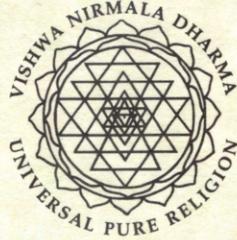


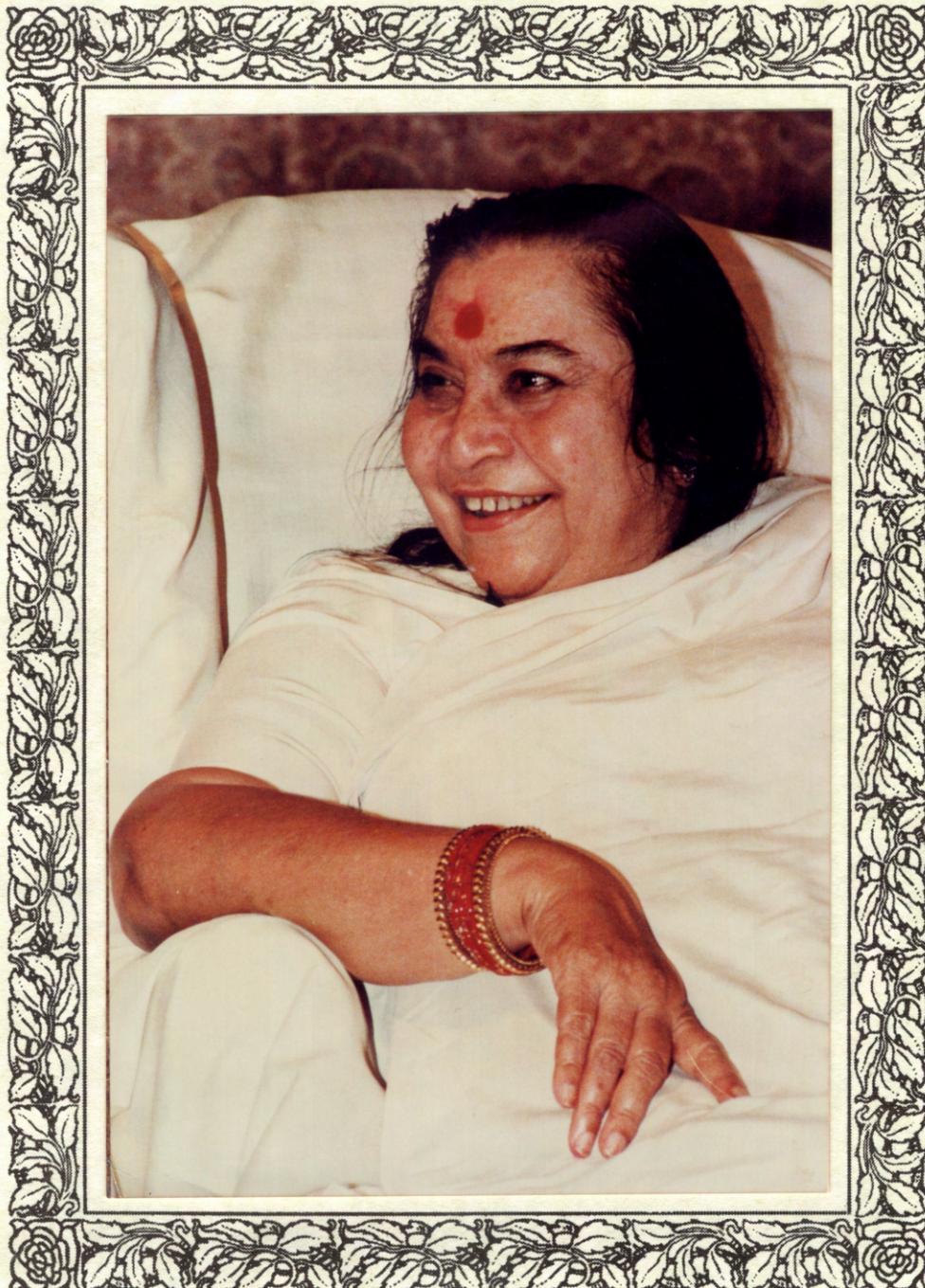
The Divine Cool Breeze

Volume 13, Nos. 3, 4 and 5



March, April and May 1999

International Newsletter

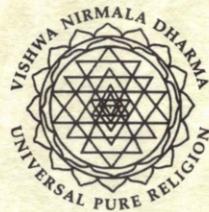


"Now Sahaja Yogis have to live for others, and not for themselves. They'll have all the energy, they'll have all the support, and they'll have all the blessings."

—Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, Adi Shakti Puja, Canajoharie, New York, USA, June 20, 1999

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॥ Aum Shri Nirmala Devi, Namoh Namah ॥

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Invitation to Shri Adi Shakti Puja

Param Puja Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi,

Out of the highest realm of Divinity You have come on this Earth only because of Your infinite love, compassion and benevolence. Your powers, which created all the universes, are insurmountable. Your completeness is such that everything that exists, that has existed, shall exist and also that exists for ever is contained in Your indescribable being. Despite that, Oh Supreme Mother, out of Your immeasurable love, You have assumed a form which is similar to ours, only to give us guidance, protection, salvation.

In spite of being the Most Powerful, the Most Complete, the One Who contains everything, O Beloved Mother, You have granted to Your children the opportunity of offering Puja at Your Lotus Feet, only for our own benefit.

On this auspicious occasion when, for the first time You have allowed us to worship Your most complete form—the Adi Shakti—in the Americas, we most humbly and respectfully invite You to be with us and guide us in this task.

Humbly,

Your children from the Americas



Shri Adi Shakti Puja 1999

Synopsis of Talk, Canajoharie, New York, June 20, 1999



IT IS SUCH A GREAT PLEASURE to Me to see you all assembled here in such a far-fetched place, away from the madding crowd. Such a beautiful place, and which has vibrations. I selected this place suddenly from a very small advertisement in a very thick American newspaper. The vibrations were just shooting out.... I said, 'This is the place where we have to go. This place has so many vibrations, even in the advertisement.'

"So you can imagine how the guidance comes. It comes from vibrations.... This place was selected by the Divine force. It happened only in one day. Such a miraculous thing to happen in one day... and we are now here in the most beautiful atmosphere."

The red Indians were driven out and came here to hide so that they would not be destroyed for ever. Now the era of domination and conquest is over. Human understanding has evolved and they know that the domination was sinful, that what they did was wrong.

"But those people are no more, and the children and the grandchildren... of these people, who were the children of God they used to think, do not like all that because you have no right to take somebody's land like that and occupy it as your own. Of course the land doesn't belong to anyone. But still, wherever you are born, that's your land and that land has to be kept with those who are born here, who own it. This kind of aggression has been going on for ages now. Now the time has come to finish this.

Another kind of aggression now is that they enter into the minds of people now, through their talk, through all kinds of aggressive attitudes. "The mind itself becomes a slave." In these modern times, people have no freedom to think what is right and wrong, and to take to right things. The popular culture pushes them "to accept whatever is happening around, whatever is immoral, whatever is destructive.... Still I think we do not have sufficient number of Sahaja Yogis who can oppose all these adventures of modern times."

The false gurus are also very aggressive, especially in America. America is really cursed that way because it had money so all the crooks came here to loot the rich people. To have money itself is not a blessing. This kind of exploitation is much more dangerous because the mind gets ruined.

Many seekers have been ruined completely. "I hope they are born again and get their self realization." The seeking is there, but all kinds of obstacles and temptations have come, and so despite all that earnest, honest seeking, they have fallen into traps. "I cannot explain why should it have happened, but it has happened."

You feel very miserable and unhappy about these seekers, but so many have achieved their realization, and you have achieved your realization. "You are there—saved now—and in this last judgement you have risen from that level to this new level, where I am sure you will be able to salvage many more."

"Each person can salvage at least thousand people." If you try that, it would be a very great emancipation for this world. The first duty of



every Sahaja Yogi now is to save others, to talk about Sahaja Yoga, to work out Sahaja Yoga in different places." Some yogis are trying to work with abused children. In India, they are working in prisons, armies. "You can enter into all kinds of activities, into all kinds of aggressed places and save people."

The first problem in the West, especially in America, is that the innocence is under attack. This is very dangerous because the children get this mutation at a very young age. What will happen to them? We have to think of what we can do to save them. "The concern has to now go from yourself to others."

"You got your realization alright. You corrected yourself. You are absolutely perfecting yourself. All this is there. But now what is to be done? For what is this light enlightened here? It is for others. So now Sahaja Yogis have to live for others, and not for themselves. They'll have all the energy, they'll have all the support, and they'll have all the blessings."

How we live for others is to have concern about everything—about the Mother Earth, about your neighbours, about the people who are suffering all over the world. "We have to understand fundamentally that unless and until transformation takes place, we cannot change this world."

"So it's your duty, it's your job to transform other people and tell them what is Divine love. Love is the only way now we can work out.... This Divine love is so great and so powerful, at the same time so very gentle." In nature, trees grow because every leaf gets the sunshine. "We have to learn so much from the nature because nature is bound with that love. Nature has no aggressiveness. It is just under the complete control of the Divine love."

With this understanding, you should know



Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, Adi Shakti Puja 1999

how your attitude should be towards others, how you should talk to them, how you should express your love. "This is quite possible now. It's not difficult. You should not be afraid, not feel shy, but in a sweet manner you can talk to them, you can communicate with them, you can tell them. Because this was the time. This was to happen. That's the reason Adi Shakti had to come. Without Her it would not have been possible."

All the other incarnations were there to work out a particular chakra, at a particular time, in a certain group of people. "They did try and they worked it out, but it didn't really work in the real sense of the word. So Adi Shakti had to come, who has all of them with Her."



Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, Adi Shakti Puja 1999

All these various aspects of the Divine are with us all the time, "wanting to help you to do everything that you want to achieve." Their holy vibrations support you in every kind of good work you want to do, any Sahaj work you want to do. They guide you, support you, love you. Once people start working for Sahaja Yoga, they are blessed from every angle. "So one has to decide in their own minds, that all your dreams have to come true."

The only thing you have to know is that your purpose of life is to spread Sahaja Yoga. Sahaja Yogis used to write to Me, "Mother, this is happening to me... my father is like that." but now very few do this. "I think they are all being perfected."

"It's a very unique time where there's light everywhere.... It is to be just understood and

felt, that you are something very special and that you have all the help." Every one of you—as if the whole ocean is there to help you to swim over, to save so many. You haven't seen such an ocean where there is so much depth and all the waves try to save you, to make you float in the realm of joy."

"All this has happened to you because there is a purpose." It is not only because of punyas from previous lives, but because the result is that you are now capable of giving realization to others.... All the way you have come here in this wilderness. From this wilderness only, you will rise and you will bless all the people."

Especially America should be blessed because it's the Virata, it's Shri Krishna's land. People always try to copy what Americans are doing. If you get the blessings of the various lotuses within yourself, this will be given to them. Now it is important to find out what you have done and what you can do. "When you meditate, you think about yourself, how much you have grown, what have you done, what have you given to others. Whatever you have got, unless and until you distribute it, it won't increase. That is a fundamental law. And that works."

Many realized souls are very good and know a lot about Sahaja Yoga, but are not yet confident or deep. "All this is only possible if you yourself get into creating new Sahaja Yogis... not for popularity but for their good and for the good of the whole."

"I was asked that I should come and stay in America so America will improve very much. So now here I am. I came here, I stayed here and I have definitely put in all My attention because

it's a very, very important chakra."

This country is sometimes doing very stupid things. You do not need to go into politics or form any kind of opposition group. But you have to know that your thoughts, your desire have powers. "Try to experiment with it." Then you will see how your attention works things out.

"I'm sure it will work out." America can help emancipate all of humanity, but it is going the other way around. American culture is such that people say something and do something else. They have no proper traditional value system which is accepted by everyone. "The value system is so convoluted, so twisted, that it's only a Sahaja Yogi, by his nobility, by his greatness, can disentangle these people. They have funny ideas and those funny ideas should not deter you, should not stop you, for you know that they are stupid, they are destructive and they will destroy all the good qualities."

