Chapter - V

Sadhu
Organisation and The Way of Life

Having taken the path to dedicate your life towards gaining immortality, May you know that the path that leads to it is that of complete surrender and dedication. Remember you are the child of immortality.

----Atharva-Veda 15.17.10

Rg - sanhita utters sadhu as going to his aim, straight, right (ii. 27.6) Pantha Sadhuh and Sadhuh - karman i.e. Rjukarma and Bhadrakarma meaning acting well ( x.81:7)

L.ityayana Srauta Sutra regards sadhu as Visvasanbhurvase Sadhukarma i.e. righteous (i.1.7).

Taittiriya-sanhita refers-Sadhu-ya i.e. rightly (v.2.12.2)1 Garuda purana says - one who is unaffected by reverence and humiliation and if humiliated do not utter foul words is a sadhu.

Sadhu is always reluctant to self aggrandisment. And is compassionate who in other's grief forgets own joy. Like a tree saves others from heat and even partakes pain in doing good for other. Mahanirvana-tantra says - who resides in devayatan, are devakalpa, determined and truthful are called sadhus. Vishnu Purana says - Kalikala (Kaliyuga), women and Sudra are called sadhus.2 According to Sabda Kalpadraum- Sadhyati nishpadyati dharmadi karyam iti sadhuh i.e. one who accomplishes dharama is a sadhu. Amarkosha refers sadhu as - Arya, Sabhya, Sajjan, i.e. cultured, civilized and gentleman.

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1 Suryakant: A Practical Vedic Dictionary, Delhi:Oxford University Press, 1981. Monier-Williams refers its use in the sense of anything directly reaching the goal unerringly, like an arrow or thunderbolt( A Dictionary of Sanskrit).

2 Hindi Visvakosha (Encyclopedia Indica). Hindi visvakosha refers sadhu as- high birth, Jina, Muni, qualified, competent- (samartha), adept, sajjan(gentleman), and sannyasi. Tripathi informs us that Hemachandra uses sadhu as one who has controlled his senses i.e. Jina or Muni.
Etymologically, *sadhu* is formed by the combination of two words, *sadh* and *u*. *Sadh* stands for - to perform and *u* for doer. Hence meaning - one who acts, performs. One who considers "I am the mine of all defects - why attribute merits to me? Ignorance also is in me" is superior to all and is a *sadhu*. The gods do not attain a portion of his sixteenth part (*Sukraniti* : II. 616-618).

In the second chapter of this *prasthana* we have discussed the categories like *Muni, Yati, Urdhvareta, Tapas, Arana, Sramana*, etc. which imply *sadhu*.

*Siddha, Bhikshu*, *Parikansin, Tapsi, Virakta, Vairangik, Santa, Aughara, Sadhaka, Atyasrami Avadhuta, Udasa, Sannyasta* etc. are some of the other categories of *sadhu*.

*Sannyasi* is the most common name for *sadhus*, but as *sa'amana* and *bhikshu* became the monopoly of *Baudhhas*, *sannyasi* became the monopoly of *Dasnamis*. Similarly *Vairagi* and *Yogi* became synonymous with *sadhus* following the *Vaishnava-achara* and *Natha-Pantha* respectively inspite of being common denotations for *sadhus* in general. Ascetic and renunciant are categories for those with almost the similar way of life in the west.

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1. Panini in *Astdhyayi* (IV.3.110.111) refers to *Bhikshusutras* -codes of conduct for *sadhus* proclaimed by *Parasarya* and *Karmandin*. *Mahabhashya* (IV.2.66) of *Patanjali* refers to *parasarino bhikshvah* (*Parasarina sadhus*).
2. *Parikansin* is a contemplative *brahmana* in the fourth stage of his life. He is the same as the *sannyasin*. The word also means a *sadhu* who devotes himself to abstract meditation or a contemplative saint (*Apte, Sanskrit-English Dictionary*).
3. *Bhikshu* literally 'beggar'. The begging of the *brahmachari* is quite a different thing from the duties of *bhikshu* in the later system of the *Asramas* (religious stages of life), when the *brahmana* in the last stage of his life, after leaving his home and family, lives on alms alone. (*Vedic Index*, Vol. II, p.104, under entry *bhikshu*, see also Vol.1: *Urahmana*).
4. The word 'asceticism' is derived from the Greek word *askesis* which meant exercise and training for the purpose of strength, skill and mastery in the athletic games. The *Webster's dictionary* (1962) defines an ascetic as 'one who lives a life of contemplation and rigorous self denial for religious purposes' or 'any one who lives with strict self discipline and abstinence'. In the same dictionary we find asceticism as 'the practice or way that can reach a higher spiritual state by rigorous self discipline and self denial'. The term also means in the *Gita*, to make, to deliver, entrust or commit to the care of: *mayi sarvani karmani sannyasadhyatmanecas*. As to the question what he renounces, apart from the world their are different answers. According to *Sannyasa Upanishad*, it is fire meaning the *Vedic*. 153
From the various explanations on the related categories of sadhus and the earlier explanation of the category sadhu itself, we now have some understanding of what sadhu is? During our anvekshana we observed that the category sadhu instead of the others, (yati being the strongest contender) is a common usage for all. The 'sannyasis' of Dasnami sampradayas, Vairages of chatuh-sampradyaa, the Yogis of Natha-sampradaya, even Jainis and Baudha bhikshus, and others of various other sampradayas including sants and udasa of the Udasina sampradaya and also those who did not belong to any sampradaya, all called themselves as sadhus. Sadhu thus has an unique status of transcending the sampradyic, panthic, margi and achara barriers and becoming an universal epithet for those who possesd by sadhutva lived a life of sadhana and tapsya. Sadhu in general means a good human being and can be applied to anyone, but it has acquired a special meaning, for those who do not lead a family life, live in isolation or in the company of other likes in a secluded places preferably forests and mountains on the banks of pond or river. There are severe constraints in attempt to define sadhu.7

Tripathi (1978) defines sadhu:

"as a person who adopts ascetic way of life as prescribed by his ordaining sect and subsects and who is pledged at least in principal to the performance of the acts of individual and social good as part of his obligation. Following this definition, a person to be called a sadhu must: (a) lead an ascetic way of life (b) engage himself in different socio-religious duties prescribed by different ordaining sects" (p.13).

He further refines his definition:

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7 In August 1957 in the Lok Sahba a Sadhu Bill urging the registration if nearly six lakh sadhus and sannyasis was moved. The intention of mover of the bill was "to urge the increasing number of imposters and blacksheep roped in saintly saffron guise from committing unsocial acts". After an animated discussion the Bill was defeated as the government found it difficult to implement it. The reasons were twofold. Firstly, the law could not drag the nuns, Buddhists, Jaina and Christians who had renounced the world to line up with the sadhus (although this could have been solved by taking the meaning of sadhu to include them also, which at functional level exists) at a registration office. The very idea of registration was mundane to those who had left all social conventions. Secondly, the basic question was to define the terms ‘sadhu’ and sannyasis, in terms of law. It was found an impossible task; for once taken to sannyasa, individual cases to have antecedents.vide Bhagat.
"to become a sadhu, one has to satisfy two primary criteria namely, initiation into a sect and ritual disaffiliation from one's household. Initiation involves three processes which are as follows: (1) application of a sectarian mark on the forehead (2) Wearing a sectarian garb (3) Recitation of sacred principle, called Mantra which is ritually communicated to the novice at the time of initiation by his perceptor. Such persons who do not satisfy the above two conditions but are founders of some sect may also be called sadhus. Anand Murti, Rajnesh, Maharshi Mahesh Yogi are sadhus of this category" (1990 : 2).

This definition which is to the best of our knowledge solitary systematic definition of sadhu lacks on several counts. It stands only for sampradayi sadhus undergoing "ritual disaffiliation" (i.e. praisha mantra sanskara or virya or virja homa sanskara) from "household" through initiation" (i.e. disksha) and following a particular achara. But we have come across sadhus who did not belong to any sampradaya, achara, pantha or marga leading a solitary life into intense sadhana and tapisya. Tripathi attempted to fill this lacuna through adding to his definition, "the founders of some sects". But we came across several sadhus at kumbha mela of Prayag and Haridwar as well as in the caves on the way to Badrinath, who did not recognize any guru and were yet in intense sadhana and are also not founder of any sampradaya or pantha.

On mentioning that, it is through guru-diksha that one should undertake sadhana, otherwise all sadhna is fruitless, i.e. Sampradayahina nishphalah mantrah, they said they are not doing this for any phala(fruit). They are not performing any sadhana but what they are doing is all due to because of they being filled with the thought of it and are unable to do anything else. One of them near Badrinath cited the example of Ramkrishna Paramahansa as a sadhu of their category. We further referred that Ramkrishna Paramahansa was given the diksha by Totapuri in the formal sense. To this the answer was that Totapuri on knowing the siddhis of Ramakrishna Paramahansa came to him and offered diksha, as he found in him the
true sannyasi. At that time the sannyasis were of such high standard that in order to keep the purity of the institution of sannyasa intact were always in search of the right adhikari. Totapuri found so in Ramakrishna Paramahansa. A few of them said that if someone approached them in the similar way they may consider to have diksha. A few of them said that they don't consider themselves to be adhikari for diksha until such situation arrived, till then they have no option but to pray and wait.

