

Satya ka Avahan

Invoking the Divine

सत्य का
आवाहन

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Hari Om

Avahan is a bi-lingual and bi-monthly magazine compiled, composed and published by the sannyasin disciples of Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati for the benefit of all people who seek health, happiness and enlightenment. It contains the teachings of Sri Swami Sivananda, Sri Swami Satyananda and Swami Niranjanananda, along with the programs of Sannyasa Peeth.

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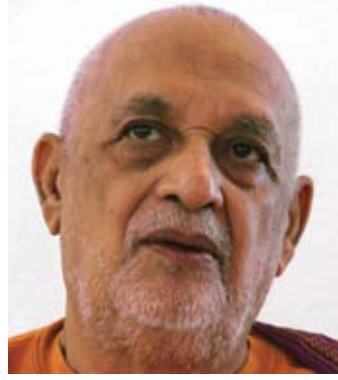
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Front cover: Sri Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna, Paduka Darshan, Munger, 2012

Plates: 1–5 & 8: Sri Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna 2012; 6–7: Sannyasa training 2012



SATYAM SPEAKS – सत्यम् वाणी

Those who take sannyasa have made a very glorious decision, for sannyasa is the most beneficial stage of one's life. By taking sannyasa you are not renouncing anything. You are consecrating yourself for a definite purpose. Therefore, when one takes sannyasa one has made the decision to dedicate oneself to the fulfilment of a great purpose which is in the bosom of the Higher Will.

—Swami Satyananda

जो भी संन्यास ग्रहण करते हैं, उन्होंने जीवन में एक महान् निर्णय लिया है, क्योंकि संन्यास आश्रम जीवन का सबसे कीमती और उपयोगी आश्रम है। संन्यास लेकर तुम कुछ भी छोड़ते नहीं, बल्कि अपने आपको एक निश्चित प्रयोजन के लिए समर्पित कर देते हो। इसलिए जब कोई संन्यास लेता है तो समझना चाहिए कि उसने एक दिव्य संकल्प की पूर्ति हेतु स्वयं को समर्पित करने का निश्चय किया है।

—स्वामी सत्यानन्द

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न तु अहं कामये राज्यं न स्वर्गं नापुनर्भवं । कामये दुःखतपानां प्राणिनां आर्तिनाशनम् ॥

"I do not desire a kingdom or heaven or even liberation. My only desire is to alleviate the misery and affliction of others."

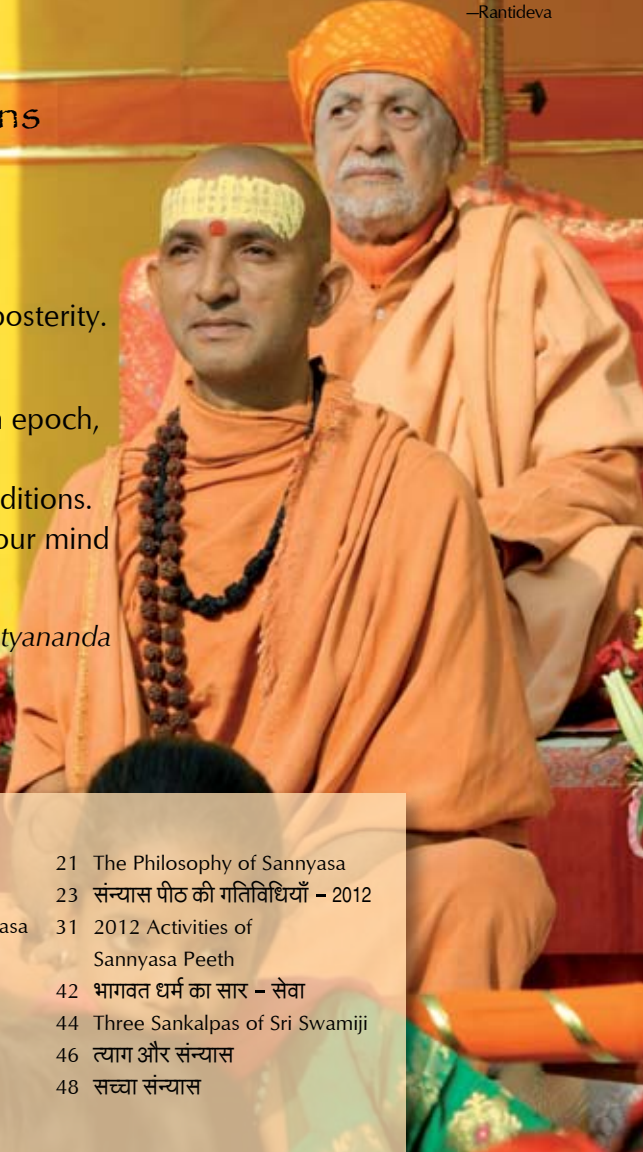
—Rantideva

Message to New Sannyasins

When sannyasa blooms
And knowledge dawns
And power unfolds,
It sanctifies history and posterity.

