

Bengali: নিত্যানন্দ Nityānanda

Hindi: नित्यानंद Nityānanda

Tamil: நித்யானந்த Nityānanta

Kannada: ನಿತ್ಯಾನಂದ Nityānanda

Urdu: نتيانند Nityānanda

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Nityananda

For other uses, see [Swami Nityananda \(disambiguation\)](#).

Pancha Tattva deities installed on a Vaishnava altar. From left to right (click on feet to go to article): Advaita Acharya, Nityananda, Chaitanya, Gadadhara Pandita, Srivasa.

Nityananda (Bengali: শ্রী নিত্যানন্দ, b 1474 CE), was a Vaishnava saint, famous as a primary religious figure within the Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition of Bengal, is an expansion of Balarama.^[1] Nityananda was Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's friend and disciple. They are often mentioned together as *Gaura-Nitai* (*Gaura*, “golden one”, referring to Chaitanya, Nitai being a shortened form of Nityananda) or *Nimai-Nitai* (*Nimai* being another name of Chaitanya).^[2] Followers often refer to Nityananda as 'Sri Nityananda', 'Prabhu Nityananda' or 'Nityananda Rama'.

According to Gaudiya-Vaishnava tradition Nityananda is an incarnation of Balarama, with Chaitanya Mahaprabhu being his eternal brother and friend, Krishna.^[3] He is considered the 'most merciful' incarnation of the *Supreme Personality of Godhead* ^[4] (a term popularized by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami).

1 Life



Sri Chaitanya and Nityananda, is shown performing a 'kirtan' (devotional song) in the streets of Nabadwip, Bengal.

Nityananda Prabhu was born to a religious Maithil Brahmin, known as Pandit Hadai Ojha and Padmavati^[5] in Ekachakra^[6] (a small village in Birbhum district of present West Bengal) around the year 1474. His devotion and great talent for singing Vaishnava hymns

(bhajan) were apparent from a very early age. In his youth, he would generally play the part of Lakshman, Rama's younger brother, in dramatic re-enactments of Lord Rama's pastimes, along with the other boys of Ekachakra.

At the age of thirteen, Nityananda left home with a travelling renunciate (sannyasi) known as Lakshmiapati Tirtha. Nityananda's father, Hadai Pandit, had offered the travelling sannyasi anything he wished as a gift. To this Lakshmiapati Tirtha replied that he was in need of someone to assist him in his travels to the holy places (he was about to begin a pilgrimage) and that Nityananda would be perfect for the job. As he had given his word Hadai Pandit reluctantly agreed and Nityananda joined him in his travels. This started Nityananda's long physical and spiritual journey through India which would get him in contact with important Gurus of the Vaishnava tradition. Apart from Lakshmiapati Tirtha, who at some point initiated him, he was also associated with Lakshmiapati Tirtha's famous other disciples: Madhavendra Puri, Advaita Acharya, and Ishvara Puri, the spiritual master of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

1.1 Jagai-Madhai episode



Gaura Nitai shrine at ISKCON temple, Delhi

The episode of Jagai-Madhai relates to Chaitanya and Nityananda. There are a few versions of the story, but the basics outline of the traditional tale is as follows:

Once while chanting the name of Krishna in the streets, Nityananda was attacked by Jagai and Madhai, two irreverent drunk brothers. Mad-

hai threw an earthen pot which cut his forehead. At this point Nityananda is said to have uttered the now famous sentence, “Merechhish kolshir kana, tai bole ki prem debona” (Shall I stop giving you love because you have hit me with an earthen pot?). Chaitanya heard of the episode, flew to a rage, and wanted to kill the brothers with his divine **Chakra**. Nityananda begged him to pardon them and they became Chaitanya’s disciples, converted by Nityananda’s compassion.

1.2 Marriage and descendants

Nityananda married two daughters of Suryadasa Sarakhela, Vasudha and Jahnava. After marriage, he settled in **Khardaha**. He had a son, Virachandra or Virabhadra, and a daughter, Ganga, by his first wife Vasudha. Virabhadra was later initiated to vaishnava rites by his stepmother Jahnava.^[7]

2 Legacy

The exploits of Chaitanya and Nityananda have had deep religious and cultural implications in Bengal. They are credited with the revival of **Hinduism** in Eastern India, plagued mainly by the **caste** system, which they denounced. Much of Vaishnava literature, regarded as one of the finest literary heritage of medieval Bengal, came from them or their disciples. Even in secular literature, their brotherly love towards each other has been celebrated.

3 Principal sobriquets

- **Nityananda** -- He Who embodies eternal bliss
- **Avadhutendu** -- The Moon of divine madmen
- **Vasudha-prana-vallabha** -- The beloved of the life-breath of Vasudha
- **Jahnavi-jivita-pati** -- The eternal divine husband of Shrimati Jahnavi-devi and the maintainer and sustainer of Her life and soul
- **Krsna-prema-prada** -- He Who bestows ecstatic love for Krishna
- **Prabhu** -- The Lord and Master of the devotees
- **Padmavati-suta** -- The dear son of Padmavati
- **Sriman** -- He of splendid transcendent majesty
- **Saci-nandana-purvaja** -- The older brother of mother Saci’s son

- **Bhavonmatta** -- He Who is maddened in overwhelming ecstatic emotions
- **Jagat-trata** -- The savior of the universe
- **Rakta-gaura-kalevara** - He Whose complexion is golden tinged with red

from the writings of Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya.

4 See also

- Chaitanya Mahaprabhu
- Gaudiya Vaishnava
- Mayapur
- Pancha Tattva (Vaishnavism)

5 References

- [1] Sen, D.; Sen, D.C. (1917). *Chaitanya and His Companions: Being Lectures Delivered at the University of Calcutta as Ramtanu Lahiri Research Fellow for 1913-14*. University of Calcutta.
- [2] Dimock, E.C. (1958). “The Place of Gauracandrika in Bengali Vaisnava Lyrics”. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* **78** (3): 153–169. doi:10.2307/595285. JSTOR 595285.
- [3] Chaitanya Charitamrita Adi-lila, 5.6
- [4] Rosen, S.J. (2004). “Who Is Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu?”. *The Hare Krishna Movement: the Postcharismatic Fate of a Religious Transplant*. ISBN 978-0-231-12256-6. Retrieved 2008-06-07.
- [5] Sen, Sukumar (1991, reprint 2007). *Bangala Sahityer Itihas*, Vol.I, (Bengali), Kolkata: Ananda Publishers, ISBN 81-7066-966-9, p.293
- [6] Chaitanya Charitamrita Adi-lila,13.61, purport
- [7] Sen, Sukumar (1991, reprint 2007). *Bangala Sahityer Itihas*, Vol.I, (Bengali), Kolkata: Ananda Publishers, ISBN 81-7066-966-9, pp.236, 321-2

6 External links

- Life Story of Nityananda
- A Biography of Nityananda Prabhu
- Nityananda Trayodasi Festival
- Lecture on Nityananda & Chaitanya: 'The Darkness Dispellers'
- Nityananda Rama at Panihati

- Nityananda Janmasthan - Nitai's birthplace
- The Lotus Feet of Sri Nityananda Prabhu
- Nityananda's Name
- Descendants of Nityananda

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