RĀMACANDRAPUR’S SĀDHU BĀBĀ

By

Satinath Dutta
DEDICATION

This booklet is offered to the lotus-hands of my most revered father and mother, by whose grace I have attained the lotus-feet of Śrī-Śrī Bābā.
I had my doubts whether it was proper or not to publish Śrī-Śrī Bābā’s (Prabhupāda Śrīla Nikuṇja Gosvāmī’s) extraordinary life and priceless teachings in a booklet. For many days the stories about Śrī-Śrī Bābā had been locked up in various diaries and notebooks. Although I had the desire to publish a number of times it never actually came to it. I was not completely sure whether publishing Śrī-Śrī Bābā’s story for the public in the shape of a book would be disrespectful toward Him or not. Actually nothing is really possible without His inspiration. I also had doubts about my own strength. In this condition a phone call came from Śrī-Śrī Bābā’s ashram in Rāmacandrapura (Navadvīpa, Nadiyā). That year was the 75th anniversary of Bābā’s birth, so the devotees had a desire to hold a commemorating festival on the 23rd of Āśvina, 1415 Bengali year (October, 2008). Though I wanted to attend the festival it was not possible, but a desire arose in my mind – I felt it necessary to tell the current generation about Bābā. Many want to know about Bābā. I told the ashram-dwellers about my plan and they joyfully welcomed it. First brief sketches of different events were made, then, by the devotees’ eager wish, other events and instructions were added to create the current booklet ‘Rāmacandrapura’s Sādhu Bābā’. Actually it is not possible for an insignificant soul like me to fully reveal Śrī-Śrī Bābā’s full divine form, but I will consider my effort a success if I can show at least a drop of this ocean. His extraordinary life is pervading the knowledge of His innumerable devotees. If they are all published perhaps we can create a garland of His entire life with different flower-like narrations.

I saw Śrī-Śrī Bābā first in the home of my parents in Mau-grāma, near Katwa, when I was very small. An event from that time is given. I advanced a lot on the path of life (I grew up), before Śrī-Śrī Bābā gave His footdust to our home in Mau-grāma, on the initiative of my father, Śrī Rākha-Hari Datta Mahāśaya. I had the chance to see Him from very close by then. Once I saw Bābā’s rudra-ṛūpa (form featuring Shiva’s divine anger) and got really scared, but my father encouraged me by saying “You have only seen His rudra-ṛūpa, but there is a very tender form hidden within that. You will understand by associating with Him.” By regularly going to the ashram I got to know Śrī-Śrī Bābā’s true character. After taking ashray (initiation) from Śrī-Śrī Bābā I had the fortune of being close to Him for just five years. In that short period He took me with Him to Śrī Vṛndāvana, Jaipur, Pushkar and other holy places, and He also
brought me to the homes of various devotees, where I got opportunities for devotional service. I must admit that Śrī-Śrī Bābā was able to perceive what was on the minds of his children (disciples) through His inner vision, so I was oft afraid to that He would perceive some offence on my behalf while I was in His presence. If I had a clean conscience in His presence there was no trouble on my mind, though. The activities of one who is both soft as a flower and hard as a thunderbolt are a bit different in the eye of the ordinary folk. He was the lion-like Advaita-ācārya Himself, the universal teacher, who promised to teach the world with His divine roars and His divine conduct. He was exemplary in His teaching of the proper purport of the scriptures, maintaining devotional etiquette, preaching the pure type of worship, and above all, revealing the way to properly serve Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Madan Gopāl.

Many thirsty souls, travellers in the desert of material life, came to the soles of His lotus-feet, having lost the way, in search of an oasis. He quenched their thirst by giving them a mantra of revival. Now too it is absolutely necessary to get His merciful blessings in order to fill our minds, which are so attached to sense enjoyment and are grasped by old age and disease, with the nectar of devotion. Therefore Śrī-Śrī Bābā’s example is the guide to break the network of illusion in the material world and to inundate us in the ocean of bhakti. Śrī-Śrī Bābā descended with the full force of Prabhu Sitānātha, who is called bhakti bhāṇḍāri, the treasurer of bhakti. It is our duty to always increase the beauty of the service of His worshipable Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Madangopāl, whom He loves more than millions of life-airs. Here we attain His loving blessings and our human births will be blessed.

Finally let me express my gratitude to all those well-wishers who have assisted in the publication of this booklet. I express my unlimited trust in the current inhabitants of Śrī-Śrī Bābā’s ashram in Rāmacandrapura – this task would not have been accomplished without their encouragement. My fellow-student and special well-wishing friend Śrī Tapan Adhikārī Mahāśaya always encouraged me – I am especially indebted to him. I am also indebted to Śrī-Śrī Bābā’s surrendered servant Śrī Tapobrata Mahānta (Kumkum Da), who has given me valuable advice while reading the draft-document. I am also bound with the ropes of gratitude to all those devotees and relatives who assisted me in the publication of this booklet by revealing their stories about Śrī-Śrī Bābā’s sacred life. The employees at Varnali Printing Press, Salar, Murshidabad, have helped without reservation in the publication of the booklet – my
endless thanks to them too. I take responsibility for whatever mistake there may be in this booklet, I wish to correct them in future editions.

Maugram, Bardhaman (W. Bengal, India)
30th Ashwin, 1415 Bengali (October, 2008)
Humble servant,
Sattinath Dutta
A solitary cave in Gomukhi. An old ascetic, older than 80 years. In front of him stands a youthful Brahmacārī, with matted locks (jaṭās). In his heart the young man carries an unconquerable vow, whose firmness is stamped on his appearance. He wants to spend the rest of his life in the solitary wilderness of Gomukhi fixed in meditation on His īṣṭa (beloved deity). But that would not happen because this old ascetic would reverse His life. He asked the young man: आप किस लिये याहा आये हैं? आप लोकलये मे जाइये! “Why have you come here? Go back to the world of population!! This is not your life’s destiny, to sit in a cave of Gomukhi! Go to the populated world and save the people who are afflicted by the influence of the age of Kali there with the power of Your sādhanā!” Thus the brahmacārī returned, his dream of a solitary life thwarted, to show the suffering souls the path of their redemption. The young man of that time was none other than Prabhupāda Śrīla Nīkuṅja Gopāl Goswāmī, the crest jewel of Advaita Prabhu’s dynasty, who was also known as Rāmacandrapur’s Sādhu Bābā, Bel-talār Sādhu-Bābā (who sat under the Bilva tree) or Pagal Bābā (the mad saint). He used to stay in Rāmacandrapura, a quarter in the area of Pracheen Māyāpur (old Māyāpur) in Navadveep Dhām, and is also named Bel-talār Sādhu Bābā because of spending 16 years under a Bilva tree there, or Pagal Bābā due to his extravagant conduct.

Prabhupāda Śrīla Nīkuṅja Gopāl Goswāmī was born in the 13th generation of direct descendants from Śrīman Advaita Prabhu, who was famous as Gaur Ānā Ṭhākur, the Lord who brought Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to this world. This dynasty also brought forth luminaries like Prabhupāda Śrī Lokanāth Brahmacārī and Bijoy Krishna Goswami. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrīpāda Mādhavendra Purī bestowed unlimited mercy upon this great dynasty in which He appeared. Sādhu Bābā appeared as the youngest son of Pratibhā Devī and Prabhupāda Śrīla Ānanda Gopāl Goswāmī in Nilakānta Kuṅja, close to the Radha Bazar in central Navadvīpa. Even without counting the history of His dynasty He had appeared to rescue the fallen souls afflicted by the age of Kali, having the full force of Prabhu Sitānāth (Advaita Prabhu) Himself. From his childhood He was different from the rest, as He did not care much for the family tradition (of exclusive bhakti). This caused no end of worry to his father and mother. At home there was the service of Madangopāl, and Bābā’s elder brothers
Rāmacandrapur’s Sādhu Bābā

were dedicated to study, but Bābā himself rejected all this and practiced his own sādhana. He used one room in the house where He practiced different yoga-exercises, accepting Lord Shankar Himself as a Guru. Drawing a picture of Devādideva (Lord Shiva), He was immersed in difficult yoga-sādhana, which He gradually mastered at the age of 13/14. After that, He practiced one different sādhana after the other. He did not want to blindly accept the household-deity, but instead performed severe austerities to determine Their glories himself. When after some time He had a vision in a dream that He was swapping a priceless diamond for a piece of glass He embraced Madangopal within His heart unambiguously.

His behavior was reminiscent of that of Prabhu Sītānāth ¹ Himself. Immersed to his neck in the Ganges and imagining Himself carrying the footprints of Śrī Viṣṇu on His head, He roared and offered Tulasī-leaves and Ganges water. His roars pierced the coverings of the universe and made Śrī Viṣṇu’s throne tremble. Śrī Viṣṇu could not remain calm and descended in the ocean-like womb of mother Śacī in the holy town of Navadwīpa. Word spread around town of Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s birth but even after hearing this Sītānāth doubted whether Mahāprabhu was Śrī Kṛṣṇa or not. After all, He had called out for Kṛṣṇa to descend, not for Gaura. His doubt was removed when once He sat in meditation in the temple of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Madangopāl, saw Śrīman Mahāprabhu emerging from the deity and entering into His heart. Being now assured of the arrival of His iṣṭadeva, He began to engage Him in the actions He wanted Him to perform (saving the fallen souls through the chanting of the holy name and the development of love of God). In the same way Bābā also wanted to be sure about His iṣṭadeva as He had the attitude of ‘not chewing others’ food-remnants’ (not blindly accepting things just from hearing) and became free from doubt.

Also later in his youth this powerful sādhaka had a very independent attitude. In Bābā’s own words: ‘ছোটবেলো থেকেই আমি বাড়ীর বারোজন ভাই-এর মধ্যে স্বতন্ত্র ছিলাম। আমাকে দুধ খাওয়ান ছিল সমস্যা। মা দুধ গরম করে বাটিটা বাইরে সেজ জ্যোঠামশয়ের কাছে পাঠায়ে দিতেন। সেজ জ্যোঠামশয় চিত্করে ফেলে বুকের উপর বসে নাক টেপে ধরে দুধ খাওয়াতেন।’

“From My early childhood I was independent among 12 brothers². It was a problem to feed Me milk even. After My mother had warmed milk for Me, she would

¹ Sri Advaita Prabhu was so called because he married a lady named Sītā.
² Actually Bābā had just 2 brothers and 1 sister, but he meant to say that he was the most independent person in the extended family. Ed.
send it to an elderly uncle of mine, who would yell, sit on my chest, press My nostrils and then pour the milk in My mouth.”

As a toddler and a child Bābā was extremely naughty; He would be endlessly inventive in His child’s play, but throughout this time the naughty young boy would be showered by the affection of His mother. In Bābā’s own words:

“আমি ছিলাম মায়ের ভজনসঙ্গী। উনি যখন ভজন করতে করতে ঘুমিয়ে পড়তেন তখন আমি পিঠে সুড়সুড়ি দিয়ে ঘুম ভাঙিয়ে দিতাম। বাইরে থেকে বেড়িয়ে এসে জামা কাপড় ছেড়ে আমাকে একবার মায়ের কোলে বসতেই হতো।”

“I was my mother’s bhajan-associate. If she would fall asleep while doing bhajan I would tickle her back and thus wake her up. I would crawl inside, take off My shirt and sit on mother’s lap.”

