

# YOGA

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*50th year of  
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## Hari Om

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*Front cover:* Swami Dharmashakti Saraswati and Swami Satyananda Saraswati

*Plates:* 1: Rajnandgaon 1957; 2: Guru Poornima, Jabalpur 1981; 3&6: Sita Kalyanam, Rikhiapeeth 2007; 4: Ganga Darshan 1997; 5: Ganga Darshan 1999; 7: Sri Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna, Sannyasa Peeth, Munger 2011; 8: Shodashi Pooja, Satyam Udyan, Munger 2013



## GUIDELINES FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

### To Make a Person Divine

Service or *seva* should be practised until the end of one's life. It breaks the ego and expands the heart. It is an 'ever-ready polish' to keep the mind clean and pure and the body active and healthy.

Service annihilates the sense of separateness and selfishness is eradicated. With a broad and liberal outlook on life, one begins to feel oneness and unity and realizes: 'One in all and all in One'.

Society is nothing but a collection of individuals, and the world is nothing but a manifestation of God. Service of humanity is, in fact, nothing short of service and worship of God, but one should serve with *bhava*, feeling. Service always elevates and makes a person divine.

—Swami Sivananda

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# YOGA

Year 2 Issue 5 • May 2013  
(51st year of publication)

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to the memory of Swami  
Dharmashakti Saraswati

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The Yogi is superior to the ascetic. He is deemed superior even to those versed in sacred lore. The Yogi is superior even to those who perform action with some motive. Therefore, Arjuna, do you become a Yogi. (*Bhagavad Gita VI:46*)

तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोधिकः । कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥

# Tribute to a Life of Dedication

Ratna Beohar, Raipur, Ammaji's sister



Swami Dharmashakti Saraswati, whom we affectionately call Ammaji, was born in the early morning hours on 19th May 1924, Buddha Poornima, in Sahaspur Lohara, Rajnandgaon district in the state of Madhya Pradesh, now Chhattisgarh. She was the eldest of all siblings in the family. Her father, Sri Govardhan Lal Srivastava, was a lawyer in Chuikhadaan and she spent her childhood there.

Ammaji was a talented and accomplished child from an early age. Her nature was very sattwic and loving. She had spiritual inclinations from the beginning. Receiving her education at home, she did not attend regular school. She received the legacy of literary pursuits from her father in abundance. Sri Govardhan Lal Srivastava had been a freedom fighter and wrote poems to inspire the nationalistic spirit. Ammaji was deeply influenced by her father's personality and she imbibed his qualities of steadfastness, courage, bravery and a strong resolve. She was a devotee of Rama and loved the *Ramayana* from her early childhood. This virtue became the reason for her marriage.

Ammaji's father-in-law, Sri Dhanu Lal Srivastava, was the tehsildar, district officer, of Dhariya. He was a friend of Ammaji's father and would often visit their home. Impressed with Ammaji's nature and sattwic qualities, he decided to accept her as his daughter-in-law and fixed the marriage with his son, Satyavratji. Ammaji went to live with her in-laws at

an early age. Fortunately, she found the environment there similar to her father's home. Satyavratji was a cultured, gentle, hardworking and talented person.

Satyavratji was born on 26th June 1914 in Chuikhadaan. He was the third of four brothers and had a younger sister. He received his education in Rajnandgaon and at Robertson College, Jabalpur. After completing his studies, he was employed in the service of the Raja of Baikunthpur. The Raja was pleased with his work and nature. Later he took up a post with the B.N.C. mill in Rajnandgaon. Ammaji and Satyavratji carried out their family responsibilities very well.

### **Rishikesh**

Time moved on and though they were blessed by God with everything, they remained deprived of the joy of parenthood. The reason for this was a strong destiny. On a special occasion in Ammaji's family, a learned pandit had made the prophecy that four generations hence a divine incarnation would be born to a daughter from that family. Ammaji belonged to the fourth



generation from the time this prophecy had been made and even her astrological chart showed that she would have a very great child indeed, born with a saint's blessing. Given this background, how could it be that they would experience normal or regular parenthood? They were patient and the situation became more and more favourable.

In April 1953, Satyavratji went to Nagpur on some office related work where he met a South Indian gentleman who was a disciple of Swami Sivananda. This gentleman invited Satyavratji to visit Sivananda ashram in Rishikesh. When

Satyavratji returned to Rajnandgaon, he took leave of absence from the mill and Ammaji and he went to Sivananda Ashram. There he was introduced to Swami Sivananda. Being good at shorthand, he would make notes during Swami Sivananda's discourses and later type them out for Swami Sivananda.

He had already become quite close to Swami Sivananda. It was here in Sivananda Ashram that he first came in contact with Swami Satyananda and both of them felt an immediate affinity towards each other. Satyavratji and Ammaji stayed in Rishikesh for a few days and then returned home. Later he took his annual leave and accompanied by Ammaji returned to Rishikesh. During this visit, a program was fixed to receive diksha from Swami Sivananda, but Ammaji felt reluctant about doing so and only Satyavratji took diksha. It was then that Swami Sivananda said, "Her guru will come to her house."



### **First chapter**

It was a tradition to celebrate Ganesh Utsav in Rajnandgaon and the people said to Satyavratji that since he went to Rishikesh so often, it would be good to invite a sannyasin from there for a program. Satyavratji and Swami Sivananda used to correspond with each other frequently and in one of his letters Satyavratji requested Swami Sivananda to send a sannyasin to Rajnandgaon. The

reply was that Swami Satyananda was the only Hindi speaking sannyasin at the ashram, had a lot of responsibility upon his shoulders and could not be spared. He would be able to visit them only after he started on his parivrajaka life.

In May 1956 Satyavratji received a letter from Swami Satyananda that he had left the ashram in Rishikesh and was

living as a parivrajaka. They should let him know the details of their plans for him to travel to Rajnandgaon. Satyavratji immediately came home, informed Ammaji, went to the post office and sent a money order with the travel fare. In June 1956 Swami Satyananda first set foot in Rajnandagon and their home became his base. This is where the deep relationship of guru-disciple and guru-bhai commenced and was to last all through their lives.

In this way Swami Satyananda left his guru's ashram and set off to accomplish his guru's work. The first chapter was Rajnandgaon. His co-workers were Satyavratji and Ammaji. He used to say to them, "The two of you are the wheels on which my chariot of yoga will surge ahead. It is you who will do all the work because I will be travelling around a lot and your home will be my contact address, my base." Satyavratji used to organize his programs. Swami Satyananda used to spend the chaturmas period at a village close by. During that time, Ammaji had a strong feeling to receive diksha. Swami Satyananda said he would not become a guru. There were many clashes between the imminent disciple and the guru. Ammaji used to even fight with him.

Eventually the hopeful disciple saw her dream turn into reality. One day when husband and wife had gone to meet Swami Satyananda, he told Ammaji that he would visit their home, she should invite everyone, she was going to receive a new birth and all should attend. At the appointed hour, Swami Satyananda arrived. Everyone was gathered and in the presence of all, he initiated Ammaji into the Rama mantra and said, "From now on, your Basanti didi is Dharmashakti." He used to tell Satyavratji, "You are the truth of my vow and that is why your name is Satyavratana and she is the strength of my conviction and her name is Dharmashakti."

### **Guru's grace**

So the years passed. While talking to Swami Satyananda one day, Satyavratji asked him to give Dharmashakti a blessing.

Swami Satyananda took the two of them to Rishikesh. After paying their respects and receiving the blessings of Swami Sivananda, they proceeded towards the source of the holy river, Ma Ganga to pray for Swami Satyananda's manas putra. The time had come. The prophecy made by a learned pandit four generations ago was about to be fulfilled. Ma Ganga gave her blessings. Satyavratji and Dharmashakti became the medium and the sankalpa of a realized guru. On the day of Magha Poornima, 14th February 1960, the dawn witnessed the descent of a shining star onto this earth. The world received a shining star in the form of Niranjan.

A woman had been yearning for motherhood and a child was blessed by the grace of his guru. Along with that child, she became a mother to hundreds and thousands of people. The child began to grow in his mother's loving nurture and care. On the other side, the work of the guru gathered momentum.

For the first time the world was introduced to *Yogavidya* and *Yoga* magazines in 1962. The seed sown by Swami Satyananda, his sankalpa for the welfare of the world, was taken forward by the complete dedication and efforts of Satyavratji and Dharmashakti. Many thousands joined the movement and the caravan grew and flourished. The time had come for the fulfilment of the sankalpa which was the reason for Niranjanji's



birth. At the time when a child needs his mother the most and craves the shelter of her lap, it was at such an age that a mother sent the apple of her eye with all her blessings and total dedication to embark on that tough path in order to fulfil the guru's work. Such great people might have existed in the past and we have read about them in the scriptures, but we now witness it with our own eyes.



