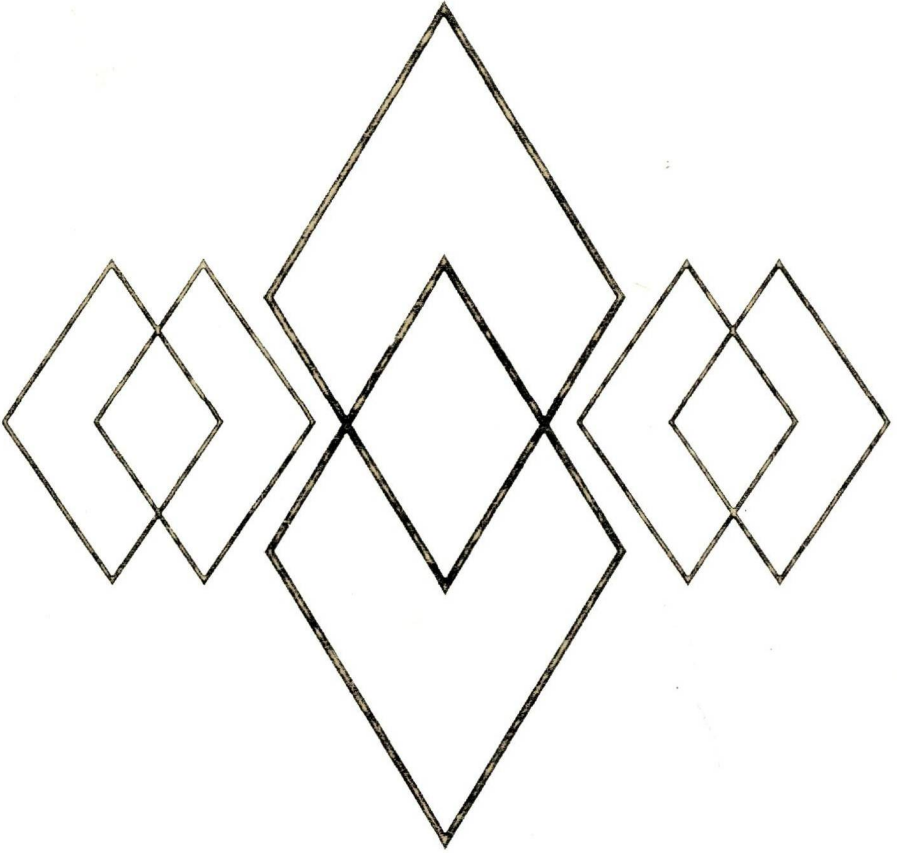


Sharaṅgati



Ácárya Rudránanda Avadhúta

Sharaṅgati



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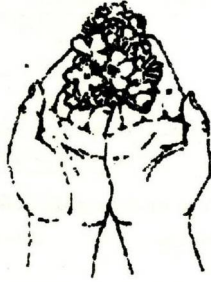
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Samarpaña



Tvadiiyam Vastu Govindam
Tubhyameva Samarpaye.

Forward

I am happy indeed to get an opportunity to write "Foreword" for the book "Sharańágati" written by senior dada Ácárya Rudránanda Avadhúta. After going through the book I remember few lines of Prabháta Sańgiita-

*"Tumi kakhano ki bháve rayegecho,
kevá bujhite páre ke jánite páre,
Kothá sumukhe Dád'íye hásitecho,
Kothá maner gahane Lukiyecho dhari ki kare".*

O Lord! Who can understand where, when, with whom, in which form and with what ideation you stay? Who can know that? Somewhere you laugh sometime standing in the front, then somewhere you hide yourself in the deeper recess of the mind. How can I understand You? Truly, every Sád'haka has a very personal relationship with Parama Puruśa according to one's own Sańskáras (Reactive momenta). The Scripture says,

*"Tvameva mátá ca pitá tvameva,
Tvameva bandhushca sakhá tvameva,
Tvameva vidyá dravińam tvameva,
tvameva sarvam mama deva deva."*

Bábá Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii has made it obvious in Ánanda Márga Philosophy that Táraka Brahma is the Supreme Loving Father. He is the only Supreme Master. He cannot remain aloof from His devotee/progenies; He cannot maintain separation from them. Between Attributional and Non-Attributional Stance, He remains ever associated with His own sons and daughters-

“Bhávah bhávátiitayoh setuh Táraka Brahma”.

In this book the sense of the author’s proximity and concern with Sadguru Bábá Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii is explicitly described. Along with that his erudition, Ístánistha, Ádarshanistha, Karmanistha, spiritual experiences and work efficiency are well reflected. He has also delineated the experiences of his organizational life. Surely, these are praiseworthy, amazing and inspiring anecdotes.

I have been well acquainted with Ácárya Rudránanda Avadhúta from the auspicious moment of beginning of my Whole Timer life and presently I have been still closer to him amidst the ups and downs in the organization. This is also the grace of the Lord and His Cosmic Plan. He is a man of far sightedness and he possesses rational outlook as far as Ánanda Márga Mission is concerned.

Each and every reminiscence described in this book is like one each petal of a flower. I am hopefully confident that the learned readers, especially for whole time brothers and sisters, this book will be quite inspiring and helpful as a guide.

— Ácárya Vishvadevánanda Avadhúta,
Purodhá Pramukha, Ánanda Márga

A Few Words

The main theme of the book is spiritual along which a Sádhaika gradually moves on under the shelter of a Spiritual Master (Guru) and attain salvation (Mokśa)

In this insurmountable journey of Spirituality, the guidance and grace of Guru is inevitable. Today we are passing through a period of Yugasańdhii (transitional phase of two eras). The Human Civilization is at crossroads of history where the storm of dogmas and materialism tend to uproot the human values, the advent of Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii has proved a boon to the human society.

Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii is an Enlightened Entity. He is Táraka Brahma (the Supreme Liberator). He has founded a Mission for the welfare of the whole Universe. By His grace, I have got an opportunity to serve His Mission as a Whole Timer (Sannyásii).

It is intrinsic nature of every human being to establish himself/herself in Brahmahood by transcending oneself from the stage of staticity; animality and human existence. This is nothing else but Human Dharma. It is called Bhágavat Dharma. There are two wings of Bhágavat Dharma i.e. psycho-spiritual practice (Sádhaná) and service to the expressed world thereby to reach the zenith of Spirituality.

In the journey of Spirituality, devotion is placed at the top but with the blending of knowledge and action, devotion springs forth. If spiritual practices connect one with one's soul, then selfless service to humanity

associates one with common mass. Walking along this twin pathway individual and collective body can achieve peace and happiness. By Báb's grace I have been fortunate enough to gain experience in both the fields. In search of knowledge whatever I understood and acquired, I have presented it in a chapter in this book namely "the Science of Intuition Practice - a lion view", for spiritual aspirants who can enjoy submerging themselves in the depth of spirituality. Experiences of actional world are described in details in the rest of the chapters.

— Ácárya Rudránanda Avadhúta

The editing team of Delhi

In addition to the difficulties of translating, the English edition of this book which required many revisions and additional notes to make it accessible to an audience not familiar with the Samáskṛta and Indian Culture. The onerous task of editing and rendering of this book into English was done by three students of Ácárya Rudránanda Dádá.

It has been our pleasure to understand from Dádá over the years, and we wanted to share the insights we have gained with others by helping Dádá to publish his experiences in English. It has not been easy for us to bring Dádá's life experiences to the world, but having gained so much knowledge from Dádá, we felt it was our humble duty to express what we can as ordinary mortals. This work required us to seek the help of experts in philosophy and the English language so that everything was clear and accurate.

Dada extends his earnest regards to all of them who directly or indirectly contributed their time and effort to help bring out this book. This English edition has been edited by a completely different team who are all family people.

In this English version a lot of credit goes to Ácárya Gunátmánanda Dádá for all the hard work he has put in to give this book the final shape. The sincerity and devotion of his work clearly shines through the entire part of the Sádhaná chapter that he did the idea of the cover has also been

his contribution We would like to add a comment about the books covers. We felt that it was not easy to give a face to a book which goes to discuss the very depth of Dádá's life, but one member of the team (in particular) felt that the cover of the book had to do just that and diligently worked on, changed and refined the book cover over a period of four months. Then just prior to the book's printing, who designed the cover was asked to add another cover to this book. She was rather disheartened but being on the path of Tantra did not want to complain to Dada (who would have likely considered all her hard work and relented in his request for second cover), because accepting challenges is the very spirit of Tantra.

To recreate the book cover, she needed golden fonts and she did not know how to make the golden fonts for the desired cover, She slept with an aching heart but was hopeful nonetheless. The next morning, she opened the screen of her computer and she saw a miracle! The formula to create the golden fonts was on her screen! This then is clearly divine intervention ... She was given the message that the book had to be printed with both sets of covers! Many out there will not believe this but trust me, it was not her imagination! At the end of this experience all we can say is: "Bábá Nāma Kevalama" hus she created the cover which one sees on the book, in accordance to Dádá's desires.

"This is the valuable tale of an experienced practitioner of the Intuition Science, who has reached to the pinnacled goal of human life, and his relationship with his Guru, whose guidance and love enabled him to reach the goal. These stories give an invaluable example to inspire anyone who is ready to take up the path of Tantra, but it is more essential to understand the philosophical base so that one can proceed in a rational style. For that reason, the final chapter discusses the history, philosophy and practice of Tantra, then explains the modernization and systematization of this ancient art by Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii into the encompassing and scientific approach of Ánanda Marga Sádhaná. In the original Hindi version of this book, the chapter about Tántrika philosophy (The science of intuition practice- A lion view) was at the beginning of the book, and the reader who is keenly interested in practicing Tantra may wish to read the final chapter first, and then proceed to read the stories of Dádá's experiences on the Tántrika path under the loving care of his Guru."

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Background of Sharańgati

The beginning of my quest for truth started with the initiation into Vaedikii Diikśá, but my mind was not satisfied. I only saw the involvement of dogmatic rituals in that religious ceremony. The Family Priest made me an aspirant in a few hours only by ascribing Yajinopaviit and Gáyatrii to me and sent me to Varanasi for further studies as I was very young. While sitting on the banks of the Ganges it occurred to me that this life was monotonous. I had a great urge to realize Lord Shiva so I used to meditate upon him or try to empty my mind of thoughts. My family wanted to send me Varanasi to study Samśkrta. But my guardian wanted me to persue education through the English medium. I now feel that studying Sams'krta would have been better from the viewpoint of Spiritual Practices, but I think studying English proved beneficial for social life, as I am able to do the Organisation's work today. I realized that this life is a gift of His Will, which I did not know earlier. Moreover, just after my birth, my grandfather had commented after seeing me as a new-born baby and looking at my whole body limb by limb that he would not stay very long with us. But it was forgotten by all. Though my mother used to repeat it from time to time. But I never understood these matters. Sometimes I used to become emotional while sitting on the banks of Jahánvii (the Ganges) river. Once I wept all of a sudden, while sitting in the Dhyána on the roof of my house feeling a natural attraction towards the Unknown Entity. After that I experienced the same emotions quite often.

It was the year 1958, when a family Ácárya came to my hostel. I came to know about the spiritual practices from him for the first time, but I did not go further, may be the time was not ripe. Afterwards, a book named "Ánanda Marga- Elementary Philosophy" came into my hand, I read it and liked it and kept reading whenever I got time. In the year 1960, I went to see Bábá during His Patna visit. I approached the door of His room where He was staying but retreated as I felt that the time was not right and neither did I feel any special attraction towards Him.

Initiation into Tántrikii Diikśá and attraction towards Íśá

In 1961, Bábá returned to stay in Patliputra for some time. It is worth mentioning here that the students of Patna University's Bihar School of Engineering and Law College were fascinated by Bábá's ideology. At that time, I was staying in Patna and was occupied with preparation for the Civil Services. On July 16, 1961, I was initiated by a family Ácárya, Tárakeshawarji and it was followed by personal contact on the 17th (the following day). Bábá made me make many a promise, but my real interest was in the study and in the preparation for my future life. However, I cannot say when my attraction for Bábá started to grow. Soon Bábá returned to Jamalpur via Muzaffarpur and left a message for me. Late Sashirain janjii sent a message to my hostel, that Bábá has asked me to come to Jamalpur, and even though I was extremely busy, I could not ignore his call.

Until now I was only acquainted with the Vaedika traditions of initiation, which were dominated by elaborate rituals and their arrangements. Tántrika initiation, on the other hand, was exactly the opposite of this. It had almost no external rituals to be performed. The ceremonies were innovative and very real.

First, Ácáryajii made me take an oath. He then told me about the process of intuitional practice and he explained to me what the Íśá Cakra

was and gave me an Íśa Mantra. This Mantra was different from the Gáyatrii Mantra. The incantation was to be done with each inhalation and exhalation of the breath. Via this spiritual practice, I learnt the Mantrágháta, Dipanii, Mantracaetanya, which were not only unique but were also very heart touching.

Initially it was very hard to concentrate. The inner meaning of Mantracaetanya was explained to me, but for a long time I could not truly understand the depth and essence of it. I was unable to do my spiritual practices regularly because of the easily distracted tendencies of the mind and my inability to concentrate. At the time of my initiation, only half of the practice of Ishvara Prañidhána was taught to me, but I was not able to do even that much! It was a most peculiar situation for me as I was not interested in any other method of spiritual practice and at the same time, I couldn't understand or fully practice this new method! At the very beginning of my spiritual life, I had neither the attraction for my Íśa, nor much knowledge of Marga Ideology. It was during my first personal contact with Gurudeva on July 17, 1961 that he made me make some promises and explained a few principles to me. But when he asked me to be regular with the institutional practice, I said clearly that I would try only after the civil services exam. I had the misconception that my spiritual practices would eat into my hours of study, but in reality, the spiritual practice and my study complemented each other. An untrained mind fails to see this truth! On receiving the call from Bábá in Jamalpur, I couldn't stop myself and my mind could not find a valid excuse to avoid going, so I left for Jamalpur. As instructed, I reached the Olipur Jágarti [place of worship] in the evening. Mádhavajii, the Office Secretary, welcomed me with a warm smile and registered my name in his dairy, and listed my name in the evening travel schedule. He soon left, having asked me to wait outside Gurudeva's official residence. As my anxiety grew, I reached Bábá's residence around 8 pm, and waited, in anticipation, to be called in. A few other people were also waiting. An older man from that group came up to me and started interviewing me, which I really did not take in good spirit. I stood there, not listening, not paying any attention to his words, but he continued to bombard me with a relentless barrage of questions: "Where have you come from? Whom do you want to meet? Why are you waiting here?" I did answer his questions, one by one. I said, "I have been asked to wait here to meet Bábá." He replied,

“Bábá doesn't live here. You are at the wrong place.” I knew that I was at the right place, so I was not perturbed at all by his reply. Later I realized that the old man was steadfast in his approach to see whether his badgering would fluster me and if I would so leave the place. On realizing that I was adamant and would stay, perhaps he felt satisfied. Eventually Bábá came out at his scheduled time. Everyone there joined him and began to walk with him. I too followed them. After crossing the railway bridge, we passed the church and reached the Tiger's grave. Gurudeva indicated to me to come sit by his side. After a short while he took me to the infamous tree, where the unfortunate incident of the washer man and woman had taken place. The atmosphere of that place was quite frightening. Gurudeva spoke to me and said, “If I teach you the technique of Shmashána Sádhaná, you will not be frightened, is that right?” I said, “Bábá, Of course I would be frightened!” To which Gurudeva replied, “Okay all right.” And our talk ended there.

Later on, when I discussed this incident with other people, I got the feeling that the Tantra Guru was preparing the ground to teach me Kápálīka Sádhaná. However, on seeing my immaturity or lack of preparedness, Bábá decided to avoid this topic. And as I learnt the significance of the Kápálīka Sádhaná, my curiosity to learn it grew in leaps and bounds and made me restless, but whenever I raised this issue with Bábá, he ignored my pleas and put me to work. As the predisposition to fear started to wane, and my courage grew, so did the desire to learn Shmashána Sádhaná intensify.

The next time we went to the Tiger's Grave, Bábá made me sit beside him under that particular tree and narrated the story of the washerman and the woman. Bábá also enlightened us on the history of the Tiger's Grave. Suddenly Bábá began to talk in a most serious tone and said, “This incident is related to this Tiger's grave yard. One night, when I was sitting here, suddenly I saw that your bodiless mind was passing by this place. I, of my own will, made you take birth at this particular place. As per your Sańskára you were meant to take birth somewhere else. However, since you have this birth because I willed it, so you must live according to my wish.” At the time I couldn't understand the gravity of these words, but from that moment on, my attraction towards Gurudeva most certainly increased! I felt as if I was not capable of turning down his orders. This made me recall one particular incident of my childhood that I had heard several times, from my mother. When I was born, my body was wrapped in the umbilical

cord. Seeing my entangled body, my maternal grandfather, who was also our family astrologer, said that I came tied to see if I stayed at home to live a normal family life, or not. These words flashed again before me while I was sitting at the Tiger's grave. Suddenly Gurudeva started to talk about my previous life and touched my Ājñā Cakra. The people who were present there with us noticed a sudden transformation in Bábá's mood. Hereafter my mind began to dive inwards and my life of spiritual practice began in the true sense of the term. Though Bábá had given me personal contact ten days ago, in reality I began to have spiritual experiences only after this meeting. In that sense this was my first real meeting with Bábá. Now I was able to do my spiritual practices for longer periods of time and my interest in Sádhaná grew.

Background of an Ascetic

As my mind became increasingly drawn towards spiritual practice, I began to find family life incomplete and unfulfilling. In fact, coming back from the Tiger's grave, as I sat down in the lotus pose to begin my spiritual practice, in the Jamalpur Jágrti; for the first time my mind became absorbed in deep meditation and I experienced an unfamiliar sense of joy. It seemed to me that this was the true essence of life. I became increasingly regular with my spiritual practice and I also began to visit Jamalpur on a regular basis. Quite often, whenever He was free, Gurudeva used to call me to his room. In His presence, I began to smell the sweetness of aromatics and even when I was away from Gurudeva, I could smell different, and very pleasant fragrances. Though these experiences were pleasant, I didn't realize them to be anything more, then. The attraction towards my Íśfa also grew more intense. I began to travel to Jamalpur every Sunday and I would love to sit in Jágrti and meditate on the ground. Living in the company of other spiritual aspirants, I began to realize exactly how hard it was to practice and observe Yama and Niyama with unwavering discipline and strictness.

Sometimes, because of this situation, there would be a very real possibility that I could miss my train. On my return journey from Jamalpur Bábá would tell me to go fast so that I would not miss my train, but I had this firm belief that I would never miss it, and as matter of fact, I never did! Gurudeva had given clear instructions that travelling without a ticket was

not acceptable as it went against the codes of Yama and Niyama. If ever, things were to come to such a pass that we were helpless and had to travel without a ticket, then at the end of the proposed journey we were supposed to purchase a ticket of equal amount and tear it. Due to this righteous conduct of the aspirants, the popularity of Ánanda Marga increased, and in turn, such behaviour strengthened the conscience of the aspirant.

I realized or sensed that there was some sort of preparation going on inside of me, but I could not perceive what it was as I was still of a tender age and the future was certainly not clear to me as yet. Apparently, I was busy preparing for an external worldly life, but someone or something was getting me internally ready for other things. I began to sense that the internal preparation that was going on was to lead me onto a path of renunciation. Material objects did not attract me much. Whenever the opportunity arose I would enjoy going to the village, bathe in the river Ganges and then sit to meditate.

On my way back home from the sandy banks of the Ganges, I would continue to feel the pleasant touch of the southern winds that would raise me to a state of near bliss. Having observed my conduct my relatives were shocked! Around this time, the Sino-India war broke out and an order came from Gurudeva, "You must clarify the Marga's position among the people and within the government circles and serve your country." The clarification of the Marga's position at this juncture was called the five principles of Prout had already been introduced to the people and Proutists would talk about the conscientious distribution of property, etc. The common people had begun to form an image of spiritual aspirants of the Marga, which was akin to communists and not true spiritualists. Against the backdrop of the war, an appropriate opportunity came up for the Ánanda Marga to dispel this misconception of the general public. It became extremely necessary to do so, because at that time Communists were supporting China, not India. In this regard, the efforts of the Margiis brought about good results.

The fervor of nationalism unified the entire country and it became a great example of national integration. There was an incredible wave of enthusiasm all around. I got a job in the department of Defense Audit and Account services, and was posted in Guwahati. The Narangi forests of Guwahati turned out to be a very good place for my spiritual practice.

Around now is when I started to have great experiences during my meditation. In the wee hours of the morning, during Brahma Muhúrta, I would walk at a particular pace in the forest, to a place where there was a small waterfall. Adjacent to the waterfall was a tree. I used to do my spiritual practice there, under the tree, daily, sitting comfortably on a rock, which was just big enough for me. Though that part of the forest was run over with snakes and elephants, they never troubled me.

My mind and my heart were fearless and were beaming with enthusiasm. Sitting by the side of this cascade, I used to remain immersed in mediation for hours and would return in a cheerful mood to my quarters in the evenings. Though this cheerfulness never made me shy away from work, I noticed that my attraction towards the material world continued to decrease. Since all my actions were driven by Yama and Niyama, it raised a great deal of dissatisfaction among my colleagues.

In those days the Narangi Army cantonment was being built near Guwahati and I was in-charge of the audit of this project. This particular incident took place in 1963. An Avadhúta, and a Brahmacárii who had given up the material world, used to come quite often to my rooms seeking help. One day he told me of a DMC [Dharma Mahá Cakra] that was going to be held in Ambagan in the Nawagaon district. I left almost immediately for Navagaon to attend the DMC, held at Ambagan.

It was morning and everyone was eating breakfast. I too took a light breakfast with them. A message came, "Bábá is calling you." I got up from the breakfast table and began to walk towards Bábá's quarters. After showing me to Bábá's room, the Avadhúta who was escorting me went about attending to his own duties. Upon entering the room, I first did a prostrated salutation to Gurudeva and then sat in front of Him. After greeting me with Shubhamastu [the Guru's blessings at the psychic level] and Kalyánamastu [blessings at the spiritual level], Bábá began to talk to me about my forthcoming life. He said, "This place is not suitable for you." Continuing further, he said, "Eastern India is not beneficial for your health." I asked, "What should I do then, Bábá?" The reply from Bábá was, "It is up to you to decide."

I was caught in a bind as to what to reply. However, as soon as I had entered the room, Bábá had ordered me to lock it from inside and inside

the room there was none other than Jiiva and Shiva. Jiiva was worried, overcome with anxiety but Shiva was calm and cheerful. On and off I spoke up, "I do not understand anything. Please tell me what to do?" Bábá would say, "No, this decision should be made by you."

At this point, I slowly began to understand what was Bábá's intention. I then said, "It is such a big decision. How can I take a call on my own?" Bábá replied, "It is necessary to take big decisions in order to perform great deeds."

I expressed to Bábá my inability to take such a major decision on my own. Time was flying by. We both forgot to eat our breakfast. The world outside had no inkling about what was transpiring between us, inside the room. Both of us were fixed in our respective seats. Bábá wanted me to make a decision. I was eagerly waiting for the 'order' to come from His mouth and I was in no hurry.

More than an hour and a half elapsed before Bábá broke his silence, saying, "What do you want?" I said, "I want your order Bábá, nothing else." Thereafter, suddenly, Bábá started teaching me history. And again asked me, "Now tell me, what do you want?" "An order Bábá." Bábá immediately became very serious and said, "All right then". Bábá said, "You go out and come forward." With a sweet smile breaking across His face, Bábá said, "Now it is okay right?" I replied, "Bábá, to some extent it is okay." "Even now 'ok' to some extent?" Bábá said. "What is your problem now? Whatever you have wanted you have received only that." I said, "No Bábá, not yet." Bábá was clearly surprised by my reaction. My patience was also giving in and I was almost restless.

Bábá said, "Lots of time has passed. Let me do other pending works." I said, "Bábá, we cannot leave this work unfinished either, in a half baked manner." Bábá too agreed with me.

Almost two hours must have passed. Bábá was very composed and was looking curiously at me, but the beauty of His pleasant smile melted away any worries about the past or the future.

Bábá spoke, "You go out. What do you say now?"

I was thinking about the difficulties of this path. If I were to ever

waver from my resolve, I would be a good for nothing. So I looked up to Bábá and said, "You have to promise me something, that if, ever by any chance I decide to leave, you will not let me go."

My response annoyed Bábá and He said, "You cannot act like this!" He further said, "Why would you leave me?"

I said, "Bábá I am a human being bound by the reactions of my Sańskára. How can I take on such a big responsibility? What will happen if I deviate from the path and give up midway? What would happen to me if I turn away from you?" I thus revealed all my fears to Bábá that were indeed holding back my spirit.

Bábá again said, "Everything is in your favor. How is it possible that you will turn away from me?" I said, "Is there any guarantee at all of mortal beings? In the case of good intellect failing, anything can happen."

Almost three hours had passed up till this point. I could not imagine what the people waiting outside were thinking. Bábá suddenly became very serious and in a commanding tone said, "If at all you want to leave me, I will never let you go."

Bábá assumed the Áshirváda Mudrá and blessed me. I immediately prostrated myself keeping my gaze fixed on his feet, I slowly started to move backwards to unlock the door. Bábá was constantly watching me. I came out of the room, almost in a state best described as in trance. The people who were present outside were very keen to know the cause of such a long delay, to know what went on inside the room. I was in no state to speak. Two monks who were present perhaps had a hunch about what could have transpired between Bábá and myself, inside the room. From then onwards, my daily activities convinced my colleagues that I had taken the decision to change the Áshrama.

From now on my life was primarily based on the strict observance of Yama and Niyama. Over the course of time, my meditation became very smooth and I would spend hours meditating beside a waterfall in the dense forest. I had numerous spiritual experiences and as I look back, there was a stage when I believed that nothing was impossible for me to achieve. My attraction towards Gurudeva increased by manifold. There was a time when I felt that I had achieved Vák Siddhi, but this phase didn't last too long.

I distributed my clothes among my friends. As and when the opportunity came, I went to the Purváshrama. After a week of this I left for Jamalpur instead of leaving for Guwahati, in order to prepare for the future course of my life.

The spiritual aspirant embarks upon a journey to seek the truth

I left home without giving the slightest hint to anyone of my decision. As soon as I crossed the outer limits of the village, I turned as a final mark of respect did a heartfelt Namaskára to the village. Instead of going to Guwahati, I went to Jamalpur. The office informed Bábá about my arrival, as Bábá was present in His quarters at the time. I entered His room and after prostrating myself to Bábá, He indicated to me to come closer. I proceeded and sat down close to His bed. Gurudeva looked at me without blinking an eye. After some time, Bábá touched my Íśa Cakra and performed Shaktipát [spiritual empowerment] on me. I lost control of my senses.

Firstly, I forgot all my fears and worries of the past, which used to periodically trouble me. My mind experienced a deluge of infinite bliss! It seemed as if nothing was impossible for me to achieve anymore. That day I stayed in Bábá's room for a long time and unlike other days. I was filled with Divine bliss. Neither was I willing to leave the room nor was anyone asking me to.

The Táttvika classes soon began on the Cycle of Creation. My mind withdrew its focus from any distraction and was completely absorbed in the contemplation of the cyclical mysteries of life. One subject after another started to come up in class. There were a good number of students in the

class, consisting of both family persons and monks. Bábá Himself used to come every day to take our class and explained complex philosophical treatises very simply by presenting them in an exciting and unique way. There were multi talented people in our group and some were very good Bhajana singers. It was not yet the time of Prabháta Sañgiitas, so people used to generally sing Bhajans of Miirábái, Surdás, Tulsidás and Kabiir. A few people even sang their own compositions. The atmosphere in Jamalpur simply radiated devotion. It was sudden when the General Secretary [a family man] told us that Dádá's mother had passed away. All the trainees immediately left for the Munger cremation grounds. As I saw the mortal body of the respected mother being lit on the pyre, I realized the ultimate state of the human body. Having returned from the cremation ground, as I sat for evening meditation, my mind grew very indifferent towards the world and all worldly bondages began to slip away. Quite often, along with my fellow trainees, I used to discuss complex philosophical topics. I found the chapter on the Kośa particularly difficult. I began to understand this topic only after years of inquiry.

Bábá as the examiner

As our classes were completed it was time for our examinations. Bábá Himself was the examiner. Even today, I vividly recall how my Táttvika exam was conducted. It was a winter afternoon, the venue of the exam was exactly at the same place where Jamalpur Jágrti stands today, with Bábá seated on the examiner's chair. I was standing in front of Him, as an examinee. Sitting in the chair of the examiner, Bábá was in a different mood; not gentle but very strict. He asked the following questions. Bábá asked, "Have you come for the exam? If yes, then be ready." I didn't say anything, but just kept looking at Him. Bábá asked, "What is the Cosmic Mind?" Pointing towards Bábá, I replied, "It is You only." Bábá reacted, "Answer properly." I said, "So far as I understand, I am answering correctly Bábá." On my reply Bábá turned very serious, and said, "You have very badly failed in My exam." I said, "I am proud of it, Bábá." Bábá was surprised, and asked, "Are you proud of your failure?" I said, "No Bábá." He said, "Then what are you proud of? I replied, "I was failed by whom, Bábá? By the cosmic mind himself."

Bábá's face split into a sweet smile and He patted my cheeks with both His hands.

Then Bábá went onto talk further, "As the organization is growing bigger, so the workload is increasing and it is now putting a burden on Me. You will reduce My workload to some extent. You may go to Varanasi and start conducting training programs there. From now on the training

programs will be conducted in Varanasi instead of Jamalpur. But keep one thing in mind, you would be taking classes in English because full time trainees from foreign countries will soon start coming in."

I asked Bábá how this unsuccessful Táttvika would be able to carry out this task. Bábá was very calm and answered spontaneously, "You would do it." On asking how, Bábá became serious and said, "With My Grace." I performed a prostrate salutation and accepted this responsibility. Then Bábá gave me some essential instructions on how to go about my work. I memorized his instructions and even today, I contemplate those instructions from Bábá, and they still guide me much like a pole star as when I perform His duties. I received the official instruction to not only do self-study and teaching but also to understand the psychology of full time trainees. Later on, when the then GS Dada also gave me some further essential instructions. Now it was the time for me to leave for my posting. I was getting increasingly anxious over the thought of going away from Gurudeva and also about the fact that until now, I had no practical experience of finishing a task in a time bound manner. Though I had gained some knowledge and experience while working in the Math on how to apply the required skills acquired in training, to complete a certain task. Till now though, my entire plan was on a mental level. At that point in time, I myself was not well versed with the organization. I was told that it was a conscious decision to post the fulltime workers in Varanasi as the city was founded by Lord Shiva. I later heard from Gurudeva himself that Varanasi was the winter capital of Lord Shiva.

My first experience of work life

In those early days a training Matha was established in a rented flat in Sigará, Varanasi. Incidentally, I was the first training secretary posted in this Matha. This center didn't have even the most basic facilities. My career, which was one of self-study, teaching and intuitional practice, was started with a group of fifteen or sixteen Brahmacáriis.

Gurudeva was the nucleus of attention in the organization. It was because of His attractiveness that helpless and depressed people kept coming to the Varanasi Matha seeking a new lease on life. I got a life membership of the Banaras (Varanasi) Hindu University (BHU) library and started reading books on philosophy. In the meantime, Gurudeva visited Varanasi. Since we had no accommodation facilities in the Matha in those days so Bábá stayed in a hotel in Godawlia. Bábá gave me some information related to the training programs, which was followed by a few more instructions from Him. Enlightening us on the significance of Varanasi, he gave us his blessings to attain progress in our spiritual practice. I felt very good about this fact, as Bábá's Varanasi visit was not expected.

For some reason, all the Brahmacáriis, workers and Avadhútas were invited for the training programs and every nook and cranny of our tiny training center was teeming with people. But, nothing seemed awkward or out of place. I felt enormously encouraged as everyone came and made a sincere effort to get to know each other. In those days, it was easy to identify

Vaerágya in conduct and as a result I really connected well with some people. Perhaps this is one of the reasons that with each passing day, the numbers of trainees grew in leaps and bounds. It would not be exaggerating to mention here that a good number of students from nearby universities began choosing the life of an Avadhúta as their life's goal. The enthusiasm was electric and this is one of the reasons that people from all sections of society, came to Ánanda Márğa.

Certain events acted as catalysts and brought about such a situation. At this time India was rebuilding herself to accept a new dawn she lacked three things, which were introduced by Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii. There lacked a holistic philosophy of life and this need was fulfilled by the introduction of the Ánanda Sútram, which was published in 1961 with 85 treatises, contained in five chapters. It was an unprecedented contribution, which was disseminated after Vádaráyaña Vyás's Brahmasútra. Bábá's perception was not only limited to the contours of a "ceaseless quest for Brahma" but also embraced an important social philosophy within its ambit.

Perhaps after the Second World War, arising from the ravages of conflicting ideas of materialism, the young generations finally were given a correct philosophy of life, which allowed them to walk upon the path of Truth. A structural plan is the unparalleled contribution given by Bábá, to mankind. Not only did he propound a philosophy of life, which is infallible but he also laid out a detailed plan on how it should be implemented so that it could benefit even those persons who belonged to the lowest strata of society. Unlike other philosophers he did not bother to validate his philosophical treatise at a theoretical level, rather he went on to introduce an actual system based on this philosophy so that it could benefit all, including those who do not possess a developed intellect. His third contribution was the organization, beautifully built upon the foundations of a unique harmony, between family persons and ascetics.

No other civilization had proposed such a system, as did Bábá. While working in the training Matha, I had many occasions to discuss the incidents that I was fortunate to have experienced with Bábá. Merely contemplating on them would fill me with great enthusiasm and they have since also helped me realize that Gurudeva was a magnificent craftsman. In the history of humankind no other Mahásambhúti [God in His human

form, e.g. Lord Shiva], endowed with so many exceptional qualities, has graced this planet. Bábá's Varanasi visit taught me the importance of action and knowledge. I used to spend much of the day in self-study, spiritual practice's and guiding trainees. In due course I realized that memories of the past had almost ceased to haunt me.

It so happened that one day I found that I was inexplicably restless, was not feeling good and had lost interest in everything. I cried copiously during meditation. I cannot describe whether it was tears of an ascetic or whether my mind was agitated without reason. Suddenly a thought arose in my mind that perhaps I would not remain here for much longer, yet nothing was clear. Gurudeva had given me hints of this type of reaction during the DMC held in Patna in 1965, in *Ánanda Púrñimá*. At that time, the news of late *Ácárya Rámtanukjii's* son, who was missing, created a lot of ruckus. *Ácáryajii* was working as Bábá's secretary. Finally, everyone left the DMC for Ranchi to attend the summer camp there.

Himachal Posting

During the second week of June, I was transferred from Shiva's winter capital Varanasi to His summer capital, Shimla. As the season changed so did my posting, but Shiva and His enduring historical memories stayed with me. It would be quite appropriate to point out here that prior to my meeting with Gurudeva, Lord Shiva was my *Íśa-Devatá* [a term denoting a worshipper's favourite deity within Hinduism]. So fortunately, the background was already present and I did not have to face any adjustment issues. As long as I lived in Varanasi I did not have to switch to a new type of attire. I wore the attire of a *Brahmacárii* [a celibate student of the Vedas, one committed to live as a *Brahmacárii*] along with a yellow *Chongá* [the robe of a *Sannyásii*]. At the end of second week of June I reached Shimla. A room was arranged for me at the *Dayánanda Anglo-Vedic (DAV) School* in *Lakkar Bázár*. I took the keys from the Principal and went to my room. It was so small that it did not even have enough space to accommodate a table and chair. A water tap was also fitted inside.

I reached my accommodations in the afternoon. I was carrying with me some essential items that I had purchased from the market. After crossing the playground, before taking a turn towards the School I met a monkey who was sitting at the corner of the road like he always did. Before I knew it this monkey smoothly snatched the bags from my hands and scrutinized me. I can still vividly recall the memory of how he first grabbed the strings tying the bags, tearing it apart with his teeth as he spread the contents of the bags

on the road. As he smashed the food and other articles on the road, he stared at me pretending it was his property and I, should go about minding my own business!

People passing by commented that this particular monkey was the boss of Shimla and no one could stop him as he had perpetrated many acts there. I listened to the onlookers' advice and went straight to my room. Though it was summer even then, in the year 1965, it was necessary to wear a light sweater during the day. On hearing of my Shimla posting, wholtime workers came to meet me asking when I would be leaving Ranchi. They gifted me many things like blankets and other essential items as per their choice, because all of them had come from their respective work areas.

My fieldwork began on the second day of my arrival in Shimla. After finishing up my chores and spiritual practices, I used to go out at 6:30 am. I would regularly take with me at least one spiritual aspirant to help him practice his spiritual practices. My daily routine included monitoring the spiritual practices of aspirants in the morning, arranging Tattva Sabhá [a spiritual gathering] during the day, and giving initiations in the evening. In this manner, I managed to train almost 25-30 spiritual aspirants within one month.

After a short period of time when I entered any government office, I met and selected prospective spiritual aspirants. Among them were Shrii Thakur Singh Negi, the principal secretary of the state; Shrii Desráj Mahajan, speaker of the assembly; and Shrii Visan Das, director of the welfare department, these were among the few spiritual aspirants. I was often in a fix as to what to do regarding travel since I had no money to allow me to travel outside Shimla. So I started to plan.

In the meanwhile, I met a local transporter who was a very amicable and sociable person. I used to hitch a ride with him in his truck and so reached the small town of Nárkand'á and stayed in a Forest Department guesthouse. I later organized a Tattva Sabhá there and even initiated few people. One evening, while I was standing at a high point, surveying the neighboring areas, the people told me that on the other side of the valley was a very affluent and prosperous community as they had made great fortunes from apple farming. Apple farming brought prosperity to this area but it also brought with it both materialism and consumerism. They were therefore in

dire need of spirituality. It was two days before I reached this region known as the Thánedhár-Koṭgarh belt, by truck. Legend has it that this area was earlier known as Gurukoṭ; in course of time it came to be known as Koṭgarh.

The story of the development of this area began with the arrival of a Christian Evangelist. In the early part of the 20th century, Father Samuel Stokes was sent to Koṭgarh to carry out missionary work in Himachal, from America. He was a well-educated, hardworking and refined young man. He was a very dynamic person and always ready to do things. He was given the task to exploit the poor and the innocent people to convert them to Christianity. However, while performing his duty he encountered followers of the Vedic religion and he was overwhelmed by the eternal wisdom enshrined in the Bhagavada Gītá and the Upanishads. Stokes abandoned Christianity and with the help of the local Árya Samájii's got initiated into the Hindu Vedic religion. Due to this transformation Stokes became an Indian in both his thinking and in his lifestyle. He transformed into Satyánanda Stokes from Samuel Stokes. Soft spoken, hardworking and now a complete Indian in belief and conduct, Satyánandajii participated in the Indian freedom struggle with great vigour.

Stokes is famous for two very impactful things he did. He brought apple saplings from America and planted them in Koṭgarh. As these apple trees grew, they over ran the indigenous species of apple. As a result, apple farming faced recurrent resistance. A series of protests occurred as apple saplings were replacing wheat fields. Suspicion grew. Questions were raised that if wheat fields were being turned into apple orchards, what people would eat? Until that point nobody could imagine that Himachal would soon require a horticulture department! People would say that initially Satyánandajii began to convert us and then he turned our wheat fields into apple orchards. But Satayánandajii was unmoved by all these developments, because he had decided to live on the principles of 'Satyameva Jayate', which means 'truth alone triumphs', a Mantra from the ancient Indian scripture, Mundáka Upanishad. In the beginning well-educated and intelligent people came forward and then others followed. Today, the apples of Koṭgarh popularly known as "Royal Delicious," are sold in the fruit markets of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai. When I visited Koṭgarh much later on another occasion people said that apple trees were gold bearing trees. So it is indeed a fact that Satyánandajii's dream had materialized. I had the opportunity to work there for one month. On the very

first day, an assembly was organized in the backyard of Shrii Om Prakash jii's shop; where I initiated thirteen people.

People embraced new thoughts of spirituality with great enthusiasm so following the tradition of Koṭgarh to welcome new ideas and thoughts. This is one of the reasons why Koṭgarh was not only prosperous but the per capita income was higher than any other place in India for a certain period of time. But with the ever-increasing population this economic data is now redundant. To put things in perspective it is necessary to mention here that this first batch of Márgiis [disciples] whom I initiated in the backyard of Shrii Om Prakashjii's shop, were the pioneers in spreading the Márga's ideology in Himachal Pradesh, and so within a very short span of time the Ánanda Márga became a household ideology in Koṭgarh. Shrii Pritam Chanda Stokes was the first member of the Stokes family to take Diikśá into Ánanda Márga. Shrii Lalchand Stokes followed his footsteps a little later.

On returning to Shimla I got very caught up in missionary work. The tiny room which was my living quarters in Shimla so generously given by the DAV school Principal Shrii Satyaprakashjii, turned out to be the centre of attraction always remaining busy because of frequent visits by all types of people starting with government employees to members of the royal family. Soon it came to be known that whoever ate Khicadi [a dish from the Indian subcontinent made from rice and lentils (Dál)] prepared on the stove kept in that room inevitably became, a spiritual aspirant. During the extreme winters, my room in Lakkar Bazar turned into one of the coldest places in Shimla as the sun's rays never reached the inside of the room. As was my routine every morning at 6:30 am I would leave after doing my morning meditations to go to a devotee's house to guide them in their spiritual practices. I would leave from there at 9:30 am because by 10am government offices and schools would open. On arriving at my destination each morning I would prepare at least one person for intuitional practice. It was 2 o'clock by the time I would be able to get back to my room. Having finished the afternoon meditations and lunch I would once again go out for missionary work returning home by 6 pm. This is how I went about my day to day business. In this way within one-and-a half months, 30 people in Shimla were initiated into becoming spiritual aspirants. It was in August that news came from Delhi that Gurudeva was about to visit Jammu via Delhi. On hearing this I immediately left for Delhi along with a Márgii brother.

The first visit of Gurudeva to Shimla

I was elated with the news of Gurudeva's arrival in Delhi. It was the August of 1965, Gurudeva was staying in Delhi's North Avenue. All the ascetics and Brahmacháris of North India were invited to visit Him in Delhi. I too was there along with a newly initiated Márgii. On reaching, I got to know that Gurudeva was staying in Delhi only to start the next leg of his visit to Jammu. Very soon after He reached Delhi we got the news that it was not possible for Him to go to Jammu. Because of the simmering India-Pakistan border tensions, a warlike state of emergency had arisen and curfew was declared in Jammu.

Because the route to Jammu passes through the city of Sambá, which was well within Pakistan's firing range, it was not desirable to travel to Samba at that time. As a result, the Jammu visit was cancelled and people were disturbed. Now what? After contemplating the situation for a while, Gurudeva's personal secretary Ácárya Satyánandajii came out from His room and announced that as of now it would not be possible to visit Jammu, but Bábá would go to any place which falls within 300 km radius. My instinct poked me. Why should I not try to invite Gurudeva to Shimla? I discussed this with my fellow Márgii, who had accompanied me, and he encouraged me. After meeting Bábá's personal secretary Ácárya Satyánandajii, I proposed this idea to him, and he liked my idea. He replied that he would think over it. He had a curious look on his face, which was obscured by a

smile. Or perhaps because he was aware of the Marga's position in Shimla, he was concerned about the arrangements for Gurudeva. He was aware of the fact that I had only recently been posted to Shimla in the month of June and was still new to the town. So he set three conditions before me.

Firstly, three first class train tickets were to be arranged to Chandigarh, because at the time, Marga Mátá was present. Secondly, a car from Chandigarh to Shimla was to be arranged and finally, there would have to be proper accommodations for Gurudeva while He was in Shimla, and thirdly the formulation of the right kind of strategy by the Himachal Marga's.

Before accepting these conditions, I thought it was necessary to discuss these conditions with my fellow Marga. He gave me a very good suggestion. The principal secretary of Himachal and the speaker of the Himachal legislative assembly were visiting Delhi at that time. He suggested that I go to Himachal Bhawan and talk to them, and everything would be sorted out! Both of them had become Marga's and I had extremely good relations with them. Not only did they like the idea but the speaker also gave his car and the principal secretary offered his house to be used for Bábá's accommodation. So, everything was fixed except the tickets. Taking the risk of arranging the tickets on my own, I said yes to Ácára Satyánandajii. He went to discuss this to Bábá who gave his approval to go ahead. Though I got the approval I needed, I still had one very important concern which was, who would cook the food for Gurudeva. My fellow Marga came up with yet another ingenious solution, which was to initiate my wife so she could cook meals for Bábá. Until that day no woman had been initiated in Himachal and on that very night we left for Shimla.

At the scheduled time, the car reached Chandigarh to pick up Gurudeva. In those days the Mall Road [Shimla's main road] was off limits to cars. So it was not possible to reach the official residence No. 1 Bamloi, of the Chief Secretary in a car. It was decided that Bábá's car would drive up to the Cart Road and from there Bábá would have to walk about 100-150 feet to reach the Principal Secretaries' residence. As soon as Bábá got into the car I told him of this plan and Bábá nodded in agreement. I was relieved! Bábá's car arrived at the scheduled time. A good number of Marga's were waiting on the either side of the pavement with flowers in their hands to welcome Gurudeva. In August there are generally flowers in abundance in Shimla and

the rest were provided by the gardens maintained by the Government. Bábá's accommodation had also been arranged at the principal secretary's residence. Bábá, covered with garlands, mounted the stage and I was ecstatic seeing Bábá was pleased.

According to the precedents of the organization, after reaching Shimla, on Bábá's order and with the consent of his pre-nominated Secretary, I managed the entire arrangement process. I drew up Bábá's work schedule. After lunch Bábá did not rest, and said, "Try to arrange as many personal contact sessions as you can; I will not rest today." According to Bábá's wishes the necessary arrangements were made. After having Prasáda of most revered Bábá, I gathered up people for personal contacts sessions. As far as I can remember now, Gurudeva had given personal contacts to 32 people and each of them had experienced Divine bliss. It was customary that after each personal contact session, the individual was to be given personal instructions. As soon as personal contact was over Bábá made me sit with Him and gave me a detailed and complete road map on how to carry out work in the Himachal region. At the end, with a serious tone to his voice Bábá commanded, "Proceed with your duties here unhesitatingly, I have done your work." Bábá's words turned out to be true, as in the following year our mission's dispersion gained great momentum.

In the evening, Gurudeva gave a General Darshana [a meeting where one is blessed by Gurudeva] in the assembly hall of the DAV School in Lower Bazar, a location that was close to Scandal Point a very famous meeting point in Shimla, which people found easy to visit. Márgiis came in good numbers from very remote areas of Himachal to see Bábá in person. Since it was Bábá's maiden visit to Himachal, and many personal contact sessions were given before the evening Darshana, the entire atmosphere in the hall was of a very spiritual vibration. People who attended the general Darshana were very pleased and happy. A group of students that had come from Bilaspur for Darshana could be seen actively participating in every necessary task with great enthusiasm. After the personal contact sessions were over Bábá said to me, "I have done your work."

The topic of discourse during Gurudeva's evening Darshana was the impact of the glands [the endocrinal system] on the human mind and its many expressions. Groups of people from Shimla and other parts of

Himachal had been long deliberating on this topic. Moreover, as Shimla was a state capital, many spiritual masters and distinguished persons would come to the city and hold well organized spiritually oriented discourses.

But Bábá's discussions were absolutely new, fascinating, scientifically explained, and psychologically oriented. The intellectual community immediately understood it and the students were very impressed too. Though Bábá's discourse lasted for barely 35 minutes, the impact was immense.

*Satsayyá ke dohere aor návika ke tiira,
Dekhana me chhoñena lage gháva kare gambhiira.*

The meanings of the above lines are that the fisherman's arrow is as powerful as the 700 couplets of the poet, which when fully understood create a lasting and deep impact.

Slowly, it dawned on me that there was an unseen purpose behind Bábá's Shimla visit that his discourses worked like Mantrágháta on Himachal. As I recall those days I now see that though Bábá had physically left Himachal, he had left behind a powerful spiritual vibration, which precipitated with ease the missionary work of the Ánanda Marga in Himachal Pradesh. People in Himachal began to take a keen interest in the Ánanda Marga and the eagerness to understand the Marga grew dynamically.

Bábá had to return to Delhi immediately, I took Bábá for a short sightseeing trip. Soon, it was time for Him to return. Bábá said, "Catch Me a night train from Kalka to Delhi." We were returning to Kalka in the same car. During the journey, Bábá gave me many instructions and said, "Get down to work fearlessly and without any hesitation."

I did exactly that. I worked tirelessly day and night for two years. As long as I was posted in Himachal, Bábá used to come to Himachal almost every year on some pretext. He came in 1966 and 1967 to conduct Shimla DMC and Náhan DMC rectively. As I was bidding goodbye to BÁBÁ I felt a strong urge to hold Him back, at the same time His warmly compassionate eyes were assuring me that He too did not want to leave. I felt as if His eyes were saying, "I do not leave." But this unspoken message would not

calm me. I returned to Shimla with a heavy heart. Himachal had received so many blessings but I, lost something. With a heart heavy with dejection I tried to delve into old memories of bygone days in Shimla. There was no other way. This mental state persisted for a few days, which is how long it took me to return to normal. But one thing became very clear to me after this visit. I had developed a very strong bond with Bábá. It seemed to me that He had already started to fulfill the promises He made to me in a Ambagan in Assam. Now I had nothing to worry about. It took me some time to realize those words.

Realization during Sádhaná Piifha Training

In early 1966, Bábá added a new chapter to the existing training program. It came to be known as SPT [Sádhaná Piifha Training]. Márgiis in large numbers, both family men and ascetics joined the second session of SPT, of which I was a part. Along with us there were seventy-two trainees for SPT. It was June and Varanasi was reeling under the scorching heat of the midsummer sun. Due to shortage of adequate space in the Sigrá Training Center, accommodation for trainees was made in the outhouse of Raman Nivása, Mahmurganj. Márga Didi's [a respectful way of addressing an older woman or sister] were running a school in this house. However as the summer recess was on, Raman Niwása was available as accommodation. The famous family Ácárya's [a spiritual teacher or a very learned person] of that time, Ácárya Ratnesh Bhatt, Ácárya Narendrajii were also a part of this group of advanced trainees.

Today many of them have attained divine abode. Since it was only the second batch of trainees undergoing SPT training, Varanasi was not acquainted with this type of mendicant monk as it is today after decades of experience. But it remains a fact that Varanasi has always had an ancient tradition of hosting Yogiis, ascetics, and spiritual hermits, and it was for this reason that Bábá had selected Varanasi as a first choice to establish a training center and run the new SPT program. As was the daily schedule, after

completing our meditations and Yoga, by 8 am we had to go out to seek alms. I would come back every day with new and real experiences. In the initial two-three days we faced all sorts of troubles because we didn't quite look like trainee mendicants. As the days passed and our appearances changed we no longer faced trouble. All the monks used to come back to the Matha by 10-10:30 am with raw and uncooked food items. The Trainer would inspect the quality of food grains and distribute rice and wheat among us. He gave everyone an earthen cook pot, a mug and attire for the SPT.

We had to make our own arrangements for fuel. In later years, as a part of the Field Training Program, all of us would go to the banks of the Ganges for missionary work. Almost all would return after initiating a new spiritual aspirant.

One fine morning, I entered a residential society and walked up to the gate of a house, perhaps it belonged to a certain university professor. Standing at the gate as I chanted Mantra, the owner of the house noticed me and became infuriated and came out with his eyes red with rage. As a matter of fact, this man's dog was even more aggressive than him. What was worse, he almost burst with anger when he saw that instead of attacking me his German shepherd became calm after sniffing me for a few short minutes. Perhaps the animal recognized me, and being guided by his soul he became silent? But the landlord, despite being an educated person well versed in modern life of the times, didn't bother to understand my need but instead went back inside with an increased blood pressure. I didn't get to know what happened to him after I left.

The Tantra Guru [Gurudeva] had taught me a hard lesson but I was yet to experience the depths of His Divine play. After being humiliated by the owner of the first house that I had come to, I walked on. Little knowing that I was stepping into another area of the Divine playground set up by the Cosmic Player who witnessed what was to happen for me. After walking past 3 or 4 houses I knocked on a gate, all the while chanting the mantra. Chanting brought about a wonderful vibration for me, and for the residents of the house. The owner of the house called his wife in a curious tone of voice, while keeping his eyes fixed upon me. It seemed as if he was not willing to lose sight of me, even for a moment.

The house owner called his wife, "Do you hear me, come outside with a full plate of offerings." Within few minutes the Divine Goddess

of the house came out and stood in front of me. She was holding a plate, which was piled high with rice, Munga Dála, vegetables, ghee or clarified butter, Indian bread, a lamp [which was lit], and some cash. I thought that perhaps the owner of the house along with his wife wanted to greet me by performing Árati [a ritual of welcome or worship, performed with respect]. On seeing this scene unfold, I realized that this offering was not appropriate for me. I spoke up and interesting talks followed.

The couple realized that this stranger at their door was not a beggar but was a spiritual practitioner. Both of them were Professors of humanities in the Káshii Hindu University and told me that the first house that I had knocked on with the ferocious dog belonged to a science professor. Soon after the period of penance ended, the lord and the lady of the house pleaded with me to eat with them, and said they would drop me to the Mat 'ha on their way to the university. On my way back, I was so curious that I couldn't help but trying to locate that very house that had treated me pleasantly but I couldn't find it anymore. Like me others would also gain real experiences every day. At night everyone would share their respective stories while relaxing. Thus, because of SPT training, 1966 was a very exciting year. At the time of adding this chapter with the training module Bábá had said: "I have sorted out the problems of this organization. Now nothing will remain impossible for our ascetics. Never in their lifetime will they turn to the material world, because I have cleared their doubts and given them power of determination."

Second Himachal visit of Gurudeva for the Shimla DMC

The wave of missionary work set off by the organization had clearly started to bear fruit. Work went on day and night. Initiations and new branches were getting registered regularly. The organization as a whole was growing well because it was Ánanda Marga's time to excel. And its expansion was horizontal not vertical. According to German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer any organization has three stages of acceptance.

1. It is ignored [ridiculed]
2. Opposed [resistance]
3. Acceptance by being self-evident

This was the first stage of organizational growth. Young monks and nuns, radiating an inner brilliance and a unique glow were out in public, working with an indomitable spirit and unmatched courage for the well being of the society. They went to remote often-inaccessible places for missionary work. The late Thakur Sen Negi, the then Chief Secretary of Himachal Pradesh was from the border district of Kinnaur. Negijii was worried because at that time the influence of a certain group of people was growing very fast which was not in the interest of our nation. Negijii wished to revive and strengthen the bond that the people of that region had with their own ancient culture and traditions, to inspire them to live a life based

on the practice of Dharma. I visited Kinnaur on numerous occasions to guide the local people on to the path of spirituality. On our very first trip to Kinnaur, we couldn't go beyond Kalpá by car. From T'apri we had two options; either to walk or ride on Khaccar or mule, there were no other alternatives available to reach Kinnaur. A lot of people who took initiation; one of them being the late Meher Chand Cauhan, a member of the first group of spiritual aspirants who was initiated in Kinnaur. Subsequently he became a very devoted spiritual practitioner. During my second visit I walked up to Morang and was accompanied by late Karam Chandajii.

The journey to Morang along the banks of the river Sutlej was a very pleasant one. The Sutlej cutting through the mountain or gorges with its power and vigour; its waters pure, crystal clear and cold, the sky kissing the Deodár trees on either side of the banks, enlivens the body and rejuvenates the soul. The other side of the riverbank was dotted with beautiful Chilgozá [pine nut] trees, which were looked like Ciira [long leaved Indian Pine]. In those days Chilgozá trees constituted the lion's share of Kinnaur's economy. Until then, no foreign varieties of apple's had reached Kinnaur and the old variety of apples that grew there were not fit to be sold in the market. For the first time, apple orchards were encouraged in Kinnaur and the person behind this was its Deputy Commissioner Shrii N D Jayal [IFAS]. Shrii Jayal had a very exciting personal history.

Early on he was a pilot in the Indian Air force. One time he was flying the late Pandit Nehrujii in an Air force plane somewhere, when suddenly the plane developed a technical snag. Shrii Jayal landed the plane on the road and saved the life of Panditjii. The PM was so happy that he introduced a new administrative cadre to accommodate Shrii Jayal. Along with IAS, IFAS [Indian Frontier Administrative Service] officers would be posted as District Magistrates [DM's] in border districts. Shrii Jayal's wife was from a royal family of Hyderabad. Both of them learnt spiritual practices and Yoga Ásanas. They helped me greatly in our social welfare work.

Since the time the Márga began to expand in Himachal it began to be said that there was not a single important person in Himachal who was not, a Márgii. The organization gave great importance to Himachal and Bábá kept on inspiring people by His own spiritual vibration. In July 1966, Bábá once again accepted a request to conduct the DMC in Shimla. All the

while the number of Márgiis continued to grow in Himachal. For this visit the best arrangements possible were made to welcome Bábá. By now I had gained experience working Himachal. In those days Bábá's main residence was in Jamalpur. Bábá used to begin His journey from Jamalpur to conduct the DMC. This time Ácárya Kśitishajii was Bábá's attending secretary. Bábá and his attending secretary were sitting in the rear seat of the car and I was sitting beside the driver.

As soon as Bábá's car entered Himachal at Kalka, and it started to gain speed along the zigzag mountain roads, I realized that it was very difficult for me to suppress a number of the Pariprashna [questions that haunt your mind and hampers spiritual progress]. The answers to the questions were lying dormant in my mind no doubt and wanted to be addressed.

Turning my head to look back I tried to gauge Bábá's mood. Bábá appeared to be in a pleasant mood, and I sensed it was the right moment to raise the question in front of Bábá. However, before I could utter a word Ácárya Kśitishajii asked, "Bábá what is Shraddhá?" It seemed that Bábá was in no hurry to answer this question.

So Bábá said, "You will get this answer during the Shimla discourse." And Bábá indeed did explain this in great detail at the Shimla DMC. Bábá while elaborating on the meaning of Faith, said: "After attaining confidence in one's own self, a person can channelize all energies of his/her entire existence towards attainment of his or her Íśta as his ultimate goal. Hence it would be incorrect to say that someone has "Shraddhá" for one individual. It is only possible to have Shraddhá for Íśta, an Ideology. This is not merely an explanation but it should be accepted as ordained by the Guru."

Now Gurudeva turned his attention to my Pariprashna. Gurudeva was inside a Mercedes Benz car. I asked, "Bábá, when you first appeared on this earth as Táraka Brahma, at that time Nandi, an ox, was your vehicle. On the second occasion when you came on this earth as Táraka Brahma Lord Krśńa, you rode on a chariot along with Arjuna, and perhaps when you were alone you rode on a horse. But now, on the third occasion, you are riding a Mercedes Benz."

Bábá answered, "No, time has changed, and it was not an ox but was a yak."

As Bábá himself said it, this was very significant from the perspective of history because it changed the traditional belief system that was prevalent in society. Like many other spiritual aspirants, I also realized the fact that whenever Bábá felt the need, he showed us or established the truth about the origins of human society as it is, demystifying the many layers of falsehood that had arisen around it, whether it was in the case of institutional science or regarding the utmost importance of spiritual practice. These quintessential words spoken by him are his real legacy, which will continue to guide many spiritual aspirants before his reappears on this planet.

Riding on a yak He had travelled to remote countries and laid the foundations of new civilizations, which in course of time became famous as Harappá and Mohanjodaro. Since childhood I had had many questions regarding popular beliefs about Lord Shiva. So to quench my own thirst, I used to often go to Bábá to give him water, as in those days Bábá used to drink water with little lemon juice and salt.

Seeing an opportunity, I didn't hesitate to ask the other pressing question to Bábá. The question was, "Bábá, He [Shiva] used to live in Kaelásha Parvata?"

Bábá replied, "In winters he lived in Varanasi and during summer he used to live in the Himálayan ranges as far as the tree line existed. A lack of oxygen in Kailásh Parvat makes living there impossible." "Shiva himself founded the city of Káshii." Bábá's reply to the second question instantly cleared the myth that "Lord Shiva lived in Kailásh Parvat."

Shiva was as closely connected to Káshii as he was to the Himálayas. This is possibly the only reason why Bábá concluded his discourse on Namah Shiváya Shántáya in Káshii, at the official residence of late Balarám Singh. Every single incident related to Bábá's life happened for a purpose and at a particular point of time. Bábá was taking an interest in his own history and Ácárya Káshitishajii was also enjoying as well. Now after two of my questions were answered it was hard for me to keep my third query suppressed! It seemed as if Ácárya Kshitishajii had begun to realize that he was a part of a journey, which was very important historically.

Third Pariprashna was, did Lord Shiva actually have blue skin? Bábá immediately replied, "No, how is it possible? It is not possible to have blue

skin. His skin's colour was camphor white." He was as fair as camphor, as white as snow. Immediately after answering, Bábá grabbed his nose and started saying, "His nose was like this only."

Bábá meant to say, "I have not changed the shape of my nose. It is same". This is how my initial questions regarding Táraka Brahma came to a satisfying end. As this inquiry was over Bábá remained silent until He reached Shimla. He did not volunteer any information on his own and I did not ask anything of Him either. Perhaps He was absorbed in recollecting His previous life incidents.

Gurudeva was given a grand welcome upon his arrival in Shimla. Fine arrangement were made for Bábá's stay in Kaithu in the late Meláram Sood's home which he had received from the Dumaráo State of Bihar as a gift, at a meager price of Rs. 10,000. Almost a year had passed since Bábá's first visit to Shimla. And a lot of intuitional practitioners had already been prepared and these intuitional practitioners helped generate curiosity among people to see Bábá and to hear his words.

Márgiis in Himachal Pradesh were quite sensitive to Bábá's comforts and discomforts. After His bath, Bábá ate lunch and then got down to draw up a daily schedule and directed me on what to do. It did not take me long to realize that Bábá was in a pleasant mood. He said, like the previous year, that this year too he would give as many personal contact sessions as possible. I was very happy with Bábá's impact on the numerous personal contact sessions given the year, before as they had brought about good results.

Because of the nature of its impact, the dream of organizing first DMC in Himachal became real within a year. As Bábá was going to rest after His meal, I came out of His room and did a quick inspection of the food arrangements for all present there. Ácárya Kśítishajii told me that when Bábá was leaving Jamalpur, He told him two things; this time I am going to Shimla to complete two tasks. I will first give Avadhúta Díikśá [Tántrika Initiation] to him [taking my name] and secondly, to conduct the DMC. Bábá said these things at the foothills of Himálayas. It would thus not be an exaggeration on my part to say that I have received my Tántrika Initiation directly from Gurudeva, and I am the only one fortunate enough to have had this experience! I think it would be appropriate to mention here

that before I was initiated in Ánanda Márga, Lord Shiva was my Is't'a. I was elated to be receiving my Tántrika Initiation in the lap of Himálayas. I felt as if all my anxieties evaporated. I forgot almost everything about my past and only faint, hazy memories lingered in my mind.

Several Márgiis were given personal contact sessions in Shimla and those who are still alive have become the pillars of Ánanda Márga in Himachal today and have reached high stages of the spiritual realm. There was one spiritual aspirant named Rájendra who was given personal contact on July 24th, 1966. After committing his life to Bábá's mission, he came to be known as Ácárya Citsvarupánanda Avt. From the perspective of the organizations growth, Shimla DMC was an important event. This DMC gifted a General Secretary [GS] to the organization. May Bábá bless him, inspire him and make him do great work! It was only these people who stoically suffered the oppression of the emergency period, the tyranny of the then Chief Minister Dr. Y.S. Parmár. Bábá would reveal the history of the neighboring places to us during his morning walk. The word Shimla originated as a distortion of Devi "Shyámala". This happened at a transitional period of time when the Shakti was slowly taking Shiva's place but the people's devotion to Lord Shiva remained intact.

I received my Tántrika initiation in Kaithu. As I was directed, after putting Bábá to sleep at night I would leave for cremation ground to perform Tantra Sádhaná for the prescribed duration and would return at 4 am. It was July and being the rainy session, I would get wet while on my way to the cremation ground where I would go for my spiritual practice. I would get wet in the rain on my way back too. Somehow I never caught a cold! In those days Shimla used to get its maximum rainfall in July and such heavy rainfall would cause a fall in the temperature. Such steep falls in the temperature would create almost winter like conditions.

During discourses Bábá would emphasize the importance of Mantrágháta, and Bábá said it would not happen easily, as your Guru needs to sow the seeds for it. Though Bábá said this in a light vein, some people had just this experience during personal contact. Those deciphered the secret were elated. Later on few newly initiated spiritual practitioners urged Bábá, "Bábá, please fix me with Your stick so that my spiritual life too becomes smooth {by Your touching me with Your Sof'ii(stick)}". Bábá

smilingly turned them down. By now people showed a keenness to work in an organized manner. When it was time for Bábá to leave the aspirants behaved differently while bidding Bábá goodbye. After seeing off Bábá I finished my night Sádhaná in Sanjauli cremation grounds. As I was walking back, my mind suddenly became restless and tears rolled down from my eyes. Though I pretended to be calm, I was not. It seemed as if I had left my family just yesterday. I turned back towards the cremation grounds and stood there just looking at the low ground I felt as if Bábá was smiling and telling me this is the path of an ascetic. This path takes you forward; your past bondages have evaporated; now you move on. Since then, because of His grace, I have never looked back, but have continuously moved forward but the road is rugged and bumpy. A realization dawned on me that this is the path of Tantra and this journey is not one of only pleasant experiences, but is replete with constant periods of internal struggle. Bliss is the ultimate goal, which is attained once the long path has been covered.

Gurudeva in the Shiválíka Mountain Náhan-DMC

Bábá told us that Mahasu was the ancient name of Shimla and that it came about as a distortion of Mahá Shiva. Bábá's two visits in two sequential years had generated a strong current of devotional vibrations over the entire state of Himachal Pradesh. By this time there were Mágjis in almost every nook and corner of Himachal. We were continually busy with Pracára work. And now the newly initiated Sádhakas too had begun to take an interest in Dharma Pracára. Please note that the people of Himachal, particularly, those residing in areas where heavy snowfall occurs do not come out of their homes in the winter.

So considering the conditions of those areas during winter, the venue for Tattva Sabhá and Dharma Pracára work would be decided well before the arrival of the winter season. The Tattva Sabhá would be held regularly with the program starting at 10 am. Around hundred to five hundred people used to turnout on a regular basis for the assembly. Because people living in the mountain regions are quite used to taking their main meal in the morning before going to work, they were quite to adept with this routine of staying outside for the entire day after leaving home at 10 am. Usually after the Tattva Sabhá, interactive sessions would follow which at times used to get very interesting. One day, a curious person hailing from an area which was most influenced by Pracára work, raised a question that

shocked the people who were present there. He was highly educated and a distinguished person of that region. He stood up from the crowd and started firing a salvo of questions. He did not stop though all of his queries were satisfactorily answered. He again fired a question, "does God really exist?" and was answered with a "yes". His questions and answers created an unusual silence that engulfed the entire assembly of people. Yet another question was asked, "Can you show me?"

The question was a difficult one but it was based on faith. After I meditated on Bábá, the answer began to come easily. The answer of the previous question was in the affirmative. The reply was given in two parts, one immediately, the other followed after some time. He then made an emphatic demand "I want to see God now, without any delay." By this point of time, even Bábá had gained fair amount of popularity in that region. Many people had experienced his supernatural ability. As a matter of fact, this was the time that the *Ánanda Marga* was going through its first phase of growth. The common public in general ignores a nascent institution, though at times they get curious enough to learn something about the organization.

Later this same gentleman said that he was only testing Bábá. People knew well how Bábá responds when he is publicly tested. Following are one of the two answers that the gentleman received. "If you want to see and know God in due course of time, without any hurry, then you have to follow a path that is based on realization, you have to do *Sádhaná*, which is based on the observance of *Yama* and *Niyama*". Until then, the sixteen points and other codes of conducts had not been given. The second answer was, "If you want to see Him right now at this very moment, you can only see the Lord by his benevolence and Grace." He said, "I want to see God now."

He was asked to stand up. The people who were present at the *Tattva Sabhá* had their hearts in their mouths in anticipation of what would possibly happen next. Though he stood up, I asked him as if responding to his question, "Have you thought it out completely? Are you absolutely ready?" But this time a different reply came. That gentleman started to shiver and said, "I am not yet ready." And he sat down. Devotion for Bábá became the main talk of the entire region. That very evening that same gentleman received his initiation.

After this incident *Pracára* work gained even more momentum in

the area and it went spread smoothly. People were being initiated both day and night. Everyday close to 40 to 50 people were being initiated. Until now waves of [Pracára] work that had originated in Mahasu had swept over Sirmaur near Náhan located in the Shiválík mountain range. All these developments helped the Náhan branch to expand to the extent that it became capable of hosting a DMC.

The Sirmaur district headquarters was located on the ridge from where the view was breathtakingly beautiful. The Náhan Fossils Park stands witness to its history, which itself is almost a million years old. Before independence, Náhan was the capital of the Sirmaur. In the Sirmaur district headquarters the first official with whom I was acquainted was the Household Secretary of the State. I would discuss philosophical topics with him at length on Dharma and different aspects of the Márga while sitting in his office, or at his home. The Shiválíka range is unique because of its temperate weather; neither too hot in summer nor too cold in the winter. One day the devotees of Náhan filed an application seeking approval to host a DMC. The Sádhakas of Náhan made this appeal based on two factors; it was inevitable that the Márgiis of Himachal would benefit if a DMC was organized in Náhan. More than that, due to its close proximity to western Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, the Sádhakas of these regions would also find it easy to participate in the Náhan DMC. So, it was decided that a DMC would be organized in Náhan in November immediately after the Meerut DMC.

While the planning for the November Náhan DMC was on, an idea to be discussed about that how spectacular it would be if we could arrange Bábás stay in the Sirmaur royal Palace. To see whether the DMC could be held in the same royal chamber where after mounting the throne the King of Sirmaur would address his court. When I got ready to discuss this proposal with the secretary of the household, Shrii Mohan Chandra Pant I simply asked, "Pantjii, where would you like to organize the program?" He replied, "Ácáryajii I have already taken the King's permission. Bábá will be staying in the royal place in the King and Queens personal suite."

His words flashed in my mind with stories that Pantjii had told me only a few days earlier while he was showing me the mansion. He had said that the royal hall that houses the court and the royal throne would be the venue for the DMC, where, sitting on the throne Mahárájá Bahádura himself

would address his Court members. It is quite appropriate to mention here that a crescent shape white moon was sculpted on the upper right side of the throne. Whenever the king would sit on the throne, this moon would appear on the crown of his head. Those who had witnessed it revealed this themselves. Pantji also validated this story. When final touches were being given to the decoration of the throne, Shrii Somdattajii said, "Sitting on this throne, Bábá will really look like Lord Shiva."

Bábá reached well in time for the DMC via the Kálamba route. In the afternoon Bábá gave many personal contact sessions here too. In the evening Bábá gave the general Darshana as well. As a matter of fact, devotees came not only from Himachal, Punjab, Western UP and Delhi but also from other parts of the country to participate in the DMC. This is how this beautiful palace became charged with divine love and spiritual vibrations. The next day a grand procession was taken out. People were inquisitive about the organization as it was the first time that the Ánanda Márگا had organized an outdoor program of this scale. When the procession reached the final leg of its journey, a large number of local people joined in and it eventually turned out into a truly big meeting.

On the second day of the DMC, an inter communal marriage of a young couple from Jammu and Kashmir was solemnized as per their traditional customs and turned out to be a successful example of inter-communal marriages. People were very happy with the marriage considering the other problems that the State was grappling with. To start the DMC Bábá mounted the Royal throne. It was an extraordinary moment when Bábá assumed his true nature, His hand in the Varábhaya Mudrá when, after blessing the newlywed couple, the Lord was truly looking like Shiva Himself. I had been patiently waiting for years to see this vision. I wanted to hold onto this vision forever, and did not want to let it go but everybody understands His divine play!

After Bábá finished his dinner I let him rest. After 1-1.5 hours, Bábá called me into his room on some pretext. He said to call Shyáma Sundar, I told Bábá that he already know his conditions. At this moment it would not be possible to send someone to bring him here. Bábá said, "I already know this." Then again Bábá gave me a message that I could pass on to Shyáma Sundar and Shrii Somdattajii. Then, as his face creased into a pleasant smile,

Bábá spontaneously uttered, "It was an excuse on the pretext of Shyáma Sundara. In fact, I wanted to talk to you, so on this pretext I have called you in as I know you love both of them dearly and they love you too." Then Bábá became serious and began to ask me, "Now you tell me has everything that has happened as you desired it or not?" On hearing this, I was neither stunned nor surprised. Rather, the realization dawned on me that after knowing my feelings regarding the Náhan DMC program, Bábá was very keen to know from me, whether I was completely satisfied with the event, or not. I had the feeling that Bábá did not want a yes or no answer. He wanted me to tell him everything in perfect detail. He said, "I have called you at this hour of the night on the pretext of giving a message to Shyáma Sundar to know what was your expectation from the event and how did you find it in actuality."

Bábá was at ease while asking me this. It seemed he was concerned that it was quite late at night. I replied, "Bábá, not only were both of my wishes fulfilled but I am mentally satisfied too. Bábá, you agreed to stay in the royal palace, mount the royal throne and you blessed your devotees with the Varábhaya Mudrá." Bábá asked, "How did I look?" I said, "Bábá! Shiva Himself." Bábá with a pleasant smile said, "This desire of yours was fulfilled too." I said, "Bábá I am grateful, please keep blessing me like this." After discussing other stories of Náhan, Bábá gave me some instructions to be implemented in Himachal. Finally, he said, "It is quite late, you can go and leave me alone." After closing His door, I left the palace.

The credit of Náhan Pracára goes to Late Harish Chandra Rái, the then Principal Art College, Náhan and his wife late Nirmalá Rai. At that time Amlá was a tiny little girl, now a Mumbai based cine artist with husband Sunil an actor and Mishá the son.

DMC Allahabad (Prayágarája)

Bábá's attraction for Himachal continued. With His subsequent two visits, the interest in Bábá's philosophy became more pronounced. Meantime, the Jamálpur chapter of Marga was completed and the chapter of Ánanda Nagar was started. Bábá came to Ánanda Nagar. The developmental work there was accelerated. Its direct effect was on the High School and hostels situated there. The children of Margeis from across the country started coming to Ánanda Nagar to get education. The expansion of Marga was explicit everywhere. As Bábá Himself was physically present in Ánanda Nagar, the influence very apparent Children came from Himachal's famous Convents to Ánanda Nagar after taking TC from there. The principal of Solan convent himself expressed his anxiety regarding this matter. But nothing could be done. Margeis were determined in this matter as they wanted their children to learn under the Great Master. Except for Him no one knew that Ánanda Nagar itself was going to become His Kuruksetra this time. History is witness to the fact that it has taken the form of a Great battle-field, not for Mahábháráta but for Mahávishva.

Sometimes I wondered about what we should do immediately in Ánanda Nagar. Whether there should be efforts made to materialize all the future projects? I was once talking to a senior military officer as to know why do army personnel live in Tents on the Border? Why are houses for officers not constructed there? Why are ditches made for Jawans (Soldiers)

on the border? He replied with a smile “the Army security is conducted according to the War-Law, that is the discipline of the Battlefield. Until all the circumstances of peace do not prevail on the border, threats are natural for the Army. Our Supreme and paramount duty is the security of the nation and not self-happiness. If so would be better to resign and join some other organisation. Our daily routine and lifestyle- everything is an adventure. We think that the country should be in peace and tranquillity. We are accustomed to lead such a life.” I wondered if our conversation was applicable on Ánanda Nagar, the reply came from inside- “No”. Ánanda Nagar will be demolished and built up several times before it can take the shape of the future Ánanda Nagar as Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii had envisioned. Children, during their play, construct and destroy houses of sand but when they become elderly they construct houses keeping in view all the amenities.

Bábá came to Ranchi from Ánanda Nagar on 5th 1967 March itself and stayed there till DMC in May 1971. Himachal was also affected by the incidents of 5th March. I was then called to the Centre from Himachal. The DMC was decided to be held in May in Allahabad. Preparations were initiated. No specific place used to be pre-decided those days for Central DMC. It all depended on Bábá’s will.

In May 1967, DMC was decided to be held in the premises of KMP Degree College, Allahabad. Naturally, Workers’ Relief Camp (WRC) was organised to be conducted in the ground of Bharat Scout and Guide. All were worried due to the incidence of 5th March. Bábá used to divert the collective psychology by initiating new programmes after such happenings. With this incident Ánanda Marga entered its journey of the second phase. In the first phase, there used to be curiosity among the public. They were surprised to see new disciples and asked questions regarding the them for example, Sanyásiis were like Sikhs etc. the common opinion in the public was that these Sannyásiis and Sannyasins were magnificent because their base was Sádhaná (Spiritual practices), Saralátá (Simplicity) and Tejasvitá (dynamicity). These Avadhútas and Avadhútikas were found all over the country engaged in organising and addressing Tattva Sabhás and public meetings. It ended with the incident of 5th March 1967 and a new phase started. The Soil of Ánanda Nagar became tainted with the blood of two Avadhútas and 3 Brahamaca’riis who sacrificed their lives in the hands of

communists goons and were called "Paiñcadadhiicis". Bábá reorganised the organisation in new way and after that the first DMC of the occasion of May Púrñimá was organised in Allahabad in the premises of KMP Degree college. Previously workers used to get much time to spend with Bábá whenever they came to Jamálpur but when Bábá decided to stay in Ánanda Nagar and got Himself involved in organisational work, His routine was changed. There was a full-fledged working office near Piská more Ranchi as Bábá shifted from Ánanda Nagar to Ranchi. Just after the incident of the 5th March 1967, I was assigned the responsibility of Dharma Pracára Department.

Relief camps were well organised before Bábá reached Allahabad. Bábá was regularly being updated regarding new developments. These camps were compulsory for every worker to organise. Thus the whole responsibility of the field was rested upon them. I was requested by others that there should not be any restriction in meeting Bábá during DMC. Arrangements should be made in such a way that they could see Bábá according to their convenience. I, too got influenced by these emotional appeals without thinking as how Bábá would react to it. Although after the incident of the 5th March Bábá told me at Ranchi while explaining the duties and responsibilities of my new assignment that whenever He felt necessary he would guide me and give me directions or I should ask Him whenever I needed to. I had no reservation in my mind regarding that. I wondered as how to convey the feelings of Praca'rakas to Bábá as I did not dare to say Bábá verbally so I wrote my feelings on a sheet of a paper and kept it on headside of the bed of Bábá so that he would read it.

I took out a blank sheet from a register and wrote on it kept it near Bábá's bed during the night when no one was there. After some time Bábá rang the calling bell and I was called inside and instructed to sit near him. Bábá was quiet not angry thus it was easy for me to understand what He wanted to convey.

Bábá started talking to me, "I have made Ánanda Márga a mission and have also started sending whole timers outside India for Pracára work. Now it will spread in far away countries. You say as you have mentioned in your note to me if a Pracáraka who is working in the farthest corner of a country in Africa and wishes to meet and see My Physical Body then what

will happen to my organisation? Whether will the organisation be able to run according to any rule? So, it will be better for you to connect all with My ideology instead of My Physical Body because I am not this Physical Body.” These words were imprinted in my mind since then. Although the physical attraction of Bábá remained there, but whether I was close to His Physical Body or away that did not bother me. I could understand the fact that Bábá is far to the farthest and near to the nearest if one has a relationship with Him. Bábá told me, “Now it is very late in the night, you may go now and make others understand too.” I came back and called all the workers and conveyed the message of Bábá. That’s why it was easy to work as those days there were no workers misleading others. Sádhakas were outspoken which is a proactive quality of a Sádhaka.

Secondly, though it seemed insignificant at the time a conspiracy began which was revealed later. In those days, a secret group of Marga Mátá was taking shape slowly. Her status in Marga was much higher. She used to come to the stage and address the gathering.

During an evening walk Bábá directed the driver to take Him towards Saungama (confluence of river Gaungá Yamuná and Sarasvati) and asked me as who was going to assist on the boat towards Saungama. It came to my notice that Marga Mátá was going to Saungama along with some Margeis and WT workers. Bábá gave instructions to return the boat which might have sent a negative signal to her. It was disclosed by Bábá in Mumbai when there was a car accident in Juhu beach.

