

# Antar Vahini

A Journey to Inner-Self

EDITION 2

SHIVANANDAM: AWAKENING THE SHIVA WITHIN



## Awaken your Soul - A message from Babaji Shivananda

Om Namah Shambave, Om Namah Shivaaya

Lots of love and blessings to all my children. My best wishes to you all for the New Year. I bless you all with lots of love and happiness, a life filled with enthusiasm, success and joy. May your life be a celebration of life, such are my blessings for all of you. May the New year end all the negativity in your lives and fill it with positive energies. May the darkness, the ego, any negative thoughts in each of you be extinguished.

As you know, the year 2020 was a very testing year, one with great worries, difficulties and ailments. But the coming year will ignite positive energies in all of you. Whatever you have learned in 2020 regarding Sadhana and Meditation, this will take you forward in the coming year. Each moment, each event in your life will be there to teach you. This coming year will be one for you to learn from what you see and experience. I bless you all with great progress and success in your spiritual journey.

**BABAJI...**



### Daily Chants:

@ 18.30 IST -> Lingaashtakam,  
Lalitha Sahasranaamam, Rudram  
@ 22.00 IST -> Om Namah  
Shivaaya Chanting



### Weekly Chants & Meditation:

Sunday @ 18.00 IST -> Hanuman  
Chalisa, Followed by Meditation  
Techniques by Babaji



### Shivarathri and Bhakti Festival:

Watch out for updates on Maha  
Shivarathri in Mar'21 and a  
special Bhakti Festival in  
planning

## Sadhana - Prescribed by Babaji until the next edition of Antar Vahini sees you

Sadhana is a disciplined practice that helps connect us to the Higher Self.

Babaji, in his infinite Love has graciously blessed all devotees with a series of weekly sessions to facilitate sadhaks on meditation techniques.

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**Any technique needs to be practiced wholeheartedly to bear fruits. In following this sadhana, you will be led to your own self !**

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The first of the many weekly sessions started on the 13<sup>th</sup> December'20. Babaji's techniques are unique and simple to follow in this fast paced world where time is of the essence.

The first session brought to devotees the 3 gunas from within that determine the thoughts, the control of these gunas that can lead one to the silence and stillness within, the 3 Meditation techniques - Yog Nidra, Chakra meditation and Shakthi yog.

Babaji's audio recording on Yog Nidra is available on request. If you are struggling to sleep or feel overly tired most times, Yog Nidra will certainly be of benefit to you.

Babaji's emphasis on being aware, conscious and focussed on the activity being performed, be it as simple as the morning obligations or cooking a meal or as complex as when at work is a sadhana for one to shed the internal evil passions and experience oneself through pure Love. Recorded Satsang on the same is also available on request.

Let us not forget the blessings of Babaji on the "**Experience of True Self**". Once a Sadhak has taken Deeksha from a Guru and the Sadhana given by the Guru is not practiced, the Guru will need to fulfill them on behalf of the sadhak. Hence it is of utmost importance that we take the sadhana seriously for our own benefit.

**Be a witness to this miracle ! For more details, tune in every Sunday between 21.00 and 22.00 IST.**



1

### THE VIRTUAL YATRA

Spiritual awakening through a pilgrimage to places of spiritual significance or a Devotional Celebration

2

### A JOURNEY WITH HIM

Each devotee's experience is as unique as HIM or HER, as we travel together on this journey to "Oneself"

3

### FROM THE ASHRAM

Updates from the space that exhorts one and all to become leaders of Inner Transformation – an adventurous Journey inward !

4

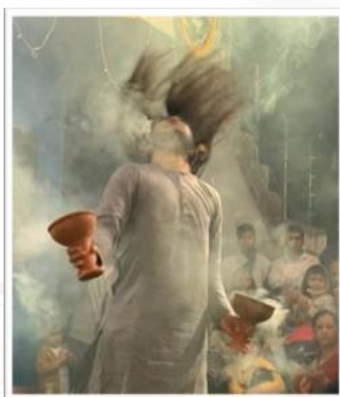
### EXPERIENCE THE TRUTH

The truth of an inward Journey of the Master or the Truth of the soul felt experiences of devotees comes to you...

