



FEARLESSNESS IS THE DIRECT ANTIDOTE TO GRIEF

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

One virtue alone is not perfection, as one limb does not constitute a man completely. Man is a composite of many parts, and perfection is composed of many excellences. Yet, if one virtue can be singled out as having enjoyed the privilege of the Lord's admiration (in the Gita), it is fearlessness in all its aspects; fearlessness that makes one a hero in the words of the Kathopanishad: 'who would dare to defy Nature with the power of the Creator behind her, and to make the outgoing senses turn inward and the externalised current of thought flow within to discover its source and substratum.'

'Grieve not', is the keynote of the Gita. Fearlessness is the direct antidote to grief. When a fear is born or when a fear materialises, man is sunk in grief. Fearlessness, therefore, cuts grief at the very root.

Understood in its proper light, this fearlessness itself is the fountain of virtues; for, more often, man errs and sins, not because he is unwilling to practise virtue but because he does not have the courage, the heroism, that fearless daring to hold aloft the banner of virtue even at the point of death; it is fear of something or other that makes him creep underneath vice even though he knows that it should not be there. With fearlessness sincerity will gain strength and earnestness will be effective. The man from whose heart fear has been expelled will be firm in his truth, unwavering in his devotion, unflinching in his resolves, indefatigable in his service and

Sadhana; for the fear has been driven out the greatest obstacle to spiritual progress,—weakness.

It is when you feel that you are a puny little creature, when the whole Nature opposes you, when your safety and security are threatened by everyone else in the world,—only then deluded notions are found present in your ignorant mind and your knees begin to tremble and your heart sinks in fear; not when you meditate on sublime truths such as: 'I am the Self that dwells in the hearts of all beings', 'God is seated in the hearts of all beings, making them all revolve on the wheel of His Maya', 'God is the thread that links all beings in the universe'. The self-same God that dwells in you dwells in all, from the highest divine being, the Creator, to the tiniest creature here. There is not a second entity in the universe whom you need fear. It is sheer ignorance of this Unity that generates fear. Fearlessness, therefore, implies annihilation of ignorance and realisation of Unity or Oneness.

In ignorance you desire, and of ignorance fear is born. Fear is obviously connected with desire. Fear of not attaining the desired object, fear of losing the object desired and obtained, fear of acquiring the object the absence of which is desired,—these constitute the basic fears. Desire is, therefore, termed by the Lord Krishna as the greatest enemy of man. Desire is slain by the

proper understanding of Truth, by discrimination and dispassion, by contentment and constant practice of Sadhana. When desire is slain man shall attain a balanced mind, viz., not getting elated when a desired thing is obtained, not shrinking away when an undesirable thing is encountered. This attitude of mind towards life, this state of desirelessness is attained when man realises that it is some divine power behind everything that works here, and gives up all egoistic notions. Then will one truly understand the fact that the Master of this vast house we call the universe, is God, that His Will shall be done here and all beings here dance to His tunes. No one, in fact, is your enemy and no one, in reality, is eager to harm the other. All beings are your own Self, whether you realise it or not; the same God who is the reality of your being dwells in all.

The real enemy, on the other hand, is within you—the impure mind, the desire-filled heart, the fountain of *Raga-dweshha*, and the inveterate egoism. If fear you must, fear this diabolical nature of your own mind. If you must run away from something or somebody, run away from this inner evil aspect of your own self. When you conquer this inner enemy, you will find that you have no external enemy to fear. When you vanquish this inner enemy and run away from it, you will find that the growing feeling of unity and oneness draws you closer to all beings on earth and draws all beings closer to you. When fear dies, love is born, which is your essential nature. For, love is the light of the sun of unity and oneness. In fact, fear is not part of the essential nature but is the product of ignorance,—fear of the unknown. When this ignorance is removed by a correct understanding of the nature of the universe and of God, you will realise that fear had no basis at

all—in truth all fears are baseless. With fearlessness thus regained, you will recover not only that priceless pearl of *Atma-jnana*, but also the sweetest elixir of life—love.

The Self residing in all beings is indestructible; it does not die with the body. The present life that is apparently revealed to you is but a fleeting moment in Eternity; why worry over it? Life belongs to you; not death, for you never die. Better seize the moment and make the best of it. Live wisely while there is life, and well in accordance with Dharma, righteousness. Dedicate your life to the moment, and out of this union will spring Eternal Life. For your soul is immortal; and if you put your heart and soul into your life every moment, your life, too, will share the characteristics of your soul. In the joy and satisfaction acquired in the performance of your duty in the right spirit, when the past and the future vanish from your thought, the present becomes the Eternal Now.

In the death of the physical body, life departs from the body in order to live in another, fresh one. Life knows no death. It is, therefore, because of this fact that man does not even like diseases which seriously interfere with life. But the physical body with which man is associated while alive as an individual here is, somehow or other, subject to diseases, decay, and death. Whatever theory modern science may put forth, the root-cause of diseases is unknown. Man dreads diseases. The antidote to this fear is the realisation of their transitoriness and that they belong to the negative forces of the universe which have no real existence. Life is eternal, not death. And life implies the condition we know as health which is nothing but living life perfectly. Diseases are the inevitable concomitants of the body composed of the five elements; therefore, cheerfully endure

them, knowing full well their fleeting character. Youth, manhood, old age, etc., are but periods; and periods are rolling waves on the ocean of eternity. Eternity is your essential nature; therefore, look with unconcerned tranquility at the transient waves of childhood, youth, manhood and old age. Fear of change will vanish when you are rooted in the Changeless Immortality of thy essential nature.

The same argument of the transitory nature of mundane objects and the fleeting characteristics of life on earth, is brought forth to counteract man's fear of losing his possessions. The objects of this world, it should be noted, are not only impermanent, but are the wombs of pain and misery. The wise man would shun them. This dispassion is the most powerful antidote to the fear of losing wealth or property. The fear of loss can be eradicated totally by the acquisition of 'That treasure', gaining which nothing else would be considered worth aspiring for—the knowledge of the Treasure of treasures,—Atma-jnana. The aspirant who would like to gain That would love to lose everything else and every loss would be for him a joyous gain. This change in the angle of vision is the best remedy for fear.

Honour is a bait that has caught many a man and hooked him to transmigration. It is an illusion; but, withal, more powerful than even the illusion of grosser sense-pleasures. The fear of losing honour has produced a fountain of vices. To maintain honour man would shrink from no crime. History abounds with examples of *Asuric* men who would not hesitate to sacrifice millions of lives in order to sustain their honour, their position as 'Kings' and 'Emperors'. There is a tendency to mistake *Kirti* (renown) for honour. They feel that as our epics or Puranas have equated

Akirti (ill repute) to a position worse than death, it is the primary duty of everyone to preserve his honour. But *Kirti* is not honour. Very often *Kirti* has been constructed out of the ashes of honour, as is exemplified in the lives of Dharmaputra, Harischandra, Nala and many others. What an amount of dishonor they had to court and honour they had to lose, before their *Kirti* could be established on earth. This *Kirti* has not the exact equivalent in the English language, though for lack of a better word it is translated as 'fame'. *Kirti* is a good thing; it is the fragrance of righteousness that emanates from great souls and attracts mankind to them; it is the resplendent lustre that surrounds the divine among men and inspires others to grow in virtue. Therefore, it promotes virtue, but honour may or may not. People emulate the example of men of *Kirti*. Hence it is that Lord Sri Krishna extols *Kirti* while He treats honour and dishonor with equal indifference. What is, however, significant is that *Kirti* is entirely subjective, it is the fragrance of one's illumined soul, so that it can never be taken away from him unless he himself chooses to lose it by 'losing the soul'. Therefore, while man may fear that he may lose his honour through the actions of others, he possibly cannot lose his *Kirti* in that manner. There is, as such, no fear of losing *Kirti*. And losing *Kirti* in the sense of losing the fragrance of Dharma or righteousness is quite unworthy.

The Gita and other scriptures teach man that he has no enemies outside of himself. He is himself his friend or enemy as he chooses to be. Hence to one who practises Dharma or righteousness there is no enemy in the world, and he is not subject to fear. The inner enemy has to be conquered, the external enemy has to be loved as dearly as the dearest friend. Love which is born of this attitude towards all

creation as the manifestation of the All-pervasive Lord enables one to live intensely for the welfare of all mankind, giving to every moment his very soul which is eternal, thereby ignoring fear which does not belong to his nature, enduring diseases and old age which are passing phases, and remaining indifferent to loss of wealth and honour which are il-

lusory and unnecessary to his glorious mission in life—loving service to all humanity in the conviction, '*Vasudevah sarvam iti*' (all this is the Lord Vasudeva himself). Thus is utter fearlessness gained and man's heart filled with cosmic love.

* * *

THE PATH OF THE SADHAKA

(Sri Swami Chidananda)

In the history of mankind great people have graced all times and climes. When occasions arose, when there was need for some talent and need for some effort which was above the ordinary (where ordinary talent and effort would not suffice), then something above the ordinary, not necessarily miraculous, manifests itself. But it expands its energy and effort upon a widely varying field.

Towering personalities have come, and there have been many who have dedicated their entire lives on earth for political purposes. Unique personalities like Lincoln and others gave up all they held dear in order to achieve emancipation of slaves. Others like Father Damien sacrificed themselves in trying to battle with disease like leprosy. There have been eminent scientists who have given up their lives in effecting certain discoveries which they hoped will benefit humanity. Many great personalities have offered their entire lives for the cause of the freedom of their country. Mahatma Gandhi fought against untouchability and foreign rule in the land. But a unique function has been reserved for an exceptional class, the Children of Light,

chosen by God, to awaken man from his sleep of materialism and to direct his eyes inward and upward, towards matters concerning higher life and freedom from the wheel of birth and death. This has been the special function of saints. The inspiring, awakening and guiding of seekers have been the prime motive behind Sri Swami Sivanandaji's life work. In Sri Swamiji we have such a one who has dedicated his entire life for this last mentioned purpose.

Let us see, what are the broad outlines upon which he would have us proceed if we make realisation of the Self the goal of life. He has given us certain working methods inasmuch as practical ways and means are more to be attended to, rather than mere theory. The spiritual life is to be built upon and sustained by the important supports, viz., a well-conceived clear ideal, a definite programme of life and a background of thought. To proceed upon the spiritual life for any of us, the first requisite, naturally, which goes without saying, is that the individual should have an ideal. He should want something and he should aim at getting something.

There are ideas and ideals. One makes up his mind to develop an extraordinary physique, to be the perfect figure; another has got the ideal of going round the world as many times as possible; another to amass a million. At the back of every human effort, there is some sort of an unconsciously accepted ideal. For the aspirant, he must have a spiritual ideal which he has set himself to achieve. This is the first requisite.

Secondly, after having conceived of the ideal which he wants to reach, any haphazard method will never take him anywhere. It will be wastage of both precious life as well as fast ebbing energy, because energy travels in an arc—man begins with weakness, has got a hay-day of energy in the middle, and afterwards it is a period of decline. So it is only in the little portion in the middle age, in the form of youth, that man can devote all his energy to achieve some purpose. Therefore, unless it is properly directed, planned and channelised, energy will become wasted. It is imperative that after having conceived an ideal, it is the duty of every aspirant (by the word 'aspirant', it is not necessarily meant a young Mumukshu, but everyone who wishes to attain the goal of life, be he 15, 50 or 75 in age, is an aspirant and therefore, the word applies to all people), having conceived of a goal, to have a definite programme. Without programme it is impossible to achieve any progress. While working out this programme and putting it into effect one will experience that it is not all smooth sailing. On the contrary it is a very rough going. Many a time one is compelled by overwhelming adverse forces to seek temporary refuge, just as a ship when caught up in a terrible storm has to seek some port for safety.

The aspirant who has worked out a programme of life to attain the ideal has to ac-

quire certain means, when he has to seek some refuge. It is, as Sri Swamiji Maharaj has advocated, to cultivate what is termed a concrete background of thought, because the aspirant's struggles are endless, and he should have a recourse in which he can immediately take refuge, whenever occasion arises, and these occasions are many during the course of his spiritual Sadhana.

A well-conceived ideal and a definite programme of life and then a concrete background of thought to sustain him in his struggle to work out the programme of life, are the three requisites which Swamiji has advocated. While working out this programme of life there are certain facts which are worth remembering, i.e., spiritual progress is very gradual and it is in the nature of a twofold conflict. Just as Swamiji has said, though physical wars between nations have ended on earth (at least for the time being), the war which has caused these external wars, which is man's struggle against his lower nature, has not been concluded properly. If man were to attain victory over his lower nature, then he should have possession of himself and should not be the slave of his passions which lead to external, physical wars. While this inner war prevails, it has got a twofold aspect of offence as well as defence. Many a time a spiritual aspirant has got to carry on his fight against these two positive and negative sides. While he progresses on the path he has to consistently protect himself from forces which assail him from inside.