"You should know that the responsibility of Americans is much greater than the responsibility of any other Sahaja Yogis because they are accepted and regarded as the most competent people, as the most effective people by the Divine power." Divine power thinks that you can do so much. If you have full power, but the machinery doesn't work, what is the use of the power? "It is working, it is spreading, but we have to double our efforts."

Some sort of social work would be good, so that many people will become aware of Sahaja Yoga. We have achieved a lot on a subtle level, and can still achieve much more, "but we should come out of it and think what can we do on the surface so that people see what Sahaja Yoga is, and what it can do to people."

"It's your personal behaviour, your collective behaviour, your national behaviour—all are

going to change the atmosphere which is supposed to be superficial so that also becomes subtler.... If you are really facing the Adi Shakti, then you must know your powers are boundless. You have to just assert those powers. It is not a stationary power. There's a movement in it and there's a right type of a movement. It knows where to enter, how to work it out.... Now you have faith in yourself and decide about it."

The American Sahaja Yogis needed a place to meet, and Canajoharie was found. It was achieved so easily. "In the same way, whatever on a subtler level you desire, it becomes a terrific force which moves by itself, which knows where to go, how to enter, into which area, and it gets the thing done. It's something you all should experience and work it out with full confidence. It is the love that we have, the concern we have." This is the power that has given us self realization and this enrichment of achievements.

When you see how quickly the Canajoharie construction was done, you should realize what we are capable of achieving. "When you think of so many people who are lost in the mire of ignorance, we should really feel from inside that concern and that hankering. 'How can I help these people?' And you will be amazed, once you think like that, how this Divine power, this force will come in. Forget about petty things and petty problems. They are nothing. You have such a powerful thing behind you."

"It's true that all this universe was created... and then you were created... but the greatest thing this power has done is to create Sahaja Yogis... those who have the pure knowledge, and those who have the Divine love in their heart. What a tremendous personality it is, just think of that, and you will get all these opportunities to express that love. May God bless you." ■



Sixty-Four Powers of Shri Adi Shakti

On the Occasion of Shri Adi Shakti Puja,
Canajoharie, New York, June 20, 1999

Fifty-four adorations were offered to Shri Mataji by the U.S. collective for Adi Shakti Puja. Shri Mataji reviewed and edited them, and added the last ten Herself.

After each name, say together, "Shri Adi Shakti Namoh Namah."

1. Shri Adi Shakti, You are the Principle that created the fourteen *bhuvanas* of universes; You are beyond our comprehension.
2. The AUM is Your Sound which resonates Your Three Powers throughout the universe.
3. The Joy of Your Attention—*chitvilas*—is expressed in all Your Creation.
4. In the Play of the Divine, God Almighty acts by Your Powers.
5. The Breath and Desire of Shri Sada Shiva are One with You.
6. The Paramchaitanya, which is your power, makes the stars and the heavens ring with joy for the delight of Shri Sada Shiva.
7. Indeed, You are the Source of Cosmic Energy. This Power radiates from You as the Finest Ethers of Divine Love.
8. Beyond matter, beyond consciousness, the Grace of Adi Shakti is where reality can be known.
9. You are the Ineffable, the Immeasurable. We call You *Pneuma*, Divine Breath, the Living Waters, yet You are so much more than this. Only the Deities have the Darshan of Your Greater Powers.
10. God Almighty in His Dance unifies with Your Complete Power as Shri Adi Shakti.
11. You are the Primordial Power of the Holy Spirit that mothered Shri Jesus.
12. You are the Creatrix, the Feminine Creative Energy that sustains the Peace of God Almighty.
13. Through Your Mahalakshmi Power, we experience the Timeless Peace of the Fourth Dimension.
14. Shri Adi Shakti, You enable God Almighty to do His Sacred Work. Verily, You are the Most Sublime Power in the cosmos.

- 
15. God Almighty takes charge in a way swift and surprising if anyone acts against Shri Adi Shakti.
 16. Shri Ganesha, Your first creation, resonates in the carbon atom, the essence of life. May He reawaken innocence and wisdom in the very cells of humankind.
 17. You created the World of the Divine, and the World of the Evolving. May our Evolution merge with this Divine Play.
 18. O, Adi Shakti, Evolution is the force that gives rise to Your Divine Play in the lives of humanity.
 19. The Adi Kundalini formed the primordial chakras, and opened the doors to the unfolding of life.
 20. It is You who created the Kundalini of our Mother Earth.
 21. The simplest flower has its fraction of You, the grandest tree has its share as well.
 22. All Nature's Creatures are Yours, From the Beauty of Mother Earth's Green Sari to the Majesty of the Tiger and the Lion.
 23. The Gravity of Mother Earth, and of all Your Heavenly Spheres, is controlled by Your Power Magnificent.
 24. Your Power, the Paramchaitanya, adjusts nature and its elements, and its all-pervading power opens us to Your Benevolence.
 25. Shri Adi Shakti is the Artistic Creator of the Mother Earth and those who respect the Mother Earth are loved by you.
 26. Shri Adi Shakti, the Land of Vishuddhi is one aspect of Your Vast Creation. You will raise the Vibrations to transform the people of this land.
 27. The native peoples of America worshipped Adi Shakti as the Great Mother, and they respected the land as sacred. May this attitude return to all others who live here and enjoy the land's bounty.
 28. The mystery of living processes is Yours and Yours alone, and cannot be duplicated by any personality. Let humanity be aware of this.
 29. O, Ritambarapragnya, You are One of the Powers of Shri Adi Shakti—You are the Power of all living work.
 30. You regulate and organize all life.
 31. You came, Shri Adi Shakti, as *Surabhi*, the Divine Cow—emerging from the *Vishnuloka* at Gokul, where Shri Krishna had His Childhood.

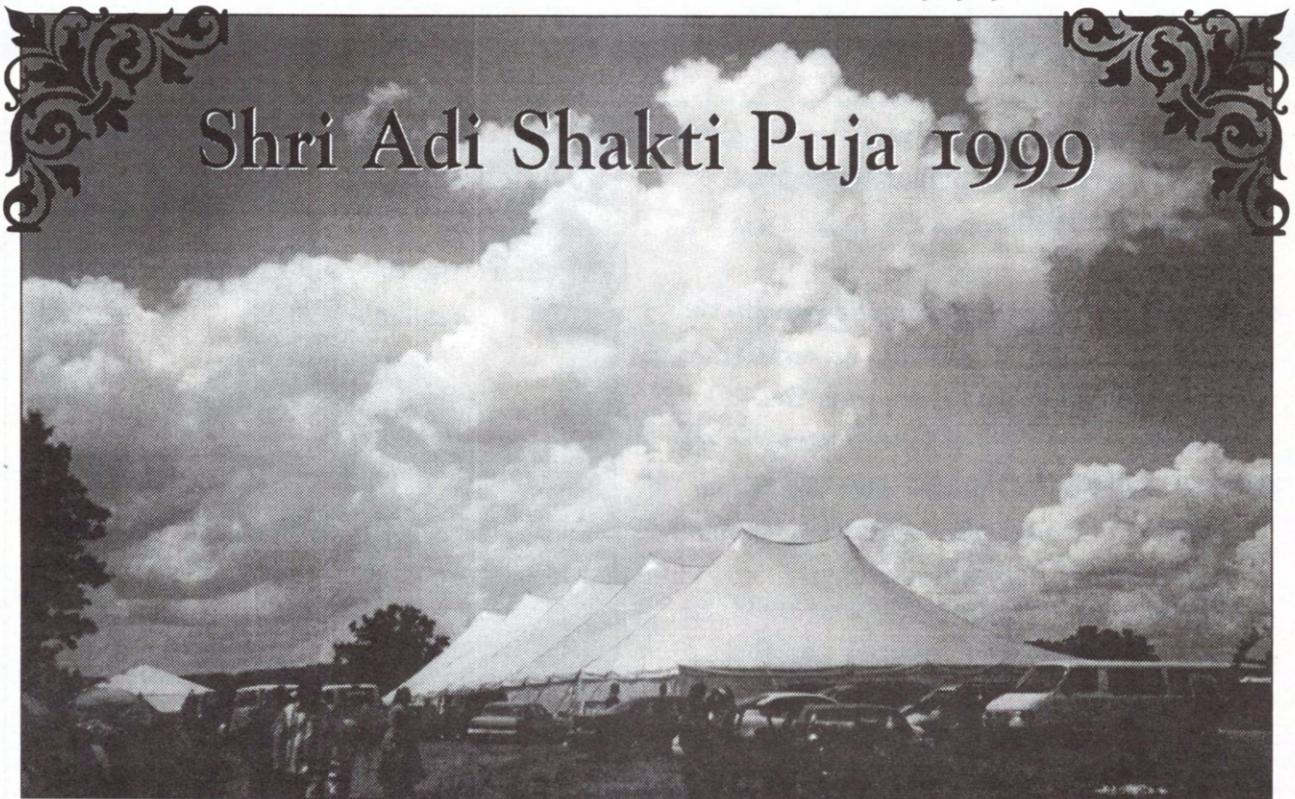


Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, Adi Shakti Puja 1999

32. Shri Adi Shakti, let the feminine qualities of the Sahaja Yognis manifest through the beauty of meditation, surrender and self-esteem.
33. You give to women the Regal Gentleness of *Shaleenata* to care for their families and to be the preservers of society.
34. Your Quality of *Sharada Devi* gives authority over the truth, art, music and drama.
35. You also came as *Sati Devi*, establishing a Royal Dharma to which we aspire.
36. O *Vag Devi*, Goddess of Language, You give inspiration to the great poets and saints.
37. Shri Adi Shakti, to describe You is the work of poets and saints who awkwardly try to embrace a mystery on the horizon.
38. You are *Para Shakti*, the power beyond all powers.
39. Give us, O Adi Shakti, greater humility so that we can gain some small glimpse of Your Glory.
40. Make us like the Sufis and the Gnostics—adoring You at every moment.
41. Your power of Mahalakshmi bridges over the Void to allow the Kundalini of the seekers to ascend.
42. Thank You, O Adi Shakti, for the seeking which brought us to Sahaja Yoga. You now lift up humanity into the Omega of the Last Judgment.
43. We pray that Adi Shakti's Love continues to protect all the saints and seekers around the world.
44. Shri Adi Shakti, Your Work is greater than any. You created the *pithas*, the chakras, nature and humanity, and its subtle workings. May the complexity of Your Work humble us down completely.
45. Your Love gives power to the Bandhan, which directs the vibrations.
46. Your Power of Kundalini brings freedom that is Divine. It is the only true freedom.

- 
47. Flow through us freely. Help us give vibrations to all with Your Photograph of Living Vibrations.
 48. Your *Mahamaya Swarupa* allows us to be near You, and it shields us from the Awesome Might that flows from You.
 49. Shri Adi Shakti, please give us deeper powers of introspection so that we become self-cleansing and self-aware.
 50. You are the Mother who desired that human beings be mirrors for God Almighty.
 51. You have crafted Beautiful Mirrors of the Spirit in the Sahaja Yogis to help redeem humanity.
 52. Your Compassion protects us from the anger of God Almighty.
 53. Through maya, humanity forgot the principles of life. Through Sahaja Yoga, humanity now remembers and absorbs the vibrations of Shri Adi Shakti.
 54. May Your Evolutionary Force bring humanity to the inspired existence of the Golden Age.
 55. You have disentangled us from the clutches of false pride, jealousy, attachment, greed, false identification and violence.
 56. You have incarnated on this earth for the Last Judgement.
 57. You are the Source of Cognitive Science and the Torsion Area.
 58. Whatever human beings plan, You dismantle to destroy their egos. With one subtle movement of Your Finger, You destroy people like Hitler.
 59. You give powerful advice with very subtle humour.
 60. You correct Sahaja Yogis, never by harsh words, but with very loving, gentle affection.
 61. You explain the subtle meaning of all the scriptures.
 62. You expose the falsehood in very direct ways.
 63. You do not know any fear and You give complete security to all Sahaja Yogis.
 64. You respect Your children and love them to make them perfect models for the rest of humanity. You have given Sahaja Yogis sinless fun and a life of complete joy.

