the *murti-prathisthā* (consecration) ceremony of Swami Muktananda Giriji. On Shree Ma's instruction, Mamaji's eldest son Bachchuda performed the *murti-prathisthā* rituals. This was Shree Ma's last visit to Calcutta.

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Durga puja at Kankhal Ashram - 2019



Durga Puja at Agarpara Ashram – 2019



Durga Puja at Agarpara Ashram – 29th Sep. to 8th October 2019





Kumari Puja at Agarpara Ashram – 2019



Lighting of the Diamond Jubilee candles by Swami Achyutanandaji and Swami Madhvanandaji

