

In the Footsteps of the Divine

An Epic Yatra to
Lucknow –
Chhapaiya – Varanasi

12 – 19 February 2022

As the golden kalashes were raised to take their place on the shikhars, it could be said that the Nutan Mandir was finally complete on the sacred day of Poshhi Poonam this year in January 2022. The Nutan Mandir journey had begun in Chhapaiya on the divine soils of Maharaj's birthplace with a *sankalp* made by Pujya Dr Jitubhai, Pujya Barindrabhai, Pujya Vijaybhai, Pujya Govindbhai and Pujya Mukeshbhai Kadhiwala in the divine presence of Guruhari Sahebji. Now that the mandir was complete, Guruhari Sahebji wanted the ultimate completion to take place at Chhapaiya with an offering of gratitude at Shri Thakorji's lotus feet, in the place where it had all started! After the Kalash Mahotsav a *yatra* had been planned, but was postponed due to Covid. In the midst of all of that it had also been Guruhari Sahebji's strong wish to bring Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben to Chhapaiya ever since she became the Governor of Uttar Pradesh.





Arrival and
Mantra
Pushpanjali at
entrance of
Raj Bhavan

Lucknow Memoirs

Guruhari Sahebji's *sankalp* was met with Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben's own wish to visit Chhapaiyadham. She had wanted to visit since becoming Governor but had not been able to and mentioned to Guruhari Sahebji to go together. It was at the behest of Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben's wish that the *yatra* to Chhapaiya was arranged at extremely short notice! Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben invited Pujya Binduba, Pujya Barindrabhai, Pujya Surendrabhai and Pujya Bhaviniben as her guests to

the Raj Bhavan, and told them they must bring Guruhari Sahebji with them! It was her deep wish to have Guruhari Sahebji's *padhramani* at the Raj Bhavan and therefore two days prior to going to Chhapaiya, Guruhari Sahebji, Param Pujya Shantidada, a few Santo and bhakto arrived at the Raj Bhavan in Lucknow on the night of 12 February 2022. It was Ekadashi and by the time we reached the Raj Bhavan it was 9.30pm. Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben was waiting for Guruhari Sahebji at the grand entrance of the Raj Bhavan, which was lit with candles and warmly welcomed everyone. The corridors of the Bhavan were lined with a red carpet welcome for Guruhari Sahebji.

According to her stature, the magnitude of the work she does and the politicians and people that she has to interact with, her demeanour is very serious. She is a powerful woman who speaks less and lets her work speak for her. But over the two days stay at the Raj Bhavan, the *darshan* that everyone had was of a *bhakt* with such intensely deep devotion in her heart. Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben honoured Guruhari Sahebji's presence in every moment. Just as we read in the epics of the Ramayana or the Mahabharat, the honour and respect with which kings

Guruhari Sahebji with Pujya Anandiben in the
gardens of the Raj Bhavan, Lucknow



would welcome Santo, was the way in which Pujya Anandiben welcomed Guruhari Sahebji. She spent every moment outside of her work schedule with Guruhari Sahebji and Santo.

It was learned that whenever any official guests would stay at the Bhavan, of which there would be ministers, ambassadors etc., Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben would take one meal with them during their entire stay. But here, in the presence of Sahebji, Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben took every meal- breakfast, lunch, tea-time and dinner with the whole group! The staff were so surprised. They had never experienced this before. Pujya Binduben also mentioned how Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben went to such great lengths to check that everything was in order in Guruhari Sahebji's room. This was sheer devotion. There were so many staff, but she took the time and personal care to ensure that everything was in order. This is something she does only when the President or Prime Minister come to the Bhavan, meaning for those that hold the highest political stature. Here she showed her recognition of Guruhari Sahebji holding the highest spiritual stature and offered her devotion in this silent way. She could have easily given orders and had it done, but in an unseen way expressed love and devotion.

There would be a special seat for the Governor in every room of the building, but wherever Guruhari Sahebji was, Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben would offer the Governor's seat and make Guruhari Sahebji sit on it, affording him the highest respect. While Guruhari Sahebji would pray for Pujya Anandiben to sit in the centre, she would not look towards him and instead sit on the side. The mutual respect was moving. When we think about it, Pujya Anandiben has met Sahebji in person only a few times but as astute as she is in social and political affairs, she was just as astute spiritually and was not only able to separate the two but able to recognise a true Sant even though he does not wear the saffron robes. From having met him only a few times, the heart of a *bhakt* that resides in the being of the Governor recognised the Sant.

