

# MA ANANDAMAYEE AMRIT VARTA

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

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1. This journal is published in four separate languages – English, Bengali, Hindi and Gujarati, in the months of February, May, August and November.
2. The journal mainly publishes articles related to Shree Shree Ma. We invite articles from devotees about their divine experience of Shree Shree Ma and also on religious literature of any country or religion.
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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**COVER PAGE (Backside)**  
**Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee**  
**Ashram, Varanasi**

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

*- Ma Anandamayee*

### Path to Self Realisation

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

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

1. *Satkriya, Satsang.* (Virtuous actions, Spiritual discourse)
2. *Satyavachan kahna.* (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 *Kriya Yog*).
7. *Puja.* (Worship).
8. *Japa.* (Repeating the 'name').
9. *Bhagwat Kripa Prārthanā.* (To pray for Divine Grace).
10. *Smaran.* (Divine contemplation).
11. *Sharanāgati.* (Self-Surrender).
12. *Tat Dhyān.* (Divine meditation).

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

--- Managing Editor, 'Ma Anandamayee Anrit Varta'



*atha chittam samādhātum na śhaktoshi mayi sthīram  
abhyāsa-yogena tato mām ichchhāptum dhanañjaya*[12-9]

If you are unable to fix your mind steadily on Me, O Arjun, then practice the regulated principles of bhakti-yoga while remembering Me with devotion and constantly restraining the mind from worldly affairs.



### **Ma's message on Sādhana**

On the occasion of the 125th Birth Anniversary of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee, i.e. in the beginning of the year 2021, the 'Akhand Bhagwat Smriti' japa had been revived and all devotees had responded excitedly to it too.

This is just to remind all the devotees of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee that you all must have allotted atleast fifteen minutes out of your busy schedule to keep *maun* and remember your *Ishta-Devatā* at the same time everyday.

Shree Shree Ma had given us the aphorism "*Hari kathā hi kathā aur sab vrithā vyathā*" ('To talk of *Hari* alone is worthwhile; all else is in vain and leads to pain'). Shree Shree Ma also used to say, "This body begs for 15 minutes a day from all to be devoted fully to God, in the form of *japa* or *bhagwat-pāth* or *bhagwat-smaran*. The time once given to God cannot be altered irrespective of your condition." DidiMa (Ma's mother) our *JagatGuru* had also mentioned that *japa* and *maun* can be done at any place at any time and at any situation or work in hand.

Those who have not yet started please begin your *japa* and *maun* at any time that you feel can be utilized everyday. May MA's infinite Grace showering on us be remembered again.



## Matri – Vani

1. Q: Is it essential to worship twice in a day?

Ma: Yes, Just as for the safety of your body you take two whole meals; similarly it is essential to worship God regularly in the morning and evening. Besides this just as you all take light meals, fruits, sweets, *paan* etc, several times a day, similarly throughout the day in-between repeat the 'name' of God or perform silent *japa* as much as you can. This will help you in your path to Truth.

\* \* \*

2. Q: Some days I get a lot of concentration during worship and some days I just cannot sit at all. Why does this happen?

Ma: Sometimes certain items included in our meals causes' disturbance in our minds. Sometimes this also occurs by watching impure scenes or being touched or staying in the company of an immoral person. Unknowingly that affects your mind. Hence I always say, if somebody wants to remain properly in this path he should leave everyone's company and stay alone for some time. But this is difficult for family-life. But one should maintain a proper aim and it is essential to continuously make efforts to keep the mind concentrated towards that aim. By considering all work being performed by you as service to God, He will always be in your mind. Just as when the old leaves fall off a tree new ones grow, similarly the attraction towards the family and world will gradually diminish and the attraction towards God will increase.

\* \* \*

3. Q: What is the solution to calm our mind?

Ma: If a pot is filled with water, then on jerking the pot the water will also shake. But when the pot is kept still in one place, then the shaking water will also become calm after sometime. Similarly try to keep your body still for sometime, gradually the mind will also become calm.

\* \* \*

4. Q: Is it ok if I eat, drink and enjoy life and not worry about the future.

Ma: If this is the case then what is the difference between an animal and a human. They too eat and sleep. But a human being is the son of immortality, hence to wish for immortality is his natural tendency. Your worry will not go away like this. Only humans want to enquire about the Truth. Human body is precious. The

quest for God is only possible in this body. Who am I, who is mine, if this is not known then what is more depressing than this? One who knows himself knows God too.

\* \* \*

5. Ma: This is exactly what the world is like: full of worries and anxiety. Without the remembrance of God there cannot be even a thought of peace in this world; such is its very nature. It is always the parents who have to suffer in all respects on account of their children. Like a hero you will have to remain unperturbed and persevere in patience. Appeal to God for His own sake, and then only may you hope for peace.

\* \* \*

6. Ma: If the mind is fixed on God the question of material wants or complaints, of honour or disgrace does not arise. You will have to strive earnestly to remain ever centred in God, no matter in what way He may keep you. When thinking think of Him, when working let it be His service only. On no account allow your thoughts to dwell on wants and complaints.

\* \* \*

7. Ma: In your sorrows and troubles address your prayers and petitions to Him alone. To Him alone you should confide all your difficulties, for He is the Fountain of Goodness.

\* \* \*

8. Ma: Everything occurs according to one's own fate. This you will have to accept. One who has created has according to one's own *karma*, has specified regulations, that one has to experience; there is no other choice. For that person, who is also a part of Him, with whom you are not satisfied, you don't like to even take his name, will this result into good deeds? Again, to reap the fruits of your actions? What your parents had thought proper, they have done. They cannot create your *karma*.

\* \* \*

9. Q: Does the human being have the power to perform such a *karma* by which he can attain the Supreme position, the Supreme Lord?

Ma: For that reason only it is said that only the *Guru* by His grace uplifts you to that position. There is no way of attaining that by *karma*.

\* \* \*

"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)

### Salvation from danger by Ma's Grace

Today early morning Shri Vishnu after offering *pranaam* to Trivenipuri Maharaj, came near and said, "A great peril has passed over all those of you who had gone to Shimla yesterday. All of you have been saved just because of the pious virtues of Rajasaheb and of course Ma's infinite *kripā*." After hearing this from Vishnu, I finished my tiffin and went near Shree Shree Ma. Swami Paramanand, Shri Abhay and Shri Vishnu were already present there. I informed Ma what Trivenipuri Maharaj had informed and then asked, "Ma, I have heard that You also have mentioned yesterday that there would be some problem in our car. What had You seen yesterday?" Ma replied, "The day you were told to visit Shimla, that day itself had seen that two cars would collide and a fatal accident would occur; inspite of that had recommended you all to visit Shimla. Because then had a *kheyāl* that this cannot be allowed to happen. If you were stopped from going to Shimla, the danger that was seen was not likely to happen. But since This Body has some mental problem, hence had sent you all for the tour; but there was a *kheyāl* that nothing would be allowed to occur. Then you all left and at around two in the afternoon saw your car and another car just crossed very near to each other, and the people in the car had become terrified. Immediately informed this matter to Renu. Horrified Renu asked, 'Ma, there will not be any crisis to all those who have gone to Shimla?' This Body informed her not to spread this information to anyone now. After this had gone and had sat down near Haribaba. Then, observed that deep breathing was occurring on This Body. See how wonderful all this is. Observing others sadness you all also occasionally by taking deep breaths become sad with that misery, implying by taking deep breaths you accept their sorrows and become sad. Many a time the same occurs on This Body, then can understand that, the person regarding whom this effect is occurring, he has to bear the consequences. Yesterday too when the deep breaths were coming then with total *kheyāl*, (not accepting it at all), it was being crased and a sweet smile was being maintained; because you all have gone to Shimla joyously and will have to return back here joyously."

Abay: Since You had maintained that soft smile on Your face, they could return joyfully?

Ma: Yes, the same has occurred earlier too. Some people have tried to take their lives quite a few times but have failed; because then This Body has a *kheyāl* that this cannot be allowed to take place.

Abay: Why this cannot be allowed?

Ma: This *kheyāl* occurs maybe because, early death of that type can cause misfortune to the person. Again for instance, this also occurs with This Body, that This Body is observing the calamity about to occur to someone, and This Body is present there but still there is no *kheyāl* to remove that. Just as the light and wind remains unperturbed during one's calamity, This Body too in spite of being present there just observes it unruffled. Again the manner in which people suffer pain etc, in a similar manner This Body too suffers. There is not much of a difference among the two. Because like other people This Body does not have any sense of duality. Although saying verbally '*ek brahma dwitiya na asti*', but in their behaviour it is observed that there are a variety of feelings; but that cannot be permitted. In fact there is truly a state where duality just does not exist.

Myself: Okay, Ma! When you are suffering someone else's pains and illness, does that person also suffer pain at that instance?

Ma (smiling): No.

Myself: One more point, yesterday the impending doom hovering over us was of course fated to occur. Instead of Shimla if we had gone somewhere else then what would have happened?

Ma: No, every incident is related to a place.

Myself: If we had not arrived from Kashi, then what would have happened?

Ma: There was no choice other than to come here.

Hearing these words of Ma I began to wonder mesmerized. In spite of a strong unwillingness we had arrived near Ma in Dehradun. We spend so much of thought in running our lives, we make so many arrangements to avoid calamity, but we never think for a moment of That Supreme whose kind gaze is always focussed on us. He Himself like a tool is handling us which we just cannot realize. If we could, then our lives would not have been so difficult.

#### **Various states of *nām-japa***

Today evening too when Ma was strolling in the courtyard, I went and stood nearby. Ma picked up the question raised by Manohar, Haribaba's pupil in the morning. Then Manohar had asked, "I do not get God's *darshan* in spite of regularly doing *japa-dhyām*" Then Ma had replied, "There are numerous types

of *japa-dhyān*. In one type just like getting an yearning for food, an yearning for *japa-dhyān* occurs and the person's countenance becomes bright, however he is actively working with his hands. The activities he is doing, it is not that he does not like it, however there is a painful yearning too. While performing worldly duties in a proper manner someone or the other feels an anxiety for performing *japa*. One another state of *japa-dhyān* is that *japa-dhyān* is occurring in an uncontrolled manner. It is not that there is no urge for performing worldly actions, but he is not able to attend to it by his own wish. It is also not that he does not like to perform the worldly actions but as if there is an attraction towards that. The urge to perform the various worldly actions impinges on his mind while performing *dhyān-japa*, but the *sādhak* (aspirant) does not have the energy to get up from his *dhyān-japa*. Besides these two states there is yet another state when the *sādhak* remains deeply engrossed in *dhyān-japa*; worldly actions just do not arise within the *sādhak* in this state."

In the morning Ma had very briefly mentioned all these. Now in the evening Ma explained these in slight detail. Ma further said, "See, all the states of *dhyān-japa* that have been mentioned, these too have been mentioned in brief. Besides these there are many more states. While performing *japa* many a time it is felt as if along with the *japa*, nectar (*amrit*) is being consumed. The *name* that is being repeated, is not just an arid *name*, it is like *amrit*. Again many a time thoughts arise in the mind. Then one feels, is there anything in this world which is more sweeter than the *name*? The first state that was mentioned, in that only *amrit* is being consumed. And in this state besides tasting the sweetness of the *name*, it is being compared with the other beautiful things of this world. Again there is yet another state where there is neither the taste of the *name* nor comparison with other gross things, it is as if a state of fulfilment.

### **Renunciation (*tyāg*) is also a type of attachment**

After this the topic of renunciation arose.

Ma: There is a kind of happiness in renunciation too. The joy in renunciation is similar to the joy in enjoyment. People who come for *sādhana* and tolerate the severity of *tyāg* (renunciation), they do it because they get joy in it.

Myself: Ma, You had once said earlier that there is nothing called as *tyāg* (sacrifice). People are just going from partial fulfilment to absolute fulfilment.

Ma: Now also saying the same in a slightly descriptive manner. Do not people say that enjoyment causes attachment. I say that renunciation too causes bondage. The sacrifice by which one gets joy is a type of bondage too; ego is hidden in that too. I have been able to sacrifice so much, just by pondering on this one gets enjoyment. Hence it is mentioned that *tyāg* cannot be performed, it occurs

on its own. In order to attain Him one has to rise above enjoyment and renunciation.

### **The originality of Shree Shree Ma's expression and language**

Ma is always present during Hairebaba's oration program (*pāth-kathā*) and it is observed that Ma is as if hearing it with total concentration, referring to that Ma said:

Ma: Now also timely sitting during the *pāth*, but what is being heard that only Ganga knows. (Everyone laughs). But observing this people can think that whatever I say that I say after hearing and learning from all those lectures. Earlier such lectures were not held; hence such doubts never arose in anyone's mind. Again several times what I say matched with that of the lecture being delivered. This does not mean that what I hear I remember that and during conversations mention that. Do you know the actuality? Whatever is being said spontaneously arises from here itself and it matches with that written in the scriptures. Recitation is not done by memorizing the scriptures. Yes, sometimes it also happens that I mention that I have heard from such and such, that is absolutely different.

Abay: The doubt that you have mentioned, once upon a time I too felt doubtful in a similar manner. Earlier I used to hear only words of intelligence (*gyān*), I never heard words of devotion (*bhakti*). Later when I started hearing words of devotion then I started feeling that the discussions on *Name*, devotion etc., that occurred in your presence, memorizing that only you are talking on devotion.

Hearing the words of Abay, Ma started laughing.

Myself: Ma, as I have understood of what you have mentioned about your preaching is that, you do not preach after hearing and memorizing the scriptures. Whatever you say is spontaneously created within you and is said instantly. But what about the language? Do you learn it by hearing other people?

Ma: No, I speak Hindi, often say two or three English words. But these are words that abruptly arises in my *kheyāl* and that is only spoken; it is not that I have heard it beforehand, memorized it and then saying it. But you can question as to why the Hindi that I speak is full of errors? Cannot everything be spoken in a pure form? The point to mention here is that *Jā hoy jāy* (whatever happens).

Myself: Khukunidi had mentioned earlier you could not find the words to speak and hence used signs by hand movement to express yourself. Now while speaking if language can be created then why did it not occur earlier?

Ma: See, when wherever we are staying, depending on the custom of that place my words come out. Now while talking I speak more of the dialect of Kolkata whereas I am not aware of the dialect of Kolkata. The reason being the

words come out depending on the custom of the persons with whom the conversation is taking place.

Myself: So from your words I have understood that regarding your thoughts just as you have not learned anything from others regarding language too it is the same. Whatever is being told by you, all of it, are being created spontaneously.

Ma: Yes, memorising and saying something does not arise within This Body. I too mention several times that memory is at peace now.

Myself: Ma, several people have a conception that you have an extra-ordinary talent and hence whatever you listen for the first time that you can memorize and this is the reason for speaking properly in a new language.

Ma: (smilingly) People just cannot imagine this state. At the most people can decipher that according to the *sanskārs* of one's previous birth this type of words can be spoken; But saying something without learning anything – this is very difficult to imagine.

For the last few days in the evening besides reading other books Haribaba has been reading the book '*Shree Shree Anandamayee Prasanga*' written by myself. At a certain page of that book it is written that – Bhajji is asking Ma, 'Why will people feed You, dress You and walk along with You?' Haribaba surprised, had asked Ma after the oration, "So, Bhajji had talked with you in this manner?" Today evening Ma informed this incident to Rajasaheb and said, "Occasionally Bhajji used to speak in this manner. Another day laughingly he had told Me, 'That You are eating and wearing of others, these are Your debts, in lieu of this what are You returning back to others? You too will have to repay these debts.' Hearing this I had said, 'I do not eat or wear anyone's, I do not converse with anyone, etc.'." (Everyone laughed)

Abhay: You have not yet answered the question that I had asked You. I had asked that since You say that everyone is Your *Guru* then I too am one of Your *Guru's*. After You had accepted that, I had further said that I am ordering You that You liberate me, but till now I have not yet received any answer to that.

Ma: (Smilingly) When these conversations had taken place then truly no words were coming out from My lips, but now I am answering that, 'I say that from (pointing at Abhay) this *Guru* I had not received any such specific order, if I had received then that order would have been fulfilled. (Again everyone laughs).

