

# MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

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

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*Hari-kathā hi kathā aur sab vrithā vyathā*  
- *Ma Anandamayee*  
(*To talk of God alone is worthwhile;*  
*all else is in vain and leads to pain*)

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*We must have a firm belief that a profound mystery surrounds every event that happens under Shree Shree Ma's inspiration or within Her awareness, be it favourable or otherwise to our judgement. Strengthened by such belief we must accept these happenings without reluctance and with endurance.*  
-- **Bhajji.**

**COVER PAGE (Backside)**  
**Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee**  
**Ashram, Varanasi**

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

*- Ma Anandamayee*

### Path to Self Realisation

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

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

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

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

— Managing Editor, 'Ma Anandamayee Amrit Varta'



*mayy eva mana adhatsva, mayi buddhim nivesaya /  
nivasisyasi mayy eva, ata urdhvam na samsayah //12.8*

Just fix your mind upon Me, the Supreme, and  
engage all your intelligence in Me. Thus you will live  
(above this mortal existence) in Me always, without a doubt.



## Ma's message on *sādhana*

*Sādhana* is the desire, the effort to acquire your own wealth (*swadhan*). Everything is His. There is no other way but to be at His feet. If you want to think about something, think about Him. Keep telling Him, 'take me, take me,' This indeed is *sādhana*. A human birth is difficult to attain. If you do not spend time meditating on your *Ishta*, think – what am I doing? Is my whole life going to pass by like this? He who is able to go forward in this direction will be benefitted. If you do not follow this you are going towards death. Reading the scriptures, singing the Lord's 'Name' – is the essence of KaliYuga – the path to cross the sea of life and death. The path of death is known quite well. Enough of happiness and sorrow. Become a pilgrim to immortality, return to your home. You need inner strength to return to your home, you need the grace of the Guru. Gradual revelation is one thing and quite another is revelation due to grace. Like a dark house being suddenly full of splendor. Again, *sādhana* for gradual revelation is also unending. Gradual grace keeps occurring through actions. Then again there is grace without any reason (*ahaituki kripā*). This is not the same as gradual revelation. That is why it is said, 'What do you know about attaining Him?' Hence you should also pray for His mercy and grace.



## Matri – Vani

Q: Ma, a young person has gone mad, he thinks that he is a realized soul. Why is this so?

Ma: During *sādhana* for various reasons this can occur. Practising yoga by reading books or practising yoga with an unfit body can cause this. This can occur even after taking *yog-dikshā* from a *Guru*, if he does not have the capability to understand his pupil's basic nature. Everyone's *sanskār* is not the same. Then the energy received from the *Guru* can create such mental disorder in the pupil

\* \* \*

Q: Some aspirants do not feel inclined to do *japa* at the fixed time however they become totally concentrated for a few minutes at some other time. Why is this? What should be done?

Ma: This is because in some, favorable condition for meditation or *japa* occurs within them, at a certain time or place only. While for some just at the scheduled time the favorable condition occurs. But the fact is that whenever such a favorable condition arises within one either at a certain place or at a certain time then, if possible he should immediately concentrate on God. Then one should not ponder on place or time, because God's name can be taken at any place at any time. But if the *Guru* instructs on a particular time then, whether one likes it or not *japa* has to be performed at that fixed time.

\* \* \*

Q: Performing *japa* at the fixed time or performing *japa* whenever one likes - which is better among the two?

Ma: Both are good. But of course if *Guru* has given any instruction then that has to be fulfilled. Otherwise both give positive results. One path or one rule is not meant for everyone. Who can say when and on whom God will be revealed? Hence the aim should be to repeat God's name or *mantra* in an unbroken manner. And then the aspirant can attain various divine experiences and joy at different times.

\* \* \*

Q: Ma, why is it so? Someone is saved (by God's grace) from a snake's bite and someone else dies due to a snake's bite?

Ma: There is something called as *karma-phal* (effect of past action). Besides this, whatever God does is for one's benefit only. Isn't He called as the *Param-Pita*, *Param-Mata* and *Param-Bandhu* (Supreme Father, Mother and Friend)? Just as a father benefits a child by giving him trouble just for the sake of giving him knowledge similarly God also benefits someone through his troubles. If someone is saved from a snake's bite, then it is beneficial for him to stay alive at that moment and if someone dies due to a snake bite then his death in that manner is also beneficial for him.

\* \* \*

Q: A Mahatma has written that if one does not have the urge towards spirituality then it is better not to take that path. Ma is this proper?

Ma: There are infinite ways to attain God and this in one way is true. But This Body states that taking God's name in any condition does not go waste. The main purpose of all these that have been mentioned is that, whenever one takes a particular path, always try to follow that path in totality. One should not keep his feet on both the boats.

\* \* \*

Q: Is it correct to say that "if one is living in the *grihastha ashram* then he should not leave it and accept *sanyās ashram*?"

Ma: The fact is, whatever is favorable for attaining spirituality only that should be accepted, whether it is a family life or a life of renunciation. One can realize God in both the states. Proper marriage and family life is clearly mentioned in the religious scriptures. For this reason only a wife is called as a religious-wife. There are several who renounce family life, but after reaching the jungle they again grow a family. This of course is not proper. Hence it is mentioned that one should not leave family life to become a *sanyāsi*. But if and when His call comes then all these do not matter at all.

\* \* \*

Ma: One should not speak unpleasant words. Many a time when unpleasant words are spoken to someone, those words instead of harming him bounces back to the speaker. Again sometimes those undesirable words become true. When these words are spoken against someone at the *swasti-muhurt* then those words will have to become true.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Without worldly agony, the desire to be acquainted with the engineer of this Universal machine is not awakened.

— Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee.

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

Amulya Kumar Dutta Gupta

*(continued from before)*

### **Thieves in Kishenpur Ashram, Dehradun**

23rd Jaisth 1356, Monday (6-6-1949). The menace of the thieves has increased a lot in Dehradun city and in Kishenpur too. Within three - four days three houses have been robbed. In our Ashram thieves had entered a house but the residents were quite alert and hence nothing was stolen. Since there are a limited number of policemen here in Kishenpur, it is not proper to totally depend on them. The villagers had formed groups and in rotation were keeping vigilance in the night. The residents were mentioning that earlier robbery was quite scarce here. Only after the arrival of certain post-partition people from Punjab, this calamity has begun. Shri Hariram Mittal's house is very near to our Ashram. He has recently donated a piece of land and a building worth rupees ten thousand for the establishment of a fees-less charitable school. The School entrance was inaugurated by Shree Shree Ma. He has also taken part in the vigilance and hence almost daily came for Ma's *darshan* in the night. Today when he arrived in the night a discussion ensued on the on-going robbery all around.

Shree Shree Ma too narrated a story of a robbery. Ma said, "There was a convicted thief. He regularly went to a *sadhu* and prayed for *diksha* and some advice. After a lot of persuasion by the thief, one day the *sadhu* gave him *diksha* and advised him not to tell lies or rob again. The thief stopped stealing. But this stopped his only means of earning. So he and his wife and children began to starve without food. Few days later when he again went to meet his *Guru*, the *Guru* enquired whether he had stopped telling lies and stealing. He replied that he has been following the *Guru's* instructions exactly as mentioned but as a result of this along with his wife and children he is on the verge of death because stealing was his only means of livelihood. Hearing this, the *Guru* gave him permission to start stealing but instructed him strictly not to tell lies. Hearing this, the thief went to the palace to try his luck. The moment he broke into the palace the king knew about it and arrived in front of the thief. The thief could not recognise the king and the king also introducing himself as a fellow thief

helped him in stealing. After stealing the king's treasury, the king kept one part of the cache and gave him three parts and took his name and address so that he could help him again. The next day the king ordered the thief to be caught and brought to the palace. The king asked him whether he knew anything about yesterday's robbery in the palace. The thief told the whole truth of how the robbery was conducted by him and an accomplice. The thief was questioned as to why he was telling the truth. The thief said that only on his *Guru's* instructions he is robbing and also telling the truth. The king was extremely pleased with the thief and gave him a job so that he could earn his own livelihood. Isn't truth another form of God? Hence where truth prevails there itself God manifests."

Tomorrow *Janaiv* or *Upavit* (sacred thread initiation) ceremony will be held in the Ashram. The two sons of Pandeyji will also be initiated with the *Janaiv* (sacred thread around their neck) and hence he has arrived with his family to stay in the Ashram. For this ceremony he has brought a truck load of items.

### **Sacred thread ceremony in Kishenpur Ashram**

24th Jaisth 1356, Tuesday (7-6-1949). From morning itself, there is a lot of festivity in the Ashram. The *Janaiv* ceremony is to be held for Parshuramji, his children and the children of Pandeyji. The *Yagna* for this ceremony will be held in the eastern side verandah. The *Yagna* altar and its surrounding have been beautifully decorated with very unusual drawings using rice paste. The *Yagna* continued from noon to ten in the night. Shree Shree Ma had also blessed the place of *Yagna* for some time too.

Didi returned back from Kashi today. Before that she brought to Kashi four tins of ghee from Delhi for the ensuing *Savitri Yagna*. Nowadays government permission has to be taken for transporting ghee from one place to another and getting permission from officials is an arduous task. But Didi is an expert in this matter and repeating Ma's name she just somehow accomplishes these ventures. From Kashi two daughters of my friend Manmohan had arrived along with Didi. And they have come here on Shree Shree Ma's instructions.

During the evening *paath* by Haribaba, Puran's mother fell down on Shree Shree Ma's feet and started wailing; she mentioned that Puran's health is deteriorating. Hearing her several devotees in the hall were almost in tears too, but only Shree Shree Ma was smiling. The heart rendering wails of the mother crying with the hope of losing her child just did not have any effect on Ma. On the other hand Ma smilingly instructed her not to disturb the ongoing *paath* by wailing in this manner. Didima was sitting beside Ma. Hearing the mother's cries She started consoling her. But after this incident nobody seemed to be able to concentrate on the *paath*. Haribaba too began to console and advise

Puran's mother. After the *paath*, Ma proceeded to inspect Puran's health; Haribaba also followed Ma.

25th Jaisth 1356. Wednesday (8-6-1949). Today morning after Haribaba's *paath*, Ma mentioning about Puran's health said, "Yesterday was a terrible day for Puran. Yesterday when This Body went to the house where Puran lived, found the whole house in a gloom." The lady of the house was also sitting with us. She mentioned, "Ma, from afternoon itself I could feel the melancholy in the house. Hence I had rushed to you yesterday in the afternoon." Ma continued, "The patient is in a very bad state. His body is lying on the bed like a log. The eyes are not blinking. Saliva is dripping from the mouth. The symptoms are truly dreadful. Yesterday four periods, afternoon, dusk, midnight and today dawn were truly miserable. Khukuni Didi informed, "After visiting Puran, Ma did not show any signs of lying down till three in the night."

The *Janaiv* ceremony of the children of Pandeyji and Parshuramji concluded today after a small *yagna*. The new white skinned and bald headed brahmacharis (who received *Janaiv*) looked devout and lively while they went round the *yagna-kund* in saffron clothes, a cloth bag hanging from their left shoulders and a *dundi* (pole) in their right hands. Pandeyji had also dressed up in an odd manner for this *Janaiv* ceremony. Later learnt that this *Janaiv* is a an important function during the marriage ceremony of Pandeyji's family. Hence Pandeyji's wife had organised a dance program the previous night, in which she danced too. Shree Shree Ma and several ladies had attended this program. Since Parshuram was taking initiation of the *Janaiv* at this old age, Ma had instructed Khukuni Didi to give the *Janaiv mantra* or the *Gayatri mantra* in his ear.

At around two in the afternoon Ma along with an entourage visited the New Forest. I did not join the group as Manorajan (Sarkar) Dada was not interested to go. Sundarlal Punditji arrived in the Ashram a bit late and hence he too could not go with Ma and this depressed him. Ma returned at around nine in the night.

After dinner Ma joked in various manner with Punditji in order to remove his annoyance. First Ma covering Her face with Her hands walked in front of Punditji saying, "How can I show My face to Punditiji?" After that Ma started talking with him in such a tone and voice that Punditji could not prevent from laughing. Observing Ma's such funny tactics the spectators around also started laughing. Joking with Punditji in this manner, Ma narrated a story:-

Ma: Once two intimate friends, a prince and his Minster's son left home for a tour of the country. After roaming several places, they one day arrived at a marketplace. There in a potter's shop they saw four pitchers, with different sermons written on each of them. The sermons were: (1) 'Keep doing your

work, as is so is'. (2) 'If the young is old, then give him due respect'. (3) 'Never ever divulge a rich man's secrets'. (4) 'Never ever forsake offered food'. Both the friends liked these sermons. Purchasing the four pitchers they decided that they would try their best to follow these sermons. One day when the prince was having a bath, the intellectuals of that kingdom while searching for the right person to replace their deceased king, observed positive traits on the minister's son and took him captive and enthroned him as their king.

After finishing his bath the prince, not finding his friend anywhere became worried. Suddenly his eyes fell on the sermon 'Keep doing your work, as is so is' written on one of the pitchers. Considering this sermon as the best one to follow, he disguised himself and entering the palace of that kingdom requested for a job. The king, i.e., the minister's son not recognising the prince gave him a job. His job was that of the caretaker of the royal court, and hence he had to check that everything was in order before the king arrived in the royal court. The prince started his job with full dedication. Even though he knew that the minister's son was his king now, following the second sermon, 'If the young is old, then give him due respect', he never dishonoured the king. However due to the change in circumstances the minister's son had totally forgotten his friend the prince and also could not recognise him through his disguise. Pleased with the prince's cordial behaviour and loyalty the king gave him permission to enter the private rooms of the palace without any hindrance. Once the queen became very ill. While roaming in the inner wings the prince came to learn that if the queen was bathed with the blood of the first person to arrive in the royal court the next day, she would recover from her illness. But the prince did not inform anyone about this, because he then remembered the third sermon, 'Never ever divulge a rich man's secrets'. The next day as was his duty he was on his way to enter first into the royal court for his daily supervision.

Observing the prince's devotion towards his duty, Lord *Mahadev* disguised as a brahmin sat down under a banyan tree for selling various food items. The moment the prince passed that way, the brahmin requested him to have some food before moving to the royal court. Initially the prince considering it to be an hindrance to his duty, ignored him and walked ahead. Suddenly he remembered the fourth sermon, 'Never ever forsake offered food'. He returned back, ate the offered food prepared by the brahmin and moved ahead towards the royal court. In the meantime, according to fate another person entered the royal court first and the royal soldiers killed him. The queen was bathed with his blood and she quickly recovered from her illness. When the prince observed

that by heeding the four sermons he was saved from all situations, he decided to narrate this fact to the minister's son, the present king. One day with the permission of the king he narrated his story in the king's court. While hearing the story the king's previous memory was awakened. Immediately he got up from the throne, enthroned his friend the prince as the new king, he became the new minister and both of them ruled that kingdom.

26th Jaisth 1356, Thursday (9-6-1949). Today after the morning *paath*, Ma went to Dandipur where a *Sethji* was conducting a *MahaVishnu-Yagna*. They took Ma in their car after giving a proper invitation. They had sent a bus to pick up the Ashramites. After reaching the ceremonial place, found that the huge *Yagnashala* was beautifully decorated along with images of Lord Krishna, Lord Rama, and Lord Hanuman. Encircling the *yagnakund*, ten twelve brahmins were offering the oblation along with the *mantras*. Ma remained seated within the *Yagnashala* for quite some time. Few photographers also arrived to take Ma's photos.

After some time Ma got up to leave in order to visit the sick Puran. Ma instructed me and Manoranjanbabu to accompany Her. On the way Ma mentioned that Puran's health was quite serious. Even after hearing Ma's words, I did not feel any anxiety regarding Puran's health. Presently Puran was residing in the house of his father's friend Shri Johari. On reaching that house Shri Johari's wife and Puran's mother decorated Ma with garlands and *chandan* and also performed *aarti*. On Haribaba's instructions, today several people in the Ashram performed 108 times *japa* of 'Om Namah Shivay'. Puran's father has also organised a *Chandi-paath* from today. We saw Puran from a distance. He looked quite lean and thin. His fever still remained at 104-deg. Didi went inside the room and kept Ma's slippers on Puran's head. After staying there for some time we returned back to Dandipur.