There is a class of insects called coleoptera. They have two sets of wings. The external wings will be stiff, thick and parchment-like, and they are not fit for flying. There are two film-like wings inside, which are used for flying. They serve the beetle wonderfully

well. They take the insect up and forward, but they are so delicate, liable to be easily damaged that the external wings serve as the protecting armour. That set of wings which takes the Sadhaka forward on the path is intense aspiration and constant Sadhana. Unless the real fire of aspiration is maintained one cannot progress. And to protect this aspiration against temptation, one must have the other set of wings in the shape of Vairagya and Satsanga, and must constantly keep up the current of Vichara or discrimination. Vichara is the chief anchor of protection for the aspirant. It is only discrimination which can protect the aspirant against temptation. With aspiration and the protective covering of Vairagya and Satsanga, one will have to work out the programme of life.

While working out the programme of life, one should have a background of thought. Unless the aspirant is established in this background, he will not be able to habituate his mind to slip back automatically into this background. Perhaps in the case of a Jnana-Yogi, it may be the Mahavakya, that he is the Absolute; in the case of the Japa-Yogi, it may be the Name. Thus to habituate himself to become established in the background of thought he should have what the Lord has prescribed in the Gita—constant Abhyasa (practice). Without constant Abhyasa one cannot expect to have any success in spiritual life. This fact I would have everyone of you to remember for ever, that is, in spiritual life it is either progress forward or slip back. There is no such thing as being in a static condition. One cannot say, "I have at-

tained the goal. Now I cannot progress." If you remain idle, you will slip back. Therefore, this Abhyasa is necessary to enable man to march forward and forward constantly. In order to console the aspirant, sometimes, Swamiji has said, "If you cannot progress much, do not be depressed. It does not matter." That is only a consolation because the mind should never be depressed.

An aspirant should always be wary to see that he always proceeds upwards, and has the protecting armour of Vichara, Vairagya and Satsanga to achieve the ideal, while working out the programme of life. There is the tortoise. The moment an enemy approaches to harm it, it withdraws itself into the shell, immediately. This is the exact purpose which the background of thought serves the aspirant. He has to withdraw himself into it. There is one difference in this particular case: the tortoise goes into the shell and comes out in the same condition as when it went in, but every time the aspirant takes refuge in the background of thought, he comes out with added strength.

To sum up, in order to tread the path of spiritual life:

- (1) let the aspirant conceive of an ideal;
- (2) let him put up a general programme of life;
- (3) let him practise Abhyasa and Vairagya; and
- (4) let him have a background of thought in which he can take refuge in times of external stress.

Life is like a lightning flash, fleeting and transitory. It fades like a rainbow, explodes like a bubble and disappears like a mirage. Yet man thinks that life is permanent here. Wake up, O Man! Strive to attain knowledge of the Infinite and enjoy Immortal Bliss. —**Swami Sivananda**

THE ADVENT OF SWAMI SIVANANDA*

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

The coming of Sri Gurudev on this planet, this Earth—the entry of this divine soul into this world—may sometimes be compared to a shooting star which strikes its light on all the dark corners of the planet and illumines every side of it, every part of it, every aspect of it and every phase of it, as if life enters a lifeless body. The whole Earth may be compared to a living organism which, during the course of human history, has demonstrated a tendency to get devitalised, for reasons galore. It looked as if, latterly, the whole of humanity appeared to be moving in the direction of a devitalisation of its own inner constitution—a dehydration and a diminution of vitality which went, simultaneously, with a blinding of its vision and a side-tracking of its general outlook. This signalled an entry into a darkness which was mistaken for a kind of extroverted intelligence. I am particularly making reference to the tendency to industrialisation, economisation, and an overemphasis on what today generally goes by the name of a scientific outlook of life. All this is summed up by this objectification of the human mind in its general vision of life, a dedication of itself to a series of phenomena, and presenting itself as this vast physical nature outside us.

Human nature became a part—an insignificant aspect of nature—studied in natural science in the fields of physics and chemistry, so that the visibility of the world got highlighted, and the human personality got identified with what became the visible panorama

of this world. If the world is a visible phenomenon and if man is also involved in this phenomenon, nature manifests itself as human nature. If this is to be the case and it is to be accepted that through the process of natural evolution human consciousness evolved out of incipient powers which were sleeping and which were material in their content; if the evolution doctrine concludes that man is a latecomer in this process of the coming of the species into intelligent existence; if it is also accepted, at the same time, that the world is nature, nature is the world, and it is the visible structure of physical nature—the world is visibility and vice versa, visibility is the world, to see is to believe and to believe is to see—then that which is not seen is also not an object of belief or trust or faith. The externality, the sensory objectivity, the visibility, so called, of the world involved a simultaneous subjection of the entire humanity to the phenomenon of this visibility so that man also became an object like any other object in the world.

As we have things of nature, man also became one of the things of nature. Man is not a human being isolated from or distinguishable from natural forces, but man became a conglomeration, a pressure-point of natural forces, a material phenomenon himself. If the world is externality, man also is externality. This is to be entirely scientific to the core, with a vengeance, and we may

*Spoken during Sri Gurudev's Centenary in 1987.

safely say that the later part of the Nineteenth Century and the commencement of the Twentieth Century went headlong into a deification and an adoration of nature as the be-all and end-all of life. Natural phenomena are the final reality. The evolutionary doctrine of Darwin, Lamarck and others confirmed to the hilt that nature is all, and nature is everything. All created beings, living beings, including human nature, got submerged into the natural processes. Materiality became the god of the universe, to say the least. It was only a little distance for man to get lost completely in dead matter. He had not died completely, but he was heading towards death.

The mind and consciousness, which actually distinguish human nature from other created things, began to lose their stability and stature, independence. Man became dependent. The whole scientific outlook, especially from the point of view of physical science, is an embarkment of the adventure in life in the direction of calculation, mathematical measurement, and an overemphasis of the observerability of anything that can be called real. It is not the rational that is the real, but the visible is the real. All that is of the character of reality has to be capable of subjection to visible observation through scientific methodology. Does anything else prevail in life which can explain the aspirations of human nature, the longings of the heart, the ideals of ethics and morality, and the urge from within everyone to appreciate aesthetic beauty and to appreciate a tendency to achievement in the future by what they call a teleological movement of the present towards a future attainment?

Science got identified with industry. Theoretical physics became applied physics, and the comforts of the physical aspect of life

practically became the sum and substance of human aspiration and the desire of anything that is alive. To be comfortable, to be physically secure, and to be assured a sensorily happy life was regarded as the only possible finality of all life.

While nature is an external manifestation of an internal aspiration, its externality does not permit the total extinguishing of the flame of its internal surge for a self-realisation of itself. Even if nature is to be considered as the whole of reality visible to us through our sense organs, there is a necessity to appreciate the fact that nature has to recognise itself. An unrecognised nature is no nature. If nature is to be there as the final reality of things, it has to be recognised. Nature has to be recognised, if not by someone else, at least by itself. There is no one to recognise nature as existent, because everyone is included within the purview of nature. Neither you nor I can know nature, because we are parts of nature. It becomes difficult to know how nature can know that it exists at all, and how science can stand on its own legs and become explicable in intelligent terms, if a self-recognition of the very existence of nature was to be denied in the light of there being nobody to know that nature exists at all—unless, of course, a capacity to self-recognition is attributed to nature.

Nature got roused into its own potentialities. Actually, the process of evolution is the working of nature within itself. All life rises to the surface of its immense capacity, like the rumbling of the bosom of the ocean to the surface in the form of its waves. The potentiality at the root becomes manifest as the visible phenomena we call nature from the point of view of science, physics, etc. It became necessary for nature itself to realise that it has to recognise itself. Nature cannot be

sleeping always. None of us can be eternally sleeping, though sleep is also an essential part of life. Awakening into a consciousness of one's own existence became necessary.

Nature evolves, but evolves for a purpose. A purposeless evolution is a chaotic interpretation based on a totally unintelligible system of things. Such a thing is not permissible because even to accept that there is a kind of chaos prevailing finally in nature, there should be, at the back of this phenomenon of chaos, something which is not in a state of chaos. Chaos cannot know chaos. An intelligent, systematic operation should be accepted to be present at the back of even natural evolution, which otherwise would be a march of death towards its own self-annihilation.

The coming of great saints and sages, the incarnation of masters, the entry into this world of divine powers—in this instance, the birth of a soul like the great master Swami Sivananda—should be regarded as one of the operations of nature to find a way of coming to the knowledge of consciousness of its own existence. The more we know ourselves, the stronger we become. The more we lose ourselves in what we see with our eyes, become things and objects rather than our own selves, the weaker we become. The greater is the emphasis that we lay on what we see with our eyes, the lesser is the requirement of nature from our own selves. Gain in nature is loss in self. The more do we feel the necessity to depend on external nature for our safety, security and satisfaction, the less do we become important in the scheme of things; and if all nature is only reality as a material phenomenon, we cease to exist at once. The existence of nature is the death of all humanity as a living principle. Nature has to live in its total inclusiveness and

an overmastering phenomenon of materiality only if the death of the soul takes place.

The soul cannot die, for the simple reason that it is a principle of self-recognition of any phenomenon. Whatever be the outcome, whatever be the procedure, whatever be the intention, and whatever be the shape or the form taken by a process, it requires to be recognised. This is a point that has to be accepted, first and foremost. The recognition of a phenomenon is the placing of a soul into it. Either you recognise the presence of a particular vision or a phenomenon or a process of history, or it recognises itself. A non-recognised phenomenon is a non-existent phenomenon. It has to be recognised either by you or by its own self. If you recognise it, you transfer a particular kind of soul to it from your own side. Or if it recognises itself, it has a soul in itself; it is self-conscious.

The natural evolution, the process of the coming of newer and newer types of species from the bosom of nature, is a simultaneous manifestation from within nature itself—the potentialities for greater and greater forms of self-recognition. If this were not to be the case, there would be no intelligent purpose in the process of evolution itself. Why should there be evolution? Why should something come from something else? Why should an effect follow from a cause? Why should anything be there at all if there is no intelligible, conceivable aim behind this purpose? The consciousness of a purpose is at once the recognition of a continuity of intelligence throughout the flux and formations of the process of evolution, right from the most incipient of stages we call unconscious matter until recognition becomes self-complete, totally inclusive and self-sufficient.

The coming of great masters like Gurudev Swami Sivananda is actually the rising into self-consciousness of a potentiality of a soul in nature. Great saints and sages are not physical bodies; they are not material formations. When we adore geniuses, saints, sages and incarnations, we are not worshipping material formations but the soul content that animates them—the intensity of higher aspirations that enlivens them. We know very well what it is that we adore in the great master Swami Sivananda. It is not the six-foot tall physical frame of flesh and blood and bone that is the object of worship or appreciation of values. 'Value' is the word to be highlighted. A meaning, a significance and aspiration, a light or an enlightenment—in short, a soul—is what is behind this vision of ours presently in the form of the great master whose Centenary we are observing today.

Spirituality was the high-water mark of the message of Sri Gurudev. There is a continuity and unending, never-ceasing permeation of a value behind dying principles and discontinuous movements of nature. An unknown content pervades and permeates all known things in the world, and this unknown masquerading of an eternal value seems to be the explanation for the endless longing in the hearts of people—an eternal quest that seems to be pressing forward in any form whatsoever that is created—and the impossibility to get satisfied with anything in this world at any time, even if one is the possessor of the whole Earth and the king of the whole world. The peculiar eluding something that compels us to remain unsatisfied with anything and everything in the world, an unending asking for an endless continuity of our life, a pressure from within our own selves to be all and everything, if possible—not to be limited in any manner whatsoever, to defy ev-

ery kind of finitude, whether physical, social, political or otherwise, to dominate everything, to gain suzerainty over all things—this aspiration, this longing, this potentiality of asking within everyone is the explanation of all creation.

The purpose of Sri Gurudev's coming into this world, and the intention behind the coming of any sage and saint especially, is the waking of the slumbering soul of mankind. Fast asleep was humanity in embrace and contentment with its union and attunement with sources of material satisfaction. The otherness of life got emphasised, and the selfhood of things got slowly delimited into a point of self-annihilation. Death began to stalk the Earth in the form of a materialistic civilization.

The God of creation, the thing from which everything originated, the source of all aspiration, longing and meaning in life, shook its shoulders, as it were, and recovered itself. As we know, when a thing goes to its extreme, the other extreme of it begins to act. In order that you may gain everything, you have to lose everything. This is how extremes act in this world. When everything is lost, everything shall be found also. When you are a 'nobody' in this world, you shall become an 'everybody'. When nobody wants you, you will see that everybody will want you one day or the other. When everything goes, everything comes.