### **The reason for tearing Punditji's clothes**

Today evening after the discourse when Ma was strolling I asked Ma, "Ma, why did You tear the clothes of Punditji that day?" Swami Paramanandji was

also present there. He replied, "Ma does like this whenever Ma observes someone wearing torn clothes."

Ma: I have done this subject to *kheyāl* only.

Myself: There is a reason for Your *kheyāl*. Were You not aware that Punditji would get deeply hurt? Still You tore away his clothes, there is surely a reason for this.

Ma (after smiling for a while): Just as when there is a fault within, it is said that either it has to be cleaned or it has to be removed, in the same manner observing a fault in the clothes it has been torn apart, because if even a small hole remains within then through that itself the pious thoughts pour out, nothing gets accumulated within. To cleanse the inner self only this outer behaviour is done with the clothes. Besides, *Babaji* had an attachment for soft clothes. He used to take very good care of these, and hence these were torn apart.

Myself: Ma, Once Gopalji's wife was seriously ill. While visiting her You had torn Your own cloth. What was the reason for this?

Ma (smilingly): I saw that Gopalji's wife would surely die, but Gopalji had an inclination towards his wife. Hence I tearing away my cloth I said to him, 'This is the manner in which *maya* should be teared away'. The funny part is that when the small portion of the cloth was torn and thrown away then Gopalji picking up that small cloth kept it caringly. However his wife recovered that time. After some days when his wife again had cancer, then observing his wife's pain he thought that as long as he takes care of that piece of cloth his wife would not die. Hence to free his wife from all the ailments every day he thought that the next day he would discard that piece of cloth; but after the night when morning came he just could not throw it away. Few days passed in this manner. Finally one day unable to bear the intense suffering of his wife he throw away that piece of cloth in some water or at some pious place, just after that his wife died.

Hearing this I said to KhukuniDidi, "Didi, Ma has this time revealed the secret. Ma has indirectly mentioned this time that Gopalji's wife was cured in the first case, as a result of the tearing off of Ma's own cloth."

Hearing my words Ma, Didi and all others present started laughing.

#### **Whether energy is lost on accepting *pranām***

13th *Āshād* 1356, Monday (27-6-1949). Today morning when I sat in Ma's room, I saw Avdhyutji, Abhay and a few others there. Avdhyutji was discussing on a certain subject. Later, I learnt that one day Haribabaji had said that, power is lost on accepting *pranām*. Avdhyutji was discussing on this particular matter. This was the essence of his talk: 'By doing *pranām* to someone, actually his

ego is nourished. But the aim and purpose of *sādhanā* is to destroy this ego. When the *sādhak* destroys his ego and makes himself *nirguna* (without attributes), then only God appears before him in His *saguna* (true) form. Hence nourishing someone's ego is the same as destroying his power.'

With the help of this link Ma started narrating about Herself.

Ma: Regarding This Body I have seen that when someone did *pranām* to This Body, then the shock and jerk that is felt on touching current, a similar shock and jerk used to occur on This Body; an unbearable burning sensation used to occur right from the feet to the head. Have also seen that the way the tree falls down when its roots are cut off, in the same manner This Body also used to fall down when someone did *pranām* to This Body. Again this also has been observed that if someone standing behind also did *pranām* then without even seeing the person, the head of This Body would stoop downwards. Again once when someone did *pranām* to This Body, then This Body too would *pranām* that person, and there was no way that person could avoid or run away without accepting *pranām* from This Body. Again such a state also occurred when there was no reaction at all when someone did *pranām* to This Body. In this state there is no question of the power getting lost, etc. Several people in Kolkata have remarked, 'when She is offered *ārti* why does She not object to it?' Actually people have good feelings towards the person who does not accept *pranām* and who does not allow *ārti* to be done on him. But when no difference is observed while putting the sandal paste on the forehead or being beaten by a broom then whether one accepts *pranām* or not, hardly makes any difference.

Ma continued the narration again after some time.

Ma: Earlier (I) have observed that seated in one *āsan* (pose) for four-five hours, there is no thought of changing *āsan* (stance). *Āsan* in general implies a *sukhāsan* (a comfortable pose). *Āsan* does not mean to sit for two-three hours in one pose. Hence (I) have then observed that (I) am seating in one *āsan* for hours. One day it so happened that (I) was seated in this manner. Bholanath seated beside me was smoking tobacco. The fire from the tobacco fell on my foot, but I was not aware of it. After sometime I somehow touched that spot and found that it had swollen. Unknowingly in order to remove it I started pulling it off and that caused that spot to ulcerate.

So saying Ma started laughing.

Abhay: Earlier You used to sit in one pose for hours, but now You keep changing position. Why does this happen?

Ma: Because it pains!

Abhay: If there is a feeling of pain then it means that the mind exists. One who does not have a mind, he does not feel pain.

Ma: If you want to say that mind exists, then that exists. If you suggest a subtle mind, a pure or a divine or anything else then that only is. And if you say only one Body exists, then that only is.

The *Devi Bhāgwat Pāth* for which all of us have arrived in Solan, that *Pāth* commenced from today with oration of the *Devi Mahatmya* (importance of this scripture) in the morning and expounding its meaning in the afternoon. Batudada who had arrived along with his family for this purpose performed the oration.

17th Āshād 1356, Friday (01-7-1949). Today is the fifth day of the *Devi Bhāgwat Pāth*. Like the other days today too the oration of the *Pāth* was conducted in the morning and its explanation in the afternoon. From the noon itself stormy winds have started blowing. From around one p.m. few drops of rain have also started. The rain poured heavily just after the culmination of the *Pāth*. The hills all around appeared dark bluish in color, and the white clouds were soaring past them. Illuminating the sky, lightning was occurring frequently. This panoramic view of the hills all around was really exciting. Whenever such storms occur in these hilly areas it also becomes chilly. And all of us were seated in our rooms shivering from the chill of the hills. The outsiders who had arrived to listen to the elegant oration were also shivering and had taken shelter in the verandah outside our rooms. In the meantime Manmohan's daughter arrived and informed that Shree Shree Ma was conversing in Her room. Hearing that, I immediately rushed in the rain towards Ma's room.

### **The effect of medicine on Ma's Body**

Arriving at Ma's room found that a Punjabi gentleman and his wife were sitting in front of Ma and Ma was informing them about Her health.

Ma: For the last few days a mild pain is occurring in the stomach. Last two days the pain was quite severe, such that even while breathing it was hurting. Today the pain is a bit less. Raja Saheb wanted to call the doctor, I refused, and see the doctor has himself arrived. Ma informed the doctor, "Today had a *kheyāl* about you. The manner in which you have tied your turban, exactly in this manner had seen you." Satisfied, the doctor exclaimed, "Is it so?" Ma started informing the doctor all the symptoms of the Body. And imagine Ma used to sit in the *Pāth* with all these pain and sufferings. Ma was explaining the symptoms smilingly; observing this the doctor said, "Ma, where is Your concentration during all these sufferings so that You don't feel it."

Ma: (Pointing at everyone) My mind remains within you all.

Hearing all the symptoms of Ma's illness, the doctor said, "I think all these illness is due to shortage of vitamins."

Ma: Can't these be cured?

Doctor: (laughingly loudly) Of course it can be cured. Take vitamins for few days and all these illnesses will get cured.

Hearing the doctor Ma and all of us started laughing too. In the meantime KhukuniDidi arrived. Shree Shree Ma extended Her hand towards the doctor and said, "See, whether there is fever or not?" The doctor took out a watch from his pocket and examined the pulse of Ma's wrist, "Yes, the pulse is a bit wavering." The doctor then took out a thermometer from his pocket and asked Ma to check the temperature. Then KhukuniDidi objected and said, "So what if the thermometer is used? Listen to an incident. Once in Dhaka, Ma had a severe illness. A thermometer was given to check the temperature. The thermometer then showed a temperature of 107 deg F. Then after every 15-20 minutes the temperature was checked and each time a different temperature was observed. Hence there is no use of giving the thermometer to Ma. Hearing this, all of us started laughing, but it was the earnest desire of the doctor that he check's using the thermometer. Ma extended the elbow joint of Her arm and asked, "If the thermometer is placed here will it not work?"

Doctor: Yes, it will.

Ma did as mentioned but fever was not observed.

In the meantime Sundarlal Punditji arrived with a turban on his head. He has come along with Swami Paramanandji. Observing Punditji's attire everyone started laughing. Seeing Ma using the thermometer, he too wanted to get his temperature checked with the thermometer. Hence Swamiji said to the doctor, "Everything of Punditji is weird. When Ma has used the thermometer then he also has to use it. One day it so happened, for performing the *Devi Bhāgwat Pāth* a punditji has arrived from Kashi. As the pundit's legs were paining a boy was sent to massage the pundit's legs with a medicine given by Ma and to bandage the area with cotton after the massage. He was also told to inform the pundit that Ma has sent that medicine. Our Punditji also got his healthy legs massaged by that medicine. But when his legs were about to be bandaged then the Punditji exclaimed that he did not have any pain in his legs." Hearing this everyone laughed.

Observing the doctor's enthusiasm on diagnosing Ma's Body, Ma looking at the doctor said, "Once had gone out with a lady and on the way had met Dr. Pant.

There too had a severe stomach pain. It seemed as if a stone was kept at a point within the stomach. Hearing that, Dr. Pant wanted to prescribe some medicine to me. I informed him that if the ache does not go away in three days then I will take your medicines. It was observed that after three days the pain had vanished. So why will Dr. Pant give any medicine? But the next day the stomach pain started again but less than before. But it vanished again. But I assured Dr. Pant that if ever I take any medicine I will take it from him only."

"The room in which I was staying in Etawah, there on a cot my beddings were spread out. One day I instructed to get the position of the bed changed. On the same night I observed a snake hanging from a bamboo on the very spot the bed was earlier kept. This snake was much bigger than the snake that had arrived to bite Paramanand in Raipur. While lying I gazed at the snake. From the spot where the snake was hanging, a sparrow fell to the ground. If the cot had not been shifted the dead sparrow would have fallen on my legs. I observed that due to the poison the sparrow had become totally black. After a few days I started getting fever. Initially it occurred for shorter durations and later it remained for longer periods. But this time I stayed in the bed as long as the fever lasted and then got up and did my normal activities. It so happened that while I am conversing with everyone there is no health problem but the moment I went and lied down on the bed I had high fever and due to this high fever, other ailments like shivering etc started occurring. The people decided to give me Quinine after observing the symptoms, but Bholanath dreamt that I have been prescribed Atebrin. Dr. Pant was called and he gave Atebrin. It is true that because of that the fever vanished but palpitations in the chest increased to an impossibly high level. Even on hearing to the brushing sound of the washer-man this palpitation used to increase. Observing this Dr. Pant started crying and said that he will never ever prescribe medicines to me. Later due to the various *kriyās* of the Body all the symptoms of illness vanished. And after that when I was lying peacefully Dr. Pant observing my countenance had said that Ma looks like a sweet girl of 15.

\* \* \* \*

(to be continued)

*"As long as you have the energy make efforts to attain Him only. Undertake the company of those who are trying to attain God. Don't you say that the germs of an illness enter from one person to another and make him ill too. The fruits of satsang is also like that. Keeping company of pious people, their pious germs entering within you will kill the germs of materialistic desires. In fact we are all patients. Always remain occupied with satsang and with pious conversations, then the path to attain Him will be realized."*

--- Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee

## *In Ma's Own Words*

*Ma narrates to Bhaiji*

Bhaiji

*(continued from before)*

### **Various vibhutis of Ma in Shahbagh**

In the *Durgā Pujā* held before this *Bāsanti Pujā*, This Body had a *kheyāl* that from dawn to dusk it will not talk with anyone. This Body lay sleeping in the room adjacent to the *Nāch-ghar*. After dusk only when it was dark met the people around. *Saptami*, *Ashtami* and *Navami* passed in this manner. At ten or eleven in the morning of *Dashami* This Body quietly went to the nearby pond, took a bath and returned back to the same room. There were lot of people in the *Nāch-ghar* but when This Body went passed it no one saw This Body. Later when they heard of the bath, all of them exclaimed, "When did You go and take the bath? When did You return?" This Body replied, "I had seen you all both while going to and while returning from the pond." If I had a *kheyāl* that nobody should see This Body then nobody can see it. Some of them even said, "Sometimes You look big and sometimes small, what is the reason for this?" All these *yog-vibhutis* really occurs in a *sādhak*. This Body plays according to its Own *kheyāl*.

One day This Body was going to Siddheshwari in Shashankbabu's car, there were too many people inside the car. This Body's mother took This Body on her lap. Had a *kheyāl* that This Body's weight should not disturb her. But Mother kept on insisting, "How are You sitting, I cannot even feel You." When the car stopped and This Body came out it fell to ground. Then This Body mentioned, "Ages ago that people could walk in the sky, this is the proof of that. Just as This Body was sitting weightless in the car. Don't you see, the kite even though made of so much paper and sticks, still flies in the air. Everything is possible with that principle only.

On the day of *Dashami* This Body went to the pond, when This Body had a *kheyāl* and it stepped into the water, and then a *bhāv* arose as if the water was calling me. Later This Body became stiff and everyone caught This Body and brought it out of the water. This *bhāv* remained for quite some days. "The water is calling, the water is calling" so saying used to rush towards the pond. Similar effects have occurred with fire too. I too used to become One with the water or

fire. Trees and plants, animals and birds whatever is seen or is heard, This Body is all That only, in all their attributes. -

When the *sādhaks* (aspirant's) (My) bodily feelings and consciousness changes due to *sādhanā*, then he can observe that there is nothing in the Universe in which he does not exist. Initially he can feel this condition with either anyone of the material objects like water, fire, sky, wind, and earth. He may sometimes seem disturbed and sometimes totally calm and still. Again one another state may arise when he can observe that the Universe is within him and also he himself exists within everything in the Universe. Then there is no question of various viewpoints. All are one. These too are very specific topics. When This Body was playing the various forms of *sādhanā*, all the above mentioned *bhāvs* were automatically attained.

### **The request of Jyotish and Niranjana**

After the *Bāsanti Pujā* on one moonlight night Jyotish and Niranjana were conversing standing near This Body. As long as This Body was in Dhaka, after the first few days, This Body has never seen Jyotish sitting in Shahbagh or later in the Ashram. One day Niranjana suddenly said, "Ma, may we die soon and be born again as *brahmacharis* of Your Ashram. This is our sincere prayer, bless us." This Body looked towards Jyotish and asked, "Why can't you do so in your present body? What is the exact meaning of a *brahmin* or a *brahmachari*? Thoughts and action are the actual thing." Then both of them did not say anything. Later Jyotish recovered from such a deadly illness. Know that it was his rebirth only.

One day during *amavasyā* (new moon day) there was *kirtan* and *bhog* in Niranjana's house. This Body had become different. The *kirtan* was over by midnight. After the *bhog*, informed all the people there to sit down for having *prasād*. Mothurbabu said, 'Ma, the prepared *bhog* will not be sufficient for all these people.' He was told, 'First let all of them sit down.' Then This Body had a *kheyāl* that as long as This Body will be watching the distribution of *prasād* till then there will be no shortage. Later it was seen that even after everyone had finished eating there were still some more remaining.

### **The Story of the snake of Vindhyaçal**

One day Nagen Dutta asked This Body about the snake incident of Vindhyaçal. While narrating that incident, just as one cries in the absence of a dear and near one, exactly a similar feeling occurred for that snake. Immediately smiled and muttered, 'Will meet very soon.'

Every Saturday there was *kirtan* in Niranjan's house. His wife was seriously ill. Went regularly to see her. That day too This Body was sitting against a pillow with the legs kept in the front, in her room upstairs on the first floor. Suddenly had a feeling that there was a snake near the feet. I did not say anything, but in the meantime someone else said, "Where is the other snake?" To attend the *kirtan* This Body started going down the stairs, with Bholanath in the front. Suddenly saw a narrow snake besides Bholanath's foot. Suddenly had a *kheyāl*, like a he-man pulled back Bholanath and with my toe pressed the snake. Later it sat down coiled under the stairs. Several came near and asked, 'Should we kill the snake?' Laughingly mentioned, 'See if you can.' Someone came and pressed it with a stick, thinking that it had pressed the snake in the centre. But then it was seen that there was no snake there. Even though there were lights everywhere the snake could not be located, it had disappeared. Whenever This Body had a *kheyāl* of a snake, whether day or night, at anytime, a type of snake was visible near This Body.