## The work goes on

When the child Niranjan was planting the flag of his guru's work all over the world, the blow of merciless fate was waiting. That unfortunate day, 31st December 1971, came. When returning from work Satyavratji met with an accident and left this earthly plane. Despite the tragedy of a husband's loss, this lone woman shouldered the responsibility



of the guru's work with the same courage, bravery and restraint as she had done in the time of Satyavratji. She used to look after the work of *Yogavidya* and *Yoga* along with Satyavratji and she took on that responsibility single-handed after his demise. As long as she was in Rajnandgaon, she fulfilled that task with complete and total dedication and success. She had her guru's full support and just kept going. In 1985 it was on guru's order that she wound up operations in Rajnandgaon and came to live in Munger. Following his instructions as a divine mandate, she made Munger her permanent home.

Ammaji led a different life, she had a different identity. From everyone's Didi in Rajnandgaon, she became Ammaji to everyone in Munger. The nurture, love and affection which is the birthright of each child was showered with open hands upon everyone. The ashram became like a home to many people because of Ammaji who had love, affection and compassion for all. She also had an incredible memory. Events long forgotten by most others were indelibly etched in her mind. When she talked about those times it was as if the events had only just taken place yesterday and the past would come alive.

Time was moving along and Ammaji was thoroughly involved in ashram activities. Whatever the need, she was always prepared and fulfilled the requirements accordingly.

When Ammaji came to Munger, Sri Swamiji gave her even more responsibilities which she carried out impeccably. As the chairperson of the Panchdashanam Paramahansa Akhara as well as General Secretary of the International Yoga Fellowship, she took her guru's work further ahead.



### **The wheel of time**

The wheel of time kept on moving. Nature's laws sought their fulfilment. As the time to move out of this earthly plane drew near, what would be the best way to make this transition? Mother Nature chose a perfect occasion – the festival of spring, Basant Panchami, a period of celebration. Destiny willed it that there were hundreds of people present to bid her farewell. Even those who were not expected to be there at the time found that providence had brought them along.

The time was most conducive. On 12th February, Devi Ma's tangible presence and the intangible shelter of the guru could be felt by all as the entire family was gathered for the Basant Panchami celebrations. Ma Dharmashakti lived the full meaning of the name given by her father – Basanti or spring. On 13th February, twenty-four hours after her mahasamadhi, Swami Dharmashakti Saraswati was given bhu samadhi, burial, to the chanting of mantras and stotras. Her body was soft and looked alive.

Now, no matter where in the ashram we may be, her presence is all-pervasive and tangible, and we offer a hundred salutes to such a mother, the embodiment of love.

# Letter to Swami Dharmashakti

*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*

## **Blessed Self**

There is a voice that comes from the depth of my soul saying that I should live in a remote village amongst people who are illiterate, poor and unhappy, and serve them. I think about it but I cannot say how far I will succeed in this. I have decided that I will follow my call. I will leave whenever I receive Gurudeva's blessings.

Your japa and dhyana will happen regularly. We must accomplish something in life. You should go to all kinds of satsangs. At the physical level, socialize and do everything as you would normally do, but on the mental plane, dance to the beat of "No ego, no me, no you, no office. Satyam Shivam Sundaram." Life itself is a yoga sadhana. Another name for God is bliss. Bliss is of two kinds; one is the bliss of worldly pleasures and the other is the bliss of Brahma, *brahmananda* or of the self, *atmananda*. Worldly bliss is the result of external experiences and brahmananda manifests and awakens from within. The bliss obtained from worldly objects is perishable and a womb of sorrow. The bliss that is self-created is eternal and is the gateway to liberation, *moksha*. It is this bliss that is attained when meditation is successful.

It is also attained through love. Among all the known sadhanas, *prem sadhana*, or the sadhana of love, is the supreme sadhana. Love is the name of a strange phenomenon. Good behaviour is its characteristic trait and a smile is its pulse. Service to others is the touchstone of love.

The final culmination of love is self-knowledge. The pervading feeling in love is, 'Everyone is mine and I am everyone's'. An example of love is 'Another person's sorrow is my sorrow and another person's joy is my joy'. To love from the mind is the easiest form of love, but it is not possible for us to become this simple.

Spoken love is a little less easy. It can happen if we have the blessings of Goddess Saraswati. There is more bitterness than love in people's speech.

If love becomes a spontaneous expression in behaviour, it changes the world. It brings joy to the whole garden of life. It is a *tapasya*, austerity, that only a rare *tapasvi* can master. If your behaviour is an expression of love, you receive God's darshan. If there is love in all that you do, in all that you say and in all that you feel, and the three become an integral part of your life, only then do you attain *ananda*, bliss,

Until such time that we have only one of these attributes, we are human. When we have two of them, we become great people, but when we attain all three, we become God.

Regularly do some japa, meditation, bhajan and kirtan. Continue reading books that deal with the truth; who knows when and how they will become a part of your thoughts. Study them, understand them and contemplate on them. The good wishes of saints are perpetually flowing in space.

– 4 March 1956, Rishikesh, India



# Bhu Samadhi

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*

The bhu samadhi of Swami Dharmashakti Saraswati has become part of the Basant Panchami celebrations. It is not a loss for me or anyone. What is lost? After all, this body is given, this nature is given, this mind is given by the parents and they are alive within, the guru is there, the mother is there, the father is there. We are the living replica of them. Therefore, there is no loss, rather, the shakti contained and confined in form has become free and the spirit is soaring, preparing for the next work, which Paramahamsaji will be giving, no doubt, for definitely in this world there is a relationship between guru and disciple.

For many lifetimes the connection remains until both become one and the same. Each person looks for a competent helper and assistant, and each guru looks for a competent and able disciple, who can aid the mission and the vision, and bring happiness into the lives of many. This was seen in the nature of Swami Dharmashakti.

In my whole life, I have never heard her speak ill or think ill or speak ill of anyone. Everybody who has encountered her has come out filled with contentment, for she gave them hope, she gave them conviction, she gave them faith, she gave them optimism, she gave them the vision of a bright future in their dark life. She has always spread positivity around, in a subtle, simple and gentle manner. Such people are rare in this world. There are many seekers, but there are only a few people with great spiritual attainments. She was one of them.

I am proud to be called her son. It is a matter of great honour for to be born of such a mother is definitely a boon of God and guru.

*– 13 February 2013, Ganga Darshan, Munger*

# Culmination of Shodashi Anushthana

*Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati*



With the Bhagavati prayer to Devi Bhagavati we bring the Shodashi program dedicated to the memory of Swami Dharmashakti to its end. We read how the relationship between guru and disciple carries on for many lifetimes and is an eternal bond. Earlier we felt that this was just something written about in books, but the experience I have had over the last fifty-two years allows me to declare that this is an undeniable truth.

## **Rishikesh**

In 1953 my father, Satyavrat, receives an invitation from Rishikesh to participate in a convention which was being organized by Swami Sivanandaji. He goes to attend this convention and participates wholeheartedly in the work. In those days there were neither tape recorders nor any other

gadgets to record the discourses, so people would take down notes in shorthand and then type them out. My father would make shorthand notes of the lectures, talks and discourses given by Swami Sivananda and would type them out later and prepare them for either books or newspaper reports.

In this manner his association and relationship with Swami Sivanandaji and the Rishikesh ashram begins. Then one day, he arranges to set off on a trip and takes my mother along. The purpose of the trip is to receive diksha from Swami Sivananda, but when the two of them arrive at Swami Sivananda's ashram, Ma Dharmashakti looks not at Swami Sivananda but at one of his disciples and loses herself completely. At that time Swami Sivananda said, "Don't worry. Her guru will come to her home and give her diksha." And that is exactly what happened.

### **Rajnandgaon**

In 1956 when our guru Swami Satyanandaji received the blessings and mandate from Swami Sivanandaji to spread the teachings of yoga, he left Rishikesh and travelled throughout India. His first destination was Rajnandgaon. After reaching the station, he sends a little message on a slip of paper saying, "Swami Satyananda has arrived in Rajnandgaon and is waiting at the station, please come."

In those days my father used to work for a mill. We are from a middle class family. I was born in a little mud hut. My father worked in the B.N.C. mill as a typist and stenographer. So this householder goes off to receive Sri Swamiji, to welcome him and take him to his humble abode. That little mud hut, which must have been about 15 feet by 40 feet, became the head office of the International Yoga Fellowship Movement. When in 1956 the International Yoga Fellowship was established, the responsibility of its care and nurture rested on the shoulders of Swami Satyavratandaji and Swami Dharmashaktiji.

When Sri Swamiji gave them diksha, he expressed the outpourings of his heart and said, "You are the truth of my vow

and that is why your name will be Swami Satyavratanandaji and you are the strength of my conviction and your name will be Dharmashakti Saraswati." Those words uttered on that day have proven their veracity here today.

### **Pillar of guru's mission**

In this way life begins. There are always struggles in life, there is no need to talk about them for it is only through these struggles that the individual progresses and moves ahead. It is struggle that tests a person's character. In the same way that a stone is hewn with chisel and hammer to be turned into a beautiful statue, it is struggle that gives impetus to the character and creativity of man.

Time carried on, the decades flew past and the work of yoga surged ahead. Swami Dharmashakti and Swami Satyavrat played stellar and integral roles in this yoga movement. She was the general secretary of this movement. She was the editor of the yoga publications. She was the editor of *Yoga* and *Yogavidya* magazines. When our guru took kshetra sannyasa and left Munger to involve himself in his sadhanas in Rikhia and established the Paramahansa Alakhbara for the training of sannyasins, he appointed her as the first acharya of Paramahansa Alakhbara.