Similarly, when the materialistic movement of nature became extreme in this direction and showed a total dependence on externality alone minus internality, suddenly the balance tilted in the other direction to maintain its stability. We may safely say that at the beginning of this Twentieth Century there was a worldwide movement of the re-

vival of the higher values of life in the East, in the West, and everywhere. Values got emphasised, and interpretations of phenomena became more important than phenomena themselves. The capacity to know became more important than that which is known. The scientist was a greater value than the findings of science. Mathematics ruled physics—which means to say, mind began to rule over matter. The subjectivity of the element of life began to gain an upper hand over the objectivity of phenomena, and the Universal started peeping through the apertures of all particular things and individualities. God felt a necessity, as it were, to move consciously in His own creation, and spirituality became, and had to become, the rule, the order and the principle of all life.

Gurudev Swami Sivananda highlights this great principle of spirituality becoming the working order of creation and the methodology of living in this world in order to transform the very way in which we breathe, live and work in all our daily activity into a regular worship of God Almighty. The world becomes a veritable manifestation of God before us, and our daily duties become a waving of the holy light before this great master of creation present in all living beings, beaming through all eyes, nodding through all heads, speaking through every tongue, and working through all hands—*sahasra shirsa purushah*. This great message of the Purusha Sukta was the final message of Gurudev Swami Sivananda. He stood for the message of the Vedas, the

Upanishads and the Bhagavadgita which, we may safely say, highlight the farthest reach that mankind could achieve in its slow movement from the lower order of creation until it reached the human stage, wherein it did not content itself. Humanity became a pointer to the presence of a superhuman possibility. Life emerged from the lower species to the higher order of creation until it reached human nature. It is only at the human level that it could visualise the presence of a future which is more inclusive and wider in its dimension. It is only at the stage of humanity that one could visualise the presence of divinity.

Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was an incarnation of this unending, incessant, eternal human aspiration for perfection. His teaching is usually summed up by us in a pithy statement: “God first, world next, yourself last.” This statement, this little message, this one-sentence teaching perhaps sums up the great gospel of life which brings God to the very Earth, into our very kitchen, into the very room into which we live, into this very vestment of our physical personality, and transmutes the materiality of creation into a scintillating divinity through which we live, move, and have our being.

Hari Om Tat Sat.

*Om purnamadah purnamidam purnat
purnamudachyate,
purnasya purnamadaya purnameva-
vashishyate.*

Om Shanti! Shanti! Shanti!

The bliss of Brahman is not the result of the contact of the mind with an object, but the infinite revelation of the freedom and perfection in which desires, ambitions and aspirations are finally fulfilled.

—Swami Krishnananda

SAGUNA-BRAHMA-VIDYA

(Sri Swami Brahmananda)

To those who find it difficult to practise the just previous meditation on the attributeless Brahman, is given an easier meditation on Brahman with attributes. Brahman is that which does everything—that which does anything, anywhere at anytime. Brahman is to be meditated on not only as Supreme Existence, but also as Supreme Activity and the Agent behind all activity. 'Being' and 'doing' are non-different—thus should one meditate. This Vidya also occurs in Kenopanishad, chapter III and IV-1 to 3. The instruction is given through a story.

In one of the battles between the celestials and the demons, the former won a victory over the latter. Such battles are going on in all levels of consciousness between the positive and negative forces, virtue and vice, at all times. Sometimes the positive forces win and at other times the negative forces have the victory. In this particular instance when the celestials were victorious, they became proud and egoistic and thought that the victory was due to their strength, forgetting the Unseen Power behind all actions described as the *Prana* of *prana* in the first chapter of this Upanishad. It is given the name *Daivam* (the Divine Power) the fifth factor in all actions—the other four being the body, the experiencer, the various organs and the activities (the Bhagavadgita, XVIII-14). It is also termed *Devatma-sakti* in the Svetasvatara Upanishad 1-3. In order to remove this false vanity which is a stumbling block in the spiritual path, the Supreme

Brahman which is omniscience, all-sentience, pure Consciousness, appeared before them in the form of a mysterious spiritual Being, *Yaksha*, superhuman, perhaps super-divine also, because the celestials themselves were unable to know Him. If He were one among the celestial, divine beings, they would have certainly known Him. Such an incredible, mighty, gigantic form the celestials had never seen before. They were taken aback by the appearance of this most wonderful Being. *Agni* (the god of fire) was deputed to find out who or what exactly was that Being. How can the object know the subject? How can a part, the finite, know the Whole, the Infinite? It is impossible. Before Fire-god could start his enquiry, he was, on the other hand, himself subjected to an enquiry by that mysterious Being. On being asked by that Being as to who he was and what power he had, Fire-god in all vanity replied that he was the well-known Fire-god, the foremost among the celestials and capable of burning the whole world in a trice, thus himself giving an occasion for his power being tested. That Being, the *Yaksha*, placed a piece of dry straw in front of *Agni* and asked him to burn it. He could not burn it, for the *Yaksha*, the Supreme Power behind all actions, had withdrawn that power of burning from him. *Agni* could not even touch it or shake it, a little piece of dry straw! He could not burn it. With his head bent down out of shame and frustration, *Agni* returned to the gods. Then it was the turn of *Vayu*, Wind-god,

to go and enquire and know the real nature of the *Yaksha*. He also met with the same fate as *Agni*. Now *Indra* (the king of the celestials, the emperor of the three worlds) himself went, thinking that what the other gods could not do, himself (their king) could certainly achieve. *Indra* is certainly more powerful than the other gods under him. The ego or the mind in us has got more power than the sense-organs. While the sense-organs cannot function without the mind, the mind can do all sorts of things by mere imagination in the absence of the sense-organs. The story says that before that mighty *Yaksha*, the most powerful *Indra* also met with miserable defeat. As soon as *Indra* went, the *Yaksha* disappeared from his view. He could not have the privilege of even talking to the *Yaksha* which his subordinate gods enjoyed. How could he show his face to the gods now? His ego had a heavy blow that almost stunned him. When one's ego is quelled, that is the proper time for the appearance of the spiritual *guru*. *Indra* now saw the great goddess *Uma*, *Haimavati*, standing before him with a smiling face, ready to instruct him on the nature of the *Yaksha*, i.e. the Knowledge of Brahman. The goddess told *Indra* that the great mysterious *Yaksha* was none other than Brahman who was the cause for the success of the celestials over the demons.

This same truth about the Supreme Power that is behind the success of the celestials in their war against the demons, is illustrated in the great epic Mahabharata through many incidents. One such incident took place just after the close of the war, when the spirit of Ghatotkacha (the son of Bhima by the demoness Hidimbi) was summoned and questioned as to the part played by the various warriors in that great war. 'Whom do you think as the greatest war-

rior?'—was the question put to him. His reply reveals the great truth of the existence of the Supreme Being behind every action. He said: "I do not know who fought and how they fought and other similar details. I only saw one Being, the Being of Krishna moving and there was nothing else visible to the eyes."

Another incident was a conversation that took place between Sri Vyasa and Arjuna, that too after the war. Arjuna was seeing a mysterious and gigantic form in the battlefield moving here and there, sometimes visible and sometimes invisible, during all the eighteen days of the war. After the war, Arjuna asked about the identity of that Being and Vyasa told him that it was Lord SIVA who was helping him and his brothers in the war. "He was not only helping all of you", said Vyasa, "He was the only one behind you and giving strength to you to fight against the mighty personages like Bhishma, Drona Karna and others."

A third incident was that which happened when, after the war, Lord Krishna congratulated Yudhishtira for his success in the war. Yudhishtira then said these significant words: "O Krishna, It is you who are responsible for the success and not me or anybody else."

Still another occasion when this truth about the immanent aspect of that Transcendental Being is revealed, is when Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna how He Himself, everyday of the battle when Karna was fighting against him, hypnotised him (Karna) due to which he forgot to use his unfailing weapon, the *Sakti* which was given to him by *Indra*, and how it was He Himself who made *Karna* use it against Ghatotkacha.

Behind every incident in this world (whether big or small, greatly significant or in-

significant) He alone is, and it is His power that does everything. He alone is the cause of the victory of the winner as well as the defeat of the vanquished. He works miracles; and every incident in our life, if only we go deep into its cause, will be seen to be a miracle. He is everywhere and still He cannot be seen as we see an object or a person. Thus should

one meditate on Him, the *saguna-Brahman*, as the ultimate cause of all that happens here in this world and the other worlds. He should not be limited as the cause alone. He is also the effect as well as that which connects the cause with the effect. The result of this meditation is gradual liberation, *krama-mukti*.

* * *

You should keep the company of those in whose company your faith increases, your beliefs become confirmed, unshaken, they become firmly established within you, and you become firmly established in what you believe.

—Swami Chidananda

AN ANNOUNCEMENT

3RD STATE LEVEL CONFERENCE-CHHATTISGARH

AND

SILVER JUBILEE CELEBRATION OF DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY,

NANDINI NAGAR BRANCH, 12TH TO 14TH DECEMBER, 2009

By the grace of Most Worshipful H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, the Divine Life Society Branches of Chhattisgarh are celebrating the 3rd State Level Conference and the Silver Jubilee of Divine Life Society, Nandini Nagar Branch, from 12th to 14th December, 2009. Senior Swamijis from the Divine Life Society Headquarters will be participating and guiding the Sadhaks. All devotees are cordially invited to participate in the Conference.

For enrolment and information please contact:

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Sri K.S. Thakur, President,
The Divine Life Society Branch,
Nandini Nagar - 490 036,
Dist. Durg, Chattishgarh | Tel: 09300544907 |
| 2. Sri Swami Vishuddhanandaji | Tel: 09406093744 |
| 3. Sri Swami Sivadasanandaji | Tel: 09424284349 |
| 4. Sri Pankaj Chowbey | Tel: 07712425095 |
| 5. Sri K.L. Bareth | Tel: 09425567941 |

—The Divine Life Society

THE LIFE, MISSION AND TEACHINGS OF H.H. SRI SWAMI CHIDANANDAJI MAHARAJ*

(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)

The theme of this spiritual conference is the Life, Mission and Teachings of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. What actually was Swamiji's mission? Once, Swamiji himself described it to a Western devotee. During Pujya Swamiji's second world tour from 1968 to 1970, he had such a great impact on an aristocratic Italian lady that she decided to wind up her fashion business and follow him to India. Swamiji was not as busy in those days, and so one day she asked him to give her teachings. Swamiji replied, "My *mission* is not to teach but to attract people to God."

Attract people to God Pujya Swamiji did by the tens of thousands. But Swamiji also taught, and we have his books to prove it. Interestingly enough, the Italian lady never really became interested in Swamiji's teachings, but she continued to be attracted to God through her love of Swamiji. On the other hand, when I first met Swamiji I had already been attracted to God. What I was overwhelmed by were his teachings. It was as if he put into words thoughts that had been lingering in my mind all my life. And today there are many devotees who read Swamiji's books over and over again. It is like scripture to them.

What was the essence of Swamiji's teachings? Although Swamiji would repeat

certain phrases, he was more interested in communicating with the audience in front of him than he was in codifying his message. Therefore when my daughter and I were preparing his morning talks for publication, for our own edification, we asked ourselves, What is Swamiji really teaching? After some thought, our answer was that Swamiji is constantly telling us, You are Divine, Know this truth and live to express it.

Swamiji's vision of us was divinity. It was what he saw in all of us, and he used every means at his disposal to remind us of it. He wanted us to know this truth for ourselves—to have the grand experience, as he used to say. Then, equally important, he wanted us to express the truth in our daily life—to live a divine life.

However, whether Swamiji attracted us to God, or whether his teachings attracted us, we are all here because we were attracted to Swamiji himself. It was his life that was important in the final analysis. His mission and his teachings were based upon his life, which he continued to work on, even though he was established in the highest consciousness.

These have been a few brief thoughts on the life, mission and teachings of Pujya Swami Chidanandaji. However, I do have one additional thought. If I had been asked

*Talk given on August 15th 2009 at the spiritual conference in Sivananda Ashram commemorating the first Purnya Tithi Aradhana of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj.

about the theme of this spiritual conference, I might have suggested one extra word. I might have suggested, The Life, Mission, Teachings and *Demand* of H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. Why might I have suggested the word demand?

A year ago, after they had brought Pujya Swamiji's body to the Samadhi Hall from Dehradun and placed him where he used to sit for morning meditation, the devotees one by one offered flowers to the sitting figure. When I went up, I too was given some flowers to offer, which I placed on Swamiji's lap. Then I looked up at his face, and to my utter surprise I suddenly felt something that I can only describe as a demand.