One single sannyasin
Can be the creator of an epoch,
A seer of intuition
And a mastermind of traditions.
Keeping this ablaze in your mind
Step into sannyasa.

—Swami Satyananda



Contents

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|----|-----------------------------------|
| 2 | Glory to Sannyasa | 21 | The Philosophy of Sannyasa |
| 7 | The Essence of Sannyasa | 23 | संन्यास पीठ की गतिविधियाँ - 2012 |
| 9 | संन्यास की आधुनिक कल्पना | 31 | 2012 Activities of Sannyasa Peeth |
| 13 | Sannyasa Training | 42 | भागवत धर्म का सार - सेवा |
| 15 | संन्यासियों के लिए सन्देश | 44 | Three Sankalpas of Sri Swamiji |
| 16 | Three Requirements of Sannyasa Ashram | 46 | त्याग और संन्यास |
| 18 | संन्यास का स्वरूप | 48 | सच्चा संन्यास |

Glory to Sannyasa

Swami Sivananda Saraswati



Every religion has a band of anchorites who lead the life of seclusion and meditation. There are bhikkus in Buddhism, fakirs in Mohammedanism, sufistic fakirs in Sufism, fathers and reverends in Christianity. It is these people who give solace to the householders when they are in trouble and distress. They are the harbingers of peace and wisdom. They heal the sick, comfort the forlorn and bring help to the hopeless, joy to the depressed, strength to the weak and knowledge to the ignorant. One true sannyasin can change the thought currents of the world for the better.

A real sannyasin is a mighty potentate of this earth. Sannyasins have done sublime work in the past; they are working wonders at present. One real sannyasin can change the destiny of the whole world. I dance in joy when I see or hear from an aspirant who entertains genuine devotion, aspiration and inclination for the path of renunciation and tries to get out

of the quagmire of samsara. Through prayers and thought currents I am in very close touch with such students and help them in the path of yoga and take care of them until they stand firm in the path.

In scriptures people took sannyasa in their old age, but from experience I find that tremendous energy is needed for purposes of contemplation, clear vision and extraordinary purity of body, mind and heart. I consider youth, with abundant energy and mental purity, as the foremost qualification for the path of renunciation. I have all admiration for those young brahmacharis who do not have any worldly bondage and entanglements. Necessary qualifications will come by themselves when they tread the path of yoga.

In my method of work for the spiritual upliftment of mankind, I permit even married people to take to the path of renunciation. There are many who have taken the order of sannyasa when they have a family and children. After some training, they go back and take care of their family with complete detachment and gloriously prosper in their sadhana.

The point of my method is that I look to the motive and inner purity of the seeker. My students can live in any place, in any dress and yet effectively follow my instructions. They all set an example to the whole world. This whole world is in need of ideal sannyasins who will serve humanity with divine consciousness and disseminate true knowledge and carry the message of the sages and saints to every door. May sannyasins, the repositories of truth, the beacon-lights of the world, the cornerstones of spiritual edifices and the central pillars of the eternal dharma, guide the nations and the world. ■

A sannyasin has a great ideal before him and those who want to adopt sannyasa should do so. It is a path to serve others, to treat all your neighbours as your own family instead of looking after the interests of a limited family of four or five.

—Swami Satyananda

The Essence of Sannyasa

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



*O Bhikshu!
Keep on moving
With compassion
and love
For the happiness
of many
For the wellbeing
of many.*

Sannyasa is the key to a fuller life. It is the universal path on which we are able to fulfil our basic need to expand our experience and awareness of life by working in the world for the evolution of all beings.

When one begins to feel, "This body is not mine and everything I have is not mine," then he becomes a sannyasin.

Once you have taken sannyasa everything is booked. You cannot, you should not, use any of yourself for your own pleasure. Therefore a sannyasin is one who has created an endowment, a trust, of all his physical, mental, emotional, social and economic resources, and all those resources are

directed for one purpose. That purpose is the guru's order. Whatever your guru decides for you, you are to do.