The subject of discourse in the night was “Mantra Caetanya”. When Bábá stated explaining “Shabda and Mantra” while delivering His speech on the topic, the Goddess of sleep (Nidrá Devii) overpowered everyone in the Pandál (Tent). Gurudev (Bábá) was continuously speaking on the subject. How Shabda Brahma used to reach Shabda by expressing itself. That means what is Shabda and how does Shabda became Mantra after being spiritualized. What is Mantra and Mantra Caetanya? Shabda without Caetanya and the state of Caetanyayukta Mantra. There was a silence. After fifteen minutes Bábá broke the silence when He asked whether the subject was becoming difficult. A voice from the audience said, “yes, Bábá”. Bábá said, “Ok”. Then He tried to simplify His discourse. I tried to explain Shabda and Mantra for more than two years and asked, “whether you know what is

Mantra Caetanya?" When Mantra enters your ectoplasm and you become overwhelmed with the ideation of Mantra, it is Mantra Caetanya. It took me two years to understand this simple fact, perhaps this is also the secret of Tantra. Until Sadguru makes things easy, no Sádha can assimilate its meaning. The Allahabad DMC was over and met with grand success.

Accompanying Gurudeva on His tour to Delhi, Kashmir, Jaipur and Mumbai

During that very eventful year of 1967, as the Allahabad DMC came to an end, Bábá set out with his family for a long tour. His itinerary included conducting a DMC in Srinagar and Mumbai. As per his direction I had to be present in all those places where Bábá would visit. So paying an advance visit to Srinagar to take stock of the level of preparedness became imperative, and I arrived in Srinagar well in advance. After the Allahabad program, a diligent and devoted worker was transferred to Srinagar. As a matter of fact, he was actually posted to Leh, but for the time being he was supposed to stay in Srinagar.

In those days it was mandatory to hold an intense meeting prior to Bábá's arrival, to make sure that everyone was performing his or her respective duty appropriately. Everyone was very busy with her or his respective duties. I was glad to see that the workers were going about their businesses enthusiastically.

Gurudeva reached Srinagar at the scheduled time. Since he was to stay for one week in Srinagar, a house was arranged with all the amenities for Gurudeva's weeklong stay. At that time we had a very good presence in Kashmir due to which we had no difficulty in preparing for Gurudeva's stay. Moreover, Bábá was very comfortable there and the personal contact

sessions were going very smoothly. At that time, Ācārya Rāmānandajīi was posted as Relief in-Charge. In those days carrying out relief work was extremely arduous task.

The fact of the matter is that after the Ānanda Mārga's relief work, which began only in 1966 during the Bihar draught, this work started to grow in leaps and bounds. The relief work evolved into a consolidated section of AMURT (Ānanda Mārga Universal Relief Team) and its ambit was not confined to Bihar anymore but went on to embrace the entire world. After the end of personal contact sessions I would introduce potential candidates to Ācārya Rāmānandajīi, which eventually reduced his workload to some degree.

Bábá would go for field walks on daily basis, and during these walks He used to go to historical places and turn over the pages of history and throw light on them for us. Not only that, at the sites He would point out the distortions if there were any, and prescribe methods to correct the distortions. Once as Bábá walked up to the main entrance of the Khiira Bhawānīi Temple in Kashmir, he noticed that the Tāntrika symbol that was installed on the main gate was distorted and imperfect. Bábá also explained the method to get rid of the bad effects caused by the distortions. I have no idea whether the temple authority carried out the corrections or not.

Everything went as planned. For the first time during a long tour I got the opportunity to stay close to Bábá so I was quite happy. Suddenly one morning, when He was taking a bath, Bábá called me in and started to scold me. I was taken aback as I could not understand the reason! Bábá was in no mood to stop. I tried to discern the source of the discomfort that Bábá had to tolerate, whatever it was, if I was the only cause, since I had the responsibility of ensuring that all arrangements for Bábá's stay at each stop are perfect. After a while Bábá explained that because of my carelessness he had to use a drinking water glass from the bedroom to take a bath. He asked me, "Should you have not checked the bathroom?" Because I was reprimanded for the very first time I felt sad.

From then on I decided to keep track of every little thing that was directly related to Bábá and I would be most prompt and alert in carrying out the tasks assigned to me. From that moment, I took Bábá's reprimand as a guiding lesson for my entire life. There after I did not ever get any

complaints from Bábá on such matters. I came out of Bábá's room. Almost an hour after I came out of Bábá's room. Within a short while I became normal, and Bábá's work continued as per His daily schedule as He began to give directions as usual. Whatever Bábá used to do He would do it only to teach us a lesson.

I usually did not accompany Bábá during his visits to historical places as I had many tasks to finish within a definite period of time. Moreover, there were some tasks, which I would have to finish before Bábá got back to his room. I learnt the lesson of the drinking glass well so that I would cherish for my entire life the responsibility that has been entrusted by Gurudeva or the Organization on you should be fulfilled perfectly and at the earliest. Whoever is familiar with the speed at which Bábá works, knows this very well. It is rightly said, "Bábá is a very hard taskmaster in practical life situations too."

The deteriorating situation in Kashmir was a cause of great concern to Bábá. In order to deal with this issue, during the period of his Kashmir visit Bábá included the Kashmir problem in his work program too. He gave directions to solve the Kashmir issue permanently. At the time He was the only one who had said that the border state should never be small. He had suggested establishing a large border state, which would spread across a large geographical region consisting of Jammu, Kashmir, Himachal and Laddákha. From the perspective of national security this proposal should have been considered with the utmost urgency. To fight the enemy across the border, the border should always be kept long.

He also suggested the name of this single administrative unit, which He proposed would include Kashmir, Jammu, Himachal and Ladákh as KAJAHILA, where the welfare and interest of each unit would be protected and preserved. Though Gurudeva's mission was to establish universal unity and global fraternity, he was always concerned with the integrity and sovereignty of India and the security of its borders. In this context, Gurudeva's discourses on the current national problems and directions to the optimal solutions can be found in His book, "To the Patriots". As we can see the current situation in the Border States of the country is proof that Gurudeva's vision was correct. This is why it is important to understand His words and instructions. Bábá was grief stricken by the 1962 Chinese

invasion. It was on his instruction only that we went to every nook and corner of the country and made people aware and inspired them to keep their morale high. He gave clear instruction to the youth to join the Indian Army in large numbers to defend the country. Bábá himself served in Territorial Army. Pondering over the prevalent social scenario in Kashmir, Bábá gave another instruction. It was that the Kashmiri Hindus Pand'its should create history by marrying their daughters to the young Dográ men from Jammu. And that it should be done immediately otherwise they would very soon have to leave Kashmir. For this suggestion, the Kashmiri Hindus who took more pride in calling themselves Kashmiri Pand'its abused us. History now bears witness to the sequence of events that unfolded over the course of time. We offered a full-fledged practical solution on the Kashmir problem, which included remedial proposal of KAJAHILA.

It was proposed in front of the Justice P.B. Gajendra Gadkar commission. Unfortunately, neither did it make any impact on the commission nor did it reach the higher levels of Government. It was in that same year, in November, that a non-Kashmiri girl married a Dográ Brahmin boy during the Náhan DMC, which made a very positive and constructive on society. This family in Jammu became a very successful example of social engineering initiated by the Ánanda Márga. However, the Kashmiri people didn't find this proposal of Ánanda Márga worthy of acceptance and the consequences of the rejection are apparent to the entire nation. After successfully completing his weeklong trip Bábá left for Delhi because he had to go to the Mumbai DMC, via Jaipur. Having returned to Delhi, Bábá said, "I have done what is necessary for Kashmir, now everything depends on its implementation." The two instructions given by Bábá were not executed, and everybody is aware of the consequences of not implementing his suggested solutions.

A Yuga-Puruśa [eminent personality of the age or Yuga, like Lord Shiva or Lord Krśńa, or the cosmic Self, a complex concept] appears on this planet when the need arises, to give directions to deal with different worldly problems. It is not necessary that on each occasion He himself would lead or guide us much as He led Arjuna to victory, driving his chariot in Kurukśetra. At the time He came with a mission, which was to establish a Mahábhárata [National Integration]. His mission now is to unify or integrate the entire universe or to establish one universe. Evidently His

role has changed in this era or Yuga. He does not want to trigger violence and cause blood feuds between one another because after three thousand and five hundred years we have become slightly more civilized. But there are doubts around this possibility as incidents of violence and bloodshed are rampant in this era too but now they are due to vested interests and personal gain and not for common cause.

As Mahábhárata was achieved so a Maháishva [one universe] would certainly be established at the right moment. This because an all around life, the philosophy introduced by him, constructive planning, organization and idea of neo-humanism indicated the possibility of establishing a Maháishva. To accomplish this mission He established an organization of Sadvipras, which was to constantly fight against oppression and injustice. In the month of April, on the request of the Márgii boys of BITS [Birla Institute of Technology and Science] Pilani, Rájasthan, Bábá laid the foundation of an organization for a youth brigade who's purpose was to be engaged in Dharma Pracára. Bábá named this organization the Young Men's Spiritual Association. Membership to this organization was exclusively for young men. Bábá gave me the responsibility to draft a constitution for this organization, which I did, and Bábá approved my drafted constitution. In the course of time this organization became PMSA [Progressive Men's Spiritual Association].

Bábá reached Mumbai from Jaipur. The monsoons had already arrived in Mumbai. Mumbai usually receives very heavy rain during the monsoons. However, despite the incessant rain there would be long queues for personal contact sessions. As far as possible, Bábá would not let anyone down during personal contact sessions by denying them. Though Bábá had a very strong physique, we used to take the utmost care of his health.

Bábá was relaxed because everything was going on in the proper order. The Mumbai DMC was completed. I do not remember the exact count of how many people became whole time workers during the DMC. In fact, we strived to see that whichever home Gurudeva would visit, he would inspire at least a few people there to come forward to dedicate their whole life to social service and it invariably happened.

On the second day, after the completion of the DMC, things took an unsavory turn and everything changed. A few Márgiis went out with Márga

Mátá in their car and met with a terrible accident at Juhu beach. Nobody had the courage to pass on this information to Bábá. Yet somehow news of the accident reached Bábá. He gave instructions. He ordered the workers who were present in the room to follow their normal work schedule. Bábá's Personal Secretary [who was appointed on March 5] would stay back and take care of the injured. Ácárya Sambuddhánandajii would act in the capacity of personal secretary (PS) and accompany Bábá to Ranchi. After all these issues were sorted out, Bábá became serious and said, "How long could I save her? During the Allahabad DMC had I not saved her in Prayága her boat would have sunk and she would have died. I myself came forward and saved her."

Nevertheless as and when untoward situations came up Bábá without being affected by the chain of events, kept guiding the organization. Be it the March 5th incident in 1967 that occurred in Ánanda Nagar, the massacre that was committed in Bijon Setu, Kolkata; the firing incident in Pundag railway station; or the car accident in Juhu Chowpátý. Like an observer He witnessed and He continued to steer the organization. As I stayed close to Him, I always felt safe and completely secure. Thus Gurudeva's stay in Mumbai came to an end and after giving the necessary instructions he left for Ranchi.

Lucknow and Thánedhár [Himachal] DMCs

The year 1969 was declared as Ánanda Marga's year of spiritual practice. Through the year Bábá continued enlightening Sádhakas on multiple aspects of Sádhaná and how to improve upon it. For the Mágina community, we had a year replete with new and innovative experiences. This was more because of the various spiritual demonstrations conducted by Bábá. In those days I used to look after Bábá's security. One day, when Gurudeva was inside the Ranchi Jágarti room and was conducting certain spiritual experiment upon a Sádhaka, He asked us to open the windows and draw the curtains because certain bodiless minds were trying to come inside. He explained that these bodiless minds come whenever this kind of spiritual experiment is conducted. Without paying attention to them Bábá got down to doing His work. After a while, Bábá turned towards me and asked in a muffled voice [as I was sitting close by], "Do you have a stomach ache?" At that point, I was going through an almost unbearable stomach pain and though I was writhing in pain, I was trying hard to control myself and sit properly, somehow. I said, "No Bábá it is all right." I wanted to ask Him, when nothing is hidden from You why do You ask me? After a few moments, Bábá turned towards me and without saying anything, He wiped His hand on my stomach. I felt a sensation of coldness, and the intolerable pain slowly died. It would be relevant to mention here in this context that shortly after my Diikśá [refers to a ceremony in which a

guru initiates a student into their teaching] into the *Ánanda Marga* when I visited Jamalpur and began to practice *Sádhaná* regularly, I would experience severe stomach aches.

After I reached Himachal, this pain had become excruciating and it persisted for almost 27 years until the time when I was given permission by *Bábá* to do *Visheśa Yoga* [the highest process of *Yoga*]. He gave me the strength to work in the midst of struggle and when he wanted me to learn another type of *Sádhaná* He cured me.

In the initial phase of 1969, *Bábá* introduced a new aspect in intuitional science by giving special discourses. In the last leg of the year, post the Cooch Bihar incident; he introduced methods of conducting seminars. The utility of conducting seminars became quite obvious when it was later included as a part of the sixteen points (*Śodāsa Vidhi*). The sixteen points refers to the conduct rules to enable the body, mind and soul fit for spiritual elevation in order to ultimately be one with the cosmic Self.

After the DMC [organized during the full moon of May (*Ánanda Púrñimá*)] was over, *Bábá's* new DMC schedule was drafted. As told earlier on at that time I was in charge of *Bábá's* security, and *Bábá's* security guards used to stay adjacent to his quarters. One day I was asked to go to *Bábá's* room. It was midday and *Bábá* was lying on his bed after lunch. I walked into his room and sat down. *Bábá* said, "I want to visit some places in summer; I would go to Himachal; but we would make a stopover in Lucknow and would conduct a DMC there as well. Thereafter we would leave for Himachal and the Himachal stay would be long as the weather would be pleasant there. But you go ahead and make a quick survey of these places to prepare the *Márgiis* there so that they can make the necessary arrangements. And give me a report within one week. Make certain that a program schedule is finalized within a short period of time."

Bábá assigned me a particular task, one that was difficult to achieve at the time. *Gurudeva* said to me, "Since you are making Me travel in summer months keep in mind that I must not feel the heat and humidity. Along with this, you should make arrangement for cold drinking water." I had to say yes, but immediately became worried, wondering how could I make required arrangements in Lucknow since it was before air conditioning was common. He also gave me third responsibility. In a muffled voice, He said,

“The *Ánanda Márğa* has become forbidden for government officials. You must secretly make a list of those people who are with Me in this hour, and who are not, and after we return you will give Me a report on this.”

I nodded in agreement. With this added responsibility on my shoulders I was calculating the odds in my mind and I left for Lucknow the same evening. I went straight to *Ácárya Ratnesh Bhatta*’s house and gave him this news of the coming DMC and *Bábá*’s visit, which he was predictably elated on hearing. When I told him about the conditions proposed by *Bábá* he looked at me and said that it was doable.

The next day *Ácáryajii* took me to show the place, which was to be prepared for *Bábá*’s stay and also took me to the proposed venue for the DMC. Someone’s office, which had a desert cooler, was to be turned into *Bábá*’s temporary living quarters. During my inspection I realized that because of the desert cooler, the room’s temperature remained quite low even though it was high noon in the extreme heat of June. *Ácárya Ratneshjii* asked me, “How is the room?” I said, “*Bhattajii* it appears good to me.” Before I could finish my sentence *Ácáryajii* interrupted me and said, “It gets so cold that we will have to arrange for blankets for *Bábá*!” I simply looked at him and thought to myself that the truth does not require to be proved.

The next day I left for Shimla in Himachal. I spent the time I had during the journey chalking out future strategies rather than wasting time daydreaming, because I was determined to arrange something elegant and innovative. By this time thousands of people had become *Márgiis* in Himachal and the *Ánanda Márğa* had a good number of supporters too.

The scene was different this time vis-a-vis previous occasions. We did not have to obtain a government Guesthouse for *Bábá*’s stay in nor did we have to arrange for a family home in Kaithu. It was not even similar to preparing for *Bábá*’s stay at the *Náhan Royal Palace*. To the contrary this visit was in an area where almost the entire population readily laid out flowers to welcome *Bábá*. I pondered over these many interesting ideas of decorating the mountainside all along the road, starting at *Káلكá* and all the way up from *Solan*, *Sanjaouli*, *Matiáná*, *Narkandá* to Shimla with wall writings and installing flower gates at each stop along with guards of honor, all of which would be most appropriate to welcome *Bábá*.

At first I stopped at Shimla to make arrangements there for Gurudeva's short stay. Considering the fact that it is a 200 km journey from Káلكá to Thánedhár, I was fully aware of the discomfort that Gurudeva may face during this long journey over mountainous roads. At that time, Ácárya Candradeva Vermá, who was also an employee of the All India Radio, was posted in Shimla. I decided that Bábá should make a short halt in his house. After everything was perfectly arranged, I left for Thánedhár.

I called a meeting on reaching Thánedhár. After going over every minute detail along with other Márgii brothers I set two institutional proposals in front of them: the first point was the wall writing and the second was the installation of the flower gates. All happily accepted my proposals. Once I was completely satisfied with all the arrangements I returned to Ranchi having left Shimla on a pleasant note.

In the scorching heat of summer Gurudeva set out on his journey from Ranchi to Lucknow. In those days the summer in Ranchi used to be moderate not as oppressive as it is today and it is for this reason that Ranchi was the summer capital of Bihar. As Ranchi was sparsely populated then, people used to walk, ride by cycle, or take a cycle rickshaw for commuting within the city. It was not as densely populated back then as it is today. Ranchi also did not have auto rickshaw's emitting poisonous smoke! Perhaps these were the reasons that after the incident of March 5th 1967 that Bábá shifted his camp headquarters from Ánanda Nagar to Ranchi. Both cities are located in Bihar.

Gurudeva reached Lucknow on time. I had kept all three conditions in mind; the arrangement of cold drinking water; no was to be no discomfort for Bábá because of the blazing heat and humidity; and finally the preparation of the report on the listing of the government employees as they were now banned from participating in the Ánanda Márga. The Lucknow DMC was not affected by the ban imposed on government employees from participating in Ánanda Márga programs, because all our Márgii brothers who were government workers without any discussions or showing any fear were fully engaged in performing their respective jobs. Bábá's arrival electrified the entire atmosphere at the DMC, which began to vibrate with devotion.

Bábá did not feel any discomfort during the day. After serving him

dinner I left him alone to rest and came out of his room. I began taking care of other matters that needed my attention. It was a few hours past midnight when Bábá called institutional me to his room. As I entered the room I sensed that Bábá was feeling uncomfortable. I asked Him, "Bábá, are you feeling uneasy?" Lying on the bed Bábá said, "Everything is fine, including this room. Put a table fan in front of my feet as I am feeling hot on my feet." I sought out for Bhattajii's assistance immediately. He came running and I said to him, "Bhatt jii, Bábá needs a table fan because Bábá's feet are getting hot." So get Bábá a fan not a blanket. For few moments, Bhattajii looked stunned but he rushed outside. Within no time he was back with a table fan and placed it in front of Bábá's feet. Bábá hinted that Bhatt ji leave and gestured at me to stay back. Bhattajii left. As I looked at Bábá I saw that He was smiling under his blanket. He began to talk, "I don't feel cold much but I do feel the heat." This is the reason that whenever He would visit cold countries He would carry minimal warm clothes. While in India during winter season Bábá would wear very warm clothes. I feel it is necessary to mention here that through many winters that I was with Bábá He always asked before wearing any warm clothes, "Are there enough blankets available in all sectors for the full-time workers, monks and nuns?" After assuring him that sufficient blankets were available for the workers, Sannyásiis and Sannyásiinis, Bábá would wear the warm clothes.

Coming back to our earlier conversation Bábá continued. I sensed that Bábá wanted me to stay back for some more time so that he could explain something to me or give me some useful directions. He said, "The colour of my blood is pink and whoever possesses this blood feels extreme heat." Then he took my finger and after rubbing it hard, said, "See, what is the color of your blood?" I said, "Bábá, it is red." Then Bábá asked me to rub his finger and tell Him what colour I saw. After rubbing one of Bábá's fingers I saw the colour and said, "Bábá, it's pink." He said, "At this moment there is only one body in institutional the universe that contains pink blood, all others have red. And the uniqueness of this blood is what makes one feel excessive heat." Our conversation on this theme went on for a long time. It was already few hours past midnight. I tended to Bábá until He slept ensuring that He would not feel heat on His feet anymore I left His rooms. I had to leave for Himachal the very next day to ensure that the final touches to the welcome preparations were in place. After making sure that

everything was taken care of in Lucknow, I left for Himachal. I started the journey with this certainty in my mind that during this tour, the heat would not trouble Bábá.

So far as I remember that particular year was hotter than the previous one. In Lucknow I didn't notice any of our Márgii brothers, who were government employees, looking frightened because of the government order. Instead, they participated enthusiastically to make the Lucknow DMC successful. It would not be an exaggeration to say that because Bábá was present among us, everyone worked fearlessly and no one hesitated or doubt anything. Márgiis who attended the Lucknow DMC most were police officers, railway employees and custom department officials. I was well aware of the responsibility that Bábá had entrusted me with. Since nothing happened in Lucknow I didn't feel the urgency to report to Bábá. Bábá didn't ask me anything either.

Once, at night, suddenly Bábá started calling one Márgii with his first name. Noticing that everyone was looking shocked, Bábá said, "It's him whom you call Kumar Saheb, I call him Rajendra." At the time Rajendrajii was the District Magistrate of Lakhimpur Kheri. I was most relieved after his family arrived in Lucknow because they were all well acquainted with Bábá's likes and dislikes. In those days Bábá would like to drink lemon water with a little pinch of salt. During our Lucknow stay, once Bábá wished to have some juice. I asked, "What juice should I get?" He said, "Except pineapple, anything. I find pineapple very tasty but not its juice."

After coming back from Lucknow with Bábá and other Márgiis, I started for Himachal. As we crossed Chandigarh and went Káلكá; at the Haryana-Himachal border, a spectacular flower gate with a banner welcomed Bábá, "Himachal welcomes Lord Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii." And the volunteers also gave a salute. Late Pritam Chand Stokes sitting on the roof of his hard top jeep and was video recording everything. Gurudeva was very happy during this fourth Himachal visit. As we moved ahead, the wall writing on the mountain rocks caught Bábá's attention. He said, "marvelous, well done." During the entire span of the journey he kept on talking and expressing his happiness. He said, "On this occasion Himachal has prepared really well and it is quite visible." I said, "How it could not have been so? When a family member comes back to the family after many days

it is quite natural to welcome him.” On my reply, a broad beam broke across Bábá’s face and taking out his handkerchief he tried to cover his smiling face.

I was constantly keeping a tab on the time. Because with every passing minute the Márgiis who had been waiting at various flower gates starting from Shimla all the way up to Thánedhár would be getting restless. I was concerned with this too. On the way, we made a quick stopover at Ácárya Candradevajii’s house so that Bábá would get a little rest and freshen up. Ácáryajii brought drinking water and did Sáśt’áunġa Prańáma before Bábá. By now, after spending a considerable number of days I was quite familiar with Bábá’s likes and dislikes.

I realized that Bábá was not interested in drinking water institutional there so I asked Ácáryajii to take back the drinking water that he had brought in; because I would carry drinkables along with me whenever I travelled with Bábá. After sometime, Ácáryajii came back and presented new clothes to Bábá. Having promised him that on our return we would make a halt at his home we left. I was in a particular hurry as I was thinking about the Márgiis who were eagerly waiting at Thánedhár. Coming back to Ácárya Candradevajii’s and the present I thought Bábá would politely refuse to take his offering, so I did not feel guilty. Soon everything became clear to me during our return journey. I realized that Bábá had done the right thing by not accepting this gift. Shimla is located almost in the midway between Káلكá and Thánedhár. We were right on time.

As we began to approach the mountains of Nárkand’á, pointing to a community of dwellings perched high up on the mountain, I said to Bábá, “Bábá, we have to go there, it is merely 10km away but it would take time since it is a hilly road and it is under construction. Moreover we might have landslides too.” After reaching Thánedhár I learnt that the Márgiis had started the preparations for the welcome ceremony after spotting Bábá’s car through binoculars. Since land phones or mobile phones were not available those days, people had to assume arrival time while they were waiting for Bábá.

As we reached Pamláhi, which is located on route to Thánedhár, we encountered a different spectacle altogether which surprised me. About now my attention was shifted from Bábá towards the public. In order to

catch a glimpse of Bábá, people had occupied almost every square inch of space on either side of the road. In most places mountain roads are very narrow. People were standing on rooftops, which in mountainous regions are constructed with tin sheets and are installed in a slanting position to prevent the accumulation of institutional snow and even on the old apple trees. It seemed as if all of Koṭgarh had gathered to see Bábá. It became hard for our driver to move ahead. However Bábá did not seem to be in hurry, so I did not consider it appropriate to instruct the driver to go faster. We stopped our vehicle for almost half an hour at the felicitating venue and Bábá was welcomed with a gun salute.

Cracking sounds of firings ripped apart the veil of calmness in the sky. In those days, almost every household kept a gun. It was a time when Koṭgarh had reached its pinnacle of economic prosperity riding on the back of the most profitable business of apple farming. But it lacked the spark of spirituality. Therefore we found it easy to do the Pracára or propagation, as the people of Koṭgarh were quick to accept the Ánanda Marga ways without delay.

Prior to this, Bábá had given his affectionate touch when he happily accepted the fourth invitation to Himachal. This is why the way Himachal welcomed Bábá on this occasion was spectacular. The entire area of Kotgarh had gathered to welcome Bábá. The newly built guesthouse of the late Lálcanda Stokes was prepared as Bábá's residence and the DMC was organized in his orchard's storehouse. Bábá stayed there as was decided earlier. The first instruction that I received from Bábá was, "Everyone looks like a Márgii here, so if you want you can let people come in and see me without checking their gate passes." News that Bábá had given such an instruction spread like wildfire in the entire area! As far as I can remember, the entire populace of the area landed outside Bábá's house by 8am.

Bábá's house was in the midst of the apple orchards built on the slope of a mountain. Looking downhill one could see the Sutlej River flowing along the Indo-Tibet border eventually merging into the Arabian Sea. After the 1966 DMC, I had institutionally traveled on a road that ran parallel to the river Sutlej's course to reach a large village called Morang. Coming from Kalpá we had to travel by bus for a few kilometers then walk for some kilometers. In those days missionary work was going on at

a breakneck pace. Like everyone, I was also caught up with the frenzied pace of propagation work. Bábá had already given a new momentum to the ongoing propagation work in Himachala

Bábá's daily schedule included a morning and an evening walk. A few Márgii's and the general public would accompany him during his field walks. On and off Bábá used to introduce people to species of herbs and roots; also enlighten them about their utilities. The disease herpes, or Sutali, as it is known in the hills, was very common in the Himachal region. Even people in the plains suffer from this illness.

One day, during a field walk Bábá drew everyone's attention to a thorny tree with small leaves, which in the hilly region was known as Kantaki or Khadira Acacia and explained its qualities to the people accompanying Him. Along with this information He touched upon one long forgotten episode of history when Lord Shiva would roam around villages with his companions for the wellbeing of the villagers. So Bábá too would delight the accompanying group by sharing his previous life experiences. Márgiis and the people used to treat this as an opportunity to participate in the enlightening journey with Bábá as the grace of God.

In those days in Himachal, Bávadi's or Casma's [freshwater mountain springs] were the primary sources of drinking water. Márgii Dáda's would procure drinking water for Bábá from a Bávadi situated in Shathlá. One day Bábá praised the qualities [health benefits] of this water. It increased the popularity of this Bávadi and people started drinking water from it. However, the water is polluted and so has institutional contaminated these pure water sources. I want to remind everyone that this year was declared as the year of Sádhaná and it is also when Bábá conducted different experiments related to Sádhaná on the Sádhakas. His Himachal tour was not an exception to this trend. Gurudeva had conducted many such spiritual experiments on a young man, Pratáp who hailed from the same village as where we were staying.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that even Lord Krśńa could not have done so many spiritual experiments on Arjuna in the battlefield of Kurúksetra. After these many experiments this young man permanently devoted his life to Ánanda Márga's mission. With great composure and a selfless attitude, he spent his life doing Bábá's work. This is a unique example

of Karma Sannyása (dedicated self for Sádhaná and service for the greater cause of society). How is it possible that the spiritual experiments conducted on him would not have an influence on his life? Pratáp was a living example of how a Sádhaka changed direction from the path of Yoga, decided to walk the path of Sádhaná to fulfill the goals of his life. Gurudeva conducted all these spiritual experiments on that tour regardless of who was present at the venue of the experiments. On other occasions he would do these types of spiritual experiments only in the presence of Sádhakas. Considering this precedent, Bábá's spiritual research on this tour was something unique. In my lifetime, I have never heard of anything like this being done before; though it might have happened but not in my knowledge. I was thrilled to see Bábá as Mahádeva [great God].

The first female Mágii in Himachal was a lady from the Koṭgarh who composed a Kiirtana for Bábá in Pahádi, which she also sang for Him. Before taking Diikśá into Ánanda Marga, in her personal life she was lonely, despondent and forlorn being a widow. Once she took Diikśá the practice of Sádhaná made her life worth living, but by virtue of her institutional pious conduct she inspired and helped hundreds of other mothers to join the Ánanda Marga. To this day the women's wing of the Marga in that region is one of the most powerful branches of the Marga. The ladies wing often discussed the subtleties of Pahád'ii cuisine with Bábá. Till this day, Pratáp and his relatives work with complete devotion for the Marga. Pratáp remains devoted to Gurudeva in Miirá Bháva [the highest devotional approach to spiritual life when you think of God as your companion. Also called Madhur Bháva]. The thought that who would take care of the affairs of the Marga, particularly the management of the Matiáná orchard after Pratáp and his brother Prithvii Singhji, was a source of constant worry for him. This concern of Pratáp's was taken care of by Bábá in the following year's visit when Ciranjiivi Maháviir got an opportunity to revise his Sádhaná practices, which made him to perform Sádhaná even more spontaneous. Moreover, mother expressed her desire to also raise their child to follow the path of Sádhaná.

After his weeklong stay with the devotees from His old abode the Himalaya, finally the moment arrived when Bábá had to leave causing the Mágii's to brake down and cry like children. In my entire life of Sannyása, I had never seen such a spectacle; the manner in which Bábá was welcomed and bid good-bye. Thousands of people were running behind Bábá's car

crying out loud, “Bábá, please don’t go!” Bábá’s car slowly rolled away from them on the twisting mountain roads. The roads were narrow and the large numbers of the crowd made it difficult for the driver. The driver did not know what to do or how to move on. We too had our compulsions as Bábá had to reach his next destination on time.

As we continued our journey Bábá was quiet for a while. Seeing that Bábá was quiet I too remained silent. By this time I had learnt to gauge the appropriate moment to talk with him.

Our car was racing ahead. Reflecting on the memories of the DMC, I felt nostalgic; I was ruminating on those beautiful moments that Bábá had spent with the Mǎrgiis brothers and sisters. On one hand, I did not forget the conditions Bábá had set before leaving from Ranchi. I recalled that it was summer and Bábá did not want to face any discomfort during the remaining journey. Since the journey from Thánedhár to Káلكá was five or six hours long, I had arranged for a short rest in Shimla. I took particular care of the arrangements so that Bábá would not be uncomfortable. As soon as we reached Ácárya Candradevajii’s house, Ácáryajii was going to do the Sáśtáunḡa prostration in front of Bábá, Bábá stopped him saying, “Candradeva, we took so much trouble to come all the way here from Ranchi, but you could not join us and participate in the DMC from here in Himachal?”

After saying this, Bábá indicated to me that He wished to leave. Ácárya kept urging us to stay, but I said, “Bábá needs to reach early and any further delay would disrupt his schedule.” Candradevajii tried to cajole me to accept new clothes and other items but I turned him down on a pretext. I thought it was not right to accept anything in such situation. I was aware of my responsibility because when Bábá left Ranchi, I was instructed to record, “how many Mǎrgiis, who are government employees are fearlessly with Bábá.” Since Ácárya Candradeva Vermá was himself a government employee he had come to Bábá’s notice. When Bábá was talking to Chandradevajii he had given me a stern look from the corner of His eyes, which right away alerted me. We finally left Shimla. After a while Bábá expressed His happiness on seeing the wall writings that were done on the mountain sides. He also heaped praise on the Mǎrgiis for their obvious & tremendous effort in making the DMC so successful. That very year, after the Cooch Bihar

incident took place; a maiden seminar was organized by the Ánanda Marga and wall writing was an important feature in the event. Afterwards wall writing became an essential feature of Seminars. It should be remembered that this was a contribution of the Himachal Margis.

A far sighted vision of Seminar and preparation for a difficult journey

Bábá would always give new and innovative tasks and responsibilities to workers to provide a fresh impetus to the organization. Though 1969 had already been declared as the year of spiritual practice Bábá later introduced a seminar program as well, which led to the announcement of 1970 as the year of the Seminar. It was in 1969 that communists had instigated attacks on Bábá and even had Him arrested in Cooch Bihar and it was in this fracas that one Márgii lost his life. This was intolerable for the Marga society making it very difficult to bear with the pain of this injustice. Even though it was very hard to forget the incident of 5th March 1967, Bábá just kept Himself busy with work.

History repeated itself in 1969 but in a completely different manner. At the time I was in Delhi. Our delegation had met the President of India, Shrii V. V. Giri. The President listened to our plea with complete attention and sent us back with the assurance that the necessary action would be taken. Some of our team members nudged us to also meet with the first lady, Mrs. Saraswati Giri. So we went to meet her. She promised to consider our case and bid us goodbye with extreme cordiality. Perhaps it was the first time that a high level delegation from the Ánanda Marga presented its grievance against an injustice committed by a communist government of state, to the person holding the supreme constitutional post in the country.

Quick action followed because the result of the enquiry was out very soon. At that time the Union government was not fully inclined to a leftist ideology. This because while the argument was going on in the Apex Court over the issue of the Central Government prohibiting its employees from joining the Ánanda Marga. Our lawyer, the retired Solicitor General of India, C. K. Daphatary was told by the Governments representative that "The government is going to withdraw its case so you should ask your client the Ánanda Marga to withdraw its suit as well." However, we did not withdraw our case because our legal counsel informed us during the course of the arguments that one could not predict whether or not the government would re-issue a similar order tomorrow. Therefore, we would contest the case on merit, which is how the Marga won its case. It is appropriate to mention here that the Ánanda Marga has always fought against injustice, be it in the court of law or in society, but this was a battle of ideology, not against an individual.

The honorable court had always delivered justice and we were hopeful to get the same fair treatment in the future. Then the Supreme Court issued a stay order on the Union government directive banning government employees from joining the Marga. After many years the Apex court finally gave a verdict in favour of the Ánanda Marga. The continuous and rapid erosion of moral values in life, which permeate every dimension of life, makes one anxious as to whether justice would be delayed or denied.

I remained fearful not for the delay in justice but for denial of justice. The rapid deterioration of the moral values of life would have been reflected if justice was denied to us. Despite all the opposition the final ruling was given in favour of the Ánanda Marga. Due to this ruling the government cannot threaten any member of Ánanda Marga, according to its code of conduct, because this security was guaranteed by the 1969 ruling of the Supreme Court, and by the other rulings of the Supreme Court. Bábá promptly returned to Ranchi from Cooch Bihar. After this incident, some people in the Marga revolted in anger citing this as an excuse that the Marga should take revenge for unprovoked arrest of Bábá. Bábá had always given the organization the right guidance. Thoughts of taking revenge could not come into one's mind if one has appropriate knowledge of the Ánanda Marga's ideology. History stands witness to the fact that the Marga's attitude

was never vengeful, whether it was in reaction to the 5th March 1967 incident or the horrific Bijan Setu massacre in Kolkata in April 1982.

This is the reason why Bábá changed the sentiment of revenge nurtured by few people in the Marga by infusing new vision into the organization's work ethic and gave new direction with the introduction of the seminar. The natural inclination of man to react with violence cannot be answered by committing more with violence. Bábá repeated taught us Lord Krśńá's teaching of "Samígráme Vaeparityam" [adopting the or an opposite approach in the planning of the war strategies]. This incident actually precipitated the growth of the organization by adding two new dimensions to it. One, the ideological education was systematized, and because of the introduction of Optee System [one who opts for voluntary work], the Ánanda Marga invested all its energy in constructive and creative work and eventually during the process it was able to consolidate its position in society.

It was perhaps through these initiatives that Gurudeva prepared us to face the actual crisis of 1971 and also other crises during the emergency in 1975. It was almost customary for Bábá to prepare us beforehand for any impending crisis without giving any prior indications. The point was that we would not be weak when grappling with difficult times and give up. Perhaps Tantra teaches us just this one secret. Bábá's directions were quite straightforward and crystal clear. Whosoever was not well versed with the ideology of the Ánanda Marga could be tempted to make a wrong decision, which is why He gave directions to conduct seminars?

The first seminar was organized in October 1969. As people did not realize its significance it did not succeed in achieving its purpose. Gurudeva took this as a challenge and made certain that he himself would examine trainers and organizers from the central office. Bábá would send trainers and organizers to arrange seminars on prescheduled dates, finalized by the Central Office, only after giving them classes on the selected topics for the seminars. Bábá made wall writing an essential element of the seminar. He would select a slogan for the seminar and made people shout this slogan in front of him at his quarter. "Seminar, more and more seminar, village level seminar." "Ek caoká ek culhá, Eka hai Mánava Samája: one human society." Wall writings came up almost in every corner of this vast country. It was a very interesting subject and was clearly happening on Bábá's direction so

many Mārgii's participated in the seminar festivities with great enthusiasm. People showed a lot of interest and would attend classes that would continue late into the night. In the course of time Gurudeva made this a part of His sixteen points.

While introducing the seminar system in 1969, Bábá had told us, "It is very essential to know the theoretical aspects of the ideology for the advancement of which you move earth and heaven so you may better understand the Sádhaná that you practice." Otherwise "mutative forces will try to divert you from your path". He continued, "Therefore ideological indoctrination is a necessity and this is the reason why I have introduced the seminar system." It was observed that with this fully rounded ideological knowledge, the level of dedication of the people grew too. From January 1970 the seminar session began and people had several inspiring experiences. A separate department was set up in the Central Office to give more emphasis in the organization of seminars. A separate supervisor was appointed for this purpose. It was necessary to take the signature of the seminar in charge before leaving the headquarters for their tour programme. The new department that was established for this purpose was called the First and Second Diocese Seminar [graded ideological training and organizational consolidation for provincial level, conducted twice a year]. At the same time Bábá started the All Wing Trainings, for everyone. Rampant inter departmental transfer of workers began. In the meanwhile, I was posted at Chatarpur, Dist Ganjám, Odishá, then at Raipur, 31 days later at Ranchi, and the Bangalore region. The Regional Education In Charge of the Ranchi and Bangalore regions was appointed soon after.

Apparently this, inter departmental shuffling of field workers caused organizational difficulties. Though it took some time to resolve eventually people realized that were benefits. No experiment ever done by Bábá was meaningless or devoid of purpose. It had a definite impact on both the individual and on society. The impact of this new initiative that began in 1969 is evident to this day. Gurudeva's discourses of the initial years, which were complicated and not easily comprehensible for the common intellect, gradually became easier for the Sannyásii and the Mārgii due to the many levels of seminars and discussions. In this manner as the quality of Táttvika increased so the ideological moorings of the organization become stronger. It is said about the attainment of knowledge, that people come seeking

knowledge either based on fear or driven by intellectual interest. Regardless of the fact that in the beginning the seeking may have started out based on fear, but later and even today to a great extent the seeking has generally transformed into serious interest. By virtue of the Seminars family men and Sannyásiis learn the socio-spiritual philosophy of Marga?" "What is Mantra Caetanya (consciousness)?" "What is meant by the supreme entity?" "What is the phenomenal cause of the noumenon [that which is perceived] world?" "What is this created world?" "Is it simply the manifestation of the supreme operative principle or does it have other forms?" etc., etc.

On a personal note, I would like to share an anecdote here. I was very shy in the initial years and so I mostly hesitated in raising my hands during Kiirtana sessions. One day Bábá asked Gautamjii, a family Ácarya of Lucknow and me to sing the Kiirtana with our arms and hands raised. Thus he removed my shy hesitancy! As a spiritual master Bábá would show us the different methods to dispel our sense of inferiority or complexes. This gentle corrective work was possible only by a spiritual master of the supreme order. Should a disciple leave, so betraying Him, the master will not leave His disciple till he completes his final voyage. "Once a spiritual master of a supreme order holds your hands He will never leave you until He takes you to supreme abode of bliss." Bábá had assured me of this long ago by saying this to me in a mango orchard in Navagáon, Ássám. This is why I work so fearlessly on the path shown by Him and "go all alone". Yes indeed-living beings often forget this truth as they get enmeshed in the Máyavii (illusionary) cycles of life and death but how could Bábá forget?

Lord Krśńa, when propelling Arjuna on the path of action, says in the Bhágavad Gítá:

*Bahuni men vyatitáni, janmáni tav cárjuna,
Tányaham veda sarváni na tvam vettha parantapa.*

— [Bhágavad Gítá Chapter 4, 5]

Meaning 'Oh Arjuna, we have lived many lives together, due to the many cycles of your life and death you have forgotten this, but I know everything about you.'

Sauṅkaś Mocana [One who removes all the problems]

This incident relates to a period of time when I was working in the capacity of Education in-Charge for the Ranchi and Bangalore region, which had several schools under its jurisdiction. The jurisdiction of the Ranchi region extended up to Nellore diocese. In that very year a relief camp was organized in Bhurkundá near Ranchi. I was sent to Bhurkundá by the Ánanda Márga Central Office to find the best venue to set up camp. We found a venue because of the cooperation of the Government Polytechnic College. This led to the unprecedented success of the relief camp there. At the camps someone or the other would be sent to report to Bábá on a regular basis. One day in the midst of the ongoing camp I was asked to go give the report to Bábá. On reaching Ranchi I presented my report to Bábá. After the reporting was over I was very happy to be once again attending to Bábá and I said to Him, “Bábá, I do not feel like going back to Bhurkundá and leaving you here.” Bábá indicated to me to stay back. In those days the camp authorities used to test some of the people present. It so happened that while an examination was going on, one person did some excess. Once the report came to Bábá, he punished everyone involved in perpetration of the act except one individual who had played the principle role. Gurudeva didn't punish him. The following year in 1971, this person fell prey to an incomprehensible power of Avidyá Máya's Vikśepa Shakti [one that which distracts you from your fundamental life path] and

completely ruined his life. Note that punishment meted out by your Guru negates the binding impact of Prakrti [nature] and gives intense relief to the disciple. This was pervasively understood by the Sádhakas and the workers. Wherever and whenever Gurudeva intervened, nature bowed down, and the Sádhaka was relieved to have His blessing. Whenever he wished and on different occasions, he established the truth of the Ánanda Sútram [the Ánanda Marga book of philosophy authored by Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii], a treatise. “Shaktih sá Shivasya Shakti” [two powers, the operative power being Shakti and the witnessing power being Shiva]. Whoever had this realization remained steadfastly devoted to him and went about doing the works entrusted by Him.

In those days once I was attending to Bábá and His personal care. He Himself turned to me and said me, “Sometimes I draw you closer to me and sometime I send you away to get a particular job done. The world will not be able to understand our relationship. So why would you feel the need to explain this to the world? You stay cheerful. I will always be with you, every moment and in every circumstance.” Since then He has never left me or been out of my sight even for a moment. The words spoken by Gurudeva constantly ring in my ears. And they illuminate the journey of my life, much like the pole star. In the same year stressful incident took place. The Karnataka government issued a directive to nationalize the education system of the state. The Karnataka Marga’s worried about the future. Since I was directly concerned with this work, one day while reporting in Ranchi I put this problem before Bábá. Bábá asked, “What options are you considering?” I said that my mind is shut down with the enormity of the situation. Bábá remained silent for a moment and said, “Note down the points. Change the name of our school to Children’s Corner and write on the board ‘Only for Marga children.’ This order was exclusively for Karnataka. Any problem small or big, like “Sankat’a Mocana” Hanumánji, Bábá would unfailingly resolve it. This was and still is, my unflinching faith. Perhaps other Sádhakas would agree with this. Even today, I find that whenever I get stuck with a problem I find direction by meditating on Him. Even though the present is burdened with troubles and the future is certainly not be devoid of problems, our Sankat’a Mocana will always help us find a way past any hurdle. Tulasi Das the poet appropriately said:

“Ek Bharosá ek bal, Ek Ása vishvása.... Cátaka Tulasidás”.

This means that one can only place one's hope and faith in God.

Seminar programs in that year attained the pinnacle of their success; mostly because with the introduction of the optee system the organization had become more consolidated with the teaching of the Marga wisdom and protective work ethics. Later we realized that this was a preparation for future times.

Movement of a difficult ordeal

Like the previous years, the momentum of organized seminars continued well until 1971. Because of my extreme involvement in organizing seminars, my energy felt drained and this disturbed my digestive system. The acting General Secretary advised me to go to Laheriásarái, Darbhanga in the north Bihar, to get treated by Dr. Páthak then to go on to a place of my choice and rest for 1 or 2 months. I followed his advice. After receiving treatment in Darbhanga, I decided that I would go to Shrii Devarájanjii's place in Yercaud in Tamil Nadu, where I would stay for a few weeks to regain my health and rejuvenate my energy levels so that I can get down to work again with new vigour. So that is where I went, to Shrii Devarájanjii's home. He was quite pleased to see me. His joy increased multiplied when he realized that I had come to rest and recover from ill health. As far as I can remember, September was almost coming to a close. One day out of the blue, Ácárya Nigamánandajii turned up and told me about the Kolkata incident, telling me he was present and so was witness to what happened. He said, "The Marga Mátá in collusion with a rival group had planned to break up the organization." This incident was the first of its kind. I could not believe it, I was shocked, but how I could not, as all the events had been witnessed by our people. When this incident happened a separate meeting was convened where things were said against Gurudeva; our people were stunned and could not comprehend what was happening right in front of them!

People remained silent and kept a close eye on the happenings; which is how it's been with that case with every phase, at every moment. This is how it has always been done. Some people protested and it was those few who did not sleep but came straight to Bábá and informed him of everything. Bábá said, "All this has been going on for the last six months and since then, despite knowing everything, I have remained a mute spectator and have been quietly observing, and now everything has come to light. The next morning at 9am Gurudeva asked everyone to come to him and gave specific instructions. Perhaps prior to this those people who held on to the Marga Mátá's feet had taken an oath to break the Ananda Marga organization. Ignoring everything Gurudeva stated that whoever would come back to Him and gave clear instructions. The people who attended this meeting were relieved to hear this. Without further delay Gurudeva called back the Margiis from Jamshedpur and returned to Ranchi.

This was the time when the opposition had started to spread their net of deceit and the Varanasi training Centre could not escape this deceptiveness. It must be mentioned here that prior to this incident the Marga Mátá would address Margiis at the opening of all DMC's and raise colourful slogans. Then, Bábá would ascend the stage. Few people even considered her the manifestation of the Goddess Durgá, Káli or simply the primordial energy. Some would even meditate on her imagining her on the Gurucakra. Gurudeva made it crystal clear that for meditation only the prescribed method is appropriate; otherwise, if you meditate on a monkey, you yourself would bear the consequences. Many fanciful letters began to arrive in Ranchi. One such letter arrived and found its way to Bábá's table. The letter had the sender's name written on it, which included my name too and it caught Bábá's attention. He asked the GS, "Rudrananda is not even in Calcutta, tell Me where is he?" The GS forgot where I was and could not give any clear answer. Everyone grew anxious; Bábá expressed His disappointment because He did not get a clear answer from the GS of the organization. Seeing everyone worried, He said, "Hey, why do you not find out whether he is really ill or not?" This question jostled people's memory the information reached Bábá that I was treating my ill health in Yercaud in Tamil Nadu. Soon after Bábá was to set out for an extensive tour of DMCs in Nagpur, Ernakulum etc.

The order came for me to reach the nearest place to Gurudeva's DMC. Very soon news of the Nagpur DMC reached me along with an order that I would have to attend it and on reaching there the first thing I must do is to meet with Bábá. On hearing these two pieces of good news my health began to improve rapidly. Taking Shrii Devarájanjii into confidence I made plans for my Nagpur journey, as I was by now recovering well from ill health. It was Shrii Devarájanjii's good hospitality that made my stay at Yercaud a very pleasant recovery. I also got the opportunity to finish some pending work given to me by Gurudeva in 1967. Yercaud has a training center for Christian missionaries. I slowly grew very close to the trainers and the trainees. As I got several opportunities to mingle and converse with them, I gave many talks and lectures to them. This closeness also gave me the perfect opportunity to closely observe their training methods and daily schedules.

This went on through my entire stay until I finally got the opportunity to sit with the bishop of the organization. After meeting him I began started to doubt his intentions. By then I had learnt many of their methods. Their brothers, as well as many of their initiated persons, had already taken advantage of our conversations and conduct. One or two fathers even showed a keen interest in the learning of our spiritual practice. This is when I realized that Dharma is the quintessential soul of India and religious rigidity and that these foreign people have been receiving training on how to adapt to Indian conditions, how to adapt to the Indian way of living and thinking so that they can thus delude the Indian people and steer them away from the One truth. For example, some fathers discarded their white attire and put on saffron clothes to fool the people, they engraved Om on top of the cross in churches etc. Slowly their modus operandi became clear to me.

I left Yercaud to attend the Nagpur DMC. Márgiis from Raipur and other places had already arrived. I was so happy to meet with my Márgii brothers and sisters and they too were pleased to meet me. Ácáryajii shared a lot of good news about Chattisgarh. Since all three families of these Ácárya's had done some very good work there Chattisgarh in turn provided many good workers. On reaching the airport Ácárya Narendrajii came to me and whispered talk to me I nodded to express my joy. A sizeable number of people had assembled at the airport to welcome Bábá. As Gurudeva came

out of the plane the entire airport reverberated with the voices “Parama Pitá Bábá ki jai”. I too was waiting in anticipation with my eager eyes fixed on the stairs of the airplane. Bábá accepting the greetings and turned his head towards me and smiled then moved ahead. I began to follow him. Eventually Bábá reached and settled down in His temporary residence that was prepared for Him. As soon as Bábá came out of the bathroom and sat on his bed I did prostrate salutation. Listening to Bábá’s gentle urgings, Get up, Get up”, I was overcome with emotion as I stood up. Bábá gestured at me to come closer and I sat on the floor beside His bed. However, I want to specifically point out one thing here, which I had noticed as soon as Bábá stepped out of the plane. I felt a change had taken place in Him, which He did not show either in Jamalpur or Ranchi. Now the change was quite evident.

It would be quite apt to point out that since 1969 Bábá, who had been playing the role of Lord Krśna of Vrája, had begun to assume the role of the Párthasárathi [Arjuna’s charioteer]. Once He reached Nagpur, it seemed as if now Párthasárathi Srii Krśńa had started His preparations to play His new role. Bábá told me everything that happened in the Kolkata South End building. With keenness in my eyes, I was looking at Him and was listening attentively to everything He was saying. Bábá was in a serious mood. I had never heard His voice so charged. It seemed as if He was not in a hurry at all. Perhaps it was for this reason that He had invited me to come to the closest place to where He would be staying. It happened exactly like that. Bábá said what occurred was not surprising to Him. He said, “Since the last six months, a conspiracy has been underfoot against Me, in My house, and I have been waiting for the right moment.” I told him about those people who had forsaken him. He again said, “It is not surprising that people have run away; abandoning Me in Cooch Bihar, doing the same in Calcutta, but I was stunned when I found a letter on My table which had the senders’ names written on it, and your name too was on the list of the senders. I underlined your name with a pen and asked everyone if anyone had seen this.” Bábá’s revelation had swept all present there off their feet. An internal investigation began and very soon the then GS recalled that I had been staying in Yercaud to recover from ill health under the express directions of the Headquarters. Bábá said, “Ask him to come to the nearest place of my stopover during the tour.” Due to His benevolence and mercy I became emotional and when I

went completely out of control, Bábá said, "How could you possibly leave Me?" I embraced Bábá. His affectionate hands wiped off my unending flow of tears. Immediately at that very moment, my mind went back to the past incident in the mango orchard in Assam, where Gurudeva had said, "Even if you want to leave Me I, will not let you go." Bábá continued, "I know you will not leave me. Moreover, how could you?"

Bábá's repeated utterances again revived the promise He had made to me many years earlier. However, the need to renew such a relationship never arises because it is not a worldly relationship. One must understand this subtlety. If this understanding dawns upon you then you have been successful. When the Supreme Lord has Himself taken up the responsibility to row your boat, you are sure to cross the river of worldly ignorance whether your boat is stuck at the rivers bank or caught mid-stream because He, commands the winds. Right faith and right belief is the only force guiding the spiritual aspirant. If the belief continues to become stronger, then his path is felicitated by Vidyá Máyá [the positive force of nature that pushes us forward onto the path of our goal]. If it is not so then Avidyá Máyá [the force that pushes us backward] will make inroads. So this is the path of an alert traveller because this is the practice and the path of Tantra.

By this time, I had regained enough composure to say, "What does this world think? How can I ever leave You?" Bábá nodded in agreement and suddenly becoming very serious said, "But the world does not understand you." I said that I accepted this as a blessing of Bábá. Bábá patted my cheeks and told me to do the Gurupújá and the prostate salutation. Bábá also said, "Get down to do My work fearlessly, without worry. I will take care of the rest." Since that day I have been working, continuously walking the path laid out by Him, relying only on His mercy. Whenever I felt tired, or when worldly troubles got overwhelming, those words ring in my ears, and with renewed vigour I embark on my journey. During the second day of the DMC, Ánanda Gáyatrijii who was a student sang a devotional song in Maráfhii. Bábá indicated with an authoritative tone to sing once more. She sang with full emotion. The entire gathering vibrated with devotion. Even Bábá liked it very much. Immediately after this Gáyatri went for training.

Grace on Gopál Krśńajii

Bábá arrived in Ernakulum, Kerala for conducting the DMC. Gopál Krśńajii and Shántá mother's Tapasyá [spiritual discipline that involves deep meditation, austerity/ moderation, self-discipline, and efforts to reach self-realization] caused many lives to be fulfilled as they had an opportunity to serve Bábá, in their home. Gopal Krśńajii was a retired District Judge and lived in Ernakulum. He had a most earnest desire that Gurudeva stay in his home during his Kerala visit. Bábá's stay at his house was possible because his home was fulfilled all the necessary conditions given by Bábá for His stay. As a matter of fact, no one generally has the capacity to fulfill all of Bábá's conditions. From our earlier experiences we knew that it was actually quite easy to satisfy Bábá who is Áshutośa [refer to a person who can be gratified easily], satisfied with earnest devotion. We had witnessed this in Varanasi when Bábá had accepted Shrii Balrāja Singh's invitation, turning down the elaborate arrangements made by us. Gurudeva reached Ernakulum and Shrii Gopál Krśńajii and Shántájii were ecstatic. This was their reward for their righteous actions of many past lives. They served Bábá with a full heart and soul. They would walk in and out of Bábá's room without any restrictions. Bábá gestured at me to get closer and told me, "Think about a particular work for which I can be useful and get it done." I began to think of different ways by which Ernakulum could benefit from His visit. In those days the press and the newspapers were quite powerful in mobilizing public opinion. After formulating a strategy along those lines, I went to Bábá to get it approved.

I put forward a proposal to establish our own press in Ernakulum and there after publish a newspaper in Malayálama. Expressing his happiness over the proposal Bábá gave His approval to go ahead. I said that I wanted to bring certain select Mǎrgiis to him for a special Darshana so that they are inspired and spontaneously start contributing in this endeavour. From here on my task became very easy. Having accepted my proposal Bábá gave me a signal to bring to Him those select Mǎrgiis as soon as possible. Within a very short while they were assembled in Bábá's room; after doing the prostrate salutation they stood in a semi-circle. They were a small group of 5 to 6 selected Mǎrgiis, which included Shrii Gopál Krśńajii. After asking after their well-being, Bábá filled their hearts with a surge of devotion. Then he indicated to me to take everyone out and get the work done. After coming out I held another meeting and laid out a proposal. Everyone accepted it gleefully. In those days Gurudeva would make people do developmental work wherever he would go. Except in Ranchi and Kolkata, Gurudeva's did not have His living quarters in any other place, so Mǎrgiis would get a chance to spend time with Bábá when He would stay in their homes.

When Bábá came out of imprisonment post the emergency, the need for building Bábá's personal living quarters in all sectors became an urgent need; and that is why seven Guru Nivása have been built in all the nine sectors spread far across the globe. On this pretext Gurudeva provided the organization an extra house to enhance work efficiency. Today everyone realizes that Bábá used this need as an excuse to give the organization an opportunity to grow. The DMC in Ernakulum concluded in a very pleasing way and soon it was time for Bábá to bid goodbye to Ernakulum. Shrii Gopál Krśńajii and Shántájii were very upset as they thought they would not be able to tolerate the pain of separating from Gurudeva. As the time of Bábá's departure drew near, so did their anxiety was grow. I was a silent observer of all this. One thought came to my mind; Gurudeva had been staying in such a great devotee's house, they should get a special opportunity to perform Gurupújá. I immediately went to Bábá and made this request on their behalf to Bábá. Bábá happily agreed. When I informed Shrii Gopal Krśńajii and Shántájii, they became very emotional and entered Bábá's room right away and did the Gurupújá. Gurudeva gave His blessings and made them feel truly blessed; their spiritual penance for many lives was fulfilled. This was the apex of their devotion. Dispelling their anxiousness Gurudeva bid them goodbye.

The Beginning of 16 Sútras

The year 1971 was a year of struggle, but this phase of trial and tribulations had its own importance in respect of organizational growth. By May Gurudeva had already moved from Ranchi to the Patna camp headquarters. One day while reporting was going on in the office, He said, "Now everyone must be very resolute and firm in observing certain sets of rules." Prior to this, He had already mentioned, "I have to be stricter to further consolidate the organization provided that you all agree." Thus, Bábá would sometimes become very formal, which never sounded very pleasant. But interestingly He would blend his resolute disciplinarians with His gentle nature making it fully acceptable for the people. On that day He introduced new rules to be followed for fasting and using the Laungotá [a traditional piece of Vedic clothing worn like underwear for men].

While stating rules on these two matters, Bábá said, "When I see our monks eating on the day of Ekádashiii [is the eleventh lunar day (Tithii) of each of the two lunar phases which occur in a Hindu calendar month] which occurs twice in a lunar month, on the 11th day of the bright and dark fortnight respectively I feel very uncomfortable. But I have been waiting for the right moment to come; because when any change is introduced it takes time for it to become acceptable." Eventually the directive came to us that fasting without water had been made obligatory for ascetics and nuns on the bi-monthly day of Ekádashii. We were told to fast on new moon and

full moon days. I remember that in the course of reporting an emphasis was made on keeping fasts. At that time, rooms were rented in Patna for setting up Gurudeva's quarters and office. On the day of Ekādāshī, all of us were staying in one large hall. Since it was the very first time that we kept very rigorous fast we somehow managed to survive the day but passing the night became extremely arduous. Some of us made light of our precarious condition by pointing out the discomfort. This fast was quite rigorous, the weather was hot and the humidity made it even more oppressive. We joked about half of us not be able to see the sun the next morning, perhaps some would even die! Everyone, with half-closed eyes, was surveying the others to check whether the one lying beside him was alive or not. But the next morning, everyone was alive!

It became clear that our fears were baseless. Since the fast was kept from sunrise to sunrise after the following sunrise a few people scrambled on to a rickshaw to go for breakfast after drinking the prescribed amount of water. Fasting so became an integral part of our regular discipline and conduct. We have experienced over the years, that our body even on the fast days remains as agile and active as on other regular days for doing our work. Whenever Gurudeva gave any new set of rules to follow He blessed us with sufficient strength to observe these new rules. Until now He had already given us the bath Mantra and Vidhi of Pitra Yajña [the process of remembering ancestors whose good properties we benefit from after every shower]. Thus, before He became a guest of the government He had already given us 8 decrees out of the 16.

One day, during office hours when we were all busy with our reports Bábá interrupted us and said, "After your reporting is finished call everyone inside, all those who are present here." Shrii Shashiranjanji and Ácárya Kedár Sharmájii were present and they too came in. Gurudeva said that he would make us all go through a test to measure how sincere we were in observing the Yama and Niyama's or the moral code of conduct. Bábá examined each of us thoroughly and rectified all lessons relating to the Cakra Mantra Sádhaná, evaluating every detail. He reoriented everyone one-by-one, as per respective requirements. Later on, Bábá made each one of us sing the Saṅgacchadhvam Mantra. He Himself taught us how to pronounce it correctly. While explaining the inner importance of Pitra Yajña Mantra he also told us of its significance. As Bábá was examining

Shrii Shashiranjanjii, he found out that Shashiranjanjii had forgotten Íś'a Mantra. Bábá asked, "What do you do during Spiritual Practice?" Shashiranjanjii said, "I just remember You." Bábá ordered him to revise his Sádhaná. He revised all my lessons too and also taught me Ásanas. I asked, "What about reciting the Pitr Yajña Mantra in chorus, after taking a collective bath on the coming January 1st at Varanasi, as a prelude to the DMC?" Gurudeva said, "It is a fantastic idea and you should lead them." The DMC was scheduled for January 1st in Varanasi.

Incidentally Bábá had already mentioned while conducting the tests that, "All workers and Márgiis will be examined this way from this moment on." In the course of time, this method of examination took the form of Dharma Samiikśá [a process of full review by the Guru of the spiritual, emotional, physical life of a practitioner]. On December 29th 1971 no one could have imagined that Bábá would have to stay away from us for a rather long time. Bábá would often drop a hint well before the occurrence of an untoward incident. The fact of the matter is that as humans we are too weak minded to comprehend an indication given by Bábá regarding a coming event. Prior to the unsavory incident that took place in Kolkata Bábá had time and time again explained to us the importance of Íś'a and Ideology. Either we simply ignored His hint or we were not capable of comprehending His message. In making an assessment of the unsavoury incident post the event that occurred in Kolkata in 1971, made us wonder what caused it in the first place? And if it had happened, what was the goal of the perpetrators who committed this crime against humanity? They played with Bábá's emotions and taunted him. They spread rumours that Márga Mátá had siphoned off Bábá's powers and abandoned Him that Bábá was since powerless; this rumour was spread more among the workers than the Márgiis'.

Since the workers were far from mature within the organization, and because most of them were within the age range of 63 to 70 years, for them this rumour mongering from Márga Mátá was a bolt from the blue. They were heart broken and dejected. We tried to convince them to hold fast to the ideology and stay steadfast on the path of righteous actions. Bábá had already given us the rules of GAEA [Guard Against Enemy Action] as a way of keeping us immune from and firm in the face of such rumours. As the role of the carrier pigeons in the stories of the Paiñcatantra [an ancient

Indian collection of interrelated animal fables in Saṁskṛta verse and prose] stories that are re-told often, and would continue to be retold in future, most people do not get the moral percepts hidden within these stories. There are only very few who have the power to understand the enemy's strategy and protect themselves and their organization, but the majority of people are easily swayed. Misinformation and propaganda are the most effective and powerful weapons used by the enemy in warfare, creating a devastating and long-lasting impact. By the time the unconcerned and unreflective persons realize the true turn of events, all the efforts put in over the years, are erased.

Gurudeva had said on many occasions that there are three hurdles to establishing world social order:

- 1 Communism
- 2 Capitalism and
- 3 Dogma [mostly religious dogma that creates a sort of defective psyche because of the crisis of the present age]

The government had used the CBI to cast its net to trap Marga Mátá. Numerous newspapers' articles of that time had made it clear that in order to weaken Bábá and destroy the Marga, the CBI not only gave shelter to rebels but also nurtured and groomed them. Gurudeva had always swallowed the poison that came out after the Ságar Manthan to give relief to the world. The 1971 incident was a recurrence of the 1966 episode, and the direction of the subsequent incidents that followed similar directions. If we consider these events intuitively, we see that nothing can happen without reason; in fact, everything happens for a reason! If we do not remain alert and firm within the prescribed code of conduct [as ordained by Gurudeva], we may easily fall prey to this kind of rumour mongering in the future. We face these types of unstable conditions only if we violate the principles of righteousness and spirituality. Spiritual science teaches us to see fault within oneself and see completeness in others. A Sádharma of this strength makes progress in his own development and in turn helps society. The very nature of a Sádharma is to continuously search for his or her own inner failings; rectify them; and inspire others to walk on the path of Dharma. But when we start searching for completeness within our own selves and incompleteness in others, exactly the opposite happens. A Sádharma who promotes himself as perfect,

will get entangled in the worlds pleasures and begin to look for pleasure in power, fame and sensual pleasures imperceptibly heading downhill.

This can be better understood through Lord Krśṇa's words:

*Dhyáyato Viśyánpunsaḥ Saṁgasteśu úpajáyate,
Sangátsanjáyate Kámaḥ Kámátkrodhoabhijáyate.
Krodhádbhavati Sammah Sammohátsmrtivibhramah,
Smrtibhanshád Buddhinásho Buddhináshatprañashyati.*

— Bhágavad Gītá [2/62, 63]

These are the stages of human spiritual downfall. The urge for physical longing is created by the senses. If one is not able to control these longings, it creates anger. Once anger controls the mind, the mind is so distracted that one starts to lose stability. The power of discrimination is lost. This demises wisdom. After wisdom is lost the person is completely lost. This is the final or ultimate fall of the individual. It did not take the organization long to repair the damage because Bábá himself took control of the situation. People would ask the commonly thought of question, "Can this happen again, or not?" This is like asking the Doctor whether a diseased person would come into the hospital or not? Or like asking if any dead body would come into the cremation grounds in the future or not? As one journeys on this Shreya [magnificent] path, if one gets attracted to worldly pleasures, then these pleasures not only distract him from the Supreme Goal, but the very real possibility of swaying from the path of righteousness also remains and the ensuing degree of damage depends greatly upon the height of the fall. The quantum of the damage is directly proportional to the height; as we know the fall of any object or Spiritual Aspirant is speedier if the fall is from a greater height! Humans and human mistakes are two sides of the same coin. There is an Arabian proverb, "Should we commit a mistake once, there remains less of a chance of repeating it a second time, but if the same mistake is made for the second time, then it can repeat for a third time, and fourth time, becoming a habit that is hard to then stop." However, the year 1971 taught us multiple lessons, which served to make us stronger and compelled us to act more carefully. It was as if the experiences of the year of 1971 had left giant footprints on the sand! Though to this day we keep making mistakes, the question that Yakśa asked of Yudhiś'hira,

“Kimáshcaryam?” [What is wonder?] Becomes increasingly relevant. Not surprisingly the answer lies within Yudhiś’hira’s answer to the Yaksá’s question:

*Ahanyahani Bhútáni Gacchantiha Yamálayam’,
Sheśáh sthávaramichhanti Kimáshcáryamatah Param’.*

Meaning - Death is everyone’s destination. On dying everyone goes to the cremation grounds. Yet those who are not yet dead, feel that they will not die.

Although it is certain that every human being will be subject to the passage of time and will eventually arrive at Death’s door one day, human beings will still try to build a permanent physical place to dwell in on this transient earth experience that we call life. What could be more surprising than this? It gives man great satisfaction to imagine that he will live on forever. But this world was created by the Supreme Lord and is eternally in the process of change. His dynamic flow cannot stop, because this is the flow of His intuitional energy. Human beings also cannot forsake their intrinsic natures because they are bound by Samískáras [when an action takes place it forms a reaction in potential form in the mind creating Samískáras]. This is the path of Tantra. Only one who is blessed by the Lord can complete this difficult journey of life without falling because the journey is akin to walking on a razor’s edge.

A devotee asked his Guru, “If we walk on the edge of a razor blade will it not cut our feet? So how can risk this?” The Guru replied, “by making yourself as light like an ant.” A Sád’haka can walk on the razor thin edge of a blade. The secret of the tradition of a master and disciple lies in the initiative of the Sád’haka and the benevolent mercy of his Guru. This relationship is reciprocal. Being frightened by the hurdles of the road the Sád’haka must not stop his journey. Gurudeva repeatedly gave us this assurance with His Varábhaya Mudrá [the pose, during which Gurudeva emitted a distinct spiritual vibration and blessed his devotees].

Arrangement of a grand Sabhá in Shaheed Minar

In 1971 the incidents of defection grew in numbers in many places. There is conspicuous proof noted in the annals of Ánanda Marga. We also found proof on how far the CBI had surreptitiously extended its net to strangulate the Marga to death. Their primary target was Bábá Himself. With the intention of obliterating the Ánanda Marga's very existence, they mounted a fabricated case in court, presented false witnesses, and finally imprisoned Bábá in Patna on December 29th, 1971. Bábá was later taken to the Buxar jail. Because of this unexpected turn of events, the Varanasi DMC was not held for the very first time. Bábá was taken into custody in the early morning hours. At that time, an officer of the CBI taunted Bábá, "The Sun God is peeping out from the east at this moment, if you can make the sun rise from the west by the sheer dint of your spiritual prowess I will return to Delhi." Bábá simply said, "You do your duty, I will do mine." Bábá never exhibited His spiritual powers to prove His ability. On the contrary, He simply helped Sádhakas to walk on the path of Dharma. Had He shown His powers then there would be a recurrence of history. It is unfortunate that though times have changed, the attitude of human beings has not.

On February 12th, 1973 with the obvious help of a Doctor by the CBI, Bábá was given poison in Patna's Bankipur Central Jail. This incident shocked the entire Marga community. Protests were staged at different

places. I was given the responsibility to present our memorandum to the Himachal and Punjab Chief Ministers. At the time, the Punjab Chief Minister was Gyani Zail Singh listened to our plea and accepted our memorandum, and also made a promise to convince the union government. Dr. Yashwant Singh Parmar was the Himachal Chief Minister and he knew me personally. But he refused to meet with me but had his legal secretary take the memo. We however, were sending our message to the union government through newspapers, journals and by arranging frequent press conferences. Following this line of protest a mass assembly was planned in Kolkata for which I was given the responsibility of making arrangements. I had to spend almost three months in Kolkata to get this assignment done. Apart from this task, I already had a core responsibility of running and maintaining the Varanasi Training Centre, which I continued to manage with the help of Márgii brothers. It was during the month of May that a massive rally was organized in the Shahiida Minár grounds, with approximately 50,000 Márgiis from Bengal and Bihar participating. The unprecedented support extended by the Márgiis and workers of Bengal and Bihar made an arrangement of this scale possible, as without them it would have been improbable! The late L.P. Handa, worked shoulder to shoulder with me towards this preparation and ignoring all his official duties he stayed with me until the protests were over. We took out a huge procession through the city, then onto the organized rally. Though the Shaheed Minár grounds were very large this massive gathering of 50,000 Márgiis and workers turned out to be a spectacular show, which created a great impact. Although Varuñadeva (the God of rain) disrupted the meeting, no one moved from their places. Even the media was impressed by this show of resolve by the Márgii brothers and sisters. We made one primary demand during the rally namely, that a Judicial Inquiry into the poisoning of Bábá take place. But we could not get the union government to budge! Bábá appreciated this effort of holding a protest rally at Shaheed Minar, Kolkata. His personal assistant was also present on this occasion in Kolkata. During the course of my stay in Kolkata, though my primary responsibility was the arrangements for the mass rally, I was given an added task of meeting people from different walks of society. During my conversations with these eminent persons the issue of attempted poisoning would invariably come up. Almost everyone would agree that there should be no issue of political correctness with demanding a judicial inquiry into the incident because

it was a head of a Global Organization who was poisoned. Eventually the Kolkata Márgiis were able to arrange a meeting with a retired judge of Kolkata High Court. After several rounds of meetings, the Judge told me to meet the Congress Member of Parliament (MP) Yashpal Kapur in Delhi, who was known to be close to Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The judge also disclosed to me his reason for sending me off to Yashpal Kapur. Justice J.P. Mitter would stay at his place whenever he would visit Delhi. I was relieved to know that Justice Mitter studied in the same college as Mrs. Gandhi in the UK as this presented us with the direct opportunity to convey our demand to Indira Gandhi. I thought the suggestion was very useful since we all were very upset and concerned over the fact that Bábá had been poisoned in prison. There was no foreseeable harm in giving it a shot. I left for Yashpal Kapur's Delhi residence and handed him Justice J.P. Mitter's letter and after a short while, he did leave to meet Indira Gandhi. I waited for him at his residence. After almost two hours, Yashpal Kapur returned with a message that Mrs. Gandhi would meet with me but as she was preoccupied with the preparations for August 15th due to security reasons she would only be able to meet after the 15th and had asked me to return after August 16th.

In the meanwhile I was asked to return to Patna for some urgent work. I did not get time to go back to Delhi again to meet Mrs. Gandhi. But I was taken by surprise by the fact that Justice Mitter was imprisoned during the emergency for his letter. The emergency period dissolved all distinctions between friends and foes. The government put anyone they suspected of anything in jail. After the incident of attempted contact the CBI began to follow me. I was transferred to Bhopal in November 1973 from the Central Office for reasons of safety. Someone else was sent as my replacement for the propagation of Dharma and for running the various training programs. The entire country was seething with anger under Indira Gandhi's oppressive regime. Her own people were deserting her, one by one. Many freedom fighters who actively fought in the Nation's freedom struggle had slowly faded into oblivion because they became irrelevant once the Nation gained its independence. Some became megalomaniacs and played the politics of unbridled power. Other freedom fighters who had truly participated in the struggle for independence were disturbed wondering whether their impartiality would serve society and improve the current predicament of the country. Among them was the late Jai Prakash

Narayan who played a pioneering role and showed much enthusiasm and vigour. People were relieved. History bears witness to what later happened later.

Around this time the railway minister Lalit Náráyańa Mishra died in a bomb blast on the occasion of the inauguration of the broad-gauge train tracks between the stations of Samastipur and Muzaffarpur. I was in Bhopal in 1973 but the Bihar Government sent a wireless message to the Bhopal police to have me arrested. I was taken into custody. On my arrest, the District Officers and other senior officers showed me the wireless orders they had received and explained to me that I was being harassed unnecessarily and that the Madhya Pradesh government itself had no complaint against me. I had taught the children of these officers at some point or the other so they knew me personally. Along with this, I was the examiner for Hindi of non-Hindi speaking gazette officers. The central government was after me. It was a time of political crisis. So the organization thought it best if I went underground.

Around this time Shrii Jai Prakásh Náráyańa made a call for Sampúrńa Kránti [total revolution] and the entire country responded to and rallied behind him. After the rulings of the Allahabad High Court, Mrs. Gandhi used the ultimate political weapon by declaring a state of emergency thus usurping the authority of the parliament, consolidating all powers in her hands. She held the entire country hostage. Overlooking Senior Judges she appointed a junior judge as the chief justice of the Supreme Court. She also forced the Apex court to alter its judgment already given in the Keshavánanda Bhárati case, a judgement that was given by a bench of 13 Judges. Her goal was to show the country that it was She who was running the government. I had already been in hiding for a year before the declaration of emergency I did not go to jail that year. After I was arrested in Bhopal Shrii Babulal Gaur became my lawyer, who later went onto become the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh and till this day remains one of my good friend.

Experiences during the Jarwa posting

After going through a spate of unpleasant experiences during the emergency, I was posted in Kerala, Calicut, and Bikaner, though my tenure was quite brief in each of these places. My stay in Calicut was for a particularly brief period. Apart from having a difference of opinion with the local police officers to acquire a plot of land for the Āshram, I did not get the opportunity to do any other kind of work. During my Bikaner posting with Gurudeva's blessing, a new Jāgrti [meditation hall] was built on an acre of land. Even as the inauguration ceremony was going on my successor took charge of the Āshram from me. I was next transferred to Jarwá in Uttar Pradesh. I reached Jarwá on the morning of May 9th, 1979. Jarwá is located in the foothills (Tarái) region of the Himalaya's just five kilometers short of the border with Nepal. The Tharu, mountain tribal live here and sustain themselves primarily on the forests resources. At the time of my posting the Tharu's were illiterate. Jarwá lies within the Balarámpur district and is 40 kilometers from the district headquarters of Gondá. As it is the last village on the Indian border it is surrounded by thousands of kilometers of dense forest that extend up to the Nepal border. The District Magistrate of Gonda, Shrii Rajendra Kumarjii was very close to Bábá. It was entirely due to his efforts that a tribal welfare unit came to be established there and for this purpose, the District Board gave us a small house consisting of two small rooms where t he Ānanda Márga began to run a school. Unfortunately just the day before I arrived in Jarwá the school's summer recess had already commenced. As I arrived the Avadhúta who was posted there heaved a big sigh of relief and left within two hours! When

I reached Jarwá I had only Rs. 2.50. Twenty-two tribal children were studying in the school, which was now scheduled to reopen in the first week of July. In front of the school premises was a vast reserved forest, rolling down from the foothills of the majestic Himalayas, a visual treat to my eyes!

The roar of tigers would often disturb the silence of most nights. The two-room house that hosted the school was in a dilapidated condition. One of the rooms was used as a kitchen and the other one was available for classes. There was no one to talk to. The only furniture was a three-legged wooden cot. The available utensils were one small broken tub tied to a worn-out rope that was used mainly to fetch water from the well. This well was the only water source for the entire village. Everyone would come to collect drinking water from the one well. I too used the well for my drinking and bathing water. Koilábas, the big border town there, was 5 kilometers away from my quarters. The vegetable market, the ghee Mandi, the market for all the surrounding farms products for both India and Nepal could be bought here. The other big market was in Tulasipur, which was about 18 kilometers away. I was exempted from paying bus fare so I could travel for free. Not that I had the money to pay! So with a grand amount of Rs. 2.50 I was off to Tulasipur market! I purchased three earthen pots for Rs. 1.50, one for cooking the other for kneading wheat flour or cutting vegetables, and a third one for eating. I used to leave for the forest in the early morning. After bathing in the nearby mountain stream I would do my Sádhaná under the shade of the trees. Along the way home I would climb fig trees and collect as many figs as I could. On my return around 10am still filled with Divine bliss, I would cut the figs into small pieces and put them on the fire to cook. I would also put two or three balls of wheat flour in with them. I had bought wheat flour with my remaining one rupee to cook with the wild figs.

I used to eat the leftovers of this meal the following day too on returning from the forest. I followed this daily schedule for two and a half months. Because of this posting in Jarwá I totally got disconnected from the world outside. Even my co-workers did not make enquiries about my well-being or my whereabouts. In Jarwá it was just me, Gurudeva and the tribals of Tháru and their kids with their runny noses. However, I had made up my mind to teach these children and to continue my Sádhaná with utmost sincerity and would thus make myself even more worthy of walking the path of truth, and immediately got down to work with all my heart and soul. I gradually started to enjoy my stay in Jarwá. My interaction with the people developed slowly. Since

Jarwá is situated so close to the Nepal border, different kinds of Central and regional security agencies were working in this area. Along with police posts there were customs, immigration, border police, Intelligence Bureau (IB) etc. A head constable from the immigration department who was naturally very pious came to see me. He saw me fetching water from a well where the local people were bathing their buffalos and both males and females were bathing and filling their water pots.

After seeing my living predicaments he took me to the Tulsipur market and bought a hand pump and a pipe and he also brought the tools and workers along with him to fit it for me. I had told him that the land surface was rocky and inquired whether it would even be possible to install a pipe. The man replied in the affirmative and said that the workers were very experienced and would find the water. After drilling for 2 or 3 hours at allocation that I had picked out and the water came gushing out! As I had been told clean water came pouring out after 2 or 3 days. As the summer set in and the temperature started to rise the water level began to go down. So we built a dam on a mountain stream, which was about 1-1.5 kilometers away. Even when the water level would go down during the summer people could still grow fresh vegetables, watermelon and cucumber utilizing this water source. Since love for fellow human beings comes easily to poor people. So before the onset of monsoons people would give me fresh vegetables and watermelons during my morning walks.

The Jarwá stay was an intensive training phase in my spiritual life very similar to how a river is trained by encountering many obstacles in its mountainous course but valiantly cuts its way through otherwise insurmountable rocks. I had nowhere to go, I had no visitors to attend to. My daily schedule was teaching the children, self-study, performing Sádhaná regularly and serving those who were needy and poor. Very soon Ácárya Parashívánandajii was transferred to Gorakhpur. This was a phase of arduous spiritual practices in his life. He used to do the Kápálíka Sádhaná regularly; eating in anyone's house, but not eating salt and sweets as they were forbidden for him. Every day he would go to the houses asking for alms, he would then cook his own food. He also used to distribute Prasáda to strangers. Slowly he too began to attract the attention of Márgiis and the common man. He would come and share with me whatever eatables people used to offer him with devotion in Jarwá. Whenever he would visit me he would not go out seeking alms, but he used to eat what I

would cook. Since he did not eat salt or sweet, the food that I prepared would be quite tasteless during his stay with me. I used to eat what he ate with him.