1

## The Virtual Yatra – The Durga Pooja at Kangra

Durga Pooja at Kangra is unique in itself. The transformation of a handful of Mitti (Clay) to Life sized self-sculpted idols of Maa and her family is quite known to all devotees. Babaji's divine hands at work have mesmerised one and all. His devotion and Love for Maa have been witnessed by many. The 14 years of celebration lives etched in memories of those who have attended the same in person. This year saw nothing less despite the pandemic. As a matter of fact, it was a notch up providing devotees an immersive experience Live from Kangra.



**Below is an excerpt from Babaji's own experience of Maa's bountiful Love and Durga Pooja:**

During the first year (2006), he put together only Mother's statue (Mahishasura Mardini, with lion and buffalo). At Mother's immersion, Babaji prayed to Her to come back again with her entire family and bless him with the strength and courage to create them.

In 2007, Mother came in full form with her entire family answering his fervent prayers. Babaji and his cousin would cut papers to decorate Maa since they weren't sure of how the Shola Ka Sringaar was traditionally done at Kolkata. At immersion, he prayed that during Her arrival the next time, she should be decorated in "Shola", the way it's done at Kolkata. After a week, a Bengali family had come to have darshan of Mother introduced by his cousin while they were touring Himachal. The family showed a lot of interest and enthusiasm knowing Babaji himself created these life sized idols. The family brought to his knowledge that Maa is adorned with a substance called shola, which is generally available in a particular plant that grows beneath lakes in Kolkata. Overwhelmed with the love for Maa and mesmerised by Babaji's work, the family proposed to send in the materials from Bengal from the next year on.

In 2008, All the decoration material to adorn Maa came from Kolkata but Babaji wasn't sure where the many small decorative pieces were meant to go on Maa. On remembering the mitti (mud, clay) given to him, he started the work. To his surprise, everything automatically went to its respective places on the Idol. He was extremely delighted and at the time of Mother's visarjan (immersion) this year, he prayed that the pooja should happen as per the Bengali culture from next year on.

From 2009 onwards, a Bengali Pandit joined him during Durga Puja who carried out the rites and rituals as per the Bengalis. During 2009 visarjan (immersion), he again prayed to Mother to get him a holy Dhaak arranged to welcome her next year.

Mother kept arranging herself all that she wanted for the Puja and the following year, Dhunanchi (a pot with fragrant smoke to welcome Mother) too got included. Babaji dances holding it. Though he hasn't learnt the art, the moment he holds it, his legs automatically start moving exactly the way one has to dance holding Dhunanchi.

Thus, every year, his prayers and wishes got accepted. **To this day, he continues to say – "Nothing is difficult for Maa to give her child, but it's just that the child is not asking her the right way. There's nothing impossible for Maa, as she can give everything."**

## 2

## A Journey with HIM

## Divine Romance at Kangra Durga Pooja – Experiences from Devotees

## Devotee Experience 1 – Anirud. C (Devotee from Bangalore)

Dussehra pooja celebrations is one of the main festivals that is celebrated in the divine presence of Babaji Sai Shivananda at His residence at Old Kangra, Himachal Pradesh.

My mother, Dwaraknath and I started on our pilgrimage on 5th October, 2019. We landed in Amritsar and proceeded towards the Golden Temple to submit our prayers. We had seen many pictures and videos of the temple but nothing prepared us for the actual darshan of the Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple). It was a sight to behold as the temple glowed in the beams of the resplendent Sun. The Guru Granth Sahib is worshipped at the temple which is the Holy Book for the Sikhs; a compilation of all the teachings of the Gurus. It naturally made sense to pay homage to the Guru before we made our way to the abode of our Guru.

As we drove towards Kangra with the Sun setting to our left, we could barely speak as anticipation filled our hearts. We reached Kangra late at night and retired for the day.