This time a specially decorated seat was arranged for Shree Shree Ma just outside the *Yagnashala*. On Ma's instruction a *kumari* of our Ashram Pushpa sang quite a few songs. A car was sent to the Ashram to bring Haribaba here. It was getting dusk and everyone here in Dandipur wanted Haribaba to perform the evening *aarti*. But when Ma heard that Haribaba would not leave the Ashram at dusk, Ma immediately got up. The ladies rushed forward to pay their obeisance and there was a commotion. Somehow Ma managed to come out of the crowd and sat down in the car. We too rushed into the bus and all of us returned back to the Ashram. Besides this *MahaVishnu Yagna* a *MahaRudra Yagna* is also being performed somewhere else in Dehradun. Another *Yagna* had recently concluded

near the Station. Such *Yagnas* seemed to be occurring quite frequently here in this region.

### **The sad demise of Puran**

*27th Jaisth 1356, Friday (10-6-1949).* Today at five in the morning when I saw Puran's father after the *kirtan*, I understood that Puran must have passed away yesterday night. Later I learnt that he had passed away at three in the night. Yesterday at mid-night when Puran's health had become critical, Puran's mother had arrived to take Shree Shree Ma to their house; but Ma did not go. Ma had informed Khukuni Didi, "I can see that Puran is gradually becoming still." Towards the end of the night Ma informed Didi that an horrible form has been observed. Khukuni Didi replied, "I immediately understood that then only Puran must have passed away."

Puran's father was the Conservator of forests. I had first seen Puran in Kashi. He was quite a sober boy and talked very little too. What else I had heard from Khukuni Didi and Ma is that:-

Ma: The boy had failed the BSc exams with a small margin. If he had tried he could have passed but he decided to take away his life. Johari, his father's friend also worked in the forest department. Puran locked himself in one of the rooms of Johari's house and decided to starve to death. He was in this room for seven days without food, when This Body arrived here in Dehradun. When I was departing from Dehradun, Puran was brought by his parents to meet me at the station. They informed that their son Puran has failed in his BSc Exams and has become mentally disturbed, he neither eats nor talks with anyone. I asked him, 'Will you come along with me'? Hearing this he immediately boarded the train. He even ate the fruit which I gave him to eat. So the parents left him with This Body. The boy's *sanskār* is very good, he has not taken any forbidden food even though he has grown up. Only once did he take some such food while staying in Johari's house, that too on their request only. For that reason he had been sent to Kashi for atonement. This time when his ailment could not be cured at Kashi Ashram he was sent to Johari's house in Dehradun. The room in which he had decided to starve to death, he was put up in that very room again. Hence he had a doubt that this time his life would not be saved. He had a spirit of serving others and also had quite a comprehensive knowledge.

Khukuni Didi: This illness of Puran was also brought about intentionally. He had a strong wish that if he develops a severe illness then Ma would come quite often to see him. Hence Haribaba while visiting him had said, 'Puranbhai you have purposely brought this disease. It has stayed with you for quite some time, now chase it away'. Puran had answered, 'Now the situation has changed'.

Haribaba had then asked, 'What change has occurred?' And Puran had replied, 'Shortage of energy'.

Sadanand Brahmachari conducted Puran's last rites. Shree Shree Ma patted the chest and body of Puran's father and bid him leave. It was a pity watching him. Even though he did not shed any tears, his face seemed dark with emotion.

In the night after meals when Ma again sat in the front verandah of the Ashram, then again Puran was the only topic of discussion. When Puran fell ill initially he had stayed for a few days in the verandah opposite to Maharaj Trivenipuriji's room. Maharaj had blessed him with a cardamom saying that he would recover very soon. Smt Ruma Devi was also sitting along with us. She was present when Puran had passed away, hence Shree Shree Ma asked her to describe the last minutes of Puran's death. Ruma Devi said, "Just before his death all the sense organs of Puran had become active and he himself was uttering loudly 'Ma, Ma'. Then he looked skywards, paid his obeisance with folded hands and smilingly closed his eyes and passed away." Ma too mentioned, "His overall circumstances were truly good. He left his body on a Thursday, in Uttarakhand, on the new moon day after getting the blessed touch of several Mahatmas. His last rites have also taken place on the banks of the River Ganga in Haridwar. It is no less than an immense fate to have so many pious circumstances at the same time. I had noticed earlier too that he did not have any attachment for worldly life. He loved to stay alone instead of spending time with his companions."

#### ***Kirtan* for the welfare of Puran's soul**

28th Jaisth 1356, Saturday (11-6-1949). Today from four to nine in the morning a *kirtan* has been arranged for the welfare of the departed soul of Puran. After this Haribaba performed the *Chundi-paath* for more than an hour. The *kirtan* again commenced at eleven in the morning and concluded at three in the afternoon. After this Haribaba's *paath* ensued from three to six in the evening. The *kirtan* started immediately after this *paath*. Ma had gone out for only a small interval.

A sikh devotee resides very close to the Ashram. He has married a Swiss lady named Helen. She is now old and extremely fat. Miss Blanca (Atmanand) of our Ashram sleeps and takes bath in their house. Mrs Helen visits our Ashram quite regularly and today she has arrived with her friend, another foreign lady. Ma questioned Mrs Helen, "I had requested you to come to the Ashram daily. Why don't you come?" I could not hear what Mrs Helen replied. Her companion replied, "Miss Blanca is my friend." In the meantime Khukuni Didi arrived with a cloth (*dhoti*) of Ma and handed it over to Mrs Helen. She was extremely pleased to receive the gift and asked Ma what she should do with that cloth.

Although she had married an Indian, her dress and behaviour was still like a foreigner. I hope that must be the reason for that gift from Ma. Ma told her to wear it.

Mrs Helen: In order to wear this I will require the inner cloths and blouse.

Ma (to Khukuni Didi): Please check whether there is any blouse of This Body.

Didi went inside and then Ma said to Mrs Helen, "Since you are thin, my blouse will be quite big for you." (Everyone laughs). But Mrs Helen replied smilingly, "No, no, it will be perfectly alright." Ma then looked sharply at Mrs Helen's clothes and observing two small holes in it, said to her, "You have arrived wearing a blouse with holes in it and hence I am giving my blouse to you. (Pointing at her friend) Her blouse is perfectly ok." The companion remarked, "I will also arrive again wearing a torn blouse." (Everyone laughs).

Ma: (Looking at Helen) You are really beautiful, (then Ma said in English) nice, very nice, yes, very nice." (Again everyone laughs at Ma's English).

Then Khukuni Didi arrived with Ma's petticoat, but it was found to be small for Mrs Helen as she was quite bulky.

Gossiping with them for some more time, Ma again entered the Hall. As mentioned earlier, *kirtan* was going on in the Hall. Sitting silently for few minutes, Ma Herself started singing -- '*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare.*'

Everyone in the Hall too started singing with Ma. Ma asked everyone to stand up and sing. Excited they too danced and sang the *kirtan*. After some time Ma started singing in a melodious tune -- '*Rudhe Rudhe Govind Jay*'. Whenever Ma sings, the atmosphere seems intoxicated. Every men, women, and children, started singing excitedly along with Ma. After the conclusion of the *kirtan*, *Aarti* was performed on Shree Shree Ma with everyone singing -- '*Jay Jagadish Hare, Prabhu Jay Jagadish Hare. Bhakt Janan ke Sangkata Kshanme Door Kare.*'

Shri Bolai, the son of Swami Shankaranandaji performed the *Aarti* after which everyone in unison sang several *stotras*. A pious and powerful atmosphere of the *stotras* flowed within the Hall upto eight in the evening. After that Haribaba arrived and started the evening *kirtan*, which continued upto nine pm. In this way Ma kept everyone intoxicated throughout the day in honor of the departed soul of Puran. The Ashram sadhus and brahmacharis were given *bhandara* too.

**Several Sadhus meet Shree Shree Ma in subtle form**

1st *Ashād* 1356, Wednesday (15-6-1949). Today at around three in the afternoon, Haribaba was reading the book '*Ma Anandamayee Kathā*' written

by Shri Abhoy. At one place in the book it was mentioned that Lord Jagganath had arrived to meet Ma. Reading this Haribaba asked Ma, "Had Jagganath arrived in the Idol form?" Ma replied, "That has not yet been revealed." All of us laughed on hearing Ma's answer. If Ma does not reveal anything then it is very difficult to get any answer from Ma. However, Ma revealed that one day Santdas Baba had arrived in a subtle form to meet Shree Shree Ma. Ma narrated, "One day while lying down in the Puri Ashram I was gazing at the ocean, when Santdas Babaji entered the room. Shishir Raha was also sitting near me and Babaji moved towards him. When he turned, saw that he was blind in one of his eyes. Nobody had informed that he was blind in one of his eyes. On asking Shishir I learnt that one of his eyes had been cut by the pipe of the *hookah*."

Haribaba: What all exists in the material body, are the same things observed in the subtle form?

Ma: Yes. Besides Santdas Babaji was not like this after his birth. If the subtle form of his younger age had occurred, then this form, that he was blind in one eye would not have been observed. When Shishir had gone to meet him then maybe Babaji had a damaged eye and hence Babaji arrived in that form. One another day I was lying down in the *maun* (Silence) room of the Dehradun Ashram, when I saw that C.R.Das has arrived. I knew his wife but cannot have a *kheyāl* whether I have seen him, maybe must have seen him. However, I observed the subtle form of his young age. Hence this implies that subtle form of all ages of a person can be observed and the same countenance of the material body is observed in the subtle form.

In the evening Ma went out for a trip in the car. I went out for a walk and then returned to the hall for performing my evening worship. While I was worshiping with closed eyes, I felt as if something hit me in the back. I was astonished. I turned round and found a bunch of *lichis* (lychees). I was surprisingly looking at it when a girl arrived and said, "Ma has given you those *lichis*." Hearing that I picked up the bunch and keeping it within my clothes finished my worship. I just cannot describe in how many ways Ma has been blessing this fool. Yesterday handing over to me a bunch of *lichis*, Ma had said, "Didi is very sad because you could not be given good *lichis*, hence have given you these good quality *lichis* today."

### **Shree Shree Ma and the subtle form of Rasikmohan**

2nd *Āshād* 1356, Thursday (16-6-1949). Today morning during the *paath* the topic of Rasikmohan Vidyabhusan arose. Shri Vidyabhusan was a highly qualified intellectual in *Vaishnav* scriptures. His age was also a little more than

hundred years. Shree Shree Ma said, "I had seen *Baba* once in Bandh, saw a temple with trees on both sides of the road to the temple. The branches of the trees looked almost like deers. I think the deers are themselves standing in the form of trees. Worship and service is being performed in the temple very auspiciously. A very old person is sitting there like a statue. And his *tiki* (pigtail of a brahmin pundit) has taken the form of a *jataa* (matted hair) and it has been twisted over the head covering the forehead too. Then observed the divine state of the person; also observed that his health is not good, as if his life light was flickering off. A lady was serving him. Again gradually his life-light seemed to flare up. I have never ever seen nor heard of this *Baba* earlier. But the *Baba* had heard of This Body and he also had a desire to meet This Body. Hence for that reason or for some other reason This Body met *Baba*. Haribaba knew him well and while coming to Kolkata from Bandh, he met the *Baba* and assured him that he would arrive with This Body soon. But *Baba* became worried when he learnt that I do not enter a householder's home. Howsoever I went along with Haribaba to *Baba's* house. There we found that he lived in the third floor and the stairs were within the house. While standing outside the house saw that, This Body like a leaf floating in air, went inside the house and through the stairs stood in front of him. On asking, learnt that he really had been sick but gradually he has recovered."

After sometime Ma continued, "Several times a lot of things are observed but it is not revealed. Again sometimes a few of these are spoken out. One day, was lying down in Raipur Ashram. Sitting near me Paramanand was writing letters, when suddenly words poured out of This Body's lips, 'The fire of the agarbathi has fallen down'. Hearing that, Paramanand questioned, 'Where is the fire'? But its answer did not come out of This Body. He continued writing the letters. Later it was observed that burnt blisters had formed on my hands and stomach."

Myself: Ma, the *aarti* had occurred in subtle. The fire also fell down in subtle, then from where did the blisters come?

Ma: (Smilingly) That too can occur.

Today afternoon a local lady worshipped Ma and offered *bhog*. She decorated Ma, with a red scarf and a garland around Ma's neck and *chandana* on Ma's forehead. Then chanting *mantras* she performed *aarti*. While chanting she seemed to be crying. Ma told her to stand steadily. Then finally asked her smilingly, "Will you drop the fire of the *aarti*?" The moment Ma finished asking, the *aarti* vessel slipped from her hand and she shyly started wiping her tears. In the evening Ma was taken to Shri Johari's house. We too went along with Ma.

*Kirtan* was held there for some time, Ma too sang a few *kirtans*. All of us returned back at dusk.

### **Trust in God's benevolent dispensation**

*2nd Āshād 1356*, Thursday (16-6-1949). In the night Puran was again the topic of discussion. Puran's mother had wept and pleaded at Ma's lotus feet for her son's survival. Hence I asked Ma, "It would have been appropriate to keep Puran alive for a few more days." Ma said, "While Puran was ill This Body had a *kheyāl* that it is good for him to leave his body now. Similarly when Gopibaba had gone to Puri, then too This Body had seen that *Baba* would suffer from a major illness, but immediately after that had a *kheyāl* that the disease should not give too much harm to *Baba*. Just as This Body does not have any awareness of what others will comment, similarly there is no thought of publicizing This Body. But you all are thinking that if Puran is kept alive for a few more days then everyone will think that Ma has only saved him from death, which may not have been the reason. It could have been anything, effect of proper treatment, effect of proper medicines, sermons of the mahatmas of Khanna, the blessings of the mahatmas, etc. The cause of the recovery from illness can be accorded to any of the various reasons. You just cannot estimate the profound benefits that may be present within an action that you think to detrimental now.

Many a time someone is told to perform a certain work. While performing that action he however does not succeed. For example someone is told to give an exam and he fails in that exam. Observing this you may think that you have uselessly appointed him, but it is not in vain. Because, maybe that work was still left to be done and by appearing in that exam that action was fulfilled. Nothing goes in vain."

Myself: Ma, it is difficult to understand that all your actions are beneficial to us. Hence sometimes it becomes difficult to have faith on you.

Ma: That is of course true, because even after pondering when you do not find anything beneficial then it is difficult to understand that all actions of God are beneficial and hence disbelief arises. Now if this disbelief grows day by day then one day you will fall prey to it. Hence This Body states that if ever a doubt arises on seeing something then occasionally ask This Body. Then the feelings of doubt and disbelief will not be able to grow. However if the thoughts that, whatever God does is for our benefit, is kept in mind and everything is logically observed then one day you will get this realization and then you will be able to clearly understand that all this that God has done is all for our benefit only.

\* \* \* \*

(to be continued)

## *In Ma's own Words*

*Ma narrates to Bhaiji*

Bhaiji

*(continued from before)*

### **Preparation for departing to Haridwar for *Purna-Kumbh***

Before Jyotish fell ill he had mentioned 'This time *Purna-Kumbh* would be held in Haridwar. Will you go?' I said, 'Yes'. So accordingly preparation was made for the proceeding to Haridwar, there were almost 20-21 companions along with us. Jyotish was bedridden and hence he could not accompany us. Rajendra Kushari is a childhood friend of Bholanath. He works in the residence of the Kundu's. He once brought Jogendra Kundu to Shahbagh. Then it had been decided that we could stay in his residence in Kolkata on the way to Haridwar. On reaching Kolkata we stayed in that house. The unnatural behaviors of This Body were especially observed during that period. All the time there was as if a feeling of emptiness. While climbing up or coming down a staircase, always tried to concentrate and keep the feet steadily on the stairs, but this used to further increase the uneasiness. With a gazed look or even with the eyes shut This Body used to fall down senseless. But again recovered back after sometime.