While at the Raj Bhavan, for the first time in history a sabha was arranged whereby Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben invited all of her staff. There were 500 strong! For the first time, there was discourse and talk of God. All of the staff were so pleased and felt blessed to have this *darshan* and association. Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben said she would not speak as she wanted them to have the *darshan* and blessings of Santo. However, once Guruhari Sahebji gave his blessings, Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben asked for the microphone. Amongst many things one of the main things that came across in her address to the staff was that, 'you have all had *darshan* of Guruji Sahebji and he has given exceptional blessings. If you think about this and after having thought about it apply it in your lives, then you will all become content and fulfilled in your lives.'

Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben also arranged for all of the staff's children to have darshan and blessings from Guruhari Sahebji later that day after having arranged tea-time in the grounds of the Bhavan. All the children received prasada from Guruhari Sahebji and He spoke to them of the importance of prayer, and to keep Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben as their role model.

As the Governor – Pujya Anandiben's day is planned from minute to minute, with countless meetings and official engagements. Her mealtimes too are fixed. However, the spiritual understanding she had was like that which Pujya H.M. Patel had displayed when



Guruhari Sahebji's morning puja at the Raj Bhavan

Brahmaswaroop Yogiji Maharaj came to Vidyanagar. A sabha had been arranged and Pujya H.M.Patel was the chief guest. Pujya H.M. Patel was known for his strict punctuality and none of the staff could get away with being even one minute late. He arrived for the sabha but Yogiji Maharaj was delayed. He spoke to the students, but the Principal was getting extremely restless about keeping Pujya H.M. Patel waiting and sharply told Sahebji to tell H.M.Patel that he could go home and someone would come to call him when Yogiji Maharaj arrived. Sahebji went to tell H.M. Patel but his answer was profound. He said, 'Yogiji Maharaj is not late; whatever time He arrives is the perfect time. I am very strict about punctuality when it comes to staff, because they are being paid for each minute, whereas a Sant like Yogiji Maharaj lives for God and his life is in service to others so he has to attend to so many. Whatever time he comes is the right time!'

Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben also displayed such elevated and noble understanding. Whatever time Guruhari Sahebji and the group would be ready for dinner was the time that she would adjust to. Her set mealtimes were left to one side. It showed the great *mahatmya* she held in her heart for Guruhari Sahebji and for Santo. The *darshan* we had was of an extremely powerful lady who was humble and flexible before Santo, and with no ego whatsoever with respect to her position or status. It was left for us to bow to her even greater status as such an elevated bhakt.

On the second evening, after dinner, everyone sat together and bhajans were sung by Sadhu Pujya Utpaldasji and Pujya Ashokdasji. The environment was divine. Guruhari Sahebji was to leave the Raj Bhavan the next morning, on the 14th of February but Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben requested Guruhari Sahebji to stay for one more day together with Pujya Barindrabhai – Binduben, Pujya Surendrabhai – Bhaviniben and to travel with her to Chhapaiya by helicopter on the morning of 15th February. Guruhari Sahebji humbly declined and asked Pujya Anandiben if it was ok to take leave, because he wanted to ensure all the arrangements were in order for her

welcome. Pujya Anandiben said the others could take care of that but eventually Sahebji asked for her leave. One of the things Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben said quietly was, 'atleast give us the chance for this seva.' She wanted to offer that seva, that was her immense *bhav*.

Later that night Guruhari Sahebji found out that Pujya Anandiben had cancelled the helicopter as Sahebji was not going to travel with them, and that she herself would travel by car on 15th February. Knowing Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben to be so busy, having so much work on her plate, Guruhari Sahebji felt it would be wrong for her to spend a total of 8 to 10 hours of her precious time in the car for the trip to Chhapaiya and back and therefore changed his own plans. Guruhari Sahebji therefore extended his stay at the Raj Bhavan by one more day as Pujya Anandiben had wished.