**6th October, 2019**

The Land of the Gods was beautifully decked up to celebrate the Divine Mother and Her infinite glory. We woke up, got ready and hurried to the divine abode of our beloved Babaji. As we walked into the premises, we saw the beautifully crafted larger than life idols of the Divine Mother. Babaji's love and devotion towards Her breathed life into Her idols. I had only heard from Babaji that He Himself makes the idols for the Pooja during Dussehra but when I saw Mother Saraswathi, Mother Lakshmi, Mother Durga, Lord Karthikeya and Lord Ganesha, I found it almost impossible to believe that Babaji could make these without any training. A sign of His divinity. As I looked into the Divine Mother's eyes, resplendent in white, I could almost see a tear drop glistening in Her eyes just the way a mother tears up when she sees her child. I was mesmerized to see the attention to detail and I revelled in the intoxicating aura of the manifestation of Babaji's love that She was.

My eyes searched for Babaji but I couldn't find Him. Suddenly I felt a flower hit my head. As I turned around, I saw Babaji laughing. It was He who had thrown the flower. What better way to be welcomed by One's Guru. I rushed and fell at His feet with immense gratitude radiating every inch of my being. I looked at Him and He glanced directly into my eyes and lovingly enquired about our trip, stay and sleep.

Then the Pooja commenced. Pooja at Babaji's residence is conducted in the traditional Bengali style. As Mother was being worshipped, Babaji looked longingly into Her eyes. The Divine Romance was a treat to the thirsting soul. The smoke from the dhuni, the sounds of the traditional Himachali instruments and the fervent prayers of the devotees added to the ethereal ambience of the Pooja. After the Pooja, we retired for the Prasadam.





Evening arrived and the atmosphere was filled with Her love. We all stood before Her as the Pooja took place. Then Babaji started dancing and chanting – Ambe Mayi ki Jai! Durge Mayi ki Jai! His energy pulsed through the entire crowd and everyone started dancing with Him as the centre of this galaxy of dancing devotees. It is said that one must approach God with the innocence of a child. That day we danced and chanted in divine ecstasy like children trying their best to capture the attention of the mother. Once the dance ended, we all took our seats on the sides as space was left for Babaji to perform the Dhuni dance. The canvas was ready for the Cosmic Dancer to paint with the strokes of His graceful moves. As Babaji danced, we were teleported to a different dimension. We all had our gaze fixed at Him with rapt attention. We were in awe at the divine majesty being expressed through dance. Without a doubt, this would be the same experience of Nandi whenever he watches Mahadev bless the cosmos with Thandava. Babaji and few others were fasting the whole day and they broke their fast with us. As we had prasadam, we were silent as the dance had brought in a deep stillness in the deep recesses of the mind

### 7th October, 2019

The day dawned with the divine will of Babaji to conduct a homam to please the Divine Mother. He is not a Master of directions alone. He is a Master of action. He guided us to bring the bricks for the yagna kund and also joined us in collecting and laying the bricks. He poured in sand between the bricks to seal any gaps and decorated the kund with flowers. Each one of us had the opportunity to participate in the yagna and make offerings to the sacred fire. Babaji sat patiently throughout and would glance at us mischievously from time to time which would make us giggle. Every moment in His presence is one filled with love and laughter. After yagna, we had prasadam and retired so that we can return in the evening.

This evening, we knew what to expect after the Pooja. As soon as Babaji started His chants, we danced. Mahadev is surrounded by His ganas who dance around Him in bhakti. We danced around Babaji in the same manner. We danced like there was no past, no future; only the present. As we danced, He made eye contact with everyone and smiled.

Then came the most eagerly awaited part of the day. As Vishal bhaiya lit the dhuni and Babaji bent down to pick up the dhuni, the silence was palpable. We knew what was to come even then we didn't know what to expect. He stood there in front of Her and looked Her deep in the eyes. Then it started. The Gods rejoiced as Babaji danced and blessed everyone with His love. His eyes closed, he spun much to the awe of the Sufi mystics who would do anything to see such grace; meditation in dance. The breeze blew slightly as to caress the divine tresses of His hair. The hearts beat as if to give a rhythm to the divine dance. Just as the sunflowers turn to always face the sun, our bodies unconsciously kept readjusting to always be facing Him.

Raavana stood on one leg for eons in penance for a glimpse of Him and here He was dancing before us. What a blessing!

Babaji broke His fast and partook prasadam with us.

