



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

# SAPTHAGIRI

ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY

SEPTEMBER 2020

Rs. 5/-

Special Issue on  
Srivari Brahmotsavams

23-09-2020  
Wednesday  
Night : Garudavahanam

**Tirumala Sri Venkateswaraswamivari  
Annual Brahmotsavams**  
From 19<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2020

Sri Venkateswara



Tirumala  
Sri Venkateswaraswamivari  
Annual Brahmotsavams  
From 19<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2020



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

19-09-2020 Saturday  
Day : Dwajaroohanam



19-09-2020 Saturday  
Night : Peddaseshavahanam



20-09-2020 Sunday  
Day : Chinnaseshavahanam





## BHAGAVADGITA

Tataḥ śvetair hayair yukte  
mahatī syandane sthitau  
Mādhavaḥ pāṇḍavaś cai va  
divyau śaṅkhau pradadhmatuḥ ॥

(B.G. Chapter- I, Sloka-14)



Seated in a glorious chariot drawn by white horses,  
Srikrishna and Arjuna blew their celestial conches.

## INVOCATION

Utsavaṃ kuru me puṇyaṃ brahman lokapitāmaha |  
Varṣe varṣe tu māse'smin kanyārāśiṃ gate ravau |  
Ye kecidatra kurvanti brahmaproktotsavaṃ mama ||  
Te yānti brahmaṇo lokaṃ bhamau kāmānavāpya ca |  
Aihikaṃ ca phalaṃ datvā svargamīpsitameva vā |  
Matpadaṃ ca śarīrānte dadāmyeṣāṃ na saṃśayaḥ ||

- Varahapuranam

Oh! Grand father of all the worlds! You perform Brahmotsavams in my name for my pleasure. Every year whenever the Sun enters the sign of Virgo (Kanya Rasi) all my devotees should perform these Brahmotsavams with great devotion under your leadership. Those who participate in these special festivals will attain Brahmaloaka at the end of their lives having enjoyed all worldly comforts during their life time. If they perform these festivals with utmost devotion I shall bestow upon them for their worldly fulfilment and at the end of their lives I shall give them an eternal place in my abode Vaikuntha.







## MANIFOLD NAIVEDYAMS

Small and Big Laddus, Appams and Vadas are brought in Covered Large Vessels and offered in very large quantities to Sri Venkateswara Swami.

**Odu or Matrannam** - This is the Curd rice offered to the DhruvaBera, which is kept in front of the deity inside Sanctum Sanctorum. This is offered in the Name of Kuruvartanambi, a pot maker and staunch devotee of Lord Venkateswara popular in the Pauranic times, whom Lord Srinivasa blessed.

**Second Bell** – The Second Bell for Naivedya is usually given in the morning hours between 7.00 AM and 8.00 AM varying from day to day depending on the special sevas of each of the week days. The items like *Pulihora*, *Pongali*, *Daddhyodanam* and *Chakkerapongali* are offered just as during the first bell. In addition to these there are some special items like *Suddhannam* (Pure Rice), *Sheera* (A Sweet made of Cow Ghee, Milk, Semolina, Cashews and other items), *Kadambam* (Multi-vegetable rice preparation), *Payasam*, *Kshirannam* (Milk Rice), and *Kesari Bath*.

**Arjita Sevas During the day** - Arjita Sevas are the special ritualistic services performed to Sri Venkateswara Swami where a limited number of devotees are permitted to participate on payment of prescribed amount.

**Kalyanotsavam offerings** are Big Laddus, Vadas, Appams and Anna Prasadasms (Rice Preparations).

**Sahasra Deepalankara Seva Offerings:** Pancha Kacchayam is a special offering of this Seva. This item is made up of Sugar, Cashew nuts, and mixed with Cardamom.

**Offerings for Tomala Seva :** Dosa Padi Ghee Dosas, Molahora Anna Prasadam (pepper, jeera, salt mixed with rice and ghee) and Kadambam are the special items for this ritualistic seva.

**Tiruveesam Ganta:** During this event Chakkerapongali is offered.

**Ekanta Seva :** This is the last of the service to Sri Swami during the daily sevas. During this hour Cow milk and a mixture of fried dry fruits are offered.

**Dhanurmasam's Prasadam** – The Prasadam for Dhanurmasam is different from that of the other regular items. This consists of Jaggery Dosas, Kesari Bath, Chakery Bath, Bakala Bath and Mavaaharam.

**On special occasions** - During Pavitrotsavams, Brahmotsavams and other special occasions, a very special prasadam called '*ksheerAnnam*' prepared with rice boiled in milk for a long time and flavoured with cardamom, kesar and dry fruits are offered to the Lord.

The Naivedyams in Tirumala Srivari Temple are categorized as of daily festivals and of occasional festivals. The following daily Naivedyams are offered to Sri Venkateswara Swami Seva wise and time wise too as per the special prescriptions of the Agamas. The Naivedya offerings of Nitya Archana begin from Suprabhata Seva and end with Ekanta seva.

**Suprabhatam** – Butter, Milk and Sugar are offered to swami in the Suprabhata Seva. This is the first of all the Naivedyams of the God's daily rituals.

**Koluvu ritual** - This is the beaten flour mix of sesames with Jaggery.

**First Bell** – The first Bell for Naivedyam in the Ananda Nilaya rings in soon after the Early morning Sahasra Nama Archana Seva. The items like *Pulihora* (yellow rice), *Pongali* (Moongdal Rice), *Daddhyodanam* (Curd Rice), *Chakkerapongali* (Sweet – Rice),





Venkatadri Samamsthanam  
Brahmande nasti kinchana



Venkatesa Samo Devo  
Na Bhuto na Bhavishyati

# SAPTHAGIRI

Vol. 51

SEPTEMBER 2020

No. 4

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SERIAL ARTICLES ARE NOT PUBLISHED DUE TO SPECIAL ISSUE ON SRIVARI  
BRAHMOTSAVAMS. READERS ARE REQUESTED TO MAKE NOTE OF THIS.

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Photos

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Photographer, TTD  
Sri B.VENKATARAMANA  
Asst. Photographer, TTD

Annual Subscription : Rs. 60/-  
Life Subscription : Rs. 500/-  
Foreign Subscription : Rs. 850/-  
(For Annual only)

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THE OPINIONS REGARDING THE ARTICLES  
PUBLISHED IN THIS MAGAZINE BELONG TO  
AUTHOR ONLY. T.T.DEVASTHANAMS IS NOT  
RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS.

Note : Due to Covid-19 pandemic, there may  
not be any Processions of Lord's Vahanas this  
time in the Tirumala Mada streets during the  
Brahmotsavams. They will, however, be held  
within the precincts of the temple in Ekantham.

Front Cover : Srivaru on Garudavahanam, Tirumala

Back Cover : Srivari Chakrasnanam, Tirumala

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Editorial  
**BRAHMOTSAVAM – A FESTIVAL BONANZA**

Festivals are an important part of our culture. They are special occasions, bringing people together to commemorate some activity or event. When festivals are celebrated in temples, they are extra special as they are believed to bring protection and happiness to people.

In Tirumala, the annual Brahmotsavam is a festival bonanza. Lord Brahma, the creator, takes the lead in celebrating Brahmotsavam of Lord Venkateswara. The celebrations are thus Brahma's Maha utsavam with the festivities being celebrated on a grand scale. The Lord's Utsava Murthi (Malayappa Swami) will adorn many celestial vahanams and gives darshan to his devotees.

What is special this year?

It is a nine-day festivity conducted with highest devotion and dedication. During the occurrence of Adhika maasam (intercalary month) which occurred this year for the month of Aaswayuja, the Brahmotsava is celebrated twice, once during the additional month and during the original month of Aaswayuja. When the celebrations are held twice a year, the first Brahmotsavam is called '*Salakatla Brahmotsavam*' (Annual Brahmotsavam) and that occurring in the next month is called '*Navaratri Brahmotsava*'. This year, we are all blessed because Lord's Brahmotsavam occurs twice this year.

When the Lord with His Consorts, bejewelled and bedecked with flowers, adorn on various vahanams, the occasion is a feast for the eyes and ears too. With a beatific smile, the Lord reassures his devotees that he will protect them from all evils. His pleasing eyes representing Sun and the Moon radiate confidence to devotees, assuring them of his grace. One can experience the heavenly enjoyment and feeling of fulfilment once we have the grand sight of the Lord with Goddess Sridevi and Goddess Bhudevi on either side. Let us get visualize and envision the radiant glory and grandeur of Lord Venkateswara that echoes amidst His seven divine hills as the Lord justifies His title '*Kalou Venkata Nayaka*'.

What is the significance of the recitation?

Each vahana has a special significance and is accompanied by the recitation of appropriate Divya Prabandha verses. Just one example, Sri Malayappa Swami on a golden elephant is on the sixth day. We see the huge golden elephant. The verses are from Perialwar Tirumozhi describing Gajendra Moksha by Perialwar where Mahavishnu comes to the rescue of the Gajendra that has been caught by the crocodile in its evil grip.

During these difficult times, devotees are like the elephant and have to collectively pray to Lord Venkateswara to show his grace on mankind and save them from the present dreadful situation that has caught us like the crocodile caught Gajendra.

Om Namo Venkatesaya

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# THE GENESIS OF BRAHMOTSAVAMS

- Smt. Ambika Ananth



**D**uring Brahmotsavams when taken in procession, Lord Venkateswara who is the over-lord of lords' dazzles with great divine aura. He excels in supreme glory bedecked by precious embellishments. When he is taken around seated in golden palanquin and all the various vahanams, Lord Venkateswara along with his consorts Sridevi and Bhoodevi blesses the worlds. Devotees of the Lord of seven hills await these celebrations with devout eagerness filling their hearts. For the devotees, the chance to see the Lord many times in a day, to participate in the festivities, to be able to give Harati to the Lord, all of that will be possible only during these Brahmotsavams.

When and how did this utsavam, the Brahmotsavam celebration start? Bhavishyottara Purana says the story about these Brahmotsavams and about Lord Venkateswara who was bound by the boon given to Lord Brahma - that He would remain in the form of Archamoorthy (idol that receives worship) in Ananda Nilayam till the end of this Kaliyuga.

Though the Lord exists in the beautiful idol, only the elevated souls on the path of Jnana can see him as the form of supreme consciousness. All the other

During these utsavams, in front of the vahanam there will be a smaller chariot which is the Brahmaratham. Brahma sits in the chariot and conducts the festivities smoothly - this is the belief. That tradition continues even now, an empty small chariot moves in front with the belief that Lord Brahma is seated inside.







### Towering into the sky

The beauty of Tirumala hills in the nights, especially during Brahmotsavas is enhanced manifold by welcome arches, beautifully lit temple 'prakarams', pushkarini, over-brimming devotees out beating the capacity of the guest houses. On this occasion, the Srivari Temple is bedecked with various colourful flowers by Devasthanam and the garden department, sanctifying the Temple precincts with floral aroma. Electricity department too illuminates the whole place competing with the flower show and make the temple area glittering.

devotees will see the Lord as the idol of Shaligram, as bliss consciousness form. The idol with four arms - one in varada mudra (boon giving protective mudra) the other till his waist, with palm pointed downwards to his feet and two upper arms and adorned by beautiful Jewellery and a crown, with Sridevi and Padmavathi Devi on his chest, with gem studded waist belt, in golden yellow robes - in this magnificent form the Lord gives darshan to his devotees, blesses them and destroys their sins and sorrows.

In the sanctum of Anandanilayam, Lord Brahma lit two "Akhandajyothis" (lamps that remain glowing eternally). He pronounced that the two lamps will continue to glow till the end of Kaliyuga and in the end they will blow off on their own and that is when Lord Srinivasa would return to his abode of Vaikuntta.

Lord Brahma after lighting the Akhandajyothis, reverentially asked Lord Srinivasa as to what more he could do for the wellbeing of humans in kaliyuga.

Then Lord Srinivasa instructed him – O Brahma, my son, make arrangements for rituals like Dwajaarohana (hoisting the temple pennant as the auspicious beginning of a ritual) Rathotsavam (chariot festival) and during such festivities I should be taken around in a procession every day on various vehicles specially designed for the purpose. And, also make arrangements for food offering as naivedyam thrice a day, cooked only by highly learned brahmins who are adept in the study of vedas, and my 'Kalyanam' (auspicious marriage ritual) should be performed thrice a day".

Then Lord Brahma summoned King Thondaman immediately and told him thus- "O King, you see to it that Viswakarma makes various beautifully designed vehicles, various chariots embellished with beautiful canopies, beautiful whisk fans and other items". Then he summoned Viswakarma and introduced him to the king. In no time, Viswakarma created everything mentioned by Lord Brahma and King Thondaman.

Lord Srinivasa instructed Thondaman that kings of all kingdoms along with their retinues must be invited to come and enjoy the festivities that were planned in his honour as - 'Srinivasotsavams'. The Puranam gives in detail the kings and the names of their kingdoms who had visited, namely, 'Anga, Vanga, Kalinga, Kashi, Khamboja, Kerala, Virata, Kuru, Jaangala, Pegundala, Barbara, Pandya, Chedhi, Matsya, Sindhu, and few more kings from other kingdoms. They all came on elephants, horses, palanquins and few came walking holding the decorated canopies and whisk fans - on their way they fed brahmins as a mark of respect.

The festivities started after Sun entered KanyaRashi (in the month of Bhadrapada) and on the tithi of vidiya (Dwitiya - second lunar day), the



ritual of Dwajaroohanam (auspicious hoisting of flag) took place. The previous day itself, anthill sacred soil was collected from the forest in a ceremonial manner and the ritual of 'Ankuraarpanam' took place. A gem studded beautiful palanquin which would be carried by people was brought to Lord Srinivasa and Lord Brahma prayed thus - "O Lord, do sit in this palanquin and go around the temple in circumambulation".



**LORD VENKATESWARA  
(Moola Murthy)**



**BHOGA SRINIVASA MURTHY**



**KOLUVU SRINIVASA MURTHY**

With the power of the mantras (incantations) from the four Vedas, Brahma created four idols with the amsha (part) of Lord Srinivasa.

The utsavavigraham was named - Srinivasa

The second one as -

Ugra Srinivasa

The third one as -

Sarvaadhikasama

The fourth one as -

Lekhakaa

That is how Lord Brahma named the four idols which are there in Tirumala even today. The idol of the deity that is taken in procession during festivities is called



**UGRA SRINIVASA MURTHY**



**SRI MALAYAPPASWAMI WITH HIS CONSORTS  
(UTSAVA SRINIVASAMURTHY)**

as 'Malayappa Swamy'. Lord Brahma created only the idol of Lord Srinivasa. But Malayappa Swamy has both Sridevi and Bhoodevi on either sides. One more is Bhoga Srinivasa, a silver idol. How this idol got into the temple worship is clearly explained in the stone inscription of 960 AD. Princess Samavayi got it made at the behest of Yamunacharya and that the idols of Malayappa Swamy, Sridevi and Bhoodevi were kept in worship in the place of Ugra Srinivasa idol. There is historical evidence for this. During earlier days it was the idol of Ugra Srinivasa which was taken out in procession as utsavamoorthy and in one such celebration a huge fire accident took place on Tirumala hills. Then Lord Srinivasa entered into the body of one devotee and made him talk - he said that in Malayappakona, there are three idols of himself along with Sridevi and Bhoodevi, and he also told the directions to reach that place. The lord also mentioned that those idols must be used as utsava moorthies and Ugra Srinivasa idol must not be taken out from the sanctum for procession purpose as he is 'Urga' (wrathful).

Then when people went in search of the idols as mentioned by the Lord, they were found exactly in that place in Malayappa Kona - hence he is called 'Malayappa Swamy'. Malaya means mountain, a hill.

Lord Srinivasa's idol called 'Lekhakaa' has been in the temple for time's immemorial. He is the koluvu Srinivasa - the one who sits in the Darbar when the daily almanac details (panchanga sravanam) are read out and when the details of temple revenue is reported to him.

'Sarvadhika Sama' is the one created by Lord Brahma which is receiving the worship now as Bhoga Srinivasa.

Like that, with the idols created by Lord Brahma, the very first



utsavams (festivities) called 'Srinivasotsavams' took place. Since then Lord Srinivasa continues to be in invisible form in the temple's Saligrama idol, giving darshan to his devotees and blessing them. Brahma Deva stood at the helm of affairs and got all the vahanams made as ordered by Lord Srinivasa, got the list fixed about which vahana to be used on which day, what food offering (Naivedyam) for each vahanam was decided and with strict vigilance Brahma Deva saw to it that the utsavams were performed smoothly and perfectly. Hence, Srinivasotsavams were named as 'Brahmotsavams'.

