

श्री शिवानन्दमहिम्नः स्तोत्रम्

श्री वेङ्कटरमणार्यः विरचितम्

महिम्नः सत्तां ते जगति कलयेद्योऽयमिह सः।

तरेदम्भोराशिं चटुलजलजन्तुप्रतिभयम्॥

वहेन्मूर्ध्ना मालां गगनसुमसन्तानरचितां।

शिवानन्द स्वामिन्! नभसि पथि ताराश्च गणयेत्॥१॥

1. O Swami Sivananda! Whoever in this world sings of Thy glorious divinity, can work wonders. He can cross the terrible sea of tremulous creatures; can wear the garland of sky-flowers on his head and can count the stars of the sky.

तपोऽग्निज्वालानां विततिभिरधाक्षीः सुमशरं।

परं ब्रह्माद्राक्षीर्हृदय कुहरे ज्योतिरसमम्॥

जनानक्राक्षीस्त्वं विमलचरितैस्साधुभिरये।

शिवानन्द! त्वां तत्कथमिव समीडे यतिवरम्॥२॥

2. O Sivananda! By the fire of intense austerities, Thou destroyed Kamadeva (Cupid) and attained the Supreme Light i.e. Brahman in the inner cavity of Thy heart. O Lord! Thou have attracted people by Thy noble conduct and virtuous deeds. O Most Eminent Sage! How should we glorify Thee?

विशालेयं पृथ्वी विविधविषयास्तत्र बहवो।

महात्मानस्तत्र प्रथितचरितास्सन्ति कतिचित्॥

जगत्पूज्यस्तेषु त्वमिति कविभिः ख्यातचरितः।

शिवानन्द स्वामिन्! मनसि बहुमन्ये चिरमहम्॥३॥

3. O Swami Sivananda! There are various types of objects on this vast earth and there are many saints of eminent character. Being the most distinguished among them, Thou have been regarded as Most Worshipful and Adorable for World by the poets. I have also been Thy ardent devotee for a long time.

तपस्तेपुः केचिद्दृशुरपरे तत्त्वमितरे।

पुराऽवापुर्मोक्षं तरणसरणिं चान्य अवदन्॥

न ते सर्वे स्वामिन्! त्वमिव मुनयो दीनजनता-

मकुर्वन्नुद्धर्तुं किमपि यतनं किञ्चिदपि भोः॥४॥

4. O Greatest of Ascetics! There have been many ascetics in this world—some performed penance for a long duration and some enquired into Brahman while some other preached about the essence of that Tattwa and some attained Liberation living at the banks of holy Ganga. But Swamiji! None of those ascetics endeavoured for the welfare of suffering humanity as Thou did.

महात्मानो ये ये समजनिषत प्रागिह भुवि।

विधिस्तेषां तेषां रचयति महोऽशैरनुपमैः॥

भवन्तं कालेऽस्मिन्निति मनसि मन्ये ऋतमिदं।

न चेत्तेभ्योऽपि त्वं कथमिव वरः स्याः यतिवरः॥५॥

5. Many saints have taken birth on this earth and they have preached their own

methods of Sadhana and are greatly admired and revered. But, for me, O Chief among Ascetics! Thou are the greatest saint in this Kaliyuga who is firmly established in the Knowledge.

बभूवुर्व्यासाद्या नियमितहृषीका अविषयाः।
महर्षीणां श्रेष्ठा न च खलु भवांस्तेभ्य इतरः॥
यदा स्यादन्यस्त्वं कथमनुवदेस्तत्त्वममृतं।
तदुक्तं तत्सर्वं यमिवर! शिवानन्द वदतात्॥६॥

6. There have been many a great Rishis of yore like Vyasa who were wise, self-controlled and desireless. Are Thou different from them? Certainly not. How would Thou have enlightened the masses on Amrit Tattwa, if Thou had been less great than those Maharshis? Thy sacred name 'Sivananda' contains everything. Thou are Excellence incarnate.

विहाय त्वं भोगांस्तृणमिव महीध्रे हिमवति।
तपस्तप्त्वा विघ्नैस्सुचिरमभिभूतोऽपि बहलैः॥

परं तत्त्वं ज्ञात्वा भवजलधिमुत्तीर्यः विषयैः।
शिवानन्द! ग्रस्तानवसि कृपयाऽस्मान् यमिवर!॥७॥

7. O Sivananda! Renouncing all worldly pleasures like straw and enduring many trials and tribulations, Thou performed penance for a long time in snow-clad Himalayas and crossed the formidable ocean of world attaining the Supreme Being. O great Ascetic! We are engrossed in worldly pleasures. Kindly do save us.

भवान् भिक्षाजीवी चरति निकषा काननमहीं।
न वाऽऽस्ते पाणौ ते तृणमपि विना कच्चरपटम्॥
तथाऽपि त्वं भक्तैर्यदभिलषितं तद्वितरसि।
कथं सम्पद्येत? प्रतिवदतु पृष्टः खलु भवान्॥८॥

8. It is a great wonder how can Thou—clad in extremely simple clothes, carrying not even a straw in Thy hands, living in the forest on alms—bestow desired objects upon Thy devotees. Kindly tell us the secret of this miracle.

THE GANGA BATH

Thousands of pilgrims visit Hardwar and Rishikesh every year and take a dip in the sacred river. They have immense faith in the glory of Mother Ganga. They believe that all their sins are washed away if they take a dip in the sacred waters of the Ganga. Really they are washed off. A dip in the Ganga instantly purifies. There is no doubt about this. Even confirmed atheists and rationalists come to Hardwar for a refreshing bath in the Ganga.

Wherever a pious Hindu goes to take his bath, he invokes first the Ganga and feels Her presence in the water before he takes a plunge in the river. If he lives in a place far away from the Ganga, he intensely yearns to see Her some day and bless his being by bathing in the holy waters. When he is blessed to have a Ganga bath, he carries some water to his house and carefully saves it in a vessel so that he may use it for purposes of purification.

—Swami Sivananda

HOW TO PURIFY HEART AND MIND

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

A pure heart is the beginning of divinity. Purity is the gateway to God. It is antechamber to the presence of the Lord. It is the key by which the doors of intuition that lead to the abode of supreme peace are opened. Therefore attain purity at all costs.

Learn to cleanse your mind with water of purity or celibacy or with the soap of divine love. How can you expect to become pure internally by merely washing the body with soap and water? Internal purity is more important than external purity.

Purify the mind. You will attain success in meditation only when the mind is pure and free from all extraneous thoughts. Calm the mind. Silence the bubbling thoughts and the surging emotions. Plunge yourself deep into the innermost recesses of your heart and enjoy the supreme silence of the Soul. Rest in silence. Know the Self and be free.

Purity is the passport to the foreign land of eternal bliss. If you hold this passport, you can set sail to the yonder land where reign everlasting peace, unalloyed felicity and eternal sunshine.

You will have to attain purity first. When this is done half of your Sadhana is over. Anger must be controlled. Even irritability must be nipped. The eight breaks in Brahmacharya should be avoided. The Bhavana or feeling that all the forms are the manifestations of the Lord should be kept up during work also. Regularity in meditation is highly essential.

One who has no purity of heart though versed in the Vedic lore or scriptural knowledge cannot comprehend the Great One or the Supreme Soul, who dwells in the chambers of the hearts of all beings, who is the support of the world, who is all-pervading and self-luminous.

Control emotions and whims. Rub the edges of all angularities. Become more sober. Give up fantastic ideas. Develop more intense faith. Your faith is flickering now. Give up curiosity. Let there be real spiritual awakening and thirsting for God. Abandon all puerile, childish ideas.

Worship God with flowers of purity, self-restraint, humility, wisdom and devotion.

The attainment of Chitta-Shuddhi or purity of heart and other virtuous qualities are the A.B.C. of Yoga Sadhana.

Do not mistake the promptings of the lower mind for the voice of the soul. The higher which tends towards virtue is Sattwic mind or Shuddha Manas. This higher mind elevates man. It guides him. It acts as a true preceptor. You should try to hear the voice of the Sattwic mind. If a wrong action is done, the Sattwic mind will prick you. This is the sign to know that an action is bad. If there is joy and elevation of mind, the act is a righteous one. That mind which tends towards luxury and evil is the lower or Rajasic-Tamasic mind. The mind is the cause for one's downfall. Annihilate Rajas and Tamas, by increasing Sattwa. You will be quite safe.

GURU SEVA*

(Gist Of Dawn-Discourse By Sri Swami Chidananda)

The glorious promise given by the Lord in the Gita Sloka:

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।

अभ्यत्थानमधर्मस्य तदाऽऽत्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥

is once again being fulfilled right before our eyes. This promise was given by the Lord at the end of Dwapara Yuga when Kali was about to come.

As Divine Knowledge was being lost, God has come to give it to man again. He has come to us in His aspect of Vidya Shakti. This is the Vibhuti of Gurudev who has made Jnana Yajna as the lofty spiritual mission of his life. But for Gurudev, it is difficult to imagine where Viveka, Vedanta and spirituality would be in this fearful age of Adharma. Through the instrumentality of Gurudev, God is not only protecting our spirituality, but positively building up our spirituality. I may say that all those with Gurudev's grace are not in Kali Yuga. The power of the various modes of Sadhana which he has opened up for us enables us to overcome the power of Samsara to drown us. Gurudev is thus creating and keeping alive a current of Satya Yuga in Kali Yuga. In this atomic age, he is radiating Divine Light far and wide.

How can we repay him? Will it ever be possible for us to repay him for the great service he has rendered to us and is continuing to render? What is the Guru-Seva which we can do to please Him? In this case,

* (from 'Sivananda, the Messenger of Peace')

the greatest Guru-Seva would be in the form of Jnana Yajna.