A demand for what? Wasn't Swamiji's life just one of giving? Why this feeling of a

demand? Perhaps it was just meant for me, but is it possible, that after having lived a life dedicated to attracting people to God, that his desire for our highest welfare could almost become a demand that we pay *attention* to his message, *believe* it, and *act* upon it?

Perhaps he is still saying to us: You are Divine. Know this truth and live your life to express it. That instruction can keep us busy for the rest of our lives. He wanted us all to bless ourselves—and to be a blessing to others. Perhaps that is not only his wish but his demand. Perhaps it is also meant to be accepted as our individual challenge: We are divine. We must know this truth, and we must live to express it. Know it, because it is our truth. Express it, because that is what we were all created for.

LUST AND PASSION

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

[Continued from the previous issue]

SOME HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

Complete cure may take at least one to six months, according to the intensity of the disease. If the disease is of long standing, the cure may take a long time, as Nature's processes are slow, though sure. Whenever you are haunted by sensual thoughts, you should try to replace them by holy thoughts about your favourite deity.

Let any disease be there. Ignore it. Deny it. Think and meditate on the pure Self. Keep yourself fully occupied. Do not give room for the mind to think of the body or the disease. This is the treatment for any kind of disease. Sing Hari's Name in a variety of ways. When you are tired, take to the study of religious books. Do selfless service. Run in the open air. Swim in the river. Remove the stones and pebbles lying on the roads. Write down your Ishta Mantra in a notebook for one hour.

Purify the mind by cultivating devotion to God. Do Japa and meditation. Study spiritual books. Pray to God. Observe Brahmacharya. Do not mix unnecessarily with women. See only the Divine Mother in them. Develop Atma-Bhava in all.

Avoid cinema, novels, newspapers, bad company, evil talks. Do not look into the mirror frequently. Do not use scents or fancy clothings. Do not attend dance or music parties. Do not look at mating of animals and birds.

Root out love of leisure and ease. Overcome laziness and always keep the body and mind engaged in some useful work. Keeping the mind constantly engaged is one of the great secrets of Brahmacharya. Lead a disciplined, rigorous life. Do not brood over the disease too much. It will pass off. When bad thoughts appear in the mind, repeat the Name of God and pray to Him. Ultimately, the Lord's Divine Grace and helping hand is the sure antidote for all diseases. Rely on God. Be devoted to purity and piety. Cherish sublime thoughts. Read sacred literature. Naught shall assail you.

This weakness will pass away. Do not be anxious, worried and depressed over it. Depressing thoughts are dangerous. Worry will only weaken you more. Learn lessons from the past and be benefited therefrom. Do not brood over the past and be weakened. Change your angle of vision. Practise enquiry. Meditate on the advantages of celibacy. Think of the lives of Akhanda Brahmacharins like Hanuman, Bhishma and others. Think of the evils of a sensual life—loss of health, shame, disease and death. Cultivate discrimination. You are the child of the Lord of the universe. The bliss is within you. There is not an iota of pleasure in sense objects. Dissociate yourself from the body; identify yourself with the Lord. If your mind is pure and healthy, your body too will be pure and healthy. Therefore, forget the

past and take to a new, better life of virtue and spirituality, love of God and aspiration for the higher divine life. Learn to find taste in divine life. Do more Sadhana with greater intensity. You will be a completely changed and blessed person.

1. Avoid indigestion and over-eating. 2. Take long brisk walks. 3. Use enema. 4. In empty stomach, twice daily, take the juice of lemon in warm water with honey. 5. In lieu of the evening meal, take milk and fruits. Add ginger powder to milk. 6. Drink Tulasi (holy basil) decoction prepared as follows: Boil little ginger, pepper, Tulasi leaves in a glass of water. Strain, add thin milk and a little sugar.

May the divine splendour shine in your face! May the Lord bless you with health and long life, peace, prosperity and Kaivalya!

A Jnani will have no wet dreams. He who is established in Brahmacharya will not get even a single bad dream. Dream serves as a criterion to judge our mental state or the degree of mental purity. If you do not get impure dreams, you are growing in purity.

EVILS OF IMMORAL LIFE

What do we find in these days? Men and women, boys and girls, are drowned in the ocean of impure thoughts, lustful desires and little sensual pleasures. It is highly deplorable indeed. It is really shocking to hear the stories of some boys. Many college students have personally come to me and narrated their pitiable lives of gloom and depression, brought about by heavy loss of semen by unnatural means. Their power of discrimination (Viveka) has been lost owing to sexual excitement and lustful intoxication. Why do you lose the energy that is gained in many weeks and months for the sake of little momentary pleasures?

A good bit of energy is wasted during copulation. The whole nervous system is shaken or affected during the act. Bad memory, premature old age, impotence, various sorts of eye-diseases, and various nervous diseases are attributable to the heavy loss of this vital fluid. It is greatly shocking indeed to see many of our youths walking with tottering steps, with pale, bloodless faces owing to loss of this vital fluid instead of jumping hither and thither with agile, nimble steps with vigour and vitality like the squirrel.

Those who have lost much of their Veerya (vital fluid) become very irritable for little things. They lose their balance of mind quickly. Little things upset their minds. Those who have not observed celibacy become slaves of anger, jealousy, laziness, fear, etc. If you have not got your senses under control, you venture to do foolish acts, which even children will not dare to do.

Mark carefully the evil after-effects that follow the loss of seminal energy. Persons are physically, mentally and morally debilitated because of the want of Brahmacharya or wasting the seminal power by so many chances for nothing. The body and mind refuse to work energetically. There is physical and mental lethargy. You experience much exhaustion and weakness. You generally take recourse to drinking milk, eating fruits and aphrodisiac confections, etc., to make good the lost energy. Remember that these things can never, never repair the loss. Once lost, it is lost for ever. You will have to pass your lives in a gloomy manner, dragging, of course, a dreary, cheerless existence. Physical and mental strength will be diminished day by day.

Cleanliness of life is very necessary for physical and spiritual growth. Boys and girls

suffer in silence on account of ignorance, on account of misuse of bodily parts which constitute a definite drain upon the vitality and this retards normal mental and physical progress. When the human system is deprived of its natural secretions, there must be a corresponding decline in nervous energy. This is the reason why functional disorders develop. The number of wrecks is increasing.

Young boys suffer from anaemia, bad memory and debility. They have to discontinue their studies. Diseases are increasing. Thousands of injections have come into the pharmacy, hospitals and dispensaries. Thousands of doctors have opened their clinics and shops. Yet, misery is increasing day by day. People do not get success in their enterprises and business. What is the reason for this? The reason is not far to seek. It is because of wastage of the vital force or semen, through evil habits and immoderate sexual intercourse. It is because of an unclean mind and unclean body.

If a man wishes to prosper in life, he must give up gambling, drinking, prodigality, excessive sleep, drowsiness, fear, anger, indolence and procrastination. The vital forces, when conserved properly, become transmuted into wonderful energy and strength. It will augment your will-force, faculties and capabilities. You will have a dynamic personality. You can work wonders in any walk of life.

Teachers and parents should give proper instructions to boys and girls as to

how they should lead a clean life of Brahmacharya. They should get rid of a false sense of modesty and shame. They are a good deal responsible for the ignorance of the boys and girls. There has been more suffering caused by ignorance of these matters than anything else. You are paying the price of ignorance, the false modesty, that matters of sex and sexual physiology should not be discussed. The teachers and parents should diligently watch the conduct of children. They should clearly impress on their minds the vital importance of a clean life of Brahmacharya and the dangers of an unclean life. Pamphlets on Brahmacharya should be freely distributed to them.

When the impurities emerge from the subconscious mind and come to the surface of the conscious mind with formidable force, do not try to resist them. Repeat your *Ishta Mantra*. Do not think of your defects or evil qualities much. It is enough if you introspect and find out your defects. Do not try to attack the evil qualities. Then, they will show their long faces. Do not worry yourself, "I have got so many defects and weaknesses." Positive always overcomes negative. Cultivate Sattvic virtues. Through meditation and by the development of positive qualities, through *Pratipaksha Bhavana* method, all the negative qualities will die of themselves. This is the right method. *(To be continued)*

The seekers who austere transform the objectifying energy into the Conscious Power that causes the blossoming of the self-sense into the objectless Consciousness are the integrated aspirants of the Absolute, whose power is used to carry on profound spiritual meditation.

—Swami Krishnananda

Sivananda's Gospel of Divine Life

FOUNDATION OF YOGA AND REALISATION

YOGA FOR WESTERNERS

The Master called out to Sri Menon, "*Om Namō Narayanaya*, Balan Swamiji! I am just telling Sri Sastriji that I love to do intense work, intense service. A little bit of seclusion, meditation and Sadhana are also necessary. Look at Lord Jesus. He did Sadhana in seclusion for thirteen years, then came out and worked intensely for a few years. That was enough to thrill the entire world. In seclusion you gain inner spiritual strength to revolutionise the entire world. You then do the work of a lifetime within a couple of years.

"That is the sort of work that I want you to do in Europe. You should go there and thrill the entire West in a couple of years. It should be a lightning trip to the West. Dr Atreya has written recently that Europe is even more ready for the message of Vedanta than India, America and England. Europeans are more eager to receive this message and assimilate it. Will you do it?"

"Swamiji, with your blessings and inspiration anything can be done."

"The most important thing now is to tell the Europeans to lead the divine life. Nowadays, most of them run after occult powers. That is really not Yoga. They imagine that only one who is able to perform miracles is a

Yogi. When acquired, these powers turn one's head and magnify one's egoism, thus taking one away from God.

"And when you exhort them to lead the divine life, the idea should not be to ask them to run away from their avocations into Himalayan jungles, to sit there and pray to God. You should tell them in plain language that God is ever within them, and that if they do not find Him within, they are not likely to find Him anywhere else.

"But you should be very careful, careful lest you get absorbed in the West. That is what happens in many cases. The Indians try to imitate Westerners, and Western culture eventually swallows them. Yesterday I received a letter from an American lady who says she was born to a Yogi from India."

"But, Swamiji, so long as you are here to inspire us from within, I have no fear."

The Master then said, "That is why I always insist that those who do social work should once in a while run away to places like Rishikesh. Work and seclusion should go hand in hand. You should not establish yourself in Europe. Do intense work for a couple of years, then fly back to India for seclusion and Sadhana. Then again you can return."

Insure your life with God now. All other Insurance companies will fail but this Divine Life Insurance can never fail as it has unlimited wealth of the Lord. You need not pay any premium but just give your love to Him only.

—Swami Sivananda

Children's Page

THE PROTECTOR AND THE DESTROYER

(Sri Swami Ramarajyam)

The childhood name of Lord Buddha was Siddhartha. One day Siddhartha was strolling in his garden. Up in the sky a flock of swans was flying. All of a sudden, he noticed a swan falling from the sky. He screamed and ran to the place where the swan had fallen into thorny bushes. He saw that an arrow had pierced the body of the swan. This sight brought tears to his eyes. He took out the arrow from the body of the swan and poured a few drops of water in its mouth. Thereafter he plucked some green leaves and applied their extract on the wound. This alleviated the pain of the swan and it opened its eyes.

Siddhartha felt relieved to notice that the condition of the swan had improved. He pierced his own wrist with the arrow. He felt intense pain. He said to himself, "This arrow must have caused great pain to the swan."

In the meantime, Devadatta, his cousin, came there and said, "Give me this swan. I have shot it."

Siddhartha gave him a sad look and asked, "Is it you, who wounded this creature? Didn't you feel any pity for this mute bird?"

"Do not blabber about things like pity. I have shot the bird. Hand it over to me," said Devadatta.

Siddhartha replied, "Don't you know that 'the protected' belongs to the protector as of right, and not to the one who tries to cause it pain. Go away, I will not hand the swan over to you. I have protected it. It belongs to me by right."

Devadatta hanged his head in shame. He left without uttering a word.

Dear children! a living creature, rightfully, belongs to the one who gives birth to it, nourishes it and protects it and not to the one who tries to destroy it.

If evil thoughts enter your mind, do not use your will force in driving them. You will tax your will. You will lose your energy. You will fatigue yourself. The greater the efforts you make, the more the evil thoughts will return with redoubled force. Become a witness of those thoughts. Be indifferent. They will pass away.

* * *

You cannot deny or doubt your existence. You always feel that you exist. This existence is Atma (your own Self). The knower of the doubt or the denier always exists. That knower is your own Atma.

—Swami Sivananda

NEWS AND REPORTS

NEWS FROM THE HEADQUARTERS

SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

By the Blessings of Sri Gurudev and the profound Grace of Swamiji Maharaj, the Divine Life Society Headquarters continues rendering its humble service through Sivananda Home, situated in Tapovan near Laxman Jhula, a Home with medical facilities for sick, destitute people.