Sannyasa is the ultimate point of evolution. It is there that you dedicate yourself to the path of enlightenment, wholly and completely.

Even if you only live the life of a sannyasin for fifteen days, it will enrich you with very deep and abiding experiences. It will create a new type of mind, personality and man.

The lives of sannyasins are a moving panorama of success through struggle, harmony through conflict, of noble attainment through selfless service. Their lives offer a message to strife-ridden humanity, a message of love and service, of hope and courage and burning optimism, a message for now!

A sannyasin's life should be based on experience and not on blind belief. A sannyasin should not accept blindly other people's words. He should listen and try to find out the truth behind the words for himself.

The sannyasin alone lives for the world. The world looks to its own happiness, whereas the sannyasin looks to the happiness of the world.

There has never been a sannyasin, nor will there ever be one, who has not had samskaras, karma and dharma to work through. When you are working through these times, they may not be pleasant, they may be very hard times, but they can be overcome. You can overcome any and all of them. It depends on you. You must be strong. Do not let them take hold of you. You should know that you can rise above them.

The moment you take sannyasa, forget that you were born to a family. Forget that you were meant to love or be loved. Remember that the status of a sannyasin is an immortal one. It is eternal and full of bliss.

There has to be a fundamental and qualitative change, if not a complete change, in the structure of the thinking of a sannyasin. ■

Sannyasa Training

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



In the early stage of sannyasa, after initiation, ashram training is absolutely essential. This training must take place under the guidance of a guru or senior-most sannyasin. The traditional period of sannyasa training is twelve years, as this is the time required for changing or transmuting the mental patterns and samskaras from gross to subtle, from mundane to spiritual.

Only those who complete the twelve-year period of training can be regarded as full sannyasins. Those who complete five or six years and then leave, can only be considered as half sannyasins. Those who complete two or three years are one

quarter of a sannyasin. Those who have no training in the guru's ashram at all, who have only taken diksha and then resumed their independent life, cannot be considered as sannyasins at all. In spiritual life this period of training cannot be avoided, especially if the sannyasa order is to survive.

The moment you take sannyasa certain blocks are removed. If your mind becomes detached, other blocks are removed. With each and every act of sannyasa, with each and every act of yoga, your blocks are getting removed, but what are you going to do with the energy that causes imbalance?

Sannyasins must remember that they have to work hard on the physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual planes. All the time, they must keep the mind engaged, and that is why they live in the ashram. It is not for the sake of the ashram, but for their own personal growth and development. The ashram provides a base for karma yoga, and karma yoga is very important for the purification of *avidya*, ignorance. When the proper time comes, they should shine as spiritual guides to the people, not only in the ashram, but anywhere.

Sannyasins live in a country, they have a passport, because they have to have it. They have a nationality because they have to have it, but realistically they belong to no country. They are universal and when they learn yoga, when they enlighten themselves, when they have greater control over the behaviour of their energy, then they can, and should, move out and guide the people side by side with their own spiritual practices. Sannyasins must become the transmitting poles, the powerhouse remains unaffected. ■

There are many people who wish to cross the ocean of samsara. Sannyasins are the ferrymen. They spend their entire lives on the ferry going from one side to the other, but never actually belonging to either side; their only effort is to take others across.

—Swami Niranjanananda

Three Requirements of Sannyasa Ashrama

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

In sannyasa ashrama one is committing and dedicating oneself to a higher purpose and realigning with the will of God. The three requirements of sannyasa ashrama are *viveka*, *vairagyaya* and *samarpan*, discrimination, freedom from attachment and surrender.

Viveka is the discriminative faculty. If you are able to negate or reject those situations which bind you and accept those which uplift you through your discriminative ability, then viveka is active in you. If you are able to extract something important and useful even from the most difficult situations, that is viveka. It can guide your actions, behaviour and thoughts in the right direction.

As viveka rises, the discriminative intellect also rises and the bartering intellect comes down. That is when vairagyaya awakens. Vairagyaya is generally translated as detachment, but the *Yoga Sutras* say: *Sukhanushayi ragaha* - "One is attracted towards those objects which give one pleasure." Therefore, *raga* is attraction for pleasure, fulfilment, happiness and satisfaction. In the state of vairagyaya, one allows all these things to manifest, but remains free from their influence and craving. You do what you have to, but remain free from the craving. Your association is not with an expectation; it is spontaneous and natural. That is vairagyaya: to live a spontaneous and natural life without attaching yourself, without demanding or expecting anything, but utilizing every resource and situation to uplift yourself.

