

MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

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

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3. Efforts are being made to make the journal more attractive, interesting, appealing and lucid and to spread the nectorial preaching of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee for the benefit of mankind in all fields of life, whether worldly or spiritual.
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----- MANAGING EDITOR - BRAHMACHARINI DR. GEETA BANERJEE (INCHARGE).

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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**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 pāth.* (Reading scriptures).
5. *Kirtan.* (Singing the praise of God).
6. *Kriya Yog.* (Ma says, for Self-realisation, that is to know oneself; with the advice of the Guru, whatever actions are observed, that only is called as *Kṛtya 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'



*ye tu sarvani karmani, mayi sannyasya mat-parah
ananyenaiva yogena, mam dhyayanta upasate
tesam aham samuddharta, mṛtyu-samsara-sagarat
bhavami na cirat partha, mayy avesita-cetasam*[12-6/7]

For one who worships Me, giving up all his activities unto Me and being devoted to Me without deviation, engaged in devotional service and always meditating upon Me, who has fixed his mind upon Me, O son of Partha, for him I am the swift deliverer from the ocean of birth and death.



Ma's message on Sādhana

Sādhana is the effort to rid the obstacles on the path to Him; to get rid of them from their roots. In the world of *jīvas*, everyone has to go through various types of pleasure and pain. This is all God's play. Always think it is He, in different forms. Pray – please give me patience and endurance. Only by the mind being immersed in God, will it be favorable for you to go ahead on your own path. Perform work with your hands and japa in your mind, talk only when it is necessary. It is necessary for the *sādhak* to always remember Him, to stay away from all worldly attractions, even if one is unable to perform japa for a long period of time. It is not possible to free oneself from worldly desires if one does not surrender to God. Without freeing yourself from worldly desires it is not possible to have genuine attachment towards God. *Japa* or meditation of *Krishna*, love for Him and attraction towards Him should be such that all troubles become *Ishta*. That is why always meditate on Him, perform all *kṛtyās* for Him, become an instrument in His hands. Keep your mind at His feet. Keep your body, which is His temple, always clean and neat. Try to make all actions of the body full of *Krishna* by performing His *japa* and by meditating on Him.



Matri – Vani

By your own actions desires are created; again by your actions those desires are fulfilled. Everything is done by you, for asserting your own self; you yourself are enjoying; hence you yourself are gradually moving towards death. Become an *amrit* consumer. Walk on the path of salvation; where there is no death, no sorrow.

* * *

Isn't the feeling of want, not getting what you desire? When your desires remain incomplete; does not produce desired results; isn't it aimless to ask and grieve for that; again and again? It is a natural expectation of this world that if wants (*chhāhat*) exist, desires (*abhāv*) and sorrows (*dukh*) will occur. In this world, whatever you ask for of this world is all sorrowful. You may get occasional happiness. Getting That which does not create sorrow, everything is attained, to desire Him is the only duty of humans.

* * *

The difference between humans and animals is that there is a special power within the humans by which they can attain Oneness. Human (*mānush*) means in whom – one whose mind (*man*) has become conscious (*hunsha*), he is Human (*mānush*). One who is engrossed in material desires, can he be called as human (*mānush*)?

* * *

Be a traveler with a goal for one's own Truth. The spirit of Truth should not get deviated by getting entangled in the ego of the worldly ways.

* * *

By constant japa, the *Beej-mantra* resonates with the *Guru-Shakti* and the *mantra* becomes conscious and reaches That Goal. By (general) Names (of God) too emotions arise. If Name is taken with emotion, by the power of the Name, according to one's fate, *Guru* is obtained, then everything can happen. If *Guru-Shakti* is present both with the Name as well as with the *Beej*, then everything is possible.

* * *

Q: Ma, my mind is never at rest, what shall I do?

Ma: On the contrary, I find that your mind is never agitated. Does your mind ever get restless for Him? It will attain tranquility only after it has experienced unrest.

Addressing a *mauni brahmachari*, Ma once said these words, 'What have you gained by keeping silence? While observing *maun*, if one does not repeat the 'Name' continuously in one's mind, the tree neither blossoms nor bears fruit. We want flower, fruit, everything. Without proper care how can a nice tree grow out of the seed just sown in the soil? It needs a lot of care.'

* * *

Ma once said, "Do not assume that once you are here, you will never experience what you call as misfortune. Ill health is a law of nature. Whatever mishaps befall you, be it bereavement or whatever else, what is most important is your endurance to face it".

* * *

One who smears ink (afflictions) as a result of action (wrong), He again washes it away during good deeds. Observe His compassion, grace, in everything. A tool in His Hand – always have this essence in thought; actions of agony can never ever occur by Him. His is – path of Truth, simple ways.

* * *

Unable to realize anything – this too is God's grace (*bhagwat kripa*). This wish too is also God's grace. Pious and truthful desires - the way to cessation of all desires. Being engaged all the time in true pious thoughts and pious actions – as a result of it – at which instant will He manifest – man does not know that. Hence as long as enlightenment does not take place, willingly or unwillingly always engage yourself in the journey of the Supreme Path.

* * *

Q: Is there a necessity of having *diksha*?

Ma: If *diksha* is required, it occurs in its own time. Always make efforts to be in a state of God remembrance. To have faith, whatever is required, He will provide in time.

* * *

Being born as a human being is a rare boon. If inspite of having obtained this great opportunity one does not give time to the contemplation of the Beloved, one will have to ask oneself: 'What have I been doing'. To neglect the contemplation of Truth means to take the path to death.

* * * * *

"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)

Shree Shree Ma in Dehradun

5th *Ashād* 1356, Sunday (19-6-1949). Today at around 2 pm we are departing by train from Dehradun to Solan. A *Marwari Sethji* has organised a 24-hour *kirtan* in Dehradun and has invited us for lunch. Hence we have decided to have our meals there and then depart for the station from there itself. Along with our luggage we would board the bus that they are sending for picking us up and after meals the bus would drop us off at the railway station. I heard that Shree Shree Ma had visited the *Marwari Sethji's* residence in the morning for an hour. Tomorrow Ma would depart along with Khukuni Didi and Hari Babaji in a car to Solan.

'You are my washerman'

We packed our luggage and were ready from the morning itself. In the meantime Dr. Sharma came to meet us. He too is a refugee (from Pakistan) like us. One day he had narrated about his past, and what a life it was! He is now 50 years old and has arrived with his aged mother. He had arrived in India from Punjab (present Pakistan) leaving behind a property worth lakhs of rupees, besides a huge house and a car. He had managed to come with a little bit of finance only. But in spite of this I hardly found him sad or morose. He had then told us, "Before falling into this situation I was just not aware of someone called as God. Then I lived the life of an animal. With just one blow when everything that was mine was shattered, it was only then that my mind turned towards God. Now I am quite well, my demands are also quite minimum and with the finance that I have I can manage for sometime only. I will be free after my mother's death and then I won't require any finance. In my young age I had heard that one cannot move in the path of spirituality without being blessed by a *Guru*. Till now I had no inclination towards spirituality and hence I did not feel the necessity to have a *Guru*. Only now I am feeling the absence of a *Guru*. But on the day I arrived in Kishenpur and rented a house near Mataji's Ashram, I felt that among all my misfortunes God has blessed me with the supreme fortune. Because

after having Mataji's *darshan* I felt that now I may get that which I have been searching for."

"Then Mataji was not present in the Ashram. She came after a few days. I heard that HariBabaji a Punjabi *sadhu* has also arrived along with Mataji. I waited eagerly to have *darshan* of this HariBabaji. One day I was roaming on the out skirts of the city, when I saw a red dressed aged *sadhu* coming towards me. I rushed forward and asked him, "Do you know HariBabaji?" He replied, "Why do you want him?" I replied, "I want to ask him a few things about Ma Anandamayee." He then introduced himself and said that I will get Mataji's *darshan* if I visit the Ashram in the evening and whatever I wanted to know about Mataji that I can know directly from Mataji. Hence on the same evening I visited the Ashram. After the *kirtan* HariBabaji introduced me to Mataji. I started crying the moment I saw Mataji and sobbingly said, "Mataji, whatever I was searching for all these days that I have found in You, do not push me away from your lotus feet." Saying such words I kept crying, but Mataji did not utter a single word. I don't think that my words or tears had any effect on Her. After this I did not go near Mataji again. However every evening went to the Ashram and observed Mataji from a distance and returned back."

I had met Dr. Sharma just a few days after he had arrived in Dehradun and it was only then that I had heard of this incident from him. Sharmaji is a very nice person and is always busy in helping others. Even though medical treatment is his sole occupation, he never demands any fees from the poor. He also offered them medicine free of cost. As we were departing from Dehradun today he came to meet us early in the morning and said to me, "Occasionally tell Ma about myself. I have told you everything about my life." I replied, "There is no need to plead for someone else near Ma. Whatever is required that She Herself does at the right moment." Dr. Sharma then said, "You do not want to say anything to Ma about myself and hence you are saying like this." While we were discussing in the room, Ma returned back from Dehradun. The moment Ma came out of the car I took Dr Sharma near Ma and pointing at Sharmaji, I said to Ma, "Ma, this person speaks ill of you. He says, 'I went near Ma but Ma has discarded me.' Hearing this Ma said, "There is a tale about Kabir. One day Kabir was crying. Seeing him cry, others came near and asked him the reason for it. Kabir replied, 'My *dhobi* (washerman) has passed away. Who will now clean my filth – just thinking of this is making me cry.' (Pointing at Dr. Sharma) "You too are my *dhobi*. Pointing at my mistake you are informing me how to cleanse myself." So saying, Ma touched the doctor with both Her hands.

Matri Satsang at Solan

6th Āshād 1356, Monday (20-6-1949). Today at 6 am we reached Kalka Station. Yesterday at 12 midnight we had reached Ambala from Dehradun and had changed a train to arrive at Kalka. There was quite a rush in the train from Dehradun to Ambala and from Ambala to Kalka we had to sit awake for the whole journey. From Kalka one can go in a toy train to Solan or Shimla and also travel by bus. Raja Saheb had sent his private bus from Solan to pick us up. But one bus was not enough for all of us and hence one more bus was hired in Kalka. We finally departed from Kalka at around 7 am. Dehradun is 3000 feet above sea level but Solan is at an altitude of 5000 ft. The buses climbed the hilly roads winding along the side of the hills. Even though the sun had risen there was quite a fog on the hilly roads. In spite of the fog whatever scenery was visible was quite enchanting. Somewhere there was a dense jungle of pine trees and somewhere just a few of them covering the almost bare hilly terrain as if fighting for their place and showing the way to the passerby's. At several hills the terrain has been cultivated for tea and from far these looked like the steps leading to a temple. The bus trip continued in this manner with all of us enjoying the surrounding scenery. We had to stop two three times on the way, still we reached Solan by 9 am. We had to pass through the city of Solan to reach the palace. All the houses were small and beautiful and were quite close to the hills, the whole scene looked like a painting. The palace was also not much bigger than the other residences. The king's flag flying over the palace was the only indication of it being the palace of that region.

A new small house, adjacent to the palace has been constructed for Shree Shree Ma. There are four-five rooms and a balcony in it and there is a courtyard between the palace and the new house. The balcony has a tinned shade and the terrace of the house is made of wood but both are slanted, most probably because of the snowfall in the winter. In Solan all the houses are built in this pattern only. The wooden doors and windows and the terrace and ceiling of the rooms of Shree Shree Ma's new residence were all varnished and hence were all shining bright. All the rooms were carpeted and had enough sitting arrangements like chair, sofa, etc. There were exquisite curtains on all the doors and windows and the beauty of the mountains was visible from every direction. Our residence was also close to the palace and Ma's temple and it too was quite beautiful. There were four five bedrooms and also a verandah surrounding the house. One has to climb a steep road to reach our residence from the main road. Ma's

temple was a little higher and the palace was still higher up. And all of them were built on a hillside.

The bus dropped us off at the palace. Swami Paramanandji had already arrived here earlier for supervising the arrangements. He directed us to our residences. After bathing we had tiffin consisting of sweets and tea. Since I had not slept properly last night, I went to sleep after the snacks. At around 12 pm I woke up and had lunch. I then got the information that Ma has arrived in Solan at around 11 am alongwith Khukuni Didi and HariBabaji. As usual in the evening there was HariBabaji's *pāth* followed by *kirtan*.

Regarding Raja Durgasingh of Solan

The ruler of the kingdom of Solan can be rightly called as a *Rājarshi*. Shree Shree Ma called him 'Yogiraj'. He is absolutely free from ego and wears very simple clothes. Everyday most of his time was spent in religious activities. His wife has passed away a year ago and does not have any progeny. The sole wish of the people of the kingdom is that the king should remarry. During our stay itself several dignitaries of the kingdom met Ma and requested Ma to order the king to marry again. They were certain that this religious king will not remarry and they also did not like the idea that the king did not have any descendant. But this is also true that Durgasingh is just a king by name, his kingdom the city of Solan was now a part of the state of Himachal Pradesh. But the king is just not perturbed with this situation. On the other hand becoming free from the duties of the kingdom, he is truly very happy to be able to devote more time in spiritual activities. After the establishment of the state of Himachal Pradesh, Raja Durgasingh was offered the post of the Governor of the State, but he had not accepted the offer. He has been undergoing a vow or fast for quite sometime and this has to be culminated now by performing a *Devi Bhāgwat Pāth*. For this very reason He has brought Ma here in Solan. HariBabaji and others have also arrived here for this purpose.

7th Āshād 1356, Tuesday (21-6-1949). Today I attended HariBabaji's *pāth* in the evening. From a magazine called 'The Kalyan', he was narrating an article written by GopiBaba (M.M. Gopinath Kaviraj). The title of the article was '*Ishta-Rahasya*'. Since the article was in Hindi I could understand only very little of it. In the context of this article Ma said to me, "You ask this question to GopiBaba that of course *Guru* is present, but can the actions of the reverse order attain success in the inner conscious without relying on the material world?" I asked, "Ma, what is reverse order?" Ma replied, "Also ask that to Baba."

I immediately wrote down Ma's question on a paper and decided to ask this question to GopiBaba through a letter.

Saving Paramanand Swamiji from a snake-bite

Today after the *Pāth Ma* narrated a story. This incident had occurred in Ma's

Raipur Ashram. During that period Raipur ashram meant only two shabby rooms. Ma was staying there with Paramanand Swamiji and Shishir (Raha) Dada. Shree Shree Ma resided in the inner room and Swamiji and Shishir Dada in the outer room. It was a rainy season. A poisonous snake was sometimes visible in the outer room. Observing this Shree Shree Ma had said that since there is so much movement of the snakes, it would be better to go and reside in Kishenpur Ashram. Hearing this Shishir Dada objected and said, 'Ma, why fear when you are here?' So they stayed back in Raipur. One night Ma, Swamiji and Shishir Dada were sitting in the front room when a snake was seen hanging from the wooden beam of the roof. Ma said, "Observing the snake 'This Body had a *kheyāl* that the snake should not harm anyone. Immediately without informing about the impending danger This Body went to sleep in the inner room."

Shishir Dada hung a mosquito net and went to sleep while Swamiji lied down without the net. Swamiji said, "After lying down I looked up and saw a snake hanging from the wooden beam of the roof and was consistently coiling down and back up again. Watching this action for sometime I slept off. While sleeping I dreamt that the snake has bitten me. Immediately I woke up and looking upwards saw that the snake was hanging a lot downwards and was hissing with the outstretched hood. Seeing this I got up and sat down in front of Ma's room. There was a stick nearby which I held in my hands for my safety. I thought that if the snake comes down and goes out of the front door then I will not do anything but if it attacks me then I will have to kill it. All of a sudden the snake fell down and instead of going out of the main door it started moving towards me and Ma's door. I then had to kill it. The snake had the intention to bite me and hence maybe I had seen that in my dream. Two days before Ma had said that Ma had seen a dead body being taken out of this room."

8th *Āshād* 1356, Wednesday (22-6-1949). Pundit Sunderlalji has also come to Solan along with us. Almost every day he plays jokes with Shree Shree Ma. Today morning too he was doing that. Punditji was wearing a small cloth and it was a bit torn near the knees. Ma was continuously trying to touch the cloth but Punditji did not allow Ma to touch it. Seeing this Ma told Swami Paramanandji in Bengali to hold the small torn portion of Punditji's cloth and to tear it further. Since Ma spoke in Bengali Punditji did not understand a

word of it and hence allowed Swamiji to touch his cloth. Swamiji immediately placed his finger in the hole of the cloth and tore out a portion of it. Punditji became depressed. Shree Shree Ma consoled him for sometime and then suddenly became serious. From Ma's countenance it seemed as if Ma had departed to some other world. A different form of Ma was sitting here, completely different from that Ma who was joking and laughing with Punditji. After some time Ma returned back to Her normal form. Then again everyone got the courage to talk to Ma. I have till now not met anyone who has been brave enough to converse with Ma when Ma remains in that serious form.