Her *guru bhakti*, or devotion to guru, was unparalleled. When her own father saw Swamiji, he said, "Daughter, I am handing you over to your real father, he is your father, not I." From that day forth, Swami Dharmashakti looked upon Sri Swamiji as her father and she lived the rest of her life as his daughter, imbued with trust, faith and dedication, imbued with love.

### **Inspiration to all**

Whoever met and visited her always left with a message of peace and love, whether it was of inspiration, joy or delight. She always inspired enthusiasm, courage, the flowering of positive qualities and awareness in all. In fifty-two years I have never



heard her say a single uncharitable comment about anyone, that so and so is like this, that he is wrong or not quite okay, not even that. She used to say that each person does whatever they can according to their capacity.

Some people are ants, some are monkeys and some are elephants. If the elephant says that the ant is not doing its work properly, that thinking is wrong on the part of the elephant. The ant has done the best it can, in the place it is. In this way she used to tell us that there is no gain in becoming upset with anyone, for each one works as much as they can according to their ability. In fact, you can encourage them to fulfill their jobs in the best possible way so that it can also inspire others. This was the nature of her teachings.

With the faith that she had in her guru, she told Swamiji after Swami Satyavratji had left his mortal frame in 1971, "Now you have come, what will happen when I go?" And Swamiji had replied, "I will come for you also."

### **Last days**

Last year I had told her that as per Sri Swamiji's orders I would be commencing the panchagni sadhana this year. She gave me her blessings and said, "Whatever you have been told to do by Guruji, you must surely fulfill even though you might risk your life in the process." When I completed my panchagni sadhana on 11th February, I went to her and said, "With your blessings I have completed my panchagni sadhana and am going ahead on the path that my guru's sankalpa has set before me." She blessed me and said, "I have been waiting for this very day." Perhaps she was awaiting the completion of the panchagni.

When I told her that from tomorrow the celebrations of the Golden Jubilee of the ashram would begin, she replied, "My blessings are with all of you for these celebrations and I wish that in the same grandeur that this year's Golden Jubilee is being celebrated, fifty years later the centenary will also be celebrated with pomp and glory."

I was with her from about 11am till 11.45am, on 12th February. After that I continued with the rest of the Basant Panchami program. Exactly at 12 o'clock I got a phone call. Not a second before or after, but at exactly 12 o'clock she breathed her last with complete ease, and without any anxiety she left her body.

### **Guru and Mother Earth**

It is an ashram tradition that every night we prepare our Gurudev's room and make up his bed. On 12th February at 12 o'clock, Swami Dharmashakti dropped her mortal coil, and on 12th February in the evening, Sri Swamiji's bed was prepared. On 13th February in the morning, when swamis went to tidy up and clean the room, they saw that the bed had been used. The mosquito net had been moved aside, the quilt was lying to one side and there were impressions on the bed as if someone had been sitting in meditation, the impressions from the knees to the buttocks and back to the knees were clearly visible. That brought home to us the promise Sri Swamiji had made to her in 1971 that he would come to take her. That promise made by a guru to his disciple was fulfilled. He had come to take her.

Then on 13th February, she was given ceremonial bhu samadhi at Akhara in the prescribed manner. There is a provision for sannyasins to be given bhu samadhi, sannyasins who are siddhas and saints, not the ordinary roadside sannyasins. We all belong to the second category, but those who awaken the guru tattva and shiva tattva within themselves on the strength of their faith, for such great personalities, for such saints and sannyasins, there is a provision for bhu samadhi.

Swami Dharmashakti was born on Buddha Poornima and at the age of eighty-nine she left this mortal frame. I don't consider her as my mother, but I feel it is my great privilege that Guruji gave me the opportunity, gave this soul an opportunity, to be born from the womb of such a saintly and enlightened woman. This is why she is not my mother,

but Devi to me, a Devi who ordained the gift of fearlessness in people through the strength of her love and compassion. She has given protection and strength to others.

This is my thinking that there must be very few people on earth to be as fortunate as I to have a mother such as she, and to have lived the grace of such a Guru and to have found such good society like all of you present here.

*Ya devi sarvabhuteshu maatri rupena samsthita.  
Namastasyai namastasyai namastasyai namo namah.*

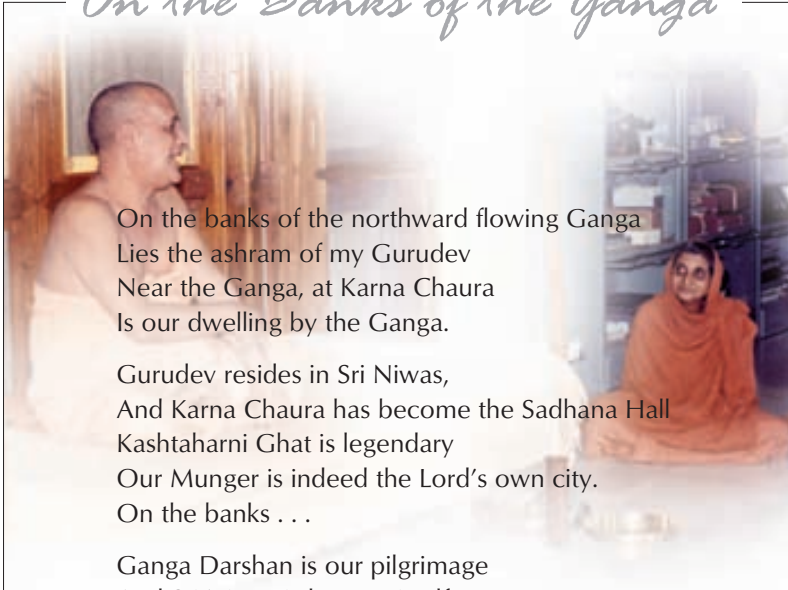
With these sentiments, feelings and thoughts, Swami Dharmashakti's Shodashi comes to its conclusion.

*Hari Om Tat Sat!*

*– 28 February 2013, Ganga Darshan, Munger*



## On the Banks of the Ganga



On the banks of the northward flowing Ganga  
Lies the ashram of my Gurudev  
Near the Ganga, at Karna Chaura  
Is our dwelling by the Ganga.

Gurudev resides in Sri Niwas,  
And Karna Chaura has become the Sadhana Hall  
Kashtaharni Ghat is legendary  
Our Munger is indeed the Lord's own city.  
On the banks . . .

Ganga Darshan is our pilgrimage  
And Sri Niwas is heaven itself  
One can have the vision of Mother Ganga  
From Shakti Vihar, Yoga Arogya, or Annapoorna.  
On the banks . . .

Bestowing love to all, Swami Satyananda  
Is our revered Gurudev  
Devotees have come from all corners of the world  
Hearing of your name, beloved Gurudev.  
On the banks . . .

With honey-like words, discourses and satsangs,  
Dharma, karma and the meaning of life,  
Concepts of philosophy and science  
He explains in the simplest of terms.  
On the banks . . .

Ganga Darshan and the research centre,  
All of you must visit  
Attain good health and inner serenity  
And let your life become joyous and happy.  
On the banks . . .

—Swami Dharmashakti Saraswati

# Tributes during Shodashi Anushthana

*Tribute from Swami Gorakhnath Saraswati*

Paramahansa Swami Satyananda chose Rajnandgaon as the place to commence his mission of yoga. It all began where Ammaji and Satyavratji used to live and where the International Yoga Fellowship Movement was established. It was a small house, I have seen it. The living accommodation was upstairs, a small kitchen and the press were downstairs.



## **Guru's mission**

The responsibility for the work rested on Ammaji's shoulders. There was a small printing press where *Yogavidya* was first published. She was the writer, editor and publisher. It was guru's work and they had his blessings. They managed to carry

out such an incredible task from such a small place. Swami Satyananda looked after the work outside, and therefore, did not spend much time with them. The running of the press was done by Ammaji as it was her responsibility. Only she would know how she managed to do so much. In such a small town and under challenging circumstances, everyone was aware of how she took guru's work ahead and expanded its scope.

There were many difficulties in the beginning, many indeed, but to carry forward her guru's mission she maintained a strong and determined resolve and was not swayed by the obstacles in her path. For twenty years all the work for the *Yogavidya* magazine was done from the Rajnandgaon ashram. Only after fulfilling her responsibilities in Rajnandgaon, did she come to live in Munger.

Most of us have heard and are aware that many divine beings and great souls who were born on this earth had humble beginnings. They came from small villages and lived in tiny huts. They became mediums and worked for the good of humanity. Swami Dharmashakti was one of them. We received her love and affection as if she were our own mother.

### **Mother to all**

She gave birth to and brought up a sannyasin of such a calibre, from a small little home; you all know our beloved Swamiji. I first met her in 1970 when I came to the ashram in Munger and have been very close to her since that time. She used to come to all the conventions and programs. I don't mean to compare or criticize my family but the love and care that I received from her far excelled what I received from my own parents. More than my family it is my beloved Gurudev and Ammaji who have been everything to me in my life. I have experienced the way a mother cares for her children.