The glorious culture of Bharatavarsha has taught us to deify everything. The Srutis repeatedly proclaim this eternal truth: *Isavasyam idam sarvam! Sarvam khalvidam Brahma!* This is the glorious discovery of our ancients, the heritage left to us by our ancients, this unique conception of seeing God in everything, in the speck of dust, in the insect, in the sky, in air, in everything. We particularly adore anything wherein Divinity is especially manifest, wherein there is an exceptionally dense manifestation of any aspect of Divinity. The Vibhuti Yoga of Lord Krishna enumerates these manifestations in detail. The Lord is also manifest in an exceptionally dense form in the Guru, in the Spiritual Preceptor who enlightens the disciple. That is why we are asked to worship the Guru as visible God. In Swami Sivananda, we have a universal Guru, a person who deserves to be worshipped by the entire universe.

Practice of Jnana Yajna as Guru-Seva to such a universal preceptor implies two things viz., (i) the dissemination of the universal teachings of Gurudev as far and wide as possible and (ii) the practice of those teachings in our daily lives. For both these purposes, we must know what the main tenets of Gurudev's Gospel are. The fundamental points that Gurudev is trying to propagate may be summed up as:

1. There is a higher and nobler purpose in life than mere eating and drinking.

2. That higher purpose is Self-realisation.

3. Self-realisation can come about only through renunciation.

4. Renunciation does not mean going away from home or taking Sannyasa. Real renunciation consists in renunciation of Ahamkara (Ego) and Trishna (craving for objects of sense enjoyment).

5. Real renunciation as explained above is possible for everyone and must be practised by everyone.

The second aspect of Jnana Yajna, viz., the practice in one's life of Gurudev's teachings is really the more important.

Knowing the teachings of Gurudev thoroughly and putting them to practice is really the practical way of doing Jnana Yajna. Towards this end, I would suggest that everyone should get by heart Gurudev's *Universal Prayer, Twenty Spiritual Instructions* and *Sadhana Tattwa*. Everyone should know at least the bare outlines of the four principal Yogas. I would particularly recommend the book *Essence of Yoga* by Gurudev. It contains all his teachings in a nut-shell. Every disciple of Gurudev should also know the important Asanas and also some essential Kirtans and Bhajans.

THE SADGURU

To be a Guru, one must have a command from God.

Mere study of books cannot make one a Guru. One who has studied the Vedas, and who has direct knowledge of the Atman through Anubhava, can alone be enrolled as a Guru. A Jivanmukta or liberated sage is the real Guru or spiritual preceptor. He is the Sadguru. He is identical with Brahman or the Supreme Self. He is a Knower of Brahman.

A Sadguru is endowed with countless Siddhis. He possesses all divine Aiswarya, all the wealth of the Lord.

Possession of Siddhis, however, is not the test to declare the greatness of a sage or to prove that he has attained Self-realisation. Sadgurus generally do not exhibit any miracle or Siddhi. Sometimes, however, they may do so in order to convince the aspirants of the existence of super-physical things, give them encouragement, and instil faith in their hearts.

The Sadguru is Brahman Himself. He is an ocean of bliss, knowledge, and mercy. He is the captain of your soul. He is the fountain of joy. He removes all your troubles, sorrows, and obstacles. He shows you the right divine path. He tears your veil of ignorance. He makes you immortal and divine. He transmutes your lower, diabolical nature. He gives you the rope of knowledge, and takes you up when you are drowning in this ocean of Samsara. Do not consider him to be only a man. If you take him as a man, you are a beast. Worship your Guru and bow to him with reverence.

—Swami Sivananda

THE RISING STARS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

Human nature, in its present state of achievement, is in a struggle through which it is passing. It is being pulled at the lower end by the instincts of the brute nature from where it has arisen through ages of evolutionary process; and simultaneously with the anguish and uncertainty characterising its involvement in lower nature, it is being pulled up by its great destiny through certain indications of that possibility planted in itself.

Every stage of earlier levels is present in the human being. There is appetite, like the vegetable and plant kingdom. There is lethargy and inertia, like a stone or a mineral; there is rapacity, cruelty and violence characterising animal nature, and selfishness which is the hallmark of undeveloped human consciousness. Even when the lower levels are surpassed by transcendence, in the earlier stages human nature remains semi-animal, semi-vegetable and semi-stonelike, and these historical evidences are available in the lives of prehistoric cavemen. It is half-conscious of its own self, and semi-conscious of the outer world. Then, there is self-consciousness of an intensely assertive, selfish nature—each for oneself and the rest takes care of itself. Then there is a further development by the rise of ages in the process of time, when community life becomes a necessity, and it is felt that even individual existence is not comfortably possible if social life is absent.

The rejection of the presence of others will so interfere with one's own self that every

need that is felt by a person can be jeopardised by the similar reactive rejecting process exercised by other people. So, the consciousness of community life arises. This also is a kind of selfish life only. Society is not an unselfish existence, because each one has to survive, but this survival is not possible without the cooperation of others. Higher up still is the consciousness of doing good for good, and bad for bad—tit for tat. Whatever you do to me, I shall do to you. That consciousness rises further, and it realises that this is not true human nature. To be human is to be humane at the same time. Goodness arises, which is a semblance of the reflection of a higher realm of existence; or rather, a beam of light arises from the soul within itself, until which time it was sleeping. It is waking up gradually in the good person who aspires to become a holy person, whom we call a saintly person.

It is not enough if we are good. That is also inadequate in the spiritual evolutionary process. We have to be sanctified in our spirit. The presence of God has to be adequately reflected in human nature, in order that it may be saintly or holy. Holiness is the name we give to a quality of behaviour and existence which can be seen only in the most holy—the holy of holies.

God does not make Himself felt in individual life until a very advanced stage of human evolution. Men and women always consider themselves as men and women only. The human being considers himself or herself only as a human being. In this stage,

the presence of divinity is not felt. People who are engrossed in social work, and erroneously consider a rule that they take upon themselves as the goal of life, get into the mess of involvement in sufferings from which they wish to redeem people, and enter into it themselves. Often many die when they cross the feelings of people in their eagerness to reform them. Those social workers who went beyond the limit of understanding of people outside suffered themselves while they worked for the relief of the suffering of others.

It is not enough if we have enthusiasm. We have also to develop understanding. It is only at the level of the manifestation of understanding and superior reason that we can say that God has descended into us. Social life is not necessarily spiritual life. God is not a social being. He is not a leader of a house or a parliament. He is not a community leader. He is not one among the many; He is One Alone. The need for another does not arise here.

I mentioned that in the earlier stages there is great confusion in the development of consciousness. Warfare, rather, takes place within itself because of not knowing where it is moving, with several progressions and retrogressions, ups and downs, almost simultaneously. After aeons and aeons and ages of development through the evolutionary process, the presence of God is felt by a pull upward against the gravitational downward pull of lower animal instincts. Here, such a presence is felt in our purified reason. The reason can also go wrong by justifying the acts of the sense organs and emotional upheavals.

Often, it so happens that the reason acts only as a justifying medium of emotional deeds and sensory inclinations. But we have

two kinds of reason: the lower reason and the higher reason. The lower reason, which we generally call the mind, is just a logician confirming the validity and system adopted by the working of the sense organs and the emotions; but the higher mind is an ambassador to God. It reflects the light from above. The sun shines in this level of consciousness.

Spiritual seekers will find themselves in great difficulty when the earth pulls them down on the one hand, and heaven pulls them up from another side. Who wins victory is for anyone to say. This is the battle, the war of the gods and the *asuras*—heaven and earth pulling an individual in different directions. It is at this juncture of human history that great Masters are born, saints and sages who practically inundated the Twentieth Century in meteoric birth and life. Such a great Master is our Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. The process of time is so long that the life of a human individual, though it appears long, is really short. That is why I use the word 'meteoric'—it just flashes forth and afterwards disappears, but during the period of this short time of the flash, it sheds light. It brightens the whole atmosphere, the whole firmament, and leaves, and it is for anyone to know what it was.

Thus, Swami Sivananda came to this world. He came, not as a seeking human individual struggling against heavy odds, but as a potential God-man himself. His *sadhana* must have been over in his previous incarnation; otherwise, suddenly a person cannot reach such heights of spiritual power in one incarnation. Any amount of *sadhana*, *japa* and worship cannot make people so great, powerful, majestic and divine like Master Swami Sivananda.

This greatness and glory should be attributed to their spiritual practices in earlier incarnations, as we may say in the case of Buddha. The individual which was to become Buddha had already passed through hundreds of lives, until he became the matured great being called Gautama Buddha.

Saints mature from within, and their maturity is seen only when they manifest it outside. The work that Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj has done in this world of human history may be a perpetual record, a great chapter in the story of civilisation and human development. He realised the deepest truths of life, and broadcast that knowledge through every means possible. He is one of the spiritual Masters who adopted every available means of spreading knowledge. His main purpose was not to prepare an incarnation or a great disciple. That was not his mission. His mission was to wake up slumbering humanity, to shake it up from its lethargy and to leave it at that, so that when we wake up, we will know what is to be done by ourselves.

Such a great Master some of us have seen with our eyes, to our own blessedness that God has bestowed upon us through our own past *karmas* of whatever nature, and today we remember him again. It is no use merely remembering him once in a year. He has to be remembered perpetually. He has created an atmosphere of a powerful resuscitation of values. Today there is no country in the world which has not heard the name of Swami Sivananda. Though he never travelled abroad, his power of thought was such that it reverberates in the hearts of people everywhere. He never moved anywhere. He had no house. He had no bungalow. He had no physical comforts. He

had the Ashram, of course, but he was contented living in a cave-like, hovel-like residence on the bank of the Ganga. He wanted the Ganga and nothing more.