Many people come to me and they wish to receive sannyasa initiation, but not make any changes in life. They will go back to the same environment, the same city, house, family, job



and tensions and say, “I have become a sannyasin.” That is the lowest form of vairagya, for you are under the influence of an infatuation. Your decision has not been thought about and you don’t even know if you qualify. First train yourself for twelve years under the guidance of a guru and then think of poorna sannyasa.

A sannyasin is one in whose life things leave by themselves, and the world ceases to have any attraction for him. When one understands the transitory nature of life and the world, samarpan, surrender, follows naturally. Until then one remains rigid. When the transience of life is understood, one surrenders oneself.

The idea of surrender is: ‘Let thy will be done’, nothing more than that. With vairagya, one dies to the world, one is no longer infatuated by the pains and pleasures of the world, and one gives oneself over to God, one automatically moves into the surrendered mentality. One continuously lives the thought: ‘All is yours, nothing is mine.’ At that time, one cultivates a special qualitative relationship with the inner self or *atma*, and with the Higher Self, *Paramatma*. That is sannyasa. ■

The Philosophy of Sannyasa

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

What is the philosophy of sannyasa? From the ancient times the *rishis*, the first seers, said the philosophy of a sannyasin is the Advaita philosophy. Advaita is not just a philosophy, but also points at a certain conduct. It is reflection and action. Philosophy is reflection and conduct is action. One who adopts the philosophy and conduct of Advaita is called a 'sadhu', a sannyasin. This is what Adi Shankaracharya believed. Saints and rishis who came before him believed the same, and sannyasins and sadhus of today also believe this.

The Advaita thought says there is only one Supreme Self, which is all-pervasive in this creation, just as air is all-pervasive on earth. In this entire creation, one tattwa is predominant. That *tattwa*, that element, has been called God. Not a manifest God, but an impersonal God. 'G' stands for generation, the quality of Brahma; 'O' for organization, the quality of Narayana; and 'D' for destruction, the quality of Shiva. As a result, in this word 'God', the three qualities of the Supreme Self are defined.

The realization of this oneness is the Advaita thought. It is that one Supreme Self which, according to vedic thought, manifests in different forms, in millions of forms. When it becomes many, the essence of that cosmic tattwa is also contained in all these millions of forms.

The realization of the Supreme Self without any distinction, division or categories is the philosophy of a sannyasin. Sri Swamiji also says in his satsangs, "Cultivate atmabhava. See yourself in others, see your reflection in others, let others see their reflection in you. Be one with them." He is indicating at this idea, at this process of Advaita. This is the philosophy of Advaita.

When you experience the *atma*, soul, within you, you can realize that the same element which is within you in its



all-pervasive form, is also called *Paramatma*, the Supreme Soul.

Yogis, siddhas and sannyasins identify with their inner state, atma. You have seen the life of Sri Swamiji, you have read about other people, you have heard of Swami Sivananda, you have heard of other saints and sages from different traditions, cultures and religions. What is the uniqueness in their life? They connected with the spirit, while normal beings connect with the mind. When you connect with the spirit, there is nothing good or bad; everything is an expression according to circumstances and situations. Swami Sivananda and Swami Satyananda believed in and lived by these same Advaita principles. ■

2012 Activities of Sannyasa Peeth

FIRST YEAR OF SANNYASA TRAINING

The three-year Sannyasa Training formally commenced at Ganga Darshan on 28th January 2012, the auspicious day of Basant Panchami and also the 49th Foundation Day of the Bihar School of Yoga. The 111 participants, representing over twenty-two countries and ranging in age from sixteen to sixty years began training under the guidance of Swami Niranananda Saraswati as the fourth Sri Vidya anushthana reached its culmination. On this day, Swamiji inaugurated a special havan invoking the Cosmic Mother in the form of Ma Katyayani. This special invocation set the pace for a daily sadhana for the Sannyasa Training participants to attain the peace-bestowing blessings of the Cosmic Shakti during their three-year endeavour. The new trainees also received special prasad to help them step into their new roles: kurta and dhoti, a T-shirt and a stainless steel kamandalu packed neatly into a small carry bag.