A very wide meaning is given to sadhu in Matsya Purana (144.23.24). It defines the four asramas as follows--The Brahmachari is one who tries to be useful to his perceptor by the devine means (learning) and in this he is called sadhu "one who attains"-sadh, "to attain". the Grhastha is sadhu due to sadhana and karana (means and purpose). Further, Vaikhanasa is sadhu in the forest, due to the reason of penance; the yati, who strives (yat to strive), is sadhu due to practice of yoga; and sannyasa is the discarding of all rituals.

Through our anvekshana and above analysis of other pakshas we came to regard sadhu as any person possessed by Vairagya and (a) leading a pious way of life (b) leading a pious way of life and is in process of sadhana (c) is in process of sadhana through Guru (d) is in process of sadhana through Guru in guruparmpara (e) has undergone the praisha-mantra sanskara (obviously through Guru may or may not be in guruparampara). In this prasthana we are dealing only with the sampradayi sadhus of selected sampradayas viz. Saivachari sadhus (sannyasis) of Dasnami sampradaya and Vaishnavachari sadhus (Vairagis) of Chatu -sampradaya and to an extent udasas of udasina sampradaya.

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* We came across sadhus who believed in Guru but not in guruparampara, for them guruparampara was binding, while is against the notion of sadhuva, i.e. vairagya or sannyasa.
During our *anvekshana* we found that *sadhus* generally used the epithets, a sort of designation. like *Srotriya, Brahmanshtha, parahansa, parivrajak, acharya, mahamand eleshura*, etc. *srotriya* means one who understands the meaning of Veda. *Brahmanishta* is one who know *Nirguna and Saguna paramatma. Paramahansa* is one who knows permanent and non-permanent elements. *Parivrajak*-who is not attached to any form. These explanation was provided to us by Swami Vishnu Puri, *ardha-kumbha, Prayag.*

**Sampradayi sadhus**

*Sampradayi* sadhus are organised in various asramas, mathas, *amanayas, peethas, sangha samaja parishads and akharas* through their *marhis*. These institutions exist in continuity through *guruparampara* taking the shape of *sampradaya* over a period of time. The existence of asramas is oldest among them. These institutions alongwith family tradiions have kept alive the Sruti parampara and have acquired, preserved and transmitted the knowledge created over the milleniums since the time of the first utterances of the *vedic sanhitas*.

We discovered during our *anvekshana* that among the *Dasnamis* as well as *Chatu sampradaya, matha* is the most prevalent place for residence alongwith *akharas*. The *sadhus* who concentrated on scholarly pursuits alongwith sadhana are called *sasvradharis* (holders of knowledge), wheras the other who are protectors of their *sampradaya, Pantha, achara* and *marga* concentrate on military aspect alongwith *sadhana are sastradharis* (holders of arms). The first *jati* of sadhus reside mainly in *mathas*. They also reside in *asrama, amanaya, peetha* etc.°

**Asrama**

_Asramas_ have a history of unknown antiquity. The _Mahabharata_ informs us of

° Among _Chatu sampradayas_ it is generally called _sthala, sthana_, etc.
numerous *asramas*, where pupils from distant part gathered for instruction around some far-famed leader. A full fledged *asrama* is described as consisting of several departments which are enumerated as follows (1) *Agnisthana*, the place for fire worship and prayers; (2) *Brahma-sthana* the department of *Veda*; (3) *Vishnusthana*. the department of teaching *Raja-niti Arthaniti* and *Varta*; (4) *Muhendra sthana* (Military section) (5) *Vivasvata sthana* (Department of Astronomy) (6) *Somasthana* (Department of Botany) (7) *Garudsthana* section dealing with transport and conveyances. (8) *Kartikeya - sthana*, section teaching military organization, how to form patrols, battalions and army. *Naimishya, Kanva, Vyasa, Vasishtha, Visvanmitra* and *Bhardva* are some of the famous *asramas* mentioned in *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*. We visited the *Bhardva asrama* at Prayag (Allahabad), which now exists without its splendour mentioned in *Ramayana*. We encountered the *asramas* of various *rsis*, at Pushkar (Rajasthan) and at Rishikesh, Haridwar and Kashi (Varanasi). We had an opportunity to stay at *Kailash Ashram*, Rishikesh, which provided us with insights and details of the life of *sadhus*. Only *Naishthika brahmacharis* and *sannyasīs* are the residents of the *asrama*. But it fits more into the explanation of *matha* rather than *asrama*, which is true for almost all the *asrama* existing in contemporary times.

*Asrama* forms through *a* and *srama*. *Srama* means, working hard, labour, toiling and stands for *maryada* (boundary of behaviour and act). Thus *asrama* means living within one's own *maryada*. *Asarma* is related to the stages of life as mentioned earlier. One needs to be within one's own *maryada* of *asramas*. We came across the category *purva asrama* during our *Anvekshana*, which stood for the previous stage of life, e.g. the *purvasrama* of a *grastha* is *brahmacharya* and its welfare and responsibility for material sustenance lies upon it. In *mund. Up.* (ii, 1.7) the observances of asramas are referred to as *tapas, sradha, satyam brahmacharya*, and *vidhi*. 

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**Matha**

*Matha* - means in *sanskrit* - a hut, cottage, the retreat, hut or cell of a sadhu. 'Madhati' means to dwell. *Matha* stands for a place where the students are getting education. During the medieval period the most important educational agency of the time was the *matha*, which was really hostel or hall for students. *Mathas* were free feeding houses, where the poor and the infirm found board and lodging. (Venkataswara 1986 : 261). In *Panchatantra* direct reference to a *sadhu* institution called *matha* as a place where *sadhus* reside is made. Ghurye (1953 : 42) suggests that the term *mathayatana* appearing in the *Panchatantra* (1.4; 2:1) was a "monastic-centre" located either in some isolated place or in a town attached to a temple of *Mahadeva*, i.e. *Siva*.

Even in contemporary times as revealed by our survey of several *mathas*, the free feeding and lodging is provided by many of them to elderly, poor, infirm and certainly to *sadhus*, who are travelling across the country on their *yatra*. In these *mathas*, the staying arrangement for a *sadhu* is a matter of right and *mathas* have to compulsorily provide their hospitality to them. Although, the *mathas* have different rules for the period of stay of a *sadhu*.

If the *matha* belongs to same *peetha*, then it is presided over by a *peethacharya*, e.g. *Kailash Ashram’s peethacharya* is Swami Vidyananda Giri. The *mathas* are generally residence of the disciples of the *peethacharya* of a particular *sampradaya*. *Kailasa Ashram* belongs to *Dasnami sampradaya*. One peculiarity of this particular *matha* is that it only provides the *diksha* of *naisthika brahmacharya* and not of *brahmacharya*. Hence any *Antevasi*...

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10 Appadurai (1977:58), mentions the role of *mathas* in the power relations viz. the king and the general people in the medieval period in South India. For further historical details on *mathas* as "broadcasters of culture", refer "Venkateswara, 1986."
of the *matha* has to be *dikshita* by some other *Guru* as *brahmachari* and then with his permission, he can come to the *Kailasa Ashram* for *naisthika brahmacharya diksha*. This rule, we were informed was being made, to enable the *matha* to run for the higher learning open only to those with intention to be *sannyasis*. The *matha* has its own printing press and has published several works in Sanskrit. Swami Vidyananda Giri has a good reputation of being a scholar of high order in the Rishikesh Hardiwar region and has himself authored works on *Vyakarana* and *Darsana*. In Haridwar the *Dasnami sannyasa asrama* runs on the similar pattern.

In the mathas where learning plays an important role (e.g. *Kailasha Ashram* Rishikesh), one important designation is that of *Acharya*. The sadhus who are called as *acharyas* in a *matha* are supposed to be masters of their *anusasana* (discipline) like *vyakarana, darsana*, etc. Another distinctive method adopted in the process of learning is that the *antevasis*, who themselves are in the process of learning teach the parts, which they have already learnt to other other *antevasis* who have not yet learnt them.

It is believed that a person establishing a residence for *sadhus* ascends to "highest" regions of heaven". *The Bhagvati Purana* mentions:

"having carefully built, a furnished *matha* with rooms for sleeping and sitting should at an auspicious day be dedicated to sadhus. The *matha* must not be built during the famine and in auspicious days."

The establishment of *matha* is one of the recognised modes of charity within the *Ishapurva dharma*. This paved the way for the establishment of large and affluent *mathas* in course of history. In contemporary times too the prosperous members of the sampradaya to which *matha* belongs influenced by the spiritual or intellectual power of the *Acharya* or *Mahant* of the *matha* donate huge amounts.\(^\text{11}\)

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\(^\text{11}\) Sinha and Saraswati observe, "From the total number of *mathas* established after independence it is obvious that the trend is not altogether unsatisfactory. For, in the past two decades they are being opened at the rate of 2 per year. If this is compared with the building of temples in city or the opening of sanskrit *pathsalas* and such other traditional institutions, we may find that the monastic institutions do not lag behind. Comparing it with opening of schools and colleges, hospitals and such other welfare institutions of the secular kind, the monastic institution may out number them individually. At any rate this establishes that the religious institutions have not lost ground at this stage of modernization of Kashi". (p.58)
We observed that the respect a sadhu commands depends on the degree of tapas or sadhana performed by a sadhu, siddhis acquired in the process, the humility in nature, duration of sadhu period, age, etc. The naishthika brahmacharis command more respect than others. In the matha or akhara the administrative position of an individual sadhu never overrides the factors mentioned above.

