

“A journey from known to the unknown”

Swami Amarnathananda

After fourteen hours of long nonstop flight journey from New York to Delhi, when I landed at the Indira Gandhi International airport in New Delhi, a young handsome Swami was waiting for me outside to receive me. I was indeed very happy to touch the holy soil of mother India. I was also happy to see Swami Siddharthananda at the airport. Ah! This is the land I was born! Lord! I want to take my last breath also somewhere at this sacred land and it should be at the bank of holy river Ganges. Lord! I miss my motherland, my brother monks and my people!

Gurgaon

When I left Delhi in 1994, Gurgaon was just farmland. Land was very fertile and people used to produce a lots of wheat and green vegetable there. But now it become one of the costly place live. High rise multi-storied residential buildings, presence of many business entities, commercial complex, continued constructions etc. made Gurgaon so busy!

Our Project in Gurgaon is a dream project of Swami Atmajnananandaji, the head of our Delhi Center. He is almost spending all of his energy to give a practical shape of this project. When it will be finished, there will be a huge residential English medium high school, homes for senior citizens, temple, monks quarters, guest house, Goshala, Garden and many other things. A section of the school is already being inaugurated by the honorable President of India, Sri Pranab Kumar Mukhapadhyaya last year. Some of the other constructions also under completion. Whenever I see Swamiji at our New Delhi ashram office in Srinivaspuri, I saw him sitting with the pages of plans and mind thoughtful. He needs huge amount of money, man power and support to complete this project. For the time being, it's a very beautiful place to visit. You get fresh air, garden vegetable to eat and a change of the mind.

New Delhi

I have a very sweet memory of our New Delhi ashram, as I worked there for almost fourteen years under Pujjya Swami Vijayanandaji Maharaj. I was very young and it was the time for me to prepare myself for the future. I left Delhi in the year of 1994. Beautiful temple, accommodation for guest, mobile medical services, computer training center etc. are some of the services offered by our New Delhi ashram.

For the past nine years, I was working very hard to write a new commentary on Sreemad Bhagavad Geeta. Before I leave for Kolkata, I needed to meet the publisher of this sacred text at the Karolbagh area. With the kind help of Swami Atmajnananandaji, it was easy for me to finish this work too. By the grace of God, the book is under publication now.

Kolkata

Kolkata is the home of Global Headquarter of 'Bharat Sevashram Sangha.' It was started by Yugacharya Sreemat Swami Pranavanandaji himself, the founder of this organization. It is in fact, the holiest pilgrim site to all of us. During the periods of

holy Maghi Purnima and Maha-Shiva-Ratri, we the monks and devotees get a wonderful opportunity to meet each other and exchange our thoughts and new ideas. Going Kolkata annually and be present at these occasions is like filling of our empty heart with spiritual food. Because of long and tiresome flight journey, expenses and for some other reason, sometimes we feel this year we are not going to Kolkata. But as the Maghi Purnima approaches near, we feel tremendous urge to go. Finally, we end up reaching at Kolkata ashram. For me, it is an annual pilgrimage. Being present among many monks and countless devotees, we feel like we are in heaven. Never feel to go out of the ashram compound for any reason. Being Kolkata is our global Head Quarter, we have big establishment also there. Hospitals, Gymnasium, Guest house, several mobile medical services, publication department, public communications, presence of revered President, Vice President, General Secretary and many other senior monks of the organization and overall the holy seat of Yagacharya Sreemad Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj as well as Parama Pujjya Sreemat Bara Swamiji, all these made Kolkata ashram special. Together we eat, together we pray, all eyes and all thoughts are directed to one direction, that is the Guru and soul of the Bharat Sevashram sangha, Acharya Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj. This year's visit to Kolkata was very special and very successful from every sides, spiritually and mentally.

Jalangi,

Jalangi is a border town cum village in the district of Murshidabad, West Bengal. Situated at the bank of the famous river Padma, it is bordering Bangladesh. I think, it is the last town of India. Living long time outside of India, it was not easy for me to visit such a distance village alone. I was wondering, how I will go to Jalangi. After a lots of discussion, finally Hashi's big daughter Mamon booked a railway ticket for me at Hazarduari Express. I was the guest of honorable Mr. Bankim and Pritikana Saha. Bankimbabu arranged to pick me up from Baharampur railway station to his beautiful home 'Dr. Sourav Bhavan' at Jalangi. Like many of us who are living long time away from our beloved motherland, we feel to give something back to our place of birth. Jalangi Rakshakali mandir and Sri Sri Radha-Krishna mandir are the results of that noble thoughts. 'Kirtiryasya sa Jivati' We will be gone, but we will leave behind our good works. Generation after generation people will be coming to the beautiful temples to pray and take the benefit of noble works of Bankimbabu and Pritikana ma.