Whenever she came to the ashram from Rajnandgaon, we were sure that she would have some goodies for us. Every child feels that the mother will definitely have a treat. She always had, but she would not let us have it right away. She

used to say that she had not brought anything, that she had to leave home in a hurry and had no time to bring anything for us. However, we could not take our eyes off her bag and sure enough, there was always something for us in it!

Whenever Swami Satyavratji would come, he brought something for us sent by her. In those days there were only a few swamis living in the ashram with Swamiji and we were sure that Ammaji would have sent something and she always did. The point I am making is that no matter how many children a mother might have, she remembers all of them, especially the naughty and playful ones. She remembers them more than the others.

Ammaji always thought of our welfare and needs. She knew about our mischief and antics. Those who went to visit her would have heard all about our exploits. Though she knew thousands of people she would recount those tales about us with such detail and clarity as if they had just occurred.

All those who are her children know about her love. She was like Jagatjanani, the mother of the world. Everyone who came to Ganga Darshan would be reluctant to leave without meeting her and listening to her stories. I feel privileged to have known her since 1970.

This year, we came to Ganga Darshan to have her darshan before going to the Kumbha Mela in Allahabad. She was happy and laughed. She said, "Very good, you must go." I said that I would be back on 12th February, and she replied that I should return to Ganga Darshan by 12th. When I returned that morning at about 5:30 am I thought to go for her darshan a little later, but I got involved with some work. At twelve o'clock, Swamiji announced that Ammaji had left her mortal body. Her blessing and grace made me come back in time. This is how a mother's love works – she remembers her children, calls them and they come.

### **Ever-present**

Now the program of Basant Panchami has just been concluded. Generally when someone passes away, the atmosphere is

quiet and still as everyone feels sad. However, the people who attended the program experienced a vibrant energy throughout. Everyone experienced that it was a special program, something different. A special and strong spiritual energy was present. When Swamiji asked about the program I said it was unique and unparalleled. Another lady replied that she has had this kind of experience only twice. The first time was when Sri Swamiji had left his body in Rikhiapeeth and now here in Munger after Ammaji's samadhi.

That is the atmosphere and one does not feel that she has left us and left her body. In fact, it feels like she is everywhere and has come to live within us. She has merged with everything.

Earlier the body was there and our desire to meet, but this has transformed into an internal experience of her constant presence. I am sure those who have known her, heard her name and have been associated with her and the ashram feel the same way.

*Hari Om Tat Sat.*

*Tribute from Sannyasi Mantranidhi, Munger*

Even if we spend the whole day speaking about Ammaji and describing her qualities, it will fall short for we cannot have enough words to talk about her. I don't have words that will be able to describe her qualities, but with the grace of guru and Ammaji and my love for her, whatever I say today is for Ammaji. These lines from the Ramayana were exemplified by her:

*Bhavani shankarau vande shraddhavishwaasrupinau,  
Yabhyam vina na pashyanti siddha svatantahsthamishvaram.*

I greet Goddess Parvati and Her consort, Bhagavan Shankara, embodiments of reverence and faith respectively, without which even the adept cannot perceive God enshrined in the very heart

She had the most unshakeable faith. We were not able to completely comprehend the depth of her faith though we





spent a lot of time with her. Her company was so dear to us. We received so much love and maternal attention that no one left her room empty-handed, whether it was love or a snack that was given.

### **Unshakeable faith**

She had so much faith. Just think about it! She had only the one son, but like the brave ladies who sent their husbands and sons to war after offering them tilak, in the same manner, our Ammaji sent her son to work for the development of her guru's yoga mission. She sent him off to take the yoga battle to frontiers far and wide, she placed her beloved child at her guru's feet, she placed him in her guru's lap. She was not just mother she was Devi Ma. She used to say to me:

*Ya devi sarvabhuteshu shraddhavishwaasrupinau.*

That Devi Ma was like the embodiment of faith and unshakeable trust. It is something I have always experienced when being with her.

She had such trust. When during Sharad Poornima her health had taken a bad turn, we asked her if she would leave her body. She replied, "Oh no! I am not ready to leave this body yet. My guru will come to take me and only then will I be ready to go. I am not going just like that."

Her trust was so firm that Paramahamsaji did come to take her. I had the privilege to see Sri Swamiji's room. I saw how he came to take our Ammaji. I saw the lifted mosquito net and quilt having been moved. I saw the bed that bore clear impressions of him having sat there. Then I recalled Ammaji's unshakeable faith in him.

### **Discipline**

She loved her guru and followed strict discipline. Whenever we went to her and asked for this or that she would say, "Put a note to the office or write to kutir to get what you want. I am not going to give it to you myself. I am a sanniyasin." This is how she inculcated discipline in us. She taught us by example.

She was not only mother to Swami Niranjanji but became Jagatjanani to thousands. Her son was like Sri Rama who went to his guru's home at an early age and gained knowledge in a short time. He went to stay abroad and was able to manage very well. He could have done as he pleased. He could have married and enjoyed himself. However, his mother's inspiration and teachings were such that when we nurture and tend a mango tree well, it gives amazing fruit. That is how she brought up our Gurudev.

She was a tapasvin. When Satyavratji passed away in 1971, she stayed by herself, without husband and son. She told me a story about how sometimes people would come to tell her that the door to the house was left open, but she would only say, "I have nothing to worry about. Whatever is in this house, if someone needs something, he can take it. I don't need these things."

I was fortunate to go and visit that home in Rajnandgaon, the house where our Gurudev was born and where Ammaji ran that small organization.



















## **Inspiration to all**

I feel that when there is so much trust and faith then we do not do anything ourselves but the guru works through us. We can become the mediums of the guru's work. The doer is the guru.

*Naham karta guru karta, guru karta hi kevalam.*

Ammaji showered us with so much love and care. Once when we did the chanting of the entire *Ramayana* on Swamiji's sannyasa day in January, she said, "How will you do it, it is so bitterly cold." I said that it was not me who was doing anything, but it was guru who made it happen. Ammaji laughed and said, "Our Guru used to do panchagni and you are doing 'thandagni (sitting in the cold)."

Her memory was just unbelievable. She always knew about the preparations to be made. What Ramji had to wear, which sandal paste was to be used, which kind of camphor for the aarti, worship, every little detail. I used to be astounded and wished I had a little of that memory and power to remember things so well. Everything that I have learnt and seen and has inspired me is due to her.

Swamiji is not so easy to meet and not so accessible, but whenever he met his mother he was so easy and simple at the heights of his success. In his heart he has the same faith and trust. That is what propelled him forward. I pray that he gives us some of that since we are his children in sannyasin form.

I bow a million times to that mother that we may receive her inspiration and strength always. I pray that we may receive her strength in a subtle manner. She has gone on ahead to her guru's abode. She is in the abode of Sivananda Baba and Satyananda Baba. She will return from there to do more of her guru's work and fill us with inspiration. With these words I offer my respects to Swamiji.

*Hari Om Tat Sat.*

*– 28 February 2013, Ganga Darshan, Munger*

# Letters to Swami Dharmashakti

*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*

## **Dharmashakti**

Remember, you have to completely remove fear; have no fear of the truth, nor fear of the untruth. Fear springs up because of the things hidden in the heart. Thinking that others should not find out about something creates fear. Partiality creates fear. Attachment creates fear. Criticizing others creates fear, hearing criticism also creates fear. Faith in God is a peculiar emotion. True fear is born when this faith is lost. It is only then that its various shades and forms come into being. While fear exists, there is inauspiciousness and doubt and darkness persists. You have to get rid of fear and meditate. Whatever you wish for, only that will happen.

Desire and anger are our greatest enemies. If you want to gain victory over them, always engage yourself in work. Only a lazy and confused person becomes angry; desire definitely resides there. Do not allow your mind to become lazy and confused. The mind can be freed from laziness and confusion through japa, kirtan, meditation, pranayama, study and written japa.

– *Delhi, 20 December 1958*

## **Blessed Self**

There is no dearth of those who spread cancer in this poor country. In the name of religion, yajnas, shraaddhas and what not, so many have prospered. Those who do not believe in them are called atheists. Those who do believe get conned. We have even opened agencies to buy *moksha*, liberation.

We have to work with our goal in sight. Through japa meditation, through faith and confidence, we have to quietly awaken the force. We have to give a form to our God and awaken Him. At least for a minute or two we have to close the

doors of our senses. Only then will the inner doors open. This is the state of meditation; this path is only for you. When your inner self becomes quietened, you will have to observe *mouna*, silence, of the mind to sustain the state. This can only happen with constant remembrance and japa of the name. Internal conflicts should end. For now, practise only this much.

Practise asanas along with exercise and sadhana. Learn sirshasana, winter is an apt time, it will rejuvenate you. Learn it step by step, it will take twenty to twenty-five days. Gradually your asana practice can extend up to one hour. Also do uddiyana, not nauli, and you must practise pranayama. You will also have to study literature related to yogasanas. While we may not practise all the asanas, we must know about them. In the winter some asana practice can be done. In the summer, reduce your practice.

