

## SWAMINI VIDYANANDA SARASWATI'S MAHASAMADHI

January the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 – a prominent date in the lives of most of humanity, ushering in the start of a New Gregorian calendar Year.

January the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 was also a day of great loss for the Arsha Vidya Parampara - the day on which Swamini Vidyananda Saraswati, the acarya of the long-term course at Rishikesh attained Mahasamadhi.

Swamini was doing puja daily in the samadhi shrine of Pujya Swamiji since 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022. On January 1<sup>st</sup>, she completed an elaborate puja there on the janma-nakshatra of Swami Sakshatkritananda Saraswati. Immediately thereafter, she left her body, leaving us to recall the well-known Sanskrit verse –

अनायासेन मरणं विना दैन्येन जीवनम् ।

देहि मे कृपया शम्भो त्वयि भक्तिमच्चलम् ॥

anāyāseṇa maraṇaṁ vinā dainyaṇa jīvanam

dehi me kṛpayā śambho tvayi bhaktimacañcalam

*“O Lord Shiva! Please grant me an effortless death; a life without being dependent on others; a life filled with unwavering, unshakeable devotion unto you, dear Lord!”*

She left just as we were seeing her live – a life exuding total commitment and devotion towards Ishvara and Guru, until her last breath.

During her study at the Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti, she served Pujya Sri Swamiji with total dedication, taking care of many of his requirements. At the same time, she grasped the vision with total attention as it was being unfolded by Pujya Sri Swamiji. A proof of this service and sravanam, led to her becoming a great teacher of Vedanta and Sanskrit with a clear vision and ability to communicate the same.

She was also instrumental in initiating the Sandhya Gurukulas in a number of villages across Tamil Nadu. She also taught various chantings, Vedic and non-Vedic, values, Vedic culture and stories from the puranas to children of Sandhya Gurukulas, school teachers and students of Vedanta courses.

With the Grace of Pujya Sri Swamiji, she established herself in Madurai, teaching a number of students in and around the city. Later, she moved to Swami Dayananda Ashram, Rishikesh as an Acharya, teaching students of long-term Vedanta courses.

Self-confidence and self-belief drove Swaminiji on the journey of self-discovery. Her strength and courage in difficult situations were inspirational to many. Always available for any help, Vidyanandaji was a natural giver at heart, contributing without fanfare, to the betterment of many lives during her too short a sojourn in this world. Although Swaminiji was blessed with a passing that she herself wished for and that others can only dream of, a great void is felt by her students and many others whose lives she has touched. The Parampara also mourns the loss of an irreplaceable contributor whose only wish in life was to contribute... Om Tat Sat Pictures in cover page #2