### Embellished Vahanams

The Puranam gives the details of all the vahanams in an elaborate manner - about the palanquin that men carry, SeshaVahanam, (the seven hooded Sesha), Hamsavahanam, (Swan), SimhaVahanam (Lion), MutyalaPallaki (palanquin decorated by rows of pearls), Kalpavruksham (the wish yielding tree), Mohini alamkaram (decoration like Mohini avataram, Garuda Vahanam (Garuda, the mighty divine eagle), HanumadVahanam (Lord Hanuman carrying the Lord and his consorts), AiravataVahanam (celestial elephant airavata), Surya prabha, (Sun), Chandra prabha (Moon) chariots, palanquins - all these continue as introduced by Lord Brahma at the very beginning. During these festivities the Lord is given auspicious bath called Snapana tirumanjanam, then at the end, He is given 'Avabrutasnaanam (auspicious bath ritual that concludes the festivities) and after Dwajaavarohanam (bringing down the flag as a mark of final ritual of the festivities). The next day the Lord and his consorts will receive "Pushpa Yagam" (floral worship).

After the Pushpa Yaga how the kings and other dignitaries offered worship in the form of archana (doing puja to his feet) and neerajana (harati), how they offered gifts and presents in his honour, how they all bowed down respectfully and

fell at Lord's feet in complete surrender - all this is described in the Purana.

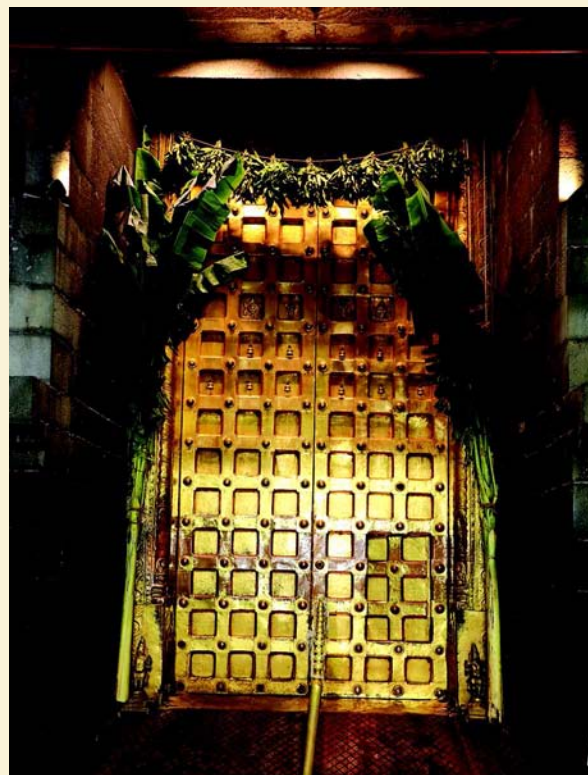
Even to this day, every year Lord's Brahmotsavams are performed in the same manner as earlier times of yore, though some changes are brought in keeping the present-day situation in mind. Whenever there comes adhikamasam (an extra month in the Hindu Lunar Calendar to keep the lunar and solar calendars aligned) two Brahmotsavams will be performed.

(Reference – 'Tirumala Leelamrutham' by Sri PVRK Prasad IAS)



### A Rare Privilege...

In the Tirumala temple, opening of the door is made by the 'Sannidhi Golla', the descendant of the Yadav (cow herd), who reared the sacred cow that shared its milk to the Lord when he was beneath an ant hill. Soon after the Sannidhi Golla opening the Golden Door of the temple, the archaks enter the temple and render Suprabhata Seva. Again, in the night the door is closed by Sannidhi Golla after the Ekanta Seva of the Lord.





# A GRAND START TO THE ANNUAL FESTIVITIES

- Sri R. Muralidharan

**T**emples are representatives of our Culture and festivals are our customs, bringing huge members of society together to enjoy the social joy, while getting the blessings of the Lord. There are a lot of rituals accredited to Tirumala temple. Among them Brahmotsavam is a grand festival spread over almost ten days, which attracts very huge number of devotees. In this respect, the Brahmotsavam at Tirumala is considered to be the most attractive. Tremendous importance is attached to this festival.

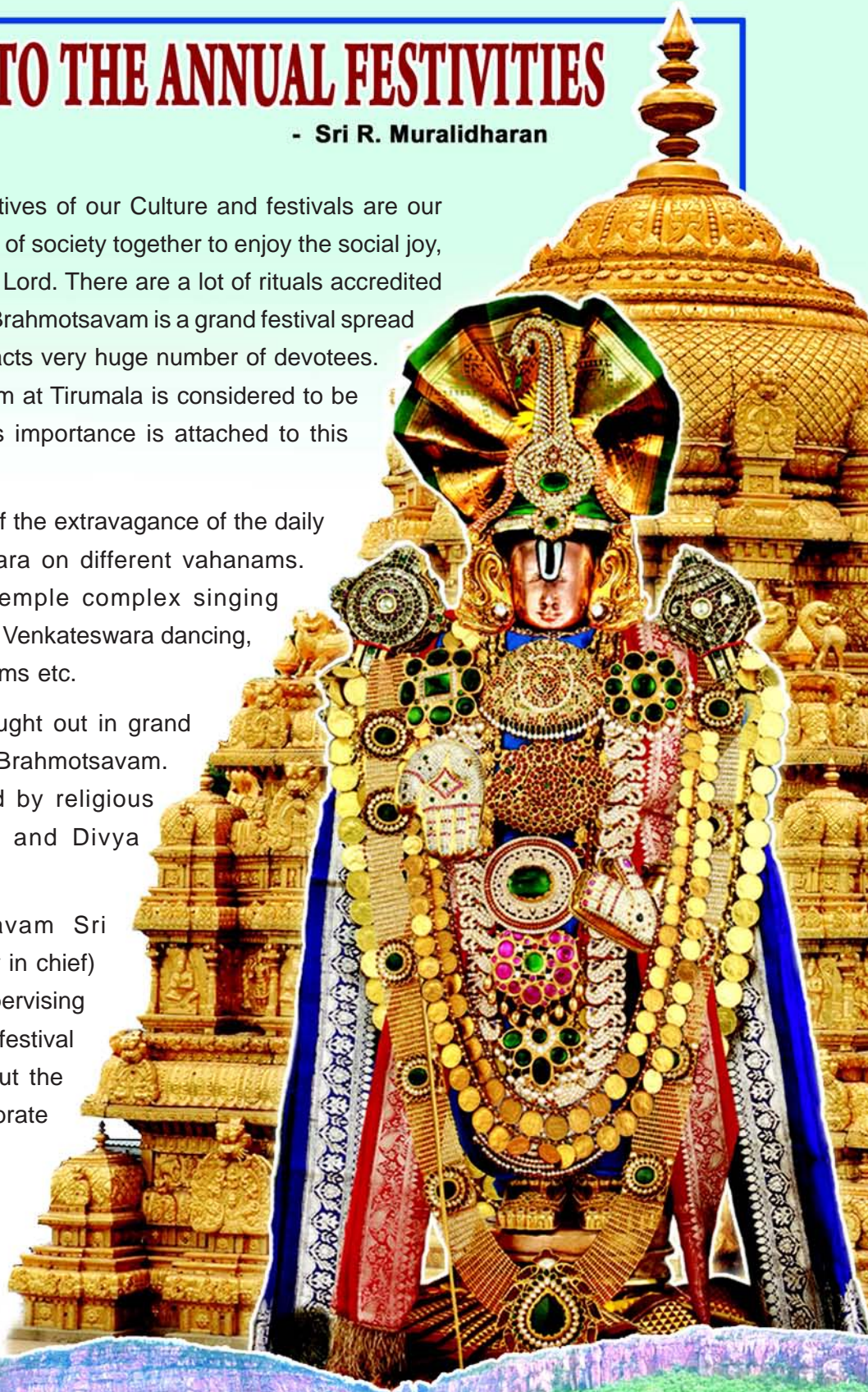
The utsavam reminds me of the extravagance of the daily processions of lord Venkateswara on different vahanams. Cultural folk go around the temple complex singing devotional songs in praise of lord Venkateswara dancing, playing drums, performing kolatams etc.

Lord Venkateswara is brought out in grand procession twice a day during Brahmotsavam. Each procession is preceeded by religious groups of Veda parayanams and Divya Prabandham.

A day before the utsavam Sri Vishwaksena (lord's Commander in chief) goes around the temple area supervising the arrangements. Prelude to the festival the priest ceremonically carry out the Ankurarpanam (Sankalp to celebrate this utsavam).

## DWAJAROHANAM

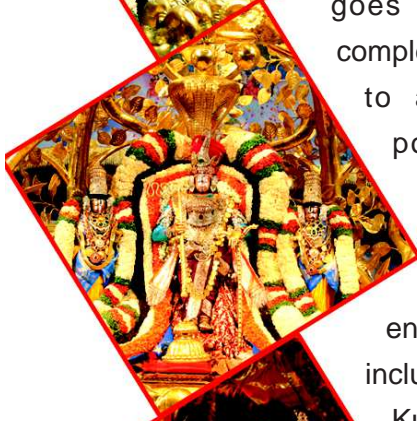
This event is performed on the first day evening of the fete inside the temple, signaling the start of the Brahmotsavam. The







sacred yellow flag with the imprint of Lord Garuda is ceremonially hoisted atop the flag post at the auspicious subha muhurtham amidst chanting of Vedic hymns and to the rhythmic beat of temple drums. Prior to the divine ceremony, the processional deities along with parivara deities like Anantha, Garuda, Chakra and Vishwaksena are taken around the mada streets (four streets encircling the sacred shrine) in a grand procession. It is widely believed that Lord Garuda goes round the temple complex extending invitations to all the supernatural powers like Yakshas, Gandharvas, Kinneras, Kimpurushas and Rishis and to the entire devatha community including Indra. Yama, Agni, Kubera, Varuna, Vayu and other heavenly bodies to take part in the religious festival.



## Pedda Sesha Vahanam

The seven hoods represent the seven hills of Lord Venkateswara. It is believed that it is on this mighty Adishesha that the Lord reclines at his heavenly abode in the Milky Way. It is in appreciation of his services that the Lord bestowed him the honour of being his first Vahanam during the festival.

## ChinnaSesha Vahanam

On the second day in the morning, Chinna Sesha Vahanam, is organised to enlighten devotees on the importance of the hidden Kundalini energy within Man.

## Hamsa Vahanam

In the night, the Lord on the hamsa (Swan) Vahanam is believed to have an inherent ability to separate milk from water. Likewise, the Lord guides mankind to lead a sanctified life, bestowing on it the wisdom to shed bad qualities and retain noble virtues.

## Simha Vahanam

On the third day in the morning the Lord on the Simha (Lion) Vahanam is decorated as Lord Narasimha on Lion. According to mythology, the Lord as King Lion is an embodiment of power and speed, a powerful entity born to remove evil spirits and harmful elements and protect the righteous.

## Mutyapu Pandiri Vahanam

In the night, Lord Malayappa Swamy along with his two consorts decorated with expensive





and resplendent milky white pearls spreading the message of peace, love and co-existence in society.

### Kalpavriksha Vahanam

On the fourth day in the morning Lord on golden Kalpavriksha (Tree of boons) Vahanam, bestowing fortunes on his devotees and fulfilling their wishes.

### SarvaBhoopala Vahanam

The night witnesses Lord Malayappa Swamy on the Sarva Bhoopala Vahanam spreading the message that all the Dikpalakas (guardians of the eight cardinal directions) governing the Universe are under his direct control and vigilance and that mankind prospers with timely rains.

### Mohini Avataram

On the fifth day in the morning, the Mohini Avataram is organised, commemorating the Lord's incarnation as Mohini (celestial beauty). The Mohini avataram is organised to illustrate the benevolence extended by the Lord to those who follow the path of virtue.

### Garuda Seva

Considered to be the most auspicious of all the events during the Brahmotsavam, this festival is organised in the night.

Adding grandeur to the event, antique and precious ornaments like the centuries-old Makara Kanti and Lakshmi haaram, whose history is rooted

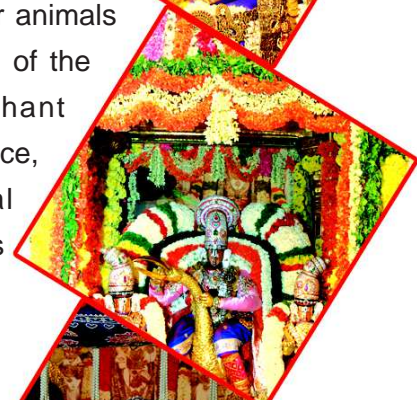
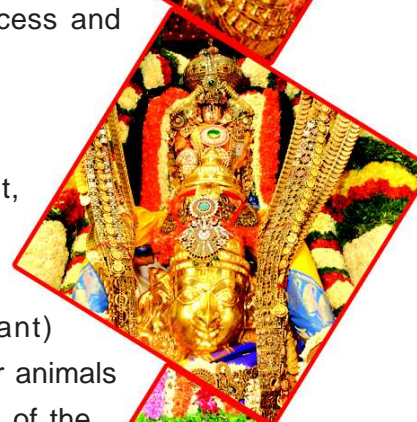
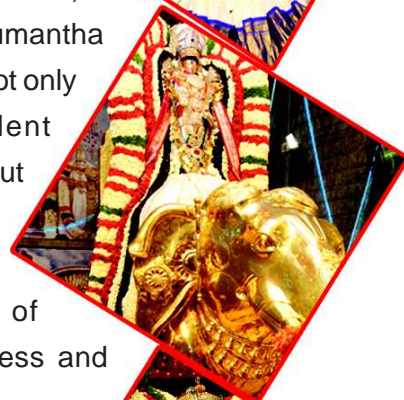
in temple legends, adorn the deity. The deity also wears the sacred garlands from the temple of Goddess Andal in Srivilliputtur.

### Hanumantha Vahanam

On the sixth day in the morning, Lord Malayappa, donning the role of Lord Rama and equipped with a golden bow and arrow, mounted atop the Hanumantha Vahanam. Hanuman is not only considered an ardent devotee of Lord Rama but also an exponent of all the four Vedas, besides being an embodiment of wisdom, strength, success and bravery.

### Gaja Vahanam

Later in the night, Lord Venkateswara enthalls devotees on the Gaja (Elephant) Vahanam. Among other animals engaged in the service of the Lord, the elephant commands a special place, being the celestial vehicle of goddess





Mahalakshmi, the divine consort of Lord Vishnu. To please his consort and bless the devout with all prosperity, the Lord takes a pleasure ride on the Gaja Vahanam.

### Suryaprabha Vahanam

It is widely believed that witnessing Suryaprabha vahanam not only provides sustained life but also relieves one of physical ailments.

### Chandraprabha Vahanam

The night witnesses the divine procession of the Lord on the elegantly decorated Chandraprabha Vahanam, reminding all of the coolness and brightness of moonlight.

### Rathotsavam

Lord along with his consorts, mounts the gigantic wooden chariot which is pulled by devotees along the four mada streets encircling the holy shrine. The chariot with a golden umbrella tied to its crest is tastefully decorated with flags and festoons. Religious fervour pervades the town as

thousands of devotees take part in the procession and pull the chariot by its bulky rope. The air remains electrified with the chanting of Govindanamam as the huge chariot moves down the lanes.

### Aswa Vahanam

The Aswa (Horse) Vahanam is organised in the night. This signifies the avathara of Kalki — a good Samaritan who fights the evil and protects the virtuous.

### Chakrasnanam

The nine-day Brahmotsavam has a grand finale with Chakrasnanam. Snapana Thirumanjanam (celestial bath) is performed to the deities on the north-west banks of Swamy Pushkarini (temple tank), followed by the immersion of the idol of Chakratalwar in the pushkarini waters in the presence of tens of thousands of devotees.

Let us invoke the Blessings of the Lord and His Divine Consorts on the occasion of Brahmotsavam.



### A dip will redeem all your sins away....

The Swami Pushkarini, the holy tank abutting Lord Venkateswara's temple, has a stepped gallery on four sides. There is a detailed description about Pushkarini in the Varaha, Padma, Vamana, Markandeya, Skaanda, Brahma and Bhavishyottara puranas. The legend says that three and half crore theerthas and devatas are residing in the waters of Swami Pushkarini. On Marghasira Suddha Dwadasi day all the three and half crore theerthas will unite here. A bath in the Pushkarini will cleanse our sins and give good results.





