

ARADHANA

Yoga of the heart ♥

Year 10 Issue 1
Jan/Feb 2021



Rikhiapeeth, Rikhia, Deoghar, Jharkhand, India

ARADHANA Yoga of the heart ❤️ is an offering to Paramguru Swami Sivananda and our beloved Pujya Gurudev Swami Satyananda. It is compiled, composed and published as an offering of seva by the sannyasin disciples, devotees and well-wishers of Paramahansa Satyananda.

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Swami Satyananda Saraswati during Satchandi Mahayajna 2007



Rikhiapeeth, the tapobhumi of Swami Satyananda Saraswati, has developed into a vibrant spiritual epicentre abundant in peace, plenty and prosperity. Aspirants, seekers, devotees, householders and sannyasins come from all parts of the world to live and work together for the benefit of others by following the high ideals of seva (selfless service), sadhana (spiritual practice), swadhyaya (self study) and satsang (association with truth), as taught by Swami Sivananda and established by Swami Satyananda. It is a place of inspiration and joy for the thousands of natives who live in the hundreds of villages that surround Rikhiapeeth, as well as for millions of spiritual aspirants and devotees who come to imbibe the spiritual vibrations that abound in this sacred place.

ARADHANA Yoga of the heart ❤️ is intended to share the profound teachings and lifestyle that are being practised and lived in this sacred place for the benefit of all.



This issue of **ARADHANA** features the Satchandi Mahayajna, Ananda Utsav and Yoga Purnima which were conducted at Rikhiapeeth in December 2020.

This is a tribute to the tradition of Yajna established by Swami Satyananda at Rikhiapeeth to fulfil his sankalpa of peace, plenty and prosperity for all.

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Aradhana Invocation

देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः । परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥ Bhagavad Gita 3:11

Yajnas nourish, strengthen and empower the Devas, they in turn empower us.

Strengthening and nourishing each other in this way, both attain shreya (prosperity).



Yajna - Symbolic Meaning

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

There are many aspects to a yajna. Through rituals of purification, consecration and invocation, the entire yajnasala becomes the symbolic representation of the universe. Various symbols and actions are used in a Yajna to redirect our senses and heighten our sattwic emotions.

The outer form of any ritual has an inner corresponding ritual. Agni is the divine spark within the human being, the spirit or soul. The ghee or clarified butter that is offered to Agni is symbolic of the mind. The annam, the sacrificial food, symbolizes the physical body which is a transformed state of annam. Once the divine spark of Agni is invoked, the latent energies or divine powers hidden within man awake to share the fruits of the sacrifice and assist the individuals purification, transformation and spiritual awakening.

Yajna links us with the devatas, the illumined, hidden cosmic forces. The mantras induce waves of energy in the subtle body that purify the subtle elements of the body, mind and environment, thereby awakening the latent divine energies. With the help of sound, form, rhythm, gestures, flowers, light, incense and offering, the mind is carried away from its material preoccupations toward a world of divine beauty.

The spirit of yajna is love, sacrifice and service. The true meaning, value and spirit of Yajna is the unity of God and humanity. This is what our life is all about - unity with the Divine.

Yajna is a very powerful tool; it includes the body, the mind, faith, mantra, ritual as well as your entire life. The combination of all these makes yajna a very powerful tool of metamorphosis, transformation and change. The act of yajna is so attractive because it is pure and simple.

It is in harmony with nature and its creation. There are two basic energy systems in the physical world: heat and sound. Yajna utilizes these forms of energy in the yajna fire and the sound of mantras. The burning of pure substances in the yajna fire is a method of transforming matter into energy and expanding its subtle and positive properties into the atmosphere.



SATCHANDI MAHAYAJNA

15TH - 19TH DECEMBER 2020



This annual five-day worship is the legacy of Paramahansa Satyananda for the upliftment of humanity and peace, prosperity and happiness for all. This ancient tantric worship of Devi performed by renowned pandits from Varanasi, showers blessings on one and all.

"When this yajna is being performed, I pray only for the health and prosperity of everyone. Let everyone be kind and caring to one another and may no one ever experience any distress in their life."

– Swami Satyananda Saraswati

For online darshan of Satchandi Mahayajna 2020, visit:
rikhiapeeth.in



Satchandi Mahayajna

Aligning with the Cosmic Forces

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati

In a sumerini mala there are 27 beads, and this year we are conducting the 27th Satchandi Mahayajna. That means we have completed one sumerini of the Satchandi Mahayajna here at Rikhiapeeth, at the Tapobhumi of Swami Satyananda, with his sankalpa for universal peace, plenty and prosperity. This is very significant for us. The completion of these 27 yajnas is an indication of our alignment. When you complete a mala of certain mantras, then an alignment of energies takes place. In the same way, these 27 years of the Satchandi Mahayajna have created a universal aligning force, and that is why it is very significant.

When I say 'universal aligning force', I am talking about a certain kind of awareness, where people think and care for others. When we think and care for others then we are in alignment with the cosmic forces. When we are not thinking and caring for others then we are not in alignment with the cosmic forces. Why do you have conflict? Why do you suffer? Why do

you experience agony? Because you are out of alignment. This yajna is intended to strengthen that alignment, and so we have to align with and focus with the energy that is emanating from here.

We have to align ourselves, and we have to experience this event with the assurance, with the belief, the conviction and the faith that Devi is here, and so is Gurudev. It is his sankalpa, and that is why even at this time of pandemic we are performing this yajna. It is important to us that his sankalpa should continue, in whatever, whichever way it can, and that is why we are holding this yajna at this time.

We are the ambassadors of that energy, sending it out to others. This is for everybody – those who are here, those who are not here, and so everybody is getting connected. That is called connectivity, and right now a great connection is taking place, and that is why this Satchandi Mahayajna is very significant and unique. This has to bring peace, plenty and prosperity to mankind, especially within ourselves. Peace, plenty and prosperity doesn't only mean that you become rich or affluent, it means that you are happy, joyous, calm and content. That is what peace, plenty and prosperity should mean to us. That has to happen, for our own good and the good of all.

Wherever there is Satyam, wherever there is Sivam, there is Sundaram, and it is beautiful here at Rikhia. It is a visual treat for all of us. Wherever you look it is beautiful. That is Devi.

*Sarve bhavantu sukhinah
Sarve santu niramaya
Sarve bhadram pashyantu,
Maa kashchit dukha bhagabhavet.*

*May God make them prosperous
May God make them disease free
May God remove all the sickness and ills of their family
And let them enjoy bliss, peace, happiness and health.*

This is my sankalpa, and for this reason I am performing this yajna. Until the villagers receive the grace of the Mother Goddess, their sorrows will not be removed.