Upon the request of Bankimbabu, I visited Jalangi to explore the possibility to open a school there for the local children. Padma River, Mata Rakshakali Mandir, green rice field, Indian Border Security force camp, peaceful co-existence of people from various faiths, fresh vegetables, all these made Jalangi a dreamy place. Few days I was there, I went for morning walk. I was surprised to see hundreds of people, men women all came outside to take the benefit of morning walk. I was very happy to see that village people are also so health conscious. It's a very healthy sign.

At the end of our visit to Jalangi, a religious discourse and Vedic Shanti Yajna was organized by the Rakshakali Mandir committee. Swami Pradiptanandaji, the head of our Beldanga ashram was very happy to participate.

Time will come when I will forget many things, but I will never forget the kind and caring hospitality of Bankimbabu and Pritkana ma.

Beldanga

Under the able leadership of Swami Pradiptanandaji, our Beldanga ashram become one of the very big and very active ashram. Swami Pradiptanandaji is also a leading speaker of Bharat Sevashram Sangha. Next day early in the morning, I heard a lots of noises outside. I also heard a lots of children reciting verses from holy Geeta together. After a while when I opened my door, I saw a lots of boys cleaning the courtyard. Immediately I knew these are ashram children staying at the ashram's dormitory for the boys. I heard there are more than three hundreds children (6-16 age groups) stay at the ashram. These are adivasi children came from the backward community and reside at the ashram for free. Ashram provide their food, accommodations, clothing, education, health care and other necessary things. It is possible for the ashram to continue this work because of the kind help from social welfare department, Government of India.

Inside the very big compound of the Bendanga Bharat Sevashram Sangha, there are a beautiful school building with number of students more than thousand, gosala, accommodation for the helpless old women, gymnasium, a big pond, mobile medical services, beautiful temple and spiritual counseling, all these services are being offered.

Chanak

Chanak is around thirty-five minutes' drive from Beldanga. Under the guidance of Swami Pradiptanandaji, Bharat Sevashram Sangha opened a residential girl's school here. This school and hostel is exclusively for adivasi Girls. Men and women are equally important in any civilized society. For our family integrity, I think women play a more important role. Unfortunately, mainly because of economic crisis and poverty, a section of Indian society do not get proper opportunity to send their children to school. Girls are more neglected and they are given marriages comparatively at early age.

There are altogether 435 girls and I think 45 other people like teachers, medical care people, guards etc. live inside the compound. Four times meals a day, their clothes, shoes, medicines, schooling, accommodations, transportations if needed, all are done by the ashram authority. I was attending a prayers service with them. I look at them, they all looked like an angle. Their health also are in good condition, their skin also a lots more clear, their face looked they are happy. They could recite prayers, chant verses from Holy Geeta, they decorate the altar, they play drums and they sing too. Thanks again Government of India helping us to continue this wonderful work for our loving children.

Jiyaganj

I have a sweet memory of Jiyaganj. It was in the year of 1973. After the higher Secondary Examination, we were waiting for the results. It takes almost three months for the results to be out. There was nothing to do in home. I was lazy and doing nothing except disturbing my mother for her daily activities. Once she was

angry of me and gave me a slap. I got very upset and not telling anybody anything, I just left the home. I went to the railway station and boarded a train without ticket. I got down at Naihati Station and took another train to Bandel. Then I saw a train named 'Kamrup Express.' I thought let me go to Kamrup. I heard there are a lots of saints live there. I boarded a compartment reserved for military personnel. Seeing my age and looking at me, I gaze they realized that I am running out of home. They gave me food and they handed over me to the ticket collector. The ticket collector asked me to sit down there and not to move. Next morning when the train reached Jiyagang station, the ticket collector came to me. He asked me to get down from the train, he then gave me I think five rupees and told me to cross the river Ganges by ferry and take a train to go back to home. That ticket collector was such a noble soul!!

