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*Arsha Vidya
Newsletter*

In fearless voice may
we proclaim

The Rishi's message
from all house-tops

And bring the men
of different claim

To a fold of Love
where oneness lasts!

PUJYA SWAMIJI'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE TO STUDENTS AT AVG, SAYLORSBURG

This message of Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswathi was video recorded at AVG, Anaikatti and shown to students at AVG, Saylorburg on New Year's Day of 2013.

The truth of time is some thing very astonishing. Astonishing because there is no length involved in time.

The beauty is there is a new beginning all the time, moment to moment. This moment is gone. Going it yields its place to a new moment. That new moment itself yields its place to another new moment. It is all new

We get old with this time is real maya. It is good to know that there is always time. No old time. No old man. Only new time. New you. But we forget. Every hour is a new hour. Every day is a new day. Every year is a New Year.

You mark a particular day. After 365 days the earth comes one round around the Sun. The earth is back to the same position. Any day can be taken as New Year's Day. Sun enters Aries on April 14. That is the real New Year.

You live your life moment to moment. You are a new person. Spouse is also new. Child is new. Father is new. All our life accomplishments were achieved in a moment. You may look forward for new achievements in the New Year.

Wish you all a Happy New Year 2013.

Om Tat Sat.

Report by N. Avinashilingam



Muṇḍakopaniṣad Mantrā 7



In the Dakṣiṇāmūrti stotram we have this sentence:¹ Like the sprout is there within the seed in an unmanifest form, so too, this world is in an unmanifest form before creation". The unmanifest tree in the seed manifests under conducive situations. What is already there alone comes to manifest. The tree is there in the subtle form, in a programmed form in the seed. That is why only the mango tree comes from the mango seed; no other tree comes. Just as the whole tree is unmanifest in the seed, so also, this entire jagat is unmanifest before creation. Again it becomes manifest 'as it was before'. The phrase 'as it was before' points to the previous manifest state that was there before the unmanifest condition. So from this it is clear, it is cyclic.

The world has not come into being from total non-existence. If it is already existent it need not come. So, from non-existence the jagat cannot come, and from existence also, the jagat cannot and need not come because it is already existent. The non-existent pot can never come into being, and an existent pot does not require coming into being. We cannot say that the pot is both non-existent and existent. There is a self-contradiction in that statement. A thing cannot be both non-existent and existent at the same time. So, it is only the unmanifest pot that manifests, because of the intervention of the pot-maker in the form of his plan, skill and effort. Pot is potentially there in the clay and that is brought into manifestation now. The intervening factor is called the intelligent cause accompanied by secondary or aiding causes like the wheel, the water, the sun and so on. This jagat was there before in an unmanifest form. From the unmanifest, it is manifest now. So, it need not be called creation.

We do not accept ārambha-vāda—an argument that the jagat comes into being. The Vaiṣeṣikās and the theologians are ārambha-vādins—those who say the creation begins. All the theologies are similar to the Vaiṣeṣikā's philosophy dating back to B.C. The theologian is definitely talking about God creating a world that was previously non-existent, and creating a world that was previously non-existent, and bringing it into being out of nothing, or out of infinite power.

Vedanta does not propose a creation. It does not, therefore, have the question—'Why this creation?' If creation is accepted, then we have to say that God created the world. If God created this world, definitely you can ask him, "Why did you

¹ बीजस्यान्तरिवाङ्कुरो जगदिदं प्राह् निर्विकल्पं पुनः श्लोक २

create the world?" This so-called created world itself being God, he does not require to answer such a question. You can ask a little more, "Is this the nature of the Lord?" Then we can discuss the reality of everything and discover what is satya and what is mithyā. The word 'creation' is, therefore, only a provisional word.

'In the beginning was the word, the word was with God, the word was God'—such sensible statements are available in the sacred books which are the basis for certain theologies. It is a clean set of statements. In the beginning was the 'word'. It is singular, not that there were words. There was 'word', not 'a word'. That is also important. A sound is a word when the meaning, which the sound or sounds refer to, is the same, not only for you but also for everyone. When I say 'water' you understand, I understand and everybody understands that it is H₂O. Then it is 'word'. Word implies knowledge. There is no word without knowledge. 'In the beginning' means before the creation. What was there before creation was word, pure knowledge. Name and form were there in the form of knowledge, but that knowledge had not come out in a visible form, in a differentiated form. In the beginning only knowledge was there. Knowledge can exist only in a conscious being, nowhere else. Therefore, knowledge exists in the all-knowing conscious being, whom people call God. Here we have to add that it exists in the māyā upādhi. When they say, "Word was with God" it is not something like 'the car was with the man'. The next statement is, "The word was God". The knowledge was not separate from that God. Without the knowledge there is no God, and therefore, that knowledge itself is God. That knowledge alone comes to manifestation as the jagat.

The second-tree example has something special to convey in this regard about this jagat. In the clay-pot example, there is just a change of form, but in the seed-tree example there is a real, intelligent programming involved. The roots, the taproot, secondary roots, trunk and so on must be there in the programme. If it is a banyan tree that grows horizontally, it must have the programming for the adventitious roots to come down from the branches. Otherwise, banyan trees cannot afford to have such branches; they will break. To protect the trunk, the bark is necessary. The bark helps to retain the water. The core trunk is also important. The tree does not need unnecessary water, and also, it has to become stronger and stronger. So, the core does not have water at all. It is like a bonal structure. There must be a programming for the branches, for the seeds, for the flowers, for the type of flowers, for the type of fruits and so on. For the whole life of the tree there is a programming. This programming is a very intelligent one, enjoying a certain order. So much knowledge is involved even in the programming for a tree. For the entire jagat, for the sentient and insentient forms, the whole programming must be available in the unmanifest as knowledge, which is not separate from Brahman. How this knowledge comes to manifestation is pointed out in the following two mantras.

Mantra 8

The fact that Brahman is the intelligent cause has not been very clearly mentioned in the seventh mantra. Brahman is a conscious being, and so it is the intelligent cause. The spider example also indicates that. The spider is both intelligent and material cause for the web, One may still question that śruti does not specifically mention Brahman as intelligent cause. Hence, this mantra makes it clear.

तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म ततोऽन्नमभ्रिजायते ।
अन्नात् प्राणो मनः सत्यं लोकाः कर्मसु चामृतम् ॥ १।१।८

tapasā cīyate brahma tato'nnamabhijāyate ।
annāt prāṇo manaḥ satyaṁ lokāḥ karmasu cāmṛtam ॥ 1।1।8

tapasā – by knowledge; brahma – Brahman; cīyate – bulges; tataḥ – from that; annam – the unmanifest (jagat); abhijāyate – is born; annāt – from the unmanifest; prāṇaḥ – hiraṇyagarbha; manaḥ – total mind; satyaṁ – five elements; lokāḥ – worlds; karmasu ca – and due to actions; amṛtam – the results (are born)

‘Brahman bulges by knowledge. From that Brahman the unmanifest is born. From the unmanifest hiraṇyagarbha is born. Then the total mind, the five elements, the worlds and actions are born. And due to actions, results are born.’

