



# THE DIVINE LIFE

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## KATHOPANISHAD

### CHAPTER II

#### *VALLI ii*

सूर्यो यथा सर्वलोकस्य चक्षुर्न लिप्यते चाक्षुषैर्बाह्यदोषैः ।  
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा न लिप्यते लोकदुःखेन बाह्यः ॥११॥

11. As the sun, the eye of the whole world, is not contaminated by the defects of the eye or of external things, so the one internal Atman of all living beings, is not contaminated by the misery of the world, being external to it.

## शिवानन्दस्तोत्रपुष्पांजलिः

### **SIVANANDA STOTRAPUSHPANJALI**

*(Sri Swami Jnanananda Saraswati, Sivanandanagar)*

*(Continued from the previous issue)*

अत्यन्तनिर्मलात्मानं                      प्रत्यग्रप्रतिभान्वितम् ।  
श्रुत्यन्तबोधवाराशिं    शिवानन्दं    गुरुं    भजे    ॥४॥

4. I adore my Lord Sivananda whose mind is absolutely pure, whose intellect ever shines with great alertness, and who is the ocean of Vedantic wisdom.

सर्वलोकसमाराध्यं                      शर्वनिर्लीनमानसम् ।  
शर्वरीशाननं    वन्दे    शिवानन्दं    महामुनिम् ॥५॥

5. I adore the great saint Sivananda who is worshipped by the whole world, whose mind is ever absorbed in Siva, and whose face beams like the full moon.

वीतान्तसंसारगदार्दितानां                      वेदान्तबोधौषधदानदीक्षम् ।  
वन्दारुमन्दारममन्दकीर्तिं वन्दे शिवानन्दमहामुनीन्द्रम् ॥६॥

6. Salutations to the great sage Sivananda who is always engaged in giving medicines of Vedanta-knowledge to those afflicted by the disease of Samsara, who is the Divine tree to those who prostrate themselves before him and who is known far and wide in the world.

***(To be continued)***

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*Sri Krishna Janmashitami Message*

## SPIRIT OF DUTY

(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)

The life of Sri Krishna and His immortal Gospel constitute one of the basic foundations of the religious life of this country. A matchless philosopher, statesman, warrior, ruler and inspirer of devotees, His teachings provide the saving grace for all the ills from which man suffers today. On the occasion of Sri Krishna's birth anniversary let us consider a single aspect of His teachings—the sense of duty in man.

“How will it profit me?” asks the modern man, before applying himself to any task. There is an over-emphasis today on privileges. “Bliss of rights” is the order of the day. Man's vision is all the time centered on his little selfish personality.

Result: each man, while trying to assert his rights, to demand his privileges and to grab wealth, position and power, comes into conflict with every other man.

In the domestic sphere, in society, in offices, in factories and even in institutions which exist avowedly for the selfless service of man, like hospitals and schools and mutts, the clamour is for self-aggrandizement. There is no harmony because each one is pulling the chariot of society in a different direction, to fulfil his own selfish ends.

### SELFLESS SPIRIT

Selfish spirit is alien to the spiritual culture of India. The heart of spiritual India still throbs with the spirit of selflessness. The pulse of spiritual India still spells out the word ‘duty’. The soul of this holy land is radiant with the light of selfless performance of duty for duty's sake. But where is that spirit? Is it still alive?

This concept is as old as our oldest scriptures. The Isavasya Upanishad exhorts man to wish to live for a hundred years, performing his duties. Work done in the right spirit does not bind one to the wheel of transmigration. That spirit has been elaborated in the universal scripture which today claims adherents all over the world and is regarded as the Bible of the Indians—the Bhagavad Gita of Sri Krishna.

In a very simple and sublime verse, the Gita tells man: “Thy privilege it is to work only (to do thy duty), not to its fruits; let not the profit be thy motive, nor shall thou remain inactive.”

This is the forgotten message. The emphasis must be shifted from privileges or rights to duties or service. If everyone does his duty, then everyone's privileges or rights are assured.

Indeed, even the concept of ‘Human Rights’ implies this: in order that your

neighbour might enjoy his right, you must perform your duty. But this connotation is often overlooked by the idea of demanding the rights by one who runs away with the privileges.

### DUTY BEFORE RIGHTS

The emphasis must now be deliberately shifted from rights to duties. This is the central theme of the Gita for application in the present day. Students must obey their parents and teachers; it is their duty. Parents and teachers must take a personal interest in moulding the character of the students and prove themselves worthy of reverence and obedience; it is their duty. Workers in offices and factories must do their job honestly and efficiently; it is their duty. The authorities or the management must have a real and genuine interest in the welfare of the staff or workers and give them incentive by sharing the profit and creating a sense of belonging; it is their duty. Each man caring for the welfare of other men would lessen the chances of conflict, and everyone will, without having to demand, enjoy his privileges or rights.

This is not a policy. This is not even just a moral code. This is Yoga or the art of living that makes man spiritual.

One who adheres to this doctrine treats every work as a flower which he offers at the altar of the omnipresent Divinity. Will you offer a faded flower when you worship God? No. Even so, when you work in this spirit, you will not be indifferent, negligent or half-hearted. You will be highly efficient. Hence the

Gita characterizes Yoga as “efficiency in the performance of one’s duty.”

### SERVICE AS WORSHIP

“By offering each action as a flower, man attains the highest goal—perfection.” In a thrilling verse the Gita says: “By worshipping That (Supreme Being) with every one of his actions, man attains perfection.”

Every well-wisher of humanity, every leader who has mankind’s well-being at heart, sincerely tries to find the path to perfection. He wants to create a perfect society, in which there will be peace, plenty and prosperity. Here then is the formula, the forgotten message of selfless service, of performing one’s duty for duty’s sake, of regarding one’s actions as flowers in God’s worship. Thus would one’s daily life itself be transmuted and transformed into divine life.

Do it now, from this very moment. Your own heart will be filled with inexpressible peace and bliss. You will radiate peace and joy. The entire society will reciprocate and make your own life happy and fruitful. If you are sincere, you will get immediate results. This is the best way in which you can celebrate Krishna Janmashtami. May His blessings be upon you all.

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**Continually remember the Lord, who has given you existence and intelligence. Lead the life of self-restraint and self-denial. You will soon attain unity with God.**

**—Swami Sivananda**

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**Swami Chidanandaji's Message of August 1976**

## LORD KRISHNA AND HIS TEACHINGS

*To the Seekers and Sadhakas*

*Blessed Immortal Atman! Beloved*

*Seekers after Truth!*

Homage unto the Divine. May God bless you. Loving greetings and good wishes to you in the name of the Holy Master Gurudev Swami Sivananda. I am happy to write and address you again after an interval of three months. I take up this letter after my April letter in which I had the opportunity of sharing with you my thoughts regarding the central meaning of religion, its main objective and its true inner essence. We saw how this implied our relationship with all creatures as much as with the Creator. Also, how it implied the recognition of the immanence of God in everything here and the living of your life in the awareness of the divine Presence in all things and beings. This is the specific vision that the great World Teacher Lord Krishna would have us invoke and adopt in our life. To this end He has given to the world the grand revelation of the 11th discourse of the Srimad Bhagavadgita. This month brings to you a renewed powerful reminder of His sublime teachings. The advent of this Great Teacher of mankind is celebrated as Sri Krishna Janmashtami which occurs on 17th of this month. Simultaneous with this sacred Day is also the holy Jayanti or birthday of the great Yogi and Saint Sri Jnanesvar Maharaj of Alandi in

Maharashtra, who is one of the foremost renowned exponents of the wisdom of the Srimad Bhagavadgita. To our numerous brethren in Maharashtra the Jnanesvari Gita constitutes one of the most important holy books of their daily reading and study. It is a treasured possession in most homes in towns as well as villages. I do not know about the big cities. I should hope that it is equally true about the city dwellers.

