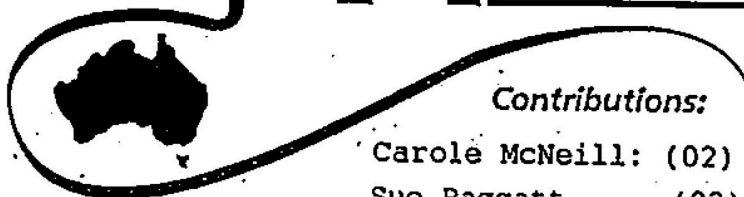


Sahaja Newsletter



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October 6th '95

D I W A L I

Diwali is the celebration of the birth of Laxmi who was born out of the primordial sea. It is also the time of the birth of Jesus Christ on the darkest night. This is why the lamps are lit. This is followed by the celebration of the new year in the ancient Indian calendar (Shalivahanas). After Laxmi was born from the ocean the moon was also born out of the ocean as a two day old moon. This is the moon that was put on Shiva's head to cool him down after he had drank all the poison that had come out during the churning of the ocean that produced Laxmi and many other wonders.

DAY 1- DHANTRAYODASHI (13th day of the moon)

This day is when Laxmi was born from the ocean. She was born as the Gruha LAXMI, so on this day a gift should be given to the Gruha Laxmi (housewife) of the home.

DAY 2- NARAK CHATURDASHI (14th day of the moon)

On this day the evil rakshasa Narakasura was killed. This is the day when hell is opened out so that rakshasas can be put in hell. Sahaja Yogis are supposed to sleep early and awake later.

DAY 3- DIPAWALI (15th day of the moon)

This day is the celebration of Rama's return to his kingdom and his coronation. It is also the darkest night when there is no moon and Jesus Christ was born at two o'clock in the night. That's why lamps are lit in the night.

DAY 4- NEW YEAR (1st day of the new moon)

In Maharashtra, the forefathers of Shri Mataji, the Shalivahanas, celebrate the new year from this day.

DAY 5- BHAUBEEJ (2nd day of the new moon)

This day celebrates the birth of the moon from the primordial ocean. He is the brother of Laxmi because he was born at the same time. So for us he is our Maternal Uncle and he is recognised as the brother of all the Goddesses. On this day Rakhi sisters from Raksha Bandhan honor their brothers.

DIWALI PUJA : 27/28/29 October 1995

GREETINGS FROM THE TROPICAL
NORTH - CAIRNS

A short update on the activities of your brothers and sisters in the warm and sunny top end.

We are now in the middle of a second seven week course which is going very successfully. Previously we had been having our regular public programmes three times a week but have now changed to the course format which seems to be working very well. We run the three programmes concurrently so there is no excuse for missing a week! The first course had twelve finish and we have twenty one up to their sixth week in this second course.

JAI SHRI MATAJI! We have also been blessed with interstate additions to our collective. Alexandra from Perth and Katie from N.S.W. Central Coast are very welcome as is anyone wishing to come temporarily or permanently to our tropical paradise.

With love, Kay.

INDIA TOUR UPDATE.

The payment of the India Tour ground fare was accomplished very successfully last week and the money has been forwarded to London. My thanks to all concerned and especially to Peter and Bevan at Burwood.

Shri Mataji has requested that the majority of those on the long tour travel via Hong Kong. We may have as many as thirty people going that way and eleven via Bangkok. We will advise you of the dates and the inevitable, but, hopefully, manageable revision to the fare as soon as possible. Payment for this, in full, is expected at the end of October. We shall probably use the same system of payment by bank transfer as for the ground fare.

This year as a special concession, applications to go on full tour may be accepted in writing to Bevan at Burwood for the next two weeks, closing 20th October.

With love,
Michael.

Subject: New Fax Number for the Darwin Collective 089-326083

Please note our new fax number which is now connected to a permanent fax/answering machine.

Forthcoming Festivals

→ See Burwood Noticeboard for rosters. Any assistance would be appreciated.

AUBURN FESTIVAL

Sat: 14:10:95

Auburn Rd. 9.30 to 5.30 p.m.

ROZELLE/BALMAIN FESTIVAL

Sun: 15:10:95

Elkington Park - Balmain 9.30 to 5.30 p.m.

MARRICKVILLE FESTIVAL

Sat: 21:10:95

Illawarra Rd to Victoria Rd.