While departing from Vidyakut on the way to Shahbagh, we boarded a boat. I was sitting outside along with Biren sitting nearby. Suddenly saw a snake following our boat almost ten hands distant and looking towards This Body. This continued for quite some time. I too sat without blinking an eye, staring at the snake. When the snake reached the boat near me, the boatman tried to hit it with the oar, and the snake went away swimming below our boat. The boatman feared that the snake would climb onto Ma's Body. Biren asked, 'What is this?' This Body replied, 'Seeing, a saint and his disciple following us maintaining a constant distance of ten arms. Just now it has vanished.' Later we boarded a steamer. This Body was almost paralyzed all the way. And was held by others and brought to Shahbagh.

### **Moroni's probability of death**

Bholanath's elder sister (wife of Sitanath Kushari) and her family members arrived in Shahbagh for the *Bāsanti Pujā* and stayed back after the function for a few days. Her only son's wife was named Antasara. One day crying she informed me, 'Whenever I have the next child the earlier one dies. The presently living daughter Moroni is one year and ten months old. I am expecting another child. In this situation I am offering my daughter at Your feet, whether she lives or dies it is up to You.' From then onwards Moroni started staying in Shahbagh. That lady's one more child (a girl) died and after that a son was born who is still alive.

### Ma goes to Paruldiya village

Once *Yogeshbabu* invited us to his village, where his mother was on death bed, almost unconscious, lying inert on the bed. For her salvation he has arranged for a *Kālī Pujā* and has requested us to go there. *Yogeshbabu* pointing at This Body said to *Bholanath* that Her *Pujā* has to be performed. When *Bholanath* requested, This Body said, 'Promise that you will never ever say to do this again.' He gave his consent and hence This Body said, 'Do it this time.'

After the priest made all the arrangements and departed, This Body went and sat down for the *Pujā*. All the worship rituals occurred automatically on This Body. In between *Yogeshbabu* arrived to see the *Pujā*, but could not see This Body there. He felt that only a saree was lying on the *Pujā-āsan*. He thought that I may have gone somewhere. But later he was shocked when he learnt that This Body was sitting in the *Pujā-āsan*.

We were present in Paruldiya, during the death ceremony of *Yogeshbabu's* mother. When the *kirtan* started the state of This Body changed. Moving round and round along with the *kirtan*, This Body observing a Muslim nearby started uttering *Allah* and similar Urdu words. That Muslim too started repeating those words along with This Body. Later the Muslim informed that the manner in which Ma had uttered the different names of *Allah*, that even if we try we cannot utter it. He also said that the joy he got on that day by repeating *Allah's* name along with Ma, that he will never ever get again.

Later instructed *Brahmar* and a few other girls to continue *kirtan* for the whole night. On This Body's advice *Yogeshbabu* had gone around the members chanting *kirtan* with incense sticks in his hand.

### Coming near and going away from Ma

Know this to be the Truth that, according to your opinion those who have moved away from This Body, as much time as is required for their benefit, for that much time only This Body remains with them. Again in order to move away from This Body such a condition arises that he just departs by showing some or the other excuse. Of course if This Body has a strong *kheyāl* then nothing is left out. However for This Body, all places and all times are the same for everyone.

\* \* \* \*

(to be continued..)

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

When an aspirant aims only for the Supreme Absolute, that aspirant will never ever try to take the position of a *Guru*.

— Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee

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

Gurupriya Devi

*(continued from before)*

### ***Sanyam Saptāh* in Vrindavan Ashram**

20th November, 1966. Swami Maheshwaranandji narrated a story regarding an important incident, which he had narrated earlier too. The story was: Once upon a time a king disguised used to go around the kingdom in the night to observe everything for the welfare of his subjects. One day he was bitten by a dog that had already bitten several other subjects earlier. The king became worried pondering what should be done with the dog. The minister advised him that the dog should be kept in a room which would have mirrors on all the four walls. Hence with good food and a bedspread the dog was kept inside the locked room. Sensing good food the dog rushed to eat it but he suddenly saw another dog about to eat a similar type of food. He then angrily shouted, 'All are mine'. So he rushed to bite the dogs seen in the mirrors. He then saw that all the other dogs were also coming towards him to bite him. Instead of eating the delicious food, he became desperate to drive away the other dogs. Few days later when the door was opened the dog was found dead.

Again a Mahatma's dog was also locked in that room but he was instructed him that all other dogs observed in that room were his reflections. So on entering he happily ate the delicious foods, with the understanding that all other dogs observed in the room are his reflections only. Again when the door was opened this time he was found to be at peace and happy. Similarly when a man understands that there is none other than he himself and that all are just a reflection in his mind, when he understands himself as the *Ātma*, only then he attains salvation.

In the last half an hour of the program Ma happily answered the questions of the participants (*vratis*). One or two days Ma had performed *kirtan* too. The Maharaja and Maharani of Bhavnagar were the main organizers of this seventeenth *Sanyam Saptāh*. Hence several Raja's and Rani's had arrived from various places to participate in this *Sanyam*. Six foreigners had also arrived from England, France, Germany, Sweden and Romania. During the Hindi oration they remained seated in silent meditation, even though they did not understand the Hindi oration.

As a special gift to them Swami Chidanandji who had arrived for four days only gave his discourse in English on all the four days.

### **The Queen of Greece visits Ma**

On the twentieth November, the Queen of Greece arrived with her princess daughter for Ma's *darshan*. They were shown around the temples of the Ashram. After that they had a private talk in Ma's room for almost fifteen minutes. They showed a special interest in Hindu philosophy and meditation. And were extremely happy to listen to Ma's words and replies to philosophical questions. On the next day afternoon a Swiss group of twelve people arrived for Ma's *darshan*. Their leader and guide was a Swiss monk and had earlier lived in India for quite some time and had also visited Ma regularly for quite some years. After a few days the wife of Ambassador of Argentina arrived for Ma's *darshan*.

Like every time, on the last day of the *Sanyam*, *Mahanishā dhyān* was held at midnight, along with lighted candles. And the last year's *Narayan-shilā* (the stone idol of Lord Vishnu) was brought in the Hall. The next day *yagna* was held in an open area. After the *yagna*, Ma with Her own hands distributed *prasād* to the participants (*vratis*). In this manner the *vratis* ended their fast (*vrat*).

### **Kātyāyani Pujā of Brahmachari Narendra Nath**

Just after the completion of the *Sanyam Saptāh*, Brahmachari Narendra Nath, who was the *Guru*-brother of Shree Gopal Thakur, arrived near Ma and performed the *Shree Shree Kātyāyani Pujā*. This *Pujā* was performed jointly by him and all his devotees.

He and his ten devotees had arrived three days earlier from Deoghar and Kolkata. All his devotees sat in a line in front of the Idol along with him and performed the *Pujā*. This festival continued for three days, almost like the *Shree Shree Durgā Pujā*. *Kātyāyani* is actually another name of Goddess *Durgā*. Rishi Katyāyan himself used to perform *Durgā Pujā*, without the other Idols of Goddess *Lakshmi* and *Saraswati* or the Gods *Ganesh* and *Kārtik*. And hence this type of *Pujā* was called as *Kātyāyani Pujā*. It is also said that the *Gopis* in order to attain Lord *Krishna* had performed this *Pujā* in the Bengali month of *Agrāhan* (Nov-Dec) on the banks of river Yamuna in Vrindavan. This month begins just after the *Sanyam*. The *vratis* were requested to stay back to attend this function. Sculptors had arrived from Kolkata and had fabricated this Idol during the *Sanyam* period and the Idol of the Goddess was truly enchanting.

29th November 1966. Today the *Kātyāyani* Idol was immersed in the Yamuna River. By the first week of December almost all the devotees departed for their homes hence the Ashram premises became isolated and quiet. From 13th to

20th December Swami Akhandanandji performed *Bhāgwat-Saptāh* in his Ashram. More than a hundred devotees arrived from Mumbai for this function. The famous *Bhāgwat* orator Shri Dongre Maharaj expounded the *Bhāgvat-kathā* in Gujarati. After a day or two Swami Akhandanandji everyday expounded in Hindi the portion of the *Bhāgwat* called as 'Gopi-Kathā'. Ma and Her party attended this *Kathā* everyday in Swamiji's Ashram.

### **Music Conference in Vrindavan**

17th December 1966. Swami Krishnanand Avdyutji organized a music conference in our Ashram. The stage was erected on the Temple verandah itself and spectators sat in the Pandal erected on the open ground in front of the Temple. It is said that on this very day four hundred years ago, while singing Shree Haridas Babaji, the *Guru* of the famous singer Tansen, had *darshan* of *Bānke Bihārīji* (Lord Krishna of Vrindavan). Hence this day is celebrated as the revelation day of *Bihārīji*. The Communication Minister of India (also the Director of All India Radio) had arrived from Delhi to attend this function being celebrated for Ma in Ma's presence and in Ma's Ashram. Ma also attended the program for some time too. And this program continued till late in the night.

### **Ma's visit to Agra**

19th December 1966. Shree Shree Ma and Her troupe, including three foreigners went to Agra on the invitation of Mr and Mrs Bhargava. He was a wealthy businessman and had constructed a new specially designed flat for Ma. Ma stayed there for two nights. They took Ma to their factory too. They showed around the various tourist spots of Agra, like the Taj-Mahal, Dayalbagh, etc, to the devotees of Ma who were present there.

### **Ma's visit to Kashi and Allahabad**

21st December 1966. Today from Agra, Ma departed for Kashi along with a very small group of devotees. Didima, myself and others who were left behind, returned back to Vrindavan. Ma was visiting Kashi after quite some time. This time Ma stayed in Kashi from 22nd to 27th December, and during this period the Kanyapeeth inmates had organized the annual *Gita Jayanti*, with Ma reaching there on the third day of the function. The Kanyapeeth girls were extremely pleased to have Ma among their midst for this function. Quite a few Professors from Benaras Hindu University came regularly and gave a discourse on the Gita and Ma attended their discourse. They too considered themselves lucky to have Ma's *darshan* during this program.

From Kashi Ma went to Gopal Thakur's Ashram in Allahabad. Ma was in an excellent mood during the three days of stay in Allahabad and the devotees of that city were exalted to Have Ma's *darshan* after quite a long time. Everyone felt that Ma had blessed each one of them separately.

On 30th December, Ma departed from Allahabad reaching Vrindavan on 31st December. Because of the small number of people in Vrindavan Ashram, Ma had quite a good rest.

### **Ma's visit to Delhi**

6th January 1967. Today Ma departed for Delhi and staying there for a day returned back to Vrindavan.

### **Ma's visit to Modinagar, Sukhtal and Lucknow**

24th January 1967. Today from Vrindavan Ma departed for Modinagar for a night's stay. The next day from there Ma departed for Shukratal near Muzaffarnagar. On 26th January the *Shree Shākambhri Durgā* Temple was inaugurated in Ma's presence. From Shukratal Ma went to the Ashram of Vishnu-Ashramji near Roorkee. And on that very day Ma returned back to Modinagar. The next morning on 27th, Ma went to Delhi to give blessings to Shri Jiten Dutta. He has constructed a cottage for Ma, where Ma rested for a few hours. And in the evening, Ma departed by train to Lucknow. A huge crowd had assembled in Delhi station to have Ma's *darshan*. A day earlier a few of us departed from Kashi to Lucknow. On 28th we met Ma in Lucknow in Shri Rameshwar Sahay's residence, where Ma was given *bhog* and all of us had our meals too. From there in the evening all of us departed for Naimisharanya.

### **Ma's visit to Naimisharanya – foundation of *Purān Mandir***

29th January 1967. Today late evening we reached Naimisharanya. Shri Prayag Narayanji of Sitapur had made excellent arrangements for boarding and lodging of Ma and other devotees in Naimisharanya. He had arranged five cottages on the banks of the River Gomati. Few years ago after the *Sanyam Saptāh* of 1960 in Naimisharanya, Ma had stayed here for a few days. Now also Ma stayed in this pious and virtuous place very joyously. On the stipulated day the foundation stone laying ceremony of the *Purān Mandir* was held pompously in Ma's presence.

The surrounding scenery was truly magnificent. Several devotees and distinguished personal from nearby towns and cities visited Ma for Her blessings and some even had private with Ma. Ma had arrived here with a small group. All of us who had arrived here from Kashi, returned back to Kashi and Ma departed for Vrindavan, reaching there on 31st January.

### Ma's visit to Vrindavan, Delhi and Bāndh

Ma had a good rest in the calm and quiet atmosphere of the Vrindavan Ashram. On the invitation of the Delhi devotees Ma went to Delhi on 14th February for *Saraswati Pujā* and stayed there for five days. Ma was quite busy during this period and there was a huge crowd of devotees. Haribabaji's disciple Shri Sunderlal has been visiting Ma for several years. It was his earnest desire to take Ma to Bāndh along with him to visit Haribabaji. On Ma's consent he went with Ma in Ma's car to Bāndh. This was his last visit to Bāndh. Being very old and due to an illness he expired in his *Guruji's* place.

After returning back to Vrindavan Ma remained in rest even though there were frequent visits by devotees and visitors. Several foreigners also arrived to have Ma's *darshan*. One among them was the Ambassador of Czechoslovakia. A group from British Television had arrived to make a short film on Ma. Ma too blessed them and sang "*Krishna Chhaliyā Anandalāl*" for them and they too were extremely pleased to hear it. Mrs. and Mr. Desjardins had also arrived with their two children for three days. Ma had a special *kheyāl* towards the three year old boy and his elder sister. Whenever the boy was near Ma, he would shout with joy. He first had Ma's *darshan* when he was four months old. Then too he showed signs by his behaviour that he recognizes Ma. An artist from Finland, who has visited Ma earlier too, arrived with a Switzerland friend. The German novelist Ms. Melita Maschmann is accompanying Ma right from the Bombay *Durgā Pujā* and is also present in Vrindavan. She has recently published a book in German language in which she has mentioned about Ma. She has dedicated the Bengali version of her book to Ma. An American lady is also accompanying Ma from mid-January.

2nd March 1967. Today the President of the Divya Jeevan Sangha Swami Chidanandji arrived near Ma. He gave a lecture and sang *kirtan* for some time.

### Holi and Shiv-Rātri in Bāndh

7th March 1967. For the last few years on Haribabaji's request Ma has been staying in Bāndh for the festival of Holi. Haribabaji's birthday is also celebrated on the day of Holi. *Chaitanyā Mahāprabhu's* birthday is also celebrated on the day of Holi-*Purnimā* (full moon day). This time Haribabaji requested Ma to stay in Bāndh also during the *Shiv-Rātri* festival. Ma had given consent to both the requests. Today the devotees of Ma departed from Vrindavan Ashram in a bus for Bāndh. Ma departed for Bāndh in a car the next day i.e. on 8th morning along with four-five associates.

### **The story of Haridhām-Bāndh**

Haridhām-Bāndh, the Ashram of Haribabaji, is a picturesque place. It is situated in the remote areas of Uttar Pradesh and is around 140km from Vrindavan, which can be covered in 4-5 hours by road. The nearest railway station is situated in Anupshahr, twelve km from Haridhām-Bāndh and both are situated on the banks of the River Ganga. The last few kilometers to Haridhām were almost inaccessible, only a bullock cart or a jeep could cross that road. Forty years ago the villages in this region used to get flooded by the Ganga River during the monsoon season. The local government had constructed a dyke (bāndh) to prevent damage to the villages but this dyke also broke due to the monsoon floods. Haribabaji travelled in and around this region for his penance.