It is the same Jiyagang, I came back as a monk after so many years. From Chanak, we had to cross the river Ganges and I was thinking of my long lost memory. In Jiyagang, we have a beautiful Hindu Milan Mandir. It's a movement Swami Pranavanandaji started long ago. The main purpose of it was to unite all types of Hindus under one umbrella. There is no need that a monk have to be there. It's a place where Hindus from all sects will come here once in a week, pray together, listen to the people, help them and be with them. There could be a library, a gymnasium, and school, and medical clinic, shelter for homeless and monthly magazines. Some of the Milan Mandir are really big. Sometimes bigger than an ashram. Jiyagang also is famous for 'Chanachur' production. Our main purpose to come here was to attend the annual function of the Jiyagang Hindu Milan Mandir. It was two days program. First day was a big religious procession that traveled all over the Jiyagang city walking? A lots of school children, prominent people from Giyaganj town, monks and devotees took part in this colorful procession.

2end day was the main day for the festival. Vedic Viswa Shanti yajna, Mahaprasad distribution, Hindu-dharma-siksha-Sanskriti sammelan, Guru-diksha ceremony, cultural program by the school children etc. were the main parts of the festival. There was almost five thousand people took part in the entire ceremony.

I want to share one of my other experience with you in Jiyaganj. One morning I went for a morning walk alone. Everything was fine, I was walking all the way through the bank of holy river Ganges. I was a little bit deep inside the village when I was surrounded by street dogs. There were almost 10 to 12 of them. I was very scared and thought, surely they are going to bite me. I was repenting why I came alone. Luckily some village people saved me and chased the dogs. Thank you Lord! You saved me today too.

Madhyagram Hindu Milan Mandir

To join the centenary celebration of the Bharat Sevadhram sangha, Madhyagram Hindu Milan Mandir took many projects. Seven days long festival was part of it. I have been hearing of Madhyagram Hindu Milan Mandir for long time. I wanted to see the place, but I had no idea where it is situated. Swami Pradiptanandaji mentioned that he will be going to Madhyagram to attend the festival for the last

day. He also asked me if I was interested to go. I was happy to accompany him. We traveled by road. On our way we crossed Palasi, Dhubulia, Krishnanagar, Badkulla, Taherpur, Birnagar, Ranaghat, Chakdaha and many other places. When we reached, there were a lots of people taking mahaprasadam. We attended evening lecture session and came back to Beldanga same day. Madhygram Hindu Mandir is a well-established institution. I find out that the people are very active in the Milan Mandir. It has school, hostel, charitable dispensary, beautiful temple and some other public benefited activities. The only thing was bothering me there were lots of mosquitoes.

Raniswar, Dumka, Jharkhand

It's a completely Adivasi and Banvasi Kalyan Kendra or a development center for socially backward class people. Raniswar is a village in the district of Dumka. It is presently situated in the newly created State of Jharkhand. But years back, it was the part of Bihar State. Summer time Raniswar is very hot. Cruel Sunlight can burn your face black. There are dust also in the air. In the midday, when wind blow with dust, you just have to run inside the house. Except few towns like Ranchi, Jamshedpur etc. Jharkhand is really a backward state. The whole intention of the Government was to create a separate State in the name of Jharkhand to develop this part of India. And it is developing also slowly.

Swami Jnanatmanandaji Maharaj, a very kind hearted monk of our Jamshedpur center was the main architect of Raniswar Adivasi Kalyan Kendra. Among all those poverty, loneliness, lack of good quality schools and hospitals where people work very hard for their bread and butter, our ashram is a Tapovan there. With lots of mango trees, flower garden, green grass, it become a little piece of heaven. Charan Maharaj, a very talented and brilliant monk is the in-charge there. Being he is from the same community, he understand the language, culture and feelings of the people also. His presence made it easy for the Bharat Sevashram Sangha to work among them. Our hostel accommodate around two hundred adivasi boys, a primary school, a ten bed hospital for the local people, a beautiful temple, Gosala (cows for milk production) all these made the Raniswar ashram a perfect place to nourish the future good citizens of mother India.

There is a separate complex where around one hundred adivasi girls also live there. Ashram provide everything for them. Among all these ashram, surely you will love to visit Raniswar ashram.