From the aspirant's point of view, when an aspirant becomes immersed and intoxicated within himself, then where are his *japa*, *dhyana*, *puja*, etc? He is then engrossed within a supreme thought. Again sometimes some depending on their own *sankars* can move about by observing the abnormality within their normal behaviour or normalcy within their abnormality. Then initially his abnormality is observed, and later his body becomes motionless, stiff and firm. When this state remains for a long time in the aspirant then the body too gets similarly transformed. This Body was then moving in an unknown emotion. In this situation there is no question of anyone's wilfulness or unwillingness.

### **Ma in Kolkata**

Pyaribanu, a relative of the Nawab of Dhaka, lives in Kolkata. One day a *kirtan* was held in their house. We went there in the evening. In the huge hall of her house a lot of men and women had gathered. The wobbly feeling was still persisting in This Body. The conditions during *kirtan* occurred again. Pyaribanu and her children were quite excited for the *kirtan*. Pyaribanu started shedding tears while singing '*haribol*'. Later *kirtan* was once again held in their house,

where the daughter (*Aparnadevi*) and wife (*Basantidevi*) of C.R. Das had arrived. C.R. Das's wife had seen This Body earlier in her dreams. Whom she had seen, that she could not locate till now. That day seeing This Body, she narrated the dream and conversed on various pious matters.

### News of Jyotish's illness

On reaching Benaras we lodged in the house of *Kunjbabu*. From there went to Haridwar. Staying there for seven days went to Rishikesh. While coming out of the car in Rishikesh, received two telegrams. Came to know from one that Satinath Kushari was ill, and in the other Niranjan had written that Jyotish was seriously ill. Then we were in Kali Kamliwala's Dharmshala. While sitting in the room saw that, Jyotish had a child's behaviour, This Body as if was sitting carrying him in the lap and his wife was standing beside me near the wall. Informed this visual to Bholanath. Bholanath was very much tensed on receiving the telegrams. Then it was asserted that Jyotish cannot die now. Informed Bholanath not to discuss about this with anyone present here.

The next day returned back to Haridwar. Informed *Shashankbabu*, 'Only the first pious dip of the *Purnakumbh* has been completed. So you and *Khukuni* stay here. We are leaving'. They mentioned, 'We have not come here for the *Kumbh*. Our only aim is to stay with you'. *Shashankbabu*'s life was in danger and a *sadhu* had told him to perform some rites. Hence said to him, 'Complete those rites here in the banks of the Ganga'.

Within a few days after visiting some more places we reached Dhaka. Jyotish was still in bed, but he had greatly improved as compared to his initial health. During his initial state of illness, when we had stopped visiting him, then had informed Niranjan, 'If he stays in a ground floor house then we will visit him. After we departed to Haridwar, he was shifted to a ground floor government residence very near to *Shahbag* and that's where we visited him.

One day the elder brother of Jyotish mentioned, 'Whatever has to happen has happened; now Jyotish is alive with your 'name' only. Save him. We have kept him with your blessings only'. His mother-in-law had also come. While returning back with tears in her eyes she said to This Body, 'I have handed him over to you. You will surely protect him; I do not know anything else'. Then a certain *kheyal* had come over This Body that he would surely get well and remain a householder for some more time.

On returning back we went to see him daily and also sent *prasād* for him every day. Occasionally Jyotish's wife came to *Shahbag* to meet us and also informed us about his health.

### Ma in the Ashram of Balanand Brahmachariji

Once we went to Deoghar. There we went to the Ashram of Prangopalbabu's Gurudev Balanand Brahmachariji. Seeing This Body Maharaj'ji said, 'Once You had given *darshan* in the subtle form, now You have arrived to give me *darshan* in the gross body. One day during *kirtan* This Body's state became like earlier days. Maharaj'ji and his disciples sat down surrounding This Body and when This Body became normal asked, 'Two or One'. Word came out, 'One'. Maharaj'ji said, 'Two'. Laughingly a lot of discussion occurred in this manner. Later asked him, 'Two in which manner'? Maharaj'ji said, 'Two, because He and I'. This Body said, 'He is not without I and again without He I is not'.

Before coming to Deoghar, for the last few days, whenever This Body used to get up from the bed or was taking a stroll and sometimes at other time too, like a whisper the word *Sohang* used to come out from the lips. Sometimes it was uttered loudly too. The people nearby used to enquire what had been uttered. But no reply came out. Few thought that This Body was uttering *Shivohang*. Later had heard this word from someone, but nobody uttered *Sohang*. There is a similar word like this but that word too was not heard from anyone. Later within, an explanation arose that *Sohang* means being in One Entity which implies Only and only I. During that time there was almost no movement. To lie down immobile and steady was the only essence. Days and night passed in the same manner. The same feeling, on getting up. After sitting visualized, a filled pot supported from all sides so as to remain steady and motionless, This Body too is sitting in that very manner. This feeling existed all the time, even while walking. Sometimes while standing This Body used to become stiff and firm, the eyes staring and the eyelids motionless. This Body remained like this in Deoghar. Maharaj'ji expressed great joy with This Body's state. He ordered *lichis* (an edible fruit) and he himself cleaned it and started feeding This Body. We were residing in Prangopalbabu's residence and from there daily morning and evening went to the Ashram. Most of the time kept lying in the Ashram.

One day *kirtan* started and there was a change within This Body. Balanand Brahmachari Maharaj'ji came near This Body and somehow the Hand of This Body rose and settled on his head. Then Maharaj'ji escorted This Body to his meditation room and closed the door. Very affectionately he showed his place of meditation. Very joyously he informed about his personal matters and *kriyas*, etc. A little further from there is a place called Tapovan which is secluded and lonely. This Body affectionately told him, 'Baba you should go and stay there!'

### **Ma in Pramathbabu's residence**

While returning from Deoghar we resided in the house of Pramathbabu in Kolkata. One day when it was decided to go out somewhere, Pramathbabu said, 'Just not possible'. So saying he went up to the terrace and sat down doing *japa*. Gradually he became so still as if he had lost consciousness. In the meantime it started raining, but Pramathbabu sat in the same manner. This Body informed all present there, 'Start singing *kirtan*. Everyone drenched in rain sang *kirtan* and then Pramathbabu started rolling on the ground. After almost an hour Pramathbabu became normal and said, 'I can't explain where I went or how happy I was with the extremity of the thought that 'How can Ma leave!'".

### **Hiralal's life in danger**

One day a boy named Hiralal arrived and while conversing informed that an astrologer has predicted that his life is in peril. Then suddenly words came out of This Body's lips, 'Your danger is very near'. He asked, 'What should I do'? This Body advised, 'You come here frequently'. So for few days he kept coming. One day he arrived during *Amavasya* (new moon day), This Body suddenly said to Khukuni, 'Bring some fire'. When the fire was brought told to give it in my Hand. Shouting 'no' she moved away with the fire. Then told Hiralal to light a match stick. He lighted the matchstick and gave it to me. As long as the fire was burning, kept a finger on the fire. Disturbed, Hiralal cried, 'Ma! What are You doing'? Replied, 'Your life's danger has been evicted'. It took almost a month to cure the burnt finger.

There is one more important point in this incident. A man was seriously ill, This Body was taken at the last moment. Before receiving the news of his death had told Khukuni to bring some fire because (This Body) had to touch the fire before his cremation. It was the same. Hiralal arrived after Khukuni brought the fire and also took it away on her father's advice. His whole body was touched with the fire. Because of this, Hiralal's life-danger was evicted and also the earlier statement was fulfilled.

### **Danger on not following Ma's order**

One evening a lady came and said, 'Ma! You will have to visit my house'. This Body was then strolling on the Dancing Hall (in Shahbag). Just on seeing her a *kheyal* arose that I should stay far from her, there should not be any conversation with her too. But she kept on persisting for going to her house, and This Body remained silent. Only once a word came out, 'No'. Being helpless she went and pleaded with Bholanath. Bholanath asked her, 'Tell why you want to take Her'. Then she informed that her elder son was ill. The doctor's have

mentioned that the disease is a bad one. Hence I will take Ma along and show him once. I have come here with this faith. When Bholanath came and informed everything. This Body said, 'He will not get well'. Bholanath became silent and then asked, 'How can this be told to her? What can be done now?' She will not go without taking You'. Jyotish was also standing there. He too asked, 'What is to be done now?'. This Body then said, 'Okay let's proceed'. Instantly a *kheyal* occurred that it is fated that the boy meets This Body before his death and that he has the urge to be touched by This Body. Where there is death, there is One Only. Here there is a controversy of birth and death. What is birth and death? Just a change of clothes, again it can be thought of proceeding to another house. The veil of ignorance does not allow humans to understand this fact. Why will I not go just because he will not recover?

This Body got ready to proceed. Knowing that he will not recover Bholanath did not want to go. So he discussed with Jyotish as to what they will think if he did not go. Jyotish remarked, 'When Ma has said that She will go, then She will surely go'. So both Bholanath and This Body got up on the *tonga*. While the conversation was going on two three dogs arrived in front of the horse and started barking. The horse now would not move. However, we went there and saw him.

Gradually his illness increased. One day his mother came again with the *tonga* and said, 'Son is in a bad condition, he wants to see You'. You have to go. So saying, she started crying. So This Body went with Bholanath. The moment we stepped on the entrance door someone came and did *pranam* to us. During that period if someone did *pranam* to This Body then This Body's feeling used to change. This Body too used to do *pranam* in return. So sat down on the doorsill and then again got up and went near the boy. Crying his mother said, 'I will not allow You to go. Say something before You go, we will surely obey that. Relieve me from this peril. You will have to say' and so on. Bholanath too started forcing This Body. Then words came out from This Body's lips, 'Will you do exactly as This Body says? Will you be able to do it? Okay, from today onwards for the next eighteen days do not allow him to get up from the bed. Will you be able to keep this is mind?'. She very calmly accepted this. While returning back the boy cried and said, 'Ma! I am unable to bear the pain of the body. Whether I die or live, I want peace'.

Later heard that the boy's illness was gradually recovering. News was coming regularly. One day someone came and said, 'Ma! He was gradually recovering but why again it is becoming worse?'. Words came out of This Body's lips,

'The rule was broken on Monday'. On the eighteenth day he died. The mother cried, 'My son cannot die. We have followed Ma's order. Do not take him for cremation'. Shouting and crying like a mad person she came rushing to Shabbag. From four in the morning This Body was feeling tired. Was not able to rise. The mother was crying a lot. Bholanath made a lot of efforts to wake up This Body, but there was no reply. Later a person came from their house and informed, 'How long could we wait with the dead body, cremation was necessary and hence the body was forcefully taken there'. In grief and sorrow the mother became totally disturbed. Used to tell everyone, 'Ma's words are not correct. None of you should go near Ma'.

Two three months passed in this manner. One day she arrived and said, 'Ma, pardon me. Truly your order was not followed properly, for that reason only I am facing this calamity. Among the eighteen days, on one Monday I had gone downstairs. There was no one with him. Then he had called me saying, 'Remove the pieces of wood drying in the terrace. I cannot see the terrace properly while sitting in my bed'. Hearing him I had done just that only, but from where did he see the pieces of wood, that did not come to my mind. Now I remember that incident very clearly. You are our Mother. You had blessed us, what to do, it was all in my fate'. So saying she cried.

\* \* \* \* (to be continued.)

\* (From 'Mayer Katha' (Bengali) - The English version is 'Mother reveals Herself'.)

### New Publications

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**Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee**  
**Vol-18 (Bengali)**

Gurupriya Devi

*(continued from before)*

**Car accident**

16th July 1966. Today Ma was returning back to Dehradun from Kankhal in Rajaben's car. Near the Parade ground in Dehradun Ma's car collided with a private bus coming from the opposite side going towards Raipur. Ma's car was quite big. Ma was sitting in the centre of the back seat. Two girls were sitting on Ma's right, Udas (with *Narayan-shilā* hanging from her neck) and Rama (Shakti's sister). And Gouri (another sister of Shakti) was sitting on the left. While the car was taking a turn the bus from the opposite side caressed the left side of the car and finally collided with the back of the car. The instant the bus was seen rushing towards the car, Ma's left Hand straightened out on to the left. Later Ma had said, "This act was done to stop the bus in order to prevent anyone in the car or bus to lose their lives at this place. And what an astonishment, how this small Hand of this Small Body had the feeling of stopping this speeding big bus. And astonishingly, the hand also lifted up automatically". So saying Ma laughed. Ma was explaining in such a manner as if Ma and Ma's action were poles apart. I have been observing this all the time. As if Ma is a witness and observer to everything. As if, not being within anything, even though being involved in everything.

The driver of Ma's car also had a sudden thought at that moment, 'Even though the collision cannot be avoided, turn the car sideways so that the collision may occur at the back of the car'. And instantly he turned the car to the right. After being hit by the bus the car jolted and wobbling climbed over a pile of stones (kept there for repairing the road) and came to a stop. And after that a straight cut from the bottom of the thumb to the center of the index finger was observed in Ma's left Hand. It seemed as if a clean cut had been made by a sharp knife. A small portion of the bone of the finger was also visible, though there wasn't any bruise on the bone or Hand. Apparently there wasn't any object within the car that could have made that cut in Ma's Hand. A search was also done within the car but nothing could be found. Earlier just after the accident, with a fisted left Hand, Ma had asked the girls, "Has anyone of you got hurt?" In the

front seat Rajaben, the driver (Balgopal Das) and his wife were sitting. Udas sitting on Ma's right and the driver were totally unhurt. The others had mild injuries. Seated within the car Ma had remarked, "*Narayan* seated inside was protecting one and all". Just before the collision Ma had pulled Gouri (sitting on Ma's left) towards Herself. Ma continuously kept asking everyone whether anyone had any injury or not. When Ma heard that everyone within the car were well, Ma opened Her left fist. Even when the Hand was fisted, droplets of blood could be seen oozing out. And at that very instant the back of the Hand bloated up like a blue hillock. And when the fist was opened blood came gushing out of the cut. Ma said, "Bring some water". But the blood wasn't stopping. Then Ma again said, "Bring some ice". Surprisingly a man was sitting slightly ahead of the road with ice. Everyone was wondering how to put the big chunk of ice on Ma's Hand. Ma immediately wrapped the chunk of ice with a towel and gave a few blows on the ground and taking a broken piece of ice from it, kept it over the blue swollen portion of Her Hand. Immediately the swelling subsided and the skin looked like a wet cloth fallen on the ground. It seemed that a major blood vessel had been injured and hence both the thumb and fore finger were quite pale and weak.

A few days earlier Ma had a *kheyāl* that, 'How will it be, to look at the color of 'This Body's blood'. Ma only knows, whether the accident occurred on Ma's *kheyāl* or Ma had taken upon Herself someone else's mishap. Later Ma had said, "What a fresh and bright red colored blood, and you all mention that 'This Body is not well'".

All those who had witnessed the blood oozing out of Ma's Hand, had confirmed that there was something strange about it and it had an amazing glow. This type of blood is not observed normally.

One more fact, when it was being discussed that Rajaben would escort Ma to Kankhal, then it had been decided that Rajaben would arrive with the car at eight in the morning. Ma too had been ready to leave at eight. But because of a festival and the rush for a bath in the Ganga, Haridwar was quite crowded and Rajaben could somehow manage to reach Kankhal at 9:30 a.m. and then only Ma had departed. Ma had also said, "Would not *Narayan* want to keep a sign of what could have happened in that fatal accident. And sitting beside Ma in the car, *Narayan* was already hanging from U.das's neck, He only saved all". But we all know that Shree Shree Ma had only saved everyone from this terrible danger.

After the accident, the bus driver pleaded before the driver of Ma's car, "Give me any punishment that you desire. Even though the car was in front of me, I just did not have any thought that I have to stop the bus. I too had become

dazed. Hence I was speeding the bus ahead." The car driver replied, "What can I say, you go near Ma." Nothing was said to the bus driver for his mistake. Because Ma had earlier mentioned, "The bus driver should not be told anything regarding this matter."

Raising of Ma's Hand and widely opening it prohibited a serious accident by the bus driver. The open free hand was like a brake and also motivated the intelligence of the bus driver to act in that manner. Later (after the accident) Ma's Hand was in an irrevocable vise-like fist position. The open-hand and the fist-hand, within this time only the cut had occurred.

In this divine manner with Ma's *kripā* everyone were safeguarded. Only the car was badly damaged. The car was almost in fragments. When Ma had spread out Her left Hand, it seemed as if someone had made a deep cut with a gap in between with a blade, in the palm from the thumb to the wrist.