We both would enter the forest at night around 10 p.m. and would meet at a predetermined point at 4am in the morning, so that we could walk back home together. Since the forest of Jarwá was a reserve forest, except for elephants there were innumerable species of wildlife starting from pythons to leopards and even tigers, but no wild animal ever attacked us. Even at night when they passed by us we were not disturbed by them. Everyday we would go into the deep forest fearlessly for the purposes of Sádhaná and return in the morning. During the course of the day we would do Satsanga and Gurucarcá [Discussion about the Guru].

Ácárya Parashivánandajii had an intense attraction for Bábá and this attraction was of a very unique nature. He never wanted to come close to Bábá; during the DMC's when Bábá would bless us all with the Varábhaya Mudrá, he [Parashivánandajii] used to leave the Pandál. He used to say that if he came and closer to Bábá he would have reactions. His relationship with Bábá was a relationship of hide-and-seek. But his devotion to the Guru was absolute and unswerving. Wherever he visited he left a permanent impression because of his Sádhaná, sacrifice, unconditional love, indifference and Uparati [a Sańskṛta word which means the stopping of all worldly actions]. This was not my first meeting with Parashivánandajii, as I knew him from our meetings in 1967 in Mumbai where he was posted as the Diocesan Secretary [DS]. Later he was posted in Ánanda Nagar, Kolar, J&K, Gorakhpur, Quilandi (Kerala), and finally to Ánandapur Khurd near Bhagalpur. Our relationship grew the days in Kolar and after he visited Gorakhpur we became even closer.

Ácárya Parashivánandajii's worldly voyage started in Varanasi. He was born into a prosperous family and had gained his higher education in the Káshii Hindu University. On completing his studies he was put in a high position and was posted to Ranchi. He had been groomed and molded in a western way of living. On the advice of Ácárya Kedar Sharma, Parashivánandajii went for a Guru Darshana. It was this Darshana that brought to the fore his previous relationship with Bábá of many lifetimes. As soon as he saw his Guru the clouds of Avidyá Máya [a self illusory delusion] that surrounded him, melted into spiritual bliss.

Bábá said, "He has been an ascetic in his previous life so give him his attire." After wearing the Avadhúta's clothes he regained his memories of his past life. Parashivánanda Avadhúta's was the first and the last ascetic of the Ánanda Márğa who was initiated as Avadhúta even before he became an Ácárya. In his previous life he was a disciple of a strict spiritual preceptor who went out for long tours abroad, entrusting responsibilities of the Áshrama on a particular disciple. Someone had once offered a coconut to his Guru, Parashivánanda could not resist his hunger and ate the coconut in one day. Because of this he had to face the wrath of his Guru and because of the curse he lived as a coconut tree for many years. During his Kolar tenure he one day told me about the misery caused by gluttony. In those days I was the education in charge of the Bangalore and Ranchi regions. Parashivánandajii used to say, "Although I am now an ascetic but the greed for food is just not going away." To eat good food, he often go as far as Bangalore. At the time eating in hotels was not prohibited for ascetics.

Ácárya Parashivánanda's overpowering gluttony for food would reach its pinnacle at some point. He would remorsefully confess this to me. He was an alert and intelligent ascetic and was aware of the fact that he had to overcome this weakness by performing relentless Sádhaná to attain a pinnacled state of concentration. This is why he began to do his Sádhaná at night in the mountains, which were 4 kms away from his quarters.

Besides doing nighttime Sádhaná, he would also do the midnight Sádhaná. Initially he would struggle during Sádhaná. But very soon he began to have peak experiences during Sádhaná. Soon enough he started to experience the divine bliss of Sádhaná. On and off, he would run into other ascetics with matted locks bathing in the mountain stream. As he attained the ability to be singularly focused due to his Sádhaná, he also took control of his other propensities. He would never cease to talk of the multitude of experiences that he had while he was practicing his Sádhaná in the Srinagar crematorium grounds. As a matter of fact, Ácárya Parashivánandajii was not only an introvert person but also a very sweet person. He was tall with a fair complexion like an Italian with dark hair though his hair was thin. He also stammered a little which would seem childlike and innocent.

One night when he was deeply absorbed in Sádhaná in the cremation grounds in Kathuá [Jammu - Kashmir], he realized that some animal was licking

his back, he pushed him aside with his hands and thought that it felt it was a tiger. An intrepid Yogii while engaged in Sádhaná, made a practical display of non-violence and compassion towards a violent animal. The following Patanjali treatise reminds us of this:

Ahimsá pratiś'háyám Tatsánnidhao Vaerátyágah.

Meaning- when a violent animal comes in contact with an ascetic who is committed to non-violence it must forget its innate violent traits.

One poet said:

*Kahaláne Ekata Rahata Ahi, Mayur, Mrga Bággha,
Jagatu Tapovan Sao Kiyao Diragha- Dággh Nidággha.*

During Parashivánandajii's Gorakhpur posting our friendship deepened considerably. By nature, he was a very responsible person but Bábá never gave him any major responsibility in the organization. Even he was not particularly interested. One day he said to me in a light vein, "If ever we have to run this organization in future what would happen to this world!" He himself came up with the answer to his question that indiscipline and frivolous people would have a hard time! And it was for this reason (to discipline some Ácárya's) that he was sent to Gorakhpur. There was a family of five Ácárya's who were also highly educated and belonged to the higher strata's of society. These people used to look down upon younger people of other castes. Bábá used to get complaints about this very frequently. One day during a meeting of Ácárya's, Bábá raised this topic and taking one Ácárya's name Bábá reprimanded him very sternly. I too was present at that meeting. When Parashivánandajii was appointed to Gorakhpur Bábá directed him to make a good impression in Gorakhpur and for the various communities living in the neighboring areas. The impact of his work is still felt today. However, he could not stay for long in Gorakhpur. From Gorakhpur he was transferred to Quilandi in Kerala. At that time Ánanda Márga had no presence in Quilandi.

On reaching Quilandi he spent three days on the beach sitting under a coconut tree. One CP Municipal councilor used to live near the beach. He heard that a Yogii had been meditating on the beach for three days. He walked up to Parashivánandajii and requested him to come to his house. Seeing the councilor's big house a thought flashed through Parashivánandajii's mind that Gurudeva's order was to start a school. So, he raised the topic with the councilor.

The municipal councilor readily gave a part of his house to Parashivánandajii for the school. He wrote a lengthy letter to me in which he said, "Yesterday was Ekádashii, and today it is 2 pm, the day after Ekádashii. Till now He has not yet sent a lemon for me". He would say these things affectionately about Bábá. Until now my financial condition in Jarwá was not very sound. Fortunately a Márgii brother had come to meet me and I took Rs. 200 from him and sent a money order of Rs. 200 to Parashivánandajii. On receiving the money order he replied: "I have used it as advance for school furniture."

I was relieved to know that Parashivánandajii used the money where he needed it. Immediately after this he was sent to the Ánandapur High School. Due to several reformative measures taken by him it became easy to run the school in an appropriate manner. Many teachers would not come to class and so students too would not attend classes. Like a strict guardian he disciplined everyone and tackled all the issues that hampered the smooth functioning of the school. Unfortunately the people around him plotted against him. He did not sense this development. Perhaps the voyage of his life like the setting sun was drawing to an end. All of a sudden one day he turned up in Gorakhpur.

A young Márgii boy came to Jarwá with the message that Parashivánandajii wanted to meet me. I immediately left to meet him. On arriving I saw Parashivanandajii oscillating between extreme phases of indifference and longing. Wearing a loincloth he was behaving very indifferently. He had already distributed all his useful items. There was nothing in his bag except a Langota and a towel. He was going to meet everyone in their homes and ate whatever people offered him. I was really worried about what had happened to Parashivánandajii. One night I gave him Hajmolá [a digestive pill] as he had asked for it, he smilingly said that Parashivánanda and Hajmolá or oxymorons. This time he did not maintain any restrictions around his eating. No one at that time had any doubts that he had actually come to bid a final goodbye to everyone. Two or three days after his return, I got the news that somebody had shot him while he was asleep the night before. Parashivánandajii finally went to Bábá's abode. This was the brief recollection of the worldly life of a great Tántrika Sádha, Parashivánandajii. I went to his pyre and offered obeisance to his ashes. When alone and emotionally indifferent memories of this Sádha come to mind. I had been waiting and when we meet him again. I need to mention one thing here. Once when Parashivánandajii had gone to meet Bábá, immediately on his return he said, "He trapped me this time too." I wondered what happened?

He explained that Bábá had said, "Parashivánanda, keeping your hand on My chest swear that you will not take salvation." He said to me, "My friend, I have been trapped again. Anyway! Its Gurudeva's wish." One day in Jarwá as we were returning after Sádhaná, he predicted quite inadvertently that someone would make someone else shoot him. It seems that he had a vivid intuition about how his life would come to an end. Since the context has come up now I could not resist bringing this particular topic to light.

In the same year that I had arrived in Jarwá Bábá visited Varanasi that October. Bábá was welcomed at the Bábatur airport. As soon as Bábá came out onto the tarmac Bábá's car with his motorcade had just started to drive out an advocate Márgii whom I knew, asked me to get into his car and urged his driver to drive fast and cut in right behind Bábá's car. This maneuver must have taken us 20 to 25 minutes. As soon as our car came behind Bábá's car His car slowed down to stop. Bábá made the driver stop the car on pretext of drinking water. Putting my head inside His car I got to touch Bábá's feet. While giving me His blessings He asked, "How are you?" Before I could say anything, the PA indicated to the driver to move on ahead. I pulled my head back and settled down on the seat with the satisfaction that I managed to attend Bábá's Darbár.

During the post-emergency period, after a short stint of the Jantá Dal government, Mrs. Gandhi once again returned to power. I was still in Jarwá. Since Jarwá was situated on the border, both the central and state governments kept a close watch on all activities in Jarwá. The Ánanda Márga's Jarwá branch had always been looked at suspiciously by the government. At one time a lengthy article was published in an issue of the scandalous weekly magazine, the Blitz, which had the distinguished editor R.K. Karanjíá on its team. The government was alert in any case as soon as I was posted in Jarwá. The central government had declared me a security risk. I could not go anywhere alone. Two intelligence officers would invariably follow me. I had developed a close friendship with a local MP who was elected from the Congress party, when he came on tour to Jarwá. Because I had a close personal bond, I arranged a rally meeting for him, which was well attended. Seeing the Áshram's activities, the MP praised our efforts and went back to the plains. Some local workers very vocally opposed his visit to Jarwá because the Congress workers had not yet forgotten the emergency incidents. Intelligence personnel immediately prepared a file on the MP, Shrii Chandrabhal Mani. It is also possible that the times were such that there were dossiers on everyone! The MP's file reached

Mrs. Gandhi. He was one of the most dynamic leaders of this region. In his own words he told me that Madam had asked CM Tiwarijii, "There is a rumour is going around that you have become an *Ánanda Márgii*?" The reply was, "No, I have not become *Ánanda Márgii* but, if we do not get the support of a local *Ácárya Dádá* it will be very difficult for us to retain the constituency. Anyway, I will do what you wish." Madam smiled and said, "Go and be happy. Somebody has created mischief for you and has filed a complaint against you." Tiwarijii returned from Delhi to Jarwá and came to meet me and said, "Now you can transform the shape of this *Áshrama*. I will start sending bricks for you from tomorrow." So the present infrastructure the Jarwá *Áshrama* has today is because it was built with the active cooperation of the local people but Shrii Chandrabhal Mani Tiwari alone provided the bricks for the *Áshrama*.

After this occurrence the government loosened its constant investigation of me. I could finally roam without any restrictions. It was interesting to see that hitherto absent government employees started to fully cooperate with me. I can never forget the assistance and support extended to me by the forest department nor the many, many contributions made by the tribals and villagers, be they Hindu or Muslim. This is the reason that even today a special feast is organized annually for the villagers. What remains to be seen is how long this tradition will continue.

Allahabad visit of Gurudeva

The news of the popularity of Ánanda Márğa's School in Jarwá had spread to three to four other districts. We were able to reach out to all sections of society. Students were coming in from Gondá, Bahraica, Basti, Devariá, Gorakhpur and Nepal to stay in the hostel. The Allahabad DMC was round the corner and in order to attend the DMC and see Bábá in person, I went to Allahabad with the Márğii brothers. I had some unforgettable experiences in Allahabad, which are unforgettable.

Like every other day, after breakfast, Bábá would go out for a routine walk in the fields. Devotees would be waiting in a queue to get a glimpse of him. I was one of them hoping that the master would grace me with his benevolent mercy. Accepting everyone's Namaskára he would get into the car and leave. I was disheartened. He went with his sight fixed ahead, I felt a moment of pain and sorrow. I thought (on Bábá's return) I would try my luck one more time but the same thing happened on this occasion too. This time the pain was unbearable but I was helpless.

Soon after entering his room, Bábá turned back, came out to me, flashing a big smile, stood beside me and holding my shoulder asked, "How are you?" Without waiting for a reply, as he was going back into his room, he said, "Stay cheerful." With these words, he set off a wave of joy that soothed my aching heart, and entered the room. It would not be irrelevant to say that until then Bábá's quarter was not built in Mumfordganj of Allahabad, and as

a temporary residence a house had been rented in Judges colony. Another experience that took place on this tour needs mentioning. Reporting was going on with great seriousness. Bábá asked, "How many kids were there in the school? I replied, "41." Bábá said, until the next reporting (which was to be held in one month), I should increase the number of students and report to Him. I nodded in agreement.

After a reporting session, Bábá used to be in a very pleasant mood. But on that day, Bábá was in a very cheerful mood and leaving aside his role of Sankatá Mocana, Bábá decided to sing something with a rhythmic movement of the head and started singing:

*"Canájør garam bābu banáyá majedár canájør garam"
 "Merá caná baná hai áli jisko kháte hai bangáli,
 pahane dhoti dhiilii dhálii canájør garam."*

[Humor created on the living and habits of Bengalis.]

Bábá kept on singing and continued clapping with the rhythm of the song. Under His instruction everyone was singing and clapping. As soon as the singing was over, pointing His finger towards me Bábá said, "Rudránanda you must write a play on this." Thus after concluding the reporting session, he indicated that everyone should leave and He Himself went to take rest.

Close to Allahabad, there is a historical excavation site of ancient Kaushambi. Bábá never left an opportunity to shed light on those episodes of history by various means, which were not documented by historians. "Namah Shiváya Shántáya" (Salutations to Shiva the Tranquil) is a book published for the first time on November 1982 in Kolkata, India and containing a collection of twenty discourses. The book is written by Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii on Lord Shiva's life and teachings] is a large collection of those enlightening talks on history given by Bábá) Bábá on his walks told us how Itikathá [chronologically written records of history of human beings] and history [did not include common people, only kings and queens] were two different things. Bábá went to visit the Kaushambi excavation site. I got to know that, due to some issue the police had stopped Bábá's car. My predicament was like that of Shankarácarya and his disciple Padmapáda took whatever vehicle was available and reached the Kaushambi excavation

site. The cars had been parked at one stop and we found that the Deputy Superintendent of Police (DYSP) was writing something.

I saw that the DYSP was none other than Mishrájii. I told Mishrájii that he had stopped Bábá and the General Secretary's car. Seeing me there Mishrájii was taken aback. I told him that on hearing the news that Bábá's cars had been detained, I came running. He directed that both cars should be released and urged me to give two names. The then General Secretary was observing me with a bewildered expression on his face. Finally, he asked me how I knew him.

I told him to leave immediately with Bábá. Bábá had been waiting for too long. The DYSP freed everyone. After completing my other tasks, I came back to Allahabad. As I reached Allahabad the GS told me that it was perfect that I reached there in time, otherwise he did not know what would have happened." I told him that when we are traveling with Bábá we have to take particular care so that Bábá doesn't have to face any discomfort. He accepted this. Again he asked me how I knew the DYSP. I told him that the children of Mishrájii's family stay in our Jarwá hostel and study in our Jarwá School.

Bábá was very pleased that I had gone there and also the manner in which I had dealt with the issue. He said that our ascetics should remain connected to people of various professions. Bábá specifically cited this incident and said that this case is proof in itself how our ascetics have been working closely with the public officials and common people to carry forward the works of the organization. I was very satisfied that this insignificant being was of some use to the Guru and the organization. Bábá made me realize every moment why he had made me stay in Jarwá for such a long time. Moreover, I realized on several occasions the significance of His words, "keep on working cheerfully".

During my Jarwá posting, several friends used to come and greet me after knowing about my whereabouts. This was the time when Bábá's Rationalized Program (RP) was in operation. If someone visited Bábá he had to gift a sapling to Bábá and he would send those trees to different centers. Gurudeva wanted to ensure people would take an interest in preserving various trees and plants, so the species that were going extinct rapidly could be saved. Under this program Bábá sent some saplings to the

Járwa Áshrama. From then onwards, I developed an immense love and affection for trees and plants. At that time my financial condition was very poor. I could only give Rs. 1.8 for collecting trees. Direction came from Bábá, "So long as Rudránanda stays in Jarwá, use his name regularly to further the cause." The devotees were to give trees every day. My financial condition was not hidden from Bábá and perhaps that was the reason Bábá gave these instructions.

Kanpur Dharma Mahá Cakra

After completing my work in Allahabad, I left for Jarwá since I was to guide a few developmental projects that had already begun. So, after taking permission from GS, I returned to Jarwá. Merely few hours had passed since my return from Allahabad, LFT of GS turned up in my quarters with an order that I should reach Kanpur immediately. I came to know that immediately after I had left from Allahabad, Bábá had asked for me and directed that, "As soon as I reached Kanpur regardless of my condition I had to be brought to him instantly." On hearing that Bábá had called me urgently, we finished lunch in a hurry, and along with LFT left for Kanpur. Though I was not completely healthy with a troublesome heart problem. Perhaps Bábá had called me for this reason. We reached Kanpur at midnight.

According to Bábá's direction, he was informed as soon as I arrived there. At that point of time, midnight reporting was going on and Bábá was in the role of Vámadeva [figure of Lord Shiva when he is very angry with somebody] to discipline and punish any laxity towards work. As soon as I entered the room and GS Dada informed Bábá about my presence, Bábá put down his stick and his demeanor began to change. First, he said come closer. I started to move forward slowly. As soon as I reached close to his cot, Bábá said, "Come closer, more closer." By now he had absolutely transformed into the mood of benevolent Kalyána Sundaram [form of Lord Shiva Who is ever

smiling like a grandmother smiles at her grandchild. She wants to make the child happy and for that she is prepared to do anything]. He started asking, "How are you jii?" I remained silent. Again he asked, "Tell me how are you?" I was pretending as if I was angry and it looked as if Gurudeva was busy in cosseting His child. I said, "Bábá I have been doing fine in whatever condition you have kept me."

Again he said, "No I want to know how your heart is doing."

I said, "Bábá, it should be fine."

Bábá touched my heart with His hand and a cold current ran through it. I felt cold and words cannot describe the bliss that I experienced then. After this He gave me a few instructions. I comprehended everything in detail. Again the contour of His face changed. He ordered, "See you should never be anxious, any kind of stress is harmful for your heart." Pointing to the group of people who were standing in a semi-circle, He said, "You people are listening right? He should not remain in any kind of pressure or tension." Again raising his hand in a gesture of giving blessing He said, "Go and be cheerful, I am always there." Immediately after this the Agra DMC was to be held, and since I had to attend this as well, I stayed back after Kanpur DMC. I was touched and graced by His unfathomable compassion and the repeated words of assurance filled me with peace and divine love. My mind became light and more inward looking, and the intensity of my spiritual practice kept on growing. My promptness and skill in execution of a task also increased manifold. Life in Jarwá I was entrusted with various social responsibilities and I hardly got any breather. Whenever I would send a gift for Bábá, He would remember me on some pretext. Once I sent a 7 kg papaya and people left it beside stairs for a week. Whenever He would ascend or descend the stairs, he would say, "He loves me a lot". What else could I have done except offer Him that object, which He Himself gave me.

Agrá Dharma Mahá Cakra

At that time no substantial work was being carried on in Agrá, except, the construction of the Chaprai unit, there was nothing else. Even Bábá was not satisfied with this and nor with the progress of the work of Chaprai unit. During his tour Bábá wanted to put pressure in order to launch new initiatives and speed up their execution. For this reason He stopped taking food, but the work was going on as per schedule. Bábá's room was very big and spacious. With the growing stature of the organization, arrangements were made accordingly so that the workers meeting could be held there only.

One incident happened during Bábá's stay in Agrá, which I will relate. It took place at the very moment when a Tántrika Sádha clad in an Avadhúta's attire was in the midst of a meeting with Bábá who was in the mood of lord Shiva. A woman from a rich family entered the room with a glass of juice to offer to Bábá. No one amongst us noticed when she sneaked into the room, as everyone's attention was fixed on Bábá but with Bábá's thunderous roar of a lion, everyone's attention broke and shifted towards her. Perhaps nobody had seen the Lord in this mood; perhaps Lord Shiva Himself wanted that this Mahá Sabhá (great assembly) should not be seen by anybody. She started to shiver, the glass almost fell from her hand, and she was so frightened that she rushed out of the room and could not talk to anybody. She repented for her mistake later on, but her intention was solemn, she thought Bábá should not remain hungry. Everything

became normal afterwards. After this incident Bábá behaved as if nothing had happened. All our anxiety evaporated. The Lord himself took care of everything easily because everything had taken place in front of Him and the intent was very solemn. This Avadhúta Sabhá (assembly) was unique in its own way. –

Experience while reporting in Bábá's room

I came to participate in Ánanda Nagar DMC from Jarwá. A small Pandál was erected in front of Bábá's Ánanda Nagar Bhawan for conducting the reporting sessions, where Márgiis used to do Sádhaná. For various reasons, including construction of the ground floor that was not completed yet, it was not feasible to allow everyone to come inside the house. In the Pandál, Gurudeva did Tantrábhisekha [application of spiritual power by Guru over the disciple] of the workers. Perhaps after the time of Lord Shiva, it was the first occasion when Gurudeva did "Tantrábhiseka" of Sádhakas. Everyone, whosoever was available there at that time was called and this ritual was done. Bábá would not utter a single word, only performed the work with the touch of his magical stick. It was a time when after the decade of the 60's that the highest numbers of people were initiated as ascetics.

I was waiting in the queue as well and when my turn came I saw Gurudeva was standing in front of me as my ultimate shelter. Firstly, seeing me Bábá smiled sweetly, again he became serious and told me to, "Hold the other end of His stick and asked me to touch all my Cakras one by one, pausing for a while after touching each Cakras." As I began to touch each Cakras with the stick and then moved from one Cakras to another, I continued to feel an inexplicable bliss, and this blissful feeling intensified as I moved upwards, when I reached Ájñá Cakra [pituitary gland that

controls the conscious mind], it became impossible for me to control myself. Gurudeva directed me to stay still. After completing his work, He ordered me to do Sádhaná. As I sat down for Sádhaná, I had an amazing and unexplainable experience.

Finally, the moment came when I was to report to Bábá on my work. I was taken to Bábá's room for reporting. Bábá was taking the reporting very seriously and people were being strictly punished for not discharging their duty properly. With the anticipation that I would also get a dressing down, I was singled out and presented before Bábá. As soon as I came in front of Him, examining me from head to toe Bábá said, "He is a good boy. He works hard, leave him." Bábá instructed me to go out of the room. As soon as I got out, I overheard people discussing this behind my back, "Bábá is pulling us up, and rewarding him. Bábá said he is a good boy, he works, so leave him." Like a potter, while making pots the Guru does the same thing with His disciple. When will the world comprehend this fact?

Transfer from Jarwa to Thano

One day, out of the blue, a senior worker arrived in Jarwá with my reliever. He was a new worker who was posted in Uttar Káshii. I was transferred to Tháno. I initiated the process of handing over my duties and responsibilities to the new worker. Since my responsibility was not confined to Jarwá only, I was also in charge of Tulsipur, Gondá, Bhingá and I had to keep track of the developments of other schools running with the help of the Jarwá Áshrama or under its supervision, it took me a couple of days to train dada who came to take charge from me. Except Bhiinga, in other places, we were running schools built on recently purchased plots. Until then no concrete house was built for the Gondá School, which was run in a mud house, but it was a very big plot. Today its market value is in crores. However, two buildings had already been built in Madhya Bazar in Tulsipur, while I was in Jarwá.

Tháno is in the Dehradun district, situated on the Rshikesh- Dehradun road, twenty kilometers away from the mountains. This place is very picturesque. The tranquil and pollution-free pristine atmosphere makes it more attractive. Tháno is located 11 kilometers from Jolly Grant airport.

Since thousands of years this entire region starting from Haridwár up to Gangotri-Gomukh has been the very Taposthali [abode where Sádhakas. do Sádhaná regularly] of ascetics, monks and Tapasvi is who had abandoned worldly

The local people were very humble and innocent. I began to enjoy my stay there among them. I continued to serve them and educate their children. I was completely engrossed in Sádhaná and Sevá (service).

Although gastro related illness had been troubling me for the last 25 years, I had no option but to drink water from the mountain streams, due to lack of any alternative. Moreover they were not purified and were infested with bacteria. Due to my Guru's benevolent grace, my nagging illness vanished automatically. As my health improved, so Sádhaná became more swift and smooth. I became an integral part of the local community and of the lives of the local people.

Any kind of developmental work that I had done for the region, like laying new roads, bringing in electricity, arranging for clean water, setting up inter colleges was possible only because of the help of the government officials.

An incident occurred during my tenure in Tháno. One day I learned from the villagers that a celebrated saint Svámii Rám had been living in Tháno to carry out some project in Jolly Grant. In the last couple of days, he had demonstrated his supernatural and spiritual powers in front of the press. I became curious to meet him. He was camping 8 kilometers away from my place. We both were pleased to meet each other. During our conversation Svámijii, told me inadvertently that he was living in Hans dale, Philadelphia, but he wanted to build a high tech hospital for the people of this mountain region.

On hearing this I expressed my happiness but Svámijii revealed his concerns, saying that though he had purchased 50 acres of land, it was not sufficient for the hospital. He needed at least another 50 acres of land.

I promised help. He told me that there were two hurdles in his way. Firstly, a retired General living in the neighborhood did not want this project to materialize. He wanted to incriminate one of the doctors, who Svámijiii had brought all the way from America, in a criminal case, so that he runs away. And the other one was the town planner who was not approving the design of the hospital building since it was close to Jolly Grant Airport runway.

I promised to help Svámijiii and presented his case in front of an Ex-servicemen's Association since some officers knew me personally. The General fortunately, did not make any hue and cry over the developments of the project. Perhaps it was the association, which counseled Svámijiii to take the help of Tháno Áshrama for the advancement of the project.

Young boys of the youth Congress used to come to the Áshrama

because of Brahmadatajii. I discussed this issue with them. One fine day they brought the town planner to the Áshrama. I explained to him the importance of a hospital and medical college for the welfare of people in this region. He was a nice person and understood my point, and it was sorted out amicably. As a result of this, the construction work for the hospital building went on with great speed, and finally acquired its complete shape.

During one meeting, Svámijiii became very emotional and told me that he was growing old and could not continue working alone, so if I could take the responsibility as trustee of Himalayan institute, he would be relieved and the work efficiency would improve by leaps and bounds. Moreover, he clearly knew the nature of Avadhútas, above all Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii's Avadhúta. I told Svámijiii that after surrendering everything to Bábá, I had nothing left to give him.

He said, "You are right. This is the true tradition of spirituality." I assured him of my help in any given circumstance. Then he asked me to give one of my reliable accountants, because cases of theft had been taking place frequently in his office. I asked him if he did not have a single reliable individual who could help him.

Svámii Rám Mahárája turned serious. He was a specialist in applied psychology. It was interesting to see his reactions and facial expressions. He had a typical Aryan body, was 6 feet 2 inches tall, with a fair complexion, muscular body, sharp temple, broad chest, and an impressive personality, wearing maroon colour Yogii attire. He said, "Do you think I am Ánandamúrtijii? Only He can get young and educated saints in a world which is at this time consumed by materialistic culture. This is not a game. I thought it was the right moment to ask questions and that Svámijiii could reveal many secrets. I asked Svámijiii, "Do you know Bábá?" Answering in the affirmative, he continued to tell His story. I did not want to break his flow of thoughts.

He continued, "So listen then, I will tell you everything. First of all, let me tell you frankly, I had heard about Bábá from my Guru. Now you listen to my story, starting from my infancy to Gurudeva and to Bábá. Before my birth, my father had turned 65 years and mother 60 years and both of them were devotees of the Gurudeva and were childless. One morning all of a sudden, Gurudeva came knocking on our door. As soon as my father opened the door, Gurudeva said, "Give me your child." Taken aback by this demand my parents said with disbelief in their voice, "Svámijiii you know

we have been childless all our lives.” Gurudeva turned serious and said, “If you give birth to a child, will you give that child to me?” “Both of them said in a fervent voice, “If we get one why would we not give him to you.” On hearing this Gurudeva left. They also closed the door and eventually forgot about this incident.

After one year of this event I was born, this was a first miracle. And it did not end there. Immediately after my birth Gurudeva came to our home and asked, “Where is my child? Bring him to me.” My mother brought me out and put me on Gurudeva’s lap, and he whispered something in my ears.” Svámijiii looked little lost when he was narrating this incident but stream of old memories kept on flowing. I was surprised when Svámii Rám said that he still remembers that Mantra. How mysterious and unfathomable this spiritual world is. If one believes and experiences only then one feels that spiritual experiences are true, otherwise everything appears false.

After examining me thoroughly Gurudeva put me back on my mother’s lap and left. While leaving he said “Keep him till the right moment comes, I will come and take him once the right moment comes.” I asked, “Svámijiii, what is your Gurudeva’s name? You have not mentioned his name in your famous book ‘Living with the Himalayan Masters.’” He said, “Not in this way, but one of his pictures is there in the book titled “Yogii of Himalayas.” I asked, “Is he the one ascetic with matted locks and sharp eyes?” “He nodded in agreement.

However, within 4-5 years Svámii Rámjii’s parents died. Now Svámijiii was completely under the guidance of the master. Svámijiii continued, “I had never called him Gurudeva. I always called him father. Even he nurtured and looked after me in a fatherly manner. Although he was a cave dweller and an ascetic, he was renowned person across India. He has a separate story, which I would narrate afterwards. Gurudeva sent me to top-notch institutes of the country to complete my education.” During his Shánti Niketan years, he was a classmate of Smt. Indira Gandhi. Adding further to this detail Svámijiii said, since he already had a very good reputation in the western world, people in India were yet to know him. For this reason she wanted to give him a seat in the cabinet by introducing a Ministry of Religious Affairs in the Union ministry.

I asked Svámijiii, “How did you react to this proposal?” He said he told madam, not to abuse him in this manner.

Later on, as our bond became stronger, he came up with a proposal for me to contest the Mussoorie parliamentary seat, citing the fact that all the powerful and rich people in this region wanted to send me to parliament from Mussoorie. He said, if I agreed, he would spend the money. My reply was the same that Svámii Rám gave to Smt. Indira Gandhi. Thus he said, that Svámii Rudránandajii does not have any interest in this, hence there is hardly any possibility that he will agree.

After completing his academics successfully, he became ready to do work. Gurudeva asked him what he wanted to do and he said, he would become an ascetic but not go begging for alms. Gurudeva told him that was the very tradition of an ascetic's life, and he must do this if he wanted to become an ascetic. Svámijii also said as a father his Gurudeva would persuade Svámii Rám to do anything he wanted Rámjii to do. His Gurudeva told him, once you become an ascetic go to the Ganges, ask her for food and she will arrange for your food. After putting on saffron attire, one day while standing on the bank of the Ganges, he made a request, one bowl came out. He showed it to his Gurudeva and he said that was an Ákshaya pot. Whatever dishes he wishes to eat, this pot would give that dish to him. Having received this Annapúrñá pot he was extremely elated. A few days passed. And then one day, he started to think deeply whether eating food was the only priority in life, and miraculous arrangement of which had satisfied him so much that there was no other desire to attain any other thing. Is this the only goal of an ascetic's life? Nothing was hidden from Gurudeva. He expressed his feelings to him as he had started to deride his own self due to this lowly act. Gurudeva told him to go and give it back to the Ganges.

He went there and became relieved after offering the eating bowl back to the Ganges. After a few days, he told Rámjii that since he had no work in India he had to travel abroad. The passport was made and in those days \$1.0 would be given in exchange for a foreign travel. Wearing a silken Lungi, and wrapping a silk Cádár up around the upper part of his body, putting a side bag, on his shoulder, wooden Khad'áun on foot, he ventured out to travel abroad. This is how he landed at Tokyo airport. He got a lot of attention from the press. The crowds present at the airport were fascinated and perturbed as well to see an attractive, young, Sannyásii in strange attire without any shoes. Though he wore his Khad'áun they were not visible. Meanwhile one Japanese gentleman came up to him and asked, "Has anyone come to receive you here?" He said, "Yes." He asked him who had come. He confidently replied, "You." He asked him to go along with him.

They left from the airport in his car. During the journey he introduced himself. He was the managing director of Mitsubishi. He let him stay in his home but threw a challenge to him "My only child [who was 7-8 years old then] has been suffering from incurable jaundice. There is no medical treatment available today. If you can cure him, I will help you to gain popularity here." Rámjii accepted that challenge although jaundice was an incurable disease at that time and remains so even today.

From then onwards, that child started to stay with him. Taking the child on his lap, Svámijii started doing Sádhaná. After six months, the child was completely cured of his illness. Now their joy knew no bounds. His moment of opportunity came. Nature accomplished her work through Svámii Rám. The Mitsubishi managing director organized a grand assembly to felicitate Svámijii, which was graced by many big wigs of Tokyo. He came back from the function content. Within three months he became popular there. The meager \$8 dollar that he had received from the foreign exchange was spent before he landed in Tokyo. Now within three months his savings in bank account increased to 3 million dollars. According to the planning of Svámijii's Guru, his Tokyo mission was accomplished. The Mitsubishi MD wanted to establish him in America too, so he arranged a Tokyo like meeting in America, and made arrangements for his living there. Slowly he established himself there and became a distinguished person in society. After becoming famous as the author of 'Living with the Himalayan Masters', he settled down in Hans dale, Pennsylvania; and began to prepare for future projects and he came down to Jolly Grant. This is how we met in Jolly Grant, Tháno.

After hearing about the events of his life, my curiosity had grown increasingly to know about his Gurudeva. So I asked him if he would tell me the name of his Gurudeva. "He told me, that though it was forbidden to discuss the Guru he could not hide it from me anymore." I also wanted to know, how his Gurudeva knew Bábá, As Svámijii had earlier mentioned that he had heard about Bábá from his Guru. I requested him to pacify my curiosity, on these two points.

Svámijii said, his Gurudeva was his parents' Guru too and lived in a cave in the Himalayas with 4-5 select disciples. He used to survive only on goat milk, which his disciples would arrange for him. At that time very few people in India knew him. But one incident made him famous in India and he became popular as an accomplished Yogii of the Himalayas. I

immediately asked Svámiiiji what that incident was. I was listening to him with rapt attention.

My eagerness grew even more to know how Svámii Rám's Gurudeva knew our Bábá. Svámiiiji continued narrating his Gurudeva's story. Then Gurudeva was living near Darjeeling and it was at a time when, sitting on the banks of a monsoon fed river, he along with his disciples' were deliberating on a treatise of the scriptures. Suddenly a body was seen flowing down the river. Gurudeva told his disciples to take the body out of the river. His disciples extracted that body from the river and brought it to the banks. Gurudeva carefully examined the body and said in a surprised tone, "Oh! He is not alive." His disciples were standing around the body in utter suspense as to how this drama would unfold.

With Gurudeva's one touch the lifeless body became alive again. Since he had forgotten about his past life, he stayed with Gurudeva and started to live like a Sannyásii. One day when he went begging for alms, he bumped into a household, which happened to be his sister's. She recognized her brother and asked him to sit. This news spread like wildfire in every direction. Ultimately, the truth unfolded itself when the prevalent family feud came to light. That man was a King of an estate, and his queen had had a love affair with a doctor.

With the help of the doctor she had procured snake poison from some research lab in Bombay and had him killed by giving him mild doses of the same. Subsequently the court took up the case, and the trial began. The snake poison obtained from the research lab was validated as evidence. Gurudeva was summoned by court, but he sent one of his disciples and pacified the court's curiosity. After this incident Gurudeva became popular in the entire country because this case turned out to be one of the most discussed cases of that time. My questions were not answered yet. I asked him, "Before expressing your opinion about your Bábá, please tell me what was your Gurudeva's name?" Svámiiiji said he was popularly known as Bengáli Bábá. He also revealed that his Gurudeva had written a Tiiká [commentary] on Patanjali treatise using the name of Bengali Bábá, which was published by Motilal Banarasi Das publishing house. The english version was done by Bengali Bábá himself. Out of curiosity, I purchased this book from the Varanasi branch of this publication. It is still there in my bookshelf.

Bengali Bábá said about Bábá that he is the Sákśáta Svarúpa [God in real human form] of Brahma. I asked, "Why he did not try to come close to him?" He said that he was not as fortunate as me. This kind of a spiritual master selects his own team. He had been assigned to do other tasks, "but I love him very dearly." When I told this to Bábá, he instructed me to send one complete set of books be sent to Svámii Rám. When I came back to Tháno and told Svámii Rám that Bábá had sent these books for him, he smiled and selected a couple from the set and returned the rest. As he, he had the rest of the books. I was taken aback by this and asked, How he had Bábá's books?" He replied, "If intelligent people did not read Bábá's books now how will they get new ideas? So, he read Bábá's literature with keen interest." A retired Judge of Calcutta High Court said exactly these words. He was invited to speak in a program in Delhi. So, I went to see him to gift him Bábá's books. Accepting my gift he grabbed my hand and dragged me to his reading room and pointed to the shelf. I was pleasantly surprised to see it was full of the entire collection of books written by Bábá He confessed that whenever he was invited as a speaker to speak in a meeting or in any program, or talk on new ideas, he turned to Bábá's literature because new ideas are found only in his literature. I did not ask anything but he went on, saying, people read Bábá's books and even know that Bábá's philosophy is new, and has relevance for today. But, whenever he speaks he does not mention that it is not his ideology but Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii gave it. Since common people would be familiar with the philosophy of Ánanda Márگا, it has to be told that these are not my ideas but Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii's. When I told this to Bábá He only smiled and didn't utter a word.

Expedition to Upper Himalayas in search of Bhojpatra

In July 1989, a WT (Whole Time worker) came to meet me in Tháno with Ashimánandajii's letter, which contained Bábá's order to collect Bhojapatra. Since WT was very thin, I did not think it was feasible for him to join us on our expedition in the Himalayas. I already had the knowledge that Bhojapatras are found in northern Himalayas beyond an altitude of twelve thousands feet. Two varieties of Bhojapatra trees are found in the Himalayas; in the lower altitude, they grow tall and large. In the higher altitude these trees are found in shrubs and bushes. So, trees can help us calculate the altitude of a particular place in the mountains.

Tropical trees like Palásha [*Butea monosperma*] grow up to a height of 3000 feet. Pine trees occur up to an elevation of 3000 to 5000 feet, and beyond this altitude Devadár [cedar] trees are found up to 11000 feet. Above the Devadár tree line, Bhojapatras grow. Devadárus grow sporadically at this altitude too. Big Bhojapatra trees occur at an altitude of 12,000 to 13,000 feet. Beyond this altitude Bhojapatra trees are found in the form of bushes and shrubs. Above this range, herbs and shrubs of plants like Rudrabanti grow.

My team for the expedition to collect Bhojapatra included Shrii Kakradhar Shástri and one Áshrama a staff. I asked dada who came from

Calcutta to stay back in Tháno Ashrama. We set out on our journey for Gangotri via Uttar Káshii in a Maruti van. On our way we picked up Svámii Premánanda Saraswati at Uttar Káshii. Svámii Premánanda was very popular among the local people of Gangotri region, particularly he was well known among the Pañdás [priest of the temple]. Ácárya of Svámii Sivánanda Áshrama was also with him. After meeting him, our mission to collect Bhojapatra became easier.

Having reached Gangotri, we stayed in Svámii Sivánanda Áshrama. By then it became very easy to cross over to Gangotri from Lanka because a bridge had already been constructed in Lanka.

The next day the early in morning Svámii Premánandajii sent boys of the pandas to climb Gangotri summit to collect Bhojapatra. They came back by 9 am with sufficient Bhojapatra. Thus we were saved from the ordeal of trekking up and down the mountain for 10 kilometers for procuring Bhojapatra. Later on, as I gained experience I learned that at various altitudes of the Himalayas different kinds of medicinal herbs and plants grow. We stayed back for a day in Gangotri. The next morning, we left from Gangotri with Bhojapatras and came to Gangnáni via Lanka and Bharwari. After bathing in the hot springs and spending some time with Nepali Bábá, we took the route of Bharbari and reached Uttar Káshii at noon. During my short stay in Gangotri, I dearly missed Svámii Rámánanda Avadhúta, he had already attained the abode of bliss. When he was alive Svámii Rámánanda Avadhútajii and Svámii Krśńáshramajii were the Centre of attraction in Gangotri. We missed both of them. I had a desire to meet the aged ascetics in Uttar Káshii so we stayed there for few hours. After collecting alms, the monks ate lunch at noon, and then rested for a while. Even I didn't have enough time, as I had to send the Bhojapatra tree to Kolkátá immediately so that Bábá would receive it at the earliest. So, we came back to Tháno by the evening. Next day, I dispatched the Bhojapatra tree to Kolkata with dada who had been waiting in the Tháno Áshrama. It was a relief for me. I began to wait for the response from Bábá. Along with the message that Bábá received it, Bábá sent another demand through his PA of collecting Brahma Kamal. Since we had sufficient information regarding Bhojapatra tree and its location, we didn't have to face any trouble as such in collecting and sending them to Bábá. But we had to make an extra effort to get Brahma Kamal. That took us almost two months, which is a different story altogether.

Expedition into the lap of the Himalayas in search of Brahma Kamala

In August 1988, Bábá's message came that we had to collect Brahma Kamal [named after Brahma, the God of Creation, which probably blooms only for one month in the entire year, somewhere between August and September]. Initially, I couldn't figure where the Brahma Kamal grows. However, with Bábá's strict instructions that it was to be procured during my stay in Tháno, one thought came to my mind, that the Himalayan region must be the place where it grows. I tried to collect information on Brahma Kamal from the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Mussoorie. In the afternoon, I left for Mussoorie on a scooter. The distance from Tháno to Mussoorie via Dehradun is 50 kilometers. No sooner had I come out from Dehradun and hit the Mussoorie road, it started raining cats and dogs. After a short while, the busy road became empty and there was no one on the road except myself. The heavy downpour forced all moving vehicles to stop along the left side of the road. I had no other option but to proceed further because I had to reach the DFO during office hours so that I could get essential information regarding the Brahma Kamal. Drenched in rain I reached the DFO's office, but the DFO was in his home in Dehradun. As I was totally wet, it would have been troublesome for me to come back to the Áshrama, so I went to Bharat Bhusanji's house. Due to the wet clothes I began to feel cold. He gave me a towel and after about an hour he returned my clothes dried and

ironed. He urged me to stay for a while but considering the gravity of the task that Gurudeva had given me he did not insist further. Shrii Ramesh Tiwariiji, DFO Mussourie used to live in a colony near the National Forest Research Institute. He was quite surprised to see me at his house at such an odd hour and in the midst of incessant rain. He asked what was the purpose of my visit. I told him everything. Once I finished telling my story, he said, “Svámiiiji you would get Brahma Kamal in certain Táis [lakes] of Himalayas.” Then I told him, “Brahma Kamal does not grow in any Tála. This flower is a medicinal herb that grows or blooms in the snow, and Gurudeva wants this.”

The DFO Shrii Ramesh Tiwari was the brother-in-law of Ácárya Ratnesh Bhattajii’s who was from Lucknow and knew me personally. Admitting his inadequate knowledge regarding places of origin of Brahma Kamal, Tiwariiji said, “Svámiiiji Brahma Kamal is one of the prohibited items of the Himalayan region because it comes under the Forest Act. So it is illegal to take this flower outside.” I got a little carried away by this information and told him, I want this flower under any circumstances. I also told him that, I was starting my journey to Himalayas after informing him, and if he wished he could ask his forest police to arrest me. Shrii Ramesh Tiwari burst out laughing and told me to go ahead but to be careful and comeback safely with Brahma Kamal. I returned to Tháno Áshrama by late night. By the following morning, my anxiety grew and I kept on asking people about Brahma Kamal but nobody could give any specific information.

Bábá used to inquire almost every week what happened to Brahma Kamal. He did not give any further directions though. One day, in the last week of September, I got a sarcastic message from Bábá, “He is looking for Brahma Kamal sitting in his room only, as if Brahma Kamal would grow in his room, and he would gift it to Bábá. Had he gone outside looking for it, he would have got it by now.”

This message sent by Bábá was an eye opener for me. I decided that I would leave the next day at 2 am in search of Brahma Kamal. I hired a Maruti van because Maruti vans can easily drive on high altitude mountainous roads. Three Márgii brothers agreed to accompany me in my expedition. Shrii Chakradhar Shástri was always ready to participate in this kind of adventure. The next day, at around 8 pm, the Maruti van arrived and

my fellow travelers also reached the Áshrama in time. Dr. Fateh Singh and Nágendra came directly from Meerut. Since we were scheduled to start our journey at 2 am, we were through with dinner by 8:30pm, and were trying to get some sleep. All of a sudden, a Geological survey team, which was to study glaciers, came back to the Áshrama due to heavy snowfall on the mountains. They were a ten-people strong study team and arrived at 9:30 pm, introduced themselves and settled down.

I rushed to the kitchen to make arrangements for their dinner. Coming out of the kitchen I asked them to take some rest after dinner since they were exhausted and hungry. The head of the study team gifted me a big golden flower emitting a pleasant aroma, he told me it was Brahma Kamal. I was in cloud nine! He also told me about the location where I would get Brahma Kamal. So now, I had the necessary information regarding the place where it grows and about the flower itself, while sitting within the four walls of the room.

He also cautioned us that the glacier had received two feet thick snowfall and we should be mentally prepared for a long search and that we should carry adequate equipment for digging. A thick layer of snow had been formed. We got whatever information we needed. Now I understand Bábá's message, "Does anyone really find Brahma Kamal sitting in the room at all? Had he ventured out in its search he would have definitely got it." The ways of Tantra Gurus' teachings are indeed unique. Gurudeva was preparing me mentally.

Undoubtedly he makes you successful, but in the similar manner as King Harish Chandra, who was first put in a difficult Situation. After taking our baths, we left at 2 am for our destination Hemkund. Hemkund is a pilgrimage Centre for Sikhs, where the tenth Guru Sáheb Gobind Singhjii Mahárája meditated to gain (mystical) power in order to become victorious in his war to "protect Dharma". We undertook the search for the Brahma Kamal that grows in the glacier of this Hemkund Mountain. I was accompanied by Shrii Cakradhar Shástri from Haridwar and Shrii Fateh Singh and Nágendra both of whom came all the way from Meerut.

We reached the Joshimath Ánanda Márga Áshrama, our first stop, at around 2:30 pm in the afternoon. After taking our meals we reached our next destination Govinda Ghát in route to Hemkund'. We found a place

in a Dharmashála and spent the night there. Shrii Fateh Singh suddenly caught fever due to exhaustion. We had to leave him in Dharmshála with the driver. The following morning we set out for our next destination, Ghangariá at 5 am. Ghangariá was situated 23 miles away from Govinda Ghát. The road went through inhospitable mountain forests. Though our daylong journey was very exhausting, we saw the beauty of nature in its full glory. The chirping of birds, the melody created by the dancing cascades and the pleasant cacophony of the mountain streams made this journey a wonderful experience. On and off we would stop to behold the enchanting beauty of nature and we would not feel like moving ahead, leaving behind such sights. Throughout this leg of the journey, mesmerizing mountain cascades would continue to invite us silently to come closer and sit there and soak in their beauty. Though the mind was eager, the sense of responsibility kept goading us to move forward. If we had not reached Ghangariá before dusk, two things could have happened. Either we could have diverted from the path or we could have become the meal of the wild animals. So this fear charged us up to drag along our worn out bodies to reach Ghangariá. Around 7:30 pm we reached our destination. Hemkund Sahib Gurudvárá is managed and run by Sikhs, where basic amenities are provided according to the needs of various seasons. Gurudvárá Prabandhak [Stewart] made us grateful by giving us blankets and rooms.

I had barely settled down with the team, when suddenly the Gurudvárá Prabandhak Sardárjii, who had a white beard, a white Pagdíi (Turban) on his head and was wearing a white Kurtá Pájámá, sat down beside me and became very emotional. He started to describe his own spiritual journey, by saying, "At the time I was in service in the Indian Air force and my retirement was near. One divine human being wearing a white dhoti Kurtá, with large framed glasses on his eyes, came up to me and said, 'After retirement you wait in Ghangariá Gurudvárá which is below Hemkund. You will get your next instructions about what you will have to do in the future.'"

"After retirement, I have been waiting here since the last three years but no instructions have come yet." Sardár Bahádurjii was troubled by this spiritual agony. Though he was managing the affairs of the Gurudvárá with absolute devotion, there was emptiness in his heart. I had no idea why after three years he shared his agony with me. I was surprised and thought

perhaps it was the inspiration of the Lord. Otherwise hundreds of pilgrims come and stay in the Gurudvára, why had he selected me to share his story. His story made me realize that Brahma Kamal was a mere excuse; perhaps on this pretext Táraka Brahma [A devotional concept in Tantra — it is the bridge between Saguña and Nirguña] had conceived a path for the benefit of an eager soul.

To enlighten the Sardárjii's dejected mood, I said immediately, "I am here only on his behalf." It was very obvious from Sardárjii's bewildered expression that he was keen to know what my next instruction was, as he kept on looking at me. He did not take any further time to realize that the moment for which he had been waiting for 3 years, had finally arrived, hence his keen eyes were waiting for the instruction to come. Because of the heavy snowfall the night before, it was freezing cold. I did not ask him to bathe in water but told him to come to me after washing his hands and feet and changing his clothes. By then the snowflakes started to fall. After giving some initial instructions I began to give him Diikśá. I felt as if Sardárjii was absorbing everything in his heart.

He attained a state of extreme bliss. I was very happy too, as Sardárjii looked very peaceful and after offering of Dakśiná, it seemed as if, he had become free after surrendering everything at the lotus feet of the Guru. Though I had given Diikśá to thousands of people, as a medium of the Guru, but in my career as an Ácárya, giving Diikśá to Sardárjii was very special because Gurudeva had made this special arrangement to give Diikśá to Sardárjii on the pretext of procuring Brahma Kamal.

As his Diikśá was over and when he was doing Iishvara Prañidhána [Intuition Practice - Moving towards God with system and speed], I felt as if he was not in his body. After this I looked for a place to do Sádhaná. Two brothers had come from Andhra Pradesh; one, a professor of medicine in the medical college of Kurnool and the other, a bank manager; I had no idea why they came to me and told me their story one by one. I learned they had come here from Andhra Pradesh in search of a Guru. I gave Diikśá to one brother then and there and asked the other to meet me outside the Gurudvára in the forest, at 4 am because we were supposed to begin climbing Hemkund summit at 5am, and it was a three-hour trek.

When his Diikśá was in progress, people were still asleep inside their rooms; the snowfall had already started. I kept on wiping snow off my body

while giving him Diikśá. It should be kept in mind that falling snow is like cotton balls, and it does not wet the body or cloth.

So both the brothers were initiated into spiritual practices of the Ānanda Marga. At 5 am Sardárjii came with us to show us the trekking route and then went back to the Dharmashála. It seemed as if he was absorbed in Sádhaná all night because he was very cheerful and in a pleasant mood. Hoping to find the Brahma Kamal we kept walking towards Hemkund. The summit was not clearly visible to us because the morning rays of the sun had not touched it yet. We kept on climbing in great spirits. As we moved a little further, there was a turn, which led to the valley on the left side. A board was installed which read, "From here take a turn for the Valley of Flowers." However, our destination was not the valley of flowers but the Hemkund glacier. Hence we kept moving onwards without making any turns.

The Valley of flowers is an incredibly beautiful place in the upper Himalayan region. It came to limelight when the reputed journalist cum writer Sardár Khushwant Singh wrote an article on the valley of flowers after visiting this place. As I had already heard of the valley of flowers, it had an irresistible attraction for me. As a matter of fact during the blooming season, which extends from August 15th to September 15th a myriad variety of flowers in the higher Himalayan region starts blooming. But here, a vast expanse of this valley gets decorated with flowers and transforms this valley into an enchanting sight. People, who love flowers, travel to this valley during this season.

There were two reasons why we did not turn towards the valley of flowers, though we passed by the valley. One, had we turned towards the valley we would not have been able to come down to the predetermined base after collecting Brahma Kamal from the Hemkund Glacier summit. Moreover, it was difficult to predict what our physical condition would be after the exhausting return journey. The second reason was that when we reached Hemkund it was October 2nd and snowfall had already started at that altitude; not only flowers but the plants were also dead by then.

These conditions cleared confusion from my mind and I decided to move onwards towards our destination. Though it was hard to leave the picturesque valley of flowers behind, we continued our journey. I was wondering whether I would get another opportunity in this lifetime to visit

this valley again. And now that I have settled down to write my memoirs, those unforgettable moments keep coming back to my mind but at this age, given my health condition, it is almost impossible to undertake another journey to the valley of flowers in Ghangariá. My age and health will also prevent me from attaining my other wish to travel to Mánasarovar, Kailash Mountain in this lifetime as well.

Anyway in this short span of life, experiencing everything and exploring every place on this earth is a dream not only for me but for everyone; something always remains unfulfilled. As we were inching towards the Hemkund summit, slightly ahead of us we saw one slope of the glacier; it was a 100 feet thick glacier slab, covered with a layer of soil. In most cases, glaciers do remain under the layers of soil, hence they do not look like dazzling snow, but instead the glacier looks brown like soil. It would be incorrect to think that all glaciers of the Himalayas are exactly like ice cubes that are formed in refrigerators.

For us it was an intimidating prospect to climb the glacier and get to the other side especially at night. The three of us started to weigh in our options; we could go down and take a different route to climb up to the other side of the glacier. Otherwise there was the terrible prospect that we could fall from the steep slope. Suddenly I remembered that as we were starting off from the Gurudvárá in the morning.

Sardárjii had given me a stick, saying it might in come handy while climbing high mountains. Hence I had carried that stick with me. I took off my shoes and threw them across the glacier one by one ensuring that it would land not too far. I pulled up my Lungi and tied it and then began to pierce the ice surface with the stick so that I could dig in my fingers into the ice to make a grip. I was able to put the weight of my body on my feet and hands. Thus with this balancing technique, I started to climb up very slowly. Though the pace of my climbing was very slow I finally managed to cross over to the other side of the glacier. Other members of my team successfully crossed the glacier as well.

If you move fast while climbing a mountain, there is always the fear of exhausting your body very quickly. Once the body is exhausted, the climber faces immense trouble while climbing further up. We were climbing at a snails pace step by step.

If you make haste during descent, then there is fear of falling off the steep slope. Descent from the mountains wears out the muscles faster than climbing. Since it was a trek to the glacier summit our pace was very slow. Because of the slow pace when we reached Hemkund Sahib Gurudvára, it was almost 8 am. We saw everything was wrapped under a thick cover of snow. The natural lake near the Gurudvára, where devotees bathe before entering the Gurudvára was covered under one foot thick snow, as if the lake was sleeping, wrapped in a snow blanket over it, protecting its pure water inside from the freezing cold. There was absolute stillness. Not a single bird was to be seen there. Before the advent of winter they had fled to safe places.

After surveying the landscape, I found the place looked exactly the way it was described by the glaciology study team. But we had not set out on an exploration to survey the ice-capped summits but to search for the Brahma Kamal lying hidden underneath the ice. It was our objective like Bhárgava [the son and disciple of Lord Shiva who had a fearful form] to offer it to Áshutośa [The pleasing form of Lord Shiva]. I started pondering, that though we had reached a place where our object of desire was hidden under a surface of thick snow, the question remained that we did not know where exactly it was and who would guide us there. With this dilemma in mind, suddenly a thought flashed in my mind, "Worry reduces the power of thinking." Worrying would not help anymore. Only by dint of surrender would we accomplish Siddhi [purpose of our expedition to be fulfilled]. My fellow travelers were immersed in the breathtaking beauty of the snow-covered landscape. Finding an appropriate place on the summit for Samkalpa and Sádhaná, I did Kiirtana and Sádhaná. Ice has a tendency to become as hard as glass at night, and in the day with intensity of sunlight it gradually turns soft like cotton. Ice that comes down from fresh snowfall remains as soft as cotton.

After doing Sádhaná and Gurupújá I took Samkalpa [oath] that until and unless I get clear directions I wouldn't get up from Sástáunga. Almost with the same kind of determination Gaotama Buddha who while performing austerity sat down under the Bodhi tree after bathing in the Fálgu River. The following Shloka suitably describes this kind of resolve:

*Ihásane shuśyatu me shariiram.
Tvagasthimámsam pralayanca yátu.
Aprápya bodhiṁ bahukalpadurlabhám
Naevásanát káyamatashcaliśyate.*

Let every atom of my body reduce to ashes but I shall not leave this seat of meditation unless I attain that state of spiritual evolution for which I have come and adopted this life. I shall not leave this seat unless I realize the truth. It could have been 9 am in the morning as the sunlight illuminated the entire stretch of the summit and the sky became clear by then. The cold breeze made us feel colder still. I had already decided I would not get up until I get clear directions.

After 20 minutes or so, I smelled an aroma, which had bewitched me two nights before, when the glacier study team, had put a Brahma Kamal in my hands. It was a similar fragrance that was permeating the entire atmosphere. I realized that bulbs of Brahma Kamal and its plants should be found there and in adjacent areas in large numbers. I climbed down 5-6 feet from there and started digging with a Kutli which is an instrument used in digging up mountain soil to take out potatoes and other root vegetables. Shrii Shástriji and Nágendrajii also joined in. We extracted almost 200 bulbs. I selected 100 bulbs from them, which were big and in good shape. I heaved a huge sigh of relief after packing them in my bag.

With a deep sense of satisfaction and relief I began to wonder what we should do next. It was decided that since our mission was already accomplished it would be meaningless for us to stay there any longer. If we started descending soon we would be able to reach our destination in time. It was a repetition of the common wisdom that a return journey is always covered easily and effortlessly. Spiritual voyage is unlike this journey, where progress is dependent on the benevolent grace of the Guru, a disciple can only make an effort and the rest is the Guru's wish.

On our way back I picked up our luggage and bade goodbye to Sardárjii who became very emotional.

As per Sardárjii's wish, his work was done and I had completed my task. I had no idea what Bábá's plan was and how it would materialize.

Perhaps Bábá rescued Sardárjii who like an elephant was trapped in an abyss. Though he had put me through an ordeal, he showered his benevolent mercy on me and on Sardárjii as well. On the pretext of one task Bábá completed many tasks. Though I was terribly exhausted but I was ecstatic too, and meditating on Bábá, I started to walk towards Govinda Ghát. On the way back as I saw the same beautiful cascade of water dancing vigorously, the beauty of the surrounding nature was as enchanting as it was when we were climbing up. Being enchanted by the indescribable beauty of nature, we enthusiastically moved on to our destination, but now happiness during the return journey was doubled because of the successful completion of our goal, but there was also a sense of urgency.

When we were going up, the first rays of rising sun was illuminating our path, in the same way as when we were coming down the mountain, the last rays of the setting sun was guiding us forward. We reached Govinda Ghát at around 8 pm.

Though yet some light, which helped us through the dark roads of the forest. We finally we reached our destination. By then Shrii Fateh Singh had recovered. He was not fit for a long trek up the summit as it was freezing cold, but he was fine and ready for the return journey to Tháno by car. Without any delay we packed our bags and got into the car. We came back to Tháno in the morning. Since I was not fit to travel any further, I asked a Márgii (a retired railway employee) who was staying in the Áshrama to take the Brahma Kamala to Bábá's Tiljala green house. I was waiting in anticipation to hear about Bábá's happy reaction.

Bábá's PA told me how Bábá reacted with happiness on receiving the Brahma Kamala. My eager soul was satisfied at hearing these sweet words. For a disciple there is no happier moment than to see his spiritual master happy. If Lord Shiva is happy then the entire created world is happy. When I went to Tiljala I had the same experience. Perhaps Gurudeva invited me while in this mood. I realized that I experienced the same kind of happiness because of what happened on 10th November 1989. (This incident is narrated in next chapter.)

When Gurudeva called me at 2 A.M. in the Midnight

One night while I was sleeping in Asiimánandajii's room, I faintly remember somebody came from Bábá's quarter and waking me up saying, "Bábá has called you right away." It was the night of 10th November 1989; as I looked at the clock; it was about to strike 2 A.M. On hearing Bábá's name my sleep vanished instantly. Rubbing my eyes, I came out.

As I reached Bábá's quarters, I was told Bábá had been waiting in His room for me. I wondered what urgency had come that Maháprabhu had to take pains to call me at this hour of night and that He had not slept Himself as He was waiting for me, I went inside His room and did Saśtáunga. After blessing me, Gurudeva told me to sit down and said, "You definitely know Bengáli isn't it?" I remembered when reporting was taking place in Tiljala, Bábá smilingly told everyone, "Rudránanda knows very well how to speak broken Bengali." I said, "Yes Bábá." As far as I recollect throughout my entire span of life nobody dared to say 'no' in front of Bábá. Bábá started, "Well then you listen to Me carefully and understand, what I am saying. Once I finish my talk I will tell you what to do next." For one and half hours Bábá continued to talk and then told me that I needed to do next.

Bábá had endowed me with a tremendous retentive memory. I cannot explain how I pulled together all my senses and concentrated on what He

said with a single-minded focus. I did not only comprehend everything but I also felt as if I was riding on the waves of indescribable joy. This experience is inexplicable. After a few moments he said, the knowledge that I am going to give you now is Applied PROUT of Ánanda Marga, and through this, a new chapter has been added to the organization today. This chapter is called "Master Unit". Bábá told me that when I go back to my room I should, write an article in English compiling these talks.

He told me to come the following day at 7 am and knock on the doors of his bathroom to let him know that I was there and wait for my next instruction. Once I hear the splashes of water from the bathroom I would know that Bábá was bathing, then I should start reading the article that I had worked on at night, word-by-word, paragraph-by-paragraph. Once one paragraph is finished and Bábá says, "Good, go ahead" I should understand that I have passed and I can continue to read from the document. He told me to keep this process in my mind, as He would continue to bathe. I agreed to what Bábá said and again told myself not to make any mistakes because when I was taking leave from Bábá at night He had asked me if I had understood what He had told me and whether I would face any difficulty. I returned to my room in the late at night. I took the responsibility and accepted everything with patience, enthusiasm and with a sentient fear that Bábá has given such a massive task to an insignificant being such as me, I felt very grateful. He also instructed me not to fall asleep until the task is completed which I did.

After completing the task, I had to be present at Bábá's room at 7 am in the morning. In case I faced any hurdle, I knew that I would not get anyone's help during this short span of time. At that time, there was no dearth of scholars in Tiljala. But it was clear to me that I had to compete the task alone. As I came back to my room, I found everyone was fast asleep as it was 4 am in the morning. My sleep had vanished at 2 am.

I first recollected all the talks and ideas given by Bábá and mentally made a coherent and consolidated structure. Thereafter I started to write it down in English. By the time it was 10 minutes to 7 am I gave a final touch to the finished article on the practice notebook. It was called Master Unit, the applied side of PROUT, the social economic philosophy of Ánanda Marga.

As Bábá had directed me in the night, exactly at 7 am I reached the door of the bathroom that was inside Bábá's bedroom. I gave the indication of my arrival and in anticipation of the sound of splashing water I sat there with rapt attention. After a few moments the sounds of splashing water started to come. Bábá said, "Rudránanda you have come. Okay, you start your work." As I got permission from Bábá, I started to read as clearly and slowly as possible.

"In the beginning, Master Units were started with the view to developing the fate of the backward and down trodden classes of society who find no opportunities to keep pace with the developing world. When Ánanda Marga started touching every discipline of life, it was then decided to establish Master Units as the miniature form of Ánanda Marga. As there are different nerve centers in the body, which control the function of the different limbs and organs, which are finally controlled by the mind itself, likewise the Master Units will be treated as the nerve centers of. There has to be an active representation and participation from all the departments, branches and sub branches of Ánanda Marga in the Master Units.

Their miniature forms in Ánanda Marga will depend and gradually terminate in the maxi mature form and cover the whole globe. Master Units will expand all possible services, particularly in the field of education, culture, economics and spiritual upliftment. These Master Units will work to improve the fate, first of all human beings and then include all living beings, irrespective of caste, creed, color, religion and national barriers. Humanity knows no artificial barriers. Humanity is the only criteria for our work.

Through Master Units and PROUT, we will elevate the standard of the people in a few months or in a few years. We should also serve the people immediately by an all-round service. PROUT and all round service may render temporary service as they move the flow of life but our spiritual philosophy, is above all the flow of life. Hence with the spiritual philosophy as hub we are to start as many Master Units as possible. All round service, PROUT and Master Units are the ways of life.

What are the primary requisites of an ideal Master Unit? There are five, which corresponds to the five minimum fundamentals in PROUT.

First to provide food throughout the year and sufficient local raw materials through agriculture farming and scientific farming. These raw materials will provide the basis of industrial units and agro industries such as dairy farming, horticulture, sericulture etc. For such industries you cannot depend on raw materials from anywhere else.

Secondly, there should be production of sufficient fibers from ladyfingers, pineapple, sugar beet, banana, basil, cotton, sisal etc. that can be used for production of clothing.

Thirdly, primary and post primary schools should be started in all Master Units. Higher educational institutions should not be established just now.

Fourthly, both general and special medical units should also be established. Special medical units would accommodate injured people for a certain period because [all] Master Units may or may not run big hospitals or medical units, and should emphasize instead on alternative medical treatment.

Fifthly, Master Units should undertake projects to construct special houses for the extremely poor people.

There is a necessity for starting a Master Unit in each and every district and the 'block of the world' Master Unit will be the biggest structure ever set up by Ánanda Marga. All Master Units will be the miniature forms of Ánanda Marga and these Master Units will be main centers for the Ánanda Margiis. Master units should be on a minimum of five acres of land. The Samśakrta name of Master Units is "Cakranemi" which means "the nucleus of the Cakra [wheel]." Bábá said, "I want all Master Units to be economically self-sufficient in all respects, because spiritualists should not depend on the wealthy class for money."

There are several common points, which should be implemented in all Master Units:

1. Schools, including primary, post primary and higher secondary schools.
2. Hostels, including junior hostels, senior hostels and higher hostels.
3. Children's homes including junior homes, senior homes and student homes.
4. Medical units.

5. Cottage industries.
6. Dairy farms.
7. Plantations.

Besides these common points, there are some special features of Master Units, which should also be implemented.

1. A wheat-grinding machine to produce flour.
2. A bakery to produce bread etc.
3. A seed bank.

A Sulabh Beeja Vitaran Kendra or a cheap seed distribution centre. The Centre will collect good quality seeds and seedlings and sell them at cheap rates. Seeds may be purchased from local farmers at the end of each harvest but the centre should provide good quality seeds at a cheap rate to people.

A free plant distribution centre:

This centre will grow plants from seeds and seedlings. The following system should be used to prepare plants for distribution. The seedlings should be grown until they are six inches tall. The plant should then be uprooted and their roots soaked in water for one hour. Next, the main root of each plant should be cut and the remaining roots then should be soaked again in water for ten minutes. The plants should be planted in a field or packed for distribution. Plants that are prepared in this way will produce large sweet fruits. The fruits will be better than those produced from seedlings, but not as good as those produced from grafted plants.

- Sericulture and silk rearing centre
- Bio-gas plants

This means that there must be a dairy farm. Water hyacinths are also good for producing Bio-gas :

- Butter production
- Apiculture
- An ideal farm training centre
- A sanctuary

On all our Master Units, only bio-fertilizers like compost, cow dung, Neem paste etc. should be used. The chemical fertilizers must be avoided.

Our Master Units programme is a combination of oriental sublimity and western dynamicity.

In this way, for one and a half hours I kept on reading every sentence of the document that I had prepared based on Bábá's philosophy, and Bábá went on giving his approval. I had barely stopped after reading the entire article, when Bábá said, "This is my master unit program. It will take the entire world within its ambit. It is in its nascent stage but one day it will take mammoth structure." He added, "This is my world reconstruction programme." While leaving, Bábá said to me, "Give it to Vijayánanda for publication."

Today, it is part of the book called 'Prout in A Nutshell' (19-21).

Sometimes I contemplate on two words Glasnost and Perestroika, which became very popular in the USSR during the 1980s, because Gorbachev was implementing these two policies to restructure the Soviet economy. Had Gorbachev known about PROUT planning, he would have planned differently. But, Bábá would finish his task in his own style and at a time that he thought appropriate. No ordinary human being can implement Bábá's plan by his/her individual effort because all the programmes given by him are interrelated, and all of Bábá's programmes collectively intend to establish Sadvipra society.

Bábá asked me to leave after I had completed reading the document. After doing Sástaunga I took his blessings. Then I handed over the fruits of my nightlong labour to the Publications In-Charge, late Vijayánandajii. I felt relieved and I went back to my place.

Intensity of spiritual quest

The seed of spirituality that sprouted forth on 16th July 1961 was nurtured and preserved by the Guru's affectionate care. It started to blossom and grow slowly, knowingly or unknowingly by keeping me aloof from people, and Gurudeva took care of me himself.

Since September 1989, I started to feel an unusual spiritual crisis. It was as though I had no work to do, my Sádhaná stopped somewhere.

I shared my anxiety with Dada Shraddhánandajii. He came up with an immediate solution to this problem. He said, "Nowadays Bábá keeps talking about you. You do one thing; prepare an application for Visheśa Yoga Sádhaná. Write down everything starting from your first postings and where all you have stayed and what all have you achieved. I will put an application before Bábá for approval. It seems it is high time to change your method of Sádhaná."

Maybe because it was immediately after November 10th, 1989, when Bábá had given me the responsibility to write the article on Master Unit, that Dádá had taken Gurudeva's permission and he came to me with a big smile on his face saying that my work was done. Perhaps, while giving permission for Visheśa Yoga, Bábá told him a few things about me, which Dada Shraddhánanda used to tell me quite often, after being elected Purodhá Pramukha [the head of the organization], and he would express his faith and trust in me.

Immediately after receiving my first lesson in Visheśa Yoga Sádhaná [highest form of Sádhaná in Ánanda Márga], I went to Bábá's place in Tiljala for practice. I felt my heart was like the barren and draught-stricken earth, which comes to life with the first drop of rain and a sense of unfathomable bliss would flood my heart.

Gradually, I immersed myself in Sádhaná. At that point of time I did not find any interest in any kind of work. In due course of time, I received a second and third lesson successively and kept diving into the inner recesses of my mind. Sometimes I would spend hours practicing one lesson; after learning each lesson, I used to think there must be nothing beyond this stage.

Later on I came to know "Jin khojá tin payiya gahare páni paitha." Bábá soon transferred me to the Chandigarh region Master Units. So far as the Chandigarh region was concerned, only Matíaná Master Unit of Himachal provided basic amenities in extreme cases. Though the Márgii brothers were very excited to see me there, I did not like to spend long hours in Márgii quarters, so quite often, I would travel around. Meanwhile 1990 came around, and Asimánandajii [Ácárya] was brutally murdered in Ánanda Nagar. The entire Márgii community, particularly all the Sánnyásiis and Sannyásins were heartbroken, because Asimánandajii was known as a simple modest human with an ever smiling face and a divine soul. At the same time in June 1990, another accident took place in Ánanda Nagar, which will be described in the following chapters

Pundag shooting, martyrdom of Karuná Ketana Brahmácárii

The killing of Karuná Ketan Brahmácárii at Pundág Railway Station worked as trigger in spreading resentment among large number of unknown devotees who came from abroad to attend the DMC. News began to pour in that the West Bengal police used cruel and oppressive measures at Pundág railway station and were dragging Márgiis out of the train to take them into custody.

As the DMC in Ánanda Nagar came to an end, Márgiis were preparing to go back home. Few Márgiis had already reached Pundag railway station, some were still midway, and others were inside a Pand'ál in Ánanda Nagar. As news of the police's tyranny reached Ánanda Nagar, it created a sense of resentment among the Sádhakas, so all wanted to reach Pundag station. As the number of Márgiis increased by droves, the number of police personnel swelled too. On the one hand the police were preventing Márgiis from moving forward and on the other hand, they continued to drag Márgiis who were foreigners from the trains and were arresting them. After some time, the situation became intolerably tense.

Since it was morning, like any other normal day, after doing morning Sádhaná, I went towards Bábá's quarters, the then General Secretary suggested that I go to Pundág railway station immediately to help the authorities bring the situation under control.

I came back to the Rector Master's Office and after getting ready I left for Pundág station. As I reached there, the scene that was in front of me took my breath away. Armed police personnel were standing on the side of the station, they were facing Sannyásis and Brahmacáriis. I was standing behind the columns of Sannyásis and Brahmacáriis and trying to comprehend the situation. Suddenly the sound of firing changed the scene. Karuná Ketan Brahmacárii who was standing beside me took the hit and collapsed. The sound of the bullet brought about sudden mayhem. It was an unexpected incident. For the first time Ánanda Nagar witnessed tyranny of this nature committed by the police. Everyone was shocked to the core. I appealed to our Márgii brothers and sisters not to take the law in their own hands because though the police were standing in front of us as though we were criminals, in hindsight the real culprit was the communist government of West Bengal.

I came back to Ánanda Nagar and asked the General Secretary to go inside and inform Bábá. As soon as he came out he said that Bábá's order was to take Krtýánandajii along with me and go to Purulia District Magistrate's office and claim Karuná Ketan's body and then come back to Calcutta with his body. Meanwhile Bábá would leave that very day and on his way to Calcutta, he would stay the night in his Viśnúpur residence, and I should report to him there.

To carry out Bábá's order, I along with Kirtyánandajii left for Purulia in a jeep. First we met DM Purulia who spent hours with us dillydallying saying yes and no. Finally he said no at 4 pm. With this information we both started for Viśnúpur. Because of torrential rain, there was mud and sludge around Bábá's quarter. It was late but I told GS what transpired during our meeting with Purulia District Administration. The following morning we all left for Calcutta with Bábá.

Bolt from the Blue

Gurudeva explained in detail the Master Unit's philosophy and its importance for the development of the organization. He directed us to build an ideal unit, and entrusted me with the responsibility to establish an ideal [Master] Unit for Delhi and neighboring areas. I concentrated all of my energy to accomplish this task. I got down to work after taking all our acquaintances living in those areas, into confidence. We surveyed many places in order to buy a plot. We went searching for a plot in Palwal [Haryana, outskirts of Delhi], Bahádurgarh, Meerut and Khadar region. Finally we selected a plot in Murádnagar (Ghaziabad), which is situated beside the Ganges canal.

After finishing multiple stages of paperwork, a plot of twelve and half acres was purchased to establish an ideal Master Unit. The direction was clear, to register this trust separately, and run it in a way that will go on to make it a trendsetter as an ideal Master Unit. The maintenance of records and administrative operation should be transparent and clean. Despite differing opinions, we slowly started to become successful.

Initially, I could not perceive that not every individual registered with the trust, had come with good intentions. As a matter of fact, I thought that some people really had pious and solemn intentions. As time passed, things started to come out in the open. But it took us a little time to understand and identify people with malafide intentions.

The first meeting of the trust was organized in Ghaziabad. Since the purpose was solemn, people were very hopeful and excited about the outcome. The meeting had just begun, when a sudden phone call that came from Germany, cast a cold curtain of gloom over the people attending the meeting. That phone call was made to inform us that Gurudeva had left his mortal body. It was the afternoon of 21st October 1990. Most of the members rushed immediately to Delhi airport.

At that time, Indian Airlines was the only air transport provider. As we arrived at the airport, they made an announcement that Márgiis would be given preference for this flight. By then this heartbreaking news had spread like wildfire among the Márgii community. So we got full cooperation from the authorities but they asked Ánanda Márga to give a list of names to identify who should to take this flight first. Since my name was on the list I left and reached Tiljala at night. By then Gurudeva's mortal body decorated with garlands and flowers, was mounted on a platform, so that visitors could get a glimpse of him. It was so heart rending no one could have ever imagined it. I am unable to express the condition of those people who were sitting near Gurudeva's mortal remains.

The elders were stunned and trying to console the younger ones. The entire atmosphere was unexpectedly pensive and melancholic. People were continuously doing Kiirtana. We were dumbfounded and were unable to think what to do next. Whoever had heard the news arrived as soon as they could. All were clueless and helpless. No one was in a condition to console the other.

The central office decided to keep [Bábá's] mortal remains till the 26th October, in order for his devotees to catch a final glimpse of his mortal remains. Meanwhile the central office began to take people's opinion where Gurudeva's mortal body should be cremated. Apart from a few, almost everyone pointed out Bábá's own statement: "Shiva belongs to Káshii, Krsńa belongs to Mathura, I belong to Ánanda Nagar."

Indicated that he wanted the cremation in Ánanda Nagar.

Under his own supervision, Gurudeva continued to build Ánanda Nagar, expanding it in every direction. Gurudeva would call Ánanda Nagar, Central Ánanda Nagar. According to the ideal plan, Ánanda Nagar would have eight fully developed divisions.

But everyone accepted whatever decisions were taken by the then central administration. It was a historic decision. Even many years after this decision was taken, Márgiis unanimously accepted decisions made by the central office. For example, Purodhá Pramukha was elected. Moreover, for many years the nominated Central Working Committee continued to take decisions in a unilateral voice without creating differences. And the organization continued to move forward as per the directions given in Caryácarya [The Ánanda Márga Social (Smrti) Code].

On the 26th October, with heavy hearts and teary eyes, after giving salutations, the Gurudeva's final journey began. His, mortal remains were placed on a decorated vehicle and started moving forward slowly.

*Tumi esechile káuke ná bale ná jániye gele cale,
Mora áro giiti chilo gávára áro chande tále.
Bhávite pári ni ámi, E bháve ásibe tumi,
Emani jábe je cale, Ánkhí jale more phele.
Dharár dhulite jato phúla phote shata shata,
Táder koraka tále diye gele madhu d'hele.*

— [PS -2085, Madhumálanca, Calcutta] (17.11.1984)]

“You came without a sound and you left without telling anybody. I wanted to sing more songs with rhythm and melody. I could not imagine that you would come and leave like this and bid farewell like this, leaving me with eyes full of tears. On this earth where hundreds of flowers bloom, you made the garden full with their honey and fragrance.”

It was very hard to console the wailing hearts. The very sight was heart wrenching because we had surrendered everything at his lotus feet and tried to fulfill his dream of establishing a universal family. We were growing and working under his tutelage and now when he was not amongst us in this physical world, what wondered what would happen to us.

With this question lingering in my mind, singing his Prabháta Samígiita [compilation of 5018 Bhajans in Samískrta, Urdu, English, Hindi and Bengali, whose lyrics are written by Bábá] with teary eyes, we were slowly moving towards the Tiljala arena, where the pyre was made on a recently built Bhaeravii Cakra. The mortal remains were kept in a decorated

vehicle. I was also one of those who was pulling the car. It seemed as if our legs were unwilling to move forward, even then everyone was singing with teary eyes.

'Na jāniye gele cale, mor āro giiti chilo gāowār āro chande tāle...'

I could not do anything except move forward. Till then everyone was so dejected that they were left with nothing except an obligation to carry out their respective duties. Finally we reached the place where the pyre was built on Bhaeravii Cakra. The final hope that people were harbouring in their hearts that Bábá was in deep Samádhi and would get up on the 26th October, was about to be shattered. Human beings are optimistic. They hold on to hope. As the sunrises and sets, so life goes on.

Now Gurudeva's mortal remains were mounted on the pyre built on the Bhaeravii Cakra. The moment for the final farewell came, the gun salute was given, as the pyre was lit and the smoke from the fire rose upwards. It assumed a form in which many devotees saw Bábá. It was a phase when Tiljala, which was Parama Puruśa's divine playground. This was where many a spiritual research was conducted.. Bábá's physical body finally left this planet, leaving his devotees filled with sadness and absolute hopelessness. It was a bolt from the blue for those human souls whose hope was dependent on this Yuga Puruśa.