# BRAHMOTSAV

## The Grandest Spectacle in Tirumala

- Dr. G.S.R.K. Babu Rao

**W**hen we think of divine Tirumala, we think of the Brahmotsav celebrated every year during Ashvija month. The celebrations attract pilgrims and tourists from all over India and around the world. Brahmotsav is the flagship ceremony of all the festivals conducted at Tirumala. The two temple towns – Tirupati and Tirumala acquire new fervour during these days. Especially Tirumala, glitters with flowers, lights, volunteers colourfully dressed dancers, besides glittering *vahanas*. The departments of Horticulture and Electricity Board vie with each other to make their show more splendid and spectacular. There will be many dazzling attractions like flower and fruit displays, art exhibitions and photography exhibitions. TTD authorities ensure that no pilgrim suffers from hunger or thirst on the hills. They provide different kinds of *prasad* in most of the strategic points. Even milk is provided for the children and the aged.

### What is Brahmotsav?

The word Brahmotsav is a combination of two Sanskrit words Brahma and Utsav. It is said that Lord Brahma first performed this festival and hence it is referred to as the festival celebrated by Brahma. Lord Venkateswara who is worshipped with some festival every day (as many as 300 in a year), is more fond of Brahmotsav, which are celebrated under the aegis of Lord Brahma.

When there is an *adhika masa* (extra month) in the lunar calendar, two Brahmotsav are held. Thus, in 2015 and 2018 the festival was celebrated twice. In 2020 too it is going to be done twice.

There are minor variations in these two celebrations. In Salakatla Brahmotsav, Rathotsav (Big Chariot) is performed in the morning of the eighth day whereas during Navaratri Brahmotsav, Golden Chariot (*Swarna Ratha*) is taken out in its place. Hoisting the flag (*Dwajaroohanam*) and Flag lowering (*Dwaja Avarohan*) in Salakatla Brahmotsav, is done. But in the second Brahmotsavam, i.e., in Navarathri it won't be performed.

It is believed that Brahma descends to the earth to conduct the festival. In *Sri Venkateswara Sahasranama stotra* (Sl no 940),







Lord Malayappa, flanked by His consorts Sridevi and Bhudevi in a golden Tiruchi (palanquin), is taken out in a procession along with *Parivara devathas* such as Anantha, Chakra, Garuda and Viswakshana, while the *Dhwajapathakam* preceeds the divine cavalcade.

it is mentioned that “*Om Brahmadi Gana Sevitaya Namaha*” (refers to Brahma and his entourage worship during the festival. It is signified by a small, empty wooden chariot (*brahma ratha*) which moves ahead of the processions of Lord Malayappa (*utsav murthi*). Until 1582, Brahmotsav were held as often as 12 times a year.

## Celebrations

The celebrations are held for 9 days. On the first day the *Ankurarpan* [planting the nine sacred seeds] and also hoisting of the flag, which is called *Dwajarahana*. The yellow flag contains the image of Lord Garuda (accompanied by the chanting of Vedic hymns).

The commotion of the *utsav* is electrifying, effervescent and tumultuous. The euphoria during the *brahmotsav* is palpable and indescribable. The Lord, perched on different *vahans*, grants the fortune of his blessed *darshan* with an ever-smiling mien and feasts the eyes of the onlooking devotees. One has to experience for themselves to really visualize its glory and galvanize themselves to ethereal bliss. It is not an exaggeration that everyone in Tirumala would be eagerly looking forward to this occasion all through the year.

Currently every day, two *vahan sevas* are being performed during the Brahmotsav. The Lord is taken in a procession around the streets of Tirumala on different *vahanas* (vehicles). Each *vahan* has its own significance, and conveys Lord's message in its own way. Further, Lord Srinivasa goes round the Tirumala streets in the accompaniment of elephants adorning *tiru nama* [sacred three vertical lines on the forehead], horses decorated very charmingly, well-groomed bulls with bulging humps and several other decorations.





Each day, the processional deity will be mounted on different *vahans*.

**Garuda Seva** - On the evening of the fifth day, Lord Malayappa and Garuda are carried in a procession and decorated with garlands of flowers. This is the most significant day in the celebrations. Usually, the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh visits the temple that day and offers the Lord and His *deveris* [consorts] silk clothes. Tirumala witnesses lakhs and lakhs of surging pilgrims that day. But now-a-days, Hon'ble C.M. is offering sacred silk clothes on the first day of the Brahmotsav.

Annamayya very vividly described this procession in his *keertan* (1-92).

*Itu Garuduni nee vekkinavu*

*Pata dikkulu baggana bagile*

[Once you ride Garuda, all around there were shatters.]

*Hanumantha Vahanam and Gaja Vahanam are virtuous ones to carry the lord on the sixth day.*

**Rathotsav** - On the eighth day He rides ornately decorated huge chariot and as if to prove the saying, "*Radhastam Kesavam drushtva punarjanma na vidyate*" (Once you see Kesav on the chariot, there shall be no rebirth.) While He goes on the chariot invisible divine danseuses (*apsaras*) will be dancing as described in Annamayya's *keertan*,

*ADdarO paaDaro apsarOganam*

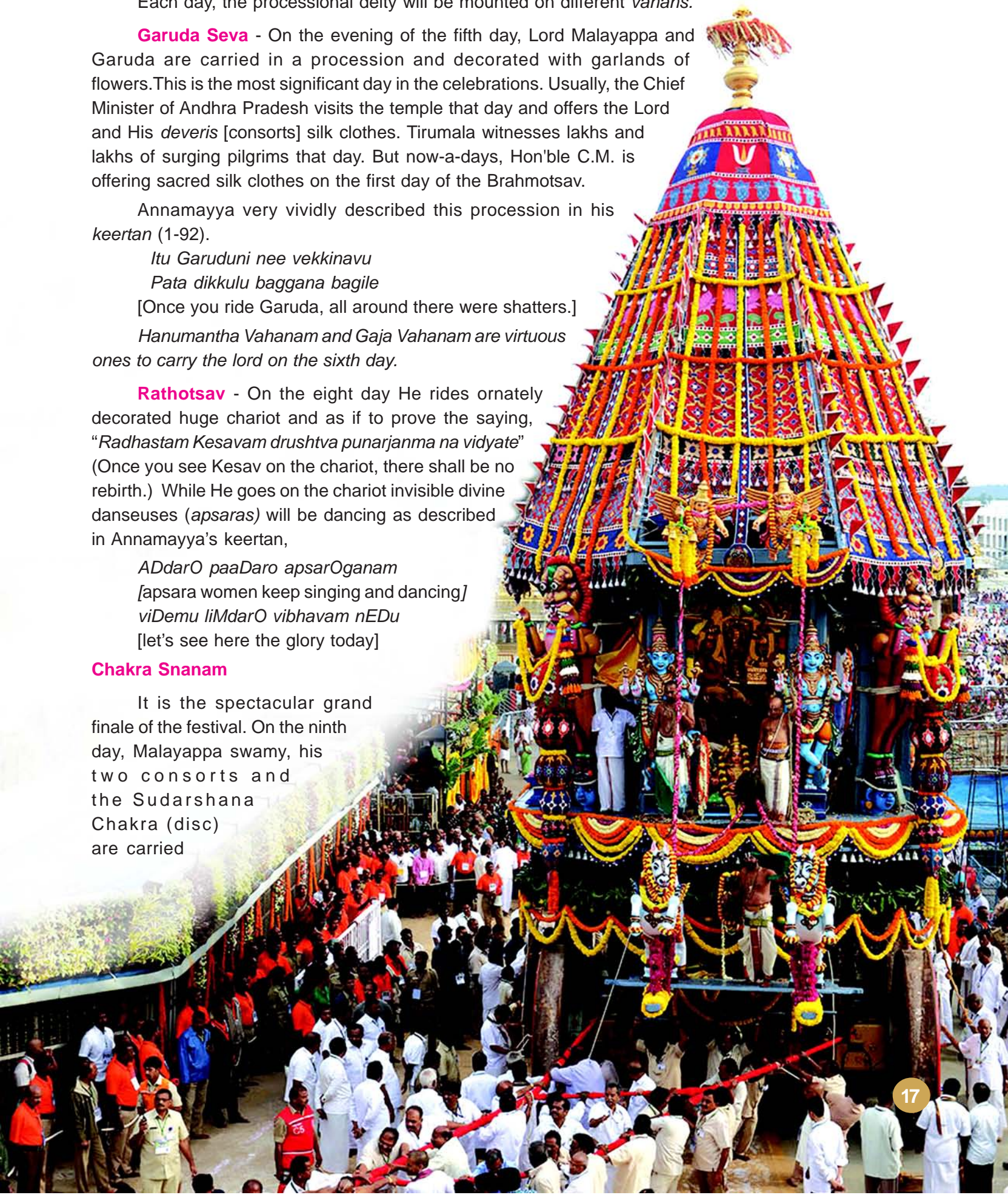
[apsara women keep singing and dancing]

*viDemu liMDarO vibhavam nEDu*

[let's see here the glory today]

### Chakra Snamam

It is the spectacular grand finale of the festival. On the ninth day, Malayappa swamy, his two consorts and the Sudarshana Chakra (disc) are carried







## 400-YEAR OLD TRADITION OF JODU ERUVAADA DHOTIS FROM GADWAL TO THE LORD

'Eru' means river 'vaada' means delta area. Gadwal town (Telangana) is in the area between Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers.

A special set of dhotis are made in cotton and silk by the weavers of Gadwal which will have three colours – white, maroon and yellow. Silk is procured locally, but the cotton required is procured from Chirala (AP) or Coimbatore (TN). Each dhoti will be of 11 yards length, width 2 ½ yards and border 15 inches. Above the border lines, there will be eight Gadwal fort's ramparts. Five weavers perform the job on a specially designed loom with utmost devotion. This loom will not be used for any other purpose. One of the dhotis is sent back to the royalty of Gadwal along with temple *prasada* as Swamy's gift (*sesha vastram*). The weavers will not take any charges except the cost of raw material.

The tradition of the Gadwal weavers' family presenting *vastra* to Lord Venkateswara began 400 years ago during the reign of Nala Somanadri Raja of Gadwal Samstan, who was a friend of Nellore Venkatagiri Raju. When they travelled together to Tirumala Somanadri Raja offered to provide 'SeshaVastrams' to the Lord on the first day of the Brahmotsavam. Currently the weaving is being carried out by the Tenth generation of the family.



in a procession to Varahaswamy Temple (*It is said that Varahaswamy had given the land for Lord Srinivasa to stay on these hills, with the proviso that all His devotees should first worship Varahaswamy.*) There is an edict to this effect in the temple. Then the Chakra is bathed in the *pushkarini*.

The festival concludes with *Dhvaja avarohanam*, the lowering of the Garuda flag. The devotees who witness this grand spectacle, dawdle home filling their hearts with the image of the lord and looking forward to the next Brahmotsav.

### Brahmotsav during Annamayya time

The current Brahmotsav celebrations are different from those of Annamayya's time. Swamy those days, used to go in a procession in *Thiru Veedhis* [Mada Streets] on '*thiru dande*'. On the **tenth** day His wedding [*kalyan*] was being celebrated grandly culminating the celebrations.



Annamayya bids farewell to Lord Brahma and other gods,

"*BhOgindrulu meeru pOyirandu  
Vegan meedata mee vibhavaalaku*"

Oh, gods thou lead a comfortable life, farewell to you! You may please proceed to your respective dwellings. He also extends the invitation for the next year's celebrations.





# DIVYA PRABANDHAM IN TIRUMALA BRAHMOTSAVAM

- Smt. Prema Nandakumar

The Tirumala Brahmotsavam is justly famous. These are the days when the Lord sallies forth to give darshan to everyone outside the temple. This helps the sick, the disabled and very old people to see the Lord face to face and receive his blessings. The Lord does not simply walk around the streets. He initiates a special joy, an ecstasy, by coming on different Vahanas. The excitement of the devotees is to be seen and enjoyed. Not only the Vahanas, the traditional reciters recite verses from Nalayira Divya Prabandham, the sacred Book of the Srivaishnava community. This entwining of our Sanskrit heritage since the Vedic times and the Tamil hymns that are more than a million years old and drip honeyed sweetness are the special features of the Vishnu temples all over the world. Gaambhiryam and Maadhuryam form this unique feature of these

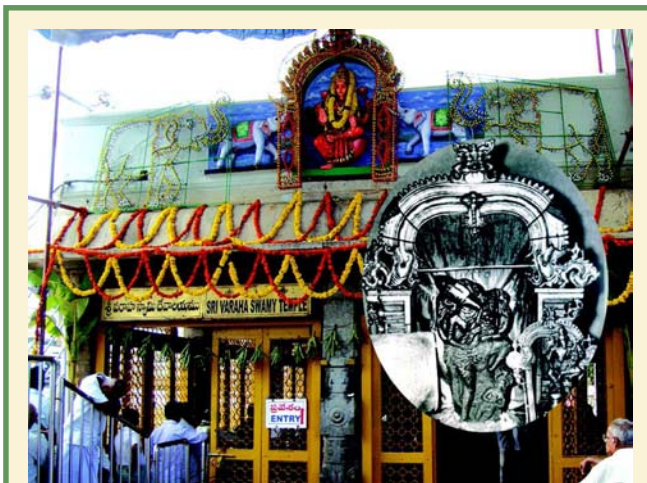
temples. Custom has planned the lovely series for the annual Brahmotsavam. For those of us who have a fair knowledge of the verses in the Nalayira Divya Prabandham, the experience is always delightful.

**Let us have a glance**

To get an idea of the closeness of rituals (the Lord coming in a particular vahana, the prayers recited by the priests who are close to the Lord's image) and the reciters who lead the procession with appropriately chosen verses from the Divya Prabandham, let us make a quick study of the great event. The first three days are appropriately devoted to the first three Antadis (Tamil satakas) for these three verse-garlands by Poigai, Bhutat and peialwar herald the Sri Vaishnava movement itself. There is a charming legend associated with these three Alvars.







### Sri Varaha Perumal Sannidhi

Sri Ramanuja established a set of practices at Sri Varahaperumal Sannidhi on the banks of Swami Pushkarini. He established that the Daily Aradhanas should be performed to Lord Varaha prior to Lord Srinivasa and that devotees should worship Lord Varaha first before proceeding to worship Lord Srinivasa. He also installed the Utsava Murthy of Lord Varaha and initiated celebration of Utsavams for Sri Varaha – including Varaha Jayanthi and Adyayana Utsavams.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D., immediately after the Kalabhra interregnum had devastated the Tamil Nadu, there was only the sad spectacle of large scale destruction and desecration of sacred temples and the cultured living that had evolved from the ancient Sangam period. It was now that Poigai, Bhutat and peialwar met at Tirukoilur which already had a very ancient temple dedicated to Vishnu as Tiruvikrama. As it was raining heavily and it was a pitch-dark night, they took shelter in a dark room in one of the houses. Suddenly they sensed the presence of a fourth person in the room. As it was too dark to see, Poigai Alwar sang:

“With the world as the cup, the sea as ghee,  
The sun as the lighted wick,  
I have strung a garland of words in praise  
Of the Lord who holds the flaming discus  
To gain release from the ocean of misery”.

Bhutattalwar followed it up with another light to see the Lord. This Light glows within us all the time!

“With love as the cup, aspiration as ghee,  
A ceaselessly joy-filled thought as the lighted wick,

I have lit the flame of knowledge to Narayana,  
By means of the revelatory Tamil language”.

The three devotees realized who the new comer into their consciousness was: so Peialwar sang:

“I have seen the Mother, the golden image!  
I have vision the sun-like splendour too.  
The battle-ready and fire-red discus golden,  
And the whorled conch. All these did I see  
In the person of my Ocean-hued Lord”.

Since, Mother comes (Sri) first to the sight of the devotees, Vaishnavism is fondly known as Sri Vaishnavism for the devotees. Each of the three Alvars sang a satakam. Together they have some brilliant scenes and similes, while devotion envelops the verses. During the Brahmotsavam, the Lord comes on various Vahanas on nine days. Usually, the DivyaPrabandham verses are chosen in a way that links them to the Vahana on which the Lord comes to bless us. For instance there are two Sesha Vahanas which are used on the first two days. Verses from Poigai (MudhalTiruvanthathi) and Bhutat (IrandaamTiruvanthathi) are recited on these two days.

