

My Memoir

Divine Presence

In the lap of nature lies the beautiful Damodar Valley, which has sheltered countless living creatures in its blissful and nurturing embrace. In spring, the valley seems alive with those who dwell in and around it, quietly experiencing the presence of Goddess Chinnamastika and her majestic aura. Simply by sitting under the temple tree and listening to the gentle, mellow sounds, all creatures appear to surrender—even the fiercest seem to lose their harshness.

Here in Rajarappa, they sit with tender eyes and listen to the chants of “Om Chinna Masta.” This is the same Rajarappa where the great King Rudranarayan Ghoshal lived, and one of his descendants is still a priest of the temple. Legend says that once the son of the Santhal chief went inside the temple to protect Janki and never came out; it is believed that he resides there forever. The tribal people named the place Rajarappa after this story of the “lost king.” It is also said that even the most ferocious animals become calm and harm none within the temple premises.



Rajrappa Valley



However, this was not the situation in earlier times. Seekers, or sadhaks, had to travel eight miles from the janpad, facing the dangers of wild animals and dense forest, to offer prayers to Mahamaya Chinnamastika Devi. They would carry torches in their hands to find their way, and they had to return by noon, because it was too dangerous to stay back after dark.

In those days, traveling at night was unthinkable. The Rajarappa Temple is situated in Hazaribagh District (then Bihar), about 45 km from Ranchi. The sacred symbol of Sanatan Dharam—the temple of Goddess Chinnamastika—lies about 14 km from Chitrapur. As I write these words, I find it impossible to present Maa's divine image before the eyes of the reader. Even the strongest expressions fail. Such is her divinity.

I was born in Ranchi. When I was seven or eight years old, I received the blessing of a vision of Om Maa Chinnamasta. I was born to my parents by the grace of Devi Vindhyaachal. By profession, I am a civil engineer, serving the Government of India. For twelve years I was away from Chota Nagpur due to my job, but by the grace of Maa Sharda I was posted again to Ranchi District in November 1970. The next year, in 1971, I bought a new car and took it to the temple to seek Mother's blessings. The car was only a means—an opening for my journey towards the sanctuary of Maa.

From 1952 to 1971, I had never even thought of visiting the Rajarappa Temple. I had heard devotees say that it took the good deeds of many lifetimes to receive a glimpse of Divine Maa Chinnamasta. Yet it happened. One fine day I stood on the steps of the temple of Om Maa Chinnamasta. Inside, I filled my eyes with the vision of the Mother of our world. With an indescribable feeling in my heart, I offered my prayers and returned home.

I returned home, but my heart and mind remained bowed before the divine power. My heart wept like a child who cannot say goodbye to his mother and feels helpless. I felt restless and disoriented because I could not have Maa's darshan again. My duties kept me away from Rajarappa, yet the longing to return kept calling me. For two years I remained away from the divine power of that temple.

Day and night I prayed: "Mother, O Mother, please give me your darshan." Finally my prayers were answered, and suddenly an opportunity to visit Rajarappa came. It was an unforgettable day. I absorbed the pure blessings of our Holy Mother's vision. Every moment of prayer and worship stayed within my heart. This time, before leaving, I sought permission, so that my heart could be at peace.

After that, I visited the temple whenever I could. The pilgrimage to Rajarappa became dearer to me than my motherland, because it was the beacon of my Holy Mother's divinity. My devotion deepened day by day. I yearned for her darshan, but worldly duties kept me away. I felt that my bhakti was the only heaven beyond the end of mortal life.

In November 1971, after a long day of hard work, I was sitting on the veranda when a sudden wave of prayer and meditation rose within me, and I longed to visit the temple. My wife agreed, and the very next day we set out for Rajarappa. When I saw the lotus feet of Devi Maa's idol, tears came to my eyes. At that moment a thought came strongly to me: her



feet should be crowned with a beautiful white stone altar.

Overwhelmed with joy, I returned to Ranchi and appointed a mason the very next day. Within three or four days, a beautiful altar, minarets, and four reservoirs were ready. To the south stood the Rudra Bhairav temple, and the reservoirs in all four directions shone like jewels in a crown. To the west stood the sacred banyan tree, and to the north was the pathway leading into the divine sanctuary of Maa Chinnamasta, decorated with flowers and greenery.



