

The Secret Paths of the Siddhas

by R C Ganjoo

Sadhvi Shanti Puri, 73, practising medical doctor (dentist) in Austria for 30 years joined "Yoga in Daily Life" in 1977. Yoga teaching and sermon of Paramhans Swami Maheshwaranand captivated Sadhvi that ushered her to self-realization. Finally she left her home and family back in Austria and opted Sannyas in 1991 at Kailash, Rajasthan under traditional Guru- Shishya Parampara. In June, 2008, Sadhvi Shanti Puri travelled along to Badrinath, to explore the holy places of meditation and search the caves of Sri Alakhpuriji and Sri Devpuriji. She went up to Satopanth lake, 4402m, the lake of Divinity, where Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh (Shiva) used to meditate and take bath every Ekadasi (11th day of the moon cycle). It is believed that this Trinity – Creator, Preserver and Liberator – remove the sins of the world. Sadhvi Shanti Puri shared her experience in the Himalayas with R C GANJOO

"Paramhans Swami Maheshwaranand, Vishwaguruji", - The lineage of the Alakhpuriji Siddha Peeth Parampara, started in Satya Yuga from the Himalayas. The devotees of Sri Alakhpuriji had abundant siddhas in the Himalayas and elsewhere. One of the siddhas was Sri Devpuriji, in a gupha (cave) located near Svarga Rohini. Sri Devpuriji brought the message of Sri Alakhpuriji and the Siddha Peeth Parampara from the Himalayas to the world. Shivasvarup Sri Devpuriji was followed by Bhagwan Sri Deep Narayan Mahaprabhuji and Holy Guruji, Paramhans Sri Swami Madhavanand Puriji. At present the successor of the Alakhpuriji Siddha Peeth Paramparais is Vishwaguruji Paramhans Swami Maheshwaranand ji. Once Vishwaguruji Paramhans Swami Maheshwaranand ji, while meditating in brahma muhurta (morning dawn), his Guru, Swami Madhavanand ji, came to light, surrounded by several rishis in their astral bodies. It was like in a film – as the sun spread over the velvet summit of a huge mountain, it appeared as if Heaven had descended on Earth. All of a sudden, Mahasiddha Sri Alakhpuriji appeared, in the same form, surrounded by radiant light, as he had appeared to Vishwaguruji for the first time in his prayer room. He said: "I was aware of your devotion and courage of past births. This time, I called you here, so that you shall start a pilgrimage to Uttarakhand. If your faith had not been unshakable and your vision is crystal clear, rishis, living in their astral bodies in the region of Alkapuri, would not have appeared before you and bestowed their blessings. They want you to continue the dharma of the siddhas, and bestowed their blessings to you."

In 2015, it was second pilgrimage in the Himalayas of Swami Maheshwaranand, after this profound experience, Vishwaguruji started his journey towards the Himalayas. He followed the way of the river Ganges, starting from Haridwar, the 'Gateway to the Gods'; passing Rishikesh, the 'Sanctuary of Saints and Sages', in direction towards Char Dham. First he offered his devotion to Goddess Yamuna, visiting her dharmat 3185m altitude. Then he travelled to Gangotri (3048m), the abode of Goddess Ganga, meditating there in one cave in the hills. He also climbed up to the 'snout' of the Gangotri glacier, called Gaumukh (3982m), the origin of the holy river Ganga. From Tapovan, the Gangotri glacier is falling down thousands of metres, melting as the river Bhagirathi at Gaumukh. The upper part of the Ganga is called 'Bhagirathi', after the King Bhagirath, who meditated here for 5500 years to bring the Goddess Ganga in the form of the river Ganges from BrahmaLoka to the Earth. But all these wonderful and holy places were not showing Vishwaguruji the place where the siddhas lived. So he continued his pilgrimage towards Kedarnath, the abode of Shiva. What a beautiful, peaceful and divine place – with magnificent snow peaks surrounding a vast green valley! The idol in the temple of Kedarnath is a Jyotir Lingam that represents Shiva. After visiting Kedarnath, Vishwaguruji followed the road towards Badrinath, the abode of Vishnu.