Before we leave, we went to see the Massanzore dam. It's another wonderful creation of human brain.

Midnapur

From Raniswar, I came to Saithiya railway station to take a train to Kolkata. I attended Maha-Shivaratri festival there. I have also attended all Governming body meetings, decision making meetings, General Committee meetings of the organization. From Kolkata, I went to Midnapur ashram. To mark the centenary celebration of Bharat Sevashram Sangha, Swami Milanandaji, the head of our Midnapur center displayed a massive arrangement at its newly aquired land inside

the main city. It was the on the auspicious occasion of annual festival of Midnapur ashram. Pujjya Swami Vijoyanandaji Maharaj was the main architect of this ashram. I have been going there from the time of Pujjya Swamiji. On this occasion, there were several senior monks present there. Three days festival concluded with Guru-diksha, bhajan-kirtan, Hindu-dharma-siksha-Sanskriti Sammelan, lectures, havan for world peace, cultural program, childrens performances, prize distribution and mahaprasad distribution. Swami Milananandaji Maharaj has a big plan to build a new and beautiful ashram at the newly aquired land with much better facility.

Patiram, Dakshin Dinajpur, West Bengal.

While I was in Beldanga, three chariots were under construction at the ashram. It's a part of the centenary celebration. It was planned that six to eight chariots will be built with Acharya Swami Pranavanandaji' statue or framed pictures installed in it and it will be traveling villages and cities of India throughout the year. On its way, these chariots will be stopped at various places. There will be religious procession, havan, lectures, bhajan-kirtan, prasad distribution, diksha ceremony, Sadhu-seva and books and flier distribution to make people aware of the organization.

After Maha-shiva-ratri festival at our Kolkata ashram, Swami Pradiptanandaji Maharaj made enquiry with me that if I could join with him for sometimes in this Ratha-Yatra, though I was ready to go Northern part of India then. He mentioned that all the three Chariots were ready and there are several programs already being fixed. I liked the idea and accordingly, I left Midnapur to Howrah and took Tebhaga Express train for Balurghat. One of the Swamiji was waiting for me at the railway station to receive me. And at the same day, we left for Patiram Hindu Milan Mandir by road. When I reached there, I could see three beautiful chariots decorated with beautiful lights and garments are placed at one corner of the temple. There were a lot Swamijeas and countless people were listening to the firey and brilliant lecture of Swami Pradiptanandaji.

Patiram Hindu Milan Mandir has a long history. Many of our very senior monks visited the place and made the land sanctified. There is a beautiful temple, a school building, hostel, charitable dispensary etc. made the place busy. With the request of Swamiji, I also spoke at the sammelan.

Beltara and Kumargunj, Dakshin Dinajpur.

Because of lack of accomodation in the Mialan Mandir, I and another Swamiji went to stay at a devotee's house. Morning time our real yatra started. Three chariots, more than ten monks, drivers, students, people who were helping us altogether we were almost 25 people. We left early in the morning with miking and informing people of our intention of this lavish tour. We passed through villages with nice buildings, green grass and tin roofed small houses, green rice field, mango groves, vegetable gardens, coconut trees, quirious people, women peeping from their head covered with saris, cows, goats and fowls running here there, it was an unique experience. Swami Dibakaranandaji, the head of our Teor and Balurghat brach and the leader of this entire team was telling me -- Swamiji, this is your 'Bharat darshan, enjoy the beauties of villages of India. This is your real pilgrimage. And he

was so true. I recognized Swami Dibakaranandaji is a very responsible monk. He is a kind and duty conscious monk. Without him, our journey could be so painful.

When we reached 'Beltara Hindu Milan Mandir' deep inside the village, Swami Pareshananda, another intelligent and very active monk was ready to receive us with a lots of people with him standing on line. Women were wearing red bordered saris with big sindur tip on their forehead and they were blowing conches and giving uluddhani. I could imagine how our Swamijees working hard to penetrate among the village people and make them aware of Bharat Sevashram Sangha and its multifarious social welfare activities. As soon as we reached, green coconut water was served to us. Oh! It was so tasty!

We spoke about the activities of the organization, the purpose of our coming and performed havan ceremony. We took Prasadam and left for Kumargunj.