In the new surroundings, the temple shone like a bright cobra pearl. Maa Chinnamasta was placed at the prayer altar like the Queen of the World through the constant efforts, prayers, meditation, and devotion of Tantric Sukumar Basu, who arrived at Rajarappa in August 1962. For ten years he worked tirelessly to bring changes to the temple, and his endeavors were fulfilled by Maa's blessing.

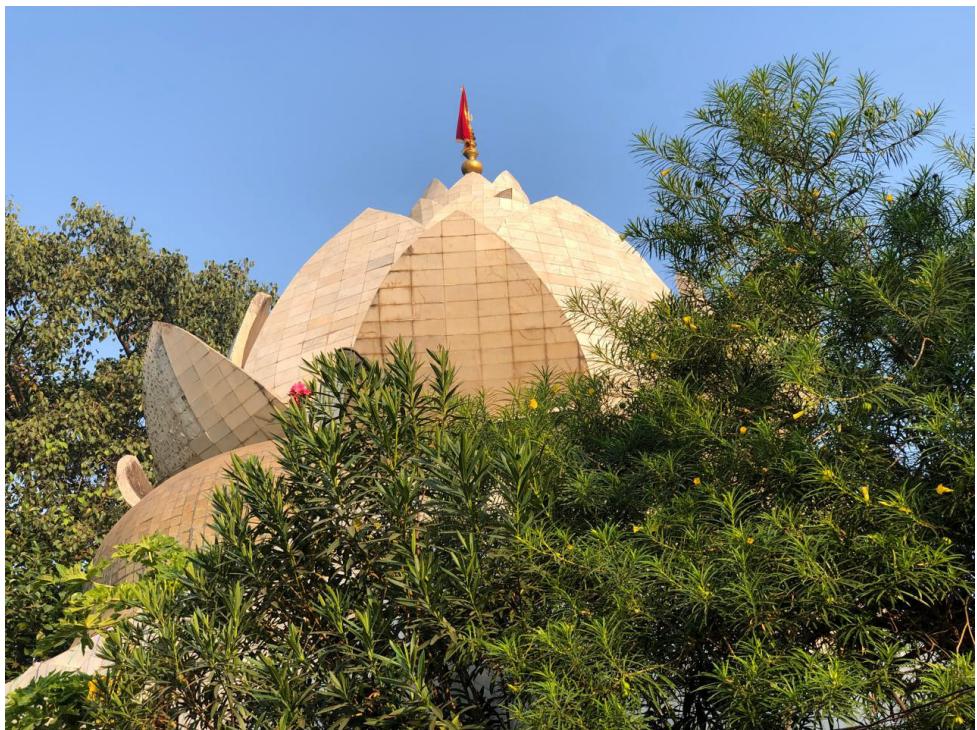
I first met this noble tantric in February 1972 at the Panchvati Ashram, where we sat together with some other respected people and discussed many matters. Our interaction was simple, yet his knowledge attracted me deeply. My heart was drawn to Dada Sukumar, and without realizing it I gave him the place of an elder brother in my heart. It felt as if we were connected from previous lives, because we were both blessed by our Eternal Mother. He treated my family as his own and gave us a tour of the temple.

At the Rudra Bhairav Temple he said, "I completed my third Chaagmaas Yajna here. The kund was made in the center of the foundation. The foundation is 18 feet deep." Dada Sukumar himself had the concrete roof made. Many people contributed to the development of the temple. In 1966, Shri Awadh Bihari Singh from Berma (Jharkhand) met Dada and willingly took responsibility for the Rudra Bhairav Temple. Since then, he has looked after its construction and development.

The main temple rites were performed by Shri Vijay Chakravarty, Managing Director of Pal Chakravarty, Calcutta, who had come to meet Dada Sukumar. The east and west portions of the temple were constructed by Dr. Santosh Sen of Dhanbad. The yajna kund in the north-east was built with the help of Magistrate Shri Laha of Dhanbad. The kund in the north-west was made by contractor Shri Baidhnath Chatterjee, and the south-west kund by photographer Shankar Prasad Bhattacharya. Bus owners of Calcutta Routes 12A and 12B helped with the construction of the ancient foundation. A dining hall was being prepared by Shri B. B. Jha, a local resident. At that time Dada was associated with the Bengal Bus Syndicate, and much of this became possible. The rest of the construction work was managed by Dada himself, along with his lifelong friend Shri Paltu Sardar.