Observing the dilapidated condition of the villages he collected few villagers from various villages and started to construct a dyke with sand and mud. While the villagers were involved and busy with the construction he advised them to take the shelter of God for this massive work and hence requested them to take the 'name' of God '*Hari-naam*' all the time. This non-stop continuous 'name' of '*Hari*' became the part and parcel of these villagers. Several people have informed that even the sand particles were engrossed in taking the 'name' of '*Hari*'. Everyone believes that only because of this '*Hari-naam*' this thirty-four kilometers long dyke (*bāndh*) is so stable, strong and sturdy and that because of this only it is able to resist the flood waters of the Ganga from entering the villages. The entire work was carried out in just six months (in 1923), and entirely done by people while chanting the name of God. Every bit of mud and stone here is soaked in God's name. The entire region prospered after this dyke was built.

### **The devotees of Haribaba'ji**

The villagers of about forty villages are ardent devotees of Haribaba'ji and consider him to be an incarnation of God. They respected him with undoubted faith and had whole-heartedly surrendered themselves at his holy feet. Several residences, temples with Idols of Shree Radha-Krishna, Nitai-Gouranga, etc are seen in and around Bāndh. And the whole place is kept neat and clean. Almost twenty years ago Ma had been here for the first time and then had a *kheyāl* that Bāndh is a spiritually advanced place and hence it has been a very loving place for Ma.

### **Haridhām Bāndh, one of Ma's favorite place**

The devotees and ashramites who had accompanied Ma to Bāndh really considered themselves very fortunate for being able to see Ma in Her natural,

simple and joyous behaviour. They could realize that this is the type of environment with everyone around chanting the 'name' of 'Hari', that Ma always liked to reside. In this pious place there wasn't any rush of tourists. All the villagers eagerly expecting to have Shree Shree Ma's *ahetuki darshan*, came only at the stipulated time of *darshan*. For that reason Ma's door was always kept open. No one even tried to enter Ma's room at other hours of the day.

### **Maha Shiv-Rātri at Bāndh in Ma's presence**

9th March 1967. Today for *Shiv-Rātri* only seven devotees had arrived from outside and hence there were a total of only twenty people performing worship of Lord *Shivā* in four phases (*prahar*) in the room adjacent to Ma's room. And Ma's room was also kept open throughout the program so that everyone could feel Ma's presence all the time. After the completion of the second phase of worship and rituals at around 2pm, everyone seemed to be dozing off. Observing this Ma started singing *kirtan* in a loud and melodious voice along with the clapping of the hands for almost ten to fifteen minutes. The devotees or worshippers started the *kirtan* along with Ma and it rose to a crescendo. The sleep vanished and all became intoxicated in Ma's *bhāv*. To each one of the worshippers this *Shiv-Rātri* would always remain engraved in their hearts as an unforgettable experience with Ma in Haridhām Bāndh.

Among Shree Shree Ma's group members was a person from Los Angeles, USA who had written a letter of his experience. I quote his letter here- 'Daily at around ten-thirty in the morning all of us proceeded with Shree Shree Ma to the place where *Rās-lilā* was being held and watched the beautiful and absolutely natural looking drama. At around four-thirty in the afternoon we used to return back to a huge *Pandāl* and sit there with Ma. Haribabaji sitting in the dais along with Ma read the scriptures and discussed about it with Ma. At seven-thirty there used to *kirtan* and at eight-thirty Ma again arrived in the *Pandāl* for Haribabaji's *kirtan* and *satsang*. One evening Ma gave a discourse of Her *Matri-vāni* through the microphone. I recorded Ma's *amrit-vāni* very clearly in my tape-recorder. In this place almost all the time *kirtan* is going on which is truly a rare feat. Where ever Haribabaji went a group of villagers were always with him and beating the drum-plate sang *Hari-hol* or the *Maha-mantra*. Shree Shree Ma and Haribabaji during their evening stroll most of the time met and greeted each other. At nine in the night both of them visited the Temples and Shree Shree Ma caressed each and every Idol and touched their feet with Her head.'

### Ma's stay in Moradabad and Dehradun

29th March 1967. Today Ma all of a sudden, departed from Bāndh to Moradabad which is around seventy kilometers from there. There Shree Shree Ma and Haribabaji inaugurated a new residence of Shri S.N. Khanna, Principal of G.K. College and also stayed there for a few days.

4th April 1967. Today from Moradabad Ma reached Kishenpur Ashram in Dehradun. Didima and myself reached Kishenpur on 5th April from Kashi. Ma's health here in Dehradun and in Moradabad was not quite well. In spite of that, Ma stayed in Kalyanvan Ashram for two days for a general visit to the Ram Mandir and a newly constructed building behind the Temple. Daily a huge crowd of people arrived for Ma's *darshan*. There were also seven to eight foreigners among them.

On 7th and 8th April *akhand-Ramayana-pāth* was held in the Ram-Mandir and on 9th from dawn to dusk *Hanuman-Chalisa-pāth* was performed here.

### Didima's Sanyās Utsav in Kankhal on 14th April

10th April 1967. Today Ma arrived in Kankhal from Dehradun for Didima's *sanyās* function to be celebrated here on 14th April. After arriving in Kankhal Ma's health improved a lot and Ma looked much better. On 14th on the day of the function Ma was very busy throughout the day supervising all the arrangements of the function and even came downstairs twice for quite a few hours. Even though the 'Shantiniketan' named Ashram in Kankhal is not quite widespread still all the programs concluded very beautifully within that area. Several people had arrived from Dehradun and distant cities. It was our good fortune that even though Didima's age had just crossed ninety, still day by day instead of growing older She was appearing younger and younger. During this function Didima was specially worshipped as a *Guru*. Arrangements were made for continuous *kirtan* from four-thirty at dawn to six in the evening. Quite a few monks were invited and everyone in the Ashram premises were offered *prasād* in the afternoon. Three Mahamandaleshwar *sadhus* from Haridwar gave simple oration on *vairāgya* and *tyāg*. Didima's *ārati* was performed once early in the morning and then in the evening.

15th April 1967. Today being Bengali New Year's Day, Ma's room was open and Ma was available for *darshan* throughout the day.

Sitting in front of a *Lakshmi-Narayan* photo, *Satya-Narayan Pujā* was performed from 14th to 16th April 1967.

### Ma's subtle vision

17th April 1967. Today Ma observed in subtle a beautiful mansion. Numerous *Mahatmas* were residing in that mansion. There was also a cottage for Shree Shree Ma. In one of the rooms of that mansion a lady in deep concentration and lost in herself was singing *kirtan*, '*Bhav bandhan mukti'r kâron*' (in Bengali meaning- destroying worldly attachment is the very cause of liberation). The words after that are not very clear. After that one word was '*dukh:hâri*'. Since this incident has occurred in Kankhal, the land of Lord *Shiva*, Shree Shree Ma added few words in place of the unclear words – '*Sorbjoy Shiv*'. After that was added '*Lakshmi Narayan*'. For this very reason the three days long *Satya-Narayan Pujâ* has been organized.

Hence a new *kirtan* was given by Ma. Initially for half an hour Ma Herself sang this *kirtan*. The lines were:

'*Bhav bandhan mukti'r kâron sorbjoy Shiv dukh:hâri*'.

'*Bhav bandhan mukti'r kâron Lakshmi Narayan dukh:hâri*'.

(Lord *Shiva*, the all victorious and remover of all sorrows is the very cause of liberation from the cycle of birth and death.)

*Lakshmi-Narayan*, the all victorious and remover of all sorrows is the very cause of liberation from the cycle of birth and death.)

Shree Shree Ma instructed the Ashram girls to sing *kirtan* of the second line along with the tune, from early morning to nine in the morning. This *kirtan* had a very heart-touching melody.

The next day on 18th April they sang the first line for three hours. Shree Shree Ma informed, "*Shree Lakshmi Narayan* has bestowed this *kirtan* to this Ashram, and hence this *kirtan* should remain here forever".

One of the girls who sang these *kirtans* was 'Moroni'. She was Baba Bholanath's elder brother's daughter and he had adopted her at the age of one. She has now come here in Kankhal with her two sons as her husband passed away last year in 1966.

19th April 1967. Today all the outsiders departed. Shree Shree Ma also departed to 'Shantiniwas', a residence constructed by J.K.Birla, on the Haridwar-Rishikesh highway. Ma stayed there for a few days and then went to Dehradun.

24th April 1967. Today Ma reached Kishenpur Ashram in Dehradun on the *Purnima* day (full-moon day) just before the onset of the lunar eclipse. The moment Ma reached Kishenpur Ashram, *kirtan* started in the hall and it continued for the next four hours. However in between *maun* and *dhyân* was held for half an hour. During this period Ma rested in Her room upstairs and

after the end of lunar eclipse, Ma ordered for Ganga-water and Ma Herself sprinkled it on everyone present there.

### Shree Shree Ma keeps *maun* for two weeks

26th April 1967. From today onwards till 5th May, Ma started keeping *maun* in the morning time. Ma talked only after the evening *ārti* in the temple. This was not like the total-*maun* that Ma had taken earlier. Now as and when required Ma recognizing the girls around Her gave instructions through signs. Nobody dared to speak during this period. Hence there wasn't any sound in the Ashram and there was an atmosphere of peace and stillness all around.

28th April 1967. On Ma's instructions today myself along with several boys and girls of the Ashram departed from Dehradun to Lucknow and from there went to Kanpur to make arrangements for Shree Shree Ma's *Janmotsav* to be held there from 2nd May.

29th April 1967. Today Ma had been to Raipur Ashram for one night and returned back the next day to Kishenpur Ashram.

1st May 1967. Today the opening of the kitchen of the Kishenpur Ashram was done in Ma's presence. *Khichdi* was prepared and after offering *bhog* to the Idols in the temples the assembled devotees were distributed *prasād*. During this period *Ram-naam kirtan* was held in front of the *Ram-Mandir*.

\* \* \* \*

(to be continued)

### List of Festivals

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 Janmashtami	September 6, 2023
Birthday of M.M.Gopinath Kaviraj	September 8, 2023
Shrimad Bhāgwat-Saptāh	September 22-28, 2023
GurupriyaDidi Nirvān Tithi	September 22, 2023
Shree Sharadiyā Durgā Pujā	October 20-24, 2023
Shree Shree Lakshmi Pujā	October 28, 2023
Shree Shree Kālī Pujā	November 12, 2023
Shree Shree Annakut Pujā	November 14, 2023
Shree Shree Sanyam-Saptāh (Gopa-Ashtami)	November 20-26, 2023
Shree Shree Jagadhātri Pujā	November 21, 2023
Shree Shree Rās Purnimā	November 27, 2023
Shree Gita Jayanti	December 19-22, 2023



Shree Shree Ma, Didima & Gurupriyadi sitting in the *Ma Annapurna Mandir* verandah of Varanasi Ashram (1954)



Shree Shree Ma along with devotees on the hanging courtyard of Varanasi Ashram (1952)



*JagatGuru* Didima (Ma's Mother) in front of the Kanyapeeth, Varanasi Ashram (1947)



Shree Shree Ma attending the *Purnāhuti* of the *Sāvītri Mahayagna* (1950)



Shree Shree Ma's carriage during the *Nagar-Bhraman* procession after the *Purnāhuti* function (1950)



Shree Shree Ma, Didima & Gurupriyadi sitting in the *Ma Annapurna Mandir* verandah of Varanasi Ashram (1954)



Shree Shree Ma along with devotees on the hanging courtyard of Varanasi Ashram (1952)



*JagatGuru* Didima (Ma's Mother) in front of the Kanyapeeth, Varanasi Ashram (1947)



Shree Shree Ma attending the *Purnāhuti* of the *Sāvitrī Mahayagna* (1950)



Shree Shree Ma's carriage during the *Nagar-Bhraman* procession after the *Purnāhuti* function (1950)

Pādpeetham Smarāmi  
Kashi Ashram and Ma Annapurna

Brahmacharini Gecta

*(continued from before)*

**Ma's unusual *Lila's* during *Akhand Sāvītri Mahayagna* at Kashi**

Brahmacharini Bishuddha'di has mentioned in her book 'My Mother Anandamayee':-

When I joined Kanyapeeth in January 1949, the three year long *Akhand Sāvītri Mahayagna* was going on at the Kashi Ashram and it was to be concluded on 15th January 1950. Throughout the year almost ten thousand Brahmins were fed in a grand fashion. Distinguished brahmins were invited from different regions and states of our pious motherland. These variety of brahmins had their own strict rules and regulations. And hence their own brahmin cooks had arrived to cook their food according to their rules and taste. The fooding arrangement was made on the huge balcony and the huge hall below it, overlooking the River Ganga. It was a pleasure to watch the South Indian brahmins. All around their *āsans* were drawn motifs with chalk and food was served on banana leaves. They wore multi-colored satin clothes and *tilak* and other marks on their forehead and forearms drawn with sandal-paste and ash. Ma used to take us to the hall to watch the proceedings. After food was served to them, *ārti* was done and we sang the *ārti* songs. After that they recited verses from the Vedas. They started eating only after we departed from the hall. It was a grand treat to watch each day a different region of brahmins having food in their own strict methods.

On Ma's instructions, daily Kshama'di keeping *maun* (silence) washed all the sesame, barley etc., required for the *yagna*. Then dried these and removed the foreign particles from it. Mukta'di helped her in this work. We Kanyapeeth girls too keeping *maun* helped them in removing stone particles and other foreign particles from these *yagna* items.

One day a lot of potatoes were to be peeled off and cleaned. Ma instructed all the sacks of potatoes to be opened and spreadout in the verandah of the Chandi-mandap. Ma sitting there ordered us Kanyapeeth girls to arrive there with cutters. When we sat down circling the huge heap of potatoes, Ma instructed each one of us to peel the potatoes and keep the potatoes and the peels separately.

This was the first time I was cutting vegetables. After it was over Ma asked us to count the number of potatoes we had peeled off. Pavitra'di had peeled the most of the potatoes and I the minimum, only eight to ten. But when the thicknesses of the peeled skins were observed, Ma declared 'Bishuddha is first'. Hearing this, my heart was filled with joy. I smiled at Ma and Ma too smiled at me.

Ma gave the responsibility to Bithu'di and Renu'di to prepare satin flags with scriptural emblems on them for hanging on the top of the *Yagnashālā*. Bithu'di asked me and Jyoti'di to help her in this work. We started the work in the underground room below the Kanyapeeth. First triangular, rectangular and square large flags of various colors were made. Then various symbols of the weapons and vehicles of Gods and Goddesses were cut from colored satin clothes and stitched on them. In this manner several multi-colored flags were fabricated. At some places paintings were also made on the flags by Renu'di and myself. Ma was extremely pleased when these were shown to Ma. During the conclusion ceremony (*Purnāhhuti*) of the *Yagna* all these flags were hung all around on top of the huge *Yagnashālā* according to the scriptural rituals.

A month long *akhand naam-kirtan* was also held just before the *Purnāhhuti*. For this conclusion function *sadhus*, monks, devotees, etc had arrived from all over India. Since there wasn't enough living quarters within the Ashram, several houses adjoining the Ashram and nearby localities were hired for their stay. Several reputed *Mahatmas* were also invited and had arrived for this function. Especially among them were the renunciating saints, Shree DevGiriji Maharaj from Uttarkashi, Shree Triveni Puriji Maharaj from Khanna, Punjab, Shree Avdyutji Maharaj, Shree Haribabaji Maharaj from Vrindavan, orator of the *Bhāgwat* Shree Akhandanandji Maharaj, Shree Chakrapaniji, Shree Gopal Thakur from Allahabad and several others. Besides, Maharajas and Maharanis of various states had also arrived for this function. Ma Herself had sent invitations to all these eminent people and also to several devotees with a quote to accept '*Chhoti Bachchi kā amantran*' for the conclusion of this three year long *Yagna*. But Ma's health was also not very good during this period. Whatever Ma ate was immediately vomited and Ma had become quite lean and weak. Dadabhai (Gurupriya'di) had remarked, "So that the participants (*hotā*) of the *Yagna* could, without any illness complete the *yagna* successfully, Ma had taken away their illness on to Her Body." In spite of Her illness, Ma kept a strict vigil over the *Yagna* and rituals going on all around. And at the same time took care of the saintly *Mahatmas* and of the royal families and the ardent devotees, arriving for the function. With the *yagna mantrās* and other *kirtans* and oration of the

various scriptures being transmitted over the mikes in the Ashram, almost the whole of Kashi was vibrating with its holy words and songs.