### Adisesha's service towards Lord

The Nalayira Divya Prabandham known as Tamil Marai (the Tamil Scripture) has plentiful references to the avatars and actions associated with the incarnations as well as Vishnu in Paramapada. For instance, PoigaiAlwar sings ecstatically of the many ways in which Adisesha serves the Lord. The 53<sup>rd</sup> verse of the Antadi lists the services thus: when the Lord walks, Adisesha becomes an umbrella (as he did when Vasudeva carried the baby Krishna from Kamsa's prison to Nanda's Gokula in a basket. Adisesha protected the child in the basket from the torrential rains.) When the Lord is seated, Adisesha becomes his



throne (as we find Andal asking him in the 23<sup>rd</sup> verse of Tiruppavai, to grant boons when he is seated in the grand Lion-throne). When the Lord stands, Adisesha becomes his sandals (as in the Ramayana when Bharatha received Rama's sandals as a guardian for the kingdom of Ayodhya, till he returned from the banishment to the forest for fourteen years). And when the Lord is resting in the Milky ocean, Adisesha is a float, the gems in his 1000 hoods are the light, Adisesha himself is the gentle silken sheet that enfolds the Supreme Lord. Perhaps enthused by these multi-pronged services of Adisesha to the Lord, we have a Big SesaVahanam and a Small SesaVahanam that are processional vehicles for Malayappa Swami.

Among other Vahanas that we get to see come in procession is HamsaVahanam. How come a swan? Ah, Lord Vishnu took avatar as a Hamsa. This incarnation is not widely known, yet it is a significant one. The Bhagavata has a fairly detailed passage on the Hamsa incarnation of the Lord, He taught Yoga and Sankhya to Brahma and his mind-born sons, Sanaka and others to underline the supremacy of Vishnu (Book XI, canto xiii, lines 15-42). However, while the teachings are on the difficult pathways of yoga and sankhya, Perialwar has gifted us a beautiful Tamil verse in his Perialwar Tirumozhi (1-9-10) on this incarnation:

“The world was covered in pitch darkness;  
The precious Vedas Four were lost;  
To relieve the world of this nightmare  
You came forth as the mighty Swan  
And gave back the priceless scriptures!  
Acho! Acho!”

‘Acho’ is a term of wonderment used when talking to children. When the Lord appears on the lion mount, the reciters declaim the 95<sup>th</sup> verse from Periyalwar's Moondram Tiruvanthati. The lion, the King of the forests, is a familiar image in Divya Prabandham. The Lord's walking is often compared to the lion's gait. In Srirangam, when Sri Ranganatha comes out of the garbagriha in the palanquin, the servitors carrying the palanquin use the simhagati to move forward. In this context, the reciters take up Periyalwar's reference to the Lord's Narasimha incarnation. The 95<sup>th</sup> verse, brief but

with gem-like brilliance shows us the Lord coming out of the pillar as a ferocious Narasimha even as the evening was closing with a spread of red clouds around, destroyed Hiranyakasipu, saved Prahlada and joined Goddess Mahalakshmi. Such is the terror and glory that is exhibited by the Man-Lion. Is it not appropriate to remember such verses when Malayappa swami comes out in regal splendour, riding the simhaVahana? In the same manner, Malayappa swami coming on the Horse vahana is also very attractive and the atmosphere is delightful when appropriate verses reminding us of Andal's soulful verses about the hero riding a horse comes to meet her are sung.

There are the Surya Prabha and Chandra PrabhaVahanas too. All the Vahanas are

### Mutyala Harati

Sannidhi Golla makes the bed for the Lord and lights the oil lamps for Ekanta Seva. Before going to sleep, the Lord is gently rocked in the golden swing, while a descendant of Annamacharya sings a soothing lullaby for the Lord. At the same time, a descendant of Tarigonda Vengamamba offers camphor ‘Nirajanam’ in a pearl filled silver plate. This pious woman from Tarigonda settled in Tirumala in the service of the Lord. The Harati offered to the Lord on her behalf is the last service and the doors of the temple will be closed for the day.





accompanied by verses from the Divya Prabandham, chosen with great care. For instance, the Chariot Vahanam comes out on the eighth day. Everyone will agree that this is a grand sight. The adhyapakas accompanying the Ratha present Tirumangai Alwar's Tiruvezhu Kootirukkai, a poem composed in 'RathaBandham'. Each word in every line is composed with infinite care by the great Alwar, a prolific writer who belonged to the warrior class. When written down, the lines of the poem form into a picture of a chariot, amazing like a puzzle put together. Written as a 7-tiered poem, the numbers 1 to 9 alternate with 9-1 in a meaningful manner. It is a firm belief of the Srivaishnavas that the Lord is as eager to gain the aspirant as the latter is passionately desirous of union with the Lord. Tirumangai Alwar's poem underlines the grace of the Lord which truly needs no reason to bless the devotee: it is *nirhetukakripa!* Surrender is the key and this poem of Tirumangai is such a statement of surrender. A painting depicting the poem as a chariot may be seen on the inner wall of Sarangapani Temple, Kumbakonam. The poem was composed in praise of Lord Aravamudha, the presiding (Moolavar) deity of the temple.

Tirumazhisai Alwar's Nanmukhan Tiruvanthadi is associated with Kalpavruksha Vahana and SarvabhoopalaVahana. Appropriately enough, this Antadi is replete with references to the Lord being literally a Kalpavruksha. He grants all our desires! The Alwar exults in the eleventh verse:

The Lord with tresses decorated by tulasi,  
Has for long loved me. Waste no moment,  
But salute and meditate upon Him.  
With bowed head, worship him with cool flowers.  
Praise Him with your lips, gaze with your eyes  
Upon His magnificent image.  
Keep your ears listening to his glorious deeds".

It also follows that Lord Venkateswara is the King of all kings on earth. Yes, the way the kings gather and hold and carry the seat of Lord Malayappa swami naturally gets the name Sarvabhoopala Vahanam! Appropriate verses for familiar Vahanas like Elephant, Horse, and Garuda

are the very cream of this superb Vahana culture in Vaishnava temples for they are all backed by charming devotional verses in the Nalayira Divya Prabandham of the twelve Alwars. To conclude this essay, let us watch the wonderful, divine drama enacted by Perialwar about Hanuman paying respects to Sita in Lanka, presented by the Adhyapakas, when Lord Malayappa swami comes astride the Hanumantha Vahanam.

Hanuman has crossed the seven seas, entered Lanka, and discovered Sita Devi in the AshokaVana. Naturally she is somewhat confused when this person in the form of a monkey gives her the message of Sri Rama that he would come soon and free her from captivity. But how to believe this monkey to be a messenger of her Lord? It is then that Hanuman recounts some incidents from the life of Rama that are directly related to Sita. The breaking of Siva's bow and marrying Sita; the defeat of Parasurama; how Sita bound Rama's hands with a string of jasmines in the privacy of their togetherness; how Rama, Lakshmana and Sita went to the forest directed by Kaikeyi; Rama befriend the forest leader Guha; how Bharata came to the forest and fell at the feet of Rama giving way to his grief; Rama's mercy to the Kakasura; how Maricha came as a golden deer causing Sita's separation from Rama; and finally here is the Signet Ring sent by Rama also as a proof, with the promise that he will come soon and free her from captivity. The entire group of these ten verses in Periyalar Tirumoli (3-10) make up a mini Ramayana, and we cannot stop our tears of happiness when Periyalar says that Sita received the signet-ring of Rama from Hanuman, placed it on her head, and expressed her relief and joy. No wonder devotees feel that saluting Malayappa swami atop the Hanumantha Vahanam, one gets the punya of having read the entire Ramayana of Valmiki. Such is the very close relationship between the Vahanas in which Lord Malayappa Swami comes out to give us darshan and the scriptural sanctity and poetic beauty of the verses in the NalayiraDivyaPrabandham of the Alwars presented by the adhyapakas on the appropriate days during Srivari Brahmotsavam.





# THE END RITUAL OF SRIVARI BRAHMOTSAVAMS

- Prof. Rani SadasivaMurty

Gaṅgādītīrthajanakapādapadmam sutārakam |

śaṅkhacakrābhayavaram śrīnivāsaṃ bhaje'niśam ||

A holy bath taken at the end of any Yajna is called 'Avabhruthasnanam'. This Avabhruthasnanam at the end of the Brahmotsava Yajna is called 'Chakrasnanam'. Chakrasnanam is the end ritual of Srivari Brahmotsavams at Tirumala. Chakrasnana alone is as much important as the rest of total Brahmotsava vahana sevas all together. On the tenth day morning, last day of the Brahmotsavam, special abhishekam (AvabhruthaSnanam) is held for Utsava murti Malayappa swami and his consorts Sri Devi and Bhu Devi in the complex of Lord Varaha Swamy temple on the banks of Swami Pushkarini.

It is a great occasion. Among all the weapons, and defcvotees of Lord Vishnu, Sudarsana Chakra is the best one. There are a good number of prayers in praise of Sri Sudarsana. Here is the glory of Sri Sudarsana from 'Sudarsana Ashtakam'.

bhacakraśśiṃśumārākhyah kālacakrastrikālabhṛt |

viṣṇuhastasadāvāsī bhuvaneśasudarśanaḥ || 1 ||





Simsumara chakra or Bhachakra (Zodiac) is said to be the replica of Sri Sudarsana chakra that always adorns the divine hand of Lord Sri Mahavishnu. Lord Vishnu graces upon the Simsumara Chakra to move incessantly. Similarly because of His kindness only, Sudarsana also is gracing all the worlds.

nityaṃ bhagavato haste bhāsamāṇaḥ prabhāvavān |  
lokarakṣaikaadīkṣo'yaṃ dakṣaśśubhrassudarśanaḥ ||2||

Sudarsana is such a great aspect of Lord Vishnu that he is ever inseparably seen in the hands of Sri Maha Vishnu with great effulgence only for the sake of protecting all the worlds.

viṣṇusevī hetinātho viṣṇubhaktahite rataḥ |  
samastalokasañcārī niyantā dharmakālayoḥ ||3||

Sudarsana is the Lord of all Vaishnava Weapons. He always favors the devotees of Lord Vishnu. He moves in all the worlds and the holder of the Dharma and Kala in the universe.

duṣṭahantā duḥkhahartā durnirīkṣyaśikhāvaliḥ |  
saṃsāramakarocchedī jīvavāraṇatāraṇaḥ ||4||

He is the slayer of the evil, remover of the grief, unbearable to be seen because of his sharp flames and the killer of the Crocodile of the worldly bondage in order to protect the elephant in the form of Jivas.



viṣṇuśauryapratīko'yaṃ  
mūḍhadhīkalpanakṛtī |  
sūryacandrasamo  
dhīrassūryācchādanapaṇḍitaḥ ||5||

He is the symbol of the valor of Lord Vishnu. He could create artificial darkness in the sky while the Sun was shining, in the attempt of Arjuna to kill Saindhava. He is equal to Surya and Chandra.

rathāṅgākṛtisampanno  
rathāṅgaprakṛtirmahān |  
satataṃ dīnatānōdī  
vinodī vīrakarmabhiḥ ||6||

He is just like the wheel of a chariot in shape, remover of grief and assures pleasure to good people through his heroic deeds.

arjunaḥ kṛtavīryo'yaṃ  
mahāyogī pratāpavān |  
śrīdattavaraśiṣyo'sau  
pravarassukarassudhīḥ ||7||

King Kartavirya Arjuna was the valorous incarnation of Sudarsana. He was the disciple of Sri Dattatreya. He was very great yogi, king and scholar.

śrīviṣṇuparivārāḍhyo  
vedamārgaparāyaṇaḥ |  
sucānurūpadharmātmā  
bhuvanāvanavikramaḥ ||8||

He was the chief of all courtiers of Sri Maha Vishnu. He likes the path of the Vedas very



### Tirumala's most popular vow

Devotees approach the Lord with curious offerings like '*Tala Neelalu*' hair on the head, '*Niluvu Dopidi*' (submission of whatever ornaments on the body at the time of taking the vow) '*Tulabharam*' (offering of items equal to one's weight), '*Anga Pradakshina*', (circumbulating around the temple in prostrate position) and many such.



much. Very much pleasing in appearance. His valor is enough to protect all the regions of the endless universe.

vandāmahe sadā cakram cakriṇaḥ pādasevakāḥ |  
bhavacakravimuktyartham bhogabhāgyadamuttamam || 9 ||

Let us all offer all our salutations to such great Sudarsana as we are always the servants of his holy feet. It is all for the sake of getting free from the snares of the worldly bondage. He is the bestower of Wealth, Riches and comforts.

### A Boon to Sundarsanachakra

This ritual of Chakrasnana which is a kind of Abhisheka for Sri Malayappa swami, Sri Devi and Bhu Devi is performed in the presence of thousands of devotees. This year due to pandemic, it will be performed among less in number. Along with the God and Goddesses the abhisheka ceremony is offered to Sudarsana Chakrattalwar also. This is a very rare honor. Among all the internal attendants of Sri Swamivaru only Chakrattalwar is the recipient of this honor. This is the boon given by Sri Swamivaru to Sudarsana Chakra.

### Protects from Demonic powers

The reason for such boon is that Sudarsana through out all the 365 of days of all the years

incessantly protects the devotees from the evil effects on the Tirumala hills. Particularly during the Brahmotsava days Sudarsana follows the devotees of Sri Swamivaru like their shadow and protects them all from all kinds of calamities. He drives away all evil forces like Bhutas, Pretas, Pisacas and Demonic powers. Having pleased with the bhakta rakshanavrata of Sudarsana, Sri Swamivaru gave this boon to him to receive the Abhisheka ceremony along with him on the last day of this grand festival. Regarding the same Swamivaru ordered Brahma also to give a share to Sudarshana in the Abhisheka seva. Accordingly Sudarsana is also brought along with Sri Malayappa Swami, Sri Devi and Bhudevi to the temple complex of Varaha Swami.





### Sahasradhaaraabhishekam

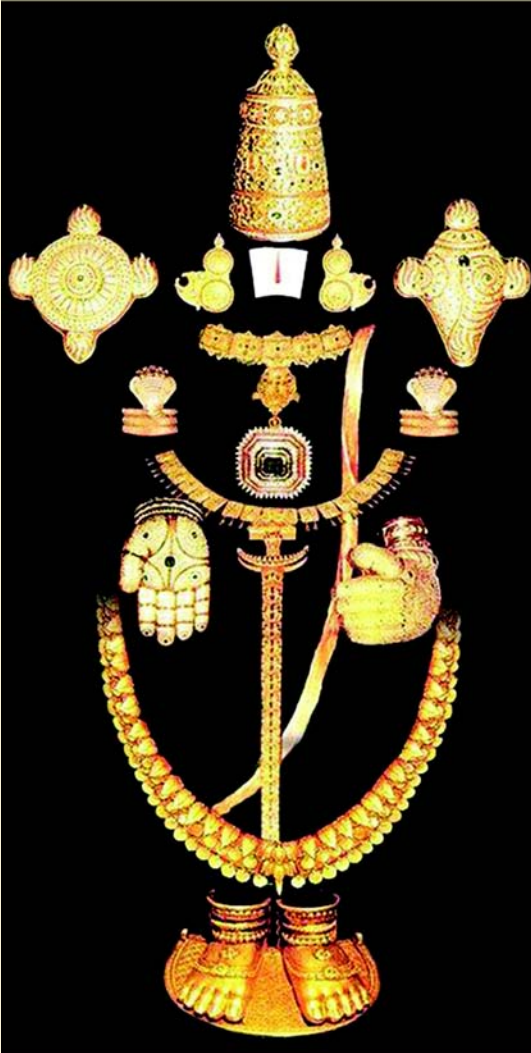
In this Abhisheka seva for Sri Malayappa Swami, Sri Devi, Bhu Devi and Sudarsana the ritual of Abhisheka through Sahasra Dhara patra is performed. Through that vessel of one thousand holes the fragrant waters of turmeric and sandal paste is poured up on them, while the Pancasuktapathana accompanies the activity. Then they are offered Pancamruta Snana. Later abhisheka with turmeric waters is offered to them. Finally Suddhodakasnana is offered. After that new and dry clothes are enwrapped to the four deities. Thus the Abhisheka is completed.

### Attain Salvation

After the Abhisheka ceremony is over, the Sudarsana Chakra (Disc weapon of the Lord) is immersed in the waters of Swamy Pushkarini. A large number of devotees wait for this holy and rare occasion and simultaneously take a dip in the Pushkarini waters at that time. It is believed and said that one will get absolved from sins by taking a dip in Swamy Pushkarini simultaneously along with the Sudarshana Chakra on this day. Those who witness this rare Chakrasnanam ceremony will attain a permanent place in Vaikuntha.