Chāndogyaopaniśad² says, “This world was there before as ‘sat’ without any differentiation”. Pure knowledge alone was there before. The jagat is now differentiated. For this differentiation to take place, knowledge has to manifest. The time has come now for the jagat to get out of the unmanifest condition. ‘The time has come’—this is only an expression because time itself is yet to come. Getting out of the unmanifest condition is like waking up from sleep. You wake up because of the prārabdha karma. But Īśavara does not have any karma to clamour for fructification. The karmas of the individuals in the unmanifest condition clamour to manifest, and we refer to that condition when we say, “The time has come”. What does Īśavara do now?

Tapasā cīyate brahma: Īśavara bulges due to tapas. The word ‘tapas’ has different meanings such as heat, inquiry, knowledge and religious discipline. By tapas one comes to recognize Brahman. In the dialogue between Varuṇā

² सदेव सोम्य इदम् अग्रे आसीत् भ छान्दोग्योपनिषद्भ ६।२।१।

and Bhṛgu in the Taittirīyopaniṣad, we clearly see the meaning of the word 'tapas'. Varuṇā, after imparting the teaching, asked Bhṛgu to know Brahman by tapas. After tapas, Bhṛgu understood each layer of the person, one after the other, to be Brahman. Each time Varuṇā asked him to do further tapas. Once Bhṛgu understood ānanda, limitlessness, as Brahman, he did not come back. Therefore, tapas means inquiry which is in the form of knowledge. Īśavara here identifies with his own knowledge and that is tapas. In the next mantra the teacher is going to explain the meaning of the word 'tapas' as knowledge³. There is no other tapas. But Īśavara has to identify with that knowledge. Without that identification he can be just the caitanyaṁ brahma, and cannot become the creator.

Brahman requires an upādhi to identify with the knowledge and become the cause of creation because Brahman itself does not undergo any change. Brahman therefore gets seemingly 'connected' to māyā. From the unmanifest, which is māyā, the jagat is going to manifest now, just as the sprout, which exists in the seed in a potential but unmanifest form, emerges from the seed. You place the seed in water to make it sprout. Before it sprouts it bulges. Because of the extra water that the seed has absorbed, the binding factor inside gets dilated and there is bulging. That means it is going to sprout. This is a condition before delivery. So, the śruti rather poetically says that before the creation, Brahman with māyā bulged. That means it is going to create the jagat. Till then it did not bulge. Before sprouting only it bulges. Sankara says the bulging is like the bulging of a son on seeing his father. Father went to the office. The whole day the son was waiting for the father, always looking out for him. When the father comes, there is a joy on the son's face. That is bulging. Brahman's visualising the previous creation, identifying with the knowledge of creation, is figuratively called bulging here. Brahman does not bulge and it cannot bulge. Bulging indicates the readiness of Brahman for creation.

To be continued.....

³ Yasya jñānamayaṁ tapaḥ - muṇḍaka 1|1|9 – knowledge of the earlier cycle of jagat, which is unmanifest, alone is tapas.

Śrī Rudram

नमो॑ निचे॒रवे॑ परि॒चराया॑रण्यानां॑ पतये॑ नमः॑ ॥ ५ ॥
namo॑ nice॒ravē॑ paricā॒rāyāra॑ṇyānāṃ॑ pataye॑ namaḥ॑ ॥ 5 ॥

namaḥ – salutation; nicerave – to the one who wanders around (more cleverly than the robbers of the forest); pāricarāya – who is constantly on the move for stealing; āraṇyānām – of the forest-thieves; pataye – to the Lord; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to the one who wanders around more cleverly than the robbers of the forest, who is constantly on the move for stealing and who is the Lord of the forest thieves.

Namaḥ nicerave – Salutation to the one who is a clever robber. These robbers are in the forest and one must be lucky to return safely from their trap. In his early life, Vālmīki was a robber in the forest. Once he tried to rob Nārada. Nārada asked him, “Why do you commit this crime?”

Vālmīki (retorted): “Why should I not do this?”

Nārada: “This is pāpa karma, a wrong action, that will make you suffer later. Do you want to suffer?”

Vālmīki: “No. But the suffering will be small because it will be shared by my wife and parents.

Nārada: “No. They will not share your pāpas. They will only share the food you give them.”

Vālmīki was shocked to hear this from the sage. He went home and asked his father. His father said, ‘I have my own pāpas. I will not share yours. It is your duty to take care of me.’ His mother confirmed that what his father had said was right. Vālmīki went to his wife hoping for a favourable answer. She said, ‘I do my duty of making a home. Your duty is to provide. Why do you commit this crime? I will not share your pāpas.’

Hurt and disappointed, Vālmīki returned to the saint and prayed, ‘I want to get rid of all the pāpas. Please bless me.’ Nārada asked him to repeat the name ‘Rāma’. After a lapse of time when Nārada returned, he could only hear the sound of Rāma nāma. Nārada called him to come out of the Valmīka, anthill, and he was called Valmīki¹. The Lord blesses even people like Vālmīki.

¹ valmike bhavaḥ– one who obtains in an anthill.

The forest thief waits for people to come his way. But there are others who look for people in the forest as well as in the periphery of the forest. They are called nicerus.² Paricara is one who moves around in the society. All these are different types of thieves. The Lord is in the form of nicerus, paricaras and so on.

Āraṇyānām pataye namaḥ – Salutations to the one who is the Lord of the āraṇyās, forest-thieves. A commentator says, ‘He is the greatest among the forests.’ But the idea highlighted in this section being the capacity of the Lord to do aparādha kṣamā, forgiving the wrong doings, the mantra is interpreted as āraṇyānām patiḥ, the Lord of the forest thieves. The Lord can condone any person. When the criminals become devotees, he becomes sahamāna.

नमस्सृकाविभ्यो जिघांसद्भ्यो मुष्णतां पतये नमः ॥ ६ ॥

namassṛkā vibhyo jighāṁsadbhyo muṣṇatām pataye namaḥ || 6||

namaḥ – salutation; sṛkā vibhyaḥ – to the one who is the Lord of those protecting themselves with weapons; jighāṁsadbhyaḥ- who is (the Lord of) those desirous of destroying others; muṣṇatām – of those who steal grains in fields; pataye – to the Lord; namaḥ – salutation.

Salutation to the one who is the Lord of those who are protecting themselves with weapons, desirous of destroying others and who is the Lord of those who steal grains in the fields.

Namaḥ sṛkā vibhyaḥ – Any yantra, weapon, is called sṛkā. Vajrāyudhā is a sṛkā. Sṛkadhāri, one who holds a sṛkā, is Indra. With weapon and armour, some people protect themselves and they are called sṛkāviṇaḥ.³

There are other people who wish to kill animals, jighāṁsats.⁴ One can kill animals for food, but the animals should have a chance to get the hunter. The hunters were equally exposed to the animals. Thus they were more or less matched. Animals do not have a rifle, but only their own legs, claws and so on. A deer has swiftness in its legs and can run away to protect itself. Modern killers, riding a jeep, protect themselves well and shoot the animals. This kind of criminal act will only give them sorrow in life. They are jighāṁsats, desirous of killing the animals without any fear of them. They may even want to kill other human beings too, by protecting themselves first. One who is the Lord of these people, unto him my salutation.