One day before the arrival of the *Purnāhhuti* (conclusion ceremony of the *Yagna*) day, Ma called us Kanyapeeth girls and said, "All of you who are present here during this *MahaYagna* should be aware of the fact that you all are waiting for several births to personally observe this pious moment of the *Purnāhhuti* of this *MahaYagna*, '*Bhagwāner kripāy ei durlob jogājog*' (Bengali meaning- By the grace of God this rare association has occurred). Ma gave each one of us yellow colored *nāmāvali* cloths. Ma gave me a similar cloth and then suddenly took it back saying, 'I will give you a new one'. I wondered when all were new then why did Ma take my cloth back. When Ma gave me another one of those *nāmāvali* cloth, I found that in all others, '*Hare Krishna*' or '*Om Shivāy*' was printed and in my cloth only '*Shree Ram*' was printed. After that Dadabhai (GurupriyaDi) gave few items (*jau* or barley, *til* or sesame, *haritiki* or *harad* or chebulic myrobalan, and small pieces of silver and gold) in our hands and said, "All these you will offer tomorrow in the *yagna* fire during *Purnāhhuti*. On the ultimate day at the auspicious moment when the final offerings were made by the *hotās*, Ma stood nearby touching them. We too then on Ma's direction offered the items given to us Kanyapeeth girls onto the *Yagna* fire and with folded hands uttered the prayers to the Fire God as taught to us by Ma, for the well-being of the universe.

### The effect of *Sāvitri Mahayagna*

Regarding the effect or result of this *Mahayagna* Ma said, "That the *Agni-Dev* (God of Fire) has accepted all this *Seva* (service) from us for the past three consecutive years, is all this completely useless? The words that had emanated from This Body that the fire of a *yagna* held several years ago, would be utilized in a *Mahayagna*, is that just a lame talk? Keep this in mind, that whatever is happening is some unknown incident engrossing everything within His realm of the created and uncreated Universe. Do not consider all that He is getting done in this manner as a child's play. He Himself manifesting in this Form is accomplishing automatically whatever has to be accomplished. This *Sāvitri Mahayagna* has been performed with the very aim of universal peace and universal welfare."

\* \* \* \*

(to be continued)

*If 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.

## Reminiscence of my proximity with Ma

Brahmacharini Bishuddha

*(continued from before)*

My classes started again, now in Sanskrit. I had an interest to know something about Rig-Veda and hence informed them that I would like to take it as an elective subject. But the language and grammar of *Veda-Samhitā* is much different from that of conventional Sanskrit. And its books are also not easily available. Though some books were available in the B.H.U. Library, but being a private student I didn't have access to it. Being a difficult language and because of the unavailability of the books, Padmaji initially objected to my selection of subjects, but observing my keen interest she finally consented. But the maximum encouragement in this subject I received from Bhandarkarji. Punditji used to say, "Veda means knowledge, one who wants to know, the Veda automatically gets manifested in him. Hence let's both of us study it jointly." Truly enough while going through the *Sutras* of the Veda, sometimes Punditji explained the meaning and sometimes I too tried to explain it. The Veda class was exceptional. After the daily chores and teaching the Kanyapeeth students I just had twenty minutes of free time during the recess. And that is when I went to Punditji for my studies. I was also not quite fit to study in the night. Over and above I was given the responsibility of managing the accounts of the Kanyapeeth. Well in this manner I studied and gave my exams in M.A. Sanskrit. The most surprising fact was that even after all these hindrances I passed the exam with first class and that too a difficult subject like Rig-Veda. What I mean to say here is that all this was only possible by Ma's infinite grace, I have no credit in this.

In December 1961, quite a few of the Kanyapeeth girls had typhoid fever. During that period a deadly cold wave had also started. In spite of medical treatment and Kshama'di's utmost service, her elder niece died. Kshama'di had arrived near Ma at a very young age and on Ma's instruction looked after the Kanyapeeth for several years. Such selfless and efficient service given by her is rarely seen. She had brought four of her nieces from their parents to Kanyapeeth to lead a life of a Brahmacharini and to study in Kanyapeeth. She brought them here as paid students and also requested her brothers, who were well-off to donate essential items, like fans, winter clothes, blankets, study desks and stools

for Kanyapeeth. But after the death of the eldest niece, the brothers took back their daughters from Kanyapeeth. The next day I received news that my elder sister Shraddha had also died at home. When all the girls were fit and fine, we received instructions from Ma to take the young girls for a rest to Vindhyaachal Ashram.

In 1962 May, Ma's *Janmotsav* was being celebrated in Kishenpur Ashram, Dehradun. On Ma's instructions we Kanyapeeth girls had also been there to attend the function. Shri Kaniya Bhai of Bombay had sent several pieces of satin clothes. Mahalaxmiji and Ramaji had prepared beautiful *ghāgrās* for the *Rās-lilā* party. One night I was busy making paper flowers for decorating the Hall when I received a call from Ma. When I reached near Ma, I saw several Ashram *Didi's* standing around Ma's cot with a satin cloth in their hands. The moment I bowed and *pranām'*ed Ma, Ma pointed at two pieces of satin cloth kept on Ma's bed and said, "Whichever you want, you take." I picked up the yellow piece. Chhobi'di standing nearby and observing my grim face, thought maybe I did not like the yellow piece. She showed me her pink piece and said, "Will you take this one?". I replied in negative, but Ma said, "Take it when she wants to give." So we exchanged our clothes. Ma then said, "All of you should now sew the sides of your cloth pieces. Chhobi'di's piece, which I had earlier selected required to be stitched in three sides only as the fourth side was uncut. Two elder sisters whose pieces needed to be stitched on all four sides, requested Chhobi'di to exchange the cloth piece. Chhobi'di in simple faith uttered, "Everyone wants to give me, everyone likes me." Hearing that Ma too imitating Chhobi'di started saying, "Everyone likes me, everyone likes me, likes me...."

The Rani of Mandi had also arrived and wanted to dress up Ma with flower ornaments and worship Ma. But these were not available in Dehradun so she requested me make some ornaments for her. Unable to arrange flowers for it, I collected various leaves and made ornaments of leaves and a variety of shiny and sparkling papers and plastics. Rani *Sahiba* was extremely pleased and with those she decorated Ma but first wrapped Ma with a beautiful Benarasi sari. She worshipped Ma and performed *ārti* too. Usually Ma during such *Pujā's* sits with palms joined together but here like a young girl during the *ārti* song, Ma moved around Her hands in tune with the song, showing Her leaf-ornaments to everyone. I understood that Ma had liked it.

The day before *Purnimā* (full moon day), Ma called me and asked, "Can you make such leaf-ornaments for me? It should be appropriate for *Rādhā-Krishna*, *Shiv-Pārvati* and *Sitā-Rām*, i.e. three sets will be required. Yes, nobody should

get to know that This Body has asked you to make it." Chhobi'di also gave me an order for one set of *Krishna* ornaments with which she decorates Ma on the *Purnimā* day and then all the girls chant *nām-kīrtan* of "Ma-Ma" throughout the night. I went to an underground room and busied myself with Ma's order. When other girls asked me as to who were the special guests who had ordered so many sets of ornaments, I replied that they wanted to remain anonymous. When Ma was alone in Her room in the evening, I took all of these to Ma and Ma instructed me to hide it below the bed. Ma then asked, "Nobody asked whom were you making these for?" I replied, "Yes, several have asked. I have replied that the name of the person who has ordered wants to remain anonymous." Ma was pleased hearing that. On the *Purnimā* day after ten in the night, Chhobi'di decorated Ma as *Krishna* and then started *kīrtan* of *Ma-naam*. All the Kanyapeeth girls and women devotees accompanied Chhobi'di and chanted beautiful *kīrtan*. A little later I saw Ganga'di getting up and leaving, and then Mala too departed. One by one few more Ashram Sisters departed. Oh! Mal, and then Chhobi'di also departed from the *kīrtan*. I was sitting and guessing where everyone had left when suddenly someone came and said that Ma was calling me. I went to Ma's room adjacent to the hall and saw, Ma, Buni'di and Mahalaxmiji pulling out several costly satin sarees from a big trunk. And near the wall were standing next to each other, Ganga'di and Mala disguised as *Shiv-Pārvati*, Basanti and Swapna disguised as *Rām-Sītā*, and Chhobi'di disguised as *Krishnā*. The moment I entered Ma (pointing at Chhobi'di) said, "What! do you like that disguise?" The long hairs of Chhobi'di were bundled on her head like a bunch of curled hair. She was wearing a multi-colored satin *ghāgrā*. Seeing all this I laughed aloud. Ma dressed me in a golden colored Benarasi saree. Then putting some scented ash on one corner of Her saree, Ma applied it like a puff on my face and body. After that decorated my forehead and cheeks with red and white sandal paste and then put a flower garland around my neck. Finally Ma placed the leaf-thrones made by me onto each of ours head. I shouted, "So Ma, You got these made for our heads only?" Ma too laughed a lot along with all of us. Ma had instructed Ganga'di to remain in meditative pose like *Shiva*, so with eyes closed she stood at one corner. Not even seeing what Ma was doing all around. Keeping us decorated here, Ma went into the hall. Sitting there for some time, Ma said, "See, *Baba* (i.e. Haribaba) puts off the lights during *kīrtan* time, hence you all too shut off the lights." After all the lights of the hall were shut off, Ma came near us and catching the hands of *Shiv-Pārvati*, escorted them to the Mahatmas *āsans* (sitting place) in the hall and told them to sit on one of them.

Returning back, Ma decorated Mahālakṣmī as *Kaushalya* and said, "You take *Rām-Sītā* with you." Finally escorting us *Radha-Krishna* with Her, Ma made us sit in the centre *āsan* in the Mahatmas place. Then Ma said in the hall, "Now put on the lights."

The moment the lights were on, everyone cheered in chorus, "JaiMa, JaiMa, JaiMa". When Ma was decorating us within the closed room, Pushpa'di and Chitra'di while peeping through the window, commented that Ma was doing some program with the Brahmin girls. When these words reached Ma's ears, Ma called them too. Ma told Chitra'di to wrap a yellow cloth around her neck and raising the hands above the head act like *MahaPrabhu* and stand at one side. First Ma performed *ārti*. Then Ma instructed the elder girls to bring their satin pieces. Then Ma catching hold of one of the girl's hand carrying the satin piece, moved the hand this side and that in a very fast pace, making those girls to perform *ārti* in a peculiar manner. That day a South-Indian lady devotee Ms.Kalpakam sitting there later informed, "This type of *ārti* is performed in old temples of South-India." Ma then performed *Tāndav* dance along with *Shiva* and then hugged *Pārvati* and then told them to slowly leave the hall. After that Ma started *Rās-leela* dance with *Krishna*, and what a dance it was! Catching hold of *Krishna's* hands in Her hands Ma went round and round and danced along with the rhythm of the *naam-kīrtan*. Chhobi'di dressed as *Krishna* could feel Ma's *bhāv* and she herself was getting dazed. After dancing for a while Ma hugged *Rādhārāmī* and then requested both of us to leave. Then Ma requested *Kaushalya* to leave along with *Rām-Sītā*. All of us returned back to the hall after changing our dresses to participate in the ongoing *kīrtan*.

Ma again came in the hall after mid-night. Chhobi'di decorated Ma as *Krishna* by putting bangles on the hand, earrings on the ears, and garlands around the neck and on the bun of hair on the head. After that the moment the flute was placed on Ma's hand, Ma immediately with slightly lips upturned like a child said, "Oh! The flute was not given." Ma repeated this two three times and then held the flute near Chhobi'dis lips. I then understood, what Ma meant. I had not made a flute with the leaves for *Krishna*. Well keeping Ma as *Krishna* in the centre we danced around and chanted *kīrtan* for some time. After that Ma went away to Her room. We chanted *kīrtan* for the whole night and at dawn went around the whole Ashram and finally came and stood in front of Ma's room. Ma came out and distributed *batasās* to all of us.

Later Ma informed, "During the time, when the satin pieces were being distributed to you all and Chhobi and Bishuddha exchanged their pieces, then only This Body had the *kheyāl* of playing this drama."

On the final day Ma was to be worshipped while Ma lied down on Her bed. This arrangement was made in the courtyard in front of the hall. Ma's bed was beautifully decorated with garlands made of white Jasmine flowers. Since these flowers are not available in Dehradun, I made them with white crepe papers and they really looked like original flowers. Ma's bed was also covered with a milky white bedsheet. I had sprayed a scent of jasmine flower on the paper flowers too. At the proper time Ma's lying on the bed and then Ma's *Pujā*, *ārti*, *pushpanjali*, *kirtan*, reading the scriptures, Ma's *bhog* and finally distribution of *prasād*, etc, were beautifully performed and completed.

Gradually all the visitors, guests and Mahatmas who had arrived for the function departed. During non-function days, one major work was to collect the enormous letters that arrives in Ma's name from various devotees and to read it in front of Ma, write down Ma's advice, and post letters back to them. When Dadabhai is with Ma, then she used to do this service. Now I was performing Ma's *seva*. Because of the function we could not get time to read the letters to Ma. So now after the function the normal routine started, Ma one day said, "Now you take the responsibility of the bag of letters, take out time and read the letters to This Body and reply to them." When I went to collect the bag I found not a bag but a sack full of letters.

So whenever I was getting time I read the letters and marked the important lines in it, so that it would be easy to read them out to Ma. Since Ma had said to fix a time for it, so after the evening *kirtan* I used to sit with the letters in Ma's room. Lying down with eyes shut Ma used to hear my words and gave the answers and I noted down the answers in brief. Few elder sisters also used to sit in Ma's room. Few days later, Ma pointing at Chitra'di and Pushpa'di said, "Give them a few letters too for reading out." Ma further said after a brief gap, "The reply for the ladies will be from Didi and that from the gents will be from Paramanand." Immediately Pushpa'di said in a hurry to me, "Give me a few good gents." (Which actually meant letters from men), because then the letters and the written reply will be handed over to Swamiji, she won't have to worry or exert herself to write down the actual letter. Hearing Pushpa'di, all of us there laughed aloud. So the three of us one by one read out the jist of the letters to Ma and noted down Ma's reply. I was more concerned about this work because I wanted to empty the sack of letters soon. There were several letters written by the same devotee with the same problem, so they were sorted out and removed. One lady had sent four letters with the same prayer to Ma. It is being mentioned here because of the comment Ma gave after hearing it. The letter said, "Dear

Ma, My husband is bed-ridden, please cure him. My son doesn't have a job, may he get one quickly. My daughter has attained the marriage age, please arrange for a good husband. I am fed up with the household problems, can't sleep at all. Please give me peace." Immediately on hearing this Ma remarked, "What else but a servant to fulfill orders." Thinking it to be the reply to the letter, I wrote it down hurriedly. Seeing this Ma laughed out and said, "How is this you know?" So saying Ma narrated a story.

Ma said. "The father of a young boy has passed away and cremation rituals have to be performed. The priest instructed the mother to swipe clean the courtyard and arrange for the given items in the list. Before starting the rituals, the priest said to the boy, 'Whatever I say you just repeat'. The rituals started. The priest instructed, 'Boy, take water in your palm'. The boy repeated, 'Boy, take water in your palm'. So in this manner the boy repeated whatever the priest said or did. The priest thought that the boy was doing it on purpose, was teasing him. Becoming furious the priest started fighting with the boy, the boy too repeated the same and fought with him. Finally all the materials for the rituals spread all over the cleaned area. The boy's mother sat at one corner of the courtyard and watched the cremation rituals silently. Considering it to be a part of the ceremony, she exclaimed, 'If I knew that the ritual would spread out so much, I would have cleaned the whole courtyard'. Hearing this funny story from Ma, all of us including Ma laughed a lot. So what Ma had commented was just an address to herself, not the answer to the letter, which Ma gave later.