Perhaps this is the way the world functions. When the first Tāraka Brahma [According to Ānanda Mārga, this is the trio including Lord Shiva, Lord Krśṇa and Bábá Tāntrika and devotional concept of Brahma] had left this mortal world, devotees would have gone through a similar experience of sadness and hopelessness. Again when the second Tāraka Brahma, Lord Krśṇa, bade goodbye to people leaving his Nārāyaṅii Mudrá, then not only Yaduvam'shii even devotees would have suffered in a similar manner.

The pain of separation from Lord Krśṇa must have ripped their hearts too. That evening people one could see that people were not talking to each other.

Like everyday, daylight broke the next morning. At a few places people were deliberating on a common issue, which was very natural from a worldly perspective. It was a curious speculation [topic of deliberation] as

to who could be the head of the organization and how he would be selected. As people looked for useful items when needed, in his room, legal experts looked for new points and the interpretation of laws in books of law and land records in documents. And just as people look for pearls in the ocean, in a similar way people looked for answers as to who the next Purodhá Pramukha] will be and thought the answer is most likely to be found in the scriptures introduced by Gurudeva. This effort to identify the successor started after the ceremony of paying obeisance to Gurudeva was over.

Obeisance

Immediately after the funeral that was held on the 26th of October, the elder Márgiis who participated in the memorial ceremony expressed their growing concern that no provision was given in Caryácarya for Parama Puruśa [The nucleus of the created universe]. Moreover, they pondered how the language of Caryácarya could be applied on Gurudeva. Hence, a language [provision] was crafted so that this ceremony is completed.

All who came to participate in that ceremony congregated around the Bhaeravii Cakra [A Yantra-an instrument when in operation gives some output in which a Tántrika sits for meditation], where the memorial stands to this day? For the record, the entire Tiljala ground was packed to its full capacity. A solemn atmosphere of reverence and devotion was created there which touched everyone. From a worldly perspective, after offering respect and reverence, the Central Office brought down the curtain on an important chapter in the history of the Ánanda Márga.

Then all those devotees who had been staying in Tiljala since the last few days began to return home in order to carry on their domestic duties. Even after this, a large number of Márgiis and Sannyásiis stayed back in Tiljala for many days for further directions. Now things came to such a pass that the organization had to decide upon what message should be sent to the field workers. It was extremely important for the organization to deliberate on this issue because, our messenger assigned to communicate

with the field workers should not go unprepared to the field and should not fail to satisfy any query of any field worker.

There was an apprehension doing the rounds in the organization that, "If the question comes up in the field that in 1955, Bábá had told the senior Márgiis that he would live for 50 years more, how is it that he left before the time he had indicated without giving further directions to the organization?"

There were so many people holding on to this belief. Many newspapers and journals had published this statement of Bábá. People never comprehended that on many occasions, whenever the occasion would arise, Gurudeva used to repeat, that the Parama Puruśa is beyond all sorts of bondages and rules. He acts on His own will and His appearance and disappearance totally depends upon His wish." Hence no one can say why Bábá did not tell anyone before leaving this mortal world? He is not bound by the rules and customs of this mortal world like ordinary human beings. As a matter of fact, people should have understood this when on November 17th, 1984 Bábá gave 2085 Prabháta Samgiitá.

'Tumi esechile káuke ná bale, Ná jániye gele cale...

You came without informing and left suddenly without telling anybody.

Once Bábá had told devotees, "If Parama Puruśa, taking the help of the five elements appears in this world to perform a particular task, so Parama Puruśa also leaves his mortal body after completing that particular task." At this, people who had assembled there cried aloud, "Bábá do not talk like this. We are mortal beings. We know you through this body only." At this reaction, Bábá became serious and said, "I always remain in the juncture between Nirguña and Saguña. It is your illusion that you think I go anywhere!" In this context I can recollect one incident that occurred in 1969, [declared as a Sádhaná Year, when Bábá inside his room, in Ranchi Jágrti, directed a Sádhaka to sit in meditative posture, and touched his Guru Cakra and ordered to meditate and asked what do you see?

The Sádhaka replied, "Bábá, you are sitting in Varábhaya Mudrá [Special gesture of the Guru bestowing grace over the disciple]."

Bábá again said, "Concentrate your mind more and tell me what do

you see?" That spiritual aspirant replied, "Slowly your manifested form is dissolving in bright light and now it is dazzling in brightness but the effulgence of light has taken the form in Varábhaya posture." Bábá said, "This is my real nature. This is your Dhyána Múrti. This form ultimately comes during meditation."

In spite of knowing all this, the mind that is attuned to the material world, gets jolted at this loss, thinking that our beloved Bábá is not be here physically. Whenever this thought comes to mind all theoretical talks fade away.

The Central Office identified the names of those Sannyásiis that were present that day in order, to assign them responsibility of some important places all over India. The Central Office assigned me to Himachal. But one month earlier I had met with an accident in Tháno and suffered deep injuries in various parts of the body. I hadn't recovered completely and still felt dizzy at times. Hence someone else was posted in my place. As a matter of fact everyone was nervous to live among the honest and simple devotees of Himáchal.

Himachal Márgiis were yet to recover from the shock of the brutal murder of Asiimánandajii in Ánanda Nagar in April, but another bolt from the blue struck them on October 21st, however Márgiis went there and were able to control the situation because they were not only devotees but also responsible individuals. The sense of dedication and duty of Himáchali Sádhakas was unmatched and exemplary.

Ácárya Shraddhánanda Avadhúta Elected as Purodhá Pramukha

In this manner, one phase of Ánanda Márga's journey came to an end and on 27th October the preparation for another phase began. This initiative culminated on 31st October with the election of Ácárya Shraddhánanda Avadhútajii as second Purodhá Pramukha. He took over the responsibility as chairman on 31st October 1990. Before assuming this position he was Secretary of Purodhá Board and the senior most Avadhúta.

It would be useful to mention here, that this election was conducted as per provisions laid out in the Caryácarya, Chapter 39. Ánanda Márga and the Márgii society could not measure the importance of the 39th chapter until it felt its need.

There is a clear instruction given in Caryácarya, regarding the election procedure of Purodhá Pramukha. "Purodhá Pramukha will be elected by the votes of Purodhás." Now, the very fact that Gurudeva himself didn't declare anyone as Purodhá. However, there was a separate Purodhá Board like the Táttvika Board, the Ácárya Board and the Avadhúta Board, but Gurudeva nominated all the boards' members.

Since, Guru is the harbinger he is not bound by any other rules. For disciples the teachings of Guru that he gave during his lifetime are far more important than his rules. However, during his lifetime, whatever he said

and what he would have said holds more significance than provisions given by him. But for a disciple, it is his Dharma to follow the words spoken by the Guru and behave accordingly. This was further vindicated by the Supreme Court verdict in famous Táńd'ava case [Táńd'ava is a dance done by Lord Shiva which male devotees of AM would practice]. In the course of the trial, the argument came up that, "There is no provision for Táńd'ava in Caryácarya, so how can Ánanda Márga have the right to perform Táńd'ava?" Justice Tárakunde, our Counsel, said that as Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii was alive, he could give an order to include it in Caryácarya. The apex court accepted this argument. As, there is a provision to perform Táńd'ava during the observance of every religious ceremony prescribed in Caryácarya, It would not be an exaggeration to say that no ceremony of Ánanda Márga is complete without Táńd'ava. This is how Gurudeva included it completely in Caryácarya.

There was a dilemma before the organization regarding the election of Purodhá Pramukha, and who should be considered as a Purodhá. To be eligible as a Purodhá one has to be a Sádha of Visheśa Yoga. During his lifetime Gurudeva himself initiated or caused 30-32 Sádhas to be initiated in Visheśa Yoga Sádhaná. I was one of them too. And, before the election of Purodhá Pramukha actually took place, it was customary to call these Visheśa Yogiis to give suggestions on various issues that concerned the Márga. Ultimately members of the nominated Purodhá Board, nominated by Gurudeva himself were accepted as Purodhás. In his lifetime, he was everything for Márgiis and the Organization. Four Purodhá board members came to the consensus that Ácárya Shraddhánandajii should be elected as Purodhá Pramukha. This proposal was drafted in the minutes book of the Purodhá Board and everyone present there signed it. In this way Ácárya Shraddhánanda Avadhúta became the second Purodhá Pramukha of Ánanda Márga and its AMPS and on 31st October 1990 he assumed charge. A Central Committee (CC) nominated by him started to formulate policies for organization.

When Gurudeva protected His ideals

I was working as ISMUB [Inspection Seminar Movement Utilization Board] secretary. I was in Saharsá, Bihar to attend a seminar. Ácárya Samanváyánandajii and Ácárya Abhipremánandajii were there to assist me. It is said that usually the biggest and largest seminars are organized in Saharsá because the highest number of Márgiis in India live in the Saharsá area. I had not realized this until I saw on my own that a large numbers of poured in for the seminar and were having breakfast together. The seminar was well organized and minutely planned. I was supposed to take classes there. There were workers, Táttvikas and Ácáryas, Bhukti Pradhána [a devotee who looks after a district] and senior Márgiis, who were attending to whatever required for three days. On the third day RU [Renaissance Universal] programs were organized outside the seminar area for college students-professors and intellectuals.

As soon as the seminar concluded in the evening of the third day, an initiate of Dada Samanváyánandajii turned up. He came all the way for Mahiíii. Abhipremánandajii and I were absolutely baffled to see a man of grand demeanor, 6 feet tall, of fair complexion, and Aryan physique, standing before us in Prárthaná Mudrá.

Dada Samanváyánandajii was smiling sweetly. Dada introduced this gentleman to us as Shrii Tárácandajii who began to plead with him to go to Mahiíii without any delay.

He went so far as to reveal that he had become a Márgii twenty years before and now he was at the fag end of his life. But the next question that he shot at us was like a pointed arrow of an archer.

He asked if whether after his death the only light of the Márga would be extinguished in Mahiśii. We did not know how or what to answer him.. Dada Samanvayánanda got very excited and said, "Okay, let's go." Abhipremánandajii was a young and enthusiastic Sannyásii; he too insisted that he would go too.

Then Shrii Tárácandajii revealed that a public assembly would be organized in Mahiśii that evening. Mahiśii has an ancient tradition of intellectual and philosophical discourse; even to this day, village dwellers do not only engage in intellectual discourses, but they are extremely argumentative too. Once, any subject is raised for debate they will not let any one off the hook easily. Shrii Tárácandajii went outside to arrange for a vehicle. I took the initiative and said that regarding Mahiśii debate let us each decide our respective tasks as to who will talk on what issue once we reach there. Ácárya Samanvayánandajii told us that we must keep in mind that irrespective of the homework we do before attending the Sabhá, Mahiśii was where Ádi Shankarácárya was defeated in the debate, hence we would obviously not have an easy time. Reacting to this Abhipremánandajii said that we would deal with whatever happens there, and if we already get intimidated at the thought of going there our fate did not look very bright.

Abhipremánandajii's argument was logical. I was listening to everything, because other than, Ádi Shankarácárya – Mand'an Mishra episode, I had no understanding regarding the present condition of the village or its people.

My dilemma was like any other chicken-hearted person who gets scared even before he goes to an unknown place.

I proposed that in the assembly, Ácárya Samanvayánandajii would speak first in local Maethilii language [regional language of North East portion of Bihar], and then Abhipremánandajii, and ultimately if the need arose I would talk. They were all in agreement that we should try our best so that we can at least come back without being embarrassed.

These argumentative villagers were so adept at shutting you down during the debate and making you go away, that nobody dared to return and stand up in front of them. This was the reputation of the village hence it was no wonder that we were a little intimidated about going there.

We were a little late reaching the village it seemed as if the entire village had already assembled at the venue. The first thing that crossed my mind was that it was the same place where Ádi Shankarácárya had to accept defeat. Today a hall stands there in the same place where Ádi Shankarácárya had participated in the debate. Facing the hall, there stands a temple. Perhaps Ádi Shankarácárya and Mandán Mishra had built it. Since this incident had occurred 1200 years ago, the structure looks worn out and decayed. This village is situated in the flood prone area of Kosii River. The villagers live with this continuous cycle of getting dislocated during floods and settling down again once the floods recede.

Around 8 pm the assembly started. Though everyone was looking forward to the debate there was an air of positivity among the villagers. A petromax lamp was right in the centre of the assembly and a hurricane lantern was in front of the speaker. Dada Samanvayánandajii chose to speak in Hindi instead of Maithili, for reasons known best to him. Then Abhipremánandajii spoke, when he finished his talk, it was almost 9:30 pm. The people assembled there proposed unanimously that I should speak next hence I spoke for almost half an hour, but before concluding my speech, as two of my associates had said then and there, I committed a blunder. They both asked in one voice, "What did you just say?" And my mistake was that I asked the audience, "Do you have any questions?" Initially I was surprised but little fearful as well, I again repeated my question "please ask if you have any questions?" Dada Samanvayánandajii, who was sitting beside me, pulled my Lungii in the dark, and said, "What are you doing? These people will humiliate us." Now I asked for a third time because an inner voice kept prodding me, to taunt them. I broke the silence again and said, "If anybody has any questions please come forward." Dada Samanvayánandajii lost his patience and told me in a muffled voice, "If you really want to leave this place after being disgraced then it is alright." As he finished scolding me, seven people from the audience stood up, who were logicians, and scholars of the scriptures. As the debate on the scriptures began, a barrage of questions was hurled at me. But they were very civilized and cultured people. They asked one question at a time, no further questions were asked until one answer was given convincingly.

So clearly during the arguments they followed three principles of Nyáya doctrine:

Váda [discussion], Jalpa [wrangling], and Vitañdá [irrational argument]. Instead of getting tense by their questions, I was enjoying every bit of it. I regretted the fact that we had not been able to record those moments, as it would have helped Tátvikas to learn something. Anyway, whatever had happened, it is now in the past.

The question and answer session began.

The first questioner asked raising his hands, "I really liked your discourse on Tattva, your attire, your food habits, fasting, and conduct everything is praiseworthy." He then asked me to tell us the path that the Ánanda Márga follows.

As I was about to answer, he interrupted me and said, "Firstly, please introduce yourself." I had heard the exploits of Mahiśii so I started:

*Mano buddhiahankára cittáni náham'
Na ca shrotra jihve, na ca Ghránanetre,
Na ca byom bhoomirna Tejo na Váyuh:
Cidánanda Rupah Shivoham' Shivoham'.*

*Aham' Nirvikalpo Nirákára Rupo
Vibhutvacca Sarvatra Sarvendriyáñam'.
Na Cásángatam' naiva Muktirna meyah
Cidánanda rupo Shivoham Shivamah.*

After this introduction was over, seven of them wanted me to take the main question. I could not have refused them because I was ready to answer their questions. Along with the crowd the interrogators were also pleased by the way I introduced myself.

The answer to the first question: "Ánanda Márga teaches us to live and conduct ourselves according to the quintessential precepts of Dharma. Instead of merely talking about Dharma, Ánanda Márga teaches us to walk steadfastly on the path of Dharma because it is our belief that the principles of our conduct should be based on Dharma."

This was followed by, the second question. What is Dharma?

Answer to the second question: “The word Dharma is composed of the root verb Dhr+Man suffix. As you all know in Saṁskṛta with the combination of root verb+ suffix, a word is composed. Here the root verb Dhr means to sustain; that is what sustains a living being whether it is animate or inanimate. Here it is used in the context of distinctive traits by virtue of which an animate or inanimate can be identified. For example, the particular characteristic of ashes is that they don't have the capacity to burn anymore. If we say water, then the innate characteristic of water is to cool down and it flows on so it is known as water. Hence meaning of Dharma is nature, innate characteristics.

And now every object, every living being in this created world has its unique characteristics, so a human being has his/her nature/characteristics/traits. As a matter of fact, we are not considering nature of human being belonging to a particular place. It is not like we are discussing about innate characteristic of a group of people belonging to a particular region only, for example we all know the nature of Mahiśii residents because they have an argument active streak. We are discussing humans as species irrespective of where they live, he may be a compatriot, a foreigner, white, black, rich or poor; they feel happy in good times and pain when they are sad: Along with this, a human has another natural tendency, to gain more than whatever he has achieved. Therefore, endless appetite is an inner characteristic of human being. And in this search he wonders about and suffers lot and gets trapped in the cycle of life and death.

*Punarapi Janamam Punarapi Marnam
Punarapi Janani Jathare Shayanam.
Iha Saṁsāre Bhava Dusvāre
Kṛpayā Pāhe Pāhi Murāre.
Bhaja Govindam Bhaja Govindam
Bhaja Govindam Mudha Mate.*

Except infinite Paramātmā nothing is endless, everything is temporary and finite. So there is an ongoing quest for Brahma. The quest for Brahma or infinite is the quintessence of Dharma of human beings.

Another question: What is infinite?

Answer to the third question: Brahma is the only infinite entity.

Question: What is his real nature?

Answer to the fourth question: *Ānandam Brahma Ityāhuh* [Brahma is Eternal Bliss].

Question: Then what is Bliss?

Answer to the fifth question: Endless happiness is bliss.

Question: What is happiness?

Answer to the sixth question: It is that state when after coming in contact with the choicest object, the nervous system becomes relaxed.

Question: What is the difference between happiness and bliss?

Answer to the seventh question: Happiness is short lived [temporary] whereas bliss is eternal, obtaining physical objects or enjoying material objects gives pleasure, which is temporary whereas the attainment of Brahma gives bliss.

Question: What is the real characteristic of Brahma, Saguña or Nirguña?

Answer to the eighth question: Both

Question: How it can be both?

Answer to the ninth question: These are two distinct states. Nirguña is that state where Supreme Cognitive Principle is eternal. It is a non-transitory state. Intellect does not exist in this phase. This stage is described in Puruśa Sukta, Rgveda and is described by modern science as that singularity which is infinitely small and infinitely complete. It has been said:

*Púrñamadah Púrñamidam Púrñát Púrñamudaccyate
Púrñasya Púrñamádāya Púrña Mevá vashiśyate.*

It is so small that nothing is smaller than this but it contains the entire universe within it. There is so much energy within it that after creating the entire universe, it still exists as infinitely absolute. Hence number "One" is also described as "Parama Puruśa" He is singular. It is also said:

*Ajo hyeko juśamáño'nushete jahátyenáń
Bhuktabhogámajo'nyah.*

He is omnipresent; nothing is hidden from him because –

Tatra Niratishayam Sarvajiņa Biijam'.

Brahma is one –Nirguńa and Saguńa are two distinct stages of his existence. In the state of non-attribution he is “Ekoham' Dvitiyonásti [I am single and there is no other entity].” When he assumes the state of “Ekoham' Bahusyámah” [I am single, let me be many] then transformation of the state happens –state of attribution, which is the cause of creation. It has been said: “Saguńáta Srśti” [This creation emerges out of Saguńa Brahma. This is a stage of creation]

Question: What do you signify by Brahma?

Answer to the tenth question: Brahma [The Supreme Consciousness] is the composite of Puruśa [Consciousness] and Prakrti [Operative Principle].

Shiva Shaktyátmakam Brahma

[Brahma is the culmination of Shiva and Shakti]

Question: Then who is Puruśa?

Answer to the eleventh question: “Pure Shete Iti Puruśa [In this unit being, Puruśa is the witnessing counter part].” The witnessing entity that lies within in every living being is the Puruśa. It has been said:

*Dvá suparná sayujá sakháyá
samánań brkśamń pariśasvajáte
Tayoranyah pippalań
svádvattyashnannanyo bhicákashiiti*

Purusha is the witnessing entity here, not the doer.

Question: Then what is Prakrti?

Answer to the twelfth question: Prakrti means Pra+Karoti+iti. It is the operative principle; creators [female] or forces that weaves multitudes of expressional forms. By dint of her sentient, mutative and static force she

creates numerous expressions and forms on the cosmic body of Puruśa and is the cause of this creation.

Question: *What is the cause of creation Puruśa or Prakrti?*

Answer to the thirteenth question: Yes indeed, it is the material and causal force.

Question: *It has come in Shiva-Umá conversation-*

*Umá Kahahu main anubhava apná
Sata Hari Bhajana, jagat saba Sapná.*

Is it really true? Will you please take tell us what is Ánanda Márga's interpretation on this?

Answer to the fourteenth question: From the perspective of obtainment of Paramátmá, it is true but our perspective cannot be similar with that of Paramátmá. Although this created world is an intuitional flow of Paramátmá, but as far as we are concerned the entire universe lies within the divine Paramátmá. This manifested world is his imaginative flow so humans can express as much as he views with his own eyes. This created world is dynamic which signifies movement is its Dharma. Here nothing is stationery, everything is moving, and it is interplay of mobility and immobility. From a subtler viewpoint the inanimate world is not static as well; the only unchanging entity is Paramátmá. Therefore it would not be incorrect to say that the created world is not a mere "dream" but it would be pertinent to say that no object remains in a constant state forever.

Today, a bud that remains attached to the bough and branches of a tree, will blossom as a flower tomorrow. After some time it will transform into a fruit, and finally this fruit will fall prey to the inscrutable nature of time, and will get buried within the womb of the earth, and following the law of nature, it will germinate and sprout forth into light and ultimately grow into a tree. This is the divine play of the Cosmic Player. From a cosmic perspective, there is nothing outside him, but we see a tree as it is, its leaves and flowers as they are. So, the philosophy of Ánanda Márga is basically the philosophy of life, and its ideology does not establish itself as superior, defeating other ideologies. That's why Paramártha [doing good for others —public welfare] has been accepted as it is, in its real nature.

Then I saw that all the seven persons who were asking questions, started whispering among themselves, but I was very calm and kept on waiting for the next question. Meanwhile I realized that the anxiety of my companions was turning into curiosity.

Now both of them began to wait in anticipation to see how Gurudeva would bring an end to this episode. Again questioners became serious and a barrage of questions followed. It was way past midnight.

Question: *What is Ānanda Mārga and what is its mission?*

Answer to the fifteenth question: Any place is identified by a certain object that is found in that particular place. For example, where Bhojana [food] is available that place is called Bhojanālaya [eatery]; where clothes are available that place is called a clothing store [Vastrālaya]; where snow occurs that place is known as an abode of snow, the Himālayas; and the place where humans experience Dukha [Pain, suffering] that place is known as Dukhālaya [abode of sadness]. Another name of the world is abode of sadness because here human beings have a greater share of pain than pleasure, because pleasure is momentary and short lived. To put it in proper perspective the Mārga [path] that leads human beings to Ānanda-Ghana-Sattā that is the Eternally Blissful Entity is called Ānanda Mārga because the ultimate and supreme goal is the blissful entity only. His real nature is only bliss. The bliss that a Sādhaka gets when he gets close to the Supreme Lord is indescribable. In the same way a sublime state of happiness is beyond the expression of the senses because this realization is beyond the periphery of the mind. It is like a realization of the deaf who enjoys the sweetness of the sweet dish but cannot express it in words. It is also said: "Man mast huá tab kyun bole."

When you are blissful within, why should you speak?

When one is talking, it means you are empty within, like a pitcher full of water makes no sound, [an empty vessel sounds much] I will ask why should a Sādhaka get carried away while telling his experiences to the world, but yet can get dragged into the material world. That is why a Sādhaka keeps talking until he attains the realization of that blissful entity.

Ánanda Marga has two objectives: "Átma mokśártham' jagad hitáya ca"

Question: Are Mukti [liberation] and Mokśa [salvation] similar?

Answer to the sixteenth question: Mukti is that state where there is no bondage and Mokśa is where the mind rises above all bondages and dissolves into its source, so finally the mind ceases to exist.

Question: In the state of Mukti what is the state of mind?

Answer to the seventeenth question: Mind is light, cheerful and free from all shackles, but it still exists. It is not beyond the limits of life and death. The bondage less mind has to take rebirth. Sádhaná has not been fulfilled yet; there are still some roads that remain to be covered.

Question: And in the state of Mokśa, what is the state of mind?

Answer to the eighteenth question: In this state the mind dissolves into its cause, a drop merges into the ocean, losing its own identity.

Question: Can a Sádhaka who has attained Mokśa take rebirth?

Answer to the nineteenth question: Now when he has realized the reason for his existence is finished, why will he come back?

Question: Is it possible to describe this state?

Answer to the twentieth question: No this state is beyond the periphery of mind.

Question: Is it another form of death?

Answer to the twenty first question: This is not like mortal death, as a matter of fact the meaning of death is transformation. This is a state where even death has died; this is why this state is called the death of death.

Question: Does one need a Guru for the attainment of Mukti or Mokśa? The scriptures say that the role of Guru is essential. What is Ánanda Marga's belief in this?

Answer to the twenty-second question: Desire for liberation makes one ready for the attainment of Sadguru. When the mind reaches this state, Sadguru himself finds his disciple. Otherwise how can a disciple find his Guru?

Question: Whether there are different categories of masters?

Answer to the twenty-third question: There are three kinds of Guru [Spiritual Masters].

(1) Mediocre standard [2] Middle standard [3] Supreme standard

[1] Mediocre standard: After showing the path to his disciple, he turns away and never concentrates on removing the hurdles that the disciple faces during his spiritual journey. Neither does he turn back to take stock of the progress of his disciple. Even the disciple forgets the teachings of his Guru because he does not undertake the spiritual journey at all and so he never encounters the hurdles of the journey.

[2] Middle standard: He shows the path to his disciple and reviews his progress on and off but he doesn't focus his attention towards him.

[3] Supreme standard: He makes his disciple as his own and does not leave his disciple until and unless he successfully leads him to achieve Parama Pada that is the Supreme Stance.

Question: How can we describe such a Guru and who is He?

Answer to the twenty fourth question it is said that "Brahmaeva Gururekah Náparah" [Brahma alone is the Guru and nobody else]: As a matter of fact, Tantra has described Guru as Táraka Brahma. He does not leave, exists like a bridge between this Bhava [manifested universe] and beyond the state of Bhava [what is not manifested yet]. More precisely he remains in juncture between Nirguña and Saguña [Brahma] and keeps a watch on his disciples.

Question: Does he take incarnation?

Answer to the twenty-fifth question: Not exactly like an incarnation, whenever something needs to be done in this physical world, he appears in this world with the help of Paiñcamahábhúta [The five fundamental factors of nature], assuming a physical form and stays in this world as long as there is a necessity.

Question: How does this type of Guru facilitate the way of Mukti or Mokśa for disciples?

Answer to the twenty-sixth question: Considering the physio-psychic body of the disciple, according to his Sañskáras, a spiritual vibration

is created in his Kula [the last point where the Kuñd'alinii vibrates],. By incantation of Ísta Mantra his physical energy, Prána and mind are channelized to flow collectively into same direction. In this way, finally his Jiiva Bháva [that element sleeping in Kuñd'alinii state] transforms into Shiva Bháva. This is the crux of "Brahmavida Brahmaeva Bhavati". [When you think about God, you become God/Him]. The entire matrix of spiritual science of Ánanda Márga is based on this psychology and practice. This is the interpretation of the Átmamokśártham' [Liberation of the self-side of Ánanda Márga's ideology.

Question: These are the categories of Gurus. Are there different categories of disciples too?

Answer to the twenty-seventh question: Yes, there is. Even disciples are divided into three categories and can be described as the following:

- (1) Downward facing pitcher
- [2] Southward facing pitcher
- [3] Upward facing pitcher.

Downward facing pitcher -As a, downward facing pot remains full with water as long as its kept forcefully submerged in water, so a disciple continues to enrich his knowledge as long as he continues to take lessons from the Guru. Till the time the pot remains in water it remains full, no sooner, is the external force removed and the pot is taken out of the water, not a single droplet of water remains attached to it.

Southward facing pitcher - This kind of disciple faces a similar predicament, when there is no pressure from the Guru he becomes barren. So when he is close to the Guru, he becomes Átma Jiñánii, Brahma Jiñánii and keeps talking about great ideas. As soon as he goes away from the Guru, he loses everything. This category of disciple turns out to be dangerous for society.

Third category of disciple is like an upward facing pot. It doesn't get emptied, it remains full not only when it is under water and but also at the time when it is taken out. Even when the Guru leaves his physical body, as a solitary cuckoo does sing in summer sitting on a bough of a tree, so he continues to sing eulogies of his Guru, totally unconcerned whether anyone is listening to him or not.

Question: What is the meaning of "Jagat Hitáya Ca"?

Answer to the twenty-eighth question: As the scripture says, "Jiiva Brahmeva ná Parah [Unit is nothing else but Brahma]", so this entire living world and its vitality of life is a transformed manifestation of Paramátmá. Upon the realization of this truth, the harbinger that is Ánanda Marga has introduced multiple programs for all around development and benefits of the world. AMPS [Ánanda Marga Pracárika Samígha] workers have been running these programs across the globe.

On the one hand Ánanda Marga is propelling mankind to live a life as per the principles of Dharma by initiating them regardless of their color, caste and creed in Tántrika Sádhaná which is based on the Vaedika wisdom of ancient India, while on the other hand it is engaged in serving human beings, treating them as manifestations of Shiva by providing relief during natural or human induced emergency or calamity. Thousands of volunteers, all over the globe are actively involved in this work.

It was time when night was silently but steadily approaching towards its final phase, because the subject of the discourse was so engrossing no body realized the passing of time. One man spoke from the crowd, "Svámii you have been standing there for hours and answering questions. Please sit down first and then talk. You must be very exhausted by now.

Since Gurudeva was giving me energy how could I have felt exhausted? I said, "The moment you get tired of asking questions, I will get tired".

Question: If this is Ánanda Marga then why isn't it getting accepted everywhere?

It was a very exciting question and a practical one too. Both of my mates became quite anxious hearing this query. Perhaps they were thinking that if a satisfactory answer were not given to this one, all accolades that I have achieved so far would go down the drain. But how could this have happened, because behind all these incidents the inspiring force of Gurudeva kept my spirits high, and did not let my flow break.

Answer to the twenty-ninth question: In reply, I started, if you had not asked this question then this meeting would not have been complete. It

would have remained unfulfilled. I further added, Ánanda Marga is a new philosophy, a new ideology. As per the German philosopher Schopenhauer, any new ideology has to go through three stages:

- [1] Ignorance
- [2] Resistance
- [3] Acceptance

It means at the very first stage, nobody pays attention to a new ideology, so it remains ignored as a result it doesn't get sufficient time to create its own identity. At a second stage it has to compete with contemporary ideologies and in the final stage it starts to gain acceptance because of its ideological principles. Initially, it fascinates A few selected intellectuals, then the entire intellectual community and then finally the common populace accepts it. For Ánanda Marga, from its origin to 1966, it was an era of ignorance. From 1967 to the emergency in India, an era of resistance began and post emergency the third stage started. Usually, a new ideology takes time to gain acceptance, from a historical viewpoint you can add or subtract fifty years.

Question: What is the precious contribution of Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii to humanity?

Answer to the thirtieth question:

- [1] Infallible and complete philosophy of life
- [2] Structural plan
- [3] Bringing ascetics and family people together to work for materializing the structural plan and that is a huge contribution.

Question: We have already understood infallible philosophy; will you please take the trouble to explain the other two?

Answer to the fortieth question: Apart from the philosophy of life, the other unmatched contribution by Gurudeva is structural planning. Since Gurudeva primarily was not a philosopher who had introduced a new stream philosophy in the realm of numerous prevalent philosophical ideas, as a faculty of study. He is basically a Dharma Guru. Due to his love for

mankind, he has blessed them and has given a holistic [all-encompassing] philosophy of life and also he gave a systematic planning how this philosophy can benefit people living at the lowest rung of the society because “Bhukhe Bhajan Ná Hohi Gopálá” and “Bhuvukítah Kim Na Karoti Pápam.”

So for the social and economic development, he has given a decentralized planning [up to the village level]. The third and final is an organization consisting of Sannyásiis [ascetics] and family men, who would work in tandem for social upliftment and in turn contribute to the development of the country. It was given to ensure that humanity would come out from the Cimmerian influence of static forces and attain its real nature. A single grain of pulse cannot break the pot. If one person attains liberation how will it help the poor and deprived people of this world?

As I finished talking, all seven logicians who had come for deliberations on the scriptures, stood up and spoke unanimously: “Shankarácárya has again come to our village, and this time we have been defeated and Ánanda Márga has won and from today we have become Ánanda Márgiis, tell us what shall we do now? This is the tradition of our village.

I said in a mild voice, “There is no question of winning or losing in Dharma Sabhá. Let’s embark on a journey together to re-establish Dharma in the similar manner as Ádi Shankarácárya and Mandán Mishra set out to do; on a journey to establish Dharma by building this temple in front of us, which is known as “Shankar Digvijaya”. It was 2 am by then. Thereafter, people went around the village carrying me on their shoulders. Finally we reached Tárácandajii home. We all were very hungry, so we ate at Tárácandajii’s home; he had already made arrangements for everyone.

Shrii Tárácandajii was ecstatic with joy, it was pleasing to see his reactions, if somebody would ask for water Tárácandajii would give him milk, if anybody asked for milk he would give water. At that moment Tárácandajii was so elated that he couldn’t differentiate between milk and water. When I was taking leave from the villagers, I told two Sannyásii Dádá’s to give Diikśá to these seven intellectuals. Before I left I told them, that since I had to leave for Nepal at 5 am by bus, I would not be able to give them Diikśá As I was leaving these seven people told me, “You will have to come again, because we will organize a grand assembly with three villages.” I agreed but it did not happen. Perhaps Gurudeva wished otherwise.

Leaving behind Dádá Samanvayánandajii and Abhipremánandajii to bask in the glory of success, I left for Nepal at 5 A.M. Thereafter those seven scholars of scriptures were given Diikśá.

Kaostubha Jayanti Ceremony in Mumbai

On the eve of the 75th birth anniversary of Bábá, the Central Committee planned for a grand celebration of Bábá's birthday in all the nine sectors of Ánanda Marga that are situated across the globe. I myself had put forward this proposal before the Central Committee. It was passed unanimously by voice votes. The Central committee decided that since the Delhi sector is the headquarters of Ánanda Marga, Bábá's birthday would be celebrated in a spectacular manner in all the four metro cities that come under the Delhi sector. The Central workers agreed to take the responsibility upon themselves to celebrate Bábá's Birth Anniversary in such a manner that it can set standards for other centers. It would help the remaining eight sectors to follow their model, which could create such positive vibrations across the globe that it would invoke a keen interest in Bábá and his ideology. It was intended to inspire so that people embrace the ideology of Ánanda Marga, as it happened in the 1960s, and build a new world. Everyone got excited by this vision and was ready to do anything to execute it. There were not one but many intelligent, hard working and devoted workers. All of them had experienced the grind and rigor of worldly life and were willing and ready to work for a greater cause.

But, almost all of us were scared to hear the name of Mumbai because the thought of taking responsibility of Mumbai would be

extremely challenging. Mumbai is the financial capital of India, one of the busiest metropolitan city hence, not a single person presents there wanted to be assigned for Mumbai. I don't remember the person assigned this responsibility to me and proposed in front of the committee, "Since this is your agenda, so it would be fair if you yourself take up the responsibility of organizing the Mumbai festivities to inspire others." On hearing this all agreed unanimously to his suggestion. Neither did I oppose it. There is a line in a Munshii Premchand story: "Who at all can refuse to believe in Painca Parameshvara [5 people's jury deciding cases which are not taken up in the court]?" The meeting was dismissed on a happy note. Later on a few people came up to me and said, "You have been trapped." I replied that it is indeed true that I have been trapped. It is Him who has led me to this trap and it is He who will help me to get out of it too. This was a sentient bond. Since it was directly related to Gurudeva, I accepted the task enthusiastically and joyfully.

As I was saying these words, a few priceless words spoken by Bábá came to my mind. On one occasion He had said, "I exist in your Samikalpa [Resolve]. Why do you fear to make Samikalpa?" As far as I remember, this advice of Gurudeva continues to guide me like a north star. He made me strong g to take the initiatives for a good cause. Sometimes the very thought of how a Sádha can refuse to do constructive work, makes me surprised. The Sádha must himself realize that he is a medium through which Parama Puruśa gets His work done, only then a conscientious person cannot refuse to do it. Perhaps Bábá explained this final stage of the establishment of Neo-humanism as "Spirituality as Mission" referring to when you become a medium of God then nothing is impossible.

That day, I found a few Márgiis from Mumbai waiting in the Central Office. By then they had received the news that I was assigned the task to organize Kaostubha Jayanti [Diamond Jubilee] celebration in Mumbai. Expressing their happiness with the progress of their work, they invited me to Mumbai, so that we could complete this task together. I began to draw a blueprint in my mind as I realized that it would be difficult to draw crowds there, I decided that I would spend three months in Mumbai and visit each and every college and university to present my views on the Ánanda Márga. Firstly, I would try to create awareness about Ánanda Márga in order to arouse curiosity among the people. Secondly, I would write an article on

Bábá's personality and His contribution to society and try to get it published in a national newspaper. Thirdly, if it is possible and Bábá wills it then I will institute a "Chair Professor for PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory- A socio-economic theory of *Ánanda Marga*)" in Mumbai University. If it is successful the study of Prout will become a topic of research and will find a place in the academic circle, and in turn people would get to know Bábá's personality. This will enable the nation to put the theoretical and practical aspects of Prout into practice, and it will allow socially and economically backward sections of people to prosper. Thus Bábá's appearance on earth will benefit those who have been ignored and exploited for centuries. This occasion will also reveal that the purpose of Bábá's appearance on this planet was the establishment of Prout.

On the 31st May 1979 in Valencia, Spain, Bábá said, "When I started the *Ánanda Marga*, I wanted all humanity to stand on the cardinal principles of ethical human values and spirituality as my introspection revealed to me many issues in human society that needs to be corrected. Human beings came here about 10 Lakh years ago but they have not been able to form a well-knit social order. We require a strong social order. That is the reason I had to create another branch of philosophy known as PROUT through which we are remodeling the social order so that nobody is compelled to do anything, or be exploited and nobody is compelled to resort to immorality, for want of food or clothes or other resources of life".

After developing the blue print for action I left for Mumbai and began working for *Ánanda Marga Áshrama* located in Andheri West. *Ácárya Prañaveshánanda Avadhúta* and *Ácárya Citsvarúpánanda Avadhúta* went out of their way to help me. Every year September 14th, is celebrated as *Prabháta Samágitá Divasa*, and it was selected as the day for organizing the event. It is necessary to consider the factor of the grand *Ganesh Mahotsava* before organizing any public event in Mumbai in September, so we wouldn't face any trouble on September 14th. The second step was finding a place to hold the function. The *Tejapála Auditorium* was available; hence we booked it for the event.

The final activity that I was supposed to do was to get my article published in a newspaper. In those days *Asian Age* was regarded as the newspaper for intellectuals in India. *Asian Age* used to publish newspapers

in Mumbai, Delhi, Calcutta and London edition. It was decided that an entire page should be booked for that day so that we could do justice to Bábá's great personality and his ideology at the very first instance. The Committee assigned the task to me and ask to write the article. This was very difficult as until then I had never written an article for a national daily. I also kept in mind the fact that the Asian Age had domestic and foreign readers, so I was extremely careful with the presentation of the idea and the application of language.

In those days the committee would meet every week, so at the next meeting a new question arose: who would grace the occasion as guests? Names of the following people were proposed – three people from the Marga [family men and Sannyásiis], distinguished advocate Shrii Rám Jethmaláni and Svámii Rám Mahárája as the chief guest. They All immediately accepted our invitation to participate in the ceremony to celebrate Bábá's birthday.

On this occasion a proposal was made to publish some memorabilia. Everyone agreed to this, as it is essential to preserve the memories of this function for the future. In those days the Bombay Municipal Corporation Chairman, Shrii Khairnár was very popular. We talked to him and he agreed to come to our program. Thus we finished sending invitations to all our eminent guests who would grace the stage. Since it was a daylong function, which would continue till 10 pm, arrangements were made for lunch and evening snacks. During our public awareness program, I met Dr. Mrs. S.S Desmukh who was Vice Chancellor of Mumbai University. She agreed to come as the guest speaker. One day, during one of our conversations I raised this issue of establishing 'Chair Professor for Prout'. She asked me under which department of the University would this subject come? I said it should come under Department of Economics. She asked me to meet the Head Of Department [HOD] of Economics to discuss this issue. Gradually we were moving in the right direction. In the second meeting she said as per university procedures your organization has to institute a permanent fund for payment of salaries to the chair professor and for the maintenance of the department. In order to pay the salaries, we can institute a fund of up to 16 lakhs. I broke the good news in the next committee meeting and everyone was ecstatic. I did not tell everyone about the money but I had already given my word.

I met with the Economics HOD of Mumbai University and discussed this issue with him. I got a hunch that we won't face any difficulty. I met the Vice Chancellor for the third time when the due date for the program was very near and preparations were at the final stages. The entire Mārgii community of Mumbai was very excited and they were working fervently as if it was their family function. So, I never felt exhausted after working through the day and the night.

Elaborate arrangements were made for the comfort of the Mārgiis who were invited for the function. After the invitation card was published, huge crowds came out on the road. We were able to reach out to almost all the intellectual groups of Mumbai. In those days Ācārya Citsvarupa'nanda Avt used to always stay with me. In the meantime, I came in contact with Justice Mr. B.L. Dughát. At the very first meeting we struck a good rapport, particularly because he was spiritually inclined. He would give discourses on many spiritual subjects based on the scriptures. His elder daughter Rādhiká Dughát had returned from Harvard Law University after obtaining her degree. She had great respect for Svámii Ram Mahārāj. As invitation card had Swāmi Ram's name as the chief guest, she participated in the function to meet him.

The stage was set and the function commenced at the scheduled time. All the invited guests took their seats except, Svámii Mahārāj. We received a telegram from Rśiksha Āshrama informing us that due to his ill health Svámii would not be able to attend the function. He sent a message, which was read out, to the audience. As per the agenda all speakers continued to throw light on the various facets of Bábá's personality throughout the day, the discourse took a very interesting turn. When the VC of Mumbai University Dr. Snehlatá Deshmukh concluded her brilliant speech with the dramatic announcement of the institution of "PROUT Chair", the entire Tejapála auditorium roared with thunderous applause, and it went on for some time, Professor Deshmukh realized that the "Prout professor chair" would play a very important role in Mumbai University. And Mumbai University will play an important role in spreading the knowledge of PROUT. [Truth needs no evidence]. The Speakers on the stage were visibly happy with this announcement. However the "Prout professor chair" of Mumbai University was subsequently sabotaged.

A few renowned artists performed in the cultural evening program turning it into a big success. The famous playback singer Shrii Ravindra Jain showed his true nature by singing Bábá's songs. The audience was on their feet when he started singing "Bábá Náma Kevalam" as he urged everyone to sing the Kiirtana, the entire auditorium turned into a Hariparimañdal [group for singing Kiirtana] group for a short while.

Bábá's successful birth anniversary celebrations had been made possible because of the untiring efforts of several Márgiis of Mumbai. A few years later, I realized the importance and the reach of the article that was published in the Asian Age. When I met Justice Ranganáth Mishra, Chairman of the Human Rights Commission and retired Chief Justice of India in Delhi, I gifted a copy of the Asian Age to him. He admitted that on the very day the article was published, he was given this newspaper when he was on a Delhi bound flight, so he had already read it. He was very happy to discuss the topic of the article and told me that this type of personality comes rarely on earth but the world doesn't get to know such a personality. He said, "It would serve a good purpose if you spread this ideology among common people."

Initially, the arrangements of the Mumbai festivities appeared to be a daunting task but it had had a tremendous impact. Later on the success of Mumbai Kaostubha Jayanti was evaluated from the fact that it assumed the momentum of a massive movement and kept on inspiring the Márgiis community throughout the year to do more work. People were heard discussing, "Even we will organize a program like the one done in Mumbai." However, it is a self-fulfilled statement. "Hari Ananta Hari Kathá Anantá" The Supreme Lord is endless and His story is endless too.

Many achievements through task

An interesting incident took place in the Cairo sector. In order to accelerate the missionary work and development of the organization, Bábá consolidated the Cairo sector by bringing the structure of Greece, Croatia and Malta within its jurisdiction. This incident happened in Malta, which is a very tiny southern European island country, situated in the Mediterranean Sea. It is so small that it cannot be located in the world map easily. Italy is to its North West, Greece to its North East, South West is Libya and the African countries on Mediterranean coast. Two air routes are available to travel to Malta from India, one is via Europe and other is via Egypt. I preferred the route via Egypt.

A mishap happened in a local Ánanda Marga sector of Malta. It was not an accident but a small disagreement between a young lady and the Church, which snowballed into a major fallout. Impressed by the scientific and practical methods of the Ánanda Marga ideology, one educated young lady from a Catholic family took Diikśá in Ánanda Marga. As she started to enjoy doing Sádhaná, she stopped participating in the rituals and prayers organized by the Church since they no longer held any importance for her. Mágina do not teach anyone to behave in this manner or to forsake his or her religion. Ánanda Marga considers every religion has its respective place of importance, because ultimately every religion teaches us goodness.

The local bishop used to visit her house frequently. One day, he suddenly, got into a heated argument with her. She told the Bishop in a clear voice, "There is no other way to attain Parama Puruśa [The Supreme Divine] except through physio-psycho-spiritual [Body-Mind- Spirit] Śádhaná." The discussion took a serious turn. The Bishop became angry and said, "So the church is fake? So, the Roman Catholic Church that has existed for centuries is nothing but a hoax and a fraud." Though she was consistently insisting that she never said that the Bishop stood up and commanded her that "It is my order, you have to come to church and forsake Ánanda Marga, or else you and Ánanda Marga both will have to face punishment." Her mother was supportive, she kept on refuting the charges of the Bishop and said that her daughter was innocent, and she had not been saying anything against the church. She said, "You are unnecessarily making a mountain out of molehill."

He left in a fit of rage. He did not stop there. He hatched a conspiracy against the Ánanda Marga by lodging a written complaint to the government of Malta on behalf of the Church to drive Ánanda Marga out of Malta otherwise it would slowly devour the Roman Catholic Church. At that time a Roman Catholic party led government was ruling Malta and the head of the state was a devout catholic. He was very intelligent, practical and an efficient ruler. He discussed this issue with one of his close friend who by providence was a devoted Marga and a lawyer by profession. In the middle of the conversation the President told his Marga friend, "Why don't you invite a senior Sannyási from Ánanda Marga's headquarters in India to come here? I will organize a program where all the parties can present their views; representatives of the Church and Ánanda Marga, university experts, and government will record this event officially. So then if the dispute is settled in an open forum by debate then all sides will be satisfied and I will get rid of this headache."

Following the suggestions of the Head of the government, the President of the Malta sector of Ánanda Marga sent a letter to the Central Office, as a result of which the Central office directed me to go to Malta. Another Marga who was posted at Malta came to know that I was appointed to carry out this task; he told me that there were two routes to go to Malta; one via Europe and another via Egypt. I agreed to take the Egypt route because I had heard astounding acts about the pyramids of Giza, which are built in an unmatched geometric pattern.

The Geometrical design and the architecture of the pyramid are so unique that if any object is kept inside the structure it does not rot but it dries up. Inside the pyramid one feels motionless because the gravitational force is very minimal inside the pyramid. The Pyramid of Giza is triangular in shape, is inclined to the north and forms 30-degree angle with the North Star or Pole Star. Another fascinating aspect is that when every object of this world is moving in their respective speed then why does the Pole Star appear fixed at one place in the sky. This can be logically explained, when two speeding objects, move at similar speed in the similar direction they appear as if they are not moving at all, exactly as it happens when two trains run parallel with same speed towards the same direction. As a matter of fact, although we see only one pole star, which always appears fixed in the sky, any star that moves with the same speed according to the speed of the earth's revolution can become a pole star. However, this world is so vast, that no matter how much knowledge you obtain about it you realize that there remain endless things to learn. The most important thing one must learn is that this world is the divine playground of Parama Puruša.

I was very keen to enjoy the experience of meditating inside the pyramid. Therefore, when the proposal to go to Malta came my way, I felt as if the accumulated Sańskáras of many years are being rewarded now. But I was told that if I go to Malta via Egypt then I would have to stay in Cairo for five days. I agreed to take this route to Malta because I was fascinated by the pyramid of Giza and was keen to see its ancient museum. Another fascination was to see an Egyptian mummy. I boarded an Egypt airline flight from Mumbai for Cairo. The experience of this air travel was quite unique. A Pathán from Kábul was sitting next to me. As I was settling down in my seat, while pointing at the recliner that separates the two seats he told me in a menacing tone, "Remember this is the border between us. Don't try to transgress this, otherwise the consequences will not be pleasant." I was thinking of Gurudeva and asking him, how I would complete this five hours long flight when someone is being so aggressive. I mustered all my courage and asked him, who he was and where he was from.

Beating his chest with his right hand, he said in a cracking voice, "I am a Pathán from Kabul." Then these words spontaneously came out of my mouth, "You are the brave Pathán from the warrior clan of Kábul! Where are you going? What is your destination?" My words worked like magic,

and he answered in a gentle voice, "Yes I am a fighter, now I will fight for you." Pushing the handle of the chair back he said, "Now there is no divider between you and me." Then, my five-hour experience in flight was such that throughout the flight he continued to fight for me with the cabin crew for my needs and comforts, and as we got to know each other he started to behave like a sensible human being. He was a professor in civil engineering in the USA and had been afflicted by many diseases. After spending holidays in Kábul, he was going to the US via Cairo. The remaining period of the journey was quite pleasant.

Upon reaching Cairo, I went to the old city seeking to explore the relics of the ancient civilization and also to see the beauty of the river Nile. It was midday and the time for Sádhaná. Suddenly I saw a mosque, I thought why not go inside and try my luck if I could get an opportunity to do Sádhaná here. There was a reason why this thought came to my mind. I had read in Gurudeva's book Human Society - Part 2, the principle of social dynamism.

Although the Arabian invasion destroyed the inner strength of Egyptian tradition, the Egyptian capacity of susceptibility was not destroyed. The reweaving capacity for susceptibility left in the Egyptian society was diametrically opposite to the new Arab ideas. As a result of Arab susceptibility of hostile Egyptian thought waves Arabian thought waves became weak and it became impossible for them [Arabs] to conquer Europe. This was one of the reasons for the retreat of the Arabian moor.

A question may arise. Since the ancient Arabian and Pro-Islamic Arabian ideas were of conflicting nature, why didn't the former destroy the vital force of the latter? Actually, much of the ancient Arabian ideas were incorporated in the Pro-Islamic Arabian ideas. There occurred a terrific psychic clash on uniform ideology, and the one uniform spiritual awareness greatly helped the Pro-Islamic Arabs impose their psychology on the ancient Arabian psychology.

Pro-Islamic Arabian psychology suffered from the same setback in Persia in the east as it did in Egypt in the west. Endowed with its own distinct characteristics, Persian society accepted only the external imprint of Islam, but it retained its own cultural identity and ideological characteristics as a subterranean flow and this continues even today. After crossing Persia the Pro-Islamic Arab ideology became rather weak and after crossing Indus

valley and entering Indian Territory it became impossible for these ideas to completely overrun Indian society. The primary reason was the strong spiritual tradition prevalent in the Indian society and power of the national outlook of Indians themselves. Although the Varnáshrama Dharma [Dharma practice based on the caste system] was centered on idol worship and created wide chasms in Indian social structure, a global moral, social and spiritual ideology generated a powerful wave in India's collective life. This is why it was not possible for the Islamic social ideas coming from Persia to overrun India. The transformed Islamic ideas and Indian social ideology lived side by side for centuries. Due to mutual opposite thought waves, the exchange between them has been very negligible. Of course Islamic society has had some influence on the external structure of Indian society but couldn't influence the mental and spiritual sphere of India. The Sufi influence in Indian society particularly on its Vaesnáva religion is actually of Persian not Islamic origin. The vibrations of Indian society have continued to supply energy to the social life of India for centuries.

After witnessing the wonders of Egyptian civilization as I was proceeding to the mosque, these thoughts were still playing in my mind. After meeting the Maolavijiji I asked him for permission to do Sádhaná within the mosque compound. Immediately he went inside and came out with a new mattress and directed me to a safe place and deployed two security guards for my safety. He went back murmuring, "Angel from India, no one should disturb him while he his offering prayer."

I realized that the very essence of inherent Egyptian culture is fundamentally unique. When I came back and discussed this with my Muslim acquaintances they ridiculed me said, "Yes indeed, they are Egyptian only." But I had good experiences. On my way back, while I was waiting in the Cairo airport, it again reminded me about the ancient civilization.

The next day I went to see the pyramid of Giza and the Giza museum. As our bus approached the monuments, the magical sight of the Pyramid was continuously drawing me towards it.

In fact there are multitudes of pyramids of different sizes, which were built 5000 years ago. The biggest one of them caught my attention, and this is where the emperor's body would have been buried. I saw all visitors were approaching towards this biggest pyramid. I bought a ticket and went close to it, and started to survey it from top to bottom. It is made of big rocks

of sand stones, each weighing approximately 10-15 tones. It was difficult to imagine how the ancient Egyptians could have fixed these rocks on the ceiling, which is 300 feet high. The very first glimpse of the pyramid takes one's breath away.

Although it is well known that Giza is situated in the Sahara Desert, which is an endless expanse of sand with sand dunes of moderate height, one cannot find a trace of a rock or mountain, then how is it possible that these heavy rocks were brought here and taken to such a height? This remains a mystery hence today it is considered one of the wonders of the world. Because of the weak gravitational force, it is possible that inside the pyramid the dead body does not decay but dries up. And this could be the reason why ancient Egyptian people devised this tradition of immortalizing the bodies of emperors and empresses. As history tells us it was at this time that emperors and empresses were considered as the incarnation of the Paramátmán. The depth of the interior chamber was little less than its height, where bodies would be buried after death and the mortal remains of Kings and Queens are still preserved inside in the form of a mummy.

I started to climb down the stairs to get to the inner chamber and landed on a platform, which looked like a big room. There were surveillance cameras installed everywhere. To fulfill my long cherished desire I found a place and sat down for Sádhaná. Since it was a very big area it always remained crowded with visitors. The visitors were surprised to see me doing Sádhaná and they began to take my pictures. Without paying attention to them I tried to concentrate. Without any extra effort, I had my first experience of Sádhaná during Bhúta Shuddhi [It is a level of AM meditation which refers to the withdrawal of the senses from the physical body]. Within no time, the mind left the body and started running towards Iśfa very fast. Now the mind was at the stage where external deviation couldn't touch it. The Mind, untouched by the external world, with complete concentration towards Iśfa, I attained the state of Infinite bliss and remained engrossed in this state for several minutes. I don't remember how long I was in that state. I could hear a faint sound coming in, "It is time to close, go up." I tried to stand up absentmindedly, though my hands and legs were too weak. Somehow I grabbed the ropes leading upstairs and started to climb up. As I came out, I did not only face the flash of sunlight but there was a sizeable crowd of visitors too. A doctor came out from the crowd, perhaps he was

fascinated by my attire and eagerly insisted on a photo with me, I could not stop him. Thus my desire for doing Sádhaná inside the pyramid was fulfilled. I went to museum after visiting the Giza museum.

During my five-day stay in Cairo I continued to soak in the magnificent relics of the ancient civilization of Egypt and relished the delicious watermelons that grow in the valley of the Nile. During my stay in Cairo, Ácárya Nirmalakrshnánanda Avadhúta hosted me. I am grateful to him. At that time he was a Brahmacárii. I finally left for my destination Malta along with Nirmalakrshnánanda.

Second test of my ascetic life in Malta

A seminar was going on in Malta on the day I reached and a group of selected Mǎrgiis was participating in it. It was a great opportunity to meet everyone at one place. It gave me a chance to do collective Kiirtana, Sádhaná, sing Prabháta Sanígiitá, do Svádhyáya [self study], and to listen to other Mǎrgiis speak on different topics. The venue was far from the city and on the beach, which was within an army area.

The beach of Malta is different from the sea beaches of any other country in the world as it was extremely clean. I had never seen such cleanliness on sea beaches in any country. Though the Bali island of Indonesia is successful in maintaining cleanliness on its beaches. Malta, a tiny country in the world map, is like a pearl situated in the Mediterranean Sea, and although this island is built on limestone it is extremely prosperous.

In the entire archipelago, I didn't see any greenery, not any trees, except in green houses. There are two reasons for Malta's opulence, firstly its tourism business, and second its business of repair and maintenance of oil tankers. Malta is the only country that repairs oil tankers of natural gas producing states of the Mediterranean Sea and because of these two reasons, people of Malta are very rich and prosperous, and the government is stable.

The Mǎrgiis of Malta are devoted and inspiring many of the Mǎrgiis, who had assembled for the seminar, had seen Gurudeva in person. My daily

schedule was very hectic; taking classes, having deliberations and discussion on spiritual topics, I would spend the night doing Sádhaná on the beach. One night around 3 am while I was absorbed in Sádhaná voice resonated in my ear, "Whatever I ask you to do you have to do it." I turned my attention to this voice, and heard it again and then the realization dawned on me, that it is Bábá's voice, "Whatever I ask you to do you have to do." It was the same voice when in 1960 July, I was sitting on Tigers grave with Bábá for the first time and Bábá had told me about my previous life, "You have taken birth on my command, so you have to live this life as per my wish."

And again when he was on the DMC tour and after the defection episode, he called me in his room and not only repeated those words but told me to work until death. From then onwards, bearing the burden of Sańskáras, I have been moving ahead by his grace. There was no fear in my mind that I would waiver on my resolve to do what Bábá wants. Whenever this physical body becomes feeble, he gives me strength to work. After failing me in the Táttvika exam, when he ordered me to work which promptly did and he entrusted me with the responsibly of the Varanasi training center. He sent me with this assurance that I would continue to work with his grace.

It was the second day of my stay in Malta, the local Márgii brothers informed me that a team constituted, by the government, which has representatives from government, church, university professors and media would interact with me on how the establishment of the church is jeopardized in Malta because of the presence of Ánanda Márga. As far as they knew Ánanda Márga has one God. They offered a complete philosophy of life and to implement that ideology, they have an organization, which comprises of family men and ascetics.

Since Ánanda Márga has these three weapons, so the church faces potential threat from Ánanda Márga in Malta. Based on this premise, the church has made a demand to the government that it should deal with this issue and expel the Márga's from Malta with immediate effect to ensure that the interests of the Roman Catholic Church is not effected. These were the three probable points for deliberation. The Márgii community was certain that Márga would not face any trouble and would be able to answer questions in a satisfactory manner. They were anxious about the fact

that the discussion panel would have experts in philosophical studies from the universities as well as scholars of philosophy who would be experts in comparative studies. Furthermore, there would be professors of Christian theology, and they might trap me in Váda, Jalpa and Vitańd'á [Three renowned terms of Philosophy of Logic]. Besides, since Ánanda Marga is a controversial organization, citing any incident involving Marga, they could raise a dispute and scuttle the discussion.

If these sorts of scenarios were created during the discussions, it would harm the interests of Ánanda Marga, Malta. On the one hand this was one of our prime concerns, which was a frightening prospect, but other was more serious and difficult. If we tell them that we accept Bábá as God, then all efforts to retain Ánanda Marga's position in Malta would have been shattered. These briefings given by the Marga's gave me a sense of relief. From now I would have to deliberate on these three points. Since I now knew the topic that I needed to work on. I thought it wouldn't be very hard for me to satisfy any query on the first two points, but how could I tell a lie on third point that Bábá is not God.

This question put me in a fix. But within a few hours, this confusion was cleared. I have not come here to attend Tattva Sabhá of Ánanda Marga Here my goal is to defuse the tense situation so that Ánanda Marga remains in Malta, works here and doesn't get banished from here. Then a thought came across, "Sańgráme Vaepariityam" [The system of war science in which if you are attacked your defense will be to use the opposite form of attack]. I made up my mind and mentally started to concentrate on framing arguments and counter arguments. By the following morning I was thoroughly prepared. The Marga community was there with me too. They were supposed to be present as spectators. Around 10 a.m. a discussion panel of 15 members from the university, the Government [observer], the church, and media including the recording team of the official TV channel, arrived.

Around 10 Marga's were anxiously waiting with me. They were finding it hard to comprehend how the third question would be answered and what would happen to me and how would members react. There was a fear among the Marga community as to what would happen to Ánanda Marga in Malta from tomorrow. After Mahisii it was my second test. The first test was based on debate, so the consequences were limited, but today

it was not a conflict but a fight, and it was a battle of survival. If I go down in this battle Ánanda Marga will be wiped out from Malta. I was worried about losing and wondered how I would face the Margaís in India if I lost. But I had one faith, one belief like Tulasidas had:

*Ek bharosá, ek bala, ek ása vishvása,
Ek Ráma ghanashyáma hita, Cátaka Tulasidása.*

One expectation, one hope and one faith, Tulasidas looks to his Íśa as a Cátaka bird spends the whole year waiting for raindrops with this belief that as the Sváti Constellation appears in the sky, drops of rainfall would come down, and its thirst would be quenched.

I too was absolutely confident, because after failing me in the Táttvika exam Bábá had said, “You have been failed by me not by the world. Hence start studying again, throughout life keep on studying and working, I am your only examiner.” With these words playing in my mind I sat down on a chair, facing the opposing team across the table. My Margaí brothers also settled down beside me. After the introduction, the conversation started. I was alone from my side, in front of me there was a panel of experts, angry representatives of the church, and media. My condition was like:

“Rávańa Rathii Virathii Raghuvíirá”

Rávańa appeared on his chariot and Ram simply walking, without chariot.

Though I was alone, I had faith in the Supreme Lord, and surrendered everything to the Lord. The questions were rapid and asked from a philosophical perspective: is the Ánanda Marga western or oriental? Starting from western philosophical thoughts, the discussion went on to Greek philosophies, to Bertrand Russell, and comparative analysis of Christian theological believes; the Ánanda Marga’s ideology of life, and thereafter questions on Ánanda Marga’s philosophy. When this interactive session moved to the concept of God; the deliberations of Nirguńa and Saguńa became very exciting. I realized they were well prepared. They were well versed enough with our ideology and beliefs to do a comparative analysis of Ánanda Marga with fundamental philosophical precepts. It seemed they came after doing extensive study. Later, it was revealed that the church did this to mount pressure on us, but the Malta government was trying to ascertain the truth of the church’s complaint.

The barrage of question began to flow thick and fast and followed the sequence as described below:

Question: What is the difference between western philosophy and Ananda Marga's philosophy?

Answer: First of all, western philosophy is not a Darshana but a philosophic question. Are philosophy and Darshana different? My answer is yes.

Question: Then, what is it?

Answer: The word philosophy has been derived from Philo+ Sophia. The meaning of philo means love and Sophia means wisdom, so it suggests love for wisdom. Its extent is confined to the intellect only; it is an exercise of only the intellect. This methodology does not take thinkers beyond the reasoning faculty of the mind. Even today, when we find somebody who remains engrossed in deep thinking, he cannot perform any work promptly –in common parlance he is considered a philosopher. Besides, meaning of Darshana is “Drshayate Anneniti”, which means to see something from a different perspective. This perspective is interpreted as philosophy. So, western philosophy is not Darshana but a philosophy, which has apparently attained its zenith in the works of Rene Descartes.

Particularly his philosophical proposition: “Cognito Ergo Sum” is the epitome of western philosophy. This is more or less reflected in the works of all western philosophies. Hence because of an intellectual exercise, western philosophers are famous in this world. Since that point of time when the human mind has attained the capacity to think, it has been in the pursuit of truth –these four questions consistently bother man.

[1] *Who am I?*

[2] *Who has created me?*

[3] *Who has created this world?*

[4] *What is the relationship between the creator who has created both this world and me?*

From ancient times human beings have been consistently searching for answers to these four questions. People who have been trying to find answers to these questions are known as philosophers and the faculty of

their study is known as Philosophy in the western world. India, which has a much older history than the west took this quest further; this is also regarded as a philosophy. This search is going on even today, and it will continue in the future as well. Because discontent gives rise to quest and quest propels human beings onto the path of attainment of knowledge. This has been going on from time immemorial.

Somebody had rightly said:

*Nikal já akla se áge ki, e noor,
Ciráge ráhá hae, manzil nahi hae.*

There are six streams of Indian philosophies: "Sáuñkhya" is the oldest of the orthodox philosophical streams. The pioneers of Sáuñkhya Darshana were entangled in a quest to find out who is the fundamental cause of creation - Puruśa or Prakrti. In this search they denied the role of the Supreme Creator and concluded that Puruśa and Prakrti are both independent identities. Since God has no role to play in creation there is no necessity for him either. In the dark ages of non-progressive philosophy, the wisdom of this philosophy come to this conclusion that the physical body is perishable, and the human being has to go through the cycle of life and death, so why worry thinking about these issues.

The soul embedded in the mind discards the body when it gets old and feeble and again expresses itself through a new physical body. So what is there to pine for? Although the method of Yoga was not God though Yoga is God-Centric, but in Ishvara our ultimate object is god, because the 1st lesson is moving towards Ishvara-Centric, but God by introducing the eight fold path led humans to the stage of Ishvara Prañidhána. On the other hand the Nyáya system kept people engaged in Jalpa and Vitañd'á, but could give man, immersed in worldly life, a clear way to move his mind upwards. Miimánísá spoke only about, "Athato Brahma Jijñásá" and ignored the material world, which has pushed the modern world into the clutches of materialists. Had the unquenchable quest of human beings been satisfied only with the search of Brahma, there would remain no necessity for this world and for contemplating on eternal truth from a worldly perspective?

Question: In this background what is the necessity of Ánanda Márگا's philosophy? What is it all about?

Answer: Since the genesis of this creation to a certain point of time in [written] history, human beings have lived with a belief that there must be someone who had created this universe and us. His manifestations and names can be different but he is certainly there. But as Columbus discovered the American coast in 1492 and Vasco Da Gama reached the Indian coast in 1498 instead of saying, "Thank you God", they thumped their own chest, saying, "Great you have conquered nature. Now what else is there left to conquer?" From that point of time, mankind started to march in a different direction. As a series of great souls started to appear on the horizon, one by one, like Galileo, Copernicus, Newton.

They stunned human beings with consistent new inventions. Science brought about new technology and inventions, and corporate houses commercialized these newly invented technologies. It transformed material life almost into a life of heavenly dreams. So human perspective became scientific. Truth can only be validated in the laboratory. Direct proof turned out to be the only means to acquiring knowledge. People had no faith left in assumption, and institutional evidences. Meanwhile, in the last century, human civilization moved to a stage when Charles Darwin discredited the ancient Biblical belief that it was the Supreme Lord who created this universe in six days and went to sleep on the seventh day, and proved the history of genesis of life on this planet are trapped in carbons of fossils and rocks. History of creation is a billion years old and this living world has been evolving as per the theory of evolution. We could have argued with him but I don't know why we did not. It was a strike on the prior obtained belief, Humans survived it, but humanity could not withstand this, it started to crumble with the impact of the first strike. The second blow was given by Karl Marx who made an economic analysis of history and altered Aristotle's theory of human nature, seeing man not as a political animal but an economic one. Analyzing the human mind he introduced a revolutionary idea with an attractive packaging in front of the new world. This was at a time when his nascent ideology had just begun to sweep away the industrial world. We did not contradict him with philosophy but we watched like silent observers how nations were built on the basis of this ideology and they were soon destabilized.

The third blow was given by Sigmund Freud who believed in the subconscious mind; until then we had not been able to strengthen

philosophy by accessing the inner recesses of the mind. The fourth strike was made by the famous equation of Albert Einstein= $E=Mc^2$.

Since prevalent, philosophical systems couldn't tackle these incessant strikes made at such a rapid pace by scientific inventions, on mankind's quest for Absolute Truth, by introducing wholesome ideology. The essence of humanity started to fade and began to lose its significance. Religious people irrespective of whether they went to the Church, Mosque or Temple, witnessed this. People no longer cherished the goal to attain the Supreme. Rather than understanding each other's needs they hounded each other. Please excuse me for saying this, but man diverted from the path and became a mute spectator. The power that should have been used for the welfare and benefit of people is being used today to destroy one another. In this scenario, Ánanda Marga has been working in a consolidated way to implement an all round philosophy of life.

Question: *It is clear to everyone why Ánanda Marga is necessary. Now tell us, what is Ánanda Marga?*

Answer: The Story of a Prophet, composed by Syria-Lebanon philosopher Khalil Gibran came to my mind and I realized that the discussion was moving exactly as it is described in the book. With this talk, the session of interactions became very exciting, now the questions and curiosity turned into Pariprashna. I said one thing is clear, although, the history of human life on this earth is 10 Lakh years old and mankind's civilization is thousands of years old, but, this modern civilized man has not been able to learn about – justice, particularly social justice. Modern man might have become less crude in nature than primitive man, but his primitive instinct has not changed at all. The question is in what way are we civilized? For instance, if a soldier dies in the battlefield, newspapers and journals eulogize his bravery and people draw inspiration from his heroism. But does society think of what happens to the widow and how does she spend the rest of her life? When the audience heard this woman, who was present in every group: Government, University, Media and Church, couldn't hold back their emotions and agreed with

What I had said. This interaction took an interesting turn after this discussion. I added that since.

Sáadhaná reaching out to helpless people would entail numerous practical hurdles, the voices of aggrieved widows, have not yet reached

civilized people. I further told them that I would like to talk about something that requires will and no additional expenditure. To be more precise, if man signifies both male and female, then why do women not represent both female and male? When in the Roman Catholic Church, both nuns and priests have been walking on the same path to attain God, then why has the Vatican not made any nun a cardinal yet? Why has the Muslim society not made any woman a Maolavii? Why do followers of Vaedika religions not give the status of a priest to a Sádhvii [female ascetic] to bring in social reform? Is it only because they are women? As soon as I finished this conversation, the atmosphere in the hall became charged and this Couplet flashed into my mind:

*Kahaláne ekala rahata, ahi mayur mrga bággha,
Jagat tapovana so kiyo diiragha dágha nidágha.*

“It is easy to say that people live together. They are actually enemies like the snake and the peacock, and the deer and the tiger. But a spiritual Yogii because of his spiritual vibrations creates an impact by his spiritual practice and he created world turns into Tapovan [a place where there is peace and tranquility].”

Ánanda Marga does not only believe in social justice but its female ascetics are holding the ranks of Púrodhá, which is equivalent to cardinal in Vatican. The task that the Vatican could not accomplish in thousand years; Islamic civilization in 1400 years; and Vaedika society in thousands of years, Ánanda Marga has put this idea of social justice and gender equality in practice within a short span of time and today it can proudly claim that human society is like a chariot which has two wheels in order for it to move - man and woman. One wheel was not only dismantled but also thrown away by other religious orders. Once we successfully reinstall this wheel in our lives, this life and the world can progress in the right direction. The interaction was slowly becoming sentimental.

Ánanda Marga has rectified and filled up the gaps in philosophy and given it complete shape. As the nucleus and the fundamental cause of this creation, God is attracting all living beings within himself. As a matter of fact, since life emerged on this planet, the transformational journey from crudity to subtlety has been evolving from single-celled to multi-cellular

life forms. The nature of living beings depends on the length of the radius from the nucleus of the creation; if someone is far from the nucleus he/she is crude, if someone is close to the Centre than he/she is subtle. So, apart from psychophysical conflict, longing for the Great arises in the heart it begets progress [psycho-spiritual].

Secondly in response to the explanation of human nature in terms of psychology, the founder of Ānanda Mārga has added a new chapter to philosophy which is known as “PROUT philosophy”, which is based on the appropriate analysis of the human mind and it says that the human being is not only an economical animal, but a moral and spiritual being, who is the highest form of life created by God. Though he has a longing to attain the infinite, yet it is essential that his physical and psychic needs are met or else he would resort to immorality and become a sinner.

Thirdly in response to Sigmund Freud’s theory, Ānanda Mārga has created a foundation, blending, Bio-psychology to philosophy to attain Paramātman and has developed the methods to cross the limits of subconscious mind and reach unconscious mind in order to progress to the supreme destination:

“Tatra Niratishayam Sarvajiina Biijam” (There lies the seed of omniscience.)

Therefore, Ānanda Mārga’s ideology has infused momentum in the spiritual quest of human beings, smashing down the matrix of Freud’s philosophy. Otherwise he was able to consider man, as a sensual animal because he himself walked on Aparā path then he would have known Parā Jñāna [Divine knowledge]. Finally, the pioneer of Ānanda Mārga, has caused advancement of physical science by directing Albert Einstein’s concept of space and time towards infinity.

Question: What is Ānanda Mārga’s philosophy about space?

Answer: Space is not just three-dimensional but multidimensional.

Question: And time?

Answer: The mental measurement of ‘motivity’ of action is time. If there is no mind, then there is no time. Therefore, in the absence of mind we cannot measure time. Hence be it science or philosophy, existence of everything depends on the mind. Ānanda Mārga is a practical application to give

philosophy its absolute purpose – attainment of infinity. Ánanda Márğa has shown the practical application of philosophy to attain the final goal. So in effect, Ánanda Márğa works as a sovereign research lab and its monks and nuns are the scientists of this lab. This is a system or arrangement to launch human beings on to the path of spirituality. Following these techniques of spiritual practice, a Christian can develop undivided concentration by dint of Sádhaná and participate in weekly prayer in the Church with pointed focus, and a Muslim can do Namáz more devotedly to attain the almighty. The followers of the Vedic religion can focus their attention on Íśta in the temple. We do not attack any religious belief. Gurudeva has given strict orders on this issue [not to hurt anyone's religious sentiment.]

Question: Please enlighten us about Ánanda Márğa's organizational structure and the necessity for the structure?

Answer: Ánanda Márğa is a philosophy of 'life' Ánanda Márğa has an organization consisting of family men, Sannyásiis and Sannyásins, in order to spread its ideology to everyone and to give solace to the under privileged the Márğiis are working all across the planet through its branches, without discriminating on the lines of ethnicity, race, language and color, and teaching Sádhaná for free, to establish a one universal family.

The ideology of Ánanda Márğa is:

*Hararme Pitá, Gaorii Mátá
Svadeshah Bhuvanatravam.*

Lord Shiva is my father and His Spouse is My Mother and this entire created Universe is my homeland.

Question: Who is a Sadvipra in Ánanda Ma'rga?

Answer: In philosophic parlance Sadvipra is accepted as a leader of society. He is like Plato's philosopher king, sage of Confucius, superman of Nietzsche. Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti, founder of Ánanda Márğa gave this philosophical yardstick of leadership qualities in order to develop an ideal society.

Question: How will this kind of leadership emerge in society?

Answer: This kind of leadership will come as a consequence of social churning.

Question: What are his characteristics?

Answer: He will possess intellectual and spiritual power; he will ceaselessly fight against immorality and exploitation. Other philosophers have also given their views on this kind of leader.

Question: Would this leader be a male or female?

Answer: This leader could be either man or woman.

Question: What is the process of becoming a savior and what is his identity?

Answer: Through the practice of Yama-Niyama, Sádhaná based on 16 points of codes; Sadvipra will do service to society and sacrifice for the wellbeing of people, be physically sound, mentally potent and will radiate with the effulgence of soul.

Question: The women present there said in a chorus we can become Sadvipra too?

Answer: "If you go through this practice then one can become a Sadvipra." Meanwhile, the team that represented the church had a discussion among themselves and raised the following question.

Question: During this entire span of conversation everyone learnt that Ánanda Marga has a philosophy for life, is it true?

Answer: You are right this is cent percent true.

Question: Do you have an organization?

Answer: This is absolutely correct too.

Question: Do you have a God as well and because of whom the existence of the Roman Catholic Church is at stake in Malta and for which reason we have been sitting here and talking for hours to settle this dispute?

Answer: Answer to this question is negative.

Question: What?

This expression came as a shock and surprise, and then, again I was asked, "Don't you have God?"

Answer: No.

Question: How do you regard Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii?

As this question came up, every Márgii present in the room had his or her heart in his mouth. Everyone had foreseen that this moment would come, and it was the moment of judgment whether Ánanda Márga would stay in Malta or leave. Only my reply could allay their fears. Everyone turned his or her attention to me. As per the question, it was a very difficult moment. For a few moments, I remembered Gurudeva and what I had told him mentally during the Táttvika exam, “You have failed me after asking me just one question –what is Cosmic Mind?” And my reply was, “Bábá it is You.” You failed Me because of this answer. At that time future and life was in Your hands. Now the future of Ánanda Márga in Malta depends on this answer; at least tell me what I should say now. However, I did not get any response just a smile.

Answer: My reply was Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii was our father; hence we look up to Him only as a loving Father. Immediately as I finished, in a chorus of jubilation, everyone said, “It means that you, Ánanda Márga do not have a god?”

Answer: I have replied in front of all of you.

I had not finished yet and was trying to say something more but the loud clapping drowned my voice. One voice reverberated, “Our fears have been allayed, questions have been answered, now we have nothing more to ask, ask you.”

Hearing this from the representatives of the church, the government team left without saying anything. They were very affectionate towards me. The second exam of my life ended. I had to wait for the result of this round of examination. As per the analysis of the Márgiis, the interactive session was very interesting, subtle, and contemporary, and direction oriented. The Márgiis breathed a huge sigh of relief. I went to my room.

Meeting with the President of Malta, and he spoke his heart out

The next day, along with Sannyásii Dádá and the President's Márgii friend, I reached the President's House at the scheduled time. The President welcomed us with warmth. Embracing me, he said, "You have done my work", which created a very emotional moment for me. Urging me to sit down he took his seat.

He discussed in detail Malta's current conditions [political and economic] and the reasons for inviting me to his country. He had thorough knowledge of previous day's debate. He indicated that he was very pleased to see the way the debate ended. Then he told me about Malta's geographical distinctiveness, its historical legacy, and its economic scenario. He extended to me the status of a state guest. A sweet smile was playing on his lips. During the entire span of the meeting, he behaved so cordially that I did not realize that it was our first meeting. Then he asked questions about Ánanda Márga He asked many questions about Gurudeva with earnestness, and kept nodding in agreement at my answers. Then holding my hand, he led me to the Maltese parliament. He briefly acquainted me with the history of the parliament and drew my attention towards the symbols engraved on the high wall and said, "Those are the marks of the bullets fired by the enemy during World War II. It is an undisputed fact that our Maltese dollar is stronger than the US dollar. We did not remove those bullet marks because

it inspires us to stand out as a proud and independent nation which doesn't lag behind in the community of nations." He became emotional while saying, "We took the bullet hits on our chests, this realization will keep driving us to move forward, we will not remove these marks but preserve them as a memory." I told him earnestly, "May the Supreme Lord always provide you and the people of Malta guidance to move on the path of action." He expressed his gratitude for this.

We again came back to his chamber. The moment had come when I had to bid him farewell. He told me very modestly, "You tell your people that Ánanda Márgiis can keep on working here fearlessly, in case any trouble arises, I and my Government will always help you. His kindness made an everlasting impression on me. While we were leaving a group photograph was taken and he gifted me a voluminous book, containing detailed information about Malta.

The next day we arrived at the Malta airport to leave for Egypt. I was taken to the VIP lounge and given a farewell by the Government. I left for India via Cairo. Though I had bid goodbye to Malta, when I was waiting to board the flight, I remembered that though I had tried to carry out the task, I did not remember him who had sent me here. As the memories came back the following Prabhát Samgíita came to my mind and tears rolled down from my eyes.

I shall always move forward, Always taking your name.

My legs will not shake, nor will my heart tremble with any fear.

Neither earth nor sea nor anything animate or inanimate.

Nobody can obstruct me.

I will do the work for which I have come, with firm determination.

For the days which have passed, I will have no regret.

For the days that are to come, I will feel no fear or doubt.

I don't know how many ordeals are in store for me in the future, but it doesn't worry me at all. I will keep moving forward with this certainty that none other than Bábá is supporting me and nothing is hidden from Him. It is He who brought me to this world, and held my hand and taught me to walk, and brought me this far, and he will be the only resort in the future too, because this world does not recognize anyone in his lifetime. It

is history that does the evaluation of work done. I remember one incident with him in 1967 when Bábá saw me nervous after taking on an important responsibility. He explained to me, "Why are you nervous, I will keep teaching you whenever you become weak." Whenever I feel weak those words give me hope and I clearly see that it is He who has been guiding and protecting me, otherwise this world could be a terrible place filled with ordeals without His Grace even I cannot move one step forward.

That fateful morning in Ánanda Nagar on December 16, 2003

I didn't witness the incident that took place on March 5, 1967 because on that fateful day I was in Himachal Pradesh, but I was a victim of the event that occurred on December 16, 2003. On the 5th of March 1967, a group of local people armed with bows and arrows attacked the Ánanda Marga. Forest department officials and workers of the regional BDO office spearheaded this attack. The 16th December raid in 2003 was conducted by the additional SP and CPM district chief.

