



Satsaunga

Ananda Marga UK and Ireland Regional Newsletter

Issue 2
Quarterly
Winter 2010



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Moving Ahead Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

"Rohit's father said to his son: "Rohit, when a person is sleeping, his fate is also sleeping, and when one has risen, one's fate also has risen. And when one has started moving ahead, one's fortune also has started moving ahead. Hence Rohit you should also move forward. Caraeveti, Caraeveti... move on, move on. Start working. Don't sit like an inert object".

*As long as a person is asleep, drowned in the darkness of ignorance, one remains seized by static force. One's fate also remains sleeping. That period in life of a human being is known as "**Kali Yuga**". Afterwards when the conscience dawns on him, and he starts thinking that he has to wake up and start working, from that very moment onward comes the age of "**Dvāpara**" in his life. In individual life "**Dvāpara Yuga**" begins when his sleep is broken, and he sits up thinking that he has got to begin to work. When one stands up and starts moving ahead, "**Tretā Yuga**" begins in his life after that."*

(contd. on pg 2)

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Takako Nakasu, Didi Ananda Tattvaveda, Dada Subuddhyananda, Krsnadeva Hanson, Amitabh Azzopardi, parents of the babies.

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Participants of the AMYTT in North Carolina, Summer 09. Taken by Amitabh Azzopardi.

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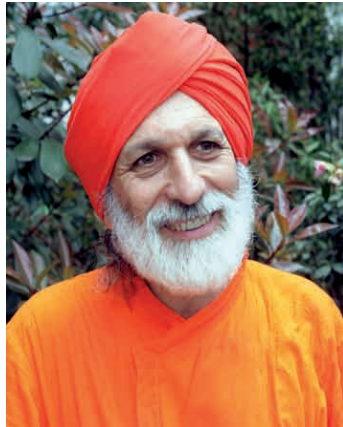
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Views expressed in the newsletter may not necessarily reflect those of the editors.

EDITORIAL



Moving Ahead

This title has a few meanings for me. Firstly, this newsletter is moving ahead, with our third successive issue on schedule. Secondly, the NL is moving ahead because of the cooperative, sincere work of several margiis.

Similarly, in various ways London Region is moving ahead in the sense of reaching out to more people who want to bring spirituality into their lives. Through AMURT, we are also moving ahead in helping some of our service projects worldwide.

Ananda Marga is also growing within itself, as three children in AM families will have been born recently, by the time of publication.

Recently I've been reading about the early days of AM and it seems to me that as AM evolved from its beginnings, in the same way,

science of action what kind of action will he do? One who does not have knowledge nor even karma yoga, what will he do? For them also there is a way and their way is the way of devotion. The path of devotion is – "I do not know anything and whatever I do, I do only to please Parama Puruṣa (supreme consciousness). I do work for His satisfaction. I work just to serve Him."

The idea behind service is the idea of devotion. Who is served through devotion? It is Parama Puruṣa alone who is served. You can say, "we may or may not serve the humanity but we will certainly serve Parama Puruṣa. Service to humanity is service to Parama Puruṣa, for the universe is created out of Parama Puruṣa. Hence every object of this universe is the creation of Parama Puruṣa. Hence serving the world is serving Parama Puruṣa – and thereby He becomes pleased." Suppose you bring good sweets for me but I don't eat sweets so much, I eat only a little. Hence if instead of giving the sweets to me you give it to some other child, I shall be pleased. Likewise serving Parama Puruṣa

many of us tend to evolve within AM.

The people who first were attracted to Baba came because they were looking for spiritual, inner development. Spirituality of course is at the core of AM. However, even from the earliest days of AM, Baba would talk about the need to develop a true human society on this planet. And at the same time, He was gradually establishing the organizational aspect of AM, including, primarily, the need to spread the philosophy and spiritual practices of AM far and wide and to render meaningful service to those in need. Eventually the organization evolved so that the various departments and projects of AM can have a positive effect in every aspect of human endeavour.

Thus by and large the earliest margiis brought meditation and yama-niyama into their lives and gradually got involved with the duties and responsibilities of being margiis.

For many people who come to AM, there seems to be a similar pattern: our initial interest is to find our spiritual centre. Sooner or later, most margiis get involved in the AM organization, perhaps first by coming to dharma cakra and conferences and eventually by taking a duty in AM. There is of course much to do to make a real human society, with spirituality at its core, and if you think you can give more of your time, of yourself, to helping with this great work, please feel free to contact any acharya or other active margiis to see how you can get involved.

Dada Jyotirupananda
Regional Secretary

is serving the world. The world is created out of Parama Puruṣa, hence render service as much as you can. Parama Puruṣa will be satisfied.

Therefore one who is a true devotee, one who follows the real path of devotion will serve humanity to the maximum extent and together with this, whatever else he will do – singing, dancing, doing kiirtan – He will think that Parama Puruṣa should remain in everything, seeing everything. Hence Parama Puruṣa also wants that He should remain in the midst of His devotees, He should listen to their stories of pain and pleasure and watch their singing and dancing.

15 October 1979, Nagpur

Published in 'Service to Humanity Is the Supreme Ideology of Life' from Ananda Vacanamrtam Pt. 15

(contd. from front page)

When a person actually starts moving ahead from that moment onward "Satya Yuga" commences. "Krta Yuga" means "Satya Yuga". Hence Rohit's father advised Rohit to move ahead. Now the father of Rohit was an ordinary man whereas Rohit himself was a great scholar. It is an extraordinary matter that the father of Rohit, uneducated or little educated, advises a big scholar like Rohit. In this context who is to be considered a real scholar – Rohit, or his father? Really, Rohit's father was a true scholar. The science of knowledge says, "Go ahead with work and in the process of work, if some negative work stands on the way, that negative path has to be given up and proper work has to be done. That which is improper has to be totally avoided." This is known as the science of karma, or karma yoga.