Vaikuṇṭavāsaṃ vaikuṇṭatyāgaṃ vaikuṇṭasodaram |

Vaikuṇṭadaṃ vikuṇṭarājaṃ śrīnivāsaṃ bhaje'niśam ||



### Dazzling Jewellery

Srivaru is adorned with 'Nityakatla Samarpana' when there are no festive occasions in the following week. Plain gold ornaments are used to perform Alankaram in this Nityakatla Samarpana.

Visesha Samarpana of Lord on festive occasions is performed during all yearly rituals like - Jyeshthabhishekam, Pavitrotsavam, Pushpayagam, Rathasaptami, Teppotsavam, Pournami Garuda Seva etc. in this Alankaram.

Srivarī Mulavirat is decorated with Diamond studded ornaments like the Crown, coverings for Sudarsana and Panchajanya, coverings for Vaikunta Hasta (right lower hand) and Kati Hasta (left lower hand). Rest of the ornaments are of plain gold. Four festivals such as Ugadi Asthanam, Anivara Asthanam, Brahmotsavams and Vaikunta Ekadasi are very important and hence during these festive occasions 'Visesha Samarpana with Swarna Peethambaram' is adorned to Srivarū. In this Alankaram, Srivarī Mulavirat is splendidly decorated with a Diamond Crown, Diamond Studded Coverings for Sankha, Chakra, Vaikunta Hasta, Kati Hasta, Ear Rings, Kantabharanam, Makarakanti are adorned.





Tirumala  
Sri Venkateswaraswamivari  
Annual Brahmotsavams  
From 19<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2020

20-09-2020 Sunday  
Night : Hamsavahanam

21-09-2020 Monday  
Day : Simhavahanam



21-09-2020 Monday  
Night : Muthyapupandirivahanam



22-09-2020 Tuesday  
Day : Kalpavrukshavahanam





Tirumala  
Sri Venkateswaraswamivari  
Annual Brahmotsavams  
From 19<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2020



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS



22-09-2020 Tuesday  
Night : Sarvabhupalavahanam



23-09-2020 Wednesday  
Day : Mohini Avataram in Pallaki







TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

Tirumala  
Sri Venkateswaraswamiyari  
Annual Brahmotsavams  
From 19<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2020

24-09-2020 Thursday  
Day : Hanumadvahanam



24-09-2020 Thursday  
Night : Gajavahanam





Tirumala  
Sri Venkateswaraswamivari  
Annual Brahmotsavams  
From 19<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2020



25-09-2020 Friday  
Day : Suryaprabhavanam



25-09-2020 Friday  
Night : Chandraprabhavanam





# AMIDST THE FERVOUR

- Smt. D.K. Ahana Lakshmi

**B**rahmotsavam' because it was first organized by Lord Brahma, says a legend. Having decided to organize a grand celebration, he called Viswakarma and asked him to make various chariots, vehicles (vahanas), temple umbrellas and ornaments. King Thondaiman made the other arrangements. People from all over were invited and came to visit, view and participate in the spectacle. And the festival grew and grew.

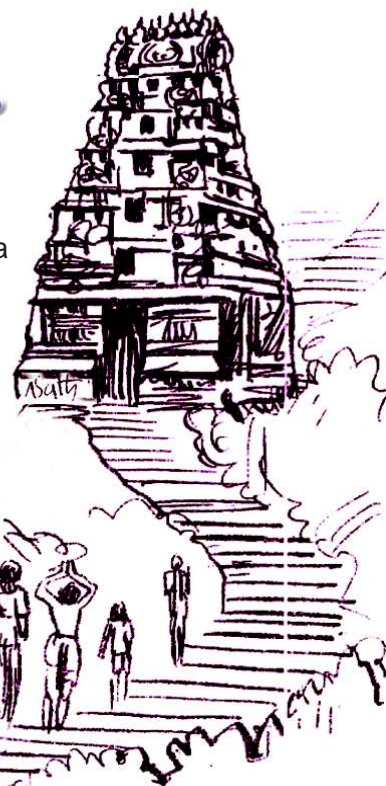
"The dwajarahana has been performed", whispers one devotee to another as the Gadrudadwaja goes up signifying the beginning of the festival. The excitement starts steadily increasing. Next, Vishwakshena, the commander-in-chief of the Lord's Army goes around the streets that the Lord will be passing through. Decorations come up everywhere. The gopurams and walls are all lit up; there are cut-outs of gods and goddesses made out of coloured lights. A grand spectacle.

There is a constant influx of people coming into Tirumala for darshan of Lord Venkateswara. But during this season, devotees find a good viewing position as the Lord goes by, twice a day, different vehicle, often accompanied by his divine consorts. Each of the vehicles is a massive structure, borne on the shoulders of dozens of men. An immense operation that is carefully done. There are security forces everywhere, alert to any potential danger with

"GovindaGovinda", the chant is heard and is taken up by all as they hear the drums beat. The Lord has left the temple and entered the Madastreet and is approaching the devotees on either side of the barricades. The central pathway is kept clear for the procession. The decorated cows and elephants walk ponderously ahead. Soon the huge umbrellas, characteristic of temple processions appear in the distance which means the processional is on its way.

## Adds Fervour

While we wait for the Lord to come close to us, our eyes feast on groups of colourful folk dancers from all over the country performing Karagam, Kolattam, Lezium and so many others. There are some dressed up in fancy costumes: a dazzling Krishna surrounded by Gopikas, an Annamayya lost in singing the praises of Lord Venkatesa; scenes from





mythological stories. Drummers, men and women, dressed in white and yellow, green and orange, dancing as they beat their drums. An artist balancing a tall conical structure on his head, swaying and swirling to the beat of the drums. Bhajan singers singing praises of the Lord to the beat of cymbals. The frenzy is steadily building up. It is intensely vocal and that adds to the fervour.

The vahanam appears in the distance as a patch of gold gliding over the sea of people in the bright artificial lighting. Huge braziers of fire are held aloft to highlight the procession. It is now an individual experience – eyes strain to see the Lord riding the vahana. The temple Jeers along with pundits chanting the DivyaPrabhandam can be seen walking steadily, quite oblivious to

the musical instruments and drum beats that herald the Lord. “Peddasesha vahanamchoodandi”, says a devotee. As the vahana bearing Malayappa comes closer and closer, the ecstatic chant of ‘Govinda, Govinda’ becomes louder. People are seen tapping their cheeks, raising their hands above their head in salutation. Some are holding aloft plates with lit camphor. Everyone is on their toes; little children on some adult’s shoulders trying to get a better view; yet others trying to capture the moment on their cellphone cameras.

Closer and closer comes the processional deity. A heady fragrance of jasmines and roses and other flowers wafts towards you. Look at the thick garland of white and green and red so beautifully arranged around the Lord and his consorts! How can they bear the weight? But he is the Lord of the seven hills, the Lord of the universe. Malayappa swami is seated majestically, Sridevi and Bhudevi on either side, costly gems over silken attire, wearing huge crowns, giving darshan to his thousands of bhaktas. In just a few seconds, that ecstatic feeling rises to a feverish pitch around you. A brief halt as the priest holds aloft a huge lit slab of camphor, for the devotees to see the lord better. And then the procession has moved forward, you surge forward with all those around you and strain and get a view of the rear of the vahana, covered with flowers and hear the steady chant of the Vedas.

### Just a moment....

It is an individual thing, because it is you straining to catch a glimpse while whispering a prayer to yourself. You cannot hear yourself because of the terrific sound all around you. It does not matter, you have had darshan; you feel fulfilled. It is a collective thing because you are part of the crowd of eager bhaktas, raising hands above your head and joining others in their devotion filled shout of ‘GovindaGovinda’.

Excitement. Ecstasy. Faith. Fervour. Words are not sufficient to describe the feelings Tirumala Brahmotsavam evokes. Every time the Lord comes out on a vahana, the same feelings are repeated, recreated. Of course, there are some vahanas that are extra special. Garuda Vahana, for instance. And the Ratha of course – one wants to at least touch the ropes that pull the chariot.

It does not matter whether you have got a vantage point from which you can almost reach out and touch the vahana, whether you are able to get a close view of the majesty of





Malayappa swami, or you are separated from the procession by a thick crowd and can only see a blur in the distance, or even are watching the event being telecast. Just a momentary view of the procession and you feel fulfilled; it does not matter if you are watching it alone or with others. You unconsciously mouth “GovindaGovinda”

while your hands are raised above, literally making your face see nothing except the grand processional. You have had Malayappa swami's darshan during Brahmotsavam. A sense of peace descends into you.



### What are the 'Vastrams' being adorned to Lord of Seven Hills?

**Melchat Vastram** : New Melchat Vastram is adorned to the Moolavarlu (Main Deity) on every Friday after Abhishekam. Normally the melchat vastrams are donated by devotees during abhishekam to the Lord on Fridays. This silk vastrams are in different colours like yellow, orange, green or white with contrasting attractive borders. Every Friday immediately after Abhishekam, Melchat vastram will be adorned around the body and shoulder of the Lord in a beautiful manner. The other vastram will be used to cover the Head of the Lord. It will be a feast to the eyes to see the Lord of the universe in a Melchat Vastram and another Vastram closely tied to the Lord's Head.

**Uttariyam** : The Uttariyams (silk) are used on special occasions like, Deepavali, Ugadi, Anivara Asthanam etc. The uttariyams will be brought with all paraphernalia into the sanctum sanctorum amidst vedic recitations.

**Gadwal Yeeravada** : This yeeravada or inner cloth will be draped as a cushion to the bare head of Mulavarlu (main deity) before putting the kireetam (Crown), so that the Crown fits properly. This cloth was prepared and presented by Gadwal Samsthanam and the name is remembered even today as 'Gadwal Yeeravada'.

**Vakshasthala Thaayaarla Pattu Vastram** : A Silk Garment for Vakshasthala Thaayaar will be tied after special Abhishekam.

**Duppata Pattu Vastram** : Everyday this new vastram will be adorned to Sri Malayappaswami during Kalyanotsavam and also new silk sarees to Goddess Sri Devi and Bhu Devi.



**Pattu Vastram to Bhoga Srinivasamurthi** : This silk cloth will be adorned in Sahasra Kalasabhishekam ritual.

**Pattu Vastram to Koluvu Srinivasamurthi** : This silk cloth will be adorned to Koluvu Srinivasamurthi on Sravana star and on Ekadasi days.

**Peethaambaram** : The word 'Peethaambaram' is very famous and used in all temples. In Lord Venkateswara Temple, the main deity is adorned by a shining gold plated Peethaambaram around the waist on special occasions like Ugadi Asthanam, Deepavali Asthanam etc.

**Seshavastram** : This cloth is considered as very sacred as it is worn by Lord Venkateswara (Moolavarlu).



# NITYAKALYANAM PACCHATHORANAM

- Kum. Mythili

**T**irumala is known for its beautiful rituals and activities. Every day is a 'Nityakalyanam Pachathoranam', auspicious happenings that are evergreen. The way of Sanatana Dharma is to focus on the auspicious. Listening to auspicious things is of as much importance as seeing auspicious events. This is why we have the Vedic prayer:

*Om Bhadram Karnnebih  
Shrnnuyaama Devaah,  
Bhadram Pashyema  
Akssabhir Yajatraah.*

O Devas! May we hear all that is  
auspicious with our ears  
O Devas! May we see all that is  
auspicious with our eyes

This is why many certain events are  
specially celebrated as they usher in joy.

Birth and marriage are two events  
that call for such celebrations.

The marriage event is sacrosanct in Indian culture. It is interesting to note that the sequence and meaning of the marriage procedure has largely remained unchanged since Apasthamba (circa 600 to 300 BC) voiced the Grihya Sutras. Thus, four parts to a marriage can be distinguished: Kanyadana, Panigrahana, Maangalyadharana and Saptapati.

When marriages of Gods are celebrated, it should be understood that it is not a cursory event, not a bommala-pelli (marriage of dolls). The different parts of a marriage ceremony may be enacted for the utsavamurtis. But the entire sequence of activities is for loka-kalyanam – for the happiness and prosperity of all people.

## Daily Utsavam

It is the Vaikanasa Agama that dictates the manner in which rituals and offerings to Lord Sri Venkateswara are carried out. The Agamas have allowed five kinds of





deities (berams) of which the Utsavaberaam is Sri Malayappa Swami, the processional deity to whom all the nityotsavas or the daily ceremonies as well as the weekly, monthly and annual ceremonies are offered. The name is from where the idol was found: Malayappakona (a recess of Malayappa hill).

There are more than a dozen nityotsavas beginning with Suprabhatam, the waking up of the Lord and ending with Ekantaseva, also known as PavvalimpuSeva, literally the going-to-bed routine. In between, around noon is the Kalyanotsavam. Not all the nityotsavas are celebrated every day; for example the arjithasevas are not performed during Brahmotsavam.

The Kalyanotsavam or 'Marriage ceremony' is performed for Sri Malayappa Swami with Sri Devi and Bhu Devi. It was Tallapaka Annamacharya who instituted the daily Kalyanotsavam somewhere in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century and this has continued since that day. One remembers his beautiful compositions, especially 'Satatam Sreesam' in which he describes the glory of Lord Venkateswara as the consort of Sri Devi and the rescuer of Bhu Devi.

### Ritual Starts with...

After sankalpam, the ceremony begins with the description of qualities and appearance of the bridegroom. His star is Sravana and Makara Rasi. Next the brides are described, Sridevi's nakshatram is Uttara-phalguni in KanyaRasi while Bhu Devi's is Revati in MeenaRasi. Fresh garments are offered to both the groom and brides. Next comes the kanyadanam. Since it was Tallapaka Annamacharya who made it a nitya-kalyanam, his descendants have the honour of kanyadanam, 'giving away the bride', which is considered of great importance.

Here we recall a verse that is even today, said by the bride's father to the groom during the kanyadanam part of the marriage which was said by Janaka while bestowing Sita on Rama (Balakanda, 73rd Sarga):

*IyamSita, mama sutasahadharmacharitava.*

*Prateechachainambhadramtepaanigruhneeshvapaanina.*

"This, my daughter Sita, will be your partner in performing dharma. Take her hand into your own and accept her".



### Vimana Venkateswara Swami

Swami residing on Ananda Nilaya Vimanam is called 'Vimana Venkateswara Swami'. It is believed that, darshan of Vimana Venkateswara Swami is equal to darshan of Lord Venkateswara in the Sanctum Sanctorum.

Next comes the *mangalyadharam* ceremony. The mangala sutras adorning Sri Devi and Bhu Devi are a promise of loka-raksha, the protection and welfare of the world. This is something that we all feel close to in the current situation that the world is grappling with. As in the traditional marriage ceremony, the Pradhanahoma





### Srivari Kalyanotsavam (Online Participation)

In view of the Health Advisory received from the Government due to Covid-19 Pandemic, Kalyanotsavam are being performed within the temple without direct participation by pilgrim public. Due to the large demand, TTD has enabled online participation (from the safety of their homes) in Srivari Kalyanotsavam through live telecast in Sri Venkateswara Bhakti Channel (SVBC). While performing the seva, the list of Gruhastas who have opted to perform the kalyanotsavam will be placed at the feet of the deity to invoke blessings.

The procedure will be as follows: The gruhastas in traditional dress are to be present in front of their TV sets in their home at noon (12.00 hours). The first ten minutes will be for sankalpa (only two members per ticket) where the gruhastas will follow the instructions of the Archaka Swami. Gruhastas residing in India will receive Prasadam of one upper cloth, one blouse-piece and one akshintalu packet which will be sent by post.

and Pravesahoma with Vedic recitation and offering of oblations are next performed. Rolling of coconuts between representatives of the bride and groom with the recitation of VaaranamAairyam from NachiyarTirumozhi is done on behalf of the bridal couple. Andal sings: "Auspicious Narayana is my refuge now, and for birth seven times seven, my friend..."

Next is the *pushpamalaparivartanam* or garland exchange, when the garland adorning Sri Malayappa Swami is placed to adorn Sri Devi, then taken back to Swamivaru and then the same is repeated for Bhu Devi. Next, Swamivaru with his consorts give us darshan together. The talambralu brings to an end the wedding ceremony when turmeric and rice are showered on the deities.