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



शतचण्डी महायज्ञ

स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती

पंचाग्नि साधना के पाँच वर्ष पूरे होने पर, अग्नि को अखण्ड बनाया। अग्नि अब चौबीस घण्टे रहेगी। यह शान्त अग्नि है, पहले प्रबल अग्नि थी। मेरा एक अनुष्ठान पूरा हुआ तो सोचा कि अनुष्ठान के बाद तो प्रसाद दिया जाता है अड़ोस-पड़ोस में। इसलिए आप लोगों को कहा - कपड़े, खिलौने आदि लाना। सब आया। पूस के महीने में सूची बनेगी और गाँव के लोगों में प्रसाद रूप में बाँट देंगे। हम दान नहीं देते हम प्रसाद देते हैं।

यहाँ रहते हुए, इन लोगों के दुःख और तकलीफों को देखकर हमारे मन में एक विचार आया कि इस क्षेत्र में हम एक बहुत बड़ा यज्ञ करें जिसका उद्देश्य हो कि सभी लोग सुखी हों, सभी निरोग हों, सभी शुभ का दर्शन करें और किसी को कोई दुःख न आए। इसी विचार से प्रेरित होकर हमने यहाँ रिखियापीठ में प्रत्येक वर्ष शतचण्डी महायज्ञ की परम्परा बनाई। इसका प्रारंभ राजसूय यज्ञ के रूप में हुआ था। राजसूय यज्ञ चक्रवर्ती राजा करते हैं, जिन्होंने दुनिया को जीता हो। राजसूय



यज्ञ का विधान है कि यज्ञकर्ता दिग्विजयी हो। दिग्विजय का मतलब होता है चारों दिशाओं से उसे जीत कर आना चाहिए। अब साम्राज्य दो तरीके का होता है। एक राजनैतिक जिसको तलवार, बन्दूक और सेना के बल पर जीता जाता है। और एक साम्राज्य होता है हृदय का, लोगों के दिलों पर राज्य करना, लोगों का दिल जीतना। साधु-संतों का धर्म होता है कि वे दुनिया को जीतें। स्वामी विवेकानन्द जी ने दुनिया को जीता। वे दिग्विजयी थे। आदिगुरु शंकराचार्य ने चारों दिशाओं को जीता। हमने भी लोगों का दिल जीता है। हम भी दिग्विजयी हैं। हर धर्म के लोगों के बीच, हर देश में हमने योग की विजय पताका फहराई है। और अब इस रिखियापीठ में आकर हमने राजसूय यज्ञ के रूप में शतचण्डी यज्ञ का आरंभ किया है। हमारे माता-पिता ने हमको एक उपदेश दिया था। उन्होंने कहा - बेटा, तुम्हारे दादा-परदादा तो तलवार के बल से लड़ते थे, मरते थे, जीतते थे, हारते थे, मगर अब जमाना बदल रहा है। अब कलयुग में शस्त्र नहीं, शास्त्र के द्वारा तुम दुनिया को जीतोगे। तुम क्रोध के द्वारा नहीं, प्रेम के द्वारा; अकड़ कर नहीं, विनय के द्वारा दुनिया को जीतोगे। हमारा दुनिया को जीतने का एक ही तरीका है। जो मारे इस गाल पर चपत, उसको दूसरा गाल दे देना बेटा, एक और दो। हाँ, बैर का बदला बैर से नहीं दिया जाता है। तलवार से तलवार शान्त नहीं होती है, बल्कि प्रेम से तलवार शान्त होती है। यह हमारे संत-महात्माओं का उपदेश सदा से है।

यज्ञ का उद्देश्य

दैवी कृपा का आवाहन यज्ञ करने का उद्देश्य होता है। देवी की आराधना करना कि वे हमें सुख-सम्पदा, दीर्घ जीवन, सफलता, अच्छा स्वास्थ्य दें और भवसागर से तार दें। यह यज्ञ का उद्देश्य होता है। यज्ञ जीवन में सुधार लाता है और यह सुधार की शक्ति किसी प्रबल शक्ति-स्रोत से ही



आ सकती है, मानव से नहीं, दैवी सत्ता से ही आ सकती है। इसी प्रयोजन से हमने भी यहाँ पर शतचण्डी महायज्ञ का श्री गणेश किया है। इसके अन्तर्गत हमने सीता कल्याणम् का भी आयोजन किया है, जिसमें हम सीता-राम विवाह भी करते हैं।

तुम जानते ही हो कि जीवन में कितनी विफलताएँ भरी हैं। भय, कुण्ठा और अन्य कितनी ही चीजें। सब चीजें दुःख भरी लगती हैं। अंततः सबका अंत निराशा और हताशा ही में होता है। लेकिन एक सत्ता है जो बिगड़ी को सुधार सकती है। जीवन की कई विपदाओं को दूर कर सकती है। मुझे विश्वास है आप सबने इसका अनुभव अवश्य किया होगा। यज्ञ कितने अच्छे ढंग से हुआ, यह उतना महत्वपूर्ण नहीं है, महत्व तो इस बात का है कि यज्ञ कितना शक्तिशाली रहा, प्रभावशाली रहा। जब पूजा के विशेष दिन संकल्प लिया जाता है, उस दिन प्रातः मैं यही प्रार्थना करता रहा- सब सम्पन्न हों, दीर्घजीवी हों, सबका अच्छा स्वास्थ्य हो, और सबको सफलता मिले। “सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः। सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद् दुःखभाग्भवेत्”।। सब सुखी हों, सभी निरोग हों, सभी को भगवान का आशीर्वाद मिले, किसी के जीवन में दुःख न आए। यदि किसी कारणवश कष्ट आता भी है तो उसे प्रसन्न रहना चाहिए कि भगवान की कृपा, देवी माँ की कृपा हमारे ऊपर है।

यज्ञ का प्रयोजन मनुष्य के दुःखों को दूर करना है। आपत्ति, विपत्ति, गरीबी, रोग, मृत्यु - दुःखों की कोई गिनती हो तो मैं करूँ। दुनिया में कितनी चीजें होती हैं जो हम लोगों को अप्रिय लगती हैं, जिनसे हमको कष्ट होता है, परन्तु देवी माँ की कृपा से सब कष्टों से मुक्ति हो - यह यज्ञ का



Satchandi Mahayajna, 2007



Satchandi Mahayajna, 2007

प्रयोजन है। यज्ञ कोई सामुदायिक या सामाजिक उत्सव नहीं है। यह आध्यात्मिक उत्सव है। यज्ञ निराकार को साकार में लाने की क्रिया है। परमेश्वरी देवी जो निराकार होती हैं, उनको साकार में उतारने की क्रिया है। चारों तरफ उनकी कृपा हम लोगों को मिलनी चाहिए, इसीलिए हम संकल्प करते हैं - सब लोगों के आरोग्य, विजय और समृद्धि के लिए। यदि कोई गड़बड़ है, तो गड़बड़ को ठीक कर देने के लिए, कहीं अंट-संट हो रहा है, तो अंट-संट को ठीक करने के लिए, हर प्रकार की आपत्ति और विपत्ति से मुक्त होने के लिए। जब हमारा पुरुषार्थ थक जाता है, जब हमारे हाथ थक जाते हैं, तब हम भगवती माँ की शरण में आते हैं, और उस शरण को प्राप्त करने के लिए यज्ञ प्रबल उपाय है, मंत्र के द्वारा, क्रिया के द्वारा और अनेक प्रकार के उपायों के द्वारा इस शक्ति को उतारा जाता है। “सर्वरूपमयी देवी सर्व देवीमयं जगत्। अतोऽहं विश्वरूपां तां नमामि परमेश्वरीम्”। देवी सर्वरूपमयी है तथा सम्पूर्ण जगत् देवीमय है। अतः मैं उन विश्वरूपा परमेश्वरी को नमस्कार करता हूँ। हम इस यज्ञ की सम्पूर्णता की कल्पना केवल एक बिन्दु पर करेंगे कि इस यज्ञ से लोगों की कुछ इच्छाएँ फलीभूत हुईं। बहुत लोगों को फायदा हुआ। भौतिक फायदा भी फायदा है, केवल आध्यात्मिक फायदा को ही फायदा नहीं बोलते हैं। भौतिक लाभ भी भगवान का आशीर्वाद है, अच्छी संतान भी भगवान का आशीर्वाद है। बस इसी दृष्टि से इस यज्ञ का श्री गणेश किया है। और आगे चलकर यह रिखियापीठ की परंपरा बनेगा। हमारे देश में बहुत यज्ञ होते हैं। यह कोई बहुत बड़ा यज्ञ नहीं है। उस दृष्टि से देखो तो ये बहुत छोटा-सा यज्ञ है। पर यह यज्ञ एक बहुत बड़े घटनाक्रम का श्री गणेश है।