One who does not understand the

Food For All

3 Cazenove Road, London N16 6PA

It's a freezing Thursday evening and I'm eager to be indoors. I'm rushing to my appointment with Shiveshvar Diez, new manager of Food For All (FFA), our health food shop in Stoke Newington, London. When I finally get there, a bunch of smiley faces greet me and I instantly warm up. Meeta is there, not to my surprise, with Tarinii in tow. Jay, her son, is stocking the shelves and an employee is fetching things from downstairs. My man is busy looking at numbers and figures.

AA: How long have you been working here?

SD: About eighteen months now.

AA: Why did you decide to take up the post of manager?

SD: I've always liked the fact that the shop started off as a project of Ananda Marga (AM), the spiritual path that I'm on. At the same time I'm passionate about health foods – I've worked in HF shops in Manchester, London and even a sentient bakery in Stockholm. This opening at FFA was a good opportunity for me to grow in responsibility and to contribute to the AM identity of the shop.

AA: Can you tell us about the relationship between FFA and AM?

SD: FFA belongs to AMURT, which is the Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team. AMURT does disaster relief and grassroots community development projects in third world countries and is always in need of resources. FFA was partly set up to support AMURT financially. Not all customers are aware that FFA is a non-profit business.

AA: Do you promote what goes on in our meditation centre?

SD: Yes. People show interest in what goes on upstairs and we encourage them to try the classes. We've observed an

increase in interest in yoga and meditation over the last year.

AA: What were the first things that you had to deal with in your new role?

SD: Firstly myself! I had to start being more organised and developing people skills suitable for the job. I started establishing some systems and I also wanted to make the other employees feel more valued.

AA: Who else works at the shop?

SD: Govinda, who set up the shop over thirty years ago, is now the executive director. I'm the only one working full time at the moment and we have twelve part time employees.

AA: What are the other employees like?

SD: We're a very eclectic bunch coming from different places. They love their work and I respect them for that. Some of them have been working here as long as eleven years.

AA: Are you in control of the shop?

SD: I don't like to control. I try to listen to the other workers and to allow them to contribute to the shop. At the same time I have a vision which I'm trying to realise.

AA: What does the shop offer?

SD: Besides a good range of foods catering for various dietary requirements (no meats or eggs though!), customers can also find eco-friendly detergents, body care products, health supplements, and an extensive range of culinary and medicinal herbs and tinctures. We're actually best known for our herb section – we have one of the largest ranges in north London and we have customers coming from far for our items. We will have a certified nutritionist working with us on Thursdays offering advice to customers. Quite a few of our employees are knowledgeable about our herbs and

are often happy to give their good advice. We can order special products and even do free deliveries for customs over £40, mainly to assist disabled customers.

AA: What else has changed in the shop over the last year?

SD: We have started some renovations. The front of the shop has been painted green and we now have a sign up. There has also been an emphasis on good customer relations.

AA: What do you want the shop to be?

SD: We enjoy providing natural foods and products for the community and keeping the prices reasonably low. The shop is an authentic local HF shop and attracts a customer that enjoys a more personal service and a more laid back, relaxed atmosphere. It smells and feels like a real, natural HF shop – people come in and actually tell us that! We are committed to our customers... some of them have been coming here for thirty years. Downstairs we've got space that we'd like to utilise better. We're discussing the laying of a new floor and also of upgrading to a barcode system that would significantly improve the way we run the shop.

AA: Sounds like FFA is doing well! Thank you for the work that you do and I wish you all the best.



REGIONAL NEWS

Hello! From Our Regional Boards...

AMPS UK

For organizational efficiency as well as for legal reasons, Ananda Marga of London Region (consisting of UK & Ireland) has a regional board that meets to decide various matters within the region. As most of our work is in the UK, rather than Ireland, the matters that we often deal with involve AM in the UK.

The members of the board include all the acaryas whom are largely engaged in working in this region, plus several margiis. The members then, are: Dada Jyotirupananda, Didi Ananda Manika, Dada Ravishekhara, Didi Ananda Prama, Meeta Lovage, Murali Ramaswamy, Amitabh Azzopardi, Tarun Laghate and Paresh Birianzi.

With this newsletter we are working to communicate openly with the margiis of the region. We intend to use this and other media to be able to both listen to and communicate to the margiis about regional matters. In our most recent meeting, on 5 December 2010 some of the points that were discussed included:

1. Our upcoming Spring Conference (at Easter time). After much discussion, we confirmed that it will be at the Irish Master Unit. Much of the discussion centered on the accessibility of that venue and the numbers of Margiis who could attend, as well as the need to support our only Master Unit in the region. Soon by email we'll communicate with the Margiis RE details of travel, the program, etc.
2. We also discussed financial issues, especially between the Regional account and the London Bhukti, as a great number of our

Margiis in the region are in London. It was proposed that we set up a proper financial accounting system, which would allow for proper budget planning and more transparency to the Margiis. We'll have a finance meeting on 23 Dec to resolve these issues.

3. We also discussed the need for an active Dharma Pracar board in the region.

The next board meeting is scheduled in London on Sunday 6 March 2011.

AMURT UK

Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team is a separately registered charity in England. For years now a large part of our work has been to raise funds for AMURT/EL projects worldwide. At present the AMURT regional board consists of Dada Jyotirupananda, Nirmala Boland, Govinda Lovage and Sunanda Almond. our main interests in fundraising as of late includes our projects in Romania, west Africa and at the moment, Haiti.

We are not as effective in fundraising, or in raising the profile of AMURT in UK, as we should be. Thus much of our time lately has gone into establishing an effective Executive Committee. At present we are looking for a Margii to chair that committee. We have drawn up a job description for that posting (including the duties and the expected time needed per month). We will be posting that job description on our mailing list soon, in search of the right person. Is it you?