**Mandalesvara**

During our anvekshana we discovered another dimension to this whole process. Any sadhu, particularly among Dasnamis when acquires reputation either due to his spiritual prowess or intellectual strength or both, the disciples starts flocking around him. When the popularity of such a sadhu acquires a certain level, the mahanta and mandaleshwaras residing in mathas or akharas and being their acharya or mahant initiate the process to recognize such sadhu as mandaleswara. Mandalesvara literally means the king of a certain Mandala (can be either geographical space or group of people). To us it was explained as a sadhu who has a following among a mandala (group) of other sadhus. The mandaleswaras are formally recognized by akharas and other mandalewaras by putting a shawl over the sadhu by them (mahant in case of akhara). The mandaleswara thus recognized then gives samashti (collective east to the fellow mandaleswaras and the entire akhara to which they belong). This whole ceremony takes place during the kumbha melas, some of the ceremonies were attended by us. The prevalent name for such ceremonies is bhandara which in different form is prevalent among Chthi sampradayis. There are two types of bhandara- 1) vyashti and 2) samashti. In the vyashti form only sadhus of a particular akhara participate. In samashti form the other akharas and their sadhus also participate.

We came across several mandaleswara who did not reflect any spiritual or intellectual
power and have become so by the sole reason of their being able to organize samishti, which requires huge amounts, during the kumbha mela. These mandaleswaras reflect the degeneration of an otherwise still a very effective, powerful, true to its vocation, and popular institution.

Our anvekshana revealed that each akhara has several mandaleswaras attached to it. Akhara thus plays a central role in the organisation of sampradyi sadhus. Among the Dasnamis there are more than a hundred mandaleswaras, who are very influential and command respect and popularity (some of them even more than the Sankracharyas). The mandaleswaras are paramhansa sadhus which the sankracharyas are not hence this makes them spiritually of higher degree. But formally each of them accept the leadership and superiority in Sankracharyas. Each akhara has its acharya mandaleswara, who presides over the diskha of sastradhari (holders of sastra) sadhus apart from sastradharis, (holders of arms). The latter can also take diksha from any other sadhu of the same order. These acharya mandaleswaras are highly respected and command almost equal status to that of Sankracharyas. We came across mahamandaleswaras, during our anvekshana. One of the explanations which was provided to us that regarding what maha mandalesvara means is mahamandaleswara is one, whose own sishya (disciple) in his own life time has acquired the status of mandaleswara. These mandaleswaras and mahamandaleswaras run huge mathas and during the kumbha mela organize huge camps with splendour. They are known for their scholarly pursuit and learned discourses, which are quite popular. Acharya mandaleswaras lead aakharas during the Shahi-snana at Kumbha-mela. In many of the mathas mandalesvaras play the central figure in the "structaration" of the mathas. The internal organisation of matha largely depends on the personality of its head.
Struggling Transplantative Process

Another striking feature, which we discovered was that many of the mathas have registered themselves as "Trusts" to avoid intrusions from the state through, various legal wranglings created through "secular constitution". Still several mathas which have not registered themselves as trusts run themselves as originally conceived. Many of them are succumbing under the pressure to get themselves registered as "Trust" in order to protect their property from "secular state". It becomes difficult for the mathas to protect themselves from the state intrusions and its subsequent control. Sri Panchayati Akhara, Mahanirvani in its 'registration of trust' has clearly defined. Sri-mahanta, Mahanta, Karobari (secretary) Kothari, Thanapati, Ramta pancha etc., Sri pancha and executive is organised through panchayati method, where their duties and rights are clearly defined. What was striking is that these institutions structured in the panchayati spirit had to make modifications to suit the transplanted "democratic structures" through the constitutional framework and law.

Identity of Sadhu

We met many sadhus possessing ration cards and voter-identity cards as proof of their citizenship. The sadhus informed us that during the Ayodhya movement sadhus blame conscious of their voting rights and started participating in the electoral contests. Some of them even contested elections.

It was stated to us by various Dasnami sadhus that the identity of sadhu is of Brahma which is indefinable resting in 'Sruti through neti-neti that is, that which has no end. This conflict is resolved through the concept of two forms of behaviours, the first parmarthika and the second Vyaraharika. Parmarthika is dealing with spiritual aspects whereas Vyavaharika with Loka hence it is also called Loka Vyavahara. The sadhu in his chitta has stated firmly
the notion of his being Brahma and is doing the other activities of loka-vyavahara, which
collects as Vyavaharika dharma i.e. deha-dharma and sampradaya, marga or pantha
dharma. This Vyavaharika dharma leaves no sanskaras on his chitta which is stated in
Brahma - chaitanya to universal or absolute consciousness). Hence, even though a sadhu is
involved in loka-vyrahara, he remains untouched by it due to the rigroisty of his sadhana.
The structure of matha and the related other activities as mentioned above fall under the
category of loka-Vyvahara.12

Managing matha

The management of matha is of three kinds. (1) Svayatana or Maurasi in which the
office of the Sri mahanta is given to the disciple of the existing mahanta who, moreover,
usually nominates him as his successor; (2) Panchachyatan in which the
office is elective, the presiding mahanta being elected by an assembly of sadhus; and (3) Hakimi - the appointment of
presiding mahanta is rested in the ruling power of the party which has endowed the temple
(Sinha and Saraswati 1978; 44-45).

Mathas are organized on heirarchical pattern by sadhu office bearers. The apex
authority rests in the mahant. All powers rest in him. Below him are the following
office-bearers, (1) Adhikari; he is deputy matha head, (2) Kotwala (provost) (3) Mukhtiyara
: He looks after the legal affairs of the matha and keeps necessary documents. (4) Kothari :
(quarter-master) (5) Pujari (priest) (6) Parbhatiya : He cleans puja utensils and helps the
priest. Major areas of matha administration and management are: (1) Maintenance of antevasi

12 The use of equipments in running of the affairs of matha and akhara is quite prevalent e.g. watches, record
players, electricity, telephone, public transport, etc. Tridandi Swami, who we visited at the Prayag ardha kumbha, 1995, follows a very rigorous sannyasi life.
he always lives on the bank of a river, do not use electricity, washes his own clothes and sleeps on floor of
kusha (type of grass) bed, even at the age of above ninety years.
register. In this the place of origin of the inmates are recorded. It include address, his pre-diksha name, his age, his sadhu name etc. (2) Arrangement of the boarding and lodging of the guest sadhus (3) Account maintenance of the asset and liability of the matha. (4) Maintenance of expenditure and purchase account, litigation and account maintenance of the offerings required (5) Resolution of intra-matha and inter-matha disputes (6) Prakashan Vibhaga publishing department (7) Karyalaya (office), which keeps all the records including that of the grhasthas attached to matha. We found almost similar pattern among the akharas as well Tripathi (p.4) mentions the first five Kailash Ashram had prachara vibhaga also which dealt with the propagating of Ashrams ideals.

Organisation of mathas

Sankracharya established the four mathas at four corners of the country and laid down rules for their governance under Mathamnayasetu, a text prepared by Sankracharya for four mathas. These four mathas are also known as four dhama and are important mathas, to be visited compulsorily in one’s life time. We are giving the details below as given in Mathamnayasetu of Shankracharya in the appendix of Sri Sankara Digvijaya of the four amanayas also known as mathas:
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<td>Adivaraha and Kamakshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brahmachari</td>
<td>Svarupaka</td>
<td>Prakasaka</td>
<td>Ananda</td>
<td>Chaitanya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vakta</td>
<td>Samaveda</td>
<td>Rgveda</td>
<td>Atharvaveda</td>
<td>Yajurveda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahavakya</td>
<td>Tat tvam asi (Ch.Up.6.8.7)</td>
<td>Prajnananam Brahna (Ait.Up.5)</td>
<td>Ayam aima Brahma (Man. Up)</td>
<td>Aham Brahmasmi (Br.Up.1.4.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area governed</td>
<td>Sindhu, Sauvira, Saurashtra, Madarashtra and other areas covered in the west.</td>
<td>Anga (Bhagalpur) Banga (Bengal), Kalinga (Area between Orissa and Madras) Magadha (Bihar) Utkala (Orissa), Varbara (Jungle area)</td>
<td>Kuru (Delhi and adjoining area)Kashmir, Kamboja (Punjab) Panchala etc.</td>
<td>Andhra, Dravida, Karnataka, Kerala, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ankita pada</td>
<td>Asrama and Tirtha</td>
<td>Vana and Aranya</td>
<td>Giri, Parvata and Sagara</td>
<td>Sarasvati, Bharati and Puri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tirtha</td>
<td>Gomti</td>
<td>Mahodadhi (Sea)</td>
<td>Alkananda</td>
<td>Tungabhadra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampradaya</td>
<td>Kitvara</td>
<td>Bhogavara</td>
<td>Anandavara</td>
<td>Bhurivara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gotra</td>
<td>Avigata</td>
<td>Kashyapa</td>
<td>Bhrgu</td>
<td>Bhur bhuvah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acharya</td>
<td>Hastamalaka</td>
<td>Padmapada</td>
<td>Tortaka</td>
<td>Sureshvara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from this, Sankracharya in Seshmanayasetu mentions some other mathas or peethas. The text is lost. Three mathas or peethas are mentioned in the appendix of Srisankaradigvijiya under the title seshamanaya as follows:
Amanaya or matha or peetha | Uradhvamnaya or Sumeru matha | Atmanaya or Mahan parmatma matha | Nishkala Amnaya or Sahasrakardiyati matha
---|---|---|---
Kshetra (area) | Kailasa | Nabah sarovara | Anubhuti
Adhisthata deva (presiding deity) | Niranjana and Maya | Paramhansa and Manasi Maya | Visvarupa and Chichhakti
Vakta | Sukshmaveda | - | -
Pada | Satya and Jnana | Yoga | The sandals of guru
Tirtha | Manasa | Triputi | Listing of good sastras
Sampradaya | Kashi | Satvatosha | Satsishya
Acharya | Isvara | Chetana | Sadguru

Ghurye holds that Dasnami sannyasis fall under three categories viz. Dandi, Paramnansa and Naga. This classification is not correct and suffers from category-chaos as Ghurye himself puts it. We have attempted such a classification later in this chapter. Here we want to mention that Dasnamis are sadhus belonging to Dasnami sampradaya, whereas brahmachari, dandi and paramhansa are stages in the life of a sadhu. One important feature which we encountered during our stay with Dasnamis is that they greeted with the pronunciation of "Om Namo Narayana," Narayana is considered to be a Vaishnava deity. Ghurye(p.87) informs that dandis of the padas Asrama, Bharti, Sarasvati and Tirtha greet with `Namah Sivaya' (We could not verify this).