### Even a view is enough

Participating in or even viewing the Kalyanotsavam is believed to confer tremendous grace. I remember as a child my grandmother giving me a pair of wooden dolls which her grandfather had brought back to their village after visiting Tirumala and viewing the Kalyanotsavam. She still enjoys telling me how she spent many happy hours re-enacting the Kalyanotsavam with those dolls, with flowers from the garden. The dolls now form a part of my bommalu-kolu during Navaratri.

What is the relevance of pachathoranam? Green is the colour of our environment, the colour of our fields ensuring our food security. Green is the colour of trees and plants that



give out life-supporting oxygen while absorbing carbondioxide that we breathe out and that emanates from burning fossil fuels. Today, we are realising more and more that protecting the environment is crucial.

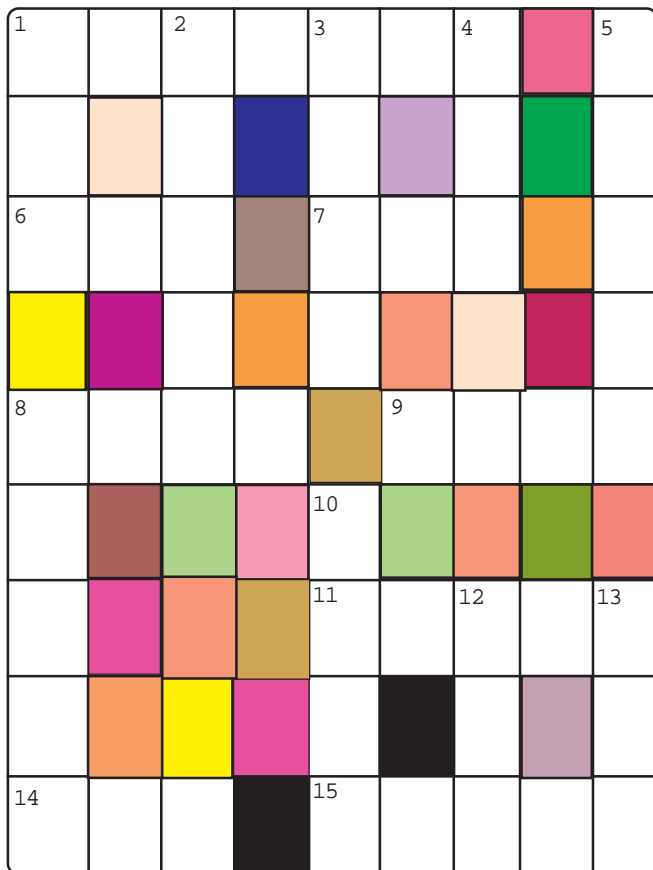
One of the ways in which we can protect the environment is to increase the tree cover around us by planting and nurturing saplings. Linking environmental protection with marriage, in Uttar Pradesh's Chamoli district, newly-weds plant a sapling and young girls receive money from the groom to ensure the sapling's upkeep. In this way, the deforested hills are slowly and steadily being

afforested while the young girls are empowered. Similar initiatives exist in many places but are required everywhere. Already, many families give away saplings as part of the tamboolam after a marriage.

While most people seemingly focus on Goddess Lakshmi, Sri Devi, as the giver of wealth, we should understand that Bhu Devi, personification of Mother Earth should also be revered and honoured in the same way. *Prakruti rakshati rakshitaa* is a beautiful slogan that should receive wider understanding.



## PUZZLE



Presented by  
Sri T.S. Jagan Mohan

### CLUES FOR PUZZLE

01. Goddess Lakshmi (3)  
02. Great delight (3)  
03. Wife of Vali (4)  
04. Goal (3)  
05. Nectar (5)  
08. Brother of Madri (5)  
10. Sun God (4)  
12. Earth (Down to up) (3)  
13. Goddess parvathi (3)

DOWN

01. Mother of Ashtavakra (7)  
06. A Type of Climbing plant (3)  
07. Male sheep (3)  
08. Father of Sanmukha (4)  
09. Wife of Maya (4)  
11. Manmadha (5)  
14. Behave (3)  
15. Bheema (Right to Left) (5)

ACROSS





# POIGAI ALWAR AND TIRUVENKATAM

- Dr. M. Varadarajan

In Kanchi Mahatmyam, it is said that Lord Periya Perumal is reclined in Tiru Vekka town, Kancheepuram. In that town, there is a tank called Lotus Tank (Pottamarai Poigai) wherein Poigai Alwar was born in a golden lotus flower in the Tamil month Iyppasi, on the Sravana Star under the amsa of Sri Panchajanyam. Since he was born in that Poigai, he is called Poigai Alwar. He is one among the three Alvars called Mudal Alvars. He composed one hundred hymns called Mudal Tiruvandadhi. In this Prabandham, in the hymn (6), Alwar says about his acquiring tatvajnana from the deity. At one time, the Lord Ranganatha, with a view to safeguard Vibhishana, graced him by reclining in the South facing in Srirangam. Now, for the sake of Poigai Alwar, He graced the Alwar in the reclining pose in Tiru Vekka. Further, when the Alwar was in the womb, the Lord showed, as it is, His svarupa, rupa, divya mangala vigraha, attributes and so on. This Alwar also enjoyed in seeing the Lord and worshipped Him. Since, he experienced the nature of Lord in the womb, there is no question of forgetting the vision of Lord. Hence, it is known from this hymn that he acquired tatvajnana by the grace of Lord.

In this way, this Alwar was born by the grace of Lord of TiruVekka and tatvajnana by the grace of Lord Ranganatha. Having born and knowing the tatvajnana of Lord, it is bounden duty to do kankarya to Lord. This is being accomplished by recitation of hundred hymns called Mudal Tiruvandadhi.

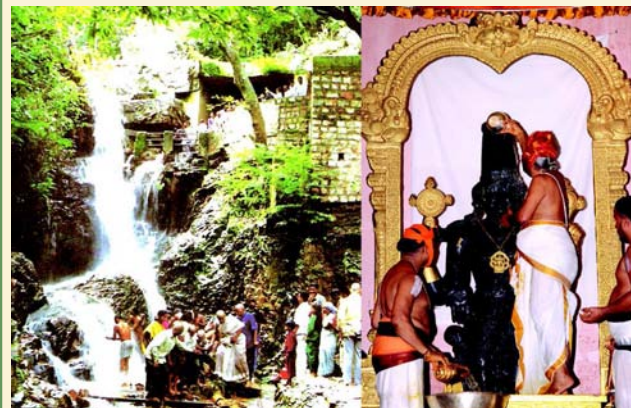




In this Prabandham, he sung on Paramapada 3 hymns, Milky Ocean 8 hymns, Tiru Vekka and Tiruvarangam each one hymn, Tirukkavalur 2 hymns, besides Tiruvenkatam ten hymns. Apart from these, he also mentioned about Varaha and other Avataras of Lord. Since, he sung more hymns on Tiruvenkatam and having deep bhakti on Tiruvenkatam, Acharya Appillai mentions in the Vazhiththirunamam about Alwar's preference on Tiruvenkatam by saying "Venkatavar Tirumalaiyai Virumbumavan Vazhiye".

### Some of the hymns are being narrated below –

In hymn 26 "Ezhuvar vidai Kolvar...", the greatness of Tirumala is narrated. Tirumala will eradicate the sins, which are considered as enemies of three categories of seekers of purusharthas, besides it stimulates the mind of Nityasuris and Lord's Consort Periya Piratti in Paramapada. The three categories of seekers of purusharthas are 1. those who are longing to acquire wealth; 2. those who know the instability of wealth and desired to experience atmanubhava for which did saranagathi and after sanctioning the same desired to experience atmanubhava than Lord's anubhava and convey send off to Lord; and 3. those who seek the constant anubhava of Divya Mangala Vighraha of Lord by doing service of garlanding etc. and pray for its uninterrupted service. Tirumala will accomplish all the three kinds of service. Further, Tirumala, not only help the worldly people, but also activate Nitya Suris and Periya Piratti in Paramapada. Their mind always glitters like a lamp. That means they experience Lord's greatness, unlike the mind of people in the gloomy experience of worldly affairs. It also



### Teertha Kainkaryam

*Abhishek* (sacred bath) is performed every day to 'Bhoga Srinivasa' idol and on every Friday to 'Moola Murti' by the sacred waters of Akasa Ganga. This service of bringing waters from Akasa Ganga is being performed by the descendents of the great Sri Vaishnava, Sri 'Tirumala Nambi'. He initiated this seva personally to the Lord about thousand years ago and it is said that the Lord used to call him 'Tata'.

instructs Periya Piratti to leave Paramapada and ascend in the chest of Lord Srinivasa with a view to advice the Lord to help His servants. She also says that She will not leave the chest of Lord. Further Tirumala instigates Nitya Suris as follows: "O Nityasuris! Having experienced the supremacy of Lord in Paramapada, you must have tired. Please come to Tirumala wherein Lord Malayappa shows his Divya Mangala Vighraha to all tribal people, animals and to experience His attributes like sowlabhya etc. Tirumala will eradicate the sins of people as said in Bhavishyoththara purana, which says "Sarvapapani vem prahu: gadas thatthaha uchyathe | t h a s m a t h venkatachailoayam loka vikkyatha keerthiman ||" "Vem" means sins. "Katam" – burning. Hence this Hill attained the fame and called Tiruvenkatam.





### Lord Krishna Worshipped as Lord Venkateswara

In the hymn (37) “Vakaiyaru....” , Poigai Alwar says that distinguished people who are well versed and practiced Vedas visit Tirumala and worship the Lord. Further, Lord Krishna, who is favourable for those bhaktas, is being worshipped in Tirumala as Lord Venkatesa. Tirumala is the place wherein daily these distinguished people, who are well known about non- stability in the benefits of items like age, wealth, house, field, cow, food and heaven, are fully aware of paramapurushartha of moksha and more so aware of what is good and what is bad. These people from different parts of the country, daily do service to the Lord with deepa, dupa, theertha etc. for performing bhagavataradhana. Such is the fame of Tirumala. Further, the commentator

Periyavachchan Pillai says that Lord, in Krishnavatara during warfront blew the conch, desired to reside in Tirumala safeguard his bhaktas.

### Guarding Tirumala

In the hymn (38) “Oorum variyaravam.....”, Poigai Alwar narrates that the Lord is pleased to reside in Tirumala, where elephant, snake, and inhabitants of hilly area are residing. In Tirumala, naturally snakes are creeping. The elephants used to stray in the millet field. Having noticed this, the inhabitants throw big precious stones to remove them from that field. At that time the snakes bewildered and thought that these are the lightning in the clouds and presume that there will be rumbling after that lightning and with fear speedily enter into the mounds of the earth. That is Tirumala. Further, Nityasuris liked this place and used to say that “This Hill is ours, This Hill is ours”. Explaining the nature of inhabitants of the hill, Periyavachchan Pillai says that the inhabitants won’t get down from the Hill, as they considered it as blame for their group. In such a way, they were guarding Tirumala in those days. Such is the practice of those inhabitants and their bhakti on Lord and Tirumala.. Nityasuris also assembled in Tirumala to do service for the Lord.

### Glittering with His attributes

In the hymn 39, “Idandathu bhoomi...” Alwar establishes when there are so many Divya Desas, Nityasuris stationed only in Tirumala. During Krita Yuga, He did Varaha Avatara and uplifted the universe. In Krishna Avatara, he lifted the Govardhana Giri. Further, He destroyed Kamsa. Reclining in the Milky Ocean is the root for all these Avataras. Periya vachchan Pillai says that the attributes in those Avataras are combined in



archavatara and Lord stationed in Tirumala with so much of desire all the time by glittering with His attributes. In the hymn, the commentator beautifully explained that we are all worshipping the Lord for some time, but liking the food more. Even the food is not liked all the time. When it is not digested, we will starve for four or ten times. But Alwars were very much attached in the Avataras of Lord and experiencing the attributes of Lord in different Avataras. This is the basic difference between Alwars and us.

### Attaining Moksha

Alwar mentioned above in the hymn 26 that Tirumala will eradicate the sins of those who desired to get moksha. Now in another hymn (76) “Vazhi nindru.....” he says that Tirumala will accomplish the desire of attaining moksha. Nammalvar also underlines these in the third century third decade of Tiruvaymozhi. Poigai Alwar says in this hymn that Tirumala is the place where the Lord, who never discriminates the upper or lower class people and put his divine leg over the heads of all in the universe during his Triuvikrama Avatara. Such deity is stationed now in Tirumala. He underlined the constant taste like bhakti on Lord and definite confidence in being that Lord as a means to attain the goal.

### Residing in Tirumala as Lord Srinivasa

In the hymn (82) “Padaiyarum vatkannar parasinal...”, Alwar elicits the essential brilliance of Tirumala, where not only Nityasuris and distinguished people who were well versed in Vedas, surrender, but also it is the abode for women. Periyavachchan Pillai says that on Dwadasi Day women, with brightness in the eyes, used to bring the well blossomed garland in their

hands besides dupa and worship the Lord. It is said that the smoke of the dupa covers the stars in the sky and coloured the Hill with blackness. Further, in Ramavatara, with a view to fulfil the request of Sita, Sri Rama waged war with Mareecha, the deer and at last killed the demon. Such a deity is residing in Tirumala as Lord Srinivasa.

Lord Srinivasa emerged on Dwadasi day in the Tamil month Purattasi, in kanakalatha yogam. Tirumazhisai Alwar clearly states in his Prabandham Nanmugan Tiruvandadi hymn (41) “Kanalurugindren kallaruvu muttudiru Ona vizhavil...” that Sravana Star is the avatara day of Lord Srinivasa.

Hence, Brahmotsavam is being held for nine days in Purattasi month beginning from Chitra star and concludes on the avatara day of Sravana star every year. This article is written based on the Tamil version of Sri U.Ve.T.A.Krishnamacharya Swami of Tirupati.



### Nachiyar Thirumozhi

Sri Ramanuja knew that Goddess Lakshmi cannot bear separation from the Lord even for a moment, hence to mitigate that separation, he initiated the singing of “Nachiyar Thirumozhi”, the 143 Pasurams composed by Sri Andal, an Avatara of Goddess Lakshmi, when the Thirumanjanam is performed.





# KAINKARYAS RENDERED BY SRI RAMANUJA AT TIRUMALA

- Sri. R. Narasimhan



**S**ri Ramanuja is the foremost amongst several Acharyas and Philosophers – the one who truly inspired us so much – that his life and his philosophies are relevant even today after thousand years. He was the first Acharya who provided a simplistic, systematic interpretation of the Vedic philosophies with emphasis on unity & bhakthi.

## The Access and Worship at Tirumala

Sri Ramanuja's life depicts a view that – the Lords of Kancheepuram and Srirangam vied with each other to own him. The “Arayars” of Srirangam temple who are staunch singers of praise of only Lord Sri Ranganatha, went to Kancheepuram once, to sing in praise of Lord Varadaraja – ostensibly – to seek a return favor of Sri Ramanuja's visit to Srirangam.

While Sri Ramanuja was delighted to be in service of the Lord Sri Ranganatha in Srirangam, he also longed to go on a pilgrimage to Tirumala. But, Lord Venkateswara, being at the top of the Tirumala hills, was inaccessible to devotees. The forests en-route were full of wild animals. Also, a group of people called “Kaapalikas” – who believed in human sacrifice, did not allow anyone to proceed

to the temple. Sri Ramanuja was distressed that worship at Tirumala was stopped due to this and wanted to restore the sanctity of the place.

One day, during his discourse in Srirangam, Sri Ramanuja asked his disciples, if any of them was willing to go to Tirumala, to serve the deity there. Only “Sri Ananthalwan” showed willingness. Sri Ramanuja was extremely pleased, and asked him to visit Tirumala, dig a lake, set up a garden of flowers and take steps to revive the worship there. Sri Ananthalwan set up a flower garden and commenced Pushpa Kainkaryam to the Lord Sri Venkateswara. Even today, the gardens exist (as “Sri Ananthalwan Gardens”) and garlands for ThomalaSeva are offered from there.

## Temple Practices and Administration

Sri Ramanuja then went on to establish several temple rituals, practices and services for the day to day administration of the Tirumala temple. He established this, through his commands to Sri PeriyaThirumalaiNambi, Sri Ananthalwan and Sri Yadava Raja – the ruler of the land during his times. This has been exhaustively documented by Sri Ananthalwan



himself, in his rendering – “Sri Venkatachalaltihasa Mala”. Here are a few of the highlights of the great services that Sri Ramanuja rendered to Tirumala & Lord Sri Venkateswara.