After the tour, we reached the northern entrance by the Damodar, where Dada showed me a staircase and said, "This round, 10–12 ft spiral staircase was built with the help of Shri Devendra Singh. If another set of stairs is made down to the waters of the Damodar, it will be a blessing for devotees." At that very moment I said, "May I start this work, Dada?" With great joy Dada blessed me and decided to call it the "Tantric Ghat." After the evening prayers I took Maa's blessings and bid farewell to Dada Sukumar.

Within two or three days, the work began. It was completed and inaugurated on 22 May 1972. Dada himself concluded the inaugural evening, in the company of other devotees, and





I stayed at the temple that night.

According to the Maa Chinnamasta Granth, it is believed that the chief of the Magru tribe, along with the Santal tribes, visited the temple during Sharad Navratri and performed yajnas, sacrifices, and prayers on the ninth day (Navami) to seek the blessings of Goddess Chinnamasta. They came from distant places to the sacred Damodar and offered pind daan for the peace of their ancestors' souls.

It is said that the temple is more than 61,000 years old. This is suggested by the way its pillars, minarets, and rocks have been put together. The ancient architecture is considered proof that this place was the ashram of Sage Medha, whose beauty is mentioned in the Chandi Granth. This serene temple was built in the dense forest by King Surath, a devotee of Goddess Chinnamasta.

Legend says that Lord Shiva resided in the temple for three days, and since then the forest around the area has remained so calm and quiet that even the most ferocious animals do not attack or kill. All live in harmony.

There is also a kund in the middle of the Damodar River whose waters are believed to have healing powers. It has healed the wounds of mind, heart, and soul for sages and devotees.

Towards the north-west of the temple there is another hot spring, which originates from a pool filled with cold water. Such are the wonders of this divine place.

To the east of the Maa Chinnamasta temple flows the Bhairav River, known for its fierce current. Yet on the day of Makar Sankranti it turns gentle and allows devotees to touch its waters before they enter the temple for prayers.

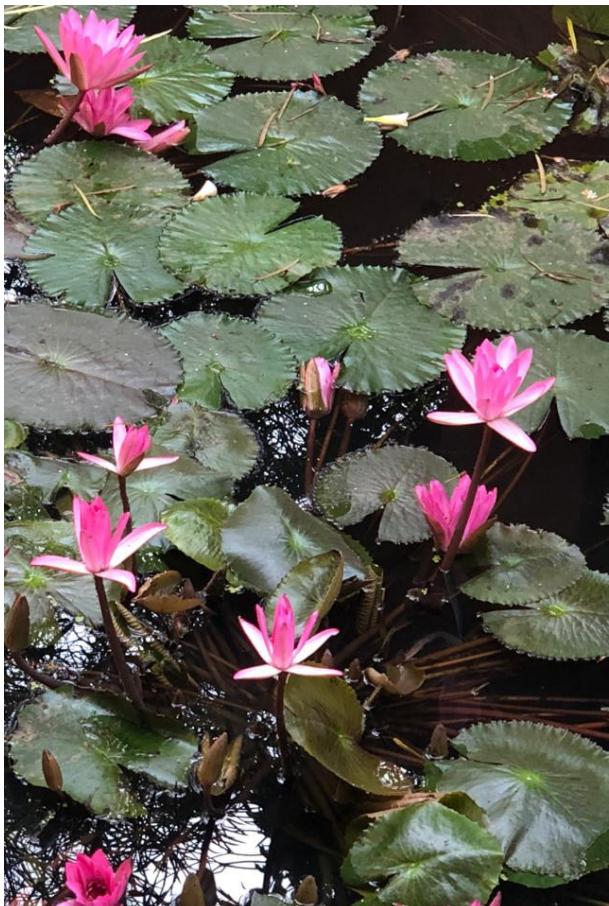
After this, I began going to the temple more often. Once, while meditating at midnight, I heard the ringing of bells. When I heard it the third time, I went to Dada and told him. With a Petromax light we inspected the temple, but we found no bells at all. Unable to understand what had happened, we went to sleep.

Dear readers, it is said that Maa Chinnamasta resides between the Damodar and the Bhairav. Their confluence creates beautiful fluorescent lights, a rare sight that devotees sometimes witness at midnight. Just as these lights appear unexpectedly, the news of my initiation also came suddenly.

One night, around 10 p.m., Dada came to my house in Ranchi and told me that I had to be initiated—that I must receive diksha—by Maa’s orders. I argued with him because I was only 32–33 years old and felt too young for such initiation. Our argument continued until 4 a.m., and in the end I agreed, but only on one condition: that I would not perform any rituals or puja.