This entire month of August is really a sanctified and blessed month of many sacred anniversaries. Besides the Jayanti of Jnanesvar, there is also the Sant Tulsidas Jayanti occurring on 2nd August. Sri Kalki Jayanti, Sri Varaha Jayanti, the holy Sri Ganesa Chaturthi are in this month. The very sacred day of Upakarma and the annual Gayatri Japa fall in August. So too the most auspicious anniversary of Sri Varalakshmi Puja is observed on the 6th of August. While countless devout ladies in numerous homes will be observing this blessed Varalakshmi Puja, innumerable householders and Brahmacharins throughout the length and breadth of India will be observing the holy Gayatri Mantra Japa Day on Monday, the 9th August. The great Gayatri Mantra is the very life and soul of the devout follower of the Sanatana Dharma, the Vedic religion. This Gayatri Mantra is the very quintessence of the radiance and the spiritual force enshrined in the Vedas. Gayatri is

therefore Maha Sakti. So very important it is that its daily repetition is enjoined upon all the three stages of life, namely, the student's stage, the family man's stage and the retired person's stage. The secret of the strength, energy and radiance of the youth and the teenage student lies in his regular and unfailing practice of Gayatri Japa every day. The secret of the prosperity and success of the householder is again in the Gayatri Mantra which he repeats daily. It is the source of courage and strength as well as the solace of the retiring middle-aged Vanaprasthi. The glory of the ageing sage and monk is based upon this solid foundation of the powerful Gayatri Mantra that he diligently cherished and adored throughout his life until entering into Sannyasa.

The sacred Gayatri Mantra is the support and strength and the fountain-source of power and spirituality of the true and devout Hindu. Truly speaking, the personal spiritual life of the Hindu commences from the day of his initiation into the Gayatri at the time of his sacred thread ceremony. Beloved reader, may you realise the greatness of this wonderful Mantra and commence repetition of Gayatri with unfailing regularity from this full moon day, i.e., Monday, the 9th August. Experience the blessedness of this daily Sadhana. Gayatri is divine power in manifestation. If you have neglected it up till now, let this be the moment to correct your error. Reinststate the great and all-powerful Gayatri Mantra in its rightful place in your daily life. You will be supremely blessed.

Gayatri is the greatest wealth and treasure. This month is most suitable and eminently fitted for all auspicious beginnings because the holy day of special annual worship of Lord Ganesa falls on the 29th of this month. Therefore take timely advantage of this significant spiritual event and derive the maximum benefit in your life. Siddhi Vinayaka will confer success upon you. Get yourself a copy of the great book Sri Jnanesvari Gita. English as well as Hindi versions are available. It is a precious mine of wisdom. It is a work of great beauty. It is a masterly exposition of Lord Krishna's teachings. Study it with interest and attention. Votaries of the holy Ramayana may take up an analytical study of Saint Tulsidas' great poetical work, the Sri Ramacharitamanas. All good undertakings must be commenced immediately as opportunity presents itself. This is the admonition of the wise ancients.

Let us meditate now upon the Supreme Avatara of Lord Vishnu, the glorious Lord Krishna, the giver of the sublime wisdom teachings of the Srimad Bhagavadgita. May His Divine Grace be upon you. May He grant you long life, good health, prosperity, success, happiness, peace and highest spiritual illumination. Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya. Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya. I close with my best regards, Prem and Om,

Yours at Sri Gurudev's Feet,

*Swami Chidananda*

Swami Chidananda

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## RELIGION AND DIVINE INCARNATION

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

The essence of religion is adoration of God. The permanency of a religion is based on its substantial foundation, which is dependent on the extent of the universality of its outlook. The more universal we are, the more permanent we also are. Religion, to be permanent, to be Sanatana, should cater to the needs of all people, and to the extent it excludes others from its fold, it is subject to destruction. Sanatana Dharma is eternal religion. It belongs to creation as a whole. It shows that it is capable of adjusting itself to the vicissitudes of time.

An idea or concept cannot be eternal unless it is capable of endurance. But everything here is perishable. The body perishes. The world is subject to change and destruction. The world is *anitya* (impermanent) and *asukha* (joyless). How, then, can we have something which is eternal in this transient world? Man is not eternal. Even the greatest saviours have gone. Even Avatars like Rama and Krishna have cast off their physical bodies. Yet, there is something enduring in the midst of all unenduring things, "the eternal among those which are not permanent", as says the Upanishad. When everything is unenduring, we speak of an eternal dharma, Sanatana Dharma, notwithstanding the fact that none of us

has seen it. The culture of Bharatavarsha is identified with eternal religion.

Sanatana Dharma is capable of adapting itself to changing times. Some opine that the caste system is one of the causes for its endurance. Others think otherwise. Some others hold that it is capable of absorbing everything into itself, and so it is eternal. But, where lies the centre of this religion? What is the substance of religion, which is the cause of its *sanatana* (eternality)? As mentioned, it is the adoration of God that is the quintessence of religion.

Now, the concept of God differs in different religions and, accordingly, the idea of the relation between man and God also differs. A perpetual relation would be the relation of the essential nature of the human being, and not merely the outer relation of the body. That which is eternal in us establishes a relation with that which is eternal in the cosmos, so that the relationship, too, is eternal. There cannot be a meaningful relation between the eternal and the non-eternal. So, this eternal relation is the summoning of the inner in the outer. It is the cry of the soul for God. As God is eternal, religion must be eternal, for it is the relation between man and God, between Nara and Narayana, between Arjuna and Krishna.

How can we establish any relation with God? We have not seen God. He is unknown, unthinkable. The relation would fade away if one of its ends is not clear to the mind of man. This is one of the reasons why religions shake at the bottom. Here, a clear understanding is necessary. It is one of the qualifications of an aspirant. He must have an unshakable conviction, and a fixed conception of God. It must be a 'perception', a clear 'vision'. The human intellect cannot function except in terms of duality, such as, "I and you are different", "The world is outside me", and "I have a function to perform in the world, which is outside me", etc. Religion is not rooted in the reason of man, entirely, but in faith based on understanding. It is a symbol of inner culture. At every step in the journey an inner connection is established between the soul and God. *Religion is what we do when we are alone*, and not the way we worship in public temples. It is the unfoldment of consciousness towards a larger dimension.