At around 7 am, I was doing my morning Sádhaná when I heard a loud noise that was coming from outside, I had to cut short my Sádhaná. I looked around there was no one in the room. Putting on my clothes, as soon as I reached the RM office I saw a company of armed policemen in front of the Central office. Loud noises were coming from the right side of the Berlin house. Till then I had no idea what was going on. I called up the SP, Mr. Goyal and introduced myself. He answered, "You wait, I am coming. Finally, I am coming." Seeing me there, the Additional Superintendent of Police breathed a sigh of relief. Immediately he put 4-5 armed policemen on duty to protect me.

I went up to the first floor and knocked on General Secretary, Ácárya Dhruvánandajii's room door. Identifying my voice he opened the door and

I asked him to come out fully dressed. He did that and then we locked the door and both of us went to the Central Office accompanied by the Central Office Secretary. As we were walking with the police personnel, we met a group of Sannyásiis who had formed a human wall to block our way. "We will not let you go any further." I said, "This will not serve any purpose, you people step aside." They kept pressurizing us not to go ahead. Because they had come with the lady police team too, the police arrested them. So, it was clear, everything was going on under a premeditated plan. The police started to put everyone in the vehicle. I saw Ácárya Raghunáthjii was already sitting inside the van. We reached Pundág Chowk in the police van and they made us sit there throughout the day. After a couple of hours, Ácárya Raghunáthjii was released. We were taken to a certain school in Jaipur in the evening and were made to spend the night there.

In the wee hours of the morning we were brought to a Dharmashálá in Purulia to complete our daily chores. Upon reaching there I found that our numbers had increased to 71. We were presented in the court at 10am and then in the evening we were sent to Purulia Central Jail. When we reached the barracks at 8 pm it was a winter night of December. We were trying to settle in the barrack, and the tyranny and terror of the police began. I realized that all the jail staff knew me before hand; so one thing became clear to me that police administration and jail authorities had been working in tandem. The nuns were sent to the ladies jail. Now 66 of us were left, our group included family men, our security personnel, Brahmacáriis, and ascetics. Now the cycle of oppression started, we were strip-searched, this thorough search was conducted not by the prison police, but convicted murderers, thieves, pick pockets. We tolerated this humiliation. Two days had passed and we hadn't eaten anything. Very few people were able to sleep at night. On the third day after the morning roll call was over we were asked to eat. We asked if there were separate utensils for cooking vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals? Getting a negative answer from the jail authority, we said that most of us are Brahmacárii, monks, and moreover even family men in Ánanda Marga, are not only vegetarian but also do not take onion or garlic either. How can we eat food cooked in dishes that are used for preparing meat? Is jail a place that corrupts someone's sanctity? We all were determined to protect our Dharma. We told the authorities that we should be provided new cutters for our use and new dishes, we should have our

separate rations, and that we would cook our own meals. We would accept raw food items from them otherwise we would fast unto death, We further told them that they could inform whom so ever they need to inform as there was no point in, discussing this with us.

To weaken our resolve and undermine our unity we were told, “You are Sannyásiis, but there are many young Sannyásiis and family men among you—at least allow them to eat.” We said, “Everyone is present here please ask them yourself.” Everyone rose and said in one voice, “Division will not work, all of us follow a similar code of conduct.”

In this way the second, third, fourth, and even fifth day passed.

Every day the jail superintendent would come to us and urge us all to eat. As our fast continued to the fourth day, everyone became unwell. Initially everyone had this impression that we will not able to hold fort for so long; and that after giving the authorities a threat of fasting it is not easy to survive for more than three days. They assumed that on the fourth day when hunger would get the better of them, they would themselves come asking for food, all their code of conduct would vanish into thin air. But after the fourth day, the entire jail including security personnel and inmates of the jail became anxious about our health.

Gradually, even prisoners started to support us. On the fifth day of fasting, the jail superintendent called for a meeting. I took two Dádás along with me to attend the meeting. The same question was asked and my answer was as per our stand. Now the jail superintendent’s voice changed. He said, “Everyone is eating food here and I am feeling really bad that you are Sádhus and Sannyásiis, and are fasting here.” I said, “Would you like it if these Sádhus and Sannyásiis are forced to discard their Dharma here?”

“When have we said no to eating? From the very first day till today we have not said we don’t want to eat. The truth is you don’t want to feed us.” People in our team were united and acting like a solid unit because they were intelligent people. The Jail SP made another attempt to weaken us, “At least you can order the family men and Brahmacáriis to eat because they have become very weak.” I said, “Since they are committed to the same code of conduct, they continue to be Mārgiis.” At this he made a sarcastic comment, “There are 35 Sannyásiis who are locked up like you all in this jail. They are eating everything.” I replied, “That is their responsibility. We

are in front of you too and are locked up in your jail. Truth doesn't require any evidence to be proved."

Again he asked, "Tell me what you people will eat? "I said that I had already made it clear, first thing was that we need dishes. If you really want to feed us give us one utensil. The answer came that it is a small dish. I said if it is small, then we will cook less and eat less, then you will not complain why we are not eating. Meanwhile I asked one Dádá to go to the store and check how big the pot is. The store in charge accompanied him. The Dádá came back smiling with a big Bhagoná. "Dádá, 125 people's food can be cooked in this."

As the issue of cooking utensil was over, another problem was identified. Because prisoners are sent to court in the morning, the kitchen remains busy till 10am in the morning preparing their meal. I said that we don't need it at 10am, hand over the kitchen by 11 am after washing and cleaning is done. After this issue was settled, another hurdle popped up. "We have to lock up everything by 4:30 pm. So, you will be able to cook a meal once a day. The second thing is you can prepare only one item.

You will have to vacate kitchen by 2:30 pm." We said we would vacate the kitchen by 2:30 pm and that we would keep our eating pots and utensils in our barrack. And as far as the number of dishes is concerned we will cook Khicad'ii. Therefore, the store should provide us rice, pulses vegetables and oil. The discussion ended in a pleasant manner, I came back to the barracks and broke this happy news to our people on the fifth day of imprisonment, that the jail authorities had accepted all our demands. Everyone's face lit up with the anticipation of eating food. Like always everyone hailed Bábá with "Parama Pitá Bábá kii Jai." Thus one episode of the jail term concluded.

It is said that life in hell doesn't get very painful if there are like-minded people living together, but living in place as pleasant as heaven can easily become painful if you are with people who have divergent views.

According to a philosopher's perspective, there is no particular place like heaven and hell; rather they are two different states of mind. Indeed, where there is no worry [Kunt'há] that place is known as abode of bliss [Vaekuñf'ha]. All 66 of us were kept in the same barrack, every individual barely managed to get bedding space—and we had one bathroom only for

our group. This is the reason our bathroom would always remain occupied. Quite often the situation became critical, as and when someone needed it for more than twenty minutes entered the bathroom. As and when such a situation arose, people used to bear it with a smile. In this manner, by taking care of each other, we stayed in jail from December 17, 2003 to April 29, 2004. We lived together creating an atmosphere of Samígacchadhvam.

After we started cooking food, people adjusted in their own way. Older people in our team used to eat only one meal at 3 pm. After lunch we used to preserve the left over for dinner, because it would remain hot till 7:30 P.M. Thus the rest of us would eat from the left overs during dinner and no one had trouble eating. We had no clue as to how long our term of imprisonment would continue. Therefore we devised a strategy to use our jail time judiciously. Everyone agreed unanimously that our prison life should be disciplined, so that we could productively use our time in jail. Because Gurudeva is watching all that is happening—we are not bogged down in this difficult situation hence we could withstand the adverse situation by unity.

It has been said that 'jail makes or breaks a man'. We began to do self-study and had discussions after self-study, through the entire course of the day from morning to night because we not only had outstanding trainees but excellent trainers as well. In this manner after four and half months our barracks got transformed into a training math. Today younger brothers, who were trained at that time in jail, are holding key positions in the organization, truly justifying the saying –Jail makes a man. Today we all take pride in them. May Gurudeva keeps on providing them with strength to work continuously and overflow with devotion.

The second phase of prison life began. It would not be an exaggeration to say that even before our arrival in prison, the jail administration had done a thorough research about some of us and they had information about each individual and their official capacity in the organization. So, constant demands started to come from the jail authorities, "forgive those people". It would fluster us to think, who were they? This happened almost on a regular basis. Our bail petition would be filed and expectedly be rejected. But one day it took an unexpected turn for us. When summoned to meet a gentleman who had come from outside, he proposed, "If you forgive them

then tomorrow you will be released from prison.” I asked that gentle man for what crime we have been brought here? Please make it clear first what our crime is. He didn’t respond but gave a mischievous smile. I again asked him, “Sir, will you please let us know who should we forgive and for what crime?”

“If we forgive them then we will be released from prison and if we don’t what will happen?” He replied, “Then you will rot in this prison.”

I further said -- Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii came on this earth to establish a set of ideologies to build Mahá Vishva and being fascinated by his ideology, I became a Sannyásii. So, now I am facing two options, either I compromise with the forces acting against the establishment of this ideological principle to secure our freedom or remain locked up forever for refusing this proposal. I told him that this prison is very spacious, if during the prison term, I die, cremate my body in one corner.

On hearing my reaction, this gentleman was disappointed and went back. In spite of hearing this development no one in our team got demoralized. Meanwhile, after seeing us fasting, 35 prisoners began to keep Ekádashii fast, they took Diikśá, and used to participate in Kiirtana. Thus far, our behavior and conduct made a good impression on prison inmates and staff. For us, the prison turned into Ánanda Nagar. One day one staff member came to me and said he wanted to talk to me alone. I gave him time.

He said, “Dádájii, try to get out of this prison because your life is in danger, a big conspiracy is being hatched.” I called him by his name and said, “How can death take me away without his command who has given me this life? Above all, if it is my destiny to die in this prison no one can prevent that. So, why should I be frightened before dying?” He said, “I thought it is appropriate to convey this message to you because I have understood everything after seeing you for so many days.” I thanked him and he went away. I was imprisoned because my crime was: that I had asked the President of AMPS to open fire at a mob who were determined to attack us and one person got injured because of his firing. At that time Ácárya Raghunáth Prasádjii was President of AMPS.

The news that a large group of Márgiis was locked up in prison had spread like wildfire. At that time Shrii Atal Bihari Vajpayee government was at the center and Svámii Cinmayanandajii was Union Minister of State for Home. When he learned that even I was locked up in Purulia’

jail, he wrote a letter to the West Bengal chief minister. It is necessary to mention here that Svámii Cinmayanandajii used to, see me with his Guru Svámii Dharmánandajii in the Áshram, because Svámii Dharmánandajii, Cinmayanandajii's Guru was my friend. That letter had an impact. The chief minister called in the minister for Jails and asked him to sort out the matter. As a result, the Deputy Inspector General [DIG], Jail reached Purulia Central jail. I was called. The DIG was talking to other prisoners in the jail premises when I came out from my barrack, he informed me about the letter of the Union Minister of State, he inquired about my well being. At this I thanked the DIG, Mr. Chaturvedi. He told us about himself that his ancestors came to Bengal about 100 years ago during the British rule. He was not a Bengali. On being asked about my well being, I asked, "What hardship could one face in jail at all?" Hearing this, he broke into laughter.

Sir, do I have the right to know why we have been brought here in large numbers. On what charges have our workers of our Central Office been locked up here?. He said in a satirical tone that this is how things go on here. Then he asked me what facilities we require here.

I expressed my gratitude with a mere "thank you", but also drew his attention to the hopeless living conditions of the prisoners. Meanwhile I sent one prisoner to bring his eating pot; it was an aluminum plate folded in a few places and stained with a black spot, and I put it in front of him so that he could take a good look at it. I also told him that even a goat would hesitate to drink water from this pot, and you can imagine how these inmates feel while eating from this pot. Reacting to this DIG looked suspiciously at the jail Superintendent and asked for an explanation. I further added, "Please see, it has been written that this is correctional home, then how can you think of reforming these prisoners by feeding them from this pot?"

He became very angry in the meantime a frenzy of activities started to take place, the jail officials who were present got into action very quickly. Everyone was responding to his command. Within half an hour each and every prisoner had a bright stainless steel plate in his hands. Till then, we had already spent a long time in jail and even prisoners became familiar with the expression, "Parama Pitá Bábá kii Jai." The Entire jail compound roared with this sound, "Parama Pitá Bábá kii Jai". Shrii Chaturvedi sir said, "Even in jail you people have maintained Dharma." I said that wherever a

human being goes he carries good and bad habits with him. Thanking him I said, "Mr Chaturvedi, I don't have any personal needs."

"Besides, these days, the jail administration has been treating us almost fairly." He was visibly surprised with my assertion and asked whether their behavior was different earlier I simply said, "This generally happens; possibly it was done under someone's pressure, but now we don't have any complaints or grievances against the jail authorities. On a personal level all of them were very good human beings. Then he left. Later on the jail superintendent expressed his happiness that we had not made any complaint against them.

They confessed that they had been very scared. I told him that Gurudeva has taught us to tolerate, not to complain. "Perhaps it is the tradition of this place that when a new prisoner comes, they are tortured first, so you have tried to carry out this tradition with us." The Jail SP Mr. Ghosh really appreciated these words and from then onwards till our release, we had a very pleasant relationship with Purulia jail authorities. Starting from 2nd week of December 2003 to April 2004 we did not get bail. So, we had to go to the High Court, and the High Court bailed us out but it placed certain restrictions, which are still in force today. Quite often, the way the law functions and the resultant travesty of justice, is beyond normal comprehension. But still the system continues to function in its own way and society witnesses the workings as mute spectators. It is better not to elaborate on this issue. We spent our prison time in the manner, as we would have done in any normal circumstance. It has been said:

*Kávyá Shástra Vinodena, Kálo Gacchati Dhimatám,
Vyasanena Ca Murkháńám Nidráyákalahena Vá.*

'The time of wise people is spent discussing poetry, scriptures and making others happy. Foolish people spend their time in bad habits, sleeping and quarreling.'

Our younger lot would get disheartened each time our appeal for bail was rejected, but each one of them would take care of himself. In a sense, truth of this statement, "Jail makes a man and breaks a man", was validated. I had only heard about it earlier, but now saw it happen personally in the jail.

Ultimately, after multiple refusals and denials, on the order of the Calcutta High Court we were released on April 29th 2004. A few days prior to our release, news of Ácárya Árteshánandajii's sudden death struck us like a thunderbolt. A spiritual warrior, who was engaged in ceaseless work for the poor, suddenly left this mortal world, whom:

*Bade shaokha se sun rahá thá Jamáná,
Tum so gaye dástán kahate kahate.*

'You have to accept the providence of fate, there is no way you can change it, perhaps Bábá needed him to do some other work elsewhere.'

When we were leaving the Jail compound, the rest of my team had gone out of the main gate, the Jailer held me back. He asked me to sit in his office saying that he wanted to discuss some personal issues with me. Initially I was shocked, that the Jailer of Purulia Central Jail where we had spent four and half months, had never bothered to talk to any of us, was now at this final moment when we were leaving, wanted to talk to us.

I wondered what was going on in his mind. Anyway, human behavior changes with the change of circumstances. Perhaps he was no exception to this rule. I was puzzled when he drew the curtains on the door so that nobody could see us. He stood up with his hands in Namaskára Mudrá and became very emotional and started speaking. He told me that as we are leaving to please forgive him and bless him for his future life. On several occasions, he had gathered the courage to meet me and talk to me. But every time, the fear, that someone might report his conduct to higher authorities, held him back, because they were under strict surveillance. His dilemma was that whatever he would hear about me would bother him because he never found what he heard to be true whenever he saw me in person. In this world there is wide gap between what one hears and what one sees.

I told him that that was the very nature of this world. In no era, have worldly beings been able to learn about any controversial personality during their lifetime. This is the irony of history and there is no exception to this. He held my hand and in an emotional voice and said that he was helpless because he had come from the party cadre. Since we were under surveillance, he was worried that somebody would complain against him hence he, did not try to communicate with us. Otherwise, among all

personnel of jail administration he was the one who respected me the most. Only one compulsion had kept him away from me. By then it was very late, the deputy jailor came inside with the news that my group was desperately waiting for me to come. He told me that whatever we have left in the way of memories and activities will help them. As soon as all three of us came out, the entire security staff of the jail gathered and opened the main gates and bid me goodbye. I came out. People who were waiting eagerly outside asked in one voice, what had happened and why was I so late in coming out. "I told them that some of the jail staff wanted to spend time with me personally." As everyone was keen to get home as early as possible we ended the conversation. I walked towards my destination remembering the time we had spent in prison. The thought came to my mind that this is the worldly play; this world is the divine playground of the Cosmic Player.

My U.S. Tour on the Summon of the Denver County Court

As a matter of fact, a Sannyásii [ascetic] is tested every moment of his life, but some of these moments throw up grueling challenges indeed. Until now, I have been put through many ordeals in my spiritual journey, and on each occasion I didn't have prior information. They came up all of a sudden. This has been the trend so far. Therefore, I never got adequate time for preparations, so that I can confidently say, "I have done my homework, ask me from anywhere." This was not an isolated incident but happened consistently. This saga began from the very day Báabá had failed me in Táltvika exam, and then in Mahíšii Sabhá, and it occurred for the third time in Malta.

Now for the fourth occasion I was facing another ordeal in Denver County Court in USA. And here I want to set the record straight, facing cross-examination in the court for the first time is a prospect that scares the wits out of many brave hearts. During the course of cross-questioning you have to maintain coherence from beginning, through middle and up to conclusion, because, any wrong statement given by your self can prove your entire case wrong. Lawyers of rival party are ever ready to prove that testimony given by the witness is false and devoid of facts. And in this case, if you give incorrect and contradictory testimony, it will certainly be used as the strongest counter argument discrediting your own case. To be precise the biggest challenge for someone testifying before the court is to keep

the focus of the court glued to the main issue. Thirdly there is a difference between, listening, comprehending and saying something.

In the third week of February 2011 the central office asked me to represent the organization in Denver county court USA. Till today I have not turned down any responsibility entrusted by the organization on me, whether it is a small or big one. Moreover, how can an Avadhúta deny taking up any responsibility given by the organization? To constantly remind us of our responsibility, Gurudeva has introduced a model code of conduct for his own Avadhútas, and we are bound to follow these codes. Initially I was very scared thinking about the gravity of the situation and enormity of the responsibility of defending the central office in the Denver county court, and moreover the onus of defending AMPS was entirely upon my shoulders.

If I fail to present our case properly in the court the world will say, "He is good for nothing, he only talks big, but he has destroyed reputation of the organization in the US." Immediate effect of losing this case would be that Ánanda Marga would lose its legal control outside the Delhi sector. Then how would I come back and show my face. As a matter of fact it is the accepted norm of the world that you will move ahead if you win and lag behind if you lose. This tradition is very primitive, no change has been made to this rule whatsoever, we have to wait what changes civilized society brings to this norm in future. I was given all the documents of this case, and I started reading them. After reading the files 2-3 times I tried to memorize the main points; started to comprehend each and every point one by one.

One thought came to my mind that it is very important to know what is the argument that our American lawyer has prepared to defend our case in the court. On reaching there I would find out. I will also have to understand there what is my designated role in this case? Then I started waiting in anticipation to receive an invitation letter to be sent by our US "law firm" so that I could apply for the visa. When I completed the complicated process of applying for the visa, the American Embassy called me for an interview. So I reached the Embassy and after taking a token joined the waiting queue. While standing in the queue, taking a headcount of the people standing in front of me, I made an estimation of the time it would take for me to reach up to the window. Ultimately my turn came. The questions were asked in such manner as if the visa office was hell-bent to reject my visa.

Question: Why have you come to take American visa?

Answer: AMPS is an intervener in a Denver county court case, and I am representing the central office; and central administration has already informed this to its American representative, and representative himself has sent invitation letter through his "law firm" asking to be present in the court, so that visa can be processed. This is why I want to go to America. Hence I have come for visa.

Question: Why you only want to go? Is there no other person?

Answer: I being the Legal Secretary of AMPS and the organization has to represent itself in a court of law, it is the provision of the organization only that person who has legal knowledge can go. How can any other person perform this job?

After this reply, the visa officer left his desk, went inside to consult with someone, came out and made another question.

Question: Do you have any representative in US?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Then why don't you give this responsibility to him, why do you only have to go?

Answer: This responsibility cannot be given to him.

Question: Why?

Answer: Since Central AMPS are intervener in this case, so, a representative of Central Office must carry out this job.

Question: Why your American representative cannot accomplish this job?

Answer: Since his jurisdiction is confined to US only and central office is intervener, so, only a representative of central AMPS can do this job and I am legal secretary. Therefore I have been considered as the suitable person for this job, so I am here for the visa.

Visa officer again went inside and after coming out started checking my passport thoroughly, and then he turned towards me and surveyed me from head to toe, as far as he could manage to see from the other side of the window. He could not stop his inner wish and it came out spontaneously

and said in a muffled voice, "What to do I am unable to cancel this." He went inside once again, as he came out he asked me.

Question: When do you have to go?

Answer: My ticket is booked for tonight.

Question: It is impossible today, you come back on Monday, and how do you want your visa delivered, should I send it to you via courier? [That was the final working day of the week for the court]

Answer: I will collect it myself from here.

Thus, the entire span of the interview lasted for 45 minutes; people standing behind me were getting restless wondering what was going on. I called up the US office in the evening to inform them that "I did not get visa today. Embassy has called me again on Monday so, I can leave on Monday night only." Since they kept my passport, it assured me that I would definitely get visa on Monday.

On Monday I went to the embassy, as I went inside the compound there was pin drop silence everywhere. I was stunned with the deafening silence because there was not a single individual within the embassy compound except the guard. So I walked up to him and asked with disbelief in my eyes, "What's wrong brother? I was called to come today to collect my visa but it is very quiet here?" There were few other wondering souls like me too who turned up meanwhile. The guard said, "The embassy is closed because it is Washington Day today, so, you people come tomorrow." I presumed that the visa officer was so occupied by the dilemma during my visa processing that he forgot to make a distinction between working day and holiday -perhaps his mind crossed the orbit of time for a short period. I had to call the US office again and explained them the entire scenario. Next day I got the visa for sufficient amount of days so that I could visit US whenever it was required and complete the task. It happened likewise.

Shreyáni Bahu Vighnáni

(In doing good work, there are many obstacles.)

The twists and turns of events that played out in the US embassy validate this line. I felt as if somebody had made a complaint against me to make sure that I shouldn't reach Denver County court in time. Everything

in this created universe takes place as per the will of Paramátmán but everyone does not believe in this.

On the second day after my arrival in Washington, Ácárya Vimalánandajii took me to the law office at scheduled time where we met our lawyer, Tim Obitt. The lawyer examined my preparation minutely with difficult questions and practically cut me to size arrogantly then and there. For the first time I realized that I don't even know the 'A' of Ánanda Márga.

Another lawyer took me to her desk and gave instructions for two hours. Next day I had to sit with Tim again, but this time he was completely in different mood, smiling and cheerful and I heard his first utterance, "Dada please forgive me for whatever I told you yesterday, I did not intend to belittle you, rather I wanted you to concentrate hard on the subject so that you could prepare yourself for the role that I wish you to play in the court." I approved of his approach and said, "No problem Tim, preparation is essential for the job that we have to do here, otherwise how we will present our case in court." So I became alert to seriousness of the task ahead. My reaction assured Tim that I was not cowed down by inferiority complex. Tim didn't say anything more but smiled back. Then he ended this conversation with his familiar expression "fair enough" and handed me a file, which contained 1000 pages and said, "Dada withdraw yourself completely from this world and prepare yourself after studying these files thoroughly. We will meet again after 5 days." Then after discussing on some other points related to this topic and taking down necessary feedback we came back.

After reaching Dhruva's house, I assembled all necessary items and made a daily schedule and confined myself to the room. Since it was February, the weather in Washington was still freezing; there would be intermittent snowfall too. I started to live in a time bound and disciplined manner. Here is my round the clock schedule that I followed: I used to start my day early at 2 am and after finishing bath and daily chores, I used to do Sádhaná. Then Paiñcajanya, after Paiñcajanya would go for walking; having returned from walk, would resume study; then taking breakfast at 9 am, I would continue study up to 1:30 pm. After another round of Sádhaná, I used to rest for half an hour, after taking lunch. Post lunch would continue studying till night. At night after taking a short stroll I would sit do Sádhaná.

Then take light dinner, post dinner; study till 11 pm, then would sleep from 11 pm - 2:00 am.

Following this tight schedule, I became sleep deprived and my appetite decreased too. After almost 4-5 days, one day Vimalánandajii could not hold back his concern any longer and said, "If you continue in this manner, you will definitely fall sick." I told him I will not fall sick but I might become weak. And as I had wished it happened so. Gurudeva took absolute care of me, as I looked after his work. I remember one incident when I was posted in Tháno [Dehradun], his reaction after I finished a particular task assigned by him, reached me, "When Rudránanda takes up any work, I become certain of that." These words of Gurudeva make me more alert and active in carrying out a particular task. So, for me it is very natural to increase my stamina to work harder. On the fifth day we reached Washington "law house". Tim took a stock of our preparation in his own style and smiled mysteriously with this spontaneous expression, "fair enough".

Slowly my preparation was reaching to a stage, more precisely – reaching to a point when I was able to say something and I began to understand the case bit by bit. So, what was the history of the Ánanda Marga case in Denver court?

Tim started talking, "Dada! Bábá had given you a Mantra that you use while performing Sádhaná. Today your lawyer is giving you a Mantra; you memorize this into, which you will use in your statement, whenever you get an opportunity, possibly after every ten minutes, keep on repeating this Mantra. Its effect will be felt afterwards. And this Mantra is- 'A.M. Inc. is the legal embodiment of New York sector under AMPS Central.' The Mantra given by Bábá has changed your life and the mantra that I give you now will change the trajectory of this case." I said in reply, "I will follow your instruction word by word and practice this Mantra." In his usual, natural expression Tim said – "fair enough".

Slowly my preparation started reaching to a stage where I could say now I have begun to comprehend the case. Now I thought, let's revisit what was the case actually? The case was Tiiirthánanda vs. Vimalánanda. Tiiirthánanda, who was the sectorial secretary of N.Y. sector of A.M. Inc. before the appointment of Vimalánandajii was made, had gone to court

instead of handing over the charge to new Sectorial Secretary claiming that there is no relation between A.M. Inc. and AMPS Central. A.M. Inc. is an independent unit because US and India are two different sovereign nations. So, federal laws of the US should only run A.M. Inc. Therefore we are a separate entity; we have nothing to do with you and therefore why should he hand over the charge. No sooner was the new appointment for the sectorial secretary announced, Tiirthánanda had made changes in the A.M. Inc. Constitution to remove any hurdle in his way of becoming Sectorial Secretary again and thus consolidated his position with certainty. If there is no bamboo in the first place there won't be any noise of the flute [to deal with]. But there is old proverb that 'man proposes God disposes'. But Bámisurii [flute] is crafted by breaking the branches of bamboo pole, which gives out such mellifluous melody of Pañcam Svára that is spellbinding and will continue to enchant human beings forever.

So far as the question of posting of the Sectorial Secretary was concerned, his claim to the post was baseless because, when there was no connection how posting could have been made? Thus an edifice of sand was built on the shifting sands. From claimant side, except a few, almost all former sectorial secretaries and Máginais presented themselves in the court and gave testimony by reading out a shocking affidavit.

It contained one point on which all witnesses of the claimant party had to read out a shocking statement mentioned in affidavit: "Bábá is not God". Having seen the affidavit few intelligent monks and family men held refused to testify before the court. Thus they saved themselves from making a historical blunder. "May Bábá prevent everyone from committing mistakes; if someone's faith is not lost he will survive as well."

As a matter of fact, their affidavit is still a part of the court's record book.

Date of cross-examination on my testimony and comment was finalized. I did not have to go to Denver. One officer of the court, along with his recording team, stenographer, lawyer of Plaintiff [complainant], reached Washington at the scheduled time. It would be helpful for readers to note here that judicial procedure in US is quite different from Indian judicial proceedings. In India all proceedings of trial take place within the court in the presence of the judge only, in this process the court keeps itself engaged for years, and carries on the business of trial on scheduled dates for hour,

two hours, as per the demand of the situation and the progress of the case. The judge always listens to the trial himself and gives the ruling on the case on the basis of the evidence furnished by lawyers of both parties. In the US, after a case is filed, lawyers of both the parties start exchanging documents related to every aspect of the case and keep cross examining each other. And in this process whichever point is settled, it automatically gets killed. Both the parties accept that whatever points are left at the end that those remaining points should be settled on the basis of cross examination and testimony. After this date is fixed for argument, trial and hearing is made in front of the judge. USA follows this legal practice. Finally you come to court on the scheduled date, hearing takes place in front of the judge and he/she gives his ruling and permanently ends the case. Indian legal procedure is different from beginning to end and the judge remains in the court only.

Proceedings of the court commenced at 9am and continued to 6 pm in the evening. There was a lunch break of 40 minutes. Except the intervening lunch break, proceedings continued throughout the day. Audio recording and stenography of this testimony was being done simultaneously. The question-answer session began and I was the first one to face questions.

Question: What is your role in AMPS?

Answer: I am the General Training Secretary (GTS) and Legal Secretary of the organization.

Question: What is your job?

Answer: Firstly in the capacity of General Training Secretary I inspect and scrutinize the works of training centers across the world.

Question: Where are these training center's located?

Answer: In the western world, Ydrefors, Gullringen of Sweden, Ezora in Africa, Ghana, Mindanao archipelago (Davao of Philippines). In India Gándhidhám (Gujrát), Ánandshiilá, Ranchi (Jharkhand), Bengaluru (Karnataka) for nuns, and Varanasi (UP). Varanasi itself is the controlling authority of all seven training centers, where I am posted, and monitor all seven sectors from there.

Question: What do you do in these training Centres and how it all started?

Answer: Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii, founder of Ánanda Marga whom we

endearingly address as *Bábá'*, His advent on this earth was on full moon day of Vaeshákha month also known as Buddha Púrñimá [as per the Indian calendar], in the small suburban area of Jamalpur, Bihar in 1921.

However, there doesn't exist any recorded document on whatever he had done prior to 1955. But there were some incidents, which have become part of popular folklore. In 1939, he encountered a ferocious dacoit in Calcutta; in this very first encounter he transformed that dacoit into a spiritual aspirant. Unlike the life stories and anecdotes of great men, *Bábá's* life was not chronicled in history. Legends and anecdotes about his life from the time period of 1954-55 started to come out into light when Gurudeva started the *Ánanda Márga* movement/mission. The objective of the mission is "*Átma Mokśártham Jagad Hitáya ca*", liberation of self and service to humanity. And in order to achieve this goal he established AMPS. There is no difference between the two. We address him as Gurudeva.

As a Guru he propelled few individuals onto the path of spirituality. At that time very few people knew him. In the course of time, gradually by delivering discourses he pioneered his own philosophical treatises and introduced an all-round ideology on how to live a life. Simultaneously by delivering spiritual discourses he established his *Dhármika* scriptures. By introducing a new social philosophy, which he called PROUT, he completed the matrix of philosophy adding the final limb to it, which was consistently overlooked for many centuries. Meanwhile in 1956, by propounding social philosophy, which is considered by '*Smrti*' as the three scriptures, and brings about completeness to the three scriptures.

Question: Then there were no third scriptures till today?

Answer: There were three scriptures but they were incompatible with the realities of the modern world, they were replete with fallacies, so, they failed to keep pace with the ongoing march of modern civilization. Hence a new invention like PROUT was needed.

Question: So how did Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii personality influence those who came close to him?

Answer: Scientific method of *Sádhaná* [spiritual practice] introduced by him, created two groups of people in the society –one group while walking on the ideological path showed by Gurudeva, began to live an ideological life which is attuned to the attainment of *Paramátmán*, while performing

duties of domestic life, and these legion of men were family men. His personality touched every one regardless of wherever he/she was and in effect it influenced the society. The other legions of people were educated and young Sannyásiis/ins [monks and nuns] who sacrificed comforts of family lives, and devoted their life to serve mankind.

Gurudeva not only took care of the monks like a benevolent father but also trained them for future life too. On the successful completion of training, Gurudeva would himself approve them to take up duty of the organization; Gurudeva would assign them to the service of society. Slowly the number of people, discarding family life to work for Bábá's mission started to grow. This started in the initial phase of 1960. I came in contact with Bábá in 1961 after leaving everything behind. After giving me necessary training he assigned me to the Varanasi training center to run it efficiently and absolved Himself from this responsibility. Now my only job was to impart training. While I was leaving for Varanasi, Gurudeva empowered me with two things – a routine to live a disciplined life regularly and a model of conduct rules to execute it properly.

We had an extra copy of this model code of conduct rules, so, we have submitted it, and it has been exhibited and become part of the court papers.

Question: Then what did you do next?

Answer: While following the routine and model code of conduct, I would teach Ánanda Marga philosophy to new trainees who came for training, and I made them perform Sádhaná four times [in a day], and I myself do the same as well. Following this daily routine I started walking on the path of truth and Dharma. Wherever a group of trainees was ready after completing the training session, I would inform Jamalpur [the headquarters], and one examiner would come from Jamalpur to take their exams so that they can be made Táttvika, and later on these Táttvikas would be trained to become Ácáryas.

Question: What is this Ácárya's training?

Answer: This is training for teaching Yoga to Ácárya or the science of Sádhaná. In this stage trainees are taught a particular method so that they can go to places and teach Sádhaná and meditation to interested or willing people. These kinds of trainees came to be known as Ácárya. Later on they are given

the attire of Brahmachárii. Once an Ácárya completes his/her training, the organization takes charge of them. The Ácárya Board hands him/her over to the Central Office.

Question: *After becoming an Ácárya what do they do?*

Answer: The General Secretary of AMPS Central gives them a posting according to requirement in fieldwork, wherever there is vacancy.

Question: *What is Ánanda Márga's structural system? What is this posting system? Will you please tell us?*

Answer: In order to propagate the Ánanda Márga ideology Gurudeva has divided entire world in to 9 sectors namely:

- [1] Delhi sector has, India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh in its jurisdiction.
- [2] Hong Kong – China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Mongolia, Eastern Russia and parts of Siberia.
- [3] Manila sector – Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Borneo etc. and countries of Far East Asia.
- [4] Suva sector - Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Guam.
- [5] George Town sector – Latin American countries like Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, Chile, Venezuela etc.
- [6] New York sector – North America, Caribbean and Canada.
- [7] Berlin sector, Germany, France, Poland, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Romania, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Spain, England etc.
- [8] Cairo sector - Pakistan, Arab countries, Egypt, Greece, Malta, Croatia etc.
- [9] Nairobi sector - Entire African continent except Egypt.

I continued answering the question: For the purpose of propagation of Dharma Sector is again divided into region, Diocese, District, Block, Pancáyata, and village. Village is the smallest unit. Gurudeva Himself has given this structure. A District is known as Bhukti and block as Upa-bhukti. As per the needs of the Sector, the Central Office appoints S.S.,

R.S., D.S. etc. An S.S. (Sectorial Secretary) can be an Avadhúta or Purodhá as well. We hand over trainees after successful completion of training, to the organization as workers and these workers continue to gain skills and efficiency over the years and the training department of the organization trains them so that they can become Ácárya, Avadhúta and Purodhá.

Question: What is this order of Táttvika, Ácárya, Avadhúta and Purodhá?

Answer: As in the Roman Catholic Church there are brother, father, bishop, cardinal, pope, and so for understanding purposes consider brother as Táttvika, father as Ácárya, bishop as Avadhúta, cardinal as Purodhá, and pope as Purodhá Pramukha.

Question: When you post any worker to a certain sector, how does the Central Office maintain communication with that person? What is the procedure?

[Now the questions became more pin pointed and were veering towards the real issue, and for the record I was not sitting in a Tattva Sabhá, rather I was in the middle of a court proceeding, where truthfulness of the case was being examined - to find out the reality of A.M. Inc's claim which had filed the case - so that justice can be delivered.]

Answer: The General Secretary of AMPS can appoint anybody in the capacity of SS in any sector, once name of the person is approved by Purodhá Pramukha or President of the AMPS. Newly appointed SS is given an appointment letter, signed by GS. He has to come to the Central Office in every two months for RDS so that the Central Office can find out if he has completed all the targets given to him, or else to find an alternative to achieve them. This is known as RDS method.

Question: What is RDS?

Answer: Gurudeva has given this acronym, for a systematic method of reporting which includes:

R-Review

D- Defect

S-Solution

Question: What is review, defect, solution, will you please explain?

Answer: When a Sectorial Secretary comes for RDS he needs to carry a proportionate progress report to show what portion of target he/she has

achieved since the previous reporting session RDS. As it is the practice, when a Sectorial Secretary comes to the Central Office for RDS, the center assigns him a set of tasks to be accomplished by Whole Timer workers and Márgiis until the next session of RDS, to be achieved by the Márgiis of his sector. Apart from this, the sector itself comes up with certain targets to fulfill within one year. And he goes to [Central Office] to submit proportionate progress report of these tasks. So, along with these targets some organizational target is also given to him to be completed by the sector by next RDS session. A fund is also released for accomplishing certain set of tasks. Another is the approved tour program; it means he returns from RDS with two things. One is with the target of completing few tasks and approved tour programme. And he goes to the RDS with the work done report of the entire sector that contains collective reports of all the workers. Personal work done report of that particular sector is also included. Review is done to see how far he can attain the target. Defect [reporting] is done to see how far the target has been achieved.

In this manner I made a documentary proof exhibit of reporting, inspection and tour programmer so that nothing remains untouched. This is the method how organization regulates its workers.

Question: How do you regulate these sectors?

Answer: We regulate these sectors through postings, transfers, reporting, tour programme approval and inspection.

Question: How by means of inspection?

Answer: The Central Office sends inspection authority to every sector in order to conduct regular inspection. Like I myself conducted inspection of the New York Sector in 1997 [I had made an exhibit of the inspection copy and it was included in the record. Similarly, I exhibited a copy of the transfer posting order of that gentleman who had filed the case.] Along with this I want to remind you that our lawyer has already exhibited many kilograms of Crimson Down copies, which contain tour programmers of New York Sectorial Secretaries, all reports filed in the sector etc., which were published earlier. So, documentary proof explaining how the central office regulates the sector was presented before the court and it has become a part of the court's document. So, after reporting when SS goes back to working field, he carries with him an approved tour programmer prepared by the organization, which remains valid till next RDS session.

How the AMPS Central regulates its workers posted in sectors located in foreign countries was sufficiently established by evidentiary documents. So, the main contention of the case that we are independent and do not come under anyone's control, was almost invalidated.

Question: *The content of the case is whether they are independent or not?*

Answer: How can they say they are independent? I want to bring something to the notice of the court:

- [1] Who taught him this method of Sádhaná?
- [2] Who trained and made him Táttvika and Ácárya? Does he himself hold the responsibility of this?
- [3] Has not Ánanda Márga given everything to him, this attire, and status, even his name?
- [4] Whom does he meditate upon? Who is his Guru? Is it that he has done everything on his own as he is claiming?

I also said in my answer it is as if after a child is born [boy/girl], parents rear and nurture him/her, after he grows up completing his education on their support he arrogantly tells his parents you are not my father, not my mother. I am independent and I have no connection with you. Old and weary parents say slowly, "You are absolutely right, but can you examine whose blood is running through your veins? Is it yours only or belongs to your parents too?" But here our boy has gone out and submitted an affidavit in the court claiming independent identity. So, it has become necessary to settle this issue whether he has any relation to AMPS Central or not?

Question: *A.M. Inc. is an independent entity in the New York sector because it is not located in India but it is registered in a different country. Can AMPS Central not interfere in this matter? What do you have to say in this regard? Please throw some light on this.*

Now the pattern of cross-examination changed and banged on the real issue. Now this question was spot on. So, I was on my guard too. Our lawyer gave me a serious look and it made me more careful, we were heading into a direct confrontation. All the three parties in this case were sitting face to face. Until now only the Plaintiff [complainant] and the Respondent were present, now AMPS Central, a party to this case, was testifying as an intervener. Had we not done so, AMPS Central would have ceased to exist,

so on the advice of the US lawyer, and after intense deliberation we had decided to become intervener as it happens in normal cases.

In the court, the plaintiff launched their fight to establish falsehood with such arguments that we had already conceded defeat without putting up a fight. There is an anecdote, when an ordinary man goes to bath in the river, even before he takes off his clothes, the very sight of the cold water makes him shiver with cold more than what he goes through when he actually jumps into river.

Answer: The complete name of A.M. Inc. is a pointer to the fact that it is incorporated into *Ānanda Mārga*, so, at the first instance its name suggests its root are ingrained in AMPS Central [Office], and its branches have come up in all Sectors across the world. One of its branches is in USA that was registered in 1971-72 as A.M. Inc.. Secondly, its head was appointed by us only, and he has been holding this position from the very inception of A.M. Inc. There has been no change in leadership of this branch until now, and according to rules of the Central Office, chief of this unit will be the Sectorial Secretary appointed by us. Third, the objective of this unit is same as is mentioned in the constitution of AMPS. Fourthly, our central committee has also passed a resolution along these lines that any legal unit irrespective of the country it is located in, should be registered under AMPS center and will include the following four rules in its constitution; the legal units to be set up in the future would also assimilate these four points in their constitutions. Otherwise it will not be accepted.

The 4 rules are:

- [1] Name of *Ānanda Mārga*.
- [2] Similar objective like AMPS Central.
- [3] *Ānanda Mārga Pracāraka Sam'gha* is a legal unit of the center. It gives approval to any legal entity of *Mārga* settled in another country.
- [4] The General Secretary of AMPS Central is the posting and transferring authority and he is also the authority for approving the members of the Governing Body of the legal unit.

It would not be irrelevant to mention here that it was the same SS under whose tenure A.M. Inc. got center's approval to get registered, and who testified against AMPS Central during the trial. Anything is possible

in this world dominated by delusion.

With the change of circumstances, even shadow of our own body that falls on the ground starts dwindling and merges with the body during scorching summer noon's of May and June. What an irony! Similarly, that 1996 resolution which I have mentioned above, and I have exhibited one copy, which consequently have become a part of court's document. The sheer irony is, it was this Sectorial Secretary during whose tenure A.M. Inc. was registered in the US, and was a member of the Central Committee in 1996 and the resolution contains his signature too. I have referred this fact.

Therefore, I said, considering the facts, now the court should not have any difficulty to see that, "A.M. Inc. is the legal embodiment of New York sector under Ánanda Marga Pracáraka Samígha Central."- I repeated this mantra, given by our lawyer Tim Obit, so far as I can remember, I used these phrases in all my statements and repeated it 200 times at least.

With Gurudeva's grace, by the time the final judgment was pronounced on this case, this line, "A.M. Inc. is the legal embodiment of New York sector under Ánanda Marga Pracáraka Samígha Central", did not only make a decisive impact, but it dismantled the main contention of the case built by the Plaintiff. Then we were given a break during noon. During that recess our lawyer brought a proposal on behalf of the court that the, "Court officer wants all parties to sit down and settle the issue of the case on mutual agreement."

All the parties [plaintiff, defendant and intervener] agreed and sat down. A member from our side asked the representative of the plaintiff, "Are you fully authorized by the claimant's side that whatever you will speak here it will be accepted by them without any resistance?" Hearing this he became confused. He was in a fix, like neither could he swallow and nor could he throw it up. It was evident that it gripped him with a sense of shock. Finally after long contemplation, he answered, "I am not sure." So final proposal [on the advice of the court] of reconciliation was also scuttled until the next sitting at the court. Our lawyer informed the court of everything in detail and it went on record too.

After the cross examination on the relation between A.M. Inc. and AMPS Central was over, the next round began on legal aspects, regarding the status of A.M. Inc.'s constitution, which was very exciting.

Question: Is the President of A.M. Inc. appointed and are the members of its Governing Body nominated by AMPS Central?

Answer: This is hundred percent correct.

Question: Does the Centre accept the suggestions proposed by A.M. Inc.?

Answer: Yes, if it is within the ambit of the rules of the organization.

Question: Why then has the AMPS Central not accepted the Constitutional Amendment made by A.M. Inc.?

Answer: Here it would be very appropriate to mention that the former S.S, who is pleading here in the court for justice, after hearing his transfer order, had hatched many strategies, constituted a core group, and sent representation to the Central Office to revoke the transfer order. He also made old Márgiis write letters to the Centre and ultimately amended the constitution. After using this masterstroke, perhaps he became certain that he would not have anything to do in the future.

Question: Why is this amendment incorrect?

Answer: It is incorrect because the Constitutional Amendment done by A.M. Inc. is against the working procedure of the organization.

Question: What does it mean?

Answer: This amendment was made on a date after the transfer of the incumbent S.S. of A.M. Inc. was announced. So, when he does not have any authority how can he make a Constitutional Amendment in A.M. Inc.'s constitution after being transferred? Hence it proves that "he has not come to the court with clean hands and his intent is not pious". So, how can the AMPS Central approve the "amendment proposal" without considering these facts? And the court should contemplate on this fact seriously.

This statement brought about pin drop silence inside the court for few moments.

I also said if the S.S. was so agitated because of his transfer, he had an opportunity to convey his grievance to the Organization directly by writing a letter, without flouting the rules of the organization. The organization would have certainly considered his case with all seriousness, because till then he didn't snap his relation with the organization. Our AMPS Central is governed by rules of justice.

Question: What should he have done in this situation?

Answer: Firstly he should have accepted the transfer order, and then filed an appeal to the organization to reconsider the order. Instead his conduct and the document he submitted highlighted his attitude that he was the Supreme Authority of the Governing Body and A.M Inc. As we have already learnt this from the documents submitted by him in favour of his case claiming that A.M. Inc. has no connection with AMPS Central. By any stretch of imagination he has forgotten one thing that "A.M. Inc. is the legal embodiment of the New York sector under Ánanda Marga Pracárika Samígha Central". Therefore it is apparent that he has done what he should have, but has made haste in doing something that he should not have done. Above all, instead of presenting his case in front of his house, he has come to the court and I have no idea what he is expecting from the court. Regardless of his belief that he does not have any personal or organizational relation with the AMPS Central, in fact today he is standing in front of the court as an ascetic, who got this status and attire of ascetic from Ánanda Marga only. He has forgotten the very fact that though he came to the court, but he still looks every bit a Marga Sannyásii because of his name and attire. I believe the court will keep all these facts in mind while delivering the judgments. Yes, in fact, as he has raised this issue in the court, the court alone has to deliver judgments on whether A.M. Inc. is independent or it is only a legal unit of AMPS Central.

Then I kept on answering multiple supplementary questions, because lawyers of the complainant party and their representatives would get in and out the room and continued questioning me. This episode went on until the evening. I tried my best to pacify their various queries. Finally this came to an end at around 6 pm when their lawyer said that he did not have anything more to ask. So the court stopped taking our statements and cross examining us and ended the session then and there.

Now we started discussing among ourselves about the probable scenaria and whether the court would conclude this trail based on the testimony given by the three parties, because it was within the jurisdiction of the court to give the ruling after listening to all the three parties, Complainant, Defendant, and Intervener. Otherwise the court will give another date for trial when witnesses of 3 parties will be cross-examined. Getting back to our room, we sat down with our lawyer to take stock of the

court proceedings of the entire day and everyone agreed on this that things have been going on in the right direction.

“We have not committed any mistake. We have not fumbled or have not shown any streak of nervousness while giving information on any issue, and we have not given any incorrect answer yet.” We reviewed all these things.

In reality, you cannot hide the truth from anyone for long, specifically from the court. It has been said that truth prevails over everything and lies based on fabricated stories does not sustain for a long time. It is temporary, but truth itself is eternal, it has been said somewhere:

*Satyam Brahma Anantam Brahma
Púrñam Brahma Púrñam Brahma.*

(God is unchanging, God is infinite God is complete in itself.)

When this very thought came to my mind that the third ordeal of my career has begun, I was worried what would happen now because I did not get time to think even before coming here that what I would do? This time neither did I have to pass the exam in front of the public, nor did I have to take the test in front of media or in the presence of Government representatives. Rather this was a question of life and death, it was a historical moment. *Ánanda Márğa* as an organization was fighting a battle in a foreign court, across seven seas, on which depends its very existence. As a matter of fact, in my life, these kinds of daunting challenges have come up on many occasions, which would not be mentioned in this book because none of them threatened *Ánanda Márğa’s* existence. Since I was personally involved this time, I would often feel numbed thinking about the gravity of the situation. But there was one thing that gave me hope, as in other occasions, it is *Bábá’s* own words, “Why do you worry, I am with you.” Also remembering the following lines:

“Aba taka to Nibháye ho, Áge Bhii Nibhá Dená.”

Holding on to this belief, I have been constantly moving ahead towards my goal, and I know my *Íśfa* will carry me till the end.

Because of following a rigorous work schedule for weeks, as soon as

I returned to Āshrama I got into bed and immediately fell asleep, forgetting everything. Next morning I asked Vimalānandajii and Dhruva, "Now the work of this phase has been finished. What do you want me to do? If you allow me can I start preparing for going back to India?"

He said that after watching yesterday's proceeding, the judge could give a judgment on that basis, or else, if he thinks that the law requires that others should file another appeal, then he can give a date for trial and run the trial in the Denver County Court. "So, you prepare yourself mentally that you may have to come back anytime if this is likely to happen." Then they also asked me to check my passport and status of the US visa. I said that we don't have to worry about it because my visa has been extended to October upon arrival otherwise it was valid till May only, and the visa is valid for multiple entry. So, I would not have any problem to come back again for trial. They were worried about my visa, because they were totally aware what I had gone through in Delhi the last time. But they put a heavier burden on me saying that if another round of trial takes place, apart from you, 5-7 members from other Sectors should also come to testify, to show the organization's strength in the court.

I had to say yes because there was no other alternative. Everyone knew what I would have to bear after I said yes. Then after 2-3 days I took off from Washington. The Denver court ultimately ruled in favour of holding another trial, and the date was fixed for May 2011. As a delegate of intervener AMPS Central, my cross examination was finished in February 2011. The Central Office made all the arrangements to send a large team as its representatives and me as the Intervener. The entire team arrived in Denver one by one. A house was rented in the high hills of Denver for our stay, because we did not have the right to use the Denver Jāgrti as it was in the possession of the claimant party. Somehow in spite of the discomfort we had to spend the days of the trial allotted by the court, which were 10. The US courts don't function like Indian Courts. The Indian Courts continue to give dates after dates and conduct hearing in phases for 1-2 hours, this process of trial continues not for years but for several generations with son bearing the burden of the father's case.

In the US, the court conducts one hearing at a time, and after settling one case, it moves on to another case. So, this system is practical where

the plaintiff, defendant and judge all concentrate on one case and complete the task efficiently. A long list of witnesses had come from the Plaintiff with affidavits. I was surprised to see few names but whatever has been taking place in this universe is recurrence of past events only, nothing else. Perhaps for this reason, a similar question came before Yudhiśhira: 'Kimáshcaryam?'

King Yudhiśhira had answered Yaksha

*Ahanyaháni Bhutáni Gacchantiha Yamálayam,
Sheśáh Sthávaramicchanti Kimáshcaryamatah Param.*

It means every living being in this world goes to the abode of Yama, or attains death, some sooner or later. But who lives longer think they will not die. Is there anything more strangely than this? Hearing this reply Yakśa was compelled to become silent because he was satisfied with the answer.

This truth applies to everyone and it is unavoidable. These mistakes are repeated only. In May 2011, the trial began in Denver county court.

The former Sectorial Secretary was brought in as the first witness who by every means became a finished member of Márga, and he was cross-examined by our lawyer. Since he was a former S.S. of N.Y. Sector he came with this demand that being the first witness he would make a good impression in the court. But rather than answering the questions, he was in a hurry to explain things in detail. The erratic answers given by him made his life miserable in the court. When he gave a satirical answer to a question, the judge also asked him few questions, one of them was very interesting, and its answer was very shocking.

Question: Is Revered Bábá revered as God?

When the judge asked this question, I could tell from his facial expression that judge was emotional and respectful. After seeing the entire proceeding of the court it seemed that he had love and respect for Bábá. This is why the judge addressed Bábá in this manner.

Answer: No, Bábá is not God.

His answer didn't shock the claimant side, but it stunned all the members of the defendant side and we started to look at each other. Since

A.M. Inc. was not registered during his tenure; so, asking a question on this matter was irrelevant. The judge was visibly surprised.

In the history of Ānanda Mārga, he was the first speaker, as a witness on behalf of the claimant side, to have denied the godliness of Gurudeva in an open court.

Question: *Why did you discard the life of a Sannyāsii and start living a family life?*

Answer: My desire for having a family became so intense that I couldn't resist it. Getting this reply the judge immediately understood his real intent. Then Tim Obit and May did not want to rake up any more slander and pollute the atmosphere of the court.

Next day another witness was presented whose testimony was very crucial because it was during his tenure that A.M. Inc. was registered. Since everyone's affidavit was already submitted to the judge, and he did not find it hard to understand what a particular witness would say in the court. So, it was easy for the judge and cross-examining lawyer to ask questions. Our lawyer Tim Obit had already told me that his cross-examination was important. As is the custom of the court, he was made to take an oath and then the cross examination started.

Question: *Is it true that you were S.S. of N.Y. sector when A.M. Inc. was started?*

Answer: Yes, I had registered A.M. Inc. under N.Y. sector. Prior to this there was no legal unit here in Ānanda Mārga.

Question: *How AMPS Central maintained relation with A.M. Inc. N.Y. sector?*

Answer: A.M. Inc. N.Y. sector has no connection with AMPS Central. This is a separate and independent unit. It does not require any approval of the Centre because the US is a different and independent nation.

Question: *Did you get the draft of A.M. Inc. approved from AMPS Central before registering A.M. Inc.?*

Answer: No, it was not necessary.

Question: *In which year did you register it?*

Answer: Possibly in 1972-73.

Question: *Did you travel to India that year?*

Answer: No.

The earlier March when I had testified, I was asked how could I prove that A.M. Inc. had taken the Centre's approval for registration and how I could say that I know this. I clearly said that intending to get this draft approved, the Sectorial Secretary had submitted it when he came to attend RDS as he was in a hurry to complete the registration process. Since getting A.M Inc. draft was his utmost priority, Bábá's Personal Secretary at the time came to me with the draft for my feedback, before presenting it to Bábá.

Therefore all this happened in my presence only and so I claim with conviction that before registration the AMPS Central approved the proposed draft of A.M. INC. This procedure is still being followed today. AMPS Central gives approval before establishing any unit of AMPS in any sector or in any country. It would not be irrelevant to point out here that then all sectors used to publish their newsletters which described in detail every work programme of the organization, tour program of the S.S., reports given to the Centre, target given by the Centre. Newsletter of NY sector was known as Crimson Down. We had exhibited not just one or two copies of Crimson Down but a massive stack of Crimson Down copies, which could weigh more than several kilograms. So the judge was familiar with these evidences. Then our lawyer presented a copy of Crimson Down to the judge and immediately asked the witness the following questions:

Question: *You are saying in your statement, at that time you did not travel to India so what kind of approval could you have asked for. But this Crimson Down published during your tenure only proves that you had travelled to India, and as witness of AMPS Central intervener has said in his testimony, you had to take approval. What do you have to say to this?*

The witness started to drink water repeatedly, and the expression on his face changed. The atmosphere at the court took a very dramatic turn because the statement of the main witness of the case was being proved false and fabricated.

Answer: [Silent, repeatedly drinking water and jerking shoulder].

Question: *Please be careful because you have taken oath and you are testifying in a court before a judge. If you lie, legal action can be taken against you.*

Judge: Yes, indeed, legal action can be initiated because the statement is being given in a court and the witness is bound by oath.

In this way, many false claims of the second witness came to light in the court, like the false legal claim regarding relation with the organization, reporting, tour programme approval, posting order etc. Moreover, when I testified, lots of things had become clear before the court like Conduct Rules, training method, how the organization does posting etc.

So, there was no way that the judge would have missed anything, to comprehend, particularly this fact that AMPS Central trains people to prepare them and gives them postings as per the requirements of the Sectors. It was also confirmed before the court that no appointment is made on a permanent basis. The Centre transfers one person from his posting as per the necessity that arises. The organization has been following this custom since the times of Gurudeva and is still prevalent today. The testimony of the second/main witness became very dramatic when the judge after hearing answers to all organization related questions, asked him again?

Question: *Is Loving Bábá a God?*

Answer: Absolutely not.

He did not stop there but went on to give statement that astonished all:

How can Bábá be God?

- [1] He had diabetes,
- [2] He had heart diseases,
- [3] He suffered with eye diseases,

So, how can He be God?

The question asked by the judge whether our beloved Bábá was God was very exciting, and my attention was focused on the expression playing on Judge's face which made one thing clear that the judge was using every word to address Bábá respectfully and endearingly, but the witness, who was a disciple of Bábá and an Avadhúta, didn't only drag the organization to the court but was taking pride in belittling his Guru. What an irony of

fate! He tried his best. The second witness, tried to prove his greatness by belittling Bábá and the organization in front of the court. But, at the end of the day, primary job of the lawyer and the judge is to verify truthfulness of the witness and the main contentions of the case, whatever remains, whether they are fabricated and untrue. Truth prevails at last; it only needs to be verified. The first two witnesses who came to defend their case, made the case weak by their statements in front of the court, and pushed their case towards an irrevocable end. The third witness, as he was the third Sectorial Secretary, proudly proclaimed how esteemed and high the Sectorial Secretary's position is and he gave a ridiculous statement based on the experiences of working in the other sectors. He himself proved that he had gone to AMPS Centre to do the reporting to Bábá. And every S.S. has to go after a certain time, as it was prevalent during Bábá's time, and it still is. So, neither did our lawyer nor did the judge take him seriously because answering the questions of the court was not his priority, but to express his own opinion.

On the question of Bábá's divinity, asked by the judge, his answer was negative too. Since the case did not concern his tenure as Sectorial Secretary, there was no particular question, so, court did not find it necessary to ask him any more questions.

Thus within a span of four days almost 6 witnesses of the claimant side had finished giving their testimony. On the fifth day the trial of the case began. On that day a woman took oath and sat down for giving testimony. Right after taking the seat, after her introduction, she started speaking without being asked, she had just said this much:

"Otherwise, I was also with [AMPS] but because of one incident occurred in Ranchi... after testifying in that case." Tim looked at me and I nodded my head to indicate to him that it is negative. Tim understood what direction he had to give to the case. Tim said, "Here I conclude the cross examination for the defendant side. I don't have anything more to ask." After the seventh witness was finished the judge asked, "Bring in further witnesses because the statement of the last witness has been finished." The judge had reason to ask this question, because majority of the people who had submitted affidavits hadn't testified yet. So, the judge asked them to come forward to give witness.

Judge asked the claimant side's lawyer:

"Next witness."

The lawyer from the claimant side said, "Now we don't have any more witnesses left who can come forward to testify. So, I announce the conclusion of testimony from our side."

The judge said, "It is fair that you are closing your witnesses to prove your case, but you have an opportunity to justify your case, so whatever you want to speak, go ahead."

The lawyer from the claimant side said, "We have nothing more to say to justify our case but one thing I want to say is that it seems you [Judge] have made up your mind to rule against us."

I could not assume how the judge might have felt on this reaction, but I was definitely surprised on how any lawyer can express his opinion directly and so emphatically to a judge in an open court, with such bluntness, perhaps it was possible in US only. Then judge looked at our lawyer Tim Obit and asked,

"Do you want to say something?" Tim Obit stood up and started speaking.

He said, "The claimant party came to the court but they failed to justify their case, so they have lost and we have won. So, give judgement in our favour. On the lines of precedent set by rulings given by the court in a case following the Serbian church law, where one father went to court against the church, and the judgement went in favour of the Church." During his 15 minutes presentation he presented this case in front of the court and citing the ruling quote, he said, "Whatever the court has heard till now, we want a judgement on that basis. We don't want to waste the court's time anymore."

[This proceeding is called summary proceeding in court.]

Though 10 days were fixed for the trial but it suddenly stopped on the fifth day because witnesses of the plaintiff refused to come forward to testify any further. It appeared as if the judge had come prepared to give a decision on that day only but due to the castigating remark made by the lawyer of the claimant side, the judge decided to fix another day to give the final decision.

He said, "Come on Monday at 10 am." After this the judge left.

It was Friday. So, the next working day was Monday only. The judge got two days in between to prepare himself. Thinking about the court's proceedings and judgement of the day, we left for our room.

As we reached our mountain home [which was rented by us], I we found nature was looking blissful with her radiant beauty, stretched out in the entire mountain region. Everyone was attracted by this breathtaking manifestation of nature, knowingly or unknowingly. It would have been a different experience to enjoy this scene. The entire mountain landscape was covered with a blanket of white snow, looking divine. It was very pleasant to experience this wonderful manifestation of natural beauty with a group of our own people. Ācārya Svarūpānandajii, Rāmānandajii, Keshavānandajii from India, Shambushivānandajii, Shubhaniryāsānanandajii came from across the ocean, a didi from the NY sector, Kṛpāmayānandajii, Vimalānandajii from NY sector itself, among other Mārgiis Ācārya Dhruva and Shyāmasundar were present in our team. Perhaps it was for the first time for many of our team members who were about to witness the final day proceeding. From the NY sector only our old associate Ācārya Shaṅkarānandajii was trying to cheer up our mood with his antics giving us few moments of comic relief from the pressure and tension of case and trial. At times he used to get carried away too. In the midst of the enchanting revelry of nature's beauty, we had forgotten everything for few moments. Such moments, such company, such atmosphere, but they were temporary. Everyone restlessly anticipated the outcome of the trial, because it was freezing cold outside.

On the judgement day we arrived earlier than the scheduled time and settled down in court. All were present from our side and Tim Obit came with his parents. It would not be irrelevant to mention here, that everyone in Tim's family from youngest to the oldest kept his spirit high. His wife along with their little kids kept on praying for his success and his parents were present in court to boost his moral.

Exactly at 10 am the judge took his seat. Everyone present in the court stood up and greeted him. Within five minutes he started to read the judgement.

“You came to the court with the conviction that you have any case, but your case was not proved in the court. So, as a result you have lost because of this reason and by this law.” Thus he continued to read the judgement for two hours and we all were listening with rapt attention and we were swaying with joy. At around 12 pm, he stood up after completing the judgement. We were also on our feet and ready to leave. Meanwhile I entered the lawyer’s zone, Tim with his hand stretched out came running towards me like an innocent child and said, “Dada, please give me a big hug.” I embraced him too. We had barely managed to control our emotion, when our lady lawyer May began crying leaning her head on my right shoulder. With tears of joy rolling down from their eyes, they expressed happiness. Tim’s parents, who were standing close by, were smiling pleasantly. I thanked them too. They were very proud that Tim’s hard work paid off.

As soon as Tim became normal, he said, “Dada, you people leave immediately and get back to your place, wait for us there, we will come to meet you.” Sensing the bewildered expression on my face Tim said, “Don’t you see the court is teeming with security guards, you people leave immediately from this place.” Without bothering to find the reason, we started rushing towards our car, as I took a stock of my team, I found Shankarándajii was missing, and asked, “Where is Shankarándajii”? I was shocked when Rudraprakáshándajii told me that he was talking to that lady Márgii who had thrown him out from NY Sectorial Office at 12 am in midnight. I sent Rudraprakáshándajii and two Dádás running to bring him back. “Go fast and come back with him by the time we get into car. We will be waiting.” They came back but Shankarándajii was not his normal self, we became very anxious and we forcefully made him sit in the car and started for our room. We kept him under observation throughout the night, but next morning we had to admit him in the hospital, because he was emotionally out of control. He would get restless thinking about the lady who had thrown him out of NY Sectorial Office with luggage at 12 am. He was shocked with this incident. He became emotional, and behaved abnormally. In the hour of happiness everyone was worried because of Shankarándajii health, but he became normal after two days.

Barely a few moments passed after we had reached, when our two lawyers turned up at our temporary residence. The first thing they said on arrival, “Usually after judgement is delivered on religious cases, either

plaintiff or defendant, after losing the case, becomes restless and tries to assert themselves as their sentiments get hurt. Keeping this concern in mind, the judge had deployed security personnel to ensure that any law and order crisis doesn't arise. This is why I immediately suggested to you to leave the court chamber and you people did accordingly." Apart from this Tim also said that it was a moment of personal happiness too, "After winning this case I have been getting calls from all over the world and along with this I have been entrusted with the responsibility to draft the constitution for Syria. So, I am very happy with you people too, revered Bábá has graced me too."

We sat down with our two lawyers and discussed what happened in the past and what might come next, and also discussed in detail what necessary steps needed to be taken in the future.

Tim told us every interesting point about the case. Had we lost this case in the US, as a consequence it would have made a menacing impact on the organization, outside of the Delhi sector, because this case was A.M. Inc. is an independent unit outside of the purview of AMPS Central. Our argument was that this is a religious hierarchical order, and following this order; the organization appoints its missionaries across the globe for propagation and service. We give them training and confer them with venerable ranks of Ácárya and monk. We send them to other countries with the confidence that they would carry out the work of the organization.

This is how they receive their name, attire and win the credentials to become Ácárya and Sannyásiis. After every task is finished they report to central office and we discipline them if they falter or make mistakes. As it was a religious case it was significant for the entire world. Our victory ensured that no evangelist could go on knocking the door of the court on this issue. If a worker of Marga thinks that justice had not been done to him, he will have to plead before Ananda Marga only. So, this case sent out a message for everyone to follow in the future. However for an intelligent person, a mere hint is enough. As a matter of fact our faith resides only with Gurudeva. If an assessment were to be made regarding our material and monetary strength during the trial, "it was like the battle between Ráma and Rávana to conquer Lanka. On one side, Rávana, conqueror of Indra, with a golden crown on his head, was proudly leading his army of Rákásas [demon] and the battlefield was full of many warriors of Rávana's army;

on the other side were Ráma and Lakśmaña with bows hanging from their shoulders, leading an army of monkeys. Gosvámí Tulsidás had pointed appropriate picture:

“Rávana Rathi Virath Raghuvirá”

After discussing a few points with the lawyers in the evening, we expressed our gratitude to them and bade them goodbye in this pleasant atmosphere. Thus, a heavy burden went off my shoulders.

We continued sharing experiences of the trial, basking in the joy of success, which went on till midnight. But in those moments, we also missed the members of our teams who could not reach New York because their visa was denied. All of us wished they were present with us, but everything depends on the will of Parameshvar.

“Sabhi Nacáve Náca Gosáin Náchat sab Markat’ ke náí.”

All are made to dance at the direction of God like the monkey man makes the monkey dance.

In this manner, the curtain finally came down on the drama that was being played on for years. Everyone got a momentary relief and got ready to prepare for their return journey.

Grace on Niilakantha of Bali Island

Bali Island, which is part of Java Sumátrá, has been the hub of Avidyá Tantra. And the “Sánur area” of Bali Island is notorious for this. It would be an exaggeration to say that Sánur was a synonym of terror for the rampant practice of Avidyá Tantra. Numerous stories are still heard even to this day, about how various groups of Avidyá Tantras used to fight battles to establish supremacy in various aspects of Avidyá Tantra like Máran, Mohan, Vashikaran, Uccát’an. IR Ketut Nila or IR Insinyur, was one of the famous practitioners of this Tantra who later came to be known as Niilakantha.

Bali is known as Gerund Krtya in its ancient language ‘Kabi’. Gerun means house, or home. Ancient Java Sumátrá had a long history of “black magic”. This is one limb of Avidyá Tantra. No one other than Lord Shiva is the Ádi Guru of this Vidyá. In Bali, symbols of Lord Shiva are found everywhere, in temples, monuments, and relics. He is closely associated with ‘Baliyan’ culture. Baliyan history and its association with Sam’skrta language and Avidyá Tantra is known as Kavisheshana. In ancient times there were many experts of this type of Tantra. It is still being practiced in Bali. People of Bali still fear this practice and are scared of its adept practitioners. People first doubt any adept practitioner of Avidyá Tantra if someone falls ill or meets with an accident or any danger falls upon the family.

IR Ketut Nile was born in Sanur. He was a textile engineer by profession, and was an expert of Kavisheshana. Having defeated all of

the rival groups in the battle for supremacy, he established himself as the unchallenged master of this Vidyá, which made him famous. He inherited this technique of tantric faculty from his family. He achieved mastery after consistent practice and study. But one incident changed the course of Nile's life. By divine providence or through his Sañskáras, or thought attraction for Vidyá Guru, he came into contact with Ánanda Márga and got initiated on 1st September 1982. Through repentance he gave up Avidyá and accepted Vidyá. Post initiation, he became popular as Niilakant'ha.

Story of Niilakant'ha doesn't only surprise us but also makes us realize how through the benevolent mercy of Vidyá-Guru infamous practitioner of Avidyá Tantra transforms into a spiritual practitioner of Vidyá Márga and how he progresses with great speed after surrendering everything at the lotus feet of the Guru. If history can write the name of Milrappá who belonged to Tibet, in golden letters, then in the modern era, Niilakant'ha is a living testimony to the fact that he dedicated rest of his life for the 'welfare of the world after becoming a spiritual practitioner of Vidyá Márga' and how this mantra "Átma Mokśártham Jagad Hitáya Ca" can be materialized by serving living beings. After he connected to Vidyá Tantra, the very first thing he did was to free Sánur from the terror of Avidyá practitioners. From then onwards people started to visit Sánur fearlessly. Secondly, he devoted the rest of his life to the propagation of Ánanda Márga's ideology. At that time Sukarno was ruling Indonesia and the Ánanda Márga was facing oppression. Niilakant'ha made two predictions. Firstly, soon Ánanda Márga would be able to express its view without any fear. Second was a practical problem for Márgiis, because vegetarian dishes were not available in any hotel. He predicted that very soon there would be vegetarian eateries in every corner of Bali. It turned into a reality. It was his wish that the length and breadth of Indonesia, particularly of Bali, would vibrate with Kiirtana "Bábá Náma Kevalam". It is a reality today. Niilakantha went to many places with monks and nuns of Ánanda Márga for missionary work. Since he was an expert in Bali language, he translated most of Gurudeva's books. He selflessly dedicated the rest of his life to Ánanda Márga.

Some rare supernatural incidents of Niilakanťha's spiritual life:

Before his initiation took place on 1st September, Gurudeva already initiated him in his dream on the night of 31st August. This trend

continued, each time when he took a new lesson, he received the lesson on the preceding night before he actually took the lesson from an Ácárya. These rare incidents happened with Niilakan't'ha only.

When Niilakan't'ha came to India for personal contact, Bábá said, "He doesn't need it." Once while listening to Bábá's discourse at a DMC, he suddenly said he had already listened to it in Bali.

Niilakan't'ha indeed had Tántrika power. To him Bábá was God, and nothing is hidden from Bábá. He performed every duty assigned to him by Ánanda Márga with devotion and sincerity. He never turned down any responsibility. During his spiritual journey he never exhibited powers that he had attained as practitioner of Avidyá. But there were very few exceptions. During the monsoons heavy rainfall occurs in Bali. In those days because of the croaking of toads it used to be difficult to hear other sounds. Once a seminar class was going on and because of continuous croaking of the toads it was very difficult to listen to anything inside the seminar hall. Seeing this Niilakan't'ha felt very bad. He came out and snapped his fingers and suddenly the entire surroundings became silent. Thus the seminar concluded without any further interruptions.

He spent, the final five days of his life in Simíharájá Master Unit. When Niilakan't'ha took his last breath, there were thirty-five monks and nuns in the unit. As per his wishes, following the provision of Caryácarya, he was cremated in Simíharájá Master Unit. At the final hour, because of his mental state, he wanted to leave his physical body as soon as possible. The Márgii communities of Indonesia, particularly of Bali still miss him especially those people who had seen him from close quarters from the very day of his initiation to his death.

A step forward to Samígacchadhvam

As a specific era of time elapses in to history, the events that took place in that particular period of time make their way into the annals of history too. The fact of the matter is that written or recorded history only have popular acceptance but the unwritten part of history is very important too. However if the proportionate ratio of unwritten history to written history is calculated then it would be 3 hours to one minute. To be more precise, for every one-minute of written history there is 3 hours of the undocumented part of history. Ánanda Marga doesn't have any written history. But for the record, Gurudeva had to go through a myriad of turbulent and tempestuous phases in his lifetime and Ánanda Marga had to hurdle through a path fraught with insurmountable obstacles to grow and evolve as an organization. As expected given the hardship of the journey, many people who had embarked on this voyage with Gurudeva, either diverted from the course or gave in along the path because they had to suffer pain on the course. Whenever I happen to meet some of them they still repent to this day.

Since the path of Tantra is replete with struggles only the brave can undertake this journey successfully. One western scholar has perhaps rightly said, "When the going gets tough the tough gets going" it means "when the journey is full of hurdles only he survives who works very hard." As a matter of fact, since Ánanda Nagar doesn't have a recorded chronology of history, any intelligent person can raise this question in the future: "Were

there no such people in Ānanda Mārga who could have tried to bring those people back who were angry and transgressed to a wrong path? This blame can fall squarely on the organization and the individual.

So aiming to write something on this debatable issue, I began to take the opinion of people across different countries. Almost all of them suggested to me to take up this issue. Without giving any background, I would like to write a few episodes from my memory, to enlighten readers on this history of Ānanda Mārga, touching on this controversial issue.

On the 21st of October Gurudeva left his physical body that consisted of Painçamahābhuta. Neither the organization nor the Mārgii community was prepared to deal with this shock. However, Tāraka Brahma is not bound by the rules that govern this mortal world. Initially this news came as a rude shock. The gravity of the shocking news use a popular phrase everyone like a bolt from blue. Nevertheless Bábá had given hints on many occasions through Prabháta Samgiita that he might leave anytime and without giving any indication.

*Tumi esechile káuके ná bole, ná jániye gele cale,
Mor áro giiti chilo gáwá, áro chande tale.
Bhávite pári ni ámi e bháve ásibe tumi,
Emni jábe je cale , ánkhi jale more phele.
Dharár dhulite jato phool phote shata shata,
Táder koraka tále diye gele madhu dhele.*

You came silently and left suddenly without telling anyone.

I had many more songs to sing to you.

It was beyond my imagination that you would come in this form and go away from me, leaving me in tears.

You went away pouring nectar on the myriad variety of flowers that bloom on this earth.

Once Bábá had said, "I am not bound by any promise." How Parama Puruśa can be under any bondage? But normal human beings deluded by the noose of Máyá want to tie Parama Puruśa with affection too. As I understand, Bábá had never conspicuously revealed that he would remain in physical body for such-and-such period of time.

It is indeed true, that the organization and the society of Márgiis were not ready for the sudden physical departure of Bábá. They were stunned by this heartbreaking jolt. When I got this news I was in the middle of a meeting with certain trustee. Initially nobody believed it. Soon the information kept pouring in from different places that substantiated the news. All of us rushed towards Delhi airport. Indian Airlines gave everyone an opportunity according to seniority to sit in the Kolkata bound flight. We reached Tiljala in the late evening and what we saw there was absolutely heart breaking. Now, one by one different problems started to spring up. The first decision was made. Sufficient amount of time was given before the funeral so that people would get an opportunity for final Darshana. Hence the 26th of October was decided as the day for the funeral, and the first difficulty was settled, which didn't give rise to any discontent.

The next question, which came up, was which is the best place for performing the funeral. Gurudeva had said on many occasions, "Lord Shiva belongs to Káshii, Krśńa to Mathurá and I belong to Ánanda Nagar." Majority of the people were in favour of cremating Gurudeva's mortal remains in Ánanda Nagar only. But it didn't happen. Thus the seed of discontent was sown. On the sixth day, this dilemma ended, because the organization has a unique quality that whatever direction is given by the Central Office, the organization accepts it undisputedly. We moved ahead on this very principle and followed the order of the Central Office unquestionably. Now, after the 26th October issue was settled, another difficulty came up. In order to keep the organization running, we need a Purodhá Pramukha or President and the question arose, "How to get a Purodhá Pramukha or President?" Now the search began in this direction.

In this context, the 39th chapter of Caryácarya (Part One) came to light. "The Purodhá Pramukha will be elected on the consensus of the Purodhás." And he would become the President. The second question was, "Who will be considered as the Purodhá in the organization?" Gurudeva himself had not announced anyone as Purodhá. Hence, who will select whom? The deliberation continued, and finally, we came to the conclusion that there are respective boards for Táttvikas, Ácáryas, Avadhútas, who are selected by Gurudeva only. Along with these boards, there is the Purodhá Board too, but there is no Purodhá. Therefore if we assume that a member of the Purodhá board is a Purodhá, would this serve the purpose? Thus all

unanimously subscribed to this argument that members of the Purodhá Board who were nominated by Gurudeva are eligible for the selection of Purodhá Pramukha. So, Ācārya Shraddhānanda Avadhútajii, a member of the Purodhá board, was declared as Purodhá Pramukha, and all the members in the minutes' book of the Board meeting officially signed this proposal. In this way the Ānanda Mārga community and organization got its Purodhá Pramukha and the organization moved on. After the rain, comes the sun. So came the rainbow, after the rain. Now, as per the instructions that were given in Caryācārya, a Central Committee (CC) was needed to run the organization efficiently. Thus following the rules of Caryācārya, the Ānanda Mārga Pracāraka Samgha, tried to move on. The Central Committee was nominated and it got down to work immediately. The organization began to elect the Purodhás from a motley group of 30-32 Avadhútas who had received Viśheśa Yoga Sādhaná from Gurudeva himself. In this vein, with the approval of the honorable Purodhá Pramukha, the Purodhá Board started to play a pioneering role in the organization. As the former Secretary of the Purodhá Board was elected as Purodhá Pramukha, a new secretary was nominated. Now another issue came to light, which prompted everyone to take note. The Purodhá Board initiated approximately 40 Sádhakas into Viśheśa Yoga. This issue became a bone of contention, as the majority of the trainees of the Viśheśa Yoga were newly initiated monks. Some of them had never shown any interest in learning Viśheśa yoga but they were forcefully propelled on the path of a very critical spiritual practice. Rational people couldn't accept this fact so the dispute began to take a serious turn. Finally, the Purodhá board stopped those reluctant Sádhakas from taking any more advanced lessons. They issued a directive that any Sádhakas willing to learn Viśheśa yoga had to pass an exam conducted by a Senior Ācārya. This was a very decisive and constructive decision. It helped the organization to raise the standards of its workers and provided a systematic structure for teaching Viśheśa Yoga. It was said this rule had practical application. Hence, the central committee or board started making laws considering the present and future needs of the organization, which are still available in its Resolutions Minute Book, and it shows the vision of the Central Committee or the Board.

Since the organization was expanding very fast, it had to face many obstacles on its fast-moving trajectory. Now a natural question came up as

to how the organization would be run? Would an individual or an elected team runs the organization, or would it be run by any other means? For years, the Central Committee deliberated on this. Lots of arguments were put forward during the course of this deliberation. One argument was to maintain the incumbent system but there were some obvious loopholes. Moreover, there was no visible solution available to these problems. So the Central Committee decided in a May 1994 meeting that from now on the organization would be run on the instructions given in Caryácarya, not by any individuals or any team elected by individuals. On this issue, two different groups of people with distinct opinions emerged, one was to go on with the rules prescribed in Caryácarya and another against the rules of Caryácarya but their number was insignificant. Though their number was minuscule they had a presence.

It is true that people who have the power to rule deride change but change is the rule of this world. Individuals come and go but ideology remains. It is commendable if the individual can stick to his ideology, not only praising it but clearly, setting an example by living according to his ideals and not attempting to forsake them when his personal interest is at stake.

In May 1994, the Central Committee passed a proposal that from henceforth the organization would be run according to the provisions given in the Caryácarya. Though it was a difficult task, this path had relatively fewer dangers. In the same vein, the Purodhá Pramukha or Chairman of the Central Committee gave an order that the Tátvika, Ácárya, Avadhúta and Purodhá Boards should be constituted by elections. This process began in 1994 and was completed that year. At that time there were 34 Purodhás. It was decided that the Central Committee should be comprised of 31 members. So, in the event of an election, any of 3 Purodhás were supposed to be left out of the board and a 31 member strong Purodhá Board was elected. All did not accept this fair process and protests took place. A consistent attempt was being made from outside to make way for the 3 Purodhás in the elected Board. The elections were completed and the committee was not only constituted but they had also started functioning, but the protests continued. This negotiation went on for three years. In November 1997, in the middle of a Central Committee meeting, somebody suddenly raised this issue and said, "This is the ideal time for *Ánanda Marga* to grow and expand as an organization and a united effort is needed." The entire committee started

to deliberate on this, that there is no harm in trying collectively and it was believed that three years was not a short period of time for introspection. It was also believed that everyone had made the necessary rectifications after the long contemplations over the last three years. The discussions gradually moved ahead relying on this possibility and at that time there was no indication to doubt or suspect anybody, all became united. It was indeed a great moment as the deliberations started to lay the groundwork for the future and a clear-cut roadmap was devised. Suddenly one issue was raised. In the 1994 General body of the Purodhás, they could not fix the tenure of the then Central Committee. Now, it was not clear who had the authority to decide this tenure of the Central Committee. It would not be irrelevant to mention here that in 1995, a subcommittee of the Central Committee [constituted with the permission of the central committee] published a new copy of Caryácarya, which had already established the fact that apart from the central committee there was another committee under the general body of Purodhás. Before the 1995 amendment, the first part of the Caryácarya didn't clarify the ambiguity surrounding this issue. As given in the Caryácarya, the Purodhás general body has four responsibilities to perform:

1. Selection of the Purodhá Pramukha.
2. Election of the Central Committee.
3. Election of the Purodhá board.
4. Fixing the tenure of the central committee.