Naradaparivrajakopunishad enunciated the way of sannyasa-diksha followed by these sadhus. The main sanskaras are sradha, savitri-mantra and Virja homa. Dandi sannyasis hold danda (made of bamboo shaft on whose upper part is tied Yajnopavita) [sacred thread] and saffron cloth). The danda is covered by saffron cloth in most of the cases. Dasnami sannyasis of only tirtha, asrama and sarasvati pada can be dandis.

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Brahmacharyasrama samipya grhi bhavet, grhi bhutva vani bhavet, vani bhutva prabhajet: Sannyasa asrama should be entered through the other asramas. The significance of Sannyasa asrama is enhanced as one can enter it directly from brahmacharya asrama (Tripathi 1988: 98) Those who give away danda within seven days of sannyasa-diksha are called tyakta dandis. They are of two types viz. paramahansa and naga. As mentioned earlier, mandalesvaras are paramhansa sadhus, whereas Sankracharyas are dandis. Paramhansa are called digambaras also and are both sastradharis (holders of sastra) and sastradharis (holders of arms).

Among the Chatuh sampradayis, the abode of sadhus is known as sthana or sthala. mutt or matha, astara, sangal etc. But matha is the most prevalent form of their residence, and is run" on the pattern as explained earlier.

Akharas

The akharas are a special type of organisation of sadhus who are on the one hand are well versed in sastras and on the other hand they are well equipped and trained in arms (Agratah chaturvedah drshtatah sasrama dhanech, dvabhyami adih samyasmi sapena cha khadagena cha).¹³

Sarkar considers madhi as the recruiting ground for sadhus, the Dasnami sadhus, excepting the dandis. admitted are divided into 52 madhis - also known as dhunis.¹⁴ In an


¹⁴ Ghurye (op.cit.,p.119) writes "Every Akhara is further divided into eight such units called 'davas'. A dava according to best information we could sift appears to be a quarter. And as there were eight quarters in the universe the number of davas is said to be eight. In the formation of these 'davas', we gather, the particular order of the Dasnamis into which a sannyasi is originally ordained plays an import part. What it is exactly we have been unable to ascertain.

There are 52 Marhis, which were originally distributed as follows according to Sarkar 57: Under the Giris 27, Under the Puris 16, under the Bhartis 4, under the Vanas 4; under the lamas 1. For the detail list of this marhis, refer, sarkar, pp.57-58.
akhara all the 52 Madhis - also known as dhunis are grouped under 8 davas means claim. Thus through rotation each dawa gets a chance to elect Sri Mahant of a particular akhara during kumbha. We found during our anvekshana that all the Dasnami sadhus in some or the other form are related to akhara. The sastradharis (armed) and sastradharis except Dandi's who generally belong to the tradition of four peethas forming direct guru parampara from Sankracharya. Akhara is derived from Akhanda, which means organised.

There are seven principal akharas of Dasnamis as recognized by the report of 1989 Kubha - mela administration. In 1995 Kumbha mela at Prayaga and 1998 Kumbha-mela, Haridwara, the same were given the status of principal Akharas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Akhara</th>
<th>Ishta-deva</th>
<th>Head office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Juna or Bhairava</td>
<td>Dattatreya (bhairava)</td>
<td>Kasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avahana</td>
<td>Ganapati Dattatreya</td>
<td>Kasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niranjâni</td>
<td>Kartikeya</td>
<td>Prayaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mahanirvana</td>
<td>Kapila</td>
<td>Prayag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agni (attached to Juna)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akhanda (attached to Niranjani)</td>
<td>Surya</td>
<td>Kasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ananda (attached to Mahanirvani)</td>
<td>Ganesa</td>
<td>Kasi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Above classification reveal that there are four independent akharas and three are attached. Apart from these there are Alkhiya, Sukhada and Gudada akharas attached to Juna.

At the time of kumbha mela we encountered several akharas apart from those mentioned here. Chatuh-sampradayas have seperate organisation of akharas. One striking feature which came to our notice was that the sadhus of Nirvani akhara fold their jata (bundle of hair) on
the right, Niranjani in the middle and the Juna on the left. The sadhus of the Juna akhara are very particular about their dhunis (holy fire). One of the naga sadhu of the Akhara informed us that dhuni is the symbol of naga existence. It teaches svavalambana (self-reliance). A naga with 'dhuni is not dependent on anybody else. We found that naga of Juna assert their individuality more than other nagas. They are more strict in following the achara and remain naked most of the time. On the other hand nagas of the Udasina akhara were more polite and humble.

**Panchayati Organisation of Akharas**

As explained earlier among the sadhus, the succession of matha or akhara is based on three principles (1) Swayatana or Maurasi, (2) Panchayatana and (3) Hakimi. The Panchayati form is accepted by Akhara. It is essential for Akharas to include panchayati in their name. During our anvekshana, we found that akharas in their full name include the epithet Panchayati. The complete name of Mana Nirvani Akhara is Sri Panchayati Akhara Mahanirvani. Panchayati means that the organisation is elected through consensus and unanimity. In this process, discussions over a prolonged period of time takes place and through discussions among the sadhus, the pancha is elected. This election actually takes place at the dava level and not at the level of akhara as a whole. Dava is claim by a group of marhis numbering 52 and divided in 6 or 4. It is at the level of marhi that the actual election takes place. The marhis are distributed all over the subcontinent and the dava method, hence provides representation, as per the region. Dava literally means 'claim'. The unit whereby madhis combine to assert their claim in the organization of the akhara is called Dava. Once the davas are organized they become important only for the purpose of elections. For, the Sambhu pancha elects Sri mahanta one from each dava and accordingly the number of Sri
mahantas depends upon the number of davas an akhara possesses. These eight or four Sri mahantas thus become the representative of all the 52 Marhis. Sri mahantas appoint karobaris, each from their respective davas; and alongwith the other members of different marhis, known as dhunibala, constituting a body known as Sri Pancha which is the administrative head of an akhara.

We observed that sadhus all the time are on yatra, mainly to various tirthas. The only period in which they stay at one place is chatur-masa the four months of rainy season. The period in which they cannot travel, the period is utilised in svadhyaya (self study) and manana. The entire moving population of an akhara is divided into a number of small units called jhundi. For each jhundi one senior sadhu is selected as a mahanta by the Sri Pancha. The jhundi mahanta is duty-bound to work under the instructions from Sri-mahanta. The Sri Pancha also appoints thanapati, one from each dava, to look after the properties of the akhara. Therefore, the number of thanapati also depends on the number of davas in an akhara. One may hold the office as the thanapati for the whole of his life. The decision regarding any matter can be taken only when all the four or eight Thanapatis assemble and reach an agreement among themselves. No single thanapati can take discision independently. The posts of thanapati is very important and responsible; and hence it is usually given to a senior trustworthy sadhu who have retired from the office of Sri pancha. Thus in his lifetime a sadhu of an akhara holding the highest post of Sri pancha has to come down to the post of thanapati to work under those who were once his subordinates. The organization of the akhara is such that there is no room for the pride of power. At every step the absolutism of an individual is curbed. No discision, whether big or small, can be taken by any individual at any level. Although the council of the Sri pancha, distributed in jhundis, tours eight months
in a year (encamps at one place during chatur-masa i.e. the four months of rainy season) they remain in touch with their main centre or akhara where the thanapatis manage offices. The Sri pancha has the authority of appointment and dismissal of of the thanapati or any other authority in the centre or the branches of akhara. Finally, it is the larger council of the nagas known as Sambhu Pancha which is the supreme body to decide all matters of vital interest to the akhara.

During our anvekshana the panchayati spirit is quite visible in the working of akharas. The akharas have formed an all akhara organisation called Akhara Parishad, whose secretary is elected by akharas and then nominated to the parishad. It is Akhara Parishad which negotiates over various issue with government and other bodies. During the ardha kumbha, mela, Prayag the Akhara Parishad decided that the Shahi-snana, undertaken by naga sadhus by proceeding to sangam, the meeting point of Ganga yamuna and Saraswati (now disappeared) in huge procession (many of the Sadhus ride in elephants and horses and display their armoury) will not be undertaken as the arrangements at mela for the sadhus was not satisfactory. This boycott by sadhus of the snana (bath) on an auspicious day on the issue of negligence by administration created a furore. The public opinion turned against the administration as the sahi-snana is considered to be a holy and pious activity essential during the Kumbha mela. The largest gathering of humanity takes place at these days.\textsuperscript{15} Later administration took cognizance of the complaints and sadhus got ready for the second Sahi-snana The whole process of interaction for the cause of sadhus was done by the office-bearers of the Akhara Parishad on behalf of the sadhus alongwith some prominent sadhus.

What is called madhi among the Dasnamis is the Dvara for Chatu-sampradayis. The

\textsuperscript{15} More than one crore people had gathered at ardha kumbha mela, Prayag, on mauni amavasya, an auspicious day whose merit enhanced for falling on Monday.
52 dvaras among the four so\textsuperscript{16} sampradayas is distributed as follows: Ramanandi-36; Nimharka-12; Madhva-2 and Vishnuswami-2.

The organization which binds the sadhus of dvaras together at close interactional level is akhara. The Viashnava sadhus are organized into three anis and 57 dvaras. The three Anis are further grouped under eight akharas, and divided into eighteen sections.

The sadhus in the Akhara are known as akharamallas or Rakami. They follow strictly the rules of Akhara. The rules and regulations of the sampradaya regulating mathas and asramas are not binding on them. The Akharamallas organisation is panchayatan A Vaishnava naga passes through seven stages of Yatri, Chhora (in these two stages the naga is supposed to serve the guru and the akhara and pursue studies), Bandagidara, Hurdanaga looks over the activities of akhara and receive and master training in arms). Mudathiya (is the advanced stage of the previous two and looks after accounts) Naga (The duties of a naga are related to administration and protection of akhara, and the seventh and final stage is that of atita. Atita is always absorbed in worship and look-after the spiritual well being of the Akharamallas. They are concerned only with the important issues of the sampradaya.

From the nagas and the atitas, the Sadar (Chief) naga is selected by pancha. He is offered kanthi (beads), a Katori (cup) and some other presents by pancha. Kotavala is accountable to Sadar naga who forms a jamata and wanders to various places for twelve years to propagate Vaishnava dharma and collects resources for the Akhara. A Maha Atita is the most respected person in the Akhara and is occasionally concerned on issues of utmost concern for the Akhara.

We observed that not as elaborate as Dasnami akharas, the Chutu-sampradaya

\textsuperscript{16} From sri Sampradaya, Ramanandis are represents while from Rudra, Vishnuswamis.
akharas too follow the panchayatana form of organisation. There is an executive body of pancha and sar-pancha, which helps mahanta in administration. The selection of mahanta is done by Maha-Atita. The Mahanta cannot disobey the pancha, if he does so he is removed. Golaki looks after the akhara accounts and his presence is must when purohita (priest) give charge of worship to another purohita.

Khalsa

One of the mahantas of Chatuh-sampradaya khalsa told us that khalsa is taken in the sense of unity and were formed to fight the muslim agression. It is taken to mean armed front and were earlier moving armed force. It is believed that Guru Nanak used the term khalsa and it is perevalent among sikhs. On the similar pattern the khalsas are organised among Vaishnava, which is known as Chatuh-sampradaya khalsa. This Chatuh-sampradaya khalsa is build by bringing together Ramanand, Nimbarka, Madhva-Gudiya and Vishhnuswami sampradayas. Each sampradaya has its mahant in this organisation and Sri mahanta is from the Ramanand sampradaya.

During our anvekshana we found that the process of building a khalsa by a sadhu is similar to that of becoming a mandalesvara among Dasnamis. The sadhu intending to build one's own khalsa has to approach the mahants of Chatuh-sampradaya and one Ani, and request for permission to build a khalsa. After being granted permission the sadhu invites panchas for Bhandara similar to that of samishti in Dasnamis. In the ceremony he is given shawl, rosary and tilaka. These khalsas are related to dvaras, the mahanta of a khalsa cannot give diksha to a naga. Among Dasnamis the acharya mandaleswara of concerned akhara does give sannyasa diksha to nagas. In case of Dasnamis the sidhu to become a mandalesawara is approached by mandalaswaras and akharas. Here it is other way round.
Some important *khalsas* apart from *Chutuh sampradaya khalsa* are:

**Dakor Khalsa**: Exclusively of Ramanandis. The *sri-mahanta* and other assistants are from *Dakor gaddi* in Gujarat.

**Brahbhai Dandiyan Khalsa**: Again exclusively of Ramanandis. It has one *Sri-mahanta* with eleven assistants and is a very big *Khalsa*. The *khalsa* was established by *Sri Driramadasa* and *Sri Jagannatha* played an important role in its expansion.

**Tyagi Khalsa**--*Sri Siyarama Dasa* had build this *khalsa* and is also called *Terah bhai Tyagi khalsa*. This also belongs to Ramanandis with thirteen *mahantas*. The members are largely *Tapsis* (body besmeared with ashes) and is the biggest *Khalsa*.

**Mahatyagi khalsa**--*Sri Baldeva* had build this *khalsa* and is also known as *Chaudah Bhai Mahatyagi khalsa*.

**Nandrama Dasa khalsa**--This *khalsa* was established by the *Sishya of Dhirama Das*, *Nandrama Dasa*.

Some of the other *khalsa* are *Viruka mandala khalsa*, *Sri Saptarshi jamadagni khalsa*, *Sri Visvamitra khalsa*, *Vasishtha khalsa*, *Akhil Bhartiya Pancha Saptrshi Khalsa*, *Akhil Bharatiya Sri Kamdhenu Khalsa*, etc.\(^{17}\)

There are small *khalsas* like *Nandarama dasa Dhiramadasa khalsa*, *Sarptrshi Khalsa*, *Raslama khalsa* and *Maha tyagi Khalsa* (1976 : 128-129) In the 1989 *Kumbha mela* the total number of *Khalsas* were 154.\(^{18}\) Following is the chart of various *Anis* and *akharas* along with their *baithakas* in relation to each other:

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\(^{17}\) Sinha and Saraswati have mentioned some of these *khalsas*.

### Nirmohi Ani

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Akhara</th>
<th>Sub-section</th>
<th>Baithakas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nirmohi</strong></td>
<td>Ramanandi Nirmohi</td>
<td>Vrindavan, Ayodhya, Puri, Nasik, Chitrakoot, Ujjaina, Govardhan etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vishnuswami Nirmohi</td>
<td>Vrindavan, Bundi, Kota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nirmohi Maladhari</td>
<td>Vrindavan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radhavallabhi Nirmohi</td>
<td>Vrindavan, Neem ka Than (Jaipur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jhariya Nirmohi</td>
<td>Vrindavan, Neem ka Than (Jaipur)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mahanirvani</strong></td>
<td>Ramanandi Mahanirvani</td>
<td>Vrindavan, Ayodhya, Chitrakoot etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hariivyasi Mahanirvani</td>
<td>Vrindavan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Santoshi</strong></td>
<td>Ramanandi Santoshi</td>
<td>Ayodhya, Chitrakoot, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hariivyasi Santoshi</td>
<td>Puri</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Digambari Ani

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Akhara</th>
<th>Sub-section</th>
<th>Baithakas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ramji Digambara</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Vrindavana, Ayodhya, Chitrakoot, Nasik, Ujjain, Puri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shyamji Digambara</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Vrindavana, Puri</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Nirvani Ani

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Akhara</th>
<th>Sub-section</th>
<th>Baithakas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nirvani</td>
<td>Ramanandi Nirvani</td>
<td>Vrindavana, Ayodhya, Chitrakoot, Ujjain, Puri, Govardhan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harivyasi Nirvani</td>
<td>Vrindavana</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balbhadri Nirvani</td>
<td>Vrindavana, Puri, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khaki</td>
<td>Ramanandi Khaki</td>
<td>Ayodhya, Chitrakoot, Nasik, Ujjain, Puri</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harivyasi Khaki</td>
<td>Not known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niravalambi</td>
<td>Ramanandi Niravalambi</td>
<td>Vrindavana, Puri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ramanandi Tatambri</td>
<td>Vrindavana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have seen the four fold divisions among the Saivas organized as Dasnamis and Chatu-sampradayas. This four fold pattern is followed by Udasina sampradaya of Sri Chandracharya (son of Guru Nanak). It is called the four paddhati based on region i.e. purva (eastern), paschima (western), uttara (northern) and dakshina (southern). Virja havan among sadhus of these is performed as tyaga. They are known as nyasi Udasina. They are also organized into their akhara named: Sri 108 pujyapada Advaita pancha parmesvara panchayati akhara Bada Udasina Nirvana. Its head office is at Prayag. They follow the panchayati form of organisation. There is Nirmal akhara also which is similar to Udasina. The Udasina akhara is administered by the Panchayati or council of sadhus known as pancha-parmesvara constituting, 4 Sri-mahantas, 68 Nirvanas and 24 Vastradharis. In Akhara administration are involved one pujari, one Bhandari, one Kothari, one Kotavala, two
Karobari and four Patels with highest authority lying with Sri mahantas. The Udasa (sadhus of Udasina sampradaya) wear a mudra (ring) in the right ear and bhasma over body. "holy" woolen thread, jata and janjira (iron chain in the waist). The nagas of Udasina akhara were very friendly to us and were of great help during our anvekshana.

**Attempts to Universal Organisation**

Earlier we have mentioned the organisation of Dasnami sadhus under four mathas and ten padas. Within these ten padas and four mathas, Sankracharya attempted to organize the all sadhus. Sankracharya never attempted to create a sampradaya of Dasnamis, although divided into four sampradayas, i.e. Kitwara, Bhogavara, Anandvara, and Bhurivara, itself took the shape of sampradaya with Advaita darsana, Saiva achara and Advaita sadhana. It was from these Dasnamis, that new sampradayas took shape. Madhvacharya, the initiator or Brahma sampradaya was a Tirtha and followed Vaishnava achara. His sannyasi name was Ananda Tirtha. Similarly, Swami Dayananda Saraswati and Ram Krishna Pramhansa (Sannyasa diksha by Tota Puri) too can be seen out of Dasnami fold. They created their own samaja. Vivekananda thus is a Puri and Ramkrishna Mission belongs to Puri Dasnami sampradaya. For though Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's Sampradaya is regarded as a branch of Madhva sampradaya his sannyasa-diksha was through Isvara Puri. Even at Badrikashrama, where we stayed for a week, the Vaishnava dietics where worshipped. Dasnamis, had always a penchant for universal acceptance. But inspite of the biggest attempt of its kind in history to bring within a single fold the entire traditions known at that time failed to be so, newer such attempts emerged creating separate sampradayas, panthis, margas, samaja or sangha.

Another such attempt was made by Gorakhnatha, which led to the creation of Natha - sampradaya. The sadhus of the sampradaya are known as Nathas. Nathas lay claim that one
of the *Nathas*, even converted Sankracharya within their fold. Such was the reach of the *Natha* or *Yoga - sampradaya* that within its tradition of *siddhas* is covered the *Jainas* as well as *Baudhas*. *Nanaka - pantha* derives their origin from the *siddha* tradition of *Natha - sampradaya*.

In the *parampara* of *Natha - sampradaya*, it is held that formerly there were eighteen *panthas* following *saiva achara* and twelve of *Gorakhnatha*. These two groups fought each, other and as a result twelve of the former and six of the latter were destroyed. The remaining twelve *panthas* of the two constitute the *parampara* of *Kanphatas* or *Gorakhnathis*. Those derived from former are (1) *Kantharnatha* (2) *Pagalnathâ* (3) *Raval* (4) *Panikha* (5) *Ban* (6) *Gopal*, or *Ramke*. Those of latter are (1) *Hethanatha* (2) *Kolinatha* of *Ai-pantha* (3) *Chandnatha*, *Kaplanî* (4) *Bairaga* (5) *Paonath* - (6) *Dhajjnatha* (*mahabira*) whose members are all foreigners (Briggs 1989 [1938] : 63).

What is important to note here, is the fact that *Natha-sampradaya* traces its origin from *Adinatha* or *Siva* who is supposed to have taught the *Yoga* to *Parvati* and *Matsyendra natha* (*Guru* of *Gorakhanatha*) overheard it, who in turn taught it to *Gorakhanatha*, to whose credit goes the above twelve fold panthic, organisation. This way all the *panthas* mentioned earlier belonging to *Saiva achara* and *Gorakhnatha* seperately are in fact belong to various traditions re-organized by *Gorakhanatha*, which may have turned out to be a violent exercise. What is unique that similar to that of *Sankracharya* this attempt of *Gorakhanath* was to reorganize almost all the traditions.

It is interesting to note here that most of the *marhis* as discussed earlier under organization of *akhara* are named after some *’natha’* like *Ridhnatha*, *Aparnatha*, etc. It is possible that at one time the *sadhus* of *naga akharas* belonged to the *natha sadhus*. The
Dasnamis and Natha panthis have similarities in achara. The ishta deva of Juna akhara and Nathas is Bhairava and they both worship Dattatreya. Both of them have the tradition of siddha, kapalika, avadhuta and bhairivis. Some of the sadhus belonging to Juna akhara wear ear-ring like the nathas. Not all Nathas are Kanphala. The Nathas can be seen to follow both Saiva and Saktta achara. They follow Tantrika sadhana in a varied form with emphasis on Yoga sadhana of Hatha-Yoga. It is not only the names of the Dasnami marhis, most of which have a natha epithet, but the achara (way of life) and sadhana bring Dasnamis and Nathas close to each other. Sinha and Saraswati inform that there are 64 marhis among the Saiva sannyasis of which Dasnamis have 52 marhis and the Nathapanthis have 12, Barahpanthi, as they call themselves\(^{19}\) (1976 : 93)

On the basis of anumana from the above discussion that the tradition of Sankracharya and Gorakhanatha attempted to universal organization of sadhus trying to incorporate each, other culminated in the marhi form of organisation which constituted the Akharas among Dasnamis and Pan/has among Nathas (i.e. Barahpanthis). It can be seen otherway also as 64 marhis of the Saiva sadhus getting organised as mention earlier.

The attempt of Chatu - sampradaya was on the similar pattern and according to Vaishnava achara mata, their are only four sampradayas. Even though these attempts were made no such attempt, succeeded. The Dasnamis could not cover, even the entire Saivas or Chatu-sampradayas the entire Vaishnavas.\(^{20}\) It is only in contemporary times that organizations like Akhil Bhartiya Akhara Parishad, Bharat Sadhu Samaj and Dharma Sansad

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20 The reach of Nathas is far larger than these two, but it also failed to reach the goal of universal organisation of sadhus. These attempts certainly led to efforts, which has produced extraordinary organisations.
which transcend the *achara sampradaya* and *mata* divisions to be representative of all sadhus.

These organisations reflect collective force of sadhus. *Dharma Sangha* of Swami Karpatri ji led a massive agitation in the late sixties against cow-slaughter and the phenomenon of "*Hindutva resurgence*" in late eighties and early nineties was culmination of the use of this collective force of sadhus (Pushkar Misra 1994):

**Stages in the life of a Sadhu**

We have attempted to explain the life of a sadhu in *matha* and *akhara* alongwith their organisation earlier. We now attempt to explain the stages in the life of a sadhu.

*Narad-parivrajko-upanishad* mentions six stages in the life of a sadhu:

1. *Kutichaka* (asrama dweller) - This being the earliest stage, the Sadhu as an initiate lives with and serves the guru. Etymologically *kutichka* is one who lives in Kuti (hut). *Kutichaka* does not travel.

2. *Bahudaka* (supported by many) is a stage in a sadhu life, where he continuously travels, not staying more than three days at any single place. The sadhu collects his *bhiksha* from many sources and serves other people to the best of his ability. A *bahudaka* because he drinks water of many places (*bahudaka*) in the course of his vow of wandering life.

3. *Hansa* (swan) - is a sadhu versed in *Sruti* and *Sastra* and pursues the aim of attaining *Brahmajnana*, living at one place and undergoing *sadhana*. He gives his advice to people as they come to him when required. Living on *bhiksha*, *hansa* is a "swan floating in the holy lake of manas, the seat of Brahма, hence is a *Brahmajnani* by the yoga (communion) of jiva-atma with *paramatma*). *Hansa* (Swan) "has the ability to separate the essence of things from the surface appearance, the reality from non-reality, the truth from false". Thus *Hansa* has realised the essence behind all.

4. *Paramahansa* (great swan) is a sadhu who has firmly established oneself in the *hansa* stage and is absorbed in one's *atma*. *Paramhansa* is free from all rules and regulations and is a highly respected sadhu residing in the highest state of *sadhana*, where the *sadhya* and *sadhana* become one. They give up their *danda*.

5. *Turiyatita* (beyond the fetters of nature) - is a sadhu engrossed completely in the inner *vairagya* merging consciousness within oneself and hardly aware of *loka*.

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6. **Avadhuta** (one who has shaken of all *laukika* attachment and obligations) - is the stage of "complete liberation" where all the divinations are abolished in the vision of the sadhu.

During our *anvekshana*, we came across only *sadhus* of the first four stages. It is these stages only which were known to many of the *sadhus*. The other two stages were seldom mentioned and seem to have merged in the *Paramhansa*, stage, which invariably was considered to be the highest stage. These four or six stages of *sadhu* begin only after he undergoes sannyasa *diksha*. But before undergoing sannyasa-diksha, he has to undertake *brahmacharaya* and *naisthika brahmacharaya-diksha*. This was even for those who in their *purva-asrama* were *grhasthas*. Ideally the stages of life and *asrama* are *brahmacharya*, *grhasta*, *vanaprastha* and *sannyas*. In this when any *brahmachari* reluctant to enter the *grhastha* *asrama* devotes his life to *sadhana* or learning engrossed in *vairagya* was given the *diksha* of *naisthika brahmacharya* which qualified him for *sannyasa diksha*. The other *brahmacharis* who went in for *grhasta asrama* and were called *upakurvanas* attained this state by undertaking *sadhu* life through *vanaprastha asrama*.

Our *anvekshana* revealed that the stage of *Vanaprastha asrama* is almost missing, atleast we did not come across any such example. And those who opt for the *sadhu* way of life are prepared for *sannyasa* by beginning from the very beginning i.e. by taking the *brahmacharya diksha*. We came across *brahmachari* of over even seventy five years of age.

In contemporary times even if a *grhasta* begins his *sadhu* life, the six stages of *sadhu* life

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22 *Jabala-upanishad* mentions three types of *sannyas* viz. 1) *Parivrata*, *Atura* and *Paramhansa*. *Atura-sannyasi* is one who opts for *sannyasa* only in speech and *monasa* (*chitta*). Among the *Dasnamis* we found that a different *sannyasa-paddhati* (the way of undertaking *sannyasa*) is followed for *atra sannyas*, which is of short duration and deals only with essentials. *Asramopnishad* and *Bhikshuka-upanishad* follow the four fold divisions of *Kutichaka*, *Bahudaka*, *Hansa* and *Paramhansa*. Former mentions the rules regarding *Bhiksha*, e.g. *Kutichaka* is supposed to take *bhiksha* from his offsprings only, etc. It also mentions rules of residence to be followed while travelling. The latter also accepts almost similar rules. *Narada-parivrjoka-upanishad*, *Asramopnishad* and *Bhikshuka upanishad* have only minor differences over the rules and regulations followed by the four stages in the life of a *sadhu*. *Parivrata* of *Jabala-upanishad* is same as *Kutichaka* and *Bahudaka*.

23 *Br. Up* (VI.1.6) mentions the stories of an old man Aruni becoming a *brahmachari*. *Jabala upanishad* recommends *sannyasa*, whenever the urge arrives.
are as followed, viz. (1) Brahmacari, (2) Naishthika brahmachari (these two are prior to sannyasa diksha) (3) Kutichaka (4) Bahudaka (5) Hansa and (6) Paramhansa (these are the stages after the sannyasa diksha). We came across mainly brahmachari, naishthika brahmachari and paramhansa stages.

**Sannyasa and Vairagya: The Concept and Notion of Sadhutva**

On our query that why one takes up sannyasa, the most of the answers, were that it is due to the *Karma* of the past which embodies one with sannyasa, when possessed by the feeling of Vairagya. Vairagya, a state of mind, which is a stage of detachment, where the *karmas* of the world no more remain interesting for the individual. When an individual reaches this stages it is institutionalised through *praisha mantra sanskara as sannyasa.*

Literally *vairagya* means change or loss or colour. When there is cessation of all *karma*, then there is *vairagya*.

*Vairagya* in *Yoga sutra* (1.15) is the state of possession of *chitta* of non-craving in the subjects seen or heard. Through the knowledge of *Purusha* (as in *sankhya*), the absence of craving for *prakriti* and its *guna* is called *para-vairagya* (1.16).

*Vidyaranya’s Jivanmuktivivekah* deals with the conception and notion of *Vairagya* and sannyasa. The text is in five *prakaranas* (chapters). The first, deals with the *pramana* of

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*24 Some examples of Vairagya are given below, although experienced in indifferent contexts. Krishnamurty, Commentaries on Living, observes:*

To give up in order to gain is no renunciation at all. To see the false as false, to see the true as true—it is this that sets the mind free...self deception exists when there is any form of craving or attachment: attachment to a prejudice, to an experience, to a system of thought. Consciously or unconsciously, the experiencer is always seeking greater, deeper, wider experience; and as long as experiencer exists, there must be delusion in one form or the other. (p.4 & p.8).

*Keyserling in A Travel Diary of a Philosopher, observes:*

Today no fact as such troubles me anymore, I am not fond of reading, I hardly need my fellowmen, and I am leading more and more towards the life of a hermit, in which shape I can doubtless fulfill my destiny... the impulse which drives me into the wide world is precisely the same as that which drives so many into monastries: the desire for self-realisation. (p.13 & p.14).
the second prakarana deals with vasanachhaya (the loss of cravings),
the third prakarana deals with manonasha (the destruction of mana i.e. chitta and its writtis)
the fourth prakarana deals with svaroopsidhiprayojana i.e. the reasons for knowing the true self. where Vidyaranya quotes from 'Sukadeva, Janaka, Vasishthas Rama and Gita, to justify it and finally in the fifth prakarana explains Vidvatsannyasa. The text is based on paramahansa upanishadas, Vidvat sannyasa can be referred as Jnana sannyasa (to be explained later).

The stage of Vairagya is mentioned as jivan-mukta in Yoga-vasishtha. Muktika upanishad, which seems to have drawn its inspiration from the Yoga-vasistha, mentions the word jivan-mukta, meaning those sadhus, who live till their "fruit-yielding actions" i.e. prarbdha karma are exhausted (Dasgupta 1975 [1922 : 246-247). When the prarabdha karma is exhausted the stage of vairagya arrives culminating through adrshta. Adrshta is "unperceived law" (Chatterjee and Datta 1984 : 61) which may or may not be regulated by the prarabhda karma, which actually means the deeds done by an individual in its previous births.

The Pravachana-bhashya on Sankhya sutra raises the threefold conception of viveka (the discriminating faculty of an individual) which determines its actions on the basis of good and bad), viz. (1) manda-viveka (feeble one), (2) madhya-viveka (middle one), and (3) viveka - nishpatti (viveka - transcended). In the first stage individual has not attained the desired discriminatory capacity of the difference between prakrti and purusha, but is endeavoring to attain it, the second stage is the state of jivan - mukta, i.e. where the desired discriminatory capacity has been attained but still the subject - object distinction remains alongwith the consciousness of the viveka. The last stage is called the asamprajnata state, where, there is
no subject - object distinction therefore there cannot be in this stage be any "reflection of pleasure or sorrow" (due to the fructifying of karma i.e. prarabdha) (Dasgupta 1975 [1922] : 250). Yoga-vasishta says that daiva (prarabhda. i.e. karmas of the previous birth) and purushastha (the individual will) decide the course of action of an individual. It says that in order to attain the state of vairagya, the daiva (if hindrance) can be annulled by purusharth.

During our anvekshana, we found on the basis of the karma siddhanta it is believed by majority of sadhus that the culmination of vairagya and its subsequent sannyasa is due to the role of prarabhda. This prarabhda can be read through planetary charts on the basis of Jyotisha (one of the vedangas): Hence it is possible to determine whether an individual is made for sannyasa or not. This plays a crucial role in deciding the persons who ought to be the acharyas of ancient and larger mathas. We tried to study the planetary charts. The entire process is determined by the time of birth and the position of various planets and rasis (cosmological bodies) at that time. There combined effect is said to determine the course of the individual life. It is not so that everyone who has a favourable chart for sannyasa will be given diksha.

Generally speaking there are three kinds of karmas viz., Nitya, Kamya and Nishiddha. Nitya - naimittika karmas are the one which are to be performed on regular basis e.g. cleaning oneself, sandhya. ("worshiping"), other performed at regular intervals during festivals, etc. The daily Yajna falls under this i.e. agnihotra. Kamya karmas are those which are performed to attain some particular thing, e.g. kingdom, prosperity, offsprings, etc. Nishidha karmas are those which are prohibited from performing, e.g. violence, theft, non-truthfulness, etc. (Shastri 1965 : 8).
There is another classification of karmas, viz. (1) Srauta and (2) Smarta. Srauta karmas are those which are performed on the basis of Sruti and Smarta karmas are on the basis of smritis. These two pertain to the performance of yajna and agnihotra (daily abultation to the holy fire) and can be taken as nitya - naimittika karmas. Karmas can be also taken as pravrtti karma and Nivrtti karma. Pravrtti karma can be the kamya karma, whereas Nivrtti karma is performed to attain the state of Nivrtti that is Mukti or Moksha, cessation of all cravings.

Karma which simply means action has a broader meaning which includes moral, physical and mental activities. Karma is used in various contexts to mean action, deeds, destiny, causality, effects, products, result, etc. It is rooted in the idea of rta which is the foundation of dharma. The different contexts of karma are niyati or prarabdha the (karmas of previous birth determining the future course of individual's life), nitya-naimittika, kamya, nishidha, etc.

Sannyasa is defined in Srimadbhagavadgita (18.2) as giving up of kamya karma. Sannyasopanishad calls it the giving up of fire (in the sense of agnihotra) Sannyasa is institutionalisation of vairagya, through presha-mantra -sanskara also known as virya homa or Virja homa sanskara. The world sannyasa is derived from sam +ni +as, to place or put down, deposit, give up, abandon or quit: Kamyanam karmanam nyasam sannyasam (Gita: 18.2) It also means sam + nyasa, sam - perfect; nyasa-setting aside, abandoning, surrender.

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25 This has been explained while explaining dharma in the previous chapter.
26 ibid.
shaved. In this whole process the sadhu has to continuously mutter savitri mantra. The sadhu undertaking sannyasa is said he have five acharyas—1) saffron robe, 2) shaven head, 3) vibhuti (holy ashes), 4) Rudraksha rosary and 5) mantra. The sanskara is completed by minimum of four sannyasis. First is the guru, who in the ears utters the mantra, second gives him name out of seven, third besmears his body with vibhuti and fourth breaks his Janaiu (sacred thread). During the diskha the sadhu has to move seven steps naked.

After initiation in sannyasa or sannyasa diksha new name is given to the person concerned. The best time and place for diksha is at kumbha-mela. For nagas, this the only occasion with a few exceptions. Before the actual diksha, all the sanskaras (karmakanda i.e. ritual) have to be undertaken. These sanskaras are performed by the purohit (priest) of the akhara, who is not a sadhu. The main sanskara performed is that of self sradha. Sradha is a sanskara performed by one's own progeny, after one's death, so that the person can attain mukti or moksha, the release from karma, i.e. from getting born again. The Sradha is performed by the person himself before the sannyasa diksha via the purohit of akhara. It is performed partly inside the river. After Sradha sanskara is performed, the person takes bath and goes to the guru for sannyasa diksha naked signifying that he has left everything behind including his body and is prepared for the praisha mantra sanskara. The guru gives him new clothes (ochre coloured in case of Dasnamis and white or yellow in case of Vaishnavas) and danda (where relevant) alongwith kamandala and mala (rosary). He also gives him the mantra of sannsaya, i.e. praisha-mantra. Here the sadhu looses the adhikara (qualification) for gayatri-mantra and his mantra becomes the praisha mantra. Among the Dasnamis the
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discarding of shikha (tuft of hair on head) and sutra (sacred thread also called janaiu) are to be given up to be a sannyasi. This is not so in case of Chatuh-sampradayas and other sampradayas of vaishnava achara.29

Various forms of Sannyasa

In Narad-parivarajaka-upanishad Brahma enunciates four forms of sannyasa.

Brahma says:

Actually there is only one form of sannyasa. But due to ajnana (false knowledge), asakti (loss of will) and Karmalopa (loss of karma, in this context yajna karma), sannyasa took four forms successively - Vairagya-sannyasa Jnana-sannyasa, Jnana-vairgya-sannyasa and Karma sannyasa. The individual free from all cravings due to karmas previously performed when undertakes sannyasa, it is called vairagya sannyasa. The individual with sadhana-chatushtaya realising the momentariness and the non-permanent character of the world leaves the comforts of the world, when undertakes sannyasa, it is called Jnana sannyasa. The individual after observing willfully all the asramas (bramacharya, grhastha and vanprastha i.e. asramas prior to sannyasa) undertakes sannyasa, then it is called Jnana vairagya sannyasa. Due to jnana and vairagya the cravings are lost. The individual who observes asramas and without having vairagya, when undertakes sannyasa, it is karma sannyasa.30

29 Swami Chandrasekharendra Saraswati observes in Guru Tradition quoting from Sruti and Sastric paksha: Vyasa composed the Brahmascutra and Shankaracharya wrote a commentary on it. Vachaspati Misra wrote an explanatory commentary on this commentary—he called Bhakti after his wife. As a commentary on the commentary called Bhakti, Amlananda wrote the Kalpataru. Now Abhoga is commentary by Lakshminsinha on the Kalpataru. The reference was in the explanation of the 24th sutra fourth pada, third chapter of Brahmascutra. It is the passage in which the sutrokara or author, vyasa, expresses the opinion that there is such a thing as sannyasasram. Jamini in his Purvaminamsa contends that man attains Moksha directly by performing Vedic Karma as a grhastha or householder and that there should be no sannyasa in which vedic karma is exchewed. Vyasa rebuts this view and establishes that there is a turiya or fourth asram (that is Sannyasa). The qualification of a sannyasin are given by Amlananda in his Kalpataru. The sannyasin must remove his sikha (tuff of hair) and must have a shaven head. He must also cut of his sacred thread. Such is the custom among followers of Ramamjja siddhanta (Visistadvaita). The author of the Kalpataru gives opinion which is the right view:

"Ye tu sikha-yajnopavita-tyaga-rupa-paramchamisya na manyaante te na na pasanti pratyaksa ghatikasthansenuv patyamana Atharvanim srutim-sasikham vapanam krta bahis-sutram tyajet buddha".

(They say that the man who goes to the highest level among sannyasins, the parmaahamsa state, need not shave his head and cut of his sacred thread. Those who speak thus do not seem to have heard the words of the Athavaveda spoken by those who study the Vedas in ghatikasthana: "The wise man who takes to sannyasa must remove his sikha and discard his sacred thread"). (p.15).

Vairagya-sannyasa generally is undertaken from the brahmacharya stage. Conceptually speaking, when an individual due to the experience of profound vairagya looses all interest and craving due to the fructification of all karmas is given sannyasa diksha by a guru, it is vairagya-sannyasa. Jnana-sannyasa dawns upon and individual due to realisation culminating through jnana generated by viveka. Karma sannyasa is undertaken to attain jnana. Karma sannyasa has two forms nimitta sannyasa and animitta sannyasa. The former is undertaken due to special events in the individuals life and the latter is undertaken due to natural inclination. Another justification calls nimitta-sannyasa as atura-sannyasa and animitta sannyasa as karma-sannyasa, hence enumerating variagya-sannyasa jnana sannyasa, atur sannyasa and Karma sannyasa. Atur sannyasa is undertaken during (i.e. just before death) or when an individual due to physical infirmity or disease is unable to perform karma. Animitta-sannyasa means that an individual undertakes sannyasa by the realisation that all objects are impermanent and gets detached by them with faith in atma.

The above sastric pakshsa enumerates four forms of sannyasa i.e. Vairagya, Janana-vairagya, Jnana, Karma (nimitta [atura]) and animitta). In our anvekshana, we encountered all the forms off sannyasa mentioned in the sastric paksha. Sadhus undertaking animitta or karma sannyasa were maximum and those undertaking Jnana-vairagya sannyasa were least. Apart from the above mentioned form of sannyasa as mentioned in sastric paksha, we came across several other forms of sannyasa during our anvekshana.

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31 There is mention of Vividisha sannyasa, which is a stage and not form of sannyasa similar to karma sannyasa. At certain stage in course of jnana sadhana, the retirement from active life is prescribed and recommended for sadhana. This is known as the stage of vividisha sannyasa. When the sadhaka has reached the stage of dhyana and niddhyasana i.e. when he finds that meditation has become spontaneous. Abstension from all karma, except dhyana and Vichara is Vividisha sannyasa. Brahma. p. 91 p. 104, p. 105.

The first form of sannyasa was of sadhus who undertook sannyasa for social service. Bharat Sevashrama Sangha, Ramkrishna Mission, Divine Life Society, and numerous others are working for social welfare. Even sadhus from Dasnami and Chatu sampradaya are taking up social service. Sampradayi sadhus generally refrained from such activities as it was considered not to be true to the spirit of sannyasa, but now the trend in this direction is increasing.

Second type of sadhus which encountered apart from the above mentioned ones in considerable numbers were those undertaking sannyasa due to extraordinary events in their life e.g. death of someone very close and dear, financial loss, loss of prestige or status, etc.

The third kind if sadhus which we encountered undertook sannyasa, just to get free boarding and lodging and a comfortable life without much labour attracted by the respect commanded by sadhus.

Fourth, were sadhus who undertook sannyasa to get an easy earning by displaying fake siddhis by befooling people.

A few sadhus of the fifth kind we come across undertook sannyasa to escape criminal charges against them to avoid subsequent arrest.

We were informed by local intelligence unit at Rishikesh that there were some secret agents of foreign intelligence agencies doing the job of spying in the garb of sadhus. Kautilya in his Artha sastra mentions the use of sadhus for the purpose of spying. This was the sixth kind of sadhu undertaking sannyasa.
At the Purna kumbha-mela Haridwara, 1998, we approached some learned sadhus and requested them to explain the category of sadhus who do not fall within the categories of sastric paksha. What form of sannyasa is their’s. To this some of the forms were explained to us as virakta, vimukha and chhadma sannyasa. The other forms were categorised by us as loka-sangraha, pravartana and manishika sannyasa.

On the basis of our anvekshana we enumerate the following forms of sannyasa other than the sastric paksha.

**Virakta saninyasa** - the sannyasa undertaken by an individual due to loss of interest in life and world because of some special event in life e.g. death of someone close and dear, financial loss, loss of prestige or status, etc. Virakta means loss of interest, Virakti i.e. loss of interest in life and world is cause of this sannyasa. Virakti, subsequently can lead to Jnana sannyasa as well. As virakti due to personal loss may culminate into the realisation of the impermanent nature of the world and its objects.

**Loka-sangraha sannyasa** - the sannyasa undertaken for the welfare of people. Gita (3.25) *(saktah karmanyavidvanso yatha kurvanti Bharata, Kuryadvidvanstathasaktaschikitshur lokasangraham* mentions the concept of loksangraha i.e. welfare of the people. Hence loka-sangraha sannyasa is undertaken by an individual for loka-sangraha.

Sadhu organisation are actively engaged in different social services. Divine life
society. Rishikesh: Ram Krishna Mission, Calcutta; Bharat Sevashram Sangh, Varanasi; Radhasvami Sangh, Agra, Anand Moyee Ma Sangh; Swami Narayan, Gujarat; Vedantic School of Swami Chinmayananda, etc. are some.

From running orphanages, old age homes, hospitals to rural upliftment, reformation of holy places, publishing literature, education to masses and building pilgrimage shelters are the prominent areas covered by them.

**Pravartana Sannyasa** - Sannyasa undertaken to propagate one's own sampradaya, pantha, mata, achara, etc. The Akharas played crucial role in fighting the foreign invasion and rule. Its requirement arrives from the necessity of kshatra dharma and rajdharma. This necessity was at the root of the creation and organisation of Akharas, which undertook as much inter-sampradaya battles if not more than those against the foreign invasion and rule specially Dasnamis and Chatu-sampradaya khalsas. The diksha for this specific purpose comes under pravartana sannyas.

It is important to note that a vairagya-sannyasta sadhu may also do the work of pravartana sannyasta sadhu. Difference lies in the specific reasons for undertaking sannyasa at the time of sannyasa-diksha sannyasa undertaken with specific purpose to learn, preserve and spread one's mata is pravartana. Sannyasa. Christian monasticism fall under this kind of sannyasa.

**Manishika Sannyasa** - the sannyasa undertaken to change the existing social order and/or to activate a new social order according one's mata. The sadhus of Ananda Marga fall under this category.
Vimukha sannyasa - the sannyasa undertaken to lead a comfortable life without labour. *Vimukha* means turning around. Here it means turning around *sannyasa*, just opposite of what it actually stands for. It is considered to be *akrtubhagyam dosha* i.e. enjoying fruits without performing action.

Chhadma Sannyasa - the sannyasa undertaken to deceive. *Chhadma* means deceit. This *sannyasa* is undertaken just to know the rudiments of *sadhu* life, for deceit, so that one can, befool others, e.g. thugs or one can hide e.g. criminals or one can take the garb to spy, etc.