Sanatana Dharma has the capacity to include every faith and every philosophy in itself, because of its universality of approach. It sees God everywhere. To make this concept easy of understanding, the idea of Avatara, or incarnation, is introduced as a tenet peculiar to religion. Avatara means 'getting down'. It is the descent of God into the world. How can God descend when He is universal? Then, what is Avatara? This descent divine is not like a person getting down the steps. It is a grander and more profound principle. Avataras, as generally understood, are

possible only when there is a collective cry of humanity for redeeming it from some serious calamity. Such Avataras, as the Ten Avataras of Narayana, then come. We have also lesser Avataras, like Vyasa, Dattatreya, etc., called Amsavataras. It is one of the fundamentals of religious belief that God is in the world, immanent. He sees us, hears us. Hence, religion becomes a matter of the heart, of love, adoration and feeling. God is all-pervading, omnipresent, just here, not apart from us even by a few inches. This idea is the soul or essence of religion. Mere speculation is not religion. Philosophy put into practice is religion. Religion is, thus, divine living, divine life. It is not your or my religion. It is the religion of humanity. It is the relation between man and God—not the Hindu and God, not the Christian and God, but man and God. Religion, essentially, cannot be manifold. It has, perforce, to be one sweep of human nature in the direction of Absolute universality. Any genuine step taken towards this end is also true religion.

Yet, a universal religion is not possible, because each one's way is different; the approach is different, due to the difference in temperaments and capacities. Thus, what we can really achieve is tolerance towards other faiths, instead of a homogeneity of belief. Universal religion should, therefore, mean the following of one's own religion, with tolerance to all other religions. It is impossible to think of God as He is. To think of God as He is, we have first to cease to be. So, the idea of Avatara is bequeathed, representing God as what

He is to man, as He is manifest, relatively. Avatara is the connecting link between the ordinary human nature and the divine reality. Avatara is a manifestation of God through *mula-prakriti*. That is why we have to recognise an Avatara, though God is everywhere and can be worshipped in that highest capacity, if possible.

Whether an Avatara is a descent of God to man or man's ascent to God, is immaterial for us. Literally, Avatara means descent or manifestation. When the need for the higher values of life is felt more, the Avatara becomes a helpful stepping stone. The farther we are from God, the greater is the need we feel for the higher life. When humanity drifts too much from truth, the Avatara becomes necessary. To some extent, God tolerates our mistakes, but when we go too far, He comes down with a rod to correct us. Just as a mother allows a child to play, and go here and there, but when the child is about to fall into a pit she runs to its help, God manifests Himself when it is necessary to correct mankind's perspective of life. God incarnates Himself in the world whenever there is decline of righteousness and rise of unrighteousness, for the purpose of the protection of the good, the vanquishing of the wicked and the establishment of justice, in every age.

The theory of divine incarnation has been a controversial issue in the philosophy of religion, and has been one of the intriguing questions in theology. It is impossible metaphysically to interpret to the mind of man the divine secret of the movement of spiritual force in the

world. When a solution is attempted, the Avatara reveals itself as the answer of God to the needs of man. There is an internal bond of inseparable relation between the relative and the Absolute, and the descent of God on earth is the pressure or power of truth forcing itself into the realm of the relative when the harmony of this bond or relation gets dissipated by centrifugal psychic energies that seem to run counter to the integrating centripetal call of God to all manifestation. The descent of God as the Avatara is said to be for the ascent of man to his divine home. As the health-giving forces of harmony in the body perpetually wage a war with the disease-producing toxins, the universal balancing power of the Absolute introduces itself as a corrective element amidst the disturbing forces of darkness. The Avatara is a perpetual activity of God who manifests Himself at every juncture or critical situation (*yuge, yuge*) in the life of the world. The Avatara is the recurring reminder of God to man that it is impossible for the undivine to triumph over the essential goodness and divinity immanent in creation.

One who has devotion to the Guru, one who has totally surrendered himself to the Guru, one who serves the Guru wholeheartedly, knows no grief, no sorrow, no fear, no pain, no misery, no ignorance and he instantly attains Self-illumination.

—**Swami Sivananda**

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## SPIRITUAL INSIGHTS AND EXPERIENCES

(Sri Swami Atmaswarupananda)

Whether we are seekers from the East or the West, or from any tradition, our experience is seldom steady. Whether we have intellectual insights or spiritual experiences or direct experience, whatever comes will go. When it is present, we seem to have great clarity. We wonder how we could ever be confused. When that clarity leaves us, we are left groping. We don't understand anything or so it seems.

Is there anything we should know about these experiences? One thing is that it seems that whether it is at the level of intellectual understanding or insights, whether it is at the level of feelings or spiritual experiences, or whether it is at the intuitive level, direct experience, the more intense the period of clarity, the more intense the period of absence of clarity. The higher we go in one direction, the lower we seem to go in the other direction.

But then, whether our experiences are high and low or more moderate, it is not the experiences that count finally. No matter what our experiences are, no matter who we are, the important thing is not the experience, it is who knows the experience. The same one that has the high experience has the low experience. And it has a choice. It can spend the rest of its life involved in experiences,

pleasant and unpleasant, or it can pay attention to that which knows the experience. That which knows the experiences is what they sometimes call an *amsa* of Brahman or a part of Brahman. That is the Divine within.

Our high experiences lead us to believe that we have found the Divine in the experience. But can the Divine be an experience that comes and that goes? The experiences shone forth by the Divine can come and go, but the Divine Itself never changes, is ever steady, ever there. We have to be aware that the mind wants variety. It needs to become wiser. It needs to see the ultimate limitation of experiences—no matter how sublime. It has to find the peace that passeth understanding that is the essence of That which is ever present, always witnessing as Its natural state.

We are told to be the witness. Lord Krishna tells Arjuna to be *gunatita*: Rise above the three gunas and pairs of opposites. That doesn't mean that we try to create a witness. What it means is to recognize the natural witness that has ever been with us. There is nothing we can do about that natural witness. Neither can we enhance it or make it go away. It is ever there. It is the eternal. Our choice is whether we pay attention to it or not. □ □ □

## BONDAGE AND LIBERATION<sup>1</sup>

*[Based on the Srimad-Bhagavata]*

*(H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj)*

The Atman dwells in the transformation of the Gunas forming the body. Why should it not be bound down by Gunas? Or if the Atman is free like Akasa, why should it be at all in bondage? What are the indications of the Atman in bondage and in liberation? Is the Atman ever in bondage, for connection with the Gunas is eternal; or ever in liberation, for if liberation is a state to be acquired, the Atman cannot be permanent? Let us discuss the foregoing salient points in the light of the answer given by Sri Krishna in the Srimad-Bhagavata.

Bondage and liberation are terms applied not with reference to the real Self, but with reference to the Gunas (the Guna-limitations: Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas that are subordinate to the Self). The Gunas have origin in Maya. Therefore, neither liberation nor bondage can be attributed to God. Sorrow and delusion, joy and grief, even the atonement of body—all these are due to His Maya. As dream is only an illusory form of the mind, so the sources of births are not real. Vidya and Avidya, both proceed from His Maya. God is one and the Jiva is only His part (as the ray is of the sun). The bondage of Jiva is caused by Avidya and its liberation by Vidya. This is eternally so.