Regional Retreat, 5th – 7th Nov 2010 Langthwaite, Yorkshire Dales (England)

40 or so people gathered in northern England in November for the second regional retreat of the year. Here are some words from Krsnadeva Hanson on the weekend:

The setting for this retreat was the house of Parameshvar, Adiiti, Priya and Aditya, on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales in the northeast. The little village is a very beautiful location seemingly miles from anywhere. Our hosts looked after us with a great deal of care and attention and the retreat flowed very nicely.

We had some interesting sessions including a very informative one on AMURT UK's activities led by Nirmala and Sunanda, followed by an inspiring PROUT game led by Jyotimaya that gave us all the opportunity to be kids again whilst bringing out some of the principles of the PROUT social cycle. Parameshvar took us out into the countryside for an exerting walk up a very big hill which revealed to us the true beauty of the surroundings. The view from the top was magnificent and we all felt Baba's kṛpā (grace) or was it just Parameshvar's dog?!!! There was also a talk from Didi Ananda Tattvaveda about the possibility of doing a Kiirtan Parikrama (travelling from city to city doing akhanda kiirtan) tour next year. This was met with enthusiasm from many margiis and an organising group was formed.

We had the joy of warming Parameshvar and Adiiti's house with lovely kiirtan and after the ceremony we welcomed Soraya's daughter, the



beautiful Tejasvii, into our community. Amitabh did an amazing job in the kitchen producing excellent and varied food that delighted us all. The satsaunga and of course the kiirtan and meditation were also very much enjoyed by all and in my opinion the retreat was most definitely a success.

If you are interested in participating in the kiirtan parikrama (perhaps by travelling with the kiirtan group, or by hosting a kiirtan program in your community) please contact Didi Ananda Tattvaveda by email: atattvaveda@gmail.com



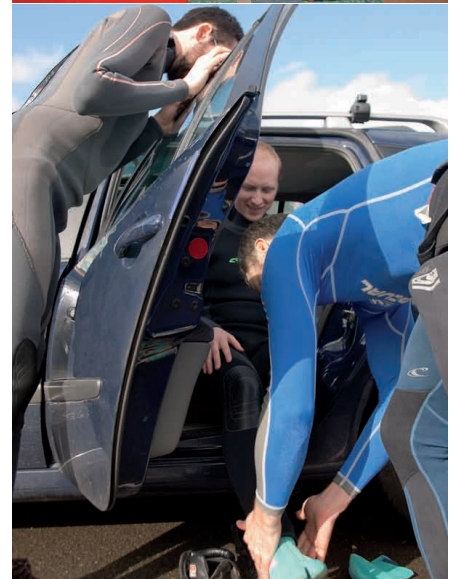
Participants of the Regional Retreat at the top of the hill

Sisters Retreat, Oxford

Roshnii Chou

We had a very nice Sisters Retreat on the weekend of the 17th of October in Oxford. Meeta kindly provided the venue and we had 19 sisters and children on Saturday. We had workshops on 16 points, 15 shiilas, meditation with children in a family setting, and a wonderful picnic! £220 was raised from the retreat for the Master Unit in Ireland. Gunita volunteered to be the finance secretary of our regional Women's Welfare Department and together with Nirmala, she is looking into setting up bank accounts for the MU in Ireland and WWD. If you'd like to offer some help please contact them directly.

The dates for the next Sisters Retreat are Friday 18th to Sunday 20th February 2011. Please contact Gunita if you can help with the programme.
lagrace@hotmail.co.uk



Brothers Retreat, Devon

Jyotirmaya Hull-Jurkovich

We had a wonderful retreat in Croyde Bay, Devon at the end of October. Saturday saw us arrive in stormy and rainy conditions. We braved the cold and donning wetsuits and equipment, we caught and rode numerous decent waves. We did wonderful night meditation on the mountainside overlooking the bay under a bright full moon. Accommodation and mode of transport suited the small number of participants. We stayed in a very nice mobile home overlooking green

Devon meadows, underneath bluer than blue Devon skies, and only a short walk from the waves. We had a good spiritual programme including discussions on Neo-masculinism (!), how to boost the EQ of brothers in the region (emotional intelligence) as well as an informative class on orchestral music. The food was great and we had an inspiring and fun time. Watch this space for next year.

Spring 2011 Retreat

Our Spring 2011 Easter Retreat will be held in Ireland at our Master Unit, a place where we've had several retreats in recent years.

Admittedly there has been a lot of discussion as to the best venue. Here are some notes as to why the Regional Board decided on that venue:

1. A number of Margiis in the region as well as board members see that a retreat at the MU is a valid and viable way to support this important project.
2. As well, because of the distance for most Margiis, and because Easter is generally a longer holiday, the Spring retreat is the only feasible time to have the retreat there.
3. It was also suggested that the retreat can be modeled as a "Family Spiritual Holiday."
4. The board also agreed that we will provide information well in advance for the best travel arrangements to the Master Unit, so as to save money and travel time as much as possible.
5. The board also affirmed that we need to plan a most dynamic & interesting retreat there.

Intro Retreat

29th - 31st Oct 2010

Newmarket (England)

We had a good introductory retreat in Newmarket, Cambridgeshire for Londoners. Amala organised the retreat with the help of a number of margiis and thanks also to the participation of Didis Ananda Manika and Ananda Tattvaveda and Dada Jyotirupananda, the 13 or so participants plus children had a very good time. It was the first time that the retreat was opened up to family people. Some of the participants came with children and one lady was in her late pregnancy. Jyotirmaya's help was appreciated in making the retreat more family friendly. The retreat was held at a new venue belonging to Christian nuns who themselves use it for spiritual purposes. The participants seemed to enjoy kiirtan particularly and we hope that they will stay in touch.