For them who are not only home-less, but are often home-sick, longing to go to their own beloved ones, but having none anymore to call one's own, castaway and abandoned, forgotten and forsaken, harassed and taunted, denigrated and humiliated: one can hardly imagine what desperation and frustration such people would feel, should feel, yah certainly must feel in such circumstances:

"What it is like to be alone, how it feels to be rejected, how to get by on one's own, What it 's like to be abused, how it feels to lie awake, feeling angry, tired and bruised, To have no friend to turn to, filled with rage, with such a pain.

How it feels to wake each morning, with a past one can't explain." (Meredith Mcghin)

Paying respect to one of the newly admitted patients this month, she was picked up from the Ashram Headquarters area, where she was sitting on the street, in the pouring rain, with one of her legs from top till bottom in circular plaster. With great difficulty she could just shuffle around, dragging herself a little here and there. The mind shattered, the heart hurtful, and the body half undressed.

Once admitted in the Home, the consultant Orthopedist diagnosed multiple fractures in one of

her legs and a neglected fracture of the hip bone of her other leg, besides several head injuries. Her story was confused and fragmented, but between the lines she mentioned that she had come from the 'Ocean', Madhya Pradesh, from where her husband had put her on the train to Haridwar, to get rid of her. While being alone at night, she was beaten up severely, and could not remember anything until she woke up in a Hospital where her leg was put into plaster. Again after being hospitalized, she landed up on the streets, where she had to deal with two wounded legs and a heavy-weighting plaster.

"At times I feel like my life is complicated, like God has allowed more grief and suffering to come my way than He should have. But in my heart, I know I should be thankful that I have access to opportunities that others will never even dream of having, that I should be glad I have loved ones, even if they are taken away from me."

(Meredith Mcghin)

Her name is Sarojini Devi, and she is gradually relaxing a bit and acquiring the feeling of being safe and secure, though the healing process of her physical and psychological condition will take its own time.

"I know what sorrow feels like, but there are always those who have been hurt deeper than me. To them I can only offer my prayers and my sympathy."

(Meredith Mcghin)

May the Almighty One embrace and console her and soften her tormented and painful being.

Om Sri Satgurudevaya Namah.

"Feed the hungry. Clothe the naked. Serve the sick. This is Divine Life." (Swami Sivananda)

SRI KRISHNA JAYANTI CELEBRATION

This year Sri Krishna Jayanti was celebrated on a grand scale at the Headquarters Ashram on 13th August 2009 as it just preceded the First Punya-Tithi Celebrations of Worshipful His Holiness Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj from 14th to 18th August 2009.

As part of the celebration, Parayana of Srimad Bhagavatam was done from 23rd July to 5th August 2009. On the Sri Krishna Jayanti Day, immediately after the Brahma-muhurta prayer-meditation session, a prabhat-pheri was organised. A Havan for peace and welfare of the world was also performed at the Yajnasala. There was an Akhand Chanting of Dvadashakshari Mantra from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. before Lord Murlī Manohar enshrined in the *sanc-tum-sanctorum* of the beautifully decorated Vishwanath Mandir. The traditional worship

of Lord Krishna commenced at 5 p.m. with Abhisheka to the Lord to the chant of Purusha Suktam, Narayana Suktam and Vishnu Suktam. About 2000 devotees from distant corners of India and the world participated individually in the Abhisheka. Simultaneous presentation of melodious and soul-stirring Bhajans and Kirtans at the Special Pandal at Dattatreya Hill filled the Ashram atmosphere with divine fervour. Floral Archana with Sahasra-namavali was also offered to Lord Krishna.

The Lord's manifestation as described in the 10th Skanda of Srimad Bhagvatam was read by H. H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj at 11.45 p.m., followed by Arati. The celebration concluded with the distribution of sacred Prasad at the Sivananda Satsanga Bhavan (Auditorium).

KRISHNA YAJUR VEDA PARAYANA IN THE ASHRAM

In connection with the First Punya Tithi Aradhana Celebrations of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, the Ashram invited a Vedic Scholar from Coimbatore, Sri C. Sreenivasanji who graciously accepted our invitation and did the chanting of the Krishna Yajur Veda at Sri Vishvanath Mandir of the Ashram for four days from 25th to 28th July 2009.

There are four Vedas. They are the ultimate authority. We cannot know the truth about Dharma through any source of knowledge other than the Vedas. Among the scriptures of the world, the Vedas are the oldest. The Upanishads are the essence of the Vedas.

Scholars like C. Sreenivasanji are very rare nowadays. He did Parayana of the entire

Krishna Yajur Veda Samhita as Worship to Lord Viswanatha and for peace and prosperity of the whole world. He also chanted selected Mantras from Yajur Veda Samhita, Aranyaka and Upanishads in the Samadhi Mandir during Night Satsanga. The chanting included Pada, Krama, Jata and Ghana of Selected Mantras. The chanting filled the entire Samadhi Mandir and the Spiritual Vibration was felt by all. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj conducted the chanting in the night Satsanga with appropriate explanation of the Mantras, their source, meaning, content and purpose.

On the concluding day Sri C. Srinivasan was felicitated.

—The Divine Life Society



ANNUAL SADHANA WEEK AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM

The Headquarters Ashram conducted its Forty-Sixth Sadhana Week from 8th July to 14th July 2009 to guide, inspire and motivate the spiritual aspirants and seekers. The Sivananda Satsanga Bhavan (Auditorium) housed the programmes. All the seven days, the programme started with early morning prayers—meditation conducted by Sri Swami Devabhaktanandaji and it was followed by Prabhat Pheri. Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji conducted the Yogasana Class. Senior monks of the Ashram and spiritual luminaries of different organizations blessed the *Sadhaks* with their gracious presence and inspiring and enlightening messages.

Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Divyananda Saraswatiji Maharaj of Kailash Ashram, Rishikesh in his inaugural discourse said that human birth is a great blessing of God and it is the only gateway to Liberation from the rounds of births and deaths. Liberation cannot be achieved by mere desire; its attainment needs strong determination, intense dispassion and sincere *sadhana*. Swamiji Maharaj emphasized the role of a Guru in the spiritual path and said Guru is no other than God Himself to bestow the seeker with Brahma-Jnana.

H.H. Sri Dandi Swami Hamsanandaji Maharaj of Swargashram in his enlightening message said that God is *vivartopadana karana* of this world. He explained this great truth by citing the example of superimposition of a snake upon a rope. The snake does not exist. Ignorance of the rope is the cause of the appearance of the snake. Similarly, the world does not exist. Our ignorance of God or Brahman is the cause of the appearance of the world. The world is an illusion. Brahman alone exists. The Vedas declare that we are

not different from *Satchidananda Brahman*. We can experience our *Satchidananda Swarupa* only if we get rid of *dehadhyasa*—identification with the body.

Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Asanganandaji Maharaj of Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh lucidly explained the meaning and significance of *Pratah-Smarana Stotra* of Jagadguru Sankaracharya. Swamiji said that our real nature is beautifully delineated in this Stotra. We are Satchidananda Brahman. We are the witness of the three states—*jagrat*, *swapna* and *sushupti*. Our real nature is beyond the grasp of the mind. Brahman alone is. This world is as unreal as dream though we consider it as real. Swamiji inspired the *sadhaks* to follow one most effective practical *sadhana* if they wish to attain Self-realisation in this very birth. As soon as they wake up, they should resolve that today they will live in this world considering it a dream. The constant practice of this technique will soon enable them to experience their real Self.

Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Vijnanananda Saraswatiji Maharaj, Gita Vijnana Peeth, Kankhal, Haridwar in his blessings message highlighted the importance of *Guru kripa* for progress in the spiritual path. Guru is the Eternal Atman appearing in human form to awaken and guide us. By complete surrender to Guru, we can realise God. Swamiji also enlightened the *sadhaks* about the three paths of Sadhana—Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga.

Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Bhagwatswarupji Maharaj (Darshana-charya) Gurumandal Ashram, Mayapuri,

Haridwar focused upon the necessity of renunciation of sensual enjoyments for attaining *moksha* or Liberation: “*moksham icchasi chettata, vishayan vishawat tyaja*”— if you desire the highest liberation, give up like poison the desire for sensual enjoyments. Swamiji also said that just as a clean and stainless mirror is required to look at oneself, even so a pure mind is required to experience one’s true Self.

Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Vishwatmananda Puriji Maharaj of Sadhana Sadan, Haridwar, in his discourse said that after transmigrating through eighty-four lakhs of *yonis* (species), the divine grace has enabled us to be in human body. It will be a great loss—‘*mahati vinashti*’— if we do not utilise this rare human life for the attainment of the Supreme Goal i. e. God-realisation. He also stressed that our real nature is Satchidananda but due to ignorance we feel bound. To dispel the ignorance, the seeker should approach a *Srotriya Brahmanishtha Guru* with *Brahma jijnyasa* (desire to have knowledge of Brahman) and listen to the great Mahavakyas like *Tattvamasi* (That Thou Art) and contemplate upon their meaning.

H. H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, President, D. L. S. Headquarters, in his inaugural address, invoked the benedictions and blessings of God and Gurudev upon the seeker-participants. Swamiji expounded the glory of Ram Nam citing the inspiring incidents from the life of Saint Kabir. He laid emphasis on the constant repetition of the Lord’s Name as it is the one unfailing sure method for attaining God-realisation in this Kali Yuga (Iron Age). Emphasizing the transient nature of human life, Swamiji advised the *sadhaks* not to waste even a single

second. One should repeat the Name of the Lord with every breath.

Swamiji inspired them to follow the example of Brother Lawrence and practise the presence of God in their day-to-day lives to ensure quick success in the spiritual path. He also reminisced some inspiring incidents associated with Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and in his sheer humility, accredited all his knowledge to them.

H. H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, D. L. S. Headquarters, in his elevating series of discourses during the seven days’ programme on all days early in the morning and other sessions in the day, covered a wide range of topics touching different aspects of sadhana. Swamiji laid great stress on *atma-kripa* or Self-effort being the most important factor in spiritual life as without this one will not engage in *sadhana* sincerely. He said that we are now living a body-centered life. We have to raise ourselves to Divinity—our real nature—by doing vigorous *sadhana*. Guru and saints can guide us but we ourselves have to walk on the path. Nobody can come and lift us. As Lord Krishna says in Srimad Bhagavad Gita,—“*uddharet atmanatmanam*”.

Swamiji also highlighted the significance of the four words –Serve, Love, Meditate and Realise as they stand for Holy Master’s Yoga of Synthesis. The three obstacles in the way of attaining Highest Beatitude—*mala*, *vikshepa* and *avarana* can be overcome by the practice of Yoga of Synthesis. Swamiji spoke elaborately on each of the four Yogas, viz., Karma yoga, Bhakti yoga, Raja yoga and Jnana yoga or Vedanta, and touched upon their important aspects.

H. H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, D. L. S. Headquarters, in his elevating talk emphasized upon *abhyasa* (practice) the key-word given by Lord Krishna. It is practice that leads to ultimate perfection. If we do not practise, we will achieve nothing. Swamiji motivated the *sadhaks* to study Srimad Bhagavad Gita daily as it contains the essence of all the scriptures and guides the seeker like a mother. Swamiji also said that *ananya chintan* (exclusive remembrance) of the Lord is the key to Supreme Bliss and *anya chintan* (thoughts of the world) is the cause of all miseries.

H. H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, D. L. S. Headquarters, in his illuminating discourse said that *sadhaks* usually complain that in spite of long years of *sadhana*, they do not get any substantial spiritual progress and find themselves incapable of understanding the cause thereof. Swamiji illustrated the cause with an apt example of a diabetic patient who takes his medicine and insulin injection daily but cannot resist himself from taking sweets. Even so, the *sadhaks* devote themselves enthusiastically to spiritual practices but do not give up their evil and unrighteous ways due to attraction towards worldly pleasures. Swamiji referred to the *sloka* in the fifteenth chapter of Srimad Bhagavad Gita—“*Yatantopyakrit-atmano nainam pashyantyachetasah*” Those who are without discipline of the mind and senses, who have not eradicated lust, pride, anger, greed etc.—however hard they may struggle, cannot attain God-realisation.

Sri Swami Advaitanandaji Maharaj in his inspiring talk described the two paths as mentioned in Yama-Nachiketa Samvad of Kathopanishad. Before each individual, there are two paths. The first path—‘Preyo Marga’

is the one that is pleasant and satisfies the senses but it is fraught with the danger of losing one’s freedom. The second path—‘Sreyo Marga’ is apparently difficult and does not seem to be pleasant but leads to one’s highest good and welfare. Swamiji advised the *sadhaks* to be like Nachiketas and tread the path of wisdom.