Let us consider the different indications of the imprisoned and the liberated Jiva. The difference is twofold: that between the Jiva and Ishvara and that amongst the Jivas themselves. Jiva and Ishvara, though of different attributes, dwell in the same body. They are like two birds, accompanying each other, companions that have made a nest for themselves in the tree of the body, of their own free will. Of these one (the Jiva) eats the fruits of the tree, the other (Ishvara), though not a partaker of fruits, is the mightier of the two. For he who does not partake of the fruits is the Knower of the Self, as of others. But the partaker of the fruits is not so. He (Jiva) who is joined with Avidya is always imprisoned. He (Ishvara) who is joined with Vidya is always liberated. The Maya of Ishvara, or Vidya, does not throw a veil round, and does not delude. The conscious element is dual in every individual. The consciousness of Ishvara is universal. The Jivatman, however takes upon himself the limitations of individuality and becomes the conscious centre in every man; he asserts: 'I perceive', 'I conceive', 'I do that'. "I" is the Atman limited by the sense of individuality. The perceptions and conceptions are of the Jivatman and he is the partaker of the fruits. This 'Jiva' element in an individual is bondage. But

<sup>1</sup>*Taken from DL March 1963*

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the Ishvara element in him is always liberated. And Jiva becomes liberated when the individual limitation is withdrawn.

Now the difference amongst Jivas, liberated and imprisoned: The liberated Jiva, though dwelling in the body, does not dwell in it, as it were, even like one aroused from a dream. The awakened man remembers his dream body, but knows it as unreal. So the liberated Jiva looks upon his body as unreal or a temporary halting station, not a part of his own self. The ignorant identifies himself with the body, like the man in a dream. The senses perceive the objects of the senses. The Gunas perceive the Gunas. The wise (Jiva) does not identify his self with these. He is, therefore, not distracted. The ignorant, however, while dwelling in this body, brought about by prior Karma, in which the senses act, thinks that he is the doer and becomes thus bound down. The wise one sees with disgust that actions bind him. Sleeping or sitting, walking or bathing, seeing, touching, smelling, eating or hearing, the wise (Jiva) does not bind himself like the ignorant, for in these acts, he realises that the Gunas (senses) perceive, and not his Self. He dwells in the body, but is not attached to it, like the Akasa, the sun and air. Space is in all things, but the things form no part of space. The sun becomes reflected in water. The air moves about all around but does not become attached to anything. By the force of dispassion, the vision becomes clear. All doubts are removed. And the wise (Jiva) rises, as it were, from sleep, and withdraws himself from the diversities of body and other material objects.

The Jiva whose Prana, Indriyas, Manas, and Buddhi function without the promptings of self-centred desires, is freed from the attributes of the body, though dwelling in the body. Whether injured or adored by others, the liberated Jiva is not affected in the least. He neither praises nor blames others for their good or bad deeds or words. He knows no merit or demerit. He looks on all with an equal eye. He does not do anything, he does not say anything, he does not think anything good or bad. He is Self-centred and moves like a senseless being (Jada). If a man well-versed in the Vedas is not fixed in the Supreme, his labour becomes fruitless like that of a man who keeps a breeding cow that bears no calf. A cow that does not give milk, an unchaste wife, a body that is under the control of others, an undutiful son, wealth that is not given to the deserving, and words that do not relate to God; — these only he keeps whose lot is misery.

With discrimination such as these, do away with the notion of diversity in the Self. Then fix your purified mind in the Lord who is all-pervading, and desist from everything else. If you cannot fix your mind on God, then offer up all your actions unconditionally to Him. Be eager to hear the words that relate to God. Sing of His praise, meditate on His deeds and incarnations. Whatever you do, do for the sake of God. Then will be gained, O Aspirant, fixed devotion to the Lord. That devotion or Bhakti is to be acquired in the company of wise men.

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## A BRIEF LIFE SKETCH OF SIVANANDA VANI



Smt. Vani Bai Ram, one of the ardent devotees of Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, was born on 17<sup>th</sup> August 1914 in a highly cultured Brahmin family at Guntur, Andhra Pradesh. She was the only child of her parents. She lost her mother when she was yet a baby. Her father, Shri Dasu Madhava Rao Garu, a leading lawyer, brought her up with great care and affection. Her father chose to name her “Vani”, after the Goddess of music and learning, as he found in her the inborn qualities suited to music even when she was a small baby.

She received training in Karnataka music from Sri “Gayaka Sarvabhoma” Parupalli Ramakrishnaya Pantulu and in Hindustani music from Sri Pundit S. N.

*Sri Vani Mataji is, above all, a mother par excellence. Anyone who has had the least acquaintance with her brilliant and saintly children will readily agree that she is best qualified to advise the youth of today on the best way to grow up into saintly and powerful personalities, not only achieving success in every undertaking here in this world, but winning at the same time an immortal place in the heart of mankind and the lap of God.*

*When she tells you what a glorious saint Sri Gurudev is, she means to exhort you to grow into his image. When she relays to you his immortal message of profound wisdom, she appeals to you to assimilate it into your life and soul, and to let his teachings guide your footsteps. Thus shall you—every one of you—attain success in this very life, and God-realisation in this very birth, here and now.*

**Swami Chidananda**

Ratanjankar. In May 1929, she was married to Dr. V. S. Ram, the Professor and the Head of the Department of Political Science, Lucknow University. Immediately after her marriage, her husband received the Carnegie Fellowship Endowment for further study in Europe and they left for Europe. During that time she visited all the countries in Europe and also learnt some Western Music (violin) at Paris and Vienna.

In January 1951, Mrs. Ram had to face a great blow, an irreparable loss—in the sudden and premature death of her husband Dr. Ram. The responsibility of bringing up seven children fell on her weak shoulders. Her intense grief and utter helplessness brought her to the feet of her divine master Sri Swami Sivanandaji

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 Maharaj. Swamiji's magnanimous compassion and his inspiring teachings completely transformed her. She became a new person with new spirit and new energy. She joined All-India Radio, New Delhi as Producer (Music) to eke out her living and also started Sri Sivananda Sangeet Vidyalaya. She learnt from her Guru to do real Seva by remaining in the mundane world keeping her heart pure, discharging her duties towards her children and serving her Guru to the best of her ability and doing charity.

Her intense love and deep devotion for her Guru found expression in her book 'Children's Sivananda' and also in the establishment of Sivananda Cultural Association in Delhi. Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj conferred upon her the title 'Divya Jiwan Jyoti' and also blessed her with the name Sivananda Vani. Mother Sivananda Vani left her mortal coil on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1972 and attained the feet of her Beloved Gurudev.

17<sup>th</sup> August 2014 marks the auspicious Birth Centenary of Mother Sivananda Vani. We present her article, one poem and also one inspiring letter written to her by our Holy Master as our loving homage to her sacred memory on the occasion of her Birth Centenary.

### **THE DIVINE LORD AND HIS PRESENCE**

*Dated: 26.7.55*

**OM**

Sivananda Vani Bai,  
 Lucknow.

Blessed Divinity; Salutations.