He also said:

“সপ্তোবহ এেমদন আইর জনে পুষ্পোন্নর রোন্নো। ছযমদন পুষ্পোন্ন হবতো ছসমদন িো। মনবজর হোবত পমর শনের বতন। িোর হোবত নো ছখবল আইর ছপট ভরবতো।”

“Once a week mother would cook puspānna for me, and on that day she would serve me with her own hand. Unless she fed Me, My belly would not be full.” In fact, Śrī-Śrī Bābā’s mother was an exemplary mother. Reminiscing His mother He would say,

“আমার মা ছিলেন সাঙ্কাৎ মাতৃন্ত্রিত। একবার নীলকান্ত কুঞ্জে কোন কোন এক উৎসবে মেদিনীপুর থেকে প্রায় একশ জন ভক্ত এসেছেন। রাত্রে তারা একসঙ্গে প্রসাদ পেতে বসেছেন, আর মা ঘুরে ঘুরে তত্ত্বজ্ঞ করছেন। হঠাৎ একজনকে প্রসাদ পেতে না দেখে তিনি অপর ব্যক্তিদের তার না আসার কারণ জিজ্ঞাসা করলেন। তারা জানালো “সে অসুস্থ, তাই আসতে পারে নাই।” তিনি তখন সবার অলক্ষ্যে তার জন্য প্রসাদ নিয়ে গিয়ে তাকে বললেন “বাবা, প্রসাদ খেয়ে নাও - সুস্থ হয়ে যাবে।” লোকটি তখন আঘাতে কোলে আর কলে “আমার গভীরাধিকী জননীও এত সেহ করতে পারে না।”

“My mother was the personification of motherhood. Once there was a festival in Nilakānta kuñja and 100 devotees came from Medinipur district. They all sat down for prasāda at night, and mother was walking around sizing the situation up. Suddenly she noticed that one devotee was missing and she asked other devotees where that person was. They said: ‘He is sick, that’s why he cannot come.’ Mother then went to that person unnoticed to bring him some prasāda, saying ‘Please take prasāda – you will feel better then.’ That devotee then wept loudly and said: ‘Even my own mother was not as affectionate!’”

Just as He did with His mother, Bābā similarly attained the special affection of His father – his father had special faith in Him. In Bābā’s own words:

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3 Puspānna is boiled rice with added sugar and spices like cardamom. Ed.
4 Following family tradition, Bābā took āśraya (initiation) from His mother.
“Once my father had a carbuncle, an abscess, which had 36 openings. Doctor Kali Krishna Murkuti decided it should be operated on, but my father said: “Niku knows all my veins and even the subsidiary veins. If He would perform the operation I wouldn’t feel a thing.” In this way I performed the operation and took out all the pus myself.”

Thus Bābā passed His childhood, growing up into adulthood, showered by the affection of His mother and father.

Bābā’s youth is summarized by strict celibacy within and engaging Himself in different elevating missions externally. For this He opened a Yoga-school, to shape the character of young people and improve their physical status. Anyone who attended attained physical skills, strong character and leadership-qualities. Wherever Bābā witnessed injustice or atrocities He courageously protested. Once when He was absorbed in teaching in the school one teacher spoke bitter words about the demeanor of the Goswamis, prompting an immediate and loud response from Bābā. On another occasion Bābā saw the driver of a fire-engine inattentively running over a pregnant cow. He became very upset and gave the driver a proper punishment. He was thus always immediately ready to angrily oppose injustice, wherever He perceived it. There are many other examples of His strong character and His courage in His activities of that time.

There were already many indications at that time that in the future a firmness in the establishment of truth would be revealed in His personality. An event comes to mind in Bābā’s childhood. The sevait of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Ballabha in Maugrām, in the sub-district of Katwa in the district of Bardhamān were devotees of Śrī-Śrī Bābā, so Śrī-Śrī Bābā occasionally came there. The late Tinkuḍi Bal Mahāśaya, my paternal uncle, lived in Maugrāma; he was a pure Vaiṣṇava and knower of śāstra. Bābā was very happy to discuss śāstra with him. One day Bābā was sitting alone on a stool in a cottage in Bal Mahāśaya’s estate – He was bulky, wore matted locks (jaṭās) and was scantily dressed. A bright effulgence shone from His body and He spoke in a powerful

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5 Bardhaman district lies west of Nadiya District and Katwa lies right next to Nadiya, in the far east of Bardhaman.
manner. Everyone around was a bit afraid too – the slightest wrong or ambiguous word could reveal their fear. Everyone wanted to admit their offence and thus get freed from their fault. It was all about vegetarian diet. In a powerful manner Bābā said:

“তোরা বরং ছুরি নিয়ে আখ্যায়, আমি আমার শরীরের থেকে মাংস কেটে দিচ্ছি। তাই তোরা খালি। আর জীবহত্যা করে পপ বাড়াসা না। আমার সম্ভানে যদি মাংস খেতে চাবো তা আমি নিজের শরীর থেকে কেটে দেব। এটাই আমার কর্তব্য।”

“Better you bring Me a knife, and I will slice a piece of flesh from My own body – you can eat that then! Do not continue the sin of killing other living beings. If My children (disciples) want to eat meat I will slice it from My own body – that is My duty.” It seemed as if He was really ready to slice flesh from His own body. It was clear that He was the shining embodiment of non-violence, powerfully announcing His firmness in establishing the truth and His fearlessness in uprooting misbehavior.

During that time His inner renunciation was covered by an external layer of luxurious dress, hair-do and food. In Bābā’s own words:

“পোয়াক পরিচ্ছণ্ড ও বেশভূষায় ব্যাপারেও আমার বেশ পরিপাটি ছিল। আমি যেভাবে কাপড় ধুয়ে পড়তাম নবদ্বীপে তখন ঐ জাতীয় পোয়াক কেউ পড়ত না। বালিগঞ্জের কাছে মুন্নাইট সেলন থেকে প্রতি সপ্তাহে চূল কালিং করে আসতাম। সেখানে ইউরোপিয় লেডিরা চূল কালিং করতো। আমার পাঁচ পর্যন্ত খুলে পড়া চূলকে কালিং করে পিঠ পর্যন্ত তুলে রাখত। যখন আমি পোয়াক পরে বাইরে বেরোতাম তখন সবাই বলত Prince যাচ্ছে। তাপর যখন জীবনের অনিত্যতা বোধ আসলো তখন সবকিছু ছেড়ে দিয়ে কোপিন মাত্র সমর্ক করে হিমালয়ে উদ্দেশ্যে রওনা হলাম। ইচ্ছা ছিল সমস্ত জীবনটাই হিমালয়ে কাটাব। কিন্তু গোপেশ্বর সে ইচ্ছায় বাদ সাধলেন-নিয়ে এলেন এখানে। এখানে লোকালয়ের যেত কেলাহানো ও সমস্যা সবকিছু সমূখীন হতে হচ্ছে।”

“I was very expert in dressing and ornamenting Myself – no one in Navadwip could dress like Me. I used to go once a week to the Moonlight Saloon near Ballygunj, where the European ladies went, to have My hair curled. My hair, that hung down to My hips, still reached down to My back after it was curled. If I went out dressed like that everyone said ‘There goes the Prince!’ Later, when I understood that life is temporary, I gave it all up and left for the Himalayas with only My loincloth as possession. I wanted to live in the Himalayas for the rest of My life, but Gopeśvara stopped Me and brought Me back here, in the world of people, where I must face all the noise and troubles.”

Regardless of His outer coverings, Bābā was the ideal son – His life was blessed by His mother’s benediction. In Bābā’s own words:

“আমার জীবনে মা ও বাবার স্বামীকে একটি দাঁড়ির মধ্যে পাক দিলে যেমন হয় তেমনই পৌঁছিয়ে পৌঁছিয়ে ছিল। বাবা বলতেন ‘নীলকান্ত কুঞ্জে একটা সিংহ আছে। দুটো চেন দিয়ে বাঁধ। চেন ছিড়ে
I was bound up to my mother and father like a twisted rope\textsuperscript{6} – father used to say: “There is one lion in Nilakanta Kuñja, tied to two chains – but what will happen if the chain is broken, no one can tell.” Truly I never did anything without mother’s permission – if she would forbid something I would not pursue it, no matter how nice it would have been. I can proudly say that in 30 years (I was 30 years old when My mother entered into the Lord’s eternal pastimes) I never opposed my mother, either in words or in deeds. My father knew how much influence My mother had over My life. He would never weep in front of Me after mother entered the eternal pastimes, thinking I would suffer. He would weep loudly when in the lavatory. One time My father called Me and said: “You know Your mother showed me how to see Madangopāl by beautifully serving her husband, her sons and Madangopāl, altogether.” I surely thought it better if father would also enter the Lord’s eternal pastimes after mother passed away – he could not tolerate the separation from her. When my mother and father passed away it was to Me as if two suns had set. After that I set out for the Himālayas wearing just one simple piece of cloth – never in my life I wanted to depend on anyone’s help.” This was Bābā’s exemplary renunciation. Referring to the way in which boys and girls take the wrong path nowadays Bābā often said “How can they grow up without trusting and respecting their mothers and fathers? We must teach them to offer respects to their father and mother.”

\textsuperscript{6} Two ropes are often intertwined to make a thick combined rope. This is how tight the parents were to Bābā.
playing various instruments that were held in different ways. He was a great sculptor – devotees were overwhelmed by seeing His flower decorations of the Śrī Vigraha (deity statue of the Lord). He was also an expert cook. The dishes He offered to Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Madangopāl became mahā-prasāda of a divine relish.

Many were eager to make this great young man who was so expert in all sciences and who was of such high lineage, a relative. Param Gurudeva and Ṭhākur-mā were eager to marry their youngest boy. When they had already proceeded far in this endeavor they wanted to know Śrī-Śrī Bābā’s views on this. Bābā took one night of His mother and father’s time. That night was a great trial for Him, for it would decide His future life. In Bābā’s own words:

“I asked My father for one night so that I could think it over and then tell him of My decision. That following night I sat down in my bhajan-kutir to meditate. In this way the entire night passed, but I could not get any clue. Finally I decided I would not rise from my āsana unless I got the clue to my dilemma. As I saw the dawn approaching I saw a sacrificial fire of a group of sādhus burning in a solitary spot, so I went there and saw that the eldest among the sādhus had a watch in his hand. He went to a nearby improvised cot to take rest – for just five minutes! I was astonished to see he did not wear anything on his body, yet he was wearing a watch! When I inquired I learned that in twelve years he took rest for just 5 minutes, and for checking that time he was keeping a watch. With folded hands I told him of my calling and inquired if I could attain My goal or not. He blessed me by saying ‘You

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7 To propose a marriage with their daughter.
8 Author’s paternal aunt or grandmother, i.e. Bābā’s parents.
9 This vision of Bābā was divine, not phenomenal.
10 The meaning of this is – don’t waste time sleeping etc. since life is short.
will attain everything but then do not marry’. In this way I received instructions for my entire future life. In the morning I told my father about my resolution. Father was heart-broken but knew that my resolution could not be broken or compromised, so he did not say anything anymore. From then onwards I gave up my desire to become a householder.”

From age 30 to 36 – these 6 years Bābā spent on the inaccessible Himālayas – this period is very astonishing! Bābā lived in the jungle on one of the Himālayan mountains when a Panjābi woman came and told Him of her sad story. She wanted to become Bābā’s disciple, but she was young and beautiful. Bābā told her to come back the next day and became worried – again there was an obstacle to the solitude He had sought by leaving home. Without delay He left that place and took a train elsewhere – in this way He conquered māyā’s temptation.

During his time of solitary practice Bābā had some amazing experiences. He used to say:

“আমি সাধন জীবনে দুটি চীজ দেখেছি। একবার আমি যে পাহাড় থাকতাম সেখান থেকে দেখতে গেলাম কৃষ্ণরেগ্রন্থ এক ব্যক্তি পাহাড়ে গা বেয়ে নদীর দিকে যাচ্ছে। নদীর তীরে এসে কৃষ্ণরেগ্রন্থ ব্যক্তি হাতে দিয়ে ঈশারা করলেন। সঙ্গে সঙ্গে একখানা মার্বলিনীন নৌকা অপর পাড়ো থেকে এসে তীরে ভিড়ল। তিনি সেই নৌকায় চাপার পর আবার তা অদৃশ্য হয়ে গেল।”

“During my life of sādhanā I saw two things. One time I saw a leper coming down the mountain on which I was staying, going towards the river. When he came to the bank of the river he beckoned with his hand and at once a boat without helmsman arrived and docked there. After boarding the boat he disappeared again.”

On another occasion when Bābā was passing urine he noticed the disciples of one sādhu. They went and told their Guruji about Bābā. The sādhu told them to bring Bābā to him. When the disciples brought Bābā there, He saw the mahātma sitting down with two sacks of peanuts on each of his side. While he was talking he would sometimes stick his hand in one of the sacks and fill his mouth with peanuts from them. He had an axe on his side. When Bābā was leaving the sādhu spoke affectionate words to Him and engaged his disciples in serving Him. On one plate they put a bundle of rotis and on the other a large amount of pumpkin vegetables. Bābā was speechless when He saw how much it was, but Sādhuji requested Him to eat the whole lot. While Bābā was eating, the sādhu ordered his disciples to bring another person to him, but when the summoned person showed up a bit too late the sādhu became very angry, picked up the axe standing next to him and killed the man by cleaving his head with it. He then ordered his disciples to throw the corpse in a
nearby river. Bābā was terrified as He witnessed the whole event. A while later the sādhu told his disciples to take the corpse out of the water by the ears at a certain ghāṭa.11 There was no limit to Bābā’s astonishment when He saw the disciples carrying out the order and that the person came back to life. When he inquired about this from the sādhu, the sādhu replied: ‘That person’s life was bound to be finished at that particular moment and there was no other means to bring him back to a new life than by first killing him at that predestined moment.” Bābā used to comment on these two events by saying: “এই ভাবেই মহাথ্মারা বিচিত্র ভাবে তাঁদের সীলা প্রকাশ করেন” – “In this way the mahātmās reveal their pastimes in astonishing ways.”

Bābā spent most of that time at the Manasā- and Chaṇḍi-mountains of Haridwār, not caring for His own needs, meditating on His beloved deity in solitude and making His life a full success by attaining the mercy of the Guru. Bābā achieved in six simple years what many great saints took a lifetime to achieve. After attaining this high stage of sādhana He moved to a solitary place at Gomukhi, but from there He returned to the world of people, on the order of the Mahātmā, to the great cemetery12 of Rāmacandrapura.

All this is now more than 40 years ago. After spending a few years in the solitary wilderness of the Himalayas, Bābā wanted to spend one year in one holy place after the other, so after spending one year in Navadvīpa He set off for Puri-dhām to live there for the following year. When he heard that Bābā had departed from Navadvīpa, Medinipur’s Pulin Kākā had a feeling He had arrived in Kharagpur Station, so he went there and brought Bābā back to his own home. From there he brought Bābā to Navadvīpa, where he and some other Guru-brothers from Navadvīpa began to search for a nice plot of land to Bābā’s liking. Eventually they found the place where the current Ashram is and told Bābā the place was up for sale, so Bābā went there one day and sat under the Bel-tree there. As soon as He sat down there He entered samāḍhi. After a long time His samāḍhi broke and His mind was filled with transcendental experiences. With a faint voice He said: ‘Yes, this place is good – you can buy it.” So following this endorsement, Pulin Kākā and other Guru-brothers purchased the place. At that time the place was one big jungle, filled with high grass. Bābā placed an āsana under the Bel-tree. There was no roof over His head, while the six seasons showed their prowess, with their successions of cold and heat. Poisonous

11 A Ghāṭ is a small wharf or landing place at the river side.
12 Mahā-śmaśāna = great cemetery. Lord Shiva resides in the cemetery.
snakes were crawling hither and thither across the āshram, but in a sādhu’s āśram it is as if everyone forgets about hatred and violence – no one causes any harm there. In Bābā’s own words:

“আশ্রমে যখন প্রথম আসি তখন এস্থানে বড় বড় ঘাস ছিল। সেখানে ষড়নাট্র সাপ ঘুরে বেড়াত। কিন্তু একদিনের জন্য তারা কেন অনিষ্ট করে নাই। একদিন শুধু আছি - উপর থেকে একটা সাপ পেটের উপর পূরে চলে গেল। আশ্রমবাসীরও কোন দিন ভয় করত না। আর একদিন কতিপয় ভদ্রের সঙ্গে কথা বলছি। হঠাৎ, তারা আতঙ্কে নাওক্ষিয়ে উঠল। তাদের আতঙ্কের কারণ তারা একটি গেছে সাপকে আমার পায়ের কড়ে আঙ্গুলটা মুখে পূরে শুয়ে থাকতে দেখেছে। সে আমার কোন অনিষ্ট করে নাই। আসলে ওরা বুঝতে পারে কে ওদের শত্রু আর কে মিত্র।”

“When I first came to the ashram there was long tall grass everywhere and snakes slithered here and there, but they never did any harm. One day I was lying down when a snake fell from up on My tummy and then slithered away. The other ashram-dwellers were also never scared of snakes. One day I was talking with some bhaktas when suddenly they jumped up in fear, because they saw a cobra lying down with My toe in its mouth. But the cobra also did Me no harm - they can understand who are their enemies and who are their friends.”

There were only a few servants in the ashram at the time. First there was a very fixed-up servant there named ‘Jñāna-Dā’. He assisted Bābā in His sādhana bhajan and tirelessly performed all small duties in the ashram. A roof was erected next to the Bel-tree and a picture of Madangopāl was being served there. Many devotees did not gather - actually many were afraid to face Bābā’s rudra-mūrti. This Jñāna-Dā used to take Bābā to the Ganges and keep Him immersed up to the neck there, keeping a stick next to Him in the ground as a marker. Then he would go to the market for 3-4 hours and come back to take Bābā back out again. In this way Bābā’s sādhana would continue in the water. Then again Bābā would perform severe sādhana night after night at the base of the Bilva (Bel-) tree. One morning long stripes of slice-like wounds could be seen on Bābā’s body. When asked about it, Bābā said:

“কল রাতে কাঠিযাবাবা এসেছিলেন চিমূটি হাতে। আমার যোগের ক্রিয়া ঠিকমত না হওয়াই উনি চিমূটি দিয়ে প্রহর করে শিক্ষা দিয়ে গেলেন। এইভাবে মহাপুরুষণ গৃহেই এসে দর্শন দেন।”

“Last night Kāṭhiyā Bābā came here with a pincer in his hand; he found My yoga practice insufficient so he taught Me a lesson by striking Me with it. This is how the mahā-puruṣas sometimes reveal themselves.”

13 Rudra-mūrti = form of anger, displayed by Lord Shiva.
14 This was done according to Bābā’s wish.
15 Kāṭhiyā Bābā = a saint who wears a chastity belt made of wood.
Externally Bābā maintained His *rudra mūrti* but internally He carried Madangopāl in His heart, performing so many pastimes. How many whimsical desires Madangopāl expressed to His dear servant! In Bābā’s own words:

“একদিন রাত্রে মদন গোপালের কিছু ভোগ লাগাবার ইচ্ছা হলো। বিষ্ণুনায় হত দিয়ে পাঁচ সিকা পয়সা পেলাম। জানতে পয়সাটা দিয়ে বাজার থেকে কিছু আনতে বললাম। ইতারবেরে গোপাল আবার করলা, আমার একটু কলাই-এর ডাল আর পোস্টা খেতে ইচ্ছা হয়েছ। আমি বললাম ‘সেবে তো পাঁচিশকা পয়সা দিয়েছ তাতে এত জিনিষ হবে কি করে? আবার পূর্বে বললে না হয দেখা যেতো। এখন রাত্রিবেলায় কে বাজারে যাবে? এমন সময় পাথখানার বেগ হওয়াই পাথখানা গোলাম। যুরে এসে দেখলাম কুটিরের সামনে একটা পাকেটে আধসের মতো ভাজা কলাই ও অপর একটি পাত্রে একশ গ্রাম বাঁটা পোস্ট। সেখানে কোন শিলনোড়া ছিল না। আর কেজি মতো আমান করা আলু ও এক প্লাস গরম চা পর্যন্ত সেখানে রাখে গেছে। মনে হলো যেন কেউ এইমাত্র প্রস্তুত করে রেখে গিয়েছে। অথচ কোন জীবিত ব্যক্তির সদ্ভাবনা পেলাম না।

‘One night I had a desire to offer something to Madangopāl, so I found a few *paisā* under the bed and gave them to Jñāna, telling him to get something from the market. At that moment Madan Gopāl had a whimsical wish – He wanted *kolāi dāla* (a type of pea-soup) and *posta* (a poppy-seed-mixed vegetable dish). I said ‘You have only given us a few *paisā* – how can we buy all that stuff for such money? Then again, earlier You said “We’ll figure something out”. Who will go to the market at this time of night?’ Just at that time I had the urge to go to the bathroom; when I returned I saw a packet in front of my hut, with half a *ser* fried *kolāi dāl* along with a plate with 100g ground *posta*. There was no grinding slab there, but still……there was even half a kilo of potatoes ready for offering as well as a cup of warm tea. It was as if someone had kept this all ready for us, yet there was not a living soul in sight.” This is how the Lord and His devotees play with each other.

On another occasion Bābā woke up Jñāna-dā at midnight and ordered him to go to one particular shop in the market to get a certain type of *sandesh*. Jñān-dā began to worry where to get the sweets in the market in the dead of night – all shops were closed. Bābā said: “মদনগোপাল আদেশ করছেন, তুই যা তো” “Madangopāl is giving the order – go now.” Bābā then told him where the sweets were kept, and lo, when Jñān-dā arrived at the shop it was indeed open still. It was open late because the owner was working overtime making new sweets. When Jñān-dā told the shop-owner which sweets he needed the shop-keeper told him he had just finished preparing those

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16 Mahā puruṣa [lit: a great man] great liberated saints who can appear outside of the gross realm.

17 Ser = Bengali weight measurement, about a pound

18 Sandesh = milk sweet
sweets. Jñān-dā then astonished the shopkeeper by telling him exactly where those sweets could be found in his shop. The shopkeeper remembered that one customer had left bought sweets behind that morning and that he had left it for him on the shelf. Jñān-dā took those remaining sweets and told him he would pay the balance later. The shopkeeper told him not to bother, for he would come personally to collect the balance. The following day he did show up with a full kettle of extra sweets for Madangopāl and he offered obeisances to Bābā as well.

At this time Krishna-Dī19 began to come to the ashram. In intimate circles20 she had heard about Bābā and had come to see Him. Seeing how special Bābā was she decided to dedicate her entire life to Him. At the time she was a school-teacher. There were no facilities for ladies in an ashram for brahmacāris, but still Krishna-Dī stayed in a simple hut on the grounds of the ashram, causing the bhaktas there to face criticism from society. Once a bhakta said: ‘Bābā climbed 99 steps to reach out to Krishna-Dī. He could not mount the 100th one.’ Still, Bābā called Krishna-Dī ‘mā’ (mother). Krishna Dī was also not able to give up Bābā, so she decided to keep on coming and going to the ashram. One night it was raining fiercely and Bābā sent Jñāna-Dā to Krishna-Dī to bring her home. In the meantime Bābā went to use the bathroom. His oil lamp was extinguished by the rain and he had not taken any water with him for cleaning after the bathroom. Jñāna-Dā used to wait upon Bābā with the water. Bābā was worried – just then he heard Jñāna-Dā’s voice and was consoled. Leaving the bathroom, He saw that Jñāna-Dā was waiting for Him with water and a lamp. Jñāna-Dā served Bābā clay and water to wash His hands and brought Him to His hut, where He went to take rest. After quite a while the real Jñāna-Dā returned to the ashram after bringing Krishna-Dī home. Bābā asked him: “Where did you go, leaving Me in My kutir?” Jñāna-Dā was speechless, because he had just returned. He told Bābā: “I just came back now!” Bābā then understood what had happened, realizing the fulfillment of the verse in Bhagavad-Gītā - yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmyaham (9:22), in which Kṛṣṇa promises to supply His devotees with all their needs, carrying them on His own head.

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19 Krishnā Dī was the daughter of Prāchin Māyāpur’s Niranjan Prasād Dās, blessed with the grace of Śrī-Śrī Bābā. She gave up household life and joined the ashram. After Śrī-Śrī Bābā entered into the Lord’s eternal pastimes she became the mother of the ashram. She is now deceased.

20 Her father was already seeing Sādhu Bābā at the time. Ed.
Meanwhile other devotees like Tulasi-Di\(^{21}\) and Namitā-Di also joined the ashram. Krishnā-Di gave up her job and came to live in the Ashram fulltime. Jnāna-Dā had left by that time. Gradually other devotees like Kumkum Dā and Ritu Bijoy Dā also joined. Ramesh Da also joined, taking his wife Hemā-Di and his little son Bishu with him. They made huts in the ashram and began to live there. A temple building was then constructed for Madangopāl, and a deity was installed in the place of the picture. A royal worship was started – nobody knew how it was all accomplished – Bābā was a detached brahmacārī with just simple cloth on. He had neither real estate nor any movable property. He was absorbed all day in devotional service – sometimes He discussed different topics with the devotees. He would never go and give classes for money; he was not a professional reciter nor did he ever listen to any such recital. If a fortunate person had the chance to hear Bābā’s devotional lectures such a person would be overwhelmed – they could never hear such quality lectures from a professional. Bābā considered professional, commercial recital a ghastly offence, and He would never give lectures outside of Madangopāl’s yard. Bābā did not depend on His disciples either – his relationship with his disciples was not like the usual one. He used to say:

“আমি কারও গুরু নই। আমি বাবা। আমাকে কিছু দিতে হবে না। তোমরা বরং মদনগোপালের প্রসাদ পেয়ে কৃতার্থ হও”

“I am no-one’s Guru – I am Bābā\(^{22}\) – you need not give Me anything. Rather, you just come here and be blessed with Madangopāl’s prasāda.”

About the Guru-disciple connection He said one day:

“গুরু-শিষ্যা সম্পর্ক নিত্য। শিষ্যের তাঁর ইচ্ছের চরণে পৌছিয়ে না দেওয়া পর্যন্ত গুরুর দায়িত্ব সম্পূর্ণ হয় না। এজন্য প্রয়োজন হলে গুরুদেবকে পুনঃ পুনঃ জ্ঞানপ্রাপ্তি করতে হয়। এই কারণেই ১৩০৬ সালে ইহলেক তাগ করার পর আবার ১৩৪১ সালে জ্ঞানপ্রাপ্তি করতে হলো। শিষ্যের যেমন গুরুদেবকে প্রয়োজন, গুরুদেবেরও তেমনি শিষ্যের প্রয়োজন। অভিষে সিদ্ধ হলে একের জীবনে আর অন্যের প্রয়োজনীয়তা থাকে না। শ্রীগুরুদেব প্রকৃত বা অপ্রকৃত যে অবস্থাতেই থাকুন না কেন শিষ্যের কাছে তিনি সকসময়ই প্রকাশিত। শিষ্য আপন অন্তরে শ্রীগুরুদেবের আসন রচনা করবেন।

“The connection between Guru and disciple is eternal; the Guru’s responsibility is not over unless and until the disciple has reached the lotus-feet of the Lord. Hence,

\(^{21}\) Tulasi Sāhā comes from Prāchin Māyāpur, was blessed with Bābā’s mercy and lives in the ashram. Namitā Saha lives in the ashram and was blessed with Baba’s mercy. They are the ashram’s mothers at present.

\(^{22}\) Bābā in India also means ‘father’. Baba indicated he wanted a warm and loving relationship with his disciples.
if necessary, the Guru will take birth after birth. For this reason He gave up this world in 1306\textsuperscript{23} and took His rebirth in 1341\textsuperscript{24}. Just as the disciple needs Gurudeva, Gurudeva also needs the disciple. When perfection is attained one person does not need the other anymore. Śrī Gurudeva may be manifest (alive) or unmanifest (deceased), but to the disciple He is always manifest. The disciple should make a seat for Śrī Gurudeva within his heart.”

In this way He always kept the spiritual relationship between Guru and disciple beyond the material level of giving and taking. He was aloof from external receiving of charity from anyone, regardless of how vast the donation could be. If, however, someone wanted to give even the slightest donation with a mind immersed in devotion, he would be in great ecstasy. Bābā used to say:

“কেউ লক্ষ টাকা নিয়ে এলেও মনে হয় পুরীয়ে ছাই ফেলি ছাই ফেলি। এতেলক দান করিয়ে চায় কিন্তু তোমার (ইন্দু বাবুর) দানটা জটিলমিত্র নিয়ে পারি আর কারও তা পারি না। আর একজন আছে তার নাম মাধাই। খুবই গরিব - হাত অট জন পোষ্য। সে যখন নিতা সেবা নিয়ে আসে তখন চোখ দিয়ে জল গড়িয়ে পরে। এত অভাবের মধ্যে মদনগোপালকে স্বর রেখেছে - দেখে আনন্দ হয়। দানের সঙ্গে সঙ্গে দাতার রূপটি চেখে ভেসে আসে। তার দান গ্রহণ করা যাবে কি না গোপেশ্বর ঠিক জানিয়ে দেয়”

‘Sometimes someone may come with one lakh of rupees and I feel like burning that wad of cash to ashes. So many people want to donate but I feel more joy from accepting it from you (Indu Bābu)\textsuperscript{25} than from anyone else.” There was another person named Mādhāi Dās\textsuperscript{26} – he was extremely poor and had to maintain 7-8 persons in his family. He always came to serve while tears rolled from his eyes. Even in such dire straits he remembered Madangopāl and I was very happy seeing that. Tears came to My eyes when I saw the donor along with the donation. Gopeśvara Mahādeva would make it clear to Me whether I could accept his donations or not.”

Bābā was totally dedicated in establishing the etiquette of Bhakti Devi. External obstacles could never stand in his way – He proved that in truth at the time He gave dikṣā to Advaita Dā from Holland. He did not consider birth here at all. He used to say: “কোন ভালো আরাধক দেখেল সেখানে যদি ভক্তিজীব আরোপ না করি তাহলে ভক্তিদেবীর কাছে

\textsuperscript{23} 1306 Bengali year is 1899 Christian year. This is the year that Vijay Krishna Goswami, another famous descendant of Advaita Acarya, passed away.

\textsuperscript{24} 1341 Bengali year is 1934 Christian year. This is the year that Sādhu Bābā appeared in this world.

\textsuperscript{25} Indubhūṣan Sāhā from Yoganāth Talā was very devoted to Baba. He is now deceased.

\textsuperscript{26} Mādhāi Dās was an exclusive devotee of Śrī-Śrī Bābā. He was a carpenter. He is now deceased.
“If I saw a good receptacle and I would not plant the seed of bhakti there I would be an offender to Bhakti devi.” He also said: “যে চোখের জলে লক্ষ নাম করে তার কি পূর্ব সংস্কার মুছে যায় না?” “If someone does one lakh of nāme with tears in the eyes, will his previous impressions not be erased?”

We can also get to know Bābā’s revolutionary attitude when observing the privileges our sisters received in serving Madangopāl in the ashram. Whoever had a true passion for Gopāl was eligible for His devotional service – there was no distinction in race or gender. This was the full application of Advaita Prabhu’s prayer for the upliftment of women, śūdras and the fallen (outcastes). Bābā would never distort the truth just to please people. Bābā’s aim was to reveal the truth about Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the true path of worship (bhajana prāṇālī) and how young men and young women should remain unsmelled flowers, regardless of whether such sermons would bring in any funds or not. He did not even lift an eyebrow at that. As more devotees began to gather, they needed to be offered lodging, so gradually buildings were erected that we currently have on the ashram grounds. It was difficult afterwards to ascertain who gave what for these buildings. In Bābā’s own words:

“এই আশ্রমের সমস্ত বিল্ডিং-এর আনুপূর্বক হিসাব যশোদা বাবার কাছে পাবে। কেহ বলতে পারবে না এই বিল্ডিং-এর জন্য আমি এত টাকা দিয়েছি” ‘You can get the whole account, from beginning to end, of all these buildings from Yaśodā Bābā. No one can say ‘I gave that much money for this building’.

Fully depending on Madangopāl, Bābā held festivals for His disciples’ benefit. Bābā resumed the festivals in honour of Prabhu Sitānātha’s advent day. Though He was resourceless, the festivals were huge and lasted for 11 to 15 days. Whatever wishes His disciples had, Bābā would inform Madangopāl of it and fulfilled them. Apart from the festival for Sītānātha’s advent, the ashram also hosted festivals for Rādhāstamī, Akṣaya tritiya’s establishment day of Madangopāl, Guru Pūrṇimā and the

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27 One lakh of name is 1,00,000 names, practically it means chanting 64 rounds.
28 Cultural conditioning from one’s culture of birth, which usually catches up with the spiritual practitioner.
29 Advaita Prabhu, when offered a boon by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, prayed: more yadi var dibre prabhu viśvambhara – stīr-śūdra adhamere āge kṛpā koro – “If you truly offer Me a boon then first offer Your grace to the women, laborers and the fallen (outcastes).”
30 The building contracter.
separation (disappearance-day) festivals of Śrī-Śrī Parama Gurudeva and Thākur-mā. There was an amazing event coinciding with the first time that Bābā became resolved to hold a festival for Thākur-Mā’s disappearance day. In Bābā’s own words:


“I had the desire to hold a festival for the separation (demise) of My mother, so Jagadīśa went to Kolkata and brought things from the market there worth about 1,500 rupees31. I had called for 4 brāhmaṇa-cooks already – the next day the festival would be held. At night, however, My mother appeared to Me and said: “Who has told You to do all this? Better You offer me chipped rice and yoghurt.” Now I was in a big dilemma – I had already spent all the money available for the festival – how could I now still buy all this chipped rice and yoghurt? The following days the brāhmaṇas appeared on time, so I held them up and told them to keep the stoves off for now, not to leave and just stand by. Time passed by and they all got impatient. I went to the bank of the Ganges, alone. There I lay down and thought: “If you want to save My face then I will go back to the Ashram, and if not then I will just stay here. After a while Bishu was called away, because a trolley had brought all the required goods suddenly and the trolley-driver was searching for Me. When I came there I saw one sack of chipped rice, 1½ maund of yoghurt, clusters of bananas and a lot of guḍā22 had been sent from the market. On the bill I received from the driver was written ‘Seller – Sādhu Bābā, purchaser – Sādhu Bābā. Everything had been delivered exactly (as was needed). I then told the cooks to wash the chipped rice in four buckets. Meanwhile all

31 This was in the 1970s – it would be worth much, much more now.
32 Brown sugar
the guests had also arrived and everyone was served a feast of the chipped rice and yoghurt. In this way mother had her desires fulfilled.”

In this way there were regular festivals in the Ashram, without any previous planning, and even after such great festivals were completed it was seen that Sitānātha’s storehouse is inexhaustible.33

Not only during festivals but even on ordinary days there was an ever-increasing crowd coming, because in Bābā’s presence everyone’s misery was mitigated. Bābā made everyone forget their worldly sorrows and gave them transcendental bliss. Bābā used to say: “এই আশ্রমে এলে তোমাদের মনের প্রসার হবে। সক্ষীপ্ততা দূর হয়ে যাবে। অন্যায় আশ্রম থেকে এই আশ্রমের এইখানে তফাৎ” ‘When you come to this ashram your consciousness will expand and narrowness will go far away. That is the difference between this ashram and others.” Most folks who came to Bābā’s darshan aimed at the mitigation of their material suffering. Many came to Bābā with life and death emergencies, when all doctors had been unable to help them. Bābā told them to do Mānasik34 for Gopeśvara and abide by a discipline. In this way they were benefited. I have heard from Bābā’s lotus-mouth that he cured terminally ill people and even brought them back from the gates of death. In Bābā’s own words:

“সেদিন রাধাখুঞ্জী - সকাল থেকে আমি উৎসবী আছি। এমন সময় তুষারের বাবা এসে কেদে পড়ল আমার কাছে। তার ছালে তিন দিন অজ্ঞান হয়ে আছে। তাকে মর্গে পাঠান হয়েছে। যে কোন ভাবে ছেলেকে বীরত্বে হবে। তার কান্না দেখে আমি বললাম, ঠিক আছে। আমি দেখছি। আশ্রমের মায়েদের বললাম তোমরা গোপেশ্বরের মন্দিরের পশ্চাৎ দিকটা একটু পরিস্কার করে ওখানে একটা ধূপকাঠি জুলিয়ে দাও। আর লক্ষ্য রাখ আমার এই দেহটি যেন কেহ স্পর্শ না করে। এই বলে আসনে বললাম। তারপর দেহ ছেড়ে বেরিয়ে গেলাম। মর্গের মধ্যে ওর দেহে প্রাণ সঞ্চার করে ফিরে এলাম। ও মর্গের মধ্যেই কথা বলে উঠল। সকলে তো খুব আনন্দিত। কিন্তু এটি করতে আমাকে রীতিমত সংগ্রাম করতে হয়েছে। বাইরের কেহ এসব কিছু বুঝবে না।”

“On Rādhāśṭami I had been fasting since the morning when Tuṣara’s father came to Me weeping. His son had been unconscious for three days and was already sent to the morgue. Somehow his son needed to be revived. Seeing him weep I said ‘Allright, let Me see.” I told the women in the ashram to clean the place behind the Gopeśvara Mandir and light a stick of incense there, making absolutely sure that no one would touch My body there. Saying this, I sat down, left My body, travelled to the morgue, infused life into Tuṣara’s body and then returned here. Tuṣara got up into the

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33 There is a narration to that extent in Caitanya Bhagavat. Ed
34 Mānasik = A sacrifice or offering promised to a deity on condition that one’s prayer be granted.
morgue and began to talk – everyone was very happy, but in order to do that I had to struggle hard – no one can understand that on the outside.”

In this way the people that were thus benefited and those who heard of His superhuman powers, started gathering around Bābā. Bābā instructed them all to tread the religious path and established the right philosophy to them. Though devotees desiring liberation thus attained success, it meant trouble for the community of selfish seekers – their religious business was thus jeopardized, so they began to make trouble for Bābā in different ways. In Bābā’s own words:

“আমার উপর যে তত্ত্বের ক্রিয়া হচ্ছে তা বেশ বোঝা যাচ্ছে। সাধন মার্গের এক্টু উপরে উঠলে সকলের ঈশ্বরকরণ হয়। আমি যা বলি তা তাদের সাথে আঘাত করে। সেজন্য তারা শত্রু হয়। কিন্তু তাদের জন্য তো আমি সত্ত্বের অপলাপ করতে পারি না। এইসব কারণে আর থাকতে ইচ্ছা করে না। এই নেংরা জগতে সাধুদের স্থান নাই।”

“The tantric practices against Me have been a burden. Everyone gets envious if you make progress in sadhana. Whatever I say conflicts with their selfish interests, so they become My enemies. But I cannot suppress the truth just to please them. For all these reasons I do not wish to stay here. There is no place for sādhus in this despicable world.”

Bābā engaged Himself in the welfare of the world with His saintly mind, but people are so shrewd, they act shrewdly even with sādhus, giving them a lot of distress. Bābā told us once of such cunning and shrewd behavior:

“হেইমান মানুষ গোপেশ্বরের সঙ্গে কপটা করে। এইতে আজই পড়ামাতলার তোমাদের এক গুলোরই এসেছিল। দেড় বছর আগে তার ছেলে বাড়ী থেকে চলে যায়। আমি তাকে বলেছিলাম গোপেশ্বরের কাছে কিছু মানসিক করে যাও - আর প্রতি সোমবারে গোপেশ্বরের মাধ্যম জল দিও। কি মানতে করলে আমাকে শোনাবার দরকার নাই। তার কান আছে - তুমি ঠিকই শুনবেন। দেড় বৎসর পর তার ছেলে এসেছে - এখন সে বলে আগামী কাল সোমবারে জল দেওয়ার পর আর কি আসার প্রযোজনীয়তা আছে। মানবের কথা তো বললই না।

“Unfaithful people cheat Gopeśvara. Today one of your Gurubrothers from Porama Tola came here. 1½ years ago his son ran away from home. I told him to do a Mānasik to Gopeśvara and pour water over Him every Monday35. There was no need to tell me their Mānata36 - He has ears – He will be able to hear properly. 1½ years later his son returned home. Now he said: “What is the use of coming to pour any more water tomorrow, on Monday? He did not tell the promise.” He told us another instance of cheating Gopeśvara – “এইসব যে অপরাধ হচ্ছে এর দায়ভার আমাকে বহন করতে

35 Monday is traditionally the day of Shiva. Ed.
36 Mānata = promise made to the deity in secret. Ed.
হবে না? গোপেশ্বর কি ছেড়ে দেবেন?” “Do I not have to bear responsibility for all these offences that are going on? Will Gopeśvara leave me out of these offences?” Just as He could not bear to see cunning cheats and hypocrites, He had deep affection for those who were sarala-prāṇa (innocent, sincere, simple, honest). For this reason he had more affection for modern young men and women than for the aforementioned religious pretenders. Once these sincere and simple youngsters of Prācina Māyāpura faced trouble, having come in the grasp of a Tantric, so in the end they took shelter of Bābā. Bābā extended His abhaya hasta⁷⁷ and protected them from all danger. As they were thus sprinkled by the stream of Bābā’s affection, they became greatly attached to Him in devotion.

When the political situation in Navadvipa began to take terrible shapes and there were constant clashes between Prācina Māyāpura and Pratāp Nagar, we have seen youngsters from both sides sitting with Bābā. Though they were enemies of each other, in Bābā’s presence they all behaved as good boys. Bābā brought many youngsters that were stained by banditry and anti-social behaviour back to the path of sādhanā. He encouraged them to establish a deity in the temple of Ādya-Mā⁵⁸ – He never thought much of anyone’s criticism. This behavior made many think that Bābā was partial, but Bābā used to say: “কেহ যদি পূর্বকর্মের জন্য অনুতপ্ত হয়ে সাধু হতে চায়, তাহলে আমরা কি তাকে সাহায্য করব না ?। এ জীবনে যদি একজনকেও সাধু হতে সাহায্য করে তাহলেই জানবে তোমাদের জন্য সার্থক হয়েছে” “If someone repents his previous activities and wants to become a sādhu, should we not help him? If you help someone become a sādhu even once in this life, you should know that your birth has become a success.”

Hence everyone – high or low, brāhmaṇa or śūdra, rich or poor, saint or bandit, got a place at Bābā’s broad chest.⁴⁹

When all these buildings were constructed in the ashram and all nice arrangements had been lined up for Madangopāl’s service, many thought that perhaps Bābā had become attached to luxury, like an ordinary householder is attracted to wealth. But we got the proof for His detachment on the day when we saw 10-12,000 Rs worth of golden ornaments stolen from Madangopāl in broad daylight. When Bābā was informed of this He simply took a Gobā⁴⁰ in His hands and danced around with it,
completely undisturbed, saying: "মদনগোপাল যখন দিয়েছেন তখন আমরা আর ভেবে কি করবো। আবার যখন ইচ্ছা হবে তখন যোগাড় করে নেবেন" “When Madangopāl has given then what is the use of any more thought on it? Then again whenever He likes He takes it back again.” Gaura-Dā then came to see if Bābā really was not upset by checking whether He had increased blood pressure, but he found that His pressure was the same as on any other day.

We have also seen the limit of detachment in the way in which Bābā entered the Lord’s eternal pastimes. Whatever He planned was all for increasing the beauty of Madangopāl’s devotional service. He always kept Himself far above worldly matters. Hence when He understood that the reason for which He had come to this world was fulfilled, He was resolved to enter into the Lord’s eternal pastimes. He said:

“আমি এখন দেহের দিক থেকে দূর্বল হয়ে পরলেও মনের দিক থেকে অযুত গুণ শক্তি পেয়েছি। আমি এখন quite OK, well prepared. প্রথম ধাক্কাটা সহ করতে পারবে না বলে কিছুদিন সময় নিলাম। এখন কল্যাণ বাবু দেখে যাওয়ার পর গোপেশ্বর যা আদেশ করবেন তাই হবে। সিদ্ধান্ত নিতে আমার কিছুমাত্র অসুবিধা নাই”

“Though I am physically weak My mind is millions of times stronger. I am now quite OK, well prepared. I took some time, thinking you would not be able to tolerate the first shock. Now, after speaking with Kalyān Bābu (Dr. Kalyan Chatterjee) – whatever is Gopeśvara’s order – I will follow. It is not a problem at all for Me to accept the inevitable.” Bābā took this heart-breaking resolve on Monday-morning, the 2nd of Kārtika, 139342. The *tithi* was *kṛṣṇā ṭṛīyā*43. He took our leave with His gross body, but He stayed with us in His subtle body. In Bābā’s own words: “আমি লীলা সম্বরণ করলে কি তোমাদের কাছ থেকে চলে যাব মনে করেছ? বরং এখন কয়েকজনের কাছে আছি - আর তখন সুখ্স্ব দেহে সবার কাছে ছড়িয়ে পড়ব।” “Do you think I will leave you after winding up My pastimes? Rather I am still with some persons right now – and then I will pervade everyone in My subtle body.” And factually Bābā does pervade everyone right now. He is in the kingdom of the devotees’ transcendental experiences, He is present in His words and in the example He established.

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41 Gaura Dā = Gaur Bhaṭṭācārya, a disciple of Sādhu Bābā who was a doctor
42 In the western calendar October 20, 1986.
43 *Tithi* means a Vedic lunar day. *Kṛṣṇā* means to the dark quarter of the moon. *Ṭṛīyā* is the third lunar day.
What is that vāṇī,\textsuperscript{44} and what is that example that keeps Him manifest to the devotees even now, and will continue to do so in the future? It is very difficult to answer that question, because we try to explain Bābā’s example with our sensual minds. In this way He will not be fully experienced or understood, for in Bābā’s own words: “আমি অতি দুর্বর্ধ্য বস্তু। আমাকে রুঁজে একথা কেলো বলিতে পারবে না। মনে করুক যে ১০/১৫ বৎসরে বাবার কাছে থেকে বাবার সব কিছু জেনে গিয়েছেন। কখনও না।”

“I am very difficult to comprehend – no one can claim he has fully understood Me. You thought you have fully understood Bābā by staying with Him for 10 to 15 years? Never!” Nevertheless I am putting 2 to 4 vāṇīs of Bābā here for the devotees to follow in earnest.

Indicating where the desire to perform sādhana comes from after the desire arises to live a spiritual life, Bābā said: “সাধের স্পৃহা জগে প্রথমতঃ আত্মার মুক্তির অস্থায়ীত্ব থেকে। আত্মীর না হলে আত্মার মুক্তি সম্ভব নয়। একমাত্র আত্মস্বর্ণ পুরুষের কৃপাতেই আত্মীর সম্ভব।” “The desire to perform sādhana comes first of all from a soul’s search for liberation – unless one can see the Self the Self can not be liberated – the ātma or Self can only be seen by the mercy of a seer of the Self.”

In order to become a traveller on the spiritual path we need to destroy pride and conceit. In this connection Bābā said:

“দম্ভ, অহঙ্কার, কুরুচি নিয়ে আধ্যাত্মিক পথে অগ্রসর হওয়া যায় না। এগুলি সমুলে বিনাশ করতে হবে। এগুলি বর্তমান থাকলে কল্পনা অনিক তো স্বভাবিক ডাবেই দেখা দেবে।”

“You cannot progress on the spiritual path while there is pride, conceit and vulgar indecency – they need to be uprooted and destroyed. If they are present there will naturally be discord and quarrel.”