Woollongong Sahaja Yogis are having a stall and bhajans on the 8th October (this Sunday). The location is Lawrence Hargrave Drive, Austinmere. Turn left at the bottom of Bulli Pass. Go past Austinmere beach, park 1st street on the left before the fair. Beach is on the right hand side.

Time: 12 noon start. For 1 to 1½ hours. (Meet at 11 a.m. or for morning meditation on the beach at 6 a.m.)

Not just a room to rent!

This is paradise... water views from the left side of the balcony... beautiful landscaped garden... almost a rainforest theme. Only 3 minute car journey to the beach. This collective is actively spreading Sahaja Yoga and gets lots of regulars coming to meetings. Why not give Judy a call at Terrigal (043) 842,428 (She promised breakfast in bed for the 1st day to the new tenant)

Tuesday 9 a.m. A baby boy for Bruno and Archana. Congratulations.

SHRI MATAJI'S

TOUR OF UNITED STATES & CANADA

3 Tuesday	OCTOBER	Travel to New York
4 Wednesday	OCTOBER	Rest
5 Thursday	OCTOBER	Public Programme
6 Friday	OCTOBER	Rest
7 Saturday	OCTOBER	PUJA WEEKEND
8 Sunday	OCTOBER	PUJA WEEKEND
9 Monday	OCTOBER	Travel to Los Angeles
10 Tuesday	OCTOBER	Public Programme
11 Wednesday	OCTOBER	Rest
12 Thursday	OCTOBER	Travel to Vancouver
13 Friday	OCTOBER	Public Programme
14 Saturday	OCTOBER	Travel to Toronto
15 Sunday	OCTOBER	Public Programme
16 Monday	OCTOBER	Rest
17 Tuesday	OCTOBER	Travel to London
18 Wednesday	OCTOBER	Programme for Gujarati Community
19 Thursday	OCTOBER	Travel to Cabella
20 Friday	OCTOBER	Cabella
21 Saturday	OCTOBER	Cabella
22 Sunday	OCTOBER	Travel to Delhi
23 Monday	OCTOBER	Delhi

24 Tuesday	OCTOBER	Delhi
25 Wednesday	OCTOBER	Bombay
26 Thursday	OCTOBER	Bombay
27/28/29	OCTOBER	DIWALI PUJA, India
1st-6th	NOVEMBER	Bombay and Poona
7 Tuesday	NOVEMBER	Travel to Tunisia
8 Wednesday	NOVEMBER	Rest
9 Thursday	NOVEMBER	Public Programme
10 Friday	NOVEMBER	Rest day
11 Saturday	NOVEMBER	Travel to Morocco
12 Sunday	NOVEMBER	Public Programme
13 Monday	NOVEMBER	Rest
14 Tuesday	NOVEMBER	Travel to Cabella
15 Wednesday	NOVEMBER	Cabella
16 Thursday	NOVEMBER	Cabella
17 Friday	NOVEMBER	Travel to Madrid (SPAIN)
18 Saturday	NOVEMBER	Public Programme
19 Sunday	NOVEMBER	Rest
20 Monday	NOVEMBER	Travel to Cabella
21 Tuesday	NOVEMBER	Cabella
22 Wednesday	NOVEMBER	Cabella
23 Thursday	NOVEMBER	Travel to India (DELHI)
1 Friday	DECEMBER	INDIA TOUR START

September 1995 Visit to Beijing, PRC, by HH Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi

ai Shri Mataji!

ere is a personal account of the momentous occasion of the first visit to China of Shri Mataji in Her capacity as founder of Sahaja Yoga.

n April this year we in HK were contacted by Derek Lee in the UK. He asked whether e would be interested in attending the NGO (non-governmental organisation) UN Forum on Women to be held in Beijing in September in parallel with the UN Fourth World Conference on Women (UN-FWCW). We were, of course, very interested and also told Derek that Shri Mataji has earlier expressed an interest in visiting China some time this year. In true Sahaja Style we had only one day before the cut-off date for applications, but about 16 yogis managed to apply. We then heard that Shri Mataji was seen to attend Herself and that Ana Maria Brasiliera, a yogini working for Unifem in New York had arranged for an official invitation for Shri Mataji to appear as a guest speaker.

ver the next few months we began to assemble exhibition material and to work out a strategy. It was also becoming apparent through correspondence and through the media that the whole event was fraught with bureaucracy. The venue for the NGO Forum was shifted right out of Beijing, and we later heard that this happened at the same time Shri Mataji confirmed Her attendance.