Shree Shree Ma is now seated in the verandah of Her residence. We too came and sat down nearby. The winds blowing from the snow clad mountains seemed to be playing with the silky forelocks hanging around Ma's countenance. Observing that, Punditji started praising Shree Shree Ma's hairs. Hearing that Ma said, "Sometimes during the summer the hairs stuck together and looked like a stick. Once felt that maybe this is happening because of the dirt on the hairs. Hence on that day bathed properly with soap etc. But still the hair remained in that form. Many a time on touching the roots of the hairs of the head, have found something like oil drops oozing out from it. (Turning towards a Kashmiri lady) Does this happen to you all too?"

The Lady: No, Ma.

Today evening Trivenipuriji Maharaj arrived here from Khanna, and along with him only Chetanpuriji has come. After receiving this news I went and paid my obeisance to them. Puriji Maharaj was taking rest after the long journey.

In the evening Shree Shree Ma was taking a stroll in the garden of Her cottage. I stood nearby and enjoyed the hilly scenery all around. It is really enchanting to watch the clouds tumbling past the majestic mountains. Observing me, Ma said, "That day the topic of *Choto-Ma* was going on that she had requested GopiBaba not to visit any temple or any Goddess. Considering This Body as a Goddess, she had informed Baba not to come near This Body too. Because he has to rise above the status and emotions of Gods and Goddesses. Do you remember all these discussions?"

Myself: Yes, Ma.

Ma: Now the point is that, who is present or situated in which world solely depends on the perception of the viewer. For example, let me explain in the context of whatever was being mentioned during today's *Pāth*, only then will you understand it properly. Whether you call it your entity or your atom (your tiniest particle), that which is scattered all around, to gather all that is the only

aim of *sādhana*. If the *sādhak* (aspirant) is truly powerful then he can see you all around because in each and every atom of yours you yourself are present in totality. But if someone does not have that perception, then he may be able to see you in some specific place only. He may not be able to confirm whether you exist in some other place or not. Just as, when the torch light is thrown on something then only that thing is visible, things scattered around it are just not visible. Similarly some people by their yogic power or intellectual reasoning can see someone in some or the other world, but that vision is within a limit, that is not a vision in totality.

Myself: Ma, then I feel it is useless to reply to someone's question, because whatever answer is given that will only be partial. Hence I feel to either reply in totality or maintain silence seems to be the same.

Ma: No, To question and to even give a partial reply has its own benefit. But for example, just as one cannot remain without questioning what is this, what is that, etc., similarly in order to progress in the path of spirituality such questions are bound to occur. The various aspects within you, from all those aspects only the various questions will arise and with the rising of such questions all those aspects will one day be realized. Similar is the case while answering the questions. With the exchange of words between the enquirer and the respondent their inner aspects can also get realized. Nothing is useless in the universe.

In the meantime few ladies arrived with cardamom, coconut and sugar candy to offer *bhog* to Ma. Ma smilingly said, "With just the arrival of Trivenipuri Baba, cardamom *prasād* has also started arriving." Ma started distributing all these *prasād* amongst ourselves.

Regarding the grief of separation from the Divine

9th *Āshād* 1356, Thursday (23-6-1949). In the evening after the Pāth Ma strolls in the lawn of Her cottage. During that time we too go there and stand nearby. Today while I was standing there Ma while strolling said (to me), "Tomorrow go and visit Shimla and nearby places." I did not reply. But I noticed that the way Ma had asked my opinion before going to Mussoorie but this time instead of that directly told me to visit Shimla.

The article of GopiBaba that HariBabaji has been reading in that "*Janam avadhi hum roop nehārinu*", the meaning of these words GopiBaba has explained from the point of view of a layman. On two days I had heard HariBaba mentioning these words. Since I do not know Hindi I could not discern whether the explanation given by him was adequate or not. Today however I had a conversation with Ma.

Myself: Ma, HariBaba considers *ChaitanyaDev* as an ideal *avatār* because on being separated from *Krishna* he had spent his life in tears crying for *Krishna*. But separation is a sign of desire. Hence one who has such a feeling of separation how can he be called as being complete? And if HariBaba considers this separation similar to the separation of gross body, then too what is the reason for objecting? Because separation whether it is natural or unnatural, in both cases it proves the presence of a want or desire. If there is any difference between the separations then it is only the magnitude of the desire.

Ma: HariBaba feels that GopiBaba has made a mistake by explaining the pangs of separation of *Radha* similar to that of the pangs of separation of a human being (*boddh-jiva* - a bound being). If Baba (GopiBaba) had not mentioned that both the separations are similar and that there is a feeling of a want in both of them – had mentioned only this much; then most probably HariBaba would not have objected. Of course whether GopiBaba actually meant that, that I cannot say. That you all clarify. But this fact is true that the grief of separation of *Radha* cannot be compared with the grief of separation of a human being. The *Vaishnavs* consider this emotion of *Radha* to be of a very high order and compare it with the drinking of hot sugarcane juice. Just as while drinking hot sugarcane juice an intense burn and a sweet taste is obtained – that too is similar.

“Regarding this there is a story – Depressed with the separation a *gopi* always cried for *Krishna*. One day *Krishna* appeared before her and said, ‘Why do you cry? What do you want?’ The *gopi* replied, ‘I want that whenever I will remember you, you will immediately appear before me.’ *Krishna* agreed to it. After this intentionally or un-intentionally, whenever the *gopini* thought of *Krishna*, immediately *Krishna* appeared before him. She then felt that getting *Krishna* in this manner did not give any pleasure, because then there is no grief of separation, hence there is no pleasure in getting *Krishna* too. Compelled, she finally informed *Krishna* that she wanted to get back her earlier state.”

“Hence the want (or desire) that you have mentioned, the *Vaishnavs*, HariBaba, etc., do not think in that manner. They think that the form that the formless God has realized, is nothing more than that has been desired and to be in grief of separation for that very embodied God is the highest sign of *sadhanā*. Then they do not desire for salvation.”

10th *Āshād* 1356, Friday (24-6-1949). Today morning sixteen to seventeen people including Manoranjan Babu, Shriman Vishnu, Manmohan’s family, my family, and few others departed in RajaSaheb’s bus along with an escort to show

us all the tourist places in Shimla. Shimla is 44 km. from Solan. The scenery from Kalka to Solan and from Solan to Shimla are similar. After reaching Shimla at around 9 am we first visited the market, where Manoranjan Babu purchased few fruits and then we went to the famous Shimla *Kalibari* Temple. We had packed tiffin with us which we ate sitting nearby the temple. The city of Shimla is truly beautiful. The houses and shops were also neatly constructed and beautifully decorated. I had thought that it would be quite cold here in Shimla as it is almost seven thousand feet from sea-level similar to that of Mussoorie; but we felt quite hot and could not roam around in the sun and hence most of us came and sat down in the bus. Shriman Vishnu was quite young and hence he went touring around the city. Till he returned we waited in the bus and after his arrival we departed from Shimla at 3 pm and reached Solan by 5 pm.

On the way there was a probability of an accident. While we were coming down from Shimla, then from the opposite side a car came speeding and for just about a fraction of space a collision was averted. When we reached Solan then few ladies asked us whether an accident had occurred on the way or not? We replied that an accident did not take place but there was a probability. They then said that Ma had informed about this.

We had some tiffin and then went to have Ma's *darshan*. Ma was strolling in the courtyard of Her cottage, and few girls were walking along and reading out letters to Ma. One girl was reading the letter and when Ma answered in a few words or few lines then the girl sat down to write out Ma's words. In the meantime another girl started reading another letter. This process was going on for quite some time. An enormous amount of letters arrives for Ma from devotees from various places. While in Kishenpur I had observed that almost 30-40 letters arrive in the Ashram and most of them are for Shree Shree Ma. Some are writing for Ma's blessings in their worldly problems and some write to gain some spiritual knowledge. And these letters are either in Hindi or Bengali. Because of Shree Shree Ma's busy schedule in Kashi and Dehradun, the letters arriving there cannot be read out to Ma and hence almost hundreds of letters get accumulated. Rajasaheb had even requested Ma that if the letters accumulated become enormous then Ma should come to Solan as the rush of devotees here is minimal. Here Ma will get enough time to hear and reply to the letters.

Seeing this incident I said to Ma, "Ma, if instead of writing a letter to You if one prays mentally to You, then can You not know it and make arrangements accordingly?" Smilingly Ma replied, "They think that the problem is solved by writing letters."

* * * *

(to be continued)

In Ma's own Words

Ma narrates to Bhaiji

Bhaiji

(continued from before)

Kheyāl to cure the disease

Sometimes even after continuous repeating of some words by someone, it never seemed to reach the ears. Observing the emotion of This Body again they would ask, 'Are you hearing or not?' I used to observe that hearing the words were in my *kheyāl*, and either by My Body or through someone else the job was done. During that period this *kheyāl* used to occur – this has to be done by the body, it has to be done. But this was not expressed externally. In this manner there used to be a play with so many people, birds & animals, trees & plants, that there is no limit to it. Again sometimes without taking over the disease of someone, it used to get cured.

While staying in Bajitpur, while cutting vegetables, fruits etc, I used to talk with them just like talking with humans – 'Go, now your work here is over.' The behaviour was such, as if they were very much alive. But if some people were nearby, no words came out of the lips. On sowing and planting trees and shrubs, took care of them in such a manner as if taking care of humans. Vegetables etc, whatever was cooked, everything was done beautifully. A *kheyāl* used to arise – I Myself am creating, I Myself am taking care, I Myself am doing everything. In One Me only I am.

Initially in Dhaka when people arrived with worldly or spiritual matters, then if an answer was to be given, it automatically came out. Otherwise how so much they tried nothing happened. It also happened that, some words were about to come out, when like a barrier some hindrance used to arise.

During that period several incidents used to occur in subtle. Remaining with the *kheyāl* of someone's illness or turmoil, whom I have not seen, and that person gets well. Again sometimes the patient's illness vanishes – a *kheyāl* arises – either someone else is made to suffer, or take the suffering on Myself, the patient used to get cured. Again sometimes whether there is a *kheyāl* or not, just on informing the disease would get cured. And sometimes, nobody has informed nor said, and have no earthly connection with anyone, This Body used to become the cause for the cure of an illness or turmoil. Although such incidents have occurred, those who have been cured do not

even know about the earthly existence of This Body. Bholanath used to remark, on informing about someone, 'Do I tell them?' Then, the *kheyāl* of informing them, did not arise. Hence it was prohibited. But it all occurred on its own. I, sitting at my place, used to have a *kheyāl* that, going to his house as if I am touching him or seeing him.

When in a *sādhak* emotions arise that, All is One, different forms of That One, then topics of spirituality, worldliness and illness, all appears to him in the same form. He also feels that even the action taken is a one of His forms. In this state if he by becoming cautious is not able to concentrate on the Supreme Goal, then there is chance of his falling down. The Body is playing with various things.

One evening during my stay in Shahbagh, I was going out on a trip in Shashank 'babu's car. On the way a *kheyāl* arose that have to go to Jyotish's house. He was then ill and was staying in a house very near to Shahbagh. Had been there in the morning too. I hurriedly came out of the car and rushed inside his room. Bholanath and Shashank 'babu followed behind. There was no *kheyāl* of sitting down or saying something. In an unnatural pace rushed towards the corner table on which was kept few roses and magnolia. Touched the flowers, picked up two flowers, stood there for a moment and then hurriedly came out. From there went to Late Dinesh 'babu's residence in Dhankouda. On reaching there, Panu 'babu's wife came out to welcome us. Gave one flower in her hand and kept the other in my hand.

After the *kirtan*, This Body was taken to Banamali Bakshi's residence. In that house his wife was very ill. Secretly kept the other flower on the patient's bed. Later, learnt that she has been cured. The day all this had been done, the patient had with great difficulty got up from the bed and had cooked some food for offering to This Body.

Monu's fate of a snake-bite

Kunj 'babu arrived in Dhaka along with his family to give the marriage of his younger daughter. While retuning back to Benaras, Kunj 'babu's wife said, 'Ma, there is a chance of my son getting killed due to an injury by a snake or a stick, this is written in his horoscope. The tragic date is very near. I will keep him at your disposal.' This Body replied, 'You take him back with you.' But she kept on persisting. Later, strongly saying 'No', he was taken back by them.

Few days later This Body had a *kheyāl* that without informing anyone here will go out for a stroll to some distance. One evening went to the residence of Jyotish. He was bed-ridden, unable to even get up. Pointing at Bholanath

said to Jyotish, 'Namaskār him, Namaskār him.' With great effort he got up and did *namaskar*. Daily *prasād* was sent to him from Shahbagh. That day touched a few raisins and gave it to him and said, 'Take some everyday.' Those who were present there, just did not understand why all this is occurring. Everyone knew about This Body's such *kheyāl*. But Jyotish with a pale face watched all this from beginning to end. But did not say anything.

From there went to Shashank' *babu* and Baul's residence and then returned to Shahbagh. At around eleven in the night Shashank' *babu* arrived and said, 'We are frightened lest we lose Ma. While coming here the Shahbagh gate was closed, had to climb over the wall, the feet have become dirty, hence I am not able to enter the room. Otherwise I would have stayed here for the night. Now I will have to go home and take a bath. Separating me in this dark night in this manner, this too maybe Ma's wish. Are You truly thinking of going somewhere?' This Body said, 'You all will of course get to know if we leave.' Then he again said, 'I hope we will know when you both leave?' This Body said, 'You will know.' He returned back to his house and all of us went to sleep.

Woke up and saw there was quite a light. Bholanath said, 'If we leave now everyone will see us.' This Body said, 'Let's go out. If someone sees us on the way, we will not go ahead.' So saying we left our rooms and outside saw Kamlakanth sleeping peacefully outside the door of his room. The guard of the Shahbagh gate had opened the gate and had gone somewhere. Almost daily getting up at dawn, Jyotish used to sit in his verandah observing the by-passers on the road. But that day there was no sound from his house or from anyone else. The door of the house was closed. We went to the station. Saw a train ready to leave. Nishi' *babu*'s son was going to Narayanganj, he bought tickets for us. We went to Narayanganj.

Staying there for a few days we departed for Kolkata. In the meantime, for a change in weather, Jyotish along with his family arrived in Kolkata. After meeting us, he expressed sadness for leaving Shahbagh without informing anyone. He also said, 'After your departure from Shahbagh, did not like to stay in Dhaka, and hence have come here.' From here he went to Vindhyachal and we went to Deoghar. Met Balanand Brahmachari'ji in Deoghar. He was extremely pleased to see us. It was then decided to visit Vindhyachal. Hearing this news, Kunj' *babu*'s wife and his two sons and two daughters boarded our train in Moghulsarai station.

There we took accommodation in a bungalow on the Vindhyachal hill. Jyotish was staying below. Went to see him before climbing up the hill. The children

wished to show me Ashtabhujā and other places in Vindhyaçhal. Hence one morning all of us left our rooms. Another group joined us on the way. Saw Ashtabhujā. The companions said, 'There is a pond here called *Sitākund*. From there will go to *Kālikho*.' I started walking very fast, along the small path covered by foliage. In the meantime, suddenly felt something underneath my feet. Walked 4-5 hands ahead and turned around; saw a snake sitting on a rock with the hood spread out hissing at me. I shouted to the others following behind not to come any more near. 'Wait', Bholanath asked, 'What has happened?' And then he too saw the snake. He enquired, 'Has it bitten you?' He had a stick in his hand. He was eager to kill but said 'No'. The snake stared at me for some time; I too kept a good watch over it. Later the snake turned towards Bholanath and climbed uphill. Everyone were amazed at the staring and emotions of the snake.

We continued walking; Kunj'babu's son was about 6-7 years. Rushing and catching hold of his mother, he said, 'Ma has today overcome Dada's fate of being bitten by a snake.' Only then did his mother started thinking. She calculated, his danger is mentioned in the horoscope in this period only.

We were walking along. Occasionally Bholanath enquired whether the snake has bitten in the foot or not. I smiled and kept walking. About then I for once lifted my leg and observed, the leg which had fallen on the snake had swollen right up to the thigh. But I kept walking. There was no *kheyāl* to tell anyone about This Body. After reaching the residence from there, said, 'Today will have rice. All of you start cooking.' Then we went downhill to the residence of Jyotish. Bholanath informed him, 'See, your Ma has stepped on a snake. Do not know whether it has bitten or not.' He hurriedly brought some spirit and put it under my foot, but emotionally he applied to the foot which was not bitten. Then This Body smiled and said, 'Do not apply all these. Nothing is required.'