This is the great Master whom we are remembering now—a God-man, a saint and a sage, a mastermind, and a great exemplar for everyone who has eyes to see and ears to hear. May you all remember him, not as a person who has written books, who has given you *prasadam* when you saw him. This is not the way in which you have to remember him. You have to remember him as your leading light, who has shown you the path along which you have to move—the path of ascent, and not digressive descent.

Like him, there were many other great Masters born in the Twentieth Century. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva, Sri Aurobindo, Ramana Maharshi, Baba Ram Das, Mahatma Gandhi, and many others who we can recount came like sudden rising stars in the heaven, and they vanished almost at the same time. They came together, almost, and went together, really. It appeared as if the Twentieth Century was intended to have the blessing of these great veritable giants of the spirit, who came all together, shook the Earth, and then left us. Verily, they shook the Earth, and left this Earth. Our hearts were shaken, remoulded, refurbished, and made to rise to a capability to receive the call of the higher nature.

As I mentioned, we are living in a state of struggle. We do not know who is pulling us. Are the lion and the tiger pulling us, or is God pulling us? There is a dubious feeling, oftentimes. Sometimes we are tigers and lions. Sometimes we feel, "No, it is not like that. God is calling me." At this crucial juncture of cross purposes, as it were, in human life, one has to be very cautious. One

cannot be one's own leader; otherwise, the lion will come instead of God coming, and we will not know who is coming. One thing will look like another thing. Guidance of a great Master is necessary. Have the company of sages and saints. Live with good people—or at least not with obstructing people. If nobody is available, be alone to yourself. Thus, build up your personality for the great coming.

Physical life is very short. We should not imagine that we can live in this body for ages together: "What does it matter? Slowly, I will do it." There is no question of doing it slowly. By that time, *kala* will come and catch our throat.

A bee was engaged with great avidity in drinking the nectar from the filaments of a lotus flower. It drank nectar and got intoxicated. It went on sucking from morning to evening. When evening came, the lotus closed, and the bee could not come out. "What does it matter?" it said. "Let me drink the nectar throughout the night, and in the morning the sun will rise and I will fly with my joy." During the night it was drinking the nectar with these feelings, but the sun did not rise.

Wild elephants trampled the pond where the lotuses were growing and crushed everything, together with the bee, and its salvation was over in one minute.

So, we should not imagine that life is a comfortable dinner party of honey, milk, and everything pleasant: "I will do *sadhana* tomorrow; let me eat today." Tomorrow will not come, because the wild elephant may come before we wake up the next morning. A caution should be exercised by every one of us. "Heedlessness is veritable death," says Sanatkumara in a great admonition to Dhritarashtra in a wonderful scripture called *Sanatsujatiya*. There is no such thing called death. Heedlessness is death; foolishness is death; carelessness is death, especially regarding one's own self.

To rouse people from this predicament of unfortunate sluggishness and carelessness, Swami Sivananda, the great Master, came and made us what we are, and pulled us to this Ashram, and made us all sit here the whole day from morning to evening. It is a blessing that has come from him. May it come to you for ever and ever.

WHAT IS YOGA?

Yoga is not magic or a feat of any kind, physical or mental.

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Yoga is based on a sound philosophy and deep psychology.

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It is an educational process by which the human mind is trained to become more and more natural and weaned from the unnatural conditions of life.

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Yoga is that Integral Method whereby the individual is attuned to the Supreme Being, in all its levels of manifestation. It is neither a creed nor a tradition, but the law governing the universe, and made manifest in the conscious activity of the individual.

—Swami Krishnananda

THE ENQUIRY OF WHO AM I

(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)

One of the best known ways of seeking the Divine is the enquiry, Who am I? Indeed, Ramana Maharshi said that no matter what path you follow, ultimately you will have to make the enquiry, Who am I? And Gurudev, in perhaps his best known aphorism that begins Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realise, says, "Enquire, Who am I? Know thyself and be free." Then, to help direct our minds, he adds, "You are not this body, not this mind, Immortal Self you are." So he is reaffirming the *mahavakya* that says "That thou art," meaning Immortal Self you are, meaning not in some distant time or place, but here, now, as we are.

How is that to be discovered, enquired into? There are two directions to go, as pointed out by Adi Shankaracharya to a disciple who knocked on his door. Adi Shankaracharya asked, "Who is there?" The disciple said, "I." Adi Shankaracharya answered "Reduce it to zero or expand it to infinity." If we want to realize Immortal Self we have to take our false I, which we locate in the body and mind, and reduce it to zero or expand it to infinity. Both results are the same, and yet in practice we will likely have to follow both.

We reduce our I to zero through the enquiry of Who am I? within. We try to discover the source of our "I" by negating what we are not. Basically we negate the body, negate the mind, negate the intellect,

negate the ego, because we say my body, my mind, my intellect, my ego. We even negate the witness of all these things, because we are aware that we are the witness. Finally, we can go no further. We are still there, but we have reduced all the things we think we are to zero.

On the other hand, when we return to the body and mind identification, then there is a world out there that is also, by definition, our own Self. How do we affirm that? There are two ways, both of which we should use. One is to do unto others as we would have others do unto us. In other words, instead of treating others as objects, we treat them the way that we would like to be treated. We identify with them as if they are our own Self. The other has to do with nature itself. To expand our "I" to infinity we have reverence for nature. We must treat nature as our own Self. We must care for the environment as our own Self.

Therefore, the enquiry of Who am I? is to discover that this "I" that we think is a body and mind is infinitely more. From one point of view, it is an absolute mystery. From the other point of view it includes everything that we can possibly know including the body and the mind. That knowledge removes all sense of division and separation from us. We rest in our own Self and find the peace that passeth understanding.

Guru-kripa is undeniably a divine force that can turn even a stone into the infinite
Satchidananda, leave alone a conscious being.

—Swami Chidananda

MY VISIT TO SIVANANDASHRAM

(Sri Albert Bonwinchester)

(Amsterdam, Netherlands)

A few months ago I had been roaming around in the Himalayas with a small rucksack containing a few warm clothes, a sleeping bag and a copy of each the Gita and the Bible. It had been a vain search for Truth. There had been plenty of self-analysing, day in and day out, so much so that nothing was left, I felt. It was while sitting on the top of a mountain overlooking the Lahoul valley that I had burst out in tears. All hopes seemed to recede from me.

Only one fact remained after this hopeless inner quest. It was somehow a faith in the centre, the essence, God the Unknown. No books, no philosophies could convince me or explain about Him. Down in Simla I suddenly took the train to Rishikesh. I had heard enough of Swami Sivananda, but I was skeptic, as so many Europeans are when they hear the name 'Yoga' or in any case 'Hatha Yoga'. And it was still with a skeptic mind that I entered the Ashram, skeptic even towards the personality of Swami Sivananda.

That afternoon, coming back from a little walk, I saw the Swami coming on the road along with some of his disciples. The sight of him filled me at once with an immense feeling of joy. His eyes rested on me; he spoke to me a few words of friendliness and welcome. They were not words of long-awaited big truths, but nothing could have made me happier. They were a few simple words, so

full of divine love and compassion. It was in a radiating atmosphere, full of peace that I hurried to my quarters to find myself filled with a peculiar joy I had never known, and suffused in a light I had never seen. What no books could convince me of, the mere presence of Swami Sivananda did. How I wanted to be in his presence! How I devoured his words and his books! How shall I ever forget the days spent in his Ashram, feeling his presence, living in an atmosphere of peace, where his disciples untiringly work and participate in the varied activities of the Ashram.

Thousands of people come and find rest and peace in the limitless hospitality of the Swami. Thousands are fortunate to hear his teachings from his own mouth. Others he reaches by his daily correspondence and his many books. To see the unceasingly working Printing Press fills one with joy. Here is no truth kept in a lonely cave. It reaches the whole world. There is no love limited to a certain place, to local medical activities and charity, to personal blessings. It is a love radiating throughout the whole world by books, by messages, by letters.

I shall ever be grateful to the Swami for what he has worked in me in one moment. Filled with peace and happiness, I left the Ashram. I was changed; the world for me was changed. Since that moment, every word of him is holy for me.

WHAT I SAW IN MY MASTER SIVANANDA

(Sri Swami Yajnavalkyanandaji)*

In 1950 October, Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj visited Bombay during his All-India-Ceylon Tour. I attended one of his lectures at Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan. Even now I have very clear vision as to how he was roaring on the platform like a lion.

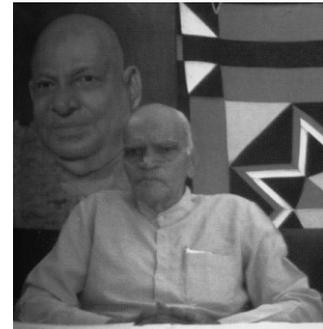
Then I wrote to him about my intention to visit the Ashram, and what a great surprise, within a week I received a reply, so attractive, beautiful and instructive, almost dragging me to Ananda Kutir.

It was the auspicious 17th May, 1952, on which I had the good fortune to have bath in Mother Ganga and *darshan* of Sri Swami Sivanandaji. Since then, I have now visited the Ashram more than twenty-five times and I feel that I am one of the occupants of the Ashram. He is the Master meant for me.

Swami Sivanandaji's catholicity is the chief attraction to me. Not only he teaches that all the religions are equal and same but actually practises it. One occasionally hears him start his prayers with "Ya Allah Illilla". To inculcate this idea in the minds of people he convened the Parliament of Religions in 1953 and all the religions were represented in that Conference. He respects all the saints and sages of the past and the present.