When Ma had spread out Her left Hand, in the palm from the thumb to the wrist, it seemed as if with a blade someone had made a deep cut, with a gap in between. And blood oozing out from the cut was dripping from Ma's Hand. The left side of Ma's Body had received a severe jolt. We were relieved to know that after taking an x-ray there wasn't any fracture in Ma's left Hand. Ma has never taken any medicine, hence the injury in Ma's Hand cannot be cured by surgery also. The only option is to pray at Ma's holy Feet that Ma has a *kheyal* to cure the injury in Her Hand. And that Ma recovers Her health soon.

All those who are close to Ma know that Ma's health recovers predominantly by *kirtan*, *japa* and taking God's name. Ma remains well when everyone near Ma sing *kirtan*, etc. Hence for the cure of Ma's health, the residents of Kishonpur Ashram decided to organize *akhand-kirtan*. The *kirtan* commenced on the evening of 16th July. Without a break the *kirtan* continued for ten days and ten nights. During the daily rituals of the Ashram one of the devotee stayed behind continuing the *kirtan* in low volume, so that the *kirtan* would remain unbroken. Everyday a new *kirtan* was started and the same continued for the next twenty four hours. During any function or when someone was seriously ill or was undergoing an operation, Ma Herself implemented *kirtan*, *japa* etc by the devotees and residents of the Ashram. Hence this time too Ma kept a strict vigilance over the ensuing *akhand-kirtan*. Daily Ma arrived at the *kirtan* venue and informed the Name and tune of that day's *kirtan*. Even with Her weak Body, Ma inspired everyone for the *kirtan* or kept them busy in some or the other spiritual activity. A wonderful sense of harmony, peace and ecstasy was felt in the atmosphere of the Ashram at the sound of this unbroken *kirtan*. All those who arrived in the Ashram were mesmerized by this harmonious atmosphere.

26th July 1966. Today evening during the conclusion of this *akhand-kirtan*, *Aarti* was performed on Shree Shree Ma, in Ma's room. Ma then advised that if one wishes one can prolong this *kirtan*, from morning five to nine in the night, till the date of the accident. Hence this *kirtan* continued for one more week.

Here in Kishenpur Ashram the *darshan* timing had been kept for a very short period and hence Ma was getting complete rest and was also recovering fast. Ma was not going downstairs. But the door of Ma's room was opened once a day for half-an-hour and the devotees had Ma's *darshan* from the adjoining terrace.

28th July 1966. Today the devotees were happy to see that the heavy bandage on Ma's left Hand had been removed. Only the cut area on the palm is still kept covered.

A *Bhāgwat Saptāh* is supposed to commence in Vrindavan Ashram from 18th August. There is an expectation that Ma would be present there. After that *Jhulan* and *Janmāshtami* would also be held. There is a probability of the inauguration of the newly constructed Radha-Krishna Temple on 4th September. And after that *Shree Radha-Govind*'s idols would be installed in that Temple. It has also been decided to celebrate the *Shree Shree Sharadiyā Durga Puja* in Mumbai from 19th to 23rd October. And *Sanyam Saptah* is supposed to be held from 20th to 26th November in Ma's Vrindavan Ashram.

Before departing for Vrindavan on 14th August, Shree Shree Ma remained in Kishenpur Ashram. Also Ma had completely recovered from Her ailments, the bruise in the left Hand had almost cured. And Ma too regularly came out and sat in the upstairs verandah and gave *darshan* from there. On 2nd August an advance party of devotees and ashramites departed for Vrindavan Ashram, where various functions and activities had started with great zeal and enthusiasm from the 1st of August.

6th August 1966. From today morning *akhand-Ramayan* commenced in the Kishenpur Ashram hall and it concluded on 7th afternoon. From 8th morning *akhand-kirtan* of the song ' *jyoti se jyoti jagāo rām*' began and it continued for the next twenty four hours.

### Functions in Vrindavan Ashram

On 14th August Ma departed from Dehradun and reached Vrindavan on 15th, and it was decided that Ma would stay here in Vrindavan Ashram from 15th to 30th September. Besides other functions three *Bhāgwat Saptāhs* are supposed to take place here. The first *Bhāgwat Saptāh* was held as decided from 18th to 25th August.

26th August 1966. The five days of *Jhulan Utsav* started from today the day of *Ekādashi*, and will conclude on 30th August, the day of *Jhulan Purnima*, which is also called as '*Rakshā-Bandhan*'. On this very auspicious day in the year 1922 Ma's '*swayang-diksha leela*' or Ma's play of self-initiation had occurred. Every year on this day meditation is held from 11:45pm to 12:15am, by everyone (in every Ma's Ashram). Also *kirtan* is held before and after the meditation.

Shri Krishna Avdyutji (residing in the Ashram) has taken the responsibility of decorating the Ashram Hall and hence the Hall looked very beautiful and quite different from other years. Usually this decoration is done by the girls of the Ashram. Shri Avdyutji has also made arrangements for a *Rās-Leelā* in the evening, which was held in the verandah of the *Chhatiyā* Mandir. Shree Shree Ma and all the spectators watched the *Leela* by sitting in the open courtyard in front of the Mandir. On the day of *Jhulan Purnima*, the final *Leelā* was held in the morning within the Hall. Avdyutji had placed eleven swings beautifully decorated with flowers and garlands in the Hall and during the *Leelā*, eleven pairs of *Radha-Krishna* swung in these swings. It gave such an enchanting effect. The *Rās-Leelā* again started in the evening and continued till eleven in the night. Shree Shree Ma was present for the *Rās Leelā* both in the morning and evening.

\* \* \* \*

(to be continued)

#### List of Festivals

Paush Shankrānti	January 15, 2023
Republic Day	January 26, 2023
Shree Shree Saraswati Puja	January 26, 2023
Māghi Purnima	February 5, 2023
Gurupriya Di's Birthday	February 13, 2023
Maha Shivratri Mahotsav	February 18, 2023
Holika Dahan	March 6, 2023
Holi (Dol Purnima)	March 7, 2023
Shree Shree Busanti Puja	March 27-31, 2023
Shree Shree Annapurna Puja	March 29, 2023
Shree Shree Ram Navami	March 30, 2023
Shree Muktanand Giri Sanyās Divas	April 14, 2023
Akshay Trītiya	April 23, 2023
Adi Shankaracharya Jayanti	April 25, 2023
Nirvan Tithi of Baba Bholanath	April 28, 2023
S.S. Ma Anandamayee Janmotsav	May 3, 2023
Buddha Purnima	May 5, 2023
S.S. Ma Anandamayee Tithi Puja	May 8-9, 2023
Ganga Dusshera	May 30, 2023



Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee giving darshan in courtyard of  
Chandimandap in Varanasi Ashram, 1956



Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee with Didima and Gopalji in Smriti Mandir  
in Varanasi Ashram, 1955



Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee giving darshan in the open terrace adjacent to Budo Shiv Mandir in Varanasi Ashram, 1954



Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee standing in the courtyard in front of Kanyapeeth in Varanasi Ashram, 1955



View of the Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashram from the Holy River Ganga in Varanasi, 1950



View of the Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashram from the Holy River Ganga in Varanasi, 2020



Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee giving darshan in the courtyard of Chandimandap in Varanasi Ashram, 1960



Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee with Gopalji in the Gopal Mandir of Varanasi Ashram, 1969



Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee with Gopalji in the courtyard of Chandimandap of Varanasi Ashram, 1956



Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee in the Annapurna Mandir of Varanasi Ashram, 1977

## Pādpeetham Smarāmi Kashi Ashram and Ma Annapurna

Brahmacharini Geeta

*(continued from before)*

### Shree Shree Ma Annapurna Idol

Now we discuss the arrival of Shree Shree Ma Annapurna Idol which also arrived in the Ashram on Shree Shree Ma's divine *kheyal*.

In 1929 (31st October Thursday) Shree Shree Ma alongwith Baba Bholanath, Didi and a few other devotees departed from Dhaka on the morning of the day of *Kali Puja* and reached Uttama Kutir (the house of Shri Yogesh Ghosh of Paruldiya) in Bikrampur after crossing the Dhaleshwari River. Ma had taken along with Herself a silver pitcher, a silver plate and a silver glass.

It was the night of *Amavasya* (new Moon day), the festival of Goddess Kali and all around people were flocking in groups. Suddenly Ma rushed down from the gathered crowd and signaled Kamlakant'da to meet in a corner of the room of the Kali Idol. There Ma said to Kamlakant'da, "Few words are coming out from This Body's lips. Inform these to Jyotish. You are being told all this as Jyotish is not present here."

"In the Dhaka Ashram, from today onwards, *Ann-bhog* (cooked rice etc.) will be offered to *Annapurna* on a separate plate and placed on the right of *Kali's Puja* pot (*ghot*). An idol of *Devi Annapurna* has to be fabricated, seated on a half-hand high throne, with the right leg kept over the left knee. There will be a lotus below the left foot, a bowl on the left hand and a ladle in the right hand as if just about to serve *Shiva*. This will be the design of the Idol. There will be an idol of *Shiva* standing on the right of *Annapurna*, with a *trishul* in the right hand, a begging bag hanging from the left shoulder, with both palms joined and stretched towards *Annapurna* as if begging for food."

"On the right of *Annapurna*, hanging slightly above in the air a *Kali* Idol; in the air means as a base there would not be *Shiva* below Her. Only *Annapurna's Shiva* will be present. And a little above *Shiva*, *Annapurna*, *Kali* and below the parasol of the throne will be a four-armed *Vishnu* or *Narayan*. A separate small Idol of *Ganesh* will be present adjacent the throne. Inform Jyotish and hand over these silver pitcher, silver plate, silver glass,

four pairs of golden bangles and a golden necklace of This Body, for making all these Idols. As long as *Annapurna's* Idol is not fabricated, *Annapurna Puja and bhog* will be offered on *Kali's puja* pot. *Kali's Puja* pot will be made of brass. Kamlakant'da wrote down Ma's detailed instructions. Bhaiji was informed to come here. On arriving he heard everything from Kamlakant'da and went to meet Ma. Hearing Ma's instructions Bhaiji was ecstatic and excitedly returned back for the new constructions in the Dhaka Ramna Ashram.

**Shree Shree Ma arrives at the grounds of the Ramna Ashram.**

Earlier on 13th April 1929, Shree Shree Ma first arrived in the Ramna Area. On Ma's instructions and Ma's Grace, on the north of the Ramna Kalibari, in the central portion of the race course, Bhaiji first constructed the Ramna Ashram with a small hut for Ma. On 2nd May 1929, Ma first entered the Ramna Ashram. Regarding an Ashram, Ma has said, "An Ashram means a pure and holy place, on entering which an excitement of spirituality arises. Everyone should make efforts day and night that the atmosphere of this place remains pious and holy by *sādhana-bhajan, sat-chintā, sat-ālochana, etc.*" The *Annapurna* Temple was also getting built and gradually within one year it was fully constructed.

### **Ma Annapurna's Idol**

During Ma's *Janmotsav* in May 1929, the newly fabricated sparkling white silver Idols of *Ma Annapurna, Ma Kali, Shiva, Vishnu* and *Ganesh* were installed concurrently in the newly constructed *Annapurna* Temple. Kulda'da got all the rules and regulations of the rites and worships of all these Gods written down in detail from Shri Shirish Chakravorty, an expert pundit of Dhaka University. The installation rituals along with the grand bathing of the Idols started from *Maha-nishā* (midnight). All rituals were conducted by Baba Bholanath with *mantras* and procedures as instructed by Ma. Kulda'da, Yogesh'da and Atul'da were helping Baba Bholanath. The whole Ashram was packed with people and *kirtan* was going on vibrantly in the courtyard.

### **Ma's Janmotsav rituals were conducted on Ma Annapurna's Idol**

During the installation rituals of *Ma Annapurna* and other idols, Ma was resting in an enclosure within the new Temple. Bhaiji was also with Ma. What Ma said to Bhaiji about these idols is not known. But a special *kheyāl* of Ma was clearly understood that, the special *Puja* performed on Ma's divine Body during *Janmotsav* will now onwards be performed on the new *Ma Annapurna* Idol here in Ramna Ashram. Just as *Vishnu Puja* is performed on a *Narayan shilā* (a special stone), similarly if Ma's *Puja* is being performed on *Ma*

*Annapurna's* Idol, it becomes clear to everyone that *Ma Annapurna* is just another form of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee.

### ***Ma Annapurna's bhog***

The next day on Ma's instructions several devotees prepared *bhog* (meals) for *Ma Annapurna* and the other Idols in the new kitchen built for this purpose. For cooking *bhog* several *Chula* (earthen stoves) were lit by the fire taken from the new *Yagna-kund* in front of the Temple. In the meantime, *yagna* was started in the *Yagna-kund* using one lakh *bel* leaves. *Choru* (a special rice-milk pudding used for *bhog*) was cooked utilizing fourteen to fifteen litres of milk. A little from that was offered to the *yagna-kund* and the rest was offered to the Idols.

### **Installation of *Panchavati***

Ma got a beautiful *Panchavati* (garden of five banyan trees) constructed in the Ashram on this special occasion.

### **Fabrication and installation of *Ashta-dhatu* Idols**

In order to have *darshan* of the Idols, devotees had to stand in the verandah outside the room in which these Gods were kept and hence they could not observe the silver white Idols clearly. Hence Bhaiji decided to construct these Idols with *Ashta-dhātu* (alloy of eight metals). He started collecting funds for it and in the meantime he also obtained some of his personal funds. Very soon he had collected enough funds. With these and with Ma's ornaments he placed orders for the fabrication of all the Idols according to Ma's proper instructions. The metal in this alloy which would give more luster to the Idols was utilized in a larger proportion. Ma along with Baba Bholanath and Bhaiji regularly visited Janaki the sculptor for advising and inspecting the fabrication of the Idols.

It is worth noting here that the sculptor who fabricated both the silver and the *ashtadhātu* Idols did not make any other idols after this. He had died after completing the *ashtadhātu* Idols.

Except for Giriji's idol, we are not aware of any other Idol of our Ashram that has been so meticulously and thoroughly constructed with Ma's *kheyāl*, with Ma repeatedly advising the sculptor, than this set of Idols of *Ma Annapurna*, *Shiva*, *Ma Kali* and *Narayan*.

In 1932, during Ma's *Janmotsav*, these *Ashtadhātu* Idols of *Ma Annapurna*, *Shiva*, *Ma Kali* and *Narayan* were installed in the *Annapurna* Temple in the Ramna Ashram replacing the silver ones.

The installation program commenced on the midnight of the last day of the *Janmotsav* festival. On Ma's direction, the immersion of the year old set of

silver idols was performed by dipping them in water kept in a big brass vessel. Again on Ma's direction *prān-pratishtā* (souful oblation) of the new idols were conducted by Baba Bholanath. Ma the eternal source of energy distributed energy and zeal to everyone around and this function turned into a grand ceremony.

### **Bhog of Ma Annapurna.**

The next day, according to the rules of *Annakut* and of course on Ma's directives, 108 different varieties of *bhog* were prepared and offered to *Ma Annapurna*. A glass almirah with a door was constructed and *Ma Annapurna's* throne set was placed within it. Every day after the *bhog* rites, offerings were also given to the *yagna-kund* within the temple itself.

### **Ma's instruction regarding the spices used for the bhog.**

One day Ma informed, "To maintain the purity of the *bhog*, wash most of the spices, etc. and use white rock salt (*Sendha*) and turmeric root. Try to self-prepare the whole year's *ghee* in-house for the *bhog* rice and for the *yagna* too.

### **Ma's directive regarding the Puja**

Ma also advised the people giving service in the Temple kitchen, "The Idols of *Annapurna, Shiva, Kali, Vishnu, and Ganesh* Gods will be kept within a glass enclosure. Uncooked raw *bhog (Neibedyā)* will be offered to the *Panch-devta* which will include *Ganesh, Surya, Laxmi-Narayan, Jay-Durga, etc.*" Regarding cooked *bhog*, Ma said, "Now the first cooked *bhog* (food) was offered on a Tuesday. Last year too, the installation of *Ma Annapurna* was on a Tuesday. Hence on Tuesday and Friday the *bhog* will be elaborate and consist of at least five dishes."