*Om Twameva Sakshat Shri Adi Shakti
Namoh Namah*



Camp at Canajoharie, New York, USA, Adi Shakti Puja weekend, June 18, 1999

On the weekend of June 18 to 20, 1999, the first international Adi Shakti Puja seminar took place on Shri Mataji's land in Canajoharie, New York. All was joyous, from the arrival in New York, through the public program and into the weekend of the puja itself. Shri Mataji was radiant, and the impression of the awakening of America (finally) reigned. If some difficulty or apparent obstacle appeared, it was instantaneously reduced to dust by the Paramchaitanya and one arrived at miraculous results in a miraculously short time.

The seminar site is 114 acres of farm land purchased by Shri Mataji nestled in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains, about 90 miles east of Albany, New York, the state capital, and a four-hour drive from New York City. In the space of ten days, the abandoned fields of Canajoharie were transformed into a functional place for puja, with roads, large tents, a kitchen,

portable toilets—there was everything for a yogi's needs. The absence of a village, store or cappuccino in the neighborhood was a true blessing and allowed us all to remain together in the camp and to appreciate the company of each yogi, as well as the incredible vibrations which emanate from the sacred ground of Canajoharie.

During the week before the puja, there was a reception for local leaders from a variety of different types of organizations, including social service agencies. The reception was held in Manhattan in an Indian restaurant called "Nirvana." The people who attended were enthusiastic and receptive. Shri Mataji gave a brief talk and invited everyone present to attend the public program and get their self-realization.

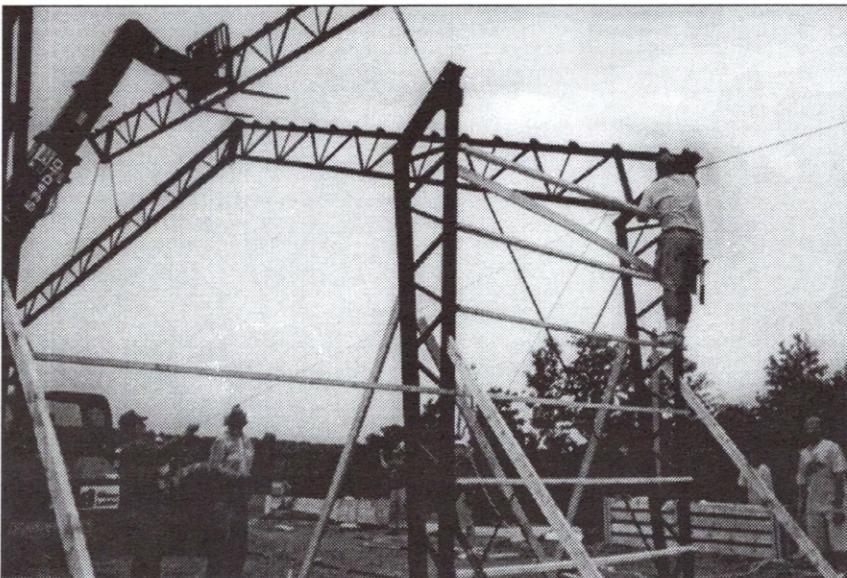
The public program, which took place at Town Hall in mid-town Manhattan on the Wednesday evening before the puja, was strong and deep. It began with miracle slides, then by bhajans and an introduction to Sahaja Yoga, followed by the



arrival of the Adi Shakti Herself. She spoke clearly and directly to the seekers, allowing questions and answers at the end of the meeting. Her divine humour was used to help the seekers to understand the essence of spirituality and the aim of their seeking.

She gave realization in about ten seconds, the hands extended towards Her and with a simple checking above the Sahasrara. Absolutely all the hands were raised when She asked who had felt the cool breeze. She pointed out that She also received a cool breeze from the audience. "Here is what is now New York," She said smiling. The evening finished with encouragement for the seekers to deepen their realization with the notes of *Jogawa*. After a dinner of pizza and ice cream, served with impressive speed to 400 people, the yogis got into the buses for the four-hour trip to Canajoharie in upstate New York.

This seminar brought the international collective together to experience a new dimension of paradise, a realm of gracious beauty called Canajoharie. Its rolling hills and tall grass express the peace and majesty of the creation. The night sky is filled with countless stars, in places so dense that they blur into a band of hazy light across the heavens. Below, thousands of fireflies join in the joyful illumination of the space above the vast dark fields of the countryside. The blue skies and dramatic clouds of daytime, the sometimes strong winds and rain storms, and the clean fresh air of the farm country of northern New York all vibrate with the love, the profound love of Shri Adi Shakti, Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi.



Early in the week before the puja weekend, construction begins on the hangar at Canajoharie.

This land, on which 800 yogis from around the world gathered to worship Shri Mataji, is a most precious gift from our Mother to all of Her children. It represents the fulfilment of a dream held close to the hearts of many, many yogis that someday, by Her Grace, America might become a land of spirituality and a place of pilgrimage for the saints of all the world. On this land, named Nirmal Nagari, She has established a great gathering place for the Sahaja Yogis, very much along the lines of Cabella or Gana-

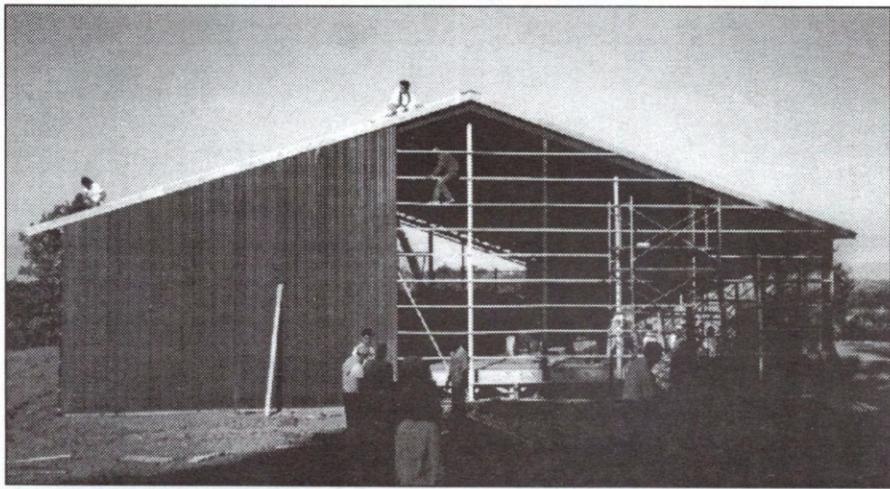
Shri Mataji's Land at Canajoharie, in the Mohawk Valley, New York, USA

The land is called *Nirmal Nagari* (*Nirmala Village*).

The building on the land is called *Nirmal Dam*, the place where *Nirmala* (Shri Mataji) resides.

The road leading to the building is called *Sahaj Marg*, the path or way of *Sahaj*.

Canajoharie is a Mohawk (Aboriginal) word which means *the pot which cleans itself*.



Friday, June 18, 1999. The hangar nears completion!

patipule. Yet in Canajoharie there is a different quality, something uniquely American, perhaps an expression in nature and vibrations of the true America.

Shri Mataji was in New York City for several weeks before the puja, and during this time She gave very detailed and loving guidance in all aspects of the preparation for the puja and the

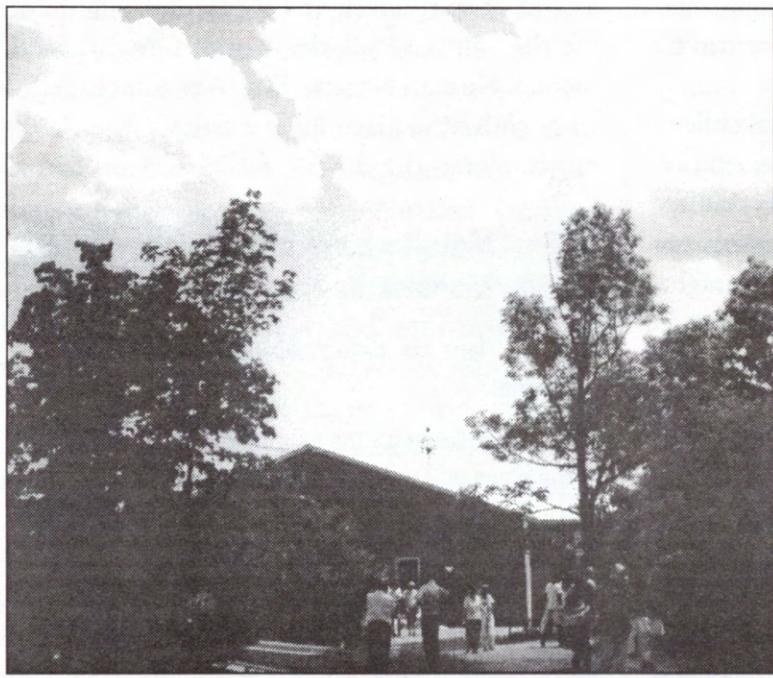
puja site. For example, She described how the stage should be built, where the well should be drilled, how the road should be made and where the hangar was to be placed. She even went shopping in lower Manhattan to buy the pots and pans for the new kitchen. The hangar was purchased a few days after Shri Mataji arrived in North America, but was

delivered the Monday before the puja weekend. With the help of some experienced and some newly-annointed Golden Builders from all over the world, the hangar was miraculously erected in time for the entertainment program that Friday evening.

Shri Mataji was welcomed with fireworks and felicitations by several yogis. Shri Mataji

expressed Her delight with the work that had been done. The evening's entertainment began with a lively performance by Nishat Khan on sitar, which drew more than a few *wa-wa*'s from the audience. The program had started late—around midnight—and it was rather cold. On Saturday, Shri Mataji gave a bandhan and it became warmer. The Saturday program included more skits, several focussing on the Native American peoples, and some excellent musical performances.

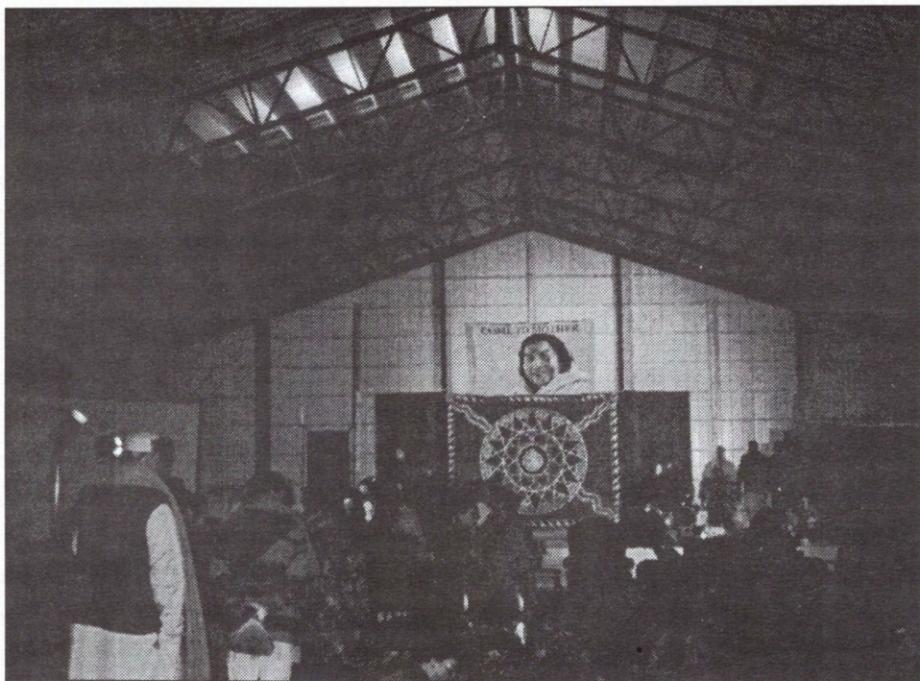
Sunday was a day of sunshine and radiance. The puja preparations went rapidly. Shri Mataji arrived around 2 p.m., glorious in Her crim-



Less than an hour later, the front of the hangar, where Shri Mataji will enter, is completed.



son sari (which perfectly matched the throne built for Her). She gave an inspiring talk, with special attention on the responsibility of the American yogis to spread Sahaja Yoga. The ceremony of gifts at the end of the puja took some time, but it was even longer when Shri Mataji offered a gift to each yogi of the host countries, coming to the stage in age groups. At one point, when men approached to receive gifts (by that time, almost the entire hall was standing up), Shri Mataji proposed that all those who had not received a gift yet and wanted one should come forward. It was one very tender and merry moment to see the yogis, like children, accepting the gifts of their Holy Mother. Then the prasad was distributed, followed by music, with an extraordinary song from an Argentinian yogi living in Chicago. In general, Shri Mataji seemed pleased, as evidenced by the many hours that She spent



Inside the hangar, Adi Shakti Puja

with us over the weekend. At about midnight, we rose to bid farewell to Shri Mataji, our joy-filled hearts wishing it would never end.