To Swami Sivanandaji, service to one and all is the dearest. He is the first of the saints who has pointed out that 'Selfless Service', Nishkama Seva is absolutely essential for all Sadhakas. This is the first fundamental step on the stair-case of Sadhana. To help the poor people of that area, Eye Camps were arranged by the Ashram and during the camps His Holiness and all the Sannyasins used to serve the people with Narayana Bhava.



Swamiji is always optimistic, encouraging and inspiring. He inspires by his talks, speeches, and letters. He says that one can have God-realisation in this very birth, even now at this very moment. In one of his letters he says to me:

"You are the most gracious Angel and a source of special joy not only to your patients but to me also. I am ever with you. I will always stand by

*Prava Ashram name: Dr. Sivananda Adhwaryoo

you and afford you every form of assistance on your path of service and spiritual progress. Your inner spiritual development is my joyous concern. Kindly show greater measure of patience—you will achieve everything that your heart aspires for. I shall be your strength and a lantern to your steps.”

Again he continues: “You are a born saint. You are doing laudable service. You are doing all the good you can, in all the ways, to all people, in every place, at all times, with zeal, strength, love and heart. This is real service. This is true worship of the Lord”.

Swami Sivanandaji is the personification of all the divine virtues known to human race. He has given to the world a great revelation: YOGA OF SYNTHESIS wherein

one can attain all-round evolution of body, mind, heart and soul. Greatness of his heart cannot be described by any one. He lives to give, give, and give everything. He sees the spark of goodness in every individual.

Swami Sivananda is the greatest of the living saints. It is clear from the fact that within a short spell of about 25 years, all the countries of the world know him, adore him and follow him. The lives of many have been changed for the better. His books have reached every country and have been translated in almost all the languages of the world. There has been no parallel like this in the history of the world. We are lucky to have been born in his age and have the privilege to have guidance from such a great Master.

KNOW THE TRUTH

If you attain Knowledge of the Self, the meaning of life will cease to be a mystery. You will clearly understand the why and how of this universe. The purpose and progress in the scheme of things will become clear to you. All transcendental things will be known to you like the apple in the palm of your hand.

Withdraw. Meditate. Dive deep into the recesses of your heart. You will have awareness of a Reality, very different from empirical reality, a timeless, spaceless, changeless Reality. You will feel and experience that whatever is outside of this only true Reality is mere appearance, is Maya, is a dream.

Know the Truth, the Absolute. You are saved. You are liberated. You are enlightened. You are free.

You can know Brahman only by becoming Brahman. To become Brahman is to identify yourself with the divine element—the Supreme Soul—which constitutes your essential nature. The Knower of Brahman becomes Brahman. The river joins the ocean and becomes one with the ocean. The drop mixes with the sea and becomes one with the sea.

—*Swami Sivananda*

SIVANANDA VIJAYA

An Inspiring Drama of 3 Acts

“There is a Voice within you which says, I am pure Chaitanya Brahman, listen to it now.”

By Sri Sundar Shyam Mukut

Translated from Hindi into English by Sri D. N. Jhingan, M.A., LL.B.

(Continued from previous issue)

Act 1

Scene 6: (Synopsis)

(This Scene provides an interlude of light humour in the play. A number of high school boys are eagerly scanning the news columns for their examination results. The scene informed us that Kuppuswami has stood first in the examination and won a gold medal. He has now joined the Medical Course)

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Vengu Iyer: A worthy descendent of Appaya Dikshitar.

Parvathi Ammal: Mother of Sri. Swami Sivanandaji (wife of Vengu Iyer)

Dr. Kuppuswami (Sri Swami Sivananda): The Hero of this drama—Son of Vengu Iyer, first a doctor and then a Great Saint dedicating his life to the awakening of humanity.

ACT I

Scene 7

(Vengu Iyer's house. Deepavali day and the room is clean and bright with a few lamps and is decorated with some simple green leaves and fresh ferns. Parvati Ammal is

seen lighting a lamp when Vengu Iyer enters from the front left side of stage).

Enter Vengu Iyer

VENGU: How bright is the house today? These lights fill me with joy.

PARVATI AMMAL: *(turning round quickly at his voice and prostrating at his feet)* Lord, Today is Deepavali. It is verily a day of joy for all today. All households and families are centres of festive enjoyment today.....But yet.....

VENGU: Yes, but what were you about to say?

PAR: But somehow I fail to feel the festive air for the absence of our beloved son creates a void in the home. The very lamps seem to lack luster with

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- Kuppuswami's gay and cheery presence. How I wish he were here this auspicious day.
- VENGU: Of course, I too would be overjoyed to have him here today. But, my dear, his absence, is it not for a worthy cause? Is not Kuppuswami busy and intent upon mastering the noble science of healing? Relieving pain and suffering, removing sorrow and fear, bringing joy and hope to others is the ruling, passion of his life. Ever since he witnessed Ramulu, the cooly, fall ill and die due to want of proper treatment and medical attendance Kuppuswami made a firm determination that he would become qualified as a doctor to help sufferers.
- PAR: Quite true Lord. I too rejoice when I consider his noble aspirations. Have I not borne without murmur this sort of separation for the past five years? A brief month or two during summer vacation was all that we used to see him. It is today that I specially miss Kuppuswami. In neighbour Meenakshi's house their son Chandran is amidst them today. Lakshmi's son-in-law Shekhar has arrived today with special Deepavali Leave.
- VENGU: What more would you desire, my dear? They are all happy. Is that itself not sufficient? Their happiness itself is our happiness. And moreover we shall soon have Kuppuswami here. This is his final year and he will sit for his degree examination in a few months' time.
- PAR: O how nice to think of that day. That day will be the greatest Deepavali day for me. I shall celebrate it more than all the six Deepavali days put together. In the meantime I shall make up a parcel of his favourite sweets and ask Shekhar to hand it over to Kuppuswami. Shekhar is Kuppuswami's college-mate, you know.
- VENGU: O! I quite forgot about it. I shall ascertain Kuppuswami's welfare and progress from Shekhar. Why not invite Shekhar for dinner here tomorrow noon?
- PAR: Do invite him. I too would like to hear everything about Kuppuswami personally from Shekhar.
- VENGU: Very well, I shall go over to Nataraja Iyer's house and meet and talk to Shekhar.
- (Vengu Iyer starts to leave the room, but before he leaves the room a young lad enters the room with an envelope in his hands. He approaches Vengu Iyer).*
- THE BOY: Uncle, my brother Shekhar has brought this letter for you from Dr. Kuppuswami. He said that there was important news for you in it.
- (Hands over the letter to Vengu Iyer who receives it eagerly and starts reading. Parvati Ammal affectionately takes the little lad aside and gives him some sweets after putting a kumkum mark upon his forehead. The boy departs).*
- Exit the Boy.

- VENGU: (*Reading the letter*) ".....by his grace I have been chosen as the one best suited for the urgency mission. It is a special recruitment and the medical authorities of Malaya are themselves arranging for my passage, equipment, etc. With your most revered self's and dear beloved mother's blessings I feel I shall be able to render the utmost maximum service to the sufferers over there", (*pauses and turns to Parvati Ammal*) It is all Lord Siva's doing. May His will be done.
- PAR: But what is His will? You are not clear. O tell me what has my beloved one written?
- VENGU: Written? What else could it be! You know already that he has a great future before him. Well, now you are seeing the beginning of his mission. He has been made to sit for a special examination and has completed his course successfully. This was arranged to enable Kuppuswami to proceed to the Strait Settlements where a serious epidemic of Malaria and Kala-azar is carrying off tens of thousands of victims. When the next boat leaves for Singapore, Kuppuswami will be sailing off Madras Harbour.
- PAR: What! Govinda! Siva!! to Singapore, thousands of miles away. Across the seas! No, no. How can I let him go? He is but a boy yet. I pray, you please write to him to give up the idea now. Please write this very day.
- VENGU: My dear! What are you saying? Don't you realize that it would wound him to the core to keep him back from responding to humanity's call? It is the fulfillment of his heart's desire. It is Divine Dispensation. Let us rather accept it with the same willingness as Kuppuswami.
- PAR: How can I keep silent and see him leave the shores of India and take up work in that distant land? Who knows when we shall see him again? And who will look after his comforts there?
- VENGU: Do you think he will find joy in comforts when he is conscious of the sufferings of thousands? Have you forgotten the day when he came across a beggar at the bathing ghat? Did he not spend a whole week without sleep that time? Moreover remember the prophecy of the Mahatma who blessed little Kuppuswami in his early boyhood. My dear! He is for the whole world.
- PAR: But he is the whole world to me. He is to me everything.
- VENGU: Is he less to me? Yet is not the claim of the World-Mother greater? He has a lofty purpose to achieve. We should rather consider it a glory and a rare fortune to have a son dedicating his life and talents for uplift of Humanity. Feel no regret in this matter. Bless him. May his exalted ancestors inspire to noble deeds. O Lord of Kailas bless him!
- PAR: (*folds her hands in reverent salutation and bows down her head silently*) May the