Later again went back uphill to our residence and sat down to have rice. During that period This Body only ate a few fruits; Was eating rice after quite some time. Bholanath was feeding This Body. It was seen that all the cooked food, rice, pulse, vegetable, had been finished. This Body was asking for more and saying, 'The snake has eaten (bit) me and I am eating rice.' Hurriedly *Khichudi* was cooked and fed to This Body. Finally informed them, 'See, whatever will remain after you all have eaten, I will eat again.' Bholanath finished eating, This Body ate again. The same was again cooked and then only the rest of the members had food.

In the evening came downhill and sat down at some place, then the boys observed below the bitten foot two blue marks like being pricked by a big needle and said, 'See this is the mark of the snake bite.'

Tour in a single cloth

Told Jyotish to go to Chunar. After Kunj'habu and his family departed for Benaras we too went to Chunar. Then had such a *kheyāl* that 'This Body will not eat anything in Jyotish's house. Hence even if food was eaten on his wish some cash was paid to him. He too did not refuse. Staying in Chunar for some time, without telling them about a destination we moved towards Bharatpur, Jaipur. This Body had a *kheyāl* that if This Body stayed in a lonely place with only one set of clothes then it would not be bad. Will not keep any money with us. All in this world are our own. Then why need any cash and any items with us? On the way Bholanath facing a lot of trouble and said, 'It's very difficult to move around alone with a lady in this manner. It is difficult to manage her fooding and lodging.' Hearing this said, 'Okay, at present it will not be good to travel alone. Let's proceed to Kolkata.'

While returning we came to Chunar, had a good time with Jyotish's wife and daughter. Observed that the emotions of Jyotish's wife are very simple, straight forward and good. Laughingly told Jyotish, 'Ma's (Jyotish's wife) nature is much more simple than yours. He said, 'You too like her, she just does not have any eagerness to have Your *darshan!*

In the meantime Bholanath one day seeing me sitting and continuously scratching my hairs said, 'See, so many ticks are present in your head.' Then laughingly said to him, 'These have come from you and are now residing here. Now where can I throw them off. Okay, let's fulfill your wish.' Went near Jyotish's wife and said, 'See ticks are staying in my hairs.' Then the hairs were quite thick and long. She properly cleaned and combed my hairs. From that day the ticks vanished. After that we went to Kolkata..

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(to be continued..)

List of Festivals

Jagganāth Rath Yātrā	June 20, 2023
Guru Purnimā Mahotsav	July 3, 2023
First Shrāvan Somvār vrat	July 10, 2023
Nirvān Tithi of Shree 108 Swami	July 25, 2023
Muktānanda Giri (Shrāvan Shukla Saptami)	
Jhulan Mahotsav	August 26-30, 2023
Bhāiji Nirvān Tithi (Jhulan Dwādashi)	August 28, 2023
Jhulan Purnimā	August 30, 2023
Rakshā Bandhan	August 30, 2023

Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee

Vol-18 (Bengali)

Gurupriya Devi

(continued from before)

Inauguration of the *Chhaliyā Mandir* in Vrindavan Ashram

On the occasion of the inauguration of the *Chhaliyā Mandir* from morning five to nine in the night *Akhand kirtan* (non-stop *kirtan*) of various names of *Shri Krishna* was organized from 27th August to 7th September, 1966. During the daily rituals or some other special functions one or two devotees continued this *kirtan*. This was the only function which continued from dawn to night. From 2nd September the actual program of the inauguration commenced. Several *pundits* gathered around in the area between the three temples and beautifully performed the scriptural rites for quite a few hours.

Not only from Vrindavan but also from different places several *Mahatmas* had accepted the inauguration invitation and had arrived here for the function. Important among them were Swami Akhandanandji, Swami Sharananandji and Chakrapaniji from Vrindavan and Mahamandaleshwar Swami Maheshwaranandji from Mumbai. Till 7th September each one of them enlightened the huge crowd of audience with their speeches. For the last few months Ma has been requesting the devotees if possible, to attend this function in Vrindavan. Hence the crowd here was more than that of the Ma's sixtieth *Jannotsav* celebration held in Varanasi. Swami Akhandanandji explained a *shloka* of *Venu-geet* of the *Bhāgwat* for four consecutive days. During Shree Shree Ma's presence in the Hall, the audience were not only packed in the Hall but had also spilled out on the courtyard listening to these motivating speeches. Almost forty-nine devotees of royal families had also arrived. And it looked charming when all of them sat down for having *prasād*.

Just like the temples of Ma's other Ashrams, *Chhaliyā Mandir* also has a background story of its own. When the Hall of this Ashram was being constructed then it had been decided that within there would be three temples. Raja of Solan Shri Durgasinghji's father had passed away just before the Raja's birth. He had a wish to construct a temple for *Radha-Krishna* but he passed away before he could fulfill his wish. Hence Rajasahb had requested Ma that he wanted to fulfill his father's wish. Although the *Shiva* temple and the *Nitai-Gaur* temple

had already been constructed and the idols had been inaugurated, a *Radha-Krishna* temple was still not there.

Several years ago the Rajmata of Gwalior Vijayaraje Scindia had prayed to God that if she gave birth to a son then she would construct a *ShreeKrishna* temple. Just after this her only son Madhavrao Scindia was born. She had constructed a temple in Gwalior but was unable to get an Idol of *ShreeKrishna* to her liking. She was amazed to see the *Nitai-Gaur* Idols in Ma's Vrindavan Ashram. On learning that Nitai Pal was the craftsman, he decided to appoint him and also ordered him for fabricating a *ShreeKrishna* Idol. But when the Idol was constructed and brought near her, she saw that *ShreeKrishna* was standing on His right leg. In general *ShreeKrishna* is seen standing on the His left leg. She immediately informed Ma about it and hence it was not installed in Gwalior. After the passing away of the Raja of Gwalior, Rajmata sent the Idol to Ma at Vrindavan Ashram.

Several years ago Ma had a subtle vision of the River Yamuna flowing exactly at the spot where the present *Chhaliyā* Temple is constructed, and *ShreeKrishna* standing nearby gazing at the river. Somebody was holding an umbrella over His head and His feet were not as is usually seen, but digging a hole on the sand with one of His feet. Even though our Ashram is quite far from the present Yamuna River, solid land was not obtained even after a deep digging, for laying the foundation. Sand and only sand was obtained. Hence it was clear that as Ma had seen, Yamuna River was surely flowing from here in the ancient period. Now surprisingly NitaiPal had not heard this story from Ma, but he had unknowingly constructed an idol of *ShreeKrishna* exactly as Ma had seen and described. NitaiPal passed away just a few days after fabricating this *ShreeKrishna* Idol.

Handing over the *ShreeKrishna* idol to Shree Shree Ma, the Rajmata requested Ma to sit beside the Idol and decorated Ma as *Radha* and saying 'This is my *Radha*' worshipped Ma and *ShreeKrishna*. She also said, "Along with Rajasaheb (of Solan) I too will contribute for the construction of the Temple'.

After this one day Rajmata complained to me, '*Chhaliyā* has given me a lot of trouble'. I was surprised to hear the word '*Chhaliyā*' from her. Actually several years ago in 1952, Ma was staying in a newly constructed cottage near the Jhaku Temple in Shimla. While lying down Ma had seen in subtle *Radharani* plucking flowers in a garden and singing melodiously, '*Aao mere salonā Chhaliyā re, Banoyāri re*'. Ma termed that song as '*Radha's Call*'. Later Ma had taught the lyrics and tune of this song to Vibhu and made him sing the song quite often. But whenever Vibhu sang this song he used to shed tears and cry from deep within himself. During the inauguration of the Temple

one day Avdyutji requested Ma to tell Vibhu to sing this song. But we all saw that Vibhu just could not sing the song, sounds of crying were only heard in the mike. Ma then said, 'Crying is the only essence of this song'. Hence in this manner the *ShreeKrishna* Idol constructed by NitaiPal was coined as "*Chhaliyā*". This story has been engraved on the wall of the Temple.

During the inauguration of the Temple the following words had emanated from Ma's lips, '*Krishna Chhaliyā Ānandalāl Brajaraman Prān Gopāl*'. And this *kirtan* was sung without a break for three consecutive days of the function. Initially it was decided that the *Chhaliyā* temple would be of the same size of the adjacent *Shiva* and *Nitai-Gaur* temples. But while excavating the site only sand was found and hence a large area had to be excavated in order to get some firm land for laying the foundation of the temple. And also on Ma's instruction stone was utilized for constructing the temple. The steeple of the temple was also constructed to quite a height.

According to the wishes of Rajasaheb (of Solan) NitaiPal's son was instructed to fabricate a pair of *Radha-Krishna*. And according to the custom of Vrindavan he was instructed to fabricate a *Radha* for *Chhaliyā* too. When all the Idols arrived they were named as "*Ānand-Chhaliyā*" and "*Radha-Krishna*". Along with these a small idol of *Radha-Krishna* of the two sisters Rama-bhen and Kamla-bhen and a *Ganesh* Idol of Suni-bhen would also be installed inside the Temple. On 5th September all these Idols were worshipped and bathed with water.

On 6th September, 1966 a huge procession was taken out. Avdyutji had taken the responsibility of the procession. Bishuddha had mixed color in a earthen pot and had drawn colored *rangoli* on the path from the main gate to the temple. Avdyutji was himself moistening Ma's towel and handing it over to Udas, Pushpa, etc said, 'Give it to Ma'. So that during the procession Ma may not suffer from the heat and dust of the roads. Avdyutji's respect, devotion, love and affection for Ma was quite hidden. He never displayed it externally. He had spread out petals of roses for Ma. He had also decorated few stools. Leading the procession on the first one was *Ganeshji*, followed by *Hanuman* in a meditative pose, after that *Devi Parvati* the daughter of Himalaya, then a troupe of *Radha-Krishna* surrounded by *Gopis*, then *Kaliyā-daman* (*Krishna* killing the snake demon), then King Indra sitting in his court of gods, after that *Shiva* in meditation with Ganga flowing into his locks of hair over his head. After that was the small 800 years old *Ganesh* Idol and the small *Radha-Krishna*. At the end of the procession were two beautifully decorated chariots, one consisting of the newly fabricated *Radha-Krishna* and the other *Chhaliyā*

with *Radha*. Some of the Brahmacharis of the Ashram walked holding metal umbrellas over the Idols while some flew the *Chāmar* over the Idols. After this were a group of band-party, then a group of *Vaishnavs* singing *kirtan* and finally Ashram Brahmacharinis and Brahmacharis singing Ashram *kirtan*. And finally adorning the procession was Shree Shree Ma along with the invited Mahatmas. Leading the procession was a group of *sadhus* from the local *Vaishnav Akhārā* were displaying their skill with swords and sticks. Seated on one elephant was the Vice-President of the Sangha Swami Bhagwatanandgiriji Maharaj. Ma, Didima, HariBaba, myself, and a few Mahatmas were riding in decorated cars. On Avdyutji's instructions the Ashram ladies and the Kanyapeeth girls were also travelling in cars. All the devotees, Avdyutji and Swami Akhandanandji were walking all the way. So that the people and devotees may not feel the heat of the day, due to Ma's *kripā* the weather had become quite cloudy. Occasionally it was drizzling like the falling of flowers. Almost three hours later the holy procession returned back to the Ashram. Several aged devotees claimed that they had never ever seen such a magnificent holy procession. After returning back the Idols were put in a shade and made to rest.

On the afternoon of 7th September the Idols were instilled with life in the Temple with full scriptural rites. In the night the birth celebration of the Idols were performed. Ma was keeping a complete watch over everything going around.

8th September, 1966. Today a *Nāmyagna (Nām-kirtan)* was held in the temple. *Kirtan* loving devotees of Delhi performed the *Mahamantra-kirtan* from dawn to dusk.

9th September, 1966. Today morning Ma went and sat down at the *Neemtalā* (in the shade of a huge *Neem* tree). Ma called this place '*ShriKrishna*'. Sitting here Ma started singing a *kirtan*, '*Krishna Chhaliyā Ānandalāl Braja Raman Prān Gopāl*'. This *kirtan* was then started by the ladies in the Temple Hall and continued for twenty-four hours.

Inside the new Temple there is wide corridor on three sides for taking *parikramā*. For the next few days Ma slept in this inner corridor of the *Chhaliyā* Temple. Occasionally Ma went to Her residence. On the seventh night after the installation of the Idols, Ma while lying down in the Temple corridor at around two in the night saw in subtle, the four recently installed Idols moving within the Temple Hall. Beckoning them Ma said, 'Listen! Are the four of you playing *Rās-leelā*'. That day at dawn Ma circumscribed the temples within the Hall singing '*Hari-bol Hari-bol*' *kirtan*. For the next few days the devotees attending

the *ushā-kīrtan* at five in the morning had the privilege of having Ma's *darshan* too. Which is usually not possible.

12th September, 1966. Today most of the devotees departed to their destination as they thought that Ma would retire to some isolated place to get some rest. But this was not the case. Ma could not go anywhere for a rest. Two consecutive *Bhāgwat-Saptāhs* were held.

15th September, 1966. Today commenced the *Bhāgwat-saptāh* of the royal family of Achrol (in Jaipur). Just after the completion of this another *Bhāgwat-saptāh* began for the peace of the soul of Ma's very old devotee Maharatan who had expired two years ago. His daughter Billo is a Brahmacharini of Ma's Ashram for the last twenty years. Shri Vishnu Ashramji was the exponent of this *Bhāgwat*. For the next seven days the audience enjoyed hearing the explanation of the *Bhāgwat* in his simple and sweetly spoken Hindi language. The *mool-pāth* was performed by a *pundit* in the morning. Shri Vishnu Ashramji expounded the *Bhāgwat* for two hours in the morning and for three hours in the afternoon. Ma was all the time seated in the hall during the *Bhāgwat kathā*, which was quite unusual during that period. In the evening quite a few *Mahatma's* and *Goswami's* arrived to have Ma's *darshan*. Ma spent one to two hours explaining the history of the Temple and about the *Chhaliyā* Idol and also listened to their devotional songs. The devotees attending the *Bhāgwat* were lucky enough to get Ma's *darshan* for long hours this time in Vrindavan.

29th September, 1966. Today on the occasion of the completion of the *Bhāgwat-Saptāh*, *yagna* was held at the *Neemtalā* and also *Prasād* was given to invited *sadhūs* and *Brahmins*. Being *Purnima* on that day, a devotee organized a *Satyanarayan-Pujā* and *Pāth* in the evening. Later everyone present were distributed the *Prasād* of this *Pujā*. Today it was suddenly decided that Ma would depart tomorrow along with DidiMa and a few others to Dehradun for a few days rest.

Ma visits various places

1st October, 1966. Today Ma reached Dehradun. On 5th October Ma suddenly departed for Hoshiarpur with only three people and stayed there for two days and three nights.

On the morning of 7th October Ma reached Delhi Ashram. DidiMa and others joined Ma in the Delhi Ashram. On the afternoon of 9th October Ma departed for Ahmedabad. Those who had stayed back in Vrindavan Ashram joined Ma in the train at the Mathura station. Staying in Ahmedabad for four days, Ma departed for Bombay on the morning of 14th October to attend this year's *Durgā-Pujā* being celebrated there.

Shree Shree Durgā-Pujā at Vile Parle, Bombay

14th October 1966. Today Ma arrived at Vile Parle, Bombay from Ahmedabad. As usual Ma stayed in 'Pagoda House' the residence of Shri B.K. Shah (Bhaiya). From 19th to 23rd October *Shree Shree Durgā Pujā* was held in a grand *Pandāl* erected in the back lawn of Bhaiya's house. The set of *Durgā* Idols was fabricated by an artist of Bombay itself. The Idols were truly beautiful and lively too. Along with the *Durgā* Idols, a 350 year old *Ganesh* Idol was also instilled with life with scriptural rites. From henceforth regular worship would be conducted on this *Ganesh* Idol. A similar *Ganesh* Idol was installed in September in the *Chhaliyā* Temple of Vrindavan Ashram.

Every day for six hours during this *Shārādiya Navrātri Ramayan-pāth* is held from *Mahalayā* to *Navami*. It is said that during this period *Shree Ram* after being victorious over the demon King Ravana, in order to please *Mā Durgā* had conducted this *Durgā Pujā*. Hence *Shārādiya Navrātri* is considered as the most appropriate time for conducting the *Ramayan-Pāth*. Every day evening the renowned artists of Bombay fascinated the spectators with their unique musical and vocal performances. On the *Navami* day, the famous singer Smt Lakshmi Shankar enthralled the spectators with her songs. Every night the ladies from Gujarat performed *Garbhā* dance in front of Ma. And Ma used to be present in all these functions and at the same time gave ample *darshan* and hence joy to the huge crowd of devotees arriving from different parts of the vast city of Bombay. On two days Swami Maheshwaranandji, the Mahamandaleshwar of the Sanyās Ashram in Vile Parle and Swami Akhandanandji from Vrindavan came to attend the *Durgā-Pujā*. Swami Maheshwaranandji gave a special discourse on *Shree Durgā*.