Muṣṇatām pataye namaḥ – Salutations to the one who is the Lord of those who steal grains. For instance, a full-grown crop that is standing in the field is harvested overnight and

² āraṇyaka corāpekṣayāpyapahāra viṣaye nitarām sañcaraṇaṣilo niceruḥ

³ sṛkeṇa yantrēna ātmānam avanti iti sṛkāviṇaḥ tebhyaḥ sṛkā vibhyaḥ (sṛkāviṇām) pataye namaḥ - — those who protect themselves with a thunderbolt are sṛkāviṇaḥ; unto him, the one who is the Lord of them.

⁴ prāṇinaḥ hantum icchantāḥ jighāṁsantāḥ tebhyaḥ jighāṁsadbhyaḥ (jighāṁsatām) patāye namaḥ- those who desire to kill (other) beings is jighāṁsantāḥ; unto him, the one who is the Lord of them, who protects from them (my) salutation.

stolen away by people. In this manner, a tree full of harvestable mangoes can become bereft of fruits overnight. Suppose they give up such acts and surrender to Īśvara, the Lord then becomes their protector. Otherwise, being a svāmī, master, he will chastise them. When those people turn into devotees, they escape by neutralising the pāpa. It is said in Kaivalyopaniṣad⁵ yaḥ śata-rudriyam adhite saḥ brahmahatyāyaḥ pūto bhavati... – one who chants Śata Rudriya... becomes freed of pāpa of killing a brahmin. The upaniṣad describes different forms of crimes from which a person is released.

Here the mantra reveals that one should not condemn such people. They are not separate from the Lord. The only problem is their abuse of free will, for which they will suffer. But Bhagavān does not suffer. Because of his knowledge, he is asaṅga, untouched; this is a very important thing to know about Īśvara. The absolute purity of vastu is the saving fact for Īśvara and is also the saving grace for jīva, as he is non-separate from Īśvara.

Carl Jung conceived of a God that included Satan also. God should include the shadow. The good and bad together make the Lord. But then, since God is bad too, Jung said that he could not trust him. And a God who cannot be trusted is of no use to the human being. It is only in the appreciation of the infallible Lord that the jīva can resolve distrust. In childhood you pick up distrust. Once you discover the parents are fallible, then you lose the capacity to trust. You continue to get hurt again and again. You can only trust the infallible. Infallible is the Lord. Without your knowing the Lord's nature, he cannot help you as much as he could otherwise. In your awareness of the infallibility of Īśvara alone, you can relax.

Jung failed to conceive the infallible nature of God transcending good and bad. Therefore, he could not have trust in God that included Satan, who is ṣṛkāvi, jighāṁsat and so on, as these are all given to acts of hurting. For us, they are non-separate from Parameśvara. When the criminals pray to the Lord, they earn his grace and the prayer neutralises their pāpas. Thus, when they surrender, Lord becomes a blessing factor for them. He is the chastiser and he is also the chastised.

Suppose you say, the Lord is chastised and not me, then you are free from it. It is your ahaṅkāra that isolates you. You can dilate this ahaṅkāra through prayer. There is no reality for the ahaṅkāra as it is only figurative. I consider this section is the best because it covers every crime in the world. Have you committed any crime? The Lord says, 'Come to me'. He is presented as perpetrator of crime. When a habitual offender recognises, 'I am Īśvara,' then the habitual offender in him resolves. Behind every crime there is hurt, angry ego, which is frightened and isolated. The pressure to accomplish and do something is greater than the basic sense of right and wrong called conscience. One goes against the basic conscientious self that has the knowledge of right and wrong and one does so because of one's pressure. If one is able to recognise the Lord as oneself, even though one may not be the Lord, one has surrendered to the Lord. The act itself will give one relief and one will not commit crime anymore.

To be continued.....

⁵ Mantra 24

“Bho Śambho!” A Public Talk By Pujya Swamiji at Coimbatore



Sree Krishna Sweets organised a Public Talk of Pujya Swamiji on “Bho: Shambho” on the 30th of December 2012. The talk was in Tamil and held at jam packed Sarojini Auditorium at Kikani Higher Secondary School, Coimbatore.

Sri M. Krishnan welcomed the gathering. He said that we receive divine vibration when we witness Tiruvannamalai deepam in person. We would miss the divine vibration when we witness the same in a video. Like that we would miss the divine vibration, when we hear Pujya Swamiji’s talks in CD and not in person. He told Pujya Swamiji that while reading Bhagawad Gita Home Study course in

Tamil, he felt that Pujya Swamiji himself was talking in Tamil. Pujya Swamiji confirmed that it was true. Like that when Pujya Swamiji spoke in English he felt that Adi Sankara himself was speaking in English. He said that Adi Sankara would confirm that it was true. Ganga river is old. But the water is always new. Like that Pujya Swamiji may be old. But his teachings are always new.

Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswathi gave his benedictory address. He said that “Bho śambho” means calling Lord Shiva to give maṅgaḷam or auspiciousness. His composition “Bho śambho” had become popular now.

In our culture, we begin anything with a prayer. While writing a book, we should start it with a prayer. If prayer is not there in the beginning of the book, people would not read that book.

Even in Sūtra literature where explicit prayer is not done for the sake of succinctness, implicit prayer is done. Panini grammar book starts with the sutra “vṛddhirādhaic”. The word vṛddhi itself is a prayer. Brahma Sutra book starts with the sutra “athā to brahma jijñāsā”. The word atha means om or maṅgaḷam. Brahma started the creation after uttering om and atha. In a traditional mathematics book there is a prayer, which says “I invoke the grace of Īśvara who is like infinity, which does not undergo any change by addition or subtraction.”

There are so many hidden variables or duritam. Prayer is a pragmatic approach to take care of the hidden variables.

Desiring is a privilege. We can seek Īśvara’s grace for fulfilment of our dharmic desires. One need not feel guilty asking for fulfilment of worldly desires from Īśvara. There is nothing big or small for Īśvara. To be at the right place at the right time is success. To take care of duritam which is obstructing success, we should pray.



Adṛṣṭham is a graceful expression of our earned result.

In temples, priests do prayer rituals through thought, word and deeds. All those visiting the temples would get the benefit of those rituals. Bhajans and satsaṅga would help one get a mind conducive for spiritual studies.

Hare Rama! Hare Krishna! means calling Lord Rama and Lord Krishna seeking removal of obstacles and grant of happiness.

Bho! Shambho! means calling Lord Shiva, the one who does not have a cause and the one who is eternal, to grant maṅgaḷam.

When the day is over, we sign it off. We get a nice break in the night. We begin the morning as a new day. We can celebrate every day as a new year’s day. New Year means we ring out the old and ring in the new. We forget the regrets of the past year. We welcome the New Year with positive thoughts.

We do not know why January 1, is celebrated as New Year. Actually April 14, when Sun enters Aries is the real New Year. But there is nothing wrong in celebrating any day as a new year’s day. We have an opportunity to pray and make New Year resolutions.

In the New Year we should pray daily. We should pray that we should be able to do nitya karma. We should resolve to pursue dharma. We should pray for atma bhala.

Pujya Swamiji greeted every one and wished a Happy New Year 2013.

Report by N. Avinashilingam

Bhagavad Gita Tamil Home Study Course Set Released



CHENNAI—The much-awaited Tamil version of the nine-volume Bhagavad Gita Home Study course, titled “Veeduthorum Geethai”, was released at the 22nd anniversary celebrations of the Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti on October 21.