The general body of the Purodhás couldn't carry out this fourth task because until then only one consolidated standard copy of Caryácarya was published that was universally accepted with the recommendations and decisions of the central committee in 1995. All the members were conscious of the fact that since the social scripture, Caryácarya, is an essential part of the three scriptures, its language should be very clear and straightforward.

Taking a cue from this fact, a meeting of the General body of the Purodhás was called for and the tenure of the Central Committee was determined and a unanimous decision was taken to fix the tenure of the general committee of the Purodhás for five years. At that point in time, the environment was so positive that everyone felt that the organization could achieve anything by dint of our united and collective effort. It was a

spectacle that was being practiced in real life that when a collective target is set then everything is easy to achieve, otherwise trivial things can seem to have big hurdles. Following the decision of the general body of Purodhás, after three years, in 1997, the Central Committee was dissolved and the new Central Committee was elected for five years. Since all the Purodhás took this decision unanimously it assured everyone that those contentious and conflicting issues wouldn't come back to haunt the Marga anymore. But, as some people committed mistakes during the time of the reconstruction of the executive, it sowed seeds of resentment again, which continue to trouble us to this day. Had the proposal of the executive body been sent to the chairman after taking a unanimous decision, as the proposal of the central committee was passed unanimously, then it wouldn't have led to any conflict in the future. Unity is strength but diversity entails weakness and doom. Experience says that if a responsible person at the time of taking a crucial decision makes a small mistake then this mistake can cause big trouble in the future. It is the task of the leadership to dispel insecurity and anxiety from the minds of the people and give faith to people so that peace is restored in the society.

I can recollect a little experience I had at that time. After the central committee was elected unanimously, and as I came out of the VIP hall, I heard people waiting in the aisle commenting, "It is good sir that you people have settled your disputes, now what would happen to us?" These people belonging to "us" have always been the root cause of all the problems and have been trying tirelessly to break the unity of the Ánanda Marga. So long as this "us" is not identified within the Ánanda Marga community, a permanent solution to this problem is not possible. As a matter of fact, the arrangement that was made in 1997 for establishing unity within the Ánanda Marga community was a significant one. But these people belong to the group that sowed the seed of mistrust and shook the very foundation that was built on faith. Now this seed of disbelief had grown to become a full-grown tree laden with fruits and flowers and stood as a roadblock to the growth of the Marga community. Differences of opinion can come up in individual life too, but it expands when it overpowers a group of people. When someone inside the organization fails to build a team, so that they can establish a single ideology, then group-ism is born. Therefore, a person dedicated to his ideology, remains always steadfast in building a team, to

get his work done. This is possible only if an individual remains positive in his personal life, otherwise, groups are formed and it gives rise to disunity.

As the Internet age started, it slowly influenced the functioning of the organization. The rumor mill also started working overtime. The organization became worried over how to deal with those "us". Secrets that were confined to the walls of the VIP hall, slowly started to come out in the open and concerns about the organization gradually began to grow. In 2002, a DMS of global scale was organized in Ánanda Nagar, the registered headquarter of Ánanda Marga Pracaraka Samgha and the concerned Margaís from all across India and other countries participated in the DMS. It was an effort of international standard.

Ánanda Nagar was selected as the venue of the meeting because it was not possible to make arrangements for so many people anywhere else. On the scheduled date, all assembled at Taiwan Bhawan. Though it was the second attempt, everyone was hopeful because in 1997 the organization tried internally to settle the discontent. After 5 years, in 2002, most of the established and experienced Margaís and all the senior monks participated in the Ánanda Nagar Taiwan Bhawan meeting. In this interim 5 years though we had many pleasant and unpleasant experiences, but who doesn't love to live a peaceful life, and this desire encourages one to make new effort towards achieving unity.

As the meeting commenced, minutes of the meeting were decided upon, and the issues were framed. As the issues were framed, all members were invited to take part in it to ensure that nobody should think that he was not given an opportunity to express his ideas, and no point is left untouched because anybody can come up with a new or valuable idea. Since the highest level called this meeting and dear Purodhá Pramukha approved it, everyone wanted this meeting to be an all-round success. Moreover, along with a psychologist, an interlocutor who had recently participated in the Arab Israel talks also participated in this meeting. So everyone was hopeful. Like any other talks, argument and counter argument, Gháta, Pratigháta, Váda, Jalpa, Vitańd'á, applied. One by one, the 27 problems were framed. One individual kept on writing all the issues on the board. Now the focus of meeting shifted to discuss the 27-point issues, which would automatically bring forth solutions. The deliberations started around which point of the

issue was most important. The deliberations went on for an entire day. Everyone was given a chance to put forward his views. One problem that caught everyone's attention was how to strengthen the organization and to accelerate the pace of organizational growth. Somebody proposed that the process of becoming a monk should be relaxed a little because it is a very complicated one. But when it was revealed that Gurudeva himself had given these rules, it was agreed that none could amend these regulations. Someone had this thought in mind to remove the obstacles that stunt the growth of the organization. There is a provision for the amendment of Caryácarya chapter 39 part one. One person argued that our Caryácarya is one part of our three scriptures, which cannot be tempered with. The counter argument that came forth was that tempering with Caryácarya doesn't amount to alteration of the Caryácarya because Gurudeva himself had kept this provision open in Chapter 39. From this discussion, three points were deduced which are very important.

It is true that Ánanda Marga has three scriptures 1. Darshana Shástra, 2. Dharma Shástra and 3. Samája Shástra, and Caryácarya is a Samája Shástra, which were introduced by the pioneers of Smrti [a Hindu religious text containing traditional teachings on religion] and Manusmrti [ancient legal texts] according to the demands of the time. Today's society is outside the perimeter of the injunctions of these Smrtis because society is a dynamic entity. If any Smrti fails to keep pace with the time then society tries to find out solutions outside the ambit of the Smrtis. Following this precedent, legislature makes law... as laws were passed in India... for example, Hindu Gain Learning Act 1937, Hindu Marriage Act in 1955, Hindu Succession Act in 1956 were passed when Manusmrti failed to give anything new to Hindu society. Until the Smrti era India was governed by rules of Mitákára and Dayábhága. Rapid expansion of education within the Hindu community made it dynamic and propelled the Hindu society to explore a new path for progress. Lord Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii, pioneer of Ánanda Marga, not only introduced Caryácarya considering its dynamic evolution in order to meet the demands of modern society, but also included a provision for amendment in chapter 39 of Caryácarya related to organizational work and made the Caryácarya it self a dynamic entity too. The provision for amendment in Caryácarya was included so that even after thousands of years, if the social norms are changed and the values

of human life become different, Caryácarya can keep pace with the new developments and doesn't become obsolete. But it is not that I am finding it difficult or am exploiting the opportunity since the provision is given, but a group of administrators initiate the process of amendment to their own advantage as they are finding it difficult to govern. If this trend is initiated a new group of administrators will also change Caryácarya according to their own advantage and if this continues, the lightest book of Ánanda Marga will eventually be the heaviest one. This in turn will lead the society into a dilemma regarding, which amended version is correct and which one is not correct. In the course of this debate three important points came up, which I feel need to be mentioned here. Before initiating any amendment one should keep in mind whether a certain task can be executed without making any amendment; whether all other options have been exhausted and amendment remains the only resort. It should also be kept in mind that you are finding fault in Gurudeva's work and whether you are competent enough to undertake this task because only he will proceed to do the amendment who thinks Gurudeva made it incorrect and I am going to correct it. It would be a very difficult decision to take. Another question that would arise would be whether the person who will amend has become a Sadvipra and whether today is the only appropriate time for exercising the provision of chapter 39. Gurudeva had left this provision for amendment open, to make Caryácarya progressive and dynamic. The present era doesn't call for the use of chapter 39 of Caryácarya. It was intended for a time in the future after thousands of years when Caryácarya will not be able to keep pace with the changing values and norms of society. There was another issue that came up during the discussion 12 years had passed since Gurudeva had left his physical body and we had started thinking so far as to amend Caryácarya. We would amend Caryácarya but there is no need to amend Caryácarya immediately. Hence this point of contention was settled too. One of the significant achievements of the 2002 meeting was that for the first time intellectual discussion was held on these historical issues.

Although the discussion went on smoothly and everyone seemed happy, there was a sense of frustration prevalent because a lot of the intellectual exercise was going on but nothing substantial was being achieved. Finally, it seemed that the talks were moving in a definite direction. One member present in the meeting suddenly came up with

a passing thought about that particular point around which our entire discussion was moving. Now the search began. Everyone came up with his own thought. Since all 27 concerns [concerns as per the public] were written on the board in front of everyone so we only had to reason it out and present it in front of the members. The contemplation started whether "the concerns flagged by many" are presently obstructing the growth of the organization. The entire meeting hall was conspicuously silent, perhaps everyone was thinking that my suggestion would be the most appropriate and it will leave a great impact on the members. Sometimes it is seen that an individual who is capable of coming up with extraordinary thoughts and ideas, is compelled to think like a mediocre. I wish people could maintain this simplicity throughout. Personal interest and greed mount hurdles in the midway and so it affects the movement to achieve unity by slowing down its momentum. In some corners, whispers were heard that how this board will decide the next Purodhá Pramukha, since this meeting was called to discuss concerns and issues and find solutions, so it would be unfair to look for any fault in its intent when its members are involved in contemplation and analysis. Everyone had a sparkle in his eyes and at that nobody could perceive ill intent.

As the topic of conversation changed, the talks veered into a new direction. As great intellectuals, scholars and experienced people participated in the meeting they touched upon many issues and they also deliberated upon who would be the next Purodhá Pramukha and how he should be elected. There was no dearth of ideas and suggestions.

When a person is bogged down by problems he is unable to implement great philosophical ideas of Plato and is compelled to give up and say, "I am sorry". We all are well aware of our own strength and weaknesses. When an ambitious bird flies very high and thinks it would never be caught but as it stoops down on the rocky and hard surface of the earth to collect food it should be careful about its own security otherwise it can be trapped by the bird catcher.

Every member eagerly participated in the discussion on the issues of election of Purodhá Pramukha. Slowly this issue had become a hotly debated topic within the *Ánanda Marga* community. It was but natural that this kind of discussion would spring up during the meeting. Now this

deliberation reached such a conclusion the deliberation be it should remain within the ambit of Caryácarya. Everyone agreed to this decision. Everyone agreed, without making much fuss about it. Later on one member made an invaluable remark; perhaps at present we are wasting time deliberating on this topic. According to Caryácarya revered Purodhá Pramukha holds position till his death provided he doesn't put forward his resignation himself.

I hope I am not digressing from the context, but I feel it is necessary to point it out here that historically there are three organizations that elect their head for a lifetime; Pope of the Roman Catholic society or Vatican, Samígha Samícálaka of RSS and Purodhá Pramukha of Ánanda Márga. Society and its founders were well aware of the fact that if one takes birth he is bound to die at the end. History is witness to the fact that the pioneer of Márga society didn't face criticism when he died. History bears witness to this fact that the same group of people who called dear Purodhá Pramukha as their own had even gone to court to prove that the second "Revered Purodhá Pramukha" was mentally incapable to hold this position. But the universally accepted "Dharmo Rakásati Rakásitah" was finally validated in the true spirit of this Shloka. Ultimately everyone came to a consensus that so long as the present Purodhá Pramukha is alive it is not appropriate to deliberate on the election of next Purodhá Pramukha. Therefore the very concern that we consider to be the biggest should not bother us at this moment.

In this way after deliberating on all 27 concerns consistently for three days we came to this conclusion that besides the enlisted 27 concerns there is another concern which is by far the most serious one and five people from either side should sit on this issue and deal with it internally within the organization but it shouldn't be discussed on a public forum. We should also decide how fast we could grow united as an organization and how we can establish the ideology pioneered by Gurudeva at the earliest.

On this point I want to cite a pieces of historical incidents. Once an international level deliberation was arranged in a country and the theme was, "The God is dead, let us attend the funeral". Atheists from all over the world participated in this event. They made powerful points to establish their side of the argument. The assembly was about to pass a resolution that it would be entirely wrong to accept the necessity of God in our life.

They also put forward this premise that as of now we are convinced that the existence of God is merely a figment of imagination, and that there is no entity called God. By divine providence the assembly was chaired by a wise old man. When he stood up to speak, the entire assembly hall became silent. Everyone thought that after the chairman's speech, his or her resolution would be passed easily. He presented his opinion very politely that all the speakers have undisputedly proved a point that there is no God but one thing is worth consideration that those very people denying the existence of God, earnestly take the name of God though it may be to ignore Him. So it means although there is no God, without him our existence is meaningless. Hence I want to make a proposal in front of the assembly that though we all don't accept the existence of God, we cannot live without him, so let's make a God for ourselves because for the ignorant, God is only a belief. Everyone welcomed this proposal presented by the chairman gleefully with a huge round of applause. Then proceedings of the assembly came to an end. Thereafter everyone left.

After intense deliberations of this sort in the Taiwan Bhawan, one thing came to light that if the organization needs our collective effort to carry forward Bábá's work, do we need this Painçáyata at all? Did we gain anything at all from this meeting? Everyone had to go through lots of hassles, and, on top of that it cost the organization lots of money and time. Let us come forward and discuss how should we accomplish Bábá's mission. Ten people met in a very cordial atmosphere and the meeting set off with the exchange of drinking water. At that point of time, after drinking cold water everyone felt very calm and relaxed, and the atmosphere inside the room was devoid of any excitement and resentment.

One member put forward a problem in front of everyone that there is no other alternative besides running the organization by collective effort, but who would convince the younger workers on this issue. So finally it was decided that those people who had misguided the younger workers, themselves should take the responsibility to clear the misconceptions that had grown in their minds. Now, people were suspicious and they asked, "If younger people are not convinced then what would happen?" Other members came forward and proposed that if needed then they can come forward to convince the younger groups. Then again the question was raised, what would happen even after all this effort that they are not yet

convinced. Few members came up with a suggestion that if ten senior monks are convinced by now and we are unable to bring around “these we” then we can move on and start working for Gurudeva’s mission with new energy and vigor and we will definitely get Gurudeva’s blessing. But “these we” people outwitted us so the organization had to suffer irreparable damage in 2003, on various occasions, 24th August, 18th September and 16th December. As the organization suffered so did the Marga community.

At the time of the third round of meetings in Ranchi, Márvári Dharmashála, instead of making a collective effort to unify two factions, gullible Márgiis were fooled to give their signatures under the guise of a well thought out conspiracy to weaken the organization. The Ranchi meeting was an excellent example, how “this we” having learnt from past experiences had successfully hatched a conspiracy to scuttle the efforts of unification of the two opposing groups. Although the organization itself was weakened by this incident, the disease that had been rotting its very foundation was being diagnosed slowly. After the Ranchi initiative was foiled, history was repeated when a former member of the Purodhá board filed a suit against the present Purodhá Board in Delhi. The sequence of events were repeated in a similar fashion, as after the Ranchi meeting clashes took place on 24th August, 18th September and 16th December. God knows how “these we” put pressure on their own people and forced them to file a case again. Different kinds of people came and left but during this we remained very active. The organization had to bear the brunt of the financial burden because of the persistent legal battles. Though finally people who filed the lawsuit withdrew the case, it drove a wedge of mistrust on the solid plank of faith and trust. Purodhá Pramukhaji of Ánanda Marga Pracárika Sam’gha and the General Secretary didn’t give up and they consistently made efforts that perhaps one-day people will understand and will unite under one roof. I have no idea how and under what compulsion simple, lifelong ascetics are leading themselves into traps of allurements and temptations, putting the organization in danger. Perhaps under such compelling circumstances one saint said, “Lord, Please forgive them, because they don’t know what they are doing”. Let alone the perpetrators of the sins but those who prompt others to commit wrong are also sinners. Initiatives for unification continued further but the fourth initiative was possible because of the remarkable effort made by late Aniruddha Prasádji of Trimuhán at Jamalpur. To honor

his commitment, all reached the venue in time. The decision to finalize the venue of the meeting was an emotional one as Jamalpur was Gurudeva's birthplace.

Though it was the fourth attempt, the organizers showed renewed vigour and great enthusiasm. Prior to this meeting I was staying in Delhi. In Delhi, one ascetic who is no longer alive had invited me for breakfast to have a little chat with me. I went to meet him with great enthusiasm. Suddenly in the middle of the conversation he became very emotional. Even I was touched by it. He said, "You must take extra care so that the Jamalpur talk doesn't fail." I assured him in a similar sentimental tone on a personal level, "I will try my best to make it successful." Before the talks begin, the ground rules were constituted and both parties accepted the rules. But as the meeting commenced, certain people started to make attempts to foil the talks. We tried our level best to not leave the place until the goal for what we had gathered was achieved. Unfortunately there were certain people whose talks and actions were diametrically opposite. So the first day of the talk for reconciliation between the two parties ended without any result. Their members were continuously making provocative comments. Organizers and the senior Márgiis were stunned and shocked to the core to witness the on goings and were worried with what intention the other party had come to Gurudeva's birthplace. If they don't want to take away anything from this place, God knows what do they want actually? Do they only want this that the Márgiis should know how pure and sentient their thoughts are? Then why are they behaving in this way? This sort of question started to rake everyone's mind. Talks rolled into the second day till lunch, because none but them only knew that they would bring down the curtain on it somehow. The meeting was officially concluded unsuccessfully. Nobody had a clue how such a big arrangement to attain reconciliation didn't chart a new course to achieve reconciliation between the two parties. This uncertainty remained till 4 pm in the afternoon. When we reached the Jamalpur railway station to catch a train for Ranchi suddenly our telephone rang. Though we had prior knowledge that two members from the board had filed a lawsuit in Purulia district court, we tried to find out when the affidavit of today's case was made? It was one week ago. It struck me like a bolt from the blue and I thought then what was the intent of that person who told me these words in Delhi, "talks shouldn't fail". He is the one who had filed a lawsuit for which

an affidavit was made weeks ago. So he already knew that “we were filing a case.” And still some people were making tireless effort to keep me in the dark about the reality with this maze of deceit, “Jamalpur talks shouldn’t fail”. This has continuously surprised the Ānanda Mārga community. But this has its own history. Perhaps this is true that history makes interesting reading but how many people learn from it? May be only few. This story is about the fourth attempt. This persistent effort for reconciliation continued to move ahead, it didn’t stop. When late Ācārya Dhruvānandajīi was General Secretary, quite a few opportunities were given to those people who have deviated from the right path to return. But the people who were affected did not show any earnestness from their end. Though there was the talk about coming back in front of the Mārgīi community, but as and when the opportunity was given they did not take any initiative to return. Is it that they keep on getting misguided by “that we”? And this issue ends then and there. So, inevitably the fifth attempt for reconciliation ended in smoke.

In 2011, in a case filed in the Denver county court, New York sector, AMPS took part as an Intervener, and I was given the responsibility to perform this duty as representative of the organization. Inside the assembly of the Law House, I was supposed to give my testimony in front of the officers of Denver County Court. When I was being cross-examined by the opposition lawyer, the Court gave us a chance for mutual arbitration. I was asked if I was ready to settle the issue mutually and then the Court would arrange a talk between the parties involved in the case. As I gave my affirmation to this proposal, a talk was arranged among the parties on the direction of the court. We thought if the case was settled mutually then we wouldn’t have to bear the expenses of a full-fledged trial and the works in the New York sector will get a new momentum. The meeting started and I was asked whether I myself was exclusively responsible for the organization or if I would have to take the approval from some other person. “I am representing AMPS Central, and the organization has full faith in me, hence, they have sent me here. I don’t have to take anyone into confidence. Whatever I do here would be accepted by the organization.” When this question was asked to the representative of the plaintiff, his reply was in negative; he was frequently going out of the room and talking to someone. It was the sixth occasion when “this we people” didn’t allow the organization to unite. My cross examination was finished. Both parties had

to bear heavy expenses to run the trial and the gap kept on increasing. The trial resumed in May, in that year only, and AMPS Central won the case after five days of trial. The Denver County Court proclaimed that *Ánanda Marga Inc.* is a legal embodiment of *Ánanda Marga*, and *Ánanda Marga* is a spiritual organization. One hundred thousand dollars was fixed as the cost of trial and we were told if the case does not proceed to the stage of appeal then the money would be refunded, but the other party didn't agree and they went to file an appeal. Finally their plea was turned down. Though the court gave a judgment in favour of *Ánanda Marga*, by then the organization had already spent more than one million dollar. A poor organization could have utilized this money in some constructive work. It was evident "this we people" were active here also.

Today, the incumbent General Secretary of AMPS Central has given the responsibility to the Sectorial Secretary (Delhi Sector) and has opened the front door of the organization for those people want to come back. And what will happen in the future depends on his will, who has built this organization to establish his ideology. We ought to work as per "His" will. He will definitely do His portion, which is not in our capacity to do. The state of moving together will help us move forward. It is my firm belief, he who considers this Organization as home, will definitely come back home, where they are ever welcome.

Science of Intuitional Practice -A Lion View

The subject of this book is the science of intuitional practice; practices which one learns through the strict guidance of a Guru and by the grace of God in order to expand one's latent spiritual essence towards its ultimate fruition, just as the meticulous care of a gardener helps a seedling to slowly grow into a fruit-bearing tree. The innate human thirst for knowledge and oneness, which were nascent in the first human beings and expanded as the human mind developed, has given rise to a multiplicity of human endeavours. Yet this thirst can only be finally quenched through union with that which is infinite: the very source of life. To achieve this goal, it is very important to follow a rational process. When one's thirst becomes pinnacled then it is imperative to learn this science and the process to achieve fulfilment. Earnestly practicing this process creates a love for the intuitional science and enables aspirants to take solid steps towards their ultimate achievement in this very life. That the aspirant develops love for the spiritual science is important because although it is rare for one to find the path, it is much more uncommon for someone to overcome all the obstacles and eventually reach the goal; such perseverance is only possible due to this love. This book reveals the secret of how life can progress under the benevolent guidance of a true Guru.

Therefore, I felt a compelling need to bring out into the open the systematic evolution of the spiritual science. I believe that learning the history

of spiritual science will clarify many confusions that have arisen over the ages; clarity will kindle one's spiritual urge, and spiritual urge will embolden people to become spiritual Sādhakas¹. To be born as a human being is difficult; the quest for the Absolute begins with one's first human birth because a human body is the uniquely precious instrument which allows one to practice the spiritual science. We should all take care not to miss the opportunity which has been bestowed up on us by virtue of our birth. It has been said:

*Punarvittam punarmitram punarbháryá punarmahi,
Etatsarvam' punarlabhyam' na shariiram' punah punah.*

[One can get back lost wealth, a lost friend or a stolen kingdom, one can marry a second wife; but one will not get a human body again and again]

Squandered money can be earned again, an estranged friend may one day return, the widow, widower and divorcee are free to remarry, lost estates, countries or nations can be recovered but one will not get a human body again and again if one misuses it. Ádhyátmika Jñána² first sprouted in the minds of ancient seekers when they tried to quench their spiritual thirst. This was long ago; at that time human interests were limited, and so it was easier to feel within the nature of one's deepest desire. Since then, human interests have developed into different shapes and forms. Today the shapes and forms of human interests are marvellously varied and we have invented terrific ways to pursue our interests. But sadly, the vast and ever-expanding array of human interests are extroversial, or at best psychic, and so lead us away from our spiritual essence. The root cause of these interests is that same spiritual thirst, however the urge has become estranged from its purpose and rather than quenching our spiritual the thirst, we become numb to it and distract ourselves with various activities and interests.

This world has been, a few times, inhabited by a true Guru whose teachings set the foundation for human culture and spiritual science. This has been expanded by the countless rís. But over time, the lessons so imparted have lost their purity. Therefore, it becomes essential to know a bit of the history of how the spiritual tradition began, and how it evolved.

1 A Sādhaka is one who has wholeheartedly devoted their life to the spiritual science and doing good to humanity.

2 Ádhyátmika = of the Átmá, so Ádhyátmika Jñána is "knowledge of the soul"

Through the practice of the methods of intuitional science the Rśi's saw that Khańd'a³ has arisen out of Akhańd'a⁴ and Khańd'a is also contained within Akhańd'a. This Sádhaná begotten realization was that of rishis, not of the common people whose minds were still absorbed in crudeness and who worshiped limited objects. Because by limiting the focus of their minds to the crude world, one's mental waves gradually become crude. One cannot achieve the infinite stature of Akhańd'a by worshipping Khańd'a; in fact, by focusing the mind on crude objects the mental waves become crude. However, for the Rśi's, their realization presented them with a practical difficulty: although one cannot achieve Akhańd'a by the worship of Khańd'a, in day-to-day life one must pay diligent attention to crude finite objects in order to work with them, and one must work with finite objects in order to live. Hence, one cannot ignore Khańd'a, if one focuses the mind on the crude then the mind will itself become crude and one will lose the Sádhaná-begotten feeling for Akhańd'a.

Without the knowledge that the finite is essentially a part of the infinite the attraction for the finite becomes boundless and irresistible, and the unavoidable contact we have with mundane objects crudifies the mind. Worldly men, those who look solely to the world for satisfaction, may temporarily get their needs satisfied to a limited extent, but they can never satisfy their inner desire. Hence, the real quest is for Akhańd'a, not Khańd'a, but while endeavouring to attain that Akhańd'a, one must deal with Khańd'a while maintaining the awareness that the finite objects are but a manifestation of the infinite. This is well explained in the Yajurveda:

*Ishávásyamidaṁ sarvaṁ yat kiñca jagatyám' jagat,
Tena tyaktena bhuiñjithá mágrdhah kasyasviddhanam.*

Humans began their endeavour to find that Great Entity from the very dawn of human civilization. Their initial attempts utilized their instincts and propensities, focussing on the manifested world. As their minds were extroversially oriented, they could not imagine the subtle nature of the supreme entity, and so whatever they felt was the most magnificent or majestic they worshiped. Early humans, in their undeveloped state, were

3 Khanda is Sańskṛta term that means the finite, partial, divided into parts.

4 Akhańd'a literally means that entity which is an unbroken, infinite and whole; by implication it means the Supreme Consciousness because it describes a quality which only the Supreme possesses.

overwhelmed by the forces of nature, hence they began by searching for the primordial entity in nature: in the oceans, sky, rising and setting of the sun, phases of the moon, patterns in the stars, in the mountains, rivers, plants, creepers, forests, thunder, lightning, etc. As people's minds slowly developed, and they made some meagre achievements with the use of their minds, they began to realize that humans were greater than the expressions of nature. Then people began to idolize human beings with outstanding qualities. Their spiritual thirst led them to imagine human figures with god-like qualities and then to worship these imaginary figures. Hence, we see that human beings have been searching for the meaning of life in this direction since the very beginning of history. The efforts of our earliest ancestors were extroversive in nature. Though this pacified the humans to some extent, especially in that it led to the accumulation of knowledge about nature, it failed to satisfy the hunger in their souls and their quest gradually turned inwards.

What did humans achieve by looking extroversially? Whatever satisfaction achieved came from Khañd'a Pújá and did not lead them to Akhañd'a. However, through this approach they gained knowledge and their frustration brought them to the point of philosophical enquiry.

There arose four questions in the human mind

1. Who am I?
2. Who created me?
3. Who created this manifested universe?
4. What is my relationship with the Creator and the creation?

These questions became the primary subject matter of philosophy. From this point was the starting point of eastern philosophy, which began with the Kapil⁵ and ended in Vádaráyan Vyás. In the West it started with Greeks and was brought to a standstill by the pragmatism of John Dewey, et. al.⁶ The search continued and, despite manifold difference of opinion

5 The first philosopher who propounded shánkya Darshan.

6 After the pragmatic movement led by Dewey, William James and Charles Peirce, western philosophy increasingly turned away from existential questions to more sociological, psychological, educational, and political topics. For this reason, philosophical historian Edward A. White said that, Dewey's work led to the 20th century rift between religion and science. That being said, western philosophy was scarcely concerned with the actual spiritual experience of truth or the act of self-surrender; it was generally devoid of the mystical language of Eastern Philosophies. Hence the rift between western philosophy and religion was always present, but it became obvious after Dewey. What is said for the rest of this paragraph refers to Indian rather than western philosophies.

amongst philosophers, it was accepted without controversy that there is a Supreme Entity and that God pervades every atom of the creation. This was something fundamental, a philosophical axiom which was learned from the imperial realization of Yogis. But the question arose as to how to realize this truth through experience and what is the method to offer our everything to Him? What is the achievement of so much philosophical deliberation if it cannot point us in the direction of self-realization? Regardless of our philosophical knowledge, our heart knows no solace until, in the process of our search, we learn how to surrender. The practice of Madhu Vidya (2nd lesson) is to impose godhood on worldly objects, because the only way to actually see God pervading the objects in the universe is to practice doing so—with time the mind becomes subtle and detached, and one cannot help but see the truth behind the mirage. Madhu Vidya depends upon one's detachment; to have the awareness that God is everything means to get attached to Him instead of the external objects or the feelings one has about those objects. The reverse is also true, to see everything with detachment cannot be achieved by mental effort alone, it is only possible if one is attached to the Consciousness (which is beyond the mind). As the mind is propensity oriented, if one is doing Sadhana of the mind then the propensities will compel the mind towards finite objects. The imposition of Brahma-hood is only possible through the Sadhana of the soul.

*Asurya namate lokā andhena tamasāvrtah,
Tamaste pretyābhigacchanti ye ke cātmahanjanāh.*

“The difference between Ātman and Paramātman is only at the objective level, at the level of cognition the distinction vanishes. Hence if one adopts the infinite as one's subject then gradually one will become Paramātman.”

Brahmavid Brahmaeva bhavati⁷

Along with the mind, let us evaluate what is human nature. The nature of unit beings, not necessarily human beings, is self-preservation and pleasure seeking. In addition to these qualities, human nature includes seeking infinite happiness. This latter quality is the inherent, uniquely human, trait that distinguishes us from other living beings. Until one

⁷ One who realizes Brahma becomes Brahma.

gets that infinite happiness, one's desires shall remain unsatiated. So long as we are caught up in seeking passing forms of petty happiness, we shall be troubled with doubts and fears due to the constant possibility of unhappiness. The sole cause of unhappiness is our self-created Samískáras, but to be scared of our Samískáras or to blame God for our difficulties is the result of defective thinking; this defective thinking actually arises from an attachment to limited forms of happiness. It is not uncommon to observe people who have done much charity and Pújá in their life to remain clouded with unhappiness, and we struggle to understand how it can be so. Such thinking is faulty; Samískáras are the root of unhappiness and therefore we must not be swayed from the course of righteousness by the fear of loss or by the remaining load of unhappiness that we must undergo. It is not wise to be fearful of the consequences of Samískáras and also erroneous to blame God for the resultant effects of Samískáras. A wise person doesn't get perturbed by the fear of losing anything because he knows that Samískáras are the root of sufferings.

One's sorrow and suffering are the result of one's self-acquired Samískáras. The devotee and poet Vidyapati rightly said, "I have created my fate, why to blame God?" Therefore, to emerge from the unhappiness in life, one must stop getting tangled up in a web of Samískáras by adopting the endless infinite entity as the subject of one's mind. Since we have shown that the only way to true happiness is to fix our mind upon The Great and take Him as the subject of our mind, we must next try to understand and explain what that infinite entity is.

Hamára abhága sakhi hunaka kaona doša

That Infinite, Unchanging Entity is beyond the orbit of time but each and every entity of this universe is moving because of His Shakti and intellectual potency. Práña Shakti⁸ exist in this creation because of the cognitive faculty of the Supreme Entity. It has been said in the Yajurveda:

*Tadejati tannaajati taddúre tadvantike
Tadantarasya sarvasya tadu sarvasyásya váhyatah.*

8 Life force.

It means, "Does He move? No, He is sthabhvata⁹. Is he far away? No, He is the vital force of our vitality." With His ideation one's mind sheds the layers of narrowness and embraces the greatness of the infinite. When the body perishes in the material world and the Ātman shall merge with Paramátman. To attain this state is to have ensconced yourself in Brahmahood. The cycle of creation, artfully and systemitacally orchestrated by Paramátman, moves from subtle to crude and then from crude back to subtle. It is Avidyá Mayá that adeptly fashions the delusion of our isolated material existence and it is Vidyá Mayá that gradually dissolves the false appearance of a reality which is separate from the Supreme Father.

The Brahmajña¹⁰ Sages say:

*Yasmin sarváñi bhútányátmaevábhúd vijánatah
Tatra ko mohah kah shoka ekatvamanupashyatah. 11*

When we encounter an individual with steadfast mental equipoise, who is completely free from hatred, greed and the fear of loss, then we can take these qualities as symptomatic of one whose contemplation on Brahma is unremitting. The wise man does not forget the creator due to the enticements of his creation. His mental state is like that of a devoted child who never forgets his mother no matter how many toys are presented to him. Maya cannot cause any harm to those who have such mental composure. A God realized person has Samatá and Grhatyága; he or she will lead a balanced life without hatred towards anyone, is not driven by aspirations for selfish gain, nor goaded by a lustful desire for material objects, nor hankers after prestige. Being free from such bondages, he or she will not have anything to fear losing, and in the same way Máyá cannot do any harm to such people. God himself protects those people whose worship of Him is one-pointed and selfless. However, regardless of if one lives a worldly life or the life of a renunciate, it is a defective path to worship God or to revere the Sambhúti of some great person out of fear or laziness, due to some latent desire for gain or some ulterior motive, due to caste or religion or groupist conformity. One's reverence and devotion should be of pure motive.

How it is possible to attain immortality? How to achieve consciousness of Amrtattva¹¹ ?

9 Does not move, immobile.

10 Knower of Brahma

11 immortality.

This is possible only by maintaining proper balance. Only those who have no attraction for the creation nor any fear of annihilation can emerge from the cycle of Saiṅcara and Pratisaiṅcara. Otherwise the dual forces of Avidyá Mâyá (i.e. Ávaraṅii and Vikśepa shakti¹²) will constantly throw one off track. God can only be achieved by those who are beyond the Hiraṅyamaya Kośa; that is to say, even the blissful intoxication of the Hiraṅyamaya Kośa no longer entices them. One can only achieve the final goal if one has overcome the final bondage. The alluring glow of the Hiraṅyamaya Kośa is the last grip by which finitude can hold onto the unit mind. In this self-contained condition one is established in the Akhaṅḍā Prema, divine love for the Infinite. The attainment of the Supreme Blissful state is not possible through Sádhana alone, zealous determination in Sádhana must be combined with complete self-surrender. This is possible for one who has achieved the stance of Kevalá Bhakti; once one is ensconced in pure Bhakti, one's work is done.

At this stage, spiritual effulgence generated by the practice of Ishvaraprañidhāna causes Dagdhabijja¹³, more precisely, Saṁskāras are burnt due to intense Sádhanā, thereby purifying the mind and the Sádhaka attains the immortal abode of Divinity, beyond the cycle of life and death, where all distinctions of self and others have dissolved into oneness. This is the culmination of Brahma Vijiṅāna [intuitional science]. The long saga of the Jivátman's journey from a single cell to a saintly human being comes to its final conclusion as but a drop merging back into the ocean of Bráhmika Bliss.

*Tvamekam sharaṅyam tvamekam vareṅyam
Tvamekam japámah tvamekam smarámah
Tvamekam nidhānam nirálambamiisham
bhavám bodhipotam sharaṅam vrajámah¹⁴.*

It was humanities resolute quest for Brahma that initially fostered the

12 Ávaraṅii Shakti is the force that spreads a veil of ignorance in front of a person so that they forget the Lord and think themselves to be an independent entity. Vikśepa Shakti causes people to wrongly believe that this crude reality with its petty pleasures is the truth (but it does not make them forget the Lord), and thereafter to foolishly do actions that move them away from their spiritual goal. These twin forces cause people to waste their human life, getting more and more ensnared in saṁskāras.

13 Literally "burnt seed"; the seeds of reactions do not sprout.

14 "That Entity alone we remember. We repeat His holy name, we salute Him as the Witness of the entire universe. We take shelter in Him, who is the ship in the vast ocean of Bháva (bundle of Saṁskāras responsible for rebirth). You, the Supreme Lord, the one without shelter, are the Supreme Culminating Point of all the created beings in the universe."

sprouting of the spiritual science during the Rig Vedic period and then further caused this wisdom to grow into a developed Sádhaná path by the time of the Yajurveda. At this time Lord Shiva, who was also known as Sadáshiva, came to give human beings the techniques of attaining Paramátman by dint of Tantra Sádhaná. Through this pursuit human beings obtained the nectar of wisdom, which satisfied their minds to a certain extent, but the appetite of soul can only be satiated through the tactual experience of Bliss brought by spiritual union. The soul remained unsatisfied because in the Vedas there was no concrete system about learning Sádhaná in the tradition of Master and Disciple. During the early Vedic period the relationship between guru and disciple necessarily lacked discipline because the knowledge taught was theoretical knowledge about the Vedas, rather than practical guidance in the practice of Sádhaná. In the Tantric period there is a shift in the relationship between Guru and disciple characterized by strictness, effort and practice. The relation to the Guru becomes paramount in the spiritual life of the disciple; from the very start, the disciple must surrender to the Guru and be ready to follow the Guru's directions, and the Guru must be vigilant of every aspect of the disciple's life.

Through this effort human beings realized that Dharma is their quintessential essence. There is an eternal flow of attraction between Jiiva and Shiva which is the root cause of all microcosmic activities, but this is generally something unconscious for microcosms; human Dharma is to consciously feel this attraction and move towards the Supreme Entity. Sádhaná is the path whereby the Jiiva makes efforts to move in that flow with accelerated speed. Only a human being has the psychic ability and developed consciousness to be able to make efforts to complete this journey, and so it is the Dharma of humanity to make maximum efforts in this regard. This journey itself is Dharma Sádhaná. It is essential in human life that one comes to know one's own true nature, the purpose of one's life which alone makes one human, and to build one's life according to one's Dharma.

Sádhaná is indispensable for the fulfilment of the purpose of human existence, because without Sádhaná, one cannot to develop properly and follow Dharma. Human Dharma is completely dependent upon Sádhaná; Sádhaná is not something unnatural, rather it is the purest expression of humanity's essential nature.

Difference between humans and other animals

Animals cannot move on the path of Dharma because of their limited capacities. They eat when hungry, sleep when tired, procreate according to their natural urges and either run away or become aggressive when gripped by fear due to any challenging situation. They don't have the capacity to struggle to move forward because their I feeling is not fully developed and so they can only move according to their instincts. Of course, humans also have animal instincts¹⁵, but we have been endowed with rationality and self-consciousness that not only enable us, but require of us, to rise above these animal instincts and live glorious human lives; under no circumstances should we allow instincts to rule our lives and behave like animals.

In order to feel truly human, one must come to understand one's Dharma and live accordingly; through the practice of Dharma one will realize the Self within. Spirituality starts with knowing one's own true nature, thereafter one will long for the Supreme and will no longer be contented to waste one's life in the pursuit of the limited. Instead one will long to utilize one's existence for spiritual development and seeks out a master to learn the practical process of Sādhaná. Without Sādhaná it is not possible to live life as a human being.

Dharma and Sādhaná are interdependent; therefore, it is said that Dharma will protect those who have dedicated themselves to the Sādhaná of the Supreme. Hence, those aspirants who diligently follow the dictates of Dharma in their personal lives will find the spiritual journey simple and pleasant. They will always encourage within themselves positive mental feelings, and therefore be ever-ready to struggle against any negative or pessimistic feelings that arise.

The moral code of conduct for Sādhaná

Righteousness is absolutely necessary to make any progress in Sādhaná. Dharma can only be practiced by following the ten moral principles of Yama and Niyama.

¹⁵ The human body, just as the animal body, is composed of cells and organs that have their own undeveloped minds, needs, urges and instincts. As our mind is intimately dependent upon our body, so our psychology is influenced by the cells and organs which compose our body, and therefore we also have animal instincts. Hence, the rationality and spiritual capacities of human beings must maintain an adjustment with the animal instincts that arise due to our physical body.

Yama				
1. Ahimsá	2. Satya	3. Asteya	4. Brahmacharya	5. Aparigraha

Niyama				
1. Shaoca	2. Santośa	3. Tapah	4. Svádhyáya	5. Iishvara Prañidhána

In common parlance the words “truth”, “fact”, “accurate” and “correct” are used interchangeably¹⁶. However, there are significant differences amongst all these words in their semantics and, more significantly, in the depth of their meaning. Philosophically, truth stands for that which is unchangeable, devoid of distortions, beyond the periphery of relativities, unaffected by changes in time and place. Spiritually there is another, related, meaning of Truth: the embodiment of Consciousness (Cittasvarúpa Puruśa). In the realm of Sádhaná Truth is defined as

Parahitártham váṅgamanaso yathárthatvam satyam.

There is no equivalent English word for Satya. Paramapuruśa alone is the embodiment of Truth, He is the only all-encompassing entity. All other facts, appearances, or ideas are only relatively correct and limited to a small domain within the vast universe. Some theories are useful to human being for a certain span of time, but they are replaced by newer theories. But the endeavor of every human being uncover the facts and laws of this relative world, is really a longing for an absolute Truth, and so for each and every person, this endeavor for knowledge and understanding will merge into the flow of Satya. In the end, it is Satya that protects us, all other relative truths fade into unimportance in the brilliant light of Satya. The Sádhaka who takes shelter in Truth will one day attain Paramapuruśa, and in that attainment there shall remain only the one Truth.

Satyameva jayate nánrtam

“The first step [on the spiritual path], is that the aspirant must take shelter in Satya.”

¹⁶ In Sañskṛta the corresponding terms are:

Tathya—a real happening

Samyak—correct or proper (behavior or actions)

Rta—a statement which is factually precise

Satya—the absolute, unchangeable truth; also refers to Brahma.

It's our responsibility to practice and follow the injunctions of Dharma. To follow Dharma requires constant inspiration, but this inspiration can only come from within and cannot be dependent on external circumstances. It is up to oneself, in fact it is one's duty, to remain inspired to practice Dharma. There is a wellspring of inspiration within one's heart, but it can only be accessed if one follows morality in daily life and is ever active in doing good.

Parama Satya, the Supreme Truth, remains concealed in the inner recesses of the unconscious mind. In our constant search for knowledge and meaning, we generally study the outside world to gain knowledge and look to religion, history, society or personal relationships for meaning; but Parama Satya, the knowledge we are actually seeking, is already within our minds and to discover it we need only purify the mind through selfless actions and introvert our gaze through Sádhaná. Yet still, the aspirants find that no matter how they seek the Supreme Truth, it continues to elude them; like a father playing hide and seek with his child, Brahma likes to conceal himself just beyond the grasp of His devotees to inspire them to continue to make efforts. So, in the attempt to find Param Puruśa one must constantly rekindle one's efforts and search for Him time and again.

They say that where there is Dharma there shall be victory, because following Dharma means to adhere to the Supreme Truth, and as Truth always prevails so to follow Dharma leads to victory. The pursuit of Dharma is only possible through righteous conduct. This path leads to one's Ultimate destination. Only Dharma and Siddha¹⁷ can bring us on this path, which is the ultimate path amongst all human endeavors.

In the annals of Brahma Sádhaná, Maharśi Atharvá was, by the grace of Brahma, the first sage to attain the knowledge of Brahma Vidyá (Intuition Science). And he passed it on to Satyaváha, and Satyaváha gave it to Auñgirasas. As Brahma is at the root of the entire creation of all entities of this manifested universe, so as an apostle of Brahma Vijiñána, the sage Atharvá, holds a similar position in the realm of Brahma Vijiñána. It is said:

*Devánámasi bahñitamah pitrñám prathamá svadhá
Rśiñáñcaritam satyamatharváuñgirasámasi.*

— Prashnopañis'ad

¹⁷ Siddha is an adjective which means perfect.

The wisdom, that sages obtained during the Vaedika age, through the practice of Dhyána, are chronicled in the Vedas. The Vedas were able to quench the thirst for knowledge to some extent but the longing of the soul cannot be satiated by bookish knowledge; only the realization of the Truth through Sádhaná can fulfil one's inner desire. There is no evidence of the methods and practice of Sádhaná being taught in the tradition of Master and Disciple prior to the advent of Lord Shiva, who began this tradition. Tantra is the science and methods of Sádhaná that were first introduced by Lord Shiva. In Tantra the spiritual aspirant must fight with obstacles at every stage of his journey, and the faster the Sádhaná wishes to progress, the stronger will be the obstacles he must be prepared to face.

Tantra means "*Tam jadyát tarayet yastu sah tantrah parikiirtitáh*" Which is generally translated as "Tantra is that which gives emancipation from dullness (staticity)". Tam is the acoustic root of inertia and the root verb of Tantra is Tan, which means "to expand" in Saṁskṛta. So, it is more accurate to say that Tantra is the technique leading to liberation through a process of expansion. The elusive secrets of Tantra are these self-expanding spiritual practices which lead to Liberation. But how is one to learn these practices? The Guru is central to the practice of Tantra Sádhaná. A disciple must diligently learn the techniques from the Guru, and success in Sádhaná cannot be achieved by continuous practice alone, it also depends upon the Grace of the Guru.

*Kśurasya dhára nishitá dúratyayá
Durgam pathastat kavayo vadanti.*

"The opinion of the wise is that this path is like the edge of a razor, which is very sharp and difficult to walk on." As the Tántrika path is like a razor's edge, much time and effort must be devoted to guide the disciple how to walk on this path carefully and properly. If the disciplines of Sádhaná, as instructed by the Guru, are not observed strictly, the Sádhaná's degradation is inevitable and his downfall is likely. However, if the disciple follows Tantra diligently then he will progress quickly in his Sádhaná. By analogy, the heart of the Sádhaná may be likened to farmland. Before seeds can be sown, the land must be ploughed, fertilized and properly irrigated, but even then, if the land is infertile then the harvest will not be bountiful. Likewise, before the Guru can give Diikśá, the Sádhaná must develop noble

qualities, do good deeds and lead a moral life, but even then, if one's heart is dry then one's Sádhaná will not be blissful.

On the path of Tantra, the quality of a disciple is measured by their sincerity in and dedication to embodying the teachings of the Guru. Inferior quality disciples can be compared to a pitcher that is placed in water upside down, which cannot hold a single drop of water despite having been in contact with the water whilst submerged. Likewise, this type of disciple is spiritual while immersed in the oceanic presence of the Guru, but when left alone they return to their old habits for they have not absorbed anything of the Guru's teachings. The middle category of disciple is likened to one who climbs barefoot the thorny plum tree to harvest the sun-ripened plums. Although there were tears rolling over his cheeks whilst he bravely tolerated the pain to climb throughout the thorny branches, carefully collecting the plums one-by-one, nonetheless when he climbs down he carelessly loses his balance and all that he has collected is scattered on the ground and lost. This kind of disciple works hard to learn knowledge from the Guru and to follow the Tántrika path, but lacks the mental balance to retain what was learned and maintain the Tántrika ideal, and, at some point, the disciple loses all his achievements and strays from the path. This second category is like pitcher which emerges from the water somewhat full, but has a hole in the bottom through which everything slowly leaks.

The third category is able to assimilate, retain and maintain the lessons received from the Guru. They emerge from the Guru's presence as a brimming, watertight pitcher emerges from the ocean. The Guru's teachings and the example of the guru's life, are kept forever alive and protected within the disciple's heart; the disciple remains ever-inspired and enthusiastic.

*Shánto viniita shuddhátma, shraddhávána dhárañákśamah
Samarthashca kuliinashca, prájñah saccarito yatih
Evamádi guñaeryuktah, shishyo bhavati nányathá.*

— Tantrasára

"A disciple must always be Samartha (ready to carry out the instructions and commands of the master). He or she must be Práññá and Yati – that is, must have the requisite knowledge and experience, and must have full control over the mind. One who is of noble soul, of noble conduct

and of tranquil mind, who is modest and reverent, and possesses a sharp memory and perseverance, who has all-round competence and is zealous in the practice of raising the *Kulakuṅḍ'alinii*, and who is well-informed and self-restrained, is an ideal disciple.”

The traits of a competent disciple are: a composed and restrained mind, calm and tranquil, patient and austere, respectful and of noble conduct. S/he is always ready to follow the orders of the Guru; has both acquired requisite knowledge and gained experience by putting this knowledge into practice (*Prajiñá*). He is earnest to learn and practice *Kaola*¹⁸ *Sáadhaná* (awakening of *Kuṅḍ'alinii*), strict in character (renunciate). Only such *Sádhakas*, having learned *Sáadhaná* from a true Guru, can be liberated.

As important and rare as it is for one to be an ideal disciple, it is even more important (and much rarer) to have an ideal Guru. From the *Tántrika* perspective, the Guru is paramount, and also fall into three categories.

Mediocre or *Adham* Gurus teach the disciple some *Sáadhaná* techniques and instructs them about the virtues of life, perhaps they deliver some nice lectures about spirituality and philosophy, but such Gurus are unattached to their disciples. The disciple is left on his or her own to struggle on the spiritual path, while the Guru remains neutral; after teaching his high ideals and giving some brief instructions, the Guru takes no responsibility for the welfare and progress of the *Sádhaka*. He neither has time nor inclination to help the *Sádhaka* in removing the obstacles which they invariably face in their *Sáadhaná*, nor has he the capacity to create the essential pressure (either direct or circumstantial) in the life of the *Sádhaka* to enable the new *Sádhaka* to get established on the spiritual path or the experienced *Sádhaka* to proceed to deeper levels, or to punish the *Sádhaka* for his or her mistakes.

A *Madhyam* Guru is of average standard. After initiating his disciple onto the path of *Sáadhaná*, he keeps tab of the disciple's progress. He puts the disciple deftly on the path of *Sáadhaná*, teaches him spiritual truths and virtuous conduct, and even takes care to keep watch on the *Sádhaka's* progresses in *Sáadhaná* and offers further advice from time to time. But like an *Adham* Guru, he cannot create pressure in the life of the *Sádhaka* or punish the *Sádhaka* to keep him or her on the right path; so, this type of Guru also cannot truly take responsibility for the disciple.

18 *Kaola* is the practice of raising the *Kuṅḍ'alinii*.

An Uttama Guru is of the highest category and they are extremely rare. Achieving such a Guru is a great achievement and a blessing.

*Shānto dānto kuliinascha viniita shuddhaveslavān
Shuddhācārii supratīsthita shucirdakśah subuddhimān
Āshramii dhyananiśṭhashca tantramāntra vishāradah
Nīgrahānugrahe shakto Gururityabhidhiyate¹⁹.*

Such a Guru must be fully established in Sādhanā, completely knowledgeable about Tantra and Mantra, able to give grace and also to punish. Capable of administration.

The Uttama Guru is able to create circumstances in the disciple's life so as to put adequate pressure on the disciple to overcome his or her fears and weaknesses so that the disciple can move forward on the path and bravely adhere to the ideology in every situation. In this way the Guru makes the disciple follow the path of Sādhanā, and he will not leave his disciple so long as he or she has not achieved the goal and attained liberation into the ocean of infinite bliss.

*Sarve ca pashavah santi talavad bhūtale narāh:
Teśām jinānaprakāshāya viirabhāvah prakāshiitah;
Viirabhāvam sadā prāpya kramena devatā bhavet.*

— Rudrayāmala Tantra

In Tantra, there are three stages of one's spiritual life. It is the mind that does all the work or actions; in Tantra Sādhanā, the mind has to undergo three stages of transformation: Pashu (animal stage), Viira (warrior stage), Divya (divine stage). Each stage has steps or sub-stages. Pashvācāra has two stages, Siddhāntācāra (theoretical) and Vāmācāra (left-hand practice). Viirācāra has four stages: Vaedikācāra, Vaeśnavācāra, Saevācāra, Dakṣiṇācāra. Divyācāra has only one stage, which is called Kaolācāra.

*Vaedikaṁ Vaeśnavam Shaevam Dākṣiṇam pāshavam smrtam;
Siddhānte Vāme ca viire divyantu Kaolāmucyate.*

19 Composed, self-controlled, adept in raising the Kuṇḍalīni, modest, soberly dressed, exemplary in conduct, having an honest means of livelihood, pure in thought, well-versed in the spiritual cult, highly intelligent, a householder, established in meditation, well-versed in Tantra and mantra, able both to punish and to reward the disciple – only such a person deserves to be called a Guru.

— Vishvasára Tantra

In Tantra, Sádhaná is the birthright of all, there is no discrimination based on caste, gender, race or social status. All identify as members of a singular group, that of human beings. The only qualification to learn Sádhaná is a human body.

*Variáshramábhimánena shrutidásye bhavennarah
Variáshramviihinaśca vartate shrutimúdrañi.*

— Ajiñanavodhinii Tantra

There is no distinction between caste or color. This Sádhaná is for the expansion of mind.

The fundamental branches of Tantra Sádhaná:

The Painçamakára Practices

In Tantra Sádhaná there are traditionally two branches: a crude and a subtle. For the less advanced Sádhaka, in whose mind there is still a strong attachment to certain crude enjoyments and whose behaviour is still influenced by animalistic instincts, there is the provision of the crude form of Painçamakára of Sádhaná. These are practices that help the struggling Sádhaka to gradually withdraw the mind from its attachment to crude habits²⁰ without repressing their mental tendencies. This is done by regulated indulgence combined with efforts to channelize the cruder mental tendency towards a subtler expression. The need for the cruder practices of Painçamakára is to prevent the psychological pitfalls associated with repression. Mental repression, rather than making the mind subtler, creates an increase in Pravrttimukhii²¹ that only further crudifies the mind. For those Sádhakas with subtle feelings, who are already spiritually developed to some degree and whose minds are relatively pure, there is the provision of the subtle Painçamakára Sádhaná or Yoga Márga, which leads on along the path or righteousness towards liberation or Nivrttimukhii.

The five Sádhaná practices of Painçamakára are Mámśa, Matsya, Mudrá, Maethuna and Madya²². The subtle Painçamakára are internal practices, and do

20 For example, eating meat, drinking alcohol, excessive sexual thinking, etc.

21 Pravrttimukhii refers to the extroverted tendency of the vrttis.

22 Literally Mámśa is meat, Matsya is fish, Maethuna is sexual intercourse and Madya is wine. The crude version of these practices involves using meat, fish, wine, or sex—their aim is to overcome the desire

not use any crude physical medium. Due the practice of crude Painçamakára by those without proper guidance or spiritual intent, the cruder practices became distorted and misunderstood. However, inner meaning of the subtle Painçamakára, the jewels of Tantra, are described below.

Madya Sádhaná

*Somadhára kšared yástu Brahmarandhrát varánane;
Piitvánandamayastvaṁ sa eva madya Sádhakah.*

The subtle practice of Madya Sádhaná has nothing to do with taking intoxicants. Rather the Yogii feels intoxicated by the spiritual bliss which is due to the secretion of hormones in the Sahasrara Cakra (i.e. melatonin secreted by the pineal gland); this only results from the resolute practice of Yogic meditation, and never by ingesting any foreign substance into the body. Such a Sádhaka is called “Madya Sádhaka”. Every gland secretes hormones that invariably effect the state of mind of a Sádhaka, but the pineal gland secretes the “divine nectar” which makes an aspirant feel as though he is floating in an ocean of divine bliss. This feeling is only available to spiritual aspirants who, through their Sádhaná, have made their mind to merge in the continuous flow of cosmic ideation (Bháva) of Madya Sádhaná, it is said:

*Yaduktaṁ Parama Brahma nirvikáraṁ niraiñjanam;
Tasmin pramadanañijnánam tanmadyaṁ parikiirtitam*

“The intense love for Nirvikára Niraiñjana Parama Brahma leads to the annihilation of thought, intellect and ego, and appears as an intoxication which may be termed a Madya Sádhaná.”²³

Máṁsa Sádhaná

*Má shabdádrasaná jiñeya tadaṁsán rasaná priye;
Yastad bhakśayennityam sa eva máṁsa Sádhakah.*

The tongue is “Má” in Saṁskṛta and the words which are spoken by the tongue are called Máṁsa. The subtler meaning of Máṁsa Sádhaná

for such items so that the Sádhaka can forgo them. Crude Mudrá Sádhaná involves food in general and aims to help one control one's diet.

23 The translation of this shloka is taken from the discourse Tantra and Sádhaná, from the book Discourses on Tantra, volume 2, by Shrii Shrii Ānandamúrtijii.

has nothing to do with meat, rather it is the disciplined regulation and sagacious use of one's speech. But the true spirit of Mámśa Sádhaná is even more subtle,

*“Evam máńsanotiti yatkarma tanmáńśa
parikirtitam na ca káya pratiivántu yogiimasimucyate.”*

“One who surrenders all actions to God, be it Pápa or Puńya, good or evil, and even surrenders the fruits of one's Sádhaná, is termed a Mámśa Sádhaka.”

Matsya Sádhaná

*Gaungá Yamunayormadhye matsyao dvaõ caratah sadá
Tao matsyao bhakśayet yastu sah bhavenmatsyaSádhakah.*

The meaning of Matsya Sádhaná is to use Práńáyama to suspend the physical and psychic energy flows. The Idá Náđ'ii is often symbolized by the Gaungá river, and the Piungalá Náđ'ii by the Yamuna river; the fish that swim through these rivers signify the flow through the right and left nostrils. The one who uses Púrńa Kumbhaka and Shúnya Kumbhaka²⁴ to suspend the flow of the Idá and Piungalá at the Trikuńi (and thereby stimulate the flow through the Suśumná) is called a Matsya Sádhaka. Bhagavána Sadáshiva has said:

*Matsamánásarvabhúte sukhaduhkhamidań deví
Iti yatsátvikam jñánam tanmatsyah parikiirtitah.*

Meaning that the Sádhaka who understands the pain and pleasure of all beings, and is therefore always engaged promoting the all-round welfare (i.e. physio-psycho-spiritual) of all, such highly-conscious Sádhakas are Matsya Sádhakas.

Mudrá Sádhaná

*Satsaungena bhavenmuktirasatsaungeśu bandhanam
Asatsaungamudrayam yat tan mudrá parikiirtitá.*

²⁴ That is Púrńa and Shúnya kumbhaka are techniques used during Práńáyama; Púrńa Kumbhaka is to hold the inhalation and Shúnya Kumbhaka is to hold the exhalation.

Bad company leads to bondage, while spiritual company inspires one's movement towards liberation. One should always bear this in mind while moving along the spiritual path. The shunning of bad company and keeping only the company of saintly people is called *Mudrá Sádhaná*²⁵.

Maethuna Sádhaná

Perhaps the most often misunderstood of the *Paiñcamakára* is *Maethuna*²⁶ *Sádhaná*. The crude form of *Maethuna*, if practiced with pure intentions, can help to sublimate our primal reproductive urge; however, the same can be accomplished through purity of mind and leading a carefully regulated life, without the need for esoteric practices. The subtle meaning of *Maethuna*, however, is the heart of the spiritual path as it involves the union of *Shakti* with *Shiva*.

*Kulakuñḍalinii shaktirdehinám dehadháriṇii;
Tayá Shivasya saṁyogah maethunaṁ parikiirtitaṁ.*

The divine power of *Kulakuñḍalinii*, resides in *Kula*²⁷ at the *Múládhára Cakra*; the *Sahasrára Cakra* is the seat of *Paramashiva*. *Maethuna Sádhaná* is to elevate the *Kuñḍalinii* from *Múládhára* to *Sahasrára*, and thereby merge one's identity with *Shiva* and attain divine bliss.

Fundamentally, *Tantra* is based on *Sádhaná*, it is an internal endeavour without any external ritual or formalities. Whatever external practices one may adapt are preparatory. Through this subtle *Tántrika Sádhaná* one gets control over one's behaviour and food consumption, one's body is purified, one's mind sanctified, and one's awareness is elevated from the physical to the psychic, then from the psychic to the spiritual.

There are the three categories of Sádhaná in Tantra:

1. *Pravrtti* (extrovertial)
2. *Nivrtti* (introversive)
3. *Mishra* (Mixed)

²⁵ Elsewhere it is writing that it is best for a *Sádhanaka* to live alone, but if one's duty to society compels one to do otherwise, or if one feels the need of company, then one should only keep the company of other *Sádhanakas*.

²⁶ The crude form of *Maethuna Sádhaná* is the practice of sexual *Tantra*, which became so prevalent (due to the over-sexualisation of modern culture) that most people today associate the word "*Tantra*" to mean only "spiritual sex".

²⁷ *Kula* is the last bone of the spine.

The Pravrtti Sádha practises Avidyá Sádhaná in order to gain control over crude matter and attain certain occult powers. This may impress some, but it is detrimental to the practitioner. The Avidyá Sádha's extroversive focus causes his mind to become cruder and cruder, eventually becoming so degraded that all his powers are lost. The Nivrtti Sádha practices Vidyá Sádhaná in order to sublimate all the tendencies of the mind, gradually channelizing them in a psycho-spiritual movement towards the Supreme Entity. Through devotion, practice, tapah and purity, the Sádha's ideation on Brahma will gradually become one-pointed leading to the attainment of Mantra Siddhi²⁸, from that point the highest spiritual goal may be attained. Mishra Sádhas (a.k.a. Pravrtti-Nivrtti Sádhas) are neither focused on occult powers, nor on spiritual elevation; they simply waste their precious time, neither progressing nor regressing. Theirs is spiritual practice in name only, but actually it does not lead anywhere. It is a form of sub-practice (Upa-vidyá).

History of Tantra Sádhaná

Bhagavána Sadáshiva first propounded Tantra Sádhaná in ancient times, thereafter the chain of teaching moved forward unbroken, until the age of Bhagavána Shrii Krśna where it received fresh inspiration with an increased emphasis on devotion. From Shiva to Krśna, the spirit of Tantra remained pure. However, after the Buddhistá period its form began changing due to the influence the various beliefs and concepts that arose in Indian culture during the Buddhist era. Buddhist thought began impacting pure Tantra during the early Maháyána period; it was at that time that those minority of Buddhists who had ardent desire for Sádhaná practice (but who were too attached to the cannon of Buddhist teachings to embrace the path of Yoga) embraced and assimilated the practical science of Tantra, which is the essential spiritual jewel of Inida. Thereafter, the Tantric cult passed through Mantráyána, Vajráyána, Sahajyána, and Kálacakráyána periods of Buddhist influence. Ultimately it was merged into Buddhism, and in this way the Tantra of Sadáshiva was metamorphosed into Buddhist Tantra²⁹. Their most sincere

28 Mantra Siddhi means the perfection of the Mantra, i.e. the Sádha is able to make his mind take on the form according to the meaning and ideation of the Mantra. If the Mantra is to ideate on Brahma then for the mind will take on the form according to the meaning of the Mantra it must merge into Brahma.

29 Buddhist Tantra was a part of Buddhism, but much of Buddhism was not at all Tántrika. Many practices where are not condoned in Tantra (e.g. idol worship, burning incense, external rituals, prayer, etc.) are prevalent in Buddhism.

practitioners were called Siddhácáryas or simply Siddhas; they were monists and called their cult Dvaetádvaeta Vilakśańá³⁰.

*Dvaetamvádvaetam rúpam dvaeyata uta param yogiınam
Shaun̄karam vá.*

— Náthasutra

They recognized that matter and spirit were essentially the same; spirit has simply undergone a circumstantial change to become matter. To put it another way, matter is a metamorphosed form of pure spirit which has been given various qualities so as to appear as crude. Hence there is no fundamental difference between one's Siddha Deha and Átmasvarúpa³¹. This perceived difference can be removed through the intuitional insight brought about by the intense practice of Yoga.

There are two well-known Shlokas with very similar meanings:

Yoga márgát paro márgo násti násti Shrutao Smrtao.

— Ádinátha

Yoga Shástram' padennityam' kimanyaeh shástra vistaraeh

— Viveka Mártańđa

Endlessly studying the Shástras will never lead to welfare, neither for oneself nor for others. If one's knowledge of the spiritual science was primarily acquired from books, then attempting to teach this knowledge to others is a hopeless endeavour; it is a case of a blind teacher leading blind students towards an unknown destination. One needs to attain the Parama Guru, diligently follow His guidance along the path of Sádhaná and thereby achieve the non-qualified state. Until the Guru places the Sádhaika firmly on the path of benevolence, the Sádhaika is like a piece of straw floating in the turbulent waters of the mind, getting spun this way and that,

30 Vilakśańá is that which is neither Bhoktá nor Bhogyá. Bhoktá is the perceiver, and in its most subtle sense implies the witnessing counterpart of the unit mind. Bhogyá is that which must be undergone, must be perceived by the witnessing counterpart. And that conscious entity which is beyond Bhoktá and Bhogyá is called Vilakśańá.

31 Svarúpa literally means "own form" or "self-existence". Deha means "body" (refers to the Kośa) and Siddha means "perfect". So there is no difference between the true form of one's Átmá and the state that is beyond the Kośas.

rising and falling according to the whims of the tides. By the Grace of the Guru one can gain composure and abide in the calmness of the Self. One attains Samyak-Jiñána, the true knowledge, rather than the false intellectual knowledge gained from books.

There are four stages of this Siddhi.

The first is called Sahajávasthá. In this stage the Sádharma experiences God or the Infinite Consciousness in every being of creation. In the second stage, called Jiñánávasthá, all the Vrttis have been diverted from mundane expressions and channelized towards the Átman. This stage implies that the Sádharma has controlled his Vrttis, not by suppression, but through sublimation. The third stage is Upáyávasthá, the realization of Átman Svarupa, i.e. the true form of one's Soul. Finally, in Advyajiñánávasthá, the Yogii experiences the entire creation, including the Yogii's Átman, as an expression of the one Átman. In this final achievement, the Yogi has complete inner satisfaction due to the lack of any desire; s/he is permanently established in his or her Íśa and his or her life is full of transcendental feelings.

'Eka evam Caturthaya Maháyogobhidhiyate'

After long and continuous efforts, one day the Sádharma achieves establishment in the exalted qualities Viveka and Vaeragya,³² thereby opening his/her way to Paramapada³³. Hatha Yoga, of which there are 20 branches, is the initial practice whereby one gains entrance to Rája Yoga, i.e. actual Sádhaná practice; it is the constant practice of Rája Yoga that will slowly develop Viveka and Vaeragya. Once one's mind has been glorified with the sublime qualities of Viveka and Vaeragya then engrossing drama of the external world with all its tribulations is no longer an obstacle; one's mind remains engrossed in the movement towards one's Íśa no matter what happens in one's external life. Prior to the awakening of Viveka and Vaeragya the Tántrika path is difficult and one must constantly reaffirm

32 Viveka (discrimination) and Vaeragya (non-attachment) are the essential qualities of the Vijñánamaya Kośa. Viveka is itself a Vrtti in the Anáhata Cakra.

33 Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii explains Parama Pada in the discourse The Noumenal Progenitor from Subhásita Samgraha Part 24, "The Supreme Progenitor in His role as the witnessed objectivity has permitted the Supreme Operative Principle to create, to emanate, innumerable waves of innumerable lengths in His transcendental body. And the portion of this Progenitor that has attained the original status (known as the Parama Pada) is the Witnessing Entity when associated with creation; and also remains as a non-witnessing, non-attached, absolute Entity when He is in His original Deity, or in His supreme stance."

one's dedication due to the forceful distraction of external events. However, for the Sádha who is in possession of Viveka and Vaerágya, the path to Paramapada is broad and easily navigated.

Mantra Yoga is the actual path that leads to Yoga (i.e. unification); it is a mystical journey. Mysticism is the continual effort by the Sádha to discover and maintain a link with the Supreme Entity. This link is a personal connection, and to have a personal relationship with an infinite subtle entity implies that all the extroversial propensities have been channelized. An empowered Mantra is the ultimate mystical device, for ideation upon such a Mantra is the most effective way to maintain a relationship with the subtle Brahma. On the psycho-physical level, the unit being's life force flows in a rhythm according to Prána Váyu, and if this is coupled to the incantation of a mantra then the very rhythm that is maintaining one's psycho-physical existence is also maintaining one's connection with and movement towards the Supreme. Not that this will happen by itself; far from it. It takes a lifetime of practice to achieve the uninterrupted Japa of one's Íśa Mantra, however it is a practical process which any human being can use. By the Grace of Guru and one's sincere efforts to practice, one achieves Mantra Siddha³⁴. Thereafter, when the breath has been continuously linked to the incantation of the mantra, the Suśumná is opened and the Kuñďalini is drawn upwards like water through a tube well.

The Sádhaná system of Sahajias³⁵

Sahajias are a special school of Tantra that was prominent after the time of Krśńa, but before the advent of Lord Buddha. Their Sádhaná system is based Hařha Yoga. We will take some time to explore their philosophy and practice. To achieve their destination, Sahajias recommend three achievements for the aspirant and five 'Akáshpath'³⁶ (the ethereal way). The three achievements (Lakśya) are called:

34 Mantra Siddha, literally "perfection of the Mantra", implies that the ectoplasmic (i.e. mental substance) has been transformed in accordance to the actual inner meaning of the mantra. But "meaning of the Mantra" is not simply understanding the translation of the Mantra into common language; it implies the subtle realization of that ineffable entity to which the Mantra is pointing.

35 The period of the Sahajias extends from around 1000bc up till the time of Buddha. They were practicing Tantra in one form or another. It was not practiced in the same way as was taught by Shiiva and Krśńa, still it was Tantra. Some of their ideas and practices (as with any group) were misguided or dogmatic, but much of their practice was a sincere representation of the spirit of Tántrika Sádhaná. Given that they were without a Sadguru to guide them properly, they cannot be criticized for the imperfections of their knowledge; it is admirable that they were practicing as they were.

36 Ákashpatha means the mind travels through the ether.

1. Antar Lakśya (inner achievement)
2. Bahir Lakśya (outer achievement)
3. Madhya Lakśya (middle achievement)

Antar Lakśya is the rising of the Kuñḍalinii. This is the evolution of the Kuñḍalinii and, in their parlance, they say that they are travelling through the Kuñḍalinii. They say their realization is that of the ether. The first is blue, then yellow and then multi-coloured. When they enter the middle path, they have a vision of the sun, the moon, luminous lights and different states of ether³⁷. The visions of the Madhya Lakśya are internal. In the Bahir Lakśya, the Sádha visualizes the different layers of ether externally (i.e. outside himself with eyes open). For such a realization, the support of Táraka Brahma is imperative³⁸.

*Ákashantu mahákásham, parákásham, parátparam
Tattvakásham, suryakásham, ákashám, painca lakśańam*³⁹

The path of Tantra Sádhana is multifarious. For self-realization (Átmasthiti) the Sádha needs to make enormous efforts in every sphere of Sádhana: inner and outer; crude, subtler and subtlest; physical, psychic, spiritual and moral. The bindus must be both stabilized and purified, the Prána must be balanced, the mind controlled, the organs restrained, the body kept pure, limber and healthy, the Vrttis must be sublimated, etc. All these aspects of one's spiritual life are interdependent; should one neglect any of them, then the others will be affected immediately. Even a slight negligence in the prescribed practices, lifestyle regulations and ideological focus will have repercussions. However, the practices and lifestyle regulations are not ends in themselves, they are to enable the Sádha to maintain such a finely-tuned physico-psychic state so as to be able to properly ideate on Brahma.

As a result, the Sádha gradually achieves the monistic state (Advaetávasthá). On the Sádhaná path all aspects and practices are

37 Ether here does not mean what it means in Ánanda Marga Brahma Cakra philosophy. The ether referred to cannot be ether in actuality because ether does not carry the luminous factor. When they speak of ether, they are talking of subtle visions or mental projections resulting from spiritual elevation.

38 They have a concept of Táraka Brahma, but in their school it is not philosophically elucidated what is Táraka Brahma.

39 This Shloka is listing the indications (signs) that will occur in a Sádha as the Kuñḍalinii is rising. This is according to the Sahajias.

interconnected. It is similar to a machine in which all the individual parts must be in good condition, in the proper place and proper proportion; if any part is defective then the machine will not operate optimally. If one gives excessive emphasis to one portion of the path then the others become dormant to a certain degree. A conscious Sádhaka will make increased efforts to awaken any underdeveloped aspects so as to achieve balance (Pramá), thus enabling the Sádhaka's psycho-spiritual machine to function efficiently and carry him/her to his/her spiritual destination with the greatest possible speed. Balance must be maintained overall and also within every sub-aspect of Sádhana.

For example, Yama and Niyama must be maintained to practice Sádhana, therefore if one aspect of Yama is defective then it will affect all aspects of Yama and Niyama and also effect all other practices. Brahmacharya means to do work (or any activity, even something pleasurable) while simultaneously ideating on Brahma. Brahmacharya Sádhaná is one part of the machine called Yama; but Brahmacharya itself has many parts that must be exercised: the mind and bindus must be purified, the vital energy balanced, etc. If these are lacking then one will not have the stamina to focus on Brahma while engaged in worldly activities.

By perfecting the Kośas the spiritual aspirant will reach the spiritual goal. Annamaya⁴⁰ Kośa is purified by 'Sađcakra bhedana' (penetrating of the six Cakras)⁴¹. Kámamaya⁴² Kośa and Práña Váyu are purified by Bindu Sádhaná. Bindu Sádhaná purifies the body and the crude mind (Kámamaya Kośa), thereby preparing the mind and Práña for higher spiritual practices. Manomaya Kośa can be purified by certain mental practices. Atimánas Kośa is not given any attention in their system. The Vijiñánmaya Kośa is purified by Vicára and Viveka⁴³. Lastly, the Ánandamaya⁴⁴ Kośa is purified by Bhakti.

40 This is simply the physical body. Kośa means shell, layer or base, and so the body can be referred to as a Kośa in the sense that the body is the shell or shelter of the mind. However, it is a bit misleading because this is not a layer of the mind.

41 Sađcakra Bhedan is, in reality, a very advanced practice. Not at all limited to purifying the physical body, not could it be performed until the physical body was purified by some other practice. However, the Sahajitas did not have Sadguru, and therefore they were without Íśa Matra and could not perform the subtle practice of Tantra properly. But the practice which they called Sađcakra Bhedan they were using to purify the body.

42 This is sometimes referred to as Práñámaya kośa. Its seat is the Múládhára Cakra.

43 Vicára is rationality and Viveka is discriminating judgement. Through Vicára and Viveka, one is able to overcome the egoistic, sentimental and instinctual movements of the mind, and thereby to have a clear vision of Truth.

44 Sometimes referred to as Hirañyamaya Kośa. Its seat is the Vishuddha Cakra.

If the Bindu's are not prepared properly then the Sádharma will not get the full benefit of practicing Práñáyáma. The unsteadiness in Práña Váyu is removed only when Suśumná opens and the flow of energy is no longer restricted to the Idá and Piunḡlá. This purified vital force can then begin moving through Suśumná; only in such a condition will the Japa of mantra become automatic (without any effort). It is only after the physical impurities are removed that the mind can truly enter into the domain of Práña, enabling the continuous flow of the Mantra. Only when the flow of the mantra does not take any effort, that is, only when the Mantra is natural and not superimposed over other thoughts, can Práñáyáma be done effectively. Likewise, when the impurities of Práña are removed, then the functioning of Práña is able to activate the Vijiñánamaya Kośa (even in normal people the Práña is able to activate the Manomaya and Kámamaya Kośas, but until Práña is subtle it cannot activate the higher Kośas).

In such a state, the Práña naturally comes under control. The ensuing calmness and inspiration enables the mind to achieve purity step by step. In common parlance, one has achieved a balanced mind, undisturbed by the commotion of the mundane world. Having a balanced mind is rare indeed; the mind has two normal flows Saṁkalpa and Vikalpa⁴⁵, which are both present in all people, but of the two, Vikalpa is predominant in most people due to the unavoidable mental habits which have been acquired from past animal lives. Saṁkalpa also means determination, for the determination to move on the path of spirituality requires a very strong introversial mental force to fight against the extroversial attraction of the Vrttis and to transform one's Saṁskáras. Although Saṁkalpa (introversion) is preferable to Vikalpa, it is not ideal because neither can lead one to the spiritual goal (just as one can easily get lost in extroversial attractions, one can get wrapped up in one's introspective reverie). Beyond Saṁkalpa and Vikalpa is the composed flow of cognition, wherein the Vijiñánamaya Kośa becomes active.

By constant spiritual practice the Sádharma, having traversed the Kośas from Kámamaya through Hiranyamaya, arrives at the part of the journey called the 'Nivrtti' or God oriented path. The God oriented Sádharma has directed the flow of every vrtti towards his or her Íśa and has gone beyond Saṁkalpa (determination). Finally, the Sádharma has become a Sahaj (i.e.

45 Saṁkalpa and Vikalpa are the introversial and extroversial tendencies of the mind.

completely natural) Yogii; s/he is in the effortless state beyond Sañkalpa and Vikalpa. It is said:

Dhurlabha sahajavasthá sadguroh karuñá biná⁴⁶

There is a network of countless physical nerves and subtler Náđiis, the activity of which is related to the interplay of Vrttis and Práña, that can become blocked by phlegm and acid within the human psycho-physical system. The Suśumná is the actual path of Yoga (i.e. it is the path that the Jivashakti must traverse for union with Consciousness, which is the meaning of the word yoga). Pátanjali's Aśtāṅga Yoga, Tantra's Cakra-Bhedan, the Vivekapañcaka of Vedānta Philosophy, Buddhism's concept of Anupuvavihára, and also the science of Sahaja Yoga all come to the same essential point. The path of yoga (i.e. the Suśumná) remains blocked due to presence of phlegm and acid in the subtle channels (their presence in the various crude parts of the body, responsible for the maintenance of life, is a biological necessity and not bad) and so long as the subtle channels are blocked, spiritual ideation is a matter of intense psychic effort and Práñáyama is not effective.

*Shudhimeti yada sarvañ nadi cakram malakulam
Tadaeva Jayate yogii práña sañgrahañae kśamah*

— Gorakśapaddhati

"All these Náđiis and Cakras which are filled with dirt, when these are cleaned then the Yogii is able to preserve the vital force of the body to be used for psycho-spiritual upliftment."

In Yogavashiś'ha⁴⁷ it is recommended to practice Bahinvija Dhyán on Mañipura Cakra (i.e. meditation of the fire of the Mañipura Cakra) in order purify the Náđiis; this is done by breath retention (after Púraaka but before Recaka) while concentrated in the Agni Mandál. In Nakulish Yoga the nerves are purified by Púraaka, Kumbhaka, and Recaka.

*Tasmát nirodh sahitadhyánamaeva phal Sádhanam,
Vidhiyate etyaeva Vashiś'ha vakyarthah.*

⁴⁶ "the state of realization is extremely difficult (impossible) without the compassion of the Guru"

⁴⁷ This book was written just at the culmination of the Vaedika age, when the Science of Tantra was taking shape. The author (also called Yogavashiś'ha) was a scholar of Vaedika texts, but was practicing Tántrika Yoga.

The main indications of purified nerves are a light feeling (often accompanied by a slimming of the body), a glaze on the skin, improved appetite, freedom from worry and distress, and, ultimately, the coveted ability to hear Omkára. There are innumerable nerves and Nádiis within the body, around 72 thousand (although opinions differ from one text to another). Although many of them hold importance within various schools of medicine, fourteen of them have a special significance in the spiritual science. Naturally, the Piunglá, Idá, and Sušumná, which are respectively responsible for the physical, psychic and spiritual energy flows, are of primary importance. In addition to these, the Sahajiiis accept fourteen nadiis as sacred for their spiritual science (this is something unique to their teachings): Sarasvatii, Gándhárii, Hastijihvá, Kuhú, Ashvini, Payasvini, Váruñii, Vishvodarii, Yashasvini, Puspá and Alambusá⁴⁸.

*Práñáyámaeva sarve prashusyanti malaeti,
Ácárayañám' tu keśá miyadanyát Karma na Sammatam.*

At first the Váyu is unsteady, we try to control the inhalation and exhalation, and after years of practice it becomes straight and calm and easy; and then it starts to move through Sušumná.