24th October 1966. Today on the occasion of *Vijaya Dashami*, the *Durgā* Idols were immersed in the Arabian Ocean at Juhu Beach, Bombay. Later in the evening the devotees paid their obeisance to Shree Shree Ma and also received *prasād* from Ma's hand.

Shree Shree Lakshmi Pujā in Pune

25th October 1966. Today Ma departed from Bombay and arrived at Ma's Pune Ashram. Here on 28th October after erecting a *Pandāl*, *Shree Shree Lakshmi Pujā* was celebrated with full pomp and gaiety.

Ma's unusual Leelā

On the night of *Lakshmi Pujā* Ma suddenly disappeared from the Ashram. Ma could not be found in Her room, nor in the *Pandāl*, nor anywhere in the Ashram. But Ma had also not gone out of the Ashram. The devotees became tense and worried on not being able to get Ma's *darshan*. However after som

time Ma was finally located. Ma was found sleeping in a wooden cot behind the Idol of Goddess *Lakshmi*. Brahmachari Nirvan was performing the night *Puja* of Goddess *Lakshmi*. The instant the worship was completed, Ma emerged from Her hiding place and laughingly said, 'One night Ma had a *kheyāl* that Ma should become One with Goddess *Lakshmi*'. Shri Dilip Kumar Roy had also arrived to attend the *Lakshmi Pujā*. Unable to have Ma's *darshan* he too was watching the function with a broken heart. But when Ma came out from Her hiding place everyone were excited and also enjoyed the *Pujā-prasād*.

29th October 1966. Today Shri Dilip Roy came to the Ashram and sang several songs to Ma. Today in Ma's presence the foundation rituals were conducted of Ma's new building. The garden full of flowers has also grown quite well. On 30th October Ma returned back to Bombay and on 2nd November night Ma departed for Bhopal.

3rd November, 1966. Today Ma arrived at the residence of Sir Dattar Singh (father of Kripalji and grandfather of Guneetadi), on the outskirts of Bhopal. In 1965, Sir and Lady Dattar had constructed a small Ashram for Ma in their land and it was inaugurated in Ma's presence. They had requested Ma to arrive at that Ashram again. A German devotee who was present during the inauguration of Ma's Ashram last year was present again this year in November in that secluded and quite environment and hence was lucky enough to have Ma's *darshan* again. Ma stayed in this quite environment for two days. Actually Ma had a *kheyāl* to leave on 4th. But on that day the train got delayed for quite a long time and hence to the joy of the Dattar family Ma stayed back for that day and departed on 5th November morning reaching Vrindavan in the evening.

***Kālī Pujā* in Delhi Ashram**

10th November, 1966. Ma had given word to be present in Delhi Ashram on 11th November for the *Kālī Pujā* and hence Ma departed today from Vrindavan to Delhi. On the way to the Delhi Ashram Ma gave *darshan* to Shri J.K. Birla who was seriously ill. Ma had an hectic schedule in the Delhi Ashram. Important personalities like Shri Gulzarilal Nanda (the Home Minister) and Smt Dr. Sushila Nayar (the Health Minister) had arrived for Ma's *darshan*. Pundit Shri Laxminarayan Chatterjee gave a lecture on *Shrimad Bhagwat Gitā* and *Tāntrik sādhanā* on two consecutive days. Ma returned back to Vrindavan on 12th November after blessing the devotees of Delhi during the *Kālī Pujā*.

***Annakut* function in Vrindavan Ashram**

13th November, 1966. Today in a very grand manner the *Goverdhan Annakut Pujā* was organized in the *Chhaliyā* Temple. *Daridra-narayan-seva* (feeding the poor) was also held. Ma had a special *kheyāl* during the cooking

of the *bhog* and kept a keen watch over the distribution of the *Annakut prasād*. The *Chhaliya Annakut prasād* was distributed to all in the Ashram and also to the *Goswamis*, *Sudhus* and others of Vrindavan.

***Sanyam Saptāh* in Vrindavan Ashram**

20th November, 1966. From today onwards till 26th November the annual *Sanyam Saptāh* was organized in Vrindavan Ashram. The participants started arriving a few days earlier from various places, like Delhi, Bombay, Kolkata, Lucknow, Varanasi, Dehradun, etc. The participants were almost twice than that of last year which was held in Hazaribagh. Ma had a *kheyāl* that the *Sanyam Saptāh* should be celebrated in a splendid manner. Hence all arrangements were perfectly done as Ma was tirelessly keeping a watch over each and everything. There was no way of avoiding anything from Ma's attention. Ma is always enthusiasing people regarding *sādhana*. Several invited Mahatmas had come to attend this function. Some of them stayed for the full seven days and some stayed for 2-3 days, but all of them educated and enriched the audience with their heartfelt scriptural knowledge and stories. Prominent among them were Mahamandaleshwar Swami Maheshwaranandji and Swami Krishnanandji from Bombay, Swami Akhandanandji from Vrindavan, Swami Vishnuashramji from Suktaal, the President of Divya Jeevan Sangha Swami Chiddanandji, Swami Shankaranandji from Manav Seva Sangh, Swami Krishnanand Avdyutji, Mahamandaleshwar Swami Chetangiriji from Kailash Ashram Rishikesh, Shri Yogesh Brahmachari from Kolkata, Shri Bhaktmaliji and Goswami Narsingh Vallabhji from Vrindavan. HariBabaji arrived daily but only on the last day sang *kirtan* and narrated the life history of one of his devotees. The orations were on various disciplines but important were on Vedanta and Vaishnav sect. Two points were very important among the discourses. One is that *Guru* is God Himself and one should surrender oneself full heartedly and have complete faith in him. And the second is that the joys of the material world are finite and finally leads one to sadness and despair.

* * * *

(to be continued)

It is He, verily, who manifests Himself in all temperaments and forms; whomsoever you may hate, you hate but your own Ishta (Lord). Anger, greed and the like must be altogether abandoned, Nor should you be swayed by praise and prestige.

- Ma Anandamayee.

Pādpeetham Smarāmi Kashi Ashram and Ma Annapurna

Brahmacharini Geeta

(continued from before)

Ma's instructions regarding the Kashi Ashram Land

Once, in order to board a train Shree Shree Ma and Gurupriya Didi were sitting in the waiting room of the Lucknow station. Ma saw a map of Varanasi hanging on a wall and a table beside it. Ma hurriedly climbed on to the table and pointing on the map on an area adjacent to the banks of Ganga between Assi and Bhadaini ghats, said, "Didi, this place is your Ashram". The subsequent incidents are ...

In the month of September 1942, Ma and few others in a boat, were moving northward along the Ganges in Kashi from the Assi ghat towards Dasaswamedh Ghat. Along with Ma were Brahmacharini Gurupriya Didi and Brahmachari Nepal Chakravorty (later known as Swami Narayan Tirth). The area between Tulsi ghat and Vatsyaraj ghat were not inhabited and there were dense vegetation here.

When the boat arrived opposite to the present Ashram, pointing at the Ashram land, Ma said, "What about that land?" Ma's unrivalled sevika Didi Gurupriya understood the inner meaning of Ma's statement and immediately decided to find out, whose land it was and who was its owner. When these questions were asked to the aged boatman, he replied, "This land belongs to Rai Shivprasad Agarwal the landlord of Lahartara. Because of certain debts it is in the hands of the Court of Wards, a legal body, and will be soon put up for sale."

After a lot of efforts and with Ma's infinite grace, Gurupriya Didi could manage to purchase this land for eighteen thousand rupees from the Court of Wards.

Shree Shree Ma's subtle observations on the Kashi Ashram Land

Regarding this land one day Ma informed Didi, "Saw seven *sadhus* telling me that this land should be yours." On a subsequent day saw them in an extremely joyful mood. Blowing the conch and other instruments they were gleefully dancing. Instantly understood that your work has been accomplished." On 13th January the land deed was registered and later it was purchased from the earlier owners.

Another day, Ma had said to Didi, "Saw on this land quite a few very fair *sadhus*, wearing white clothes and beckoning me just as you all say 'Ma, come here'. They had a very soft skin just like butter and had an exalted behaviour. There were ten *sadhus* and were calling me to mingle with them. Again one day saw them very very happy. Then This Body was just saying, 'So you all have finally acquired this land'." All these Ma had seen in subtle forms. Ma had also seen these *sadhus* dancing around Her joyfully. Ma further said, "Their bodies seemed to look like a bundle of rays of the full moon, completely sky-clad or *digambar*, with child-like emotions and tranceful eyes. All these illuminated men were dancing so innocently. The sounds of conchs and bells were also being heard. The emotions and countenance of these *sadhus* cannot be expressed in words." With Ma's instructions, the *Yagna-shālā* and the *yagna-kund* of the Varanasi Ashram have been built right over the area in the purchased Ashram land where Ma had seen these *sadhus* singing and dancing.

Regarding the area of the Kashi Ashram and the Hospital, Ma has further mentioned, "This land is situated as if on the vein of *erontrer*. Just like the gaps and veins of a leaf. And all these land which are above the this vein are important places of salvation. This land had a shape like that of the top of a turtle. It has also been heard that this land was once a cremation and burial ground." During the excavation of this ground far below two intact *Shiv-lingās* were also obtained, which are now installed in the *Annapurnā Mandir*. Vatsyraj ghat is one of the oldest ghats in Kashi. There was once an *akhādā* of a group of secluded *sadhus* here. There was also an ancient *Shiva* Temple here. It is also heard that Goswami Tulsidasji used to come here for bathing in the Ganges. There is no doubt that this land has a glorious past. Shree Shree Ma had seen in subtle several *sadhus* singing and dancing on this land and beckoning and requesting Ma to arrive on this land.

The first Shree Shree Bāsanti Pujā in Kashi Ashram

Shree Shree Ma first arrived in this pious Kashi Ashram on 6th February 1944. During the initial stages of the construction of the Ashram buildings a low stage was first constructed on the northern area. And on this very stage in 1944 during the *Chaitra Navrātri*, was performed the very first *Bāsanti Durgā Pujā* in the holy presence of Shree Shree Ma. A tin-shed room was constructed around the stage for the *Puja*. During this *Bāsanti Durgā Pujā* Ma stayed in the nearby Jain Temple. *Akhand-kīrtan* was held in this Ashram land for nine days before the commencement of this function. This stage is presently situated within the Chandi-Mandap and is still utilized for the annual *Chaitra Bāsanti Durgā Pujā* and other religious functions.

The second *Shree Shree Bāsanti Pujā* in Kashi Ashram

Within one year i.e. in 1945, due to the joint efforts of Swami Paramanandji and Gurupriya Didi, few Ashram buildings could be completed, in the north was the Chandi Mandap and in the south Ma Anandamayee Kanyapeeth. This year Ma first stayed in the Ashram in the Kanyapeeth building and most probably with the Kanyapeeth girls.

And hence in 1945 in Shree Shree Ma's presence, the second *Shree Shree Basanti Durgā Pujā* was held here during the *Chaitra Navratri*.

Transfer of *Ma Annapurna* Idols from Dhaka to Kashi

In 1946 due to an agitation by the Muslims of Dhaka, the residents of Shree Shree Ma's Ramna Ashram became terrified. The auspicious idol of Ma Annapurna is the living replica of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee. Wherever Ma Annapurna resides there She protects the devotees and pilgrims and also maintains the spiritual environment of that area. Hence everyone thought that it will be most appropriate to install this Ma Annapurna Idol in the esteemed spiritual centre of India i.e. in Kashi. Within a few days of this movement the Muslim leaders sent their hoodlums to capture the Hindus and to forcefully seize their properties. An ardent devotee of Ma, Shri Manmohan Ghosh, the steward or managing engineer of Dhaka University became trapped in that critical area. A few days later, after receiving Ma's instructions on one day he (Mona'da) suddenly abandoned Dhaka with his family and after staying for a night in Ramna Ashram departed for Kashi. The caretakers of Ramna Ashram handed over to him a letter requesting for the transfer of Ma Annapurna Idol to Kashi.

In 1947 Ma was in Kashi Ashram during the commencement of the three year long auspicious *Savitri Yagna*. The fire for this *Yagna* was brought from Dhaka quite some time ago. Long time ago in Dhaka on Ma's instructions the *yagna* fire after the *Ma Kali Puja* was not put-off. Holding this fire In Her Hands Ma danced and said, "You will see! This fire will be utilized for a great *Yagna*!" Several years' later only, people understood the meaning of Ma's words when the great *Sāvitri Yagna* was started here in Kashi Ashram.

During that period respected Yogibhai and Rani-Sahiba were also present in Kashi Ashram. On hearing about the Muslim movement in Dhaka they pleaded before Ma that the prestigious Ma Annapurna Idol in the Dhaka Ashram should be brought here as soon as possible in order to save it and to install it here with the appropriate rituals. Actually Shree Shree Ma only had inspired them to say all this. In the meantime the Ramna Ashram caretaker's letter had also reached Kashi through Mona'da. Ma sent Yogesh Brahmachari to Kolkata along with a young devotee, a resident of Kolkata.

In Kolkata after purchasing a metal trunk Yogesh' da along with Sisir Guha reached Ramna Ashram in Dhaka. A photo of Ma Annapurna was installed in the place where the Idol was installed. After keeping some clothes within that trunk the five idols (of Vishnu, Shiva, Ma Annapurna, Ma Kali and Ganesh) and the throne and the hanging shade were all packed in that trunk. Along with these were also packed in the trunk, few utensils for offering *bhog*, few utensils for performing worship and the *Narayan-shilā* given by Didima. Sweets, ganga water, agarbatti etc were also arranged for offering *bhog* during the travel. In this manner Ma Annapurna arrived secretly in the pious land of Kashi. There were just no problems on the way. On 27th July 1947 *Ma Annapurnā* was installed ceremoniously in the Kashi Ashram. After this the *Ma Dhakeswari* Idol in Dhaka was also transferred to Kolkata. On Ma's instructions the marble statue of Baba Bholanath and the *Narmadeshwar Shiva-linga* were also transferred and installed in Ma's Ashram in Ekdalia Road, Kolkata. Both of these are presently installed in Ma's Agarpara Ashram. Initially the *Ma Annapurnā* Idol was kept in Kashi Ashram near the Ganges and later in a room (Yogibhai's room) in the third floor.

The *Yagnashālā* in Kashi Ashram

At the central point of the Ashram plot, on Ma's instructions a *Yagnashālā* was constructed and with the sole object of universal welfare the *Sāvitrī* (or *Gāyatrī*) *Mahayagna* was organized from 14th January 1947 (*Makar Sankrānti* or *Paush Sankrānti*) to 14th January 1950 (*Makar Sankrānti*).

Due to the sincere and dedicated efforts of Mona' da (Shri Manmohan Ghosh) a beautiful *yagna-kutir* with a *yagna-kund* inside was constructed right at the place (the centre of the Ashram) as hinted by Ma. Actually initially, Ma had instructed Mona' da to locate this centre point, but Mona' da politely requested Ma to depict that point. One day Ma stood at that area and said, "Where is *Baba*? Wasn't *Baba* asking something?" Mona' da exclaimed, "Ma, it has been answered." During the construction it was measured and found that the spot where Ma stood and questioned was actually the centre of the Ashram plot.

The dimension of the *yagna-shala* is a square of 16 feet and that of the *yagna-kund* is a square of 10 feet. The *yagna-kund* is 15 finger-width higher than the floor level of the *yagna-shālā*.

Observing the newly constructed *yagna-shālā* and *yagna-kund*, Ma had said, "Such a perfect and over-all beautiful *yagna-kund* is rarely observed." On this beautiful *yagna-shala Akhand Mahayagna* was celebrated by offering oblations of one crore *Gāyatrī-mantrās* in a three year long period without

stopping the *yagna* for a single day, an un-rivaled incident of Varanasi. Long time ago, a question had emerged from Shree Shree Ma's lips, "Is one crore of oblations possible?" And hence a pledge was made for completing one crore of oblations.

In 1978, on Ma's instructions the old *yagna-shālā* was reconstructed into the present form. The inner *yagna-kund* is still the same untouched *kund* on which the *Akhand Mahayagna* was performed. There are a few important incidents regarding this *Akhand Mahayagna*.

(a) During the forty's decade Ma was in Vindhyachal Ashram. Fire from Dhaka had been brought here and kept ignited in a *yagna-kund* and daily *yagna* was also performed with it. One day a person by the name of Mahadev Malviya arrived in the Ashram and requested Ma with great enthusiasm, "Ma, why don't you perform the *Sāvītri Mahayagna*? When You even have the capacity to do it." Smiling sweetly Ma had said, "If *Yajneswar* has to appear in a special form, then that too will occur."