Atreyi river is related to the name of saint Atri who did his spiritual practices somewhere at the bank of this river. Kumargunj Hindu Milan Mandir is situated just beside the river Atreyi. I liked this place very much. It is because of that, I preferred to stay one night here. When we reached Kumargunj, it was almost evening. Local Swamiji received us with enthusiasm. Almost a hundred men and women were waiting for us at the road to receive us with band party and conch blowing. There was a religious procession all over the place. We got an opportunity to see the place properly. A lots of people were waiting at the roadside to see three beautifully decorated chariots and so many monks accompanying it. The ceremony completed with religious lectures, prize distribution to the school children, Vedic Viswa Shanti Yajna, Sri Guru Arati and mahaprasad distribution. I visited many places, but Kumargunj left a permanent impact on me. Hope and pray I will be visiting the it again and spend sometimes with local Swamiji and people there.

Baul, Rampur, Sahnkarpur and Gangarampur.

To make this kinds of program successful, you need preaching zeal, good wishes, man power and money. When we are out of our home or when we are away from our known ashram compound, things are not the same. We cannot maintain our time for puja, prayers, food, rest, study and exercise. Everything need to be accommodated and change need to accept with joy. In a mission like this, there are many kinds of difficulties. But we together shared our difficulties and put our mind in spread the new of Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj among all. Rudra Maharaj from Balurghat, Swami Agniveshananda from preaching party and there were many other Swamijees whose names I just forgot, we together put our all energy in making this mission successful. To me, somebody living in a foreign land for so many years, it was very difficult. But all of my monk brothers made my life so joyful. They all treated me with deepest love and with highest honor. I will remain thankful to them throughout my life. I feel honored to be part of this great mission.

I left Kumargunj early in the morning. Quiet village road, green farmland, simple village people, quiet road all these filled my heart with divinity. When I reached Baul Hindu Milan Mandir, I saw a lot of women and little girls wearing red border

saris and going some nearby river to fetch water for Maha-abhisekam. There were thousands of people gathered at the Mandir compound. 'This Swamiji from America ' that is how some people were pointing towards me with reverence. The festival organizing committee were complaining that we came for short period of time only. Because, a lots of people will not be able to see us. We were rushing, finished Sri Guru abhisekam, lecture and Sri Guru arti fast. There were lots of people were taking Guru-diksha too. Crowd were everywhere. We took some Prasad there and left for our next destination Rampur.

There was an old rice meal owned by some Marwari businessman which was unfortunately burn down of sudden fire. A tent was put there for our midday religious program. The Marwari family was very nice, kind and very co-operative. They were ready to extend all help to us. It was very hot and there were almost three hundred people came to hear us. We spoke of Bharat Sevashram Sangha, its activities, we performed havan ceremony, and there was Sri Guru Arati and mahaprasad distribution. When we left people were so sad. It seemed to me, they were expecting more from us. And it's so true. They took the pain to put a gate, pandal, they arranged so many things for everybody. And we came, spend around two hours of time and left!!

It was almost evening time. We were a little bit tired of whole day's things. But when we reached at Gangarampur, enthusiastic, charismatic and able Swami Pareshananda was ready there with lots of people to give us a royal welcome. He was waiting there with band parties, hundreds of well dressed devotees, school children and members of the organizing committee. Colorful procession went on for almost three hours going around all over Gangarampur city. It's a big place. Lots of businesses are going there. Very crowded city. Finally when we entered the compound of the Gangarampur Hindu Milan Mandir, there were lots of people waiting for us. We quickly got ready and attended Bhajan-kirtan, lecture, Sri Guru Puja-arati. After we finished everything, it was almost 11p.m.. Because of lack of accomodation, we all went back to Balurghat ashram to spend the night.

Swami Pareshananda building a beautiful temple with accomodation for guests at the Gangarampur Hindu Milan Mandir compound. When it will be completed, I am sure the place will be one of the most visited place in the city.

Sagatola, Buniyadpur

While our three Chariots traveling through villages, green farmlands, curious people, running children and approaching Sagatola in South Dinajpur, our Swamijees mentioned the story of Aniruddha and Usha Story and the story of Ban kingdom. They mentioned that this was place where once kingdom of Ban used to be here. King Ban was a very powerful king. He had a beautiful daughter named Usha. Aniruddha, the grandson of Lord Krishna liked Usha a lot. Somehow he entered the palace and chamber of Usha and began to stay with her. Knowing it, King Ban was so angry that he imprisoned Aniruddha. Finally, Krishna came for his rescue and Aniruddha married Usha. I wonder thinking that Aniruddha used to live at Dwarka, a far distance place from North Bengal. How he came here? How he knew Usha? He was born in Gujarat, married a Bengali girl?