### **Renovating the Ananda Vimanam**

After Sri Ramanuja proved, with the help of the Lord Himself, that the Lord is none other than Lord Vishnu, seeing the dilapidated state of Ananda Vimanam, Ramanuja arranged for its renovation.

### **Consecration Idols inside the Temple**

He did the Pratishtha of Sri Varaha, Sri Narasimha, Sri VaikuntaNatha etc. in the corners of the Vimanam as per Vaikhanasa Shastra, and ensured that the Lord's eternal servants like Adishesha, Viswakshena, Jaya and Vijaya etc. were invited and established in the temple.

In a way to indicate the limitless wealth of Lord Srinivasa to prosper, as said in the Shastras, Sri Ramanuja offered and did the ritual installation (Pratishtha) of a gold two-handed Lakshmi, on the necklace of the Lord.

### **Establishing of Yoga Narasimha Sannidhi inside the Temple**

There was an “Ugra Narasimha” shrine on the banks of Swami Pushkarini in Tirumala, even before Ramanuja's time on this earth. Performing Aradhana to Lord Narasimha had stopped, at some point, due to some people's belief in other deities & difficulties in performing all services properly to Lord Narasimha. Sri Ramanuja, pained by the lack of services performed to Lord Narasimha, built a Sannadhi, inside the Tirumala Temple, in the north-east (“Isana”) corner from the Ananda Vimanam, and did the Pratishtha of the same Lord Narasimha there, and established the practice of performing daily Aradhana to Him.

Installing Sri Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, Hanuman, Sugriva and Angada Moorthies in the temple at Tirumala, and establishing the practice of performing Kalyana Utsavam to Sri Rama and Sita the day after Sri RamaNavami: Once, while Sri Ramanuja and others were listening to Sri Ramayana lectures from Sri Periya Tirumala Nambi at the foothills, some one had left the Vighrahas of Sri Rama, Lakshmana, Hanuman, Sugriva and Angada near them and went away. These were very beautiful, and perfectly worshipped Vighrahas that were brought from some other place due to some disturbance there. Sri Ramanuja made a Vighraha of Sita, and along with the other Vighrahas, installed the “Rama Parivara” inside the temple

at Tirumala and established the practice of performing daily Aradhana to them. He also established the practice of performing Kalyana Utsavam to Rama and Sita on the day after Sri Rama Navami.

### **Constructed Four Mada Streets at Tirumala**

During Sri Ramanuja's time, the streets around the temple were not big and flat enough for grand festivals to be performed. Hence, during the Annual Brahmotsavam, after the first day, the Utsavamoorti was brought to Thiruchanur and 8 days of grand celebrations were done there and returned on the 9th day after

### **Changing the schedule of the Lord's Tirumanjanam**

Previously, Tirumanjanam (Abhishekam) used to be performed for Lord Srinivasa every day. It was becoming difficult to perform all other services to the Lord properly. Hence, Sri Ramanuja changed the frequency to every Friday to ensure that all services can be performed properly.





Theerthavari (Chakra Snanam). Sri Ramanuja, with a wish to re-establish the practice of conducting Brahmotsavam in Tirumala itself as was done by Brahma and Thondaman Chakravarti, commissioned the building of wide flat streets around the temple that were suitable for festivals. He also commissioned some more streets for performance of other festivals like the “ParvetaUtsavam”. After they were done, he moved the Utsavams from Tiruchanur to Tirumala itself as they used to be done before.

He also introduced other festivals like “GodaKalyanam”, “TanniramuduUtsavam” and “BhagSavariUtsavam”.

### Architect of Temple Rituals

Establishing procedure of performing Alankaram to Sankha and Chakra first: He set up the practice that, every time when Alankaram is performed to Lord Srinivasa using sandalwood paste, flower garlands etc., first Alankaram should be offered to Sankha and chakra and then, to the lotus feet. Then to Sridevi present on the necklace, then to the crown and so on



VendantaSangraha: He delivered a series of discourses on Upanishads in Tirumala – and these are compiled in the form of “VendantaSangraha”.

Offering of “Nagaabharanam” to the Lord: There used to be a “Nagabharanam” (Serpent shaped ornament) only on the right hand of Lord Srinivasa before Sri Ramanuja’s time. Sri Ramanuja commissioned the making of another “Nagabharanam”, and, also two shoulder ornaments that added more beauty to the Lord and then offered them to the Lord, such that there are a set of shoulder ornament (“Tholvalai”) and “Nagabharanam” for each hand.

### Administration of the Tirumala Temple

Appointing the VaikhanasaArchaka for the Tirumala temple: Sri Ramanuja appointed a very learned Vaikhanasa Agama Vidwan to perform the rituals to the Lord.

### Set up the Jeer Mutt

He set up the Jeer Mutt in Tirumala, in a bold step, and entrusted the divine responsibility of overseeing & performing all the rituals of the temple as per the tenets of Vaikhanasa Agama.

Introduced “PurnakumbhaSwagatham”: a process of according respect while receiving a seer or pontiff of any mutt whenever they visit the temple and presenting the Theertam, Prasadam & Seshavastram.

Tasty Naivedyam to the Lord: Sri Ramanujacharya insisted that Annaprasadams, offered as “Naivedyam” to Lord, be served to satisfy thousands of pilgrims visiting Tirumala temple. He made sure that all the prasadams be prepared with in the temple kitchen in a sacred manner.

Though there were many changes brought in the temple activities with the passage of time, the principal Tenets, Sevas, Rituals, Regulations for smooth run of temple affairs brought by Sri Ramanuja are still continuing even today in Tirumala temple without any deviation even after 1000 years. This speaks volumes about his deeds & devotion towards Lord Venkateswara which was uncompromising and infinite.

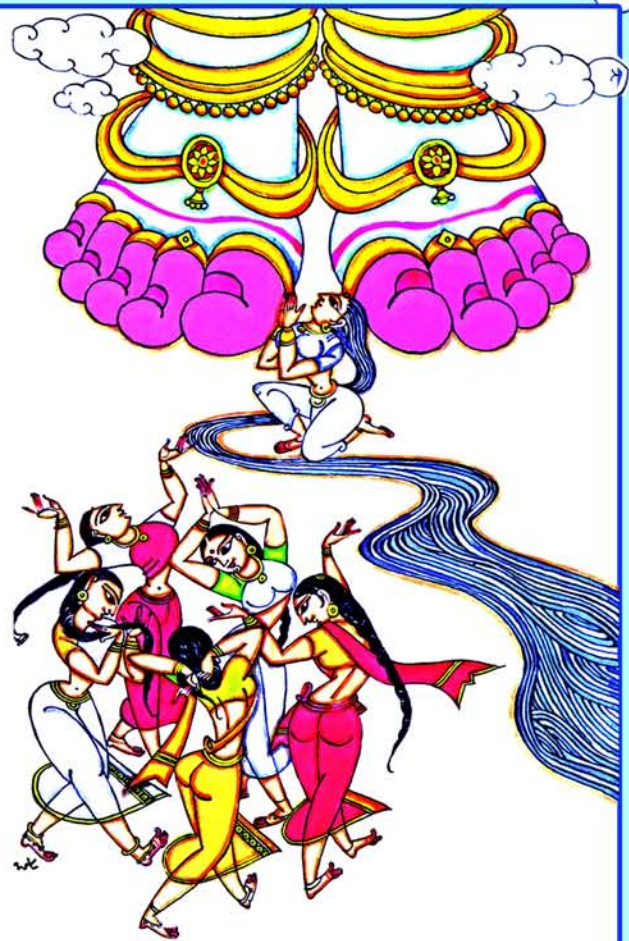




**“N**ava Vidha Bhakti” - Shravanam, Keertanam, Smaranam, Paada Sevanam, Archanam, Vandanam, Daasyam, Sakhyam, Aatma Nivedhanam are the sources one can choose to perform Bhakti towards Lord. All these nine forms tell, that one must surrender to Lord's feet. Paada Sevanam is one among which explicitly refer's Lord's Divine feet.

The lotus feet of Lord Venkateswara is the sole savior in this world. This is the ultimate truth that every human being born or believer of “Sanathana Dharma” should realize. There are numerous problems in this world which can be solved only by surrendering to Lord.

The Hindu scriptures has many incidents which had proved that surrendering to Lord's Divine Lotus Feet had rescued them from distress. Gajendra-the elephant, Prahladha-the Asura Child, Vibhishana-the Rakshasa



## **SRI VENKATESA CHARANOU SARANAM PRAPADHYE !**

**- Smt. T.S. Rajalakshmi**

King, Sugriva-the Monkey King, Draupadi-the princess and many more. These devotees were in utmost distress when they surrendered. The term “Self-Surrender” is called “Saranagathi” which is complete devotion and submission of soul to Lord.

When one performs Saranagathi by uttering “Sri Venkatesa Charanou Saranam Prapadhye”, then it means, he becomes very close to Lord and stresses that Lord has more responsibility to protect the person. The word “Sri” is very important because whenever Lord protects, it is because of “Goddess Lakshmi (Sri)”. The “Daya”, the compassion of Lord is “Goddess”. That is the reason, Lord is always addressed with “Sri” and she does not move out of his chest. She is the first

person who recommends us to Lord to forgive all our bad deeds and protect us.

“Sri Venkatesa Prapatti” is a beautiful song by Prativaadi Bhayankaram Annan Swami, in which seeks refuge at the Lotus divine feet of Swami Venkateswara. As mentioned earlier, the author first praises Goddess Alarmelmanga and then proceeds the greatness of Lord's lotus feet. The famous hymn “Isanam Jagatosya Venkatapathe” and salute as “Vande Jaganmaatharaam” by bowing at the lotus feet of Goddess Alarmelmanga as she is





### Divine Feet...

Narayanagiri which is just behind the Tirumala Temple is very auspicious as Lord Venkateswara from Vaikuntam stepped to Earth in this place. Even now, one can get the Darshan of the Sri Vari Paadham.

first to recommend the Jeevatma (Soul) to Paramatma (Supreme). After that every Sloka ends with “*Sri Venkatesa charanou saranam prapadhye*” which means “I surrender myself at the feet of Lord Venkateswara”. He repeats in every sloka stressing the importance of Lord’s Divine Lotus Feet. The entire hymn has the details of Lord’s Divine Lotus feet, his beauty and his deeds during various Avatar (incarnation).

### Nammalwar...

Nammalwar in his “Thiruvaaaimozhi” performed Saranagathi in his paasuram “*Agala killen iraiyumen..... Adikkeezh Amarndhu pugundhene*” where he first praises Goddess Alarmelmanga stating that she never gets separated from Lord’s chest....and finally he says he does not have any other refuge, so he surrenders to the Lord’s holy feet and would like to remain there forever.

### Poigai Alwar...

Poigai Alwar, in his paasuram “*Ezhuvaar Vidakolvaar...*” says that few people approach Lord Srinivasa for wealth, few out of devotion only to enjoy his divine Darshan and praise his glory to attain Moksha (Salvation) to perform “*NithyaKainKaryam*” which is devoted service to Lord at Vaikunta (the Divine abode) by falling at his Lotus feet. Lord fulfills all the “Dharmic” desires of his devotees without fail.

### Goda Devi...

Sri Andal (Goda Devi), who is the incarnation of Bhumi Devi (Mother Earth) in her Tiruppavai pasuram “*Andri Ivvulagam Alandhay! Adi (holy feet) Pottri*” - That day you measured this world, Praise your feet on ThriVikrama Avatar. “*Chittran Sirukale... Pottramara Adiye (lotus feet) Pottrum....Indru Kaan Govinda*” - At your golden Lotus feet, thus hailing “Govinda”, the most important verse which is recited daily in all the Sri Vaishnava Temples.

### Swami Vedanta Desika ...

“Daya Satakam” by Swami Vedanta Desika is the praise of Dayaa Devi who acts as a bridge between Lord Srinivasa and helps the Jeevatma to cross the ocean from worldly clutches. The author hails Dayaa Devi along with Sri Venkateswara of ThiruVenkatam by falling at his lotus feet which is the only way to get away from the worldly pains (“*Ahamasmi Aparaadha Chakravarthi.....paadasaat Kuruthvam*”) as he has committed many sins says the author. He also



confirms that one who performs Prapatti to Lord Venkateswara will attain Moksha (tvadh upasadanaad...paadambhojam). He praises Vamana-TriVikrama Avatara in which the holy lotus feet had measured the three worlds without showing any partiality (Prasakta.. Madhunaa... Charaacharam... Sharanapankajena..) who is the Lord of Thiruvenkata Hills. Finally, he concludes that, Dayaa Devi (form of Goddess Alarmelmanga) helps the devotees to fall at the feet of Lord Venkateswara to attain Moksha (Salvation). Vedanta Desika also requests that Lord should always grace him.

“Paduka Sahasram” by Swami Vedanta Desika is the praise of Lord Ranganatha Swami’s Sandal (Paadukas) at Sri Rangam. Whenever, we surrender, we fall at the lotus feet. The divine feet which protects us is protected by the Sandal. So, the Sandal is more holy, and the author praises that Sandal.

In Ramayana, Bharata ruled the kingdom with the Rama’s Paduka (Sandal). It is also said, that more than Lord Ram, the Sandal ruled magnificently the Kingdom. Such is the power of the Lord’s Sandal.

“Amrita Swadhini” by Swami Vedanta Desika is Tamil hymn “Nin Arulaal Gadhi Indri.....Un Sharane..Sharan Endru...En Tirumal...Adaikalam Kol Ennai Neeye”, says that he had done lot of sins so far, these can be washed away only by the grace, so, falling at the Divine feet of Lord Venkateswara, please protect and save me.

## Sri Ramanuja...

“Saranagathi Gadyam” by Swami Ramanuja hails “*Ananya Saranaha tvat Paadaravinda Yugalam Sarnam aham Prapadye*” by surrendering himself in Lord’s feet.

## Annamacharya...

Annamacharya, who has composed numerous songs on Lord Venkateswara and songs on Lord’s divine feet “*bhavamulona bahayamulandunu...Sri Venkatadri midanite acyuta acyuta sharanavo manasa*” asking his mind to seek shelter “Sharanam, Sharanam” to Lord Venkateswara. “*Brahma Kadigina Paadamu*”, the entire song tells many instances of Lord’s divine lotus feet which gave boons to the devotees and have made Tiruvenkatagiri the destination to attain salvation.



## Lord's Sacred feet

Srivari Padala Mandapam is at Alipiri. It is believed that Lord Venkateswara after Ekanta Seva in Tirumala will come to visit Goddess Padmavathi at Tiruchanur and will leave his footwear in this place. Devotees when climbing, offer prayers by keeping the Lord’s footwear on their head. Thus, is the sacred of Lord’s Holy Feet.





# IS THERE ANY BOON GREATER THAN THIS...

- Dr. P. Gopal

**T**irumala, the cluster of Seven Hills and the abode of Lord Venkateswara, affectionately called Balaji, Srinivasa, Govinda, etc., by the devotees in accordance with the regional usages, is a sacred shrine sanctified by the ever flowing Divine Grace. Pilgrims come in thousands daily to have Darshan of the Lord from the four corners of the country and abroad. This being a prestigious religious institution wherein, the faith of the devotees can be sustained on the observance of hereditary rituals, festivals and utsavams in accordance with the tradition, custom and usage which will inspire and instil the feelings of devotion in the hearts of visiting pilgrims. While looking at pilgrims' satisfaction in its right earnest, the TTD administration has the unceasing, relentless and demanding responsibilities to see that all the hereditary rituals, festivals as prescribed in accordance with Vaikanasa Agama tradition are carried in the temple to the minute detail every day.

The Lord of Tirumala is praised in Vedas, by all the Alwars and Acharyas since time immemorial. The presence of a supreme power to protect the devotees is worshipped since thousands of years.

Lord is synonymous with eternal bliss. He is all pervasive of unbounded love and provides happiness to the devotees. Hence Venkatachalam is called a place of happiness, bountiful pleasure and unlimited eternity. A devotee is fully blessed once he visits the abode, feels he is in a different world as his thoughts would be like of a baby. The baby rejoices, comforts and smiles in the lap of his mother. That is what *Anandanilaya* of Lord *Venkatachalapathi* provides to His devotees.

## During your Tirumala visit

Lord Venkateswara is the god of all times. The planning for the journey to Tirumala is itself very joyful. During the visit to Tirumala, a devotee should be self-disciplined and self-cautious regarding his activities. He should know what to do and what not to do on the pious hill. Since the beginning of the journey, the devotees feel that every moment they spend is a part of their holy pilgrimage. It is their 'Yatra Deeksha'. During the course of the pilgrimage, the devotees should have pure thoughts. They should not blame others. They should think good of others. Before coming to Tirumala, they should worship their household and village gods and goddesses. In the course of the journey, they should only concentrate on the thought of having the grand 'darshan' of Lord Venkateswara.