(b) In the beginning of 1944, land was purchased for an Ashram in Kashi. During that period Swami Karpatriji had started an immense *Yagna* near Assi ghat in Kashi. Ma arrived in Kashi to witness that *Yagna* and stayed in a *Bujrā* on the river Ganga. One evening Sadhan Brahmachari requested Ma, "We too should perform a *Yagna*. Hearing this Nepal Brahmachari (Narayan Swamiji) said, "If a *yagna* is performed than I can lifelong stay attached with the *yagna*. Ma said, "Let's see what *Yajneswar* wishes." In this manner the anticipation of this great *Yagna* began.

(c) There was a huge mango tree within the premises of the Vindhyachal Ashram. Quite often *Matri satsang* used to occur below this very tree. GurupriyaDi writes in her book '*Akhand Mahayagna*' that, in their next visit they found the mango tree lying uprooted on the ground. The lower portion of the tree was completely hollow. Just as the soul of a *Mahatma* departs from the gross body for the heavenly journey by piercing through the soft spot on the top of the head, similarly the soul of this tree must have pierced through its trunk and departed for heaven. Ma went near the tree and caressed it. Observing this everyone accompanying Ma, bowed down in obeisance to the lying tree. Ma said to GurupriyaDi and others, "Keep aside few logs of this tree." Needless to say that it was a few years after this incident when *Sāvītri Mahayagna* commenced and when fire was brought from Dhaka, then these logs of wood were first offered as oblation in the *yagna* fire. Also the very spot Ma had seen the *rishis* dancing and singing, on that very spot this *yagna-shālā* has been constructed.

Akhand Sāvitrī Mahayagna

As mentioned earlier, this *Mahayagna* commenced on 14th January 1947. Shri Agnisvāt Shashtri was appointed as the *Āchārya*, Shri Nepal Chakravorty as *Jajmān*, Brahmachari Katmlakant and Brahmachari Sadanand as *Hota* of the *Mahayagna*.

Shri Biseshwar Bhattacharya was appointed as *Jyāpak*. Right from the beginning, whenever there was a crisis for any of the items required for the *Mahayagna*, with the divine *kheyāl* of the crisis remover Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee, the crisis used to get solved and surprisingly the required items were also obtained easily. Pure *ghee* used to arrive from the dairy's of Gujarat. The very help obtained from unknown sources either financially or materialistically was itself an indication of this divine *Mahayagna*.

On Ma's instructions all categories of Brahmins were invited for having *bhog-prasād*. A total of almost ten thousand Brahmins were offered *prasād*, which was an historical event for the city of Kashi. Daily almost two thousand devotees had *bhog-prasād* in the Ashram. By this itself one can imagine the immensity of this ceremony. On the culmination day of this ceremony several enlightened *Mahatmas* had arrived from the Girikandar region of the Himalayas. Foremost among them were Shree 108 Devi Giriji Maharaj, 108 Swami Triveni Puriji Maharaj, Shree 108 Swami Krishnānand Avdyutji Maharaj (Punjab), Shree 108 Swami Haribabaji Maharaj (Vrindavan), Shree 108 Swami Prabhudatji Maharaj (Jhūnsi), Shree 108 Swami Akhandānand Saraswatiji Maharaj (Vrindavan), Shree Chakrapāniji Maharaj (Vrindavan), Shree 108 Swami Sharanānandji Maharaj (Vrindavan), Shree 108 Gopal Thakur (Allahabad), etc.

In an enchanting manner on the bank of the River Ganga like the very kingdom of King Indra, in Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashram, with the melodious sounds of the conchs and bells and the hailing of the devotees, in the divine presence of Shree Shree Ma and the visiting saints, on 14th January (*Paush Sankrānti*) 1950 after the completion of oblation of one crore of *Gāyatri mantrās*, the *Sāvitrī Mahayagna* came to an end. This is an incredible incident to be remembered in the history of Varanasi. During that period of three years most probably every resident of Kashi must have witnessed this function. Till today in an uninterrupted manner oblation is performed in this *yagnakund*.

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(to be continued)

Be truthful in every way. Without purity one cannot advance towards Divinity.
--- Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee



Shree Shree Ma with Ananda-Gopalji in the ChandiMandap Courtyard along with Didima and Gurupriya Didi in Varanasi Ashram (1954). (ChandanDi sitting on the left)



Shree Shree Ananda-Gopalji sitting majestically in the Smriti Mandir above the Chandi Mandap, Varanasi Ashram (1954)



Shree Shree Ma, Didima and sick Gurupriya Didi (1956)
on the steps of Kanyapeeth, Varanasi Ashram



Shree Shree Ma and Gurupriya Didi alongwith the senior Didis of Kanyapeeth during
Shree Shree Basanti Puja (1969) in Varanasi Ashram. (ChandanDi is also present.)

Reminiscence of my proximity with Ma

Brahmacharini Bishuddha

(continued from before)

Gopalji accumulated several items including golden ornaments, silver utensils, sweets, etc. (by asking) from various people. I thought whether I would be asked to give something. *Gopalji* was then installed in the *Smriti Mandir* besides the *Annapurnā Mandir*. The sandalwood throne was not yet fabricated. I was not keeping well with insomnia and stomach pain. In the meantime I dreamt

I went to the *Smriti Mandir* and saw *Gopalji* shivering from cold as there were no clothes on His body. I quickly picked up *Gopalji* on my arms and He too clung to my body with His legs wrapped around my waist and the arms wrapped around my neck. I covered *Gopalji* with a portion of my clothing's and somehow carried the heavy *Gopalji* to our *Pujā* room on the third floor of Kanyapeeth and said to the girls there, "Immediately give me a throne". I saw several thrones lying vacant there. Pointing at one, they said, "Put *Gopalji* on this throne". I replied, "Can't you see, *Gopalji* is so big, He will not fit in that throne. Remove Ma's photo from the big throne, *Gopalji* will sit there." So saying I woke up and my dream vanished. I wondered, 'How can Ma's throne be given, we sometimes decorate Ma's photo and only that throne is big enough to accommodate Ma's photo. I will not tell anyone of my dream. Because, if Ma hears about it, then Ma will give it to *Gopalji*'. I also begged forgiveness from *Gopalji* for not being able to give what He wanted from me. Few years later a sandalwood throne was constructed for *Gopalji* and on the day of *Janmāshṭami*, in a grand function, *Gopalji* was seated in that new throne. I always felt hurt on remembering that dream and hence one day told the whole story to Dadabhai. She replied, "Don't worry, *Gopalji* has received a more expensive throne than that you were offering."

On Ma's *kheyāl* Dadabhai had built this Kanyapeeth and hence fooding, lodging, education, results, etc. of the inmate girls of the Kanyapeeth was subject to Ma's supervision. Billoji (Km. Swarnkumari Jaspal) used to stay with the girls from early morning to late in the night and used to note down in a register a 'tick' or a 'cross' against every field of action taken by the inmates, indicating whether each work was done properly or not. When Ma used to arrive in Kashi,

Billoji used to show that register to Dadabhai and accordingly Dadabhai used to call the girls in front of Ma and inform their results. Ma used to explain the fault to us and how to rectify it, if required scolded us and dictated a suitable punishment too. Sometimes the younger girls had to hold their ears and do push-ups too. But Ma's push-ups were a bit different. Ma used to say, "Rām one, Rām two, Rām three...", in this manner perform the push-ups." That is repeating the name of God (*Ram*) along with the punishment. One of the main punishments given by Ma to the elder girls was five thousand times *japa* of God's name and if the punishment was severe, then ten thousand times.

Ma had a special *kheyāl* for the education of the Kanyapeeth girls. (Elder) GangaDi (*Boro-GangaDi*) was a *Panchtirth* in Sanskrit language. Hence after her arrival, she taught Sanskrit grammar to the girls and they became fascinated with grammar and passed the *Aadya*, *Madhya*, etc exams easily. (Elder) GangaDi used to take the girls appearing for exams to Kolkata for their exams. Besides RenuDi and Billo'ji taught English. KshamaDi taught History, Maths, Bengali language, etc. During that period there was facility in Shantiniketan Viswabharati University for appearing for the exams, *Aksharikā*, *Prāthmiki*, etc, in Sanskrit.

When (Elder) GangaDi left Kanyapeeth, then on KshamaDi's request BubaDi invited the retired Sanskrit pundit Shri Trayambakam Atmaram (Bhandarkar for teaching in Kanyapeeth. He had just retired from the Rajghat Basant School in Rajghat, Kashi. Punditji was an *Āchārya* (M.A.) in three Sanskrit subjects and also had a M.A. degree in Sanskrit. Punditji's name will be ever remembered in Kanyapeeth for his expert knowledge, teaching capability, humble and polite behaviour and tendency for being affectionate. Punditji was an expert in composing Sanskrit *ślokas* instantly. Among the Kanyapeeth students Sati'di, Chandan'di, Jaya, Geeta, Guneeta, Gouri, and myself feel proud to be his students, when we were young. It was under his teaching and guidance the Kanyapeeth girls learnt to give speeches in Sanskrit and win prizes in Sanskrit competition organized by the Ramkrishna Mission. Punditji taught us the Vedas. It is difficult to find a generous person like Punditji. He remained as a teacher in Kanyapeeth till he breathed his last in the Ma Anandamayee Hospital.

With the keen efforts of Ma's old devotees and professors in BHU (Benaras Hindu University) Dr (Smt) Padma Mishra and Dr. (Smt) Bithika Mukherjee, the present education system was started in Kanyapeeth. Shree Shree Anandamayee Kanyapeeth School became a recognized institution under the Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya (presently called as Sampurnanand Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya). And the girls of Kanyapeeth appeared for the exams conducted

by V.S.V like, *Prathmā*, *Mudhymā*, *Shāshtri* and *Āchārya*. On Ma's instructions even though I was not keeping good health I appeared for I.A. (Inter-Arts), B.A. and M.A. and with Ma's *kripā* passed these exams too.

Before the B.A. exams I was too ill and weak and hence I was questioned whether I could sit for the exams. I was determined to give the exams this time, otherwise I would have to study again for the whole year and give the exams next year. I never ever liked studying. Hence observing my determination and obtaining Ma's permission Bithu'di took me to her quarters in BHU, as my exams were in BHU itself. The affection and support of Bithu'di, Padma'ji and the other teachers of the Women's College can never be forgotten. Even while sitting for the exams I had to drink orange juice and take 'coramine' tablets to strengthen my weak body. Well with Ma's immense *kripa* I completed the exams and returned back to Kanyapeeth. When the results came out, Ma and Dadabhai were in Kashi. My name was within the first twenty candidates. A Kanyapeeth student had passed the B.A. exams for the first time, Dadabhai was extremely pleased and ordered a tin full of *Rasagollas* (a sweet) and after offering to Ma, distributed to one and all. I was happy that everyone was happy and that I had at last become free from studies. However this was not fated. The teachers who had taught me economics and ancient Indian culture, Dr. Radharani Chowdhury and Dr. Manorama Verma, came near Ma and after praising me requested for my higher studies. So, Ma called Dadabhai and said to make arrangements for my M.A. classes. Again I had to sit down with a pile of books and after studying under the expert guidance of Manorama'ji and Bhandarkar'ji I finally passed the M.A. exams in ancient Indian history, culture & architecture. So finally I was free from studies.

When we went near Ma for getting blessings before the Exams, Ma used to say, "Study well, pass well." Again on passing well, Ma used to say, "Get entangled in the world." That is, if we pass well, naturally an ego arises within us, and this ego binds us to this world. Of course it is essential to pass all the exams of this world, but being cautious from the knots of ego arising after passing well, should be the aim of an Ashramite. Ma always advised this.

One of Ma's foreign devotees presented a Akai 4-track portable tape recorder to Ma. Panu'da handed over that to me and said, "Try and see whether you can play it or not." I had not yet played any tape recorder. However I studied the literature of the machine and was able to play it too. Hence on Dadabhai's instructions this machine was kept with me. There was a bigger tape recorder in the Ashram, kept with Kamal'da. Carrying the tape

recorder in its bag, I went along with Ma and recorded Ma's dialogues and songs. One day several of us were sitting in Ma's second floor room and Ma was conversing quite happily with us. As usual I sat down near Ma's cot and started recording Ma's conversations. Since the mike was hidden within the palms of my hand it was not possible for anyone to understand that recording was going on. I thought that on seeing it Ma's mood may change and hence I recorded secretly. After quite some time in between the conversations, Ma with Her head tilted towards me, signaled me whether I was recording or not? Smilingly I immediately switched off the tape. Even some of the people in the room requested me to stop recording. Then Ma said, "When This Body says something, how much had reached your ears, how much has been recorded in the machine and how much has vanished into thin air, all of it clearly depends on *kheyāl*."

* On that very year the fortnightly *Bhāgwat-Kathā*, a huge function, was being held in Naimisharanya Ashram. An expert in *Bhāgwat* Swami Akhandanandji was to expound the *Bhāgwat*. Ma informed me to record the complete *Bhāgwat* in the tape recorder. In the beautifully decorated stage, seating arrangements were made for the arriving *Mahatmas* and also for the *Vyās-āsana* or *Vyās-gaddi*, the decorated cot enthroning the *Bhāgwat* from where Swami Akhandanandji would elucidate the *Bhāgwat-Kathā*. On the first day itself, Ma instructed me to sit behind the *Vyās-āsana* and record the exposition. Ma told Dadabhai to sit nearby and also informed Akhandanandji of our motive. So daily recording was done on both the sessions. One day in the evening after the end of the *Bhāgwat-pāth*, I did *pranām* to all and had just stood up when Ma came near Akhandanandji and said, "*Pitaji*, this is Bishuddha, a Kanyapceth student, has passed the M.A. exams." Akhandanandji asked me, "Have you done M.A. in Sanskrit?" I replied, "No, Swamiji, in Ancient Indian Culture." Ma also said, "No, *Pitaji*, not in Sanskrit, this is the only grief." Ma informed him of my other qualities. I bowed down, finished my *pranām* and departed. Later Pushpa'di while discussing said, "Bishuddha did not give M.A. in Sanskrit, and Ma has said, 'There is a grief'. But Ma is above human qualities of happiness and sadness, Bishuddha does not like to study at all, then whose grief it is?" I was terrified with the thought that I would be asked to study again. And that only happened. Hearing these words of Ma, Dadabhai came to Kashi and calling Padma'ji and Bhandarkar'ji informed them to make arrangements for Bishuddha to give M.A. exams in Sanskrit.

My classes started again with a pile of books, now in Sanskrit.

* * * *

(to be continued)

Compassionate Shree Shree Ma's *Aheytuki Kripā*

Sw. Narayananand Tirth

(continued from before)

Shree Shree Ma's Kashi Ashram

With Shree Shree Ma's infinite grace and with the untiring selfless efforts of Swami Paramanandji Maharaj the Kashi Ashram had grown into a beautiful picturesque abode on the banks of the River Ganga. And in this beautiful place, the Supreme affectionate and compassionate Shree Shree Ma frequently told me to reside permanently in the Ashram. But I was just not agreeing to stay there. Because I knew very well that I did not have the requisite capability to become an Ashramite. My only desire was to stay independently according to my own requirements. Because I knew that personal privacy can never be protected in any private institution.

Also during that period regarding an Ashram problem a difference of opinion arose between me and Didi Gurupriya Devi. Hence one day right in front of Shree Shree Ma, after explaining, I handed over all the documents of the Ashram land and the bank passbooks to Didi and said, "From today onwards I will not get involved in any work of the Ashram." In reply Didi said, "If someone does not want to involve himself in any job of the Ashram, then we too do not want to maintain any relation with him." I then remarked, "Perfect. I too will not maintain any connection with you all. From today itself I am discarding all relation with you all. But one thing has to be noted, even if I am not involved in any work of the Ashram, my relation with Ma will never get broken. A permanent relation always exists between Mother and Her children - whether of this life or the next - that relation or bonding never ever gets detached."

After this unpleasant situation I discarded all relationship with the Ashram. Yes, whenever I got the news of Ma's arrival in Kashi, I ofcourse went to have Ma's *darshan*. Though I never contacted anyone in the Ashram, sometimes I had to leave the Ashram after hearing harsh words from someone or the other. Because of this my interest in Shree Shree Ma's *darshan* also gradually diminished. So finally when Ma used to come to Kashi, I did not go for Ma's *darshan*. But this separation was so agonizingly painful for me that I cannot explain it in mere words. I just could not remain without remembering Ma.

Ma's every mood and movement and words etc., continuously flooded my thoughts. And because of this it was difficult for me to live normally.

Later when the Kanyapeeth building was finally constructed, one day before the inauguration and *griha-pravesh* (piously entering the new house), Ma sent two of Her sons (Shri Harlal Chattopadhyay and Shri Bisheshwar Bhattacharya) with a message to my residence that I should reach the Ashram alongwith my *Narayan-Shila* during the function. But I informed the two devotees, "Since I have no relation with the Ashram, I do not feel my presence is required for any function of the Ashram. However I am extremely sad for not being able to respect Ma's instructions, I hope Ma will pardon this disobedient and spoilt child of Her."