For reading out the letters, Ma's door was always open for us in the night. Seated around Ma, our time too passed beautifully. After quite a few days when the last letter of the sack was read out to Ma, Ma gave a loving slap on my head and back and said, "Oh! Saved everyone." So now whenever the letters in Ma's name arrived we sat in the night and noted down Ma's reply. The funny part was that, on Ma's instructions, the men's letters were handed over to Swami Paramanandji, but he called me and I had to write down Ma's answers for replying. So there was no account of how many letters I wrote every day. But for this very reason the time that I spent in Ma's room was a great boon for me. Even while travelling in the train, seated in Ma's room, many a time Ma instructed me to open the bag of letters. In general most of these replies given by Ma have been published in the books 'Matri-Vani' and 'Vangamayee Ma'.

Once while writing down Ma's replies in the train, keeping the paper on Ma's berth, the writing was becoming messy because of the jerking of the train. This was of course bothering me. Observing me and the writing, Ma

said, "Have you seen the writing of Tripurari *baba* (Prof. Tripurari Chakravorty, a skilled orator of *Mahabharat*)? His natural hand-writing is like this only. Hence there is nothing to be shy of. Your handwriting is so clear that This Body can also read it."

Ma and we elder girls are residing in Dehradun. On day Ma sent a notebook to us and instructed, "Each one of you, write something in this notebook." Chitra'di remarked, "From our handwriting Ma will guess our nature." However, all of us wrote few lines in that notebook. After observing our handwriting, Ma called me and got a letter written by me in Hindi to the then Prime Minister, Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Once *Janmāshtami* was being held in Kashi Ashram. Though Ma was very busy, I observed that Ma was quietly calling and speaking to Buni'di, Bithu'di, Buba'di, etc. The next day *Nandotsav* was being celebrated in the Kanyapeeth hall with only girls and ladies being present there. The room adjacent to the hall was closed from within. I learnt that, few senior Sisters and few young girls were inside. After some time the curtain of the hall was raised and we saw -- separated from *Krishna* Her soulmate, Buba'di dressed as *Rādhā* sitting dejected along with a group of her companions (*sakhi's*). Suddenly from the hall door wearing a tiger skin and disguised as a *Yogini* entered Ma, and in Ma's hand was a golden ringed conch held near Her lips. The sound of the conch shell was also coming from Ma's direction, but that was another conch being blown by Chhabi'di hidden behind Ma. Hearing that sound *Rādhārāni* becoming excited tells her friends (*sakhi's*), "Friends see, has my soulmate *Krishna* arrived or not?" And then *Rādhā* goes near the *Yogini* and asks, "Who are you and why have you come here?" But Ma disguised as the *Yogini* walked around in a divine manner and kept saying, "*Main bhukhaa hun, main bhukhaa hun.*" (in Hindi - 'I am hungry, I am hungry'). I still remember Chitra'di who had just returned from abroad kept trying to take a few pictures of Ma (in that special attire) with her new costly and foreign camera; surprisingly not a single photo came out. All the actors and spectators were not able to recognise the *Yogini* and hence exclaimed, "Who is She?" Observing Her style of movements *Rādhā* cried out, "Oh! She is our *Krishna*, our Anandamayee Ma." And from out of the tiger skin came out Ma wearing a beautiful light blue saree and everyone in the hall shouted and clapped in joy.

\* \* \* \*

(to be continued)

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

Sw. Narayananand Tirth

(continued from before)

### ***Shree Shree Sāvītri Mahayagna in Ma's Kashi Ashram***

Offering the oblations while reciting the vedic *Gāyatri mantra* in chorus on the banks of the holy north-flowing River Ganga, in the most pious city of Varanasi, and in the mortal presence of the Supreme Energy Shree Shree Ma gave such an amazing pleasure which just cannot be described in words. The very aroma produced from the burning of the *yagna* materials being offered as oblation created an incredibly inspiring environment. And this very aroma produced from the *yagna* burning throughout the day and night filled the whole Ashram with divinity. Not only the Ashram even the bylane and surrounding areas were also spiritually filled with this heavenly fragrance. This colossal *yagna* went on and on, not for three or six months but for three long years. And in this grand festival, one crore *āhuti* (oblations), ten lakh *tarpan* (oblation with special water), one lakh *abhishek* (consecration) and feeding ten-thousand Brahmins were systematically performed in those three years. And after the completion of all these at the end of three long years on the pious day of *uttarāyan-sankrānti* on 14th of January 1950 this colossal *yagna*, performed for the welfare of the world, was concluded in a grand festive manner with the singing of *kirtan* and the playing of various instruments by offering the final *āhuti* (oblation) after getting it touched by the Supremely Compassionate Universal Mother Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee. Just before the final rites, on Ma's instructions a very costly and beautiful Benarasi saree was dedicated to Goddess *Savītri Devi* or *Gāyatri Devi* by offering it into the pious fire of the *yagna-kund*. Shri Agnishbatta Shastri (Batu'da) the chief priest was completely baffled to see this scene. He just could not imagine that such a costly saree could be offered to the Gods by just getting it burnt in the *yagna* fire. But all actions and instructions of Shree Shree Ma are always astonishing and unnatural. According to Ma's view the saree was just not burnt in the *yagna* fire, it was offered and draped around the then present Goddess *Gāyatri-Devi*, and Shree Shree Ma could see the pious and divine seven tongues of the *yagna-agni* which

are intended to swallow the oblations -- *Kālī, Karālī, Manojavā, Sulohitā, Sudhumravarnā, Sphulingini* and *Vishwariuchi*.

*kālī karālī ca manojavā ca sulohitā yā ca sudhumravarnā  
sphulinginī viśvaruči ca devī lelayamānā iti sapta jihvāh ||*

(Munduka Upanishad, verse 1.2.4)

All the ingredients for the *yagna* were first tossed and threshed to remove dirt particles, then washed in Ganges water and finally dried in the sun. The entire cow's *ghee* required for the *yagna* arrived here regularly by train from a devotee's personal dairy farm in Ahmedabad. And when transportation by train was not possible they sent it through air flight. But the cow's *ghee* was never ever purchased from the market. A colossal function with so much faith and purity cannot be performed in the present era nor has it been heard of earlier than this.

The closing ceremony itself continued for almost a month and all those who were present could not but stop praising this function. Among the spectators besides Ma's devotees were Mahatmas, Sadhus, Pundits and Brahmins from far-off places. The donation received for offering *prasād* and *dakshinā* was so enormous that instead of the stipulated ten thousand, thirteen thousand Brahmins were satisfactorily fed *prasād* and given enough *dakshinā* and offerings.

There is a reason for mentioning the *Shree Shree Sāvītri Mahayagna* here, because during this colossal function Shree Shree Ma had bestowed *ahetuki kripā* on this unworthy child. On the end of the second year on 14 January 1949, on the *Uttarāyan Paush Sankrānti* day, Ma called me in Her room at around seven in the morning after I had finished my daily chores. Ma was sitting on Her bed and I entered and sat down in front of the bed on the floor. Ma seeing me smilingly mentioned, "A little while ago I had been to your room but you were busy worshipping your *Narayan-shilā* and hence I returned back. So saying Ma took out a saffron cloth from under Her pillow and handing it to me said, "From today onwards you will tie this saffron cloth around your head while sitting for the *yagna*." But I denied accepting it because I knew the importance of the saffron cloth. It cannot be worn by everyone and I felt that I was not worthy of wearing it. I pleaded before Ma, "Ma, Please pardon me, I am not capable of wearing this cloth." Ma immediately replied, "Whether you are worthy of it or not, that you don't have to analyze. This Body orders you to wear it daily during the *yagna*." Finally accepting it I kept it on my head and bowed down and *pranām*'ed Ma by touching my head on Her lotus feet. Compassionate Ma immediately with Her blessed Hand caressed me three times from the crown of the head (*brahm-tālu*) moving back to the whole of the spinal cord and said,

“.....perform *sashtāng-pranām* (obeisance by lying flat on the stomach).....to Mother Ganga.” I turned towards the east and did the same. After that I turned towards Ma and again *pranāmi*’ed Ma by touching my head on Her lotus feet. Ma too instantly kept Her blessed hand on the *brahm-tālu* and said, “*Mukta, Mukta*” (liberated, liberated). I sat up and prayed to Ma with folded hands, “Ma, bless me so that I can truly protect the dignity of this blessed saffron cloth given by You. I had a doubt in my mind which has been cleared now.” Ma enquired, “What is the doubt in your mind?” I said, “Ma, I always felt that for several reasons You are not satisfied with me. But today after this unprecedented *ahetuki kripā*, I believe that You are not angry with me. Otherwise You would not have blessed me in this manner.” After listening to this argument of mine Ma said, “This Body is satisfied, satisfied, satisfied with you. How many more times have to say ‘satisfied’?”

The manner in which our Compassionate Ma blessed me by presenting this reddish brown cloth (worn by ascetics or *sadhuis*) and long before in Raipur, Dehradun and in Dongre, by offering me the supreme words and the *sanyās-mantra* respectively, pulled me at Her lotus feet, I bow down and pay my obeisance and convey my heartiest gratitude at Her lotus feet again and again.

Even after making umpteen efforts that which would never have been possible, but by the Compassionate and Merciful Shree Shree Ma’s *ahetuki kripa*, was today accomplished in this manner. O Ma! today you have pardoned me of all my misdeeds and have blessed me in this manner and hence I repeatedly bow down and prostrate at Your lotus feet, *pranām, pranām, pranām*.

*Yaa Devi Sarva-Bhutesu Shakti-Ruupenna Samsthitaa |  
Namah-Tasyai Namah-Tasyai Namah-Tasyai Namo Namah ||*

### Accepting the cries of the miserable

Several people spread the rumor and to make us hear have repeatedly said, “Anandamayee Ma is the Mother of the affluent only. She does not even look towards the indigent. Whenever an affluent or a high post government official visits Her, how much care and attention She bestows on them.” Actually behind these sarcasms lies their hidden jealousy and intense burning of insatiable desires. Each and everyone are the children of the Universal Mother, none is left out. Shree Shree Ma’s immeasurable *līlā* comprises of each and every individual in this world. Until one does not view this mammoth play of the Universal Mother with a liberal mind one cannot get the appropriate taste of this nectar filled *līlā*. These immoral and revolting words arise from those only, who are deprived of this nectar.

Here I would like to narrate two incidents of my life.

During the *Sāvitrī Mahayagna*, one evening due to shortage of funds I purchased red colored rice from the ration shop. Only the poorest of people purchased this rice and it did not have any taste too. After cooking it looked like the red sand used during the constructions. The next afternoon after the *yagna* was over, I came to my room and cooked this rice and some okra (lady's-finger) curry for offering to my personal Idol, the *Narayan-shīla*, which on Ma's instructions was kept in the Ma Annapurna Temple. Also because of shortage of time, I could not purchase any vegetables, especially 'okra' (lady's-finger) which I wanted to offer to my *Narayan* today. The moment I kept the cooked rice from the stove to the ground I heard someone shouting near the Ashram door, "*Babu*, will you purchase okra?" I asked from upstairs whether he had anything else to which he denied. I came down and saw an old man carrying few freshly plucked okra in a basket, which I purchased for my *Narayan's bhog*.

After completing my worship and other rituals, I offered this meager *bhog* of red colored rice and okra-curry to the Lord. After that according to the scriptural rule (leaving the *bhog* in front of the Idol alone for sometime) I got up and was about to step out of the room, when I saw Ma standing near the door. Ma entered the room. I then surprised enquired as to when Ma had arrived; Ma replied, "I have been standing here for quite some time and have heard your scriptural recitations and have also seen you offering *bhog* to your *Narayan*." I stepped out of the room and closed the door, while Ma remained inside. After praying outside for a minute or two, to the Lord to kindly accept the offered *bhog*, I entered the room and since the worship was over, I carried *Narayanji* back to His appointed throne in the Ma Annapurna Mandir. Returning back just as I *pronām*'ed Ma, Ma declared, "Today This Body will receive your *Narayan*'jis *prasād*." Hearing this I was just dumb-founded. With what will I serve food to Ma? I have just the sand like rice and a little bit of okra-curry which I had offered as *bhog*. How can I feed these to the Universal Mother standing in front of me. But I also knew that Ma will not say or object to anything as because whatever is offered to Ma, Ma will accept that gracefully. I was feeling embraced to serve Ma the pasty red colored rice and the wee bit of curry in a brass plate.

The moment Udaas and Buni (two of Ma's favourite care-takers) heard that Ma would have *Narayan's bhog* here, they immediately sprinkled ganges-water on the floor and laid Ma's *āsan* and just after that Gurupriya entered with Ma's *bhog* cooked by herself very piously and cleanly. Within a minute a variety of food items were properly displayed in front of Ma. Ma sat down in

Her *āsan* and immediately instructed me to serve my *Narayan's prasād*. I took a wee bit of the *prasād* and served it in Ma's plate. Seeing that, Ma again said, "Why have you brought so little of *Narayan's prasād*? Bring the whole plate here." With folded hands in a very humble manner I said, "Ma! How much *prasād* should one take? Even a wee bit of God's *prasād* is enough. Besides why do you need *prasād*? We partake *prasād* for cleansing our consciousness. You do not have a consciousness, that has to be purified. Hence You do not require *prasād*." I was feeling totally ashamed to bring out that *prasād* in front of everyone. Ma just did not listen and I had to bring out the copper plate of *prasād* in front of Ma. But Ma did not stop there, Ma instructed me to feed Her that *prasād*. I took a little of the *prasād* within my fingers and was about to feed Ma, when Ma said, "Why are you giving so little of God's *prasād*? Give one mouthful of it at a time."

Hence I started feeding Ma a mouthful at a time the *prasād* consisting of cold red colored rough rice and okra-curry. And our Compassionate Ma joyously ate the *prasād* and kept on highly praising the *prasād*. And my dear readers will not believe that nowadays Ma's *bhog* actually consists of besides other items high quality scented basmati rice, which too Ma partakes little by little only two three times. And now, here was Ma eating almost more than half of the cooked food of the poor and destitute like me. If I had offered more Ma would surely have eaten that too. Observing Ma's *leelā* my eyes were filled with tears and hence I could not offer any more. I just got up and standing behind the door, facing the wall I started crying. Observing me getting up, Gurupriya Didi started feeding Ma from the *bhog* that she had prepared and were served in front of Ma. Ma stopped eating after three-four mouthfuls and got up. And imagine some people saying such a distressed-loving compassionate Shree Shree Ma is the Mother of the affluent and high government officials.

Another incident I witnessed in Solan. The king of Solan Shri Durga Singhji, whom Ma called as 'Yogiraj' and we called him as 'Yogibhai', organized a *Devi Bhāgwat Pāth* and on his sincere request Shree Shree Ma had arrived in Solan there with several of us. Daily some one or the other among the spectators offered flowers, garlands, fruits, etc to Shree Shree Ma and the orator of the *Bhāgwat-Pāth*. One day a poor old lady arrived with some barley-flour and jaggery in a leaf bowl and with sincere respect offered it to Ma as a 'gift'. Immediately Ma called a Kanyapeeth girl and instructed her to keep it aside and to bring it near Ma during Ma's *bhog*. At the stipulated time when Ma sat down for Her *bhog*, Ma called that girl and informed her to bring that 'gift'. Ma first partook some barley-flour and jaggery and then only ate the other

items offered by Raja Yogibhai. And imagine still some people complain that Shree Shree Ma is the Mother of the affluent.

### **Shree Shree Ma gift's us Her Self-Identity**

Several years ago in Bajitpur, on being questioned by Shri Janakibabu, Shree Shree Ma by replying "*Purna-Brahm-Nārāyan*" had hinted to us Her Self-Identity. In this manner on several occasions during discussions Ma has hinted Her Self-Identity. One of those incidents is being narrated here.

Besides Shri Gurupriya Devi we find three more selflessly dedicated attendees and pillars of the Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashrams. One of them is Shrimat Swami Paramanandji, the second is Shri Kamal Prasad Bhattacharya (presently known as Brahmachari Virajananda) and the third is Shri Kanakangshu Basu (presently Shri Panu Brahmachari). After the establishment of the Varanasi Ashram, *Shree Shree Bāsanti-Durgā-Pujā* is being held here every year during the *Basant-ritu* (spring season, Feb-Mar-April). Occasionally Ma is present during this festival; on most of the occasions Ma is not present. This *Bāsanti-Durgā-Pujā* is celebrated piously so far by the joint efforts of these three efficient and commanding sons of Ma. However it is needless to mention that with the presence of Shree Shree Ma the festival becomes much more vibrant and jubilant.