Sri Swami Sivachidanandaji Maharaj in his discourse emphasized upon the ultimate goal of human life i.e. God-realisation. Swamiji said that we are Satchidananda but we think that we are the perishable body. This body-consciousness causes our bondage, pain and misery. Constant repetition of the Lord’s name is the easiest *sadhana* to get rid of this body-consciousness and attain God-consciousness.

Sri Swami Atmaswarupanandaji Maharaj spoke on the common difficulty faced by many seekers, who even after years of sincere efforts find that they are not having a break-through. Swamiji explained that they do not believe in the great truths of the scriptures that Brahman alone is and we are That. Therefore, they do *sadhana* considering it a struggle to attain something new, rather than to express what they already are.

Sri Swami Ramrajyaji Maharaj in his talk focused upon the path of Devotion. Swamiji said that *Bhakti* (devotion) is to love God above everything else. Dispassion towards worldly pleasures and intense aspiration to realize God are very necessary to tread upon the path of devotion. A true *bhakta* wants nothing but God. *Bhakti* is nectarine in character, and whosoever gets it attains Immortality.

Sri Swami Radhakrishnanandaji Maharaj spoke on the glory of saints. A saint is God Himself manifested in human form. He

awakens the sleeping soul to the awareness of its immortal and all-blissful nature. He showers his love, compassion and blessings upon one and all. By his mere glance, he can transform a hard-core sinner into a pious person.

Sri Swami Yugalpriyananda Mataji in her talk paid high tribute to Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and focused upon his great teachings. She shared some inspiring incidents from his noble life with *sadhaks* to guide and motivate them. Quoting his words, she advised the *sadhaks* to start their day early and cleanse and purify themselves by uttering the Lord's Name thinking of the Lord.

Sri Swami Vaikunthanandaji Maharaj in his discourse reiterated the great Upanishadic truths that Brahman alone is real and we are not different from Brahman. We are that Timeless Divinity. Therefore, our every movement and every action should become an expression of Divinity.

Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji Maharaj in his message laid much stress on the first instruction of Holy Master Swami Sivanandaji's Twenty Spiritual Instructions. If a *sadhak* follows the instruction of getting up at 4 a.m. he will be rewarded with peaceful and blissful life, as by getting up early, he will get ample time for doing his spiritual practices and *asana* and *pranayama* as well.

Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj told the *sadhaks* about the life and teachings of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. Swamiji advised them to follow Gurudev's doctrine of Synthesis Yoga in the beginning. The combined practice of all the four paths [Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Raja Yoga] will make their spiritual life interesting, vibrant and dynamic and as they advance in their *sadhana*, they can con-

centrate upon one yoga as per their inclination.

Prof. Rajendra Bhardwaji lucidly explained how one's spiritual progress depends upon one's way of relating to the four factors encountered in day-to-day life—the world of objects, all living creatures, one's psyche (mind) and the Supreme Being. Wisdom, selfless service, self-control and deep devotion are the four respective ways to relate oneself with these four factors and then one can attain the ultimate goal of life.

Prof. Vasudev Randevji in his discourse focused upon the philosophy of Param Pujya Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and summed it up in three words—Humanity, Humility and Divinity. He also pointed out that the fundamental error of human beings is that they consider themselves as bodies, and said that the aim of all the *sadhanas* is to discard body-consciousness.

Sri Harihar Singhji said that eradication of vices and cultivation of virtues is the core *Sadhana*. He said that *kama* (lust), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (greed) and *ahankara* (ego) are the ailments of the mind and they lead to bondage and misery. One should strive hard to cultivate truth, purity, non-injury, humility, compassion and contentment to make one's life divine.

Sri Brijesh Pathakji in his talk emphasised upon the control of *indriyas* (senses) as a great necessity for progress in the Spiritual Path. He also inspired the *sadhaks* to cultivate *ananya bhakti* (undivided love) for God and make total surrender at His lotus feet like Hanuman and Lakshmana.

In addition to the discourses and messages by other speakers, recorded discourses of Param Pujya Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and Revered Sri

Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj were screen-played. There were Question-Answer Sessions in which queries and questions of sadhaks were answered by H. H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj and H. H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj.

In the Night Satsang, Krishna Leela was presented on all the seven days by Sri Sri Ram Sharma and party of Sri Vrindavan.

In the concluding session, on the seventh day, H. H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, H. H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj, H. H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj and H. H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj blessed the sadhaks with their parting advice. The Sadhana Week came to a close with distribution of *jnana prasad*.

THE FIRST PUNYA-TITHI ARADHANA CELEBRATIONS OF WORSHIPFUL SRI SWAMI CHIDANANDAJI MAHARAJ

The First Punya-Tithi Aradhana of Most Worshipful His Holiness Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj was celebrated at the Headquarters Ashram from 14th to 18th August 2009 with great solemnity and sacredness befitting the holy occasion. A special Pandal was erected at Dattatreya Hill for this grand celebration and was splendidly bedecked with flowers and huge picture frames of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Most Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj.

The Celebrations commenced with Jaya Ganesh Prayer by H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, President, D.L.S. Headquarters in the forenoon of 14th August 2009. H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, D.L.S. Headquarters extended a warm and hearty welcome to about four thousand devotees assembled from different parts of India and the world to participate in this Aradhana Parva (festival). After the traditional welcome in the form of Chanting of Vedic Mantras by Br. Atmanishtha Chaitanya, H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj inaugurated the Four-Day Spiritual Conference on "The Life, Teachings and Mission of H.H. Sri Swami

Chidanandaji Maharaj" with *deepa prajwalanam* (lighting of the lamp).

On all the Conference days, the programme started with Brahmamuhurta prayer-meditation followed by the video-clippings of early morning talk by Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. Soon after that a *prabhat-pheri* was taken out. The forenoon and the afternoon sessions were earmarked for the Conference. The Four-Day Spiritual Conference comprised eight sessions; two sessions each day. In the inaugural session, presided over by H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, blessing messages were delivered by H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj, H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj, H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj. A beautiful Pictorial, Souvenir and some books were also released to commemorate this glorious occasion.

The second and the third sessions were held under the Chairmanship of H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj. The fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh sessions were presided over by H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj, H.H. Sri

Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, H.H. Sri Swami Guhabhaktanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj respectively. Each session was well conducted by a Master of Ceremonies. H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj was the Master of Ceremonies for the inaugural and concluding sessions and H.H. Sri Swami Sivachidanandaji Maharaj, Ms. Divya Satish, Ms. Tui Suchak, Prof. Rajendra Kumar Bhardwaj, Dr. D.N.Naresh and Dr. Jayant B.Dave for the sessions second to seventh respectively.

During this Four-Day Conference, about one hundred speakers feelingly shared their loving memories and marvellous experiences during different periods of their discipleship at the feet of Parama Pujya Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. Glorious heartfelt tributes were paid to the living memory of the Holy Master. The atmosphere was pervaded by the spirit of deep devotion, fervent worshipfulness, guru-bhakti and profound faith in the continued presence of Beloved Masters H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj.

The concluding eighth session, presided over by H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, comprised blessing messages and thanks giving and felicitations. While delivering the vote of thanks, H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj expressed his heartfelt gratitude towards all those who endeavoured hard in various capacities to make this Celebration a spectacular success.

In the Night Satsanga, in addition to daily prayers and chants, a beautiful cultural programme christened Swaranjali was organized in honour of Parama Pujya Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. Ms. Medha Sachdev

was the anchor for Swaranjali Programmes. The most eminent artists of classical vocal recital Shri Shantanu and Smt. Durba Bhattacharya, Pt. Sanjeev Abhyankar, Swami Sri Divyavratandanandaji Maharaj of Sri Ramkrishna Mission Seva Ashram, Contai (West Bengal), and Sri Sharad Gupta of Hyderabad offered their homage in the form of devotional soul-stirring musical renditions from 14th to 17th August 2009.

On the 18th of August, the auspicious Aradhana Day (Punya Tithi) of Holy Master Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj was observed on a grand scale. The programmes of Brahmamuhurta Session were similar to the one followed during Conference days. A Havan was performed for the peace and welfare of the world. In the forenoon session, a grand worship was offered to the Sacred Padukas of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. It was followed by Shradhanjali by spiritual luminaries of different organizations. The speakers of the day included Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Divyanandaji Maharaj of Kailash Ashram, Mahamandaleshwar Sri Swami Asanganandaji Maharaj of Paramarth Niketan, H.H. Sri Swami Muktanandaji Maharaj of Anandashram, Sri Swami Tat Japanandaji Maharaj of R.K.Mission, Vrindavan and Sri Swami Premanandaji Maharaj of Uttarkashi. Everyone elucidated the resplendence of supremely luminous spiritual personality of Param Pujya Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and glorified him as the living embodiment of guru-bhakti, all embracing love, compassion and humility.

A special Bhandara was also organised for sadhus of Rishikesh and neighbouring places. An elaborate worship was offered to Mother Ganga in the evening at Vishwanath Ghat with Arati and offering of hundreds of

lamps. In the Night Satsanga, the beautiful and enchanting performances of Kuchipudi Dance by Sri Manonmani Natya Sangeet Parishat, Ongole, A.P. and Odissi Dance by Guru Smt. Mamta Satpathy and party of Sri Dasabatar Natyasala, Orissa mesmerised one and all present there. The Celebration concluded with Arati and distribution of Sacred Prasad.

To be a part of this Five-Day Sacred Aradhana Parva was indeed the most re-

warding, inspiring and elevating Divine Experience for all. May we all make our entire life a living, practical and dynamic worship of the Twin Divine Idols before us in the form of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Most Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and thereby attain the Supreme Goal of life.

CULTURAL TOUR OF H.H. SRI SWAMI PADMANABHANANDAJI MAHARAJ

H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj was invited by the Managing Committee, Sri Swami Sivananda Cultural Association, Amar Colony, New Delhi, and the D.L.S. Vasant Vihar Branch, New Delhi, to attend the functions organised by them on Sunday, 9th August 2009

The Swami Sivananda Cultural Association organised the Celebration of the first Punya Tithi Aradhana of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj at the Satsanga Bhavan in the morning of 9th August. Dr. Vishvamitraji Maharaj, Head of the Sri Ramsharanam Ashram in New Delhi, Dr. Mohini Giri Mataji of the Guild of Services and Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji Maharaj from the Headquarters spoke on Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj presided over the function and spoke on the unique saintly

qualities of Param Pujya Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. Over 500 people participated in the Satsanga.

In the evening of the Same day the D.L.S. Vasant Vihar Branch organised a Satsanga at 'Muktadhara', Gole Market, New Delhi. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji spoke on the importance of 'Dharma' to make life purposeful and rewarding. The Satsanga was attended by an elite group of Government Officials and professionals.

Sri Swamiji was invited by Sardar Patel College of Communication and Management, New Delhi to deliver the inaugural lecture on 'Spiritual Heritage of India' to the postgraduate students. Accordingly Sri Swami visited the college on 25th August, 2009 and delivered a talk. About 500 students and the faculty members attended the lecture.

To raise the fallen, to lead the blind, to share what I have with others, to bring solace to the afflicted and to cheer the suffering are my ideals. To have perfect faith in God, to love God with all my heart and soul, to protect animals, women and children are my aims. My watchword is Love. My goal is the natural, continuous super-conscious state.

—Swami Sivananda

BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN'S ESSAY COMPETITIONS RESULT—2008

It is for the information of Readers that the following three participants have been declared as the Prize-winners at the Swami Sivananda Memorial Essay Competition which was held by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in the year 2008. The details of the prize-winners are as under.

Shri Dinesh Kumar S/o Shri Ramanevaj C/o Shri Rama Avatar Maurya C-3/35 Avas Nagar DEVAS-455001 (M.P.)	1st Prize
Smt. Shubhara Sharma W/o Dr. Amit Sharma 151, Indirapuram B.D.A. Colony, Subhash Nagar BAREILLY-243001 (U.P.)	2nd Prize
Shri Rakesh Kumar V.Thakar 43, Shanti Nagar Near Rajmandir Multiplex Palanpur Highway DEESA-385535 Dist. Banaskantha (Gujarat)	3rd Prize

Prof. S.A. Upadhyaya, Project Officer, Bhavan's Essay Competitions, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Kulapati Munshi Marg, Chowpatty, Mumbai—400 007 —*The Divine Life Society*

YOUTH CAMP AND 32nd ALL ORISSA DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY CONFERENCE

By the grace of Most Worshipful H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, the 32nd All Orisa Divine Life Society Conference will be held from 29th to 31st December 2009 at Polasara, Dt. Ganjam, Orissa. As part of the Programme a youth Camp will also be held from 27th to 31st December, 2009. Senior Swamijis from the Headquarters will attend the youth Camp and the Conference. The Youth Camp is free of charge. Delegate fee for participation in the Conference is Rs. 350/-

Contact persons:

- 1) Sri Jaya Chandra Nayak, Chief Organizer, Mobile: 0 9438849049.
- 2) Sri Bipra Charan Patra, Mobile: 0 9437078041.
- 3) Sri Lakshmi Narayan Prusty, Mobile: 0 9861752831.
- 4) Sri Bhagaban Tripathy, Mobile: 0 9404320091.