Om Namō Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter full of love and devotion. I thank you very much. I am ever with you to lift you up and guide you under any circumstances and situations you are placed, you are not alone. God is ever with you and He will definitely look after you and take care of you. Be sure of this. He is moving wherever you go and whatever you do, you do only under His Divine Presence. Feel this always. Then there is nothing to worry about or to have any anxiety. Every experience He gives you in life is to make you strong and intense towards Him. Be calm. Be serene. Be peaceful. Be patient. Keep the mind always balanced. Never perturb over anything. When once you have taken shelter under the Lotus Feet of SRI RAM what is there to be afraid or to have any anxiety at all. There is nothing. His unseen hands are ever there to lift you up

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and guide you and illumine your path. His Divine light is in front of you to show you the way to LIFE BEATITUDE. Every step you march onward to Him, He comes ten steps nearer to you. Be sure of His Divine help at all times and places. Have no lamentation. Have no negative ideas. Always be cheerful and joyful, because you have taken shelter under RAM and when you have taken shelter under Him you must be peaceful, joyful and blissful.

May Lord bless you all.

My Pranams to one and all there.

Thy own Self,  
**Sivananda**

### **TO MY OWN DIVINE GURUDEV**

Prostrations, salutations, adorations and Sashtanga Pranams to thy Holy divine feet of Gurudev. You have given new life, new energy, new way of thinking and transformed me completely.

When I lost all that I possessed in this world, and was thrown out as useless, unwanted creature by this world, you, my saviour, came to my rescue, picked me up from this illusory-Maya-world, and placed me in the highest pinnacles of hope, eternity and knowledge of bliss.

You, my Master, have taught me: balance of mind, discipline, detachment, unrivalled devotion towards my Guru, Seva Bhava, and above all remembrance of Lord at all times. I am a seeker after the Lord. I see my God in you, my Guru Bhagawan.

All my sorrows and depressions have vanished. I have more courage, more strength and more spiritual yearning now, than ever before. You are my awakener, my spiritual guide, and my all-pervading consciousness, and the most magnanimous and dynamic yogi. I am drowned in ecstasy in the flood of ever increasing devotion and faith. I consider myself extremely fortunate and lucky to be able to bow down and touch your sacred lotus feet with this sinful head. What a joy! What a thrill; what inspiration to receive your most valuable instructions written in your own hand, in a letter form!

My Swami Sivananda, accept my endless salutations. Do I deserve so much sympathy from the greatest saint?

Your compassion and large-heartedness have sometimes made me forget you are my divine Master and made me venture to talk to you as I would address anybody else. Please, my Master, pardon me for that.

My merciful Master and Lord, your invisible hand is always by my side and is helping me at every step and stage.

I cannot help talking about my divine Master Sivananda to everyone that happens to come and see me. To talk about you is a privilege and a source of immense joy to me.

There is no other room for any other thought but you in my heart. I have built a temple in my heart for my beloved God-like Gurudev, and have seated him on the soft cushion-like heart of mine.

Swamiji, I have undergone several tests by you, and have seen many wonderful miracles happen, to the astonishment of everyone. I regard you as my benefactor, compassionate Master, loving father, a glorious Guru, and above all my God. Your magnanimous, charitable hand, compassionate heart and sweet nature have made me drink the sweetest nectar of "Ram-Nam" with the essence of Vairagya mixed in it, in the cup of purity, perfection and humility.

When I come to you, my Swamiji, at thy holy abode, I derive the pleasure of visiting the Vaikuntha Loka. To see you in your office is like seeing Narayana Himself in the heaven. To hear you sing the Kirtans and your English compositions is like listening to the sweet enchanting notes of Lord Shri Krishna's flute. Your melodious, superb, thrilling voice draws us nearer you and electrifies the whole body with holy vibrations. To sit near you, gazing at thy beautiful divine form throwing pearls of wisdom on all those sitting around thee, one gets into raptures of Ananda.

Siva, you are my support. Without you, I am nothing. You are the inspiration within me.

You are our immortal divine priceless treasure and guide. Your captivating speeches, surpassing everything else, act like balm to the depressed and the disappointed souls.

My Prabhu, the few lines of thy inspiring message are always ringing in my ears:

*Serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realize.  
Be good, do good, be kind, be compassionate.  
Enquire who am I, know the Self and be free.  
Adapt, adjust, accommodate.  
Bear insult, bear injury, highest Sadhana.  
Find the hearer, find the seer, find the knower,  
You are not this body, not this mind,  
Immortal Self you are.*

\* \* \*

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*Eat a little, drink a little.  
Talk a little, move a little.  
Serve a little, rest a little.  
Reflect a little, do Vichar a little.  
Kirtan a little, Japa a little.  
Meditate a little.*

\* \* \*

Swamiji Maharaj, please forgive me for all my short comings. My heart is filled with Sivanandism.

*Sivanandeti Sada Smaranam  
Sivanandeti Sada Japam  
Sivanandeti Sada Dhyanam  
Sadaiva Siva Kirtanam.....OM*

Thy Humble Sevika  
Always at your feet,  
***Sivananda Vani***

### MY SUPREME LORD

*Gurudev is my Supreme Lord,  
So precious, so sweet, like a God,  
Filling my thoughts with divine deeds  
Makes me happy giving my needs.  
He taught me to repeat Ram-Ram.  
Making my soul peaceful and calm.  
To the tattered mind He gave  
Shelter, cheer, blissful wave.  
Clinging (to His feet) I crave for mercy  
To reach my goal with ecstasy.*

\* \* \*

## A MOTHER'S BOUNDLESS DEVOTION FOR HER GURU

*(Sri Amar Nath Ram)*

After the loss of her husband prematurely, distraught, directionless and hopelessly driven by despair, with daunting personal challenges and difficulties of raising a family of six young children staring her in the face, my mother, Smt Vani Bai Ram (Sivananda Vani), following a vision she saw in her dream, irresistibly turned to Gurudev H.H. Satguru Swami Sivanandji Maharaj for succor, light and guidance. This was in early 1954.

Sivananda Vani's uncompromising devotion for her Guru brought her instant inner peace and tranquility. At His feet, she found strength, solace and the will to carry on with her responsibilities towards her family and society. Gurudev, she felt, had "engineered" miracles to occur in her life. To tide over her financial difficulties and to help her to occupy herself usefully through the divine gift of music, she soon was appointed as the Deputy Chief Producer of Music in All India Radio, Delhi. She was encouraged, with Gurudev's divine blessings, to become increasingly self-reliant, useful and independent; Gurudev and his Ashram became her family and source of strength. Indeed, Gurudev's Ashram became a second home for all of us, nurtured and blessed by Mother Ganges

and the holy Himalayas. We, her children, were privileged to grow up at Gurudev's feet. With His blessings and guidance, in due course, we settled down in life, never forgetting His profound teachings and inspirational guidance. For Sivananda Vani, Gurudev became the anchor who made her worries and tensions disappear and who showed her the path towards God realization through her Master.

During her frequent visits, Sivananda Vani would perform Gurudev's "Pada Puja" regularly for in that she found a means of conquering the "I" in her and in her children. She would tell us that unconditional surrender to the Master is the surest way of realizing yourself. Likewise, the evening "Satsang" in Gurudev's benign presence provided her an opportunity to express her bhakti for her Guru through the medium of divine music. She regarded music as an instrument of Sadhana, service and fulfillment. Even we, as children, were encouraged by Gurudev to express ourselves through the medium of our choice—in my case, debate and discussion, for which He graciously blessed me with the title of "Prasang Praveen"!