News from

Didi Ananda Prama

Didi Ananda Prama is currently doing relief work in Haiti. She writes:

"...We evacuated the jagrti with the entire group, all 20 of us, as we were afraid of flooding from Hurricane Thomas and we live right on the river. Maybe it was the kiirtan but luckily Thomas changed his path and avoided us... just lots of rain. A margii's sister had a huge house high on the hill that sheltered us from the storm. Now cholera has arrived in Haiti brought in from Asia. They blame the Nepali peacekeepers. It is easy to catch but not easy to treat. AMURTEL's team has treated over 700 cases. There is a global call for ORS (Oral Rehydration Solution) but with Pakistan also in need there is not enough to go around. We sent six people to attend a UN program to learn theatre to teach prevention and treatment. Didi went down to our school of 200 kids and showed them how to mix good water, sugar and salt to treat dehydration which is the real killer. So life goes on. Two of our workers were really sick. One with heart problem and one with TB and sickle cell anaemia... Thank you for your continued support in Baba's mission. All the best health and happiness, Didi Ananda Prama"

**Over £350 was raised from our region
this Christmas for AMURT/EL Haiti!
Thank you to Jyoshna La Trobe for the
email appeal.**



Dada Ravishekharaanda organised a successful introductory retreat for aspiring yogis in northern England and Wales. It was the first retreat of its kind in Wales and it was a success. Soraya and Devesha share their experiences with us.

"Inspired by Devashiisha's departure for India and the realization that there would no longer be satsaunga for me to enjoy, I felt it was my duty to do all that I could to try to create some new energy at our jagrti in Manchester. Luckily Devashiisha had met some inspired people at university: Hayley, Amber and Calum. Dada Ravi is, as always, very inspirational and we followed his intuitive flow. This was to be the tone for our introductory retreat. With only two confirmed bookings a week before the retreat, we were still motivated in creating a good vibration for them. By Baba's grace we had 22 people by the end! We also had some help from Amala who had just organised a similar retreat in England. People arrived at different times... The flow was very organic and people enjoyed all aspects of the retreat. Book sales went very well, too! All in all it was very inspiring for the organisers who are now planning our next one already! Jai!"

Soraya Daniels, Manchester

"With five days to go until the retreat began, we only had deposits from two people plus a lot of promises. We went ahead with planning, anyway, assuming that Baba would arrange for everyone who needed to be there, to come. By Friday, the promises had materialised into deposits and sixteen of us departed from Manchester and Liverpool to be joined by four more from Wales. Didi Anandamanika and Krsnadeva made the marathon journey from London to bring their unique qualities to the mix.

At the moment, I can't seem to get to a retreat without Baba arranging a drama for my spiritual benefit. This time it was through snapping the fan belt on my van, on the M53, that He helped me to let go of various cherished attachments. The students travelling with me seemed to find the whole episode to be a great adventure; especially climbing up the motorway embankment and singing kiirtan in a dark field, while waiting for the AA to come. I couldn't help worrying about how I would get the van fixed, in Wales, in time to get everyone home on Sunday evening. Of course I shouldn't have worried. I was able to find a mechanic and everything was sorted out for our return journey.

Despite arriving at midnight, the retreat was already getting into a flow on the Saturday morning. A walk in the misty Welsh hills, an inspiring class from Didi and the powerful Ananda Marga practices; asanas, kiirtan and sadhana were leading the participants into new thoughts and feelings. The planned cultural programme in the evening became a blues jam session with guitars and drums. It sounded wonderful for the few minutes that I heard, from my bed, before drifting off into a welcome slumber.

The following morning the mist had lifted and the hills and valleys of Wales were revealed in all their glory. Sunday was the day it all came together. It never ceases to amaze me how a group of people, most of who have never met each other before, can become like a family, in just two short days. It was all over too soon and with fond farewells we set off for a, thankfully, uneventful journey home."

Devesha Golding, Manchester

SECTORIAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Germany

We now have activities running in 15 cities in Germany! Some of the recent activities include 24hrs akhanda kiirtan in southern Germany, regular dharma cakra recently started in both Freiburg and Paderborn and nagar kiirtan in Berlin.

Russia

Dada Priyatosh, together with Didi Ananda Tattvaveda, toured several cities in Russia including the three active units. In St. Petersburg there was a sadhana shivir and a public talk. In Moscow, there was a five-day public program in a large hall rented by the margiis. This included lectures and classes on yoga. There was also a RAWA program and art workshop in Belgorad.

Didi Ananda Cetana, in St. Petersburg, is developing an education system that she calls "Education Eco Equipment" (EEE), made from recycled materials.

The Children's public library in St. Petersburg started an English section with Didi's help. This section is displaying her EEE materials.

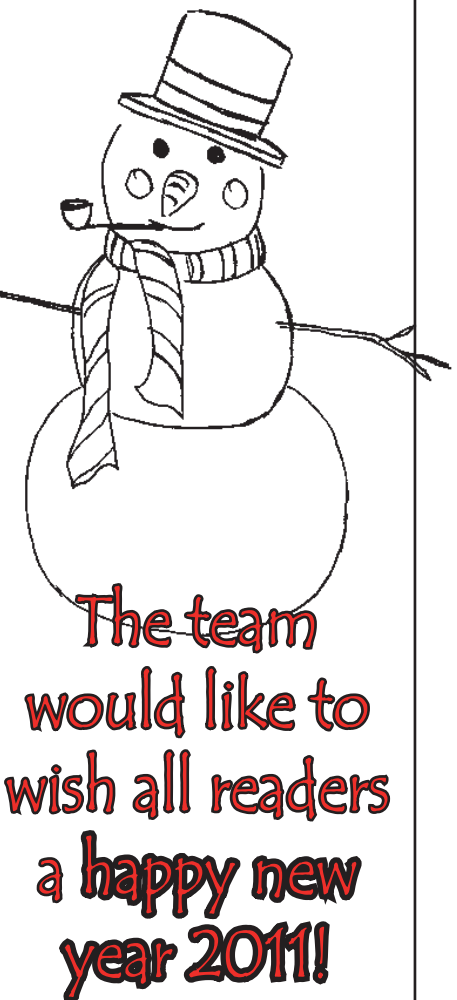
The International Women Club gave a donation for developing the EEE further.

Italy

Dada Shubhatmananda participated in a holistic group concerned with spiritual development in Roma, which was organized by a member of parliament. Dada introduced our philosophy (mostly on social development and PROUT). Journalists asked Dada many questions.

At Ananda Vipasa there was a RAWA retreat, with participants coming from several regions in the sector. A highlight was Binod Katuwal, a flute player from Nepal. More than 60 people attended.

Dada Devavratana, along with 10 margiis attended a concert organised by an Italian comedian who is initiating a social movement in protest against the political and social situation in Italy. 100,000 people attended the two-day event of concerts, lectures and information and Ananda Marga members did kiirtan and distributed leaflets throughout the first day.



Newborn Margiis...

The Ananda Marga community would like to welcome three children who were born this Autumn! **Theo Alexander Collins** arrived first on the 30th of October at 2:44 am. Best wishes to Karuna, Stuart and little Ollie! Next came **Zara Venuti**, who was born the next day at 11:22 am in the birthing pool. Congratulations to Damayantii and Dharmadeva! More recently, **Damini Marta** was born on the 9th of December at 3pm. Congratulations to Aurelie, Federico and little Melissa!



Theo Collins



Zara Venuti



Damini Marta

...and newly wed!

Margiis would like to wish Jyoshna La Trobe and Kavita Neumannova all the very best in their new life together. Their civil partnership took place on the 25th of September in the company of spiritual siblings and friends. Congratulations also to our dear Lakshmi Shivalanka who married Praveda Fossum in Norway on the 11th of December. May their unions bring them and their dear ones everlasting joy, growth and success.

Prabhata Samgiita Divas

We celebrated Prabhata Samgiita Divas (the festival that commemorates the day on which Baba started composing His songs in 1982) on the 12th of September with beautiful performances at the jagrti. Didi Ananda Manika made a Prabhata Samgiita quiz which made us realise how little we know about the 5,018 songs. We still need to find out what the right answers for some of the questions were!

Baba Nam Kevalam!

On the 8th of October we celebrated the birthday of the mantra Baba Nam Kevalam with a three hour akhanda kiirtan consisting solely of original, new kiirtan tunes. It was really inspiring to sing so many different new melodies.

Mahaprayan Divas

On the 21st of October we observed the passing away of our guru at the jagrti. We met early in the morning for Painca

Janya and we had a three hour akhanda kiirtan in the evening. It was very well attended and many felt a beautiful, devotional flow.

Social Functions Secretary

We welcome on board the unit committee Saradadevii Hull-Jurkovich as our social functions secretary. She will be in charge of the celebration of Ananda Marga festivals and organising spiritual gathering for margiis.

Autumn Schedule

This season we had a busy schedule of classes at the jagrti. As the unit secretary, one of my goals is to establish our jagrti as a spiritual centre in the local area and make good connections with the local community through service, dialogue and activities. At the jagrti we have four asana classes led by Amitabh, Shriila, Shiveshvar and Didi Ananda Tattvaveda; one meditation session led by Dada Jyotirupananda and a pregnancy preparation workshop led by Saradadevii. Amala designed a beautiful leaflet and Didi

Ananda Manika, Kalyanii and Kaeravii did lots of leafleting. Kalyana helped with on-line advertising. We have quite a few people who attend our classes regularly. Most of our classes will resume in January. If you are keen about marketing, get in touch! We need your help. We are also interested in organising workshops in philosophy, art and health, and study groups. Please contact Paresh if you are interested in this.

Jagrti Renovations

A renovation committee was set up comprising Mayatiita, Dada Jyotirupananda, Vinayaka and Paresh to carry out the necessary work. We have also been getting great help from Andy who is a professional builder and comes to our meditation class. He has volunteered to redo the bathroom for us free of charge!

We are aiming to finish by the end of this month. Mayatiita has already been working hard on the redecoration of the meditation room. Next we will replace the bathroom and lastly we will raise the ceiling of the hallway downstairs, which will give us new light and space.



Festival in Stamford Hill

We held a festival to celebrate Sharadotsava in public. The festival usually happens between September and October and is a five day programme including Children's Day, Music Day, Art Day, and Public Day. Didi Ananda Tattvaveda organised a one day event at Stamford Hill Library which engaged many margiis in north London. The interesting programme consisted of children's and adult's yoga, homeopathy first aid, children's crafts, cake selling and nagar kiirtan. It was very exciting to see that we can put on a professional programme like this. Stamford Hill certainly received some positive vibrations on the day!





As Baba said, "You shall construct the jágtri building through your united efforts. The jágtri will be utilized for your assemblies and as a place for collective spiritual functions. The jágtri is the common property of Ananda Margiis, hence its sanctity must be meticulously maintained by all."

Dharma Cakra

As a result of the survey that was filled in by 36 people, the unit committee decided that as from 2011, dharma cakra will start at 4pm. Akhanda kiirtan will now start at 2pm. We really appreciated everybody's participation in the survey so that the unit committee could make a well-informed decision. For me personally, the most inspiring part was to read the comments about how to improve dharma cakra. It seems that we share many similar ideas on how to make our weekly gathering more spiritual and inspiring. Amongst them stood out the wish for an opportunity to participate equally in the various organising elements of the gathering. For this reason the committee decided to divide the margiis into a number of duty groups that will take it in turns to organise the different aspects of the dharma cakra. As from 2011,

Krsnadeva will be our Dharma Cakra Secretary who will oversee the groups and their needs. Dharma cakra is our weekly spiritual gathering and it needs everybody's participation to uplift the whole experience. We hope that these changes will bring some excitement into the dharma cakra and hopefully, we will manage to persuade Baba to make His personal appearance by our sincerity in Samgacchadvam!

Committee Meetings

The unit committee has regular meetings every month. These meetings are open to every margii. Please look out on the mailing list for dates and agendas and feel free to suggest points for discussion.

Service to the Elderly

Our relief secretary, Gunita, is organising a service programme in a nearby care home. Perhaps one day we will have enough experience and the possibility to run our own elderly people care home, which Baba put emphasis on. If you are interested in this service programme, please contact Gunita for further details.

Calendar

Remember to use our online calendar, which you can find through our website and add it to your gmail account. Look out on the calendar or the mailing list for latest updates of our events.

End of Year Celebrations!

Saradadevi starts working straight away. Contact her for more information or wait for more news via email.



Monthly Kiirtan Nights Jyoshna La Trobe

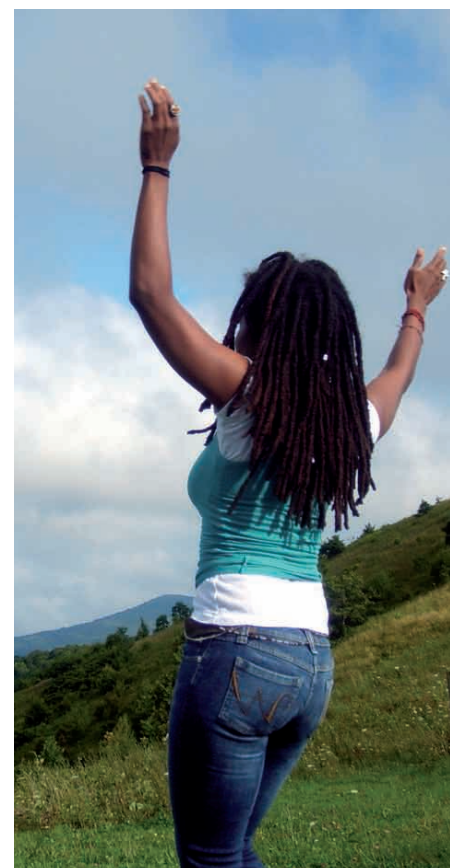
The first objective of the kiirtan events is to share through the singing of God's name. The second is to create a community of kiirtaniyas (kiirtan singers/players) in our region. Lastly we want to further promote AM kiirtan in London. As many of us know there are many yoga centres in London, each with their own kiirtan events.

The first kiirtan event had Didi Ananda Arpana (from Korea) and Prahlad (from France) as guests. She selected three of her favourite 'old' kiirtan tunes which I then scored for the wind players and we sang and played together. Margiis came as well as newcomers from the Festival of Life making it a very pleasant evening. The second kiirtan event was more experimental with Tapasii's kaleidoscope of colours and shapes forming the visuals for the evening. Meeta led Ganga Ma, Amitabha led a kiirtan in two-part harmony, I sang some traditional Rarhi tunes using the Hari Bolo mantra, and we all sang Baba Nam kevalam kiirtans till the end.

Our third Kiirtan event is on Thurs-

day, December 30th at 7.30pm at the jagrti. It should be an auspicious way to end the year; having a beautiful completion to something is important! We will have Alamin coming, a Bengali brother who plays traditional Hindustani ragas on bamboo flute. Mayatiita has selected some kiirtans this time. I shall lead a kiirtan in Sohni raga from Rarh and no doubt there will be other contributions! If any of you feel inspired to participate, please give me some notice so that we can ensure that the flow of the programme carries on unbroken.

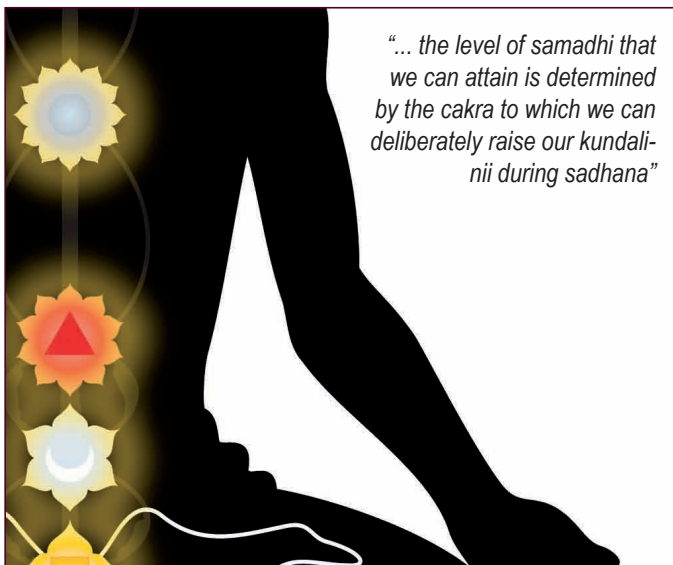
"Naturally, poor people have lots of sorrows. They don't know the next day what they will eat. But if they do Hari nam ki-irtan (kiirtan on the name of the Lord) at the time, those who listen and those who sing will forget their pain and get relief. It works like a medicine. Just to survive, one of the singers sells ice cream, one sells water and another child is very sick and has a disability. Yet when we sing kiirtan, we forget all these things." (Brikodar Mahato pers. comm. '06).



ON THE SUPREME COMMAND

Karun Towsey

With the normal routines of career, family and the general distractions of modern life, finding a balance that allows for the maximum efforts necessary for spiritual success, is not easy. Baba was certainly well aware of these social pressures and human frailties, and designed our spiritual practices accordingly, so as to ensure that as long as we make a reasonable effort, we will at least stay



on the spiritual path. The ultimate guideline in this regard is the Supreme Command.