Satchandi Mahayajna, 2020



Maintaining the Sankalpa

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati

This has been a very different and unique Satchandi Mahayajna in every respect. Even during the pandemic period, no activity of Rikhiapeeth Ashram or Satchandi Mahayajna has come to a standstill. The pandits have performed their worship, their aradhana, maintaining all the protocols. Distribution has happened for the villagers in the same manner that it used to happen in all the previous years. And people, although they cannot come in the gates of Rikhiapeeth, when they walk down the street they hear the mantras and they bow down in respect. And in that manner the villagers, the locals connect with this beautiful event which has been happening here for 27 years, and of which they have been the recipients of Guru's grace and Devi's grace. Nothing has stopped, all the sankalpas of Sri Swamiji are going on as normal and the inspiration behind this is definitely our Swami Satsangi. In her mind there is only one thought 24 hours, and that thought is: 'The sankalpa of Sri Swamiji should be increasing every moment.'

For a machine to function properly, all the parts, small or big, have to work in unison. In a human body, heart, liver, lungs, kidneys, hands, arms, legs, ears – everything has to work in unison to get the proper result. If there is any short-circuit in the machinery or an imbalance in the body the whole thing will stop. So just as in a machine every nut and bolt and lever is important, and in the body every organ and system of the body is important, in the same manner, every single one of us is an important part of Sri Swamiji's sankalpa of peace, plenty and prosperity. Inside the ashram or outside the ashram, we have to work together, we have to function as one, we have to maintain that connectivity with support and with care for every individual. In this manner, we can be sure that the sankalpa will continue to increase and touch the lives of people everywhere.



Nidhi Vatika, Panchagni area of Swami Satyasangananda



The yajna that Swami Satyananda is teaching us is how to connect with cosmic creative power. It is the nurturing, sustaining and the creative force of the universe. This awakens the shakti, the strength within us. We are all looking for the soft qualities in God, not the hard ones. The soft quality of God is the most beautiful, a compassionate and all encompassing nature of the Divine. Shakti can be strong but at the same time it has softness to it. Yajna is the invocation of that cosmic power to bring about identification with peace, prosperity and well-being in our life. The yajnas provide an opportunity to connect us with our strength and to know that in spirit we are all part of the same universal energy. Yoga and Yajna have been the two important gifts that Sri Swamiji has given to all of us. Yoga represents inner consciousness and yajna represents the outer connection. It is a balance between the esoteric and exoteric art brought about in life.

– Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Mediums of the Divine

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

These kanyas, who epitomise the beauty of Rikha and the beauty of this yajna, are chosen as the medium of the formless Divine Mother. They have been chosen as the medium, just as you choose a copper wire as the medium of conducting electricity because it is a good conductor. In the same spirit, in the same way, and in the light of the same technology, we have chosen these kanyas as the medium, as they are good conductors of the divine energy which we are invoking in this Satchandi Mahayajna.



The kanya signifies the aspect of energy when it is raw and also pure, untouched and unaware of its own potential. Through worship, the kanyas become the medium for the descent of the refined and luminous energy of Devi, and through them we receive Her blessings.

The tradition of Yajna began from that unforgettable day when man's consciousness took an evolutionary leap and he realized how to use fire and then grain, the two eternal principles. Therefore, we offer those grains to the Devi through her most beautiful form, the kanya. Let us experience this yajna like these little children, with innocence, purity and spontaneity.

On the final day of the Satchandi Mahayajna, the kanyas of Rikhia are worshipped in the Kanya puja as the true representatives of the Divine Mother. We worship them just as we worship the Goddess, by feeding them, giving them sumptuous gifts and receiving their blessings. During the yajna the kanyas represent the highest power of creation and on the final day we witness the grandeur and glory of the Cosmic Mother in them. This is a very sacred tantric ceremony in which the kanyas are worshipped as the living, breathing manifestation of Devi. They are not Devi, they are the medium of Devi, through whom She will manifest and bless us all. All of you are the guest of this grand yajna, and these kanyas are the hosts.





Kanya Puja during Satchandi Mahayajna, 1998



Kanya Puja during Satchandi Mahayajna, 2007



Kanya Puja during Satchandi Mahayajna, 2020



Sita Ram Vivah, 2020



Rama is Omnipresent

In earth, water, fire, air and ether is Rama,
In the heart, mind, prana and senses is Rama,
In the breath, blood, nerves and brain is Rama,
In sentiment, thought, word and action is Rama.
Within is Rama, without is Rama, in front is Rama,
Above is Rama, below is Rama, behind is Rama,
To the right is Rama, to the left is Rama,
Everywhere is Rama.

Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama.
Refuge, solace, path, Lord, witness is Rama.
Father, mother, friend, relative, Guru is Rama.
Support, source, centre, ideal, God is Rama.
Creator, preserver, destroyer, redeemer is Rama.
Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama.
The ultimate goal of one and all is Rama.
Attainable through shraddha, prema and worship is Rama.
Accessible to devotion and surrender is Rama.
Approachable by prayer, japa and kirtan is Rama.
Hosanna to Rama, glory to Rama, victory to Rama.
Adorations to Rama, salutations to Rama,
Prostrations to Rama.
Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama, Rama.
Om Sri Rama, Jaya Rama, Jaya Jaya Rama.

- Swami Sivananda Saraswati -

Get Connected

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati

We sannyasins are indeed very lucky. We are in the company of divine, luminous beings, listening to the wonderful chanting of the pandits from Kashi, at the Tapobhumi of Sri Swamiji and from here, our prayers go out to people throughout the world who are writing to us about their sufferings and problems. They want blessings, and our prayers will go out to help them because they cannot come here now. But in this technological age, when everything is being transferred electronically, then why can we not electronically transfer blessings?

During this Satchandi Mahayajna we discovered that it is very easy to do just that. People have contacted us to seek blessings from the yajna for their difficulties, their diseases, the hard times they are going through. They contacted us from all over the world for blessings. And we, in a very simple manner, noted them all down and placed them before Devi. The file has gone to Devi. Everybody's names have been placed and your prayers have been offered. And you will receive the abundant blessings of Devi, even those who could not come here, because you aligned yourselves with what has been happening here.

Everyone has been doing the sadhana at home, reading the Durga Saptashati, chanting the mantras that they were told to chant, and following the schedule. A person thousands of miles away is getting connected because he is performing that sadhana, he is remembering Sri Swamiji, he is remembering Rikhiapeeth, he is remembering the beautiful sights, the kanyas dancing, everything. And that is how he is getting connected, he or she, wherever they are, getting connected to us.

