

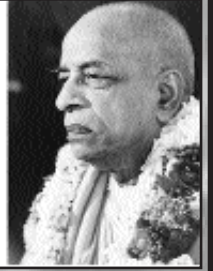
A NEWSLETTER FOR THE
RESIDENTS OF ISKCON MAYAPUR

Mayapur Katha

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS

VOL. 6 NO 3

FOUNDER-ACHARYA HIS DIVINE GRACE A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPADA



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*We are here to chant, we are here to dance
We are here to serve with devotion...
We are here to take up the golden chance
And awake our Love of Godhead*



Although Śrīmatī Rukmiṇīdevī, the first queen of Lord Kṛṣṇa, knew that brāhma-muhūrta is the most auspicious time in the entire day, she would feel disgusted at the appearance of brāhma-muhūrta because she was not very happy to have Kṛṣṇa leave her side in bed. Despite Śrīmatī Rukmiṇīdevī's disgust, Lord Kṛṣṇa would immediately get up from bed exactly on the appearance of brāhma-muhūrta. An ideal householder should learn from the behavior of Lord Kṛṣṇa how to rise early in the morning, however comfortably he may be lying in bed embraced by his wife.

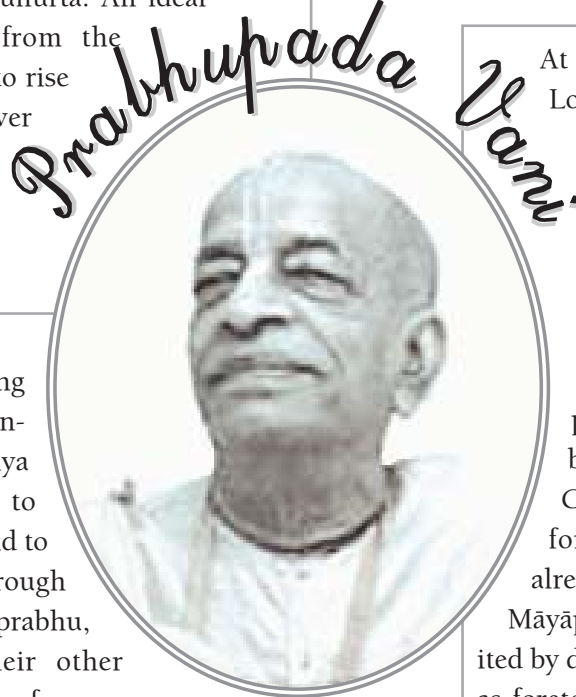
[Kṛṣṇa book 70]

So Nityānanda Prabhu, being prakāśā, He is manifesting Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He's canvassing the same thing. Caitanya Mahāprabhu is canvassing to accept Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and to accept Kṛṣṇa consciousness through the mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu and Their other assistants is easier, easier. Therefore we see practically, we have taught our disciples to chant first of all the Pañca-tattva, śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu-nityānanda, śrī-advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi-gaura-bhakta-vṛnda. Thank you. So through the mercy of this Pañca-tattva, easily you can approach Kṛṣṇa, easily. Otherwise how it is possible? These Europeans, Americans, they did not know what was Kṛṣṇa. Four or five years ago they were unknown. How they have become so devotee of Kṛṣṇa that ten thousand miles, crossing over the sea, they have come here at Māyāpur, unless they have got developed love for this? Their coming is not so easy from neighboring villages, but it costs. They have spent lakhs of dollars-one dollar equal to eight rupees-and they have come here. Why? Through the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

[Adi Lila Lecture Mayapur 26-3-75]

We have published so many books, they are not even able to read these books. So the other devotees, (laughs) they cannot rise..., come at five o'clock. That is the test. Yes. One who cannot rise early in the morning, he is not spiritually serious. That is test. Brahma-muhūrta, this hour, one hour before sunrise, is very auspicious moment.

[Room conversation indoor 13-12-1970]



At present, however, by the grace of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, His cult is being propagated all over the world, and it is most probable that in the future history of Lord Caitanya's movement, Europeans, Americans, Canadians, Australians, South Americans, Asians and people from all over the world will be celebrated as devotees of Lord Caitanya. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness has already constructed a big temple at Māyāpur, Navadvīpa, which is being visited by devotees from all parts of the world, as foretold by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and anticipated by Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

[Adi Lila 10.122 Purport]

'Mayapur Katha'

is a facility for you to share your ideas, articles, suggestions, comments, realizations, concerns, etc. with the community of Vaisnavas. You are welcome.

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Preaching in schools of Bengal



**MK ASKED IN-CHARGE OF SCHOOL PREACHING DEPARTMENT,
ANANDA VARDANA PRABHU,
TO INTRODUCE HIMSELF AND HIS SERVICE TO OUR READERS.**

I was born in one village of Bankura district, West Bengal. My family members were not Vaishnavas, but religious minded. Traditionally the whole family worshiped Lord Siva and Durga. By profession my father was a deed writer as well as being a homeopathy practitioner. My mother was a very simple, affectionate and caring mother. There are many things I can remember of my parents, but they didn't contribute very much in my spiritual life. Anyway, thanks to them for maintaining me, eventually I developed a strong desire to become a devotee of the Lord.

In boyhood when I studied in the M. High School I was considered to be a good student. When I passed my final school exams I stood first in the whole school.

When I was 18 years old I moved to Visnupur, where I was attending one government college and at that time I decided to take another degree. However, after 3 years, though I completed exam of my general degree course - B.Sc.Math (Honor). But I was not so happy where I stayed, especially with the point of view of complicated household life.

In Vishnupur, there are so many temples, but no deities, no worship - nothing, only old artistic works of broken temples, which I visited regularly and thought about life and what was happening. I heard in ancient time there was a vaisnava king, Birhambir,

in that city (Visnupur) who got mercy from Srinivas Acarya. One time I meditated when I touched the 'Dalmadal Kaman'(Cannon) which was used by Lord Madan Mohan Himself to protect His devotee. I can not say what happened. I was always thinking that I would become a sanyasi.

Somehow or other I came to Mayapur as a visitor and met Murari Gupta Prabhu, who was the New Devotee Program director at the time. After a few discussions with him, I wanted to know how I can become a devotee of ISKCON. He had an easy answer - start chanting Hare Krishna regularly, follow some regulative principles, stay here and after two months training you will get a particular service. He spent quite some time with me that day and answered many of my questions.

Finally I joined ISKCON on the same day. That was June 1993. I was initiated by H.H. Jayapataka Swami in 1995. Later on I came in touch with many nice devotees.

After having graduated from the New Devotee Program, I joined Bhakti Purusottam Swami's Preaching Program and was doing Sankirtana for three months. After that I joined the newly started School Preaching Program.

Then Maharaja's preaching program expanded and he engaged me in different services and preaching activities. After a few years, I was

appointed to oversee the School Preaching department.

Now, my duty is to coordinate School Preaching as well as 'Jagrata Chhatra Samaj' (enlighten student group). I also assist Gita Course, Campus Preaching, printing books, leaflets, etc; arranging different programs, seminars etc. Also now I am engaged by Bhakti Purusottam Swami and Dr.P.Ray (U.K.) to construct a new School Building (Bhaktivedanta Mission School).

In this way by the mercy of Srila Prabhupada, I am always engaged in different kinds of services.

Sometimes, seeing different problems of ISKCON, I become upset. Sometimes I think 'Why am I in ISKCON? Am I here to move up, to prove myself, to show my worth so that the whole world can see? Or, am I here to perfect my chanting, to cleanse my heart, and to dissolve my false ego and attain victory over repeated birth and death?'

The plain truth is that I am here to serve selflessly. That is why I am praying to all vaisnava's, Guru-Gauranga, and Their Lordships Sri Sri Radha Madhava that I can always engage myself in devotional service and remain brahmachari without thinking of anything else.

Hare Krsna! Your servant,

**Ananda Vardana Das,
Preaching department**

continue on p. 4

by Ananda Vardana Dasa:

(continuing from p. 3)

Every devotee knows that preaching in Bengal is very difficult. Not only has decades of atheistic rulers turned people of the land of Gauranga Mahaprabhu into atheists, but those who believe in God are completely misdirected by pseudo-incarnations, misinterpreters, etc.

In all areas of preaching the Founder-acharya of ISKCON, Srila Prabhupada wrote the most attractive books, presenting the philosophy of Bhagavat-Dharma, to be distributed widely to people from all walks of life but especially to the student communities around the world.

In view of this perspective, we under the guidance of H.H. Bhakti Purusottama Swami started different kinds of preaching activities here in Mayapur, such as school preaching, Gita-course, campus preaching, etc.

School Preaching-program

School Preaching has been going on in Mayapur for the last nine years. Over the years various devotees became more involved in different aspects of School preaching and met with varying degrees of success. Although the Temple authorities recognized its importance, due to shortage of manpower, lack of qualified preachers or other priorities, this area did not develop properly.

Anyway, during Srila Prabhupada's Centennial period we conducted about 1000 school programs with standard presentations like student competitions, lecture, video-show, Prasad distribution, etc. After 1996 we changed the mode of student program. To engage our trained students in active preaching, practicing Krsna Consciousness, we have introduced Jagrata Chhatra Samaj (enlightened student group) system. This effort has met with some success, because after its introduction 56 centers of Chhatra Samaj are actively running in different parts of Nadia and Berdwan districts. Also a few groups are running in different parts of Bengal

through correspondence. Anyway, our Jagrata Chhatra Samaj (student group) program has been continuing without any interruption from 1997. So far, 68 groups have been formed, each containing an average of 15 students. So now the total number of students is 1020 (apr).

Regular activities of Jagrata Chhatra Samaj:

- 1) Each student group is meeting for one and a half hours weekly.
- 2) First of all they chant Hare Krsna Maha-Mantra, recite Mangalacarana and one sloka from Bhagavad-Gita.
- 3) They next read from Jagrata Chetana (text-book with 100 basic questions and answers) that we have published for them. Our devotees who organize the program ask different questions from that book and also discuss about ISKCON and Srila Prabhupada and give a task for the next week.
- 4) Students also speak their realizations and then ask different questions to our devotees.
- 5) They chant one round Hare Krsna Maha-Mantra on beads.
- 6) Our devotees give Prasadam to them.

Ten devotees of School Preaching Department have the duty to inspect Chhatra Samaj and to preach among them in the place where students meet in a School, Club or in the house of a student, etc. Every year an annual student conference, The Bhaktivedanta Scholarship exam, is held at Mayapur. Also the students are engaged in various social works, such as the development of Mayapur City, preaching to people how to develop their transcendental life, etc. We engage enthusiastic students as volunteers in different festivals of ISKCON. Also for the benefit of the society, seminars, local pandal programs (with parikrama, class, drama, and video-show) in different areas are organized by students groups regularly.

Aims: to organize systematic program for students (in school), course of Bhagavad-Gita and other basic philosophy based on Srila Prabhupada's

books.

Gita Course Department

Under H.H. Bhakti Purusottama Swami's directions we presented a six-month Gita-Course in mid'97 for students only and then for all. By the grace of the Lord it met with success. After two years approx, three thousand candidates have taken admission in Gita Correspondence Course. Persons from all sectors of society took part - teachers, students, doctors, artist, officers, house-wives etc.

All of them came here in Mayapur after completion of the six-month course in Siksarthi Samabesh. Here in Mayapura they sat for a special exam and quiz contest, attended Gita classes, japa session and received certificate and gift. So far 500 candidates have completed this course and passed.

Earlier percentage of drop-out cases was big, due to some technical problems. Now it's reducing and nowadays almost 75% candidates are continuing with the course. Previously even many of the businessmen, doctors or teachers felt that the course was too difficult. Now we have made the questions very attractive, simple and short and we are getting good response.

As a result everyone who completes the Gita Course now gladly accepts that Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, this is the major achievement, and a strong step forward to smash all wrong ideas and make the whole of Bengal Krishna conscious. Everyone is chanting Maha-Mantra, some more, some less.