After my stay at Satopanth Lake, I, climbed up further, in the direction of Svarga Rohini, the 'Stairway to Heaven', where Yudhisthira entered Svarga Loka with his dog. Before these seven glacier steps, there is a kund (basin), called Surya (Sun) Kund, 4600m, opposite to Mt. Chaukhamba (6974m) and Mt. Balkun. There was a beautiful cave, and I stayed there for some days to meditate. One evening, at sunset, I was sitting in front of the gupha (cave), chanting my mantra and observing the sunset. Suddenly out of the sun emerged a huge light form dressed in white. Immediately, I realised

that this was Sri Alakhpuriji, the Siddha Guru of my lineage, who was giving me His Darshan. He appeared exactly over the rock of the cave, showing me that, "This is the place where I blessed Sri Devpuri ji with all divine siddhis (powers). He got from me the duty to bring the wisdom of Yoga to the whole world." The vision was as strong as the light, and after a while I could even recognise the kind face of my Mahasiddha Master with long white beard and hair. It was a unique and extraordinary experience, indeed.

Sometime later, I met my Guru, Vishwaguruji in Badrinath, telling him all that had happened in Surya Kund. He was very happy about it, that the divine cave of Sri Devpuriji had now been discovered. He proposed that we should go together in the direction of the Alkapuri Mountain, on the other side of the river Alaknanda, because the cave where Sri Alakhpuriji was residing most of the time should be there. But how to find it? We started our pilgrimage early morning before sunrise, in the month of June 2016, walking towards the mystical mountain Alkapuri. Alkapuri Mountain is a huge mountain with many glaciers and sharp peaks, which from far distance look like the top of a crown. Here lies the seat of Lord Kubera, the Lord of wealth and treasurer of Lord Vishnu. The name of the capital is Alaka (sometimes also called Alakapuri). According to Kalidas, the whole area is known as the kingdom of Kubera, which has overall opulence, splendour and richness. Kubera resides here with his attendants, the Yakshas and Gandharvas. He is also the guardian of the North and a devotee of Shiva.

In the epic poem Meghaduta (which means 'Messenger of the Clouds') by poet Kalidas (4th-5th century BC), the city of Alaka mentioned in verse 7:

"You are the consolation for the tortured, oh cloud, bring my beloved greetings from me, driven out from her far by the wrath of Kubera; go to the seat of the Yaksha princes, to Alaka in their groves all the palaces shine bright and clear from the moon of the Hara (Shiva) head."

From Alkapuri's glaciers derives the Alakariver, which in a large sangam (confluence) in Lakshmvivan, joins with the Nanda river flowing from the Satopanth and Bhagirathi glaciers. After passing the holy shrine of Badrinath, in Devprayag it joins the river Mandakini, coming down from Kedarnath. Only after this sangam which is known as Triveni, the river takes the name Ganga. The mountain Nanda Devi (7816m) is the highest point in the Alaknanda basin. When Vishwaguruji and me travelled towards Alkapuri, crossing the Vasudhara waterfall and walking towards the Alaka river, we suddenly observed a cave under a huge rock, situated at the foot of Mt. Alkapuri. As we arrived there, at evening prayer time we saw a light and heard the sound of drums and fine music, though there were no musicians nearby. We were sure that all the siddhas, saints and rishis were offering their homage to Sri Alakhpuriji. On the following night, sitting in the cave in meditation while sunrise, sitting in front of the cave and fixed our eyes on the source of the river Alaknanda, Vishwaguruji had two visions of Sri Alakhpuriji: Again Sri Alakhpuri ji appeared in the form of a column of bright light, with white beard and hair, and in a white dress. After these experiences it was clear that this was the cave of Sri Alakhpuriji, who had given a clear sign of his presence. Vishwaguruji also remembered the words of Sri Alakhpuri ji in the past: "The rishis want you to continue the dharma of the siddhas." Now it is the responsibility of Vishwaguruji to continue the work of the siddhas and lead the bhaktas towards Self-Realization, that we become free from the cycle of birth and death, by giving us the wisdom of Yoga as tool towards enlightenment."

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