So we are conducting the yajna here, and everyone is doing it in a little way throughout the world, aligning themselves with what is happening here. As Swami Niranjan said, in the village, in the state, in the country, in the world, in the universe, in all the lokas, everyone is united in the worship of Devi. This should happen every day. Thousands of people around the world expressing their devotion to Devi – surely that will make a difference. That will be a great force, and that will definitely help to bring peace, plenty and prosperity.



Tapowan, venue of Satchandi Mahayajna from 1997 - 2011

King of Hearts

Tapowan is the ground where Sri Swamiji conducted, guided and inspired the Rajasuiya yajna. He has said, "I have conquered hearts through yoga and through seva, and to celebrate I am conducting the Rajasuiya Yajna." The two missions that he had were yoga and seva, and the connection that he had with every individual was through the heart. He won the heart of every individual. That is the life that we remember in this place. He was the conqueror, not only in the spiritual dimension, but also of hearts. That is our Sri Swamiji.

Swami Niranjanananda Saraswati



Tapowan Vedi, Satchandi Mahayajna 2005



Satchandi Mahayajna, Rikhiapeeth, 2020



Yoga Purnima, Rikhiapeeth, 2020

ANANDA UTSAV

21st -23rd DECEMBER 2020



The invocation of Lord Ganesha acts as a conjunction or sandhi of the two yajnas dedicated to Siva and Shakti. Held in-between Satchandi Mahayajna and Yoga Purnima this Utsav, or festival of bliss, clears all obstacles and ensures smooth sailing in life through the auspicious blessings of Lord Ganesha.

Through mantra, invocation, abhishek and other ceremonies, this festival connects us with the positivity and inspiration that Ganesha embodies.



Ganesha - the Joining Force

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati

We are having a feast of aradhanas. This Ananda Utsav is a celebration of bliss, and it comes after the Devi aradhana. Then after this, there will be the Siiva aradhana, which Gurudev started. I have joined the in-between gap of five days with the Ganesha aradhana, because Ganesha acts as the sandhi. Sandhi is a conjunction, it joins two things together. Ganesha is the sandhi, the conjunction between Devi and Siva.

In the family, the children are the joining force of the parents, they act as sandhi by joining the mother and father together. So Ganesha, who is their off-spring, joins Siva and Parvati. Sure and certain, if you can butter-up Ganesha, then Siva-Parvati will definitely get buttered-up as well because they love their son, and whomever their son loves they will also love, and he will also put in a good word for you.

Ganesha is All-Pervading

Here in Rikhia, at the Tapobhumi of Gurudev, Ganesha is the most important, because Guruji installed him here. He is Gurudev's Gurubhai. For twenty years Sri Swamiji did the worship of Ganesha, and this continues today. He even built Ganesha Kutir for him, so we have a house for him. Ganesha kept arriving and now we have an army of Ganeshas.

In this Kali Yuga, the two symbols are Chandi and Vinayaka, Ganesha. Chandi stands for power and acquisition, money and fame. Everybody is mad after them. And Ganesha stands for good food, comfort, luxury.

Ganesha is always wearing silk dresses. You will always see him dressed well, in satin and silk. And he loves laddu and good food. From the day that the worship of Ganesha started here in the Akhara, our kitchen changed. Before that we were only eating khichari, but as soon as Ganesha came, idli and dosa, pulao and puri started coming in, and it happened on its own.

Ganesha is one of the most celebrated deities. In every home you will find Ganesha. Every artist, every painter, every musician, every singer, they have all used their creativity to bring out Ganesha. He is so loved in India and all over the world. Even abroad, you will find that people have a Ganesha in their house. That is how vyapak, all-pervading he is.

Removing the Fear

If Devi is the one who removes the obstacles, then what is Ganesha's role? Why do we need to have an aradhana of Ganesha? The Ganesha aradhana, Ananda Utsav, is for the cultivation of positivity. This is the force of Ganesha, he helps us to become more positive. Devi will remove all the obstacles, all the difficulties that you have. So the obstacle is gone, but even then, something that happened long ago, some difficulty that you faced – maybe you were sick or you lost someone, and even though ten, twenty, thirty years have passed, the fear has not gone. There is always that fear – Oh, if it happens again, what will I do? Fear, along with all sorts of emotions that go along with the incident you faced do not go. As long as that fear is there, you are in trouble.

How to remove that fear? That is what Ganesha does. Ganesha doesn't only remove the obstacle, he removes the fear of that obstacle, the memory as well. The anxiety, the tension, the stress of wondering, 'What if this or that happens?' That fear goes away, and that is why Ganesha is very important. He removes that memory in such a nice way that you are able to deal with that.

Clearing the Path

Ganesha symbolizes that energy which clears the path. You know, when you are cruising down the road and an obstacle comes you have to clear the path to go further. But sometimes in life, the obstacles are huge and we can't go forward, we can't see the light. So how to clear the obstacle? You can take the help of Ganesha. Ganesha symbolizes that energy which clears the air. Whenever you do any puja, in your home or in the ashram,

first you do worship of Ganesha. He clears the whole path for the descent of that divine energy which you are going to invoke through your puja. Whenever you buy a new car or a new home or get married, whenever you start anything, Ganesha is invoked because he clears the path completely.

The Power of Wisdom

Ganesha symbolizes, the power of wisdom. When I act, I should act with wisdom. When I talk, I should talk with wisdom. When I think, I should think with wisdom. When I feel, I should feel with wisdom. What is wisdom? Wisdom is when you include others in what you think, in what you feel, in what you act. You include others in that, you take into account their feelings, needs, difficulties and emotions. You think of their needs.

What are the needs of the people of Rikhia? Food, medicine, clothes, warm socks, shoes. They don't need chocolates, they don't need candles – these are for spoilt people. But they need the basic necessities. Now when I am thinking, then I should include them in my thoughts. Sri Swamiji thought about them every day, that was his main obsession. Whenever I met Swamiji he would say to me, “The children must have shoes, socks, warm clothes, school uniforms, pens and notebooks.” That is all he used to talk about. He included everyone in his thoughts. Can you do that? Whatever you do, wherever you are, include others in your thoughts. That is called wisdom.

Ganesha gives freely, Devi gives freely. But on whom are you going to spend all that you've gotten for free? You've gotten everything in life for free, and if I take one thing away from you, you will realize that. If the air is taken away, you will realize that you got it for free and it is the most basic need for life. You can go without food for some time, you can go without water for some time, but without air how long will you last? And you got it for free, you are not paying anything for that.

Invoke the Grace

Wisdom, power of wisdom, remover of obstacles, remover of the fear of obstacles. That is what Ganesha symbolizes. Everyone should chant at least one mantra for Ganesha daily – Om Gam Ganapataye Namah. Just light a small candle, pour water on the Ganesha that you have, wave some incense and chant, “Om Gam Ganapate Namah.” You will invoke the grace of Ganesha in your life. It is very important.