Shri Mataji was invited to participate in a high-level inter-regional round-table, entitled "Building bridges of hope - women speak out on peace". Countless faxes passed in and out of our office between Italy, the UK and China as everything began to fall into place. The media began a very negative campaign about the Chinese organisation of the Forum, and things did sound difficult. Only a limited number of visas were issued, but we avoided that problem by obtaining tourist visas. A friend of a yogini here offered to accommodate us all. Amazingly they happen to live only twenty minutes from the Forum site.

fter many late nights of preparation the advance party set out. They were met with unbelievable disorganised chaos. Arriving in Huairou, a large town outside Beijing and te of the Forum, the yogis discovered there was no space for them to set up the Sahaja Yoga stand (officially that is). They were (aggressively) asked to leave the Peace Tent where they tried to set up, and then it started raining! Everything leaked and the paths turned to mud. Thousands of women were experiencing similar problems, so the yogis went in to Beijing to encounter a different sort of bureaucracy. It took three trips into Beijing to confirm Shri Mataji's hotel accommodation.

day or so later the next party of yogis arrived. From the airport we had to go by special bus only to the Convention Centre and then the Workers' Stadium to collect special identity passes, then out to our residence. This took all day. Half the city's traffic was off the road during the Forum and FWCW through an odd/even number plate system, but still the traffic was heavy and slow going.

With a bright and early start the following day we arrived at the NGO site. What a blessing the venue was changed. Huairou is in the country-side, and a delightful town, full of friendly people overwhelmed somewhat by 20,000 + visitors. Most of them would

ever have seen a black person before, let alone many hundreds of African women in full costume with amazing head dresses. We found an empty row of booths in a good location and extended them to be able to set up a lovely altar with rows of seats. We decorated it with saris and posters and large placards we had brought from HK ("I am here because I believe God is a woman" attracted interest and appreciative remarks and was photographed many times). A portable stereo supplied soothing ragas, incense perfumed the air and the row of trees next to us provided welcome shade as the day grew hotter.

As we completed our preparations our first seeker arrived. She was ushered to a seat and within minutes, by the grace of Shri Mataji, her Kundalini had risen and she was in meditation. And so it began. . . Before long our rows of chairs were full and for six hours we six of us were giving Realisation. Seekers from every corner of the world, men and women, many wearing national costume. It was rather like being in a flower market, enjoying the beauty and diversity of Shri Mataji's creation.

The response was so positive, the experiences so strong, and the vibrations that flowed so powerful. It was amazing to be in such an environment to proudly present Shri Mataji as mother and a guru, to be able to talk at quite a deep level with people who were interested and respectful. We were given so many little gifts from these seekers who gratefully knew they had received something priceless but wished to reciprocate in some way.

After a while we noticed that about half those visiting our stall were Chinese delegates, and many were in high government positions or directors of companies, artist etc. All were enthusiastic and many asked when we would establish a Sahaja Yoga centre in China and offered their services.

That wonderful moment of asking the newly reborn: "So, how do you feel?", and seeing a look of bliss, the wide smiles, communicating so much without needing words. Seeing people walk away - more like floating. Watching our Hong Kong sisters working on Japanese nuns, Iranian Muslims in full black costume, right-sided American feminists, and Indian lady with no teeth saying "Sister, I have such noise in my head" and her feeling of peace and silence at last. Giving out brochures, taking names and addresses. The activities within the stall were filmed and photographed countless times over the week.

Each evening, a cultural programme was arranged. The first night was a concert of additional Chinese music and dance. Tremendous, and as Edwin commented, "made him feel proud to be Chinese".

The following three days followed the same pattern, with, in all, over three hundred receiving Realisation. So many people were cured of pain while receiving vibrations and many returned to sit and meditate. One Chinese lady looked gloomy and miserable and complained of intense back and head pain. After Realisation she sat up straight and claimed "You have cured me!" To her astonishment all her pain had disappeared. We ourselves were constantly reminded of Shri Mataji's awesome power of love and compassion and how blissful it is to be a channel for this.