Releasing the book, Pujya Swamiji spoke about the relevance of the Bhagavad Gita in today’s world. “One is disturbed by so many happenings around. To be insulated from the disturbances, one should know the greater purpose of life. Study of Bhagavad Gita will help one have proper attitude and clear knowledge,” he said.

The hard-bound set, at nine volumes, is a comprehensive exposition of the Bhagavad Gita, and at the standard book size, is easy to carry. For more details, please visit www.avrpt.com

Price: Rs. 300

Pujya Swamiji releases Five Books

Grace we received on New Year Day!!

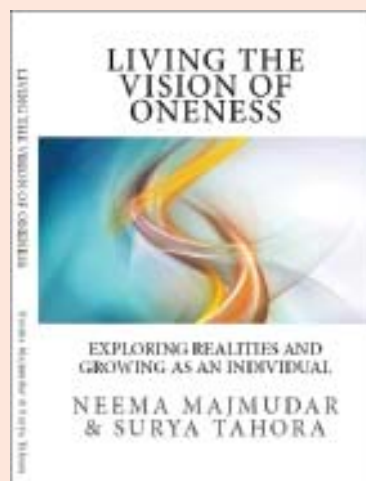


This New Year day was special at Arsha Vidya Gurukulam. The day started with early morning Ganesha homa and puja to Lord Dakshinamurti where we felt the grace of the Lord flowing in abundance. We received Pujya Swamiji's brilliant New Year Message, where he gave us an insight into the fact that every moment is new, and there is no old thing in the universe.

For us, this New Year was especially unique as Pujya Swamiji launched our five new books: 1 in English and 4 in French which are a result of our efforts of past two years.

In the English book ***“Living the vision of oneness”***, we have expounded on the framework that the Bhagavad Gita provides us to *gain clarity about our pursuits, to make effective decisions, to deal with constant changes and manage multiple desires in this rapidly moving world, and to build harmonious relationship with people.*

We have used various case studies and practical examples to convey teaching of the Gita in an easily accessible way. The tone used is analytical and at



the same time personal and conversational to engage a person to reorient and transform oneself with ease.

Four other books launched are translations in French of **Pujya Swamiji's *Introduction to Vedanta, Meditations & Prayers, Values of Values*** and **Swami Veditatmananda's *Pratasmarami Stotram*** by Surya Tahora.



The books can be ordered through the following links:

<http://discovervedanta.com/book.htm>

<http://discovervedanta.com/french/book-new.htm>

We thank Pujya Swamiji and the Lord for making our New Year day so memorable.

Neema Majmudar and Surya Tahora

Swami Dayananda Ashram, Rishikesh

is happy to introduce

a new

TAXI RESERVATION FACILITY

for the benefit of

campers and visitors to the Ashram.

The pick up/ drop facility is available from

New Delhi,

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(airport / railway station).

You may avail of the facility by visiting our website

www.dayananda.org

and clicking the link

“Taxi Reservations”

in the homepage.

Help us serve you better by making use of this facility.

Please make a booking at least 48 hours prior to your travel.

Nineteenth Anniversary of Arsha Vidya Bhavan, Pondicherry

Arsha Vidya Bhavan, Pondicherry celebrated its nineteenth year of service rendered to the public of Pondicherry this year during 7th to 9th January 2013 (3 days) at Jayaram Tirumana Nilayam, Sithan kudil, Pondicherry. Mailam Pommapura Adhinam's 20th pontiff Sri la Sri Sivagnanabalaya Swamigal inaugurated the series of the talks by Sri Swami Sudheerananda Saraswati of Arsha Vidya Kuteeram, Coimbatore,

Sri La Sri Adeenam said in his Anugruha Bhasanam, that the moral values were not given to the younger generation from neither teacher nor from parents, and therefore, Pujya Sri Swami Dayananda Saraswati and his disciples were required to bring the awareness among the youngsters, so that the values were practiced and protected. Sri Adeenam glorified the various activities of Pujya Swamiji in spite of his age and ill health. Sri Adeenam showed his fullest support and help to the Bhavan activities in Pondicherry.

Sri Swami Sudheerananda first introduced the subject "Kaivalya Navaneedam" of Sri Thandavaraya Swamigal from Nanneelam. This text was familiar among many in South India who loved to learn Vedanta in Tamil. The book had a beautiful commentary by Sri Ponnambala Gnana Desiga Swamigal of Sri Kovilur Parampara.

Initially Sri Swami Tattvabodhananda Saraswati introduced Sri Swami



Sudheerananda Saraswati to the audience and the topic of the day as "Ullankai Nellekani" (Hastamalakavat) of the Kaivalya Navaneetam. This book mainly dealt with the oneness of Jiva and Brahman. Having the Brahma sutra in the background, the teacher gave the knowledge to the student in two topics. He explained the that the essential nature of oneself as Brahman with simple steps like Adikaritvam, Sadhana Chatustayam and Mumukshutvam.

On the second and third day, Sri Swami Sudheerananda spoke on the basic doubts and the basics required for proper understanding of the subject matter. He dealt with the answers for frequently asked questions like the nature of Jiva (individual) Jagat (world) and Iswara (God). More than a hundred people were present on all the three days to listen to Swami Sudheerananda and benefitted. The tasty dinner was provided all the 3 days by our Bhavan members.

Bhagavad Gita Jayanthi in Houston, USA



Srinivasan Jayakumar, left, president and chairman of Arsha Vidya Satsanga, Houston, and Vivek Shankar Natarajan lead the worship on the occasion of Bhagavad Gita Jayanthi on Dec. 16

Dr. R. Nagaswamy, the first director of archaeology of Tamil Nadu State, is not only an iconographer, but an iconoclast as well in that he dispels many myths about Hindu temples and the Vedic scriptures through his erudite and scholarly research.

He has succeeded in bringing to light many hidden facets and relics of India's splendid past.

Nagaswamy has great scholarship in various branches - numismatics, iconography, sculpture and epigraphy, besides music, dance and poetry.

The 82-year-old veteran takes pleasure in understanding the Tamil and Indian culture and in popularizing it, without compromising on facts or diluting them.

An acknowledged international expert on South Indian Bronzes, Nagaswamy appeared as an expert witness in the London High Court, in the now famous London Nataraja case.

The judge described Nagaswamy as an unequalled expert in his subject and took his definition of a Hindu temple as authentic, guiding principle.

The bronze icon belonging to the 12th century AD, which was spirited away from Pathur village in Thanjavur district in 1976, changed hands and was with a Canadian corporation. The Tamil Nadu Government fought the case and thanks to Dr. Nagaswamy's knowledge and his clinching testimony, the Nataraja was returned to its rightful setting in 1991.

Currently on a visit to Houston, Nagaswamy spoke at a gathering of the Arsha Vidya Satsang in Houston on Dec. 16.

Nagaswamy in his talk titled Hindu temples and their meaning, responded to a news item of the day which said a United Nations human rights group had asked the Government of India to take steps to uplift the Dalits in India who were denied entry into Hindu temples.

Nagaswamy showed a series of pictures where Hindu deities were taken to the dwellings of the so-called Dalits or untouchables so that they were directly able to worship the deities.

This showed that the propaganda that Dalits were denied rights to worship was misleading, Nagaswamy said.

A temple need not necessarily mean that there is traditional temple architecture with an idol and a regular worship. Even a thatched roof over an idol, where people worshipped for a few days, but abandoned the site later, would be construed as a temple under Hindu traditions, according to Nagaswamy.