गणेश जी का आगमन

स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती

एक दिन एक लड़का गणेश जी की मूर्तियाँ बेचता हुआ यहाँ आया। स्वामी सत्संगी ने गणेश की एक मूर्ति खरीद ली और लाकर मुझे दिखायी कि स्वामी जी गणेश जी की यह मूर्ति बहुत सुन्दर है। मैंने कहा, रख लो, पर मैंने कोई विशेष ध्यान नहीं दिया उस समय। उसी दिन दिल्ली से किसी ने गणेश जी की तीन और मूर्तियाँ भेज दीं। एक अष्ट धातु की, एक दक्षिण भारत से और एक त्रिआयामी। मैंने कहा, नहीं यह संयोग नहीं है। इसमें निश्चित रूप से कोई न कोई मतलब है। उस समय गणेश जी की कुटिया बन रही थी। मैंने उन चारों गणेश जी की प्राण-प्रतिष्ठा कर दी। सामने स्थापित मूर्ति का नाम रखा गणेश रमानी। हमारे आस-पास रहने वाले पिछड़ी जाति के लोग हैं रमानी। किचन में हो गये गणेश अय्यर। हमारे गुरुजी अय्यर थे। अपने कमरे में रखा गणेश भट्टाचार्य। पीछे की तरफ एकदम एकान्त में जो गणेश जी हैं उनका नाम है गणेश अली। इस कुटिया का नाम भी गणेश कुटीर है और सामने है गणेश वाटिका।

उस दिन से सबकुछ बदल गया यहाँ पर। मेरा मन भी बदल गया। मेरे सोचने का तरीका बदल गया। सबसे बड़ी चीज़ है कि मेरी रसोई भी बदल गई। मैं तो खिचड़ी और दलिया के अलावा कुछ जानता ही नहीं था। मेरे संन्यासी खिचड़ी और दलिया खा-खाकर ऊब गए थे। परन्तु अब नहीं। अब खिचड़ी कभी-कभी बनती है, क्योंकि गणेश जी तो शिवजी के समान नहीं हैं। शिवजी तो कुछ भी खा लेते हैं, पर गणेश जी को चाहिए अच्छा भोजन,





अच्छा कपड़ा, रहने का अच्छा ढंग। वे विद्वान हैं, मनीषी हैं। उनका अपना स्तर है। पूरा महाभारत उन्होंने ही लिखा था। व्यास जी बोलते गए और गणेश जी लिखते गए, बिना रुके। हमने सोचा, चलो शिवजी खुद नहीं आए, अपने बेटे को ही भेज दिया, ये तो मेरे गुरु भाई हुए। शिवजी मेरे इष्ट हैं।

गणेश जी के आते ही सब कुछ बदल गया। हमने मान लिया कि शिवजी ने कहा कि मैं नहीं आ रहा हूँ, गणेश जी आयेंगे, तुम इन्हीं की सेवा करना और इनके साथ तुम भी बढ़िया खाना खाओ। तुम साधु हो, पंचाग्नि कर रहे हो। अच्छा है, मगर पंचाग्नि करने वाले को अच्छा खाना खाना चाहिए। घी भी खाना चाहिए, तेल भी खाना चाहिए। यह क्या दलिया, खिचड़ी खा रहे हो। गणेश जी बहुत अच्छे-अच्छे कपड़े पहनते हैं। वे शिवजी की तरह नहीं रहते। शिवजी तो कैसे भी कपड़े पहन लेते हैं, कहीं भी खा लेते हैं, छुआ-छूत कुछ नहीं, कहीं भी सो जाते हैं, मच्छर हैं, कीड़े हैं, साँप हैं, बिच्छू हैं। गणेश जी टीप-टॉप रहते हैं, रेशम का कपड़ा ही पहनते हैं, पढ़े-लिखे विद्वान् हैं। गणेश जी चाहते हैं तो भक्ति आती है। उनके कहने से भक्ति आती है; और माया अपने आप आती है। अतः परमात्मा किस रूप में हमारे ऊपर कृपा करते हैं, किस रूप में हमको दर्शन देते हैं, कैसे हमको प्रेरणा देते हैं, इसे तो ऊपर वाले पर ही छोड़ दो। हम तो कहते हैं रामजी, आप किसी भी रूप में आओ, स्वयं न आ सको, तो सीता जी को ही भेज दो, मेरा किचन देख लेंगी। लक्ष्मी जी को भेज दो, बहुत काम कराना है। उनसे कुछ मकान वगैरह बनवा लेंगे, आस-पास के लोगों के लिए। अपने पड़ोसियों के खेत जोतने के लिए ट्रैक्टर ही चलवा लेंगे। पर आओ, जिस भी रूप में आना चाहो, उसी रूप में आओ।

Tradition of Giving during Yajna

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



In the tradition followed in the Rajasuiya Yajna, there are three essentials. The first is worship of the Deity, which means sitting and singing the praises of God, doing kirtan or listening to the glorious exploits of Godheads. The second includes ritualistic installation, the chanting of mantras etc. The third is giving and receiving. The Yajna cannot be complete without daan or giving. This was the tradition when Sri Rama ruled the earth. The tradition was followed during Dwapara period and the same tradition should be followed during the present age, Kali yuga.

Daan

Daan means unconditional offering of everything you have for the welfare of others without any personal or selfish expectations. The items are offered to Devi and then distributed as Prasad to everyone. She awakens the prosperity already residing within them. Rather it is receiving and returning what you have received after adding to it a touch of excellence.



Prasad means happiness and joy. Prasad is an offering of goodwill and carries good wishes for health, happiness, prosperity and peace. We give so that everyone may become equal. Prosperity and contentment are the birthright of everyone. This is not charity. It is a revival of a system from the ancient



vedic tradition in which giving and sharing are mandatory. The purpose of the Yajna is the extension of support to uplift the poor and underprivileged.

The purpose of Yajna is to provide a change in perspective. A change for the better in your thinking would lead you to greater heights and change the future of mankind. When you receive the Prasad of a Yajna what is important is to understand that the rites and rituals of tantra can transform even the most mundane object, act, thought, word or deed into a vehicle for receiving divine grace in your life.

In December 2020, throughout the Yajnas, despite the challenges of the pandemic, Rikhiapeth continued the tradition of giving Devi prasad to each and every family of Rikhia Panchayat. Over 3,000 local families received essentials such as clothing, household items and food rations. This year distribution was done in a Covid-safe, contactless format ensuring the health and safety of both giver and receiver. Generous prasad was also offered to the kanyas and batuks, farmers, widows, elderly, hundreds of local school children and staff.

While the pandits chanted mantras at the Samadhi area, the giving of prasad took place at Rikhia Bhavan, where the yajnas had been conducted for the last several years. With face masks and social distancing protocols in place, this year proved that Sri Swamiji's commitment and promise to look after his neighbours is alive and well.

This was possible thanks to the tremendous support of devotees, well-wishers and aspirants from around the globe who support the activities of Rikhiapeth to alleviate the suffering and hardships faced by all those in need, especially the most vulnerable within our communities.