Sivananda Vani's book "Children's Sivananda" contains a moving and

powerful narration of her devotion for her Guru, encapsulating in simple language her Master's message for children. Gurudev's message is retold in a story narrative for the children who, according to Gurudev, are the repositories of God and godliness. Her many letters to Gurudev, written over a span of nearly two decades, and His illuminating words of profound wisdom, in response, is a veritable treatise on Bhakti, philosophy and in discovering God and Guru in oneself. Later, with Gurudev's blessings, she almost single handedly helped construct in Amar Colony in Delhi the Sivananda Bhavan conceived as a temple of Gurudev's permanent legacy for succeeding generations so that they may lead a life of virtue, piety, service, godliness and learning.

Whenever Gurudev's telepathic call came, Sivananda Vani would rush to His Ashram. Perhaps her deep seated desire,

in the end, was to personally serve her Master even more fully and completely. Gurudev was one of those Lord's messengers on earth who had taken birth to serve, love, give, purify and meditate. There were thousands of Sivananda Vanis and her children whom He lifted from hopelessness, despondency, purposelessness and despair to light, knowledge, hope and real meaning in life.

Sivananda Vani whose birth centenary we celebrate on August 17 was quintessentially an epitome of Bhakti, devotion, piety, compassion, love and dedication to her Guru, whose blessings we, the family, invoke today as everyday in our lives. Her life was incomplete without her Guru's inspirational guidance. The best tribute to her memory would be to rededicate ourselves to keeping the flame of enquiry burning and passing on the baton of Gurudev's message to the children of today.

### HOUSEHOLDER'S SADHANA

"May we hear with our ears or see with our eyes nothing but what is pure, so that with our senses unperturbed, remembering God, meditating on Him, singing His praise, and repeating His Name we may attain life as that of gods. Om Santi!"

This is an easy way for attaining God-consciousness. At night all the members of the household should sit in a circle and do Kirtan for one hour before the picture of the Lord. Endeavour to forget the body and the world and enter into ecstatic state. At night you will be free from bad dreams. All diseases will be cured.

—*Swami Sivananda*

## KHAND-DANT CHANAKYA

(Swami Ramarajyam)

Chanakya was the Prime Minister in the court of king Chandragupta Maurya. This story is related to his childhood.

One day, gazing at him, his mother began to cry.

Chanakya asked her, "Mother, why are you crying?"

The mother said, "You are destined to be a king. This thought makes me cry."

Chanakya said, "You should be all the happier for it."

The mother said, "I am crying because of my impending misfortune. After becoming a king, you will not remember your old mother. Dear son, kings and Yogis do not bother themselves about relationships."

Chanakya asked her, "How do you know that I will be a king?"

The mother replied, "The shape of the frontal teeth of yours tells that you would be a king."

Chanakya was lost in thought for a little while. Thereafter he picked up a stone lying nearby and broke his frontal teeth. The mother, now repentant, cried helplessly. Chanakya said, "I have broken these teeth, mother! Now I won't become a king. I do not want royal luxuries. I can give up everything but I cannot live without you."

From that day onwards Chanakya was called 'Khand-dant'. He was prepared to forgo all royal comforts for the sake of his mother. He knew if he did not get royal comforts, nothing would be lost. If he forgot his mother, everything would be lost. Who would make up that loss then?

Dear children, be watchful lest you should suffer this loss. You should be prepared to give up everything for the sake of your mother.

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### VALEDICTORY FUNCTION OF THE 77TH BASIC YOGA-VEDANTA COURSE

The Valedictory function of the 77th Basic Yoga-Vedanta Course was held on 29th June 2014 at YVFA Hall in the benign presence of H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj, Vice-President, DLS Headquarters.

After the invocatory prayers, Sri Swami Yogavedantanandaji Maharaj, Registrar of the Academy welcomed all those present on the occasion and Sri Swami Akhilanandaji Maharaj, presented the report of the course. Thereafter, the students shared their experiences and impressions about the Course. It was followed by the

distribution of certificates and Jnana-prasad to the students and felicitation of the faculty members.

H.H. Sri Swami Yogaswarupanandaji Maharaj in his blessing message inspired the students to put into practice Sadgurudev's Twenty Spiritual Instructions and His Divine Motto – Be Good; Do Good. The function concluded with the worship of Mother Saraswati and distribution of Prasad.

May the Lord Almighty and Sadgurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj shower abundant blessings upon all.

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### SERVICES THROUGH CHIDANANDA CENTENARY CHARITABLE DISPENSARY AT GAHAM, ANGUL (ODISHA)

The Divine Life Society, Sivananda Sevagram Charitable Trust (managed by the Divine Life Society Branches of Angul district) has rendered its loving services to 722 poor patients in the month of June through Chidananda Centenary Charitable Dispensary at Gaham, Angul. The patients were examined by Dr. R. N. Panda and Dr. R. C. Satpathy and were provided free medicines.

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



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### SEVA THROUGH SIVANANDA HOME

By the profound Blessings of Sri Gurudev and the immanent Grace of Sri Swamiji Maharaj, the Divine Life Society Headquarters continues rendering its humble service through Sivananda Home, situated in Tapovan near Laxman Jhula.

Sivananda Home is not a Hospital. It is not a Nursing Home, neither an old age Home. It is not defined as a Leprosy Hospital, nor a TB Hospital, or an asylum for mentally affected patients. Sivananda Home is in the first place a Home, a Home for them who do not have a home at a critical point of time in their lives. And at that certain point in their life, they need a Home desperately, because of being sick, affected, abandoned or abused, forlorn, or having lost complete direction in their lives; people who have been staying on the roadside on their own, sometimes for a short time, sometimes for years together. And they are all sick. All of them suffer from some disease or the other. Reasons may vary: no access to drinking water or clean and proper food, no shelter, no medical care, no one to rely upon. Most of the patients are admitted in a physical miserable state, dirty, lice, skin diseases, worm infections, anemic or dehydrated; besides major diseases from which they actually suffer at most, be it Leprosy, TB, AIDS, mental illness, heart, diabetes, orthopedic, neurological or anything else. The patients are checked up, and medically treated accordingly.

Besides the medical treatment, many of the patients are in need of nursing care, of attendance, guidance, supervision, or literarily completely

dependent on others, regarding most of their daily activities, and even nightly whereabouts. There is a group of short-stayers, and a group of long-stayers, as it were. Gurudev in His mercy has sent all of them, yah all of us together in His shelter, to look after and to be looked after! All of us as His patients only. Sivananda Home functions under His guidance through Sevaks, paid staff, helpers, and so called home makers. All these home-makers, the long-stayers, the inmates, form the bedding, the network connection of the Home. How many thousand and one unseen, unnoticed hidden activities take place even in a normal household? Sivananda Home has many home-makers, or call it the group of housewives and men, who perform these thousand and one invisible activities and gestures, without which the Home would be a house only. They lost their home, they found a home, and they are making a home for others, recognizing their pain as nobody else. This month brought several new admissions, people with infected wounds, others with enteric fever, skin diseases, asthma and one of the patients was treated for a head injury after a fall. May Sri Gurudev's healing blessing, and the compassionate glance of Sri Swamiji Maharaj touch all. Om Sri Satgurudevaya Namah.