Suddenly on the morning of 2nd June, 1932 Ma boarded a horse carriage and went around people's houses with Her sari stretched on Her two hands begging for alms. A lot of items were collected. Those who are non-brahmins were not allowed to prepare and cook the 108 items of *Ma Annapurna's bhog*. Hence Ma instructed them to cook excellent foods with the sacred items obtained from Ma's begging and these were offered to *Ma Annapurna* as *bhog*.

### **Shree Shree Ram Thakur**

Ma last visited Dhaka on 22nd April 1946. After that Ma did not visit Dhaka again. After Ma returned back from Dhaka, the devotees there became depressed and were full of anguish to have Ma's *darshan*. The women devotees were especially in tears to miss their heart's jewel. On hearing the news of the arrival of the aged Yogi Ram Thakur in Dhaka, Satyababu's wife and few other ladies

went from CoxBazar to have His *darshan*. They pleaded with Shree RamThakur. "Thakur, Anandamayee Ma while staying here in Shahbag, Dhaka has stolen our very heart and soul. Ma had filled our hearts with immense joy during the festivals. Now we are just not able to concentrate our minds on family affairs. And Ma too is wandering in the Himalayas and just not returning back to Dhaka. After losing Ma we are in so much anguish, what to do?" Shree Shree RamThakur replied, "It is for you only that Ma has installed this *Annapurna* and left Herself here forever. Ma has established Herself here by introducing Herself as *Annapurna*. Accept *Annapurna* as Ma Anandamayee."

Respected RamThakur always saw Ma as *Bhagwati* Herself and paid his obeisance in that manner only. Ma too gave him full respect. Once Ma had informed Shri Amulya Kumar DuttaGupta about Shree RamThakur, "One day RamThakur arrived and did *pranaam* to This Body. You must have seen that RamThakur is quite aged and a religious person. He did *pranaam* to This Body, but This Body remained seated motionless. One day Pran Kumar Babu asked This Body, 'Ma, RamThakur did *pranaam* to You, but You did not reply back by doing *namaskar*'? No wonder what Thakur's disciples must have thought about You'. This Body then replied to him, 'You go and inform everyone that the feet of RamThakur is always on the Head of This Body'."

As mentioned earlier, previously Ma used to stay in the house of Shri Kunj Mohan'babu or Nirmal'babu and most of the time in hired *bajraa*'s while visiting Kashi. After coming here quite a lot of religious people came to know Ma and came for Ma's *darshan* too. Gurupriya Didi and a few other devotees were thinking of constructing an Ashram for Ma here in Kashi and hence a search for a suitable land was also going on.

\* \* \* \*

(to be continued)

#### English Books in Varanasi Ashram

1. Matri Vani - Vol I	- SSAS	@ Rs. 30/-
2. Matri Vani - Vol II	- SSAS	@ Rs. 100/-
3. Matri Vani - Vol III	- SSAS	@ Rs. 100/-
4. Sad Vani	- Bhaiji	@ Rs. 45/-
5. In Your Heart is my Abode	- Bithika Mukherjee	@ Rs. 30/-
6. T.M.G.P Sri Ma Anandamayee-2	Bithika Mukherjee.	@ Rs. 275/-
7. T.M.G.P Sri Ma Anandamayee-3	- Bithika Mukherjee.	@ Rs. 225/-
8. The Magnanimous Shree Shree Ma	- S.S.Chakravarty	@ Rs.125/-
9. Atirudra Mahayajna Kankhal 1981	- SSAS	@ Rs.200/-
10. Maa Anandamayee (Marayada & lila)	- Brhchini, Chandan	@ Rs. 150/-
11. Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Vol-7	- Gurupriya Devi	@ Rs. 200/-
12. Ananda Jyoti Souvenir	- SSAS	@ Rs. 100/-
13. The Universal Mother	- Somesh Banerjee	@ Rs. 150/-

## Reminiscence of my proximity with Ma

Brahmacharini Bishuddha

(continued from before)

The young boy who had arrived in the hill with the dry *ksheer* for Ma and Bhaiji has been observed quite a few times during Shree Shree Ma's *lila*.

I remember very well the first Sanyam Saptah which was being held in Kashi Ashram. On this occasion the morning (8am-9am) *dhyān* (meditation) was being held in Ma's presence in the basement Hall (later, this had fallen into the Ganga) on the bank of the River Ganga. Just after the hour-long meditation, while Ma was still in a meditative pose, this melodious and enchanting poem emanated from Ma's lips and filled the whole pin-drop silent Hall. The words were:

*He Pitah, He Hitah, He BrahmaBhutam. He Pitah, He Hitah, He BrahmaBhutam.  
He Pitah, He Hitah, He BrahmaBhutam. He Pitah, He Hitah, He BrahmaBhutam.  
He Pitah, He Hitah, He BrahmaBhutam.*

Later Ma informed that just after the *dhyān*, Ma saw – a young boy ardently singing these lines. Ma then said, "Everytime after the *Sanyam Dhyān* you all should sing these lines." On Ma's instructions initially Bibhu'da alone sang these lines. After Bibhu'da fell ill, Ma gave permission to Pushpa'di, Chhobi'di, Kantiji and myself to sing these lines. Now the Kanyapeeth girls also sing these lines. Ma has strictly forbidden everyone to sing these lines on any festival or occasion other than Sanyam Saptah.

Being the first Sanyam Saptah, Ma informed the rules and regulations and the meals for the grade -1 and grade-2 participants. And also instructed Dadabhai, "Since the Kanyapeeth girls follow self-restraint through-out the year, they will not have to follow the rules of this Sanyam Saptah. These few days they can have the *prasād* from the *bhog* offered to Ma, Annapurna and Gopal." So for these seven days we the Kanyapeeth girls had daily *hhandārā* (delicious meals). We only participated in the meditation, *kirtan-paath* and *satsang*. However few senior girls participated in the restrained meals.

Ma again arrived in Kashi for the *Jhulan Utsav*. As usual we installed a swing in the Kanyapeeth hall, decorated it beautifully, asked Ma to sit on the swing and were busy with the scheduled rituals and the daily routine work. One such evening we heard that an Idol of *Gopal* (baby-Krishna) has arrived near Ma and Ma was calling us. We rushed to the courtyard of the Chandi-mandap

and saw kept on the cot besides Ma, a large brass plate on which was seated quite a big and healthy looking *Bal-Gopal* made of black touchstone. *Gopalji* had a pair of beautiful large eyes, on his hand were a silver ball and a flute and on his head a silver crown. After all of us had bowed down to *Gopalji* to pay our obeisance, Ma called me and said. "Take *Gopal* upstairs to the *Smriti-mandir* (adjacent to the Annapurna Mandir), offer *bhog* and after that make arrangements for his sleep." *Gopalji* was very heavy. In the *Smriti-mandir*, *Gopalji* was placed on a low broad stool. Later *Gopalji* was placed in the wooden throne which was brought along with *Gopalji*. Daily we used to go to the *Smriti-mandir* to clean and take care of *Gopalji*. Few new dresses were stitched for *Gopalji* too.

On the night of *Krishna-Janmashtami*, *Gopalji* was consecrated and worshipped with the proper rituals (*Shodoshopchar*) and a variety of *bhog* etc. was offered. Earlier during *Janmashtami* night we used to worship Ma in our Puja room. But after the arrival of this beautiful black *Gopalji*, all the idols of *Krishna* and *Gopal* present in the Ashram and Kanyapeeth were brought near this *Gopalji* and worship and other rituals were held together in Ma's presence.

Till now *Gopalji* did not have any gold ornaments. Shri Nandubhai's wife Kantabhen arrived from Bombay to have Ma's *darshan* in Kasli. One day she stood in front of Ma crying and while handing over a narrow gold chain from her neck said. "Ma, take this gold chain. Yesterday whole night this *Gopalji* had been pulling my chain and this has pained my neck. Even though I kept on pleading to *Gopalji* that I am poor and that this is the only gold chain that I have for presenting to my future daughter-in-law. He just did not let go the chain. Ma took the chain and placed it around *Gopalji's* neck. The golden chain was glittering against the black body of *Gopalji*.

Very near to the Ashram lived Gini'di (Smt Gini Sandhya) a rich child-widow. After observing *Gopalji* with only a necklace, went home and returned back and gave to Ma a pair of golden bangles for *Gopalji*. So now *Gopalji* had a golden necklace and a pair of golden bangles. We now waited to see how *Gopalji* would collect a golden crown for Himself.

The Kanyapeeth girls as scheduled, daily went to pay their obeisance in the Annapurna Temple and Gopal Temple. An elderly sister always went with them. An old devotee of Dhaka Kalon'di (Smt Urmila Das) was instructed by Ma to look after the Kanyapeeth girls. So she used to go with the girls for the *pranaam*. One day while Kalon'di was doing *pranaam*, after the girls had departed from the Gopal mandir, she heard a voice, "Is a silver crown likeable everyday?" She thought somebody must have said this and departed. The next day the same incident happened, she heard the same words, but there was

no one around. Her mind was agitated, how could the same incident happen again and again. On the third day she kept a strict watch around and when no one was seen she bend down for the *pranaam*. And instantly she heard a voice coming from the direction of *Gopalji*, "I do not like to wear a silver crown everyday." Hearing this she prayed, "O God, I do not have the capacity to make a golden crown. If Tarun (her son) gets a job then I will give you a golden crown." After that *Gopalji* did not say a word.

A few days later Kalon'di received a letter -- your son has got a job and he has sent his first month's salary to you. On receiving her son's salary Kalon'di informed Kshama'di that she has to go out to order for making *Gopalji's* golden crown. But somehow or the other she could not go out to place the order. Then in the rainy season due to frequent heavy rains it was again not possible to go out. Kalon'di was residing in the room adjacent to the Kanyapeeth hall and it was always kept locked. One day in the afternoon when she entered her room she found dry dirt marks of a pair of small feet. Kalon'di was extremely furious to see the dirt marks of someone's feet on her clean and white bedsheet. She rushed out and asked each and every small girl of the Kanyapeeth as to who had done that mischief. But none of the girls accepted the mischief. Both Kalon'di and Kshama'di kept on scolding the girls. But nobody thought, how it could be done by the small girls when the room was locked and also that in this rainy weather how could there be dry dirt marks. After a lot of scolding when no result could be obtained Tara another girl of the Kanyapeeth said, "Let us measure the feet of the small girls and compare it with the mark." Then Shukla, who had the smallest pair of feet was measured and it was found that her size was still larger than the dirt mark. Then who could have done it, everyone wondered. Suddenly Kshama'di shouted in excitement, "Kalon'di, can it not be a prank of your *Gopalji*? You had promised to give *Gopalji* a golden crown, but you have not given, hence He Himself must have arrived." Hearing this Kalon'di cried aloud and said, "Truly enough Kshama, it has been delayed for some reason or the other. See *Gopalji's* *kripa*, He Himself came to my room to remind me of the crown." so saying Kalon'di bowed down in obeisance on the dry foot marks, folded the bedsheet, kept it safely and immediately rushed out in the rain to place an order for a golden crown for *Gopalji*. Another surprising fact was that the exact amount sent by Tarun'da (Kalon'di son) was only required.

Ma was then in Kishenpur, Dehradun. A letter was sent to Ma about this incident of *Gopalji* and for Ma to arrive here for *Janmashtami* to put the golden crown on *Gopalji's* head. Ma arrived in time and both *Janmashtami* and *Nand Utsav* were celebrated with great pomp and show. *Gopalji* was glittering with

the new golden crown from which hung strings of pearls. A few devotees of Kashi had made arrangements for the daily offering of *kheer-laddoo* to *Gopalji*. A prominent affluent devotee Smt Rani Majumdar had sent a set of silver utensils for *Gopalji*. Later Yogibhai the Raja of Solan also sent gold ornaments like crown, necklace, bangles, anklets and a flute. There was no dearth of costumes for *Gopalji*.

Observing all the ornaments and dresses and arrangements of *Gopalji*, Ma one day said, "Gopal, so this is the reason why you did not go to Vrindavan and by giving excuses stayed back in Kashi. Thieves are a great nuisance in Vrindavan, there it is not safe to wear gold ornaments daily. But Gopal has a liking to wear gold ornaments daily and hence He has somehow got Himself settled here in Kashi. Heard that almost four hundred years ago a landlord of Barishal (in Bangladesh) had installed this idol of Gopal in a newly constructed temple in Kashi. There was a royal system of serving Gopal with a lot of devout property, ornaments, etc and staffs. But gradually because of the greed of the serving staffs all the property and ornaments had exhausted, so much that even the daily rituals could not be done. It was then that the *pujari* requested for the transfer of Gopal to someone else. Learning about this Batu'da informed Ma. And it was decided to install Gopal in Vrindavan. But the *pujari* caretaker demanded an enormous amount of money in exchange. Hearing that Paramanand Swamiji remarked, "If we have to give him money, why accept an old idol. We will purchase a new Gopal." So Gopal was not sent to Vrindavan."

After that Ma again came to Kashi for *Jhulan* and *Janmashtami* festivals. In Ma's presence, the *Jhulan* festival was being held in the Kanyapeeth. In the meantime Batu'da arrived and informed Ma, "Ma, the *pujari* being unable to look after that Gopal has decided to immerse the idol in the River Ganga. Immediately Ma replied, "Fetch Gopal here immediately." So finally Gopal arrived in the Ashram. But in the meantime a Gopal had already been installed in the Vrindavan Ashram. Hence He did not have to go to Vrindavan. He remained here in Kashi Ashram, initially in the Smriti Mandir and later as an emperor enthroned on a sandalwood swing in the new Anandjyoti Temple.

As long as *Gopalji* was in the Smriti Mandir, the daily worship was conducted by Mamu (Shree Shree Ma's brother Shri Makhan Bhattacharya). It was Ma's instruction that on only two days of the year i.e., on *Janmashtami* and *Holi Utsav*, *Gopalji* would be brought out and properly consecrated again. Once, Ma was in Kishenpur Ashram, Dehradun. There was a pain in Ma's arms. Ma saw that *Gopalji* had arrived and was complaining that His arms were paining. After witnessing this for two three days, Ma informed *Gopalji*, "Wait, let's enquire."

Only after this *Gopalji* stopped complaining, Ma got a letter written to the Kashi Ashram. "Was the *Jhulan Utsav* celebrated properly?" A reply came, "Everything was done as per the rules." But then again *Gopalji* came and showed His arms. Ma then said, "Ok, This Body is going to Kashi, will enquire after reaching there." *Gopalji* stopped complaining. On reaching Kashi, Ma separately enquired in detail with Mamu, Narayan Swamiji and Atul Brahmachari, and learns that during *Jhulan Utsav*, *Gopalji* had been brought down from the stool in order to change the tablecloth, though this was not the time for His displacement.

However, surprisingly when *Gopalji* is brought down during *Holi Utsav*, so much of dry colors are applied on Him, so many devotees touch him, caress Him, press His chubby cheeks, etc. He never complains about any pain or otherwise.

After the new Anand Jyoti Mandir was inaugurated *Gopalji* was shifted to the new marble Temple and was seated in a sandalwood throne or swing. Once Ma was in Kashi and was staying in a room adjacent to the new Gopal Mandir. One day a miserable old lady of Kashi arrived with a small bag of money to have Ma's *darshan*. She said to Ma, "As such I have no one to call my own. I am a child-widow. I somehow manage my livelihood with the earnings from cooking in people's house. A few days ago I fell ill and was lying down almost unconscious. I saw a healthy chubby black *Gopalji* near me and was saying, 'Open your eyes, open your eyes. Ma has sent me.' On opening my eyes I saw a blurred image of Ma and *Gopalji* was saying, 'What, should I rub your eyes with my feet or my hands?' I asked in fear, 'What, with your big feet?' *Gopalji* replied, 'No, I will reduce them.' I then said, 'I am unable to fully open my eyes. Anyway I will die soon.' *Gopalji* clarified, 'You will not die now, the boat is still floating, it hasn't reached the shore, you have to stay for some more time.' As *Gopalji* shouted 'See, See', I somehow opened my eyes wide and saw the small *Gopalji* elegantly dancing around the room and with spread hands uttering, 'What will you give? What will you give? Give.' I woke up and wondered as to where I will search for this *Gopalji*. Then someone informed that a similar *Gopalji* is present in Ma Anandamayee Ashram. Ma, this bag of two hundred rupees is all that I had saved till now from my earnings for my cremation, I have brought that for *Gopalji*."