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- World-Mother, Bhoo-mata have her child. This mother renounces her claim. May the Gods bless him with all success in life.
- VENGU: Now I shall write to Kuppuswami to come down and see you before he sails. Let us have him here at least for a day.
- PAR: (*her face lighting up in joy*). The Gods be thanked. I shall have that happiness for a day. I shall make it a festival day. Now I must inform and invite the neighbours too. (*moves towards the exit*).
- (*Curtain falls*)
- (*Re-enter Vengu Iyer and Parvathi Ammal*)
- VENGU: (*sitting down on the cot*) Oh! I have a severe pain in the chest, my dear!
- PAR: O my Lord! O Lord Siva! Why? What is wrong?
- (*She holds his head and gently lays it on her lap*)
- VENGU: I do not know, my head is reeling, (*sighs and silently gazes at a picture of Lord Siva hung on the wall*) I feel life ebbing out.
- PAR: Oh, my Lord, don't say so (*weeps*).
- VENGU: I wrote to our darling to come here before he sails for Singapore. He is due today. Oh, God! Spare me till I see my darling. (*closes his eyes. Both are immersed in sorrow*)
- (*A knock at the door and enter Kuppuswami*)
- KUPPU: (*puzzled*) Mother! Father! Why is he silent?
- (*Parvathi sheds tears*)
- KUPP: Why, mother, why do you cry?
- VENGU: Darling Kuppu! (*pause*)
- KUPP: Yes, father. (*sits down by his father's side*)
- VENGU: Kuppu! May God bless you and make you a great man worthy of the descendent of our forefather Appayya! Ah! (*rolls in bed*)
- KUPP: Father! (*touches his feet with the crown of his head*)
- VENGU: Go to Singapore. Always keep service of humanity before everything else. Mother will not stand in your way and cannot; God will help and bless you. (*His eyes are sparkling with deep emotion*) Let service be your ideal. You will have the highest realisation through service. (*In a raised voice*) Service is your goal and through service will you reach it. Service of the poor, the sick, of humanity at large is service of God. Go forth! Never let the thought of me or your mother deter you from your path. (*Faints*) (*Regaining*) Ah! Lord Siva is there. He wants me. Here I come, my Lord! (*in a low tone*) Siva tells me that you are going to be the beacon light of wisdom, Kuppu. He is always with you. Siva! S...I...V...A!
- (*Breathes his last with a deep sigh*)
- KUPP: (*tears swelling in his eyes*) Father! Father!
- PAR: My Lord! My God! (*Falls on the body*)
- (*Curtain drops slowly*)
- (To be continued)**

Children's Page**LORD KRISHNA AND SUDAMA***(Sri Swami Ramarajyam)*

The wife of poverty-stricken Sudama had prayed repeatedly to her husband, "Why don't you go to your friend Krishna? He is the master of the whole universe. Will he not be of any help to us?"

Sudama was a self-respecting Brahmin. How could he beg somebody for something? Moreover, why should he beg the Lord for anything? Does He not know everything?

Sudama did not want to go to his friend, but he had to give in at the insistence of his wife. He left for Dwaraka. As soon as Lord Krishna heard of Sudama's arrival, he ran barefooted to receive him. He took him to his palace. Placing his face over his shoulders, he wept bitterly and said, "I was busy with state-affairs, but why did you forget me?"

A king was weeping tears of love for a poor Brahmin!

The Lord asked him, "What have you brought for me? What has my Bhabhi (sister-in-law) sent for me?"

Sudama's wife had given him some uncooked rice in a small bundle of cloth. He was hesitant about giving that to Him. He tried to conceal the bundle, but the Lord snatched it from him and started eating the rice. The master of myriads of universes Lord Krishna was, yet He was eating the uncooked rice! Sudama stared at Him with eyes wide open.

Sudama returned to his place after a few days' stay with Lord Krishna. Neither did he ask for anything nor did Lord Krishna give him anything. On the way, Sudama kept thinking—it does not matter if the Lord has

not given me anything. He has bestowed His love on me. That is more than enough.

Dear children, Lord Krishna had not only bestowed His love on him, but had also changed his crumbling hut into a golden palace and his wife was living there like a queen.

Sudama bowed to Lord Krishna mentally and said to his wife, "It is the Lord who has bestowed all this wealth on us; so it belongs to Him. We should never take it as our own."

This story teaches many lessons.

Firstly, suppose you become a rich person and a poor friend of yours comes to meet you. How would you behave with him? You should receive him with open arms and help him as much as you can, and you should not utter a word about the help you have rendered. You should better forget that you have helped him at all.

Secondly, if your circumstances compel you to ask anyone for something, you should do so without having any expectation of getting the desired thing. If he gives you an affectionate smile and speaks sweet words to you, they should be reckoned as more valuable than the thing desired. Love is greater than wealth.

Thirdly, if God grants you wealth and prosperity the way He had granted Sudama and you become a wealthy person, you must always bear in mind that your wealth belongs to God. And, never forget that whatever He has bestowed on you, must be used for the benefit of others.

NEWS AND REPORTS

34TH ALL ODISHA DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY SPIRITUAL CONFERENCE AND YOUTH CAMP AT ROURKELA, ODISHA

With the sacred mission of propagating Sadgurudev's Divine Message, the 34th All Odisha Divine Life Society Spiritual Conference and Youth Camp were organised from 29th December 2011 to 1st January 2012 at Bhanja Bhavan, Rourkela.

The Conference was inaugurated by H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, DLS Headquarters and Pujya Gajapati Maharaj Sri Divya Singh Devji on 29th December 2011. Sri Swamiji presided over the Conference and Pujya Gajapati Maharaj graced the Conference as the Chief Guest.

The daily programme had four sessions:—early morning meditation session followed by Yogasana; forenoon and afternoon sessions comprising discourses and Bhajans and the late evening session blessing the gathering with talks by Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Most Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj through electronic media. Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji assisted by Sri Swami Sridharanandaji conducted Yogasana classes. Revered Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj gave his blessing messages in the forenoon and afternoon sessions.

Pujya Gajapati Maharaj Sri Divya Singh Devji, Sri Swami Sivachidanandaji, Sri Swami Dharmaprakashanandaji, Sri Swami Brahmasakshatkarandaji, Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji, Sri Swami Devabhaktanandaji, Sri Swami Sridharanandaji,

Sri Swami Aksharanandaji, Sri Swami Jitamohanandaji, Babaji Sri Chaitanya Charan Dasji Maharaj, Paramhansa Sri Prajnananandaji, Prof. Hrudananda Ray, Dr. Kavi Prasad Mishra, Sri Narayan Pati, GM RSP SAIL, Sri Sunil Sadangi, Director NIT, Sri Santosh Kumar Upadhyay, Registrar NIT, Sri Subrat Tarai, MLA Raghunathpalli, Sri Purna Chandra Pathi, ADM Rourkela, Sri Sushil Kumar Mishra and Sri Jayachandra Nayak addressed the gathering. More than 2500 registered delegates from various parts of Odisha participated in the Conference and over 3000 devotees from nearby villages and towns also attended the Conference. 500 devotees were blessed with Mantra Diksha by Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj through pre-recorded voice of Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj.

To mark the occasion, a blood donation camp was organised at ISPAT General hospital with the help of Dr. S. K. Mishra, Director Health and Medical Services and his associates wherein 100 devotees donated blood. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj inaugurated the blood donation camp.

The Seventh All Odisha Divine Life Society Youth Camp was also organised as a part of the Conference at Bhanja Bhavan auditorium and it was attended by 500 school and college-going students who came from different parts of Odisha. A systematic daily programme comprising prayers, meditation, Yogasana, Pranayama, quiz competition and

spiritual discourses was chalked out to ensure physical, moral and spiritual development of the youth. All the participants felt greatly inspired and benefited by the youth camp. By the grace of Lord Jagannath and benedictions of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and Most Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj, the State Level Conference and Youth Camp were successfully organised.

The Divine Life Society Headquarters acknowledges with gratitude the kind co-operation of the authorities of NIT Rourkela and the dedicated services of the devotees of Rourkela DLS Branch in organising the Conference and Youth Camp.

May the blessings of Lord Almighty and Sadgurudev be upon all.

—*The Divine Life Society*

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THE 38TH ALL ANDHRA DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY CONFERENCE

In pursuit of Sadgurudev's Divine Mission of Spiritual Uplift of the masses, the 38th All Andhra Divine Life Society Conference was organised from 18th to 20th January 2012 at the holy temple town of Sri Bhadrachalam. Sri Sita Rama Kalyanamandapam's Uttara Dwara Mukha Mandapam was the venue for the Conference.

Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, DLS Headquarters inaugurated the Conference by Divyajeevana Dhwajorohanam (hoisting the flag of Divine Life) and Jyoti Prajwalanam (lighting of the lamp). Sri Swamiji presided over the Conference and Sri Kuricheti Panduranga was the Chairman of the Conference.

The daily programme had four sessions: - early morning meditation session followed by Nagar Sankirtan and Yogasana; forenoon and afternoon sessions comprising of discourses and evening session of Bhajans, Kirtans and Sri Godavari Arati. The morning meditation session was conducted by Sri Swami Prakasanandaji of Laidam and Nagar Sankirtan and Yogasana were conducted by Madhavi and Mareehika. The forenoon

session commenced with chanting of Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Sri Vishnusahasranama, Sri Rama Raksha Stotra and Hanuman Chalisa led each day by Sri Bhadradri Sivananda Ashram devotees, Vikas Tarangini, Bhadrachalam and Karavadi Geeta Lakshmi's team respectively. In the evening sessions, Smt. Shyamala Shastri presented Rama Dasu Kirtans and Dr. Girija Seshamamba presented Annamacharya Kirtans and Tyagaraju Kirtans.

The Conference was divided into three Sabhas as per the different theme of each day: 'Veda Vedanta Sabha' (Divine Life according to Vedas and Upanishads); 'Vyas Valmiki Sabha' (Divine Life according to Srimad Bhagavata, Ramayana and Puranas) and 'Sadhu Sajjana Sabha' (Divine Life according to the life and teachings of the saints).

Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj gave inspiring talks in both the sessions as per the theme of the each day. Sri Muralikrishnamacharyalu, an Atharvaveda scholar, Sri Sthalasai, a Yajurveda scholar, Sri Samudrala Lakshmaniyah, Sri Boppana Arunadevi, Mata Shiva Chaitanya,

Sri Swami Satyavratandanaji, Sri Chatala-wada Venkataseshaiyah, Sri Prasannananda Swamy, Sri Mahendra Patnaik, Sri Ramayana Sharma, Para Vidyananda Mataji, Aparokshananda Mataji, Dr. Subba Rao, Sri Swami Rishikesh Chaitanyanandaji, Sri Swami Parampriyanandaji, Sri Swami Prakasanandaji attended the Conference and addressed the gathering. The Conference was well organised and attended by over 3000 delegates from all parts of Andhra Pradesh. Sri M.T. Alwar, Principal, Sanskrit College, Hindupur conducted the

programme very well as the Master of the Ceremony.

The Divine Life Society Headquarters acknowledges with gratitude the kind co-operation of Bhadrachalam Temple Authorities, ITC Bhadrachalam Management and employees and the dedicated services of Sri M.T. Alwar and devotees of Bhadrachalam Branch in organising this Conference.

—The Divine Life Society

NEWS FROM THE HEADQUARTERS

SRI MAHASIVARATRI CELEBRATIONS AT THE HEADQUARTERS ASHRAM

शिवाकान्त शम्भो शशांकार्धमौले
महेशान शूलिन् जटाजूटधारिन् ।
त्वमेको जगद्व्यापको विश्वरूप
प्रसीद प्रसीद प्रभो पूर्णरूप ॥

(O consort of Parvati, all-pervading Lord, the giver of prosperity, the great Lord, with the crescent moon on the forehead, holding the trident, having matted hair; Thou art the One Absolute who has manifested as this universe, Be thou propitious, Be thou propitious.)

The blessed occasion of Sri Mahasivaratri was celebrated with due sacredness and great spiritual fervour at the Headquarters Ashram on 20th February, 2012. As part of the celebration, the chanting of Panchakshari Mantra 'Om Namah Sivaya'

was done daily for two hours from 16th to 19th February.

The Mahasivaratri day's programme commenced at 5 a.m. with prayers and meditation followed by Prabhat Pheri. A Havan for peace and welfare of the world was also performed at the Yajnasala. There was an Akhanda chanting of Panchakshari Mantra from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. by the Sadhaks, devotees and visitors of the Ashram at the sacred temple of Lord Sri Vishwanatha. The temple was splendidly decorated with variety of beautiful flowers, bouquets and colourful lights for this auspicious occasion. At 8 p.m., the Mahasivaratri Puja commenced; four grand worships in four Praharas were offered to Lord Sri Vishwanatha to the chanting of Namakam and Chamakam. All the Sannyasins, Brahmacharins, Sadhaks and

visitors of the Ashram participated individually in the Abhisheka and Archana. Kirtans of the sacred names of Lord Siva and soul-elevating hymns extolling His glories were sung throughout the night which filled the hearts of the devotees with divine ecstasy. The celebration concluded

at 4 a.m. with Mangala Arati and distribution of sacred Prasad at Annapurna Dining Hall.

May Lord Siva and Sadgurudev bless us all to make our lives an unbroken worship, a ceaseless Sivaratri. * * *

SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

'Sivananda Home is a Centre for the loving care of the destitute and the dying people who are found by the roadside or with no one to care for them'.

(Swami Chidananda)

A gentleman, who is admitted in Sivananda Home already for more than six years, reached the spotlights this month. He had been suffering from Leprosy, long before his admission. Due to lack of treatment, inattention and no access to common medical facilities, he contracted severe deformities. So much tribulations he had to undergo, that he made a promise to the Lord, that if he would grant him a place to stay for the rest of his life, he would partake food only once a day. Admitted in the main male ward of the home, he has seen many patients coming and going over the years. Not literally though, since besides his deformities on hands and feet, he had also lost completely his eye sight. Leprosy can be cured, yes. But in his case, the disease had progressed to such an extent at the time of admission, that cure would be difficult.

As was mentioned earlier, he saw many patients coming and going. Not with his physical eyes, but his eyes, as mirrors of the soul could see through and through; could see even more than bodily eyes could see.

Since the day of his admission in the home, he is actually in charge of this main male ward. He knows all the ins and outs—what people suffer from, whether they have had their food or not, whether they go to the bathroom or not, etc. What a boon in disguise, in a setting like Sivananda Home, where several patients are not able to speak or give any proper reply or express pain or discomfort. But he senses them. His soul receives their unspoken words and agony. This gentleman, who has been staying in Sivananda Home as a resident under medical treatment, has no fingers to touch, no eyes to see. But is he disabled?

How true it is, to call them differently-abled! Them, whose bodies may function differently, who have more challenges to overcome than others, and disfigured, disturbed, disqualified?

"Don't look on me with pity or with tears in your eyes—Look deeper than the handicap, where real beauty lies. Don't be sad because I can't dance—or I can't play or run, I will never be like others or have my season in the sun. But, I have strength and dignity. I put on my brightest smile, I stand proud and tall. I want to be a shining light, an inspiration to one and all."

(from: Tribute to the handicapped child, Linda Hill).

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

CULTURAL TOUR OF H.H. SRI SWAMI NIRLIPTANANDAJI MAHARAJ

H.H. Sri Swami Nirliptanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, DLS Headquarters undertook Cultural Tours during January and February 2012.

Sri Swamiji attended the Annual Sadhana Shibir organised by Divine Life Society, West Bengal at Hamiragachi in West Bengal, from 21st to 25th January, 2012. The Sadhana Shibir was inaugurated by Swamiji Maharaj on 21st. More than 300 devotees from West Bengal, Orissa, Punjab, Gujarat, Karnataka, etc., had joined the Sadhana Shibir. Sri Swamiji addressed the devotees on 21st in the inaugural session, and also on all the other days. Everyday Swamiji addressed the Sadhakas in the early morning Prayer and Meditation Class, and also gave discourses in the fore-noon and afternoon sessions. He also answered the questions of the Sadhakas, clarifying their doubts. The Sadhana Shibir was a grand success and it was very well organised by DLS West Bengal. The participating Sadhakas felt at home, and enjoyed it, and it was immensely inspiring and beneficial to all.

On 26th January Swamiji Maharaj visited Ranaghat at the invitation of Smt. Malina Bhadra, a very ardent and old devotee of Divine Life Society. She has a pious wish to start a branch of the Divine Life Society at Ranaghat. They are having regular Satsanga there. On that day a special Satsanga was arranged which was attended by Sri Swamiji and he addressed the devotees present,

speaking about the importance of Divine Life. The discourse was liked and appreciated by all. Swamiji also spoke to the devotees who met him personally.

Swamiji Maharaj visited Odisha from 29th January onwards. On 30th Sri Swamiji attended the Managing Committee Meeting of the Swami Sivananda Centenary Boys' High School, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar, of which he is the President. He also attended the joint meeting of The Management Committee and the Development Committee on the 31st. Swamiji Maharaj inaugurated the Science Exhibition of the School on 3rd February, and attended the Prize Distribution ceremony on the 4th, briefly addressing the students. On 6th February Sri Swamiji joined the prayer class of the school early morning and gave a talk and blessings and advice to the students. In the afternoon of the same day Swamiji Maharaj attended the Review Meeting of the School teachers and House Masters and gave necessary guidance and blessings to the teachers/House Masters for better working of the School and better service to the students.

On 7th February Sri Swamiji visited the Chidananda Sevashram at Nalapari in Kendrapara district. Swamiji Maharaj attended the Satsanga organised on the occasion of inauguration of the Samadhi Mandir-cum-Satsanga hall, and gave a discourse for the devotees gathered.

From 7th to 11th February Sri Swamiji visited Chidananda Hermitage Shanti Ashram, Baliguali, Puri.

Sri Jagannath Temple Administration, Puri, had organised Sri Jagannath Pancharatra at Puri from 9th to 14th February. Upon earnest invitation Swamiji Maharaj attended it. This was inaugurated by Paramapujya Sri Jagadguru Shankaracharya Swami Nishchalananda Saraswatiji Maharaj of Puri, on 9th. Swamiji attended the inaugural session and spoke on the occasion. It was attended by Pujya Gajapati Maharaj Sri Dibya Singha Debji,

many saints, and other distinguished persons, and there was a very good gathering of devotees from all over India, and also from abroad. On 10th there was Workshop on Jagannath Pancharatra at Purushottam Vatika. Paramapujya Jagadguru Shankaracharyaji inaugurated it. Sri Swamiji also attended it and addressed the participants of the Workshop. A National Conference of the representatives of the Jagannath Temples all over India had also been organised on this occasion, simultaneously, along with the other programmes.

ANNOUNCEMENT

GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS OF THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY BRANCH, RAJA PARK, JAIPUR, RAJASTHAN

By the grace of Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, The Divine Life Society Branch, Raja Park, Jaipur, is organising a 3-day Conference on the occasion of its Golden Jubilee celebrations at Siddheshwar Mandir, Raja Park, Jaipur (Rajasthan), from 13th to 15th April 2012. The Conference will be blessed by senior monks from Headquarters and saints and scholars from other institutions. Devotees from all the Branches of the Society are cordially invited to participate in the programme aimed at dissemination of knowledge and world peace.

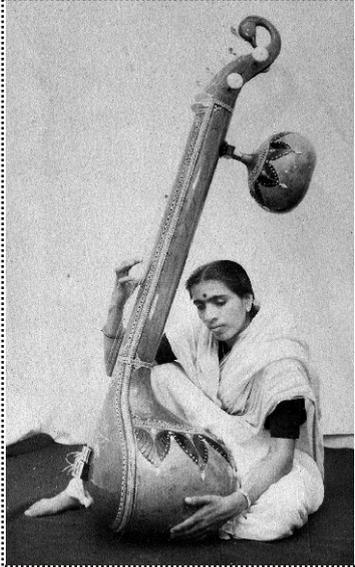
Delegate fee:— ₹200/-

All remittance may be made by Bank Draft or Cheque in favour of the "Divine Life Society, Raja Park, Jaipur", payable at Jaipur.