There are various kinds of sevas, utsavas, festivals and rituals being performed throughout the year periodically for Lord Venkateswara with great pomp and grandeur. Of all festivals, a nine-day annual festival of Lord Venkateswara, the Presiding Deity of Seven Hills and the God of Kaliyuga, is the most splendid and spectacular one. Though every day is a festival day in Tirumala, the Brahmotsavam assumes greater significance and importance having its own grandeur and uniqueness.

## Brief History

Bhavishyottara purana mentions that since Brahma, the creator Himself, is supposed to have started this Brahmotsavam first in honour of Lord Venkateswara, this festival is named after him. Historical





evidences too mention that several kings, who were inspired by the glory of Lord Venkateswara, celebrated this Brahmotsavam with utmost devotion. There are some inscriptions which are available now glorifying the importance of Brahmotsavam. One of the inscriptions takes us back to the period of 614 A.D. when the Pallava Queen “Samavai” or ‘KaduvanPerundevi” presented the Silver Idol of Naralapperumal and established the practice of taking it in procession as Utsava-murti during Brahmotsavam.

The other carved inscriptions mention that the festival was celebrated with great pomp and splendor in 1328 A.D. in the month of Ashada by ThiruVenkataYadava Raya; in 1446 AD by Hari Hara Raya; in 1524 A.D. in the month of Chaitra by the Telugu Pallava King – VijayagandaGopala Deva. Many rulers of South India belonging to Pallava, Chola, Pandya and Vijayanagara who administered the temple under their control performed this Brahmotsavam with their royal patronage offering huge kanukas/jewellery etc. Subsequently,

the festival established by Chaturmukha Brahma is being organized successively by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams on a grand scale for nine days.

### The magnificent role of TTD

It may not be out of context to mention the vibrant role of TTD administration and all its employees who bestow utmost importance to the services of the visiting pilgrims and devotees in providing amenities and facilities such as transport, accommodation, darshan, prasadam distribution, free meals, medical aid, security etc., with meticulous care round the clock especially during these festive days of this mega event and words lack to describe their enthusiastic and collective team work. The TTD administration proves tests of its efficiency every day and at every stage because of its pilgrim-orientation and the onerous responsibilities connected with it. All categories of TTD personnel from top brass to bottom level perform their duties with total dedication and devotion and play an effective supporting role to the Executive Officer which ultimately results in celebrating this spectacular fete successfully on a grand scale filling the hearts of devotees with spiritual ecstasy and satisfaction.

Thus, the Brahmotsavam festival celebrated on a splendid scale draws huge pilgrims and devotees from every nook and corner of the country and those who witness this mega festival get blessed by the Lord of Seven Hills. Is there any boon greater than this for devotees of Lord Venkateswara on this planet earth?

OM NAMO VENKATESAYA



### SOLUTION TO PUZZLE

1 S	U	2 J	A	3 T	H	4 A		5 S
R		O		A		I		U
6 I	V	Y		7 R	A	M		D
				A				H
8 S	I	V	A		9 H	E	M	A
A				10 K				
L				11 A	K	12 A	Y	13 U
Y				P		R		M
14 A	C	T		15 I	L	I	N	A





# ACHARYAS' STUTI ON LORD SRINIVASA

- Sri N.Rajagopalan

**T**he holy and halcyon 'Venkatachala' or 'Thiruvengatam' has been hailed and glorified through ages, revered for its sanctity and being the abode of Lord Srinivasa, worshipped by all celestial gods and millions of worldly beings, sages and saints, alike, for redemption and relief from life's afflictions or worldly riches and material rewards.

The Rig Veda 'samhita' promises a 'kaliyuga' solution viz. 'adhyatmic' or afflictions of body and mind, 'adiboutika' or problems caused by human beings, animals, and insects, and 'adideivika' or natural calamities like flood, hurricane, earthquakes etc. It equally applies to terminations of life itself.

In this background, we shall take up the 'stutis' or hymns of two Srivaishnava Acharyas who have sung on the exalted Tiruvenkata mountain and Lord Srinivasa. The Acharyas covered in this article are 1. Sri Emperumanar, and 2. Sri Vedanta Desikan.

Sri Emperumanar has not sung any hymn as such on Lord Srinivasa, but in a very significant manner highlighted the pre-eminence and overarching supremacy of Lord Srinivasa, through the first benedictory invocatory sloka of his monumental commentary on the 'Vedanta sutras' of Sage Vyasa known as 'Sri Bhashyam', for which Goddess Sarasvati conferred on him the honorific title of 'Sri Bhashyakar'. The second 'mangala sloka' or invocatory was dedicated to the author of the 'Vedantasutras' sage Vyasa and the lineage of Gurus.

## Mellifluent Verses

Sri Vedanta Desikan in a singular poetic fancy unique only to him, and inspired by Sri Nammalwar's Thiruvaimozhi, composed the fairly long hymn of 'Dayasatakam' of 108 mellifluent verses dedicated to Lord Srinivasa, in groups of ten verses ('dasakams') each group reflecting one distinct theme on the lines of the ten centums, (satakams) of 'Thiruvaimozhi'. The hymn is structured in a varied manner employing



different poetic metres. The two major themes underlying the hymn are the overflowing 'daya' of Lord Srinivasa, and 'saranagati' as the simplest means to attain His grace. Significantly enough, the very first sloka of the hymn commences with the word 'Prapadye'.

'I take refuge with the mountain Tirumala which is like a sugar candy probably formed by the crystallisation of 'Daya or compassion of Lord Srinivasa which (Daya) is like the flowing sugarcane juice'. Like the Alvars, it is the mountain to which Swami Desikan does 'prapatti', as the Alvar has sung, recounting many hills, I also called out 'Venkatam'. 'Do and worship the peaks of Venkatam'.- (Nanmukan Tiruvandhadhi-40-42). Next, Vedantadesikan takes the metaphor further, to say that 'the flow of mercy has collected in a reservoir from which the streams (of Acharyas) on the slopes of the mountain carry the juice of Lord's 'Daya' to the 'prapannas'. The theme covered in the first ten slokas, is the fact that the Lord is eminently suitable for worship and adoration. He is the field out of which grow the four fruits of human life ('purushartas'), as the Swami phrases it. In between, Sri Desikan offers salutations to the 'Guruparampara' and Alvars. The second essential theme of 'DayaSatakam' is that the Lord of the hills is eminently enjoyable in terms of 'Bhagavad anubhavam'.



## Swami as 'Kalpaka tree'

S r i  
D e s i k a n  
visualises the  
L o r d ' s  
c o m p a s s i o n  
'Daya' as the  
'kalpaka tree' which  
grows at the feet of  
the Lord. His cool glances  
at the thronging crowds of  
devotees make the tree of 'Daya' to  
sprout tender shoots and ripen tasteful

fruits. Those who worship at His 'sannidhi', become the beneficiaries of His 'Daya' and enjoy the fruits of that 'kalpaka tree'. So the theme underlying this group is 'ati-bhogyatvam' or 'experiential excellence' of Lord Venkateswara. The third distinctive theme envisaged in this hymn is the Lord's 'subhashrayadivya-mangalavighraha' or 'divinely auspicious and blissful image'. In another sloka, Desikan fancies the divine form of the Lord as the moon of 'Anjana' mountain formed by the nectar churned out of the ocean of 'Daya' of the Lord. The most beautiful 'arcavighraha' removes the fear of death from the minds of 'prapannas', and assures promise of liberation.

## Lord's Effulgence rays

Vedanta Desikan highlights the 'most wonderful experience' of the Lord whose effulgence radiates from the top of Tirumala hills, and the sacred environs that are an undiminishing source of joy to sentient beings. Here, the object of adoration, is not the mangala-vighraha' as such, but the concept of Venkateswara or what may be called 'Venkatesa-tattvam', the highest concept that



Vedas can proclaim. Sri Desikan summarises the entire philosophy of Visishtadvaita in an interesting manner. The Vedas are like a huge market place offering a variety of commodities of different tastes, flavours and hues. The run of the mill uninformed people are attracted by shoddy tinsel stuff, and are happy with their instant gratification. They leave without exploring the market, where more precious and lasting things abound and wherein, ultimately a huge blue diamond 'Harinila', the Lord Himself is present in all His resplendence. The discriminating souls, with the help of the compassionate Dayadevi, will be able to attain that Diamond which is always associated with 'pearls' 'nitya-muktas'. The blessings that accrue from the 'divyakataksham' of Lord Srinivasa that is as such 'Benefactor-Gateway of prosperity'. The blessings that emanate from the merciful glance of the Lord, not only make the 'prapanna' free from the three worldly debts, but confer immense wealth and welfare here in this world, and gifts to the departing soul along the way to Vaikunta.

### Lord's compassion

Sri Desikan acknowledges the overflowing compassion of Lord Venkateswara in crowning him, and thus enabling him to compose this hymn 'Dayasatakam'. That experience, he says, was like taking up the musical instrument veena at the appropriate time and playing upon it for diversion. In a benediction to all those who properly read this magnificent hundred-odd long hymn, Sri Desikan assures them of the grace, 'Daya of the Lord who carries the 'Saranga' bow, to remove all enemies, and bestowing her glances from atop the Vrishagiri, to coronate them as kings among those who have surrendered to the Lord with no other goals. Sri Desikan says, 'with great devotion I praised the

Lord's Daya as the Universal Mother, who is sweet as nectar, and the granter of heaven and liberation. In the course of this eulogy, verses just flowed at a time from the kalpaka-tree of Lord's will, which is shaken by the strong breeze of Daya, like the simultaneous fall of mangoes from a tree due to a strong gust of wind'.

Sri Desikan says that even 'if some people were to point to any defects in this hymn, they would not be heard, thanks to the Daya of the divine Couple, 'Divya-Dampatee, with the din of the falling waterfalls down the slopes of 'Vrsihagiri' shutting out all discordant voices'. The hymn starts with the beautiful word, 'prapadye' and ends again with the expression 'Divya-Dhampatee', a typically favourite term of Desikan who uses similar other expressions elsewhere in his 'stutis' to refer to the Divine Couple. They are the channels carrying the surplus waters of Lord's Daya.

One may say that 'Dayasatakam of Swami Desikan is a 'maha-kavya' which is replete with several excellences from conceptualisation to composition, -- excellence of 'utpreksha' or imagery, excellence of themes around which the poem has been structured, excellence of 'bhavas' expressed, excellence of delineation of the exalted ambience of the mountain environs with streams and slopes, where nature radiates with divine bliss, and above all the fervour of the Acharya in articulating his devotion to the Lord Srinivasa, Who reigns supreme on the hills in shining grace, compassion and generosity. All the 108 slokas reflect the devout 'bhakti', that Swami Desikan carried in his heart for the Lord Venkateswara as the abiding 'Daya-Svarupam' on the sacred Venkata Mountain.





# GENERAL PREDICTIONS FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2020

- Daivajna Chaturanana Rani Narasimha Murthy



**Aries (Mesha) :** Planning for the monthly budget is necessary. A slight difference may also matter much. Better to avoid unnecessary expenses. Health conditions should be taken care of. Worshipping to Lord Venkateswara will ward off all the evil effects and give excellent results.



**Taurus (Vrishabha) :** Good future is expected though there are certain adjustments. Money is a flow to go out. Enemies cannot over power. Mixed results are seen in the corporate sectors. Some plans may hit fine and some may keep silent. Happy movements are there to one and all. Basement for the future will be very strong. For good result chant Govindanamaas.



**Gemini (Mithuna) :** New ideas will change the goal of life. Students should work hard. There will be a struggle facing for lower and middle class people. Contentment is the key factor to avoid the present problems. They should be in constant practice till they get better time. Shakti japa will give them new dimensions to conquer new horizons.



**Cancer (Karkataka) :** Though weather is tough they can manage the show. Decisions may effect in a long run. Official matters should be deal very smoothly. Children will get good opportunities. Health conditions should be taken care of. Women should take care of the house. Vishnu Sahasranama parayana and Lord Venkateswara pooja will bring them high degree of success.



**Leo (Simha) :** People who are unemployed will get good opportunities in the second half of the month. No major change in the houses. Argument is a waste, involvement is necessary. One should not loose self respect. Children should take care of themselves. Lakshmi pooja will bring them cheers and immense wealth.



**Virgo (Kanya) :** There are fair chances to wish long pending cases. But it is only temporary. Brothers and sisters in the family will get good chances to improve financially. Expenses should be verily controlled to protect the business ship afloat. Ship should be in the water but water should not be in the ship. Otherwise it sinks. Vishnu pooja and Sahasranamaparayana will fetch a lot.



**Libra (Tula) :** They will become very famous. Business people will become successful. Very good profits are expected in the year end. Students, Investors, Sportsmen, Pandits will come to limelight. Women will enjoy the times very very highly. Saktipooja and pooja to Sun God will bring them thunderous success.



**Scorpio (Virshchika) :** Financial conditions are not to be frightened. Flow should be continuous and non stop. Effects should be more out not at the cost of health. Mixed luck is expected to students. Better to use talk less work more concept. Eswara Aradhana will bring them high degree of success.



**Sagittarius (Dhanu) :** Public relations will improve. Expenses are inevitable to control. Students should not be lazy. Old people should be taken care of. Health is the main issue to protect. Idle mans brain is a devils workshop. One should not sit idle and should involve in some assignment. Subrahmanya pooja or Shakti pooja will bring good results.



**Capricorn (Makara) :** They will feel the heat and stress. Speech is not even silver but silence is golden. Students should work hard. They can expect good ranks. People are some how very comfortable to involve themselves in the work. Worshipping of Lord Shiva or Lord Venkateswara will ward of all the evil effects and good results are expected.



**Aquarius (Kumbha) :** Smooth handling is very important to get some consideration. Great success is ahead. Negligence is to be avoided. Prevention is better than cure. Success will not be happy to leave them. Old people in the house are to be taken care of. Worshipping of Lord Subrahmanya will give immense success.



**Pisces (Meena) :** First half of the month is excellent. There will be sudden influx of money or listening to good news in the 2nd half of the month. Students should be cautious. Women will be happy in their routine and they are expected to get new ornaments. Rudrabhisheka or Sakti Sahasranama parayana will relieve the stress.



Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams



16-10-2020  
Friday  
**Day :**  
Golden Tiruchhi Utsavam  
**Night :**  
Peddaseshavahanam

17-10-2020  
Saturday  
**Day :**  
Chinnaseshavahanam  
**Night :**  
Hamsavahanam

18-10-2020  
Sunday  
**Day :**  
Simhavahanam  
**Night :**  
Muthyapupandirivahanam

19-10-2020  
Monday  
**Day :**  
Kalpavrukshavahanam  
**Night :**  
Sarvabhupalavahanam

20-10-2020  
Tuesday  
**Day :**  
Mohini Avataram in Pallaki  
**Night :**  
Garudavahanam

21-10-2020  
Wednesday  
**Day :**  
Hanumadvahanam  
**Night :**  
Gajavahanam

22-10-2020  
Thursday  
**Day :**  
Suryaprabhavahanam  
**Night :**  
Chandraprabhavahanam

23-10-2020  
Friday  
**Day :**  
Golden Chariot  
**Night :**  
Aswavahanam

24-10-2020  
Saturday  
**Day :**  
Chakrasnanam  
**Night :**  
Tiruchhi Utsavam

Edited and Published on behalf of T.T.Devasthanams by **Prof. K. Rajagopalan, Ph.D.**, Chief Editor, TTD and Printed at TTD Press by **Sri P. Ramaraju, M.A.** Special Officer (Press & Publications), T.T.D. Press, Tirupati - 517 507.



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS



Tirumala  
Sri Venkateswaraswamivari  
Annual Brahmotsavams  
From 19<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2020

26-09-2020 Saturday  
Night :Aswavahanam

27-09-2020  
Sunday  
Night:  
Tiruchi Utsavam  
Dwajavarohanam







SAPTHAGIRI (ENGLISH) ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY, Published by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams  
printing on 25-08-2020, Regd. with the Registrar of Newspapers under "RNI" No.10742, Postal Regd.No.TRP/9 - 2018-2020  
Licensed to post without prepayment No.PMGK/RNP/WPP-04/2010-2020



**27-09-2020 Sunday**  
**Day : Chakrasnanam**