However, we attended program at Sagatola and Buniyadpur and again went back to Balurghat to spend the night there. Both places we took the chariots, discussed about the missions of Swami Pranavanandaji Maharaj, met many people, exchanged our thoughts and feeling with the village people. Every places we went, people were very enthusiastic and receptive. They were very respectful to all monks and they were happy to hear us.

Balurghat

It is one of the biggest ashram in North Bengal for Bharat Sevashram Sangha. Pujjya Swami Hiranmoyanandaji Maharaj, the present vice president of the organization is the main architect of many ashrams and Hindu Milan Mandirs in North Bengal. He is also the head of the Balurghat center. Being Swamiji mostly now live at our Kolkata Head Quarter, Swami Divakaranandaji looking after all the affairs there. Couple of young and very brilliant monk are assisting him to run the ashram smoothly. Among them, I recognize Dhruva Maharaj. He is tall, handsome, very enthusiastic, intelligent and capable monk. I am sure, a very bright future is waiting for him. Balurghat ashram has dormitory for boys. Almost four hundred boys stay at our ashram. Most of them came from very poor families and ashram provide them everything. Their education, food and lodging, clothes, medical care all are provided by the ashram. There are also Yoga training center, free primary medical care services, a very big and beautiful temple, guest house and very nice monk's quarters.

At the evening, there was a big colorful religious procession that went around all over the city. It is very big place and it's a business hub also. I could see people are busy doing businesses all over the city. Balurghat has a large numbers of followers for Bharat Sevashram sangha.

Tapan

It's a small place and our three chariots was too big. Roads are very narrow there. But what I realized that people in Tapan has a very big heart. We had a whole day program there. People received us with high enthusiasm. They were so happy to see so many monks in their village. There were a lots of people waiting to take Guru-diksha from Bharat Sevashram Sangha. Swami Bitashokanandaji and Swami Pradiptanandaji these two senior monks were with us to initiate people. We took a little rest at a retired teacher's house. His only son and daughter-in-law live in Kolkata city. They also were visiting their mother. In one mud wall room, we ten monks took mid-day rest. It was so joyful.

Evening time was the main function. There was a large gathering waiting to listen to us. After almost two hours of lecture, there was havan ceremony. We completed the program by doing Sri Guru Arati in a very heroic way using smoke, fire, conch, trisul, sword, chakra, fruits thali and flowers. We finished the program by 11p.m. people were still there to see us, talk to us and they didn't wanted to go back home even. However, we have to drive almost another two hours to go to another ashram to rest. We left behind the place, but we brought with us sweet memory of the people of Tapan. It will remain always in my mind.

Tazpur

From Tapan to Tazpur almost two hours of journey by road. When we left Tapan, it was already late. It was dark everywhere and the road was empty. I was feeling a kind of fear in mind. What if decoits stop and rob us? Who will save us? Lord! Why I took this risk? I do not want to die helplessly!! It was a long journey. We were sleepy. Not a single person was at road or anywhere. Finally, we saw there is some kirtan going on. Some ladies were walking in the street coming out of a tent. I think some whole night program was going in the lonely area!!

When we reached ashram gate, there was nobody. It was very late. All the ashram inmates were sleeping. Then we saw a police van reached there with the Officer In-charge coming out of the van. He said --Swamiji, the chariots supposed to reach tomorrow? We explained that because of the accommodation problem, we had to come tonight to rest here. In the meantime, one of our boy jumped the wall and entered the ashram to find out somebody to open the gate. Finally, Swamiji-in-Charge came with a sleepy eyes. He was also surprised to see us in this late night. However, everything was Ok. He gave us room and we went to bed.

Next morning I was salking around the ashram. Then Swamiji-in-Charge came near to me and mentioned that Tazpur is a completely adivasi area. When we came out of the gate, I could feel the touch of not achieving or expecting the usual development there. We make noise saying "India is shinnming". But unfortunately, if we are not sympathetic, these areas will take many years to shine.

But the people of Tazpur are polite, gentle, kind and very caring. They love to see people from places visiting their areas. They try their best to give better hospitality within their limitation.