On the morning of the 14th, after breakfast, a padhramani had been arranged for Guruhari Sahebji and the whole group, to the home of a dynamic mukt-raj, Pujya Ratna-Sanjay, who is Inspector General of the Purnia Range, responsible for security across the Indo-Nepal border. Guruhari Sahebji and the whole group of Santo and devotees were welcomed with immense warmth. Prayers and shlokas were sung, followed by breakfast, whereby the numerous items offered were laid out with such love, which everyone took together in the garden. Pujya Ratna-Sanjay's family, his officers and the Joint-Commissioner of Police, Law and Order – Pujya Piyush Mordia and others were all present and had the opportunity to have *darshan* and speak with Guruhari Sahebji. After this, one group of Santo and bhakto left for Chhapaiya, and Guruhari Sahebji with a small group stayed back one extra day.

During that extra day, Guruhari Sahebji met all the staff that had wanted to meet him one to one, with their questions. It was an extraordinary day, whereby they all received the divine association of pragat Guruhari Sahebji. It was a divine reconnecting of souls to their source. There were so many officers who expressed their joy and their fulfilment. Guruhari Sahebji gave each of them the *murti* which Bapa had blessed him with many years ago.



Grand welcome of Guruhari Sahebji and Pujya Anandiben at Chhapaiya-Dham

Shri Chhapaiya-Dham Yatra

On the morning of 15 February, all Santo and bhakto eagerly waited in Chhapaiya to welcome Guruhari Sahebji and Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben. A carpet had been laid out leading to the mandir, and under Sadhu's Pujya Yagneshdasji, Pujya Pankajdasji and Pujya Utpaldasji's care, all arrangements were carried out beautifully and Guruhari Sahebji and Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben were welcomed with pomp and ceremony. Guruhari Sahebji and Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben together with a small group, were taken into both mandirs and into Shri Ghanshyam Maharaj's *pragatya-sthaan* for *darshan*. After that group photos were taken on the steps of the mandir, before proceeding into the sabha-khand, where Guruhari Sahebji

gave his blessings and Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben gave a moving speech describing the joy she felt upon having *darshan* in Chhapaiya.

Guruhari Sahebji's deep wish to bring Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben to Chhapaiya was so that she may have *darshan* and also so that whatever problems the mandir was facing could be solved! Guruhari Sahebji's vision and work has never been just for his own organisation or bhakto. One of the hallmarks of such a Brahmaswaroop is his magnanimity; his deep wish for the well-being and progress of all humankind! And this was certainly *darshan* of this. Guruhari Sahebji had harbored this wish to alleviate whatever problems were being faced by the Santo and trustees at the *pragatya-sthaan* of our Ishta-



Darshan at Shri Ghanshyam Maharaj's Pragatyasthaan, Chhapaiya



P. Varshaben-P. Amiben honouring Pujya Anandiben



Dev. A meeting was held after lunch prasad with Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben and true to her nature, she was quick at assessing the whole situation and immediately set to work. She herself scanned the reports and personally visited the sites in question. Upon her return to Lucknow – on that very same day, she assigned the work to bring about the solutions required! The Mahant of Chhapaiyadham - Param Pujya Dev Swami, Santo and Trustees were so deeply pleased and expressed their gratitude to Guruhari Sahebji.



P. Shrutiben-P. Bhavishaben honouring Pujya Anandiben



After this, the two days spent in Chhapaiya continued to be soaked in divinity. All Santo and bhakto did not let a second go to waste! The eagerness and enthusiasm for dhun, bhajan, prarthana and seva was overwhelming. Sadhu Pujya Yagneshdasji asked for permission so that the *pragatya-sthaan* mandir could be opened earlier in the morning and closed later at night! All of the Santo and parshads were so co-operative and made it all possible for the group. Therefore the mandir would be open at 4.30am and Santo and bhakto would be present to start dhun at that time! After which they would attend the three aartis, one after another and then bhakto would head to Narayan Saravor, the sacred place where Ghanshyam Maharaj would bathe. There, after pradakshina and dhun, bhakto would take breakfast. The entire day would be filled in this way, followed by visits to the sacred sites of Ghanshyam Maharaj's *baal-leela* and sabha in the evening.