यज्ञ का प्रसाद

स्वामी सत्यानन्द सरस्वती

जैसे समुद्र में से जल वाष्प बनकर उठता है, बादल बनता है और मानसून की वर्षा में फिर वही उसको वापस मिल जाता है। यदि समुद्र से पानी वाष्प बनकर न उठे तो मानसून की वर्षा भी नहीं होगी। और पानी नहीं बरसेगा तो पानी वाष्प भी नहीं बनेगा। तो जो तुम देते हो, वही तुमको मिल भी जाता है। यही प्रकृति का नियम है। और हमारे यहाँ भी यही हिसाब-किताब है। इसी कारण प्रसाद वितरण यज्ञ का बहुत महत्वपूर्ण भाग है। कहते हैं, प्राचीन काल में राजा हर्षवर्धन ने अपनी सारी व्यक्तिगत सम्पत्ति दान में दे दी। कुल्हड़, पत्तल पर खाना खाते थे, जमीन में सोते थे। आपने इतिहास में पढ़ा होगा कि महाराजा हर्षवर्धन ने प्रयाग के कुंभ में भाग लिया और जो कुछ उनका अपना था, सब दे दिया। यह भी परम्परा रही है! श्री रामजी ने कितने राजसूय यज्ञ किए हैं। एक-एक राजसूय यज्ञ को करने में बारह साल लगते हैं। राजसूय यज्ञ की एक परम्परा होती है, उसमें तीन चीजों का ध्यान रखा जाता है। पहला देव उपासना, मतलब बैठकर उपासना करना। दूसरी होती है पूजा, कर्मकाण्ड, जो पूजा होती है, स्थापना होती है, पाठ होता है, यह यज्ञ का दूसरा भाग है। यज्ञ का तीसरा भाग होता है दान। बिना दान के यज्ञ सम्पन्न नहीं होता है। यज्ञ का यही विधान है। यज्ञ में दान के भी नियम होते हैं। वस्त्र का दान राजसूय यज्ञ का प्रथम आचरण है। पात्र का दान राजसूय यज्ञ का दूसरा आचरण है। इसके बाद तीसरा आचरण है अन्न-दान। तीसरे वर्ष से आगे अन्न-दान होता है, अन्न-क्षेत्र में सब आते हैं। फिर प्रतिवर्ष बढ़ते जाता है। सोना-चाँदी भी प्रसाद के रूप में दिया जाता है। किसी को हीरे की अँगूठी



Swami Niranjanananda and Swami Satyasangananda overseeing Covid - safe distribution of prasad along with village leaders, December 2020

दी, किसी को सोने की अँगूठी दी। हजारों को दी। जितने आए, उतनों को दी, क्योंकि देनेवाले तो आप ही हैं। सबसे महान दान होता है ज्ञान का दान। बारहवें साल में ज्ञान-दान भी दे देंगे। मन करेगा तो शक्तिपात भी करा देंगे। राजसूय यज्ञ का नियम है, जब राजा-महाराजा आते हैं और चक्रवर्ती को पन्ना, मूंगा, हीरा-मोती चढ़ाते हैं, तब वह उनको प्रसाद रूप में देता है। उपहार रूप में ग्रहण करता है और प्रसाद रूप में देता है। प्राचीन काल में यज्ञ का प्रसाद कैसा होता था, आपको मालूम है ना। बस वही परम्परा है। प्रसाद सबका अलग होता है, राजर्षि का, देवर्षि का। हम राजर्षि हैं। जिन्दगी आराम से बितायी है। लक्ष्मीजी ने मुझे कहा, देख बेटा, जब तक तू ठीक तरीके से चलेगा न, तब तक तू जब बुलायेगा, आऊँगी। तू ने गलती की तो मैं गयी। अब मुझे डर लगता है कि लक्ष्मी जी को अकेले नहीं बुलाना चाहिए, क्योंकि वे आयेंगी तो अपनी सवारी में आयेंगी। लक्ष्मी जी की सवारी है उल्लू। उसे दिन में नहीं दिखता। इसलिए मैं भगवान को निमन्त्रण देता हूँ, वे उनके साथ गरुड़ पर आ जाती हैं। तुम लक्ष्मी जी को बुलाना चाहो तो नारायण की सेवा करो। वे पतिव्रता हैं। जहाँ नारायण वहाँ लक्ष्मी। यह जरूरी नहीं कि जहाँ लक्ष्मी, वहाँ नारायण। पहले नारायण की सेवा करो, उनकी पूजा करो, उनको बुलाओ। जिस रूप में हो। नारायण तो एक नाम है। शिवजी की पूजा करो, पार्वती जी आएँगी। नारायण की सेवा करो, लक्ष्मी जी आएँगी। यदि तुम चाहो कि लक्ष्मी जी को बुलायें ताकि बैंक बैलेन्स बढ़ता जाये तो बढ़ भी सकता है, मगर एक दिन जब जायेंगी तो ऐसे जायेंगी कि बस। उल्लू को दिन में दिखता ही नहीं है और लक्ष्मी जी हमेशा उल्लू पर ही आती हैं। इसलिए हम बहुत सावधान रहते हैं।

हम यहाँ बोलते हैं - नमो नारायण! क्योंकि नारायण इस सृष्टि की शक्ति हैं तथा नारायण और लक्ष्मी अभिन्न हैं, एक हैं। हम केवल लक्ष्मी के लिए तप करें, लक्ष्मी के लिए प्रयत्न करें, खूब पैसा आए, यह तो फालतू चीज है। लक्ष्मी तो पानी के तरंग की तरह चंचल है। “लक्ष्मीस्तोयतरंगभंगचपला विद्युच्चलं जीवितं। तस्मान्मां शरणागतं शरणद त्वं रक्ष रक्षाधुना”। लक्ष्मी सरिता की तरंग की तरह अस्थिर हैं, जीवन विद्युत के समान क्षणिक है। इसलिये हे प्रभु मेरी रक्षा करो। मैं अभी ही शरणागत हूँ। हमारे यहाँ यज्ञ का प्रसाद यहाँ की कन्याएँ देती हैं। समाज में सन्तुलन के लिए बच्चों को छोटी उम्र से ही उदारतापूर्वक लेने और देने की शिक्षा मिलनी चाहिए, जिससे वे अपनी खुशियाँ अपने साथियों के साथ बाँट सकें। बढ़ती उम्र में बच्चों को अच्छे संस्कार देने से जीवन के प्रति उनके दृष्टिकोण में परिवर्तन आएगा। अन्यथा अमीरी और गरीबी के बीच की खाई कभी पाटी नहीं जा सकेगी। इसी सामाजिक संतुलन के भाव को बनाए रखने के लिए हमारे यहाँ यज्ञ में प्रसाद बच्चे ही बाँटते हैं।



YOGA PUARNIMA

25TH- 29TH DECEMBER 2020



Mahamrityunjaya Homa conducted during Yoga Purnima is a very important and effective yajna to bring health, wellbeing, protection and upliftment to mankind.

This yajna is a tribute to the birth and life of the great yogi Paramahansa Satyananda. Learned pandits from Varanasi conduct the havan and Rudrabhishek to create a divine energy field.

For online darshan of Yoga Purnima 2020, visit:
rikhiapeeth.in

Yoga Purnima - The Fullness of Yoga

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati

Yoga Purnima is the celebration of the fulfillment of Yoga. Purnima means completeness. When the moon is full, that is purnima, and that represents completeness. Yoga Purnima, which was started by Swami Satyananda thirteen years ago, was started to celebrate the fulfillment of yoga. What is the fulfillment of yoga? Is yoga just asana and pranayama? Is yoga just doing some practices daily, rolling out your mat and closing your eyes and looking inwards? Is yoga only seva? Is yoga only related to your inner growth? What is yoga? What is the fulfillment of yoga? What is the purnata of yoga?



That was exemplified in the life of Gurudev. This event coincides with the birth of Swami Satyananda, which we will celebrate on the last day of Yoga Purnima, because he exemplified the fulfillment of yoga. If you saw him, you could easily say that he was a person who lived every aspect of yoga, whether it is karma or jnana or bhakti or kriya or kundalini yoga. Any form of yoga, he lived that. He symbolized that completion because he had experienced that in his life.