Students are cordially invited to attend the youth Camp and the devotees to participate in the conference —*The Divine Life Society*

REPORTS FROM THE D.L.S. BRANCHES

INLAND BRANCHES

Agra (U.P.): During the month of July 2009, the Branch conducted daily Sankirtan and yoganana class, weekly Satsangas, Satsanga on Sundays, and Havan and a spiritual talk on Tuesdays. On Sri Guru Purnima special programmes and a talk were arranged. It also held a 65 days Yogasana training for the Paramilitary personnel from May 25 to July 29. On the occasion of the Foundation Day anniversary of the Branch it organised Havan and a talk on 5th July. It held a meditation session during the solar eclipse.

Aska (Orissa): The Branch conducted 2½ hour weekly Satsanga at its Ashram on Sundays and mobile Satsanga at the residence of the devotees on Thursdays. It organised special programmes on Sri Guru Purnima and Punyatithi Aradhana of Sri Gurudev, and daily Satsanga during the Sadhana Week. It held two medical camps at the Ashram. It also distributed utensil, cloth and Prasad in a leprosy colony and to the poor on the Shodashi day of a Sannyasin.

Badakuanl (Orissa): The Branch held twice a day Puja followed by recitation of a few chapters of Bhagavad Gita in the morning and of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram in the evening, Paduka Puja and weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, and a special Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day. It organised on Sri Guru Purnima early morning prayer-meditation, Paduka Puja, Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana and 90-minute Mahamantra Akhanda Kirtan in the forenoon, and a special Satsanga in the evening. Sadhana programmes took place during the Sadhana week. The programmes on the Aradhana Day were early morning prayer session, 1000 times devout offering with 'Om Namoh Bhagavate Sivanandaya' Mantra, Bhagavad Gita Parayana, Mahamantra Sankirtan for one hour, and evening Satsanga. It also held Bhagavad Gita Parayana in a nearby village.

Barbil (Orissa): The Branch had the weekly Satsanga on Thursdays and mobile Satsanga on Mondays. The monthly programme on Chidananda Day was Sadhana Day with Paduka Puja and evening Satsanga. Swami Sivananda Charitable Homoeopathic Dispensary treated 421 patients during the month.

Bargarh (Orissa): The regular activities: 2-time Puja, Gita class on Sundays and Svadhyaya (study) class on all the remaining days, weekly Satsanga on Sundays, monthly Sadhana Day on 24th, daily class for Yogasana with meditation, and daily Seva through Homoeopathy clinic. Special programme on Sri Guru Purnima included Paduka Puja, spiritual talks, Japa, Narayana Seva, Prasad.

Baripada (Orissa): The Branch conducted Paduka Puja on Sundays and monthly Sadhana day on the first Sunday. On Sri Guru Purnima, after Paduka Puja, food was distributed to 80 children of a leprosy colony. The distribution of free medicines to the inhabitants of a leprosy colony was continued.

Bellary (Karnataka): The Branch held daily Puja, weekly Satsanga and Paduka Puja on Sundays, and special Paduka Puja on Sri Guru Purnima and Aradhana Day.

Bhongir (A.P.): The Branch conducts daily the evening prayer with collective recitation of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram. It arranged Guru Puja, Bhajan and Prasad distribution on Sri Guru Purnima, and Sankirtan and Guru Puja on Aradhana Day. On 31st July, Bhoomi Puja was performed for the construction of the temple of Sri Murali Krishna.

Bhuj (Gujarat): The Branch held fortnightly Satsanga on even Saturdays of the month with spiritual talks. In the special Satsanga on Sri Guru Purnima, after a talk on Sri Gurudev, two dignitaries from Sister Spiritual Institutions spoke on 'The Role of Guru'.

Bikaner (Rajasthan): Regular Activities: 2-time Puja; weekly Satsanga with Svadhyaya on Sundays; Matri-Satsanga with Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on 14th and 27th July; Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day; Havan on Chidananda Day; Sivananda library; Yogasana class; and scholarship to students.

Special activities: (1) Sri Guru Purnima: Puja of Bhagavan Vyasa, Sri Sankaracharya and Paduka, Bhajan-kirtan, Prasad Sevan. (2) Aradhana Day: Paduka Puja, a talk on Gurudev's life and teachings. (3) Sri Sundarakanda Parayana: on all the Mondays during the month of Sravana. (4) Eclipse: Sankirtan and distribution of alms. (5) Sri Goswami Tulsidas Jayanti: Sri Sundarakanda Parayana.

Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh): Besides the regular activities of Satsanga and mobile Satsanga, the Branch arranged a Sadhana Day on the Car Festival day and a special Satsanga in Sri Jagannath Temple premises.

Buguda (Orissa): The Branch held the weekly Satsanga on Thursdays at its Sivananda Ashram and a special monthly Satsanga on the Sankranti day in a temple.

Burla (Orissa): The Branch had Satsanga on Sundays and Mondays. It also held special Satsanga on Gurudev's Sannyasa Diksha anniversary, Paduka Puja and Satsanga on Sri Guru Purnima and Aradhana Day, and Sankirtan during Solar Eclipse.

Chatrapur (Orissa): In addition to the daily Satsanga, the Branch conducted weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, four mobile Satsangas in June, Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Sankrantis—15th June and 16th July, and Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day. Paduka Puja was performed also on Sri Guru Purnima. During the Sadhana Week, there was the early morning prayer-meditation. On Aradhana Day, the programmes were Prabhat Pheri from 4-30 to 5-30 in the morning, 5-hour special session of Satsanga, Paduka Puja, Bhajan-Kirtan and discourses, and distribution of food and clothing to 14 destitutes. On Goswami Tulsidas Jayanti

the Branch organised a special Satsanga and Puja in the morning and reading of his autobiography. It also held a Satsanga in a school in which students, teachers and guardians participated in a large number on 19th June.

Chennai, Annanagar (Tamil Nadu): The Branch organised a talk on "Vision and Mission of Swami Sivananda" in Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Hall on 29th June, and another function to pay homage to certain dignitaries on 1st July at the Branch premises.

Chennai, Washermenpet (Tamil Nadu): The Branch had a special function on the occasions of Aradhana Day and its Foundation Day anniversary, and Guru Puja, Bhajans, recitation, Arati and Prasad were the main items.

Dhenkanal (Orissa): The special function on Sri Guru Purnima included Prabhat Pheri, Paduka Puja, talks on "The Glory of Gurutattva by Revered Swami Sivananda Gurusevanandaji and by the President of the Branch, and Prasad Sevan.

Dombasara (Orissa): The Branch conducted weekly Satsanga on Thursdays, and Paduka Puja and Bhajan-Kirtan on Sri Guru Purnima. It also held special programmes during the Car Festival.

Faridpur (U.P.): The Branch held weekly Satsanga on Wednesdays. It continued Jala Seva of distributing free cold water pouches to train passengers, to Kanwar Yattris and to the public at busy cross roads incurring expenditure of Rs. 40,000/-.

Ghatpadamur, Jagadapur (Chhattisgarh): In addition to the daily activities of morning session of prayer, meditation and chanting, followed by Yogasana, and 30-minutes Sankirtan and Satsanga in the evening, the Branch had Paduka Puja on Thursdays, and recitation of Sri Sundarakanda on Saturdays and of Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram on Sundays. The programmes on Sri Guru Purnima and Aradhana Day included 7-hour Akhanda Sankirtan of 'Om Namoh Bhagavate Sivanandaya' Mantra, Bhajan-Kirtan and Prasad distribution. It also held 2-hour Akhanda Sankirtan of 'Om Namah Shivaya' Mantra during the solar eclipse and also on all the Mondays of Sravana month along with Siva Abhisheka and Puja.

Gumergunda (Chhattisgarh): Regular activities: 3-time Arati in Sri Viswanath Mandir daily morning prayer-meditation session; daily 2-hour evening Satsanga; daily Yogasana class; Paduka Puja on Thursdays; recitation of Sri Sundarakanda on Saturdays and of other hymns on other days.

Special activities: (1) Sri Guru Purnima—12-hour Akhanda Sankirtan of 'Om Namoh Bhagavate Sivanandaya' Mantra, Guru Puja, Vyas Puja, Havan, (2) Solar Eclipse—2-hour Sankirtan. (3) Sravana Month: special Puja on Mondays.

Jaipur, Malaviya Nagar (Rajasthan): The Branch conducts Havan on Sundays, Matri-Satsanga on Fridays, Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day and Narayana

Seva on Tuesdays. It also held Sri Ramakatha in June and Srimad Bhagavata Katha for 9-days from April 28 to May 6.

Jaipur, Raja Park (Rajasthan): Regular activities: Daily morning Sri Devi Bhagavata Katha, daily Satsanga with Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa for 1 hour on Thursdays and Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Saturdays and also on 7th July; Sunday weekly Satsanga with Havan and Svadhya; Matri-Satsanga on Mondays; Homoeopathic clinic—612 patients treated in July; daily Yogasana class; Swami Sivananda Library; distribution of Rs. 3,900/-per month to 26 poor widows; feeding the poor daily and on Sundays with sweets—300 beneficiaries; dry ration—90 Kg. food-grain, 15 Kg. sugar, and also edible oil, tea, etc.; scholarship to 80 students.

Special activities; (1) Sri Guru Purnima: Paduka Puja—60 participants; (2) Sravana month: daily special Puja, Abhisheka.

Langthabal (Manipur): The Branch organised a special Satsanga with Guru Puja on Sri Guru Purnima. It also included a talk on 'Guru Parampara'.

Ludhiana (Punjab): The Branch conducted special programmes on Sri Guru Purnima and Naga Panchami. Vedic Siva hymn Rudrashthadyayi was chanted and its meaning was expounded.

Manjhiguda (Chhattisgarh): On Sri Guru Purnima the Branch organised 'Om Namoh Bhagavate Sivanandaya' Mantra Japa for two hours, Paduka Puja and Havan.

Kakching (Manipur): The Branch held 2-time Puja in Sri Viswanath temple at its Seva Ashram. Sri Guru Purnima programmes included Paduka Puja, recitation of Sri Guru Gita, and nightlong Bhajan-Kirtan. The members actively participated in the monthly Thoubal District Satsangas on 19th April, 7th June and 12th July, and also in Manipur State Satsanga on 24th May. It held special programmes on 24th June and 2nd July in relation to Car Festival. It also organised 111th Residential Yoga training Camp from May 3 to 30, and another Yoga Camp in a nearby village from June 7 to 21 with 51 participants. In the Youth Awakening programme, discourses were organised in New Public Higher Secondary School on April 3, 4, 25 and May 25 and 29 with average 85 participants, and in Antarctica English School with an audience of 1430. The Branch Secretary gave talks in the National Youth Conference on 8th June and in a symposium held for Manipur and Mizoram States on 'Spiritual Empowerment of Youths' held at Imphal on 28th June.

Kakinada (A.P.): The Branch had weekly Satsanga on Sundays, a special Satsanga with two discourses on 12th July and a Bhajan session on 19th July. It continued Seva through Homoeopathic clinic.

Khatiguda (Orissa): The Branch conducted weekly Satsanga on Thursday; a mobile Satsanga followed by Bhandara, and Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotra Parayana on Ekadasis. Sri Guru Purnima was observed as a Sadhana day with 12-hour Akhanda Kirtan and Narayana Seva.

Khedbrahma (Gujarat): The Branch held the monthly public Satsanga on 19th July with talks on 'Sivananda Ashram' and on 'Self-Realisation', and distributed Jnana Prasad.

Khurja (U.P.): The Branch conducted Satsanga on Sundays with Svadhyaya, Sankirtan in the afternoon by Matri-Mandal and Mahamantra Japa in the evening on Ekadasis, and Yogasana class for men in the morning and for women in the evening. It continued social service through Sri Swami Devananda Homoeopathy clinic, distribution of Rs. 200/- to poor women. It also distributed 480 Kg. wheat to the poor in June and donated Rs. 30,000/- to a Vriddhashram.

Nandini Nagar (Chhattisgarh): Regular activities: daily 2-hour early morning session of prayer, meditation, chanting; daily evening Satsanga; weekly mobile Satsanga on Thursdays; Matri-Satsanga on Saturdays with Sri Sundarakanda Parayana; Matri-Satsanga on Ekadasis covering Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram and Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana; and 6-hour Akhanda Kirtan of Mahamantra on 3rd every month.