*"Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms. Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms. Let us ever remember Thee. Let us ever sing Thy glories. Let Thy Name be ever on our lips. Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever."*

*(Swami Sivananda)*



MEMBERSHIP

## REPORTS FROM DLS BRANCHES

**Ambala (Haryana):** Regular Satsang is held on Sundays with Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa, Kirtan, Swadhyaya from Gurudev's books and Arati. Video Satsang is held every 2nd Sunday. Hanuman Chalisa, Sankat Mochan Bajaranga Baan Path with Kirtan and Arati is carried out on Tuesdays. Free Jal Seva and Homeopathy dispensary continues to serve.

**Aska (Odisha):** Apart from regular Satsang on Sundays and Thursdays, mobile Satsangs were held at devotee's places (5 nos). One day Sadhana Shivir was held at Aska on 9th May and at Bhetanai village on 22nd June which was attended by more than 300 devotees. Gyan Prasad and Photos of Gurudev and Guru Maharaj were distributed. Free medical services were rendered on both occasions.

**Bargarh (Odisha):** Regular activities of Satsang with Guru Pada Puja, Abhishek, Swadhyaya, and Yoga continue. 150 patients were treated at homeopathy clinic and copies of Mahatvani distributed free. On 14th June Srimad Bhagvat (11th Skandha) Pravachan was held.

**Bellaguntha (Odisha):** Daily morning Paduka Puja with Kirtan, Satsang on Sundays with Parayan of 18th chapter of Bhagavat Gita; special Satsang on Tuesdays with Ramayan Path, mobile Satsang on Thursdays, monthly Sadhana day on Sankranti and special Paduka Puja on Sivananda day form regular activities of the Branch.

**Bellary (Karnataka):** Birth Anniversary of Swami Devanandaji Maharaj was celebrated with Satsang, Archana and Puja on 19th June.

**Bikaner (Rajasthan):** Regular activities include morning and evening Puja at Mahadev Mandir, weekly Satsang on Sundays and Yogasana and Pranayam sessions. Paduka Pujan on 1st June i.e. Sannyasdivas, Kirtan on Nirjala Ekadashi on 9th June and Sundarakanda Path at the residence of devotees (2 Nos.) were performed.

On 24th June Mahamrityunjaya and Gayatri Havan was performed. Scholarship is given to poor and brilliant students and a library is maintained to spread knowledge and information. As part of Swami Chidananda birth centenary celebrations, Rudri Abhishek was performed and Panchakshar Mantra Kirtan was organised from 2nd to 8th March with a Shobha Yatra and a vishal Bhandara on 9th March.

**Buguda (Odisha):** During the period from January to March the Branch conducted Satsangs every Thursdays, special Satsangs on Sankranti days (3 Nos.), and mobile Satsang at devotees residence (5 Nos.). Maha Shivaratri was celebrated on 28th February with Paduka Puja and Archana.

**Chatrapur (Odisha):** Apart from daily evening Satsang, four weekly Satsangs and twelve special Satsangs were held. Gurupada Puja was performed on Sivananda and Chidananda days. The target of recitation of Sundarakand 50 times was completed by the end of June and more such Path are planned as a part of Birth Centenary Celebrations of Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj.

**College Square-Aska (Odisha):** Apart from regular weekly Satsang, Sivananda and Chidananda days were celebrated with Paduka Puja and Sundarakanda Parayan.

**Digapahandi (Odisha):** The Branch organises Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays, Guru Paduka Puja on Sivananda and Chidananda day and conducts a special Satsang on Sankranti Day. Mobile Satsang was held at the residence of a devotee on 26th May.

**Faridpur (U.P.):** The weekly Satsang on Wednesday continues. Sannyas Diksha Diwas was celebrated with poor feeding and Vastra Daan. Financial help was given for the marriage of two girls of a poor family. Financial help was also given to an old sick Brahmin lady for treatment.

**Jeypore (Odisha):** Apart from daily morning and evening Puja, weekly Satsang on Sundays and mobile Satsang on Thursdays, Sivananda day was observed with Havan, Puja and Prasad Sevan. There was a radio talk on All India Radio Jeypore by Swami Parampriyanandaji. Koraput district homeopathy dispensary treated over 900 patients.

**Kakinada (A.P.):** Regular Satsang with Mediation, Parayan and Pravachan are held every Wednesday at Sivananda Kshetram Sarpavaram, on Fridays at Z-town Kakinada, on Saturdays at Reserve Police Quarters, Kakinada, and on Sundays at Sai Mandir Madhava Patnam. Free medical camps are held on 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month and Narayan Seva on every Sunday rendered to 25 to 30 poor people at Sarpavaram. Bhagavat Gita Parayan (all 18 chapters) was held at Pavasapandu village (suburb of Kakinada) on 12th June. Sankirtan was performed by an old devotee who now lives abroad on 18th June at Sarpavaram and celebrated the Jayanti Utsav of Swami Devanandaji Maharaj on 19th June.

**Kanpur (U.P.):** Daily morning and evening Arati, Bhajan and Sankirtan on each Ekadashi and monthly Satsang with Sundarakanda Path form the regular activities of the Branch.

**Khatiguda (Odisha):** Satsang held on 1st June with Narayan Seva. Satsang with Vishnusahasranama Parayan on both Ekadashis and mobile Satsang on 24th June at devotees residence were held during the month of June.

**Ladies Branch Imphal:** Guru Purnima was observed with Guru Paduka Puja, Bhajan and Kirtan followed by Prasad.

A one day spiritual meet was held on 26th February attended by a Sannyasi from Rishikesh Ashram. Speakers expressed the need for spiritual awakening in present times followed by Bhajan and Kirtan. Regular Satsang on Ekadashies and All Soul's Day Prayer on Amavasya continued.

**Ladies Branch Sunabeda (Odisha):** Daily morning Sankirtan, weekly Satsang on Sundays including children's Satsang, Narayan Seva on Tuesdays, Abhishek and Vishnusahasranama Path on Ekadashis and Mahamrityunjaya Mantra Japa on Chidananda day form the regular activities of the Branch. A Sadhana day was organised on 1st June.

**Lakhimpur-Kheri (U.P.):** Regular weekly Satsang with Jai Ganesh Kirtan, Guru Stotra, Bhagavat Gita Chanting, Mahamantra Chanting, reading from Gurudev's books and concluding with universal prayer and Shanti Path continued.

**Lanjipalli (Odisha):** Apart from Puja and Arati twice a day with Parayan of Bhagavat Gita and Ramacharit Manas, regular weekly Satsangs are held on Sundays. A Sadhana day was organised on 29th June (Rath Yatra day) with poor feeding and Prasad. A discussion on Jagannath Mahaprabhu was also held. All the programmes were well publicized in local press and electronic media.

**Lucknow (U.P.):** Satsang was held twice during the month of June with Jai Ganesh Kirtan, Bhajans, recitation from Bhagavat Gita with Arati and Bhog. Sweets and fruits were distributed among visually disabled children of National Association for Blind on 27th June.

**Ludhiana (Punjab):** Regular monthly Satsangs were held during the period April to June 2014. A five day Yogasadhana Shivar was organised from 16th to 20th April with Yogasana classes in the morning and Satsang in the evening. The camp was attended by a Saint from head quarters (Rishikesh). Regular Yogasana classes have started at the Branch with active participation of Rishi Nagar welfare society. Exercise books, geometry boxes etc. were distributed in a nearby school for poor children.