Once Ma had benevolently arrived in Kashi Ashram during this *Bāsanti-Durgā-Pujā*, but due to certain special reasons none of the above three pillars of our Ashram were present in Kashi. Swami Paramanandji had gone to establish Ma's Vrindavan Ashram. For this reason Ma instructed this unworthy son (i.e myself) to somehow manage the festival.

During the second day i.e. on the day of *Maha-Ashtami*, special arrangements were made for the special *bhog* of *Devi-Durgā*. To have Ma's *darshan* and to witness the *Pujā* and to partake of the special *Maha-Ashtami prasād* innumerable invited and uninvited devotees and people had gathered in the Ashram. In Ma's presence the necessary rituals- *Devi-Pujā*, *pushpānjali*, *Devi-bhog* and *Devi-Aarti* were properly completed in time. And now it was the time for distributing, the special *Maha-Ashtami prasād* to one and all. And our Mother was moving here and there and was joyously entertaining everyone. Wherever I went for some work I found Ma present there in a divinely form, with a sweet smile on Her face and wearing a dress of white silk with clogs (*kharam*) on Her feet. And behind Ma was walking Shri Potolbabu with an umbrella on Ma's head. And a group of young Kanyapeeth girls were also following Ma. As if the Divine Mother is walking like the "*Yogini-Koti-Parivritā*"

(the divine mother in countless changing forms). I was busily making arrangements for distributing *prasād* to everyone. Suddenly I met Ma face to face in front of the 'Sevālaya'. Ma has coined the name of the Ashram Office as 'Sevālaya', because all the work of the Ashram is executed from this very place. And all the work of the Ashram is considered as a service (*Sevā*) to God. If and only if this attitude is maintained then only pious work occurs and it purifies the mind. Otherwise the work creates pride and ego and hence attachment. Ma instructed me, "Are you making arrangements for everyone to receive the *prasād*? Don't you see it is becoming so late in the afternoon? Quickly make everyone sit down to receive the *prasād*. Don't delay anymore."

Myself: Yes, Ma! I am making arrangements for everyone to get the *prasād*. Let me first seat the invited guests, after that I will let the uninvited people to sit down. I will not allow anyone to leave without partaking *prasād*. Everyone will get *prasād*.

Ma: It is the month of *Chaitra*, it is late afternoon. Let everyone invited and uninvited sit together for partaking *prasād*. Don't delay anymore. Everyone has come to receive the *prasād*.

Myself: Ma! How can everyone be seated together? Arrangements have been made for three hundred people. And what I see, there are more than four hundred people here. How is it possible to feed everyone together?

For Ma both the invited and the uninvited are the same. Both have equal rights to partake the *Devi's Maha-Ashtami prasād*. Hearing this Ma suddenly said forcefully, "What is the worry? Make everyone sit down together. ***Aami aachhi kiser chintaa*** (I am here, why to worry)?" Such powerful words Ma rarely utters. The word "*Aami*" (I or Myself), Ma rarely utters. Why and for what reason these words were uttered from Ma's lips. Suddenly hearing these words from Ma, my body became vibrant from within. More than four hundred people, invited, uninvited, male, female, children everyone were seated for partaking *prasād* within the Kanyapeeth, in the hall, upstairs and downstairs corridors and in the courtyard in front of Kanyapeeth building too. All the brahmacharis and brahmacharinis of the Ashram, by wrapping themselves with towels and *gamchhā*'s, started serving the *Maha-Ashtami prasād* to each and everyone, wherever they were seated. And our Mother in the form of Shree Shree Ma Annapurna, prepared Herself for the distribution by wrapping a semi-wet yellow colored towel on Her head and went around each and every place checking the distribution of the *Devi's Maha-Ashtami prasād*. With Ma's grace all the people received and ate the *prasād* with total discipline

and while hailing Ma and *Devi-Bāsanti*,— “*Anandamayee-Mayer-Joy*” and “*Bāsanti-Devi'r Joy*”, departed from the Ashram heartily content.

The manner in which Ma had saved us from that extreme crisis cannot be forgotten. After everyone left I was free to ponder the situation that had occurred here. I felt gloomy for the reason of speaking in front of Ma that I would distribute *prasād* first to the invited guests and then to the uninvited people. I should have treated both equally and should have seated both of them together. Does the egoistic mind of the humans vanish so easily! But at the very moment I thought that if I had not spoken in that manner, Ma would not have said those forceful words and would not have given Her Self-Identity. Everything that Ma does or speaks is out of this world. Only the Supreme Lord can positively say with such a force, “**I am here, why to worry?**”

\* \* \* \*

(to be continued)

#### New Publications

- (1) *SantānVatsalā - Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee* (Hindi)  
Author: Swami Narayanand Tirth. Price: Rs.275/-
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- |                                     |                      |             |
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## Commentary on the Bhagavad Gita

Sri Chinmoy

*(continued from before)*

Self-knowledge is the knowledge of universal oneness. Divine perfection can be established only on the fertile soil of universal oneness. This oneness is the inner oneness. This inner oneness is unique and cannot be truncated by the mind. Serve humanity precisely because Divinity looms large in humanity. Know Divinity and you will in no time realize God's Immortality in you and your Immortality in God. God in man and man is God can only announce the truest embodiments of absolute Perfection.

Out of His infinite generosity, love and soulful concern, Sri Krishna unveiled the secret supreme that He is in everything and He embodies everything. Arjuna's stark delusion has been removed and dispersed. Sri Krishna spoke of His immeasurable splendor and Arjuna believes in Him unreservedly and soulfully.

Arjuna now cries for the transformation of his single-minded belief into reality. Even though his mind believes the Truth his heart desires to vision the Truth and to live it. Sri Krishna immediately grants him the vision of His Universal Form. Krishna says, "O Arjuna, behold in My Body the entire universe." (11.7) Arjuna's physical eyes naturally fail to vision the spiritual Body. So the Lord grants him the spiritual eye of the divine vision, the eye that sees the unseen, the yogic eye. The Body signifies form. The formless persists in this form. This divine body is the embodiment and revelation Immortality and Eternity. The body of flesh and blood undergoes innumerable transformations, but not this Divine Body of unlimited form and deathless substance.

Sanjay says to Dhritrashtra, "O King, Krishna the Almighty Lord, reveals to Arjuna His Universal Form. Arjuna now sees Krishna as the Supreme Godhead, the *Parameshwar*." (11.9)

Arjuna sees the many in the One Supreme, possessing countless faces, decorated with many celestial ornaments, welding divine weapons, wearing divine garments and jewels, bearing celestial garlands of supernal fragrance. (11.10-11) The brilliance of thousands of suns bursting forth all at once in the skies will hardly equal the supreme splendor of the Lord. (11.12) Arjuna beholds Infinity in multiplicity, in the divine Body of the Lord of the gods, i.e. Sri Krishna.

Overwhelmed, ecstacy flooding his innermost being, with palms joined, head bowed down, he exclaims, "O Lord, in You, I behold all gods and all grades of beings, with distinctive marks. I even see Brahma seated resplendent on His lotus-throne and seers and sages all around, and the celestial serpents. (11.15)

Verses 15 to 31 eloquently and psychically describe what Arjuna saw in Krishna with his newly acquired yogic sight.

The fight is yet to start. The mighty warriors are ready and eager to fight. To his greatest surprise, Arjuna sees the lives of the warriors utterly extinguished in Krishna. Even before the birth of the fight, he sees the death of the warriors. Destroyed they are all within the fires of Krishna's flaming and all-devouring mouth. Seeing all this his very life-breath quivers. The disciple cries out, "Your Compassion, my Lord Supreme, I implore. I know You not. Who are You?" (11.31)

Time am I. Time, the mighty destroyer, am I. Doomed they are. Whether you fight or not they are already dead. Even without you, your foes will escape no death. Arise, O Arjuna, arise! Victory's glory and renown you win. Conquer your enemies. Enjoy the vast kingdom, enjoy. Their lives are determined by Me in silent surrender. You be the outer cause. '*Nimitta-mātra bhava*' Just be My instrument, nothing more." (11.32-33)

There can be no greater pride, no better achievement, than to be God's own instrument. And to be an instrument of God means to be infallibly accepted as His very own.

Krishna is the All devouring Time. This vision according to our outer eyes and understanding is terrible. But according to our inner vision and inner comprehension or knowledge, it is natural and inevitable.

The Upanishad verses echoes in our aspiring hearts: "That moves yet, That moves not. That is far distant, yet That is close and near." (*Itopanishad-5*)

To doubt the spiritual Master (*Guru*) before one's (the aspirant's) own illumination dawns is not uncommon in the spiritual history of the world. But for the aspirant to leave the Master precisely because doubt haunts him is an act of sheer stupidity. Stick, stick unto the last. The blighted doubts will disappear unto thin air. The splendor of (God's) Infinity and Eternity will blossom in the bosom of time. It is your mounting aspiration that will accomplish this task.

Arjuna's throbbing heart voices forth, "Thou art the primeval Soul. Thou art the Supreme Abode." (11.38) He cries for Krishna's forgiveness. Owing to his past ignorance, he had not realized Krishna in His divine nature. (11.41-42) His past was full of wrong deeds, with ignorance and with carelessness. He begs with a throbbing heart for forgiveness for his acts of omission and commission

rendered to Sri Krishna. He says, "Bear with me as father with his son, as friend with his friend, as lover with his beloved." (11.44) Sri Krishna no doubt forgives Arjuna. He assumes His four-armed Vishnu form and then His normal, natural and familiar form. (11.49-50)

Arjuna comes to realize that it is only the Grace Divine that has endowed him with the yogic eye to see the Unseen, the Glory supreme of the Lord, the present, past and the future.

He also learns from the Lord that "neither the study of the Vedas, nor sacrifice, nor alms, neither austerity nor study can win this cosmic vision." (11.53) Even the Gods yearn for a glimpse of this Universal Form which He has just shown to Arjuna out of His boundless compassion.

"Those who perform all their duties for My sake, who depend upon Me and are devoted to Me, who are free from attachment, and are without malice toward all beings, such devotees certainly come to Me." (11.55)

Faith, devotion, surrender. Lo! Krishna is won. No other way is there to realize Him, to possess Him.

Arjuna is extremely happy and extremely fortunate that he has had the most rare vision of the Cosmic Form. How is it possible for him to be burdened with further philosophical and spiritual questions? The reason is that his vision of the Cosmic Form does not imply that he has reached the Goal of goals. The vision has to be transformed into a living, constant reality in Arjuna's life, and then he has to live in the reality itself. The experience of the vision is good, realizing it is better, embodying the vision is the best.

The path of meditation and the path of devotion are now being compared. Arjuna wishes to learn from Sri Krishna about the two paths: the path of meditation that leads to the Unmanifest and the path of devotion that leads to the personal God; which is the better of the two? (12.1)

Krishna's answer is that each path, devotedly and faithfully followed, leads to the Goal. But the path of meditation is more difficult and more arduous. The physical body binds us to the material world. Hence it is difficult for us to meditate on the Unthinkable, the Unimaginable and the Transcendental. (12.2-5) But if we approach the Lord who assumes human form and who plays His divine Game (*leela*) in the field of His manifestation, our success will undoubtedly be easier, quicker and more convincing, to a degree which our physical minds would not believe is possible. (12.6-7)



(to be continued)

## Flecks of Mātri Kripū

Urmila Das (Kālondi)

In the late 1330s of the Bengali era (1923 AD), Baba Bholanath, along with Shree Shree Ma, came to Dhaka in search of employment. On 3rd, *Baishākh 1331* (16th April, 1924), Baba Bholanath was appointed as the caretaker of Shahbagh, the country-house (*Bāgānbāri*) of the Nawab of Dhaka. Shree Shree Ma and Bholanath were given accommodation within the Shahbagh. While staying there, Shree Shree Ma's Body manifested many yogic (*kriyās*) actions. I heard from people that a human-*Kāli* (Goddess *Kāli*) has arrived in Shahbagh having miraculous power. Many lucky people have been blessed after having Her *darshan*. And one of them was my husband, who narrated to me wonderful incidents of Shree Shree Ma. My husband had a special attraction towards *sadhu-mahatmas* from his student days. Hence hearing of Shree Shree Ma's arrival he went to Shahbagh and was particularly attracted after having Shree Shree Ma's *leelā darshan*. From then onwards he used to visit Ma everyday. Unfortunately, I was not lucky enough to see Ma during that period as I was very busy with the family and household chores. As Ma used to say "nothing happens until the time is ripe". So I guess my time had not yet arrived and I could not get Ma's *darshan*.

In *Māgha 1333* (January 1927), *Rayani Pujā* was held in the residence of Dr. Shashank Mohan Mukhopadhyay in Tikatuli and hence Ma was brought there. I heard from people that Shree Shree Ma of Shahbagh has arrived in Shashankbabu's house and there was quite a lot of festivity all around. Several neighbors were visiting his house for Ma's *darshan* and hence I also went along with them. I saw a young bride in a red bordered light pink saree with a veil over Her head and face, sitting in front of the *yagna-kund* in the *puja mandap*. The face was not clearly visible. She was sitting absolutely motionless. Since I did not get any response, standing there for a while I returned back. This was my first *darshan* of Shree Shree Ma.

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About the author Kalon'di

Urmila Das was born on January 1, 1900 in a prosperous 'NagChowdhury' family of Bardi, present-day Bangladesh. As the youngest daughter of this family, she started her education while staying in the hostel of the Bethune Girls School for girls in Calcutta. In 1916, at a young age according to the social norms of that time, she was married to Mr.

After leaving Shahbagh in *Jyashtha 1335* (May-June 1928), Shree Shree Ma stayed in a rented house near the *Dhākeswari* temple for some time. The name of the house was 'Uttamākutir' - a two-storied house, Ma lived upstairs. In the month of *Āshār or Śrāvan* (June-July-August 1928) after visiting the *Dhākeswari* temple we went to Uttamākutir for Ma's *darshan*. When I climbed the stairs, I saw Ma right in front of me. Ma was sitting on the floor and Didi (GurupriyaDi) was combing Ma's hair. We bowed in obeisance and sat down. My husband started meditating. Ma kept staring at me with unblinking eyes. I too fascinated gazed at Ma's charming countenance. After spending some time like this, I remembered that my sick son was at home. My husband's meditation was not breaking, my mind became restless and I started feeling a little annoyed. Shree Shree Ma kept looking at me in the same manner - it was as if Ma was looking right into my heart and mind with that gaze. After a while, when my husband's meditation was broken, we *pranām*'ed Ma and departed. Ma said - "Come again". This was my second *darshan* of Shree Shree Ma. Much later, Ma had said to Didi that the day I had gone near Ma, I was the same inward and outward.

In *Āshwin 1336* (Sept-Oct 1930) On the day of *Mahalaya* Shree Shree Ma and Bholanath again came to Ramna Ashram. In Shahbagh *Kālī-Pujā* was performed on a *Kālī* Idol. Wherever Ma went, the Idol was also carried along in a cupboard. This Idol was brought from Shahbagh to Ramna Ashram in that wooden cupboard and kept in Ramna Ashram in that cupboard only. Later when the *Shree Shree Annapurna* temple was built, the Idol was placed under the altar of *Ma Annapurna* inside the temple. Every year during *Janmotsav* (Ma's Birthday celebration), the door of the cupboard was opened for everyone who were were overjoyed to have *Ma Kālī's darshan*. Everyone were allowed to enter the temple on that day.