There are six devotees involved in this department. At the present we are corresponding, distributing books and organizing Gita seminars twice a month in Kolkata and also visiting different Gita Study Circles all over the Bengal.

Campus Preaching (Pilgrims guide and facilitations)

Eight devotees in total are involved in this preaching section. Two devotees in the Temple courtyard and two

devotees near the main gate are engaged in preaching to the visitors. They distribute leaflets in English, Bengali and Hindi. They also respond to the various enquires of the visitors and guide them to visit important places (Samadhi, Bhajan-kutir, Gurukula, Goshala, etc.)

Hare Krishna Maha-Mantra japa is being taught to the visitors after Mangala-arotika (daily approx 200 people chant on japa mala)

In noon (1 pm- 3:30 pm), a video show is held for the visitors in the Samadhi Mandir Auditorium.

We published 60 different leaflets: Sridham Mayapur (guide and importance), Srila Prabhupada, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Altruism, Soul and reincarnation, Good health (about vegetarianism), etc.

One devotee is involved in distribution of free Prasadam (khitchari and sweet rice) to pilgrims. Plates of Prasadam distributed yearly 613,200.

Visitors write their suggestions, comments, criticism about ISKCON (Mayapur) in our comment books.

We gave free accommodation (for preaching purpose) to 900 people including youth, students, Namahatta devotees etc. on the occasion of Student seminars, Youth Conference and Gita Jnan Maha Yajna etc. in Youth Hostel.

Bhaktivedanta Mission School

Now I have being engaged by H.H. Bhakti Purusottama Swami and Dr. P.Roy to construct a new school building. I am acting with Mr. Kasinath Dey and Sarvalokeswar Prabhu. We wanted to start an English and Bengali Medium Secondary School which is focused on advanced academic studies and a Krishna conscious program.

Where: Iskcon, Mayapur, near Namahatta Building

When: probably beginning of May 2003

For whom: For local and outside people (including ISKCON devotees) approximately between the ages of 10-18 years.

I request the devotees to please distribute this information as widely as possible to temple devotees, congregation, etc.

Any parents or students who would like further information or who might possibly be interested are invited to write to us.

Prospective teachers or administrators are also invited to correspond with Ananda Bardhan das

What we need now for Preaching Division:

We have two specific difficulties. Firstly we need educated brahamacaris, expert in Krishna Consciousness philosophy, although present devotees have sincerity and devotion.

The other problem is financial. H.H. Bhakti Purusottama Swami is mercifully funding it, but we need more.

Besides, we face difficulties in traveling to different areas by public vehicles. A car with preaching equipment such as video, slide show would help us tremendously.

We depend on the mercy of Srila Prabhupada and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to run on and to expand preaching activities. We also seek blessings of H.H. Bhakti Purusottama Swami under whose direct guidance activities of Preaching Division are continuing.

Devotees engaged in Preaching Division:

A\C and Pandal Program:

- 1) Govindananda das
- 2) Gopijanavallabha das
- 3) Paramdaya Gaura das

School preaching:

- 4) Sita Pati das
- 5) Basantaradas
- 6) Brahmanda das
- 7) Subijoy Gour das
- 8) Ramavantas Nitai das
- 9) Gopal das
- 10) Sarvajna das
- 11) Devkumar das
- 12) Chaitanya Sundar das

Gita Course:

- 13) Govardhan Gopal das
(Master)
- 14) Laxmi Govinda das
- 15) Padmapani das
- 16) Gopikanta das
- 17) Parjanya Maharaja das
- 18) Sitanath das
- 19) Venudhari das
- 20) Gopgopinath das

Campus preaching:

- 21) Kanairam das
- 22) Manohar das
- 23) Sacisuta das
- 24) Soumya das
- 25) Visok das
- 26) Krishna Gopal das

Collection:

- 27) Sama Krishna das
- 28) Kanchan das
- 29) Murari Kesava das

BVMS & IYFH:

- 30) Subhuga Shyam das
- 31) Sarva Lokesar das

Health

Bhakti Yoga Prabhu is serving with SMVS (Sri Mayapur Vikash Sangha) under Pancharatna Prabhu, the executive director of SMVS since Gaura Purnima 2000 as a managing director.

He is overseeing the field work of SMVS - health program, education, training, community development around the local area as well as doing administration - finance, communications, human resources and PR. Prior to coming here he had experience in financial management with the government of Canada for eleven years, being an accountant by profession.

Bhakti Yoga: *"I joined ISKCON in 1975 and got initiated in 1982 in Toronto by H. H. Gopala Krishna Goswami. From 1982 till about 1987 I did Sankirtan, distributing Srila Prabhupada's books, and also paintings to support the Temple. Then from 1987 till 1999 I did accounting for the temple and also Deity worship. In 1999 I came to Mayapur".*

Bhaktiyoga Das: We are building a Health center by the bridge on the turning of the road on the way to Yoga Pitha. It's being built by Mayapur Vikash Sanga, with the help of the ISKCON relief and welfare Trust, which is the money collected by Pramodini Mataji in Germany. And also with the help of Mayapur Trust, which is another trust set up in UK to collect money for development in Mayapur. We are also looking for donors to complete the building fully. Right now we have money to do the entire structure up to the roof and one complete floor.

MK: *How big the building will be?*

B: It will be five storeys. Below ground level we will have a basement that we'll use as a go down. Then on the ground level we will have an open floor with offices for the doctors who will come daily and see the patients, like an open clinic. That's one half of the building and another half will be used for meetings and training and so on. On the first floor we are planning to locate a pathology lab, which we are in the process of opening now by Hular Ghat. When the first floor will be completed the lab will be shifted. Also there will be a pharmacy with enough medicines to supply 15 village level pharmacies.

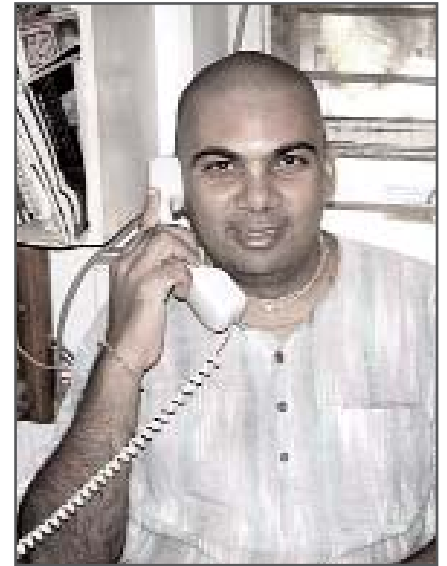
MK: *Are you going to make medicines?*

B: No, we will purchase whole sale from the drug companies and sell to the public and also whole sale.

On the other side of the first floor we will build a maternity section with a birthing room and recovery room with about three beds. At this facility we will take normal pregnancy cases, any complicated case will be sent to the local hospital in Krishnagar or where ever. The mother will be advised to go to a hospital where they have more facilities to handle it.

On the second floor we are planning to have an emergency ward for emergency cases, Electro cardiogram unit for monitoring heart patients and facilities for the resident doctor. A doctor will be there all the time, 24 hours a day and only will be available to the patients on emergency type basis. Also on that floor we are planning to have a kitchen, where we can cook for patients. Cooking will be done either there or we will contract some devotee to do it as a business.

On the third floor we will have three wards - for ladies, for men and for children. These wards are for the small emergency cases, all we going to do is fix scratches and sprains, minor



things and if a patient needs nurses care for some time (day or two) then they can stay there. And on the other side of this floor we want to open an X-ray unit.

Once we get this building completed we have plan to make a full fledge hospital with surgery and everything and it will have approximately 35 beds, full emergency and we will do surgery there, patients will stay there for how ever long it takes to recover from their illness.

MK: *Where do you plan to put that hospital?*

B: It will be right next to this building. And once we will have the big hospital built this building, which we are doing now can be used as offices for the hospital or as residence for doctors and nurses. We feel that if we build something small now then we can get started and we can show our potential donors what we have and tell them that we have small building and we want to do something bigger because the need is there with large population around. Actually the closest good or semi-good hospital you can find is in Krishnagar. If you want to find really good hospital you will have to go to Kolkata. The same is with pathology lab, the closest one is probably in Ranaghat.

MK: *What is actually done now?*

B: In the building we are doing now we just completed the floor for the ground floor and pillars for the second floor and we plan by the end of October there will be a floor for the first floor, which will be the ceiling for the ground floor. We are planning to go on doing one floor at the time for the

center



next three or four months, one floor every month, until we'll get to the roof. Once we complete up to the roof we will come back to the first floor and we will finish the floors by putting walls and rooms.

MK: *Do you have money to finish the whole building?*

B: So far we have enough money only to go up to the first floor. But we have been meeting with donors and making presentations and one donor promised to give money this winter. With that money we can complete the frame for the entire building and finish the first floor. We are hoping to have that all complete by Gaura Purnima 2003. If no more money comes by then we just go ahead inaugurate the building and start operating out of the first floor. Then as we get money we will finish other floors. If we get enough money now then we will complete the entire building by the end of 2003. To do the entire building according to estimates of our engineers will cost roughly 48 lakhs. So far we only have about 12 Lakhs in hand.

We are hoping to get some donations this winter.

MK: *Where will you get the doctors from?*

B: At the moment we are working on getting the pathology lab, pharmacy and doctors started in the Land Office at the Hular Ghat. We are looking at some doctors which we already located. They will serve as a regular doctors, each one will come one or two days per week. Actually we are waiting for some money from UN, and as soon the money arrives we can start the pharmacy. For the pharmacy we already have a devotee pharmacist.

MK: *Who is that devotee?*

B: He is from Mayapur, his name is Paramesti Das, he is a qualified pharmacist. We just had interviews for lab technicians and we had located two people, who we feel are good and soon we'll finalize who will get the job and that person will start, as soon as UN

money arrives. We also have one staff, Doctor Shyamasundar Manna, Srila Prabhupada's disciple and we are looking for two or three other allopathic doctors. We also have plan to bring in one Ayur Vedic doctor we already located. We will try him for a while and get some feed back from the patients. If patients are happy with him and we are happy with him, then he will continue on.

MK: *When are you going to try him?*

B: When the Hular Ghat location starts up, in the Land Office, as soon as we get money from UN. We already have rooms ready, we just need to bring in the equipment and get started. Hopefully by the end of the year it should be on it's way - the clinics, the pathology lab and the pharmacy - everything should be up and running.

MK: *Will there be any charge for devotees?*

B: Yea, there will be charge for everyone. We haven't settled the amount yet, but we plan to charge everyone, because we want to make it a sustainable program. Right now we are getting the start up money from UN, but to have it running on ongoing basis unless we have fees we can not run it.

MK: *Are the fees going to be dif-*

ferent for different people, or same for everyone?

B: A-a... currently we are talking, although it hasn't been finalized yet, about making it less for the people who are below the poverty line. But in general we want to make the fees lower than what is being charged outside.

MK: *How will you know who is actually below the poverty line, what is the proof?*

B: We have a staff member who goes around, interviewing people and finding out what their income level is.

MK: *So, is it based on what people are saying?*

B: Yes. If we find different then we will deal with it.

MK: *What if some western devotee is below the poverty line?*

B: Well, we are talking about poverty line by Indian standards.

MK: *Which is what?...*

B: It's about couple thousands Rupees per family (monthly income). We haven't set everything in place yet.

MK: *So, does it applies to everyone or just to the locals?*

B: Yes, it applies to everyone who is below the poverty line.

MK: *Thank you. Hare Krishna. ♦*



THE CONSTRUCTION SITE OF THE HEALTH CENTER

Radha-Madhava's Dasis

For the last three years or so there has been an increasingly growing interest from the community devotees, particularly Matajis, in rendering personal service to the Deities. And with soon expected big Panchatatva Deities this service will considerably increase.

So, MK requested the head Pujaries Jananivasa Prabhu and Pankajangri Prabhu to recount the services Matajis are doing for Sri Sri Radha-Madhava, Sri Panchatatva and Lord Narasimha Deva.

MK: How many Matajis are involved in the Deity's service?

Jananivasa Prabhu: I don't know, hundreds... There is about 20 garland Matajis, headed by Bhakta Gana Devi Dasi. Prabhupad's rooms also, at least three Matajis up there. So many little things have been done by Matajis. It's unlimited actually... All kinds of people making garlands, sewing... Hari Bhakti mataji is doing beautiful vases to decorate the altar.

MK: Who are like the main supervisors amongst the Matajis involved in Deity's services?

J: Bhakta Gana Mataji is for the garlands; Nirgata Mataji is heading those who take care for Gopi's hair; Kesavi Mataji for any kind of designs and drawings; Latika Bhakti Mataji is doing puja, engaging the guests in offering incense and flowers to Radha-Madhava; Krishna Madhuri Mataji is in charge of jewelry, keeping Deity's dresses, cleaning and tidying up, in fact, all the other services she is more or less in charge of.

MK: How long has she been engaged like this?

J: About three years. First she was serving in JPS office, and then slowly she started to help more and more in the Deity's area and practically took over all responsibility.

MK: Who was doing it before?

J: It was done by brahmacharies, but not so much. A lot of things Krishna Madhuri introduced, which wasn't done before. She really got it together - tidied it all up, sorted all the jewelries, made nice boxes and cupboards, maintain the place, kept it clean. Also she engaged so many other Matajis. She sorted out the old mahaprasad jewelry and made little packets, so when some guests bring their presents for the Deities we can give them something back. That's apart from her service of looking

after Tulasi. She also engaged other Matajis in the service of Tulasi Devi. It is actually a great help for me that she took so much responsibility. She is very-very sincere and advanced devotee. None of these things were practically happening before. She completely converted the whole place. All of sudden Matajis became engaged in hundreds of little types of services. She gave everyone a chance to do some direct service to the Deities. She also gives us ideas what would be nice for the Deities, she has good taste. She is being so helpful, actually, for the Deity Department.

MK: Are any of these Matajis supported by Pujari Department?

J: Although some of the Matajis are getting a little maintenance (those who are doing garlands and cleaning Prabhupad's rooms), but most of these Matajis are doing the service on their own, in their free time.

MK: Are those Matajis who getting maintenance officially part of Pujari Department?

J: No, not officially. In the beginning it used to be mostly foreign Matajis, they were maintained by their husbands and they didn't want to take anything. But with big increase of Bengali families, we started this other system, it's good for them, they get to do service and also get a little maintenance, which they need. So, it's like a part-time service, for a couple of hours every morning.

MK: You said that before all these services (like combing the Gopi's hair, etc) were done by official Pujari Department devotees.

J: Yea, more or less. Now it's being done on a regular basis.

MK: By the Matajis?

J: Yea, by the Matajis. Every Sunday they comb and change the hair.

MK: So, the pujaries have less to do then? Do they eat less prasadam?

J: Yea... they have less to do. Some things women can do better than men, things like braiding the hair, decorating them. Lot of these details wasn't being done before.

MK: Did the Matajis introduce it?

J: Yea, they expanded on the different aspects, put lot more detail into it. It's pleasing for Radha-Madhava.

MK: Do you welcome any more new ideas if someone has?

J: Yea, of course. Big Panchatatva will be here may be within a year-n-half or so. We have to build a new Sringhasana for Them, if anyone has an idea how we can do that.

What we really need is a designer, someone who knows how to draw and make designs which we can actually put on our dresses. We want an actual designer. Like, for example, if we need a peacock dress, so we can go to the person and ask to give the design and he will draw three or four variety of patterns for us to choose from.

MK: So, what you actually want is a very creative person with very creative mind?

J: Yea.

MK: Are you offering a regular service with support and everything?

J: Yea, it will be the regular service.

.....

MK: Pankajanghri Prabhu, what could you add about matajee's services to make the picture more complete?

Pankajangri Prabhu: Gopi Bhava makes the Tulasi garlands and Damodara Priya helps her. They also make chandan. Vakresvari is also helping them and bringing chandan sometimes. Then Nirgata Mataji is doing Gopi's hair alone with Aladini Radha, Sradha, young girls like Mayapur, Radhika are also helping sometimes; Ratnavali Mataji, she is the original, the oldest one doing that. Rohini writes the mantras for Narasimha kavachas. Every couple months she brings a bunch, and she does 500 or 200 at the time. When Srimati Mataji was still active here she made that big backdrop behind Narasimha Deva and made some outfits for Him. Now Atita Guna (Giri Govardhan's wife) makes outfits sometimes.

MK: Thank you. Hare krishna!

.....

*A few words about
Krishna Madhuri Mataji
by Latika Bhakti Devi Dasi:*

Krishna Madhuri Mataji was born in England; she joined the movement in Australia. She was traveling, then stayed in the temple in Sydney and did Sankirtan. I spoke with some devotees, who knew her when she joined (1983) and they said that she was always very sincere and enthusiastic, doing a lot of Sankirtan. She came to Mayapur about five years ago. Before coming to Mayapur she was living in Vrindavan, teaching in the Gurukula there.

Krishna Madhuri Mataji is a very nice devotee, very sincere; she is always engaged in the service of devotees. If anyone is sick or in any problem, she is always there to help and take care. She does nice service in the Deity Department, taking care of Their jewelry and so many things; she is also doing service in Guru Maharaja's office [JPS]. But the main thing is that she is very humble, very Krishna Conscious and she is very good association. I am very happy to know her.

Krishna Madhuri Devi Dasi:

More matajee's are now assisting in the Deity Department. Services include making Tulasi garland; help-



ing to care for Tulasi Maharani; making new jewelry and repairing broken ones; putting away the Lord's ornaments; ironing the Lord's clothes and generally tidying and cleaning in the dress room; polishing Lord Nrisimha Deva's brass lamps and brass plaques in the Temple room, also silver umbrellas and other paraphernalia; helping to sew for Their Lordships; grinding chandan; making sakhimala from maha beads.

Regularly assisting in these areas are following Matajis: Gopi Bhava, Sradha, Damodara Priya, Titiksa Radha, Vaikuntha Laxmi, Bhagavati, Vakresvari, Sadhumati Gopi, Stuti and Lila Mayi Laxmi Devi Dasis, and bhaktin's Marianna and Amrita.

Hema Gopi and Suvarna Krishna Lila Devi Dasis also make very nice jewelry. Vamsi Priya and Sulochana Devi Dasis are always very helpful in stitching accessories for the new outfits, such as turban pieces, fans and belts.

Sankaspada Devi Dasi washes and irons Srila Prabhupada's cloth. Aharadha Devi Dasi bakes cakes for the evening offering. Matajee's also knit and crochet chadhars for Their Lordships; comb, braid and decorate Srimate Radharani's and Gopi's hair; make flower garlands for all the Deities and help to look after Srila Prabhupad's rooms.

MK asked one of the Matajis doing Tulasi garlands, Sradha Devi Dasi, to introduce herself and tell us about her service.

Sradha Devi Dasi: I joined in 1984 in Yugoslavia and in 1985 I moved in Sweden. In Yugoslavia we didn't have Tulasi then. I came in contact with Tulasi sometime in 1985 in Almik, Panchatatva temple. I saw that She had some bugs and I got very worried and had desire to help Her. I started to take care and it became my service. Kirtiraj Prabhu told me that I have to look after Tulasi for the rest of my life. So, I became a Tulasi pujari. Haripuja Mataji taught me how to do Tulasi garland and I started to do it once a week for Panchatatva and later for Giridhari in Korshnas every Sunday.

I came here one year ago, end of January, and I also wanted to have something to do with Tulasi. Anyone who comes in contact with Tulasi Devi will always have lots of devotional service, because She engages one in devotional service. I started to pick Tulasi to help Gopi Bhava. I was thinking that Madhava should have Tulasi garland too, because Narasimha Deva was getting every day. And the next day Gopi Bhava came to me and asked if I could help her to pick Tulasi for Madhava. So, I was doing it for some time and when ever she couldn't do the Narasimha's garland I would make. Then I realized that Narasimha Sila doesn't have a garland. So I also started to make for Him and it became my daily service now.

MK: What other services are you doing?

S: I am a Day School teacher. I am teaching science, mainly physic's, chemistry, biology, history and English.

MK: When did you start the service?

S: From April 9 this year. It was the first teaching experience for me.

MK: You never taught before?

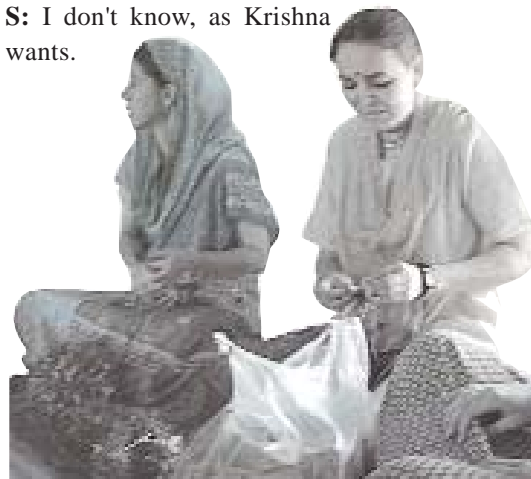
S: No, I never taught before. I was a BBT devotee, working on translating Srila Prabhupada's books to Yugoslavian language, doing the proof reading. I was working 13 years as a proof reader in the North European BBT.

MK: Why did you stop that service?

S: It finished. We translated all the books and then war happened and the country being divided into two. It became very difficult to live there, so I came to Mayapur.

MK: Are you going to be here for a long time?

S: I don't know, as Krishna wants.



Sradha (right) and Damodara Priya Matajis making Tulasi garland



Ramadevi Mataji is at the sewing machine

From Jananivasa Prabhu:

The Deity department would like to thank Srimati Ramadevi Devi Dasi for the enthusiasm she generated. So many devotees were making the night dresses for all the Deities for Janmastami and Radhastami. It was a marathon. Many Matajis stayed up all night, I remember

Hrimati Mataji, whole night she was stitching on the sewing machine. So many other Matajis, even the small girls also were there - Mayapur, Rohini, Radhika, Sita and their sisters, Naika was also helping. Some gurukulis were helping headed by Krishna Das. Ramadevi is very expert in engaging everyone in Radha-Madhava's service, even though she was almost at her wits end to finish. Everything was finished on time; it was right up to the last minute. Many Matajis were doing work in their houses, like Koladvipa's wife. They did a very good job.

MK: *What did you think of this way to make the dresses?*

Jananivasa Prabhu: The atmosphere was nice there. I even gave class a couple of times while they were all working. It was a different scene there - the room was completely full up, every square inch practically... people were squatting all around, cloth is all over the place. And Ramadevi was controlling the whole show, plus she designed all the dresses.

MK: *Would you like this to happen again?*

J: Ha-ha... It was too close to the deadline. Ramadevi was in complete anxiety. They should have started earlier; it needed more time to make.

MK: *But would you like to see devotees to do it again or you prefer professional hired tailors?*

J: Yea-Yea, Yea... It is better when the devotees are there, nice atmosphere. And it is giving everyone a chance to do direct service to the Deities.

MK: *If somebody else designs a dress can they do the similar thing to what Ramadevi had done?*

J: Yea, Yea. We have to see design first, discuss it and approve it, may be make any modifications. Ramadevi has a lot of experience already, because she makes dresses for the Deities in London. Otherwise someone can make a drawing, but they may not have practical experience of putting the drawing into cloth, how the Deities actually will wear it, how cloth can hang and how it can't hang, to actually apply the cloth, so it suits the Deities. Otherwise we are welcoming all suggestions and drawings.

.....

MK: *How it all started?*

Ramadevi Mataji: OK, a few months back I heard a rumor that someone said that I was supposed to make a Radhastami dress; no one knew where it came from. So, I asked Jananivasa Prabhu is it true and he asked: "Would you like to?" I said: "I would love to". So the first

Dresses made with Love and Devotion

idea was to make a lace dress. Bhakta Gana Mataji and I had to go to Kolkata to choose the cloth. We went around New Market, but saw no lace, then we found one shop top to bottom full of cheap lace, nothing suitable. During our search for lace we came across nice red and gold brocade. I thought it would not look anything on the altar, for the design on it was very fine, but we brought a sample with us. Then we gathered different samples of brocade to show to Jananivasa Prabhu. He thought that it was OK. So, we went to Kolkata again, we came to the conclusion that the red one was the best.

I had a very fixed idea about what I wanted to do with it - very English style. But there were different factors, so almost every element of my idea

had to be stopped. Every day another small piece of the dress was manifesting. First were skirts, over skirts, blouses, sleeves... Slowly, slowly it all came together. I never knew one day to the next what the final product would look like.

MK: *How comes you made three outfits instead of one*

originally planned?

R: The red and gold outfit was actually meant for Radhastami night. We were just getting started and I was wondering what's happening with Janmastami night dress. I asked Jananivasa Prabhu and he said: "No one is doing it yet. Would you like to do it?" I thought: "How can you refuse..." Then couple of days later he said: "Actually we want to make two outfits for Radhastami, because two people want to donate for it. Can you make two?" I said I will try. So, we went to Kolkata again for



Devotees helping to make the outfits



Night shift. Need to get the outfits ready in time

more cloth. We ordered it, but there was some delay with getting the cloth, so we decided to use the red outfit for Janmastami instead. We started actual cutting and making 6 weeks before Janmastami. The first two weeks the tailor was working from 10am to 6pm and in the final weeks he was working from six in the morning till eleven at night and some nights later, trying to get it all together. But it wouldn't have come together

if not for devotees help. A lot of devotees gave a lot of help.

MK: *Could you please name at least some of them.*

R: Russian Krishna Das strung about 150 meters of trim with ribbon, which is not an easy thing to do, but he sat there for hours and threaded all the trims. He also sewed the tassels and leaves on Madhava's belt. The little girls - Mayapur, Rohini, Radhika, Sita and even Naika strung some beads for little Radha-Madhava. Then there was Latika Bhakti, Hemagopi, Suvarna Krishna Lila, and Lila Mayi. For the last few nights before Janmastami Jananivasa Prabhu came and gave class in the sewing room, so we could get lots of people to help. At that time Gopi Bhava came, Sradha, Vrindaranya, Ramaniya, Kesavi also helped, and Manasi Ganga with her son Rishabha. Lots of ladies came... Manju, Nitya Lila, Prema Manjari also helped. Bihasya took the work home and got the local village girls living near her in Taranpur to help her to sew the stars on the Radhashtami dress. Vamsi Priya Mataji made all the lace cuffs that go around the sleeves on the blouses - it was a big job. Without these devotees help it would not have been possible, it wouldn't happened.

MK: *Quite often we see that hired outside workers are brought to decorate the Vyasasana or Deity's bathing table, or to make an outfit for the Deities. You have managed to organize so many devotees to do so many things in limited time!*

R: I really love to serve the Deities, a lot of pleasure involved, but it's so much more pleasure when you share it with other devotees, get everyone involved. The comment of the girls after those evenings was that it is so pleasurable when everyone sits together, working on one project for Radha-Madhava. Radha-Madhava are our Deities, They are not a tailor's Deities. Obviously we need their help, but the more



input we give into those dresses the more it will be treasured by Krishna for they are made with love by those who love Them. So, my idea is if everyone in the community gets together and makes Krishna's dresses for Him, then those dresses will be very treasured by Krishna and will be a special possession to Him. So, I was very inspired to see everyone working together. I couldn't do it all by myself. The tailors liked it too, usually they are working alone on their sewing machines and they don't get any help and it's always the last minute. Bipal has been sewing for Radha-Madhava for the last twelve years and he said this is the first time it's been like this - actually getting help from the devotees.

MK: *Was it easy to get devotees to come and help?*

R: Well there are few devotees, who came just by being asked and others had to be tempted by various benefits, like hearing Krishna pastimes from Jananivasa Prabhu or some Mahaprasad. But once they had come one time, then they generally came to do more.

MK: *When did you start the Radhashtami outfit?*

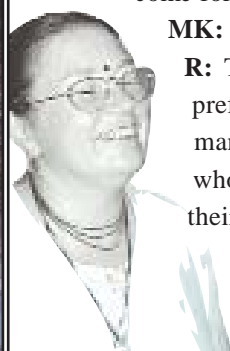
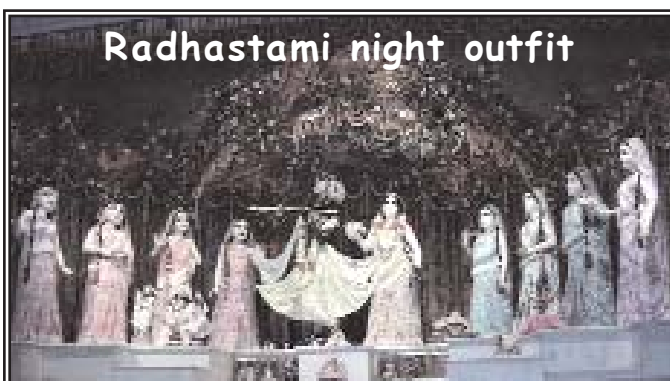
R: We started actual cutting and sewing straight after Janmastami, but we had less than two weeks to do it.

MK: *Do you think the opportunity to do an outfit is open to everyone? If someone came up with idea for the dress can they implement it themselves?*

R: There is definitely room for a variety of dresses. Whether they can do it themselves or not I don't know. Some people can come up with ideas, but not necessarily can execute them. But there is definitely room for people to become involved and this is what Jananivasa Prabhu wants. He wants variety in dresses and he did make an invitation before if anyone has an idea for outfits please come forward.

MK: *How shall they proceed?*

R: They shall approach Jananivasa Prabhu. He prefers to have drawings with colors and as many details as possible involved in it. Anyone who has an idea should come forward with their suggestion. ♦



The Temple grows to accomodate the Deity's seva

The big Panchatatva Deities are being made, and Their temple is also getting bigger

Interview with Pankajanghri Prabhu:

The new construction at the end of Panchatatva Mandir is going to be an extension of the Temple. That space what we are doing right now is supposed to connect Panchatatva Temple with the Lotus building. According to Vastu it should be done. The missing corner is the place of Kuvera and we are being told by several Vastu-wallahs that people wouldn't like to stay in this temple, and we can see that it is always empty and also money wouldn't come there.

So, that was one consideration and at the same time we wanted to make something attractive for preaching. And also it being pointed out that in future we will need more space in the Temple, for more and more people will come. So, the ground floor will be raised about a foot and half and will extend the Temple and on the first floor there

Interview with Bhakta Gana Mataji:

MK: Who is behind these changes?

BG: Devarisi Prabhu said something to Jananivasa Prabhu about bad Vastu sometime ago, may be about 5 or 6 months.

MK: So, is it Jananivasa Prabhu's inspiration to do this extension?

BG: Yes. He asked my husband to draw a design. He did

the initial sketch and Jananivasa Prabhu loved it, he said: "This is exactly what I want".

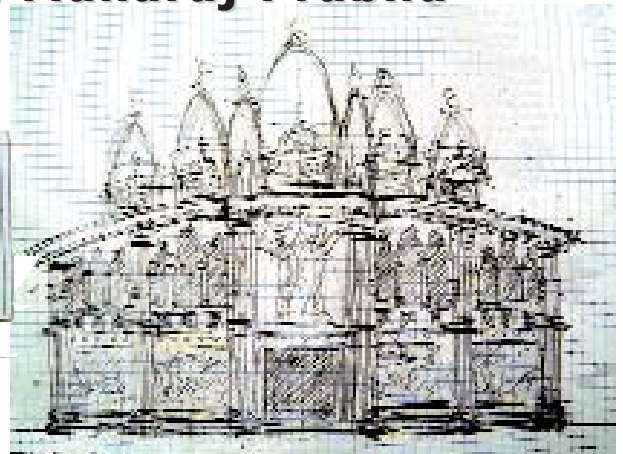
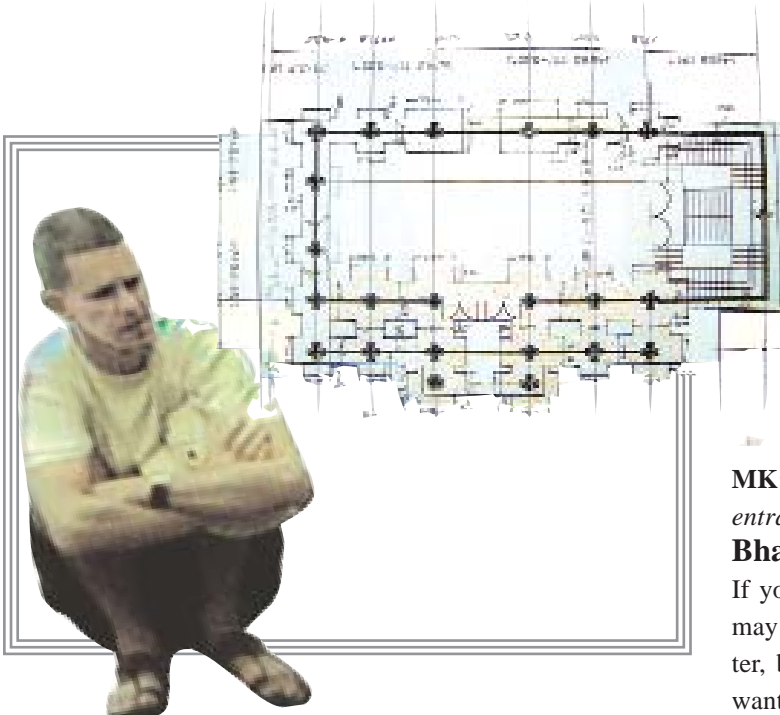
MK: Could you describe the design a little bit?

BG: There are five main domes and four smaller ones around the central dome. And on the gallery level, which is on the first floor, will be a museum, where a multi-media presentation how Navadvipa Dhama had manifested in the material world will be displayed. Running along that floor on the outside there will be a balcony, which people can walk out on and have a look around. Leading to this level there will be a wide staircase on the side of the Lotus building. My husband had an idea to decorate the gate with terracotta like on Srila Prabhupada's Samadhi, but we don't really have the facilities.

MK: Who is involved in manifesting the temple extension?

BG: Originally my husband did the design. (He was trained in architecture and sculpture.) Then there is a contractor Ravindra. And there is a very good engineer, Suman. Then to control the spending, so we don't end up wasting Krishna's money, there is one devotee Sunanda Prabhu, who will take care of purchasing the materials and dealing with contractors. He is a brahmachari from Pujari Department and he is very efficient in what ever he does. And Pankajanghri Prabhu is the ultimate in-charge of the building. ♦

Interview with Bharat Maharaj Prabhu



MK: Please tell us about the work you doing at the entrance to Panchatatva's temple.

Bharat Maharaj Prabhu:

If you want to know why the building is getting done, then may be Jananivasa or Pankajanghri Prabhus will explain better, but it's basically to correct the Vastu problems. If you want to know why am I doing this - because it pays my bills.

I was asked originally just to design the building. Now I am standing in the mud in the foundation, so I think I have been tricked again into doing something that I was not expecting.

MK: *How is the work going?*

BM: It looks like we are building a swimming pool at the moment, everybody saying that we are crazy to work in the rainy season. But it's another challenge. There is a limit up to which we can work. At the moment we are just trying to get the foundation done. Apparently even without building going up if just the foundation gets done, that's corrects the Vastu problem. So, if we just get that far then we can continue with the building later.

MK: *Are these changes aiming just to correct the Vastu?*

BM: Well, it will become sort of the main entrance into the temple. They say that the majority of the visitors will be coming from that side - Long building, Brahmachari ashram, Guest Houses, car park. And Shastricli it's also better to enter first into Panchatatva Temple and then proceed to Radha-Madhava.

MK: *What will happen to the existing entrance?*

BM: It won't be closed. It just physically the new structure will be looking more like a main entrance. At the moment if you look at the Panchatatva Temple building it looks more like a warehouse than a temple. So, this new structure is going to look like a temple.

MK: *When we will be able to start using this new entrance?*

BM: The estimate given by our engineer is five months. So, the actual building without final finishing will be ready by Gaura Purnima next year. The exterior decoration will be done in terracotta and it will be a sample of what could be possible used on the big Temple. And some of the big Panchatatva Deities will also be ready at the same time.

MK: *Is the area next to the new entrance also going to be decorated?*

BM: Yea. I heard that the way to develop Mayapur is to build the building and to build a park next to it and go on like this. I am not sure who said this - Srila Prabhupada or Bhavananda Prabhu in earlier days in Mayapur. So, the environment will become very attractive in this way. So, we are going to make a park in front of the entrance. The courtyard in front of existing entrance is very hot in day time, we have to put down mats for the guests to walk on, so they don't burn their feet. I would like to make something more comfortable to be in. Jananivasa Prabhu wants to build a very elaborate Tulasi house. Basically it will be the extension to existing park area.

MK: *Will the park be ready for Goura Purnima as well as the building?*

BM: We will try to do it, but the actual garden work is more of a problem during rainy season, but when the weather is OK to do landscaping we will start that as well. Depends on the time, we are going to have something ready.

MK: *Could you tell us more about the new Deities coming and about making Them?*

BM: So, I think it is largely due to pushing by H.H.

Jayapataka Maharaj that the work on the big Deities has again started. Ganga Das has been to South India and re-contacted the *stapati*, who had been approached previously just to see if he is still interested or able to do the metal casting of Panchatatva Deities. So, they visited Mayapur, there was some hope that they may set up a foundry here and do all the casting work in Mayapur. But they decided after coming here that it wasn't practical. So, we are sending the models, which had been finished in the beginning of 1999, to Kumbhakaunam in South India, where these *stapatis* work. I never been there myself, but I will be going back and forth between there and here - the building is going on here and the Deities are down there. They said that it will take a year to do all five. But to have the new entrance to the Panchatatva Temple and the Panchatatva Deities, probably two of Them, is something to look forward to.

MK: *How had you made such big models?*

BM: I was working together with some artists in Krishnagar. We directed them how the Deities should look, that were coming mainly from Jananivasa Prabhu. The modeling took longer than normal, so the straw structure in some places started to rot and became weak.

MK: *Are They still full of straw?*

BM: No, no. From the clay models they made molds and cast fiberglass in them. The reason they were made in fiberglass is that fiber glass is strong and light for transporting, so we could send them where ever the casting would be done. We weren't sure when and where we will be able to find a foundry capable of casting this much metal in one go. Srila Prabhupada said that the Deities should be solid. Most foundries around the world, anywhere you go, casting big sculptural metal statues are making them hollow. There is no reason to make the art sculptures solid. So, even the big foundries around the world, famous places in Italy and America, still haven't got the facilities to do kind of work that we want. Anyway, these people in South India do. They are very skilled. They haven't done a lot of big Deities before either, like this size. We are talking about around two tons each. Some other places were suggested in Thailand, but the reason I happy with this arrangement in South India is that they have a very high quality finishes. There are metal deities around the world, which have developed faults in the metal after 20 or so years. These Deities will be there for long time to worship, so the quality of the casting has to be very high.

MK: *How are you going to transport such big models?*

BM: At the moment there is one devotee from South India donating industrial air-conditioning unit to the Deity department, he wants to air-condition the altars. It's coming here by truck. We will see if that truck is big enough we will load the models onto it and send it back to South India.

MK: *How the metal made Deities will come to Mayapur?*

BM: Also by truck.

MK: *Were the small Panchatatva Deities done in Mayapur?*

BM: They were started when we were finishing Srila Prabhupad's Samadhi for Centennial year. The Panchatatva's

temple room was being made, it was November 1995. The temple room was to be finish in two months, but there were no Deities. So, we had only two months to make Them. We made a contact with some people in Navadvipa who do the metal casting. I was working in a shed in the middle of demolition site. They were demolishing the terracotta workshop. It was approaching the Festival time and there was an opportunity for the visiting devotees to come and help in finishing of these Panchatatva Deities. There were some considerable faults in the metal work from the people in Navadvip, so, for that reason we have to be very-very careful how we do the big Deities.

MK: *Was it big difference in time to make the big models in comparison with the small ones?*

BM: Well, surprisingly, it is not much slower to work on the big Deity than it is to work on the small Deity. Jananivasa Prabhu was telling me what to do, how the Deity should look. So, I was just trying to do what he said and sometimes it was quite time-consuming. For the big models the work was spread out over the longer period of time, because the work just wasn't continues for various reasons, waiting for decisions from SMPDC in particular.

MK: *Why?*

BM: The poses of the Deities are unusual, not the same poses as the small Deities. The poses for each Deity were chosen by SMPDC members - Sri Mayapur Project Development Committee. These poses are the result of discursions in London in 1997 and it was given to us to work on.

MK: *Sounds like you've been busy all these years one way or another.*

BM: Yea... I feel like I have been tricked. I started out just to design the building and now I ended up totally supervising the work on it. I am happy to help Pankajangri Prabhu with his project, which is this building, and Jananivasa Prabhu is more involved with making the Deities. And I also like to make something nice in Mayapur. Like the work, which is done on the Samadhi, for example, that kind of work isn't done anywhere in the world as far as I know any more.

MK: *Can you explain what do you mean? I don't know, many people don't know.*

BM: Terracotta relief, sculpture. It's possibly considered too expansive to do in the West. They used to do it in the early part of last century. The sky-scrappers in New York and other cities around the world had the terracotta tiles. In 19th century also lot of terracotta work was done and back in 16th century, Renaissance time in Italy, but you don't see it any more. So, with the big temple there are many things which can be done and if they are done nicely it will attract people from all over the world.

MK: *What work did you do on the Samadhi and how long it took you to do the decorations?*

BM: I was involved in some respect in the most of art work on the Samadhi. Girigovardhan and Sadbhuj Prabhus were also involved, with the art work at least. The main thing I

was responsible for was the terracotta-relive work. And even that I was just continuing the work started by Anakadundubhi Prabhu, who was here, in Mayapur, for 17 years, from the very early days. He started the terracotta work in Mayapur under the guidance of Surabhi Maharaja. I just continued that after he left.

MK: *Which year did you start this service?*

BM: I came here in January 1988. I was invited to come and help Anakadundubhi Prabhu, but by the time I got here the terracotta project had been shut down. Surabhi Maharaja didn't want to do any more terracotta work in Mayapur, being disappointed about some things which gone wrong. So, when I came here that work being stopped, but I did some terracotta work for the Expo, which was just built at that time. Then I was asked to do something for the Samadhi and Surabhi Maharaja saw that and said: "O, may be we can do some more" and from that it gradually developed back into full production. And in the middle of that Maharaja left, so for few years there was no one specifically looking after the final finishing of the Samadhi. In the middle of the project came Matsya Avatar Prabhu with strong sense of Italian tradition and he introduced color on the terracotta panels, which initially was planed to be just plain unglazed terracotta. That was a major change which involved me - adding color to the terracotta panels. Bengal is famous for the terracotta clad temples, 100 or more years old. But we introduced color glazes, which is not traditional. So I was just basically training the local artists how to work with glazes, for them it was new.

MK: *What were you doing after completing the work on the Panchatatva models?*

BM: I was an art director for Abhai Charan serial and was traveling with Bhakticharu Swami's filming crew. Then filming had stopped for sometime to catch up on the editing work, dobbing, etc. I had no service for indefinite period of time, so I went to Australia, where I was working in the Supermarket, stoking the shelves from 10 PM till 2 AM. I was waiting for my teaching license to be restored. Then I was teaching art. I didn't really want to come back to Mayapur. I came because my wife and daughter had a car accident and my wife was in hospital in Kolkata. My wife didn't want me to go away again in the hurry and Jananivasa and Pankajangri Prabhus were asking me to stay and do staff with them. I said that for my wife to be able to stay here, which is what she wanted, I needed to go and work to support her here. So, Jananivasa Prabhu basically said: "Well, if you stay here we will pay your bills". So, it wasn't out of any kind sense of devotion that I got involved in this project. As I said I like to do something nice for Mayapur. This is something different to work on also, then just Guest Houses and apartment buildings. Also it provides some entertainment for the devotees - wondering what are we doing and why we are crazy enough to do work out in the rain.

MK: *Before the work on the new extension began we saw*

you doing some work for improvement of the existing main entrance to the temple.

BM: O that was just a small thing. Pankajangri Prabhu wanted to put marble on the entrance pillars and asked me to design something for the tops.

MK: So, in one way or another, since you came here this time you seem to be busy doing entrances to the Temple, attracting the people to come there.

BM: No, it just... I would say that... when you think about what wanted in Mayapur... it's not just something when somebody sit down at the drawing board and design it all in one go... it something, which develops, grows... and bit by bit you build it up.

MK: What do you mean?

BM: Well, it's like... on battle of Kurukshetra, it was said that it will go on whether Arjuna wants to involve himself or not... So, that's what this is like, it just the time to manifest and if anybody wants to be involved they can. But, it's not like we are creating something, it's already subtly manifested and we are just taking part in making it physically visible.

MK: O, thank you, Prabhu, for wanting to be involved and for trying to manifest it to be visible for us. It's not like everybody is getting involved in such things.

BM: Yea... When I went to Mayapur Project office in London in 1997, I saw a quotation from Srila Prabhupada, saying that the plans for the big temple in Mayapur had already being made. And that was in 1971. So, it's a long time - 30 years since Srila Prabhupada said that the design is made and still there is no building here... We just have to come and do it basically.

MK: Please tell us something about yourself. What you were doing before you joined ISKCON? How did you join?

BM: I was living as a materialist, working to pay my bills. The college I was in was on the same street as Hare Krishna temple and Srila Prabhupada came there twice since me being there, but I didn't know anything about it at the time. I met devotees ten years later. I saw Govinda's Restaurant in Sidney and was wondering shell I enter or not. Then I saw the devotees inside, they were dressed strange and I decided not to go there. But one devotee, the temple president of the farm community outside of Sidney, noticed me and invited to come inside. So I entered. He talked to me, gave some small books and invited to visit the temple in the farm.

I thought it was very peaceful mood out there. The devotees were doing sankirtan and selling paraphernalia, perfume. Then I visited the Sidney temple. The mood was so different there - exiting and high energy mood. It was interesting to see the energy level of the devotees in Sidney, kirtans were really far out. If you could get in the temple room, you could be standing on the edge of the room and end up dancing up and down because the floor was bouncing

up and down from the kirtan. And it was a strong floor.

MK: What was your wife's reaction to this?

BM: I was thinking that my wife may find the activities of the devotees strange. But, actually, she didn't. I know there are the instances of couples separating because one of them wants to be a devotee and another one doesn't, but it just happened that my wife and I became attracted at the same time. I was a little surprised.

MK: Did you bring her to the temple?

BM: First of all I brought her some small books. We went to visit the farm temple for the Sunday feast with whole family - we already had two sons then. All family liked it. And little later we went to visit another, much bigger farm community, 1000 km North of Sidney, New Govardhan.

We went out there for the school holiday, took a tent with us and camped on ISKCON property. And our eldest son, Jiva, who was about 9 at the time, made friends with some boys. Sri Prahlad was in the Gurukula then. My son was on the holiday, kids normally want to relax and what ever, but he started to go to school with the Gurukula boys. Three days later Prahlad came to me and asked: "Do you mind if your son gets shaved up?" We said: "Yes, if he wants to, he can get shaved up. His hair will grow back again if he changes his mind".

So, we never saw him again for the rest of the time we were there, he was in the school, doing the whole program with the devotees. And when time came to go back, the school principal came to us and suggested that our son will just stay in the Gurukula. This was just one month after we met devotees and we were putting our son in the Gurukula... It was completely unplanned. We went back to Sidney and he stayed in the Gurukula, so he was the first in the family to join. Two years later he was in Vrindavan Gurukula.

MK: When did you first come to Mayapur?

BM: Sometime by the end of our first year in ISKCON. We were initiated by Bhavananda Prabhu and he used to focus us on serving Mayapur, so from the beginning we heard about Mayapur and wanted to visit. ♦

Jananivasa Prabhu gave us the update on Panchatatva Deities:

We spoke to stapatris from Madrass side. They have experience of making the Deities for Bangalore temple. So, we gave them the contract. We sent our fiber-glass models and I received a letter at the end of September (2002) from them, saying that they already started the wax work. First they will make wax models, from that they will make a mold to cast the metal Deities from eight metals combined. So, they are doing the wax models of Lord Chaitanya and Nityananda Prabhu and they will inform me again when they will be ready for casting. Then Bharat Maharaj Prabhu will go down there to make some refinements on the wax models and he will be there for all the finishing work. ♦

Half a year ago Bhagavati Devi Dasi came to Mayapur with her husband Jagadananda Das and got engaged in the service of Sri Sri Radha-Madhava. MK asked Bhagavati Devi Dasi to introduce herself to the community devotees:

“ I had fallen in love with Mayapur when we first came here in 1998. I very much like India, Indian people and devotees. We come from quite wild country, Russia. Russian people are very simple by nature, in that way they are similar to Indians. There was nothing interesting in my life before joining ISKCON. I graduated from Air Force Technological College and went on to work as a constructing engineer, building airplanes in one important industrial city, Yekaterinburg. Then I got married.

My husband had 'Bhagavad Gita as it is' at his home and he told me that this book is the origin of all. When I read this book I knew that I had found what I was looking for. From five years old I was curious about the meaning of human life and was asking my parents if there is life after death, but they didn't know anything about it. Also at that time it was illegal to even talk about religion and religious people had been treated very badly.

When we first came to Mayapur I wanted just to stay here for the rest of my life. I told my Guru Maharaj, H.H. Bhakti Vikasha Swami, about it and he advised us to approach the temple authorities and stay. But it happened so that we could come again only after four years. In that period of time we were preaching as we could. We had a Nama-hatta center in our home; we organized programs on the local TV and Radio, and distributed Srila Prabhupada's books.

Now that we are in Mayapur, I thank Srimati Radharani every day that She has allowed us to come here. It is by Her causeless mercy I met wonderful devotees of a very high spiritual level. I would like to be like them too.

I would like to in particular appreciate one Mataji, Gopi Bhava Devi Dasi, although I am equally impressed by all Mayapur Matajis. From the first minute as we being introduced to each other by Vrindavan Lila Mataji, Gopi Bhava asked me to help in her service. She was really overloaded with different services. Having very serious heart problems she would sit to 11-12 o'clock at night, finishing up her service. She is very simple, kind and open by nature and respectful to everyone. I noticed that everybody also likes and respects her. To serve the Deities is a great responsibility and there is not enough Matajis to help. There was a time when Gopi Bhava by herself was doing Tulasi garlands for Lord Madhava and Narasimha Deva, jewelry for the Deities, fixing Deity's clothes, looking after Tulasi and many other needy little things.

I wanted so much to do some service and she gave it to me. She showed me how to make Tulasi garland.

This is very time consuming service demanding a lot of tolerance. Only when I started to make Tulasi garland for Lord Madhava I could appreciate her heroism. The first garland I made with great difficulty - it took me 6 hours to make plus 3 hours for picking Tulasi. So, in the first days of my service I was spending 9 hours every day just to make one garland for Madhava. Of course, now I already got some experience and it takes me about 3-n-half hours to make and about 2 hours to collect.

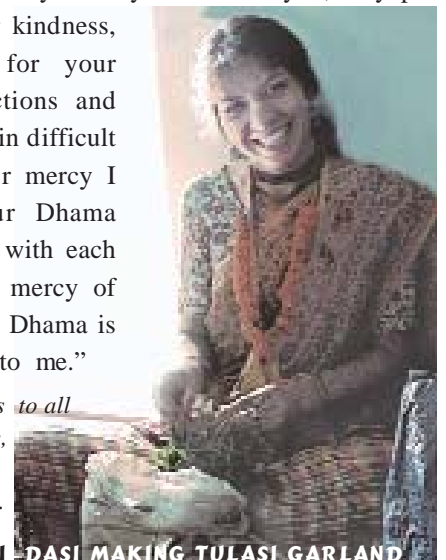
Because of their very strong attachment to the Lord Gopi Bhava and other Matajis are diving deeply into the ocean of devotional service and staying with it steadily. It is very high spiritual level and, of course, I would like to be like them.

Although the service is difficult, but when the curtains are opening for the darshan arotika and I see that Lord Madhava is wearing the garland I made - indescribable joy takes over me. Once I asked: 'Dear Madhava, do You like the garlands I am making for You?' When I offered my obeisances a big flower landed right next to my head. I took it for the answer 'Yes'. The whole day I was overwhelmed with happiness. Serving the Deities is very transcendental. Even when picking Tulasi I feel great joy in my heart.

Every day Gopi Bhava is thanking me for the service and she is also paying attention to some of my bodily problems. She told me: "If it's too difficult I will help you, but don't leave the service".

I am very grateful to Gopi Bhava, Sradha, Vakresvari, Anubhava and many other devotees, who are very caring and attentive to people like me. I almost don't know English, still I feel so much support and mercy from devotees. I want to say thank you to all of you, Mayapur devotees, for your kindness, tolerance, care, for your priceless instructions and readiness to help in difficult moments. By your mercy I love Sri Mayapur Dhama more and more with each day. Only by the mercy of such devotees the Dhama is beginning to open to me.”

*With the best wishes to all devotees living here,
Your servant,
Bhagavati Devi Dasi.*



BHAGAVATI DEVI DASI MAKING TULASI GARLAND

From Pankajangri Prabhu:

Gopi Bhava Mataji is a gem of a devotee. She is doing so much service for the Deities here. She is making the best Tulasi garlands. Different people had been making Tulasi garlands for years. But her's are the best - so soft and comfortable to wear. Also she does a lot of other services, like making jewelry, repairing jewelry, keeping the pujari and dress room tidy, ironing Deity's cloth. Even she has some heart problem... Sometimes we have to tell her to slow down, but she doesn't listen. Sometime she is working all night because of a festival, making new jewelry to offer to the Deities, sitting all night, making extra garlands. She has a very exceptional service attitude.

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From Vakresvari Devi Dasi:

The first time I met Gopi Bhava was on Vraja Mandala Parikrama in 1999, then she was not like she is now. She was nice then also - jolly, easy to be with, she was very perceptive to what was going on around her on Parikrama. But here, in her service in Mayapur, she really opened up like a lotus flower.

Gopi Bhava is very artistic and successful in what ever she does, and she is always anxious for Krishna's service. Because she wants to serve Krishna so much He reciprocates with her desire and gives her everything necessary for it, the intelligence how to do the service in the best way. Like He did with Dhruva Maharaja - when Dhruva wasn't able to find the words to describe the Lord, He simply touched Dhruva with the conch shell and enabled him to offer the beautiful prayers. Sometimes Gopi Bhava is making such amazing garlands with three threads and an unusual combination of flowers and colors, I never saw anyone else doing anything similar to that. To watch her making a garland is like watching a professional pianist playing, her hands move incredibly fast. Normally to make such a long Tulasi garland will take minimum three hours, but she is making it in one and a half hours. That is really fast.

I want to say a few words about her very close relationship with the Lord Narasimha Deva.

Once we were standing together before Narasimha Deva's altar after darsan arotic, we had just given the pujari some flowers and leaves of Tulasi to offer to the Lord. She was looking at Narasimha Deva when she turned to me and said regretfully "the pujari doesn't put small red roses into the Tulasi garland any more as he was doing before. It was really beautiful". I said to her: "Don't worry, the Lord already heard you". Ten minutes later when we came there again to get the helmet on our head, to our great surprise, the Tulasi garland was decorated with small red roses.

One time I came as usual for evening darsan and saw Gopi Bhava sitting at her usual spot, next to Srila Prabhupada, making the garland. She was looking sad. We said Hare Krishna to each other and I proceeded to

Panchatatva Temple. There I saw on the platform before the Deities a lonely plastic bag full of Mahaprasadam. I looked around - there was no one to claim it. So, I took it and on my way out I again passed Gopi Bhava and suddenly said to her, completely spontaneously: "Gopi! Krishna sent His Prasad to you". I opened the bag and started to feed her until everything was finished. She told me that a minute before I came she wanted to cry because she felt that her service was not pleasing to Krishna, He doesn't give her His mercy, and she felt no reciprocation neither from Him or the devotees whom she is serving with. So, she saw the hand of the Lord in this little incident. That's her mood. She is always seeing every situation as Krishna's arrangement.

Everything she does in the service she puts herself into it fully. Sometimes I think she is living in the Temple - comes very early, goes home very late.

In my personal experience when Krishna wants to reciprocate with my thoughts or service, He does it through her. If she is saying something to me like "it would be nice to do this or that..." I know that Krishna wants it from me.

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From Krishna Madhuri Devi Dasi:

Gopi Bhava Mataji began to help me in Pujari Department when she came to Mayapur two years ago. At that time I was very busy, trying to cover many services - making jewelry for Their Lordships, repairing broken jewelry, taking care of the Lord's paraphernalia, other things... So, I was very happy that Krishna sent someone to help me.

Gopi Bhava is very talented and makes very beautiful jewelry for Sri Panchatatva, Sri Sri Radha-Madhava & astasakhis, Sri Narasimha Deva. In the beginning she was doing jewelry and was enthusiastic to do other kinds of service, such as ironing Narasimha Deva's clothes and keeping the Lord's accessories in order in the dress room. She is very attached to Lord Narasimha Deva. She is a disciple of H.H. Indradyumna Maharaja, to whom she is very much dedicated. She is always anxious about his personal safety, as he is preaching on the Polish Tour and there are many demoniac elements opposing the preaching in Poland. Since a long time she has been doing a very beautiful Tulasi garland every day as an offering for the protection of her Guru Maharaja during his preaching, she is also offering a lamp to Narasimha Deva every day in the same mood.

Gopi Bhava is unendingly enthusiastic in her service and is eager to do the needful at the time and on the festival days she is engaged from morning to night making special offerings to the Lord - cooking, making garlands or jewelry. She is very much absorbed in this service.

She is often suffers from heavy heart problems and has considerable pain, but she never complains and as far as possible she maintains her service despite all the difficulties. Even when we want her to take rest and not to do as much, but she has got so much taste for devotional service, it is difficult to stop her.

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the Congregational Development Ministry

by Hemagopi Devi Dasi

Dear Vaisnavas, Hare Krishna!

As asked by 'Mayapur Katha', I will try to explain something about us, and our service here in Mayapur, the working of the Congregational Development Ministry and it's central office in Mayapur.

I'm Hemagopi Devi Dasi. I come from South India - Madras. Before I came to Mayapur, I was working as a software engineer. I've to put in 9 hrs of work per day for 6 days a week. So I couldn't attend all the temple programs as a devotee in the temple would. But I had a temple in my home. I had deities - I ate only Prasadam, I wore tilak to my work and I was trying to preach to all those who came my way. It was a struggle but the point is that I was trying to be Krishna Conscious in my situation knowing that I can't give up my present job or life style. There are 1000s and 1000s of devotees who are in similar situations.

It's a fact that people like this need training, constant caring, and inspiration to go on with their battle against Maya. The Ministry's function is to facilitate and canalize the activities of the Congregation so that our preaching strategy becomes the most effective and at the same time all the members involved are feeling themselves to be tools in the divine mission of Srila Prabhupada and not just as audience who come to have Prasadam on Sundays. The congregation should feel cared for and they should in turn be taught how to care for others. Then it'll be like snow ball effect.

The Central Office of the Ministry is located in room 112, Long building, Sri Mayapur Candrodoya Mandir.

Basically the function of the office (like any other office) is to maintain the correspondence with congregations around the world. This correspondence mainly manifests in the forms of books and journals that are regularly produced by the Ministry for the sake of congregational development. Apart from the Congregational Preaching journal, just in last one year, we've published the Bhakti Vriksha manual in Bengal, 'Free to Preach' and 'Icebreakers'...there are so many other books that will come up in the future.

My husband, Advaita Candra Prabhu is in charge of printing and circulating these materials. I'm the correspondence secretary. I write to different yatras, trying to inspire them to get our materials, read them and become inspired to get organized. Kaunteya Prabhu is the secretary to the Ministry. He is editor of most of the Ministry's publications and also author and compiler of few other books. When some yatra is ready to get more organized in terms of it's congregation, he or H.H. Jayapataka Maharaja visit that place, organize seminars, give courses and guidance. Our latest venture is Kolkata. We are trying to organize Bhakti Vriksha Programs there. H.H. Bhakti Purushottama Maharaja and the management in general have been very cooperative. It's one of most populated city in the world - 2 crores of people. So if we start 10 groups with 15 members each, then in 6 months when the groups multiply there will be 300 devotees. Then in the next multiplication after 6 months it will be 600 then again after 6 months it will be 1200. So, in approximately 7 or 8 years, the whole Kolkata city will be devotees!!!! It's the birthplace of Srila Prabhupada and so I'm personally very attached to see a very big organized congregation here. I feel that Srila Prabhupada will be extremely pleased to see such a progress. Lord Caitanya willing, and if we get mercy of all vaisnavas, then we will surely achieve success. ♦

MK asked Hemagopi Mataji to tell us some more details of her and her husband, Advaita Chandra Prabhu.

I was born in Coimbatore in 1975. My father is a police officer and mum is a telephone department staff. We are four - an elder brother, me, younger brother, and younger sister.

As school going students, we were totally under the control of my father. Our mother's role was to just feed us and make us do our homework after she came back from work... Being a policeman, my father hardly had any heart for God. On the contrary my mother was very religious and from childhood worshipping Lord Krishna. Of course, till Srila Prabhupada came in our life we didn't know that krsna was the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He was worshipped with so many others, including my late grandfather and our family goddess Kali.

Our parents brought us up with great discipline. Life was perfectly organized. The evening times when we were free after doing homework we would learn music, Veena etc. The girls especially were kept under total control. They made sure that we all become good citizens and have a good position in the society. three of us became engineers and my sister became a beautician.

It was during my college days that I first happened to see the books of Srila Prabhupada. At that time, my mother was going to ISKCON temple and chanting 16 rounds every day. This new devotional aspect of her was quite surprising to me and so I became curious. I was also concerned because they showed this famous movie in television, where all the Hare Rama Hare Krishnas are taking drugs, doing illicit activities etc. So I was worried that my mum might get carried away by these crazy guys.

My mum and dad fought about her chanting. I was very scared because my father told us that soon she will renounce us and join the temple because of the influence of drugs. I was worried, so I was insisting on reading what she read and chant what she chanted.

The first book I read was 'Chant and be happy'. I really liked it and started chanting. I was chanting non-stop any single moment my mouth and brain had no engagement, I would start chanting! It was a far out experience. I was feeling so happy. For reasons unknown

to me I used to be so sad. I had all that any girl could dream of - still so much vacancy in the mind! I used to worship Kali - my only prayer to her was that she should take me away from this world as early as possible and never let me come back here again. So I approached Krishna through Maya Devi. That's why I still have such strong attachments, I guess. In a few years time my mother took initiation from Jayapataka Maharaja. So we had a big picture of him in our home and worshiped him daily.

Before coming to Mayapur, I was working in a software company called Alcatel, as software engineer. I got a job and left for Belgium. There, my office was next to the temple! I was very surprised and was very thankful to Krishna.

Once, before my birthday, I had a wonderful dream. Srila Prabhupada was asking me to go and preach to the King and Queen in the London Palace. I was trying to find them but somehow got lost. Then I realized that I missed Prabhupada and started crying. Just then I saw buses coming near by. So I got on a bus and went back to Prabhupada. I told him that I got lost. He said that he knew that. I asked him to give me Prasadam and he said: "Just now I've cooked Sunday feast. Just sit down and I will serve you". Saying that he gave me hot puris and halwa. Suddenly his hands changed and became more fair and fat. I was struck with wonder and looked up to see. There I saw my Guru Deva sitting and smiling at me, exactly as Srila Prabhupada did. When I woke up, I realized that H.H. Jayapataka Maharaja is my Guru - my link with Srila Prabhupada and the Guru Parampara.

My husband is Advaita Candra Prabhu. He is from Calabria, South Italy. He has a younger sister. His whole family are nice devotees - all chanting, vegetarian, and always willing to serve devotees. He too met devotees when he was in his college. He was getting trained as hardware engineer to work in IBM. But he was so frustrated with the so-called happiness of college life. He tried out all possible things and then gave them all up, finding no taste. Once he happened to watch a movie, where the Hare Krishnas were captured during a Harinam. It was love at first sight for him. So he and his sister took a car and

started searching for those people, who in Italy were popularly called as 'oranges'.

After long ordeal and traveling all over Italy, when they were near Florence in North Italy, he finally found a poster inviting the general public for a festival of India. So he and his sister went to attend that festival. He was so convinced that he immediately started following all regulative principles and started chanting. He wanted to give up his studies, but devotees convinced him to finish his degree. So he decided to join the temple after his studies. In between, some of his friends and relatives, seeing his nature, proposed that he go to Africa as Christian Missionary and do social work. He was about to leave to Africa. He just called up the devotees to tell them of his plan. One



devotee, Mayapur Candra Prabhu, a disciple of Srila Prabhupada convinced him that Krishna Consciousness is the best social work any one can do.

So finally he joined the temple in 1984. At that time Bhagavan Prabhu was initiating in Italy and my husband was in the list to get initiated in 2 week's time. When Bhagavan Prabhu left the movement, he felt shattered. Somehow, he continued with Sankirtana, which kept him alive. During this period he was appointed to be cook for about 20 devotees. He had never entered the Kitchen but at that time the mood was that you should do whatever is asked of you, understanding that it's Krishna's will expressed through the temple president. So he learned cooking. Still his heart was searching for a Guru. He met Bhakti Caru Maharaja who then wasn't yet an initiating Guru. Maharaja gave a lecture on how ISKCON is a boat and Srila Prabhupada was its captain. He was explaining that we just have to stay in the boat and one fine day we'll reach

Krishna. This greatly reinforced his faith and he decided that Bhakti Caru Maharaja is his Guru. He waited till 1988 when Maharaja started giving initiations. He is one of the first disciples of Maharaja. For this reason his Guru Maharaja had invited him to come to Mayapura. And from that time on, he had been around - except for a short time in South Africa and Bangladesh.

I met my husband during the South Indian Safari organized by H.H. Jayapataka Maharaja in 1999. I was on a 40 days vacation before my next trip to Belgium where my company's head quarters was situated. I might have to stay there for a long time and hence I came to take initiation and association from my Gurudeva. I was also supposed to marry one karmi from US, before my trip to Belgium. So I was very intensely praying to Krishna to protect my spiritual life. My Prabhu happened to see me in the Safari and enquired about me from my friends. When I heard about him, I was very happy. I introduced him to my mother who was also in Mayapur with me and later to my father. They were happy that I could marry a person who has similar tastes. So we got married in one month's time. At that time, my Guru Maharaja sent a message through Ganga Prabhu that he

will be happy to have us in Mayapur. I was not prepared since I was working and well settled in Madras.

But the very next month I had to leave my job because H.H. Bhakti Caru Maharaja invited my husband to get back to the 'Abhay Caran' serial shootings. He was serving as electrician. Since he was leaving and we were just married for 1 month, all my relatives got worried and instructed me to follow him. So we traveled all over Europe and USA. We had a good time for 8 months after which we decided to settle down in Mayapur.

We started our service in JPS Office and later, as per the instructions of my Guru Maharaja, took up this present service with the Congregational Development Ministry.

So that's our story. We are glad to be in Mayapur. Turning back we see how Krishna has kindly guided us till now. Unlimited thanks and gratitude to the kindness and blessings of our beloved Guru Maharajas and all the Vaisnavas.

HARE KRISHNA

In Memory of Madhava Kripa Prabhu

*Madhava Kripa Prabhu was a member our Mayapur community since 1998 until he left this world in July 2002.
His wife, Stuti Devi Dasi shared her memories of him with us.*

Madhava Kripa Das, a disciple of H.H. Jayapataka Swami, passed away on the holy Sayana Ekadasi Day, the 20th of July 2002 in a hospital in Madrid, Spain. He was very ill with a critical heart condition. Within 32 hours he underwent two heart transplant operations before passing away.

His wife and other devotees were by his side, chanting Hare Krishna. Srila Prabhupada was chanting from the tape into his left ear. He left with Maha-Tulasi leaves in his mouth, Ganga water sprinkled over his body and tilak and Nrisimha Deva's oil on his forehead. It was a very beautiful departure.

Madhava Kripa Das joined ISKCON in 1984. He was a sankirtana devotee and in the ten years he was doing sankirtan he distributed many of Srila Prabhupada's books and organized book distribution in Spain. He had to stop active book distribution due to his heart problems. He then moved to Vrindavan, India in 1994, where he was being engaged in pujari services for Sri Sri Krishna-Balarama and Sri Sri Radha-Shyamasundara and gopis in Vrindavana Dhama. He was also doing pujari service here in Mayapur for a short time.

Then he returned to Spain and again distributed Srila Prabhupada's books on street sankirtana. In 1997 he entered grihastha ashrama and in 1998 he settled in Mayapur with his wife, Stuti Devi Dasi. They have two daughters - Radhika (4) and Krishna Lila (2).

His Holiness Jayapataka Swami wrote the following memories of his dear disciple, Madhava Kripa Das, which was read out at the Smriti Sabhas (Remembrance memorial service) at New Vraja Mandala and all the temples in Spain.

"Sri Madhava Kripa Das is a sincere devotee of Lord Sri Krishna. He was responsible as a disciple, father and husband. His nature was friendly and caring. Sri Madhava Kripa Das liked to preach and distribute Srila

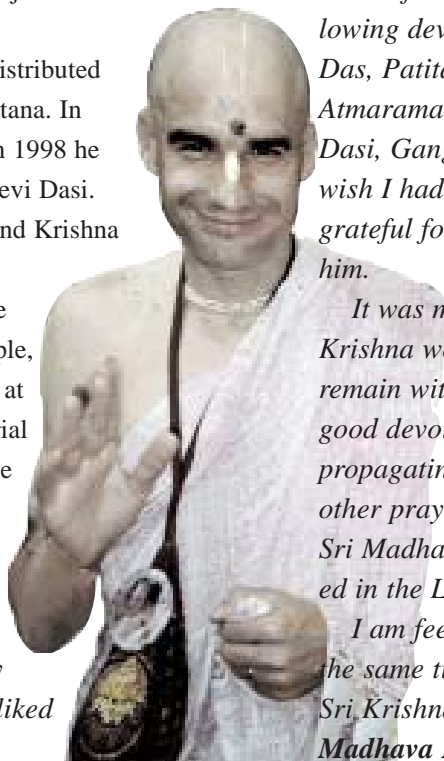
Prabhupada's books. We had some nice times together in India and all the memories I have of him are very dear and loving.