P. Jayeshdasji & P. Himat Swami offering murti to Pujya Anandiben

Guruhari Sahebji says that many people do satsang but question why they do not experience joy. To experience that ultimate joy of satsang there has to be *mahatmya*, such that *samp*, *suhrad-bhav* and *ekta* happens naturally,



Offering of murti to Guruhari Sahebji by Chhapaiya Mandir



Guruhari Sahebji with Mahant Pujya Dev Swami & Kothari Pujya Vishnu Swami

as bhakto are able to positively perceive divinity in everyone and everything around them. The time in Chhapaiya showed what an epic inner *yatra* has happened by Guruhari Sahebji's grace, not only at everyone's personal level but at a collective level! The kitchens and dining rooms were such that by our standards, one would not choose to sit or stand there. However, even though everyone could see this, not a single person made note of it; not a single person passed any remark with regards to this or for that matter any of the facilities etc.! Rather, bhakto collectively got to work and carried out the seva of cleaning the halls, the utensils and the kitchens. There was such positivity! No-one saw any fault, but only looked towards how to get everything in order! What an immense journey Guruhari Sahebji has carried us all through. He has made it all happen at an internal level without us even knowing it. Through Guruhari Sahebji's divine words, divine actions and continuous nurturing of all bhakto, he has transformed us such that positive perception becomes natural in our lives. He continues to nourish and nurture us in this way, and this pilgrimage to Chhapaiya allowed us to have *darshan* of the epic soul pilgrimage that he has taken us on and continues to.

Guruhari Sahebji wanted to offer gratitude to Shri Thakorji for bringing the *Sankalp* of the nutan mandir to fruition and therefore was laden with gifts for Shri Thakorji! A large set of silver plate, bowls, spoon, cup together with a silver *aarti* and monetary seva from bhakto, were all offered at Shri Thakorji's lotus feet and were used in *seva* of Shri Thakorji that very same day.

Guruhari Sahebji has always said to us to sing *mahima* and *goon-gaan* and takes every opportunity for bhakto to do this. On the night of 16th February, experiences were shared by Pujya Ashishbhai, P. Dr Amiben, P. Dr Jitubhai and P.Chhayaben. On the morning of 17th February, Guruhari Sahebji sat outside with all bhakto and gave exceptional *darshan* with *goshti*! One point that Dada made was never stick to just one thing. If you are doing dhun, do not only keep doing dhun, or if you do seva, do not stick to only seva. It is through *katha-varta* that *mahatmya* increases and when *mahatmya* increases, the joy one gains from doing seva increases. By carrying out seva with *mahatmya*, one earns the *prasannata* of God and the Satpurush and this *prasannata* lifts you. When you are lifted you are more clearly able to see the good and bad in others. However, if you look at the bad, then you fall again. To see only the good, the soul needs strength and that strength comes from dhun! Therefore, one must do all three.

Later at 10.30am, there was a final official sabha in which Guruhari Sahebji wished to take blessings from Pujya Dev Swami and Pujya Mota Swami. Guruhari Sahebji's complete divine love and *dasatva* were so clear to see. Even during Pujya Anandiben's sabha, when Guruhari Sahebji was about to be garlanded – he did not allow it and rather took the large garland, walked across the stage and placed it upon Pujya Dev Swami's neck. This is *darshan* we have had so many times; a complete state of zeroness. Pujya Dev Swami too reciprocated the mutual love, respect and affection, saying he felt such peace having Pujya Sahebji's *darshan*.



Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben delivering speech



Guruhari Sahebji showering blessings



Guruhari Sahebji with Santo at Kashi Vishwanath mandir, Varanasi

Guruhari Sahebji's padhramani in Varanasi

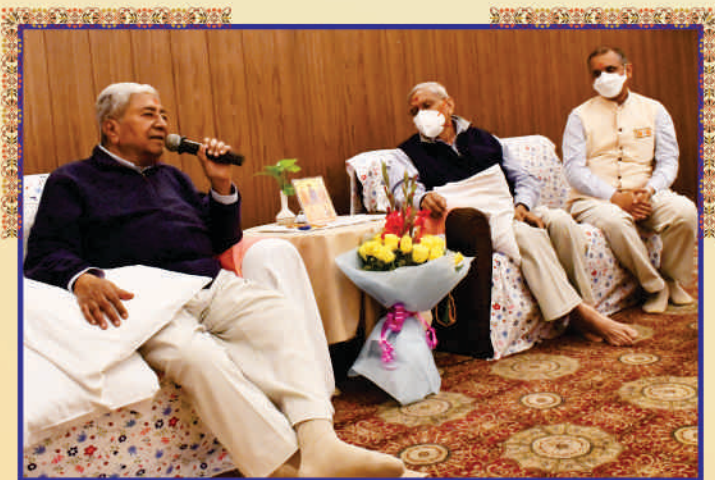
Guruhari Sahebji then departed for Varanasi. Guruhari Sahebji was to travel by car, but again Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben grabbed the opportunity for seva and sent a helicopter. There were so many policemen and officers all of a sudden at the mandir that Guruhari Sahebji thought some important official must be arriving. He asked and was told that it was because he was departing from Chhapaiya! Arriving in Varanasi, there were also two pilot cars with