In the middle of the week heavy rain forced us to reluctantly abandon our stall for one day. This was the day Hilary Clinton addressed the forum. The rain threatened to cancel

the event, and confusion surrounded last-minute venue changes. However, we spent an enjoyable day shopping and eating, along with thousands of other women. The whole town was full of women bargaining playfully with the local shopkeepers and sampling delicious regional food, and it occurred to us that had it been a forum on men, there would have been little or no shopping - it is such an inherently feminine thing to do!

One amusing incident which no doubt the foreign press relished, was the lynching of poor old Ronald MacDonald by a mob of screaming women. MacDonalds had set up a tent in the mud and were churning out burgers and fries at an astonishing rate. Jayashree had been amused to hear a strong American accent exclaiming "Oh, this has to be the best food I've eaten in days!", and turned to see a large lady wolfing down a serving of french fries. Well outside the MacDonald's tent was a bench with the familiar model of Ronald, looking rather out of place. He was there for several days without incident, often with a spectacular African or Burmese woman sitting next to him. At one point someone must have remembered all the statistics about Brazilian rainforests and suddenly there was a crowd trying to boycott the tent, screaming "Get back, Big Mac!" Next thing we knew, Ronald was lying in a pool of mud covered with slogans and stickers, the crowd had dispersed and business was back to normal for MacDonalds.

With Lyndon and his harmonium we sang some bhajans in the afternoon to an appreciative crowd. We were also able to make use of the technology centre with its rows and rows of Macintosh terminals to print out an invitation to a reception for Chinese delegates to meet Shri Mataji in Her hotel for the following week. Against all odds and 20,000 milling people, but with bandhan-power we found Alex when he arrived from Hong Kong.

The last day was the best with many local people queuing for their Realisation. Quite a few of these were local high-school students, who sat so still in meditation for a long time. One young girl told how she had been attracted by a special light she could see in the eyes of the Sahaja yogis. Some could smell a fragrance when their Kundalinis rose. So many said they felt light and fresh after Realisation. A monk who had to be "unfolded" from his lotus posture to receive his Realisation saw visions of halos and mist with a large divine figure seated on a cloud. When the yogis compared notes it became clear that we all found that Chinese seekers receive Realisation so easily and have a great innocence and sense of introspection.

Alex and Lyndon visited a nearby booth and gave Realisation to an English woman who works for a UN organisation in Afghanistan. She is doing remarkable things at a grass-roots level through the village women. Devastated by war the country is in a mess with no local government, schools or public utilities such as sanitation. She has got the women together to rebuild their lives through the production of handicraft items, the profit from which goes into the local community. Alex and Lyndon returned with a beautiful handmade silk bokhara-style carpet she had given them, trusting that someone called Alex from Hong Kong would someday forward the money to her in Afghanistan.

The forum officially finished on Friday, so the next day the yogis spent the day (brilliantly sunny for the first time) enjoying the exquisite beauty of the surrounding countryside, not to mention three substantial meals. We had a lovely long footsoak in a playful river in the hills close to the Great Wall.

The following day was Sunday - Shri Ganesha Puja day, so we all shifted into a small hotel in Beijing and began preparations for this auspicious event. The venue for the puja was an unopened restaurant - large private room, perfect. The sixteen of us set up with such joy and the altar looked beautiful with a large photo of our glorious Shri Mataji holding a fan smiling and down at us (a gift from Dale in Sydney). What a puja! Such strong vibrations and lively bhajans, we could have sang all night. Lots of photos were taken of the altar at the end, it was like being in Cabella. It was a wonderful night and such an auspicious beginning to what was to follow. When She was told about the puja, Shri Mataji was very pleased and exclaimed "That's it! That's a wonderful start".

Monday was a day of maya and bureaucratic entanglement for all the yogis. The vibrations of Beijing were very heavy especially in the Agnya and many of us had dull headaches. Because Shri Mataji had been invited to attend the UN-FWCW She was allowed only to stay at an allocated hotel. It turned out to be a very good hotel with most helpful staff who were, for the duration of the conference, completely under the control of the security police. It was only with the permission of these individuals that we could even consider holding any sort of public event for Shri Mataji in the hotel. So negotiations through these obstacles took a whole day and required our greatest powers of diplomacy, not to mention witnessing. However, at last we received permission from the head of the secret police to hold a public reception/programme for Shri Mataji. The floor of Her room was also under tight security and only Forum or Conference delegates would be allowed access. The great connection that became apparent through this drama was the Conference Liaison Officer at the hotel, one Mr Chen, a lecturer of English in a Shanghai University. He became increasingly helpful and was truly a Godsend.