Cooking and serving area



As the weekend wound down and people began to leave, the yogis of the host countries reflected again on the significance of this seminar. It seems certain that this puja signals a new era for Sahaja Yoga in the Americas and a new unfolding of the Vishuddhi. Shri Mataji has planted so many seeds on Her tour of North America and blessed this land with the puja of the Adi Shakti Herself! We can hardly imagine what the fruits of this will be.

It was such a tremendous opportunity for the North and South Americans to be together to host Shri Adi Shakti Puja in the USA and to have all our brothers and sisters from around the world come to establish the spirituality of America. We felt the love and concern for America coming from all of the foreign yogis, and many of them expressed their feelings in the form of selfless work, assisting in building the hangar, cooking and many other tasks.

May we all meet again soon on the sacred ground of Canajoharie, at the Feet of the One who has given it to us.

Behind the Scenes—Preparation for Adi Shakti Puja 1999 at Canajoharie

Those who came early to prepare the puja site pitched personal tents on the completely undeveloped land. Soon there were portable toilets, shower stalls and four 1500-gallon (5700 l) water tanks that were filled by a 9,000-gallon (34,000 l) tanker truck that is normally used to fill swimming pools. The leftover water was

emptied into the front pond by the road. This was the same pond that Shri Mataji had predicted would be full before puja, and no one could imagine how it would happen without heavy rains—the Divine knows all!

The water brought in by the tanker was very sweet well water and served our needs quite nicely, but we had instructions from Shri Mataji to drill a well. So the yogis constructed various types of dowsing (divining) rods for locating the best spot to drill. The 25 yogis using various wire and wood dowsing contraptions all located water at the very same spot—about 15 steps from the kitchen. The well was drilled in a couple of days and water was hit at about 90 feet. Throughout we were reminded not to think.

The week before the puja, there was no kitchen and no hangar. Experienced construction workers had come from Australia, Europe and North and South America. The delay of the arrival of the hangar materials until Monday might have discouraged ordinary people, but the yogis put their doubts aside and trusted that with the attention of the Adi Shakti, it would work out. The mood and attitude of the crew and crew leaders was very relaxed and very collective. People were working very hard, but with no stress and no ego about the little things. Everyone just did what they had to do, and bandhans worked amazingly fast. It was amazing to see the second of 12 cross girders being assembled with the assistance of a giant forklift type of machine. The cross girders that were being attached to the



Shri Adi Shakti Herself, on the stage inside the hangar



concrete footings would form the main structure that would accept the metal "skin" of this 60 by 120-foot (18 x 36 m) pendal.

On Thursday morning, the metal skin was being applied to the steel and wood frame at an amazing rate. There was no talk of cancelling the Friday night entertainment program, so work continued as before—steady and hard, without panic. The finishing touches to the kitchen had been applied the day before, which included two brick ovens—one large enough for pizzas—lights and a few electrical outlets. All the cooking was done on wood fire pits, with the large cooking pots supported by three Y-configured brick monuments. The kitchen team was always there



Enjoying the rustic environment of Canajoharie

"As I left Canajoharie, I took a last look at those gracious hills and fields. I bowed down to the Earth and, with all my heart, just thanked Her and Shri Mataji, and that Earth on which I knelt sent back deep waves of love. It's something hard to express, but it is holy ground and, as such, we love it very much... and it loves us back!"

—Steve Wollenberger, USA

with a glass of lemonade or a huge plate of delicious food just when it was needed.

There had to be invisible hands doing the work on Friday, considering how much got done

in such a short time. While the metal skin was being applied to the front of the pendal (the outside wall), the lights and power outlets were being installed for the evening performance. The stage crew built a simple but very sturdy stage, complete with ramps to the front door and to the pendal floor and a handrail providing easy access for Shri Mataji. The rest of the stage—steps in the middle, a bathroom for Shri Mataji—went up so fast it was just a blur of motion, changing radically every time you looked. Outside the pendal, there were trenches being dug for the electrical wiring to the kitchen and decorative lights put up to greet Shri Mataji.

Somehow... just as Shri Mataji said it would, the hangar was ready to receive Her for the Friday night program. We were all amazed that we could be so awake for that night's program, having had so little sleep. We could feel that we were being filled with vibrations, glowing in the presence of Our Holy Mother. ■



Shri Mataji's Canadian Tour 1999

Shri Mataji's Visit to Toronto

THE CANADIAN SAHAJA YOGIS WERE most pleasantly surprised by the news that Shri Mataji would be coming to Toronto before proceeding to the USA. It was a sheer joy to hear that the Adi Shakti would be gracing Canada by Her most auspicious presence! Shri Mataji in Her Divine compassion sent a message to the Toronto collective that though it was 'short notice' to arrange a public program, we should not worry as the results would be unprecedented and we would have more people attending this program than ever before!

Posters were printed and put up all over the city of Toronto and adjoining areas, pamphlets distributed at all the prominent public places, newspaper ads placed and important dignitaries in the public and political arena were sent personal invitations via personal telephone calls, fax or e-mail. Most ministers of the Canadian federal government as well as all the provincial government ministers were informed and invited to the Toronto program as well as to the forthcoming Vancouver program (June 26th). We were even able to get the hotel booking where we had wanted to host our Divine Mother. (The hotel manager actually asked the guests occupying the most prestigious suite in the hotel to "move over" in order to make place for their "valued and esteemed" guest!)

Prior to the arrival of Shri Mataji, it rained continuously for three days, not only in Toronto but also over almost the entire province of

Ontario. The rains were much needed as the lake levels were going down and the authorities were worried! The atmosphere was thus purified and readied by Shri Vishnumaya to receive the Adi Shakti and we were all eagerly awaiting Her arrival.

Shri Mataji arrived in Toronto in the evening on May 25th, 1999. There were about 150 yogis at the airport to receive Her. While waiting for Her luggage in the immigration area, She gave realization to seven customs officials who were then continuously around Her till She left the airport! Shri Mataji was very happy to see so many yogis at the airport and remarked that the collective here had grown a lot and that Sahaja Yoga was spreading quite rapidly in Canada! She also described the loving way in which the Sahaja Yogis of Germany had gathered to welcome Her at the Frankfurt airport (Her stopover on Her way to Toronto). She then received flowers from all those assembled and blessed everyone. As She sat there in Her chair and smiled, our hearts sang with joy and our spirits danced.

The public program was held at the Convocation Hall of the University of Toronto. The sequence of events to take place at the public program was clearly outlined by Shri Mataji; no wonder everything went like a song! There were approximately 1,000 people present in the auditorium, eagerly waiting for the proceedings to begin. The program started at around 7:30 p.m., thanks to the efforts of the Yuva Shakti, who had the venue ready on time. Steven Day played raag Yaman on the sarod and charmed the audience while putting them



into a meditative mood. Then a local Sahaja Yogi very effectively, in 10 minutes, introduced Sahaja Yoga along with an explanation of the subtle system and the chakras. Amazingly enough, just as he concluded his talk, Shri Mataji graced us with Her presence. Everyone stood up to greet Her.

The evening belonged to Shri Mataji. She was in Her element. She communicated the benefits of Sahaja Yoga in a very easy and simple manner, along with a sense of humour, to which everyone responded with spontaneous laughter. The entire talk was full of compassion and Her voice was overflowing with the love and the concern of a Divine Mother. Indeed She manifested Her form as Sakshat Shri Sandrakaruna. Later in Her hotel room She said that She was concerned about the direction in which American society was going. The solution to all their problems, She further continued, was only Sahaja Yoga.

Shri Mataji requested the audience to ask Her questions because She felt they were intelligent people. However She requested that they ask relevant questions only. Shri Mataji, once again, with disarming ease and spontaneity answered

the questions succinctly with Her own brand of humour. On being asked as to who She was, She answered, "Instead of worrying yourself as to who I am, why don't you try to understand who you are? By knowing yourself, shall you know who I am." Jai Shri Mataji!

After the question and answer session (some other questions and answers appear at the end of this article), Shri Mataji mentioned it was time for everyone to experience their Self Realization. What happened next was an unusual experience for most Yogis. We felt cool breeze in the

auditorium and saw the banner behind Shri Mataji moving with the breeze. Shri Mataji did tell the audience She felt the cool breeze coming to Her from the audience. What a blessing! Toronto was really "cool."

Shri Mataji requested the bhajan singers to sing *Jogawa* and explained its meaning to the audience. She requested them to join us by clapping their hands because it increases the vibrations. The auditorium was full of joy and Shri Mataji joined in the clapping. The bhajan reached a crescendo and our joy through vibrations peaked. Silence prevailed for a minute or two and Shri Mataji thanked and blessed every-



Shri Mataji at the airport in New York, July 3, 1999



one. Everyone stood up on Her departure.

The next day Shri Mataji agreed to meet Tamil TV (an ethnic television network with an extensive reach in North America) and talked to them for an hour and a half. They plan to do a documentary on Shri Mataji. They also covered the public program the day before and had got their Self Realization. They were very respectful of Shri Mataji and sat at Her Lotus Feet during the interview. The interview will be broadcast to all of North America and some countries in the Caribbean where there are pockets of ethnic Tamilians, which is a community from the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu. Shri Mataji then departed for the airport. She had a few brief words and bid Her good-byes for now! With the ever beautiful smile, the Divine Mother continued on Her way to meet Her expectant children waiting for Her in New York, USA!

Approximately 100 people attended the first follow-up program. Their sincerity and interest was simply amazing. A four-part follow-up program was scheduled, during which we proposed to gently guide our new brothers and sisters to find deeper meaning of their own selves, their kundalinis already awakened by and in the presence of the Divine Spirit itself!

BOLO JAGANMATA SHRI NIRMALA
DEVI KI JAI !!

—Ashish Pradhan, Toronto



Shri Mataji in Vancouver

THERE ARE NOW 2,500 NEWLY REALIZED souls in the city of Vancouver. After two public programs conducted by Her

Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, a visit to Her House in suburban Surrey and a hotel room press conference, our city has been thoroughly vibrated and blessed by Her detailed attention, unprecedented in the eighteen years since Her first visit here.

Arriving from Chicago on Saturday, June 26th, Shri Mataji gave a public program at the city's major convention centre built over the water of the inner harbour. In this landmark building first constructed as the Canadian pavilion for Expo 86, Shri Mataji addressed the seekers of our city. As She had done in Toronto, New York and Washington, Shri Mataji invited questions from the audience, satisfying all their mental concerns before the gift of Self Realization. One man asked, with the directness of a true seeker, "What is the purpose of life?" "That's simple," Shri Mataji replied, "to become Divine."

Others asked questions revealing their inner anguish and the pains of seeking. Shri Mataji complimented them on their honesty. A young boy in the front row wanted to know how evil comes into us. Another man sought the meaning of the backdrop on the stage behind Shri Mataji. She explained that was only there for decoration. "Everything you see," She cautioned, "but why don't you see the point?" After the public program, Shri Mataji toured the city by car—Stanley Park and the North Shore mountains—to disperse the strong vibrations of the evening.

After very little sleep, Shri Mataji visited on Sunday morning a temple in Burnaby for the second public program. Speaking entirely in Hindi, She told these devotees of Shri Krishna that it should be easy for them to get their Self Realization. The temple's pujari prepared the



way by introducing our Mother with great devotion and recognition. From Burnaby, Shri Mataji travelled to Her house in Surrey, a Sahaja Yoga ashram, where She received all the Sahaja Yogis, had lunch and rested.