The next day i.e. on the day of the function at around eight in the morning Shree Shree Ma's specially graced and senior-most Ashramite Swami Paramanandji Maharaj arrived at my residence. I was then residing in Munshighat in Bengalitola. He said, "Ma has arrived to take you back to the Ashram, Ma is sitting in a boat on the banks of the river Ganga. Ma Herself was coming here to invite you. But I requested Ma, 'Ma! it will be tiresome for You to climb up so many steps. I will go and inform him about Your arrival, still if he does not agree then You may go Yourself.' Now you please come along with me with your *Narayan-shila*. If you do not come along with me then Ma will have to come here climbing all those steep stairs of the *ghat* with great difficulty. Now you tell what you want. I will go and inform that to Ma.

I seemed to have fallen in deep trouble. I have never ever dreamt that *Jagat Janani Ma* (The Universal Mother) will Herself arrive at the doorsteps of this unwanted ill-fated child of Hers, and that too to escort him back to the Ashram. I felt extremely annoyed with myself. How to confront Ma, I wondered. Immediately I picked up my *Narayan* and proceeded with Swamiji to the boat.

At the Ghat, I saw Shree Shree Ma along with Didi Gurupriya Devi waiting for me in the boat. Before I could say anything, Ma started smiling at me. Boarding the boat I went towards Ma and bent down and handed over the throne with *Narayan-shila* onto Ma's extended Palms. Ma placed the *Narayan* onto Her lap and the boat departed for its destination back to the Ashram. At the precise mentioned pious time Ma first entered the newly constructed building and after that all of us present followed Her. For a few days this *Narayan-Shaligram* stayed in the Ashram and then returned back to its initial residence, my house at Munshi-ghat. I too returned back to my residence.

In the month of October in 1946, ShriDurga Singhji, the Raja of Solan, or-

ganized the *Shāradyā Shree Shree Durgā Pujā* in a royal manner in his palace in Solan. To fulfill the prayers and request of ShriDurga Singhji, Shree Shree Ma accompanied with Her devotees departed from Kashi. Just before the departure to Solan, Ma instructed me to go along with Her. Because of my financial condition and the quarrel with Didi I just did not have any desire to go along with them. But because of Ma's continuous request I had to silently go along with Her. On the evening of *Shashthi Pujā* I was having *darshan*, standing in front of *Ma Durgā*. Ma had selected Shri Bisheshwar Bhattacharya (Bishu) as the main *pujari* and had brought him along from Kashi. Bishu suddenly came near me and said, "Ma is calling you." On asking where Ma is, he replied, "Ma is present in the corner room on the northern side." I hurriedly went there and found only Didi Gurupriya standing along with Ma and discussing something. The moment I went near Ma, without saying anything Ma caught my hand and Didi Gurupriya's hand in Her two hands separately and said, "From today onwards both of you will stay like brother and sister as was the situation earlier. Forget whatever has happened in the past." So saying, Ma's eyes were filled with tears. Both of us without saying anything, *pronāmed* Ma, by lying down flat on the ground and agreed to what Ma had mentioned. In this manner Shree Shree Ma removed all conflicts between both of us. So, now I understood why Ma hurriedly instructed me to accompany Her to Solan.

When the Chandi Mandap portion of the Ashram was constructed in 1964, on the first floor when a room, a temple and a kitchen for preparing *bhog* for *Narayanji*, was finalized, Shree Shree Ma instructed me to permanently come and stay there with *Narayanji*. On objecting to this summon, one day in front of me, Ma said to Swami Paramanandji, "See Paramanand! When he is not going to stay in the Ashram with *Narayan*, then what is the necessity to keep the Temple? Break it down." Hearing this I felt as if Ma was a bit unsatisfied with my behaviour. Hence on Shree Shree Ma's instructions on Monday 2nd *Agrahan 1353* (18th November 1946) along with *Shree Shree Narayanji* this spoilt child of Ma permanently became an Ashramite. After this action the gloominess within myself decreased a lot. This *Shāligrām-Narayan-Shilā* is still present and installed in the *Shree Shree Ma Annapurna Mandir* of Shree Shree Ma's Kashi Ashram. For the regular worship and care of *Narayanji* I had donated Rupees two thousand in a corpus account of the Ashram. Being not connected with the Ashram management, like earlier times, I started living independently in the first floor room of the *Chandi-Mandap* in the Ashram and had *prasād* after *bhog* was offered to all the Deities.

The *leelā* of untouchability

Right from the beginning of the establishment of the Kashi Ashram, every year during the spring (*Basant-kāl*) Shree Shree *Bāsanti Durgā Pujā* is celebrated. During this function sometimes Ma is present and sometimes not. Once, Ma was present during this function at Kashi. On the forenoon of *Maha-Ashtami* day, the devotees had sat down to have *prasād*. The supremely compassionate Shree Shree Ma was Herself serving *Ma Durga's prasād* to the seated devotees. The devotees started hailing Shree Shree Ma's name and accepted with full devotion and joy this most fortunate *maha-prasād*. After that Ma, climbed the stairs of the Kanyapeeth and distributed this *maha-prasād* on the palms of Didi Gurupriya and then to the Kanyapeeth girls. And all of them raised their hands in devotion to their heads and then ate it. Shree Shree Ma after that proceeded to the main gate of the Ashram and sat down on the ground. Observing Ma distributing the *maha-prasād*, very politely I asked Ma, "Ma! Why have I been deprived of this *maha-prasād* today?" Immediately Ma took a small bit of the *maha-prasād* and dropped it in my open mouth. Then called Swami Paramanandji and fed him the same too.

What to expect next! All the people present there, immediately rushed towards Ma with their open mouths and Ma started dropping bits of *maha-prasād* into their mouths. Besides the devotees even the boatmen moving outside the Ashram were fortunate enough to get the *maha-prasād* from Ma into their open mouths. One of the early brahmacharis of the Ashram and the first disciple of Respected Didima, Shri Hiru (later known as Swami Tanmoyananda) came and stood before Ma. What was he thinking I do not know, but he took a small bit of that *maha-prasād* and offered it at the mouth of the Universal Mother, and Ma without any hesitation gulped it. It has to be mentioned here that the *maha-prasād* had been touched by people of all castes and creed. Dr. Gopal Prasad Dasgupta, devoted and loyal son of Shree Shree Ma frequently complained in sorrow that the rule of untouchability is too much in Ma's Ashrams. He was staying very near to the Ashram. Hence Ma sent another of Her devoted and loyal son Shri Potol'bhāi (Shri Satyendra Kumar Basu) to bring him here to witness this *Shree Shree Jagannāth dhām leelā*. But he had fallen asleep after his afternoon meals and hence it was not possible for him to witness this play of untouchability.

Just as on one hand Ma strictly safeguards the system of casteism on the other hand Ma just does not hesitates or feels hurt to break it as and when required. To demonstrate that only this incident was enacted here. With Ma creation and dissolution are both the same.

Shree Shree Sāvītri Mahayagna in Ma's Kashi Ashram

Within a month of becoming an Ashramite of the Kashi Ashram, I heard that from the forthcoming *Paush Sankrānti* day in 1353 (14th January 1947) *Shree Shree Sāvītri Mahayagna* would commence on the banks of the River Ganga in Shree Shree Ma's Kashi Ashram. And I was completely bewildered when I heard that Ma had appointed this son of Hers as the *yajmān* (host) of the this great *Mahayagna*. I had objected on this selection several times but no one listened to my cries. Shree Shree Ma's wish was finally accepted. Ma's *kheyāl* is flawless. Whatever Ma says or wishes (*kheyāl*) that has to be fulfilled. Hence being the *yajmān* (host) of this *Sāvītri Maha-yagna*, *āhuti* (oblation) of one crore *Gāyatri mantras* (*Sāvītri* is another name of *Gāyatri*) were resolved in my name. As we all know that one crore of oblations, each time repeating the *Gāyatri mantra* is not an easy job and hence it was clear that this would be a long-lasting grand event.

Right in the center of the ashram premises a cemented square platform sixteen hands by sixteen hands and one hand high was constructed. This was the *yagna-mandap*. There were ornamented arches on the four sides of the *mandap*. And in the center of the *mandap* a huge *yagna-kund* was constructed. Under the earnest supervision of Shri Manmohan Ghosh (a retired civil engineer of Dhaka University) an old and ardent devotee of Ma, this *yagna-mandap* and *yagna-kund* were constructed keeping into account all the scriptural rules.

On the south-east corner of the platform was installed *Shree Ganesh* and a set of sixteen symbols, on the south-west corner was installed God *Vāstu*, on the north-west corner was installed symbol of 64 *yoginis* and their Guard, on the north-east corner was installed God *Rudra* (*Shiva*) and the symbols of Nine-planets. At the centre of the eastern and north-eastern part of the platform was kept a pot and on that was installed a golden *Shree Shree Gayatri Devi* Idol.

After completing the ritualistic worship of the regular Gods and the installed Gods & Goddesses, the four *Vedas* were chanted below the four arches of the *mandap*. The fire that was brought here from Dhaka was installed in the *yagna-kund* by the lotus hands of the *Mahashakti-roopini* Shree Shree Ma, amidst the sounds of various musical instruments. This fire was safely protected and taken care of for the last twenty-five years in Ma's Ashram in Dhaka. The brahmacharis daily offered oblation onto this fire kept in a *yagna-kund*. Beautifully decorated with silk flags and colored streamers, the *yagna-mandap* was truly a wonderful thing to be gazed all the time.

The *Ācharya* or *purohit* (worshipper) of the this grand *yagna* was Shri Agnishbatta Shastri, an expert in *Vedās*. In Kashi he is widely known as 'Batuda'.

For this *yagna*, representing *Brahma* was none other than Shri Kamlakant Bandyopadhyay, a very old devotee of Ma and the first Brahmachari of Shree Shree Ma's Ashram. From the period when Ma arrived in Dhaka, he had surrendered himself at the lotus-feet of Shree Shree Ma and has been staying with Ma busy in *sādhanā*. Shri Sadanand Chakravorty was selected as the *sadasya* (member) of the *yagna*.

Every morning all the deities installed in the *yagna-mandap* were worshipped first and after that with the requisite *yagna* materials while uttering the *Gāyatri mantra* oblation was offered into the burning fire in the *yagna-kund*. The *yagna* materials for oblation consisted of *til*, *jah*, *chaawal*, *ghrit*, *chini*, and *panch-mewa* (i.e. *badam*, *pista*, *kismis*, *kaju*, *akhrot*, *makhana*). Initially the *yagna* began with only three *hotaas* (*yagna* pundits), i.e. *brahma*, *sadasya*, *jajmaan*. So only three thousand oblations were offered and three thousand *Gāyatri mantras* were uttered in a day. Gradually as donations for the *yagna* increased so also the number of *hotaas* increased. Finally the number of *hotaas* increased to sixteen and sixteen thousand oblations and sixteen thousand *Gāyatri mantras* were uttered in a day. All the *hotaas* were Brahmin bachelors of the Ashram. According to compassionate Shree Shree Ma's special instructions during each oblation I had to keep in mind that – I am offering myself as oblation in this burning fire. And I tried my best to fulfill this order of Ma. While the oblations were going on in the *yagna-shālā*, a Brahmin ashramite sat on one corner performing *Gāyatri-japa*. The aim of this was to compensate a wrong pronunciation of the *Gāyatri-mantra* while performing the *Gāyatri* oblations. Every evening after the conclusion of the oblations, according to the scriptures, *Gāyatri-Devi* was offered *ārti* and finally the *hotaas* had to perform *Gāyatri-japa* of the exact number of oblations performed on that day. All these were conducted according to Ma's instructions.

Special *bhog* and oblations were offered to *Shree Shree Gāyatri-Devi* during *amavasyā*, *purnimā* and *sankrānti*. If Ma was present in Kashi during *sankrānti* then Ma Herself made all the arrangements for the special *bhog*. Ma has several times mentioned, "God is alive here. You all are so lucky to have obtained the responsibility to take care of Her. In how many people's lives does this opportunity occurs?" Ma also arrived sometimes in the morning during the oblations and gave encouragement and joy to the *hotaas*. If Ma observed any faults in our performance, Ma immediately rectified it. Ma also kept a keen interest in the welfare of the participants of the *yagna*. Ma's foremost aim here was that this special *Yagna* be performed precisely and flawlessly.

Commentary on the Bhagavad Gita

Sri Chinmoy

(continued from before)

The most secret knowledge is the Supreme Knowledge. It cannot be imparted to anyone. It has to be realized. This supreme secret is already written in the innermost recesses of the divinely human heart. It rejects none, not even the one who is drowned in sin. He who has no faith in what Krishna says will have no escape from the fetters of ignorance. Faith is not blind belief. Faith is not a blind surrender to the sacred books. Faith is the conscious awareness of one's limitless freedom.

Krishna says, "O Arjuna, salvation is not for him who has no faith. Forever he is bound to the sorrows of life and to the pangs of death." (9.3) He who walks along the road of faith will see for himself the Truth supreme here on earth. The determination of the seeker's aspiring heart is his mystic faith. The conviction of the seeker's revealing soul is his victorious faith. An ordinary, un aspiring man is inspired by the world of false hopes. But a man of faith always lies in the worlds of forceful proclamation. The more faith he heaps on the altar of God the more quickly does his soul flower.

Krishna simply says, "The fools mock and scorn Me, My human incarnations, knowing not that I am the Lord Supreme of all beings." (9.11) To recognize an Avatar is not an easy thing. Either one has to be blessed by the Avatar Himself or one has to possess the gift of inner vision. An aspirant has to prepare himself in order to recognise an Avatar. He has to shun sense pleasure. He must not be controlled by passions. He has to constantly breathe purity. Fear he has to tear down. Doubt he has to smite. Peace he has to invoke. Joy he has to imbibe.

To perform abstruse rites and ceremonies is not necessary. Self-giving is the only thing required. He accepts everything with great joy. We can start our inner journey by offering Him leaves, flowers and fruits. Even the smallest act of offering to God is the truest step on the path of self-discovery and God-discovery. We think. If we offer our 'thinking' to God, this very act of offering our thought will ultimately make us one with God the Thought.

If we can discover a true, divine thought, then in no time God will ask or compel time to be on our side. Nothing other than time can help us feel the

breath of Truth and touch the Feet of God. We can own Eternity's Time if we truly want to.

We serve. If we serve Him, Him alone in humanity, we become one with His absolute Reality and His Universal Oneness. We must not forget that our dedicated service must be rendered with overwhelming pure enthusiasm. Says Krishna, "To Me all are alike. I know no favour, I know no disfavour. My loving devotees who worship Me are in Me. I am also in them." (9.29) This is an experience that stands out in bold relief in a true seeker's life. There is no special privilege. Everybody is granted the same opportunity. It goes without saying that a true devotee has already gone through arduous spiritual disciplines. Now if he grows into a genuine devotee and becomes dear and intimate to Krishna, then it should be understood that he is getting the result of his past strong disciplines and severe austerities. No pain, no gain. No sincerity, no success. Have aspiration. It will accelerate your progress, both inner and outer.

As the devotee realizes, in this very realisation he discovers that Krishna is his eternal breath. A devotee is never alone. He has discovered the truth that his self-sacrifice unites him with his Lord. The more he consciously offers himself to the Lord, the stronger becomes their divine bond of union, no oneness.

"Even for the righteous brahmans or the saintly kings or the ardent devotees this material temporary (*anityam*) world is full of miseries (*asukham*), hence one should engage in loving (*bhajasva*) service unto Me." (9.33) The outer world lives in our worldly consciousness. This materialistic consciousness can be transformed into the Eternal Consciousness through aspiration (*sādhana*), devotion and surrender. Liberation has to be achieved here in this world. *Anityam* and *asukham* cannot pollute the heart of a true seeker. One must engage oneself in different processes of devotional service, like hearing, chanting, paying obeisance, worship, etc. Being completely absorbed in God one can attain God.

The tenth chapter begins with Sri Krishna mentioning indirectly that He is the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supreme. He is the wisdom Absolute, He is the Glory Supreme. His Glory nobody understands. No, not even the Sages or the Gods.

Everybody is dear to the Supreme Lord. But the sweetest and the most intimate relation exists only between a devotee and the Lord. A true devotee worships Lord with no thought of desires. The Lord blesses him not only unreservedly but also unconditionally. What a devotee needs is the determination in his heart. Once he has achieved it, his self-realisation will no longer remain a far cry.

To understand the Truth is one thing. To believe it is another. Not to understand the Truth is no crime at all. But to disbelieve the Truth is nothing less than an unpardonable sin. A child does not understand his father's wisdom. However, his faith in his father's wisdom is spontaneous and genuine.