If we want to progress on the spiritual path there needs to be a single aim. In this connection Bābā said:

“সাধক নিজেই নিজের চুক্ত। নিজের কাছে ভালে লাগাই সর্বব্যাপ্ত শাস্তি আনতে পারে। বাইরের লোকে কি বলে সেদিকে মুক্তিকে চর্চা না। কেন জাগতিক পরিচালকের নির্দেশ মেনে না চলে একমাত্র তার নির্দেশিয় মানা করা উচিত।”

“The sādhaka is his own Guru. His own satisfaction can give him peace of mind in all circumstances. You don’t get anywhere if you bother about what outsiders say. We do not bother about what worldly rulers say and should only bother about what His\textsuperscript{45} indication is.”

\textsuperscript{44} Vāṇī means not just words or teachings, but divine teachings by a Guru or sādhu.

\textsuperscript{45} His = one’s Īṣṭadevatā or chosen deity.
We have set out on the spiritual path and set our target – now we have to make progress and become mentally prepared. Explaining how the svarūpa of the sādhaka will come about Bābā said:

“সোযে হবে মেবদ্রোহী, স্বীয সোযনো ও ছপৌুবষর ছজোবর ছস সিস্ত সঙ্কট অনোযোবস অমতক্রি রেোযোই। তেোযোই তোবে ছপ্ররণো ছযোগোবে। িনটট টঠে জোযগো নেস্ত রেোইবরর ছেোন রেোইবরর পোমরেোমরে। আর ইষ্টিুখী মিন্তো মভতবর মনবয যোয। মদবনর ছেলোয রেোরবে রো। রোম্রে মদবে আেষভণ রেবর। ঐেোবজ ব্রতী হবত হয। আর ছেোন সিযই ইষ্ট মিন সাংবযোগ নো। পোমরেোমরে ও বেষময়ে সিস্ত মিনবে রেোইবরর মনতোন্তই দুভভোগে। জোনবে।”

“The sādhaka will be a rebel who will easily overcome all dilemmas on the strength of his own sādhana. Obstacles will only increase his enthusiasm. If you can fix the mind in the right place no external things can cause any trouble. Worries about the family and sensual matters will pull the mind to the outer sphere and thoughts of the Lord take it to the inner sphere. If it is not possible to control the mind in the daytime due to having to concentrate on one’s work, one must be dedicated to this at night. If at any time you are unable to concentrate your mind on the Lord you should know yourself to be very unfortunate.”

Is it easy to concentrate the mind on the lotus-feet of the Lord? Can we actually perceive Him at all? How can we meditate on something we do not perceive? To these questions Bābā answered:

“শ্রীগুুবদবের শ্রীিরণ যেোনই এেিোে সোযনো। এরূপ সোযনো রেোইবত রেোইবত যখন শ্রীগুুবদবের সবঙ্গ এেোত্ম হবয যোবে তখন মতমনই মশবষের স্বরূপ মিমনবয ছদবেন। এোং তোর উপোসেবদেতোর রূপ শ্রীগুুবদে িোযেবিই প্রেোশ পোবে।”

“The only sādhana is meditation on the lotus-feet of Śrī Gurudeva. If by doing that we become one soul with Śrī Gurudeva He will reveal the disciple’s svarūpa and he will have the form of the Lord revealed within the form of Śrī Gurudeva.” He also said:

“শ্রীগুুবদের মূর্তিখানি সবদাহই অতের বিরাজ করলে সাধন ভজনের আর কোন প্রয়োজনীয়তাই নাই। এই মূর্তিকে জাগবে করার জনাই সাধন ভজন। শ্রীগুুবদের যতদিন প্রকট অবস্থায় থাকেন এবং তাঁর সাক্ষাৎ দর্শন লাভ হয ততদিন তাঁর সেবাপূজা করাই শ্রেষ্ঠ। যখন তিনি অপরকৃত হন তখন উপলব্ধি করতে হবে তাঁর প্রদত্ত মনের মতধে তিনি অবস্থান করছেন। সেই মনের সাধনেই তখন সমস্ত শক্তি নিয়োগ করা উচিত। সাধককে একমুখীন হতে হবে। শ্রীগুুবদেই হবেন তাঁর কাছে সর্বম। এই একমুখীন ভাব নিয়ে চলালে সমস্ত কিছু অধিগত হয়ে যায়। অর্জনই একমাত্র লক্ষ্যের কারণে পেরেছিলেন - তাঁর কারণ তিনি পার্থীর চোখ সহ মাথা ছাড়া আর কিছু দেখতে পান নাই। অন্য সকলের ব্যাখ্যা হওয়ার কারণ তাঁদের মন বিভিন্ন দিকে বিকৃত হয়েছিল”

“Those who always keep the divine form of Śrī Gurudeva within the heart and mind need not do any sādhana bhajana. Sādhana bhajana is done for awakening this
mūrti (divine form of Gurudeva). As long as Śrī Gurudeva is manifest (alive) and His personal audience can be achieved, it is best to do His sevā pūjā (worship). When He has become unmanifest (deceased) His presence needs to be experienced within the mantra He has given. It is then proper to engage all one's energy into the practice of this mantra. The sādhaka needs to focus – Śrī Gurudeva becomes his all-in-all. If one can focus like that, all will be attained. Young prince Arjuna had that single focus – he could not see anything else but the eye of the bird. The reason for others’ failure was that their attention was scattered in all different directions.” In this context Bābā also said:

“If one can focus like that, all will be attained. Young prince Arjuna had that single focus – he could not see anything else but the eye of the bird. The reason for others’ failure was that their attention was scattered in all different directions.” In this context Bābā also said:
get this faith and within Him he will see the truth. In this connection one should remember the verses "ādau śraddhā tathā sādhusaṅga".

What is an acceptable means of livelihood (upajīvya) for a devotee? In this regard Bābā said:

"The devotee’s only means of livelihood is a service attitude. The advancement caused by chanting the Lord’s name ten thousand times will backfire on you even more if you are averse to service. Performing a great sādhana will not accomplish as much as just weeding a little grass in the ashram." He also said:

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One must serve on hints and indications – that has been mentioned in one of the prayers of Narottama Ṭhākura too. One needs to be really smart to understand these hints – with a gross mind one can not serve.” Bābā alerted His devotees by saying:

"Do not ever sit on Prabhu’s throne. You will suffer a severe backlash if you desire to enjoy others’ service. The orders of Śrī Gurudeva must be carried out, but it is not proper to imitate Him.”

Pointing out the svarūpa of Śrī Gurudeva and Śrī Bhagavān, Bābā said:

"According to the scriptures Guru and Bhagavān are the same thing. In his Śrī Guru Vandana, Śrīla Sanātana Dāsa says ‘Nanda’s son Hari saves the conditioned souls assuming the form of Guru, revealing His greatness.’ Thus, from the philosophical

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46 Two verses in Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu 1.4.14-15, that describe the 9 stages of devotional advancement.

47 Prabhu can be either the Lord or the Guru.
point of view, it is appropriate to consider the Guru to be the form of Bhagavan. But
while we are serving Guru we must meditate on each limb of Śrī Gurudeva separately,
and serve Him accordingly. That is the desirable way to serve Guru. If we consider it
from the other point of view, we can see that Śrī Gurudeva awakens devotion to the
Lord within the disciple. Hence, since He assists in realization of the Lord, Śrī
Gurudeva is the form of Bhagavān.”

One day Tulasī Dās mentioned in one of his Doṅhaśi“Ego is even more
harmful than māyā (illusion) – ego caused many Munis and Rishis to fall down. Hence
dual is to be given up first of all.” As an example he mentioned: “A cyclone is able to
uproot huge trees but not tiny blades of grass.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the samaśṭi-guru (aggregate Guru) or Sāmpradāyika
Guru (teacher of the entire tradition), and the individual Ācāryas (Gurus) are the
vyāṣṭi-Guru. On the indication of the samaśṭi-guru, the ācāryas train their disciples. If
the samaśṭi-guru sees a devotee in svarūpāveśa He is very blissful, embraces him at
the chest and offers him at the feet of the Lord. Only Śrīman Mahāprabhu can bestow
the svarūpa of a maidservant of Rādhā. Hence He (Mahāprabhu) has said: ‘No one but
Me can bestow the love of Vraja”. The gopis of Vraja show the limit of Vraja-prema.
Each one of us is prakṛti (ontologically feminine), only Bhagavān Himself is puruṣa
(ontologically male). When this feeling comes to the sādhaka, the maidservants of
Rādhā will assimilate him into their group and count him/her among them. It is
entirely a matter of feeling; any other thought or feeling will not help us advance on
this path.” He also said:

“Śrīভগবানের দুইটি রূপ - ঐশ্বর্য ও মাধুর্য। এই দুইয়ের মধ্যে মাধুর্যই শ্রেষ্ঠ। শ্রীভগবানের মাধুর্যের
প্রকাশ শ্রীবৃন্দাবনে। মাধুর্যরুপে এই ভগবানকেই আমরা উপাসনা করি। চতুর্দিক রসের - দাস্য, সখ্য,

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48 Doṅha = medieval Hindi couplet
49 Svarūpāveśa = absorption in one's eternal spiritual form.
Śrī Bhagavān has two features – prowess and sweetness – of the two, the sweet one is the greater. The sweet feature is manifest in Śrī Vṛndāvana – we worship the Lord in this feature. He is worshipable in four flavours – service, friendship, parenthood and amorous love, in order of superiority, culminating in amorous love. The gopīs of Vraja show the limit of such spiritual amorous love, and again amongst them, Śrī Rādhikā, who is the embodiment of mahābhāva, is the greatest. Prema is the only support of this amorous love, and it is impossible not to capture the Lord with prema. Sometimes the Lord even takes a subjugated role to show the excellence of prema, so He will not hesitate to grasp Śrī Rādhikā’s lotus-feet. In the madhura rasa, the gopīs of Vraja take shelter of Śrī Rādhā’s devotional service – when Her lotus-feet’s devotion are served Giridhāri is easily attainable, for She is the love of His life. His mercy is attainable when His heart’s beloved’s mercy is attained.”

About the importance of studying śāstra, Bābā said:

“By studying śāstra one becomes acquainted with the Lord’s transcendental form and attributes, and through sādhana bhajana this form becomes visible. The sādhaka can then perceive Him as a person from this world and talk to Him, offering his love to Him.”

Prabhu Śitānātha brought the Lord of Vaikuṇṭha to the mortal world, where He flung Him into the ocean of ambrosial devotion to Śyāma. The original Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa descended in a golden form – what is the dearest thing to this Gaura? The holy name He has brought, not his own (Gaura-) name! In this connection Bābā said:

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“Gaura will not be happy if we chant His own name. If we chant the name He brought\textsuperscript{50} He is truly happy. If we want to make Gaura happy it is our natural duty to respect His suggestion. Even if we ourselves are happy by chanting Gaura’s name it will not make Him happy, and it is the primary target of a devotee to make His beloved Lord happy. Hence, to make Gaura love us we should not take shelter of invented independent paths, but worship (practice) the Holy Name that is dearer to Him than life itself.”

When, during His Gambhīrā pastimes, Mahāprabhu heard ‘Gaura nāma’ from Sitānātha’s mouth, He was unhappy and gave the following warning to the devotees:

\begin{quote}
chāḍi kṛṣṇa nāma ki koro kīrtan, 
svatāntra śvara bhāviyā bhāsāle bhuvana
\end{quote}

“What are you chanting, giving up the holy name of Kṛṣṇa? You make the whole world float in a concept of an independent Lord!”\textsuperscript{51} Bābā quoted that in this context.

About the purport of Śrīmad Bhāgavata Bābā said:

“Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is universal and everyone’s shelter. Śrīmad Bhāgavata’s philosophy is liberal and non-sectarian. It is improper to lock Śrīmad Bhāgavata up in a narrow box. Śrīman Mahāprabhu is the carrier and container of Śrīmad Bhāgavata. Mahāprabhu’s intention was to distribute the confidential love of (Kṛṣṇa in) Vraja. Our main purpose is to worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa by following the footsteps of six Gosvāmis with adherence to the path demonstrated by Śrīman Mahāprabhu.”