A consecrated idol buried on a temple site within the perimeter compound, is a "legal entity," and has the right to be returned to the original abode, even in the absence of a structure.

This logic was upheld in the U.K. High Court as per Nagaswamy's testimony. Once a temple, the place is always a temple, seems to be the dictum.

The temple is designed to symbolize various natural forces, or symbolizing spirits, with perfect measurement of length, width and height, on different geometrical grids. When people worship an idol, they actually worship the spirit symbolized by the idol and not the mere stone, Nagaswamy says.

One of the very widely used Vedic prayer among Hindus invoked the sun to provide the worshipper a critical intellect and wealth or good health, thus suggesting the universality of the Vedic scriptures, followed by Hindus.

Hindu scriptures regard the human body as a temple, according to Nagaswamy. The human body is the temple that enshrines the sacred space.

A Vedic hymn, Nârâyaṅa śukta, gives an insight into human heart and its function that amazingly is a scientific, biological description.

It says the heart is in the form of a lotus bud, inverted, facing down, situated a span beneath the neck and a span above the navel. It shines like a flaming flower garland. It is indeed "the temple of the universe."

It is obviously a clear reference to the pulsating life force which is the cause of all of man's action.

It is in the center of this flame the supreme soul is enshrined.

Through the pulsating vital breadth inside the human body the individual can visualize and experience the Supreme who remains engulfing the Universe.

Thus the human body has always been praised as the temple and the pulsating vital breadth, the life principle, as the divine.

When Hindus worship many gods they worship the universal power beyond lands, languages, forms, race, color, sex, or times and that is the concept of Hindu Godhood. The Hindus loudly proclaimed that 'Critical knowledge' itself is god and that concept of ever expanding knowledge is different from the Creative power and that was the contribution of the Vedas.

In his latest book, Mirror of Tamil and Sanskrit, Nagaswamy challenges the long-held anti-brahminical and anti-Sanskrit belief of some fanatical Tamil scholars and places Tamil and Sanskrit interaction in proper historical and chronological perspective.

In the field of language, grammar, poetics, literature, art, architecture, music, dance, royal administration, judicial administration, and social functions, astronomy, philosophy and religion, the ancient Tamils followed the Vedic Tradition and were greatly influenced by the northern system.

At no point of time in Tamil history, there was any attempt to suppress the study of Tamil, according to Nagaswamy.

Earlier, members of the Arsha Vidya Satsanga, Houston chapter of Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, founded by Swami Dayananda Saraswati, observed Gita Jayanthi.

Srnivasan Jayaraman briefly highlighted the significance of the Bhagavad Gita, after members recited verses from the scriptural text.

The local AVS group has also initiated a history project, comprising several community members, who are experts or scholars in Indian history.

The project is aimed at raising awareness on separating myths from realities, through books and other works based on sound research of India's history.

Nagaswamy's talk provided an appropriate backdrop for the launch of the history project.

For more information on Dr. Nagaswamy's work, visit www.Tamilartsacademy.com

Any form of prayer is as efficacious as any other. This must be understood well, not as tolerance for or accommodation of forms of worship other than one's own, but in terms of understanding the universal order alone that is being implied. There is no pagan's prayer, there is only prayer.

Pujya Swamiji

Pujya Swamiji's Talks in Abhu Dhabhi, UAE

Abu Dhabi was blessed and filled with the aura of the divine presence of Pujya Swamiji from 21st to 23rd December 2012. The Abu Dhabi branches of BGHS group and Aim for Seva had organized the three-day talk by Pujya Swamiji on the topic “**Successful Living**”. It was a special privilege and opportunity for the people of Abu Dhabi to meet and receive his blessings. The three day talk was held in the Emirates Hall Auditorium of the Abu Dhabi Women’s College. The talks began on 21st December with a prayer to Lord Vinayaka by Smt. Radha Swaminathan.

Pujya Swamiji was at his humorous best on the first day and had the audience rolling with laughter on many occasions. On the first day Swamiji talked about the relative nature of success and explained that there is no fixed thing called success as the criteria for success varies from time to time and person to person. Even if you ask the Top 20 rich persons on the Earth in the Forbes List they will still say they are not fully successful but are in the process of achieving more success in life. Also Swamiji talked about various mistakes we do in our life that can make our life act as impediments to success. A person plays various roles in life at the same time like a father, son, brother, husband, employee, citizen etc. at the same time. Every time he has to play the role as needed but should always remember to detach from the role when the requirement for that role play is over.

The second day started with the singing of devotional songs by children (learning music from Smt. Radha Swaminathan). After this Smt. Latha Ravi made a presentation to the audience about the various activities of “Aim for Seva” and urged the audience to contribute towards the cause of Vidya Dhaanam which ranks as the foremost amongst all types of charities.

On the second day Pujya Swamiji stressed the importance of not looking at oneself as an insignificant person in this universe but look at situations and things objectively which will enable a person not to become subjective to anyone or anything. Pujya Swamiji had a word of advice for various members of a family not to look at small mistakes done by other family members as it will lead to unnecessary misunderstandings.

The third day, being Gita Jayanthi day, started with a chanting of the twelfth chapter of Bhagavad Gita (Bhakthi Yoga) by children who are students of Sri. Subramaniam. Then, Sri. S. M. Raoji, a well known businessman who currently owns and operates state- of- the- art steel smelters in the UAE and has held various positions including Chairmanship of the Indian School, Dubai felicitated Pujya Swamiji and made a short speech in which he urged everybody in the audience to read the Bhagavad Gita Home Study by Pujya Swamiji which will give a proper and systematic understanding of the Bhagavad

Gita. After Sri. Rao's speech, Pujya Swamiji, continued from where he left on the earlier day in which he dealt with few significant issues that will lead one to "Successful Living".

Pujya Swamiji talked about the proper attitude towards performing one's duties i.e., doing what needs to be done without either not performing or procrastinating. This is called svakarma and svakarma is nothing but svadharma mentioned in the Bhagavad Gita. Another key to Successful Living is to accept the fact that the result of any action performed by us is dependent on many factors and not only on the action performed. This realization will lead one to accepting the result of the action whichever way it may turn out to be.

At the end of the talks, there was a question and answer session in which Pujya Swamiji answered lot of questions by the audience. In his own inimitable style Pujya Swamiji made even seemingly insignificant questions as significant ones. One such

question by an audience was to tell a mantra for sleeping properly. Swamiji immediately answered "Sri Rama Rama Rameti Rame Rame Manorame, Sahasranaama Thathulyam, Rama Naama Varaanane" and also explained the importance of this mantra.

Everyone present expressed their gratitude by offering their Guru Dakshina to Pujya Swamiji and obtained Swamiji's blessings and "yajna prasadam". Pujya Swamiji also invited the audience to visit the Arsha Vidya Gurukulam centre in Coimbatore and meet him anytime.

During his visit, Pujya Swamiji, honoured the Gita Home Study class members by directly taking a class for about 45 minutes on the sloka **Karmanye Vadhikaraste, Ma phaleshou kada chana, Ma Karma Phala Hetur Bhurmatey Sangostva Akarmani**. We are really fortunate that Swamiji took the class directly for us.