A Balanced Life

Sri Swamiji said that the fulfillment of yoga is not closing your eyes and looking inside. I am not saying that closing your eyes is wrong, that is part of yoga, but you also have to look outside. That is the fulfillment of yoga – balanced vision, interacting with the outside world in a perfect manner and having perfect inner experience. Not only looking inside and not only looking outside, but both. The fulfillment of yoga is balanced vision, Samadrishti, equal vision. You devote as much of your time, your interest, your enthusiasm for outer life as you do for your inner life.



Sivananda Sarovar

When you are doing your seva you are in the external life, and when you sit down to do your practices you are in the internal life, and most of us prefer one more over the other. Some only want to go within and some only want to remain external, and both will remain in darkness. Both will remain in the darkness of ignorance, so say the Upanishads. Even the person who searches for knowledge from within will be in darkness. In fact, he will be in greater darkness than the person who is looking outward for knowledge, this is what the Upanishads say. We have to have a balanced approach to life. Yoga means balance.

True Friendship

But how can we attain this? Sri Swamiji has said, that you have to become friends with your mind. It is only when you become friends with your mind that you become a master of your mind. You cannot become a master of

your mind by creating a rift between yourself and your mind. Your mind is not your enemy; your mind has to be your friend. You know how friends are, they listen to everything. If my friend tells me something, I will listen. But if my enemy tells me the same thing I will not listen. If you want your mind to be in your control, if you want to be a master of your mind, if you want to be a swami, one who is a master of his mind, for this you have to befriend your mind.

When you befriend your mind then your mind slowly comes into your control and you are able to direct the mental energies wherever you want to. Otherwise, you are a slave to your mind. You are doing puja or japa and your mind is wandering somewhere else. Suddenly you realize this and you think, 'Where did I go? My mind got lost.' You go wherever your mind takes you, you feel whatever your mind says to you, you believe whatever your mind tells you. You are a slave to your mind, we all are. We have to become masters because only then can we direct the mind as we want and experience the fulfillment of yoga.

True friendship is when you take care for the other, so if you want true friendship with your mind, your mind has to care for you and you have to care for your mind. When you want to meditate, then your mind has to cooperate. When your mind wants to do something else, you can also cooperate with that. That is how friendship is; it is a matter of give and take. If you can do this with your mind then gradually it will become calm and peaceful, and you will be able to direct your mental energies.

Yoga for the Complete Personality

This Yoga Purnima is the fulfillment of yoga. Fulfillment of yoga is mastery of mind, mastery of emotions, mastery of the psyche, mastery of the spirit, the Atma. Yoga is not just about the body. People are only focusing on the body. Every day they do asana and pranayama, and then they go out and do everything under the sun that they shouldn't do, becoming aggressive and greedy, selfish, nervous and depressed. What about these aspects of your Self? Asana and pranayama definitely have a role to play, they balance the energies, but beyond this are many other aspects of yoga.

Sri Swamiji saw yoga as a holistic science, something that deals with the complete personality, the total entity. Not just the physical but also the mental, emotional, psychic and spiritual aspects. That is the complete individual, the whole human. And yoga can meet the needs of each part



Margasheersha Purnima, 29th December 2020
Birthday celebration of Swami Satyananda

of the personality, and that is what we have to discover in our lives. But you have to go slowly, it doesn't come all at once. You take baby steps. *Shane shane hi uparitam* – step by step you rise. Drop by drop the ocean is formed.

Reaching out to Humanity

Yoga Purnima is for humanity. It is not restricted to Rikhia. It is reaching out. When you reach out to others, then you are very close to God. So Yoga Purnima is reaching out. It is for humanity, it is for the universe. It is not only for humans. When I say 'humanity' I mean all living things. It is for the birds, the animals, the trees, the water, the air, the fire, the ether. It is so that all realms should be unified, because those realms also exist within me. When we are praying for the unification of the universe we are praying for our own unification, because we are so intimately connected. If I am disturbed, everything is disturbed, the universe is disturbed. It's not a joke, don't take it lightly. One negative thought that you send out into the universe disturbs the universe. Imagine thousands and millions and trillions of people sending out negative thoughts. What will happen to the universe? And if we all send out positive thoughts of love, of care, of kindness, of hope, of inspiration, then the universe will keep blossoming and thriving. So this is reaching out to humanity, to the universe, to every living creature, every living being, seen or unseen, manifest or unmanifest. And that is the fullness of yoga.



Yoga Purnima Purnahuti, 2020



Lord Siva

Swami Sivananda Saraswati

Lord Siva is the regenerator and not the destroyer. Lord Siva is the God of Love. His grace is infinite. He is the saviour and guru. He is engaged in freeing souls from the thralldom of matter. He assumes the form of guru out of intense love for mankind. He wishes that all should know him and attain the blissful Siva-pada. He watches the activities of the individual souls and helps them on their onward march. Lord Siva is an embodiment of wisdom. He is the light of lights, the supreme light, and self-luminous. Siva means that which is eternally happy or auspicious. Om and Siva are one. Lord Siva is the Supreme Reality. He is eternal, formless, independent, omnipresent, beginningless, causeless, taintless, self-existent, ever free, ever-pure. He is not limited by time. He is infinite bliss and infinite intelligence. Shivalingam speaks to you in the unmistakable language of silence: "I am one without a second. I am formless."



The lingam is the outward symbol of the formless being, Lord Siva who is the indivisible, all-pervading, eternal, auspicious, ever-pure, immortal essence of this vast universe, who is the undying soul seated in the chambers of your heart, who is your indweller, innermost self or atman, and who is identical with the Supreme Brahman.

The greatest and the highest abhishek is to pour the waters of pure love on the atma lingam of the lotus of the heart. The external abhishek will help the growth of devotion and adoration for Lord Siva, and eventually lead to internal abhishek with pure abundant flow of love. When one sings the hymns of Lord Siva, one is in tune with the Lord. The individual mind melts in the cosmic mind. He who sings the hymns becomes one with Lord Siva.





Hara Hara Mahadev! This is the voice of the atma. It is coming from the heart, from the soul, from the point of purity within you. When you call out from that point of purity, then it definitely reaches where it is intended. So try to call from the heart. When you call Siva from the heart, he will definitely come. When you call anybody from the heart, definitely, the call will be answered. But when you call from bitterness, when you call from anger, when you call from worry, when you call from anxiety, when you call from nervousness, depression, then perhaps the frequency does not match. So try to call from the depths of your heart. Call out to Siva, call out to Guru. They are the forces that have that power to reach out. They have the power to reach out to those who call from the heart with purity.

- Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati



Connecting to the Source

2020 was a year of unprecedented challenge and change for humanity. Due to the pandemic spiritual aspirants, devotees and seekers from India and around the world were unable to attend the Yajnas. Thousands of devotees and well wishers reached out to the ashram requesting blessings and asking for a means to connect to these aradhanas which are the highlight of the year for so many.