The Supreme Command states amongst other things that by doing enough sadhana, the thought of Par-ama Purusa will surely arise in our minds at the time of death and that our liberation is a sure guarantee. This is a promise that Baba made to us. For me this means that through our ideation on the ultimate, most spiritual focal point – through our Ista mantra – we will generate enough momentum within this life on the spiritual path to ensure that we come straight back onto the same path in our next life. In that way, our liberation is a sure guarantee, as soon as we have burnt off all of our samskaras.

Initiation into an Ista mantra means that the aspirant is ready to move their efforts on the path into a higher gear. To do this they must also, if they have not done so already, adopt the mindset of a bhakti yogi. That is, the

path of devotion.

A metaphor for how this works would be the analogy of a car journey. The normal processes of human life, and also of spiritual paths based on the accumulation of knowledge and on trying to merely balance one's mind, could be likened to trying to get from A to B by driving about through the network of urban streets, with their twists and turns, red lights and the danger of things jumping out into your path. The path of devotion means that you get out of that matrix onto the motorway, where your sole point of focus is the ultimate destination: Taraka Brahma (the stepping off point into infinity). On the motorway, you sail forward apparently effortlessly in a straight line, whilst being able to see those trudging slowly through the urban jungle as you whizz past.

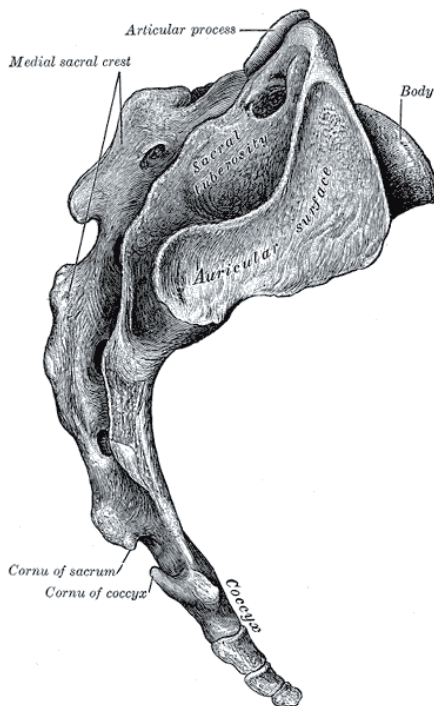
The fastest and only truly realistic way to achieve enlightenment is through accepting that we are simply a part of the universal consciousness. With this idea we then shift all of our attention away from our own grand personal mental development and focus it on Taraka Brahma. This might not be so easy for those whose previous spiritual efforts have left them with enhanced capacities within those intellectual, occult spheres. As the reality of this path of ego renunciation starts to dawn in their minds, they are confronted with the daunting prospect of letting go of their history of spiritualist grandeur and, to the sound of screeching brakes and clanging alarm bells, they pull over to the side of the spiritual path to readjust their flowing robes and fix their makeup.

In the past, it was said that if you plan to embark on the spiritual path, then you really should ensure that you get liberation within that one lifetime – otherwise, you may well have to come back into a life to work through all of the good samskaras that your initial spiritual efforts would have generated. Within such a situation, it is possible that one loses the spiritual urge until all of those rewards had been received and things started to go wrong again, after one, two or more lives.

As I understand it, the only completely new practice that Baba introduced (rather than just reorganizing), was the Guru Mantra which, if done properly, should greatly reduce the accumulation of these 'good samskaras' which slow down our progress almost as much as the so-called 'bad samskaras'.

It is often argued that on this path, we have been screened from seeing where exactly we are on the spiritual path, so that we will not be distracted by the flashy baubles of occult powers that might become available to us as we move forward. This is true, but obviously, as we get closer to liberation (Samadhi) and the volume of samskaras attached to our various vrttis diminishes, we cannot help but to become increasingly aware of the wonders of this manifest universe. In other words, this shielding effect is only really relevant during the earlier phases of our journey, before we have become subtle enough to resist

THE ASANA CORNER



the tailbone

are very important for a yogi: protect them.

Lift, Align & Tuck In!

There are a number of adjustments one can do to oneself during asanas to go deeper in them. See if the following suggestions make any difference to you. Apply them conscientiously in different asanas. If you don't feel sure of what you're doing, ask a more experienced practitioner for help.

Lift the toes, feel the inner arches of your feet, and lower your toes maintaining the arches. Engage your feet muscles more as you practise asanas barefoot.

Align your heels with your knees and your hips. Observe whether this alignment happens naturally in your standing postures. Take it a step further and see if you can keep your ankles, knees and hips in the same plane as you fold and unfold your legs in bellows pose.

Distribute your weight evenly over the corners of your feet. Having too much weight on the heels, for example, can increase the strain on the spine leading to fatigue.

Lift the knee caps. It's a subtle movement that engages the thigh muscles and takes pressure off the knees. See how this feels when you're stretching your legs, or if you're inverted in a shoulder-stand. The knees

Point the tailbone towards the midpoint between the heels. This is a very significant movement that levels the pelvis and activates strength in the hip region, providing as a result better support for the spine. Can you engage your tailbone in positions other than standing ones?

Take the navel towards the spine. Don't let your abdomen sag but hold it in place. Pull the navel slightly back and with it the digestive organs. This supports the spine further.

Take the front lower ribs towards the back lower ribs. This is a nice way of making sure that you don't overarch your back into a banana shape, thus keeping an uninhibited flow of energy through the spine as effort is continually made to balance the forces acting on it.

Lengthen through the crown of the head. Feel the energy that flows out of your body in all directions, through the feet into the floor, the fingers of your hands, and the crown of your head. As a result, lengthen the spine and feel the body expanding with it.

the crass allure of the occult realm.