To show how we can proceed into the kingdom of sādhana, holding our Guru-rūpa sakhi\textsuperscript{52} by the hand, Bābā quoted the example of Śrīnivāsaśārya Prabhu and his disciple Rāmacandra Kavirāja. The disciple sat down to perform sādhana to find out

\textsuperscript{50} The holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

\textsuperscript{51} The verse is found in Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya 1,269-270 in a slightly different reading but with the same purport.

\textsuperscript{52} Śrī Gurudeva’s eternal female form as a maidservant of Śmt. Rādhārāni.
why Śrīnivāsačārya’s samādhi was not breaking. When absorbed in meditation he understood why Śrī Gurudeva’s samādhi was not breaking and thus he/she assisted Śrī Gurudeva. In this way they both met to serve Śrī Rādhikā and thus gave Her loving pleasure. In this way Śrī Gurudeva and his disciple assisted each other in kuṇja-service in svarūpāveśa.

Bābā wanted to show the importance of niṣṭhā (fixation and loyalty) in the life of the sādhaka by saying:

“নিষ্ঠা সাধকের জীবনের একটি উল্লেখযোগ্য বৈশিষ্ট্য। শ্রীভগবানের বিচিত্র রূপের প্রতি সাধকের শ্রদ্ধা থাকলেও একমাত্র নিজের অভিজ্ঞতা প্রতিই তাঁর সর্বাধিক নিষ্ঠা থাকে”

“In the life of a sādhaka, niṣṭhā is a noteworthy speciality. Though the sādhaka has faith in all the various forms of the Lord, he is most of all fixed in that of his own chosen deity.” In this regard he told the story of Bilvamāṅgala.

Because we are always surrounded by our mundane relatives in our material lives we forget about our relatives in the spiritual world. Indicating the difference between them, Śrī Gurudeva said:

“জাগতিক জীবনের আত্মীয়জনদের সঙ্গে আমাদের সম্পর্ক স্বর্থের। এই সম্পর্ক মুতুরের পূর্বকাল পর্যন্ত বর্তমান থাকে। মুতুরের পর শ্রদ্ধার শরীরটি ভক্তিভূত করার পর আর কোন সম্পর্ক থাকে না। আর আমাদের প্রিয়জনের বিয়ের জন্য হয় দূর্খ তা ও বেশী দিন স্থায়ী থাকে না। এই দৈহিক শরীরে তুলে দেওয়ার পর আমাদের সাহায্য আর কিছু থাকে না। শুধুমাত্র কর্মফল ছাড়া। কর্মফল অনুযায়ী আমরা ইস্তকূপ লাভ করি। মুতুরের পর এই পরম আত্মীয়ের কৃপা লাভ করার জন্যই আমাদের সাধন ভজন। সাধন ভজনের মাধ্যমে ইম্মানুবাল সঙ্গে আমাদের সম্পর্ক গড়ে ওঠে। এই সম্পর্ক এত ঘনিষ্ঠ যে ইন্দ্রিয়ে সাধক নির্ক্ষে অক্ষরি বিজ্ঞ করেন। এর প্রমাণ আমার দেখেছি শ্রীীমন্মহাপ্রভুর জীবনে। শ্রীমন্মহাপ্রভু পুরীধামে যখন গরুড়ের তুষ্ণ থেকে জগন্নাথদেবকে দর্শন করেন তঁর নিকটে তাঁর চোখ দিয়ে অক্ষরি নিঃপত্ত হয়। এই অক্ষরিজ্ঞ ঐ তুষ্ণকে নীচে অবস্থিত একটি কাল পূর্ণ হয়ে গিয়েছিল। চোখের জন্য তাঁর সেবা যথার্থতরপে করা যায়। অনেক নাম জন্য কেনা না হয় দুর্গুণটি চোখের জন্য প্রভুর চরণটিতে সিংহ করে পারলে তাঁর অধিক কৃপা লাভ করা যায়।”

“Our connection with our relatives in this worldly life is selfish and will last only until our deaths. The connection is gone as soon as our bodies are burned to ashes in the cemetery, and the sorrow of separation from our departed loved ones does not last long either. No one and nothing can help us after our bodies are carried off to the cemetery – all that remains is the results of our previous activities (karma). It is according to our activities that we may get the mercy of the Lord, and we practice sādhuṇa bhajana to receive the mercy of our Supreme Relative after death. We create a connection with our beloved deity through our sādhuṇa bhajana. This connection becomes so close that the sādhaka constantly sheds tears of love in separation from his beloved deity. We see the evidence for that in the life of Śrīmān Mahāprabhu. When He had darśana of Lord Jagannātha from behind Gauraḍa’s column in the Jagannātha
Rāmacandrapur’s Sādhhu Bābā

temple in Puri, tears constantly streamed from His eyes, and filled a drain below the pillar. Devotional service is fulfilled through such tears. What may not be accomplished even by chanting many rounds, can be accomplished by sprinkling some tears of divine love on the lotus-feet of the Lord. If one can do that one can achieve greater mercy.”

Our aim is to establish a connection with our our beloved Lord. To define the situation of the sādhaka once this connection is established, Bābā continued:

“The sādha’s beloved is always present everywhere – nothing is done anymore with this body other than remembering Him. His lotus-feet cannot be reached in full bodily consciousness. Through bhajana sādhana the perfect (spiritual) body is attained – for this one needs to think of that body. In that condition it is the same to the sādhaka whether he lives or dies. He can leave the gross body whenever he wants it and enter into the Lord’s eternal pastimes.”

Before He entered into the Lord’s eternal pastimes, Bābā revealed the true identity of truth behind death. If anyone would say ‘my Gurudeva has died’, Bābā would ask him: “তোমার কাছে কি তিনি মৃত?” “Is he really dead to you?” He also said:

“For the sādhaka Śrī Gurudeva never dies – if He would die there would be nothing left for the sādhaka. During His life He performs His manifest pastimes and after He leaves His body He performs His unmanifest pastimes. For the sādhaka these two kinds of pastimes are the same. On the strength of his sādhana he sees the unmanifest pastimes just like the manifest pastimes – he cannot understand anything else.”

He reminded us:

“মৃত্যুর মানে একটা পর্দার আড়াল। পর্দাটা সরিয়ে দিলেই আবার দেখা যাবে। সৃষ্টিতে সবকিছু দেখা যায় - সর্বত্র বিচরণ করা যায় - সৃষ্টিতে তা সম্ভব হয় না। সাধকের কাছে মৃত্যুর অতি তৃছ ব্যাপার। এ দেহেরে প্রয়োজন মিটে গেলে দেহ রাখা না রাখা তাঁদের কাছে একই কথা”
“Death means moving behind a curtain. If you shove away the curtain you will be seen again. In the subtle body you can see everything and move everywhere – this is not possible in the gross body. For a sādhu death is a very insignificant affair. When there is no more use of the body it does not matter anymore whether you keep it or not.”

One devotee asked: “Sometimes we see sādhus weep when someone dies. Why is this then?” Bābā answered:

“If the sādhus weep because someone has died it is not because they are subdued by māyā. When they weep they think this person has wasted his life as a slave of māyā and could not attain the Lord.”

Drawing the discussion towards his private life, Bābā said:

“I did not marry, so I can die with a smile on My face – you must also take My leave with a smile on your face – then I will be happy. Why need you shed tears like people from this illusory world? Rather, you should try to follow My example.”

He told his servants that lived in the ashram:

“The people of the world will come to you with their various problems. If they see tears in our eyes, then where else can they go? Try to solve all their problems with a smile on your face.”

Bābā explained very clearly that ‘I’ and ‘this gross body’ are not one and the same. If someone asked Him ‘How are You?’ he would say ‘I am fine’ and if someone said: “I heard You are sick” He would reply:

“Look, where is My disease? The disease is in the body, not in Me – I am always healthy and blissful. The disease is only in the gross body, which will act according to its own laws – I have no influence in that.”
Bābā was totally averse to preaching. The forest flower got wilted right in the forest where it bloomed. Baba withdrew from the sight of the modern preaching media and went far away into the jungle to absorb Himself in Madangopāl’s service.

Still, just as one can not hide the aroma of a blooming flower, Bābā’s glories manifest themselves to sensitive devotees. Even though they wanted to take Him to pompous religious festivals He would never agree to join. Once the devotees wanted to celebrate His birthday, but Bābā told them:

“আমার জন্মদিন নাই - কারণ আমি জন্মহীন। আমি অনন্ত, অসীম, অগ্রহণ্য। তাই আমার জন্মদিন প্রতিপলন করা মানে আমাকে অবমানন করা”

“I have no birthday because I am free from birth. I am without beginning, without end and without borders – hence I am beyond birth, death, old age and disease. Hence observing My birthday would be an insult to Me.”

In this way He gave up the narrow circle of ‘the small me’ and revealed the identity of ‘the huge me’.

The above words do not just show Bābā’s spiritual wisdom, it evolved out of His life’s experience, so if it emanates from Bābā’s sacred mouth it gets a fresh (deeper) meaning. Bābā Himself was the embodiment of these sacred words (vāṇī pratiṃṛti). Blessed we are that we were so fortunate to see with our own eyes such a sādhaka, absorbed in meditation on His beloved Lord, in such a mature state.

About four months before He entered the eternal pastimes of the Lord, Bābā once sat on the veranda in front of His hut. It was the 8th of June, 1986. In front of Him sat bhaktas like Nirañjan Jyeṭha Mahāśaya, Kṛṣṇā-Dā, Bābul-Dā, Nimāi-Dā, Gaur-Dā, Cintāharan-Dā, Viśvanāth-Dā, Nārān-Dā, Mihir-Dā, Tulas-Di, Yugal-Di and Gitā-Di. Nirañjan Jyetha Mahāśaya asked Bābā: “What will happen to the ashram after You are gone? We were all on father’s lap – how can we survive without father? And why should we call Madangopāl ‘the compassionate Supreme Lord’?” To this Bābā replied:

“না বাবা, তিনি সব সময়ই করুণাময়। আমাদের সুখের সময় তাঁকে করুণাময় বলা আর দুঃখের সময় না কলাতা স্বর্ণপরতা। স্বর্ণপর হলে তাঁকে পাওয়া যায় না”

“No Bābā, He is always compassionate. To call Him compassionate when we are happy and not to call Him compassionate when we are unhappy is simply selfishness, and He cannot be attained by being selfish.” Bābā continued:

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53 The father of Krishna Di, who lived in Prachin Mayapur. He was a devotee who knew śāstra well. He is deceased meanwhile.
"The ashram should be run as it is run now, if the residents of the ashram can prepare themselves for that. If not, then folk will come here simply to rent space. There is no other identity to this ashram than Sādhu Bābā’s Ashram. Whoever will live here will be a sādhu, qualified for strong minds. Tears from this illusory world should never appear in their eyes, like you see here your Namitā – even after she heard her father had deceased she did not shed one teardrop. One needs to be that steady. Thousands and thousands of people will come from outside with different types of problems – they should be able to relieve their problems by seeing the residents of the Ashram. This type of example they must give.”

After speaking like this non-stop for a long time, Bābā consoled everyone by saying:

“Even after I am gone there will be no problem for you as long as you follow My example. To My children I have sacrificed Myself (given Myself away) little by little. Now they can easily get that which they will have to perform harsh practices for later. No one understands the value of teeth as long as they have teeth. It is necessary for Me to leave this body for their own growth.”

He furthermore said in this regard:

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“Prabhu Sītānātha appears in this world to take its poison, and after completing that task He goes again. Again when the world is afflicted by the weight of the poison you will bring (invoke) Him again through your sādhana. For this severe austerities are required.”

In the morning of the 10th of June, 1986, Bābā sat on the veranda in front of His kuṭir, surrounded by some devotees who fanned Him with hand-fans. Just then a dove was calling in the distance. He pointed everyone’s attention to it, saying:

“এরেিডোেমগমররোজপমরক্রিোরসিযপু মররেোবেোাঁেোআখবক্ষতছেবেছশোনোযোয়োয়ুনোমগমররোজমেেোরবেননো?এেেোরিবনিবনইপমরক্রিোেবরএলোি”

“In this connection Bābā said:

“এইশরীরমদবয়মগমররোজপমরক্রিোেরসম্ভেনোহবলমগমররোজমেেোপোরবেননোো?এেেোরিবনিরেোরবেননোো?”