The 10 Váyus or vital airs flow through the body and mediate all sorts of activity. The Váyus are composed of Váyutattva⁴⁹, which is crude matter, they circulate through the body via the nadiis and are controlled by the Anáhata. Continued persistent Sádhaná for many years leads to Abhyása⁵⁰ and Vaerágya; the purification of the Váyus leads to the attainment of mental balance (Pramá). This harmonious and peaceful condition is called Prána Shuddhi or Váyu Shuddhi. It is not simply a feeling of relaxation, it implies that one's spiritual composure is unshakable. Once the impurities are removed, the flow of Prána Váyu becomes straightened and it starts moving through the Sušumn (when it is agitated or the waves of Prána are unsteady, then it must flow through Idá and Piunglá, because they are curved but Sušumná is straight). In this state, Prána Váyu is subtle and with

48 Shaunkhini is the passage (Nád'ii) and Ashvini is the nerve, associated with the anus. Vajráñii is the passage and Kuhu is the nerve for the urinary organ. Shukra Nád'ii is the passage and Aopasthya is the nerve for genitary organ.

49 Váyutattva is aerial factor, one of the five fundamental physical factors of which the physical universe is composed.

50 Abhyása is defined in Subhásita Samgraha Part 8 as follows, "A spiritual aspirant who wants to attain Samádhi needs to develop Vaerágya (spirit of renunciation) and Abhyása (continued practice)... What is Abhyása? Tatra Sthitao Yatnobhyásah. Abhyása is the creation of a particular continuous psychic vibration."

continued practice it becomes subtler and subtler. Eventually it starts to flow through Brahma Nádī⁵¹.

Normally it takes a long time and much practice for the Váyus to straighten. The straightening of the Váyus implies a progressive transformation of their form from crude to subtle, as the material is gradually transformed into spirit.

According to the spiritual writings of the Sahajias, the Múládhára is situated in the Brahma Granthi⁵², Svádhiś'hána is at the Vishnú Granthi and Mañipura is at the Rudra Granthi; they said that the Anáhata and Vishuddha Cakras are Nirgranthi (Granthi free)⁵³.

Though the journey starts at Múládhára Cakra, it is the Mañipura Cakra which provides the main foundation, for it is here that the fire of the Sádha's power is expressed⁵⁴. Hence, while the Sádha is at the first or second level, the Mañipura carries primary importance. With the opening of the Rudra Granthi, the Sádha enters the realm of the Anáhata and Vishuddha, but the influence of the Mañipura remains paramount because it empowers the higher Cakras. Hence even as a Sádha progresses to higher realms, s/he must always take care of the third cakra through proper practices and lifestyle habits. The meeting point of Shiva and Shakti, the culmination of the Sádha's profound journey, is at the Sahasrára.

51 Within the Suśumná there is a smaller and subtler channel called Citráñii, within which lies a still smaller and subtler channel known as Brahmañii (aka Brahma Nádī).

52 Granthi is the Sañskṛta word for "knot", and is used to refer to major glands or plexi. The Rudra Granthi, Viśnú Granthi and Brahma Granthi refer to an entire plexus, but sometimes Granthi refers to a specific gland which predominates a plexus. The pituitary gland is called Maháyoginii Granthi; and the pineal gland is called the Sahasrára Granthi. Granthi can also refer to the blockage of the blockage of the Suśumná channel at a certain Cakra, which the Sádha must work through by bringing the glands of that plexus in to harmony.

According to Ánanda Marga philosophy (bio-psychology) the Mañipura is situated at the Rudra Granthi, Anáhata is at the Viśnú Granthi and the Ájñá Cakra is at the Brahma Granthi. The Vishuddha Cakra is situated in the Kúrma Nádī (i.e., the sinusoid nerve, which is located in the throat), the Brhaspati Granthi (i.e. the thyroid gland, the parathyroid is known as Brhaspati Upagranthi) is also there.

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54 There is an interesting bio-psychological parallel here. Human life involves the psychological journey of a developing mind through the Cakras. The mind at the second Cakra is simply attempting to establish itself and needs, more than anything, a nurturing environment. It is at the 3rd Cakra where the mind feels itself as an independent entity capable of utilizing its human capacities and will-force in conjunction with the energy provided from the Mañipura to make efforts to achieve its chosen goals. Likewise, on the spiritual journey, it is at the Mañipura where the Sádha must focus his or her energy (by adhering to an ideology) to move forward along the chosen path.

Vaesh̄nava S̄adhana

In Vaesh̄navism the Bh̄gavata Pur̄āna⁵⁵ is the most significant Pur̄āna, mainly due to tradition (the Bh̄gavata Pur̄āna tells of the Avat̄aras of Viś̄nu) but also because of its emphasis on Bhakti and monism. The Viś̄nu Pur̄āna, Mahābharata, Rāmāyaṇa, Paiṅcarātra Sam̄hitās, Vedas and Upaniśadas⁵⁶ are other important texts held dear by the followers of the Vaesh̄nava⁵⁷ cult. The Vaesh̄nava cult gradually formed into four different Sampradāyas⁵⁸, each epitomized by (and named after) a Vaedika Deity and associated with the founder of the Sampradāya.

1. Srii Sampradāya is attributed to Nāthamuni in the 10th century. It gained prominence due to the teachings of Rāmānuja in the 11th century, which focused on Vish̄iśtādvaeta (qualified non-dualism). Srii refers to Lakśmii.
2. Ham̄sa Sampradāya or Kumāra Sampradāya was founded by Sankādi. Its philosophy of Dvaita-Advaita was propagated and elucidated by Nimbārkācārya during the 12th century. This was an extension of Rāmānuja's philosophy and of all the four major philosophies in Vaesh̄navism it is the most philosophically sound.
3. Brahma Sampradāya was founded by Mādhavācārya during the 13th century. Its philosophy was Dvaetavāda (dualism). Mādhva called his philosophy Tattvavāda (realism) and it was in direct opposition to the teachings of Rāmānuja and Nimbārka.
4. Rudra Sampradāya (Rudra refers to Shiva) was founded by the ascetic Viś̄nusvami in south India in the 13th century. It gained in popularity due to the teachings of Vallabhācārya in the 15th century (a contemporary of Caentanya Mahāprabhu). The name of his philosophy is Shuddha-advaita (pure non-dualism); it differs from Shaṅkarācārya's Advaita in that it does not deny that the individual is a part of Brahma.

55 The Pur̄ānas are a vast body of Indian literature covering a wide range of topics, written mostly in Saṁskṛta but also in various local languages. Pur̄āna means "ancient" or "history". There are 18 Mahā Pur̄ānas and of these the most studied is the Bh̄gavata Pur̄āna.

56 They consider Kr̄ṣṇa, Rāma and Nārāyaṇa to be Avat̄aras of Lord Viś̄nu, hence the Bh̄gavata Gītā, Rāmāyaṇa and Paiṅcarātra Sam̄hitās (which depicts Viś̄nu as Narayana). In addition to the principal Upaniśadas, Vaesh̄nava followers also wrote 14 Upaniśadas that focus on specific Avat̄aras of Viś̄nu, which are called the Vaesh̄nava Upaniśads.

57 Also called Viś̄nuism because its religious followers worship Lord Viś̄nu in the form of 10 Avat̄aras. Of course, those true Vaesh̄navas who follow the Tāntrika path have no use for such a belief system, as religions arise where spirituality is lacking.

58 Sampradāya means school, lineage, spiritual tradition.

Although they have some significant and irreconcilable differences in philosophy and beliefs, they share the common Vaeśnáva root: Bhakti. In the end, all the schools must take recourse to Bhakti (even though, in some cases, Bhakti is contrary to their philosophical principals) because Bhakti is the essence of the Viśnú cult.

System of Meditation (Sáadhaná Paddhati) of Shrii Sampradáya

Nididhyásana⁵⁹ Yoga is the Sáadhaná Paddhati⁶⁰ of Srii Sampradáya. Achieving one-pointed and continuous contemplation of the Supreme is the essence of Bhakti and jñána. Without some basic knowledge, what shall one contemplate? So, acquiring some basic Jñána is the first step towards Bhakti, thereafter one needs to do Karma, but one must not devote oneself to Jñána or Karma; they are just a means to achieve Bhakti. Without the effortless focus and zeal that arises from Love (Bhakti), the mind will constantly be attracted to worldly objects and so one's contemplation will be neither one-pointed nor continuous. The main defect with focusing on Jñána and Karma is that with Jñána and Karma the mind does not feel an innate attraction for the Supreme, and so one's ideation of Brahma will be sporadic. True Nididhyásana is not an activity but is a state of being which can only be achieved when one is established in Dhruvámrti⁶¹. Constant remembrance and contemplation is the gateway to Mokśa; all the practices of Yoga are focused on the development of Bhakti leading to Dhruvámrti which results in Nididhyásana.

The physical body is created according to Saṁskáras—that is to say, we get the body, which is the most suitable for us to express our Saṁskáras (Prakṛti will guide the disembodied mind into the most suitable body amongst those which exist). Once the Jiiva has taken birth in human form, they grow in a cultural environment; the growing babe will develop up to a certain level according to the historical, socio-cultural environment. As the child grows into adolescence, s/he achieves mental independence and begins to guide his or her own life. At this point the individual will-power

59 Nididhyásana (contemplation) is the focusing of the mind on one object. In Mantra Caetanya (from Subhásita Saṁgraha Part 10), it is written "This offer of one's mind to the Lord is Nididhyásana. The inner sense of Nididhyásana is that all the propensities of the mind are to be concentrated at a point to be offered to Parama Puruśa."

60 Paddhati can mean approach, procedure, system, method; it can also mean "guidebook"

61 Dhruvámrti means continuous memory. It implies that one remembers the Supreme as an unbroken mental flow. This continues even while one is asleep.

begins to supersede Saṁskáras as the prominent developmental factor. From here the Shrutis and Smrtis⁶², the teachings and examples of great people, offer support to the benevolent minded individual who rightly perceives that life is precious and should be lived in pursuit of a high ideal. Upbringing, society, Saṁskáras, etc. are all the play of Vidyámáyá upon the awakening human mind and, more importantly, they are a reflection of the past and so they cannot be altered. However, when guided by the ideals of the Shrutis and Smrtis, and the examples of the Rśis, the Jiiva can surmount all the hurdles that exist on the spiritual path. This ability to surmount hurdles is truly the Grace of the Lord; He provides us with the capacity and strength as well as the well-spring of inspiration (knowingly or unknowingly all people feel the touch of Ánanda inside and can make efforts because it fills us with an unconscious faith that our lives are deeply meaningful).

Truly, Dhruvásmrti is Bhakti and Bhakti is Dhruvásmrti; when it arises, one can come out of the bondage of the world and be one with Brahma.

Rámánuja's school and the Methods of Bhakti

In his school, the methods of devotion are Viveka, Vibhoka, Abhyása, Kriyá, Kalyáña, Anavasáda and Anuddharśa. Viveka Bhakti⁶³ is when you purify your food, eating only what is beneficial and necessary and rejection the unessential and harmful. Vibhok is when the Sádha is not attached to sensual pleasures. Abhyása is dutifulness. Kriyá Bhakti is the performance Yajña, which are special efforts to please God. Kalyáña Bhakti is simplicity, truthfulness and compassion. Anavasáda implies a state of concentrated Citta, which has been withdrawn and pushed towards one's Íś'a . There are different stages of Anavasáda depending on the object of concentration. Anuddharśa is lack of excessive sexual feeling; sex is an expression, and when one is attracted to it then it brings up animal feelings and mental degeneration.

In the Rámánuja school (Shrii Sampradáya), the above methods of Bhakti are accepted as Citta Shuddhi⁶⁴ and according to their teachings this will lead to the awakening of Brahmajñána. When the Citta becomes pure

62 Spiritual scripture and social codes.

63 Discrimination in matters of food.

64 Citta Shuddhi is to withdraw the mind from its internal psychic projections.

(by following the above methods of Bhakti), and this arises devotion and the knowledge of Brahma is awakened. As a result of this devotion they hope to get Mokśa. But as per this school's philosophy, the relation between Jiiva and Shiiva is eternal, however if this relation is eternal, then who gets Mokśa? The devotee is fully dependent on God, God is the final abode, and devotion is the pure expression of this feeling of dependence and pursuit of God as the goal of one's movements.

The desired goal is moksha. As per the Vishishtādvaita school the unit and the cosmic are both eternal and their relation is also eternal. This causes a philosophical inconsistency because if both are eternal who gets salvation? Their object is the endeavour for Satya, Bhagavāna is their ultimate shelter and Bhakti is the means; the full expression of the feeling of Bhakti is Mokśa (salvation).

Mahāprayāñ of Vishishtādvaitavādii⁶⁵

According to this school, the Ātmā of a Mumúrsā Bhakta⁶⁶ travels through the Suśumnā and rises to the crown Cakra. The Ātma then exits the body through the Brahmarandhra (top of the head). After leaving the body, the ātma, together with the subtle mind, travels along the path called Arch and achieves the state of Devayānagati. The Ātmā passing through the solar system, crosses all the obstacles of nature (Prakṛti) and if any subtle Sañskāras remain attached with the causal mind, these are exhausted so that the ātmā is now completely free from Sañskāras. Finally, the Ātmā achieves Virajā [transcendental state]

This is the state of Vishuddha Sattva [absolute purity]. Here they come face to face with the Supreme. Bhagavāna accepts the liberated Bhakta with his piercing yet loving eyes. The developed Ātman of the Bhakta becomes sevak Bhava [servant of God]. The Bhakta sees the beautiful form of God with his Sapalaka Nayana (unblinking eyes), and Bhagavāna attracts the devoted soul with His Cosmic Eyes. Finally, with a smile and eternal embrace, Bhagavāna removes all the conflicts and the Bhakti is submerged into the ocean of eternal bliss.

⁶⁵ This is a follower of Ramānuja's school of Tantra. This is the discussion of what happens, according to their philosophy, to the soul (Ātmā) at the time of liberation (Mahāprayāña).

⁶⁶ This is one who has an intense desire for liberation and who has overcome their Sañskāras.

Hans Sampradáya—its philosophy and meditation:

There are three states of Átmán according to this theory: Baddha, Mukta and Nitya⁶⁷. In the first stage, that is the Baddha stage, due to the influence of Prakrti, the Átmá is dominated by the Ávidyá force, Karma, Vásaná [attraction for world objects], and Ruci [the effort to get worldly objects]. According to Hans Sampradáya, in the first stage of Baddhávasthá, Jiiva, Brahma and Ishvara are one and the same. This raises some unresolved questions about what a bondage is. The second stage is Muktvávasthá, here Átmá remains self-illuminated. In the second stage, there is also no difference between Jiiva and Ishvara, and hence this is also called Vedábhedha. Which means the stance of Jiiva is the same in the Baddha and the Mukta stages. They recognize that only Ishvara is omnipotent, but then claim that there is no difference between Jiiva and Ishvara, neither in the Muktvávasthá nor in the Baddhávasthá. This was an unresolved incongruity in their philosophy. In first state, they say there is “a ray of knowledge” that illuminates the Jiiva, but in Muktvávasthá the Átmá is described as “self-illuminated”. Furthermore, if there is not any difference in both of those stages, then logically they are the same stage which means that the stage of bondage does not really exist. This is also called Bhedáveda⁶⁸.

Nididhyásana⁶⁹ is the Sádhaná system of Hanís Sampradáya this is also called Jiñána-Bhakti. In Hanís Sampradáya school, Bhakti is not a feeling, it is a special type of knowledge and Dhyána is Dhruvásthiti, i.e. meditation is the direct means of salvation.

Brahma Sampradáya:

Moksa is achieved by the grace of God (Parameshvara) and is Bhágavat Darshan (a direct meeting with the Supreme). Bhágavat realisation is possible only through Grace. At this point, there is an unbroken flow of love, as a result of which the worldly feelings and all the memories of worldly life are submerged into the flow of Bliss. This is the state of Parama Bhakti. Mind gets free from Avidyá and turns away from the worldly objects. This is not possible by any other method, only through Bhakti. All

67 Respectively: under bondage, liberated, eternal

68 This means there is difference but there is no difference. This is a contradiction which is unaddressed in their philosophy.

69 See the last section of this chapter for an explanation of the spirit of Nididhyásana.

of one's Prárabdha Karma⁷⁰, all of one's Sañskáras and desires get burnt in the flames of this flow of love. As a result, the spiritual aspirant becomes fit for liberation, step by step. As the aspirant moves closer and has less Sañskáras, the love becomes more intense. According to this school, Mukti is of four kinds:

1. Karmakśaya
2. Utkránti Laya
3. Arcih
4. Ádimárga Bhoga

Karmakśaya is to overcome acquired sin (negative Sañskáras) either by undergoing reactions, performing pious actions (tapah) or attaining "Aparokśa Jiñána" (direct knowledge). Prárabdha Karma is not destroyed even by direct knowledge, it gets finished only by Bhoga (experience). Even the Devatás must undergo Prárabdha Karma Bhoga. Once all of one's Prárabdha Karma has been destroyed, one enters the next stage, Utkránti Laya⁷¹, which means the Kuñd'alinii rising through the Brahmáñád'ii. Utkránti Laya is the Suśumná Path, and it causes the Anáhata (Hrdaya) to get illuminated with the effulgence of Viśnú.

This is Brahmadvára, through which the Sád'haka (who is following Bhágavána) gradually achieves Vaekuñt'ha Loka⁷², and enters into the subsequent stages of Arch and Ádimárga. Through Arcih and Ádimárga Bhoga⁷³ the Sád'haka ultimately enters into the desired BrahmaloKa. Through Aparokśa Jiñána (direct knowledge) one will never be able to get to this state in one single life. After leaving the present body, one will have to take birth again on some planet like Earth, in order to get Paramatmá Bhoga.

This philosophy divides people into two categories. First are the Sád'hakas who are worthy of liberation, i.e. those who have exhausted their Sañskáras, who will get into the Vaekuñt'ha Loka. Second are the worldly people who will remain moving in Bhuloka, subject to the turmoils of

70 This means "Sañskára that is being expressed" (so it is not a potential reaction anymore, it is a reaction in expression).

71 Means "travelling up through Suśumná"

72 i.e. heaven. This is also called Satyaloka.

73 Arcih and Ádimárga are the two stages immediately prior to the achievement of Brahma Loka. i.e. they are the two states prior to the Kuñd'alinii's merger into Sahasrára Cakra.

pleasure and pain, of heaven and hell. In their Shastras, this latter category is called “Nityabaddha” (eternally under bondage).

The Sádhakas who have reached up to the Svara Loka, through Jiñána mixed with Karma, still have every possibility of falling down. To go higher than Svaraloka, jiñána and Karma are not sufficient, one must take shelter in Bhakti. In the liberated stage, although happiness and sorrow are still experienced, there is no virtually no danger of falling or of creating Saṁskára. The Sádhaka who has reached to Maharloka has almost no chance to fall. When one has reached Janarloka there is no longer any chance of degeneration or falling from the spiritual stance, but the Sádhaka may yet have to take rebirth. The possibility of rebirth is only completely eliminated when the Sádhaka, through Brahmanád’ii and Arch, achieves Taparloka and then there is shall be no return (unless the Sádhaka wills it to be so). After Taparloka the Sádhaka only continues to practice Nididhyásana (one pointed devotion) and keeps traveling along the Suśumná path until s/he passes through Brahmadvára⁷⁴ and arrives at Vaekuñtha Loka.

This process is the path of the Jiiva taking bath in Virajá (divine ocean of love). Uniting with Brahma and getting Salvation, the Sádhaka discards unit body (Liṅga-deha) and enters “Bhágavat Dharma”⁷⁵. The Jiiva is getting Ánanda step by step: Sálókya, Sámiiṭpya, Sárúpya, etc.⁷⁶ Vaekuñtha or Bhágavát Dharma are the final, transcendental and eternal object. Paramatmá Himself dwells in Vaekuñtha.

Rudra Sampradáya

The Márga shown by Vallabhácárya is called the “Puśtí Márga”. Puśtí means Grace. The devotion that can be achieved by one’s efforts to move along this path is ordinary Bhakti or Maryadá Bhakti. Then one needs the special Grace of God to raise one from a state of ordinary Bhakti to Puśt’i Bhakti. The only subject and the only object of this Puśt’i Bhakti is “Bhágavátprápti” (oneness with God). They say that this state is even higher than Mokśa.

74 Brahmadvára is the “gate” through which one enters Vaekuñtha Loka.

75 Literally, the abode of God. Another name for Vaekuñtha Loka

76 These are the stages of realization. See the discourse Stages of Samádhi, in Ánanda Vacanámrtam Part 23

Puṣṭi Bhakti is of four stages:

1. Pravah Puṣṭi Bhakti
2. Maryádá Puṣṭi Bhakti
3. Puṣṭi Puṣṭi Bhakti
4. Shuddha Puṣṭi Bhakti

Praváh Puṣṭi Bhakti:

There remains attraction towards Karmaruci and Mamatva⁷⁷, but the orientation of mind ever remains towards God. That is to say, there remains interest in action and attachment to the result, but the mind is oriented towards God. As such, in Praváh Puṣṭi Bhakti, one's Karma is also God oriented.

Maryádá Puṣṭi Bhakti:

In this Bhakti the aspirant is detached from the worldly attractions, attachments and from Karma. The mind, therefor, moves from Pravrtti oriented to Nivrtti oriented, i.e. from extroversive to introversive. He or she remains always engrossed in Bhágavata Kathá and develops a deep love for God.

Puṣṭi Puṣṭi Bhakti:

Such a Bhakti, by getting the Grace of God, feels the omniscience of God and so through God's omniscience is able to know everything. Nothing is hidden from them; they remain aware of all what is happening around them.

Shuddhá Puṣṭi Bhakti

This love dominated Bhakti, though very scarce, keeps devotee completely engrossed in listening to the name of God through Bhajana, Kiirtan, and repeating Iṣṭá Mantra. It appears as if this is their passion, but actually it is not passion, it is the intoxication of love. This achievement needs no effort, rather the transformation from Puṣṭi Puṣṭi to Shuddha Puṣṭi Bhakti is entirely dependent upon Grace.

⁷⁷ Enjoyment of doing work and attachment to worldly objects and to the results of one's work.

Methods of Mukti in Rudra Sampradáya

Bhakti originates from Mahátma Jñána (knowledge of the Great Soul) and is intensified by the love and affection the Sádha feel towards Paramátmá. God is realized by Bhakti, for without love for God there is no other method for God realization. Bhakti is the bridge to Mukti. Avidyá begets love for worldly objects and Vidyá slowly opens the door to Vaerágya. By constant remembrance of God, one develops love. This love is the real achievement. Only such God-loving Jiivas become fit to get liberated and achieve God-realization.

Ánanda Marga Sádhaná & its methodology

The spiritual journey starts with the principle and the practice of morality. Hence, the life philosophy of those who strive for their own elevation or the elevation of society can be summarized as “Morality is the base, Sádhaná the means and life divine is the goal.”⁷⁸ It took early humans 100's of thousands of years to realize this basic approach to life. The realization that a human being cannot be satisfied with anything limited is the initial step in the development of a spiritual ideology. But this simple truth was not easy to realize for primitive human beings, because they were overwhelmed with the simple struggle to survive and in such a situation the momentary respite that comes from the transitory attainment of warmth, satiated hunger, safety, etc., surely made it seem like the attainment of basic needs and comforts was all they needed to be happy. It was only after society developed sufficiently so as to allow people a bit of security that they were able to contemplate what they truly desired. Sadly, so soon as society developed further, a portion of the population had the opportunity for extravagance, power, fame, exploitation, and overindulgence; such people were quick to forget the fundamental truth that limited objects cannot satisfy their desire for joy. Due to their show of wealth and hedonistic pleasures, the common people were befooled into believing that financial prosperity could give one the means to purchase happiness⁷⁹, and so rather than looking inside, people learned to make efforts to achieve higher financial or social standing.

78 P.R. Sarkar, The Neo-humanism of Sadvipras, published in Neo-humanism in a Nutshell Part 1

79 Interestingly, when psychologists conduct surveys that rate people's "happiness", they find that increased wealth only leads to increased happiness up to the point where people have sufficient means to live a comfortable life without worrying about how to take care of their family's basic needs (food, shelter, medical care, and education). Beyond that, increased wealth seemed to lead to a decrease in the level of happiness. They hypothesize that this is because having too much wealth means people can indulge in material pursuits and become estranged from their introversion self.

All of humanities running after limited forms and transitory pleasures have always been due to our desire for the limitless entity. Therefor we have been looking for that entity right from the beginning; have been worshipping the same entity in various external and mundane forms. We have not known it, but that which we find charming in all the attractive external forms are but finite hints of the boundless One that is hidden within our hearts. The flowers fragrance, the peace of a sunset, the majesty of the sunrise, the quiet pleasure in a child's smile, the satisfaction of hard work, the flavour of our favourite ice-cream, these are meaningful to us because we desire the great Soul within. Although the subtler of these attractive entities may awaken in us a sense of the divine, none of them can satisfy our limitless thirst.

It would seem like our urge for the limitless is a curse, and indeed, if we selfishly desire finite happiness then our limitless thirst will cause us to exhaust our energy. However, this speciality of human nature is a great help for human kind; it caused us to discover the intuitional science and has been the constant impetus that has both allowed us move along the spiritual path and to continually make efforts to create a developed society. Initially, man was human in form only (i.e. physiologically); his psychology was animalistic, except for the fact that he had a latent thirst for the infinite. Due to this uniquely human desire for the sublime, the *rśis*, those prehistoric harbingers of humanity, began their search and due to this humanity was awakened. The *Vaedika Rśis* developed the early techniques of *Tantra*, and through practice and the ensuing psycho-spiritual expansion, these techniques were refined. The practice of *Dhyāna*, *Dhārañā*, *Āsanas*, *Mudrás*, *Prāñāyāma*, *Yama* and *Niyama* liberated them from staticity and established them in an advanced state. With time more advanced *Yogika* practices were developed and these opened the way for those inquisitive *Yogis* to develop occult powers (*Siddhis*); but with this knowledge came the potential for downfall for those whose focus was not on spiritual development.

With the development of modern society, people grow up in an environment of science and technology; they have an evolved intellect and the typical person of today has significantly greater mental capacity than the average aspirant of the past. This advancement has not been without its downside: there are paramount problems that humanity must face (environment degradation, the threat of destructive or even nuclear war, hunger and poverty, the loss of culture) and individuals also must cope with

excessive stress and mental problems. These downsides are the result of a development that has been one-sidedly focused on the material (and those aspects of the human psyche that are related to the material). People have become much better at the intellectual manipulation of ideas, but worse at looking deeply into reality with their intuitional mind. People of modern society need a more pragmatic philosophy and techniques that allow their rapid development. Of course, the essence must always remain the same: morality leading to intuitional practice which in turn awakens devotion and thereafter lead to Nididhyásana. In this age of science and technology we needed a newer, more methodical science of intuitional practice. Humanity was also in need of a way to balance intuitional practice with the modern dynamic lifestyle.

Ánanda Marga Sádhaná satisfies the age-old search of human beings but is completely adjusted with the modern lifestyle. Our Philosophy is complete, logical and pragmatic, therefore it is suitable for those with a rational and scientific outlook. Even while living in modern society, people can achieve the highest states of divinity in this very life; in fact, their modernity can be an asset to their spiritual growth (if properly channelized) because their minds are free from dogma, flexible and fast-moving there is the opportunity rapid spiritual development.

Sádhaná Paddhati of Ánanda Marga

Dharma Sádhaná is the means to fully develop human beings' trifarious potentialities. Of course, these potentialities must be developed in order to be successful on the path of Sádhaná; but they can and should also be utilized in the service of humanity. The root cause of the severe ailments in modern society is that these psycho-spiritual potentialities have not been developed in a sufficient number of people. It is these psycho-spiritual faculties which are lacking; society cannot function harmoniously if it is built solely upon humanities physical and intellectual faculties. In fact, once the psycho-spiritual potentialities have blossomed in a person, he or she will want to do service due to an expanded feeling of love for humanity. Hence, Dharma Sádhaná is also the means to develop a true human society, because it both develops that which society is lacking and compels those in whom these potentialities have blossomed to utilize them for welfare.

*Sarve bhavantu sukhinah sarve santu nirámayá*⁸⁰

80 Let everybody be happy and free from all physical and psychic ailments.

How can such a utopian idea every become manifest? The Sádhaná of Ānanda Mārga is a scientific process that is not only aimed at individual elevation, but also on social upliftment. It is based on science of shabda Brahma⁸¹ which was taught by Shiva and developed by the ancient Rśis. In fact, the creation is the prolific play of that singular shabda manifesting as a multitude of sounds. By making dedicated efforts in Mantra Sádhaná, one's vibrational Shabda gradually merges with Shabda Brahma.

Brahmavid Brahmaeva Bhavati

Knowing Brahma one becomes Brahma; one can only know Brahma by losing one's individual identity in the Supreme Entity. This is the true spirit of Mahávákya of Shrutis i.e. Tat Tvamasi, Ayamátmá Brahma, Aham Brahmásmi⁸².

Relationship between Saṁskáras and mind

The founder of Ānanda Mārga, Bhagaván Shrii Shrii Ānandamúrthi, has explained in his book on Yoga Psychology that mind is the storehouse of Saṁskáras. The potential for the Vrttis exit in the Citta⁸³, the Vrttis (mental movements) are stimulated due to Saṁskáras. Every mental expression must have a corresponding psycho-physiological state within the physical body and nervous system; hence for the vrttis to express they must trigger the endocrine glands, which in turn affect the nervous system. The nervous system activates the brain and then the man behaves according to his Saṁskáras. The Cakras act as sub-stations of the mind and regulate secretions from the subsidiary glands. Therefore, each Vrtti is associated with the Cakra, which regulates the appropriate glands for the expression of the Vrtti. As a result, the entire human being is vibrated due to the Saṁskára—his mind, Cakras, glands, nerves, motor and sensory organs⁸⁴. This vibration may be crude or subtle, but in either case it is an obstacle for those aspirants whose goal is to establish

81 Shabda means sound, the subtlest expression of the universe. As everything is a vibrational expression of the singular Brahma, everything has an acoustic aspect. Shabda Brahma is the use of Mantra to gradually transform ones entative vibration to be parallel with the curveless expression of Brahma.

82 Respectively, "You are That. This soul is Brahma. I am Brahma"

83 Actually speaking, the potential for the Vrttis already existed within the Cosmic Citta even during the Sañcara process before the advent of living beings. The expression of these Vrttis in unit minds is only the expression of a potential within the Cosmic Mind. It is likely that there are latent Vrttis within the Cosmic Mind which are unknown to us, their expression will only occur after further evolution of the human species.

84 This relationship works both ways. The sensory organs, upon seeing some object, stimulate the nervous system (which has its own habitual patterns and likings, because the nerve cells therein have their own minds), which in turn stimulates the Cakras, which arouse the Saṁskáras.

oneness with the vibration-less entity. To surmount this obstacle, it is an utter necessity for the aspirant to be conversant with the body-mind relations and the unique interaction of his or her individual Saṁskāras with the stimulus from the external world.

So, we see that the action of the mind is due to the Saṁskāras; in the absence of Saṁskāras there cannot be mind. If there were no Saṁskāras then the Vrttis would not awaken and they could not activate the glandular secretions. Generally, peoples' conception of the relation of mind, body and Vrttis is the opposite of this; that is to say, in their understanding they have the causal relationships reversed from actuality. It is not that the body leads to the glands lead to the mind, but that the Saṁskāras (the collection of which sustains the existence of mind) have a need to express themselves and due to this need the physical body becomes manifest. Verily the Saṁskāras and mind are the organizing agency behind the formation of the physical structure.

There are many details that are not explained here, for example the specific functioning of the glands and Cakras, the formation and exhaustion of Saṁskāras, etc. This was a just brief introduction to the new science of Yoga-psychology as explained by Shrii Shrii Ānandamūrti. His Sādhanā system is based on this science, and that is why this Sādhanā system is the scientific spiritual path that society has been in such dire need of.

In light of the science of Yoga-psychology, the age-old dictum to Know Thyself can be given a precise and systematic expression in scientific language. By using a pragmatic language, it becomes easy both to understand the spiritual path and to contextualize one's life and the obstacles one encounters into a rational philosophy. Putting one's life into such a context is the first step to Knowing Oneself. Thus, the practitioner of Ānanda Mārga Sādhanā is able to circumvent the confusion and doubt that often leave the aspirant so befuddled that they give up their practices. To "know thyself" is really to know the Supreme Brahma. Although this takes effort, if one will proceed systematically along the scientific path it is possible for even a novice on the spiritual path to reach the goal; but in the absence of a scientific approach, the path is so difficult that those who attempt it must have super-human resolve, often feel the need to leave behind the distractions of society, and frequently lose their way in a maze

of scriptural dogma. One's mind carries the Sañskáras and due to these one attains a specific body; one's body is the base, so must be carefully cared for, but at whatever moment one starts along the spiritual path, one must begin with the body and mind which was inherited from the actions one did in the past. In the ultimate analysis, one cannot change the body, mind, and Sañskáras which are the result of past actions, however one has control over the path which one choose and the sincerity with which one moves forward. Hence, one must not be sentimental about any religion nor wonderstruck by historical precedent, nor should one be to be attracted by colourful external shows nor seek safety by following the masses. In the poetic words of Kabir, "the true path is rarely found." One must follow the guidance of a true Guru and move rationally along a scientific path.

The mind carries the individual Sañskáras from one's past lives and the previous actions from this life; except for Sañskáras, the mind would have no interruption in its movement towards its goal. But a Sádha must carry the burden of Sañskáras, therefor, along the way, the aspirant's mind is bound to get tired and, at times, may stray from the path in search of some repose from the difficulties of a spiritual life. After some time, the Sádha, remorseful for lost time, returns to the path but now with the added burden of misspent actions. This coming and going is very common in a Sádha's spiritual life, but it will never lead to the goal.

The Sañskáras activate the Vrttis, which stimulate the glands that are collectively controlled by the Cakras. Feelings, hopes, fears, longings (both subtle and crude), aspirations, ego, etc. excite the various Cakras, leading to hormone secretions that affect the nervous system thereby activating the physical brain and filling the mind with thoughts. The man behaves accordingly. The Sádha is struggling against this, but when the mind is tired or when one does not know how to struggle properly, how can one continue to fight. This is why the proper path is necessary. One needs to know how to control the expression of Sañskáras, to keep the Vrttis within the ambit of the mind, the nervous system relaxed, the Cakras balanced, etc. and above all, to have a perennial feeling of progress and inspiration which will enable one to stay the course even when one feels tired. This is the working system of the mind, we can go in a bit more depth.

These Sañskáras keep the mind restlessly entangled in the world,

and should a person be without Saṁskāras then all the engagements of his or her mind would also finish. Saṁskāras are at the root of all actions, and they are of three types:

1. Inborn,
2. Acquired,
3. Imposed.

The Saṁskāras which were acquired during one's past human lives have been deposited, layer by layer, in the mind; these were the cause of one's rebirth in the present life. These are called inborn Saṁskāras.

One's Saṁskāras are formed into a bundle (Karmāshaya). Saṁskāras are created by original actions and lead to non-original actions (reactions) which we must undergo. However, the first stage of any action, be it an original action or a reactive action, is the will. Prior to the performance of any action, or the expression of a non-original action, the will must be converted into (take the form of) desire. Broadly speaking, there are two "wills" within us. Our direct-will (of which we have conscious control) is what is generally meant when we talk about will or will power. But we have another will, the indirect-will; the function of the indirect-will is to exhaust our Saṁskāras⁸⁵. The direct-will is unique to humans, but the indirect-will is simply the desire of qualified unit-consciousness to return to its original unqualified, pure form. In original actions, one's direct-will takes the form of a noticeable desire and one performs actions accordingly; this leads to the creation of acquired Saṁskāras. That is to say, acquired Saṁskāras are the resultant of karma done in the present life. In the case of non-original actions, the Saṁskāras assume a concrete form and the indirect-will is converted into a desire⁸⁶, then we undergo the reaction of some past action.

85 Original actions are called Pratyayaṁulaka Karma; they are performed by one's direct-will (conscious will) according to one's desire. Non-original actions are called Saṁskāra mūlaka Karma (reaction to the original action). We do not "perform" these actions in the typical way. Our indirect-will (unconscious will) creates situations and activates Vrttis so that we will do actions which will cause us to experience the results of our Karma. We experience Saṁskāra mūlaka Karma as something we must undergo, or as something which is happening to us. Saṁskāras are created by Pratyaya mūlaka karma and exhausted by Saṁskāra mūlaka Karma.

86 "The action which assumes the shape of the pot-like desires is called Karmāshaya (bundle of Saṁskāras)." (from The Science of Action published in Subhāsita Saṅgraha part 8). The desire we experience prior to the expression of a non-original action is not for the expression of the Saṁskāras. Unconsciously we desire to exhaust our Saṁskāra, but our conscious desire is to avoid pain and get pleasure. Hence the Saṁskāras are given a concrete form (according to the situation of our present life) and our indirect-will takes on the form of desires which will create the appropriate situation for the expression of a Saṁskāra. Our actions take the shape of our Karmāshaya, and we walk into situations

The Saṁskāras one creates in the present life cannot simply be absorbed into one's Karmāshaya (bundle of Saṁskāras which influence our actions and life situation); generally, they remain in seed form and are absorbed into one's Karmāshaya during the period between one life and the next⁸⁷. The Karmāshaya is stored in the Vāsanābhāṇḍa (pot of desires). The Saṁskāras in the Karmāshaya do not have a definitive form, there is a lot of variability in terms of how they can be expressed. The same Saṁskāras may be exhausted by suffering a disease or by feeding the homeless (but some saṁskāras have a very definite character and can only be exhausted through specific interactions with specific people). In beginning of the present life, certain Saṁskāras within one's Karmāshaya take on a definitive form according to the family environment, the culture or the era. This is known as imposed Saṁskāra⁸⁸, because it is imposed upon someone at the dawn of life when s/he has not much ability to control their life.

The science of intuitional practice offers a method to burn these Saṁskāras. Through the practice of Sādhanā the aspirant gradually burns the accumulated Saṁskāras and if, through the practice of Madhuvidyā, one can avoid the creation of newer Saṁskāras, then one becomes free from the cycles of birth and death⁸⁹.

Faculties of Mind

The mind is not physical but works through the physical medium of the brain. Mind has subjective and objective counterparts; the subjective portion is causal but needs the objective portion to manifest itself. The subjective

which are adequate for the expression of Saṁskāras.

- 87 Why is this so? Because within the present life we have a certain DNA, a certain life situation and a certain "pot of desires" which will determine the nature of our actions (both original and non-original). Of course, there are exceptions to this. The common exception is that a Saṁskāra created in the present life that is quite similar saṁskāras created in the past life may also be expressed in the present life concurrently with those Saṁskāras from the past life. In this case one is not forming a new Karmāshaya. Another exception is that if one has a serious accident or disease and is unconscious (i.e. the mind and Prāñā are partially dissociated), or if one's Kuṇḍ'alinī shall awaken, then one's Karmāshaya may absorb some of one's present-life Saṁskāras. In this case one is forming a new Karmāshaya.
- 88 There are different varieties of Saṁskāras. Perception is also a type of action (the act of perceiving something depends upon our Ahaṁkāra). Perceptions or situations which are frequently imposed upon one's mind (especially during one's youth) are imprinted upon the Sthirabhūmi (the part of the Citta that takes shape of perceived objects). This Tanmātrika imprinting will eventually create a Saṁskāra in the form of a proclivity for those types of perceptions, behavior or situations, even though one did not actually "do" anything. The reaction for this type of Saṁskāra is a proclivity that influences one's actions.
- 89 Bābā has mentioned that Sādhanā is to separate the Karmāshaya from the Vāsanābhāṇḍa, i.e. to separate one's actions and Saṁskāras from one's conditioned desires. In this way one may do action without creating further reactions.

mind or the *Kāraṇa Mana* (causal mind) stores the *Sañskāras* in a seed form, hence it is the cause of rebirth; the objective mind establishes relation with the world via the sensory and motor organs. But they have separate role. The mind functions through four faculties:

1. Instinct,
2. Emotion,
3. Rationality, 4. Cognitive Faculty.

Instinct

Instincts are automatic psycho-physical responses to stimuli or situations; they are an expression of the intrinsic desire of the *Jiiva* to remain alive. All the various creatures crave to exist in certain environments and to eat certain food according to their instincts. Some feel happy and safe in water, others like dry land; some prefer to burrow in wet soil or rotten trees and feel uncomfortable/vulnerable in the open, while others like the open air; some lifeforms live in instinctually coordinated groups, others in isolation.

There are two types of instincts: inborn and non-inborn (i.e. acquired). Lower lifeforms, insects, undeveloped animals and plants are completely guided by inborn instincts. They lack a clear "I" feeling and so their life is essentially a succession of instinctive reactions to external stimulus. Acquired instincts are not present at birth but develop with time. First certain glands must develop and then the mind, in its search for safety and happiness, will have to cope with various situations. The lifeform will do its utmost to get whatever forms of happiness it can, while maintaining the flow of its life within the prescribed limits of its vital force. How will it cope? By utilizing those glandular secretions, which are available to it. The mind in conjunction with the hormonal secretions will adopt habitual likings for certain things or automatic reactions to common situations. So, for example, some dogs like to play fetch, some like to be hugged, some are afraid of people. Higher animals (dogs, monkeys, etc.) are primarily guided by inborn and acquired instincts, but occasionally will have to "think." Humans have fairly few inborn instincts, and we lose many of them as we grow from infancy into childhood (e.g. to cling to the mother's breast and to cry when hungry). In humans and in higher animals, all the acquired instincts and some of the inborn instincts are related to glandular

secretions; some inborn instincts are not due to glandular secretions, but are due to the instinctual needs of the cells and organs of which our bodies are composed.

We can develop acquired instincts after our glands have developed (e.g. our reaction to being tickled), and up to a certain age it is natural and beneficial to do so. But after the glands in the higher plexii develop it is better if we do not, because we have higher mental functions and a fully developed sense of self-existence, we should not resort to instinctual behaviour beyond basic physiological functioning.

Emotion

As with acquired instincts, emotions are the results of Vrttis, but are not the same as Vrttis. The “thinking” of animals is on the emotional level; they have not yet developed the ability to reason. This type of thinking is called “sentiment”. It implies an emotionally biased predisposition for certain behaviour. Sentimental behaviour or thinking is not completely automatic, as in the case of instincts, but it is much faster than rational thought. In animals, sentimental behaviour is the highest faculty of mind. In Humans sentimental thinking is very common, but the use of rationality is superior. Sentimental thinking is very powerful and efficient in the sense that one does not need to deliberate over the correct course of action; one simply acts according to one’s sentiments, regardless of the propriety of such actions.

Ideally, our emotions, which are also called our “feelings” should inform our rational thinking process. In the west, these modes of thinking have become bifurcated: we either think sentimentally/emotionally or rationally. This leads to a materialistic rationality that can be highly efficient at intellectual manipulation but cannot make use of the subtler information, which can only be obtained by our “feelings” not through our cruder senses. That is to say, our rationality becomes dry and crude. On the other hand, we should not allow our emotions to dominate our thinking. Our rationality should not repress or ignore our feelings but should utilize the “feelings” so as to think more deeply.

Rationality

Rationality is a uniquely human mental faculty. Although rationality

depends upon the existence of a developed intellect, it is something more. Developed animals possess intellect⁹⁰, but only humans have rationality. Rationality implies that the "I"-feeling has increased to such an extent so as to produce self-consciousness⁹¹ because the use of rationality is a willful act, and individual will cannot exist until a clear sense of individuality has arisen. Animals, due to the smallness of their "I-feeling" are subordinated to the Cosmic Mind and cannot do any independent action. Human being's sense of independent individuality is the treasure given to us by the Cosmic Mind, it separates us from Animals, but it is also our greatest burden. By the Grace of Brahma, this sense of individuality is accompanied by the rational faculty, and rationality is what enables us to bear the burden of our independent mind. He has given us the burdensome gift of independence and has also given us the rational mind so that we can move with purpose.

The Supreme has given us individuality so that we may come to Him in an act of devotional love, for devotion is only possible if the unit mind is free to come to the Lord or wander astray according to his/her liking. And in conjunction with this individual will, the light of reason is awakened within our minds, which enables us to properly guide our life.

Rationality implies that one has discriminative ability and then uses one's intellect and will-power according to one's discrimination. The intellect is a tool, it can be subservient to the lower faculties of mind or it can be utilized by the rational mind.

However, the use of rationality does not imply that one is doing good. It implies that one's mind is stronger than one's emotional impulses, but one may use one's discrimination and rationality in a selfish way or to move away from the Cosmic Nucleus. For example, a crook can use one's rationality and discrimination to carefully calculate how to maximize the profits from a heist, and if the crook is to be successful then he must have

90 According to Ānanda Sūtram, intellect arises in the unit mind when the size of the aham ("doer I") exceeds that of the Citta (objective mind). In more simple language, this means that mind's capacity to act is larger than the mind's ability to hold objects and therefore the mind can act upon its mental objects. Hence, the mind can hold an object in the Citta that is not present before the senses and manipulate that object abstractly. How much abstract manipulation of mental objects is possible depends upon the relative size of the Aham compared to the mental object.

Intellect can only occur in a unit mind which possesses some degree of Mahat ("I feeling"); in those life-forms with only Citta and Aham there is no question of Aham increasing in size to exceed that of Citta, hence first the jīva shall develop "I feeling", then it may develop intellect.

91 This happens when the mahat portion exceeds the citta portion (but before the Mahat exceeds the Aham portion).

discipline and self-restraint.

Higher than rationality is Viveka. Viveka implies that one's rationality is guided by one's conscience, and therefore that it is focused on self-realization and doing good to the world. The crook has merely disciplined his urges so as to be able to enjoy something more lavish in the future. He has not sublimated these crude desires into subtle ones. Viveka is to move towards the subtle by transforming one's crude urges into psychic energy and then this into an urge for spirituality; it means to expand one's self-interest so as to encompass others.

Cognitive Faculty

The Cognitive Faculty is that which enables the mind to acquire knowledge through experiences, through the sense organs, through reflection, and through abstract thought. In short, this is consciousness which has reflected on the unit mental plate and, due to this reflection, the unit mind inherits the cognitive ability to witness its mental objects. Whether the mind perceives an apple in the outside world, or if the mind imagines an apple internally, the mind is "witnessing" the apple. But the ability to "witness" does not belong to the mind. Consciousness, *Átman*, is the witnessing subjectivity; the mind is able to witness the apple because *Puruṣa* is reflecting upon the mind. Those mental abilities which the mind acquires due to the reflection of consciousness upon the mind are called the Cognitive Faculty. Although Unit Cognitive Faculty is not actually a part of the mind, we still refer to it as a mental faculty due to the mental faculties which it creates within the mind⁹². The unit mind has many levels and sub-levels; the higher level is the subject of the lower level, and the lower level is the object of the higher level. For example, the thinking level of mind is the subject to the level of mind that enjoys sensory perceptions, such as eating food. Therefore the thinking level of mind can take the tasting of food as its object and think about it. In essence, the cognitive ability of the mind is the ability of the higher levels of

92 There is another reason to refer to Cognition as a mental faculty, mainly to be consistent with the typical western usage of the term. In typical western usage, "cognition" refers to a mental faculty of unknown origin. In western thought there is no recognition of the primacy of Consciousness, i.e. that mind and the physical universe are the result of Consciousness. The western conceptions are generally based on a materialistic outlook which (by necessity) reverses the role of cause and effect by calling the psychic world as a resultant of electro-chemical interactions, and the cognitive world (i.e. consciousness) as the result of mental activity. But from our perspective, what is referred to as cognition in typical western usage, is to be understood as the result of the cognitive faculty (which is spiritual) reflecting onto the mind (which is psychic).

the mind⁹³ to subjectively witness the lower levels of the mind.

Cakras

God has granted freedom to human beings, and has given them enormous capacity, but their medium has its limits. With this freedom they erected great civilizations, developed extensive scientific theories, created so many languages, admired the beauty of the universe through their art and poetry, expressed their joy through music, raised children, walked in the sunset, sent men to the moon, nourished a vast population, cared for the elderly and explored the sublime realms of the Universal Soul. But they were also endlessly engaged in fratricidal wars (for every war is fratricidal), polluted the air, poisoned the oceans, turned forests into deserts, extinguished species and allowed whole populations to starve. The power of human beings comes from the Cakras. They have power for good and for evil, but the real potentiality of the Cakras is unknown to most people. Through Sádhaná and Yoga, a Sádhaḡa can activate those centres of powers, travel along the path to the Supreme and one-day reach the goal, rendering service to humanity along the way.

Though the physical power in humans is limited, its source is not limited. The psychic powers in humans are greater than their physical strength. This can be most obviously seen by comparing the strength and efficiency of a tractor (built by the human intellect) to that of a man with a shovel. The soldiers may be strong and brave, but the great intellectuals, inventors, seers, scientists, and leaders can do much more than 100's of soldiers by concentrating their minds on a noble task. The limit of the physical force in humans depends, of course, on their muscles, bones and tendons, however the source of our physical force is the mind. It is our mental force that is transformed into physical force, and without which even the most muscular man would be helpless to rise from bed.

This conversion of psychic energy into physical energy is the only way that human beings can translate their dreams in to reality. This conversion is based on the glands and Cakras. The Cakras are 7 in number⁹⁴: Múládhára,

93 The levels of mind are a result of the levels which already existed in the Cosmic Mind. But both the levels of the unit mind and the levels of the Cosmic Mind are due to the subtle ectoplasmic structure. But it is the Cognitive Faculty which enables this ectoplasmic structure at one level to subjectively witness the ectoplasmic structure at another level. Just how this ectoplasmic structure creates mental levels is an interesting and unresolved issue which is beyond the scope of this book.

94 Not counting the Guru Cakra or Lalaná Cakra.

Svādhiśthána, Mañipura, Anáhata, Vishuddha, Ájñá and Sahasrára. A Cakra is a “controlling station”, the first five Cakras connect the mind through the body and allow the mind to indirectly control the body. The mind controls and co-ordinates all the multifarious activities of the body, but it does so through its controlling stations. The transport of solids and liquids, of nutritional elements, to all the cells of the body, the immune system, the growing of limbs, the allocation of energy, the flow of electrical signals, the pumping of blood, respiration of air, the production of so many hormones, fluids, tissues, etc.—all of this is controlled by the coordination of your Práña Shakti and the mind. Not to mention to so-called voluntary actions like jumping, walking, speaking, writing, etc. The human body is the most advanced instrument in the universe, and it grows from a single cell without any special effort (just need to supply it with the bare minimum necessities). Such a complex body evolved because the human mind is so advanced and needs to be able to feel and express a broad range of complex and subtle ideas through the body. In order for the mind to express these ideas and feelings, the body must have a developed Cakra system (to control the body), a subtle and expansive brain and nervous system (to accommodate the mind), a developed endocrine system (without the endocrine system there could not be harmony between the body and mind, because vrttis exist in the mind must have a corresponding physical state).

The first Cakras allow the mind to control and coordinate, respectively, the solid, liquid, luminous, aerial (Práña), and ethereal factors in the physical body. Each Cakra is associated with a Kośa, from Kámamaya to Hirañyamaya, and every Kośa contains Vrttis. Therefor every Cakra must be connected to a plexus (i.e. a group of glands that produce major hormones) so that the corresponding layer of mind may express its Vrttis through the hormones produced by glands that are connected to the Cakra. It is beautiful and simply organized, yet the details are marvellously complex.

Every Kośa has certain sublime qualities, which are higher than the Vrttis. For example, the Manomaya Kośa contains the intellect, a very wonderful and subtle tool, and the Atimánasa Kośa holds our intuitive power and is the birthplace of our spiritual life. Yet the Vrttis associated with those layers of mind are not so high (cruelty, attachment, hatred, ambition, etc.). How can one reconcile this? Well, in order to utilize the vast potentials

of every Kośa, which are held within the Cakras, the corresponding Vrttis will have to be brought under control. When the Cakra is purified through disciplined conduct and spiritual effort then one will gain control over the Vrttis associated with that Cakra; when the Vrttis are controlled then one will be able to utilize the sublime potentialities of the corresponding layer of mind. Take the Svādhiś'hána as an example. The Vrttis therein are six in number:

1. Avajiñá (indifference, repression),
2. Múrcchá (psychic stupor, inertia),
3. Prashraya (indulgence, compulsive or addictive behavior),
4. Avishvása (insecurity, distrust, inferiority complex),
5. Sarvanásha (paranoia, thought of sure annihilation),
6. Krurató (cruelty, resentment).

If one wants to be able to use the higher intellect, to think clearly and calmly, then one will have to control these six Vrttis. Those great intellectuals and scientists, poets and writers, were not dominated by compulsive behaviour, there were not over-indulgent, nor were they overwhelmed with paranoia.

Through Pineal, Thymus, Pituitary, and the other endocrine glands our thoughts can get metamorphosed into physical energy and thereafter we try to express these thoughts in the external world using our motor organs. The process of conversion involves first the translation of our ideas by the Pineal, Thymus, Pituitary; thereafter the other glands are activated.

The Cakras are our power centres, around which there are collections of sub-glands. The Cakras are affected by the environment, hence our mental power is affected by the same. That is why those who want to progress in the intellectual or spiritual sphere should keep themselves aloof from negative environments and immoral people.

Glands

There are two types of glands: Primary and Subsidiary. The Pineal gland is the foremost primary gland, for it is the controlling gland of all other glands. The Pineal gland is called the master gland because it has a controlling influence on the subsidiary glands. Its secretion is called melatonin. 40 years earlier,

the pineal gland and melatonin were not recognized by western science as fundamentally important to human psychology and happiness (western science still does not understand much about its importance). Now melatonin is a hormone that even uneducated people are familiar with; it has been found it removes insomnia, to overcome jet-lag, to combat depression, etc.

Lymph

Today, western science does not recognize lymph (like melatonin decades before) either as a hormone or as fundamentally important to the endocrine system and to human psychology. Lymph is seen as simply a fluid that “bathes” the tissues, helps to combat disease and remove pathogens that have been neutralized by the immune system. Lymph, however, is much more than that. Lymph is the end product of the body’s progressive refinement of substances into purer and purer forms. Lymph is itself a vital hormone for the body, but it is also the essence, which the endocrine glands use as their raw material in order to produce all the main hormones. An insufficient supply of lymph to the higher centres results in an inadequate production of hormones by those glands, our thinking may not necessarily become crude, but it cannot become subtle.

Once the glands have been supplied with lymph, the excess is used by the brain. There the lymph (which is physical) can be converted into an enlarged psychic arena during periods of concentrated thought (i.e. the subtlest physical substance is converted into Cittāñu, the non-physical building blocks of mind)⁹⁵.

In addition to the lymphatic and endocrine system, our body also has various local hormones, most of which are secreted into the digestive system or simply produced by individual cells and released into the body through the cell membrane as part of the cells automatic life-cycle.

The Hypothalamus⁹⁶ and Pituitary gland are also Primary glands,

95 This is similar to what occurred at the nadir point of creation, i.e. the transition point between Sain̄cara and Pratisain̄cara, where the intense clash in the crude object caused matter to be powdered down into citta particles. The difference, however, is that when the human mind powders down lymph during concentrated thought, those citta particles are not attached to a metazoic structure (i.e. they do not form the small mind of some base life form), they are part of a human beings enlarged mind which is not attached to our physical structure.

96 The hypothalamus is a region of the forebrain below the thalamus (the thalamus is responsible for processing sensory information). The hypothalamus coordinates the autonomic nervous system and the pituitary’s activity. It is known to be responsible for controlling body temperature, thirst, hunger, homeostatic systems (these are systems that keep our body in the proper equilibrium for survival); it

but they come under the controlling influence of the Pineal gland. The hypothalamus has couple of roles, one as a gland and the other is related to nerves; for this reason, there are two types of cells in the hypothalamus: glandular cells that produce and secrete hormones, and neuro-glandular cells that control the nervous system. All other glands are subsidiary, i.e. they are controlled by these three primary glands, with the exception of the testes and ovaries

Thyroid and parathyroid⁹⁷ have a great importance in our day to day life in general, and the spiritual life in particular. They have a close, somewhat inverse relation to our lymphatic glands, i.e. over-secretion of lymphatic glands leads to under secretion of thyroid and parathyroid⁹⁸ hormones and vice-versa. These glands are related to intellectual and mental development. These glands develop after puberty, they lead to self-reliance, rationality, and an easy-going nature. If undeveloped, then one may become vain, irrational, and quarrelsome. The thyroid, parathyroid and thymus are all positioned in the throat, under the jurisdiction of the Vishuddha Cakra. Due to this they affect the Anáhata Cakra and its Vrttis.

Adrenal glands are a pair of ductless glands situated above the kidneys. Each consists of a core (adrenal medulla), which secretes adrenaline and noradrenaline, and an outer region (adrenal cortex), which secretes cortico-steroids⁹⁹. These hormones have a great effect on our digestive system and are related to our stress-response habits. An excessive secretion over many years will affect physical and emotional health¹⁰⁰.

The hormones of the prostate gland are only understood by western science in terms of their physical effects. But these hormones are of

is also involved in sleep and processing emotions.

97 On the physical level, the hormones secreted by the thyroid and parathyroid regulate growth, development and metabolism.

98 Ductless glands secrete directly into the bloodstream. The two types of ductless glands are the endocrine glands and the lymph glands (aka lymph nodes).

99 Adrenaline increases blood circulation, breathing rate and metabolism. Noradrenaline is a neurotransmitter released by the adrenal gland and also by the sympathetic nervous system; it raises blood pressure, and artificial noradrenaline is used as a drug for those with low blood pressure. Cortico-steroids come in can be split into two groups: one is used in the metabolism of carbohydrates, proteins and fats, and also reduces tissue inflammation; the other maintains the balance of salts in the body.

100 There are many clinical studies which sight excessive adrenal activity as the primary cause of ADHD, a mental condition of the inability to concentrate that is quickly increasing in the youth. Adrenal excess is also linked to cancer, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, etc, not to mention digestive disorders and eating disorders. Excessive adrenal activity is indicative of the modern socio-economic system which continually puts people in stressful situations that they are not allowed to respond to as their hormones would dictate.

tremendous importance in human psychology. Shyness or shame, fear, phobia, etc. are the result of a deficient secretion by the prostate gland; melancholia and depression are the result of excessive secretions by the prostate gland.

Genital glands

Testes, Ovaries and Pineal are the primary glands because they are self-regulatory and not controlled by any other gland. Unlike the Pineal gland, the testes and ovaries do not directly influence the subsidiary glands. In men and women, the gonads convert lymph into gametes and associated fluids; especially, but not only, in men there can be an excessive conversion of lymph. The testes in men convert lymph into semen according to the instruction of the pituitary gland (i.e. the Ājñā Cakra); anything controlled by the Ājñā Cakra is heavily dependent upon our thinking. Too much external stimulus (such as movies), impure thoughts, static food, excessive heat in the area of the Svādhiśthána, fraternizing with the opposite sex, etc.) will cause excessive conversion of lymph into semen. Excessive semen causes the thoughts and nerves to be affected because the body cannot hold an excessive supply of semen, hence an excessive conversion of lymph into semen produces an urge to eject the semen from the body. This urge can become quite overwhelming and in such a case sexuality predominates one's psychology. This is so common in certain societies that the entire culture (which is a reflection of the median psychology of a society) circulates around sexuality, and rather than culture elevating people's minds above the crude, it has the effect of dragging them into crude thinking.

The sexual glands are not, however, our enemy. The hormones they secrete are essential for the proper development of human physiology and psychology. During puberty in males, testosterone in normal supply results in a sense of dutifulness and if it is in high supply it leads to the development of rationality. An insufficient supply of this hormone leads to weak, hairless bodies in men, causes them to be irresponsible, dogmatic, unkind or even sadistic. The normal supply of sexual hormones leads to a feeling of sexuality, which is natural for the preservation of the species and for the development of individual self-identity. If, however, this is combined with unrestrained sexual thinking and the corresponding excessive conversion of lymph into reproductive fluids, then the sexual hormones become

less benevolent. On the other hand, if an excessive supply of testosterone is combined with pure thoughts, then this sexual urge is converted to universalism; the development at the Svádhiś'hána directly leads to the development of the Anáhata.

Anáhata Cakra

It is at the level of the Anáhata that humans truly distinguish themselves from animals. That is to say, animal's psychology is limited to the lower three Cakras; the lower three Cakras are also important for human psychology. It cannot be said that human psychology at the level of the lower three Cakras is like that of developed animals. Humans have a far more developed mind and an independent will and so a mental tendency (such as sadness) that is common between humans and monkeys (for example) will produce a very much more colorful psychology in a human being. That being said, the level of the Anáhata is uniquely human (although vertebrated animals have a 4th Cakra, it is only slightly developed in non-human primates and undeveloped in any animal that has four legs).

The Anáhata develops after the testes or ovaries¹⁰¹ start functioning. At that time, humans can start to feel love for their family and friends. If there is a good supply of lymph to the Anáhata, then this love can be transformed into universal love.

Hormones and human behaviour

Human behaviour corresponds to the glandular secretion. Human life has three critical, or transitional, periods:

1. The mother's womb,
 2. Puberty—when glands become active,
 3. The transition to old age—when glands start to deactivate.
1. The zygote (i.e. fertilized ovum) is the blue print of life, the genetic representation of the father and mothers Sańskárika fusion, but it is not yet human. It is at first an "adjustable physical structure" awaiting to be inhabited by the appropriate disembodied mind (together with

¹⁰¹ Of course genetic analysis can determine if it is male or female.

its Sañskáras). Thereafter, it starts to take on characteristics of a human being. Yet for the first six months there is not yet any physical differentiation between male and female, there are not any testes or ovaries. Up till then, sexuality exists only at the genetic level, and in the mind that has so recently inhabited the physical body. In this stage of life, one's latent sexuality is controlled by the brain. Although this is a most critical period of life, nothing can be done at this stage. The Garbo Upanis'ad¹⁰² has a lot to say a lot about this stage, but as it is not yet proven scientifically, I shall not include it here.

2. During the stage of life between 12 and 16 the genital glands become active. The immediate effect is that pubic and joint hair begins to grow, the mammary glands develop in girls and the voice deepens in boys. Psychologically, adolescents start to be aware of their potentials, of the vast possibilities life offers to them; they can start to use their energy according to their own convictions. If the secretion of these glands is below normal, the behaviour of the adolescents becomes cruel, irresponsible, anti-social, and can lead to a predisposition for criminal behaviour. If normal, they become rational, responsible, social, and dutiful. In case of the over secretion adolescents think for their bright future, conscious about the society love for spiritual life and plan their lives for something great and extraordinary.

Not all of these changes are due to the genital hormones alone. The release of the hormones of the testes and ovaries quickly triggers the development of the glands in the Mañipura and Anáhata. When the Anáhata becomes active, the beard begins to grow; boys start to become men, girls start to become women. This change is not primarily physical, it is due to the development of the higher Cakras that one is filled with a feeling of independence and self-reliance.

¹⁰² The Upanisadás are a vast collection of ancient writings about a variety of topics, but centering around spirituality. One of these books is called the Garbo Upanis'ad, and it is exclusively about the time of development within the mother's womb.

Although Sigmund Freud tried to convince us we make or break a human life during the first five years, the science of Bio-psychology categorically refutes Freud's statement as lacking in scientific rigor (which is not to undervalue the importance of early childhood experience)¹⁰³. Through the science of the Bio-psychology adolescents can get alter their glandular secretions, change their psychology and lead their lives as they choose. So soon as the glands become active, these boys and girls can apply the science of Bio-psychology to transform their lives by following *Ánanda Marga* psycho-spiritual practice and diet control (which are the practical implementation of Bio-psychology). This is such a critical stage because it is here that one gains control of life and can start to use Bio-psychology to proceed ahead in a scientific manner.

3. The Change of life

Between the age of 50-60 comes a stage of hormonal withdrawal which is called menopause in ladies and repassing in male. It begins with the gradual lessening of genital hormones in males, or the rather abrupt stoppage of them in women, and is followed by a lessening of the hormonal activity in the higher Cakras (but of course not a complete shutting down). As a reaction, people become short-tempered and quarrelsome, irrational, clumsy, dogmatic, and unable to assimilate new experience. Thus husband-wife relations often develop communication problems, and the wisdom that aged people have gained from many years of life is of no avail. The withdrawal of the sexual hormones is biologically unavoidable, however, the subsequent degradation of the higher glands can be minimized by applying Bio-psychological methods. Those who were doing spiritual practices throughout their lives will not suffer from the above-mentioned symptoms.

The *Sádhaná* of *Ánanda Marga* is based on human Bio-psychology, i.e. the scientific relationship between body, mind and spirit. It is of primary importance to keep the body fit and prepared to do *Sádhaná* for a healthy and subtle body is the gateway to achieve the four-fold fruits of human

¹⁰³ We cannot, of course, criticize Freud for not understanding the importance of genetics in human development, nor for not including the powerful influence of past-life *saṁskáras*. However, his over-emphasis on libido and early childhood experience is somewhat inexcusable. The development of human will and abilities that comes about as the glands develop during and after puberty is apparent to anyone who cares to see. In his defense, Freud was a man of his era, and that was an age dominated by Newtonian thinking. According to Newton's example, Freud sought a theory where initial conditions (i.e. the state of the human after the first five years) follow deterministic laws to lead to an unalterable future.

life: Karma, Artha, Dharma and Mokṣa. It needs, therefore, a sentient and balanced diet (Pramitáhára), the regular practice of Ásana and the disciplined observation of a moral lifestyle. After thus purifying the body, the Cakras may be brought under control. In order to control the Cakras, the related glands and sub-glands and their secretions must be regulated. In the Sádhaná of Ánanda Márga, the discipline of do's and don'ts, of moral conduct, of diet, is of the utmost importance so that the body is provided with a substantial amount of subtle physical energy, which can be converted into psychic stamina. To purify the body-mind of its accumulated impurities, one should perform periodic fasting on Ekádashii, Ámávasyá and the Púrñimá days (for the householders fasting is compulsory on Ekádashii days only).

Fasting is always helpful to purify the body but one gets more physical and psychic advantage if fasting is done on these specific days because the proximity of the moon and earth has an adverse effect on human psychology (it stimulates lower human tendencies) that can be mitigated by fasting. The balance of this vast cosmos depends on the attraction and repulsion of different bodies; this is true of our solar system, and in particular, in our Earth-moon system (of which we are a part). As our daily experience goes, the ocean water goes up and down through tide and ebb once in 24 hours. These waves are caused by the moon's gravitational pull, and the biggest waves occur on the days between Ekádashii (i.e. the 11th lunar day) and the full moon, and between Ekádashii and the new moon, as those are the days when the moon and the earth have the closest proximity. This geo-physical relation has an impact on our physical body also; as there is tide and ebb in the ocean, so there is in our human life also. The human body is approximately 72% liquid, and there is a tendency for the liquid portion to rise when the pull of the moon is the strongest. The rising liquid portion can clog the vital upper organs of the body, like heart and lungs, which leave one prone to the attack of disease. The gravitational influence of the moon also effects the movement of lymph and the secretion of hormones. People are more inclined to give into their base propensities and chase after crude enjoyments, hence there is a marked increase in crime rates during these periods. The abnormalities in the human body due to the effect of moon adversely affect the Sádhaná as well. The ancient rṣis, who were indeed scientists, turned their body and mind into psycho-spiritual laboratories

by their disciplined life-style. They observed that by performing dry fasting during this period one could minimize the impact of moon's attracting the liquid portion of our bodies. As a result of their experiments, Ekádashii Vrta has been included as a part of our spiritual disciple. In *Ánanda Marga* spiritual life, we are realizing this experimental truth ourselves.

In *Ánanda Marga* the body is prepared for *Dharma Sádhaná* with the help of dietary regulation, fasting and the practice of suitable *Ásanas*, as per age, under the guidance of a competent and trained *Ácárya* (spiritual teacher). During this preparation the body becomes a vehicle with which the soul, compelled by an insatiable longing for His graceful touch, can proceed towards Him along the path of *Sádhaná*. Care should be taken to ensure adequate lymph production¹⁰⁴; and this should be properly utilized by fine-tuning the conversion of lymph into the appropriate hormones. If the lymph is converted into semen or used up by over-production of hormones in the lower *Cakras*, then the higher *Cakras* will not get an adequate supply of lymph and the supply of subtle hormones to the circulatory system will be not be adequate. In this case, the body will not be able to flow with the mind as the mind moves in a subtler direction.

After the purification of body, there remains the herculean task of purifying the mind. For this the practice of the *Yama* and *Niyama* is imperative, without which an aspirant cannot move a step forward. No matter how well conditioned the body is, should the mind be misguided then spiritual practice will be fruitless. In fact, *Sádhaná* begins with *Yama* and *Niyama*; even before changing the diet, fasting and *Ásanas*, one should begin to make efforts to follow morality in day-to-day life.

Yama and *Niyama* both mean the control and regulation of the self. *Yama* is the control of self in relation to the external world (e.g. non-harming implies a second entity that one shall not harm), while *Niyama* is the control of the self which is independent of any external entity (e.g. cleanliness can be followed even if one is completely isolated). *Brahmacarya* is to change one's vision by searching for *Brahma* in every object, *Brahma Vicarañam*. The practice of *Yama Sádhaná* enables the practitioner to slowly

¹⁰⁴ Mostly this is done by eating sattvic diet, fasting, *ásanas*, and the other parts of 16 points, which are related to the physical body. However, the choice of food should be proper. Cake and cookies can be sattvic, but they are not healthy. Diet should be healthy and moderate (not too little or too much), and should include sufficient fruits and vegetables; chlorophyll is especially important and so one should eat a good quantity of green leaves.

imbibe the feeling of Brahmacharya; so Brahmacharya is both a practice of Yama and also the goal or culmination of the practice of Yama. Ishvara-Prañidhāna is the practice to enable the mind to flow with the vibrational flow of one's Iśā Mantra. The practice of Niyama Sādhanā brings the mind closer to Ishvara-Prañidhāna; so Ishvara-Prañidhāna is both a practice of Niyama and the goal of the practice of Niyama.

One will be able to make significant progress in the practice of Yama and Niyama simply by adjusting one's conduct and controlling one's sensory organs. However, one who is established in Yama and Niyama must already be moving on the Sādhanā path, for how else could they practice Brahmacharya or Ishvara-Prañidhāna? There is a major stumbling block on the way to Ishvara-Prañidhāna; the mind cannot flow with the ista mantra unless the Prāṇa is brought under control. It becomes imperative to exercise control over Prāṇa. If Prāṇa is controlled then the aspirant's very existence will be in a harmonious flow with the flow with the Prāṇa. But how are these flows to be harmonized? This is done only through Prāṇāyāma.

Prāṇāyāmatyēsah Prāṇāyāmah

“The process by which, the Prāṇa Shakti is controlled is called Prāṇāyāma.” The root of Prāṇāyāma is - Prana + Ayam + Ghain = Prāṇāyāma. The physical energy that we use for all our physical activities is derived from the food, water, air and light that we take into the body. However, no amount of food, water, light and air will provide energy unless the Prāṇa activates the body and all its systems. The unconscious mind controls the body and regulates all of its systems, but it gets its work done via the Prāṇa. At the same time, the Prāṇa regulates the flow of the conscious mind. So, there is an intimate relation between the Prāṇa and the mind; the mind utilizes the Prāṇa and the Prāṇa controls the flow of mind. through Prāṇāyāma, Prāṇa is controlled.

Indriyāṅām mano nāthah manonāthāstu mārutah

“The mind is the master of the sense organs, and Prāṇa is the master of the mind.” The rapidity of the flow of inhalation and exhalation controls the flow of the mind. In case of excessive physical labour or exercise, the flow of Prāṇa becomes rapid, which causes the conceptual and retentive

power of the mind (Dhárańá Shakti) to diminish; hence, while running, one can neither think deeply nor can one assimilate the richness of sensory perceptions. Animals with rapid respiration (e.g. a dog) may have a keen sense of smell or sight, but due the high frequency of their Prána, objects within their Citta also fluctuate, and hence any object recreated in their Citta will be lacking in intricate detail. On the other hand, during a period of deep contemplation, the speed of respiration slows down and the mind's conceptual power increases correspondingly. During the practice of Dhárańá and Dhyána the flow of breath becomes subtle and imperceptibly slow; only then can one begin to conceive of the meaning of one's Íśá Mantra. By making the flow of Prána subtle helps to produce a subtle state of mind.

Tasmin sati shvásaprashvásayorgaticchedah Pránaáyámah.

The special process, by which the flow of Prána is changed and made it flow as per the Sádha's will, is called "Pránaáyáma".

Generally, the Prána flows according to one's mental or physical activity. However, in Pránaáyáma the causal relationship is reversed, so that the flow of mind is controlled via the Sádha's control over the Prána. By controlling Pránaashakti one is able to increase one's mental concentration; should one simultaneously be engaged in the effort to think sublime thoughts or to ideate on one's Íśá Mantra, then the practice of Pránaáyáma also enhances the subtlety of one's mind¹⁰⁵. In the extremely concentrated state mind, the Prána comes to a momentary standstill, which is called "Púrńa Kumbhaka". In the state of prolonged Kumbhaka, Prána Vayú is nearly brought to a stop artificially. This helps concentration, with continued practice one's natural Kumbhaka will increase and one's normal flow of Prána will slow down—that is to say, one's Prána will be in a more controlled state even when one is not doing Sádhaná.

¹⁰⁵ On the other hand, should one misuse Pránaáyáma, then it will temporarily increase one's concentration no doubt, but if the mind is thinking baser thoughts then it will also hasten the mind's descent into crudity. In this case the increase in concentration will be short lived, because crude thoughts lead to mental instability.

Glands, Cakras, Kośas

Spheres	Cakras	Glands
Physical	Múládhára , Svádhiś'hána	Genital glands, prostate
Psycho-physical	Mańipura	Adrenal, Pancreas
Mental	Anáhata, Vishuddha	Thymus, Parathyroid, Thyroid
Psycho Spiritual	Ájińá	Pituitary, Hypothalamus
Spiritual	Guru Cakra	Pineal

Cakra	Plexus	Factor	Sensory org	Motor org	Kosa
Múládhára Cakra	Terrenial Plexus	Solid	Nose	Anus	Kámamaya
Svádhiś'hána Cakra	Fluidal Plexus	Liquid	Tongue	Genital	Manomaya
Mańipura Cakra	Igneous Plexus	Lumi-nious	Eyes	Legs	Atimánasa
Anáhata Cakra	Sidereal Plexus	Aerial	Skin (touch)	Hands	Vijińanamaya
Vishuddha Cakra	Solar Plexus	Etherial	Ears	Vocal chord	Hirańyamaya
Ájińá Cakra	Lunar Plexus	--	--	--	--
Guru Cakra	Occult Plexus	--	--	--	--

When to start Sádhaná

But when the human being should begin this? This is a practical question. Human life has multiple stages:

1. Foetus and birth
2. Childhood (0-5 years): Formation of teeth, visual acuity, basic bodily control, and rapid development of the brain.
3. The boy/girl hood (5-10 years): Body grows, mind acclimates to the new life

4. Pubescent (10-13 years): Rise of power of discrimination, sense of responsibility
5. Adolescence (13-18 years): Beard and moustache in boys, bodily development in girls. Feeling of independence and self-reliance.
6. Youth (18-39 years): Body-mind development, peak mental and physical capacity
7. Adult (39-60 years): Agility wanes, body may remain strong but speed diminishes, mental powers (memory, thinking ability, ability to learn) decrease significantly.
8. Old age (over 60 years): Body becomes weak. Further degeneration of mental powers; mind and body become slow.
9. Dilapidated old age (Jarávasthá): Body and mind are weak and fatigued, nervous system and brain have become worn out due to long life.
10. Death: The end of body, hence mind leaves the physical structure.

When to start Sádhaná life? The common belief and understanding in Indian culture is that one should start Sádhaná in old age. That is to say that one should only start spiritual practice after one's mind is no longer subject to the upheavals of worldly ambitions and after one has fulfilled one's responsibilities. The logic is that (a) one cannot simultaneously tend to worldly affairs and practice Sádhaná, and (b) worldly affairs are more important than spiritual pursuits, so one should first lead a full worldly life and thereafter should devote oneself entirely to spirituality. The attentive reader will see a few practical problems with the traditional Indian approach. Firstly, without a spiritual outlook, how can one hope to discharge one's family responsibilities with wisdom and sagacity? Secondly, without spiritual practice one will only add to the burden on one's Saṁskáras; and in that case the ambitions and desires of one's youth will remain in old age (but one will no longer have the energy to chase after them).

Thirdly, and most importantly, how can one begin the long and difficult spiritual journey so late in life? They say in the west, "you can't teach an old dog new tricks," implying that in old age one will not be able to change one's lifestyle and assume all the disciplines of Tantra; one will not be able to make the super-human effort required to fight against one's internal enemies, to purify one's body and mind, to pursue to Supreme Entity with devotional zeal and determination. The spiritual quest is a

herculean undertaking, which requires one to devote one's everything to it. To enter onto the way of Tantra so late in life, when one has hardly any physical energy and only a few brain cells rattling around upstairs is but a futile task. At best, all one will be able to do is put on a superficial show of spirituality for the sake of gaining some respect from one's grandchildren. Indeed, what is commonly observed when the elderly attempt to transform themselves after years of mental stress and physical abuses, is that they adhere to a few dogmatic ideas and cling to those religious traditions which they can assimilate into their lives with the least effort.

The spiritual journey should be started in one's youth; the younger the better. Even children at the age of 5 can begin to do Sádhaná with their parents. But certainly, by the time one is an adolescent one is fully capable of doing Sádhaná and Ásanas, and absolutely one should do so. In that stage of life, the mind remains playful, malleable, ready to explore and accept that which is good and true. In one's youth, one may push the body without risk of harm, and therefor develop the ability to do difficult ásanas and to sit in meditation for long hours without discomfort. One's mind is able to learn quickly and one's nervous system can tolerate the strain of struggle. Like children playing a competitive game, one can feel joy at struggling against one's obstacles and feel that one's chest is filled with the breath of divine purpose. A small child joyfully learns to walk, but when one suffers an accident and need to repeat the same process as an adult, we find it frustrating and barely tolerable.

*Kaomára ácaret prájiño Dharmáni Bhágavatániha
Durlabham mánuśámjanma Tadapya dhravam arthadañ.*

“The wise practice Dharma Sádhaná right from infancy because a human life is rare and rarer still is the human life perfected through Sádhaná.”

In this regard, the Gurudeva has said, “Under all circumstances and during all activities, cling firmly to His name. The Dharma of your childhood is to read and practice Brahma Sádhaná. The Dharma of youth is to earn money and practice Brahma Sádhaná. The Dharma and of your old age, when you become incapacitated for all physical activities, is only to practice Brahma Sádhaná.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ From the discourse Bhaktitattva in the book Subhásita Sañgraha Part 1, by Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti

*Dharma Sádhana begins with Diikśa
Diikśa and Adhyatmika Sádhaná*

Normally, a person stands helpless before the capricious winds of Máya's influence upon the human mind. Because people lack the proper training and discipline, because they are without the proper weapons and practice-honed skills to fight against such a cunning foe as the artful Prakrti, they simply turn their heads and leave the battle field; content to live their lives under her authority. What are these weapons and skills? They are the principles of Yama and Niyama, and the mind trained by Sádhaná so as to be enabled to utilize the Íśta Mantra.

The Cosmic Mind is an impersonal entity and being completely caught up in the grand eternal flow of the universe, can have no concern for the petty struggles of a unit being. This Entity remains busy with Its Creation and does not concern itself with overcoming Prakrti because within the Cosmic Mind Puruśa and Prakrti are enraptured in their eternal dance. This Dance creates the universal stage, equally set, unbiased and available for all to make their best efforts live out their lives, but this universal stage is also equally unconcerned with anyone as an individual. The Cosmic Mind has created the universe justly, that was its role, it is for us to navigate our way to the other side. Therefore, whosoever takes determination to come out from the influence of Prakrti will have to make efforts, otherwise liberation shall remain an impossibility and one's woeful cries to the Cosmic Mind will be heard, no doubt, but not answered.

In the process of Diikśá, the Sádhaka accomplishes two tasks; s/he is given the requisite guidance and techniques to start to move forward in life, and secondly the goal of one's movements is determined. The precursor to Diikśá is the decision to take up arms and to undertake the responsibility to lead the life of a human being. Even in this stage one shall start to practice morality and gain the introspective strength to take a proper appraisal of the significance of human life. Thereafter, one needs Diikśá to begin to move forward.