Remember, you will have to perfect form visualization in meditation. This is what I want. Do not talk about your experiences during sadhana to anyone. You can tell me as required. On days when you are worried, do not do meditation, do other sadhanas. On days when the mind is at peace, spend more time in meditation.

– Delhi, 27 December 1958



# A Spirit with Direction

Swami Dharmashakti Saraswati



Yoga is the most ancient culture of the golden land of India. Its scientific character can be proved with any test or criterion. Therefore, it has become acceptable in this age of science.

In ancient times, for the practices of yoga, people used to reside in the forests in the garb of sannyasins. They used to develop esoteric knowledge within themselves and conducted some research. They used to teach their knowledge to others and transferring the entire knowledge to their chief disciples, entered mahasamadhi. The chief disciple became the successor or heir. The ancient *yoga vidya*, science of yoga, has survived till today on account of the tradition of guru-disciple relationship.

Mahamandaleshwar Swami Sivananda Saraswati was a great yogi. He gave a new direction to yoga. It is on account of his untiring efforts that the songs of yoga can be heard everywhere today. He made yoga the basis of world peace.

*Samyam*, restraint, is the basis of yoga and *samyam* is based on *viveka*, discrimination, which in turn is based on *samatvam*, equanimity, and *vairagya*, dispassion. These qualities can be developed through various yoga practices. However, as per the need of the time, many enlightened souls incarnated in this

part of our planet Earth who were endowed with these virtues by birth. Sri Swami Satyananda was one such divine soul.

In 1923 on the full moon day of *Margashirsha*, December, a great soul descended in human form. This 'yogi by birth' was the glory of Garhwal. The yogic rays started emanating from him since the time of his birth. He was not at all attracted to parents, property and homely comforts. At the age of nineteen, he came to Rishikesh and took refuge at the feet of his guru for the acquisition of spiritual knowledge. Thus began his sannyasa life. At the age when people normally seek *bhoga*, pleasure and enjoyment, he left his home, parents and everything else.

He became the chief disciple of Swami Sivananda and spent about twelve years in his service, perfecting the knowledge of scriptures. Side by side, he performed intense austerities and stood the many tests of his guru.

Swami Satyananda Saraswati was a saint with a simple heart. He was thoroughly spiritual; the world or worldliness did not touch him at all. Once he left his home, he left it forever and never looking back, he remained always free from the grip of maya.

Just as in the case of Hanuman, a great devotee of Sri Rama, Sri Swamiji always held Swami Sivananda in his heart. However, he was not infatuated with his guru, being balanced in all respects.

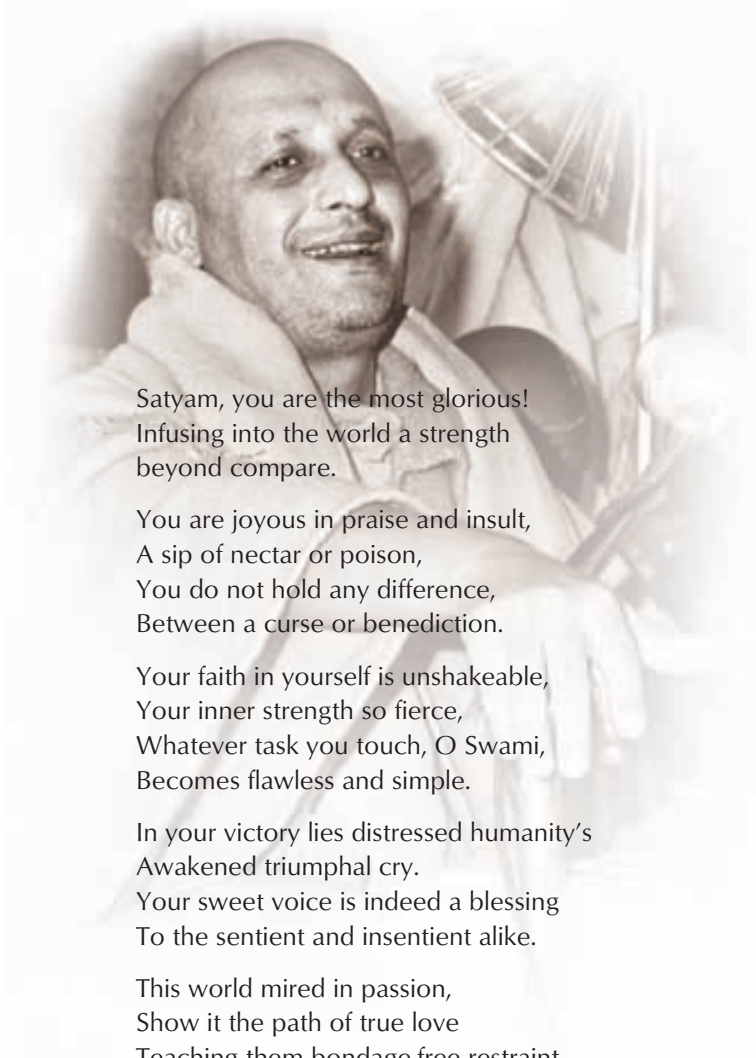
He was also fond of creative work. He undertook an extensive world tour in 1968 and delivered the message of peace through yoga in many disturbed countries and cities. The people were influenced by this great, wonderful sannyasin. His resolution and mission were so clear: propagation of yoga and establishment of peace. Nothing else attracted his attention.

It was always clear to him what he had to do. He knew that whatever his guru wanted to be done was in the overall interest of human society in general and his disciples in particular.

Really blessed are his parents who gave birth to such a spiritual being, and blessed is his devotion to his great guru.

– July 2010, *Ganga Darshan, Munger*

## Golden Jubilee



Satyam, you are the most glorious!  
Infusing into the world a strength  
beyond compare.

You are joyous in praise and insult,  
A sip of nectar or poison,  
You do not hold any difference,  
Between a curse or benediction.

Your faith in yourself is unshakeable,  
Your inner strength so fierce,  
Whatever task you touch, O Swami,  
Becomes flawless and simple.

In your victory lies distressed humanity's  
Awakened triumphal cry.  
Your sweet voice is indeed a blessing  
To the sentient and insentient alike.

This world mired in passion,  
Show it the path of true love  
Teaching them bondage-free restraint,  
Show them how to soar high above.

Becoming light, Satyam,  
Give this world the strength of faith.

*October 1973*

*—Swami Dharmashakti Saraswati*



# Remembrance of a Great Guru

*Swami Dharmashakti Saraswati*

Offering my pranams at the feet of all the gurus on this divine and auspicious occasion of Guru Poornima, I would like to say a few words. I have been abundantly blessed with the abiding grace of my Guru, Swami Satyanandaji.

It was in 1953 that I saw my Guru for the first time at the ashram of Swami Sivananda in Rishikesh. I remember wondering at the time about how such a Dhruva and Prahlad-like small child came to be there. Later we asked Swami Sivananda to send a sannyasin to Rajnandgaon for satsangs. He replied saying, "You are from a Hindi speaking area and all the sannyasins in the ashram are from South India and do not know Hindi except for one sannyasin who is fluent in Hindi, English and Sanskrit. However, he is my secretary, translates my books, checks proofs in the printing press, is the editor of *Yoga Vedanta* magazine and attends to banking, marketing and a lot of other ashram work. I will send him some other time."

## **At last with us**

Thus, three years passed. In 1956 when Sri Swamiji set off on his parivrajaka life and was living in Delhi, we received a letter from Swami Sivananda saying if we hadn't been asking for Swami Satyananda. Well, now was the time to invite him, have many programs and help him with his work. It was the grace of God that brought him to our home and we began to stay together as if it had always been that way except for a brief separation. We did not look upon him as a great soul or a stranger, but considered him to be an intimate and integral part of our family.

We organized many programs, the work went on and Swami Satyananda made frequent trips to Rajnandgaon. We



had been reading the *Yoga Vedanta* magazine for many years and read a lot about Guru Poornima. In 1956, we made all the preparations accordingly for Guru Poornima and were ready for pooja and worship, but he said, “Look here, pooja and worship is offered to gurus and I am a mere disciple.” We said, “No, you are Guru’s representative and we will worship you.” He replied, “I will never be a guru nor will I ever have an ashram.” We were determined and eventually the pooja and worship was offered, we took him to be our guru, but he never acknowledged or accepted that position.

Time went on and I had the good fortune to be seated at his feet for the many Guru Poornimas that followed. Providence caused many events to unfold and in 1958 we received initiation or diksha from him. Since then our relationship has been that of guru and disciple. The things that we saw, heard, understood and experienced about him brought home to us that he is a great soul through whom the river of God’s energy flows incessantly. He was really worthy to be a guru. The teachings imparted to him by Sivanandaji Maharaj were such

that he truly became a great guru. We have deep pride in the ideals that he placed before us as a guru. A sannyasin should not be proud, but in this regard we say with great pride that we were his disciples and he was our guru, is our guru and will be our guru forever.

### **Sankalpa Day**

I would like this most auspicious and divine Guru Poornima to be observed as 'Sankalpa Day'. From all that we have learned from him, let us choose some of those words and make them a living reality in our lives. Any one of his ideals, whether it be his spirit of service, dedication to duty or steadfast faith in guru – let us select any one of those qualities and make a resolve to incorporate it in our lives, dedicated to him. This would be the most appropriate and true offering of our devotion to him.

We spent many Guru Poornimas with him, travelled to many places together, heard his satsangs and discourses, even fought with him at times and received immeasurable love and affection. Following in the footsteps of this great guru, we even came to Munger, carried on doing his work and today such a day has dawned that we yearn for the presence of his grace and shelter. This is our resolve that he is always with us, our life is his life, everything we have is his. Nothing belongs to us and everything that we do is only for him.

As life has moved on I have seen, heard and understood this one truth: he is God, a great rishi, an incredible saint and a great soul. One does not find people like him in this day and age. He showed us myriad forms of himself. When I spent time with him, he was like a father and a brother to me. Now he is Guru, God, my all and when I remember him I experience such deep joy inside the depth of my being for being blessed and to have spent so many years interacting with him, finding shelter in the grace of such a divine being and doing his work.

It does not matter that I cannot do very much now, but I can surely speak of him, tell his stories and talk about him to you. May his journey continue and his work carry on always.

## **True sannyasin**

He had the grace and blessings of his guru, Sivanandaji Maharaj, always with him and that was the foundation upon which he was able to accomplish such unique and amazing Bhagirath-like work. Over the years, I have watched as thousands of Swami Sivananda's disciples have spread the world over. They have worked for yoga and have spread its teachings, but they have done it in their own name, not in the name of their guru. However, I have seen our beloved Sri Swamiji whose every act was dedicated to his guru. Only guru's name and guru's work, nothing for himself. This is the mark of a true sannyasin and this is what exemplifies true guru seva. He is our true guru. It does not matter that he did not see himself as a guru, but I have experienced this truth during the time we spent together that he was omniscient and omnipotent and could accomplish whatever it was that he set out to do.

His whole life was lived in cycles of a twenty-year period. For the first twenty years he lived in his parental home, the next twenty years were spent in his guru's ashram, his work and mission took twenty years and then the sadhana and paramahansa sannyasa dharma that he lived was also for a period of twenty years. He spent that time meeting and interacting with people, going about his work. Not a day was spent in idleness saying that today I am tired or I cannot do this work. He kept working to the very end. He could have lived on for another twenty years if he so wished, but he thought, "Though my determination is strong, my body might not always be so, and that is why I must go, I must go, I must go."

He went with such ease, like we go on a pilgrimage to Badri-Kedar. I have heard how the eldest of the Pandavas, Yudhishtira, ascended directly to heaven from Kedarnath, leaping from peak to peak. That's exactly how Sri Swamiji went and left us.

## **The tradition lives on**

His ideals, his work and his name live with us forever and along with his name, the name of his guru. We too are very

fortunate and blessed to claim our lineage from the tradition of Swami Sivananda. He was an ideal sannyasin who spread yoga all over the world. There have been many great sannyasins and mahatmas before him as well, but they used to do only their sadhana. They definitely scaled the peaks of spiritual attainments, yet did not share their learning with the world. Later a few of them wrote a book or two, but none of them left behind any concrete teachings that could benefit humankind at large.

Swami Sivananda sent out a clarion call to them, “O all ye who do sadhana in the Himalayas, descend from the mountains and travel far and wide to impart your knowledge and teachings to all.” He did this work himself. Though his disciples who have gone around the world do not acknowledge his name, they are doing only the work that he inspired.

A man may have ten sons, but his name lives on only through one of them. In the same way, it is through Swami Satyananda, whom he affectionately called Satyam, that Swami Sivananda’s name lives on. Sivanandaji loved and cherished Satyam very much. The onus of carrying on Sivanandaji’s ideals fell on Satyam’s shoulders and he accomplished this with exemplary perfection.

Therefore, it is now our duty to make a resolve that we will defiantly complete the work he started and do what he used to talk about. He will return to live amongst us and whether I am around at that time or not, he will surely come and show humanity a different path. I cannot speak very much now, but will just say this much more about him that each and every pore and cell of my being echoes with his words. I am truly blessed to be seated here in the arena of his work and mission. I am witnessing his work carrying on, I am hearing his name. This is a matter of great pride for me. It is my immeasurable glory that I am his disciple.

*Swami Dharmashakti’s last talk  
– 25 July 2010, Guru Poornima, Ganga Darshan, Munger*

# Letter to Swami Dharmashakti

*Swami Satyananda Saraswati*



## **Dharmashakti**

Returning here after your initiation, I decided to stay in one place for a month and not go anywhere. The old swami was going your way so I asked him to convey this message, clearly explaining the reasons and circumstances. Now I am beginning to think that the old man created some mischief, and you are worrying on that count. Remember, I'm a man of fluid decisions and promises. I break them as easily as I make them . . .

I am everywhere. The body can only stay in one place at a time, but I am all-pervasive. Never doubt this truth. Beyond the delusion of the body lies the vision of atma. Whilst your eyes see only the body, you will not be able to see the principle that animates it.

There is something beyond my body, on account of which I exist and am perceived by everyone else. That is pure consciousness. It is everywhere. It can assume a form and materialize in front of you. That is called *chinmaya vighraha*, the form of consciousness. We should strive to look beyond the gross, physical bodies and perceive the eternal, conscious being that dwells within. And when That is perceived, I can be with you not just on the eighth of the month, but every day, nay, every moment.

However, for that you have to practise. Knowing is one thing, doing another. Practise alone leads to perfection. Now that you know the way, why this delay? Start immediately. Satsang with me must lead you to *atma sanga*, communion with your own spirit. There is no difference at the level of the spirit. Knowing this, don't get infatuated with mere physical appearance. If you still desire my physical presence, send Satyavratji on the evening of the 6th. I will come after sunset and leave before sunrise the next day. Make special preparations for satsang and prasad. Till then, goodbye.

– Satyam, July 1958



# Invitation to Shodashi Pooja

The following invitation to perform pooja in honour of Swami Dharmashakti was sent to Satyananda Yoga ashrams and centres around the world.

## **Blessed Self**

Hari Om

On 12th February at 12 noon, Swami Dharmashakti Saraswati, senior most disciple of Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati, and mother of Swami Niranjan Saraswati, attained Mahasamadhi at Ganga Darshan.

In accordance with the tradition of sannyasa, the Shodashi or 16th day following her Bhu Samadhi will be commemorated at Ganga Darshan on 28th February with Rudrabhisheka and Devi aradhana.

Swami Dharmashakti, known as Ammaji, was loved and revered by countless people across the globe and India. So that all devotees and well-wishers can join in this pooja and offer their prayers and sentiments, a program should be conducted in her memory on 28th February at centres and ashrams.

The program is as follows:

- Shanti Path
- Guru Paduka Stotram
- 32 names of Durga 9 times
- Mahamrityunjaya mantra 108 times
- Tantroktam Devi Suktam
- Ram Stuti
- Shanti Path

With best wishes,

*Om Tat Sat.*



# In Honour of Swami Dharmashakti Saraswati

*From around the globe reports were sent to Ganga Darshan expressing the sentiments, admiration and gratitude of devotees for Swami Dharmashakti.*

## India

**Bangalore** – Forty people attended the program at the Atmadarshan Yogashram, which started at 4:30 and went on into the early evening hours. Atmagyanam, a senior teacher at the centre, shared stories of his experiences with Swami Dharmashakti and reflected on her life of dedication to guru and her connection to the divine consciousness through Paramahamsaji and Swami Niranjananandaji.



**Bargarh** – Celebrations in honour of Swami Dharmashakti were held in the morning and included Rudrabhisheka, chanting and aarti. Twenty-five people attended.

**Chennai** – Swami Atmabhishek and Sannyasi Thulasi led a private puja ceremony for a group of eight devotees. Prayers, chanting and flowers were offered before a photo of Swami Dharmashakti.

– The Mambalam Satyananda Yoga Centre gathered in the morning to offer prayers and respects to Swami Dharmashakti. Fifty-two devotees shared their memories and stories. Sannyasi Krishna Yogam offered an overview of the life of Swami Dharmashakti and her contributions to her guru's yoga mission. Sannyasi Dharma Chaitanya and Jignasu Yoga Ratna presented poems they wrote in her honour.



- In Dasharath, and twenty-three students and teachers gathered at the 136.1 Yoga Studio in Alwarpet to pay their respect to Swami Dharmashakti with a candlelight puja, prayers and chanting.

**Jabalpur** - In the Satyananda Yoga Kendra over sixty devotees attended the ceremonies. On the Narmada River a bhoj was held for 200 people. In the presence of Swami Girishananda Saraswati, prasad of clothing, utensils and copies of the Bhagavad Gita and Ramayana were distributed.



**Lucknow** - Twenty-five sadhakas and devotees joined Sn Gurupremananda at the Satyananda Yoga Kendra to share in the puja and celebration for Swami Dharmashakti's honourable life.

