

## PILGRIMAGE TO MANJAKKUDI

The Acharya and students of the long term course at Anaikatti visited Manjakkudi from Feb 5, 2017 to Feb 8, 2017.

Each and every inch of Bharata desa is a punya bhumi. But due to association of mahatmas some places are holier. One such place is Manjakkudi, which is the birth place of our Guru Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati.

On Feb 5, on arrival at Manjakudi our Acharya was received with purna kumbha. Students stayed at "Daya Residence", a comfortable guest house with modern facilities and had food at "Koodam". The traditional hospitality was really heartening.

In the evening, we visited the house where Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati was born and brought up. Sri M.G. Srinivasan, purva asrama brother of Pujya Swamiji took us around the house and narrated many events from their childhood. We were then taken on a brief campus tour of Swami Dayananda College of Arts & Science and Swami Dayananda Matriculation School. We then participated in the puja at the Lakshmi Narayana Perumal Temple, which is just next to Pujya Swamiji's ancestral home. The day concluded with satsang.



Acharya received with Purna kumbha

On Feb 6, early in the morning, we visited the Siva Temple, where Pujya Swamiji used to visit daily during his childhood. Later we meditated at "Meditation Centre", where one can feel the divine blessings of Pujya Swamiji in the calm and serene atmosphere. A student from the Veda Pathashala performed the deeparadhana to Pujya Swamiji. Then, we were off to Thanjavur to see the Brihadeeswara Temple and Saraswati Mahal museum. We were spell bound by the engineering marvel of The Big Temple.



Meditation session at Meditation Centre

In the afternoon we visited the G.R. Auditorium of Swami Dayananda College of Arts and Science. Our Acharya Swami Sadatmananda was honoured with garland and ponnadai. The AVG students were also individually honoured.

While addressing the college students, Acharya said that they were blessed to study in Pujya Swamiji's institution. He explained that success is when one is able to bring out one's full potential. For achieving that success, one should have clarity of goal, appropriate and adequate effort (prayatna), grace earned by reaching-out actions and prayers. One should accept the result; however it may be, with objectivity (prasada buddhi).

Subsequent to the Swami Dayananda Study Center visit, we also went to Free Student Homes near Manjakkudi run by AIM for Seva. The enthusiasm and confidence of the students were very impressive. Acharya distributed sweets and blessed them. Students enjoyed the Sanskrit antakshari game during night satsang session.

On Feb 7, we visited the Navagraha Guru Temple, Adi Kumbeswarar Temple, Mahamaham Tank and Suryanar Temple situated in and around Kumbakonam.



Students at Big Temple, Thanjavur



Acharya honoured at College



Students honoured

In the afternoon, we were given a rousing welcome by the students of Swami Dayananda Matriculation School at the G.R. Auditorium. The programme started with the rendering of the AIM for Seva Motto Song and Sri Dayananda Pan-chakam. This was followed by chanting of Bhagavad Gita Chapter 15 and recitation of Thirukkural, a Tamil text which instructs the life style to be followed to achieve the first three purushartas. Then 18 students presented a write up of the life and contributions of Pujya Swamiji in Sanskrit. Although study of Sanskrit language was started only this academic year, the students' presentation and pronunciation were excellent. The students demonstrated complicated postures and exhibited their skills in yoga asanas. After a melodious carnatic music presentation by the students, the programme concluded with blessings of Swami Sadatmananda. All in all, one could see Pujya Swamiji's vision being actualized in the happy and confident faces of the children.



Girls' Hostel



**Presentation on Pujya Swamiji in Sanskrit**



**Yoga Incredible**

In the evening, we visited the Veda Pathashala run by SDET. We were impressed by the dedication of the teachers and commitment of the students to Vedic study and perpetuation of the Vedic knowledge. We visited the Vardaraja Perumal Temple and were captivated by the beauty and alankara of the murti.

The last day of the pilgrimage was dedicated to the Tiruvidaimarudur Mahalingaswamy temple chariot festival. Readers will recall the contribution of Pujya Swamiji in building the five temple chariots which had been idle for many decades. We were fortunate to witness and participate in the annual festival when the chariots are pulled with devotional fervour. This was only the second time that all the five chariots have been operational.

We were impressed by the contribution of SDET in transforming Manjakkudi into a model village for rural development. It is indeed very astonishing to see how Pujya Swamiji had inspired the transformation of this small village into a major hub for rural education and establishing all other facilities to support students aspiring to study. What a huge foot-print Swamiji has left behind! Om Shri Gurubhyo Namah!



**Students before temple car**



**Veda Patasala**

**Photos by Uga/ Tomoko**

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