Chapter -VII.

The aftermath.
The interregnum between the passing of the Giri regime into oblivion and the advent of the Āshram order of the Dashnāmī Sannyāsīs in the administration of the twin institutions witnessed the tenures of two Receivers. Of them, Amulya Chandra Bhadurlī was the first. He was appointed on 7 July, 1925 and worked until mid-May, 1937. His efficient role in the development of the sacred complex necessitates special treatment in the ensuing discussion.

Apart from his efficiency as the administrator of the Math and its property, he was equally commendable for the keen interest he showed in the all-round development of Tārakeswar. Primarily, he actively endeavoured in 1927 to renovate the only High School in the pilgrim town. As a mark of gratitude, a marble plaque bearing his name was put up in the High School. Besides, he sanctioned substantial grants for the Girls' Primary School as well as for the repair of the cbatuspāṭhi (an institution for learning the Sanskrit language). With a view to encouraging the physical education of the students of the locality, he also sanctioned a playground for the High School, from the Tārakeswar estate. He was said to have spent up to Rs. 1200/- at a time for the development of the school during his tenure.

He was much concerned about public health at Tārakeswar, in view of its fame as a pilgrim town. He undertook special measures to keep away epidemics through proper sanitation, as well as through the inoculation of the residents and pilgrims, particularly during the pilgrimage season. Besides, an Āyurvedic centre was also set up at the Tārakeswar estate at his instance.

2. Serial Number of Order or Proceeding – 1328. Date of order – 24.5.37.

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The Chandina Sattva which was followed during the tenure of the last Giri Mohanta was abolished during his term as the Receiver. Besides, he took special care of the dharnayātris and endeavoured to lessen their plight. The tradition of the distribution of the prasād (consecrated food) of Lord Tāraknāth to the ascetics and pilgrims was also established by him. This expensive ritual, known as bhāndārā (distribution of consecrated food) is still practised within the sacred complex.

His encouragement to agricultural experiments at the Sāhāpur garden-house coincided with his interest in improved breeds of cattle. Moreover, one Hirālāl Shāw, a wealthy merchant of Calcutta, arranged for the marble flooring and decorative tiling of the temple walls during Bhāduri's Receivership.

Notwithstanding the commendable services he rendered to this pilgrim town, he could not avoid the charges brought against him and, ultimately, he had to resign. Initially, he was accused of preferring the candidature for appointment of those from his native North Bengal. Besides, his handling of the finances of the Tārakeswar Math rendered him open to accusation. However, he failed ultimately to withstand the charges, ranging from nepotism to deliberate self-projection at the cost of temple funds, brought against him.

His resignation from the post of the Receiver was followed by an advertisement seeking eligible candidates for the post. Of the applicants for the post, Mr. Justice S. Mukherjee favourably considered a retired District Judge Rāshbehārī Mukherjee, an orthodox Brāhmin and an ex-President of the Bengal Provincial Service, Judicial Branch.


4. Serial Number of Order or Proceeding –652. Date of order – 18.1.28.
The salary of the new Receiver was fixed at Rs. 500/- per month and he was required to furnish security, or a fixed deposit of Rs. 10,000/- and the balance of Rs. 10,000/- in personal security from any reliable company within 7 days of his appointment. He was, in fact, the Receiver for the estate for a short while as, within a few months, the District Judge decided on the appointment of Dandīswāmī Jagannāth Āshram as the next Mohānta of the Tārakeswar Math.

II

The appointment of Dandīswāmī Jagannāth Āshram to the office of the Mohānta at the Tārakeswar Math coincided with the setting up of a new administrative hierarchy in accordance with the order passed on 29.8.34 by the Calcutta High Court.

The new Mohānta as the Tīrtha-Guru (preceptor of the religious complex) was directed accordingly to adhere to the advice of the newly constituted Managing Committee which had also been put together following the same order.

This Bengali Mohānta was born in the district of Pābnā, now in Bānglādesh, in the month of Kārtik in 1301 B.S. He was a reputed and learned person, with a keen interest in the promotion of the learning of the Sanskrit language. Initially, Dandīswāmī Jagannāth Āshram had been the head of the Kānko Math at Kātrāsgarh, Mānbhum, for a long time prior to his appointment as the Mohānta of the Tārakeswar Math. Of all the heads of the religious institutions, he alone displayed sufficient initiative in taking over the administration of the twin institutions, when invited to do so in the changed perspective.

5. Ibid.—1320. Date of order — 18.5.37.

His interest in the promotion of the Sanskrit language materialised in the establishment of a Sanskrit College within the premises of the Tārakeswar Math in 1345 B.S. The marble plaque engraved on the southern gate of the monastery still bears witness to his achievement in this regard. The boarders of the Brahmacārī Āshram were mainly the students of this residential Sanskrit College. Scholars in Sanskrit literature who generally came from East Bengal (Bāṅglādesh) and Bihār were appointed to teach the Bengali as well as non-Bengali students of this college. The non-Bengali students were mostly from Bihār, Uttarpradesh and Āssām and this trend continues even today. It is interesting to note that these non-Bengali students often get regular allowances from their respective states even in these days. The new Mohānta did not sever his relationship with the Kānko Math in Bihār even after taking over the office of the Mohānta of the Tārakeswar Math. He endeavoured to establish a Sanskrit College there. He also enthusiastically arranged Yajnas (ritual sacrifices) on auspicious occasions at that Math.