The next day Ma ordered 10kgs of sweets, fruits, etc and offered *bhog* to *Gopalji*. After the *bhog*, Ma Herself distributed them to all the devotees present and also packed and sent to several out station devotees.

\* \* \* \*

(to be continued)

## Compassionate Shree Shree Ma's *Aheytuki Kripa*

Sw. Narayananand Tirth

*(continued from before)*

### Inception of Shree Shree Ma's Kashi Ashram

Kashi is the foremost place of pilgrimage for the followers of Sanatan Dharma. On its North is Varuna river and on its South is the Assi river. The area between these two rivers is called as Varanasi or Kashi. The Lord of Kashi is none other than *Dev-Aadi-Dev Mahadev* (Lord Shiva). And this holy city is situated on the western bank of the sanctifying River Ganga. The holy waters of Bhagirathi Ma Ganga flowing south-east wards from the Himalayas takes a u-turn just before Kashi and flows from South to North in a crescent shape. Who-so-ever dies in this holy city of pilgrimage does not have to take birth again. Here in Kashi, Lord Shiva Himself arrives and bestows spiritual sermon and the *Mahamantra* of 'Shree Ram' in the right ear of the dying person. And *Mahamaya* the beloved consort of Lord Shiva Herself detaches the eight essences i.e. hate, apprehension, fear, shame, condemnation, clan, dignity and wealth, of the human body by which it remains bound and circulates within the world. (vedant sangyawali.210.)

In praise of Kashi, Sant Goswami Tulsidas mentions in the epic Maryada Shree Ram-Charitra-Manas –

*'Aakar chaari jeev jag ahaheen. Kashi marat param pad lahaheen.'*

Which means, 'There are four varieties of living beings in the world, i.e., plants, invertibrates, oviparous and viviparous. These four varieties of living beings attain salvation because of the pious importance of Kashi and the divine blessings of Shree Viswanath (Lord Shiva).

*'Mukil jaan mahi jaani, gyan khaani agha haani kar.  
Janh basu Shambhu Bhawani, so Kasi sei'a kas na.'*

Which means, 'Where Shiva-Parvati resides, considering that as the birthplace of liberation, the mine of knowledge and the destroyer of sins, why not imbibe that Kashi?'

*'Kasi marat mukt karat det Ramnaam.'*

Which means, 'In this land of Kashi Lord Shree Vishwanath bestows the Name of Rama and liberates the living beings from the clutches of the world?'

Maharshi VedVyas in his Skand-Puran has described the importance of Kashi in great detail. Only a person who aspires to liberation lives in Kashi with a mindset of renouncing of the body. Whatever fruits are obtained after *sādhana* in any other place, the same amount of *sādhana* produces a tenfold fruition. And in that very Kashi there is no Ashram of Shree Shree Ma. Arriving in Kashi, Ma used to stay in the various *Dharmshalas*, but lodging in these were allowed only for a short duration. Hence occasionally Ma hired the big boats 'Bajra' and resided on the River Ganga. Once Ma stayed in one of the *Bajra's* for almost a month. All the available *Bajras* were hired and Shree Shree Ma's devotees also resided in it. Still a land was not selected. As far as I remember, the total rent paid for the boats was a little more than seven hundred rupees.

During the summer of 1942, Shree Shree Ma was staying in the Shiva Temple in Raipur, Dehradun. One day after the night *Maun* (silence) Ma was resting in Her room. Didi Gurupriya Devi, Swami Paramanandji, Shri Abhay, Smt Pramila Sen (wife of Shri Amal Chandra Sen) and myself were sitting around Ma's lotus feet and discussing various spiritual topics. In between a topic arose whether the non-Hindus who do not accept salvation but die in the Kashi region attain salvation or not? After each on us had given our own ideas in favor or against this question, it was proclaimed that there is no question of accepting or not accepting salvation in Kashi. The greatness of this place is important. Whether someone believes in salvation or not, whether one is a Hindu or not, because of the effect of this place one will not have to take birth again. Just as the hand put in fire knowingly or unknowingly gets burnt, similarly whether one believes or not, one gets liberation after dying in Kashi.

I (to Ma): Ma! In this pious land of Kashi, we should have an Ashram. Ma! You go to Kashi but there is no arrangement of Your stay there. You have to take lodging in a *Dharmshala*. There too You are not allowed to stay more than their decided period. This is a very depressing situation.

Hearing this Ma while swinging Her Feet's kept one over the other remarked, "You seem to have quite an audacity! Wish to construct an Ashram in Kashi! Where will you get so much funds?" Is it so easy to construct an Ashram in Kashi, the moment you decide and the Ashram will get ready?"

I: Ma! Besides Your other children, I am Your poor child. If an Ashram is constructed in Kashi, I will donate one thousand rupees. Didi, how much will you pay for this construction?

Didi: I have postal certificates of five thousand rupees. I will donate that amount for the construction of Kashi Ashram.

I: PramilaDi, how much will you donate for this construction? Of course you will donate ten thousand rupees.

PramilaDi: I cannot say anything without speaking with your Dada (PramilaDi's husband, an agent of Hindustan Life Insurance Co., Delhi). But from my side I can donate one thousand rupees, this much I can say. How much your Dada will agree to, I don't know.

I: Ma! Within five minutes see how a collection of seven thousand has been accumulated. With a tiny bit of Your *kripa* we will not have to worry for funds. Money will surely get collected. The only requirement is Your *kripa* and blessings.

This is the only discussion we had with Ma on that night. Shri Harshnath Mukhopadhyay (husband of Smt Leela), another son of *Mahamaya Devi*, was a patient of blood pressure and he could not sleep in the night. Hence till late in the night he used to stroll near the mango tree in the courtyard in front of Ma's room. And by chance he had heard all the discussion we had with Ma regarding Kashi Ashram. The next morning he said to me, "What were you all talking yesterday in Ma's room? Some words of collecting thousands of rupees came to my ears too. Please tell me what is the matter? I narrated the complete discussion to Harshnath *babu*, and also informed him that an assurance of seven thousand rupees has already been obtained. Hearing this he too agreed to donate one thousand rupees. Without pondering a second I rushed to Ma and said, "Ma! See how eight thousand rupees have been collected within a few moments. With a little bit of Your *kheyal* collection of funds will surely occur."

The next day Didi wrote a letter regarding this matter to the Rani of Gondal. Receiving Didi's letter she immediately sent a cheque of three thousand rupees. After obtaining eleven thousand rupees in her hand, GurupriyaDi departed for Kolkata to collect more funds for Kashi Ashram. With Shree Shree Ma's blessings, receiving an equal amount of eleven thousand rupees from the devotees of Kolkata, Didi departed happily for Kashi with the total donation. Old devotees of Ma like Shri Chintaharan Samaddar, Dr. Girindra Krishna Mitra, Shri Saroj Kumar Dutta etc., had each donated one thousand rupees. Didi had gladly accepted whatever she received from the devotees. Several poor devotees had even contributed one rupee. For this pious work Didi had accepted every rupee with joy.

In 1947 after the *Shree Shree Durga Puja*, Shree Shree Ma secretly arrived in Kashi with Her four children, Didi Gurupriya Devi, Swami Paramanandji, Brahmachari Kamalakanth and Shri Abhay. I was instructed to hire a big *Bajra*

(huge boat) and keep it ready tied alongside Nagwa Ghat, opposite to the Ramnagar fort. According to Ma's instructions, I escorted Ma and others a little after eight in the night from the Kashi station to the hired *Bajra* tied at the Nagwa Ghat. Ma and the others never left the boat at any time. It was my duty to supply all their requirements from time to time. Only Kamlakanth Brahmachari went to the nearby Nagwa village to purchase freshly drawn cow's milk.

One day Ma hurriedly left with Gurupriya Didi and Paramanand Swarniji in a dinghy boat sailing towards Dashaswamedh ghat. When the boat arrived opposite to the present Ashram, pointing at the Ashram land, Ma asked, "Whose land is this? Who is the owner of this land?" When the same question was asked to the aged boatman, he replied, "This land belongs to the Rai Shivprasad Agarwal the landlord of Lahartara. Because of certain debts it is in the hands of the Court of Wards, a legal body." From the very question of Shree Shree Ma it is easily inferred that Shree Shree Ma is interested on this land. Otherwise why did Ma question about this land and not any other area on the bank of the Ganga. Later after getting information from various sources it was clear that this land belonged to Rai Shivprasad Agarwal. For non-payment of debts it is under the supervision of the Court of Wards and will be soon put up for sale.

After a lot of efforts, Gurupriya Didi could manage to purchase this land for eighteen thousand rupees from the Court of Wards. Besides this amount, Shri Satyabrata Agarwal, the son of Rai Shivprasad Agarwal, had taken three thousand rupees to sign the sale deed. He mentioned that eighteen thousand rupees will be taken by the Court of Wards as his father's debt and hence he would not get anything out of it. If he was not paid three thousand rupees he would not sign on the sale deed. And the registration in the Court would not be complete without his signature. Since it was decided that this very land had to be purchased for our Ashram there was no need of any hesitation for a certain extra amount? On 12th December 1944, the land deed was registered. This news was informed to Shree Shree Ma by telegram. Ma had seen in subtle, that various pious rituals, yagnas and worships of various Gods and Goddesses would take place here. And hence several gods, rishis and sadhus are dancing within this area. This area has been in a state of decay for several years. Just as fate changes for human beings, the same occurs for lands too. Just after getting the land under Ma's authority, *Shree Shree Bāsanti Puja* was held here, and after that in continuity were organised *Shree Shree Sāvitrī Mahayagna*, *Tulā-dān*, *Sahastra Chandī-pāth*, *Vishnu Mahayagna*, *Maha Rudra Abhishek*, *Srimad Bhāgwat Saptāh*, and several other auspicious rituals and about thirteen thousand *Brahman bhojans*

and more than thousand *Kunari puja's* were held too. And on a permanent and regular basis worship of *Shree Shree Ma Annapurna, Shree Shree Ma Kali, Shree Shree Narayan, Shree Shree Shiva, Shree Shree Ganesh, Shree Shree Bal-Gopal* and *Shree Shree Agni-devta* are performed every day.

Just after the inauguration of the Kashi Ashram on the banks of the River Ganga, the Supreme affectionate and compassionate Shree Shree Ma instructed me to reside permanently in the Ashram. And I was such a fool that from my inner most soul I just could not agree to this request. Even though I could very well understand that this was an extreme hurdle in my path to salvation, still I could not give my whole-hearted consent to Ma. Even though I was going against Ma's request, such was Shree Shree Ma's kheyal that Ma still blessed me. This incident was of the year 1945 or 1946. On Shree Shree Ma's instruction though I stayed in the Ashram for quite some-time, I returned back to my old residence outside the Ashram. I was not able to become a permanent ashramite. This is also true that I did not even have the requisite caliber to be able to permanently reside within the Ashram.

Shree Shree Ma again arrived in Kashi. Hearing this I rushed to the Ashram in the afternoon to have Ma's *darshan*. Ma was then strolling on the Kanyapeeth terrace. Since Kanyapeeth was a residential school for girls it was essential to get the permission of Shree Shree Ma or Gurupriya Didi in-order to enter within the building. After receiving Ma's permission, a few of us standing in front of Kanyapeeth went upstairs to the terrace, and were conversing with Ma when someone arrived and requested Ma to go downstairs. Ma immediately rushed down. Within a few minutes I was instructed to go down. The others who were present in the terrace followed me downstairs. In the ground floor, Ma was seated in a cot in front of the present Kanyapeeth office. I went near Ma and asked, "Ma, you have called me?" Ma replied, "Yes". And instantly Ma took out a medium sized brass bowl from underneath Her shawl. The bowl was filled to the brim with thick sweet *kheer*. It even had a layer of yellow colored cream on the top. Placing the bowl on my hands Ma said, "This Body has eaten some *kheer* from this bowl. Now you eat it." I observed that from a corner of the bowl a small spoonful of *kheer* had been chipped which must have been offered to Ma. I thought that with so much care and affection Gurupriya Didi must have prepared this delicious *kheer* for Ma and Ma had presented me the whole bowl. Didi surely may not like me eating the whole of it. Since I had not listened to Shree Shree Ma's instruction of staying permanently in the Ashram, I became ashamed of myself with this action of Ma, and hoped that the mother earth

would open up and swallow me within herself. This is similar to praising a sinful person.

Because of my indecent behavior and present attitude, Buni (Kumari Phul Jutika Guha, Ma's *sevika*) must have given a sarcastic smile. Because of this sarcasm Ma had informed Buni, "You have laughed? Your behaviour has just not changed. If This Body, never ever, eats *kheer* again?" Hearing this Buni had turned stone stiff.

Placing the bowl of *kheer* on my hand, Ma kept on persuading me to eat it. Can a normal person besides being mad devour so much *kheer*? With Ma's repeated request to eat the *kheer*, finding no other option, I turned around to distribute the *prasādi kheer* to the devotees standing there. Immediately Ma interrupted, "You cannot offer even a bit from this bowl to anybody. You have to devour the whole." Hearing Ma's order, I said, "Ma, without distributing *prasād* from this, I cannot devour this poison. This is not a bowl of *kheer*. This is like a bowl of poison for me. This is like a cobra's poison." Smilingly Ma said, "I want to see how you die eating this strong poison." Ma in general does not speak of such harsh words especially like 'die'. It is my misfortune that such harsh words were uttered by Ma that day. However there is a proverb that if a mother curses a child by saying 'die', then the child's life span usually increases. Maybe that's why I am living for such a long age. There is no sign of death even now."

With no option left I had to devour the whole bowl of *kheer*. The major sin of misbehaving i.e. not respecting Ma's instructions finally ended with the devouring of Ma's *prasādi kheer*. Can anyone ever imagine this? Just as our Ma is beyond creation, Ma's rule is also beyond creation, beyond human imagination. Ma is constantly forgiving all our sins. In return of our sins, we receive from Shree Shree Ma genuine love, forgiveness and grace like the endless flow of rain. I am truly ashamed and deeply anguished of not being able to deliver the due respect of our compassionate Ma's instructions.



(to be continued)

*Not a single word uttered from Shree Shree Ma's sacred lips should go in vain and that Her memory is not under the control of time; it is our duty to remember this.*

--- Bhaiji

## Commentary on the Bhagavad Gita

Sri Chinmoy

*(continued from before)*

In the seventh chapter Sri Krishna tells his beloved disciple that out of His infinite Bounty He will give him all that He has and all that He is: Infinity and Eternity. In return He expects only two things from the disciple: Yoga and dependence. We may call this dependence as devoted surrender, which is the indivisible oneness of the finite with the Infinite. To know Sri Krishna is to know the Supreme Knowledge. To realize Sri Krishna is to realize the life of everything in essence.

*Manushyānām sahasreshu...* i.e. Among thousands of individuals, scarcely one strives for spiritual perfection and of those who strive and succeed, scarcely one knows Me in essence i.e. in Real form. (7.3).

It seems as if this third verse is throwing cold water (discouraging) on the seeker. This is not at all Krishna's intention, because Krishna is not only all Wisdom but also all Compassion. He wants to tell Arjuna what actually takes place in the spiritual race. This Supreme Knowledge is not for one who has childish curiosity, shallow enthusiasm, weak determination, flickering devotion and/or conditional surrender. Any of these undivine qualities will, hinder the path of spirituality.

The sixth and the seventh verses of the seventh chapter describes the relation between Sri Krishna and the universe. "I am the beginning and the end of the universe. I am the Source of creation and I am the place of dissolution. Beyond Me, there is nothing. This whole universe is threaded upon Me as pearls on a string." (7.6-7).

There are three qualities of My *Prakriti* or Nature: *Sattva*, *Rajas*, *Tamas* denoting harmony, activity and inactivity. Sri Krishna says, "These three qualities are from Me and in Me, but I am not in them. (7.12) *Sattva* is the chief quality of nature. It embodies harmony. The possessor of the *sattvic* quality has undoubtedly a heart of gold. He knows that his life has significance. His breath is pure, patience is luminous, unparallel is his fortitude and infallible is his certainty. He wants to live in the truth of the present, past and future. He wants to transcend soulfully.