“Such songs can be heard on the Girirāja Parikramā close to Puchari on the open sugarcane fields.” Then, when He heard another bird sing, He said:

“ওটটরোযোেুবেরপোবশভজনস্থলীরেোবঅেমস্থতএেটটেেৃক্ষছেবেছভবসআবস”

“This comes straight from a tree near the bhajan-place next to Rādhākuṇḍa.”

In this connection Bābā said:

“ইইশরীরেিবনংগিরিিরাজােপিরক্রমােকরােসন্ভবনা হলে গিরিিাজ্জিি কি কৃপা করেননাো?একবারমনেমেইেপিরক্রমােকেএলাম”

“Will Girirāja not bestow His mercy if it is not possible to physically do Girirāja Parikramā? Once I came there to do parikramā mentally.”

Then He gradually reminisced the sights He had seen on His pilgrimages like Govindajī Mandir in Jaypur, the natural beauty of Galtajī as well as the beautiful sight of Puṣkar Tirtha. Of the two mountains flanking Galtajī He said:

“ওখোবনযোরোসোযনোেতমনভীে।মনভীেনোহবলওসেজোগোয়তপসেোেরোয়নো।হমরদ্বোবররেটেেতোহোবড়যখনঅেস্থোনেরতোিতখনওঐরেিমনজভনপমরবেশমেরোজেরত।এইসেজোগোবতইভগেৎউপলমিহয”

“Those who do sādhana there are really dauntless, otherwise they would never perform austerities at such a place. When I was staying on the mountain near Haridvāra there was also such a solitary surrounding. It is in such places that you can realize the Lord.”

Through the abovementioned discussion we were able to perceive the external manifestation of one of the sādhaka's state of svarūpa.

55 Just as Lord Shiva drank the poison from the milk ocean, Lord Advaita, who is Lord Shiva incarnate, took the poison of material life out of the peoples' lives during the manifest pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Ed.

56 Galta is in Rajasthan, a waterfall on a mountain close to Jaypur.
On 17th June, 1986 the discussion was about the temporary nature of life. Bābā said:

“আমাদের জীবনে তিনটে কাল আছে - শৈশব, যৌবন, বার্ধক্য। যৌবন খুবই ক্ষণস্থায়ী। এই ক্ষণস্থায়ী যৌবনকে ধরে রাখার জন্যই সাধনা। কাল তার অমোঘ নিয়মে চলবে | কলির প্রভাব মুক্ত হওযা একপ্রকার অসম্ভব। কলির প্রভাবেই দেহ এক সময বার্ধক্য নেমে আসবে”

“In our lives there are three phases of time – childhood, youth and old age. Youth is very brief. Sādhanā is meant to keep the youth which is so transitory, which lasts for a short time. Time will flow unfailingly (with its infallible rule/unfailing nature). It is almost impossible to get rid of the influence of Kali. Due to the force of Kali old age will descend into the body at one time.”

On 18th June, 1986, Bābā discussed the following:

“বেশী নাম ছোটা ভাল নয। নাম প্রচার হলেই পিছনে শত্রু লাগব। যেমন সক্রিয় হয়েছিল। সেজন্য অপ্রচারিত থাকা ভাল। শত্রুরা বিষপ্রয়াগ ও অন্য উপায় অবলম্বন করে পারে”

“It is not good to spill (spread) the Holy Name too much. After preaching the Holy Name enemies will come, as has happened with Socrates. Hence it is better not preached. Enemies may use poison and other types of ways.”

The topic of discussion then changed to the ability to leave one’s body and then to re-enter it, and how this is a real fact. However, He said:

“তবে এ জিনিষ করার যোগ্য খুব অল্প লোকেই আছে”

“There are very few people who are able to do this.”

22nd June, 1986. Seeing the heavy faces of the devotees, Bābā said:

“ওরো রোগীর সেবা করতে অভাবন। সাধুসার কি জানে? সাধুসার ও রোগীসার এক নয। আমার মধ্যে যে ঝুঁকি রয়েছে তার খয়র কেউ জানে না। সে একমাত্র আমি জানি। আর আমার অস্তিত্বের জন্য। তোমাদের যখন তোমাদের মত সাধন শক্তি নাই তখন আমাকে ভুগতে দাও। আমি তো সকলের প্রার্থ্য খন্ধ করেছি। এখন আমাকে তোগ করতে হবে না। আমি তো ইচ্ছা করলে এখনই তো হচ্ছে দিতে পারি। আমাদের দেহ ছাড়া না ছাড়া একই ব্যাপার। আমাদের কাছে “মরণ রে তুল্য মম শায়ম সমান” | যাতে আমি আমাদের সঙ্গে লীলা সম্পন্ন করতে পারি তার ব্যবস্থা করা যেতেন। আমি যেন দেখে যেতে পারি গোপালের, গোপেশ্বরের সেবা চিঠমত চলছে”

“They are practiced in nursing the sick – do they know how to serve a sādhu? Nursing the ill and serving the sādhus is not the same thing. No one knows what tempest is raging within My body – only I know it and My antaryāmī. When you do not have the power of austere practice (sādhana śakti) to stop that then let Me suffer. I have destroyed everyone's karma from their previous lives (prārabdhā karma). Now isn't it my turn to suffer? I can leave my body right at this moment if I want. For us,
either to keep the body or to leave it, it is the same. For us, death is the same as achieving Śyāmasundara – *marañña re tuhu mama śyāma samāna*. It is necessary to make arrangements for Me to blissfully end My pastimes now. I need to see that the service of Gopāla and Gopeśvara is going on nicely.”

26th June, 1986. Bābā resides inside His *kuṭīr*, surrounded by some devotees – Nirañjan Jyeṭhā Mahāśaya, Bābul-Dā and others. He discusses the following:

“সন্তদোসিহোরোজ, যনেয়িহোরোজ ইতেোমদসোবেরিঃরুতেরপতোাঁবদরআশ্রিমেলবনো। আইোরওঅপ্রেটহবয়োওরপরছতোিরোসিস্তঅনুষ্ঠোনএইভোবেইেরবে। তবেই তো আমার আদর্শ বজায় থাকবে”

“Did not the ashrams of sādhakas like Santa Dās Mahārāja, Dhananjay Mahārāja, etc. go well after their deaths? You should continue all our festivals also after I become unmanifest (expire) – better even you try to increase them. Then My example will remain intact.”

To this, Bābul-Dā asked: “We might increase the festivals fourfold even, but along with this you see so much infighting and litigation arising in different ashrams.”

To this Bābā answered:

“ছতোিরোমনষ্কপটহবলতোছেোনমদনহবতপোবরনো। আইোরএইআশ্রমেরমাধুর্য কোনদিননষ্ট হবে না। ঐশ্বর্য এখানে প্রবেশ করতে পারবে না। তোমাদিগকে আদর্শের প্রতি অবিচল থাকতে হবে। আমি তো বলেছি প্রযোজন হলে এই আশ্রমের চতুর্দিকে উঠু প্রাচীর দিয়ে থিয়ে তার মধ্যে অবস্থান করবে। বাইরের সঙ্গে কেন সংশ্রব রাখবে না। গুহুমাত্র গঙ্গা জল, তুলসীপত্র দিয়ে মদনগোপালের পুজা করে তাই পেঝে দিন কাটবে। সম্পূর্ণ তাঁর উপর নির্ভর করে চলবে। বাইরের কাছাকাছি কেন সাহায্যের অপেক্ষা রাখবে না। বিষ্ণুর অন্ন কন্ধ গ্রহণ করবে না। তোমাদের মদনগোপালের উপর অবিচল নিষ্ঠা থাকলে কখনও অসুরিয় পরতে হবে না।

“This can never happen if you are all honest and sincere. The sweetness of My Ashram will never perish – luxury (*aiśvarya*) will never enter here. You must remain fixed in that example. I am telling you – if necessary you stay in this ashram by surrounding it with high walls all around, not associating with any outsiders at all. Simply offer Ganges-water and Tulasī-leaves to Madangopāl, consume that and spend your days like that, fully depending on Him. Don’t depend on the help of any outsider and never eat food-grains from the materialistic enjoyers. If you are fixed in Madangopāl without wavering you will never have any trouble.”

In the evening of the 5th July, 1986, Bābā sits on the veranda in front of His *kuṭīr*. Nārān-Dā and Gaur-Dā sit in front of Him, serving His feet, and some others of us stand around Him. The discussion turns to tantric practice. Bābā indicates from whom and through whom these things are being done. Then He says:
“Beware of people as long as I am alive. Do not carry just everyone on your
head (don’t just trust everyone). Do not reveal your secrets to everyone, or you will
live in fear of disaster.”

Nārān-Dā asked: “Bābā, how can we combat tantra?”
Bābā replied:

“Mandrakhā irāvāthākkas yoxkākā yoxkākā tāngā sāmāhā

"Tantra is defeated by the power of mantra. It is sufficient to sit on an Āsan and
do japa of the mūla-mantra58 1,008 times in one session, as a rule."

The only protection against this, either at home or outside, is uninterrupted
sādhanā. In the course of the discussion this matter was revealed.

Sunday 20th July, 1986 – three months before entering into the Lord’s eternal
pastimes, Śrī-Śrī Bābā sat on the veranda in front of His kutīra in the morning,
discussing various topics, reminiscing His past. He narrated two stories of how He
showed His physical prowess in His youth, how He practiced yoga through breathing
exercises, and how He became detached from life after His mother and father passed
away. He narrated how attempts were made on His life and how such attempts all
failed, in what condition His puruṣāṅga59 ended up due to yogik practice and how it
was restored to its natural condition through an operation. He then changed the
subject and said:

“I used to have a special inclination towards music. A great musician came to
our ashram in Vṛndāvana from Haridas Swamiji’s Ashram. He showed so much
happiness embracing Me to his chest – by his blessings I have become successful in
this (musical) path – now there is no musical instrument in India that I cannot play.

58 18-syllable Gopāl-mantra
59 puruṣāṅga – male organ. Due to Bābā’s breathing exercises His organ had withdrawn into His
underbelly, which caused problems in urinating. It was cured through an operation.
The famous musician Pārbatī Kar was My Viṇā-Guru – I had a desire to spend My whole life making music.”

His love of music was fulfilled when He attained the relish of the flute-sound of Śrī Vṛndāvana’s youthful Cupid, Muralidhāri.

After discussing all this Bābā withdrew for a few days, absorbed in meditation on His beloved Lord. After that, in the beginning of Niyam Sebā60 He took leave of this uncertain world and headed for the world of the gods, keeping His extraordinary life and priceless teachings here for His children (disciples).

In this way Śrī-Śrī Bābā showed the sādhakas the way to go through His extraordinary life and priceless teachings. Those lucky persons who saw Him personally and managed to receive His mercy are blessed, and even those who attained His mercy in various other ways are blessed. Today, as Kali is ruling all over with his full vigour (youthful vigour), at the same time Bābā is protecting everyone by stretching his fearless hands, speaking this abhaya-vāṇī (words of fearlessness) which are like a nectar of revival – “এই আশ্রমের ক্রিস্মীমানার মধ্যে কলি প্রবেশ করতে পারে না” “Kali will not be able to enter the boundaries of this ashram”. Whenever we have the opportunity in our busy lives to stop and think we can experience that Sādhu Bābā of Rāmacandrapura accomplishes the spiritual welfare of His children even today, telling travellers who have lost the way:

“পথিক তুমি পথ হারিয়েছে? এসে এই পথে”

“Oh traveller, you lost the way? Come on this path!”

Thus ends Satinath Dutta’s ‘Sadhu Baba of Ramacandrapur’

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60 Holy month of Kartik (October-November), in which vows (niyam) are taken.