In the evening, back at the hotel, a small press conference was held for five journalists, including the editor of Common Ground (the city seeking magazine), a crew from Vision TV (a national religious cable channel) and members of the Vancouver Indian community's press and television. They sat shoeless on the floor before Her. One article was offered to Shri Mataji the following morning for Her approval and correction. It reads as if written by a Sahaja Yogi.

We all feel very blessed by Shri Mataji's great attention upon our city. Every Sahaja Yogi was able to offer Her flowers at the airport at both Her arrival and departure. When She visited the ashram in Surrey, everyone was able to go to Her Feet, offer a gift or discuss a concern. She gave time equally to each of Her children. She said that Paramchaitanya was so pleased that She just wanted to fill the house with vibrations, to just let it flow. And so we were blessed.

—Richard Payment



Questions and Answers

ON JUNE 27TH, SHRI MATAJI HELD A press conference in Her hotel room while visiting Vancouver. Four journalists were present representing Common Ground magazine, U magazine, The Link newspaper and Vision of Fiji television program. Here is a small excerpt.

SHRI MATAJI: You see, what is the trouble with human beings is that they have evolved from the animal, so this evolution is not complete, I think, as human beings also. But whatever it is, all these horrible things that are lingering within us and our personality are also coming from our heritage. Then also because we think too much, we acquire lots of things and our orientation also changes from other orientation like food, but we become sort of great greedy people. We become very money-oriented and the whole system changes to a different line, but these lingering things are still there, so with that also, we have jealousy, aggressiveness. All those things are actually our inheritance. So as a result, you become a person who can see things, who can watch things and not react. That's the greatest benefit I think.

QUESTION: Did you do any work with Gandhi?

SHRI MATAJI: I didn't do work, as such. I was a little child of seven years and I stayed with him and he found out about Me. He knew because he was also a realized soul, but very much full of disciplines and things like that. So people never understood that side of Gandhiji. But he was a very spiritual man and he loved children. If I did any work, I used to take out his temper some time, entertain him. But actually, you see, with him, he wanted Me to find out how he should write the different bhajans. In his bhajanori they had a book, written down all the hymns, so in what series we should write. So according to different centres, I told him that you have to awaken on the centres.

QUESTION: Are we all one being?



SHRI MATAJI: All are connected, but those who are realized souls can feel the connection. But those who are not, do not feel it, but we are all connected. They're all one person, part and parcel of one spiritual being. We can call it God Almighty. We have to be just aware of it. We have not come into our awareness. Once it comes, you know that... and then you are a different personality.

QUESTION: When will things work out?

SHRI MATAJI: It depends on the wish of the people. My wish, that it should happen tomorrow. Why should we waste our life on the non-sensical? Come to our senses. This is what I want, but I'm now travelling, lecturing, talking, but what I feel that at the helm of affairs one should see the point.

QUESTION: Then how do you reach supreme being, God? In other words, is this the route to reach the supreme God?

SHRI MATAJI: Yes, this is, of course. This is Nirvana.

On Saturday June 26th, Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi gave a public program in Vancouver. She invited questions from the audience.

QUESTION: What's the purpose of life?

SHRI MATAJI: To become Divine. Simple. That's a question to be felt within us. What is the purpose of human life? Is to become Divine, part and parcel of the Divinity. Now supposing you are

a father, what do you want your son to become? Happy, enjoyable and also a responsible person. You also want that for your children. Then your great Father, what does He want for you? He wants you to be happy joyous people. Out of ignorance, you are not that, so He wants to remove that ignorance. This is the purpose of our life.

QUESTION: If someone is in a stressful situation and they don't have the opportunity to go and meditate or they don't have a chance to align, what is the best on-the-spot way to raise their vibration so that they can see it from God's point of view, from the point of view of society, in order to properly deal with the problem?

SHRI MATAJI: As I have told you already, it is your fundamental right and, if circumstances do not help you, the whole thing works out, automatically it works out. You get all the opportunities. I have seen many people who had these problems, but they work on it. So believe in this power of love, how beautifully it works it. All right? May God bless you.

QUESTION: [A man from a Vancouver Hindu temple invites Shri Mataji to visit the next day and give a program.]

SHRI MATAJI: Thank you very much. You see, temples, gurudwaras, churches, all these are meant for introducing spirituality, and that's not the end of it. What is the end? End of it is to know yourself, to become spiritually endowed.... I am saying you have to go beyond your mental personality. For that, you have to have Kundalini awakening. ■





New Year's Puja

Synopsis of Talk, Kalwe, India, December 31, 1998



"HEY HAVE ASKED ME TO TALK about Indian culture today because Bombay is the place where Indian culture is disappearing... but I don't think so, because the roots are so deep that we cannot give up that culture so fast."

People coming from abroad must realize that India has never had one particular religion. Indians didn't read just one book or follow just one person; they didn't have the organizations or appointed priests that there have been in other countries. "The whole thing worked out very spontaneously."

But behind all that, the attitude of Indians, our style, was not to challenge or to question what these great saints have given us. Because we accepted their status as saints, as higher personalities. Whatever they said we accepted. That became a way of life."

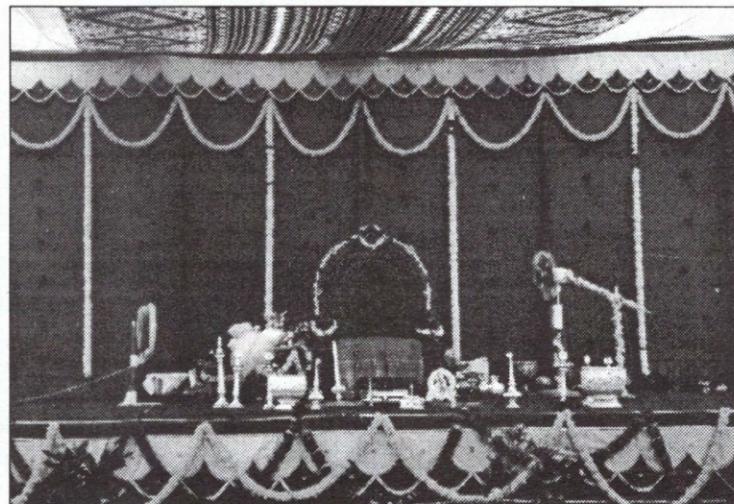
Later on, the caste system developed. Before that, those who wrote about Shri Rama and Shri Krishna were not brahmins yet their writings were never challenged. A brahmin was someone who knew about the Brahma principle, about the all-pervading divine love. But after a while, those who were born in brahmin families were automatically brahmins. People also inherited their fathers' professions. According to profession, the castes were established. Among one caste in Maharashtra, there are only artists. They marry among themselves because it is easier to marry in the same profession and to have the same ideas

and lifestyle. Later on, the British used it very much to separate us one from another.

The great saints in India "all tried to be one with all the castes... so this saintliness was regarded as another caste which did not believe in any caste whatsoever.... They were a casteless people, without any religion. The ultimate aim of every caste was to get self-realization." Through self-realization they would enter into the system of saints. Muslims, Hindus, Jains, Sufis were all put together as saints. They were the people who believed in the ethical life, in the higher spiritual life, and lived like that.

"Now as you are all Sahaja Yogis, you have lost your religion, lost your caste, you have lost your everything! You are Sahaja Yogis. Yogis means you are the people who are believing into the ethical side of life."

In India, the caste system was used for exploitation, segregation, and politics. The ideas about caste became very rigid and people were commonly asked what their religion and



Preparing stage for puja, Kalwe, December 31, 1998

caste was. Now gradually it is vanishing but politicians still try to make use of it. Democracy is not very helpful in this matter, because in a democracy, anyone can start another organization or caste.

When India's constitution was made, Ambedkar wanted there to be a privilege for the Scheduled (lower) castes. "My father was there." He said that the only division should be between the haves and the have-nots, "so that the needs of the people who haven't got the minimum necessities for a good life will be helped instead of creating a caste."

Some people, such as Mandal, created a problem by trying to help downtrodden people in unethical ways. "Because of this problem of creating artificial castes, this country is suffering a lot. The caste of the saints is very much polluted, and we had many people in our country who started becoming gurus."

"The culture of this country was the ethics of dharma. Without that they thought human beings were worse than animals. Ethics was very important to every caste, to every person. But now it has become such a mixture and such a problem, that unless and until Sahaja Yoga really spreads in a real way I don't think we can improve the condition of this country."

"The essence of it is that once your attention is only towards ethics and *Antaratma*, the soul, then you start discovering all the inner deeper meanings of your life. You work it out in a different way." If your attention is towards material gain, then you become like Americans, with very low-level hankerrings.

"The principles of Indian life were imbedded in spirituality, in morality. An immoral person was regarded as a very low level person. Such a person could not get married, he had no place in soci-

ety.... Just to see that the society is kept clean, such a person was thrown out of the society."

Those who drank alcohol were considered adharmic. In the West, when somebody dies, they drink, when someone is born, they drink. It is a very western style of life when openly you sit down at the dinner table before your children and start drinking. Even the worst in India would never do that. "Then the Islamic influence came, and surprisingly when it is absolutely prohibited in Islam to drink, they all started drinking as a reaction."

But still it is not yet a custom to drink to celebrate something. In the church organization they actually make alcohol, such as Benedictine. "This is such a perversion of religion. Indian philosophy is such that it gives you complete freedom and you can do what you like. But not in the name of religion, you can't do it... so it is kept pure."

"Whenever people try to do something adharmic in India, others will stop them. Whatever is pure must be kept pure." Christ hit people who were trying to sell things in the temple. The purity of a religious place has to be maintained. One boy wanted to get married, but he had had a girlfriend before. In India, for him, marriage is now an impossibility. "So the restrictions came from the society, a society which was built up on ethics. And all these ethical values are penetrating... everywhere."

"But unfortunately now the other cultures are coming and people think we are rather rigid, very rigid people. We should really relax a little bit and take to other things. But I have to tell you that if you go out of the line of ethics, in any direction, the only saving is Sahaja Yoga to come back to normalcy, there is no other way."

"And once you come to Sahaja Yoga you can-



not deviate from the path of dharma. If you try to do that you go out of Sahaja Yoga. It is as simple as that. It is not that, 'Alright, doesn't matter, Mother should forgive.' Alright, I forgive, because you have got some still human weaknesses left in you. But in Sahaja Yoga you cannot. Sahaja Yoga has to maintain its purity. If you allow all such people to enter into Sahaja Yoga, then there will be no purity of Sahaja Yoga. Then everybody will start doing this or that just to say that, 'After all, you see, we are also Sahaja Yogis, they are also Sahaja Yogis, if they have done it, why don't we?'"

What is surprising is that the westerners who have taken to Sahaja Yoga are following it very scrupulously. "I am not such a strict Guru, as you know. But they understand one thing, that this is for our betterment, this is for our growth, this is a very, very important part of our lives, that is ethics." And even if they grew up with parents drinking, with friends doing wrong things, they just give it up completely. "I am very proud of them."

For Indians, it is natural to follow dharma because we are brought up that way. We have seen that if people take to wrong things they get corrected. If a boy even looks at a girl, the father would say, "I will pierce through your eyes," and that's why the eyes remain steady.

Among the so-called elite, there may be some nonsensical behaviour starting in the big cities, with girls starting to drink and smoke. "I don't know what is their idea about life. Maybe it's an actress or something they follow, buy what is the life of that actress?"

"When you compromise with your value system, ultimately where do you end?" It's showing results. We have AIDS and other diseases coming from this sort of an unethical lifestyle. "It is



Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, New Year's Eve Puja 1998

happening everywhere to suggest that we should take to very normal life, to very good family life of obedience and understanding."

"Because you are very free in the West it is very difficult for you to accept, but once they come to Sahaja Yoga I am really surprised how they have accepted Sahaja Yoga so beautifully."

Westerners grow up with complete freedom to do what they like. In India, children do not have that freedom. Western children go where they like, do what they like. Teachers cannot correct them. But one good thing has come from this. "So many are lost, alright, but those who are saved are rare people."

The growth of freedom within allows them to learn Indian music in a few months' time. Indians cannot do that "because they are restricted all the time, they are controlled all the time, they are kept on the path of religion. So ultimately the freedom that some of you had and enjoyed has given you a special personality. That you pick up very difficult things without

any effort. Now whether you should have that freedom or not is your own lookout. But too much restrictions on children, I think, is not a good thing." When Ravi Shankar was young, his guru broke a tanpura on his head for playing a wrong note. The gurus used to beat their disciples. "But I think that curbed their capacity to absorb something difficult."

Children who are born with Sahaja Yoga should be given full freedom for they will not do anything wrong. And you will see they will pick up things very fast. Westerners are not more intelligent or alert, but they are given their freedom, their growth, their personality.

Sometimes the westerners appear very vulgar, "but once with that wealth of freedom they come to reality, they shine. So I would request also Indians not to suppress their children too much. We enjoy the children very much in India, no doubt, but we suppress also there, very much. 'Why are you standing? Why don't you sit down?' And children don't mind because it is accepted, this pattern is accepted in India."

"So too much restriction on children also curbs their personality, this is what I have discovered. But the western people go through such hell first of all, develop such problems to begin with and ultimately what happens is this, that they can be discarded as bad people. But if they come as good, they are marvellous. All the freedom they have enjoyed before is showing results; otherwise how can this miracle happen to western people? There is no justification."

"Now the problem is to give freedom or not. We have a proper sense now, after realization, that a child is a born realized. In the beginning he won't understand but gradually such a child will show results, maximum capacity to absorb and to express."

"So today I am telling you about this freedom which is the freedom of the Spirit. We should have understanding of such children who have that spirituality in them. They have dharma in them. And we should not try to constrict them or to trouble them. Let them do what they like. They'll never do anything wrong because they are born realized."

"So I am talking about the future Indians." Some of the children, at a very young age, sing as though they are old musicians reborn. They are born realized, but they have also got their talents from their past lives.

"So we should not try to control and check our children too much, that's a part of our Sahaj culture. It doesn't fit into Indian culture, I must say, but it should fit into Sahaj culture, to understand the value of our children who are realized souls. I enjoy their company, they speak so sweetly of all the things, of all the persons, and they describe about everyone so sweetly. Just allow them the freedom to talk and they'll tell you all kinds of things."

"Now I have praised you a lot, the non-Indians, and it is a fact, the way they have taken to Sahaja Yoga is remarkable. But the way they are taking to this Indian music and to Indian art I really can't believe it. I can't understand it."

"So you have freedom, but now use this freedom for expression of whatever you have achieved in Sahaja Yoga. Because you are already grown up with your freedom and if you do not utilize that personality full of freedom in expressing Sahaja Yoga in your own languages, you won't help your people. Your quality is high. But in your own country your percentage is low. So you have to go all out to get them into Sahaja Yoga and to let them know what they can achieve and what they are. You are duty bound, I think." ■



Reclaiming the Swastika

Have you ever looked up the word, "swastika" at the library? While writing this article, the reference librarian at the New York Public Library was asked about a text about the swastika. Her reply: "Are you researching World War II?" When it was explained that the swastika is one of the most revered symbols of Hinduism and other religious traditions, the writer was sent over to the Fine Arts Division. Things were better there, as the librarian said, "Oh, you're interested in Shri Ganesha and the swastika. He is the son of Shri Shiva and Shri Parvati; here is a reference about it."

As the swastika is such an essential part of life and Sahaja Yoga, understanding its meaning and history is important. The negativity of the Third Reich has affected the awareness in the public consciousness about the swastika—yet the pure truth about the swastika can never be altered. It is the most ancient symbol of humankind and its shape actually imparts the energy of Shri Ganesha. The vibration of the swastika is very powerful and holy, and marks His presence.

The word *Swastika* in Sanskrit derives from *svasti*, meaning "well-being" (*su*—good + *asti*—being). The following is an incomplete list of cultures that have revered the swastika, and

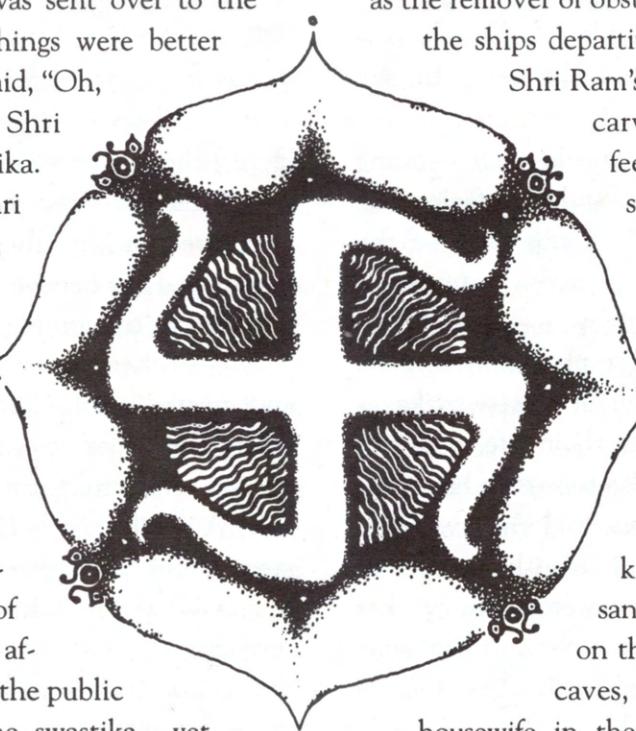
have used it extensively to show auspiciousness or favorable circumstances: India; China; The Myceneans (of Greece); The Celts (of Ireland); also, Ancient Britain and Scandinavia; Ancient Christians of the Middle East; Native Americans; Russia; Japan; and Germany.

The presence of the true swastika (in a clockwise direction) gives miraculous qualities. It acts as the remover of obstacles and as such marked

the ships departing from Lanka to insure Shri Ram's victory. In China, stone carvings of Shri Buddha's feet are often marked with swastikas. Its name there is *wantzu-te* and it represents a benevolent society, the totality of life, and Buddha's heart.

Actually, the swastika is found virtually everywhere humankind has wandered. Thousands of swastikas are painted on the walls of ancient Indian caves, and today the Hindu

housewife in the villages still marks the doorway and walls of her home with it. Ancient Greek coins, Roman mosaics, and even the sewing bobbins of Old Europe have this mark. As the centuries have gone on, the understanding of the swastika became disconnected from people's lives. Sacredness was separated from the activities of everyday life. Nevertheless, the swastika appeared on household goods, clothing, and building columns as a mark of auspiciousness that was less conscious than in the past.





The vibratory quality of the swastika is in its clockwise direction. The counter-clockwise form is not auspicious and has been used in this form for tantric or evil purposes. In many cultures, the swastika became an ornamental symbol (used in either form) as people became less vibrationally aware, and their chakras insensitive to the kundalini. It makes one wonder if the repeated (but unintentional) use of the counter-clockwise swastika eventually brought entire societies down by displeasing the Divine.

The ancient Christians identified the swastika with Jesus Christ and the Sun. In the Apocalypse of John in the New Testament, references are made to four angels, each standing on a fiery wheel-like cross, and each facing one of the four directions. This can only be the divine quality of Shri Ganesha interpreted through Western iconography.

Pre-World War I Western philosophers had a positive understanding about the swastika as representing dynamic growth in life, and as a symbol of Christ. They also took it to be a symbol of the four directions, and the evolution from the animal realm to human life and up to the celestial realms. They were unaware that Ganesha and Christ were aspects of the same principle, and associated with the cross of Christ which is not a truth.

Through Sahaja Yoga, we know that the qualities of Shri Ganesha—innocence and wisdom—reside in living cells on a subtle level. The swastika is also reflected in the spiral shape of the DNA molecule, the building block of life. On an atomic level, the swastika itself is visible in the carbon atom. Shri Mataji has confirmed the findings of Sahaja Yoga scientists who have documented that the swastika (ॐ), as well as the omkara (ॐ), Alpha (α) and Omega (Ω) can be

seen as part of the structure of the carbon atom.

The swastika is not just a representation: it is in itself the presence of life. Before realization, seekers find comfort in messages and symbols. After realization, we feel the blessing of this "symbol" directly on our chakras.

In the land of the Vishuddhi, the Native Americans felt the power of the earth element. The ancestors of the Pueblo peoples of the American Southwest, the Anazazi, depicted swastika designs on their beautiful pottery.

Today the Hopi, their descendants, still tell stories of an ancient migration covering 10,000 years of history throughout the Southwest. The Hopi believe that they as a people came right out of the earth and that they migrated in the four directions in the shape of a clockwise swastika. They believe this shape gave religious meaning to the journey. Their emergence symbolized to them an entrance into a new world and created a longing to return to the world where the "door to the top of the head" was open, a return to the mother.

In Australia, Shri Ganesha's land, sits the great Uluru, otherwise known as Ayer's Rock. A massive red rock formation, it is a Ganesha *swayambhu*, a natural geological phenomenon that emits vibrations. Ayer's Rock was a sacred place for the aboriginal tribes who felt the huge stone formation was alive. Scientists have pinpointed this rock as the oldest fossil record of amoebic life and possibly life itself. The rock is red in color and has magnetic properties.

Shri Mataji speaks about the magnetic and electromagnetic qualities of Shri Ganesha, who is at the core of evolution itself:

"At the level of matter, we might call it electromagnetic, but potentially it is the energy of



Shri Ganesha which is electromagnetic at this point. There it starts evolving, growing. That's how we have different growth of the evolution. In a human being it exists, as you know, as auspiciousness, as purity, mainly the innocence."

Shri Ganesha, the four-armed elephant-headed god, mirrors the swastika in form. His flowing arms and hands are reflected in the words of the Shri Ganesha Song. He is praised here as *Shri Vinayaka* (the remover of obstacles). "Four Holy Hands, the blessing, rope and goad, the fourth offers food to your devotees." The goad—spiritual growth; the rope—rescue from harm; the cup-raised hand—bestowing blessings; and the fourth bearing food—or blessings of prasad. All of these combine to represent innocence itself, and gives pranava—"that is when electromagnetic force is charged with Ganesha's principle." These symbolic aspects of Shri Ganesha help impart pranava, a coefficient that generates vibrations. (Shri Ganesha Puja, Cabella, September 19, 1993.)

Then how did the swastika of Shri Ganesha get distorted by the evil of Hitler? Shri Mataji explains that Hitler was influenced by Tibetan Buddhists who were involved with tantric practices. Knowing this symbol had power, he used it to represent a supposed German cultural resurrection and to justify his evil doings. At another point in history, the Roman empire used the swastika as a sign of its dominion, and it was carried by Roman standard bearers, but as in the case of the Nazis, such wrongs are always conquered by goodness. As Shri Mataji reminds us, the Romans were responsible for the death of Shri Jesus Christ. Their empire weakened soon after. It is a fact that their mercantile trade with India introduced them to the swastika as a symbol of society, but the

Romans used it in reverse.

At the 1998 Shri Hanumana Puja (conducted in Germany), Shri Mataji spoke about Shri Hanumana and the angelic quality of the right side of Germany. Shri Hanumana acted during World War II to play a trick on Hitler. The Nazi Party originally used the swastika in a clockwise manner on its flag. Shri Hanumana made the stencil go in such a way that the Nazis decided to use the other side. Both Shri Ganesha and Shri Hanumana joined together to stop Hitler from winning the war in this way and so the whole world was saved from evil's attempt to conquer.

New seekers at meetings may have conditioned ideas toward the swastika because of this century's negativity from Nazism. The western media also perpetrates a fundamental misunderstanding about the meaning of the swastika because of WWII memories. In India today, the swastika represents political elections and the Indian society at large in a positive way. As recently as the 1930's, public buildings around America were built with swastikas as a beautiful decorative element representing life and goodwill. It is only in the last fifty years that attention has gone backwards.

Sahaja Yoga is healing these misunderstandings about the meaning and power of this profound sacred mystery, the swastika. The swastika of Shri Ganesha is inviolate, pure and beyond time and history, and through Sahaja Yoga its public dignity will be completely restored.

*Om Twameva Sakshat
Shri Ganesha Sakshat
Shri Adi Shakti Mataji
Shri Nirmala Devi Namo Namah*

—Karen DeNitto, USA ■



Guru Puja Talk Synopsis

Cabella Ligure, Italy, August 1, 1999



"INCE WE HAVE COME TO Cabella, it is the ten years completed. So you can imagine how in this ten years we have been able to progress in Sahaja Yoga. Now today we are going to have a guru puja. As I've said you all are gurus and you want to worship Me as your guru, is alright." You have become gurus because you have the absolute knowledge.

You have reached a state where you can give realization to others. Though we know the absolute knowledge we cannot assimilate it that well—that means we cannot go deep into it. What is the reason for that? As we have evolved from the animal kingdom, we still have many of the animal qualities, such as aggressiveness, domination, peevishness, fear, grabbing. These are our inheritance, and they are still lingering within us.

Those who are not yet Sahaja Yogis want to grab other people's things. They first used to grab lands, then people, making them slaves. "Then they were not satisfied with that so they were grabbing kingdoms, jewellery, and all these things.... They had no legal right.... It seems very inhuman, but it is there because of our inheritance."

Human beings also have jealousy. Animals aren't as jealous as we are. "We have inherited this jealousy by our own reactions and thinking. People get jealous and they want to put down others. If they cannot achieve any height, they want to bring down the heights of others." Once someone feels this type of jealousy, they rationalize it and think it's alright.

They are conscious that they are lower than another person, less talented than that person, and so they try to overpower that person because of the force of jealousy behind them.

Although we are human, we have inherited anger and ferociousness; we get upset as animals do. But human beings can also react because of their thinking. "By thinking, all these inherited properties become perverted." If a person wants to put down another person, then he doesn't behave like an animal in a straightforward way. "He will find out a device, a method, he'll think it over how to do it."

"The main problem with human beings is that they still have inherited very violent temper." This has to be controlled, to be seen. "When you see something which you don't like, which is against your will, immediately you flare up." The quality of a person is known in this way. If at the slightest provocation a person gets annoyed, then his quality is not very good as a guru. As a guru we should not react, we should not get angry or try to oppress others." We have another method called love.

If you are loving and compassionate then you don't feel anger towards others, and you don't make the other person angry either. Anger begets anger. If you are angry with someone, that person may not show his own anger out of fear but he will hold it in his heart and want revenge. "So in Sahaja Yoga, please remember that love is the only way we can solve the problem."

"Now if something goes wrong, say in the ashram, if you get angry with that person, what will happen? That person will bear a grudge



against you. Perhaps, if he's a good Sahaja Yogi, he may realize that it was the wrong thing to do. But if he's a bad Sahaja Yogi, not yet fully equipped to understand, then... he will just feel that 'this man has insulted me, he has deliberately put me down, and I should try to take a revenge.'"

This doesn't happen among the animals, except for a few, like snakes. "As we have passed through all these different categories, we might be having some of the qualities of some of these animals within us.... If the snake is within us, then anybody who hurts, you will remember it all your life." But if there's a tiger in you, you will become ferocious, get angry, lose your temper. "This is not a very good situation that we are still at the level of animals, and our inheritance is still working in us. So we have to keep a watch.... We have to be good gurus.... You have to have a very peaceful, compassionate, loving temperament."

One has to understand that people have this inheritance—some people have more, some less. If you get angry with a person for that, it's not going to help him or you. If you are loving and compassionate and you explain to that person what the problem is and what you want to do, he'll definitely improve and he'll feel your love.

"Of course, sometimes it's necessary to also forgive such a person." That doesn't mean that if he has done all kinds of wrongs, you forgive him and he goes on still with the same. Forgiven means forgotten. Someone has been misbehaving so just completely forget it. This is important for a Sahaja Yogi guru.

Other gurus are not like that. They are very hot tempered. One guru complained, "Mother, you are too kind to them." He said that he had made two people into gurus, and one got lost in

money, the other in women. "I said, 'Now it's alright. If they are lost, they are lost, but if you can revive them with your love, affection and kindness, better get around them.'"

"So as a guru you must conclude that they are still lingering with their inheritance." But human beings are much worse because they can think. Animals behave according to their conditionings. They don't have the ego that human beings have developed. So even the gurus get a very bad ego. The first ego of other gurus is that they feel that they have worked so hard so they don't want to give realization to others. They compare their own state and how they have achieved it to what others have achieved. They create all sorts of tortures for their disciples but they don't talk to them or try and understand what the other person is like. They don't see how the seekers should be treated. "All this anger and all these things might have been alright before, but after the advent of Sahaja Yoga, you must know it is not necessary."

"Now also the mental punishment to your disciples should not be done." For example, if a leader finds something wrong with the disciple, he will say something that will hurt him. "Supposing while walking you are hurt, you can't walk. In your spiritual ascent also, if you are hurt, you cannot go ahead. So not to hurt people is very important. Once you go on hurting others, then you are not a good guru."

Sahaja Yoga is different. You have achieved realization without penance or confessions. "As you are, you got your realization." Whatever your condition, you are given realization. You didn't pay for it, you didn't have to put in any kind of effort. "This kind of a happening should prove to you that you have a power of love, of compassion."



You are anxious to give realization to others. Why? It is not for fame or for a reward, "but just out of the love that is within your heart that you feel, 'Why am I enjoying everything while others are not enjoying?' And so you go out of the way to help people to get their realization. Now you have become a greater human being and you feel concerned." Others are getting ruined, doing wrong things. That makes you feel very upset, and you want to help them.

Once you have this understanding, you will know how to deal with people as a guru. "Mostly it is not necessary to say anything harsh to that person. At the most you can tell the mistakes that they have committed" but then do it in such a soft manner that the person doesn't get any shock.

Some people have a lot of attachments, say for the family, and these attachments sometimes continue after coming to Sahaja Yoga. Detachment is a state of mind—you will do anything to help someone. An attached person is always worried about the other person, very sensitive, and cannot think of Sahaja Yoga. A person can also be attached to his identity in society, his name or position. And you cannot challenge that "because he is so identified with that.... He is so much attached that he wants the guru to pay respect to that attachment." You should not discuss and argue with such a person because he's still coming up slowly to this stage. "Such a person is not absolutely a perfect Sahaja Yogi."

"So what do you have to do? ... Let it be. But the Divine will work it out and he will realize that what he has been thinking, doing, and taking decisions is all wrong. Once he discovered it himself, then he will get detached. But if you go on telling him anything, and try to

argue it out, it will never work out."

"So you must understand that as human beings, whatever we were, also as Sahaja Yogis, we have problems. And these should be slowly dissolved, not by argument, not by saying things, but by love and compassion. If you have love for a person you'll be amazed, 99 per cent people value love."

"This is the third quality of human beings. First is his inheritance, second is he thinks, and thirdly that he values love." Someone who is loved values that love. He feels that this person is loving me for myself, not for my wealth or beauty. "And this idea of love, this is something that will get him completely detached from that person easily." It is hard to understand that if you love somebody then you should get detached. This is only possible in Sahaja Yoga.

"In Sahaja Yoga your state of mind is such that you are absolutely detached and absolutely attached. How? For example now, say I have my daughter. So I'm detached. I never telephone to her. I'm never bothered about her because in Sahaja Yoga you know how is that person. If the vibrations are right why should you telephone? Why should you talk to her, why should you ask for anything? No need. Only on vibrations you'll know how the person is." It will seem that you are absolutely detached but if you find the vibrations are indicating something serious about that person, you put full attention to that. "You put attention but not attachment."

"The attachment doesn't solve the problem. What solves the problem is attention. But when you are not detached then your attention is attached attention. It's an attention that is not available to everyone, and attention that



gets absolutely stuck into that person with whom you are identifying."

If you are detached, whenever you put your attention on someone who needs that attention, it will work out. "But if you are all the time wasting your attention on a person because you are attached to that person, your attention will be tired. It won't work out." It's a paradox, that if you are attached, your attention doesn't work.

If you are not attached, you can do so many things. It's not necessary to always think and worry about someone. "That person is alright.... After all, you have to do Sahaja Yoga, you have to do so many things, you have to raise kundalini of so many. Let the attention be free. Attention should not be bound by your attachments."

Even if you do not pay attention, the attention works automatically. "It is such a great thing to have this spiritual attention which is nothing but love. It will just act. You'll be amazed how it acts. It's another world I'm talking about, not this mundane world but something higher, where your attention works, and works so beautifully."

If your attention is bound by attachments, you will have a very limited sphere. "That's why identification is not the way a guru should work it out." If a guru likes one of his disciples better than the others, he feels that one is the best and should be encouraged and helped the most. On the contrary, that fellow is already good, has gone deep. So he should pay attention to those who have not risen so high, help them to come up. "In a very sweet manner, you have to talk to these other people who are not yet there, or who are still struggling.... You have to notice what are they doing, why is it

they are not improving or rising in their attention." Often the reason the divine is not flowing through them is because they do not have good attention.

"But if you really don't fix your attention to one person or ten persons only then your attention looks after the whole world. It receives all the information and also it gives all the information what is to be done to correct the situation."

"One has to rise into that state where you do not get angry, annoyed, upset.... You see a situation and in that you are not involved... you are away from it. Then you can solve that problem better. But if you are part and parcel of that problem then you cannot solve.... So it's a very simple thing to understand that if you are identified, if you are involved with one person or with one kind of a thing, then you are lost. So our attention has to be always free and can be applied widely wherever needed. That is the state one has to reach." How do we reach that state of mind? Only through introspection.

"Through introspection you will understand that you need help to solve your problems. Firstly the problem is how to face yourself, because you are little bit shy or maybe nervous about it.... When you try to be deliberate about it, then it won't work out. But if you are Sahaj, it will work out."

"So we come to the second point, apart from the attention, that we should leave everything into the hands of Paramchaitanya.... So a detachment comes in. You give the whole thing to Paramchaitanya to solve." Then you will not react.

We suffer because we feel responsible for others, and we feel we have so many responsibilities. This creates a very complex society. "They are suffering from all kinds of diseases in

which only thinking is responsible." Thinking all the time about one person or one problem leads you nowhere. But if you leave it, the Paramchaitanya will manage.

"Things can be improved by understanding what is the most important thing, is to love. But love is truth and truth is love." If you genuinely love someone, then it will be absolutely obvious and clear-cut to you what to say to that person, because it will be absolutely truthful. "So when you are dealing with somebody also, you should be extremely truthful... but you must use such ways and methods that will not in any way hurt the other person, which will have an effect on that person."

"This kind of gurus we need now very much in Sahaja Yoga because Sahaja Yoga has spread a lot. So first of all our temper has to be brought into proper shape.... The Sahaja Yogi guru has no business to lose temper at all, on any point whatsoever. If they can really do that much, it will save so much of worry, so much of problems, so much of mess we get in... but first we must have pure love in our heart—not love out of some gain or out of some sort of reward. But pure love if we have then we can work it out very easily, anything that you want to do."

Gurus have to understand their duties and know why they are gurus. It's a very important position which should be used for exhibiting a tremendous understanding of their disciples. They should have a clear-cut purpose. People should not doubt the guru. People should not wonder why he is doing this or that. It should not be a mystery.

"All these things I'm telling you today because today we have completed our ten years of staying in Cabella. Cabella has been extremely kind to Me.... Lots of people to

Sahaja Yoga. It is a very far-fetched place, everybody discarded it... but here only it has worked. And that should be accepted as a very good indication that Sahaja Yoga does miraculous things. But foremost thing is you must know vibrations. If you don't know about vibrations, then you can't do it."

At first everybody said that it is such a lonely place, surrounded by Mafia. "On vibrations I decided that this is a wonderful place. Vibrations helped Me so much that time." Everybody discouraged Me, but where is the Mafia now? It's gone, finished.