By Balaji Subramaniam

It is the simple things that bring about cheerfulness. It involves living one day at a time, for that is a life in keeping with the reality. Today is real; tomorrow I may not be here at all. That does not mean I worry about what will happen tomorrow. Today I am alive and what is to be done this day, I just do. The future can take care of itself. If I can manage today, tomorrow I have only one day to manage. This is the truth about life. Your whole life, all you have to manage is one day. Even if you are worried, your worry is only for one day. Yesterday's worry is gone. What happened yesterday was yesterday. It is not today. If yesterday you made a mistake that is fine. You are wiser for it. If you are worried about it today, not only yesterday was spoiled, today also is wasted in worrying about what happened yesterday. With reference to the result of action, and what is to be done, certain surrender allows you to live happily. The future will take care of itself. This one day at a time never goes away.

Pujya Swamiji

4th National Conference Convened by Ārsha Vidyā Vikās Kendra

March 2nd (Saturday), 3rd (Sunday), and 4th (Monday) 2013

In order to appreciate the richness and diversity of Indian Culture in the contemporary society, AVVK is planning to host another interface on various aspects of Vedic Culture, Post-Vedic Indian Culture, Sanskrit/Odia Literature, Buddhism, Bhakti Movement etc.

Thrust Area of the Conference “Spectrum of Indian Philosophy, Culture and Literature”

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. The Vedas | 9. The Purānas |
| 2. The Vedāngas | 10. Dharmashāstras |
| 3. Upanishads | 11. Indian Philosophical Systems |
| 4. Buddhism | 12. Essential of Vedānta |
| 5. Sanskrit Literature | 13. Vaishnava Vedānta |
| 6. The Epics –
<i>Rāmāyana</i> and <i>Mahābhārata</i> | 14. Ethics and Values |
| 7. Bhagavad-Gītā | 15. Indian Hymnology |
| 8. Women in India | 16. Bhakti Movement |
| | 17. Religious/Philosophical Literature |

Participation details

Faculties of the Universities, Research Scholars, and Independent Researchers are invited to participate in the Conference.

Submission of Abstract

Abstracts not exceeding 300 words along with Registration Form may be sent by email to atmaprajananda@gmail.com so as to reach by **31 January, 2013**, followed by the hard copy and the CD/DVD by Speed Post/Courier.

The final paper in around 3,000 words (10 pages) may be sent by
15 February 2013

by email to atmaprajananda@gmail.com.

Followed by the hard copy and the CD/DVD through Speed Post/Courier.

Last date for Submission:

The abstract by 31st January, 2013, Final paper by 15th February, 2013.

Registration Fees -

Resource Persons - Rs.300/-

Research Scholars - Rs.100/-

Details of the Conference available in
<http://www.atmaprajananda.blogspot.in/>

Surabhi

*pītodakā jagdhatṛṇā dugdhadohā
nirindriyāḥ* (Kaṭha. Up. 3)

“These cows have drunk water for the last time, eaten grass for the last time, given milk for the last time, and unproductive.”

Today who will want to keep such animals except sending them to slaughter houses?

A sigh of relief and secure sight in Surabhi *gośālā* for *gomātās* at Ramadevara Betta, Chennamallana Halli Village situated 120kms from Bangalore in Madhugiri Taluk. These *gomātās* are living peacefully in Surabhi on top of a rocky hillock situated in a serene surrounding amidst rocky hillocks awaiting the last call from Bhagavaan. The lives of 380 *gomātās*, the survivors have been saved and rescued on the way while being



transported to the slaughter houses and becoming delicacies on the dining tables of many homes, five star hotels and restaurants.

The farmers, due to poverty sell these *vridhha asvatha pītodakā jagdhatṛṇā dugdhadohā niirindriyāḥ gomātā* for pittance of money to the brokers who are in this *gomāta*, buffalo, bulls and oxen transporting trade to the slaughter houses.

This noble project of Surabhi *gosamvardhana Kendra* is active from 2006. So far 550 of them have been rescued. They take good care of these animals with proper medical attention. The cows also suffer from the same medical problems like the humans. They get cold, fever, diabetes, arthritis and skin problems and so on and so forth. Poor dumb animals cannot express the discomfort like the humans. Twice a week the veterinary doctor visits for a health check. So there



are separate natural shelters made of stone walls for the sick and healthy cattle.

A separate land has been demarcated for burying the dead cows. Surprised to hear that *gośālā's* are not exempt for going through the cumbersome procedure of reporting the death of every animal and procuring a certificate from the Government. The hawks are waiting for a slip to drag them to the courts!

Since this is situated on a rocky hillock, rural and remote place with scanty rainfall, providing water and fodder is a great difficulty for these animals. There is hardly any road leading to this *kendra*. Only bullock carts can withstand the roads. It is an adventure visiting this isolated place. Still lorries and JCBS reach this place to destroy, damage and demolish the *gośālā* by the supporters of the slaughter houses.

In spite of the stiff resistance and 78 court cases against him to close down the *gośālā*, a commendable job with yeomen effort with passion for *go samrakṣaṇa* has been done by the family of Shri Madhusudan, his wife Smt Rama, the aged mother Smt Leelavati and the support of the local villagers who have understood the noble cause.

He has made a rain water harvest storage which supplies him for four months only. The open well and bore well at the foot of the hillock is another source of water supply. The one solid rock hillock situated in a 7 acre has been converted into greenery by spreading more mud and clay. There is a Lord Rama temple and even a breezy *aśvatta* tree.

Sri Madhusudan has been creating awareness to the farmers by educating them on the value of the so called useless *gomātās*. He conducts workshops and training programmes on the use of *go mūtra* and cow dung, erecting biogas plants and culturing organic manure for the fields. He



has developed 30 traditional health care products out of these. The *bhasma* or *vibhūti* prepared out of cow dung cakes is another interesting product. There are no chemicals, chalk or white cement added unlike the ones available in the market. It is safe to be smeared on our foreheads!

He is also collecting the various breeds of *gomātās* from the farmers lest the breeds become extinct. These rare breeds are given to the needy farmers and other *gośālās* on demand.

He also addresses the school children in the villages and also in the cities about the importance of *go samrakṣaṇa*, protection of cows in spite of his busy schedule of his regular attendance to the courts to protect these *gomātās*.

Please visit their website for more details.
<http://surabhigoushala.org/>

It was a moving and touching experience for all the three Swaminis, Swamini, Svatmanishthananda, Swamini Svatmabodhananda and Swamini Bharatiyananda, who visited this *go samrakṣaṇa kendra*. Thanks to Swamini Bharatiyananda for initiating this eye opening trip to Surabhi.

Report by Swaminis

Indian Railways To Run 750 Special Trains For Kumbha Mela 2013

Source

MUMBAI, INDIA, December 27, 2012 (travelbizmonitor.com): The Indian Railways is gearing up to facilitate the rush of passengers during the Maha Kumbha Mela at Allahabad in February next year and is expected to run around 750 special trains and make arrangements for additional 1,800 coaches to ensure seamless travel for devotees, as per a TOI report.

As Railways is expecting a rush of around 83 million people during the Kumbha Mela, the state transporter is working on enhancing the capacity of around 100 existing trains by adding more coaches to ferry passengers travelling to the holy city apart from running special trains. “We are pooling around 1,800 additional coaches from all 16 zones,” P Guha, Executive Director (Coaching), Railway Board, said.