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Yogendra Kumar Das, who was employed as an advocate in Dhaka. He was a great devotee of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee and regularly had Ma's *darshan*. When he died in early 1931, Urmila'devi became a widow with seven children. She returned to Dhaka because of the odd behaviour of her mother-in-law. In the beginning, though she was dependant on her elder brothers, within a few days she got a job by teaching sewing to the girls of the Hindu Widow Ashram. In 1939, she got a job in the Rajbari Primary School in Dhaka and hence her family condition improved a little. Her two elder daughters got admission in that school. Later she got another job as a teacher at VidyaMandir School in Palton. She had to work incredibly hard to manage two jobs at the same time. She also worked as a tutor in a couple of houses. By the grace of Shree Shree Ma, she worked hard

In *Fālgun 1336* (Feb-Mar 1930), Ma instructed Bholanath to stay in a room in the Siddheshwari Ashram where he performed rigorous *sādhanā*. A Brahmachari from the Ramna Ashram used to bring food for him, and would also sleep near him at night. From time to time, Ma visited him. Bholanath used to become overwhelmed with *bhāv*. He used to roll around in the ground and used to perform a lot of *kṛiyās*. During this period he initiated the Brahmacharis and two to four other devotees.

After Shree Shree Ma came to Ramna Ashram, we used to visit Ma regularly. One day I went and saw Ma sitting on the balcony. There were not so many people then. Ma used to sit peacefully, talk with everyone, chanted *kirtan* along with everyone. On that day, Ma said to Didi, "Give *prasād* to everyone." Didi mixed rice and hilsa fish curry in a plate and gave *prasād* to everyone in their palms, and said, "Ma has cooked this hilsa fish curry." What a wonderful taste it had. I had never eaten anything like this in my life. Then Ma was very affectionate and hence I did not feel like returning back to home. One day Ma said, "It is time for you to take *diksha* (initiation), take it." We replied, "We had been wishing to take initiation for a long time, but there was no such opportunity." Ma did not say anything else.

Later on one early morning my husband went to Ramna Ashram to have Ma's *darshan* and talked for more than an hour about his life. Ma instructed him to go and meet Bholanath in Siddheshwari. So on Ma's orders, he went to Bholanath. There were several people in the room. He also went and sat down. After a while everyone looked at the clock and departed to go to office. Bholanath in his *bhāv*, forbade my husband to leave. When everyone left, Bholanath said to him, "Today you will get initiation." My husband replied, "I did not bring anything. I didn't even take a bath. I have only changed my clothes." Bholanath said, "Nothing will be required, go and wash your hands and feet in the pond. Only that will do." When my husband returned after washing his hands

for several years to bring up her children in this manner. At that time without thinking twice she took the responsibility of a neighbor girl. Such was the courage and confidence of her character. That girl also remained as a member of her family throughout her life.

In 1951, on Ma's instruction she took charge of Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Kanyapeeth in Kashi Ashram. Unfortunately, she had a stroke in 1961 and hence she returned home. For quite a few years due to her physical illness she could no longer go back to stay in the Kashi Ashram. Probably from 1967-68 she again started visiting the Ashram regularly.

She died on 15th September 1987. At the time of her death though she was surrounded by her entire family, but repeating Ma's name and gazing at Shree Shree Ma's photo she left her earthly body.

and feet, Bholanath gave him an *āsana* and then initiated him. He had a silver coin in his pocket. Offering that as *Guru-dakshinā*, he *pranām*'ed and returned back home. In the evening he again went and offered fruits etc to his *Guru*. This is how his initiation took place, but I did not get *dikshā*.

In the year 1337 (May 1930) *Jannotsav* (Ma's Birthday celebration), was to be celebrated. A few days before the Birthday, Ma suddenly stopped talking. For 5-7 days Ma did not talk at all. After that when Ma started speaking, Ma's voice was very vague and soft for a long time. Almost no one could understand Ma's words. This *bhāv* continued even during the festival. The festival began. Arrangements were made to hold *kirtan* from 19th *Baisakh* (2nd May) to *Krishna-Chaturthi Tithi* (16th May). Several people had arrived, there was hardly any space inside the Ashram. Ma went and sat down in the field. Though Ma could not speak properly, but wherever Ma went, the people gathered there.

On the day of the festival, everyone was sitting on the ground for having *prasād*. Ma arrived there and watched everyone. Then suddenly Ma prostrated on the ground and said, "Narayan I bow to thee." On the *tithi* day, for Ma's *Pujā*, Ma was seated on the *Panchavati* altar. Ma lied down and fell asleep. Bholanath worshiped Ma. By the time the *Pujā* was over, it was dawn. Ma woke up quite late in the morning. The devotees bathed Ma on that altar itself. Thus the celebration ended with great festivity and joy.

A few days after the festival, Ma was lying in Her room. Ma suddenly said, "I am seeing, panic and wailing from each and every house." Shortly after this incident, a terrible Hindu-Muslim riot started in Dhaka. Forget the women; even the men were unable to leave their houses. No one could go to the Ashram for several days. Ma said, "Look, it would have been difficult if this situation had occurred before your festival. The ladies have been coming and going day and night, they couldn't have done anything."

Gradually the dispute calmed down. Then Ma went to Joydevpur and returned back after two days. Two to four days later, Ma again departed for a tour to South India. After touring South India, Ma went to Dwarka. From there to Vindhyaçal, Kashi, Gaya, Jamshedpur, Calcutta and finally to Cox's Bazaar.

Various disasters started in my family. The eldest son contracted bacillary dysentery. There was no result even after 14 days of treatment by a senior doctor in Dhaka. The doctor said, "I have no more treatment, you try something else." Ma was not in Dhaka then. What to do, I was confused, and kept remembering Ma all the time. Then my elder brother's *guru-bhāi* who was a *sādhu*, gave homeopathic medicine. The boy was cured. It was all due to Ma's *āhetuki kripā*.

In *Māgh 1337* (Jan-Feb 1931), my husband was afflicted with fever which turned into meningitis and after suffering for fourteen days, he left his mortal body on 1st February Sunday 1931. With 7 children, I began to drown in the endless sea. Shree Shree Ma was in Cox's Bazar at that time.

After returning to Dhaka, Ma sent someone and asked me to go to the Ashram. But I was to face the crowd. I replied, "If Shree Shree Ma kindly gives *darshan*, only then can I meet Ma. Otherwise, it is not possible for me to go to the Ashram. I feel ashamed and not mentally prepared to show this face in public." I was confused - where to go, what to do, I didn't understand anything. My husband had no savings. There were no relatives to support me. Some advised to go back to my husband's native place. There my step mother-in-law and her three sons were not bothered about me. After staying there and being tortured for four months, I returned back to Dhaka. So I held on to Ma's holy feet. "You are always there for one who has no one."

One day in Dhaka I received a call letter from "Anand Ashram". Since I couldn't go alone, my elder sister accompanied me. Smt Charulata the incharge over there offered me a job. While we were about to come out she requested us to stay back for sometime as Shree Shree Ma was arriving there shortly. Due to shame of meeting so many people I objected but my elder sister held me back. In order to hide myself from Ma and the crowd I hid behind a door. From there I saw Ma, Didi and others arriving in the room where I stood hiding. Everyone went into the room through the centre door but Ma went passed the door I was standing and I hoped that Ma would not have seen me. After Ma and Bholanath sat down on a freshly laid cot and white bedcover, Ma called Didi and said something. Didi went around the room and pointing at various ladies kept asking Ma, "Is this the one?" and Ma declined. Finally Didi caught me from behind the door and took me near Ma.

Ma caught my hand and asked, "I had called you, why didn't you come?" I replied that I felt shame coming in front of the people. Ma instructed, "Come in the morning, there are hardly any people then." I replied, "I cannot go alone, if someone accompanies me then I will come." Ma asked me to promise that I would visit one day later. I also mentioned that I would surely arrive if somebody accompanied me. After this Ma asked a lot of questions related to my household and family life. Returning back to my elder brother's house, my nephew (brother's son) agreed to take me to Shahbagh.

According to Ma's advice one day later, I went to Shahbagh in the morning. Ma was extremely pleased to see me. It was a Saturday and Ma conversed with

me for more than two-three hours asking and advising me about my family and household work and also about my husband. Ma said, "On the last day your husband had met This Body and had sincerely opened his heart's content." Hearing Ma's compassionate words my mind and heart were totally relaxed and I felt at peace. Ma also mentioned, "In the Ashram everyone remains fast for the whole day and takes only rice in the night. This is obeyed during *amāvasyā* and *purnimā* too." From that day onwards I too started the same rule.

Ma then asked me, "Do you know Baby?" I replied, "Of course. She is my neighbour." Ma then said, "She comes here daily, you come along with her." Ma instructed Baby'di also to pick me up while coming to the Ashram. From then onwards I started going to the Ashram along with Baby'di.

In 1338, (1931-32) Ma instructed how to construct the new Temple of the Ashram. The small *Mā-Kālī* temple was enclosed within the new larger temple, such that the lower portion of the small temple was below the ground level of the new bigger Temple. A new door was made on the portion which was above the ground level of the new Temple, so that one could enter the old temple from there. On the terrace of the old temple was constructed the throne where the new *Mā-Annapurnā* Idol set was installed. On one side of Her was the Idol of Lord *Shiva* begging for alms and on the other side was the floating *Mā-Kālī* Idol which Ma had seen in the sky coming towards Her. On top of *Mā-Annapurnā* was an Idol of the four-armed Lord *Vishnu*. An underground room was also constructed whose stairs was constructed behind the throne. Three rooms were constructed outside the Temple and two rooms were constructed below the verandah of the Temple. Bholanath Himself installed all the Idols.

From this year (1338) onwards Ma's *Jannotsav Pujā* was performed on *Mā-Annapurnā* instead of on Ma's Body. Till now almost everyone could cook *Mā-Kālī's bhog*. But now on Ma's instructions, Yogesh'da would perform the worships and rituals within the Temple and Atul'da, Kamalakant'da, Kuloda'da and Yogesh'da would bring water for the *bhog* and also cook the *bhog*. They would (maintaining *Shuddhāchāri*) eat food cooked only by themselves would stay piously. Yogesh'da who was till now staying outside the Ashram was instructed to stay within the Ashram. During this (1338) year's Ma's *Jannotsav Pujā* after the worship of *Mā-Kālī* Idol, a photo of the Idol was taken, the Idol was placed back in its small temple and the doors of the temple were closed. The *Mā-Kālī* photo was kept in front of that door and worshipped daily with red-hibiscus garlands. Arrangements were made that every year during Ma's *Jannotsav Pujā*, that door would be opened and the *Mā-Kālī* Idol would be

worshipped and seen by all irrespective of caste and religion. After the evening *Pujā*, that door would be closed for another year.

After the function I asked Ma, "Ma, arrange for my *dikshā* now." Ma replied, "You have to wait for one year (of your husband's death) for your *dikshā*." Hearing Ma's words I was upset, there was nothing to be done. I visited the Ashram every Sunday. Ma was outside Dhaka most of the time, when She arrived only then we had Ma's *darshan*.

In the meantime I got another job as a primary school teacher from morning six to ten. I could then put my two elder daughters to school. A relative arranged for their scholarship and my eldest son also got admission in a good school.

In 1338 (March 1932), Ma arrived in Dhaka just before the Holi festival. On the day of the festival, on the earnest request of the wife of Shri Rajendra Kushari, Ma played Holi with all the ladies. Using a Holi sprayer Ma sprinkled colored water on everyone and they too did the same to Ma. Both dry colored powder and water were utilized. In the afternoon Ma took along the ladies for a bath in the pond. There too, being a good swimmer, Ma went into the deep and sprayed water on the ladies. After Ma got up from the pond, Didi took Ma away for changing clothes. We too changed our clothes. On Ma's order, Shri Rajendra Kushari's wife was given the title of 'The Holi King' because on her request only this *leelā* had taken place. After that Ma sat down with everyone for *kirtan* and also applied sandal paste on everyone's forehead. When *bhog* was over, Ma sat down with everyone to have *prasād*. Very happily all of us enjoyed this function from morning to night. Bidding *pranām* to Ma all of us gradually departed for our homes.

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



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

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## My first darshan of Ma in Kashi

Brehmi, Sunanda Goswami

(continued from before)

After receiving an invitation from Ma, one fine morning in the month of April 1981, my father, my brother Debu and myself departed for Shree Shree Anandamayee Ma's Ashram in Kankhal Haridwar. After three days we reached the pilgrim town of Haridwar. After bathing in the Ganga at Haridwar and having some refreshment of curd and rice-flakes, sitting in a bullock-cart we reached Shree Shree Ma's Ashram in Kankhal at around 2pm. Entering the long verandah in front of the Ashram office, we entered the Shankaracharya Hall and paid our obeisance to Ma, on a beautiful photo of Ma installed in the Hall. There we met Udasji, who immediately recognized me and instructed me to wake up the people sleeping in the Hall. I too loudly announced, "All those who are sleeping may kindly wake up and sit properly as *satsang* would begin very soon". I then met Pushpa'di in the Hall, who smiled at me and enquired whether we had taken *prasād*. When I replied that we had not yet taken lunch, she became worried and said, "Let's go to the Shiv Mandir kitchen and see whether anything is left or not". Reaching there we found that the kitchen was being scrubbed clean. Pushpa'di asked them whether any *prasād* was left over or not. One of the ladies replied, "I cannot say whether there is any *prasād* left or not but Ma had sent information to keep aside two full plates of the *bhog*. These are kept over there". Immediately Pushpa'di exclaimed, "See, Ma has kept aside your share of the *prasād*. Please have it". Hence my father, brother and myself sat down joyously to have the delicious *prasād*.

The *satsang* had started in the Hall. Ma was seated on a small cot covered with white sheets. The Ashram Elder Sisters were sitting around Ma. Geetashree Chhabi Banerjee sang beautiful *kirtans*, followed by lectures by eminent *Sadhus* and finally the *Koulak Adhiveshan* was declared closed. Ma got up and departed from the *Satsang Bhawan* to Her *Matri-Nivas*.

After that going to the office I learnt that our accommodation has been arranged in a dharmshala a bit further away from the Ashram. Thinking of the time, that would be wasted in travelling between the dharmshala and the Ashram and not being able to witness Ma's *leelā*, brought tears in my eyes. All of a

sudden Pushpa'di appeared and asked, "You all haven't left yet? When will you go? Why are you crying?" Hearing my answer she immediately turned around and almost running went away and on returning back said, "I informed Ma that girl has come. Ma replied, 'That girl! Bring her here immediately.' Come along with me." I went with Pushpa'di near Ma. Ma was sitting in the front room of the house presently occupied by Paton'da. The *Mathādeesh* of the *Shankari Math* was supposed to arrive in the Ashram.

Ma was making all the arrangements for his stay here in this house, his *Pujā* room, items required for his worship, the kitchen and the utensils required there, his bedroom and it's accessories and the sitting area for his disciples, etc. I entered the room and bowed down and *pranām'ed* Ma. Ma asked, "So you have finally arrived? Who has come along with you? Your father and brother?" I replied, "Yes Ma". Ma again said, "Your living arrangements have been made a bit further away from the Ashram and hence you are feeling hurt?" Ma then said to Pushpa'di, "Go and call Kaushalya staying outside the Ashram." Pushpa'di departed and arrived a little later with Kaushalya'di. When Kaushalya'di paid his obeisance to Ma, Ma said to her, "Kaushalya vacate your bedroom immediately, (pointing at us) they, father son and daughter, will stay there." She replied positively, "*Thik hai* Ma." Ma then ordered me, "Go there immediately. it is almost time for your father's evening *Puja*."

We went along with Kaushalya'di to her house and placed our luggage at the appropriate places in the given room. Pushpa'di arrived again and said, "Ma has instructed you and your brother after having *chappati* and vegetables in the night (dinner) in the Ashram, to bring father's dinner here in the room. You have to take dinner in the Shiv Mandir kitchen. Hence you come along with me." After we all had dinner we lied down in our respective beds. Father and brother were terribly tired after the long journey and carrying the luggage. Lying down I pondered 'how Ma sent the invitation to father to attend the *AtiRudra Yagna* and how we arrived here and are now lying peacefully in this room adjacent to the Ashram and the *AtiRudra Yagna* area. It is all but Ma's immense *kripā* on all of us. In this crowd of people I only knew Ma, Pushpa'di and Udasji, how I will manage the coming days Ma only knows.'

\* \* \* \* \*

(To be continued)

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

--- *Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee*