

Bhaiji passed away on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1938 at Almora. The circumstances, on the Yatra to Mount Kailash, have been described by Sri Ma as follows:

“He (Bhaiji) did some spiritual exercises on the bank of the holy lake Mansarovar. That day while walking together, Jyotish said, “Can I abstain from speech from now with your permission?” Ma said, “it’s not advisable during the journey. But when you express such a mood, this body gives you the name “Mounananda Parbat” (The mountain of Reticence). From that day onward the sanyas mantra and his total emotional renunciation continued during his illness. Everybody has been told now about it, since the time has come. Before the end, he was absolved of the responsibility by taking off the sacred thread and gold chain.”

In that moment of sorrow, on Ma’s advice, Hariram Joshi and other devotees chose a spot near Patal Devi temple in Almora for Bhaiji’s Samadhi. Now a Shiv Mandir stands on that spot which is now part of Anandamayi ashram. This is also the place where at the initiative of Yogi Bhai Ma Anandamayi Vidyapith (boy’s school) was established.

There are guest rooms at the ashram and potential visitors may arrange to stay by contacting the Swami in charge at the contact numbers shown on the website.



Patal Devi Temple (One of nine temples in Almora dedicated to nine forms of Durga.)



Ashram courtyard showing Sri Ma's room. Bhaiji's samadhi on left.



Shiva linga over Bhaiji's samadhi.



Image of Durga in 8 metals in Sri Ma's room

A story attaches to this image. Hari Ram Joshi, in his book “Ma Anandamayi Lila – Memoirs of Hari Ram Joshi” (P.131/132) - recorded that at Durga Puja 1944 (actually 1943) in Almora Sri Ma expressed the kheyal to Didi and Swami Paramananda that it would be a good idea to install an *ashtadhātu* (8 metals) image of Ma Durga at the Pataldevi Ashram so that Durga Puja could be performed there every year. No one had yet complied with this wish.

Durga Puja was performed at Almora in 1993, and only afterwards Swami Nirgunananda, the resident Swami-in-charge, read about Ma's wish. He was determined to fulfil it; it was a costly undertaking and whilst so many people promised to help, no action resulted.

Finally at Durga Puja in Kankhal in 2008 or 2009 a devotee (Nantoo Banerjee) came forward and actually acted out his promise. He was able to locate through his contacts the best artisan in Kolkata for the job. That person offered to complete the job without charge except for the cost of metals. Then several devotees came forward and offered one of the metals (including silver and gold) on the condition that they would remain anonymous. The final hurdle was to find someone who was prepared to handle the mercury. Even that was done. When the final account was presented it came to a fraction of the cost that such an image would normally entail. Somehow a devotee brought the 40kgs image up to Almora from Kolkata.

When the image was finally installed there was a huge procession and celebration through Almora town.



Sri Ma's room with portrait of Sri Ma by Richard Lannoy.