According to estimates, around 30 million devotees are expected to visit Allahabad on Mauni Amawasya (February 10). Around 133 additional booking, enquiry and reservation counters will be opened in Allahabad, Naini, Sangam, Prayag and Vindhyachal. Considering the enormous task, a Mela Adhikari (officer) has been appointed by the Railways to coordinate with other agencies.

How the new BAPS Temple in California Ingratiated Itself

Source

CHINO, CALIFORNIA, January 4, 2013 (India Abroad, by Arthur J. Pais): Even as hundreds of devotees gathered for the dedication of the Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Mandir in Chino Hills, California, December 23, and thousands watched the Web cast as the murthis were installed inside the temple, for the local organizers, there was also a satisfaction of having convinced the city authorities to sanction the completion of the temple, keeping intact most of the original project.

Constructed from 35,000 pieces of hand-carved Italian Carrara marble and Indian pink sandstone, the temple encompasses five pinnacles, two large domes, four balconies, 122 pillars and 129 archways. Its 6,600 hand-carved motifs depict a mosaic of tales. Situated on a 20-acre site with a 91-foot lotus-shaped pond, it also has a cultural center, gymnasium and classrooms. At least 900 volunteers including many second-generation Indian-American students gave their services, according to the temple authorities. At least 1.3 million man hours of construction was used.

In a script that has been reverberating in the past four decades whenever a new temple has been proposed, the objections of the city zoning board — ranging from more traffic in the residential area around the temple to the size of the temple towers — was slowly challenged by the temple builders.

The temple builders approached the opposition in several ways. Even as permissions for the temple facilities were being cleared, they were also convincing the city officials and residents that the devotees and tourists who would be coming to the temple would bring revenue to the city.

The devotees also asserted — in private conversations and official discussions — that as Americans, they had equal right to their house of worship. They also built goodwill for the community and over 1,000 Hindu families around by holding walkathons, medical camps, blood drives and Thanksgiving dinners in Chino Hills on the same day when BAPS members in more than 40 American cities and towns were hosting similar events.

'Building a Better Community, One Step at a Time' was the theme of the walkathons and over \$5,000 was expected to go to local organizations, including the Chino Hills High School and the Wounded Heroes Foundation helping injured armed forces veterans.

BAPS doctors have conducted free medical checkups.

'It was amazing to see how willing the doctors were to help out the patients,' Ambika Rajyagor, a student volunteer from Chino Hills High School, was quoted as saying. 'Watching the doctors volunteer their time and effort gave me the incentive to help out more so that I can make the difference in the community.'

During numerous open houses, members also collected hundreds of letters of support from the community, including religious leaders,

the adjoining residential communities, and coaches from the National Junior Basketball program, who were allowed use of the gymnasium on the temple ground.

Chino Hills Mayor Peter Rogers found out about BAPS's outreach activities from calling many California mayors.

"He even called the mayor of Chicago and came to be convinced we were carrying out good work," said Lenin Joshi of BAPS. "His discovery played an important role in city council giving the final approvals." The members of the temple's governing board also felt vindicated when local dignitaries attended the inauguration event and joined devotees and spiritual leaders including Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami, the head of Kauai's Hindu Monastery, and publisher of Hinduism Today.

Mayor Rogers said at the inaugural event, 'The Mandir and cultural center will indeed be a place that Chino Hills can be proud of for so many, many generations.' The temple, Mayor Rogers added, 'is a beautiful testament to the hard work of your congregation who has spent several years to build this place of worship.' The inauguration was a culmination of four-day events that began with BAPS guru Pramukh Swami Maharaj's 92nd birthday celebrations December 20.

Temple authorities also claimed it is the first earthquake-proof temple in the world; the upper structure of the complex is protected from earthquake damage by separating it from the base with a series of 40 base isolator units. It uses a solar power system. The temple complex reportedly cost \$15

million, including the land. It could have cost nearly double, but for hours of volunteer work and fees of experts, temple authorities say.

'If one word could sum up the construction of this mandir, it would be sacrifice,' Rakesh Patel, the director of construction, was quoted as saying. 'It was, indeed, the dedication, service, effort and sacrifice of hundreds of volunteers from doctors to lawyers to engineers to architects who completed this mandir. Whether it was raining or sweltering outside, volunteers did everything from heavy duty labor to planning and execution of the smallest thing for making this mandir.'

Sri la Sri Balangadharanatha Swamiji Attains Mahasamadhi

Source

BENGALURU, INDIA, January 13, 2013 (Deccan Herald): Balangadharanatha Swamiji, the pontiff of the Adichunchanagiri Mutt in Nagamangala of Mandya district, died on Sunday evening at BGS Global Hospital, Kengeri. Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar and Dr K N Venkataramana, vice-chairman of the hospital, announced his sad demise on the hospital premises on behalf of the mutt on Sunday night.

The body of the seer was later brought to the Vijayanagar branch of the mutt around 10 pm and the public were allowed to pay their last respects. Devotees who thronged the hospital were seen moving towards

Vijaynagar with the body. Many devotees were also at the Vijayanagar mutt by the time the body was brought there and continued to fill the grounds next to the mutt to pay their last respects. The seer's body was kept for public darshan all through the night. Home Minister R. Ashoka said that the body would be kept at the Vijaynagar Mutt till 9 am on Monday and then would be taken to the mutt at Adichunchanagiri, Nagamangala in procession and the last rites would be conducted there in the evening with full state honors. Chandrashekara Swamiji, of the Vishwa Okkaliga Samsthana, told media that the community leaders, including former prime minister H. D. Deve Gowda, had suggested to finish the last rites of the swamiji on Monday itself as it was Makara Sankranti, an auspicious occasion. Gowda said that the Swamiji was a great man and his samadhi would be constructed according to all the rituals.

Balangadharanatha Swamiji, 69, was the 71st pontiff of the Adichunchanagiri Mutt. He had been suffering from multiple ailments, including complete renal failure and coronary heart disease, for the last four years. Sources said he was admitted to hospital on Saturday morning after he complained of chest pain and low blood pressure. With reports emerging that the condition of the seer was critical, many VIPs and political leaders including Gowda, Shettar, Ashoka and Central Minister Veerappa Moily rushed to the mutt. As news spread of his ill health, devotees started to converge on the hospital.

Being the main pontiff of Vokkaligas, the second most dominant community in the State, the swamiji enjoyed immense popularity among political leaders.

The mutt witnessed a revolutionary progress under his leadership with several of his flagship projects in education, religion and social service. The seer focused on providing humanitarian services including providing basic necessities like food, education and health for lakhs of people during the last four decades.

Ashoka and Dr Venkataramana briefed the media around 6 pm and said that his condition was stable. However within minutes after the briefing, the seer's condition deteriorated and he suffered a massive cardiac arrest. All efforts of the doctors to revive him failed and he breathed his last at 7 pm.

Sri Balagangadharanatha Swami: a Visionary Educationist

Source

BENGALURU, INDIA, January 14, 2013 (Deccan Herald): Balagangadharanatha Swami, pontiff of Adichunchanagiri mutt, was born as Gangadharayya on January 25, 1945, in a Subedar family at Banandur in Bidadi hobli of Ramanagar district.

One of the six children of Chikkalingegowda and Boramma, Gangadharayya completed his primary education at his birthplace. After completing SSLC with a first class in 1963, he joined the Government Arts and Science College in Bangalore to pursue science.