*Rajas* is the second quality. A man with *rajasic* quality is always filled with dynamic passion. He wants to possess, rule and enjoy the world. He has practically no time to enter the world of inner illumination. He has the strength to build a temple of Truth, but he often destroys the temple owing to his unlit vision and the mad elephant in him. A man of action, he wants to live in the glorious present. He does not care for the future. He wants to expand himself forcefully.

*Tamas* is the third quality. It denotes sloth, inactivity, darkness, ignorance, sin and death. It also denotes worldly delusion. A man of inactivity enjoys nothing. On the contrary he is constantly enjoyed by darkness, ignorance and death. A man of inactivity, he does not live in the proper sense. His days and nights are made of deep un-illuminated sleep. (7.13-14). He destroys himself unconsciously.

Those who follow the inner path are of four distinct types. These four kinds of devout people worship me:

*Ārta*, the distressed, the depressed, the afflicted. For him the life is a bed of thorns. Pain and sorrow are his only companion. He has realized this truth and prays for life's transformation. He wants a bed of roses.

*Jignyāsu*, the seeker, the enquirer. He wants knowledge. Knowledge tells us why a man suffers.

*Ārthārthī*, the seeker of wealth and power. He wants to live in perpetual freedom.

*Gyāni* the wise. He knows that the Supreme is everywhere and the kingdom of heaven is within him. His life is to attain the life of oneness with God. (7.17)

Sri Krishna further continues: "Noble and good are they all, but I hold the wise, the enlightened as My chosen soul and My own Self. When his life has played its role, when the hour of silence knocks at his door, I place him in My Heart where the Breath of Eternal Life grows." (7.18-19).

The eighth chapter begins with a volley of most significant questions. *Brahman, adhyātma, karma, adhibhūta, adhidaiva, adhiyajña*; what are these? The Lord answers: "The Imperishable Absolute is *Brahman*." Another name for *Brahman* is *Aum*. *Aum* is the Creator, is the Creation, is in the creation, is beyond creation. Lord further says: "*Adhyātma* is the self-revealing Knowledge of *Brahman*'s primeval Nature. *Karma* is the birth of activity, natural and normal. *Adhibhūta* is the perishable material manifestations. *Adhidaiva* is the knowledge of the Shining Ones. *Adhiyajña* is the sacrifice made by Me in order to unite the manifestation of finite forms with My infinite Life." (8.3-4)

Krishna affirms that self-realisation or the realisation of Immortality must be achieved during one's life in the body and nowhere else. As each human being creates limitation, imperfection and bondage, so also is he capable of transcending them. He will finally enter into the planes of fullness, perfection and freedom.

Our existence is a result of our previous existence. This earth of ours is the result of an earth that existed before. Everything is evolving. The essence of evolution is an inner and outer movement. No use taking shelter in our earthly days and nights, for they are fleeting. We can, we should and we must take shelter only in Lord Krishna's eternal Heart, which is the safest haven, where no day or night is required, since His Heart is Infinity's Light and Eternity's Life.

Nothing else do we need except devotion. Our supreme choice is devotion. Our heart of devotion responds to His Heart of Love. Says He: "Only unswerving devotion has the direct and free access to My Life immortal, My Truth absolute." (8.22)

What is within will sooner or later be manifested without. The possessor of divine thoughts will also be the doer of divine deeds. It is possible only for a dedicated and aspiring man to think of God consciously while leaving the earth scene.

Krishna tells us how a yogi enters into the Ultimate after leaving his mortal sheath. "His senses are under control. His mind is placed in the heart. He meditates on Me. *Aum* he soulfully chants. He gives up *prān*, the life-breath, and enters into the ultimate realisation in Me." (8.12-13)

The meaning of *Aum* can be known from books but the knowledge of *Aum* has to be achieved by living an inner life of aspiration that will transport the aspirant to the higher levels of consciousness. The easiest and most effective way of going up is to surcharge oneself with pure love and genuine devotion. Doubt, fear, frustration, limitation and imperfection are bound to surrender to this love and devotion. They have the power to own the world and be owned by the world. Love God's manifestation and you will find that the cosmic creation is yours. Devote yourself to the cause of the cosmic manifestation and you will see that it loves you and claims you as its very own.

It is true that knowledge can give you what love and devotion give, but very often knowledge is not cultivated for the sake of Truth, but for the fulfillment of desires. Fruitless is the pursuit of knowledge when desire looms large in it. When the aspirant is all love and devotion, he soars.



(to be continued)

## My first *darshan* of Ma in Kashi

Brejni. Sunanda Goswami

(continued from before)

As mentioned earlier, an article by Dinesh Chakravorty – ‘Shree Shree Anandamayee Ma’ in the Bengali book ‘*Bharoter Sadhok o Sadhika*’ (‘Saints of India’), written by Ganesh Chakravorty, touched me deeply and I had an intense desire to have *darshan* of Shree Shree Ma. My father a School headmaster in Mednipore informed me that Shree Shree Ma is in Kashi and hence without informing him I departed by train from Kharagpur and reached Shree Shree Ma’s Ashram in Kashi after changing one train in between. On reaching the Ashram I was informed by Shri Sailen’Da that Ma was in Haridwar and that accommodation was not available in the Ashram. On my insisting he sent me thru an escort with a letter to Maiji’s (Ganga Ma’s) Ashram close by. Ganga Ma gave me shelter and food and consoled me saying that I could stay there as long as Shree Shree Ma did not return back to Kashi. I attended the *sandhya-aarti* there and then again went to meet Maiji.

Maiji now asked me, “Why have you come alone?” I informed her the reason and also notified that I was telling the truth. She then noted down my father’s address and said, “Today night is *Kali Puja*. At 3am in the night the girls of this Ashram will visit the Golden Shree Annapurna Temple and you will have to go along with them too.” She further informed a girl to help me in waking up and getting ready for the temple visit.

I wondered how coincidentally today being the day of *Kali Puja* and that I have arrived in Kashi and also that it is the only day of the year for having *darshan* of the Golden Idol of *Ma Annapurna* and *Baba Bishweshwar* in the Ma Annapurna Temple in Dashaswamedh. This order had been declared by Kashiraj (Kashi Naresh or Raja of Kashi) for the common man. Hence the common man of Kashi felt blessed to get this opportunity of having *darshan* of *Ma Annapurna* and *Baba Bishweshwar* on this day. In the *Annapurna* Temple, in several steps various food items, raw rice, pulses, vegetables etc., and also cooked rice, pulses, curries, fried vegetables, *puri*, *kheer*, curd and sweets were kept in such a decorative manner that it had a lively vibrant look just like the Idols of *Ma Annapurna* and *Baba Bishweshwar*. After that we visited other nearby Temples too. This day has become a very special chapter

of my life. Having Ganga bath, visiting temples, doing service in the Ashram, *puja, kirita*, etc. along with the other girls of the Ashram became my regular routine.

Suddenly one day I fell ill. There was intense pain all over the body, the temperature was fluctuating between 103<sup>o</sup>-105<sup>o</sup>F and the throat had swollen up. Ganga Ma and the girls took utmost care of me, whether it was day or night, helping me in brushing the teeth, changing cloths, giving timely food and medicines. The doctors of Ma Anandamayee Hospital were looking after me. They said that only because of the minute care of the girls and Ganga Ma that I could recover from this fatal disease.

Time was passing in this manner when Ganga Ma informed that a letter has arrived from my father. He had pleaded, "Maiji, please do not send my daughter to any other place. I will come to pick her up from your Ashram after the school exams are over here."

I used to visit Ganga Ma daily early morning for getting her blessings and she used to mention, thirty days then twenty days, fifteen days, ten days and finally five days left for Shree Shree Ma's arrival in Kashi. Finally the big day arrived and I said, "I would like to meet Ma". And Ganga Ma replied, "Of course you will." But I was still quite weak, with pains all over the body and throat. So she ordered one lady to escort me. Walking very slowly with short steps we finally reached Ma Anandamayee's Ashram. On the way the lady advised me how to behave and talk with Ma.

Entering the Ashram I saw the office, the Chandi Mandap, the *Budo Shiv-mandir*, the Gayatri Yagnashala and finally an open half circular terrace or balcony where several people were sitting. The terrace was covered on three sides beautifully by curtains with a serene and pious atmosphere all around. The lady informed me that Ma was also seated there. As I had not seen Ma earlier I looked around and pondered who was Ma? Some of those seated there wore saffron colored, some yellow colored and some white colored clothes. I suddenly felt as if a divine voice was saying 'Come near, I know you have come here to see me. Not seeing me, you have not returned back, that too I know, you get well soon and then you can come and stay with me here'.

Ma (beckoned me): What is your name?

Myself: Sunanda Goswami.

Ma: Who has given you this name? Your father?

Myself: Yes.

Ma: Were you married?

Myself: Yes.

Ma: Have you got any children?

Myself: No.

Ma: Have you taken *diksha*?

Myself: Yes, from my father.

Ma (looking at everyone): I hear, hear, she has taken *diksha* from her father. Father is the supreme *Guru*. Who is the *Guru* of the father?

Myself: Shree Shree Jogeshwari Mahadevi Ma.

Ma: She is not alive now?

Myself: No, Ma.

Ma: You have come here to see me, to tell all your problems, you get well soon and come near me.

I just stared at Ma. So beautiful, a divine charisma. Ma smiled at me and gave me a fruit. We returned back to Ganga Ma's Ashram. Maiji was waiting for us, and asked us joyfully, "Repeat what Ma has said." I replied, "Ma said that Ma is happy with Ganga Ma's hospitality." She was too pleased to hear everything that had occurred in Ma's Ashram. I also told her that somebody must have informed Ma about me. She replied, "Nothing needs to be informed to Ma. Ma is omniscient." Having Ma's *darshan* had become a part of my daily routine. I used to just gaze at Ma and get mesmerized. After *pranām* Ma used to give me a fruit as *prasād* and I used to return back to GangaMa.

One day when I arrived near Ma, Ma smiled at me, I bowed down in obeisance, Ma blessed me by touching my head and said, "Tomorrow pack your baggage and come near me." Ma gave me a fruit and further said, "Inform Ganga Ma about your coming here." On returning back when I informed Maiji, she said, "Ma has called you near Her, what can be better than this?" When everyone in this Ashram learnt about this news, all of them came and blessed me or praised me. Gayatri'di handed me my money bag and said, "I had taken this purse from you when you had arrived here, take it and count the cash. Stay well."

The next day I entered Ma's Ashram with my baggage. Through Swamini Kantanandji, Ma had made arrangements for my lodging in a third floor room, very near to the *Puja* room of the Kanyapeeth. Ma Herself had collected all the required bedding for me and had sent it to my room through Kantanandji. Ma then informed the Kanyapeeth girl who was managing the morning tiffin, to serve me breakfast too. Ma also made arrangements for my afternoon *prasād* in the *Annapurna Mandir*. For the night meals, Ma informed Mala'di to serve me *prasād* from Ma's *bhog*. Ma then enquired as to who was managing the

*Puja* room. Parul`di replied that Sandhya was presently managing it. Hearing her name Sandhya came forward and Ma said to her, "From tomorrow onwards daily prepare a plate of flowers and other *Puja* items for her (pointing towards me)." This good looking girl Sandhya was very good in cooking, embroidery and other handicraft. She had also received the 'best girl' award from the Uttar Pradesh Governor during the Annual function of the Kanyapeeth.

Almost everyone had only one question in their mind, Ma had given lodging to an outside girl within the Kanyapeeth? Ma called the elder girls of the Kanyapeeth like Sati`di, Didiji, Pushpa`di, Ganga`di, Tulsi`di, Bani`di, Mala`di, Jaya`di, Geeta`di, Gunita`di and said, "The father of this new girl is a high level pundit. A daughter of such a pundit has arrived here. All of you take care of this girl." The number of devotees visiting Ma was increasing day by day. A proper queue was being maintained for the general people and separately for the *sadhus* and *sanyāsis*. People were getting *Ma's darshan* and blessings in front of the Kanyapeeth building, and the queue beginning from here went right up to the Anandamayee hospital passing through the Ashram gate, the bylane in front of the Ashram, the back gate of the hospital and finally to the main gate of the hospital. Sometimes Ma gave *darshan* from the circular verandah adjacent to the Yagnashala too. The queue was being managed by our Nitai`da (Shri Nitai Basu Mallick of Kolkata) and I stood just behind Ma holding Her chair. Ma called Nitai`da and said, "In the queue, a young lady wearing a green sari covering her head is standing near the Ashram gate with a garland in her hand. Request her and bring that garland." When Nitai`da gave that garland to Ma, Ma taking it in Her Hand, looked at it keenly and then plucked out a flower from it. Ma then with a sweet smile informed the lady, "I have taken a flower from your garland." It is true that when the crowd of devotees or the queue is managed properly, Ma is always in a good mood. If there is even a small chaos among the devotees standing in the queue, Ma stops giving *darshan* and goes back to Her room. Hence the queue managers have to be really strict and vigilant.

While giving *darshan* Ma spoke on the mike one day to everyone, "The *Bhāgwat Saptāh* function is going to commence very soon. Everyone come and listen to the *Bhāgwat-Kathā*. Such an orator has been obtained with great luck and his name is Vishnu Ashranji. Everyone should come to hear the *Bhāgwat-Kathā*." Guneeta`di is organizing this *Bhāgwat Kathā* in the memory of Sir Datar Singh and Lady Datar Singh. The explanation of the *Bhāgwat* is being rendered very beautifully in simple words by Shree Shree 108 Mahatma Vishnu Ashranji.

In Ma's room, Ma has been decorated as Lord Shiva. A bunch of matted hair on the top of the head adorned with a crescent moon and a symbol of River Ganga flowing down. A trident in one hand, a *damru* (drum) on the other hand and a garland of flowers (symbolic of the serpent) around Her neck. Ma is sitting motionless with closed eyes and everyone there are singing *kirtan*. Guneeta'da arrived and with closed eyes Ma said in Hindi, "Guneeta, *Shivji* has arrived in your *Bhāgwat*." We cannot see when our eyes are closed, but Ma had seen Guneeta'di. The week long *Bhāgwat Saptāh* celebration is continuing but in between *Gita Jayanti* celebration has also commenced.

There is an incident about *Gita Jayanti*. In the year 1944, Ma is in Vindhyachal Ashram. One day a lady (wife of Shri Devnarayanji) came for Ma's *darshan* and on seeing Ma's divine form, was inspired to worship Ma. Her *Gurudev* was Shree Shree Gopal Thakur of Allahabad. Omniscient Ma agreed and told her to inform her *Guru* about it. As a messenger the lady informs her *Gurudev* in Allahabad about Ma. Perplexed ShriGopal Thakur rushes to meet Ma, has *darshan*, and immediately decides – Ma is Herself the living Gita, I will celebrate my *Gita Jayanti* function in front of Her. And hence *Gita Jayanti* was first started in Vindhyachal Ashram in Ma's presence by ShriGopal Thakur. Every year after that Shree Gopal Thakur used to celebrate *Gita Jayanti* in Ma's presence, wherever Ma was during that period. He himself used to conduct the *Puja* on Ma by placing Ma's *Āsan* right in front of his *āsan*. And the final offering or oblation (*ārghya*) was placed on Ma's lotus feet and also on *ShriKrishna*'s image. He was a self-composed singer and also sang Rabindra-Sangeet. So after the *Puja* he sang the *ārti* and heart rendering songs too. *Gita Jayanti* is a four days festival commencing from *Shukla-Ashtami* in the month of *Agrāhan*. The complete Gita is read in three parts with six chapters each on the first three days. On the fourth day the whole Gita is read and then *Puja* and *yagna* is held.