Swamiji warmly welcomed the trainees into what he called his personal sadhana, a three-year offering to his guru, Sri Swami Satyananda. He recalled the first three-year Sannyasa Training that took place



forty years earlier, in which he was the youngest participant at the tender age of ten! He also spoke of the challenges and triumphs this new group would face in the coming years as he chiselled away at the outer layers of their personalities to reveal their true nature. He offered a sneak preview of his plans, which were to include karma yoga, seva, practical and theoretical classes in all aspects of yoga, and also conducting seminars and shivirs throughout the Indian subcontinent. From these auspicious beginnings the 'STs' have been in full swing ever since, joining in the daily ashram routine and immersing themselves in guru seva and study. True to Swamiji's words, the first year has been one of ceaseless and demanding activity, expansive learning, creative thought and self-discovery for all.

Empty vessels

A great purging took place at the start of the training to prepare the participants for the tremendous transformation they would be undergoing. The first instruction to the sannyasa trainees was to hand over all mobile phones, gadgets and other worldly possessions and reduce their personal belongings to the bare necessities. Suitcases were emptied, rooms were inspected, and a storeroom gradually filled up with books, blue jeans, sneakers, art supplies, musical instruments, tea kettles, electronics and other sundry items, none of which will see the light of day until 2015. Following this external purging, all hoarded snacks and sweets were taken away and a shankhprakashana shatkarma was conducted for all STs and residents to cleanse bodies, minds and emotions. To complete this introductory step in surrender, shaving of the head was required for all. With nothing left to hold on to, the stage was set for action.

Heads and hands

Our gurus purport service as one of the highest sadhanas and the STs plunged into their karma yoga activities with great enthusiasm and creativity. Over these twelve months they have been trained in all aspects of the ashram organization and their presence

can be seen in every department: cleaning and accommodation, electrical and maintenance, bookkeeping, administration, gardening, kitchen, prasad, pooja, decorations, events management, computers, web design, publications, magazine distribution, transportation, clinic, and so on. In preparation for the upcoming Golden Jubilee and World Yoga Convention they have also been busy overseeing new construction and landscaping projects; editing, formatting and translating books; and remastering DVDs and audio recordings.

Sa Re Ga, Ka Kha Ga . . .

Swamiji led early morning swara yoga practices to get ears and voices in tune for chanting stotras and mantras, and also for attaining a deeper understanding of the principle of sound. Sannyasins gave daily lessons in reading and writing the Devanagri script for foreigners and non-Hindi speakers. This prepared the ground for afternoon chanting sessions, where the focus was on developing speed and perfect pronunciation of Sanskrit words. The effect of these practices was immediately perceptible. Since June, much of the chanting for ashram events has been led by STs, including several of Swamiji's satsang programs, the Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna held at Paduka Darshan and the October Navaratri anushthana.



Learning to teach

As representatives of the Saraswati tradition of sannyasa, the STs are expected to have the skill, knowledge and energy to teach and speak on behalf of the tradition. This is possible only if their own receptivity is keen, their understanding of the teachings deep and their experience fulsome. Therefore, to develop these skills they were taken through a range of classes, practical as well as theoretical, over the past twelve months. They attended lectures, developed group projects and received instructions from experienced teachers on how to impart the knowledge of the tradition to others.

The highlight of these learning activities were the classes with Swamiji in Akhara, whose very life is a testimony to the effects and benefits of yoga as a lifestyle and culture. In the spring, Swamiji gave morning classes on pawanmuktasana and in the summer, evening classes on developing kaya sthairyam and pratyahara. His teachings offered detailed information about the true meaning of asana and meditation, the various stages one goes through in these practices and the purpose they serve in everyday life.

Additional classes and lectures were led by resident and visiting sannyasins, including Rishi Arundhati from Canada and Rishi Nityabodhananda from Australia. Rishi Arundhati taught the shakti bandha series as they were taught to her by Swami Satyananda in the late sixties. Rishi Nityabodhananda gave lectures on the tantric theory of chakras.

Other topics taken up by resident swamis included the practice and theory of yogasana; teaching and public speaking skills and techniques; anatomy and physiology of yoga practices; yoga nidra and meditation practice and theory; discussions on the *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*; SWAN theory and spiritual diaries as tools for self-study.

Several STs already certified as yoga teachers shared their skills and knowledge by leading asana and yoga nidra classes for guests, Yogic Studies participants and their fellow sannyasa trainees. Those with little or no teaching experience were given the opportunity to try their hand at teaching by assisting classes,

giving demonstrations and leading the mantra sadhana. Additionally, a select group of STs was sent to Rikhia in August to attend the Teacher Training Course.