The following morning we went to the Jing Guang hotel to transform Shri Mataji's suite from a very dull collection of boring furniture into a beautiful abode for the Goddess, with flowers, artifacts and colourful cushions as well as the silk Afghanistani carpet which Shri Mataji graciously accepted as a gift from the Hong Kong yogis.

Our trip to the airport with flowers and eager faces turned out to be a dress-rehearsal, as no one informed us that Shri Mataji was now arriving the following day. An unannounced strike by Alitalia in Milan created a drama that began in a specially chartered light plane and a bumpy trip over the Alps to Zurich to try and connect with the Swissair flight to Beijing. With great inauspiciousness Swissair would not wait the ten minutes it would have taken for Shri Mataji to board the flight. Shri Mataji was forced to stay overnight in Zurich (although much to the delight of the Swiss yogis) then travel the following day to Frankfurt to take a Lufthansa flight direct to Beijing.

Wednesday 13, September found us all at the airport again. A moment of panic when we couldn't see the Lufthansa flight on the arrivals board. The flight had arrived early. Mr Chen worked it so that Alex and Herbert could actually go inside to meet Shri Mataji and help Alganesh with the luggage. After more than two days of travelling Shri Mataji emerged through immigration, radiant, relaxed and beautiful. A glorious sight for Her anxious children. What a momentous occasion, the Lotus Feet of Shri Mataji on the earth of China once more. She graciously accepted our flowers and then travelled straight to the Conference site with half an hour to spare.

The yogis arrived to find Shri Mataji sipping tea in the VIP Room chatting with the other delegates. She looked so fresh, not a crease on Her beautiful deep blue sari. The event began with the six speakers along a table facing the audience of about 200. Shri Mataji was respectfully introduced as the second speaker. She read the 14 page speech She and Sir CP had written, graciously thanking the Chinese government for hosting the event and then enthralled the audience with Her words of wisdom and hope.

The speech begins, "This is, beyond my imagination, the most glorious time in the history of the world, that at this time we are so much aware of the problems of women". She compared the women in the world and said "that unless and until you bring about a new culture by which women from the East and women from the West can both rise in their own esteem and express themselves in such a way that they create high moral standards for their society, women neither in the East nor in the West will rise to their full stature of feminine speciality." Shri Mataji criticised the Swiss banks and the corrupt officials at the receiving end of UN aid who take the money raised for poor children and women. This was applauded loudly by the audience.

Then Shri Mataji told them of the only solution to the world's problems and described Sahaja Yoga. The talk went for far longer than any of the other speakers, although Shri Mataji didn't read the entire prepared speech. (Later Shri Mataji jokingly told us that Her husband, while helping with the speech said "You never read anything, how do you know all this?" She replied that She was just born like that.) Some of the others spoke aggressively of the problems faced by women in areas of conflict and several referred to Shri Mataji's solution for world peace. One woman in particular was very impressive. She is Marta Benevides from El Salvador, and later Shri Mataji said she is born-realised and must become a Sahaja Yogini.

Shri Mataji discreetly sent a suggestion to the yogis that some of us ask questions during the open time. We simply expressed our interest in Mrs Srivastava's solution for global peace and asked Her to describe more about the Kundalini. In Her final minute of response Shri Mataji told the audience a little more about Sahaja Yoga. One could sense a real interest in, and respect for, Shri Mataji's message.

At the conclusion Shri Mataji was warmly congratulated by many people as She passed through the audience. She took people's hands and gave Realisation and spoke warmly to quite a few people. One lady, a UNICEF delegate from the Philippines asked us to "thank Her for touching me, I feel wonderful". The event was covered by India TV and also an Italian news crew.

During the afternoon, in Her hotel room (which She so sweetly admired), Shri Mataji spoke enthusiastically about the Conference and discussed the other speakers. Much to our delight She agreed to our suggestion of bhajans to commence the programme, and was surprised to hear we had brought harmonium, guitar and dholak from Hong Kong just in case. She rested briefly before coming downstairs.