We weren't aware of his critical heart condition and this situation has taken us very much by surprise. Yet in this world no one should be very surprised by the unexpected, as it is to be expected. I am confident that Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu will take Sri Madhava Kripa under His transcendental shelter for all his wonderful devotional service.

My prayers are offered to give strength to his good wife, my dear spiritual daughter Srimati Stuti Devi Dasi and their children. My deep gratitude I would like to express to all the devotees who have helped Sri Madhava Kripa Das in his final days to pass from this world to the eternal world in Krishna Consciousness and for all the other support in his time of need. I personally experienced how wonderfully helpful Spanish devotees can be in times of need. I have heard specifically that the following devotees were very helpful: Yadunandana Das, Patita Pavana Das, Rukmini Ramana Das, Atmarama Das, Godruma Das, and Puspa Gopal Dasi, Ganga Dasi, bhaktin Sonya and others. I wish I had been able to be by his side and am very grateful for all the devotees who were there to help him.

It was my earnest hope and prayer that Lord Sri Krishna would allow Sri Madhava Kripa Das to remain with us for some more time as we need good devotees like him in this World to help in propagating Krishna Consciousness. It was my other prayer that in case the Lord desired to take Sri Madhava Kripa Das, that he would be integrated in the Lord's eternal service.

I am feeling a loss of this spiritual son and at the same time feeling something sublime that Lord Sri Krishna has done something auspicious for Sri Madhava Kripa Das".



Grihastha Counseling

By Nanda Krishna Das

The meetings are held every Saturday and Tuesday at 5:00 pm till 6:30 pm on the veranda of Vaishnava Academy building.

The purpose of these counseling meetings is to educate and train married devotees to live according to the Krishna Conscious principles of the grihastha ashrama. We start our meetings with Mangalacharan prayers, then devotees singing a vaishnava bhajan, then 'Jaya Radha-Madhava'. After that we are chanting one sloka from 'Bhagavad Gita as it is', read Srila Prabhupad's purport and discuss it, sharing our realizations with each other. After that we chant one round of Hare Krishna Mahamantra congregationally, and then we chant Narasimha prayers. Many devotees bring some Prasad, so after the program is finished we distribute it and honor.

Also we hold periodical exams and encourage devotees to attend regularly.

Recently we had been discussing on the subject of Vaishnava and Mayavada philosophy.

Sometimes special additional classes are organized for training the grihastha devotees for second initia-

tion.

When they pass the exam counselor gives them recommendation.

Sometimes, as a special program, a group of our counselees go to participate in some local preaching program, last time we went to Bethuadahari, Aramghata.

We find that this counseling system is very stimulating to the atmosphere of the grihastha ashrama.



Nanda Krishna Prabhu (far right) with counselees

Counselor - Nanda Krishna Das;

Assistant counselor - Prabhir Krishna Das.

Counselees: Dhara Nath Das, Janani Radha Devi Dasi, Mathura Palika Devi Dasi, Manjari Prema Devi Dasi, Amritamayi Devi Dasi, Syamal Krishna Das, Padmapriya Devi Dasi, Sayananda Das, Amrita Prabha Devi Dasi, Pariswar Krishna Das, Amritasya Devi Dasi, Charuchandra Das, Puspa, Kamaka Das, Mahalaxmi Devi Dasi, Kalki Das, Tulasi Sundari Devi Dasi, Bishvambhara Das, Mathura Mandira Devi Dasi.



WELCOME TO OUR COMMUNITY

One baby girl was born to Bhadra Nitai Das and Kalarupini Devi Dasi.

Kalarupini Devi Dasi:

She was born on 30th May 4:30 PM at home. It was quite fast with the local midwife from Taranpur. That morning Ramadevi left for Kolkata. I was very scared. But it was quite easy. My husband put on the Purusha-sukta prayers tape, Gurukula boys chanting. And she was born two minutes after that. She was born 5 days after Narasimha Chaturdasi, so we gave her name Bhadra Gouri Laxmi. Thursday is Laxmi's day. It's auspicious for girls to take birth on Thursday. So, my husband gave her Laxmi's name.

GOSHALA REPORT

By Nanda Krishna Das

July through September 2002

Five cows bred during this period.
Calves born: 2 male; 1female.
Milk production: 17,500 liters.

All small calves and heifers received prophylactic treatment against worms on 2.07.02 and 27.09.02.
All cows and bulls had been vaccinated for Anthrax disease on 28.07.02.

On November 12, 2002 is the auspicious Gopastami day. So, we should try to serve cows. Anyone can come to our Goshala and serve cows in many ways. It is also mentioned in the scripture that one may simply please Krishna by worshipping cow, circumambulating cow, stroking with one's hand, giving a handful of grass.

Everyone is invited to participate in Gopastami celebration in our Goshala campus.



Mayapur city won't be built in a day...

INTERVIEW WITH SADBHUJA PRABHU Master Plan Project Coordinator
November 2002.

MK: Could you give us some news on the building developments in Mayapur?

S: We will be starting construction of the new brahmachari ashram for older retired brahmacharis. In December we will start the foundation.

MK: Who is building it?

S: Central Department.

MK: Where is it going to be?

S: It is going to be in the field between Long building and Gada kitchen and between existing brahmachari ashram and the little park, which is just next to the car park.

MK: What kind of retirement it will be next to the car park?

S: Yea, it's too noisy. In course of time the car park will be shifted near to BBT on the other side.

MK: When?

S: As the time goes on. There is no need now at this stage.

MK: What's going on with the Temple extension?

S: It's on hold now, until the rainy season is over.

MK: Is there any news on City development?

S: If we get some money we may be able to start Prabhupad Avenue.

MK: When?

S: After Gaura Purnima. We will do big fund raising and big Maha-yajna this Gaura Purnima. But all this is still being discussed with Kalakantha Prabhu and Abhiram Prabhu. We are going to start to build Tamala Krishna Maharaja's Samadhi very soon. It was supposed to start in October. We have some drawings and concept how it is going to look, but we are still waiting for approval from Dallas (we sent them the drawings to discuss).

MK: Thank you. Hare Krishna. ♦

From 'Sri Krishna Samhita' by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura [Chapter 8, Text 13]

"There are eighteen obstacles that pollute one's ecstatic love in the wonderful mood of Vraja. Contemplating the names of these obstacles is the indirect consideration of the mood of Vraja".

Putana	Bogus guru	One should avoid the first obstacle, accepting a bogus guru, by discussing Putana's arrival in Vraja
Trinivarta	False arguments	Tinivarta manifests as false philosophies, Buddhism, etc
Sakatasura	Regulative principals	One who follows the regulative principals out of formality without understanding their purpose
Vatsasura	Juvenile offences	While one is young in his practice he can be disturbed by the demands of his body
Bakasura	Cheating religion	This is called namaparadha
Aghasura	Intolerance and cruelty	Compassion to the living entities and devotion to Krishna are the same
Brahma	Illusion	
Dhenukasura	Gross discrimination	Like devotees, simply interested in regulative principles and controlled by gross discrimination can not rise to the top-most platform. Vaishnav principles are so exalted that those vaishnavas, who are not endeavoring to understand them are comparable to fruitive workers
Aristasura	Perverted material attachment	The example of this obstacle is found among selfish dharma-dvajs, the show-bottle devotees
Kaliya	Malice	This obstacle pollutes everything
Forest fire	Sectarianism	It causes many obstacles
Pralambasura	Impersonalism	If one deeply discusses impersonalism, then he is compelled to except natience and non existance
Indra [Lifting Govardhan hill]	Demigod worshiping	
Vyomasura	Stealing and lying	
Kidnapping Nanda Maharaja	Drinking wine	If one takes intoxicants one forget himself
Sankhachuda	Name and fame/sense gratification	Those who are motivated by desire for fame are also proud. A vaishnava should be careful of such persons
Vidyadhara	Merging	Sometimes due to bliss increasing and increasing a vaishnava loses consciousness and a feeling of merging can overtake. One who can resist it will become a qualified vaishnava
Kesi	Puffed-up	This creates the mentality of disrespect for the Lord and a devotee falls from his position

WARNING: If you have to have any keys made do not entrust the task to servants or any hired person, who has access to your apartment or place where the key will be used. An unfortunate incident happened in the not too distant past, when one devotee had his servant make keys for him only to find later that he had made an extra key and entered his cabinet and stole a large amount of money. It is best to make your own keys.

CORRECTION: In 'Mayapur Katha', volume 6, No 2, in the article 'Spiritual family' indicated that the story of Raghunatha Prabhu in New Orleans had been told by Manorupa Devi Dasi, but actually it was Prahlad Nrisimha Dasa's memories. Your servant, Padmalochan Das



SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

Pujari Department is looking for talented/professional designer for Deity outfits. It's a full time service with maintenance. All details can be discuss with the Head Pujari. Hare Krishna! Jananivasa Dasa

Navadvipa Satika

Prabhodananda Saraswati

✿ Let me offer my respectful obeisances to Lord Gaura's transcendental abode which, whether seen, touched, glorified, remembered, bowed down to from afar, or worshipped, gives the nectar of pure love for Lord Krsna.

✿ They who follow the rules of varnasrama-dharma, worship the Deities, visit holy pilgrimage places, and study the Vedas, but do not reside in Lord Gaura's dear abode, cannot understand the abode of Vrndavana, which is beyond the reach of the four Vedas.

✿ Humbly thinking oneself lower than a blade of grass, natural gentleness and charm, speaking words sweet as nectar, spitting at the insignificant sense-gratification of this world, disinterest in the affairs of this world, and overwhelming love for Lord Hari are the transcendental virtues obtained by worshipping Lord Gaura's transcendental abode in this world.

✿ Worship millions of the most exalted spiritual masters if you wish! Study millions of Vedic scriptures if you wish! But know that it is they who yearn to reside in Lord Caitanyacandra's transcendental city who will understand the great secret that is pure love for Lord Krsna.

✿ Now it is the age of Kali. My enemies, the senses, have become very strong. The splendid path of pure devotional service is blocked by millions of brambles. I am weak and agitated. Alas! Alas! Where can I go? O abode of Lord Caitanya, if now you will not give me your mercy, what shall I do?

✿ I am tightly bound by chains of limitless horrible desires. I am addicted to millions of sins. My mind is filled with pain. Millions of wicked men mislead me. They are not my friends. Except for the holy abode of Gauda-mandala, who is my friend in this world?

✿ Alas! Alas! How will the desire creeper of pure devotional service sprout in the desert of my heart? In my heart there is only one hope. I shall reside in Lord Gauranga's holy abode. Then I shall never again lament.

✿ I am chained by sinful desires. I have fallen into the painful ocean of repeated birth and death. The sharks and crocodiles of lust and anger are devouring me alive. I have no shelter. O holy abode of Lord Gauranga, please be merciful to me!

✿ His complexion as fair as molten gold, and His form filled with the splendid and blissful nectar of pure transcendental love, the Supreme Personality of Godhead has mercifully appeared in the town of Navadvipa. In Navadvipa every home celebrates great festivals in honor of Bhakti-devi, the goddess of devotion. Navadvipa is sweeter than Vaikuntha. My heart finds its happiness in the transcendental abode of Navadvipa.

✿ When, residing somewhere in Navadvipa, my heart peaceful, filled with ecstatic love for the son of Saci, meditating moment after moment on the transcendental pastimes of the divine couple in Vraja, and happy with the devotional service proper for me, will I see sweet Vrndavana forest everywhere?