For details contact:

1. Sri G.N.Bodha, President, Divine Life Society, Raja Park Branch, Jaipur, 238-B, Parvati Marg, Raja Park, JAIPUR-302 004, Rajasthan.
2. Prof. Bhagvati Pd. Shastri, Secretary, Mobile No. 9413114760
3. Sri Rajeev Dhawan, Jt. Secretary, Mobile No. 9950557450

IN MEMORIAM



With a deep sense of loss and profound sorrow, we report the sad demise of Prof. Sivananda Sushila Kamboj Mataji on 15th February 2012 at Dehradun.

Revered Kamboj Mataji was the direct disciple of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and her entire life was an expression of her sincere and intense love and devotion to the Holy Master.

She was born on 2nd August 1924 in Dehradun to Sri Sri Gauri Shankar Kamboj and Smt. Chaman Devi Kamboj. Observing her great love for music, her parents arranged for her music education in spite of the strong protest from the society. Their support and encouragement and her dedicated efforts and perseverance made her achieve Masters' Degree in Music. She was appointed as a Music teacher in M.K.P. College, Dehradun in 1945 and she retired from the College as

the Head of the Department in 1985. She also founded 'Swara Sangam Academy' to train young talents in Music.

Revered Mataji got the blessed opportunity to have Sadgurudev's Darshan in October 1953. The first Darshan of her Divine Guru made her surrender her entire life at His sacred feet. Since then, she started visiting the Ashram regularly. She got the special blessing of doing Pada Puja to Sadgurudev whenever she visited the Ashram. She was awarded the titles 'Sangeet Sudhakar' and 'Sangeet Jyoti' by the Holy Master. She was also blessed with close association with Worshipful Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and Worshipful Sri Swami Venkatesanandaji Maharaj. She has authored two books 'Sivananda Sangeet Pushpanjali' narrating Sadgurudev's life and teachings and 'Sukhad Samsmaran' sharing her precious memories and experiences with Sadgurudev.

In spite of her old age and ill-health, she continued to visit the Ashram during all important celebrations till January 2012. Her fragile body could not deter her from attending all the daily activities of the Ashram. She was suffering from bronchitis for the last one month. She took her last breath at 3.30 p.m. on 15th February 2012.

May her soul rest in Eternal Peace and Divine Beatitude at the holy feet of the Lord and Worshipful Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj.

REPORTS FROM THE D.L.S. BRANCHES

Amar Colony, (New Delhi): During December and January, besides regular Daily and Weekly programmes, Gita recitation competition for 65 students of various age groups was conducted. All the participants were awarded certificates and cash prizes. Gita Jayanti on 6th December and Sri Vishnu Sahasranama Ashtottara Maha Yajna on 15th January were observed for the welfare of the entire mankind. Swami Devabhaktanandaji Maharaj from DLS headquarters graced the MahaYajna and delivered an inspiring lecture. Seva by charitable clinic in Swami Sivananda Bhawan continued.

Badakuanl, Jajpur, (Odisha): During October and November, 2011, the Branch regularly conducted its daily and weekly activities; and Guru Paduka Pujas on 8th. On the occasion of the inauguration of a newly built temple in the neighbouring village, the Branch participated and recited Srimad Bhagavad Gita.

Babanpur, Aska, (Odisha): In addition to regular weekly Satsanga and Guru Paduka Puja, during November to January, the Branch celebrated its anniversary from 21st to 27th November with various activities. Srimad Bhagavata Saptah, prayer, Japa, meditation, Guru Paduka Puja, Havan, worship of Lord Krishna and discourses in the night were the main events. Sadhana Shibir on 26th January at Hanuman Temple of Pataliguda was attended by 100 devotees from different Branches. Mobile Satsangas were also conducted in the residence of devotees.

Badhiausta, Ganjam, (Odisha): The Branch continued regular daily prayers and weekly Satsangas in December. It celebrated Gita Jayanti from 2th to 8th with chantings, Havan, Pravachan and Anna Dan. 108 times Hanuman Chalisa Parayan by more than 100 devotees and special Satsanga by Swami

Brahma Sakshatkarandaji and others when he paid a visit, were the special activities.

Bangalore, (Karnataka): Regular Thursday Satsanga and other activities continued during November to January. Paduka Puja, recitations, Japa, Kirtan, Devi worship, Swadhyaya, Skanda-shashti celebrations and distribution of Sivananda literature were some of the main events. 67th Anniversary of the inauguration of the Branch was celebrated on 14th January. Sivananda Bhajan Mandali's Bhajans and inspiring lecture by Prof. Shivaram Agnihotri on 'the relevance of spirituality in daily life' were part of celebration.

Bargarh, (Odisha): The Branch continued with regular daily, weekly and monthly activities of Prayers, Guru Paduka Puja, Yoga and Meditatin, Swadhyaya, Satsanga and Seva at Homeopathy Charitable Dispensary. Sri Swami Anandaswarupanandaji Maharaj. In December and Swami Dharmanishtanandaji Maharaj on different occasions in January visited the Branch and conducted special Satsangas. The fourth Anniversary of the Branch Ashram Pratistha Divas was celebrated on 28th January, with full day programme participated by all neighbouring DLS Branches and a large gathering. Swami Sureswaranandaji Maharaj of Bijepur in his speech tried to awaken the people to lead a divine life, as the only way to attain peace and happiness in the present age.

Bhawanipatna, Kalahandi, (Odisha): In addition to regular bi-weekly Satsanga, a Sadhana Day was observed on 4th December, in the premises of Swami Sivananda Bal Vikas Vidyapith. The District level Conference on 21st and 22nd December, marked the beginning of 25th year of 'Subhadra Kshetra'. The programme unfolded with Prabhat-pheri, hoisting of DLS flag by H.H. Swami Dharmaprakashanandaji Maharaj and

honouring of many noble souls of long-standing relation with Gurudev's mission. H.H. Swami Sivachidanandaji Maharaj and many other saints and scholars delivered lectures to a gathering of more than 1000 devotees. All partook Anna Prasad.

Bhongir, Nalgonda, (Andhra Pradesh): The Branch celebrated Bhagavad Gita Jayanti on 6th December and Punyatithi of Brahmaleen H.H. Swami Devanandaji Maharaj on 7th January, befittingly with special worships etc.

Chandigarh: In the one-day moral education Bal Shibir on 11th November, 62 children of 13 to 15 age group along with their teachers, were exposed to the blessings and teachings of Gurudev at the Branch. Sessions of Prayers, carry-home messages of Gurudev, Bhajan and discourses by children, practice of concentration and story-telling were successfully concluded with distribution of certificates, Jnana Prasad and meals. On Sundays, along with regular poor-feeding, Satsanga and free medical consultation, one hour Rama Katha also has been commenced. On 8th the Branch conducted 12 hours Akhanda Maha Mantra Japa.

Digapahandi, Ganjam, (Odisha): Besides the regular activities in November and December, the Branch convened a special meeting on 20th November, 2011 and discussed the practical aspects of constructing a new 50'x25' 'Sivananda Satsanga Hall'. In connection with the Birth Centenary Celebration of Sri Sarat Chandra Deboji, visits to many schools in and around Digapahandi were organised in December, propagating Gurudev's messages on ethics and morality, together with demonstrations of Yoga practices.

Gandhinagar, (Gujarat): The Branch organized Public Satsangas on 24th November, and 11th and 31st December 2011. In the last Satsanga Sri Swami Gambhiranandaji Maharaj of Uttar Kashi, Prof. N.P. Shukla and Mr & Mrs. G.R.Vaghela of Divine Life Society of Australia graced the

occasion. Sri Swami Dharmanishthanandaji Maharaj conducted a Yoga Camp from 10th to 19th January for more than 25 participants. During this period Swamiji Maharaj attended several special Satsangas at different places like I.T.I, Schools, etc.

Gumargunda, (Chhattisgarh): In January, the Branch continued its regular activities. 19th Punyatithi of Brahmaleen H.H. Swami Sadapremanandaji Maharaj was celebrated on 30th December with various spiritual activities. Makar Sankranti, Basant Panchami and Republic Day were also celebrated.

Jagdarpur, (Chhattisgarh): In January, the Branch continued its regular activities. 19th Punyatithi of Brahmaleen H.H. Swami Sadapremanandaji Maharaj was celebrated on 30th December with various spiritual activities. On 26th January, to pay homage to martyrs, 100 resident school children of the Ashram took out a Prabhat-pheri in town and hoisted National Flag.

Jaipur, (Rajasthan): Regular activities of daily morning and evening Satsanga, weekly Satsanga and Mahila Satsanga on Mondays continued during December. Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj of DLS headquarters daily participated in night Satsanga from 6th onwards and delivered lectures. Charitable activities like financial aid of Rs.150/- per head to 28 poor students, daily Narayan Seva to 300 poor people, dry rations to Leprosy Colony and as educational aid Rs.7550/- were distributed to 100 students of class IX to XII.

Jeypore, Koraput, (Odisha): Besides regular Branch activities and night Satsangas, a collective Gita Yajna on 6th November with oblation for each sloka and Dwadasakshara Mantra to the sacred fire was performed at the residence of Sri Trinath Mahapatro by a large gathering of devotees. Sri Kanhu Charan Mohanty, Jt. Secretary of the Branch, sponsored treatment to 900 patients at The

Koraput District Charitable Homeopathy Dispensary.