He took keen interest in initiating remarkable changes with regard to the rituals performed over the years within the temple, immediately after his appointment as the Mohānta of the Tārakeswar Math. He was, indeed, instrumental in doing away with the animal sacrifice within the precinct of the temple particularly during the worship of the Goddesses Durgā as well as Kālī. The alternative to animal sacrifice that he insisted on is still being followed.

Despite his limited power and resources, Jagannāth Āshram tried to improve the condition of this place of pilgrimage. Permanent structures were put up around

the sacred complex during his tenure. He fought boldly against the corruption which had flourished over the years, thus polluting the sanctity of the twin institutions. Besides codifying the norms to be put into effect by the priests of the temple, he also brought the errant employees of the estate to book since they were well-known for corruption. This naturally led to a growing dissatisfaction among those employees who created trouble for the new Mobānta⁹.

He was also bent on recovering the benāmī (in the name of the other) property, in Ārrāh and Bāliā districts of Bihār, of the erstwhile Giri Mobānta in order to strengthen the finances of the Tārakeswar estate¹⁰. At the same time, he enthusiastically continued the philanthropic work that had been started during the Giri regime. He helped the people in and around the sacred complex through donations from the surplus funds of the estate when they were in distress. A few refugee Brāhmins from East Bengal (Bāṅglādesh) were granted lands for residence and, also provided with employment at the Tārakeswar estate¹¹. This perhaps spoke much of his inclination to help those who came from his place of birth.

Despite his earnest desire to change the overall atmosphere of the pilgrim town, he had to face the antagonism of a large number of local residents which, in the long run, caused him much distress. His disenchantment with the litigation in which he got himself entangled, against his will, strengthened his determination to resign in favour of his trusted disciple Dandīswāmī Hrishikesh Āshram.

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The causes of the litigation were simple. Immediately after his assumption of the office of the Mohanta, he began to think of himself as the sole possessor of the Tārakeswar endowment and its assets. Moreover, he believed that all the traditional powers allowed to the Mohantas of the sacred institution, concerning the management of the shrine, were also given to him. This he believed, in spite of his awareness that he had no control over those which were taken away by order of the court, under Sec.92. C.P.C.

Although he did not object to the power of the committee with reference to the appointment and dismissal of the Manager, Treasurer and the Accountant, he wanted them to work under him as laid down in the authorised scheme. Besides, he denied the power of the committee in relation to the appointment of the Superintendent of the estate which, according to him, had been vested exclusively in the Mohanta.

He also stuck to his standpoint that the annual budget of the estate (from 1st of Śrāvan to 30th of Āshār of a Bengali Year), prepared at his initiative, would be submitted to the committee for sanction, and once sanctioned would be the basis of the endowment for the year concerned.

This viewpoint of the Mohanta had faced opposition from his opponents, who contested the claim that the assets of the endowment had been vested in the Mohanta as its owner. Therefore, the Mohanta had neither authority over the Manager, Treasurer and Accountant, regarding their appointment or dismissal.

12. Petition on behalf of Dandīswāmi Jagannāṭha Ashram under Clause XVIII of the scheme framed under Sec.92, filed on 11 March, 1946. Dandīswāmi Jagannāṭha Ashram Vs. Śrī Śrījīb Nāyatirtha and others.
nor in matters relating to the sanction of leave and the enforcement of discipline. Besides, the ultimate authority to provide funds or to sanction budgets was always within the jurisdiction of the committee alone. Hence, following the terms of the authorized scheme would not be derogatory to the prestige of the *Mohānta*.

The District Judge, however, upheld that the committee should be treated with respect and utmost consideration as it had acted within its allotted powers in the appointment of the Manager and the fixation of his salary. The *Mohānta* was directed to be dependent on the committee for the supply of funds, and to take part in its deliberations as an important member of the committee, which was the only appointing authority with reference to everyday administration. The *Mohānta* was invested only with the authority to monitor the performance of the officers of the Tārakeswar estate including the Manager. Hence, the authority of the committee vis-a-vis the *Mohānta* had been upheld by virtue of the judgement given by the District Judge.

The judgement made it amply clear that the *Mohānta* had got himself entangled in a quarrel with the committee on flimsy grounds. The fall out of this judgement led to a disenchantment with him, as it created an atmosphere within the *Tārakeswar Math* in which he himself felt uneasy to a considerable extent. Moreover, his inability to compromise with his personal problems compelled him to resign in 1952 (1358 B.S.), after nominating his disciple *Dandīswāmī* Hrishikesh Āshram as his successor.

13. Petition of objection on behalf of Śri Śrijīb Nāyatīrtha and others filed on 9 July, 1946. *Dandīswāmī Jagannāth Āshram Vs. Śri Śrijīb Nāyatīrtha, Member and Secretary, Committee of management, Tārakeswar estate, and others.*

Dandiswāmī Hrishikesh Āshram hails from the district of Bānkurā and is still in the office of the Mohānta at the Tārakeswar Math which he had taken over at the age of eighteen in the month of Chaitra, 1358 B.S. (1951 A.D.) by virtue of the order and approval of Mr. Justice Rebati Chattopādhyāya, the District Judge of Hooghly\textsuperscript{15}. The initiation of Dandiswāmī Hrishikesh Āshram, in fact, disproves the statement in the West Bengal District Gazetteers (Hooghly) that the age-old practice of Guru-Siṣya Parampara had been abolished with the change in the order of Dashnāmī Sannyāsī at the Tārakeswar Math\textsuperscript{16}.


Also,