**Mahasamund (Chhattisgarh):** Morning Yoga and Pranayam sessions with Puja and Bhajans continue. On the occasion of Navaratri, chanting of Ramayan, Devi Suktam, Durga Path

etc. were performed for nine days. Hanuman Chalisa Path on Tuesdays and Gita Parayan on Sundays are performed regularly.

**Nandinagar (Chhattisgarh):** Daily morning and evening Satsang, mobile Satsang on Thursdays, Matri Satsang on Saturdays and Ekadashi Matri Satsang form the regular activities of the Branch. A 6 hour Maha Mantra Kirtan was organised on 3rd May. A residential youth camp was organised from 3rd May to 9th May. Various spiritual activities like Japa, Asanas and Pranayams, discourses, Sundarakand Path etc. were carried out in three sessions each day. Havans were performed on 10th May and 23rd May.

In the month of June along with the regular activities special Satsang was organised at two different places (Jabalpur) on Sanyasa Diksha Day of Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. Special Satsang was also conducted on 23rd June at Balabhat (M.P.).

**Nimapara (Odisha):** Apart from daily morning Paduka Puja and weekly Satsang on Thursdays, special Satsangs were held on 21st April and 11th May. A special Satsang at Taradapada village was held with Bhajan, Kirtan, Srimad Bhagavat Gita Path, Arati, Shanti Path, and Prasad Sevan. Sri Rama Navami was celebrated on 8th April and Hanuman Jayanti on 14th April with 108 Hanuman Chalisa Path. Srimad Bhagwat Saptah was held from 2nd to 8th May as part of birth centenary celebration of Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj.

**Panchkula (Haryana):** Apart from weekly Satsang on Sundays and daily Yoga classes, a 7 day camp for students was held where students learnt Yoga, Music, Dance, Art and Craft. A group of 20 children visited Maat Pitta Godham where they offered Shram Daan.

**Patiala (Punjab):** Monthly Satsang at devotee's residence continued. Special Satsang was held on 3rd May when a Saint from Rishikesh

Ashram visited the Branch. The Branch donates to local Gaushala every month.

**Raigarh (Chhattisgarh):** Apart from weekly Satsang on Mondays the Branch celebrated Ramnavami on 8th April and Shivananda Jayanti was celebrated from 8th April till Hanuman Jayanti on 15th April.

**Rajapark Jaipur (Rajasthan):** Regular activities include daily evening Satsang, Mahila Satsang on Mondays, Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra Japa on Thursdays, Sundarakanda and Hanuman Chalisa on Saturdays and morning Satsang on Sundays.

Financial aid of Rs.150/- per head is given to 27 poor widows and a mentally challenged person every month. Every Sunday, food is distributed at Sidheshwar Mandir to about 300 people. Rice, Dal, Sugar, Oil and Tea leaves are given to Garibdas Kushtha Rog Ashram. A Library with 1889 books is maintained and a free Homeopathy dispensary is run by the Branch. A Free Yogasan class is conducted every morning. A water hut with filter and cooler is maintained. Satyanarayan Katha was held on Purnima and Ekadashi Katha was held on the occasion of Sanyas Diksha of Gurudev Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. Ganga Dashahra was celebrated on 8th June and election for the office bearers of the Branch was held on 22nd June.

**Rajkot (Gujarat):** The activities during three months ending 30th June include Satsang at Sivanand Bhavan on Sundays and at Nilkanth Mahadev Mandir on Saturdays, half day Shivir on Ramnavmi, daily Yoga classes for ladies at Sivanand Udyan, free homeopathy clinic three days a week where over 1900 patients were treated and free dental clinic on Tuesdays where 137 patients were treated during this quarter. Free dentures worth Rs.4500/- were given to 5 patients.

Eye camps were held with the help of Jalaram Mandir Grinford-U.K. where 4726 patients were treated and 673 operations were

performed at Saurashtra Central Hospital. Financial assistance of Rs.24,000/- was provided to heart and cancer patients. Bhaktinagar Railway station was given Rs.15,000/- for stretcher. Exercise books and other material worth Rs.15,000/- were distributed among students. A free coaching class for students of weaker section has been started attended by 33 students of class IX.

**Rourkela (Odisha):** The regular activities of the Branch include daily morning meditation, Yoga and Pranayama classes, mobile Satsang on Sundays, Paduka Puja with Abhishek and Archana on Thursdays and 8th and 24th of every month. Every Sunday free Homeopathy medicines are distributed.

**South Balanda (Odisha):** The regular activities of the Branch include morning and evening Puja, Satsang on Fridays, Guru Paduka Puja on Sivananda and Chidananda days and ladies Satsang on Ekadasi. Special Satsangs were held on Sankranti Divas (15th June) and on 28th June with Akhand Mahamantra Sankirtan for world peace and universal brotherhood.

**Steel Township Branch (Rourkela-Odisha):** Mobile Satsang was performed at devotee's residence every Sunday and on 28th May. Free Music classes are held every Wednesday. Paduka Puja was performed every Thursday and Swadhyaya sessions held on Saturdays.

**Sunabeda (Odisha):** Weekly Satsang on Thursdays and Sundays with Kirtan, Japa, Swadhyaya, Puja and Arati and Ladies Satsang on Wednesdays and Saturdays are the regular activities. Savitri Brata was observed by the ladies wing.

**Surendra Nagar (Gujarat):** Regular activities of the Branch include daily morning Puja and evening Matri Satsang, Sundarakand Path on Saturdays and Ramayan discourses on Mondays. The Branch distributed Sewing

machines to young widows with funds from silent donors. A water hut was set up for summer and free Ayurvedic medicine for Piles is distributed.

**Varanasi (U.P.):** Satsang was held at Vridha Ashram on 22nd June.

**Vasant Vihar (New Delhi):** The weekly Satsang continues with Meditation, Swadhyaya from Guru Maharaj's books, reading from Ramacharita Manas and Bhagavat Gita, Lectures by local Saints, universal prayer and Prasad Sevan. A meeting was held to chalkout programs for Birth Centenary of Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj.

## OVERSEAS BRANCHES

**Hong Kong (China):** Regular activities of the Branch are 1 hour Maha Mantra chanting on every Saturday (except second Saturday and general holidays) both at Cheung Sha Wan and North Point Yoga Centre (34 participants), regular monthly Satsang with 1 hour chanting of Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra, Hanuman Chalisa followed by a talk on the teachings of Gurudev at North Point Yoga Centre on 10th May (35 participants) and regular Yogasana classes based on "Practical Guide to Yoga" covering yoga exercises, breathing techniques and meditation (27 new classes with 316 participants).

The Branch continued with Bhajan practice session on 3rd May. Celebrated the 14th Anniversary of the Hong Kong Branch on 17th May along with the Annual General Meeting with a chanting session, a talk and Yoga Asana session where Yoga teachers demonstrated Asanas (89 participants) followed by an evening dinner for the members (82 participants). On 24th May a special Bhajan/Kirtan with talk on the Essence of Bhagavat Gita was held at Cheung Sha Wan Yoga Centre (29 participants).

The Branch continued to organise "Give Blood" activity at Hong Kong Red Cross during the whole month (6 participants).

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