*Diipajiińanam yato daddyát kuryát pápakśayam tatah
Tasmátdiikśeti sá proktá sarvatantrasya sammatá.*

“The process which produces the capacity to realize the inner import of mantra and which expedites the requital of the Sañskáras, or reactive momenta, is called Diikśá.”¹⁰⁷

Diikśá does not merely teach the aspirant how to do a meditation practice, it inaugurates the aspirant onto the Tántrika path and transmits to him or her the power to see the way and the strength to move forward. It is not enough to teach someone a mantra, they must be given capacity to use the mantra and to realize its meaning (Mantra Caetanya). The first part of Diikśá is Mantragháta, when the Kuñd’alinii is first struck by the acoustic vibration of one’s Íst’a Mantra and starts to resonate accordingly. Mantragháta does not only awaken the Kuñd’alinii, it also awakens one’s latent Sañskáras; the aspirant must therefore also be prepared to face all what is in store for him or her due to past actions. Hence, Diikśá must also give the knowledge and ability to overcome one’s Sañskáras on the psychic plane (Pratyáhára). The final part of Diikśá is Mantra Caetanya¹⁰⁸.

*Caetanya rahitáh mantráh proktavaríastu kevaláh
Phalam naeva prayacchanti lakśa koti pRájapati.*

“Mantras without their corresponding ideation are merely a couple of letters mechanically uttered. They will not bear any fruit even if repeated a billion times.”

Perhaps more accurately, the aspirant is given the wherewithal to realize the meaning of his Mantra at the time of Diikśá, and therefore the culmination of the Diikśá process depends upon the effort of the aspirant (not on the Ácárya’s instructions alone). The spiritual Journey starts with Diikśá and it is accelerated by spiritual Sádhaná. It is of the utmost importance that the goal and means of reaching the goal is decided upon 100%. For this reason, Diikśá is not complete without surrender to the Guru; i.e. one commits one’s life to walk along the path, to follow the life-style and Sádhaná systems as prescribed by the Guru. Without surrender, one’s mind will not commit itself to the efforts required to do Sádhaná and will always be plagued by doubts.

107 The translation of this Shloka was taken from The Importance of Diikśá, in Discourses on Tantra volume 2.

108 Mantra Caetanya means “conceptual understanding of and psychic association with a Mantra”. In other words, the Mantra has meaning and the mind is able to be transformed in accordance to the meaning of the Mantra. In more technical terms, it means that the aspirant is able to use the Mantra to transform his or her ectoplasmic body into the form of the Mantra’s Bháva.

Sádhana Path (the way)

The cosmic entity created this universe in three steps in Bindu, Náda and Kalá¹⁰⁹. And likewise, the merger of the unit into the Supreme is in three steps, but in the opposite direction – Kalá, then Náda and then Bindu. The withdraw is in the opposite direction from the creation; the culmination of Pratisaiñcara is the mirror image of the initial phase of Saiñcara, except that the former is done by the individually by the unit entity and the latter was done universally by the Cosmic entity. Though this is the real way, it appears as the opposite direction if viewed from a worldly perspective. The process of creation can be likened to a journey along the Ganges River from Gaunḡotri to Gaunḡáságar¹¹⁰ and the process of merger like a journey from the Bay of Bengal back to Gangotri. No effort is required whatsoever in the journey from Gangotri to Gaungasagar; but the journey from Gaunḡáságar to Gangotri requires extreme effort and courage because it is opposite to the movement of the river's current¹¹¹. Those lacking the needed stamina, resilience and courage get tired and are apt to listen to the naysayers, and their minds will easily find some excuse to abandon the journey. They may proclaim the journey to be too difficult and the obstacles too strong to surmount, or they may rationalize their giving up by claiming that spirituality is a fruitless waste of time and it is better to use one's time in pursuit of tangible, concrete, and pleasurable goals.

109 Bindu (aka biija bindu or Kámabiija) is called Shambhúliunga in Bhrama Cakra theory, it is the will-force of the Supreme Brahma when the undisturbed Puruḡa is at the vertex of the triangle of Prakrti (i.e. Puruḡa on the theoretical verge of Prakrti's imminent binding). This will-force is first transformed into Náda; so, the first expression of Paramabrahma's will-force is Náda. Náda means "flow without curvature"; verily, the cosmic Om̐ is nothing other than Náda. Thereafter, Náda is converted into Kalá. Kála means "flow with curvature"; so, the flow of infinite wavelength (Om̐) is given a vibration. At first this Kála is of very subtle vibration, but gradually Kála takes on cruder and cruder vibrations. In this way the Cosmic Mahat, Aham, Citta, the various Lokas and finally the crude physical factors come into being.

110 Gaunḡotri is a Himalayan town situated at 3100 meters; it is the origin of the flow of the Gaunges river. Gaunḡá Ságar, also known as Ságar Island, is a large island in the Ganges delta in the Bay of Bengal.

111 This analogy is instructive and a valid point is made by comparing the process of creation/liberation to a river. However, the analogy should not be taken literally because the process of Saiñcara and Pratisaiñcara is that of a cycle. It is not that we are retracing the flow of Saiñcara. Indeed, if we were really to try to swim against the current of Saiñcara, which is the expression of Shambhúliunga (Cosmic Will force), we would be hopelessly washed away. In fact, the flow of Saiñcara is every moment pushing the flow of unit entities along the currents of Pratisaiñcara. There is a continuous flow coming out from the vertex of creation. Thus, more Cosmic Mahat is constantly being produced, as if from the Cosmic faucet, and it is pushing the Ahañ to transform into Cosmic Citta so as to make room for the new Cosmic Mahat-cum-Ahañ; then pushing the Citta to become the Lokas, each Loka to flow into the next lower Loka, and on and on. It is pushing life to evolve. Verily the process of evolution, which seems so natural as viewed from a distance, is the expression the Supreme Flow of the Cosmic mind which is pushing unit minds forward along the path of Pratisaiñcara, just as it is creating more Cosmic Mahat. Yet still we must struggle, for we are at the last point of this journey and for every quadrillion uni-cellular minds there is but a single human mind. And so, for human beings we must exercise our will power with a one-pointed focus if we are to struggle against Máya; and so it indeed feels as if we are swimming upstream.

So generally, people are scared of undertaking the Spiritual Journey, for to undertake the journey from Gauṅgasagar to Gaṅgotri one needs the jet engine powered boat. But such a craft is what we attain during the Diikśá process. Though there are difficulties in piloting and controlling under the strongly opposing current, those of intrepid spirit or those who are able to garner the courage¹¹² will continue the journey in spite of the oppositions. When they reach the destination, they get the refreshing taste of the purest water that comes from the wellspring of life. And upon reaching their destination, they will realize that although the water seemed to be opposing their movement; it was this very water which connected them to their goal from the very beginning of their journey, and which gave buoyancy to their ship every step of the way. The path can be seen as an obstacle, and indeed it may be so, but it is also that which connects us to our destination and that which will guide our every movement should we have the courage to proceed.

Tantra says this is the Viira (bravery) path, along which only the fittest survive (yet we can all become fit by surrender). To proceed in the easy direction, from Gauṅgotrii – Gauṅgáságara, may seem effortless at first, but it ultimately leads to putrid and eventually saline water which threatens one's very survival. It is as if the pollution is a warning that one is proceeding in the wrong direction. On the other hand, along the journey from Gauṅgáságara to Gauṅgotrii one is constantly aided by the inspiration of ever-purer waters and more beautiful scenery. The journey takes effort and may even be hazardous, but the ever-present sings of progress reward one's efforts and give one the stamina to continue. The movement from Kalá to Náda to Bindu is from the body to the mind to ultimately to the Átman. This is neither Váma Marga (Left path) nor Dakśiṅá Marga (Right Path), it is the Madhyama Marga (Middle path) directly up the Suśumná.

What is Madhyam Marga?

Muládháre vaset shakti sahasráre Sadáshiva

“Shakti resides in Múládhára, and at the Sahasrára lives Shiiva.”

112 Courage does not mean fearlessness. Rather courage is the ability to feel fear and to do that which one is frightened of anyway.

After Svarúpa Parińáma¹¹³, Puruśa has not any expression but He cannot be said to be Nirguńa, because He has become the Causal Matrix; At this point Puruśa has become Paramashiva and His Prakrti has been transformed into Kaoshikii Shakti¹¹⁴. Thereafter, the Kaoshikii Shakti causes the balanced triangle to undergo Sphot'á¹¹⁵, and the fine line between unexpressed and expressed, qualified and unqualified is crossed and the germ of the Cosmic Mind has sprouted. Unfathomable in both its power and subtlety, this initial flow is Náda (without curvature), and here Kaoshikii has been transformed Bhaeravii Shakti. This forceful flow creates slight internal clashes in the nascent Cosmic Mind, these clashes create very slight vibrations in the Cosmic Wave (which was vibrationless); Náda is transformed into Kalá. At first Kalá is a flow with negligible vibrations, but these tiny vibrations create slightly larger internal clashes, leading to a somewhat greater curvature, etc. The process builds up, and the curves gradually and continuously transform into greater curves. The expressions of Kalá gradually move from subtle to crude. In this phase, Bhaeravii Shakti is transformed into Bhaváni Shakti. This slow metamorphosis of the Cosmic Wave, at that point the single expression within the vast body of Puruśa, continues (in a downward spiral) until the waves of Kalá become completely crudified and Puruśa has become completely bound as the form of solid factor. With the manifestation of solid factor, the Cosmic Mind, for the first time, has an absolute object (prior to that there was no separate "thing" with a definitive boundary). The movement from supreme subjectivity to relative subjectivity to relative objectivity has finally reached a culmination in the state of absolute objectivity. But what can happen next? The tremendous force of the Cosmic Prakrti is still expressing herself, but the movement towards objectivity, towards crudity, has reached its zenith and can go no further.

113 Svarúpa = "own form", Parińáma = "evolution". This is translated as "homomorphic evolution". In the phase prior to creation, the guńas have formed into an infinite array of various geometrical forms. Svarúpa Parińáma means that the Guńas are flowing into each other (transforming into each other) without getting expressed. The process of Svarúpa Parińáma causes the Guńas to eventually form a matrix of triangles. Once Prakrti is in such a form, Puruśa has become Pramashiva, the Causal Matrix. So it can be said that the process of Svarúpa Parińáma leads to Puruśa becoming the Causal Matrix.

This can be compared to Sadrsha Parińáma, which is translated as "homogenesis". In Sadrsha Parińáma is a process that happens in the Cosmic Mind during the Kalá stage. In this process, the Guńas are also flowing but not into each other. Here they create a sequence of waves in the Cosmic Mind, each wave is nearly identical to the previous, but has been slightly crudified. So the curvatures are gradually transformed from the subtle to the crude. This phase of is dominated by Rajoguńa.

114 In the phase just prior to creation, when Prakrti has encircled Puruśa and expression is immanent, Prakrti is called Kaoshikii Shakti. Kaoshikii Shakti is the subtle force, indistinguishable from Puruśa at this stage, which is responsible for the creation of the Lokas and Kośas.

115 Bursting out.

The force of Bhavani Shakti is internal to the Cosmic Mind and centrifugal in tendency (because it represents a movement away from the Cosmic Nucleus), but for the unit object it is an external force and introversial in tendency (because it pushes the unit body towards its own center, i.e. towards the center of the unit body). The contractive force can only proceed so far and then it shall rebound, like a person jumping on a trampoline. The very Cosmic Force that propelled the Sainçara process from subtle to crude is the driving force of evolution that propels the unit minds from crude to subtle in the Pratisainçara process. This sleeping divine force, which is curled up three rounds within the Kula¹¹⁶, is none other than the Kuñd'alinii, verily it is the unit expression of that same Cosmic Shakti which gave rise to creation and is now seeking to return to its union with Puruśadeha. The Sádha awakens this sleeping divine force with the vibrations created by Mantrágháta, and thereafter the Kuñd'alinii begins to move due to Mantracaetanya. The incantative rhythm of the Íśa Mantra is not able to move the Kuñd'alinii. There must be an ideative rhythm as well, that is to say the Mantra's psycho-physical repetition must produce a psycho-spiritual flow of contemplation of the meaning of the mantra (Bháva). Thus, Mantra Caetanya must precede the ideation on the Mantra¹¹⁷.

The entire existence of the Jiiva gets vibrated and expressed through the Kula point. This is the entative rhythm of the unit beings. The Sañskáras, which are carried in the mind from life to life, get reflected on this point as well; therefore, the repetition of the mantra hastens the expression of Sañskáras. According to this is the Íśa Mantra is prescribed with a certain vibration and a certain ideation to which the jivabháva will respond.

The Jivabháva¹¹⁸ in unit is called "Kuñd'alinii"; the path of the Kuñd'alinii is through the Suśumná Nad'ii. Within the Suśumná is a smaller, subtler channel, called the Cittránii and within the Cittráni is a still subtler channel called the Brahmani. Truly speaking, it is the Brahmán'ii through

116 Kula is the last bone of the spine. Hence the Kuñd'alinii which resides there is called Kulakuñd'alinii.

117 Obviously one may repeat the Mantra (Japa) without deeply realizing its meaning, and this will have its vibrational effect on the body, and it will also prevent the mind from doing anything bad. If this is combined with continued effort in Sádhaná, external Tapah, and 16 points, then this will eventually lead to Mantra Caetanya.

118 Finite or unit subjectivity, subjective sense of the unit identity, i.e. feeling of the unit state, microcosmic bearing.

which the Kuñd'alinii shall travel and this is the Sádhaná of Madhyama Márga. To raise the Kuñd'alini through Brahmán'ii, the Sádhaka first strikes the Kula with the vibrational force of his or her Íśa Mantra by performing Mantrágháta—this awakens the Kuñd'alinii. The Kuñd'alinii cannot rise until the vibration of the Mantra slowly spreads throughout and vibrates every aspect of the Sadhaka's existence: every atom, molecule, organ, layer of mind, and ectoplasmic particle.

However, one cannot become permeated with the vibration of the Mantra without understanding the inner meaning (spirit) of the Íśa Mantra. This is called Mantra Caetanya. Mantra Caetanya implies that when the Mantra enters the Sadhaka's ectoplasm it creates a Bháva¹¹⁹, the Icchá Shakti¹²⁰ is becomes affected. Due to the force of Icchá Shakti the ectoplasmic stuff becomes one pointed and takes the form of the Mantra's meaning. This causes the ectoplasms, which are in the Suśumná to rise. As a result, a vacuum is created with in the Suśumná. If the Kuñd'alinii has been activated by Mantra ghat, then this activated Kuñd'alinii is drawn up just as the water in a tube well overcomes the force of gravity when it is sucked pulled up the pipe due to the vacuum on the other end. This is the principle of Mantra Shakti.

What is Mantra?

The Mantra is a Shabda (sound) or rather a collection of Shabda; but not every Shabda has got the status of a Mantra. A letter is a symbol that represents a sound, but a word is more than just a collection of sounds, for a word has meaning, which letters do not. If you understand the meaning of a word then that word has the power to transform your ectoplasms; when we think we generally use words internally, actually the words are tools, which we use to manipulate our ectoplasms. When we think of a single word, we give a form to our ectoplasms, then we can use other words to continue to manipulate the form of our ectoplasms according to the rules of logic. Thinking relies on the fact that words can mould ectoplasms, but Mantra is something still more powerful.

On the one hand, the Mantra is a spiritually charged and vibrated Shabda, the Japa of which awakens one's subjective feeling of existence

119 Ideation

120 Will-power

(jivabháva). Thus, the vibration of the mantra can transform the aspirant's existential vibration. The Sádha can become one with the vibration and spirit of the Mantra, thus making him/her forget his/her unit-selfhood and become one with the flow of the Mantra. The Mantra has this power because it was empowered by Sadguru, and therefore without Diikśá the Mantra will not have this effect. Furthermore, the meaning of the Mantra is different than the meaning of any word you will find in the dictionary. The meaning of words is something objective, and the mind can easily think of its objects; but the mind cannot think of its own subject (because whatever the mind thinks of is the mind's object). The subject of the mind is the Jivátma, which is the witness to the mind's movements. The meaning of the Mantra refers to the Jivátma's subject. To ideate on the Mantra is not to think about the meaning of the Mantra in a philosophical sense¹²¹, it is to feel that one is the beloved object of the Lord. Hence, the meaning of the Mantra is always just beyond our mental horizon, drawing the mind forward.

Before discussing Mantra further, let us understand further what is Shabda and from where it originates.

Shabda at the creation stage

Prakrti, the Bindu-Rúpinii¹²² in the stage just prior to creation, is action dominated (i.e. she is awakened but has as yet no expression of any Guña); the awakened and unexpressed Prakrti is the primary cause of Shabda and subsequent creation which is indeed Shabdamaaya (the embodiment of Shabda). Shabda emerged from Shabda Brahma. In the primordial stage of creation, the primordial principle is Paramashiva in the form of the Causal Matrix; He is the fundament point or the central point of creation. From this stage of Shiva and Prakrti emerges Shabda. At the moment of expression, Prakrti assumes the role of Vámashakti and causes the expression of Pashyanti

121 Although there is some benefit to such philosophical understanding, it is not on the level of Bhava because it is objective. Intellectual understanding of spiritual concepts is helpful to the point that they inspire us to practice and help us to navigate the obstacles which arise; but such analysis can be harmful when it becomes an end in itself. That is to say, our philosophical enquiry should be motivated by the desire to know what to do, how to move forward, how to navigate something we are facing on our spiritual path.

122 Rúpa means form, in the feminine gender it becomes rupini. Here Bindu means primordial Bindu, the point of creation that is dominated by mutative principle but has not any expression. Another name for Prakrti is Bindurupini, or the form of Bindu, because this Bindu has not yet expressed itself as Sattva, Rája, Tamah. Bindurúpinii refers to Prakrti when she is in subtle form, while her Guñas are still locked in mutual transformation but none has yet emerged as a separate Guña. Hence Prakrti is "in the form of a point".

Vák; thereafter, Prakrti is transformed from Vámashakti into Jyest'háshakti (a.k.a. Jiṇánashakti) leading to the expression of Madhyamá Vák out of Pashyanti Vák. Finally, Jyest'háshakti is transformed into Raodrashakti, causing Madhyamá Vák to take the form of Vaekharii Vák. All of this arises out of, and is the expression of, the Causal Matrix.

In the grammarian's approach to creation, Parama Shiva (aka Puruśottam or "Paramátriká") remains at the nucleus as the Causal Matrix. It is expressed in three voices: Pashyanti Vák, Madhyamá Vák and Vaekharii Vák.

Tantra Says:

*Kryá Shakti Pradhánáyáh Shabda Shabdártha Káraṇam
Prakrte bindurúpinyáh Shabda brahmáya vatparam.*

"Action-oriented Shakti is the cause of sound. And in that stage, Prakrti is in the form of a point and shabda is Brahma." Before expression, Shabda has not taken on any form. This is the state of Bháva (idea) and here Shabda remains in the state of Sphoṭa in potential form.

*Eka nityo vakyabhivyaunḡyokhaṇḡo
Vyakti sphoṭó játi sphoṭó vetti*

"At this stage, there is no media available to Shabda. Unless there is some medium for its expression, shabda remains unexpressed. Once the media is present, then shabda will be expressed."

The manifest universe is the arena of sonic expressions, here Shabda has a definitive form. Prior to the world of expression, Shabda was in the state of 'Bháva'. In the Bháva Jagat¹²³, the latent Shabda that was lying in its primordial form is known as Paráshakti. Although the full potentiality of the entire universe is in latent in this Paráshakti, in the absence of any medium it cannot have expression. Paráshakti is potential for vibrational expression, but there must be something which can vibrate, some medium. The only available medium, the only substantial entity in existence, is the Nirguṇa Puruśa; but before Puruśa can serve as a medium for vibration, He must cease to be Nirguṇa. Hence, the body of Puruśa becomes a suitable

¹²³ Bháva means "Idea", and Bháva Jagat is the "ideational world" i.e. the yet-to-be expressed universe immediately prior to the manifestation of Náda.

medium only after being encircled by the three Guṇas. So soon as the medium for expression exists, then Parāshakti shall manifest as Shabda. That is the first expression of Shabda (sound), Oṅkāra.

*Adikśanta ime varnah sambhuta Paramatmānah
Dwarikṛta Prāñāvakaṁ sarva shabdasya karanam.*

“This Shabda is unchangeable. In the real sense of the term, Shabda is Brahma. This created universe, expressed in the form of Shabda, is nothing but Brahma.”

A portion of this Parāshakti is transformed at the time of creation, however even in the manifest universe, Parāshakti remains present in both the Jivabhāva of the unit and Bhūmābhava¹²⁴ of the Cosmic Self. This Parāshakti is the Shabda energy which is expressing itself as the universe. A portion of that energy is lying dormant in the Kula of the Jiiva.

Bhartrhari¹²⁵ has said:

*Anādi nidhānaṁ Brahma Shabda Tattvam yadksharam
Vivarttertha bhavena prakrya Jagato yatah.*

That is, Shabda is the primordial sound through which Brahma finally expresses Himself in the form of the Jagat (universe).

The states of Shabda Brahma

1. Niskāla Brahma (Non-attributational consciousness),
2. Sakal (under the bondage of Sentient principle),
3. Hiraṇyagarbha¹²⁶,
4. Vibrated (with objective form).

124 Bhūmā here means the Macrocosm. Bhūmābhāva can mean Cosmic ideation (when referring to an person whose mental activities have been suspended in the ideation of the supreme), but here it means the Cosmic Subjectivity (i.e. the Cosmic counterpart of Jivabhāva)

125 Bhartrhari was a great Grammarian who lived at the time before Christ.

126 Hiraṇyagarbha is Puruṣa under the bondage of the mutative principle, and hence there is not yet any objective expression (for that requires the static principle). Puruṣa under the bondage of only the sentient principle (prior to the phase of Hiraṇyagarbha) is known as Virāta. However, in philosophy, Hiraṇyagarbha is used to refer to the metamorphosed form of Saguṇa Brahma. Perhaps more simply, Hiraṇyagarbha can be understood as the Subtle Cosmic Mind, whose infinite imaginative power is ready to give objective form to the universe (but it has not yet done so). “In Parama Puruṣa, when that unmanifest Prakṛti is manifested, the collective name given to Puruṣa and that manifest Prakṛti is Hiraṇyagarbha.” (This world and the Next, from Subhāsita Saṁgraha Part 4)

There are four corresponding stages of Shakti:

1. Paráshakti (primordial, formless),
2. Pashyanti Shakti (with form, Savikalpa),
3. Madhyamá Shakti (Sphotarúpa, expressed),
4. Vaekharii Shakti (Kárya rúpa, energy, in action).

Shabda as a vocal expression

*Catvari vák parimita padani tani vidurvahaña ye maniśiñah,
Guha trinii nihita nengyanti turiiyam vaco manuśa vadanti.*

“There are four points of sonic expression: Múládhára, Mañipura, Anáhata, and Vishuddha. Those who practice the science of intuitional Sádhaná are aware of this secret. The first three stages of expression are not external expression.”

There are four centres of Vák Abhivyakti (vocal expressions):

1. Múládhára
2. Nábhi (naval point)
3. Hrdaya (Anáhata)
4. Kan'tha (vocal chord)

The stages which lead to the first sonic expression and the birth of the Cosmic Mind are reflected in the process of human vocal expression. In a similar way as with the dawn of creation, when we want to speak we must first translate some amorphous urge into some type of Bháva deep in our mind, then this idea has to take an abstract shape as mental language. Next this mental language must take on a form that can be expressed by some physical organ (will you ask for water, will you walk to the sink and get water, will you cry due to thirst like a child, will you perform a dance that expresses human thirst?) Only in the next phase does it acquire a linguistic form in your mind. In the final phase, it is give vocal expression.

Only Brahmanis'tha (Intuitional Scientists) can realize this mystery. The first three stages of expression are subjective, they do not even have a mental form, and so cannot be known externally or even intellectually; they can only be understood through one's intuition.

The initial stage of vocal expression is latent in Paráshakti at the Múládhára Cakra. When there is an internal urge to say something, then this Paráshakti begins to move upward. Paráshakti is a stage before expression, when expression is quiescent but impending. At Svádhiś'hána Cakra, here the subtle Paráshakti is metamorphosed into Pashyanti Shakti; the energy of Pashyanti Shakti allows the formless urge of the Múládhára to begin to take on a vague form according to our Sañskáras; one is able to vaguely visualize the idea. Pashyanti Shakti is only a theoretical stage of expression. That is why both Paráshakti and Pashyanti are known only to Yogis.

At the Anáhata, Pashyanti Shakti is transformed into Madhyamá Shakti. Madhyamá Shakti transforms the theoretical expression into a mental language. Now a mental language may be expressed in many ways; through speech, dance, song, crying, doing some action, gestures. If you are in a country where you do not speak the language then you will act out what you want to say with gestures, or maybe you will simply repress the urge. Repression is also an action.

Between Anáhata and Vishuddha, the Madhyamá Shakti is translated into Dyotamána Shakti. Dyotamána Shakti translates this mental language into a concrete form that can be expressed by the motor organs; if one is to speak, then the mental language is given a vocal form. If the decision was to express the mental language by speech, then at the Vishuddha Cakra, Dyotamána Shakti is translated into Vaekharii Shakti, which translates this mental language into actual words in one of the world's languages¹²⁷.

Still, there has not been any vocal expression. At this point the expression could take on the form of writing, or one could speak internally. In the last phase of vocal expression, the Vaekharii Shakti comes in contact with ethereal factor (which is controlled by the Vishuddha Cakra). The Vaekharii Shakti gives the ether the form of the words to be uttered. Then with the energy of Shrutigocará Shakti, the ethereal words are vocalized and one has finally spoken. All this process can happen in the blink of an eye, or if it is some very complex idea or something poetic, then it may take months to be able to understand how to express the idea. Of course, with a

¹²⁷ If Vaekharii Shakti does not function, then we are in the common situation of understanding what we want to say, but not being able to find the words to say it. People who are mute or who stutter do so because they have a problem in their vocal chords that interferes with the proper functioning of Vaekharii Shakti.

Mantra one is not to speak externally. So, the final phase or final two phases do not take place.

In the initial phases of history, humanity had only very rudimentary language, and the power hidden in their Cakras was not realized. They could only make brutish noises and communicate with gestures, just as a baby can only cry and trusts its mother to be able to interpret this crying. But due to the Shakti within our Cakras, human beings have created alphabets, words, language, grammar, poetry, song, dance, scientific expression, literature, musical instruments, etc.

Bhagvána Krśńa has said:

*Sa eśa Jiivo vivara prásutih pranena ghośena guha praviśtháh
Manomayam' suksmamupetya rupam' mátra svarovarńa iti
stháviśthah*

“The same Brahma remains ready for expression in the Cakras. When Nádaván Váyu strikes at Paráshakti then Paráshakti is changed into Pashyanti, Madhyamá, etc.” Puruśa in the Múládhára is completely dominated by Prakrti. Brahma is in the form of dormant shabda in the Múládhára. His Shakti remains present in the Cakras, prepared for expression. The same Paráshakti, through the medium of the Cakras, gets translated into in the form of Pashyanti, Madhyamá etc., and is expressed through the vocal cords as the vowel sounds¹²⁸.

Sphuṭati Arthah yasmat yathá Átmá Átmánám Jánati

Similarly, the sphot 'a (bursting out), which starts from the Múládhára and changes into all the different forms of human expressions, is none other than the eternal Shabda Brahma. The first expression (Sphot 'a) is in the form of Prańava. The word for Omkára is Prańava, it is formed by Pra-nu+al¹²⁹.

*Pránávo dhanuh sharohyátmá brahma tallakśyamucyate
Apramattena veddhavyam sharavat tanmayo bhavet.*

“O Sedate One, Omkára is the image of your bow. Here the twanging

128 Vowel sounds are the causal aspect of Shabda. Consonants are the actional expression.

129 Nu here implies Upásaná, which means contemplation, prayer, worship, meditation.

or plucking of the bow means the act of Práñáyáma (a yogiic method of breath-control), i.e. stirring up the vital or spiritual force. If you use your soul as an arrow and shoot it, aiming at the Brahma-like target with a deeply concentrated (absolutely unwavering) mind, then your soul will certainly merge in the Supreme Soul just as an ordinary arrow sticks in its target.”¹³⁰

*Etadvadhyekśaramí Brahma etadevakśara param
Etadevakśaram jíñatvayo yadicchati tasyatat.*

“This Brahma is of two Shabda, Prañava is the highest sound. These two sounds of must be known if you are to realize the truth. Prañava is the final word in realization.”

*Etadálambanam Shresthametadálambanam param
Etadalambanam jíñatvañ brahmaloke mahiyate*

“If you want to reach the Brahma Loka, the final and best medium is Omkára. Travelling through the medium of Prañava, one is able to reach the goal”

Two forms of Shabda Brahma

There are two forms of Shabda Brahma, Káraña Brahma (causal Brahma) and Kárya Brahma (actional Brahma). Káraña Brahma is the cause of all the expressions, but as the cause He has no external expressions. Hence, He is self-expressed, self-contained, in a primordial form that is subjective, eternal, complete (Púrña) and perfect. Káraña Brahma is in the form of a vowel (Svara Varña), there is not even the slightest mixture the sound of a consonant (Vyainjana Varña). In Kárya Brahma there is the sound of consonants. The acoustic root of creation is “A”, the first vowel. The acoustic root of Kárya is “Ka”, the first consonant¹³¹.

In Káraná Brahma, the greatness of creation remains in its original form without any mixing. This original form is expressed independently through Svaravarña (vowels). When the Shabda is changed into its expressed (actional) form, then this blending makes the sounds of consonants. The

¹³⁰ The translation of this Shloka was taken from The Intuitional Science of the Vedas part 2 in Subhásita Sañgraha Part 2

¹³¹ The first consant is “K”, but it can only be given utterance if combined with a vowel, hence the acoustic root of the actional world is “Ka”. Consonants are dependent on vowels, but vowels are not dependent on consonants; likewise, the actional world is dependent on Causal Brahma, but not vice-versa.

variegated creation is expressed through consonants. The cause of Shabda is the Causal Matrix¹³²; Shabda goes through changes and eventually becomes (in sequence) Ákásha, Váyu, Agni, Jala Tattva and Kíiti Tattva. In fact, Shabda is Brahma Svarúpa (the form of Brahma) and as soon as Prañava finds the medium, it gets expressed.

*Akáráta Svarasambhutih sparsha srstirukáratāh
Antah Sthosmakśakárañam makaratsambhavo matah
Svaraśodasha vijñeyáh sparshastu paiñcapinvishatah
Annasthashca tathóśyañah vedatomita smrtah
Kśakaro varña samyogo syopa lakśañamiritah
Hrsva diirghavumao bhedabnaddyo hi prakirhitao
Plut utpati kálinotah páscatyō vidhiyate.*

This long sloka is elucidating the nature of vowels and consonants. The sloka is explained below. Letters in Samśkrta can be put into four categories. Antastha Usma, Svara, Sparsh, Hrasva Diirgha.

1. Svaravarn'a (vowels) - Sva+A-Aca = Svara. Svina rojate yah sah svara, or those sounds which may be pronounced independently are vowels. Akaránta is the 16 vowels. a á i ii u ú r rr lr lrr e ae o ao añ ah
2. Ukára Sparsha Varn'a - Sparsha (lit. touching) are those sounds that are pronounced with the help of the lips. In the Samśkrta alphabet these are the letters from ka to ma. There are 25 such letters (they are grouped into 5 groups according to the shape of the mouth when speaking the letters in that group).

132 Generally, people mistakenly think that the Supreme Operative principle, Mahámáyá is the Causal Matrix. But Bábá clarifies this in two discourses, both with the same title, The Causal Matrix. "That Supreme Entity, that Supreme Consciousness, is the Causal Matrix, and is a singular entity." (from the discourse The Causal Matrix in Ánanda Vacanámrtam Part 14). And from Subhásita Sañgraha Part 24 "So Mahámáyá, or the Operative Principle, is not the Causal Matrix, Shiva is the supreme cause.... Shiva is the root cause; Parama Purúša, the Transcendental Entity, the Supreme Purúša, the Supreme Cognition is the Causal Matrix, and not the Operative Principle." But Bábá also refers to Orñkára (i.e. Prañava) as the Causal Matrix in the discourse Vrajagopála and Aesthetic Science (Discourse 25). The Causal Matrix is Purúša at the stage when the Guñas of Prakrti have formed a matrix within His Deha (body); this is just prior to moment when Orñkára is expressed and the Cosmic Mind is born.

Ka Kha Ga Gha Uṅa
Ca Cha Ja Jha Ṇa
Ta Tha Ḍa Dha Ṇa
Ta Tha Da Dha Na
Pa Pha Ba Bha Ma

3. Makára Usma Varn'ah - Usma (lit. hot) is a group of sounds whose pronunciation causes hot air (from the body) to be released; there are only five such letters. Sh Ś S H Kś
4. Antastha (lit. inner) are those sounds which are kept inside. There are four such letters in Sam'skrta - ya, ra, la, va

What is Sphota? Sphota means "bang", an expression which emerges with an explosive power and speed.

Yena vák vyajyate

It is said that Vák (voice) comes out of Omkára, Omkára has emerged from Sphot 'a, and Sphot 'a comes out of the Hrdyákásha¹³³ of Parámátmá. All the Upanishadas (Sarvamányopanisada) accept and agree that this Omkára is the primordial sound, which has brought forth the variegated creation. Kálidasa¹³⁴ says "Prañavashchandasábhira", i.e. the entire creation (Akhil Brahmán'd'a) has emerged from this Prañava, hence one should do "Tasya Dhyánam" (meditation on only that entity). This Prañava is A+U+M; it is the root of all the sounds and vibrations. Tenak'srah Samámnyaya, that is to say, the Omkára is the root sound and "Antahstho'sma Svára, Sparsha, Hrasva-diirghádi" are the offshoots which have grown out of Omkára.

When this sphot 'a, i.e. when Omkára, is expressed in our individual life through the power of our vocal chord, it uses different portions of mouth according to the following groupings.

- Antastha (ya, ra, la, va) is palatal,
- Usma (sh, ś, s, ha),
- Svára (A, A') are guttural,

¹³³ Hrdyákásha is the Heart of Parama Puru'sa.

¹³⁴ The great Sa'mskṛta scholar and mystical poet.

- Sparsha (the consonants K to Ma) use different parts of the mouth
 - Ka Kha Ga Gha Uña, are made from the back of the throat
 - Ca Cha Ja Jha Iná, are made from back of tongue.
 - T´a T´ha D´a D´ha N´a, are made by touching middle of palate.
 - Ta Tha Da Dha Na, are dental sounds.
 - Pa Pha Ba Bha Ma, are labial sounds.
- Hrsva - Diirgha – the vowels.

Parábindu

Parábindu is the Omkára that was present at the moment of Sphot´a, it is the womb of creation. This Pará-Omkára remains in both the unit and the Cosmos. In the unit Deha, this Omkára is expressed as Paráshakti, Pashyanti, Madhyamá, Dyotmáná, Vaekhariii and comes out through Shrutigocará. The subtle process by which the primordial creative urge continually re-expresses itself through the human structure, touching all the various points of human existence along the way, is elaborated in the science of Samskṛta grammar.

The Cosmic history of Shabda begins from the Sphot´a point with Parábindu, leads to the creation of the universe, is the driving force which pushes evolution forward from behind, and then in the human life Shabda not only pushes us forward from behind, it also calls us forward as the veiled attractive voice (the flute of Krśńa) of the Supreme entity. Along our journey, all our movements and expressions depend upon the primordial Shabda from Paráshakti to Pashyanti to Madhyamá to Dyotmáná (this is common among every expression) and after crossing Vaekharii and Shrutigocará then voice becomes its medium and thereafter it is expressed as ‘Shabda’ by the unit. This is the brief history of “Shabda”.

Shabda in Bhúma¹³⁵

Emerging from Shabda Brahma, as the infinite vibration of Omkára, this Shabda moves in a cascading manner, from subtlety to crudity. From Bindu, to Náda, to Kalá, to cruder and then yet cruder forms of Kalá goes the process of Saiñcara. Shabda, being sonic, is also full of rhythmical

135 Macrocosmic mind

troughs and crests. In the Saiñcara process the rhythm of Kalá is present but is not significant. When life emerges, then the rhythm becomes important because the entire universe becomes alive and begins to dance according to the Cosmic rhythm. In Saiñcara, no doubt, there were certain rhythms from the atomic to the universal level, but there the universe had not yet begun to dance to the rhythm of this music. During the Pratisaiñcara process, the more life evolves, the more consciousness re-emerges as the dominant principle, the more does the sonic rhythm of the Cosmic Mind become important. This culminates in human life, where music is everywhere, and the highest expression of this rhythmical movement of life is in the repetition of a Mantra.

No down fall in Animal life why?

Vyas't'i-Bhúma (Unit-Cosmic)

The driving force behind the evolution of species, as well as the progress of unit minds from one life to the next, is that they are moving within the vibrational flow of "Parama Puruśa". All Jivátmás are moving through the medium of their corporeal structure and a psychic body. For animals this medium is impersonal, i.e. the medium is still a part of the Cosmos. Animals are still at one with the Cosmic Entity, and the Universe is an impersonal entity; the universe behaves the same for all. Animals have not yet developed a sense of individuality, they are still a part of "nature"¹³⁶ and can only exist in a harmonious flow with nature. Hence, because animals have an impersonal medium, they can only move together with the movement of the Cosmic Mind. Like a leaf floating and whirling in the eddies of the forward moving currents of a turbulent stream, the Jivátma which inhabits an animal body will necessarily progress because it has an impersonal medium which is being carried forward by the impersonal flow of the Cosmic Entity. The flow of the Cosmic Entity in Pratisaiñcara is towards Parama Puruśa.

Animals cannot do any independent action, for they have no will of their own, nor do they possess the discriminative ability that would enable one to make a choice. Therefore, they cannot create any Sañskáras. They simply move with the pace of the Universal flow, suffering or enjoying along

¹³⁶ This is not a philosophically accurate statement, but because of the meaning the word "nature" has in the English language it is the best way to communicate the idea. It would be more accurate to say that "animals exist as a subordinated part of the Cosmic Mind".

the way and thereby burning Saṁskāras in a movement towards from unicellular crudity to more and more subtle forms.

Should an animal come in contact with a human being, or better to live with a human being, then their progress is accelerated. Due to the clash of having to interact with the advanced minds and independent wills of humans, the animals' ectoplasmic structure becomes enlarged. That is to say, by virtue of having contact with people, the mind will take a higher birth in the next life than it otherwise would have. In certain mammals, their ego is a bit developed and therefore their medium is not completely impersonal. Should this medium come in contact with the personal medium of a human being in a domestic relationship (i.e. pets), then that animal will develop a strong attraction for human life and its mind will expand (it will learn some words, learn how to live together with people, it will have to learn how to control its instincts, etc.).

At some point in the evolution of species and in the expanding movement of Jīvas, there arose a living being in which the personal medium was more influential than the Cosmic flow. That is to say, the personal (i.e. individual) influence began to predominate the impersonal (i.e. Cosmic) influence. An orangutan's offspring was something more, something higher. In its little mind, it was able to conceive of itself as an independent "I". This was the earliest "man", the predecessor of homo-sapien, a great Vyatikrama¹³⁷ that led evolution forward. Actually, there have been many such Vyatikrama in the long process of evolution, by which one species made the jump to another species. But the shift in consciousness from animality to humanity was the great Vyatikrama. It may seem like a small thing, to be born with a consciousness of one's existence, i.e. to have an "I feeling" that is large enough so that one feels independent from one's surroundings, but that gave birth to an independent will, to the ability to imagine a brighter future, to develop one's self and move towards that imagined future. In short, humanity was born.

The physical structure of these primitive "human" beings would evolve over time, and eventually become like the present human frame, the suitable medium to receive and to practice Brahma Vidyā. This human body is one of the requirements for God realization, the only other requirement is a desire to be one with the Supreme.

137 Exception

This is one of the most salient points of Ānanda Mārga philosophy. Vyatikrama is a sudden incident that does not follow the regular rule or normal flow. It is a jump forward, a game-changing, sudden shift that changes the entire dynamic of the flow. It not only happened in the evolution of species, but also in the evolution of human society. When one great personality steps out of their historically determined role and does something unique. Most historical figures, even famous leaders or intellectuals, were not instances of Vyatikrama; there were simply a product of that historical/cultural moment in time, and they were playing a role (perhaps an important role) in the historical flow. But there have been some personalities who stepped out of their historical role, there could not be seen as a product of that moment in time, and due to their lives there was an unexpected shift in society. Buddha, for example, represents a Vyatikrama. He was entitled to inherit his father's kingdom, and if he had lived the life of a great and famous king then he would have played an important role in the flow of history, but would not have been a Vyatikrama. But Gautam renounced his throne, went into the wilderness seeking the Truth, and the strenuousness of the effort he made for God is unparalleled in human history. He became Buddha, the enlightened one, and his example, his life, his teachings, transformed the evolutionary course of human society.

What is Mantra?

Mantra = Men + Trace + Do - 'Mananāt tāryet yastu sah mantra parikiirtitah.'

A Mantra is a collection of Shabda, which, when contemplated upon, leads a person to liberation. But not every 'Shabda' deserves the status of a Mantra. There are certain shabda which are fit to be used as mantra. Firstly, they have to have the proper rhythm so that they can be repeated with the breathing. Secondly, they have to have the proper sonic vibration, which can strike the Kuñd'alini. Thirdly, they must have the proper meaning, i.e. the inner spirit of the mantra must be appropriate to transform the ectoplasmic structure and guide it towards Puruṣa. And most importantly, a Mahākaola¹³⁸ must have selected the mantra for the purpose of spiritual Sādhanā and thereafter empowered it with His vibration.

¹³⁸ A Kaola is a perfected Yogii who is able to raise his or her own Kuñd'alini at will, they are rare personalities, but they cannot create a mantra and they cannot play the role of Sadguru. A Mahākaola is one who is able to raise the Kund'alini of others. Only Mahākaola can create a Mantra, which will have any effect on the Kuñd'alini of another person. If you cannot raise the Kuñd'alini of another person, then how can you possibly create a Mantra, which will have the power to raise the Kuñd'alini? Mahākaola's are incredible rare. They are not even Vyatikarma, they are something even more exceptional. They do not rise above their moment in time to help society, as the Buddha and Jesus did, rather they the direct expression of Brahma

How does an appropriate Shabda get the status of Mantra? The Mahápuruṣa (Mahákaola) has such a powerful ectoplasmic structure that He has the ability to generate a vibration in the vast collective ectoplasm of the Cosmic Mind. Hence, He is able to infuse the subtle layers of the Cosmic mind with the vibration and ideation of the shabda, then only has the Shabda become a mantra. Mahákaola takes the shabda of His selection, raises it up from His Múladhára Cakra and brings it up to His Sahasrára Cakra; He then creates a subtle spiritual vibration throughout the Cosmos, so that there is a parallelism between that Mantra and both the external vibrations of the universe and the inner vibrations of the Cosmic Mind. In this way the Mantra is infused with the “power of consciousness”. Only such a powerful personality, who has the ability to infuse the universe with His ectoplasmic vibrations, will be able to give power to a Mantra and deserves to be called Mahákaola. Only Mahákaola is Guru, therefore it is said that by using the Mantra, the aspirant is able to accelerate his progress with power of Guru Shakti.

A spiritual aspirant, upon getting such a Mantra from a competent Ácaryá and then doing Japa intensively, transforms his/her whole existence and becomes Mantramaya (the embodiment of the Mantra). Mantramaya means that every atom, every cell, every ectoplasm, the aspirant’s entitative and incantative rhythms¹³⁹ begin to pulsate with the vibration of Íṣṭa Mantra. Through Mantramaya one becomes Bhávamaya (the embodiment of the ideation of the Mantra). In that state, one’s mind becomes one with the meaning of the Mantra and one loses oneself, becomes one with the spirit of the Mantra; thus, the unit gets liberation. Though every word carries a meaning, it is only an empowered Mantra, the constant Japa and ideation of which can liberate the aspirant. This the true spirit of Ahamí Brahmásmi, Tattvamasi, Ayamátmá Brahma.

Mantra Caetanya

When a Sádha does Purashcaraṇa¹⁴⁰ he or she moves from negativity to positivity. The starting point of negativity is nadir point of positivity. That

139 The incantative rhythm is the flow of one’s Práña. The entitative rhythm is the sum total vibration of one’s existence. For example, every cell in your hand has a vibration, and the vibration of the hand taken as a whole is the sum of all those vibrations. One’s existence is the totality of some many existences and entities, and the sum of those is your entitative rhythm.

140 Carāṇa has many meanings: foot, to walk/move, “to eat while moving about”, to solve one’s problems by moving, etc.

is to say, the point of maximum crudity, at the culmination of Sainçara, is also the point where life begins and Puruśa starts to shed His bondages in a movement back to His original stance. The point at which one has reached to the goal and the starting point of one's journey, are but two states of the same consciousness. In the state of Mantra Caetanya, the vibrational faculty is turned upside down and starts moving in the opposite direction. Generally, the vibrational faculty vibrates the mind according to the perceptions by the sensory organs, and the mind becomes extroversial and moves towards objects. But with Mantra Caetanya, the aspirant is using the same faculty to introvert the mind in a movement towards Consciousness. The Ganges begins flowing from the Delta back to its Himalayan origin; the mind is moving from crude to subtle. Though this path is difficult to traverse, one must do it. There is an expression in English, "When the going gets tough the tough get going". At times, the goal may seem so far away that one feels like one's efforts are paltry and will not lead one to the goal, or one may feel that the internal obstacles are overwhelming; in these moments it is not easy to stay inspired. But these are tests we must pass though, and in such moments (when the Íśa seems distant) one should cling firmly to the ideology, throw oneself into some concrete and practical service with a short-term goal and keep moving forward in one's Sádhaná. Slowly the distance to the destination diminishes, then one starts to be aware of one's progress and can even catch a glimpse of the goal on the horizon.

During this Sádhaná path, the curves of one's entitative rhythm slowly become straightened; they start as rapid vibrations of a short wavelength, but the vibration of the mantra slowly soothes them and lengthens the wavelength. They say the vibration of one's Mantra should be constantly "rubbing" against one's own entitative rhythm like a piece of wood which is used to start a fire via the frictional heat generated by rubbing it against another piece of wood. In the second stage, the vibrational faculty get converted into the primordial faculty, Kalá is converted back into Náda. In the ultimate stage, this is transformed back into the original stance of Kaoshikii Shakti and one attains oneness with one's goal.

*Caetanya rahitáh mantráh proktavarñástu kevaláh;
Phalam naeva prayacchanti lakśa kofi prajapati.*

“Mantras without their corresponding ideation are merely a couple of letters mechanically uttered. They will not bear any fruit even if repeated a billion times.”

Yet, this is only possible when the Mantra is awakened. When the Mantra is able to enter the ectoplasm of the individual and to (a) vibrate the ectoplasms with the its rhythm and (b) cause the mind to flow with the idea of the Mantra, then the Mantra is said to be awakened. It is not actually that the Mantra “awakens”, but that in the mind of the aspirant the Mantra’s power is awakened. This is due to the aspirant’s purity (hence the necessity of Yama and Niyama) and efforts in Sádhaná. Until the aspirant achieves Mantra Caetanya, the Mantra is only a vibration. The vibration may awaken the Kuńd’alinii, but the Kuńd’alinii shall only move if the Mantra is repeated with ideation. Why is it so? Because as a pure vibration, the mantra can affect only the physical body and the psycho-physical level of mind, but in more subtle levels of mind Bháva (idea) is predominant and for Mantra to be effective at those levels it must be repeated with an understanding of its inner spirit. If the pulsative and incantative rhythm is not combined with a flow of Bháva then the Icchá Shakti (will force) of the aspirant will not become focused.

At one time, while loving Bábá was explaining the science of Mantra Caetanya in abstract detail, he paused, sensing a bit of bewilderment in the air, and with laughter in his voice said, “This Mantra Caetanya simply means understanding the meaning (i.e. inner spirit) of one’s Íś’a Mantra.”

Mantra Siddhi

When a meditator is able to establish parallelism of between his or her enatative rhythm and the cosmic rhythm, this is termed as “Mantra Siddhi”. Mantra Siddhi implies that one is able to transform one’s ectoplasmic structure according to the meaning of the Mantra. This is the stage beyond Mantra Caetanya. Mantra Caetanya implies that the aspirant has accessed the power of the Mantra, but Mantra Siddhi implies that the aspirant has mastered the Mantra.

Diikśá and Ádhyátmika Sádhaná

A normal person spends their whole life under the spell of Avidyámáyá. Some enjoy it, others suffer greatly from it, but most of us are

tossed here and there according to our Sañskáras. The Cosmic Mind is an impersonal entity, without much concern for the individual. So, without effort, without psycho-spiritual practice and psycho-phycial Karma (to burn Sañskáras) it is impossible to be one with the Supreme Enity. One cannot simply sit idle and pray to be saved by the Cosmic Mind. However, the universe has been designed by the benevolent hand of the Graceful Parama Puruśa, with the purpose to help those who follow Dharma and desire to merge with Him.

The journey to get Paramapada (Mokśa), one's spiritual life, begins with Diikśá. Diikśá itself is a great achievement, for it implies that lifetimes of living as a human being have prepared oneself to begin the spiritual journey. During Diikśá the aspirant achieves two essential requirements to begin the spiritual journey. The first is to have clarity about the object of life (the goal); the second is to have knowledge of the path and to be instructed in the spiritual science. Diipajiñána means, "torch"; during Diikśá, the aspirant's is not only shown the path, he or she is given the light by which they can navigate their way along this path. Diipajiñána is a part of Diikśá. It is the knowledge which allows a human being to move "from the darkness of animality to the effulgence of divinity."

Just as the process of creation has three steps, the journey of spiritual merger is a three step journey:

1. Kalá,
2. Náda,
3. Bindu.

The steps towards merger are opposite to those of the process of creation. Ádhyátmika¹⁴¹ Sádhaná is to withdraw the mind from the external physicality and the push this withdrawn mind towards Paramatmá by means of Diipanii, Mantrágháta and Mantra Caetanya. This very effort, this continuous effort, is called Ádhyátmika Sádhaná and only through Ádhyátmika Sádhaná will there be Pragati (true progress) in life.

Pragati¹⁴² = Pra+Gati. Actually, Pra+Gati is of latin origin, Pra means forward, Grati¹⁴³ means movement. Moving from the body to mind to

141 Ádhyátmika means "of the Átman". So Ádhyátmika Sádhaná is the Sádhaná of the Soul.

142 Progress

143 The English word grade, graduate, gradient, gradual, etc. come from the latin root "gradus" which

Átmán, from crude to subtle, is progress. Physically speaking there can be development, but really speaking there is no progress on the physical level; we cannot go beyond the limitations of the spatial, personal and temporal bondages. Development in the physical world can only be termed progress if that physical progress enhances the spiritual progress of humanity. Likewise, the mental world remains under these three bondages (though not so tightly as the physical world). In the mental world also, we can only speak of development, unless the mental development is such as to aide in our spiritual progress. Only in the spiritual and psycho-spiritual sphere is there scope for true progress. Only at that level do we move forward to an absolute goal, only the progress we make towards spirituality will remain with us in the next life. This is because only the spiritual world has a culminating point. One can roam about in the physical world and the psychic world endlessly without coming to a concrete goal. But in the spiritual world our movements are towards the Blissful entity, and so this movement leads to satisfaction of a lasting nature.

Sádhaná is an effort

The journey of returning home is called Sádhaná. The child was playing in the playground all the day long, merrily forgetful of his home and his mother, but when hunger sets in the little boy suddenly remembers home and the warm embrace of his mother who has prepared dinner in anticipation of his homecoming. Our minds get coloured by the sights and sounds, tastes and desires of this world. The moments we live through, due to our own actions, remain lodged in our mind. With such a coloured mind, full of Saṁskáras, we feel ashamed to present ourselves before the Lord, as one wearing a white garment would want to hide the stains when visiting the residence of a king. It is not possible to return home if one's mind is full of so many colours because home is the colourless world¹⁴⁴. We try in vain to get decoloured using some artificial means. The only effective decolouring process is Sádhaná¹⁴⁵. So, one searches for a Guru to learn the intuition science, and then makes a tireless effort to purify the mind while simultaneously moving closer towards one's

means "step forward"

144 "That one Supreme Entity is colourless. Why is He colourless? Because colours are all His creations. He created colours. So He cannot have any colour..." From the discourse Prayers - Cardinal and Non-cardinal in *Ánanda Vacanámrtam* Part 5

145 Sádhaná here includes Yama and Niyama Sádhaná. Notably, the practice of Saoca and Tapah. Of course, the practice of Guru Vandaná (offering of colors to Guru Brahma) is a practice directly aimed at removing the colours of the mind.

home. The effort is Sádhaná. According to scripture, there are three important points to remember if we want to be successful in our return journey:

1. Shravaña,
2. Manana,
3. Nididhyásana.

Shravaña

Shravaña means hearing the name of the Lord. One hears physical sounds with the help of our physical ears, but that type of hearing may or may not be beneficial. The ears can only hear the sounds vibrations that were created in the external world, but we cannot control what sounds come from the outside world. Some sounds cause happiness and some make us weep with sorrow. Sounds that cause happiness relax our nervous system, and sounds that cause sorrow create tension in our nervous system. This happiness and sorrow are nothing but two states of the nervous system, and furthermore, what makes us happy or sorrowful is dependent upon our habits and Sañskáras. That which makes us happy may not be good for us, for example the sounds emerging from a tavern make the drunkard feel happy, and that which makes us sad may actually be for our benefit, as a crude person will benefit by hearing Kiirtan even though he may not like it.

This type of worldly hearing is not enough, it is not Shravaña. Some sounds propel us on our spiritual journey by filling us with transcendental feelings and inspiring us with knowledge about our goal, and other sounds degrade our minds by making us long for worldly enjoyments. The senses usually are not helpful for spiritual progress, rather they tend to distract the Sádhaka. However, if we gain control over the senses and thereafter use them in a judicious manner, then they can be tremendously beneficial. Through Shravaña we employ a rather cunning strategy: we make the ears into an instrument to help change the mind and to stimulate a longing for the Supreme within our Soul. Hence, in the first stage we learn to use our senses to assist us in our spiritual journey, rather than allowing them to impede our progress. Shravaña means to cultivate the habit to listen to the name and the prayers of Hari Kathá.

The senses easily excite our minds when they are employed extroversially, and so when listening to negative discussions or watching

some sensational movies, the mind can easily remain awake all night, forgetting our need for sleep. To do such things requires no effort and it can be understood that the senses have become the master and controller of the person, and the person will employ his will power simply to gratify the desires of the senses. On the other hand, when it comes time to use the ears to listening to the great name of Hari, then the mind normally feels sleepy. We must work hard to develop the habit and only once the habit is developed will the name of Hari energize us. Two points should be remembered for one who wants to develop this habit. First, avoid the negative use of the senses by being careful to keep in good environments and spending time with good people. Second, Shravaña is a practice, we must make efforts and do it regularly. Once one has developed the habitual control over the ears then he or she will want to listen to His name and will feel bored and disinterested to hear degrading things. The devotee proclaims, "If at all I am to listen to anything, I shall hear the name of Hari; if I am to speak, I then I should speak of His glory; if I will think something, then I should think of only Him."

Kiirtan: Singing and Listening

Hearing lectures about Parama Puruṣa and spiritual topics are included in Shravaña, but they are not the most effective form. Through Kiirtan, an aspirant employs multiple motor and sensory organs in a joyful and rhythmical dance that keeps the mind flowing with the name of Hari. The sound of the Kiirtan drowns out all other worldly noises, so it is easy to withdraw the senses from the world. At the same time the music and dancing produce happiness (it is fun to sing and dance!) and cause the mind to sway to the rhythm. If the name of Hari is attuned to the rhythm of the music, then the mind's enjoyment of music and dance will automatically keep the mind engaged in hearing and speaking the name of Hari.

The culminating point of the primordial faculty and the starting point of the vibrational faculty are one and the same¹⁴⁶. This vibrational phase is called "Bhavaságar". In Saṁskṛta Bhava means to 'to be', the cognitive principle is Bháva and the operative principle is Bhavánii. This expressed universe comes within the scope of the vibrational faculty. Here

146 i.e. The final point of Náda (primordial faculty) is the originating point of Kalá (vibrational faculty). We hear His name in the form of a Mantra to traverse Kalá and reach to the point of Náda.

everything is characterized by change. The baby boy becomes a youth, then an adolescent which grows into a man full of vigor, and then later that robust personality is transformed into a decrepit old man. During this process, the story of a person's life was played out on the universal stage, intricately woven into the stories of everyone else's life as part of the powerful Cosmic Drama. When his little story comes to an end, the man's body dies and everyone cries bitterly, but slowly his memory fades from importance as everyone continues on with their own stories; but actually, he is not gone, he has only be further transformed (reborn) from an old man into a child again, to weave a new tale into the flow of the vibrational faculty. This is Bhavaságara, Bhava here means "being"; it is filled with ups and downs, and people feel fear at both the tremendous size and power of the Universe, as well as at all the dangers, the snakes, sharks, earthquakes and plane crashes, that can end our little stories. But how to surmount Bhavaságara? This is only possible through Shravana. Through listening to Hari Kathá and through doing His Kiirtana one may traverse Kalá.

Manana

After listening to the name of Paramátmá and eulogies of His greatness (Shravaña), one's mind is prepared for Manana or contemplation. Manana means to think repeatedly about Paramátmá. In Manana one need not repeat the same words over and over, but the same idea should be repeated contemplated upon¹⁴⁷. Manana is a preliminary stage, eventually one is to select (or be given) one and only one of the vibrational expressions of His name and this shall be your Íśta Mantra. Even though there may be various other sonic expressions that have the same meaning as one's Íśta Mantra, one only wants to hear and only wants to repeat internally the sound of one's Íśta Mantra; all other sounds will clash with the internal vibration of one's Íśta Mantra and so no other sound can be accepted. The interaction with any object (other than one's Íśta) will tend to break the ideational flow of one's Mantra. By imposing "Brahma Bháva" with the help of Madhu Vidyá one can protect one's ideation and thereby maintain the flow of mind while working in the external world. Guru Mantra is the unique and practical system to practice Madhu Vidyá. Manana upon one's Íśta enables an aspirant

¹⁴⁷ Japa is to repeat the same word (and therefor also the same idea) over and over. Hence, repeating "Hari, Hari, Hari..." is Japa. Japa comes under the category of Manana, because in Japa the same idea is repeated along with the same word. But in contemplation (Manana) one may use different words so long as the idea is of the Supreme; so Manana is not necessarily Japa.

to reach the pinnacled point of the primordial faculty, i.e. to the verge of the imbalanced triangle wherefrom 'Sphot 'a' was originally expressed. This is how an aspirant may reach to the Náda stage of creation.

Nididhyásana

What remains to achieve? The feeling of "I-ness" remains to be surrendered. All the bondages, worries, respect disrespects are due to this "I". After sacrificing everything to reach the goal, this "I" remains as the final stumbling block on the way to liberation. This does not mean that one had made some mistake. We need the "I-ness" to be human beings, in fact it is what distinguishes us from animals. For humans, our separateness of self is our highest treasure. The value it holds for each of us is proven by the suffering we undergo for its preservation. Why then do we not cast it off? Because no matter how simple animal life seems, and no matter how much struggle and suffering we must undergo as human beings, we would never trade this human life for the ease of animal existence. Just like a mother, even though her children are a great burden, would never be removed of this burden. Because due to this individuality, this "I-ness", a person can also gain very much. We cannot just get rid of it and become animals again.

You see, the self is like a vehicle that shall lead us to Parama Puruśa; its nature is to move, so we should not be attached to the form that our self takes at this moment. The problem with this "I" arises because we misunderstand the purpose the self. When we think that our individuality is real, i.e. when we think that the self has a purpose of its own, then we try to "live a life of the self" and direct our energy to the growth of our petty self and make our individuality the object of our life. In the words of Tagore, "Then we are doomed to disappointment like the man who tries to reach his destination by firmly clutching the dust of the road¹⁴⁸." We must use our "I-ness" to travel on the path, to move closer and closer to Him, because to do Sádhaná requires an ego and a developed "I feeling". But in the end, we must cast off this "I-ness" and merge into Him. We must offer our self, our "I", to Him. The first phase of surrender is to say, "my 'I' has come from You and so it is to be used to do Your work, to do Your Sádhaná, to follow Your Ideology (Dharma)." In the second phase, we internally surrender this "I-feeling", we surrender our separateness, and merge into Him.

148 From: Tagore, Rabindranath. Sadhana

*Ratnákarakastava grhañ grhiñi ca Padma
Deyañ kimapi bhavate Puruśottamáya.
Ábhiiravámanayanápahrtamánasáya
Dattañ mana yadupate tvamidañ grháña.*

“Your abode is brimming over with gems and jewels. The goddess of fortune is Your housekeeper. What can I offer to You, O Lord? Oh yes, there is one thing You lack, as it has been stolen by Your devotees; it is Your mind. I therefore offer my mind to You. Please accept it.”

In order to surrender the “I”, all the vrttis must become pointed. Nididhyásana means to focus the mind on one object. Hence, all the Vrttis of mind shall be pinpointed, then we will be able to offer our mind to Parama Puruśa. The human beings have more Vrttis, fifty in total, than animals or primitive humans because we have more glands and sub-glands than animals or primitive humans. If the human structure develops more glands and sub-glands, then the number of Vrttis will increase further. These vrttis allow the mind to be attracted to the physical and psychic world in a vast multitude of ways. It is simply impossible to focus all these Vrttis by force of will, but through devotion all the Vrttis get attracted towards the Singular Entity and through this attraction they become focused.

Everything in this relative world is changing; no concept, sentiment, standard of excellence, or body of knowledge will stay the course of time. In future the concept of beauty will change, what we find awkward looking today could well stand out as the ideal worthy of emulation. That what is adored today will be forgotten tomorrow. Nothing in this world of change is constant or reliable. Those who seek truly lasting peace cannot accept a relative entity as their object of adoration or ideation. Hence, we must take the embodiment of Satya, the unchanging entity which is beyond this universe, as our object of ideation. Shravaña takes the aspirant from crude to subtle expressions of the vibrational principle (Kalá), right up to the point where the vibrational principle first emerged from the primordial principle. Manana takes the aspirant to the point where the primordial principal (Náda) emerges, and Nididyásana takes the aspirant to the center of the balanced triangle of forces, to the Causal Matrix; the spiritual aspirant becomes one with Paramapurusa. In this stage of Nididyásana, the final gap between Jiiva and Shiva is bridged, but this cannot be done by the mind or by the

Sádha's efforts; knowledge and action, though essential at earlier stages, are no longer of any value. Nididyásana is only possible through devotion. Only through devotion is one's relation to God personalized, and one gets carried across to the other shore. The entity which bridges the gap between Jiiva and Shiva is called Táraka Brahma. "Táraka Brahma is not a figure of philosophy – it is a creation of devotional sentiment."¹⁴⁹ It is rightly said: -

Bhakti Bhaktasya Jiivanam

Shravaña can transform the extroversial attraction of the senses into an attraction for Parama Puruśa, and as so by degrees the mental waves are less agitated by external attractions. In this way the waves of Kalá are gradually straightened. In Manana the mind learns to think of Him, and the waves of Kála straighten further until Kalá becomes Náda. But one still remains separate, the "I" still exists. Then by Nididhyásana one's Vrttis are focused on the goal and begin to flow towards him, until one finally merges into the Supreme. On this journey the use of an Íśta Mantra is essential. Through Shravaña and Manana the Mantra will become awakened, this is Mantra Caetanya. Only after Mantra Caetanya is achieved can one practice Nididhyásana and realize Mantra Siddhi.

Unknowingly all Jiivas, in the form of bacteria, plants, insects and animals, have been moving towards Parama Puruśa. When they achieve human form, then still they continue to move unknowingly. Still, so long as people have a sense of what is good and ethical, so long as they can listen to the inner voice of discrimination, then, by the Grace of Parama Puruśa, they will continue to slowly move forward and will not degrade to animality. But this is a very slow progress and a person can never hope to move very near to the goal in this way. Furthermore, there will be so many temptations and until one embraces the spiritual path there is every likelihood of immoral behavior. Dharma is defined as Brhadeśańprańidhánam ca Dharmah¹⁵⁰. Which means that Dharma is to desire the Supreme and to knowingly move towards Him. The closer one moves, the more one realizes that it was only by His Grace that one is able to move. With tear-filled eyes, the Sádha wants to offer something to Him, and the only thing to be offered is one's surrender. Sharańágati means complete surrender, it is the final word in spirituality.

149 In Ánanda Súttram, Táraka Brahma is defined as, Bhávah bhávítitayoh setuh Tárakabrahma. "The bridge between Nirguńa Brahma and Saguńa Brahma is called Táraka (Liberating) Brahma."

150 Ánanda Súttram, Súra 2-6.

*Api cet sudurácáro bhajate mámananyabhák
Sópi pápavinirmukto mucyate bhavabandhanát.
Daevii hyeśá guñamayii mama Máyá duratyayá
Mámeva ye prapadyante Máyámetám taranti te.*

“This Máyá is a dangerous force. The dexterous hands of Máyá create so many problems, and these problems are dangerous: Aghat ‘ana ghatana pat ‘iyasii Máyá. It is very difficult for human beings to surmount the effect of Máyá. But I am there. Those who have resorted to Sharañágati, who have taken shelter in me, will easily surmount these waves of difficulties, of worries and anxieties in life. Even sinners should depend upon me – I am here to help them.”

*Púrñamadah Púrnamidam púrñát púrñámudacyate.
Púrñasya púrñamádáya púrñamevávashisyate.*

“This is infinite and That also is infinite. The perfect has given rise to the perfect and if infinite be taken from the infinite, the remainder also is infinite.” This refers to Nirguña Brahma; That refers to Saguña Brahma. Saguña Brahma arises out of Nirguña Brahma, but Nirguña Puruśa is neither affected by the creation nor is He diminished in the slightest, He remains in His blissful stance, unaffected by the process of creation and merger.

Conclusion

Now that you have gone through this brief treatise on the spiritual science, you have understood the goal of human life and are aware that the means to reach that goal are close at hand. You have also understood that to feel the urge inside is not enough, one must move and one must move with all the energy and speed which one possesses. Do not waste now any more time! Move forward, without doubt (there is nothing to lose except your bondages). Do not idle your life away, pacifying the cry of your heart with meagre pleasures. Take possession of your Cosmic birth-right as a human being, enter onto to the glorious path of Dharma Sádhaná.

What is the next step? Seek out an Ácárya of Ánanda Márga. Learn your Íśta Mantra and the science of intuitional practice. Then you will have the strength (Iccháhakti) to change the direction of your life. Become

simple in wants, pure in heart, and take up the responsibilities of a spiritual Sádha. There is nothing else you need to do in life except this. In the words of Rumi, "existence knows no greater gift than this." So, give yourself the ultimate gift that life has to offer. It is also the greatest thing which you can do for your family, friends and for all of humanity. You have come this far, you have picked up this book because inside you were looking for something. So, don't just turn to the next page. Get up this very moment and resolve to realize your spiritual destiny.

Glossary

ÁCARYA m. or **ÁCARYÁ** f. Spiritual teacher qualified to give initiation and teach all lessons of meditation.

AHAM, AHAMTATTVA. Doer “I”, ego, second mental subjectivity.

ÁNANDA. Divine bliss.

ANANDA MARGA. Path of divine bliss; **Ánanda Marga Pracáraka Samgha** (Ananda Marga organization).

ÁTMA, ÁTMAN. Soul, consciousness, **PURUŚA**, pure cognition. The átman of the Cosmos is **PARAMÁTMAN**, and that of the unit is the **jiivátman**.

AVADHÚTA m. or **AVADHÚTIKÁ** f. Literally, “one who is thoroughly cleansed mentally and spiritually”; a monk or nun of an order close to the tradition of Shaeva Tantra.

BALA. Energy.

BHAKTI. Devotion.

BHAVA. The expressed universe.

BHÚTA, BHÚTATATTVA, MAHÁBHÚTA. Rudimental, or fundamental, factor of matter. The five bhútas are the ethereal, the aerial, the luminous, the liquid and the solid; and they carry, respectively, the **TANMÁTRAs** of sound, touch, form, taste and smell.

BODHI. Intuition.

BRAHMA. Supreme Entity, comprising both **PURUŚA**, or **SHIVA**, and **PRAKRTI**, or **SHAKTI**.

BRAHMA CAKRA. The Cosmic Cycle – the cycle of creation out of Consciousness, and dissolution back into Consciousness, through **SAINÇARA** and **PRATISAINÇARA**.

BUDDHI, BUDDHITATVA. Intellect.

CAKRA. Cycle or circle; psycho-spiritual centre, or plexus. The cakras in the human body are all located along the suśumná canal which passes through the length of the spinal column and extends up to the crown of the head.

Some cakras, however, are associated with external concentration points.

The concentration points for the cakras: (1) for the múládhára cakra, the base of the spine, above the perineum; (2) for the svádhísthána, the base of the genital organ; (3) for the mañipura, the navel; (4) for the anáhata, the mid-point of the chest; (5) for the vishuddha, the throat; (6) for the ájiná, between the eyebrows; and (7) for the sahasrára, the crown of the head.

CITTA. Done "I", objective "I", objective mind, mind-stuff.

CITTÁÑU. Literally, "atom of mind-stuff"; ectoplasmic particle.

DHARMA. Characteristic property; spirituality; the path of righteousness in social affairs.

GUÑA. Binding factor or principle; attribute; quality.

PRAKRTI, the Cosmic Operative Principle, is composed of: sattvaguña, the sentient principle; rajoгуña, the mutative principle; and tamoguña, the static principle.

INDRIYA. One of the five sensory organs (eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin) or five motor organs (hands, feet, vocal cord, genital organ and excretory organ). The eye indriya (for example) comprises the eye itself, the optical nerve, the fluid in the nerve, and the location in the brain at which the visual stimulus is transmitted to the ectoplasm, or mind-stuff.

JIVÁTMA, JIVÁTMAN. See ÁTMÁ.

KALÁ. Flow with curvature, in a stage of the Cosmic Cycle dominated by the mutative principle.

KOŚA. "Level" or "layer" of the mind (either Macrocosmic Mind or microcosmic mind) in terms of its degree of subtlety or crudeness.

KUÑDALINII, KULAKUÑDALINII. Literally, "coiled serpentine"; sleeping divinity; the force dormant in the kula (lowest vertebra) of the body, which, when awakened, rises up the spinal column to develop all one's spiritual potentialities.

LOKA. A "level", or "layer", or "sphere" of the Macrocosmic Mind.

MAHÁBHŪTA. See BHŪTA.

MAHATTATVA. "I" ("I am," "I exist") feeling, existential "I".

MARGI. A member of ANANDA MARGA.

NIRGUÑA BRAHMA. BRAHMA unaffected by the GUÑAS; Non-Qualified Brahma.

PARAMÁ PRAKRTI. Supreme Operative Principle.

PARAMA PURUŚA. Supreme Consciousness.

PARAMASHIVA. See PURUŚOTTAMA.

PARAMÁTMÁ, PARAMÁTMAN. Supreme Consciousness in the role of witness of His own macropsychic conation. Paramátman comprises: (1) PURUŚOTTAMA, the Macrocosmic Nucleus; (2) Puruśottama's association with all creation in His extroversive movement (prota yoga); and (3) Puruśottama's association with each unit creation individually (ota yoga) and (4) with all collectively (prota yoga) in His introversive movement.

PRAKRTI. Cosmic Operative Principle.

PRÁÑĀ. Energy.

PRÁÑÁH. Vital energy.

PRATISAINÇARA. In the Cosmic Cycle, the step-by-step introversion and subtilization of consciousness from the state of solid matter to the Nucleus Consciousness. (Prati means "counter" and sainçara means "movement".)

PURUŚA. Consciousness.

PURUŚOTTAMA, PARAMASHIVA. The Nucleus Consciousness, the witness of sainçara and PRATISAINÇARA.

RAJOGUÑA. See GUÑAS.

SADGURU. Literally, "the guru who leads one to Sat, the Unchangeable Entity"; the highest spiritual guru.

SÁDHAKA. Spiritual practitioner.

SÁDHANÁ. Literally, "sustained effort"; spiritual practice; meditation.

SADVIPRA. Spiritual revolutionary.

SAGUÑA BRAHMA. BRAHMA affected by the GUÑAS; Qualified Brahma.

SAINÇARA. In the Cosmic Cycle, the step-by-step extroversion and crudification of consciousness from the Nucleus Consciousness to the state of solid matter. (Sainçara literally means "movement".)

SAMÁDHI. "Absorption" of the unit mind into the Cosmic Mind (savikalpa samádhi) or into the ÁTMAN (nirvikalpa samádhi).

SAMÁJA. Society.

SAMSKÁRA. Mental reactive momentum, potential mental reaction.

SATTVAGUÑA. See GUÑAS.

SHAKTI. PRAKRTI; energy; a deification of Prakrti.

SHAMBHÚLIUNGA. Fundamental positivity.

SHIVA. A great Tantric guru of 5000 BCE who guided society while His mind was absorbed in Consciousness; hence, Infinite Consciousness, PURUŚA.

SÚTRA. Literally, "thread" (on which numerous jewels of thought can be strung); aphorism.

SVAYAMBHÚLIUNGA. Ultimate point of negativity or crudity in the human body.

TAMOGUÑA. See GUÑAS.

TANMÁTRA. Literally, "minutest fraction of that," i.e., of a given rudimental factor of matter. Also translated "generic essence" or "inferential wave".

The various types of tanmátras convey the senses of hearing, touch, form (vision), taste and smell.

TÁRAKA BRAHMA. Supreme Consciousness in Its liberating aspect.

VIDYÁ SHAKTI. Centripetal, or introversial, force; force of attraction to the Nucleus Consciousness; aspect of the Cosmic Operative Principle which guides movements from the crude to the subtle.

VRTTI. Mental propensity.

YOGA. Spiritual practice leading to unification of the unit ÁTMAN with PARAMÁTMAN.

Roman Saṁskṛta

Realizing the necessity of writing swiftly and of pronouncing the words of different languages correctly, the under noted Roman Saṁskṛta (Sanskrit) alphabet has been adopted. Those not familiar with either the Devnagari alphabet or the Bengali alphabet below please see the pronunciation key on page ix.

a á i ii u ú r rr lr lrr e ae o ao am ah
 অ আ ই ঈ উ ঊ ঋ ঌ ল্ ল্ৰ এ ঐ অঃ অঃ
 অ আ ই ঐ উ ঊ ঋ ঌ ঋ ঌ এ ঐ ও ঔ অঃ অঃ

ka kha ga gha ṁa ca cha ja jha iṅa

ক খ গ ঘ ঙ চ চ্ছ জ জ্জ ঙ
 ক খ গ ঘ ঙ চ চ্ছ জ ঙ ঙ

ṭa ṭha ḍa ḍha ṇa ta tha da dha na

ট ঠ ড ঢ ণ ত থ দ ধ ন
 ট ঠ ড ঢ ণ ত থ দ ধ ন

pa pha ba bha ma ya ra la va

প ফ ব ভ ম য র ল ব
 প ফ ব ভ ম য র ল ব

sha śa sa ha kśa

শ ষ স হ ক্ষ
 শ ষ স হ ক্ষ

aṅ jīṅa rśi chāyá jīṅána saṁskṛta tatohaṁ piṅgalá

ঐ ঙ ঋষি চায়া জ্ঞান সংস্কৃত ততোহং পিঙ্গলা
 ঐ ঙ ঋষি ছায়া জ্ঞান সংস্কৃত ততোহং পিঙ্গলা

PRONUNCIATION KEY

This key is a guide to the pronunciation of the Sanskrit words in this book. In the cases of those few words of other languages (such as Bengali and Hindi) romanized in this book, the pronunciations will be similar but not exactly the same.

a = "a" in "mica"

á = "a" in "father"

i = "i" in "folio"

ii = somewhat prolonged *i*

u = "u" in "lute"

ú = somewhat prolonged *u*

r (alone or followed by consonant) = *ri* in Spanish *carido*

rr = *rri* in Spanish *corrida*

lr = *l + ri*

lrr = *l + rri*

e = "e" in "cachet"

ae = "ai" in "kaiser"

o = "o" in "open"

ao = "au" in "sauerkraut"

m̄i = a nasalization of the preceding vowel, sometimes similar to "ng" in "sung"

h (following vowel, but not followed by a vowel) = aspirated version of the vowel, or *ha* sound appended to the vowel. E.g., *vah* = either *va* with aspiration (expelling breath), or *vaha* sound.

kh, gh, ch, jh, th, dh, th, dh, ph = aspirated versions of consonants (expelling breath)

uḡa = nasalized "wa" ("a" in "mica"). Combining form *uḡ* before *k, kh, g, gh* = "n" pronounced naturally for that location.

iḡa = nasalized "ya" ("a" in "mica"). Combining form *iḡ* before *c, ch, j, jh* = "n" pronounced naturally for that location.

ṭ = cerebral "t" (tip of tongue touches centre of palate)

ḍ = cerebral "d" (tip of tongue touches centre of palate)

ṇ = cerebral "n" (tip of tongue touches centre of palate)

t = dental "t" (tip of tongue touches upper teeth)

d = dental "d" (tip of tongue touches upper teeth)

y at beginning of word = "j" in "jump". In middle of word = "y" in "you".

v at beginning of word = "v" in "victory". In middle of word = "w" in "awaken".

sh = palatal "s" (tip of tongue touches back of palate), "sh" in "shall" or "ss" in "issue"

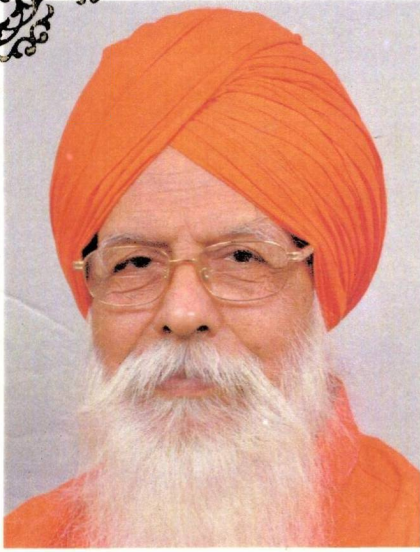
ś = cerebral "s" (tip of tongue touches centre of palate), "sh" in "shun" or "bush"

kś = either aspirated version of "k" (expelling breath), or "k" + "sh"

ṅ (preceded by vowel other than *i* or *u*) = nasalization of vowel

jīṅa = "gya" ("a" in "mica")

jīṅá = "gya" ("a" in "father")



Ācārya Rudrānanda Avadhūta is one of the senior most Sanyāsii and Purodhā of Ānanda Mārga Pracāraka Samgha. He was initiated in Ānanda Mārga on 16th July 1961 by family Ācārya Tārakeshvarajii. And the very next day, he was graced to have Personal Contact (PC) with the Guru, Revered Baba Shrii Shrii Ānandamūrtijii. Bābā Himself pronounced him as Tattvika in 1964; later that year he became a Whole-Time Sanyāsii and dedicated his life to the upliftment of humanity by working for Ānanda Mārga. In 1966, he was initiated into Kāpālīka Sādhanā and subsequently became an Avadhūta. Finally, on the recommendation of Revered Mārga Gurudeva, Ācārya Rudrānanda was given the lessons of Viśeṣa Yoga in 1989 by Ācārya Shraddhānanda Avadhūta.

Ācārya Rudrānandajii's first posting was as a trainer in the monastic Whole Time Training Center located at

Sigarā (Vārānāsii). This was the first WT training centre of Ānanda Mārga. He was subsequently posted in Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Orissa, Raipur, Kerala, Bhopal, Bikaner, Jarwā, Thanō (Dehradun), Muradnagar etc. Everywhere he went, he was successful in establishing Ānanda Mārga units, starting service activities and spread spirituality using his dynamic and spiritual personality. It was not long before he was elected as a member of Central Committee of AMPS in 1994. During his time as a central member of Ānanda Mārga, Ācārya Rudrānandajii served as the person responsible for numerous key departments of AMPS such as ISMUB, Master Unit, PRS, GTS etc. Increasingly, he became a pivotal member in the organization. During this period, he played leading role in guiding the Organization. He visited many overseas countries to inspect the various spiritual centers, service projects and offices of Ānanda Mārga, as well as inspired WT's by sharing his experiences and wisdom as to how to move those projects as per the guidelines of Revered Baba. Everywhere he went, he gave lectures and never stopped teaching people the deep spiritual truths which he realized in the process of his own Sādhanā. Most recently he was posted as the GTS, being responsible for training WT Sanyasiis/ins across the globe. Dadajii has constructed a new building for Training Centre for WT candidates at Ānanda Dhārā situated at the bank of the river Ganges at a distance of 13 kilometers from Vārānāsii.



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