His spiritual inclination drew him to pontiffs of various mutts during his student life and it prepared him for the role he played well

after taking charge of Adichunchanagiri mutt at Nagamangala taluk in Mandya district.

He was given diksha by Ramananda Swamy, the then pontiff of Adichunchanagiri mutt, on February 12, 1968 and was renamed as Balagangadharanatha.

After he was anointed as the pontiff of the mutt on September 24, 1974, Balagangadhara went to Kailasashrama in Bangalore and Sri Jayachamarajendra Government Sanskrit School for obtaining scholarship in scriptures.

The mutt witnessed a revolutionary progress under his leadership with several of his flagship projects in education, religion and social service. Hundreds of thousands of children from rural areas are studying in more than 400 schools and colleges run by the Adichunchanagiri Education Trust.

The children of the less privileged are provided with accommodation, food and education, starting from pre- school to MBBS and Engineering. Besides, the students irrespective of their caste and creed, can study Sanskrit and Agama at Kalabhairaveshwara Samskrita Agama Pathashale on the mutt premises at Adichunchanagiri.

Being the main pontiff of Vokkaligas, the second most dominant community in the State, Swami enjoyed immense political following. Political leaders, cutting across party lines and especially from the Vokkaliga community, called on him regularly seeking his guidance. Many political leaders would call on him before launching the election campaign or political conventions.

With the association of State government and different religious leaders, Balangadharanath Swami launched “Karnataka Vanasamvardhana Trust,” to improve the forest wealth by planting five crore saplings. he mutt volunteers under his guidance took up desilting of water tanks as a part of Jalasamvardhana scheme to increase the storage capacity of tanks and improve ground water level.

He also rendered yeoman service in the health sector, opening hospitals that provided free accommodations, treatment and food.

Under a health programme, trained healthcare volunteers visit villages every day, educate, guide the patients and bring suffering patients to the hospital, get them treated and send them back to their places. He also introduced mass marriage system to reduce the burden on the economically deprived sections of society.

Today, the mutt has its branches spread across the State, including Bangalore, Kumbalagod, Archakarahalli, Mayasandra, Mysore, Mandya, Melkote, Hemagiri, Hassan, Shimoga, Chitradurga, Sringeri, Chikkaballapur, Dasarighatta and Kanakapura.

Condolences Offered:

”Balangadharanatha Swamiji’s contribution to the fields of religion, education and social service are unparalleled. During the last three decades, he had built hundreds of educational institutions which have been providing quality education from primary to post-graduate level. His contribution to the field of environment through several afforestation

programmes and services in reviving folklore and other rural art forms has been immense.”

Jagadish Shettar, Chief Minister

”Balangadharanatha Swamiji not only built the Adichunchanagiri mutt but also unified the unorganised Vokkaliga community. Through his hard work, dedication and spiritual power, he brought international recognition to the mutt. He never restricted the mutt to any one community. He believed in oneness and helped all sections of society.”
H. D. Kumaraswamy, JD(S) State President

”His yeoman service for the betterment of the community and education sector is unparalleled.”

Deve Gowda, JD(S) national president

”He hailed from a poor family and dedicated himself to the service of the poor and downtrodden. He was totally committed to provide free education and struggled hard over the last four decades for overall development of the State. I used to meet him whenever I was going through a crisis and he guided me suitably.”

B. S. Yeddyurappa, KJP president

Nirmalanandanatha Swami To Head Adichunchanagiri Math

Source

KARNATAKA, INDIA, January 15, 2013 (The Hindu): Nirmalanandanatha Swami took over as the 72nd Mathadhipathi of the Adichunchanagiri Mahasamsthana Math on

Monday, as willed by his predecessor Balagangadharanatha Swami. Balagangadharanatha Swami passed away at a private hospital on Sunday after a long illness and was laid to rest on Monday.

The new Mathadhipathi is a native of Chirnahalli in Gubbi taluk, Tumkur district. Born as Nagaraja on July 20, 1969 to Narasegowda and Nanjamma, Nirmalanandanatha Swami had a humble upbringing. His parents had six children and the family sustained itself by cultivating its two acres. After finishing his graduation in engineering from Mysore, he went on to earn an M.Tech from the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras

Karnataka Plans To Monitor Astrologers

Source

BANGALORE:, INDIA, January 14, 2013 (India Times): Soon, astrologers in Karnataka may have to register with the government. In an effort to check black magic, voodoo and witchcraft, the muzrai department is mulling over a policy in this regard. There

is no law now to govern astrology, which is a huge business in the state.

”A committee comprising well-known astrologers, bureaucrats and experts will be constituted to find out ways to eliminate black magic. The committee will submit a report whether astrologers need to register with the government. The final decision will be subject to the committee’s recommendations,” muzrai minister Kota Srinivas Poojary told TOI.

The minister said they need to monitor those who exploit people in the name of astrology, witchcraft and rituals. “We have been hearing of reports that the services of black magic practitioners and sorcerers are enlisted even to cure fever. All these should end,” he said.

The proposal for registering hasn’t gone down well with the astrologers and rationalists. Noted astrologer Daivajna KN Somayaji, though, welcomed the objective, saying he wanted to know the criteria for registration. “Which organization will fix qualification for us? Anyone can register and hang a board stating he is a government-recognized astrologer. This will lead to commercialization of the profession,” he said.

Life is nothing but a series of decisions. You have to make decisions in life all the time. And those decisions have to come from a clear mind, not from a confused mind. Therefore, you have to be prayerful so that clear decisions will come to you.

Pujya Swamiji

In memory of G.R.



The antyeṣṭi, final rites of Sri. G. Ramachandran, pūrvāśrama brother of Pūjya Svāmiji who attained śivaloka prāpti on the 7th of January this year ended today with the performance of the 13th day ritual in Manjakkudi, the native village of Pūjya Svāmiji. A bhikṣā was sponsored today in memory of beloved Sri. G.Ramachandran fondly known as GR. Manjakkudi and GR cannot be separated and he is all-pervasive there and all around Manjakkudi. His pleasant speech, welcoming face, ready to serve disposition at all costs, ignoring his own health, tireless efforts in administering all the

projects there, have to be remembered on this day. All the devotees and students of Pūjya Svāmiji share the grief of all those connected to him and pray for the peace Sri. G.R.



OBITUARY



Sri G. Ramachandran (3.1.1935-7.1.2013)

Correspondent, SDET

Sri G. Ramachandran was to his last breath a sevak dedicated to realising Swamiji's vision in and around Manjakkudi, Swamiji's and his birthplace. His capacity to bring people together and his ability to reach out were matched only by the largeness of his heart. GR Sir, as he was called by all who worked with him, was the sun around whom spun Manjakkudi and the hundreds of villages and their people. He nurtured their growth, shared their joys and sorrows. No event of note was left untouched by his thoughtful presence. His mere presence brought hope, confidence and security to all his people.

Every brick of the buildings administered by the Swami Dayananda Educational Trust resonates with his spirit. We will miss him as will the people and thousands upon thousands of staff, students, colleagues—in fact, everyone who came to know him. And their name is legion. He was Manjakkudi, and with his sudden passing away, he leaves behind a void that will be hard to fill. Let us rededicate ourselves to Sri GR and to his spirit of Seva.



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