### 8th October, 2019

It was the day of visarjan. Our hearts were heavy with the thought of being separated from our Mother. After the Pooja commenced, we lifted Mother Lakshmi and Mother Saraswathi and rotated thrice in the same spot and loaded the idols in the truck. When Mother Durga was being lifted, Babaji signalled to pause for a moment. He climbed onto the base of the idol and what He did next brought tears to the eyes of everyone present. He hugged her and whispered into Her ears how much He loved Her. Mother had tears in Her eyes as well. The Mother and Her Child were sharing an intimate moment of profound silence and all we could do was drink in the divine nectar that poured out of His heart.

Our convoy went in and around Kangra, chanting Her divine name. The we reached a stream where the visarjan was supposed to happen. We got into the stream, with our pants rolled up to bring her into the cool waters. A pooja was performed and the we walked into the stream with Mother Lakshmi and Mother Saraswathi. We prayed to them for giving us the opportunity to serve Them again after which Lord Ganesha and Lord Karthikeya followed. Then came the Divine Mother. As we immersed her into the waters, I whispered a prayer in gratitude. By Her grace, I had a memory that would remain imprinted forever in my mind that would continue to give me joy each time I recollected it. I prayed to Her to allow me to come again.



After we got ready and came back to Babaji's residence, we partook the prasadam. Everyone was silent but our beloved Babaji instantly lifted the mood by cracking jokes and lighting us up. Before we took leave, we fell at Babaji's Feet and expressed immense gratitude for the blessing He bestowed on us for allowing us to be a part of the Dussehra celebrations in His Divine Presence. What He spoke next instantly teleported me back to the banks of the stream. He looked into my eyes and said – "Promise me you will come every year for the Dussehra celebrations." Dwaraknath and I were overjoyed. As Babaji uttered these words, I realized my prayer had been answered. I whispered my desire to come again to Her and He granted that desire. Babaji blessed us and assured us He will come soon to Bangalore and live with us.

### 9th October, 2019

As we headed to Amritsar from Kangra to catch our flight to Bangalore, we realized some memories are not just memories. We live lifetimes by themselves just by recollecting them.

## Devotee Experience 2 – Tanaaz Bhatt (Devotee from Mumbai)

Om Namah Shambhave

The Durga pooja comes truly to life at Kangra. Its pregnant with beauty , tradition , energy and spirituality...all in one.

If one wants to witness the overflowing love and grace of Maa Durga, Kangra is the place to be. Located in one of the mountainous roads, in an inconspicuous house, is where our most adorable Babaji resides. In this ancestral home, beaming with simplicity is where our Babaji creates the Durga idols by his gracious hands, procuring all the material from different places in a precise manner. Taking almost a month to bring Maa to life, he delivers her in the month of September, adorning her with ornaments and embellishments, marking her arrival at Durgotsav.

One look at Maa Durga is enough to convince you that she is alive and effulgent with life watching over the festivities. When we enter Babaji's kutir, Maa welcomed all with her love and her unbound presence. Her look is indescribable and mesmerising - it is an experience to witness rather than be worded.

Maa was revered daily with rituals, prasad and bhajans. Her Murti was emanating peace , joy and beauty. The entire scene comes to life as i write this. It was ethereal and sacred, a sight to behold. As we invoked prayers to Maa, she would smile and bless us all. After evening prayers, Dhunachi dance of Babaji was entrancing and mesmerising to say the least. Babaji's charming, hypnotic, and captivating moves of his dance incited in us the same energy and we all danced like never before to the drums, symbols and shenaai music played in the background and the dhuni enwrapping us with tantalising energy. All in all, the whole atmosphere was potent with divinity and magnetism with resonating slogans of Jai Durge.

Being in Babaji's and Maa's presence was captivating - it is like your body and mind is completely seized and you become thoughtless, being completely absorbed by mystical atmosphere. There is no YOU/individual - you merge in ONE with ALL.

The most important offering was the oblation on Maha Ashtami day- Sandhi pooja. As the pandit recited versus from Durga Sapthasti, Babaji built a havan kund with bricks, bordered with beautiful rangoli - as if materialised by Her power and grace. We all partook in the pooja and rituals, offering Bilvapatra, water, ghee, flowers as a mark of gratitude to Maa . All this symbolising selfless offering of oneself to Her union. The lively Sindhoor khel ensued, which was a zestful meeting of people putting tilak and sindhoor on the face and exchanging sweets. Then Babaji's whisper into Maa's ears, signalling the commencement of the Visarjan process where Maa returns to her natural elements. I personally have never liked visarjan's but this one made me realise that for all the efforts and enjoyments one takes in life, the cycle of life is imminent. Maa was taken in a massive procession all over the city in a pompous manner with Jai Durga chanting echoing in the city .