Samadhi is a state of mind into which margiis go as a result of their diligent efforts through the six Sahaja Yoga lessons. It is though, according to the philosophy of Astaunga Yoga, a part of regular spiritual practice and it is a measure of how far we have progressed along the path. That is, the level of samadhi that we can attain is determined by the cakra to which we can deliberately raise our kundalinii during sadhana.

So, by this measure, how far have each of us progressed? Before we sink into a collective melancholy about our lifetimes of miserable under achievement, let me offer a further word of encouragement.

It is true that for most of our life, during which we are juggling the worldly demands on our time, we may be making little progress. It has been stated though by a

number of great old margiis that once you start to make certain spiritual progress, the process speeds up greatly and liberation within this life indeed becomes possible. Also there often comes a point, in middle age, where these worldly things start to fall more into place and we may find ourselves with enough time to actually do enough sadhana to make very real progress. Middle age usually brings with it a mental peace that greatly helps in this process.

So the positive conclusion of all of this is that liberation at the end of this current lifetime is possible. The right frame of mind with which to approach life as a spiritualist, is that you will focus your mind on doing whatever it takes to make Taraka Brahma happy, through serving God's creation, then happily take whatever the Lord thinks best for you, whether that be to live on and get liberation in old age, or to move into a new body for that final push to the finish line.

GLOSSARY

Acarya: one who teaches by example
Akhanda Kiirtan: kiirtan done in circles in three hour periods
AMURT: Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team
Ananda Marga: "path of bliss"
Asana: yoga posture
Baba Nam Kevalam: Universal mantra. Lit: Only the name/vibration of the most beloved
Bhajan: Devotional song
Bhakti: Devotion
Dada: Respected brother
Dharma Cakra: chanting and meditation session
Didi: Respected sister
Divas: Festival
Hari Nam Kiirtan: Kiirtan on the name of the Lord
Jagrti: house of spiritual awakening
Mahaprayan: great departure; referring to the physical passing of Shrii Shrii Anandamurti
Margii: one who follows Ananda Marga lifestyle
Master Unit: A rural community model based on principles given by PR Sarkar
Namaskar: I salute the divinity within you with the charms of my mind and the benevolence of my heart
Painca Janya: the practice of starting the day at 5am with meditation
Parama Purus'a: Supreme Consciousness

FASTING DAYS



Dec		16 th	20 th	30 th
Jan	3 rd	14 th	18 th	29 th
Feb	1 st	13 th	17 th	27 th
Mar	3 rd	15 th	18 th	29 th

<http://www.skillcase.com/fasting/default.asp>

Prabhat Samgiita: songs written by PR Sarkar
Rarh: the original homeland of the Bengali people
RAWA: Renaissance Artists' and Writers' Association
Sadhana: "sustained effort to complete"; meditation
Sadhana Shivar: sessions of alternating kiirtan and meditation done in three hour periods
Samgacchadvam: The spirit of moving together
Samskara: reactive momentum
Satsaunga: spiritual company
Taraka Brahma: The bridge between manifested and witnessing cosmic consciousness
Yama and Niyama: 10 principles of moral conduct

CALENDAR

January 10th
Classes resume in London centre

February 12th
Nilakantha Divas

February 18th - 20th
Sisters Retreat

February 26th - 28th
Intro Retreat, Newmarket

March 5th
Dadichi Divas

March 11th
Vasantotsava

April 22nd - 25th
Regional Retreat, Ireland MU

CLASSES

In London

Stoke Newington
 3A, Cazenove Rd., London N16 6PA
 class@anandamarga.org.uk
 Tel: 0208 806 4250

Holborn

Theobalds Natural Health Centre
 46 Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8NW
 info@theobaldsnaturalhealth.co.uk
 Tel: 020 7242 6665
<http://www.theobaldsnaturalhealth.co.uk>

In Manchester

42 Keppel Road, Manchester M21 0BW
 Tel: Devashiish 07766 218 582

In Liverpool (Childwall)

Tel: Kumar 07963 131 563

In Wales

Welshpool, Newtown
 Tel: Dada Ravi 07812 480 870

Aberystwyth

Tel: Gabriel 07542 080 803

Machynlleth

Tel: Kusum 07847 108 571



THE SENTIENT KITCHEN

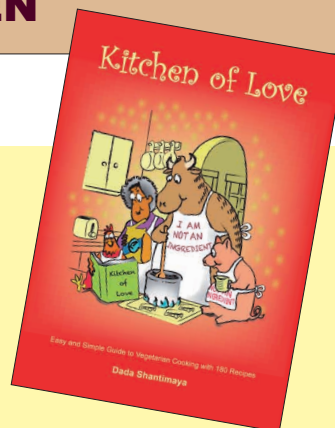
Polenta Cake

Ingredients

1 cup polenta
 ½ cup flour
 ¾ cup milk or yoghurt
 ½ cup butter
 1½ cup sugar
 2 ripe bananas
 2 carrots
 2 tsp baking soda
 ¾ cup desiccated coconut
 5 tbsp rosewater
 2 tbsp vanilla sugar
 Pinch of salt
 Almond flakes for garnish

Preparation

Preheat the oven to 200C. In a blender add milk/yoghurt, butter, sugar, bananas, carrots, rose water, vanilla sugar and salt and blend all together till they become like smoothie. In a bowl mix the polenta, flour and baking soda. Add the smoothie mixture and combine. Pour in a greased and floured oven tray and garnish with almonds flakes. Bake for 20-30 minutes until it is golden brown and a knife or toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let it cool down before cutting.



This and other recipes can be found in
 Dada Shantimaya's cookbook:
Kitchen of Love
 Order your copy NOW!
<http://www.yogameditationmalta.org/store/index.htm> [or contact us]