This time after the completion of *Gita Jayanti*, the afternoon session of the *Bhāgwat-Pāth* commenced. Ma was seated on a white bed while the Kanyapeeth girls and elder sisters sat nearby. The Hall was jam-packed with devotees and spectators engrossed in the divine nectar filled exposition of the *Bhāgwat-Kathā*. I too sat at a remote corner and hearing and enjoying the divine atmosphere. I suddenly saw Ma beckoning me to come near. I somehow crossed the sitting crowd and went near Ma. Ma pulled me and said quietly, "Father has arrived in GangaMa's Ashram. You go near him and pay your obeisance. Inform him to have morning tiffin at Kanyapeeth, afternoon *prasād* at *Annapura*

*Mandir*, night *prasād* at Kanyapeeth and finally to take rest in the night in GangaMa's Ashram. There is no place vacant in this Ashram, it is filled to the capacity with devotees."

I immediately rushed to GangaMa's Ashram and paid my obeisance to Maiji. She was pleased to see me and informed me father's room number. I met father, paid my obeisance and narrated to him Ma's instructions. He just replied, "There is no dearth of place near Ma, only Ma does not want to keep me near Her." I escorted father back to the *Bhāgwat* Hall. In the evening the queue for Ma's *darshan* commenced. My father asked me how to pay obeisance to Ma. I instructed him all that GangaMa had instructed me earlier. Father stood in the queue and I went behind Ma's chair. As the queue progressed and Father arrived in front of Ma, he addressed Ma as *Mashima* (mother's sister) and bowed down in obeisance. Ma immediately turned round and confirmed from me, "*Baba?*" (father). I said yes. Father stood up after *pranām* and again said *Mashima*. Ma instantly stood up and asked, "*Baba?*" Then removed the garland from Her neck and slowly put it around father's neck. Ma then patted father's head and whole body with both Her Hands and said three times. "Even being a house-holder, My *Baba* is a *samvāsī*." Ma further said to father, "I will give you *prasād*." Father spread out his palms to accept it. Ma said, "My *Baba* is a punditji, how can the *prasād* be given in the hand?" Then Ma turned around, called Udasji and said, "Get one of the *Gita Jayanti prasād* plates and offer it in his hands." On Udasji's instructions I hurriedly went and brought one plate. Ma then instructed me, "Take your father and the plate to the *Annapurna Mandir* and see that he sits there properly and takes the *prasād*." Because of this discussion the queue had stopped moving for almost twenty minutes. Ma concentrated on that now.

On Ma's instruction I escorted my father to the *Annapurna Mandir*. In the night, on Ma's instructions father ate *bhog-prasād* from Kanyapeeth, i.e. *chappāṭi*, curry and milk and then departed to GangaMa's Ashram. In the morning after bathing and my regular worships I was getting ready when the girl who had the duty of serving food in the Kanyapeeth, offered me my morning meal and also informed me to proceed to Ma's room after the meals, otherwise Ma would scold her. I went to Ma's room, bowed down and did *pranām*. Ma too as is customary asked, "Have you taken your meals?" I replied, "Yes." Ma then instructed, "You will now go and meet your father and inform him to come near This Body after informing GangaMa. There should not be any hesitation. You pack your father's luggage properly and bring him here in a rickshaw." So I met father and informed him of Ma's instructions which he gladly agreed. On reaching the Ashram I got down from the rickshaw and immediately went to get Ma's

next instruction. Ma informed me to make lodging arrangements for father in the first room of the building next to the Gopal Mandir. The room was already cleaned and well kept. After settling father in that room again went to Ma. Ma gave me a vessel of water and a few other required items and said, "These are for *Baba*. Take care so that *Baba* does not feel uncomfortable. There should not be any disruption in *Baba's* daily worship etc." I could not inform Ma of what father had said yesterday, but so much *kripa*, Ma Herself pulled him near Her. Even though I stayed in the Kanyapceth, on Ma's instructions I went to father's room daily to help him. One day father called me near him and said, "What should be your punishment for the misconduct that you have done. Could you assume anything? The fear that you had for so long that how to say, what to say, hope the explanation does not become too big, whether Ma will listen to all that or not, or give me so much time?"

The whole day I pondered but could not come to any conclusion. Suddenly Pushpa'di saw me and said, "What a girl? Parul'di is searching for you and you are roaming around. Today six in the evening you have a private and you are not bothered. Stand here". While talking she brought me in front of Ma's room. Someone came out and Parul'di pushed me inside. I bowed to Ma and stood silent. Ma said, "Tell, what you have to say." Standing in front of Ma, what I said and how much I said I don't know. But Ma then said, "If you inform This Body then there is no need to inform anyone else." After that Ma touched my *brahmanata* (centre-top of my head) and said "*Narayan, Narayan, Narayan*", three times. Ma then opened a cream colored shawl and wrapped it around my shoulder. That day I was with Ma from evening six to eight in the night.

One day entering the *satsang* room I saw a person lighting agarbati's just one after another. I too felt like lighting some agarbati's. I talked with Parul'di and she gave me more than a dozen agarbati's for lighting. I too went to that room and started lighting one after another. Suddenly one of these stopped burning. The continuity was broken. I informed Parul'di about it. She got annoyed and ordered me to meet Ma. I rushed to Ma. Hearing the incident Ma smilingly said, "How much you have done is ok."

One morning I am standing near Ma, when a lady arrived. She belongs to the silent community and the *tilak* is a part of their *sādhana*. But she did not like to apply the *tilak* on her forehead. When she bowed down and paid her obeisance, Ma asked, "Hope you also apply the *tilak*?" She replied, "I apply *tilak* with water." Ma gave her some *prasād* and said, "I can see the *tilak* drawn on your body." These words of Ma seemed to relieve her of the doubts disturbing her for quite sometime. She seemed happy and smiled heartily before leaving.

\* \* \* \* \*

(to be continued)

## In memory of Brahmlin Swami Sharanandagiri Maharaj

Swami Chetnanandagiri

A pious new chapter began in my life on one evening of the year 2002. On that day arrived in Ma's Vindhyachal Ashram a gentle-looking elderly monk. The very sight of him filled my heart with joy. Introducing himself, he said that his name is Swami Sharanandagiri, a devotee of Shree Shree Ma, who has performed the daily worship of Ma's *Samādhi Mandir* at Ma's Kankhal Ashram for about a year. Prior to this on Shree Shree Ma's instructions, for many years he had also performed the daily worship of *Ma Kali* at Ma's Uttarkashi Ashram. At the same time he took care of nearby *sādhus* too. With the aim of continuing *sādhana* in isolation he came to Ma's Varanasi Ashram and Brahmachari Panuda then sent him to Ma's Ashram at Vindhyachal. And hence he has arrived here in Vindhyachal. For the next few days after we had food and *prasād* together at the Ashram, he informed me one day that as a part of *sādhana* he desired to perform his work by himself. I was amazed to notice that his daily routine and life-style was unique, which is an inspiring example for any *sādhak* (aspirant). There was a great inner joy and spiritual strength in him. I was overwhelmed by his extraordinary devotion to *japa*, penance, *yagna* and *puja*. In spite of being an aged *sanyāsi*, he treated me like a close friend.

Swamiji spent the latter part of the night in meditation. Then after exercising for a while, he would drink outright several litres of warm water. Usually he would not eat or drink anything else in the morning. Then after his daily ablution when he sat on his *puja āsan* and if there was no special work, he would remain absorbed in *japa-dhyān* and reciting hymns till noon, sometimes till evening. After that he used to put some water in a vessel, added some rice or daliya, vegetables, salt, a few drops of refined oil and boiled it (which took only a few minutes to prepare). Turmeric and spices were not used at all. After offering these as *bhog* to Ma he ate that *prasād*. Usually only drank milk at night. "For attaining God-realisation, eat for the sake of living, not live for the sake of eating." I have observed in reality this virtuous thought reflecting within him.

### Birth, Education and Career

Swamiji's elder brother Shri K.C. Gangopadhyay (currently 92 years old) is a dedicated old devotee of Shree Shree Ma, who converses with me through phone calls. Whatever, I have learned from him about Swamiji's earlier life, that, I have tried to mention below.

Their early ancestors were pious and devout Brahmins from Dhaka-Bikrampur (now in Bangladesh) and had later settled down in Ranchi. Swamiji belonged to a joint family. Among the ancestors several were writers, artists, poets and senior government officials. There were also a few self-sacrificing *sanyāsīs*. Full of happiness, prosperity and wealth, this extremely cordial and pious joint family had greatly influenced his progress towards a spiritual life. He was the second child of father (Late) Shri Parosh Chandra Gangopadhyay and mother (Late) Smt Shobharani Devi.

He was born in Ranchi on the auspicious day of *Baisakhi Buddha Purnima*, i.e. on 28th May, Monday, 1934. He was named Shri Sushant Kumar Gangopadhyay, and nicknamed Bhanu. At the age of nine along with his elder brother, he got *Janaeu* (sacred thread) after a proper ceremony. They were four brothers and all of them daily performed three times a day, *japa*, worships and other spiritual rituals and also kept fasting etc. Later almost all of his family members took initiation (*diksha*) under Shree Shree Ma's refuge. Sushantji was a very talented student. He had a keen memory and always stood first in class. He passed B.Sc. with distinction from a prestigious college in Ranchi and joined the Auditor General's office in 1957.

When his parents proposed his marriage, Sushantji pacified them soothingly. He never agreed to get married. He worked in the Office of Controller and Auditor General at Orissa, Delhi etc. He was also promoted to the higher post of DAG. But mentally he was intensely renunciate. He had a strong attraction for monastic life. So he applied for VRS and resigned from his job.

Selflessly, with divine knowledge, helping others with his body and funds was as if Sushantji's inherent *sanskār*. He also helped several students of schools and colleges in various different ways. This number increased many-fold while earning and later in his ascetic life. During his stay in Delhi, he used to bring the street orphans and blind beggars to his house, bathed them, clothed them, feed them with his own hands and then again left them back in their previous places.

Here is an example of how he used to do these selfless services without pride. At that time, he was in-charge of Ma's Uttarkashi Ashram, and being an aged *sanyāsi* he was also the president of the *Sadhu Samāj*. Once, a householder devotee of Ma, after staying in the Uttarkashi Ashram for some time wanted to return back urgently to his residence. The bus reservation was done and he was supposed to leave very early in the morning. A porter was also fixed in advance for carrying his big trunk and other luggage's to the bus. But for some reason the porter did not arrive. Since he had to leave urgently the worried devotee started crying. Immediately Swamiji lifted the large and heavy trunk of

the devotee on his head and helped him to board the bus in due time.

About ten years ago from now, I had to stay in bed for almost a month due to my physical ailments. During that period, Swamiji used to cook and feed me every day. That incident will be forever memorable in my life.

Once, while still engaged in his job, he went on a pilgrimage to the Himalayas with two of his relatives. Being overwhelmed with joy after having *darshan* of the Idol of *Ma Kali* in the *Kali* temple of Ma's Uttarkashi Ashram, he had informed his companions. "If I could ever worship this Idol of *Ma Kali* then my life would be blessed." This pious wish of Sushantji was fulfilled by *Ma Kali* in the future. After retiring from his job Sushantji stayed in Haridwar for a few days and then moved to Uttarkashi where he started living in the '*Shankar Math*' adjacent to the *Ma Kali* Temple.

Sushantji's elder brother Shri K.C. Gangopadhyay had taken shelter (*diksha* initiation) under Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee several years ago. In the month of April, 1982 he went to Kankhal Ashram to have Shree Shree Ma's *darshan*. And when he told Shree Shree Ma about his younger brother Sushantji, Ma instructed that Sushant should immediately come and meet Ma in Kankhal. So on Shree Shree Ma's instructions Sushantji came to Kankhal near Ma. In fact, this coming to Ma was forever.

On the pious day of *Akshaya Tritiya*, in the presence of Shree Shree Ma, Swami Bhaskaranandji Maharaj gave him formal *Brahmacharya diksha* (initiation). After that, as instructed by Shree Shree Ma, he took charge of the *Ma Kali Mandir* at Ma's Uttarkashi Ashram and performed all the services, rituals and worships. Even during the chilly winter he single-handedly performed all the services of the temple like washing the *puja* utensils, cooking *bhog* and offering it at the right time, performing *aarti*, protecting the *akhand-pradip* (constantly burning flame of a lamp) of the temple, etc.

Uttarkashi is the abode of many *sadhus*. In between his worships Sushantji used to help them in various manners. He had even taken the responsibility of delivering milk to their residences. He looked after their bank problems and hence had to supervise about 25 of their bank-passbooks. For a few days he had also served an old blind *sadhu*. He used to clean the sick person's faces, bathe him, dress him, feed him and give him timely medicines, etc. He used to escort another old man, a talented school-teacher (a musician), by holding his hand to school on time and later drop him back home after the classes were over.

Devoid of ego, selflessly, as a service to God, Sushantji helped these distressed people. It makes one wonder how he could manage to do all that. Swamiji used to consider the poor (righteous-unrighteous, everyone) as an image

of God and did not turn down anyone (without judging their nature whether he is *Satvik*, or *Rajasik*, or *Tamasik*) while serving them. At night he rested only for a short time. Many a time he spent the night in *japa* and meditation instead of lying in bed. In 1994, on the instructions of Swami Bhaskaranandji Maharaj, Brahmachari Sushantji went to Kankhal Ashram and started the daily *puja* work of Ma's *Samadhi Mandir*. After performing this for more than a year, he received formal *sanyās diksha* (initiation) from Swami Bhaskaranandji Maharaj. His name was changed to Swami Sharanandagiri. He then again returned back to the Uttarkashi Ashram and engaged himself in intense *sādhana*. However, there was always a huge crowd of *sadhus* meeting him and he could not deny anyone to visit him. Shri Devabrata Maharaj a renowned *sadhu* donated his 'Seva-sadan' named Ashram and cottage to Swami Sharanandji. Swamiji again became so much engrossed in serving the *sadhus* and poor of Uttarkashi that he did not have the opportunity to sit and meditate satisfactorily for a long time. Despite his reluctance he was made the president of the Uttarkashi *Sadhu-Samaj*.

#### **Attachment of Swamiji with Sudhir Bandyopadhyay, a realized soul**

In 1984-85, Swamiji was seriously ill with dysentery. He had to be admitted in the hospital. At that time, on Shree Shree Ma's instruction (even though Ma's gross form was not visible to us at that time), a realized soul and a householder met Swamiji in the hospital in order to serve him. He was Shri Sudhir Bandyopadhyay, a *mantra* disciple of Swami Birajanandaji Maharaj of Ramakrishna Mission. Also known as the venerable *sanyāsi*, he was the founder of "Vivekananda Vidyalaya and Mandir" at Chowdhury Haat, Cooch Behar. He was an ardent devotee of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee and even after Ma's gross body disappeared from our sight, he had direct *darshan* of Ma and used to receive direct instructions from Ma on implementing or not, certain important jobs. He was fondly known to many as dear Sudhir'da. Swamiji soon recovered and took along Sudhir'da with him to Uttarkashi and started residing at the Yogbrata Sadan Ashram. (*Yogi-sādhak* Yogabratji Maharaj, on being pleased at the pious selfless service of Swami Sharanandaji, had respectfully donated his Ashram to him). Then Sudhir'da and Swamiji jointly started their severe penance and *sādhana*. I was blessed to hear from Swamiji, several of his mystical and awe-inspiring spiritual experiences (visiting other worlds in different bodies, where lived realized saints) of that period.

\* \* \* \* \*

(to be continued)

Anchored in patience, enduring everything, live joyously with His 'Name'.

--- Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee

With Best Compliments from:



He who has been initiated by a *Guru* must, under His direction, try to keep his mind, every minute of his life, engaged in *sadhana*, such as worship, *japa*, meditation, reading sacred texts, *kirtan*, *satsang* and the like. Exert yourself to the limit of your power, however feeble it may be. He is there to fulfill what has been left undone.

-- Ma Anandamayee

Smt. Gouri Chatterjee,  
c/o, Col.Dr.R.S.Chatterjee, Dwarka, New Delhi

## ... You love me

You love to play hide and seek  
The game with me I know,

When my eyes seem your presence

You hide swiftly yourself.

To play (stage) the games you have kept me

In this world of games...

--- Being the Pilot of thy games

Again, and again, you play

Staying unseen from my eyes

But signaling thy presence

Here in me.

From now on I have planned

I won't let thee go

Keep thee binding in my tunes and songs,

SO

I am planning, this time I won't let thee go,

Will keep thee binding with my tune on song,

SO.



Parrish Kumar Mirra