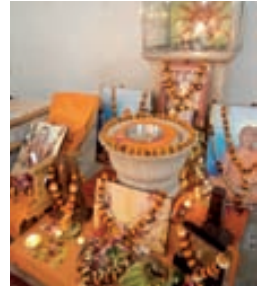
**Mumbai** - A total of seventy sannyasins, devotees and well-wishers gathered at a private residence to participate in the puja, chant mantras and offer personal tributes to her life. Shirin Sabavala spoke of Swami Dharmashakti and Satyavrat as the pillars of Sri Swamiji's work, without whom his mission could not have been accomplished.



**Raipur** – Forty devotees of the Satyadarshan Yogashram community remembered Swami Dharmashakti with kirtan, dance and personal stories that reflected the inspiring life of Parampujya Maaji. In reference to her sharp memory and loving heart, Sn Nirvaanan said that over the many years of meeting with Swami Dharmashakti she never failed to inquire about every member of her family by name and offer them each a blessing. Swami Yogashikshananda said that Swami Dharmashakti never showed anger and described any association with her as an experience of divine love. Sannyasi Chandramani spoke of Swami Dharmashakti’s selflessness and generosity. Once, when she heard that Sn Gurudhyanam had been working the whole day at Ganga Darshan and had missed his meals, she generously gave him all the delicacies she had received to satisfy his hunger.



**Rajnandgaon** – At the Rajnandgaon ashram five pandits conducted Rudrabhisheka. The chanting of the stotras was followed by a bhog. The ceremony was attended by 250 devotees.



**Ranchi** – Forty-three devotees and well-wishers from the Guru Darshan Yoga Kendra joined in prayer and pooja for Swami Dharmashakti, sharing stories and respects in her memory.

**Sambalpur** – Swami Swaroopananda presided over the five-hour pooja, which included havan, satsang, the chanting of Sundarkand,

mantras, bhajan and kirtan and bhoj. Swami Tejomayananda and one hundred people attended the celebrations.

## Overseas

**Australia** – The program at Satyananda Yoga Ashram, Mangrove Mountain was attended by 108 students, sannyasins and ashram guests. Prayers and talks were given in honour and memory of the beloved mother of Swami Niranjan.



– Guests and sannyasins joined Swami Atmamuktananda at Rocklyn Ashram to perform the pooja and share their memories of Swami Dharmashakti, who inspired so many on the path of sannyasa with her unshakeable faith and trust in guru. Following the pooja ceremony flowers and havan ash were sprinkled around the Guru Peeth.

**Austria** – Sannyasi Antarshuddhi and seven devotees conducted the ceremony at the Bhavani Satyananda Yoga Centre in Vienna. The aradhana included personal memories and poems in her honour.



**Brazil** – Swami Aghorananda and Sannyasi Gangadhara of the Satyananda Yoga Centre Brazil performed an intimate shodashi pooja and havan. Two days later thirty devotees of the centre gathered to chant the shodashi mantras in further homage to the inspiring life of Swami Dharmashakti.

**Bulgaria** – Shodashi pooja programs were held at several centres around Sophia with one hundred devotees participating.

– Sannyasins, devotees and students of the Aradhana Yoga Centre gathered to share personal stories and memories of Swami Dharmashakti, who touched the soul of everyone who met her. The program was led by Swamis Yoga Gyana and Vivekamurti, who read Swami Dharmashakti’s poem *Sumanjali*. Sannyasi Tejomaya performed Guru Paduka pooja and the evening ended with a moment of silence during which Swami Dharmashakti’s warm, calm and motherly love touched all who were present.

– Swami Shruti Gyana conducted the pooja at the Sitaram Center in an atmosphere of bright, peaceful energy full of gratitude and devotion.



– Sannyasi Tarpanvidya conducted the ceremony in the gym where she teaches, and took the opportunity to introduce her students to the great contributions Swami Dharmashakti made to her guru and the yoga movement.

– Those unable to attend these programs received instructions for the pooja and performed ceremonies for Swami Dharmashakti in their homes that same evening.

**Canada** – Rishi Arundhati performed a Shodashi pooja for Swami Dharmashakti at the Satyanandashram Canada. She performed the aradhana alone late at night so that it would be timed with the events held in Munger, joining in heart and spirit.

**Croatia** – Seventeen students of the Guru Kripa Yoga Centre in Pula joined Swamis Gyanratna and Anandaratra for a tribute which they entitled, ‘Thank you for all, Swami Dharmashakti, Guruji’s mother, we love you!’ The pooja began with Swami Dharmashakti’s life, using text and poems from her book, *Mere Aradhya*. Following the havan guests did parikrama and received prasad.



**France** – Swami Yogajyoti and six devotees conducted the pooja at the Bija Yoga Centre in Brittany, sharing memories and offering their hearts in prayer for Swami Dharmashakti’s soul. For everyone who had seen her in Munger and Rikhia she was an example of strength, compassion and radiance, a model because of her wonderful incarnation of shakti.

– Devotees and well-wishers at the Satyanandashram in Paris conducted the pooja in honour of Swami Dharmashakti.

**Germany** – Swami Prakashananda and twelve devotees at the Satyananda Yoga Zentrum in Cologne performed the Shodashi pooja in honour of Swami Dharmashakti.

– Eighteen devotees and two children gathered at the Satyam Sadhana Zentrum in Volkings to participate in the Shodashi pooja.

– Sn. Radhashakti of Hanau conducted the pooja in her home. Though she never met Swami Dharmashakti personally, she has a clear and fond memory of her presence during the Sat Chandi Mahayajnas in Rikhia, where she was seated behind Sri Swamiji in Tapowan.

**Greece** – Shodashi poojas were held in eleven Satyananda ashrams, centres and yoga studios throughout the country, attended by over 130 sannyasins, devotees and students. They offered mantras and prayers, read poems and passages from *Mere Aradhya*, and shared personal experiences with Swami Dharmashakti. Swami Dayananda



and Sn Ratnapriya spoke of Swami Dharmashakti's role in the Satyananda tradition. The Darshan Yoga Centre in Athens, which provides weekly meals to the homeless, gave the day's offerings as prasad in honour of Swami Dharmashakti.

*The mother who gives birth to a great soul is a gift for the people.*

**Hungary** – Eight people attended the ceremony at the Satyananda Yoga Centre in Budapest. Swami Bhaktananda led the program, which included kirtan.



**Ireland** – Twenty people from the Galway Yoga Centre joined in the Shodashi pooja for Swami Dharmashakti, led by Swamis Shraddamurti and Chetanmurti. The Irish yoga community sends their very best wishes and prem to Swami Niranjana.

**Italy** – Swami Anandananda and ten devotees joined in the ceremonies at the Satyananda Ashram in Montescudo, and offered a personal tribute to the memory of Swami Dharmashakti. At the conclusion of the program all gathered for the chanting of Guru Stotram and Satyananda Gayatri at the Sri Swamiji Memorial in the ashram's vedi.

**The Netherlands** – Due to illness Swami Mitrananda was unable to organize or attend a shodashi pooja, nevertheless she sent emails to Dutch devotees sharing in celebration the great life of Swami Dharmashakti and she has made an altar in her home to worship Swami Dharmashakti.

**Serbia** – Swamis Om Gyanam and Mudraroopaa and eight devotees of the Bihar Yoga Club in Belgrade held the pooja ceremony. In satsang, Swami Mudraroopaa highlighted moments of her incredible life of devotion and shared some of the precious and meaningful moments he had spent with her. There was an air of peace and joy at the end of the pooja, as if everyone had received the blessing of upliftment.

**Slovenia** – At Tara Yoga Center, Ljubljana, the ceremony was attended by 29 devotees. Swami Dharmashakti's poem 'My Precious Lamp' had been translated and was read. Swami Vishwashakti shared of her memories with Swami Dharmashakti.



**Switzerland** – Sannyasi Anandaratra and five devotees conducted the Shodashi pooja. They spoke of Swami Dharmashakti as an ideal disciple and sannyasin, her tireless efforts in serving BSY and her unique relationship with her guru.

**UK** – Swami Satvikananda of the Satvika Yoga Centre in Kent was unable to arrange a Shodashi pooja. She informed students and devotees of Swami Dharmashakti's mahasamadhi and offered instructions as to how they could perform tributes in their own homes. During the week of her passing all classes at the centre were dedicated in Swami Dharmashakti's honour.

– Swami Satyaprakash and devotees at the Satyananda Yoga Centre Birmingham performed the Shodashi pooja in the centre.

**Uruguay** – Sannyasi Janardana presided over the Shodashi pooja in Niranjana Kutir of the Satyananda Darshan Yoga Centre in Montevideo. Jignasu Shraddha recalled a memorable personal exchange with Swami Dharmashakti in 1993, in which they discussed the joys of crochet and knitting.

**USA** – At the Satyananda Yoga Centre in Austin, Texas, Sannyasi Navaratri and eight devotees conducted the Shodashi pooja and read passages from *Mere Aradhya*.

– In Cleveland, Ohio eight students of the Atma Center joined Swami Atmarupa to pay their respects to Swami Dharmashakti. The pooja began with a reading of her poem to Paramahamsaji called *My Precious Lamp*.