Swamiji has also established a mini satsang series for STs and residents to prepare them for upcoming public speaking engagements. The ten-minute satsangs, covering topics such as yoga sadhana, spiritual growth, guru and disciple relationship, mind management, the culture of yoga and the history of BSY, are delivered during evening sadhana and speakers are given on-the-spot feedback on their depth of understanding, time management, style and delivery.

Expansion of mind

The STs have been blessed to be involved in all aspects of Swamiji's Yoga Drishti satsangs over the past year; planning and organizing, decorating, video-recording, transcribing, publishing and, of course, attending them as an integral part of their training. In addition, there have been regular Sunday satsangs held in informal settings, where Swamiji has answered questions, expounded on a range of topics or spontaneously called upon STs and residents to field the questions themselves, giving yet another lesson on the importance of being ever ready. These satsangs are an invaluable source of information and inspiration, illuminating the ancient teachings with grace and simplicity and offering practical and



relevant applications for these teachings in everyday life. Each of these occasions has been an opportunity to imbibe the teachings by deepening the guru-disciple connection.

On the road

On 15th January 2013, the first batch of STs was sent on a teaching *shivir*, seminar, to spread the timeless message of yoga to the people of India. Under the guidance of resident swamis, they are travelling in pairs and conducting classes, giving lectures and leading kirtan at schools, government organizations and community groups in villages and cities in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. They departed in the spirit of sannyasa, eager to share the wisdom of their gurus. More STs will be sent out over the coming months, and by June 2013 every state in the country will be alight with the message of yoga and the Satyananda Tradition.

Two to go

At the end of year one, a total of 102 original STs remain, stronger and more inspired than they were just twelve months earlier. A whole new batch has joined them for what promises to be a busier and even more challenging year two, as BSY celebrates its Golden Jubilee and final preparations are made for the World Yoga Convention in October. The demands will be greater, the routine more rigorous and the chiselling more severe, and no doubt individuals will be pushed beyond their perceived limits as they step further into the life of sannyasa.



SRI LAKSHMI-NARAYANA MAHAYAJNA 2012

The 2012 Sri Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna drew thousands from around India and the world to Munger to celebrate and share in the divine blessings of peace, plenty and prosperity. This annual event, held on the hallowed grounds of Sannyasa Peeth at Paduka Darshan, took place between 8th and 12th September, two very auspicious days that respectively mark the birth of Sri Swami Sivananda and the Sannyasa Diwas of Sri Swami Satyananda. It was a great honour to start the ceremonies for this second year of the yajna on Swami Sivananda's 125th birthday, and Swami Niranananda dedicated the entire event to this great beacon of light, who continues to guide and inspire us all.

The daily aradhana began at dawn with the Katyayani havan to invoke the blessings of Shakti in her benevolence-bestowing form. Swamiji and Swami Satsangi performed the havan while sannyasins and sannyasa trainees led the chanting of Devi stotras and the *Katyayani Sahasranam*. The rising sun seemed a reflection of their devotion, and the sky awakened to colours of joy as Swamiji offered worship to Mother Ganga during the Ganga arati.

The murtis of Sri Lakshmi and Lord Narayana were installed inside a beautiful straw and bamboo hut made especially for the occasion. From there, with Swamiji and Swami Satsangi beside them, the



two divine forms presided over the entire event and received unbroken adoration and love from everybody present.

The opening invocation was led by learned pandits from Tryambakeshwar, who once again came to Paduka Darshan to perform the special yajna ceremony. From morning to evening, every day of the program, they fed offerings of grains, ghee, flowers and other sacred items into the roaring fire, their voices echoing in perfect cadence sacred mantras as ancient as time itself.

As master of ceremonies, Swamiji was truly masterful and he oversaw every aspect of the program, moving about with kingly grace to welcome guests and talk intimately with the crowd, sometimes singing, sometimes dancing, always with an expression of tremendous joy and love that was contagious. He gave regular commentary on the yajna proceedings, drawing everyone deeper into the experience as he described simply and clearly the esoteric meaning behind the mantras and the practices. He and Swami Satsangi took turns giving satsangs between programs, sharing their thoughts and stories about our great lineage of gurus and the nature of the guru-disciple relationship. Giving examples from her own life, Swami Satsangi spoke about the guru tattwa and the important role Sannyasa Peeth will play in the future as it guides people to express their positive, creative qualities.