Before this, I had received diksha from Swami Maa Smt. Radhika Devi. The mantra through which I had been initiated was given by my Guru, and I had gone to Calcutta for that diksha. In those days I used to chant the mantra at night, because the diksha was to take place in the morning.

As I was about to leave, I decided to look at my daughter Neha, who was asleep. Even in deep slumber she blessed me by raising her hand in abhay mudra. I showed this to my wife; it seemed as if Maa was blessing me through her.



The next day, in December 1972, my revered Guru, Acharya Saraswati Ji Maharaj—enlightened and learned in the Vedas, and a true devotee of Devi Maa—gave me diksha. After the initiation I visited the temples of Vimla Devi and Jagannath and then returned to Ranchi.

After some time I was transferred to Hazaribagh, and it became much easier for me to visit the temple on full-moon and new-moon days for Maa's puja. This reminds me of a miraculous event that occurred at the Tantric Ghat during that period.

Once, a bangle seller sat hopelessly on the steps of the ghat, praying to Maa: "Not one bangle was sold today. Must I leave your steps empty-handed, Maa—no food and no money?" His grief was intense; tears rolled down his cheeks, yet his prayers did not stop. Suddenly, from nowhere, a young woman dressed in a red saree appeared and asked him for bangles. When he asked for payment, she told him to go to the village temple and collect a red cloth bag of money from her father.

The bangle seller went to the Hesapuda village temple and asked the priest for the red cloth bag that the priest's daughter had given him. The celibate priest became angry and insisted





he had no child, but the bangle seller did not withdraw his request. To everyone's surprise, the priest found a red cloth bag of money lying at the altar. He gave it to the bangle seller and asked him to point out the woman.

Both men returned to the Tantric Ghat, but there was no one there. The priest mocked the poor man. The bangle seller wept and cried, "Maa, must I bear this disgrace in your heavenly abode? Why am I being subjected to this humiliation? I will self-immolate myself if I am a liar!" Before his words were finished, the Damodar swelled and rose like lightning, and a handful of bangles appeared before the two men. Seeing the sheer magnificence of the vision, both men fainted.

Such is the divine power of Maa Chinnamasta and her love for her devotees. It is said that every year, in the month of Kartik (November/December), the temple and the ghat are filled with a white mist and the sweet fragrance of flowers. Clapping and the jingling of bangles can be heard—just as on that day. After this, I continued visiting the temple even more often.

In 1975 I lost my beloved mother. She breathed her last after offering her prayers to Maa Kali. Her divine departure inspired my wife to create a samadhi in her memory. She said, "Let us make her samadhi near the Dakshin Kali temple." This helped me bear the pain of my mother's demise, and the very next day we cremated her near the Kali temple.



About twenty days before my mother's passing, I had visited that very place and felt an eerie sensation that sent shivers down my spine. I collapsed, and those around me held me steady. Little did I know that twenty days later I would perform my mother's last rites there. At this point I must also share something: a two-headed snake was often seen near Maa Chinnamasta's idol. While the temple was under construction, it would inspect the premises, slithering here and there. We had purchased the idols and the items needed for the Kali temple from Calcutta. On our return, as instructed by my Guru, we laid the foundation for the Kaal Bhairav idol. Six months and seven days later, after completing all rituals, the idol was placed inside the temple.

On the foundation day of the Dakshin Kali temple, a miraculous incident took place. The ritual sacrifice of thirteen goats was being performed, and many people had come. One of Dada Sukumar's friends from Calcutta was sitting inside the main temple. He was unhappy about the sacrifice and prayed to Maa, "O Maa, do you accept this sacrifice as an offering?" At that very moment, a goat's head flew into the air and disappeared into the yantra placed near the Goddess's idol.

That gentleman ran out from the inner sanctum and told us what he had seen. His doubts were cleared, and his devotion deepened. At midnight, the snake sacrifice was performed, and the foundations of the Panchvati and Panchmudi Ashrams were laid.

I also offered a small piece of flesh from my chest—taken under medical supervision—as a representation of human sacrifice.



I still remember that foundation day well. It seemed as if the waters of the Damodar were singing kirtan. Was it the river, or Maa's blessings? Even today I cannot say. Whatever it was, it was divine.

Around the same time, I was sitting peacefully in Rajarappa with no one around. I heard a voice, and at some distance a heavy-built man was bathing in the Damodar. After a while he approached me and asked, "Where is the Hanuman Temple?" I replied that there was no Hanuman temple in the premises. He was astonished—how could a temple complex have no Hanuman temple?