# Tributes from Around the World

## **Hari Om**

Her name shall be remembered for all time to come, whenever achievements of the movement are mentioned in the future. She was full of encouragement and wisdom to yoga aspirants and sannyasins of the ashram. I myself, during my visits to the ashram, never lost an opportunity to have her darshan and I always found her full of wit and humour whenever she narrated her immensely popular stories and events of the past.

– *Sn. Gurupremanand, Satyananda Yoga Kendra, Lucknow, India*

## **Hari Om**

I would like to offer a few words to that great lady I met many times in Munger. She represents for me the greatness of a disciple who could discover the genius in a young monk who was to become a Paramahansa. Through her faithful devotion she also deserved to be the mother of another Paramahansa, yet she was kind and modest, as if she was an ordinary person. Every time I met her I treasured her presence as a real saint.

– *Swami Yogabhakti, Satyanandashram, Paris, France*

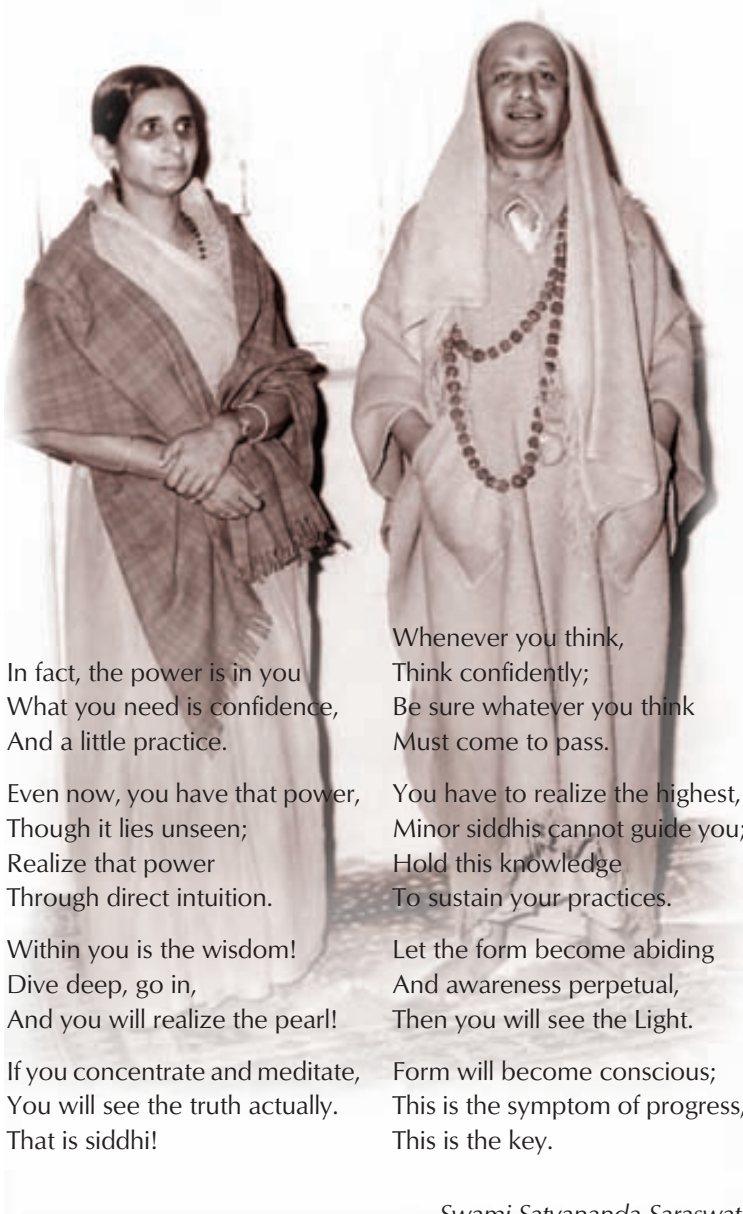
## **Hari Om**

Swamis and others at Rocklyn who had the blessings of Ammaji's grace and presence send our heartfelt condolences to you. Swami Dharmashakti was truly a great example and perfect role model of a female sannyasin, devotee, spiritual mother and guiding light for all generations – her presence will be greatly missed.

Blessings of peace, joy and inspiration.

– *Swami Atmamuktananda, Satyananda Yoga Ashram, Rocklyn, Australia*

## Dharmashakti



In fact, the power is in you  
What you need is confidence,  
And a little practice.

Even now, you have that power,  
Though it lies unseen;  
Realize that power  
Through direct intuition.

Within you is the wisdom!  
Dive deep, go in,  
And you will realize the pearl!

If you concentrate and meditate,  
You will see the truth actually.  
That is siddhi!

Whenever you think,  
Think confidently;  
Be sure whatever you think  
Must come to pass.

You have to realize the highest,  
Minor siddhis cannot guide you;  
Hold this knowledge  
To sustain your practices.

Let the form become abiding  
And awareness perpetual,  
Then you will see the Light.

Form will become conscious;  
This is the symptom of progress,  
This is the key.

—Swami Satyananda Saraswati



## Mere Aradhya

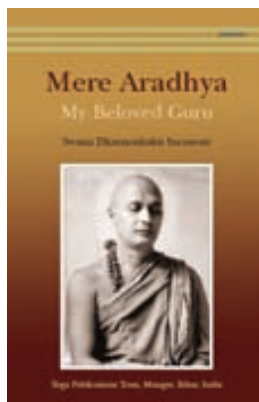
*My Beloved Guru*

Swami Dharmashakti Saraswati

462 pp, soft cover, 16 colour plates, ISBN 978-93-81620-06-9

Swami Satyananda is a unique saint and yogi. Even after ascending to the summit of yoga and acquiring the promised fruits thereof, he did not spend his life in a state of idyllic samadhi, but employed his yogic powers unceasingly and untiringly for the upliftment and betterment of humankind. Yet he remained unattached to it all. Through his magnanimous deeds, this incomparable yogi conquered the hearts of millions all over the globe. Whoever came into contact with him was immediately and irrevocably transformed.

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## Satyananda Yoga Websites



### [www.biharyoga.net](http://www.biharyoga.net)

The official website of Bihar Yoga. Includes information on: Satyananda Yoga, Bihar School of Yoga, Bihar Yoga Bharati, Sivananda Math activities, Sita Kalyanam events, Yoga Publications Trust catalogues.

### [www.rikhiapeeth.net](http://www.rikhiapeeth.net)

The Rikhiapeeth blogspot posts a satsang of Sri Swami Satyananda daily on a wide range of topics concerning spirituality.



### [www.yogamag.net](http://www.yogamag.net)

[www.biharyoga.net/living-yoga/](http://www.biharyoga.net/living-yoga/). Dedicated to the vision and mission of Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati, the spiritual successor of Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati, it contains news and articles.

### [www.yogamag.net](http://www.yogamag.net)

The official website of YOGA magazine. Includes worldwide links to Satyananda Yoga centres and teachers, a brief history of *Yoga* magazine, news and more.



### [www.biharyoga.net/sannyasa-peeth/avahan/](http://www.biharyoga.net/sannyasa-peeth/avahan/)

Provides online access to *Satyā ka Avahan*, the bi-monthly magazine of Sannyasa Peeth, which contains the higher teachings of Sri Swami Sivananda, Sri Swami Satyananda and Swami Niranjanananda, along with the programs of Sannyasa Peeth.

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## Ganga Darshan Events & Courses 2013

<i>Jun-Aug</i>	Yogic Science & Lifestyle Course
<i>Jun 1-4</i>	Bal Yoga Mitra Mandal Program
<i>Jul 18-21</i>	Guru Poornima Aradhana
<i>Jul 22</i>	Guru Paduka Poojan
<i>Sep 8</i>	Sivananda Janmotsava
<i>Sep 12</i>	Swami Satyananda Sannyasa Diwas
<i>Oct 23-27</i>	Golden Jubilee World Yoga Convention
<i>Every Saturday</i>	Mahamrityunjaya Havan
<i>Every Ekadashi</i>	Bhagavad Gita Path
<i>Every Poornima</i>	Sundarkand Path
<i>5th &amp; 6th of every month</i>	Commemoration of Sri Swami Satyananda's Mahasamadhi

### *Important Announcement*

Due to the forthcoming Golden Jubilee of Bihar School of Yoga and the World Yoga Convention, which will be conducted from 23rd to 27th October 2013, the courses conducted at Ganga Darshan, Munger, will be suspended during 2013. The following courses will be conducted at Rikhiapeth in 2013:

<i>Jun 20-Jul 10</i>	Yoga Teacher Training Course (Hindi)
<i>Aug 1-15</i>	Health Management Course - Diabetes (Hindi)

Please contact Rikhiapeth directly for more information regarding these courses.

Rikhiapeth, P.O. Rikhia, Dist. Deoghar, Jharkhand, India, 814113  
Telephone: 06432-290870 / 09304-488889 / 09204-080006  
Email: rikhiapeth@gmail.com Website: www.rikhiapeth.net

### ***For more information on the above events contact:***

Bihar School of Yoga, Ganga Darshan, Munger, Bihar 811201, India  
Tel: 06344-222430, 09304799615, 06344-228603 Fax: 06344-220169  
Website: www.biharyoga.net

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