I wondered how Swamijees from Bharat Sevashrm Sangha build such a beautiful ashram in this not so developed area. However, the ashram in Tazpur is completely dedicated in the service of the local people. It has hostel for adivasi children, school, free charitable dispensary, mobile mediactal van, beautiful temple and many other services offered by the ashram. Overall, a very kind and understanding Swamiji is there who dedicated his precious life in uplifting the people here. The ashram here is a beautiful pilgrim site to the local people.

Ghaksol

Next day we came to Ghaksol from Tazpur. Around fifteen years back when I came to Ghaksol Hindu Milan Mandir, it was really a very poor place. Not too much things were there. But now, it become a very big center. A very big and beautiful temple is under construction, there is hostel with hundreds of less fortunate children live there for free, and accommodation for guests, mobile medical services, book stall and many more things are there.

It was the occasion of annual festival of Ghaksol Hindu Milan Mandir. Evening time there was a big religious procession around the place. From Kolkata, there came Swami Biswapremanandaji Maharaj, who was busy giving Guru-diksha to hundreds

of people. We attended 'Hindu-dharma-siksha-Sanskriti sammelan' and spent the night there. Thousands of people attended the program listening our Swamijees and attending heroic Sri Guru Arati and taking Maha-Prasadam.

Chachol, Kaligram and Bhagavatipur

Driving again through the open vast green rice and vegetable field where men and women were busy planting things, announcing the activities of the organization and objects of these chariots traveling so many places, our team reached Chachol. Among many, Chachol Hindu Milan Mandir is one of the place anybody will like. It's a very peaceful, serene, very clean and well organized place. The Swamiji who is in-charge there is also young, intelligent and very active. I have no doubt that under his leadership, one day Chachol center will improve a lot. I personally liked it very much. It was morning and working day. But still, there were lots of people and followers of the 'Bharat Sevashram Sangha' came there to receive us and listen to us. When we are about to leave, I could see the face of the people who were not so happy that we came and left so quickly! Chachol left a lasting memory in my mind.

After Chachol, our team went to Kaligram and Bhagavatipur. Both places we were received enthusiastically. Women were blowing conches, they were throwing flowers on the chariots and on our way too. We have a Hindu Milan Mandir at Bhagavatipur. All these Hindu Milan Mandirs are the results of very hard work of Parama Pujyaa Sreemat Swami Prajnanandaji Maharaj, Pujyaa Swami Hironmayanandaji Maharaj, Swami Pradiptanandaji and many other monks who dedicated their valuable time and energy to improve the people of these areas.

Mashaldighi and Moyna

Tavelling many places of the districts of South Dinajpur, North Dinajpur and Murshidabad of West Bengal, finally we entered Malda district. It was 22nd of March, my return ticket to New York from Delhi was on 27th of March. It was time for me to pack everything and go back to Delhi. However, with the request of all Swamijees, I decided to accompany them today also. Accordingly, we all together left Ghaksol early in the morning and reached Masaldighi by 9a.m. At the local Sri Radha-Krishna Mandir, we had a small ceremony there. What attracted me there is the beautiful images of Srimati Radharani and Krishan Bhagavan. It was so beautiful and mind captivating! There were almost hundred people came to see and listen to us. After meeting everybody, we took our breakfast there and left for Moyna.

Few members from Moyna Hindu Milan Mandir already came to accompany us at Ghaksol. We knew that there will be a grand reception at Moyna. After traveling for sometimes when we near reached Moyna, we could hear somebody singing and explaining verses from Srimad Bhagavatam. It was very sweet and peace giving. Bharat Sevashram Sangha has a beautiful primary school there. The head master of the school mentioned to me that our school has such a good name that there are almost four hundred students in the school and the demand is very high. It was so true, the environment of the school is so beautiful. The Moyna Hindu Milan Mandir is one of the very active Hindu Milan Mandir of the organization. The school itself

giving a very good name there. Evening time was the main function. There was already thousands of people gathered there to see the beautifully decorated three chariots. People were coming there to offer their prayers to Sri Sri Guruji Maharaj. There was also a book stall. People were buying books, CD, photos, pendants and other puja thing from the stall. There were some other shops also selling games, food and ice-cream etc. It was a village mela there. The main program was in the evening time. After couple of bajans and some prayers, lectures by our Swamijis started. We completed the program by conducting Sri Guru Arati. At the end, Mahaprasad distribution. There were thousands of people. This is first time in my life I saw people taking 'khichuri' Prasadam at old newspaper!! We left Moyna by 10p.m and came back to Ghaksol to spend the night there.