"You have to meditate and improve your vision.... It should not be a vision which is reflecting your particular ideas about particular things, but it should be vision which should be clear cut. With Sahaja Yoga one has to know the protection of the Goddess is on top of your head. Nothing can go wrong with you, nothing will happen to you, it will all work out."

"Actually talking about Sahaja Yoga like this, you just get meditative... and you feel that one day all of you should become like that, just meditative. And this meditative temperament... emits vibrations. It emits and creates path for you, for your work, for your life, for everything. You don't have to struggle with anyone, you don't have to fight with anyone. You don't have to argue with anyone. Just try to meditate and achieve a state which I am describing to you, where you get completely surrounded by love and affection. May God bless you all."

"There's one thing is important to understand, that you should not go to extremes of everything, which is also a human quality. For example, if they are rational, they go on rationalizing everything.... The second part of it is



that... they become so emotional that they start doing wrong things in the name of emotionality. You have to overcome these two things."

"If you have not overcome that... what's the use of calling yourself Sahaja Yogis? Minimum of minimum this much you must do. Going to the extremes must be avoided. Keep a watch up on yourself. If you are going to the extremes, nothing will work out. You might develop cancer, develop horrible diseases on one side and on the other side you might become a very rational person and no Sahaja Yoga will enter your head."

"So you have to keep a balance all the time." For example, if a Sahaja Yogini does something very wrong, "then you should not become emo-

tionally attached over her.... You tell her that you must improve your vibrations and must come to a balance, and once you are in balance then I will consider your case." But if she has no balance she will go into rationality or emotions. "This emotional business can take you to any nonsensical thing, as it is a psychological case, and one can go into very, very wrong things."

"So to be emotional is not a good idea. You must love.... One side is it is emotional, another is rational. In rationality, you can start justifying anything, like Hitler did.... So both things are to be properly balanced. And you should see that whatever you are doing are giving you a proper result. So thank you very much again and again. May God bless you." ■

Guru Puja 1999

The celebration of Guru Puja is one of the most important milestones in a Sahaja Yogi's spiritual life.

To undertake a pilgrimage that will allow one to pay homage to the Lotus feet of one's Guru is every devotee's most heartfelt wish. It is especially significant when this Guru is Shri Adi Shakti Herself who has given us the potential for total liberation from the bondage of ignorance, ego and selfishness. She has created the jewel of enlightenment, and given birth to the path of our liberation which is vast and subtle, yet incomparably direct and revolutionary in its impact. As our beloved Mother and Guru She has full awareness of the challenges that we face. She has tirelessly sought to convey the passage to spiritual liberation and its true significance through the potential to completely transform not only the individual, but the entire way that human beings, as a race, live together.

How much greater then is the desire to begin that

journey which will end at the Temple of Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi at Cabella Ligure, and be part of the assembly offering salutation and exaltation to Param Puja Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi?

As befitting an occasion of this magnitude, representatives from the far-flung nations of the Sahaja Yoga world began to gather during the week preceding Guru Purnima. The hosting countries had the enormous task of housing and feeding close to 2,000 people.

Friday, 30th July

By Friday Yogis in large numbers had begun to assemble. Amenities had been constructed prior to the Puja weekend.

The stream carries the vibrations of life, sustaining an inherent capacity to not only cleanse the outer body, but the potential to absolve and purify the heart and the soul. Young and old alike went



down to where the waters of life were flowing to feel the cool stream as it flowed along its course, and to delight in time spent in a place of peace.

During the day it was hot, the nights cool. During the hot midday hours many sought rest in whatever shade may be found in preparation for the sleepless nights which were to lie ahead.

The puja pendal for Friday evening's concert was completely full. Due to the numbers of hosting countries the entertainment program was to be vast in scope and range and had to be spread over two evenings.

Shri Mataji arrived around 10 p.m. for Friday evening's concert. Uncle Guido welcomed Shri Mataji and Sir C.P. to the celebrations of Guru Puja. He remarked that this was to be the closing Guru Puja celebration of the millennium. There had been a re-vitalisation in the level of commitment of Sahaja Yogis. This was reflected in the weekend's preparations. Everything had been accomplished, there was no obstacle that could not be overcome.

He said it was difficult to express in words the feelings of Sahaja Yogis who had come together to worship their Guru: feelings of devotion and of deep gratitude to Her for transforming our lives, and our countries. In Italy the economy is thriving, the detrimental effects of the Mafia have declined. Similar positive changes have been seen in all countries where the enlightenment of Sahaja Yoga has become established.

As the millennium was drawing to a close he said a Mahahavan was to be arranged to counter the mis-named celebrations which would be occurring throughout the world.

The evening program then commenced with a procession of the ten Adi Gurus who each presented flowers to the feet of Shri Mataji as the stanzas (slightly modified) of the prayer to the Guru were narrated. "Though one may have position, or power, or leadership what does it all matter if one's mind is not absorbed in Shri Mataji's lotus feet?"

The music program began with performances from the hosting countries. The first country to present

was Sweden, with their inaugural performance before Shri Mataji. They performed a sweet and melodious bhajan beautifully rendered. The Finnish collective then presented a film representing aspects of the cultural and spiritual heritage of Finland. The film was acted, scripted and performed with much heart, humour and insight by the Finnish collective and was much appreciated by the audience.

The Belgian Yogis next took the stage. In preparation for the Puja they had asked everyone in their collective to write something of what Guru Puja meant to each of them. These pieces were then collated into a grand poem composed in praise of the Guru and recited between the performance of their bhajans.

The Sahaja Yogis of Holland then performed a series of melodious bhajans. An expert proponent in the illusory aspect of Maya—a magician from Spain—next performed which Sir C.P. and Shri Mataji appeared to appreciate. The Spanish collective then presented a number of traditional dance pieces followed by devotional songs set to the rhythms of the flamenco guitar. Their performance received the first standing ovation of the night.

The Yogis of Genova next presented a series of bhajans set to Indian classical rhythms performed on modified Western instruments. This was a performance of technical expertise and harmony which also received a standing ovation.

The night ended with Baba Mama presenting Nirmal Sangeet Sarita. They performed a number of bhajans dedicated to the Guru with the heart-felt style and spiritual sensitivity that we have to come to appreciate over the years. The program concluded in the early hours of the morning.

Saturday, 31st July

The camp continued to fill throughout the day. A veritable sea of tents sprang up amid the fields surrounding the two pendals. The night skies were beautiful, amber horizons far away, never-ending stars in a rolling, heavenly sky. All were watching



the blessed moonrise, bathing all with its soothing glow. A procession of Yogis arrayed in silks and saris assembled for an evening of Divine entertainment.

As the night unfolded we could certainly forego our sleep because we were to be refreshed by something far more serene: time spent in the company of the Divine. At that moment there was no other place that we would rather have been.

The evening's program began at 10 p.m. with a recital by Nishat Khan. He has performed a number of times before Shri Mataji, but few could rival his level of virtuosity and sensitivity to the spirit of the Indian Classical tradition. As his performance was revealed he proved his command both of his instrument, and of the attention of the audience. His concert was greeted with another standing ovation. He concluded his performance with an encore.

The next performance was to be a transcendent and incomparable rendition of an Indian Classical Sanskrit epic, the world's longest poem—The *Mahabharata*—performed in English by the Yogis of Italy. It was a production undertaken upon a grand scale with over 70 players, professionally acted, scripted, costumed and choreographed. Yogis throughout Italy practised for over a month, many driving several hours each week to Cabella to practice and prepare for the play.

The Divine was made manifest in the form of Shri Krishna who acted as the master of the play as the drama unfolded. The *Mahabharata* highlights the eternal contest between dharma and righteousness, and those who would see these principles overcome. The innermost narrative tells the story of two sets of paternal first cousins—the five sons of the deceased king and the one hundred sons of blind King Dhritarashtra—who became bitter rivals. They opposed each other in war for possession of the ancestral Bharata kingdom with its capital in Hastinapura on the Ganga River in north-central India.

The five sons of Pandu were fathered by five Gods and these heroes were assisted throughout the story by various Gods, seers, and brahmins, including the

seer Vyasa who later became the author of the epic poem telling the whole of this story. The most dramatic figure of the play was Shri Krishna, the supreme God Vishnu himself, descended to earth in human form to rescue law, good deeds, right, and virtue, all different aspects of dharma.

While Shri Krishna was the cousin of both parties, he was a friend and advisor to the Pandavas, and served as Arjuna's mentor and charioteer in the great war. Shri Krishna was portrayed several times as eager to see the purgative war occur and dharma upheld and in many ways the Pandavas were his human instruments for fulfilling that end.

The Kauravas behaved viciously and brutally toward the Pandavas. This was displayed most dramatically in the play when they took advantage of the eldest Pandava, Yudhishtira, in a game of dice. The Kauravas won all his brothers, himself, and even his wife Draupadi; they humiliated all the Pandavas driving them into the wilderness for 12 years.

The Pandavas fulfilled their part of that bargain, but the Kauravas were unwilling to restore the Pandavas to their half of the kingdom when the 12 years had expired. Both sides then called upon their many allies, and two large armies arrayed themselves upon the stage for battle. The performance culminated with an intricately choreographed battle scene where victory to the Pandavas was delivered, and dharma and righteousness prevailed.

The action of the drama was accompanied by one of the most famous sermons of all time, Shri Krishna's ethical lecture and demonstration of his divinity to his charge Arjuna. The famous Bhagavad Gita occurred in the *Mahabharata* just prior to the commencement of the hostilities of the war.

The audience gave the performance a rapturous reception and a prolonged standing ovation. Shri Mataji said that the play was an amazing creation with an intricate combination of theatre, drama, and the action of the players. She congratulated everyone involved with the production saying how pleased She was with its execution.



She then said that we had been fortunate to have witnessed two evenings of performances where an atmosphere of joy had been created and had enveloped us all. This had been the underlying theme of the Guru Puja weekend. We were fortunate to be part of an occurrence of deep significance and joyous celebration.

Sunday, 1st August—Puja

Shri Mataji began by saying this was the tenth anniversary of Sahaja Yogis coming to Cabella to worship Her as their Guru. (See the synopsis of the talk in this issue.) At the conclusion of the Puja the international gifts were presented to Shri Mataji. Many of the gifts had been purchased in America during the celebration of Adi Shakti Puja. Shri Mataji had explained how the Paramchaitanya had worked it all out—a liquidation sale was being conducted in a shop in Manhattan near Her apartment where She had found enough gifts for two pujas.

Many of the smaller countries who would not be hosting pujas were given the opportunity of present-

ing saris to Shri Mataji. Twenty-two saris had been selected for these countries; however, five additional countries also expressed a desire to present a sari. A cupboard was opened and the additional five saris were found waiting to be presented. At the conclusion of the presentation of the international gifts a procession from the different regions of Italy presented gifts.

Shri Mataji left the Puja venue at 1:30 a.m. Some time after the distribution of prasad and gifts from host countries to the attending yogis, a spontaneous bhajan session began which was accompanied by music of flamenco and latin variation. Songs of all description were sung—it seemed that it did not matter what type of music was being played—all that mattered was that Shri Mataji's praises were sung, and Her children were dancing in Her exultation.

The last chord was struck, and the last foot fell, as the morning sun began to lighten the surrounding hills. And so the celebration of the concluding Guru Puja for the millennium had come to an end.

—Chris Kyriacou, Australia

Shri Mataji's Itinerary February and March 2000

Sunday, 6 February – Travel from Mumbai to Thailand

Tuesday, 8 February – Thailand public program

Thursday, 10 February – Travel to Hong Kong

Saturday, 12 February – Hong Kong public program

Monday, 14 February – Travel to Japan

Tuesday, 15 February – Japan public program

Thursday, 17 February – Travel to Philippines

Friday, 18 February – Philippines public program

Sunday, 20 February – Travel to Malaysia

Tuesday, 22 February – Malaysia public program

Thursday, 24 February – Travel to Australia

Sunday, February 27 – Australia public program

Mahashivaratri Puja 3 – 5 March in Australia

Tuesday, 7 March – Travel to New Zealand

Wednesday, 8 March – New Zealand public program

Friday, 10 March – Travel to Singapore

Sunday, 12 March – Travel to Mumbai

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