A large, elegant-function room in the hotel was prepared with chairs and flowers and we managed to hire a professional video guy to film it all. By 7.30 about 40 people had arrived, mostly Chinese, invited from the NGO at Huairou, some officials from the Ministry of Culture the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a number of press reporters plus the secret police. Many of the seekers had travelled long distances from other provinces, some by bicycle. The Cultural Attache, Professor Sun, had received his Realisation in Austria last year and had met Shri Mataji there. She warmly welcomed him. Alex and Albert gave a brief introduction and then joined us for three bhajans. Half way through Vishwa Vandita Shri Mataji arrived, looking so beautiful in a sari that defied description. The programme was perfect in every way. Shri Mataji spoke for over two hours (the master copy has been sent) - a beautiful talk full of stories and humour. She spoke of Lao Tse and his description of the Yangtze River which Shri Mataji Herself has travelled. Describing its beauty, She said She had sat outside on the deck for twelve hours just taking in the splendour of the scenery. She praised the Chinese many times, drawing on similarities between Chinese and Indian cultures. Everyone laughed as Shri Mataji criticised Hilary Clinton for defending the rights of women to have as many children as they want - the problem is children don't want to be born in America, but choose China and India, leading to over-population. She told so many funny stories, and then patiently listened to, and answered many questions. One lady asked what the connection between Lao Tse, Shri Buddha and Shri Mataji was. At the end everyone had felt the cool breeze without the realisation process. Then the audience wanted Shri Mataji's autograph and to be photographed with Her, so for about 20 minutes She obliged them. It was very innocent and sweet and touched Shri Mataji's heart. She was so happy with the program, the first in China.

Perhaps the most astonishing aspect of the day was the fact that Shri Mataji had arrived after travelling for three days. She had attended two three hour programmes, She had waited while Her official UN pass was prepared, She had welcomed all the yogis personally, had given Realisation, met numerous people, had absorbed all the difficult vibrations of Beijing (yes, it was a city transformed - our headaches disappeared) - in all these She had been the perfect loving Mother, Guru, Diplomat, Scientist, and more. Our sense of awe was beyond words.

During the following two days much discussion was had with Shri Mataji concerning the best way to spread Sahaja Yoga in China. All along it has felt so important to establish Sahaja Yoga through the official channels, observing all the necessary protocol. Shri Mataji said that when Sahaja Yoga does take off in China it will be like fire, but the initial ignition is extremely important. The accompanying political and social transformation would be gradual and gentle. She has put a lot of attention on the Premier, Mr Li Peng, whom Shri Mataji and Sir CP had met in the 1970's. The famous photo of him standing between the Srivastavas was forwarded to him with a letter urging him most respectfully to take the opportunity to meet with Shri Mataji again. However during such a brief visit, and understanding the convoluted and time consuming labyrinthian ways of the official channels, nothing could be arranged. Our new friend and ally, Mr Chen, reported that his superiors, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, were extremely pleased with their initial impressions of Sahaja yogis and particularly with everything Shri Mataji said. It seems that since the unfortunate Tiananmen Square incident in 1989, Mr Li Peng has faced growing unpopularity, and is feeling isolated politically. Shri Mataji's constant praise of him is an extremely diplomatic move and will pave the way for a future relationship. Interestingly Li Peng is the adopted son of the late Premier Zhou En Lai, a great and noble figure during the madness of the Cultural Revolution.

Within China the official decree is a total ban on anything spiritual so Shri Mataji suggested that we organise a medical conference and make a submission to the Ministry of Health to assist in official recognition of Sahaja Yoga. She mentioned all the doctors in Australia as being able to help and participate. We will need all the support of our brothers and sisters from Australia and around the world for this type of conference. It may be possible to start by applying to various conference organising committees for the inclusion of Sahaja Yoga in coming events. Some scientific and medical conferences and congresses do include an alternative treatments section. To date there is World Epilepsy Congress scheduled for April 1996 in Beijing. Professor Rai's findings on the treatment of epilepsy could be presented.

Shri Mataji asked Lyndon to stay in Beijing and gave him a lot of advice for his job interviews. Lyndon came to ask for Shri Mataji's blessings before he went for an interview at a Japanese school. For an amazing half hour, Shri Mataji gave him a crash course in Japanese culture. She taught him the correct protocol for an interview, as well as some phrases in Japanese. She told him everything he needed to know. What questions to ask, all about Japanese garden, hobbies, the economy. She changed his hairstyle and suggested he wear Alex's dark suit, tie and shoes. He has since then been offered a teaching position in one of the Universities there. The pay is not good, but he may be able to do some private teaching as well. There are several very keen new yogis in Beijing and some informal, low key programmes have been held already, usually in a quiet corner of a large park. There is also a French yogini studying Mandarin who arrived in Beijing only days before Shri Mataji's visit. So there is a collective in China!