The sannyasa trainees, who for months had been honing their Sanskrit skills for this event, led the afternoon chanting with special mantras and stotras in praise of Lakshmi and Narayana, winning high praise from Swamiji for their effort. The children of Bal Yoga Mitra Mandal (BYMM), so capable and composed, skilfully managed the busy crowds and led the daily kirtans, rousing the young and the old to dance and sing in childlike delight.

Throughout the course of the first day, Swamiji spoke in loving remembrance of Swami Sivananda, the embodiment of divine love and a radiant light of inspiration for those travelling on the spiritual path. He referred to our present times as the 'era of love', and encouraged everyone to set aside their intellect and connect with their heart and emotions during the yajna, to experience the oneness of spirit, which is at the core of the teachings of both Swami

Sivananda and Swami Satyananda. The day closed with a Rudrabhisheka performed by Swamiji in honour of paramguru Swami Sivananda, the reincarnation of Lord Shiva himself.

The culminating event of the entire program took place on the third day, when a group of specially chosen visitors, guests and sannyasins was guided to perform the Lakshmi and Vishnu Sahasrarchan, a special pooja conducted to receive the abundant blessings of Lakshmi and Narayana. Facing the yajna vedi, the one hundred participants, representing different generations, cultures and countries, each offered a distinct item in honour of the supreme beauty and benevolence of the cosmic force, a list that included flowers, bangles, mirrors, sweets, coins, dried fruit, sindoor, spices and tulsi leaves. The sannyasa trainees led the chanting of the one thousand names of Lakshmi and Narayana and with every *Swaha* one hundred hands offered up their gifts, their hearts and their love to the transformative flames of the sacred yajna fire. The sight of the closing arati was breathtaking, as a hundred flames danced to the glow of the setting sun. Items from this epic offering were distributed as prasada to all guests, a promise of peace, plenty and prosperity that reached out to all corners of the earth.

On the final day of the yajna, all honours were given to Sri Swamiji, who





on that same day sixty-five years earlier was initiated into sannyasa by Swami Sivananda, an event which changed the course of history and gave birth to a timeless spiritual tradition. Swamiji and Swami Satsangi graciously shared their sannyasa inheritance by giving diksha to over 600 people, six of whom received a ceremonial rebirth as Swamiji poured buckets of Ganga water over their heads and initiated them into poorna sannyasa. As it was also the holy day of Ekadashi, sannyasins and sannyasa trainees led the chanting of the *Bhagavad Gita*. As a final day's offering, Swamiji and Swami Satsangi, seated upon the dais, performed the abhishekas of Shivalinga and Sri Yantra.



The program came to a close and guests performed a final parikrama, reluctantly bidding farewell to Lakshmi and Narayana, to Swamiji and Swami Satsangi. As a very special prasada offering, everyone received *akshaya patra*, beautiful, rice-filled pots consecrated by the yajna. Like the love of God and guru, these blessings are indestructible, and by adding a few grains from it to every meal they will continue to receive these blessings throughout the year. Thus continues the work of divine inspiration, begun so long ago by Swami Sivananda, carried forward by Swami Satyananda and passed on to Swamiji, who in his gracious, inimitable style will lead this mission long and far into the future.



SATSANG WITH EMINENT SANNYASINS



From 12th to 29th May, Ganga Darshan was host to two learned and eminent sannyasins, Swami Girishananda from Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh, and Swami Muktananda from Alwar, Rajasthan, who gave daily afternoon satsangs to the ashram residents, students and visitors, as well as local guests from Munger.

Introducing the two sannyasins, Swamiji praised their academic achievements and also their childlike simplicity, as well as their unflinching commitment to the dissemination of spiritual knowledge for the upliftment of humanity.

Swami Girishananda, the last person to receive sannyasa initiation from Sri Swami Satyananda in Rikhia, gave satsangs from 12th to 14th May on the eleventh canto of the *Srimad Bhagavad Purana*. Framing his talks around the questions King Nimi posed to the nine yogeshwaras, he gave lucid and beautiful explanations of the nature of maya, vairagya and bhakti.

From 15th to 29th May, Swami Muktananda, whom Swamiji called the 'vidya guru' of Ganga Darshan, gave satsangs on the *Bhagavad Gita*. He captivated even non-Hindi speaking listeners with his wit and enthusiasm, and with succinct simplicity he elucidated the teachings of this most sacred scripture by expounding on one chapter each day. Thus, he provided a concise overview of the concepts of karma, jnana, sannyasa and bhakti, with their practical application in everyday life.

