Paramhans Madhavananda
Category : April/May/June 2004
Published by Anonymous on Apr. 01, 2004

TRANSITION

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Sri Deep Ashram founder attains Mahasamadhi at age 81; succeeded by Swami Maheshwarananda

His Holiness, Hindu Dharm Samrat Paramhans Sri Swami Madhavananda Puriji Maharaj entered into Mahasamadhi, making his transition from this world in Jodhpur on October 31, 2003. Thousands of devotees, including his designated successor, His Holiness Vishwa Guru Mahamandaleshwar Paramhans Swami Maheshwaranandaji, attended the internment ceremony on November 2 at Om Ashram in Rajasthan State, India. Bhajana, religious singing, continued nonstop until the 14th when Swami Maheshwarananda was formally installed as Mahashishya, or successor. A report from the ashram describes the rites, "Thousands of sadhus and sannyasins from various sects and ashrams and tens of thousands of devotees came to witness and celebrate the declaration. Special guests of honor were the Mahamandaleshwars from Maha Nirvani Akhara (leaders of one of Hinduism's largest monastic orders) and the Ambassador of Croatia, personally asked to attend by Croatian President Stjepan Mesic. With mighty sounds of drums, horns and conch, Swamiji was invited to take the seat of the Holy Guruji. As he did so, he received the official chadar, shawl, designating him as successor of this great lineage." Sri Madhavanandji himself had succeeded Bhagwan Sri Deep Narayan Mahaprabhuji, who passed on in 1963 at age 135.

Sri Madhavanandaji was born on September 11, 1923, as Tekchanda Garg in the village of Nipal, Rajasthan. His father was a pandit and learned astrologer, and a humble devotee of Lord Siva and Lord Rama. His mother was deeply devoted to Lord Krishna.

In Lila Amrit --the Divine Self of Sri Mahaprabhuji, the story of his guru's life, Swami Madhavanandaji wrote of their first meeting. "From early childhood, I felt strongly attracted to God Krishna. I even used to weep in my relentless longing to see him. I

was sent to school but had quite a difficult time there because I could not concentrate on the lessons; my thoughts were always on Lord Krishna. Eventually I returned to Nipal and began to read and study the Bhagavad Gita every day. I prayed to Surya, the Sun God, and to Durga Mata, the Holy Mother. I used to go on nine-day fasts for Her, but most of all I prayed to Lord Krishna to be merciful and appear to me in my meditations.

"How bitter were the tears I shed, loving Him so much and not being able to see Him! In those moments I frequently had the feeling of a voice within me saying, 'Be calm. The Lord will come to you.' One day I was again praying to Lord Krishna from the depths of my soul, 'O Krishna, my Beloved God. I have heard Your holy promise deep within me. How long must I wait? When will I see You?' In that moment a glorious vision of the Lord appeared before my inner eye. 'Three and one-half months from today, at ten o'clock in the evening, you will see me with open eyes,' he said. 'Remember this.' He disappeared, leaving me with an unworldly sense of security.

"The Lord of Gods Himself, I knew, was going to take care of me. Fortunately, not too long after that Mahaprabhuji was invited by the Maharaja of Jodhpur to that city and so he blessed the people there with his glorious satsangs. Since Jodhpur was at a manageable distance, I decided to take this opportunity to visit him for the first time. I arrived at Jodhpur by train at nine o'clock in the evening and directly went to Mahaprabhuji's satsang. To my utter bewilderment, when I stood before him at ten o'clock, I saw none other than the Lord Krishna to whom I daily prayed in my meditation.

My eyes filled with tears and I fell to my knees. I had only one wish and that was to surrender myself completely. Merciful Mahaprabhuji placed his holy hand on my forehead. 'My son, I have saved you forever. Remember the words I spoke to you three and one-half months ago in your meditation.' As they must, the words of the Lord had come true. From that moment on I dedicated my life to him and promised to stay with him forever. At the age of seventeen I knew I had found the everlasting Light of my life and decided to spend the rest of my life under his merciful shelter. I took initiation as a swami in 1942, at the age of 19."

For more than 20 years Paramhans Swami Madhavanandaji lived with Sri Mahaprabhuji and during that time faithfully recorded Mahaprabhuji's religious songs and discourses. After his guru's passing, he traveled to Europe and North

America and preached throughout India. Today his work is carried on globally by His Holiness, Paramhas Swami Maheshwaranandaji.