The handful of shops that Shri Mataji patronised over the two free days are probably still recovering from the shock. Shri Mataji purchased carpets, embroidery, pottery, cloisonne, paintings, silk and jewellery. In total about 900 kilograms of Chinese arts and crafts. Wherever She went the shopkeepers and salespeople filmed and photographed Her, then queued humbly to receive their Realisation. Shri Mataji purchased gifts for members of Her family and for Sahaja Yogis. To our delight, She bought something for Herself, a simple and inexpensive white jade necklace which Shri Mataji said She would wear to the programme in Moscow. Alex says that in all the years of shopping with Shri Mataji this is only the second time She has bought something for Herself.

In a large department store, a sweet young salesman began telling Shri Mataji of a poem he had read about the Goddess Niranjana riding on a tiger. Later, Shri Mataji blessed Herbert's two week-old baby girl (still in Brazil) with this name. In a silk shop there was a team of five salespeople frantically measuring and cutting lengths of silk, unable to keep up with Shri Mataji's selecting. The most glorious moments that stretched the days into lifetimes. Sitting in a huge silk carpet shop among piles of beautiful carpets, while Alex and Alganesh (a formidable team, almost equal to one Vinay) told the store manager how much profit he was allowed to make, Shri Mataji spoke about the *bija* mantras and repeated them over and over to us... We learned so much about shopping, qualities of carpets, pearls, terracotta, how the average calculator cannot keep pace with the brain of the Adi Shakti. And everywhere Shri Mataji would conclude by saying, "Now I am going to give you a gift, something you cannot pay for...", kundalinis would dance, vibrations flow and smiles of peace shine on all faces.

Perhaps it was our desire that kept Shri Mataji with us an extra day, but eventually even that day ended. The following morning the Hong Kong plus collective gathered in Shri

Mataji's sitting room. A small aarti was done and Shri Mataji lovingly gave all the ladies gifts of brooches and earrings, matching the right colour with the right girl, and then a huge pile of Swiss chocolate for everyone.

The airport was totally chaotic with thousands of UN and NGO people leaving. One of the most significant events of Shri Mataji's whole visit occurred here. The Central TV station had a film crew and were interviewing delegates as they proceeded to immigration. Amidst the hustle and bustle Shri Mataji was asked for her views on the Conference. She expressed Her gratitude and once again praised the Chinese, quoting Tagore that She had left Her heart in China. That evening the interview was broadcast nationally (remember there are over 1.2 billion people in China). As the credits rolled, Shri Mataji's face filled the screen. This is a subtle yet highly potent message of approval from the media who, due to the tight control exercised by the government, can only approve or condemn something through subtle actions.

Shri Mataji did a little more shopping in the airport just before boarding the Aeroflot plane. Alex amazingly was able to accompany Shri Mataji right into the plane where he helped Her into Her seat and took Her darshan, reluctantly slipping away as the doors started to close. As always, during the poignant sadness of farewelling Shri Mataji, there is that irreplaceable feeling of the joy of our brothers and sisters eagerly anticipating Her arrival in their country.

So, dear brothers and sisters, it is with great joy that we can convey these wonderful events. Shri Mataji was very happy the Hong Kong yogis were able to travel to Beijing and take part in Her visit. She was also extremely pleased with the generous support from the Australian collective. Our heartfelt thanks to you all, particularly our brothers and sisters in Cairns who donated one thousand dollars, and to our sisters all over Australia who sent (at the eleventh hour) more than three thousand dollars. Please keep Asia on your shoebeating list and in your attention, as we welcome such a huge part of Shri Mataji's creation at Her Lotus Feet.

The yogis of Australia send love and thanks to Alex and the yogis of Hong Kong for the great work they did in arranging Shri Mataji's very successful trip to Beijing and our thanks to Katie for telling us all about it.

Additional Copies of Shri Mataji's address at the Inter-Regional Round Table, 4th World Conference on Women, are available by contacting Deborah Keetley at Burwood (02) 7474 835