Arjuna may not understand Krishna, but his implicit faith in Krishna speaks for him, "O Krishna, You are the Lord of the Lords. Supreme are You. This I believe. Neither the Gods nor the demons comprehend Your mysterious manifestations. The source of all beings are You. You are known by Yourself alone." (10.12-15)

Krishna now makes it clear to Arjuna that his divine glory can be elucidated and demonstrated but can never be exhausted. The universe in its entirety is but a tiny spark of His infinite magnitude.

Krishna says, "I am this, I am that, I am everything". Again He says, "I am the best, highest and mightiest in everything." Does it mean that His Consciousness is tinged with preference? Does He discriminate? No, He has no preference, no discrimination. "Arjuna, I am the Self seated in the heart of all beings. I am the beginning and the middle and also the end of all beings." (10.20)

Pāṇḍavānām Dhanañjayah, says Krishna. "Among the Pāṇḍavas, I am Dhanañjay." (10.37) Dhanañjay is a synonym of Arjuna. Each person has one body, one mind, one heart and one soul. How can one standing in front of another say that he is verily the other person. Does it not sound absurd? It does so only when we live in the physical, not when we live in the oneness of the Lord.

"I am the seed of all things, animate or inanimate." (10.39) Arjuna now realizes that Krishna is not the mere body. He is the all-pervading Self. Arjuna wished to know under what particular form the Self is to be worshipped. Krishna immediately replies, "Under all forms". There is nothing without the Self. The Self is in all and all is in the Self. This is the wisdom that the seeker's knowledge must possess. Self-knowledge is the knowledge of universal oneness or inner oneness with God.

Krishna wants to illumine Arjuna's mind by saying that in the process of cosmic evolution He is unveiling and manifesting His Own Perfection. His divine manifestations are endless. He has mentioned only a few by way of example. From Him springs permanence, goodness and mightiness. He tells Arjuna that he has not to learn His divine manifestations in minute detail. It will simply confuse his mind. Krishna says, "I established the whole universe with a portion of Myself." (10.42) Knowing this, the seeker in Arjuna can easily satisfy his hunger.



(to be continued)

My first darshan of Ma in Kashi

Brehni. Sunanda Goswami

(continued from before)

One evening in the last week of November 1980, I was sitting in the verandah of the *Annapurnā Mandir*. Just as, before a song is sung, the harmonium plays music, I could hear such music. There are several photos of Ma hanging in the walls of the verandah and corridor. From one large photo Ma was as if saying 'Listen to the song'. When I questioned, Ma said, 'You will hear the song at the appropriate time'.

On another evening my father was sitting meditating in the *Annapurnā* verandah. With eyes closed I was practising *yogāsan* as dictated by my father. Suddenly with closed eyes I saw a weird hand slowly emerging from the depths of hell, piercing through my heart, and passing through the nasal cavity stopped at the centre of the forehead. At the same time a voice was heard, 'Whatever is destined to you will surely happen'. I recognized that hand was my father's and the voice too was my father's natural voice. I then understood that my father was an authority in the field of *sāadhanā*. This highly knowledgeable and authoritative *sādhak*, has been staying with us ordinary mortals who have not understood anything about it.

One morning in the first week of December, father was reading the *Chandi* in the *Annapurnā* verandah. Observing me he said, "You will ask Ma, 'I am reading the *Chandi*, hope Ma is listening too?'" I replied, "Ma is in the *Gopāl Mandir*." But father insisted, "I really want to know this, so you will positively ask Ma." I went to the *Gopal Mandir* and asked Ma about it. With a smile on Her lips and with palms joined together, Ma slightly nodded Her head, which meant 'Yes, I am listening'.

In mid-December, a *Bhāgwat-Saptāh* was celebrated at Kashi. The *Bhāgwat-Saptāh* was performed for the peace of the departed souls of (Late) Sir and Lady Dattar Singh (grandparents of Guneeta'di). One morning I was listening to the *Bhāgwat*. Ma was also sitting there along with the elder sisters sitting nearby. After sometime, Ma departed to Her Kanyapeeth room. Gradually the Hall too became empty. I too went back to Kanyapeeth, following the Sisters. Ma came out of Her room and seeing us all around said, "The fault is with This Body (pointing at Herself). Just came to the room as This

Body was not feeling well. And all of you came back also. Immediately go and sit in the *satsang* Hall." With a fear I rushed back to the Hall.

One day as usual the *satsang* had started at nine in the morning in the *Gopāl Mandir* Hall. Ma too had gone there. I thought of completing some personal work before going there, but unknowingly it took quite some time. I washed my clothes and hung it for drying. My hairs being long, it took some time in oiling and combing it. At that moment I heard the *Ārati* song from the *satsang* Hall, which meant the end of the *Pāth*. Hence I did not go there and remained in my room. Suddenly a young girl came and informed, "Ma is calling you". I went downstairs and found Ma sitting in a chair in the Kanyapeeth courtyard and was decorating a carton with sweets and fruits. Ma then informed someone to give it to the new girl, in her room. I went near Ma, bowed down and paid my obeisance (did *pranām*) to Ma. Ma said, "I have sent some *prasād* for you, accept it and eat it too. You must have listened to the *Bhāgwat* right from the morning?" I felt deeply ashamed and said, "I did not go to listen to the *Bhāgwat-Pāth* since morning." I have heard from my elders that several ashramites have received punishments from Ma in this manner.

In December, 1980, after the completion of the seven days of the *Bhāgwat-kathā*, on the eight day, *Yagna* was conducted by the Vedic Brahmins in the courtyard in front of Kanyapeeth. At the end of the *Yagna* as a token of love for the departed soul a relative has to offer *ghee* into the *yagna* fire. Ma called Dr. Guneeta Marwah (our Guneeta'di) and she as a token of love offered the *ghee* in the fire and formally completed the *yagna*. All the Brahmins conducting the *yagna* came near Ma. One of the Brahmins smeared a mark of the *yagna* fire on Ma's forehead. And then all the Brahmins with palms joined together and with tears in their eyes devotedly prayed Ma as *Devi Gāyatri* and begged for pardon for any mistakes that may have occurred during the *Yagna*.

The *Yagna* fire was still burning. All of a sudden a poor looking Brahmin came near Ma and informed that he has completed the Narmada *parikramā* for the twelfth consecutive year and begged for alms from Ma. Ma offered him three handful of rice with Her left Hand. Observing the tall, simple and good looking Brahmin, one felt as if the Sun-God had Himself arrived to beg alms from Ma. When the Brahmin was leaving, Ma just did not look at the Brahmin nor uttered any word to him.

Another evening Ma was sitting in the red verandah (ground floor verandah, whose floor is red in color) of the Kanyapeeth. A huge crowd of devotees had gathered in the courtyard. They were coming inside one at a time to *pranām* Ma. But Ma did not go out to give them *darshan*. This worried the elder

sisters taking care of Ma. Instead of going out why Ma was sitting inside. Ma ordered some mustard oil to be brought in an earthen pot and then placed it underneath Her cot in the verandah. At about ten in the night a devotee suddenly arrived from Bombay. After doing *pranām* he informed that his wife was prematurely dying due to Arthritis. The doctors were helpless and were unable to save her from certain death. Ma gave him the oil pot kept under the cot and also explained to him the manner in which it had to be applied. Receiving Ma's blessings, the medicine and the proper instructions he immediately flew back to Bombay.

Few days later, Smt Anandeshwar the younger daughter of Late Sir and Lady Dattar Singh arrived. The elder daughter Smt Kripal (Kripalji, mother of Guneeta'di) was already staying in Kashi with her daughter. They wanted to have a private with Ma and hence arrangements were made for it. Suddenly Kantanandji arrived in front of Ma. I was standing at a corner of the room hidden from everyone's view and was joyfully watching Ma. Ma said something to Kantanandji and she started looking around for me and catching me from the corner, escorted me to her room. There we conversed and enjoyed the evening.

Last week of December, 1980, father informed me that the Christmas holidays would be over soon and that the school would reopen on 10th January 1981. Hence we would have to return back home. I informed my father, 'I do not want to go back, I want to stay here'. Immediately father became disturbed. Father asked me to inform this to Ma. When I informed Ma, Ma called my father and said to him, '*Baba*, make a *parikramā* of Kashi and take your daughter back with you'. Hearing Ma's words, my father became calm again. Ma advised me, 'Do exactly as your father says'. I understood that now I would have to return back home. We bowed down and paid our obeisance and then Ma gave *prasād* in our hands.

Some grand function was supposed to be taking place at Ma's Naimisharanya Ashram. Also various devotees were arriving here in Kashi to have Ma's *darshan*. Important among them were the Maharaja of Kashi, the Vice-Chancellor of BHU, Prof. Padma Mishra, Km Krishna Banerjee, Prof. Nirmala Handu of Allahabad University, Chief Minister of West Bengal Shri Triguna Sen, etc. All of them came near Ma, paid their obeisance and departed after accepting *prasād* from Ma. After the *sandhyā Ārti*, one evening in the last week of December 1980, Ma departed from Kashi. Ma first went to Ma's Vindhyaehal Ashram. Staying there for few days, Ma went to Naimisharanya Ashram. The whole of Kashi Ashram became silent and motionless. The Ashram lane which used to be scattered with flowers and numerous small

shops selling garlands and flowers had all vanished giving a deserted look to the lane too.

It really hurt me deep inside to leave this joyful place. However two days later we too packed our luggage and remembering the joyful days with Ma Anandamayee we departed to our home town. We passed our days busy with the daily chores. Father's school opened on 10th January 1981 and he started going to school. Our days converted to months and then arrived April.

One evening I was making preparation for the *sandhyā Ārti* when father informed, "A letter has arrived from Shree Shree Ma. Ma has invited me for the *Atirudra-Mahayagna* in Ma's Kankhal Ashram in May 1981. And I will surely go." I immediately replied, "I too will go." Father said, "But Ma has only invited me, not you. Hence I will go alone." I pleaded, "If you go then I too will go." Father stopped the argument, and finished the *sandhyā Ārti* and his daily worship rituals, etc. At night he commented, "If you can persuade your brother Debu to accompany you, then only can you come along, otherwise not. Like a queen you will travel with three big bags, which is impossible for me to manage."

So I went near Debu (Mahadevanand, just passed the 12th exams) and said, "Debu, father is going to Haridwar. You have to accompany me to Haridwar too." He put his hands on his head and remarked, "Didi, this is just not possible, I am very busy and have a lot of pending work." I persuaded him saying, "Only if you go father will allow me to go too. My fate is in your hand now. Please agree." Finally he agreed by accepting few new clothes from me for the journey. Happily I rushed to inform father, "Debu has agreed." Then one fine morning, by the end of April 1981, all three of us departed from our home town for a pilgrimage to Shree Shree Anandamayee Ma's Ashram in Kankhal Haridwar and to get Ma's *darshan* again.

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(to be continued)

English Books in Varanasi Ashram

1. Matri Vani – Vol I	– SSAS	– Rs. 30/-
2. Matri Vani – Vol II and III	– SSAS	– Rs. 100/- each
3. Sad Vani	– Bhaiji	– Rs. 45/-
4. In Your Heart is my Abode	– Bithika Mukherjee	– Rs. 30/-
5. T.M.G.P Sri Ma Anandamayee-2	– Bithika Mukherjee.	– Rs. 275/-
6. T.M.G.P Sri Ma Anandamayee-3	– Bithika Mukherjee.	– Rs. 225/-
7. The Magnanimous Shree Shree Ma	– S.S.Chakravarty	– Rs.125/-
8. Atirudra Mahayajna Kankhal 1981	– SSAS	– Rs.260/-
9. Maa Anandamayee (Marayada...)	– Brhchini. Chaudan	Rs. 150/-
10. The Universal Mother	– Somesh Banerjee	– Rs. 150/-
11. Vangamayee Ma	– SSAS	– Rs. 100/-

In memory of *Brahmlin* Swami Sharanandagiri Maharaj

Swami Chetananandagiri

In order to obtain Swamiji's proximity in that Yogbrata Ashram, the number of devotees arriving from different places in Uttarkashi began to increase. He then abandoned that place and in order to spend the rest of his life in a secluded ashram he arrived in Shree Shree Ma's Kashi Ashram. Here he met Brahmachari Panu'da, who sent Swamiji to Shree Shree Ma's Vindhyachal Ashram. And hence here in Vindhyachal Ashram I spent sixteen long years with him getting inspired by his daily lifestyle and spiritual incidents.

Swamiji strictly followed few sermons of Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. (1) Restraint on food - to abstain from tasty foods. To eat only that much, as is required for maintaining good health. Earlier he had a liking for sweets which he has now totally stopped from eating. (2) To always wear simple clothings. He even stitched his torn clothes and wore it. But he always donated new and quality clothes to the Sadhus and Sanyasis.

One day talking on *Akhand-Bhagwat-smaran*, he said that, without an unbroken (*akhand-smaran*) remembrance, *Akhand-Bhagwan* (the Infinite God) cannot be attained or realized in totality. Hence initially following the path of reward he tried his best to take the Name of God with every breath. But it was not possible to do it continuously. After that he followed the path of refuge (in God). And then he realized that this is the easiest path of *sādhana*.

He was always active in serving the distressed either financially or by giving homeopathic medicines. Swamiji was well read in homeopathic books written by famous writers. In Uttarkashi there was a charitable homeopathic dispensary in which he distributed free homeopathic medicines to the sick patients. In Ma's Vindhyachal Ashram also there is a homeopathic charitable hospital. Though Swamiji had arrived here for *sādhana* in solitude, but after observing the pathetic conditions and illness of the surrounding unprivileged inhabitants he could not control himself and hence started sitting in the charitable homeopathic dispensary and helped them financially and with free homeopathic medicines. When several of the inhabitants were cured of very old diseases, the charitable dispensary became very popular and patients started arriving from distant places either in cycles or auto-rickshaw or by

bus and even by trains. Swamiji sat in the dispensary in the morning and without any rest attended to almost 200 to 250 patients till late in the night. He never felt annoyed and never turned back any patients.

Swamiji always wanted from his heart that all of Ma's Ashrams follow the same principles of worship. Hence he had written a book '*Pujā-Paddhati*' and it is being utilized in several of Ma's Ashrams. On his keen initiative every year several functions were religiously organized in the Vindhyachal Ashram like, Ma's *Janmotsav Tithi Pujā*, the nine days *Navrātri Pujā*, the four *prahars* of *Shiv-rātri Pujā*, *Guru-Purnimā* etc. Alongwith the *Pujā-pāth*, *havan* and *bhandāra* were also held piously.

During his younger days Swamiji was a Central Govt. senior accounts officer and hence he also had a good knowledge of accounts. In order that the same principle of accounting is followed in all the branches of Ma's Ashram, he had written an Accounts Manual and had sent it to the Head office in Kankhal for consideration.

Around fourteen years ago Swamiji encouraged me to develop a flower garden which would not only provide all the flowers for the regular worships but would also beautify the Ashram. Hence a lot of flowering and fruit plants were planted. But as there wasn't a boundary within the Ashram, stray cows and goats destroyed the plants. One day I saw him cutting thorn plants and making a boundary with it. In spite of his old age I was amazed to witness his energy, affection and emotion for serving the Ashram.

Regarding relinquishment of all types of *Ahimsa*, *Rishi Patanjali* has said in one of his *Yoga-sutras* (2.35) - *ahimsāpratisthāyām tatsannidhau vairatyāgah*. That is, if a man gets the ideal of non-injuring others, before him even animals which are by their nature ferocious will become peaceful. To observe and accomplish this sermon of *Rishi Patanjali* in totality had become Swamiji's innate nature. Even though it may not be believed but I myself have witnessed that even though there were mosquitoes in his room, he was not bitten by them. He never ever used any mosquito net nor any chemicals to kill mosquitoes. He used flowers and leaves for worshipping God in his room in his early years, but lately he never performed any external worship. Earlier he used to pluck two three varieties of leaves like *neem*, etc and ate them in the morning. But one day he said that this will hurt the plants and from that day stopped plucking flowers and leaves.

On 26th October 2022, the first day of the *Shārādiya Navrātri Pujā*, after the completion of all the rituals of the worship, in the night, Swamiji went to

rest in his room. At the dawn of 27th October, an ashram helper Praveen went to see Swamiji and found the door of his room locked from inside. After calling Swamiji and waiting for some time when there was no response from inside, Praveen and another helper Gaurav broke down the door and all of us entered inside. I observed that Swamiji's breathing and pulse were completely still. Immediately I informed Ma's old devotees in nearby Mirzapur to fetch a doctor. The doctor arrived very soon and after examining informed that Swamiji has passed away, his soul has merged with God.

The news of Swamiji's death spread out very fast. People from nearby villages and city arrived in groups to have a last glimpse of Swamiji's body. The various Ashrams of Ma like, Kankhal, Varanasi, Agarpara, etc were also informed about this tragic incident. Swamiji's body was properly decorated and placed in a big chair and this chair was lifted onto an open car. There was a huge crowd in the Ashram. And as the car started moving slowly, the people singing *kirtan*, playing various instruments and blowing conch shells started following the car. The holy procession finally reached Rangaya Ghat on the banks of the River Ganga in Vindhyachal.