Special activities: (1) Sri Guru Purnima and Aradhana Day: Though 74 devotees of the Branch attended the functions at Rishikesh, special programmes were arranged at Sivananda Bhajan Mandir also. (2) Sravana Month: Rudra-Abhisheka on Mondays.

Nayagarh (Orissa): The Branch conducted weekly Satsanga on Wednesdays, Matri-Satsanga on Tuesdays, Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Saturdays and the monthly Sadhana Day on second Sunday of every month. It organised Bhagavata Saptaha by Smt. Kamal Kumari Panigrahi Mataji and Yoga Vedanta class by Prof. Hrudananda Rayji from June 20 to 26. The professor as well as the chief guest Revered Sri Bipin Bihari Das Babaji Maharaj also gave talks on Srimad Bhagavatam. The Programmes on Sri Guru Purnima and Aradhana Day were early morning prayer-meditation, Yogasana, Paduka Puja, recitation of entire Bhagavad Gita, Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram, Sri Hanuman Chalisa and other hymns, Narayana Seva, Prasad Sevan, etc. During the Sadhana Week mobile Satsanga with discourse by Revered Swami Dharmaprakashanandaji was arranged daily.

New Delhi, Vasant Vihar: The main features of the Sunday Satsanga were Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on the first Sunday, meditation and Bhandara on the second, Svadhyaya of Gurudev's writing on the third and a spiritual discourse by a local saint on the fourth Sunday.

Paralakhemundi (Orissa): The Branch conducted on Sundays Paduka Puja in the morning and Satsanga in the evening, and mobile Satsanga on Tuesdays. During the 10-day period from Sri Guru Purnima to Aradhana Day, Paduka Puja, special Satsanga and distribution of fruits and sweets in a leprosy colony were arranged daily. On Gurudev's Sannyasa Diksha Anniversary, Paduka Puja and special Satsanga were organised.

Phulbani (Orissa): In addition to daily Puja, the Branch held weekly Satsanga on Sundays, mobile Satsanga on Thursdays and Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day and

Chidananda Day. It also arranged distribution of food to the poor on 28th June.

Raipur (Chhattisgarh): The Branch conducted Satsanga on Sundays, and Puja and Sri Vishnu-sahasranama Stotram Parayana on Ekadasis. Sri Guru Purnima Programmes included early morning prayer session, forenoon session of Paduka Puja, discourses and Prasad Sevan, and discourses, Bhajans and Sankirtan in the evening.

Rourkela (Orissa): The Branch held daily early morning meditation and Yogasana class, Paduka Puja in the morning and weekly Satsanga on Thursdays at Sivananda Ashram, mobile Satsanga with spiritual discourses on Sundays, and Paduka Puja in the morning and special Satsanga in the evening on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day. It also organised 10-day programmes beginning with Paduka Puja on Sri Guru Purnima. Sri Ramayana Parayana was done in the morning and Katha in the evening. Daylong programmes—Prabhat Pheri, morning meditation, Yogasana, Paduka Puja, talks on Gurudev's life and teachings by Revered Swami Brahmasakshatkarandaji and Sri P.K. Pandaji, recitation of hymns, Narayana Seva, Prasad Sevan, and in the evening concluding discourse on Sri Ramayana. It also held Paduka Puja in the morning and a special Satsanga in the evening on the anniversary of Gurudev's Sannyasa Diksha. The Branch has formed a Seva committee. It arranges medical check-up, distribution of medicines, fruits, biscuits and occasionally food and clothing to inhabitants of leprosy colonies. Sivananda Homoeopathy Dispensary treats patients on Sundays.

Rourkela, Fertilizer Township (Orissa): The Branch held Satsanga on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Sri Guru Purnima programmes included Paduka Puja, discourses by Revered Swami Saswatanandaji and two devotees, and Narayana Seva to 50 destitutes.

Rourkela, Steel Township (Orissa): The Branch organised on Sri Guru Purnima spiritual programmes in the morning and Satsanga with a talk by Revered Swami Brahmasakshatkarandaji in the evening, and on Aradhana Day morning Prabhat Parikrama, Paduka Puja, talk by Swamiji in Satsanga, Narayana Seva and Prasad Sevan. Daily special Satsanga was arranged during the Sadhana week.

Salipur (Orissa): Regular activities: Daily 2-time Puja; 3-hour morning session of prayer, Japa, Kirtan, recitation; daily evening study class followed by Svadhyaya of Gurudev's book 'Sadhana'; weekly Satsanga on Sundays; recitation of Sri Siva-Sahasranamavali on Mondays; Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on the First Saturday; Srimad Bhagavad Gita Parayana on the First Sunday every month; monthly Sadhana Day on the third Sunday; Sivananda Day—Paduka Puja, 'Om Namoh Bhagavate Sivanandaya' Mantra Japa for one hour and special Satsanga in the evening; and Swami Sivananda Charitable Hospital—284 patients treated during July.

Special activities: Sri Guru Purnima and Aradhana Day Programmes were Paduka Puja, Parayana of Sri Guru Gita, chanting of Sivanada Mantra for one hour in the morning and Satsanga with a talk in the evening prayer; 12-hour Akhanda

Kirtan of Mahamantra on 21st July; Goswami Tulsidas Jayanti, Sri Sundarakanda Parayana in the morning and a talk on Goswamiji and Svadhyaya of Sri Vinaya Patrika; Yoga Training Camp in a local college on 29th July.

Sasan Purusottampur (Orissa): The Branch conducted Paduka puja on Thursdays, and also on Sri Guru Purnima and Aradhana Day. It organised spiritual programmes of recitation, Japa, Patha (reading of scriptures), Bhajan-Kirtan, etc. daily during the Sadhana Week.

South Balanda (Orissa): The Branch had 2-time Puja, weekly Satsanga on Fridays and special Satsanga on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day. Sri Guru Purnima Programmes were Prabhat Pheri, Brahma-muhurta prayer-meditation, Yogasana, Paduka Puja and a special Satsanga with a talk in the evening. During Sadhana Week it had Brahma-muhurta prayer-meditation and Yogasana in the morning and Satsanga in the evening with Svadhyaya and discourses. The programmes on Aradhana Day included Prabhat Pheri, prayer-meditation, Yogasana, Paduka Puja, discourses on the life and teachings of Gurudev, distribution of food and Dakshina to 35 leprosy patients, Prasad Sevan by 350 participants, 3-hour Akhanda Japa of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra and a special evening Satsanga with video show of Gurudev. It also held 3-hour Akhanda Mahamantra Sankirtan followed by Prasad Sevan by 140 participants on 25th July.

Sunabeda (Orissa): The Branch held biweekly Satsanga on Sundays and Thursdays. Sri Guru Purnima programmes included morning prayer-meditation, Havan, Puja, Arati, etc., and a special evening Satsanga. During the Sadhana Week it had daily morning meditation and evening Satsanga. The programmes on Aradhana Day were morning meditation, Paduka Puja, Havan, Arati and Prasad Sevan.

Surendranagar (Gujarat): The Branch conducted daily Svadhyaya of Sri Ramayana and Srimad Bhagavatam, Sri Sundarakanda Parayana on Saturdays, and discourses on Sri Ramayana on Sundays. It continued feeding of the insects with flour and monthly distribution of dry ration to the poor. It organised a 5-day Shibir for school girls under Revered Swami

Ramarajyamji from May 3 to 7. The Branch has adopted the village Kathada and arranged two Satsangas, Sivananda Library, and free Jalaseva on the highway.

Vadodara (Gujarat): The Branch held Bhajan Satsanga on Thursdays, and Mantra Japa and Paduka Puja on Sivananda Day and Chidananda Day. It organised guided meditation session on 14th June and group discussion on Isavasya Upanishad on 21st and 28th June. It also rendered social service through Homoeopathy and Ayurved dispensaries, acupressure treatment and free distribution of medicines to the poor patients.

Varanasi (U.P.): The Branch had its Satsanga on 26th July. On Sri Guru Purnima Paduka Puja was performed.

Vijayawada (A.P.): The Branch held the monthly Satsanga on 5th July and a special Satsanga on Sri Guru Purnima. Spiritual discourses were given in both the Satsangas.

Vikrampur (Orissa): The Branch conducted weekly Satsanga on Wednesdays, Matri-Satsanga on Thursdays, and Paduka Puja on three occasions. It also organised special programmes on Sri Guru Purnima, and early morning prayer session and evening Satsanga during the Sadhana Week. Aradhana Day programmes were early morning prayer, Paduka Puja, 3-hour Akhanda Kirtan of Mahamantra, poor feeding, Nagar Sankirtan and evening Satsanga. A spiritual talk was arranged on 9th July.

OVERSEAS BRANCHES

Hong Kong (China): The monthly Satsanga with one hour chanting of Mahamrityunjaya Mantra and a talk on Gurudev's teachings was on 9th May with 57 participants. The Branch held one hour Mahamantra chanting on the remaining Saturdays. There were 250 new participants during May in the regular Yogasana classes. A Yoga workshop was organised from May 5 to 26 imparting teaching of Pranayama techniques and practice. It also held a special class (8 sessions) on knitting for charity purpose.

INAUGURATION OF THE 63rd BASIC YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE

The 63rd Basic Yoga-Vedanta Course of the Y.V.F. Academy was inaugurated on Saturday, the 22nd August, 2009, by H.H. Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj, President, The Divine Life Society Headquarters, at the Y.V.F.A Lecture Hall of the Ashram, by lighting Deepa to mark the auspicious commencement of the Course. 44 students from 13 States of India have joined the Course. Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj, Registrar of the Academy, welcomed the Swamijis, Faculty Members, Guests and the Students. H.H. Sri Vimalanandaji Maharaj, delivered the Inaugural Address and H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, The Divine Life Society Headquarters, gave the Blessing Address. The function concluded with Sri Saraswati Puja. —The Divine Life Society

IN MEMORIAM

REVERED SRIMATI RANI KUMUDINI DEVI ATTAINS THE LOTUS-FEET OF THE LORD



We announce with a heavy heart the sad news of the passing of Revered Srimati Rani Kumudini Devi of Hyderabad on Thursday the 6th August at 6.45 P.M. at the ripe age of 98.

She was born in Wadepally, Warangal district, on the 23rd of January, 1911. She was married in 1928 to Raja Ramdev Rao of the Wanaparthi

Samsthanam. She is survived by her two sons and two daughters.

She studied up to the Senior Cambridge in St. George's Grammar School for Girls in Hyderabad and was a recipient of a gold medal for Mathematics.

She entered politics and served as a councillor of the Municipal Corporation of Hyderabad from 1955 to 1964. In 1962, she became the Mayor of Hyderabad. For a decade from 1962 she was a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Andhra Pradesh representing the Wanaparthi assembly constituency.

She took keen interest in social service rendering care and assistance to the sick and the needy. In 1958, she founded a Rehabilitation Home for destitute Leprosy patients and called it 'Sivananda Rehabilitation Home' after Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, which later on became a sizeable multi-disciplined, comprehensive organisation serving a larger area.

Her unbounded enthusiasm and energy had found other outlets as well. She was the Founder Trustee of the Purendar Memorial Charitable Trust and the Chaitanya Memorial Education Society. She was the Founder and Chairperson of the Mother and Child Society, Sevasamajam Balika Nilayam and the

Chudamani Vruddha Ashram. Besides many other organisations, she had also served on the Board of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam (TTD) from 1967 to 1970. In recognition of her dedicated services to the disadvantaged sections of the society, she had been conferred innumerable awards by several organisations.

She was one of the staunchest devotees of our Worshipful Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and a great supporter of Gurudev's Ashram almost from the mid 1950's when she first visited our Ashram. There was always the unmistakable stamp of her spontaneous support practically to every major project undertaken by the Divine Life Society ever since. She visited our Ashram with amazing regularity and was generous to a fault whenever she thought of the Ashram.

In 1956, when the construction of the Sivananda Mandir was completed with its underground cellar to serve as Gurudev's Samadhi Sthana later, Gurudev aptly chose Rani Kumudini Devi to inaugurate the Sivananda Mandir and the marble statue of Gurudev installed therein.

During the Kumbha Mela in 1962, the Ashram authorities planned for the first time the tap-water system all over the Ashram, and lo, Kumudini Mataji readily and gladly financed the whole project. Besides, her loving contribution to Gurudev's Jnana Yajna Mission was inestimable, having met the printing cost of scores of books. The list of her magnanimous services rendered to the Institution runs endlessly, preventing us from enumerating them easily.

She had the rare distinction and privilege of being allowed to use Gurudev's name as a prefix to her name, which blessing only a very few had. She was thus known as Sivananda Kumudini Devi.

We offer our fervent prayers to Bhagavan Viswanath and Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj for the Sat-gati and Parama Shanti of her departed soul. Hari Om Tat Sat!

—THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