Due to the wave of requests, Swami Satyasangananda outlined a home Sadhana for each of these Aradhanas that could be followed from anywhere around the world by individuals who wished to receive the abundant blessings of Devi, Guru and Siva emanating from Rikhiapeeth during these events. Each day between 9am - 5pm IST while the puja was being offered at Rikhiapeeth, across the globe thousands aligned their personal sadhana to this time. These home sadhanas were a lifeline for people to tune in and connect to the Yajnas at their source and to receive the blessings and grace that were flowing in abundance during these Yajnas.

In addition, due to an inundation of requests for blessings of the Yajna, Rikhiapeeth created a unique contact number and email dedicated to registering names and addresses of those who contacted seeking blessings of the Yajnas. More than five thousand names were registered and noted within only a few days. The names were offered by Swami Satyasangananda and Swami Niranjanananda during the Yajnas to seek the blessings of all those who had contacted. This was a unique feature of this event that enabled the prayers of all those who contacted to be offered on their behalf and for the grace and blessings of this Yajna to reach the furthest corners of the globe. As prasad for all, Rikhiapeeth prepared daily videos to capture highlights of the Yajnas which were posted regularly on the official website: rikhiapeeth.in. This enabled people across the globe to have online darshan of the events. People were deeply touched by the power of the online darshan and the feeling that despite the distance they could connect to the source.

I am so grateful for the darshan, satsangs and blessings of the Yajnas! This is great prasad for all of us and for all of humanity at the end of a very disturbed year and at the beginning of the next one. With so many blessings I am sure we can face the challenges and continue our spiritual journey blessed and protected.

- Tarpanvidya, Bulgaria -

Namo Narayan! On completion of the Yoga Purnima home Sadhana, online I could have darshan of Samadhi Sthal, go on parikrama of Sivananda Sarovar and could listen to Swami Satsangi's satsang! Although I was physically far away, mentally I was there with all of you at Rikhiapeeth. With grateful bhav, thanking technology!

- Harimaya, Bangalore -

For online darshan visit: rikhiapeeth.in



Consecrated Land

Rikhiapeeth was glowing throughout the Satchandi Mahayajna and Yoga Purnima aradhanas. The tireless efforts of the sannyasins and residents in the preparations that had spanned over several months ensured that Rikhia was truly a place Sri Swamiji would have been happy to invite his chief guests of Devi Ma, Ganesha and Lord Siva.

Due to the pandemic the Yajnas were closed to visitors and even sevaks who usually wait all year for the opportunity to offer their seva during the Yajnas were not able to come. Under the guidance of Swami Satyasangananda, the sannyasins and residents took up with dedication and commitment every aspect of the Yajna from its preparations to execution - from the cleaning and painting, to the packing and systematic distribution of prasad, puja preparations and decorations, to sound, lights and chantings.

During the lockdown Rikhia has taken big steps towards atma nirbharta, self- reliance. This was exemplified in the fact that this year the ashram was not only closed to sevaks and visitors but also this extended to not receiving any outside flowers or malas. For the first time ever the flowers that were offered in worship and the malas that adorned the murtis daily throughout the Yajnas were all grown and prepared within the ashram.

More than 50,000 flowers were picked and innumerable malas and decorations prepared well into the night to ensure the Yajnaस्थल was radiant and abundant in beauty and colour. Rikhia is consecrated land as each and every inch has been blessed by the footsteps and gaze of Sri Swamiji. This year the beauty of Rikhia was abundant and the presence of Sri Swamiji was felt as strong as ever at the place he loves dearly - Rikhia.





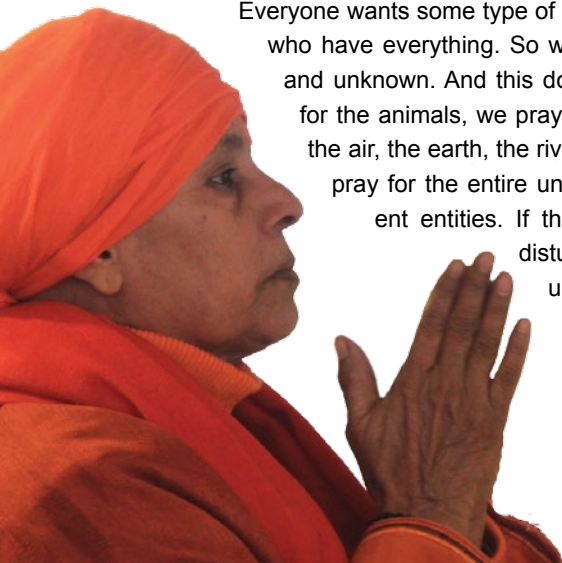
Om manifesting during the Purnahuti Havan of Yoga Purnima, 2020

Auspicious Blessings

May the blessings of Yoga Purnima, Gurudev, Shiva, Devi and Ganesha reach out to all corners of the globe. Everyone is in need of blessings.

Everyone wants some type of grace to fall on their lives, even those who have everything. So we pray for each one of them, known and unknown. And this doesn't only include humans. We pray for the animals, we pray for the plants and trees, we pray for the air, the earth, the rivers, the water, the air, the akasha. We pray for the entire universe because we are not independent entities. If the universe is disturbed then we are disturbed, and if we are disturbed then the universe is also disturbed. We are that intimately connected.

Swami Satyasangananda
Peethadhishwari Rikhiapeeth
December 2020



Rikhiapeeth Website: www.rikhiapeeth.in

The Rikhiapeeth website is a sanctuary for all spiritual seekers, so that they may stay connected to the cardinal teachings of Swami Sivananda that are practised and lived here at Rikhiapeeth – 'Serve, Love, and Give'. Be inspired by satsangs, information about the tradition and Rikhiapeeth.

On the website are the current and topical satsangs of Swami Satyasangananda which are being posted regularly on the home page in the section: 'From Rikhia the Tapobhumi of Swami Satyananda'.

As a special feature you can have online darshan of Satchandi Mahayajna and Yoga Purnima 2020 in the video section of the homepage.

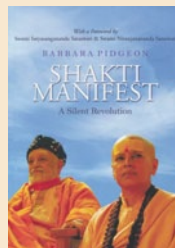


Shakti Manifest – A Silent Revolution

Barbara Pidgeon

Swami Satyasangananda Saraswati's unflinching devotion to her Guru, Swami Satyananda Saraswati, sparked a revolution of serve, love, give that brought peace, plenty and prosperity to a destitute land. This book tells the story of a timeless guru-disciple connection and the transformation it inspired in her and in the lives of the people of Rikhiapeeth.

Available online at www.amazon.com



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As a result of the current restrictions in place due to the pandemic we are unable to dispatch Aradhana Magazines by post. For all current subscribers the printed copies of Aradhana are being kept and will be dispatched as soon as restrictions are lifted. Until then, please feel free to read and download the latest issues of Aradhana which are available online free of cost at www.rikhiapeeth.in

Since the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic, Peethadhishwari Swami Satyasangananda has guided the activities of Rikhiapeeth by applying the mandate entrusted to her by her Guru Swami Satyananda, of Serve, Love and Give. She has initiated and masterminded the Karuna Relief Seva which has supported the most vulnerable within our community during these unprecedented times. The Karuna Relief Seva assesses the needs of the community and strives to alleviate the hardships being faced by thousands of rural families as well migrant workers, unemployed, youth, young students, farmers, widows and the elderly affected by the Coronavirus pandemic.

In compliance with the national directives, the ashram has remained closed since the beginning of March 2020 when the number of cases started increasing in India, and has cancelled all its event until further notice, to support the process of healing.