Swamiji's body was first bathed with Ganga-water, then various items were applied on the body, and finally dressed with new clothes and decorated with garlands and flowers. Non-stop *kirtan* was going on too. A decorated *Bajra* (a big boat) was kept ready on the banks of Ganga. Very affectionately Swamiji's body was carried on to it and the boat sailed upto the middle of the River. In a bag few items were packed and kept along with the body. Finally with full rituals the body was immersed in the holy waters of the River Ganga. It has to mentioned here that all these were done according to the kind instructions of our Ashram's oldest *Sadhu* and ex-President of the Sangha, Swami Achyutanandji.

Swamiji's gross body is not with us anymore but I feel that the Sangha, especially Ma's Vindhyachal Ashram will forever remember with respect Swamiji's sweet memories. JaiMa

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In life's journey there are several afflictions that people suffer in different forms. Whatever the amount of pain you have in life, think I will not have to go through this suffering again. I am performing penance. I am getting closer to God. Reading the scriptures, singing God's name is the essence of Kaliyuga – the way to cross the sea of life. The path of death is known well enough. Enough of happiness and unhappiness. Become a pilgrim to immortality, return to your home.

— Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee.

Jagatjanani Ma

Prabhat Kr Ray

Another incident regarding Shree Shree Ma and my parents should be narrated here. My father late Kanai Lal Ray, mother Smt Saraswati Devi and younger sister Ms. Bharati came to Varanasi along with Gurudev Bhajan Thakur. They stayed in the house of a devotee Shri P.C. Banerjee (B-19/77, Deoria Bagh, near Bhelupura Police station). There was a lot of space in this two-storeyed building. Gurudev and almost 30-40 devotees could easily have lodging and fooding here. Whenever Gurudev arrived in Kashi, he stayed here for at least 15 days at a stretch.

Gurudev and his devotee's daily routine here, began with the *darshan-puja* of *Baba Vishwanath* at four in the morning. This was followed by bathing in the Ganga in Kedar-ghat in the afternoon, and then having *darshan-puja* of *Baba Gowri-Kedareswar*. The evening program comprised of *sandhya-kirtan* and *naam-kirtan* while sailing on a *Bojra* on the river Ganga. A resident of Hanuman Ghat, Shri Ram Singh helped in hiring the boats for us. Gurudev and most of us also visited Shri Paritosh Mukherjee residing in Vijaynagar Colony in Bhelupura.

On the days when the *Bojra* was not available, we sat down with Gurudev in Kedar-ghat and meditated for quite some time. After dusk quite a few *sadhus* visited the ghat regularly to bathe and pray in the Ganga. Gurudev used to mention that several highly spiritual *sadhus* arrived here in the silent Ghats of Kashi after dusk to pray and bathe in the Ganga. Gurudev had instructed us to bow down and pay our obeisance to each of these *sadhus* while seated in our places.

On the evening of 29th December, 1976 all of us were meditating at Kedar-ghat. Gurudev called only my parents and instructed, "Both of you immediately proceed to Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashram. This Ashram is within a walking distance from here".

As instructed my parents reached the Ashram in Bhadaini. There they learnt that Shree Shree Ma was out of town for a few days and had just returned back to the Ashram. Since the local devotees had not received news of Shree Shree Ma's arrival, the Ashram was quite vacant. On that day my parents could spend quite some time in Shree Shree Ma's presence in Shree Shree Ma's first floor room.

While my parents were seated in Ma's room, Thakur Sitaram Das Onkarnath arrived there. He stayed in Ma's room for almost an hour. With Ma's *kripa* my parents and 2-3 other devotees were privileged and lucky to have the combined *darshan* of Shree Shree Ma and Thakur Onkarnathji and listen to their immensely valuable conversations. It was only due to Gurudev's blessings that my parents could have the combined *darshan* of Shree Shree Ma and Thakur Onkarnathji on that precious day. After taking *prasad*, my parents returned back to the Bhelupura house.

On 8th March 1974, on the occasion of *Holi Mahotsav / Purnima*, the city of Kolkata was also celebrating enthusiastically the *Janmotsav* of Shree Shree Chaitanya MahaPrabhu. The organizer of this festival was Minister Shri Tarun Kanti Ghosh. A special *Sadhu Sammelan* was being held in the famous Deshapriya Park and along with Shree Shree Ma, several highly spiritual Sadhus, Mahatmas and intellectuals of Kolkata were present in this *Sammelan*. On that day the *Vaishnav* committee organized a procession with Shree Shree Ma seated on a special four-wheeled comfortable chair and toured the lanes of Kolkata city. Everyone in the procession wore white dresses and played Holi by sprinkling dry Holi powder and flowers every few minutes all around the progressing crowd. They also sang *naam-kirtan* with all the required musical instruments and cheered Shree Shree Ma with "JaiMa! JaiMa!". It was truly a captivating sight. Even after the departure of the procession, the roads and lanes looked enchanting with the variety of colored flowers and Holi powders scattered all around.

On the occasion of *Holi-Purnima*, I was staying in Gurudev's residence in Cornfield Road, Ballygunge. All of a sudden a devotee arrived with the news that Shree Shree Ma along with a huge procession was arriving towards Ballygunge station. Immediately I paid my obeisance to Gurudev and ran out of the house to have *darshan* of Shree Shree Ma. Within a few minutes I reached near the procession and immersed myself with Shree Shree Ma's divine *darshan*. Within I felt that it would be difficult to have the *darshan* of Ma's divine feet. Just then a devotee took me near Ma and offering a garland at Ma's divine feet (covered with white socks) from the numerous garlands hanging on the arms of the surrounding devotees, I fulfilled my wishes. Since the time was short, this only further increased my passion for being near Ma.

Within three years that wish was fulfilled. In 1977, in order to attend the special *Kumbh-Mela* in Prayag-Allahabad, from 16th to 22nd January, I was residing in Gauriya-Math, a short distance from the Mela. *Mauni-Amavasya*

was held on 19th January 1977. This day is considered as the most important day for bathing (*Shāhi-snān*) in the confluence of the Kumbh. Few days before arriving in Prayag, I had met my Gurudev Shree Bhajan Baba in Kolkata. I had a serious enquiry and hence I asked Gurudev, 'Since Gurudev would not be present during the *Kumbh-Mela*, to which *Mahatma* would I bow down in obeisance and offer my prayers just after the *Shāhi-snān* on *Mauni-Amavasya* day'. Gurudev had replied, 'There are numerous *Mahatmas* moving around during the *Kumbh-Mela*, but it is not possible for you to identify them. After the pious bath, offer flowers on the divine feet of Shree Shree Ma. Ma is embodiment of the Supreme Power. There is nothing else to ponder. Ma is *Durga*, *Kali*, *Ādyā-Shakti*, *Parameshwari*, *Jagat-Janani*. Since Ma will be staying very near the *Sangam-ghat*, it will be easy for you to have Ma's *darshan*. You will not have to roam around. Every official or members of the police force and several inhabitants are aware of Shree Shree Ma's camp'. These words of Gurudev erased all my doubts.

On reaching *Prayag-Kumbh* I learnt that Shree Shree Ma had arrived there ten days earlier and would stay there till 24th January. On arrival Shree Shree Ma had been brought to the Ashram Camp in a huge procession from the city. Everyday some or the other religious institution respectfully took Ma in a grand procession to the *Triveni-ghat*.

During the first two days of my arrival in *Prayag*, I visited tents and camps of several *mahatmas* and *sadhus* and listened to their spiritual lectures and advice. On the *Mauni-Amavasya* day, I departed from the Gauriya-Math at five in the morning after my morning bath and daily worship. During the night the *Kumbh* officials had barricaded the place in such a manner that the one-kilometer walk from my room to the *Ghat* took more than six hours, with pilgrims walking through the barricades in a queue.

Completing my holy dip in the confluence by 12 noon, I bought some flower garlands and moved in search of Shree Shree Ma's Camp. I reached the Camp at around 12:30pm and was a bit suspicious of Ma's presence after witnessing the empty Camp. On enquiring learnt that Shree Shree Ma had been giving *darshan* to the devotees and pilgrims from very early in the morning and had just gone to Her room to rest for a while. Also for sometime in the morning Ma had been taken out in a procession. I felt a bit sad of not getting Ma's *darshan* now. My only aim in mind today after waking up at late night and getting ready for the holy-dip was to have Ma's divine *darshan*. Depressed at this situation and with the aim of offering the garland to Mother Ganga, I departed from the Ashram.

After walking for some time a devotee of Shree Shree Ma came running from behind and said, 'Ma is calling you in the Camp'. Enthralled with joy, shouting 'JaiGuru-JaiMa' I entered the Camp and was blessed with Ma's *darshan*. The moment Ma saw me, Ma said, 'Baba, you must be very hungry, isn't it so! After getting up early in the morning and finishing your daily routine you have even taken some food, but for once think of This Body. Forget about having something to eat, thinking about the devotees This Body could not even wash the mouth properly early in the morning. Seeing you leaving the Ashram depressed, This Body rushed out of the room'. After that Shree Shree Ma sat down on a cot lying outside Her room, with Her legs stretched out, just like the photo of Shree Sharada Ma kept in the Dakshineswar temple.

Shree Shree Ma advised me to offer the garland which I held in my hand. But when I bent forward to offer the garland around Ma's Neck, Ma advised, 'Baba, not around the neck, offer it at your Mother's lotus Feet'. I had heard from gossips that Shree Shree Ma has an allergy for flowers. But that is not true. For some reason or the other Shree Shree Ma always kept Her Feet covered. By bestowing grace on me how wonderfully Shree Shree Ma gave me the opportunity to devotedly *pranaam* Her by placing my head below Her lotus Feet. It is just not possible for anyone to get such an opportunity even on an ordinary day. And during the *Kumbh Mela* Shree Shree Ma is all the time surrounded by the devotees and pilgrims. Hence I can very well understand in spite of all this, it was in my destiny to have the *darshan* of my Lord and obtain His blessings too. And this is not the end. On Shree Shree Ma's instruction an ashramite brought some dry fruits and some sweets in a plate and Ma with Her own Hands offered these to me. This incident or Shree Shree Ma's *lila* which had occurred almost 48 years ago is still fresh in my mind and seems to have occurred very recently. Not only that, our Guru Shree Bhajan Baba has blessed our family in this manner several times and have brought us near Shree Shree Ma, the Divine Mother, on several occasions. Hence all of us in our family are indebted to our Guru Shree Bhajan Baba.

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(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.

- --- Bhajji

Shraddhānjali **Brahmacharini ChandanDi**

Editor

On 17th May, 2023 respected ChandanDi at the ripe age of 92 years departed for the heavenly abode of Shree Shree Ma to rest forever at Ma's lotus feet.

ChandanDi belonged to Shree Shree Ma's maternal uncle's (*Mama's*) family who lived in Sultanpur (Brahmanbaria, Chittagong, Bangladesh). Hence, Ma went there quite often during Ma's childhood.

Shree Shree Ma had three maternal uncles (*Mama's*) and four maternal aunties (*Mashima's*), brothers and sisters of Didima (Ma's mother Smt Mokshda Sundari Devi). Didima's father Shri Ramakant Bhattacharya was a devout worshipper of *Shree Laxmi-Narayan Shāligrām shilā*. His eldest son Shri Gurucharan Bhattacharya was Shree Shree Ma's eldest maternal Uncle (*Boro-Mama*). ChandanDi was the second daughter of his eldest son Shri Nishikant Bhattacharya. ChandanDi's mother Smt Manorama Bhattacharya had later on taken *sanyās* and her name was then Swami Manatitananda.

Respected Shri Nishikant (Ma called him - *Thakurbhāi*) (in 1922) while talking with Bholanath and observing Ma in *samādhi*, had asked that most significant and prestigious question to Ma, "Who are you?" And the reply from Ma was, "*Purna Brahma Narayan*", and then again, "*Purna Brahma Narayani*". Ma had also said, "*Devī*". Hearing this, Bholanath had asked, "Then who am I?" and Ma had replied, "*Hara*" (implying *Shiva*).

ChandanDi was born in 1931. When ChandanDi was 5 years old Ma had gone to their house in Sultanpur. Everyone in her house believed that Ma was God and hence Ma's photo was kept next to their *Narayan-shilā* in the Puja room and everyone prayed Ma as a Goddess. ChandanDi's father had instructed his children that whenever they would get up in the morning or went to bed at night, first to *prānaam* Ma and also to inform Ma when any one of them went out of the house.

During that period everyone called Ma as *Mānush Kāli*. ChandanDi had seen Goddess *Ma Kāli's* photo and was scared of *Kāli*. So when Ma came to their house she was scared and tried to hide herself, but her brothers used to coax her to come in front of Ma.

Later Ma had once called *Thakurbhāi* (father of ChandanDi) to attend the Kumbh Mela at Prayāg while Ma was there (in 1938). He took along, his whole family to Prayāg. ChandanDi was then 7-8 years old. There one day Ma had asked her if she would like to join the Ashram. She very much wanted to study and had asked Ma, "I want to study. If I go to the Ashram can I study up to M.A.". And Ma had confirmed it.

So Ma arranged for her to stay in Kanyapeeth, which was then in Raipur Ashram, Dehradun. From there they went to Kashi (in a rented house), then to Vindhyaachal and finally to the new Kanyapeeth building in 1945 in Kashi Ashram.

ChandanDi received *dikshā* from (DidiMa) Shree Shree Swami Muktananda Giriji Maharaj, a few years after joining Kanyapeeth, as per the custom of Kanyapeeth. She finished her schooling and Matric Exams (Class-10) in Kanyapeeth at the age of 15-16. ChandanDi was the first student of Kanyapeeth to get the degree of *Ācharya* in *Puran* History (post-graduation, M.A.). After that she became a teacher and was also appointed as the first Principal of Kanyapeeth. She was very efficient in following the rules of the Kanyapeeth, working diligently, and serving like a mother. Showering heart-felt affection and maternal love to the young girls of the Kanyapeeth she brought them up with pious education and behaviour. ChandanDi will always be remembered in the history of Shree Shree Ma's Kanyapeeth.

After conducting this responsibility with adept for 12 years, in 1970, with Ma's permission she stopped teaching and left Kanyapeeth. In the year 1971, under Ma's supervision ChandanDi was given *Jagyapavit* or *Janaiv* (sacred-thread ceremony) in Ma's Kashi Ashram and hence she became a *Naishtik Brahmacharini*. His *Janaiv Ācharya-Guru* was Mamu (Shri Jadunath Bhattacharya, Ma's brother).

In 1973 Ma took her to Naimisharanya Ashram. There one day Ma told her to perform *Gāyatri Purushcharan* along with Udāsji. *Gāyatri Purushcharan* consists of repeating *Gāyatri japa* for twenty-four thousand times in a strict and pious manner. Hence on 14th January 1973, during *Paush Sankrānti*, in Ma's presence they started this ritual. Two rooms had been constructed below a huge tree for this purpose and Ma used to visit this Ashram quite often to take care of the arrangements. Ma gave her the *geruā* colored clothes (saffron) to wear during this period. In 1976, ChandanDi completed this ritual in Ma's presence in Kankhal Ashram. After thence she started serving Ma, in Ma's Kankhal Ashram. Till her last breath, she very carefully and piously worshipped her ancestors Idol *Shree Laxmi-Narayan*

Shāligrām shilā. Every function in Kankhal Ashram was perfectly conducted due to the untiring efforts of ChandanDi. When Swami Nirvananandji became old enough ChandanDi was appointed as an *Ācharya* for giving *diksha* in the Ashram. ChandanDi was later appointed as the President of Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha.

During her stay in Naimisharanya, ChandanDi got the inspiration to write whatever she knew about her Gurudev *JagatGuru* Shree Shree Swami Muktananda Giriji Maharaj (DidiMa) and hence these writings were later published in the form of books - *Svakriya Svarasamrit* (Bengali) in two volumes. While staying in Kankhal she published few more books too, like *Ananda Lila* (Bengali), and *Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee (Marayada evam Lila)* (Hindi and English).

The irreparable damage that has been caused by the passing away of this pious soul will surely be fulfilled by *Mahashakti swarupini* Shree Shree Ma, this is our only prayers at Ma's Holy Feet.

Jai Ma

* * * * *

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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,
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... 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.



Pareeb Kumar Misra





At all times let patience be your stronghold. Say to yourself, "Lord, everything thou doest is for the highest good." Pray for the power of endurance. Nothing happens that is not an expression of God's grace. Verily all is His Grace.

--- Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee

With Divine memories of Beloved MA
B.K. JHALA & FAMILY

(Shree Shree Maa arriving at Mr. B.K. Jhala's
Proposed Residence at Pune in 1975.)