officers to ensure smooth travel, *darshan* and overall trip. One had been arranged by Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben and the other by IG Pujya Ratna-Sanjay, who sent commandos and his own bodyguard to be with Guruhari Sahebji throughout the trip. Without their help, *darshan* at the Kaal-Bhairav mandir and at the Kashi-Vishwanath mandir would have been difficult as there were large crowds and it would have taken waiting for a whole day just to enter.

The crowd at the Kaal-Bhairav mandir was immense, but the officers took Guruhari Sahebji in and once there the mandir doors were shut. Guruhari Sahebji stood with his two hands in the prayer position in front of the *murti* and the *poojari* asked Sahebji and the others to repeat the *Sankalp* after him. The *poojari* then asked Guruhari Sahebji to come forward and bow to the *murti*, which Guruhari Sahebji did by placing his head at the feet of the *murti*. Again the *poojari* called Guruhari Sahebji and then offered *poojan* and a *garland*. After this the *poojari* pulled Guruhari Sahebji forward bringing his head low and gave two *dhabba* and blessings to Sahebji. Sahebji is our Guruhari and yet his humility and *dasatva* are beyond compare. It was *darshan* of his Gunatit state, and following



Guruhari Sahebji at Kaal Bhairav Mandir, Varanasi



Guruhari Sahebji showering blessings in sabha at Clarks Hotel

that Guruhari Sahebji asked Pujya Anoopambhai to give whatever was in his pocket as seva. It was an opportunity for us to have *darshan* of Guruhari Sahebji's state of being.

This was followed by *darshan* at the Kashi-Vishwanath mandir, whereby again due to the officers presence and influence, *darshan* was facilitated quickly and Guruhari Sahebji there too was taken into the inner sanctum to offer abhishek and *pooja*. In the evening the whole group went with Guruhari Sahebji to have *darshan* of Gangaji aarti. Two large boats had been booked by Pujya Ratna-Sanjay, and the journey over the Ganges was filled with utmost peace, in the divine presence of Guruhari Sahebji, Pujya Shantidada and Pujya Manojdasji. A wonderful happening took place as some of the *asthi-pushp* of Sadguru Sant Param Pujya Poonamdada had been brought there, and as

the boat approached the auspicious Manikarnika Ghat, Pujya Manojdasji and Santo sang shloks, performed mantra-pushpanjali and repeated the divine *Sankalp* uttered by Param Pujya Shantidada.

In the evening a sabha was held and Sadguru Sant Pujya Manojdasji's *pragatyadin* was celebrated. Guruhari Sant Bhagwant Sahebji not only filled every moment with *brahmanand* but gave divine association to countless *mukto*, starting with Hon'ble Pujya Anandiben at the Raj Bhavan, countless officers and policemen right through to the drivers and waiters at the hotel. On the final morning, before departing for the airport, all the officers as well as drivers came to bow to Guruhari Sahebji and take his blessings. Guruhari Sahebji gave each one the *prasadi murti* that had originally been given to him by Yogiji Maharaj. The waiters saw this and they all came and took blessings and received the *murti* and *prasad* from Guruhari Sahebji.

At the airport, Guruhari Sahebji was met by IG Pujya Ratna-Sanjay, Pujya Bhagirath Verma (Additional District Judge) and Officer Ajay Singh who had travelled five hours just to have the final *darshan* of Guruhari Sahebji. In every moment of his divine association, Guruhari Sahebji gave so many hearts peace, sparking their reunion with the ultimate Divine. So many eyes were filled with tears as Guruhari Sahebji departed from Varanasi, but also with longing for their next *darshan* here at Mogri. ◆

~ Bhavisha Tailor



Guruhari Sahebji with bhakto on the river Ganges, Varanasi



Guruhari Sahebji and bhakto performing Ganga arti from the boat at Dashashwamedh Ghat