We await for her to manifest in the next Durgotsav as she stays in our hearts forever.

**JAI MAI DURGA !**



### Devotee Experience 3 – Rama Rao (Devotee from Mumbai)

As an individual, my prayers and conversations have always been with the masculine forms of Divine, like that of Shri Rama / Krishna / Shiva or Sai and sometimes even Jesus... The thought of expressing my feelings/ prayers to the feminine forms of Divine, such as Durga / Saraswati / Kali / Laxmi Ma /Kanyakumari etc was limited to the small chants done to these deities.

When I learnt about the worship of mother Goddess by Sri Shivananda Babaji, the showering of Her immense blessings and the experiences of Her divine sport and love (as narrated by Sri Shivananda Babaji), i realized how much I missed in life by not spending the time worshipping these divine feminine forms and how narrow minded, ignorant and foolish I was. So a desire to worship these forms was planted in me and I was looking to offer my prayers to mother divine.

Mother compassionate, offered the opportunity (even though I have not prayed to Her, as if She knew the desire and wanted to fulfil it) and made it convenient for my entire family (including my septuagenarian mother) to visit Kangra in October 2019 to participate in the Durga Pooja organized at the residence of His holiness Sri Shivananda Babaji.

The experience of celebrating and worshipping the Mother Divine at the residence of Babaji was a completely different experience and an enthralling one too. First time in my life, I enjoyed dancing (had always been a poor dancer) along with Babaji, others and in front of the holy Mother. Hearing the chant of Babaji saying "Durga Maa ki jai" filled my eyes with tears of love and happiness. Spending time with Her and conversing with her filled my being completely. Watching Babaji hug mother was like experiencing the immense happiness of an infant, when the mother hugs him/her. All of this, made me realize that mother divine is the closest and dearest, and should always be so. As Her child, we should be loving her the most without any hesitation.

For the first time, I could easily observe fast till late afternoon on the Ashtami (8th) day. Fasting during durga Pooja was something which I tried few times earlier, but always failed. Prior to this, going to Durga Pooja mandap (enclosed area where the idols are kept, worshipped and visited by public) was more of an external event, a social event, an event for eating and merry than experiencing and listening her glory.

Not only Goddess Durga enabled us visit Kangra and celebrate Durga Pooja in the presence of Babaji, she ensured that the entire visit was a smooth one. Our flight to Mumbai was from Amritsar. There were some delays while travelling from Kangra to Amritsar airport by road and we feared missing the flight, but left it with a prayer to Babaji. When we reached the airport, we learnt that the flight got delayed by 45 minutes, allowing us a smooth check in and have some breathing space before boarding.

Am grateful to Mother Divine and to Shivananda Babaji for showering this love and opening my eyes to Her glory and i look forward to worshipping Her and loving Her more than ever.

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## From The Ashram

### The Ashram in our hearts

The Ashram is not a mere project, a place or a building but a beautiful world that is simple. It is such a world wherein, when you enter and the doors of the Ashram open to you, you will be far removed from the manipulations of the world and unite with your True Self.

My mission has always and will always be One, it is to "Unite You to Your own Atma". Infact this is not a mission, this is the eternal Truth of Life.

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Your Meeting with the Atma, will be the Meeting between

You and Me !

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This relationship between me and you, is one of LOVE. When Love keeps blossoming within you, I keep blooming inside. This Ashram is not anyone's property, it is a home. It is such a life where you can live, love everyone without any anger or resentment and "I go away from within you and you will find yourself complete and all knowing". **The Ashram doors are open, come along and join me in building this Ashram within you.**

**From a discourse of Babaji Shivananda**

### The Ashrams in the making

Society, today is undergoing what many consider as modernisation and development. This has diminished human values and brought about an immense amount of negativity amongst us.