Kakinada, (Andhra Pradesh): On 22nd January, Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj inaugurated the newly constructed building of the Branch, named "Sivananda Kshetram" and garlanded newly installed marble statues of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, Lord Sri Krishna and Sri Dakshinamurty. Swamiji addressed the gathering. Other saints Sri Swami Narayana-nanda Giriji, Sri Swami Krishnanandaji, Sri Swami Sridharanandaji and Sri Vinayakumarji also blessed the function with their discourses. The function concluded with the distribution of blankets to the aged and poor together with Maha-prasadam as lunch to all participants.

Kanpur, (Uttar Pradesh): Bhajan and Sankirtan on each Ekadasi day and special Satsanga on 25th together with the collective chanting of Ramayana and Gita for the peace of the world were the events observed in December.

Khatiguda, Nabarangpur, (Odisha): During December and January, regular activities of Ekadasi Satsanga with Vishnu Sahasranama Japa, Sadhana Day with Akhanda Mahamantra Kirtan for 12 hours, and Mobile Satsanga continued.

Khurja, (Uttar Pradesh): Regular daily Yoga Classes for Gents in the morning, Ladies in the evening, and Dhyana Yoga, night Satsanga with prayers and Swadhyaya on Sundays continued in December. Ekadasi special Sankirtan, daily free homeo medicines to patients and distribution of Jnana Prasad also continued.

Koraput, (Odisha): There were daily prayers, weekly Satsangas with Narayan Seva, Ekadasi Parayana and Chidananda Day was observed in December. Sri Swami Ananda Swarupanandaji Maharaj from Kailas Ashram, Rishikesh, visited the Branch from 2nd to 8th and delivered lectures. Swami Shannishta-

nandaji Maharaj also visited from 12th to 16th and conducted Satsanga.

Lanjipalli, Ganjam, (Odisha): The Branch conducted a special Satsanga on 25th December, with usual prayers, chanting, Parayan and Kirtan followed by Anna and Vastra Dan. On Sundays and holidays Yoga classes were held in local educational institutions together with giving messages of Gurudev to the students.

Madhavapatnam, East Godavari, (Andhra Pradesh): During December, the Branch conducted Satsanga with Bhajan, Pranayama-Meditation training, discourse by Swami Krishnananda of Kakinada on 'Upadesa Sara' of Ramana Maharshi and free homeo medical camps by Dr. M.S.R. Sastry.

Nandini Nagar, Durg, (Chattisgarh): Routine activities of daily Satsanga, Akhanda Mahamantra Kirtan, weekly mobile Satsanga, and Matri Satsanga were continued in December and January. Special activities: i) Gita Parayan Competition on 6th December for Inter Higher School students and winners were awarded with cash prize and certificates. ii) Youth Camp on 10th, 11th, 17th and 18th December for 50 students of School/College under the guidance of Swami Dharm-nishthanandaji and Swami Devabhaktanandaji of headquarters, Swami Vidyanandaji of Swami Sivananda Kutir Yogashram, Dongargarh and Sadhu Bhagwat. iii) During 11th to 23rd December under the guidance of Sri. K.S. Thakur, the Sadhus mentioned above, together with members of the Branch visited nearby villages, Ashrams, Schools, Divine Life Society Branches and other places to propagate the message of Gurudev and inspire the students. The Branch also conducted a Yoga Camp from 17th to 20th January, for nearby school students under the guidance of Swami Vidyanandaji Maharaj, followed by a debate competition on "Students' Responsibility on Nation Building" for College/School students on 21st in which 12 winners bagged Rs.1552/-

each as prize money. Yoga students gave demonstration at Parade Ground celebrations on 63rd Republic Day.

Pasulunda, Cuttack, (Odisha): Regular Satsanga and Guru Paduka Puja on Mondays were continued in December. Bhagavata Saptaha from 25th to 31st at Chandrasekhar Temple was conducted with traditional worships, Bhajan and daily feeding of village children.

Raipur, (Chhattisgarh): Besides the regular programmes during October and November, 2011, the Branch distributed Blankets and Bed-sheets to the poor and needy through Sri O.P. Hajari.

Koraput, (Odisha): There were daily prayers, weekly Satsangas with Narayan Seva, Ekadasi Parayana and Chidananda Day was observed in December. Sri Swami Ananda Swarupanandaji Maharaj from Kailas Ashram, Rishikesh, visited the Branch from 2nd to 8th and delivered lectures. Swami Sannishthanandaji also visited from 12th to 16th and conducted Satsanga.

Salipur, Cuttack, (Odisha): During November and December, regular daily morning and evening prayers, weekly chanting sessions and monthly activities on Sundays like Bhagavad Gita Parayan, Yogasana-Pranayama-Meditation and special Satsanga were continued. Seva through Swami Sivananda Charitable Hospital treated 121 patients on Sundays in November and 101 in December, freely. Special Yoga classes to staff and students of local College continued. Swami Sivakripanandaji's second Punnyatithi was on 23rd November. Akhanda Mahamantra Japa, and Gita Jayanti were the other events celebrated.

South Balanda, (Odisha): During December and January, regular daily prayers, Friday Satsanga, Akhanda Maha Mantra Sankirtan for 12 hours on 3rd, Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra Japa and special Paduka

Puja along with Satsanga in the evenings on Sivananda and Chidananda days were conducted. 75 devotees participated in the All Odisha Divine Life Conference held at Rourkela from 29th December to 1st January.

Steel Township, Rourkela, (Odisha): In December and January, the Branch held three Satsangas at the residences of devotees and seven Sadhana Days. The 57th Birthday of Sri Swami Brahma-sakshatkarandaji Maharaj was celebrated on 12th January and Swamiji gave an enlightening talk on Guru Maharaj's life and teachings. The Branch also celebrated Foundation Day on 24th, Sivanada Yuva Kendra Foundation Day on 25th and Republic Day on 26th.

Sunabeda, (Odisha): Regular activities continued in December. Sri Swami Anandaswarupanandaji visited on 9th and in Satsanga glorified Gurudev's mission, emphasising the importance of living a divine life for Self-realisation in the light of Srimalad Bhagavatam. Sri Swami Sannishthanandaji visited on 17th and in the special Satsanga expounded the path that leads to liberation as per Gurudev's spiritual instructions.

Surendranagar, (Gaujarat): During December and January Daily Satsangas, Weekly discourses on 'Ramayan' by Prof. Karia Saheb, collective 'Sundarakand' Parayana on Saturdays and Matri Satsanga continued. A special "Sarva Roga Diagnostic and Treatment Camp" was conducted at Jasapur village by a group of 15 doctors who diagnosed and treated more than 200 patients. Some deserving patients are further registered for free operations in the days following. Raw rations to needy and raw flour in the contiguous villages for ants as part of "JEEVA-DAYA" were also distributed.

Varanasi, (Uttar Pradesh): During December, the Branch organised two mobile Satsangas at residences of devotees on 4th and 18th and special Satsangas at Vridha

Ashram on 11th and 25th with prayers, Bhajan, recitations and chantings etc.

Vikrampur, Angul, (Odisha): The Branch continued the regular daily and weekly activities during November and December, 2011. Special Paduka Puja was on 8th, and Gita Jayanti was also observed.

Visakhapatnam, (Andhra Pradesh): The Branch celebrated New Year on 1st January with a Gayatri Havan participated by 150 devotees. Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj during his visit inaugurated the newly built Ashram Kitchen on 23rd January and conducted Satsanga. Daily and weekly routine activities continued. Construction work of Viswanath, Durga, Dattatreya, Saibaba and Sivananda Mandir, besides Goshala is going on.

OVERSEAS BRANCHES

Barcelona, (Spain): During 2011 the Branch conducted regular Satsanga, Meditation, Kirtan and Bhajans, Guru Paduka

Puja, Swadhyaya etc. In different months according to spiritual calendar it also observed important events befittingly, besides, celebration of other sacred occasions related to Mahatma Gandhi, Gauranga Mahaprabhu, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Papa Ramdas, Krishnabai Mataji, Anandamayi Ma, Sant Jnaneswar Maharaj and others. Sri Bhakti Das actively participated in many programmes and musical concerts in the Branch and in the Prisons of Catalunya on invitation by UNESCO to project "Music and Peace".

Hong Kong (China): The Branch conducted daily Satsangas with Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, Divine Life Society headquarters, during Swamiji's visit from 09th to 22nd November. Guru Paduka Puja, chanting of mantras, selection of office bearers of the Branch, visit to Big Buddha at Po Lin Monastery on Lantau Island, lectures on Gurudev's "Twenty Important Spiritual Instructions", seminar on "Bhakti Yoga", Meditation and Yoga sessions were the main events during this period.

REPORT FROM CHIDANANDA HERMITAGE SHANTI ASHRAM, BALIGUALI

There was the monthly Sadhana Shibir at Chidananda Hermitage Shanti Ashram, Baliguali, which is part of DLS Headquarters, from 8th to 12th January, 2012, based upon the philosophy and teachings of Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj. Participant delegates and devotees were enlightened by eminent Scholars and Professors of Sri Jagannath University. Prof. Pyarimohan Pattanaik and Prof. Pravatranjan Mohapatra guided the programme.

Basant Panchami was celebrated on 28th January by worshipping Goddess Baghdevi in the company of school students.

Akhanda Nama Sankirtan going on at the Ashram gained divine fervour by the visit of Sankirtan groups from Jajpur Road and Bhairipur (Puri).

H.H. Sri Swami Padmanabhanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, DLS headquarters, visited the Baliguali Ashram from 2nd to 5th January, and also initiated twelve devotees into Mantra Japa.