He then asked me to perform puja for him. I said, "I do not know how to perform puja." He was even more astonished and said, "You helped lay the foundation of this temple and do not know how to perform puja?" He himself performed the ritual and then suddenly disappeared. A deep realization struck me, and without delay I went to Dada and asked him to teach me the methods of puja. He smiled, remembering my earlier condition before initiation. After that, I learned the puja with my heart and soul.

While I was living in Ashok Nagar, Ranchi, Dada once came to my house, and we had a long discussion about tantra late into the night. He told me about the Tantra Saar written by Krishnavish, which describes a method of tantra sadhana.



The essence is this: during Krishna Paksha the devotee, or sadhak, must plant an amla tree and offer prayers. On the fourth day, he must chant the given mantra. The sadhak must wear wet clothes and tie a snake inside the cloth so that it touches him only lightly. He must maintain silence, chant the mantra one lakh times, and then release the snake. If the snake returns and bites the sadhak, then the mantra is said to be mastered.

I was amused by this discovery. Dada challenged me, and we agreed to attempt it. He asked a priest to come and perform the necessary rituals, but due to an unfortunate leg injury the priest could not come. Dada encouraged me to proceed, as we had resolved to do it.

I was ready for the task, but I was still skeptical about tying a snake into my clothes. Dada reassured me of my safety, and I began reading the Tantra Saar. After four days of deep study and mantra chanting, I prepared myself to offer the final prayers to Maa with Pandit Durgadutt.

At that moment, a snake appeared near the place of worship by the pind and bit me on my left side.

Pandit Durgadutt ran out in panic and called everyone. My wife's tears would not stop, but Dada consoled her, saying it was proof that I had succeeded. He said that if anything happened to me, that would be the last day of his life—and may Maa punish him if harm came to me. Later, when I regained consciousness, we completed the yajna and other



rituals.

During those four days of prayer and meditation, I saw visions of a tree, snakes, and offerings of mango and papaya. It felt as if I was offering all of this to Maa.

I remember that when I first met Dada in 1972, he predicted that in the future a temple dedicated to the Ten Mahavidyas of Goddess Durga would be built in Rajarappa. At that time, no one believed his wish. But today, after Dada has left for the heavenly abode, we remember his words and how true they were.

Dada breathed his last in 1979 at Rajarappa. In 1982, the Ten Mahavidyas temple came into existence, along with the never-ending memories of Dada Sukumar. He had his samadhi built at the Tantric Ghat, so that he could be laid to rest in the lap of Rajarappa.

In his final moments he sat in deep meditation, repeating, “I had asked for the idol of Maa Kali—why have I been given the idol of Lord Krishna?” I could not understand the meaning of his words. When we laid his holy body on the funeral pyre, his hands were still in abhay mudra, as if he were blessing us.

In the same year, Dada gave his darshan to my wife and to Tiwari Babu. She was standing near the sacrificial altar, continuously taking Dada’s name. When we rushed there, we found her kneeling before Maa’s idol with folded hands.

With Dada’s blessings I studied the Tantra Saar, which holds many secrets. Another occasion soon came. One day it was raining heavily in and around Rajarappa. I thought of using the chant “Megh ke Stambh” to stop the rain.

With great concentration I prayed to Maa and chanted, and within moments the rain stopped in Rajarappa—yet it continued everywhere else. Just then I felt Dada Sukumar coming towards me and scolding me for what I was doing. It was a tender moment; every aspect of

him was dear to me. But soon I understood the message: I was not meant to interrupt the course of nature. I stopped the chanting, and soon it began to rain again.

Such is the power of Maa Chinnamasta's divinity. These experiences strengthened my devotion, which flows like the holy waters of the Ganga in my heart—and in the hearts of devotees who visit Rajarappa even today.

The greatness of Maa Chinnamasta cannot be fully expressed in words. If you offer prayers with a pure heart, they are answered. Rajarappa is like a Kalpavriksha (wishing tree) and a Kamdhenu cow for her beloved devotees. People have been blessed with children, homes, money—whatever they prayed for.

It is said that to seek the fulfillment of a wish, a devotee should pick a stone from the Damodar and place it at Maa Chinnamasta's lotus feet. When the wish is granted, the stone should be brought back and immersed in the river. Then the devotee should offer prayers and rituals according to their capacity.