Recognising the urgent need to bring about a realisation of values, empathy, spiritual education and respect for all creation, 2 beautiful Ashram's are in the making as envisioned by Babaji to bring one and all together.

#### Shiv Kutir, An international centre for Societal Oneness

The **Shiv Kutir** at **Kangra** aims to promote

- Conscious Living
- Integrated Education
- Service Initiatives in the areas of Education, Animal Protection, Healthcare and Environment
- Preservation of Nature

through the reflection, contemplation and further conscious action towards **Integrated Societal transformation and Oneness (ICSO).**

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Shiv Kutir (ICSO) is envisioned to be a  
Space that shall connect people to the  
nourishing spirit of nature

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Project proposal is in the making. Please await the announcement of the Project and plan by Babaji.

The Shiv Kutir will accommodate up to 150 devotees and students for education in yoga, Sanskrit and philosophy. The focus will be on **ancient Indian Science and the invaluable spiritual treasures of Vedic culture** including : Physical, mental, social and spiritual health. One will learn to respect life and see better tolerance and understanding amongst religions, cultures and nations.

### The Shiv Dham Ashram, a retreat for a seeker's True identity



**The Shiv Dham Ashram**, located near Chikmagalur is a bird's nest location of divinity in the form lush green nature and beautiful hills.

The Shiv Dham Ashram is an existing set up that will be purchased and will offer **healing therapies, yoga and meditation sessions** specially tuned to align with the True Self. One will experience an infusion of healing energies in the form of daily yagna's amongst many other spiritual practices.

For Sri Rama's Success, every squirrel and many stones too played a significant role and were unique instruments in HIS hands. Be Welcome ! It is a Blessed opportunity to be HIS instrument in order to establish peace, harmony, unity and happiness.

Please reach out, if you would like to contribute in any way to this beautiful cause. Further details on the Ashram's, plans and how you could support will be shared on request and interest. It beckons one and all. Jai Vishwa !

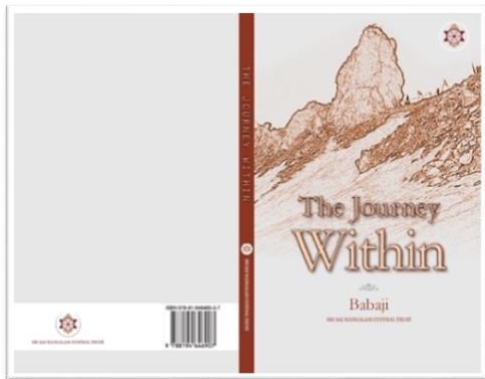


## 4

## Experience the Truth



Babaji in his immense Love for devotees, has authored a book that is set to take us on the **Shrikhand Mahadev Yatra** and enthrall each one of us with picturesque visions, heart thralling experiences and soulfully re-ignite our love for Mahadev.



Warm up to journey the dense forests, harsh terrains, endure the hardships, challenge the extraordinary yet arduous trek, meet fascinating beings and enjoy the magnificent and breathtaking landscapes along the way.

The rare species of the himalayan flowers, the lush green valleys, the confluence of water streams, the clouds atop Shrikhand and the chants of Mahadev are sure to greet you and immerse you into the silence of yourself.

Above all, the humble Master shares his inward journey. His entire journey is an endless saga of God's Love manifested there in yet another form. **Be Part of these subtle experiences and partake in the Bliss.**

In an attempt to spread greater awareness of this **Master of Love**, Babaji Shivananda's, devotees are putting together a book of their **Inner Experiences** with the divine master. The experiences of divine Love in abundance is set to unconditionally draw one and all towards him. **May his ever loving grace, blessings and Love flow through to the world over !**



Both Books are at the publishers desk and is set to Launch in the new year. They will be available as an e-book in English and Hindi with translations to other languages to follow soon after.

## Contact Us | Feedback



**Babaji's mission** is one of **Love** and to bring about **Oneness** (Self-realization) among people who seek it. It is not complicated, attaining God is simple if one follows the path of pure love as said by Babaji.

Please [reach out to us](#) to know more about the mission, activities and how you can be a part of this transformational mission. Please also write to us for any feedback on the newsletter or to contribute to articles in the newsletter.

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**"Every being is a divinity in disguise, the God playing a fool!"**

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