Publisher's Desk
Category : August 1990
Published by Anonymous on Aug. 01, 1990

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Last month I noticed in HINDUISM TODAY, minutes before it was sent to the printers, that the great soul Kavi Yogi Shuddananda Bharati attained Mahasamadhi at the age of 95. We must eulogize at some length his achievements while he was in his physical body. We first met for the first time in 1969. During our conversation, Kavi Yogi explained that the wanted to live to long and productive life and set a new standard of longevity. He explained that Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and other great souls has passed on too early. By living a full, productive life, he would set a new pattern. He certainly accomplished all of his goals.

Kavi Yogi was a friend and supporter of our Kailasa Paramparai. He once offered me a piece of his land in Madras to build an ashram near his. Siva Veylanswami, one of our swamis, was among the last of us to see and talk with him at Swami Gitananda's Ananda Ashram in Pondicherry in late 1988. The venerable yogi explained to him that "only the sun is keeping me alive."

One of his greatest achievements was to strengthen Hinduism, especially Saivism in South Africa. He inspired the Saiva Sithantha Sungum in Durban. When we were enjoying the hospitality of the Sangam in 1983, his name was on the lips everyone. He lived in their hearts, as he does today. He was also important to the South Indian Saiva Siddhanta tradition, and was an example of the awakening the latent energy of yoga. Kavi Yogi was tireless. He never slept long. He was a great exponent of inner things, and spoke constantly about finding God.

Born on May 11, 1897, near Madras, he became one of the great modern Tamil poets and was easily among the most productive - writing an astounding 500 books before he was 50 years of age. He was a dynamic teacher, an example of one immersed in yoga, thinking of God, speaking of the Diving always. He lived what many can only talk about: the universalism which is the heart of Hindu dharma. Single-handedly he brought much of the world's literature and philosophy into the Tamil language, providing translations of the Upanishads, Vedas, Dhammapada, Tao-te-Ching, Koran and Bible.

In 1920 he met Gandhiji and received his blessings. Later he worked uncompromisingly for India's freedom, ran many ashrams and educational institutions and proved that the disciplined mind, purified in yoga, can also be practical and productive in ordinary tasks.

During his earlier years of sadhana, he moved around India with a single cloth and water pot as his possessions, meeting with the seers and sages of the day, including Ramana Maharishi, Swami Sivananda and Sri Aurobindo, in whose ashram he lived for 23 years.

Swami Sivananda Saraswati gave Kavi Yogi the title of "Maharishi" in 1957 in Rishikesh, in recognition of his "contributions to yoga and Vedanta, and to his own devotion to Truth, Love and Purity."

R. Balasubramaniam of Malaysia faxed us his eulogy a day or two ago. "The recent demise of Yogi Shuddananda Bharathi is a Shakthi Mahal Kaviyam earned him the award Raja Rajan from the Tamil University. His service to Hinduism and Yoga is well known. His motto "One God, one world, one humanity" is a gateway to peace in this world. May those who were in direct contact with the Kavi Yogi share their experiences with the readers of HINDUISM TODAY."

Thank you, Balasubramanian, for the nice letter. We hope to hear from South Africa, too, about their experiences with this great soul. We know he is alive in the inner world, helping in many unseen ways. "There is no birth. There is no death. Life is eternal. May all attain the end of the sufferings of the flesh - Mukti."

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