I would like to share a memory. My brother-in-law, who was posted as an A.D.H. in Bihar, was extremely worried because he could not find a suitable match for his daughter. Once, while speaking on the telephone, I asked him to come to Rajarappa and place the stone. He could not come, so he sent his wife to offer prayers.

At the river she picked up a large stone and placed it at the temple door. When someone asked why she chose such a big stone, she replied, "My wish is also big, and seeing this big stone Maa will pay more attention to my wish."

Whether coincidence or Maa's miracle, within a few days we received the joyful news of the wedding. A wonderful life partner had been found for my brother-in-law's daughter. Another incident that reflects the holiness of Rajarappa is what is known as the "Revolution of the Saints." This movement was started by Shri Bankim Babu in the districts of Bengal,





Bihar, and Orissa. The commanding officer, Subedar Nawab Kuli Khan, ordered his junior officer Reza Khan to attack Rajarappa to crush the non-violent rebellion.

A storm caused the Damodar to swell—nature's own way of protecting the temple. The merciless officer did not retreat; instead he ordered cannon fire on the temple. A fireball struck the northern part of the temple and engulfed it in flames.

Then Reza Khan began seeing visions: first the temple, then a mosque, and then a church—all roaring in flames. These visions drove him into such frenzy that he fainted. When he regained consciousness, he retreated with his troops. Such is the divine strength of Rajarappa. The temple was later renovated again in 1962 by Dada Sukumar and restored to its former glory.

In earlier times it was very difficult to reach the temple because the roads were not properly built. Later, with the help of the nearby local body, we had the road constructed. The PWD head, Shri Budhdev Singh, helped us get a proper road and pathway made.

Once, when he went to Rajarappa, I took him inside the sanctum. While he was praying, he saw an incense stick fly into the air and disappear into Maa's yantra. Sometimes I am simply mystified by how such things happen at the temple.

At this point I would like to share something that gives me great satisfaction. I am not counting achievements; I am only thinking of what Maa planned for her devotees, and how

far we have come. Today the temple premises includes many temples: the main temple, the Ten Mahavidyas temple, Shri Kaal Bhairav temple, Surya temple, Ganesh temple, Madhumati Mai temple, Mansa Mai temple, Shri Navgrah, Hanuman temple, and the Radha Krishna temple. By Maa's blessings and the strength of devotion, all this has become possible.

Maa Tara Devi once saved my life. One day, after offering prayers, I was returning when I felt as if someone was directing a torchlight from the jungle towards me. I became suspicious and went back into the temple to pray a little more.

Later, when I came out, nearby villagers told me that a large snake with a mani had been seen near the temple, and it seemed dangerous. They warned me not to go that way. It lived near a nest by the bamboo trees. This is how blessed I am—Maa saves and protects me again and again.

Sometimes old memories arise in my mind, and I feel an urge to share them with you. Once, while traveling from Madurai to Madras, I got a chance to visit a temple about 80 km from Madras. A devotee had built it and dedicated it to Maa Tripur Sundari.

I went there with a local medical student. Somehow I did not feel like leaving, but my wife had asked me to return soon because of some work. I prayed to Maa to give me a sign. The very next moment, a priest came towards me from the inner sanctum. He took a garland from Maa's idol and placed it around my neck. That beautiful red garland felt like a





protective cloak. The student told me that this was something the priest never did. I felt truly blessed, and it filled my heart with even more devotion for my Almighty Mother.

In truth, there are many incidents and moments that I have not shared in this memoir. Even today I receive letters asking whether these incidents are true. People find it difficult to believe that such miracles can happen in this age.

With this, I urge all devotees to believe in Maa's divinity and to come to Rajarappa. Help will be offered to those who wish to dedicate themselves to Maa's sadhana.

Whenever anyone comes to Rajarappa, may they remember how Maa has brought this place into existence for her beloved children. It is not merely a building or a set of walls; it is a creation of Divine Om Maa Chinnamasta. Do not think that this is my doing, or that whatever I share was done by me. No—everything happens by the will of the Supreme Power.

Unity is another name for this place. People of other religions also visit the temple and offer their devotion in their own way. In the end, all that counts is devotion. With this, I end my memoir.



Bipin Bihari Sharan
343-B, Ashok Nagar, Road No. 4
Ranchi – 834002, Jharkhand.

॥ जय माँ दक्षिणा काली ॥

स्वर्ण जयंती महोत्सव