Every evening, Swami Suryaprakash offered skilled and precise summaries of the satsangs in English for non-Hindi speakers.

Three Sankalpas of Sri Swamiji

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

Sannyasa Peeth represents the third inspiration, the third sankalpa of Sri Swami Satyananda's life. His first gift or *prasad* to humanity was the gift of yoga. From Munger he started a revolution of yoga and today the Munger tradition, the Satyananda Yoga tradition, is recognized and respected the world over as a classical, authentic, simple and result-oriented yoga system.

Sri Swamiji's second *prasad* to humanity was the establishment of Rikhiapeeth, where the three aspects of serving, loving and giving are emphasized to enable one to cultivate *atmabhava*, the feeling of unity within all. This quality of *atmabhava* is the teaching of Vedanta as enunciated by our paramguru, Sri Swami Sivananda. It is the culmination of Vedanta and it is the culmination and final expression of human life as well. God-realization is an outcome of living a selfless, effective life, a life in which everyone, every being around you, is uplifted and touched. That is the real meaning of life, the life that our paramguru Swami Sivananda lived and propagated, and the way of life our own guru Swami Satyananda lived and propagated.

The third sankalpa, the third *prasad* given to humanity was Sannyasa Peeth, where one can imbibe the spiritual samskaras and cultivate the spiritual qualities in one's life. It is a place where one can become the spinal cord of society, to maintain society, to keep it standing on its two feet. By serving society, by knowing and imbibing the right samskaras and by understanding situations to which you are exposed, you cultivate a different and better you. It is a life of sacrifice, a life of discipline and a life of hardship, yet it is a way of living that brings glory, beauty, fragrance, coolness and shanti into one's life.

In the expression that defines our tradition - 'head, heart and hands' - yoga and Ganga Darshan represent the head, seva and Rikhia represent the heart, commitment and Sannyasa Peeth represent the hands. These are the three aspects that Swami Sivananda said one must cultivate and become better at expressing and performing. One must attain excellence. Sri Swamiji showed us the path of how to do it practically. Those who have eyes will see and those who have ears will hear, and the rest will remain witness to what is happening. ■





*Rudrabhisheka on Swami Sivananda's birthday,
Sri Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna 2012*



*Lakshmi-Narayana Sahasrarchan,
Sri Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna 2012*



*Culmination of Sahasrarchan,
Sri Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna 2012*



*Rudrabhisheka and Sri Yantra abhisheka on Swami Satyananda's San-
nyasa Day, Sri Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna*



Culmination of Sri Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna 2012



*Swami Niranjanananda's satsang
with sannyasins and sannyasa trainees,
Paduka Darshan, 2012*



*Morning asana class for sannyasa trainees,
Satyam Udyan, Ganga Darshan, 2012*

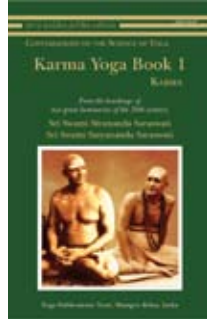
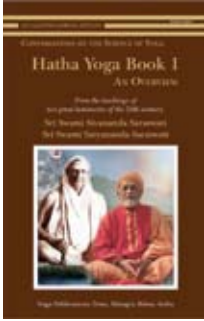


Sri Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna 2012



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हरि ॐ

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कवर फोटो: श्री लक्ष्मीनारायण महायज्ञ, पादुका दर्शन, मुंगेर, 2012

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Sannyasa Peeth Events 2013

Sannyasa Peeth, Munger, is pleased to announce that a series of satsangs will be conducted by Swami Niranananda Saraswati on a regular basis at Ganga Darshan and Sannyasa Peeth, Munger. Please contact Bihar School of Yoga regarding bookings and accommodation advice. Dates are given as follows:

Jan 28 2012–Jan 2015	3-year Sannyasa Training
Mar 5–8 2013	Satsang Series
Apr 12–15	Chaitra Navaratri Satsang Series
May 3–6	Satsang Series
June 5–8	Satsang Series
Aug 1–4	Satsang Series
Sep 8–12	Sri Lakshmi-Narayana Mahayajna



World Yoga Convention 2013

Bihar School of Yoga will celebrate its Golden Jubilee with a World Yoga Convention which will be held in Munger from 23rd to 27th October 2013.

If you think you can contribute effectively and efficiently towards the Convention, please contact the ashram.

For more information on the above events, contact:

Sannyasa Peeth, c/o Ganga Darshan, Munger, Bihar 811201, India
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