Malda

I left for our Sahapur ashram in Malda by road. To develop a nation, we need infrastructures. Though as Indian, we are proud of our motherland, but comparing to many developed countries, India is lacking basic needs like good roads, irrigation system, public transport, electricity etc. at many places. However, the Government of India is trying its best to provide these things so that the country can be counted as a developed nation. The Government made many good highways, but deep inside, there are needs to improve a lot.

When I visited our ashram in Malda last, it was not so prosperous. But now under the leadership of Dhananjoy Maharaj, the Malda ashram become one of the biggest establishment of Bharat Sevashram Sangha in North Bengal. It's really massive. It has a beautiful and big temple, office, guest house, student's hostel, school, monk's quarter, charitable dispensary, mobile medical vans, spacious space for Hindu rituals and many other activities done by our Malda center. Whenever needed, ashram also does relief works at the time of natural disaster. I heard from Swamiji that there is another sub-center under Malda ashram which provide many kinds of help to improve the life of village people.

It was the day of dol purnima, time to celebrate holi. We had a beautiful evening of religious services at our temple. Lots of people gathered there to be part of the havan ceremony and listening to our swamijis. It was a unique evening, full of spirituality. I also heard that at the time of 'Vasanti Durga Puja' tens of thousands of people come to ashram to be part of that celebration. Next morning, Dhananjoy Maharaj came to Malda Railway station to see me off, as I was leaving for Kolkata to take the Rajdhani Express to reach Delhi. It was a very touching moment. I realized Dhananjoy Maharaj is a very soft minded monk. I could feel the touch of love, respect, gratitude and pain of separation in his beautiful eyes. It touched my heart too. I gave him a big hug and said well by to him.

Journey from Malda to Howrah

I took 'Jansatabdi Express' train to travel to Howrah. I wish I could write the names of many villages and towns I was passing by. I never knew India is so beautiful, so mind captivating and so holy!! I could see from train window that women collecting potatoes from potatoe field, farmers planting young rice plant and movements of cars, trucks, man pulling rickshwas at the village roads. Passing through vast greens

farming lands, coconut, mango, jackfruits, supari and babla trees, I reached Howrah railway Station by 12 noon. We all know what Howrah Railway Station is. Over crowded, presence of hundreds of trains, shops, Railway employees and thousands of people made the Howrah Railway station of the busiest Railway Station of India.

Howrah to Delhi

I waited at the Howrah Railway Station for four hours and took 'Rajdhani express' train to travel to New Delhi. When I was living in Delhi, I used to travel by 'Delhi-Kalka' mail. Rajdhani Express take eighteen hours of time to reach to New Delhi. I heard Ministry of Railways, Govt. of India is in the process to introduce a bulate train which will take us withing six hours from Howrah to Delhi. Passing through Bandel, Burdwan, Durgapur, Dhanbad, Kanpur, Allhabad and many other towns with open fileds and many people, when I reached New Delhi Railway Station, ashram car was waiting to receive me. Thanks to Swami Atmajnanananda, the Secretary and in-charge of the New Delhi and Gurgaon Center, who made my life Delhi a lots of easy?

Left for our New Home

Where is our home? What is our right address? Which country we belongs to? What is our true identity? There is no right answer of all these question. Our mind is so restless. It do not want to stay at one place for long period of time. Our fate, our destiny also play a lots of naughty game with us. Finally, one day everything become silent. No more traveling, no more tension, no company, and no identifications is needed. We are alone, we take permanent rest at the lap of eternal mother.

After meeting my publisher of Srimad Bhagavad Geeta and doing arti one time more in the temple, I left for 'Indira Gandhi International airport' to take my flight to New york. Swami Atmajnananandaji was with me at the airport. I gave him a hug and thanked him for coming to the airport with me. I entered the ariport, completed all the procedures and boarded the big flight by midnight. The Jumbo Jet do not understand our feelings. It's a machine, it has no emotion, no feelings and no place for sympathy. With a loud noise, it took a big jump and lost into air.