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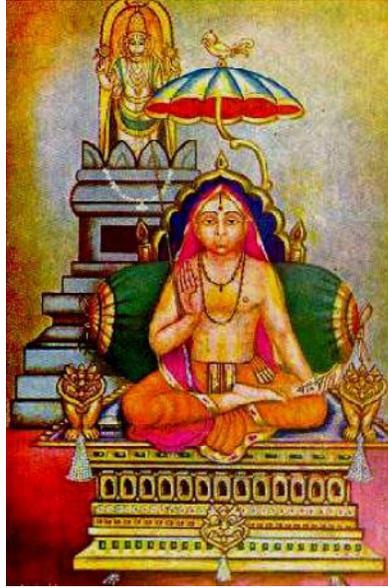
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Srinivasa Bala Bharati

VYASARAYALU

English Translation

Gannamaraju Saibaba



**Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams,
Tirupati**

Srinivasa Bala Bharati - 150
(*Children Series*)

VYASARAYALU

Telugu Version
K. Venkata Rao

English Translation
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Executive Officer
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Prof. Ravva Sri Hari

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FOREWORD

If a beautiful garden is to be raised, one needs to take proper care of tender flower plants. In the same way in order to create a good society, great care needs to be taken of young children who are going to be future citizens of India. All their intellectual attainments will be futile if they fail to learn of their culture and its greatness. They need to be told of great men and women of this country so that they are inspired by their ideals. The essentials of our culture should be given to them in the form of simple and charming stories. They will cherish these ideals and be guided by them. They will promote good and they will love the society they live in. They make their families proud and bring great prestige to their country when they grow up into good citizens.

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams have brought out these booklets for children in Telugu under Srinivasa Bala Bharati Series. Although meant for children, they are useful to the elderly too. They have found place in the book shelves of every family. The stories of legendary men and women are narrated in a simple way. We hope that more and more children will read them and profit by them.

I congratulate Dr. R. Sri Hari, Editor-in-Chief, TTD for his efforts in bringing out the English translations of SRINIVASABALA BHARATI SERIES so well. We have received co-operation of many learned men and women in our efforts to popularize this series. I am thankful to them.

In the Service of the Lord



Executive Officer,

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams.
Tirupati.

FOREWORD

Today's children are tomorrow's citizens. They need apt acquaintance with the life-histories of celebrated persons at tender so that they get opportunity to lead their lives in an exemplary way. They will come to know that great things such as Indian culture, basic tenets of life and moral teachings are abundantly available in the life-experiences of great men. It is observed that there is no scope to teach such subjects in school curriculum.

Observing such circumstances the Publication Division of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has published about hundred booklets in Telugu about the lives of famous sages and great men written by various authors under the editorship of Dr.S.B. Raghunathacharya under "Bala Bharati Series". The response to these books is tremendous and it has given impetus to publish them in other languages also. To begin with, some of the books are now brought out in English and Hindi by T.T.D. for the benefit of boys and girls and the interested public.

These booklets, primarily intended to the growing children and also to the elders to study and narrate the stories to their children, will go a long way to sublimate the aspirations of the children to greater heights.

R. SRI HARI
Editor-In-Chief
T.T.D.

Welcome To Srinivasa Balabharati Series

The series is the outcome of abundant grace of Lord Sri Venkateswara.

This will be an unfailing source of inspiration to the young.

It enshrines the best of Bharatiya tradition. May this noble endeavour be successful.

India has been known for its culture and civilization, its ethical and dharmic way of life from time immemorial. India has marched ahead with its commitment to dharma, its resistance to adharma, its espousal of life-affirming values and its humane attitude to life as a journey towards God realization. Those who embodied these values in their life have been a beacon of light to us. Their impact is deep on the life we lead. Young boys and girls will find them exemplary and feel proud of their invaluable heritage. They will love their motherland and dedicate themselves to its service.

It is therefore necessary that the young learn about these great men and women so that they will realize their indebtedness to them for their selfless contribution to the enrichment of life. This should indeed be a chief component of true education which ensures the perennial continuity of Indian culture and civilization. SRINIVASA BALABHARATI SERIES has come into existence to acquaint the young boys and girls with right perspective of Indian life and values through a series of booklets written exclusively for this purpose describing in brief the lives of great men and women.

We welcome you to share our joy in launching these booklets.

S.B. Raghunathacharya

Chief Editor

INTRODUCTION

Knowing well that Kuhu Yogam estinguishes life who dares to sit on a thrown? Having accepted the thrown, can any one escape from the endangement. Yet there is way out. If one has blessings of god and be selfless, there KuhuYogas and celestial groupings (Grahakutas) can't do any thing. There is one who has taken such brave steps in the interest of the safety of the state and for protection of the Hindu empire and he is Vyasraya. Not only that, after becoming the ruler of Vijayanagar empire for an hour and half and after the peril is gone, he has retransmitted the kingdom to SriKrishnadevaraya. Sri Vyasraya is such a person of great sacrifice.

- Chief Editor

VYASARAYALU



Binnur is a village lying on the banks of river Kaveri in Karnataka State. Binnur is also called "Agnipura" "Benkipura". It is known that Binnur was called Vahnipuram in puranas. The king Venkatagiri Nayaka ruled this province in 15th century. Ramadeva was his minister.

Ramadeva was not only a minister dealing with political affairs but also Kulapurohita. He won the love and affection of his people by his administrative abilities. He was praised by great people for his scholarship. That's why the vaidikis called him Ramacharya as a mark of honour. The scholars called him Vallabhasumati and the public called him Ramavallabhulu.

Lakshamma was his wife. She was a very good house-wife. Their married life stood exemplary to one and all. They were sound in all respects except in the wealth of progeny. Lakshamma visited many temples and worshipped deities. Ramadeva was a devotee of Hanuma. He believed that Hanuma alone could fulfil his desire and thus worshipped him with sincerity. At last his prayer was fruitful.

Lakshamma gave birth to a female child. She was named after Bheemakka. She grew to the age of 10 (Ten) years. Lakshamma expected a male child and waited for a long time, but in vain.

"One eye is not an eye. One child is not a child". It is a proverb. She is a girl. One day or other she has to go to her in law's house. Parents were not satisfied with a female child. Lakshamma used to express her grief before her husband, many a time in the course of their conversation.

Ramadeva told his wife not to worry and consoled her that Bheemakka was a gift of God and that they would get the son-in-law to reside in their own house permanently. Ramadeva was able to console his wife but he also desired for a son. He was also a worshipper of VedaVyasa.

One day VedaVyasa appeared to Ramadeva in a dream and said "Oh! Ramadeva! you will be blessed with a son. Donot worry. You will have the grace of

an old ascetic" and disappeared. Ramadeva felt very happy but his joy did not last long.

On death bed

Ramadeva fell sick. The Doctors of the village treated him. But they failed to diagnose the disease. King Venkatagirinayaka Bhupati also sent Royal doctors. The treatments of Royal Doctors became in vain. He lost consciousness and speech. His body became cool. His relatives wept loudly. There was no end to the agony of Lakshamma. She embraced her daughter Bheemakka and wept loudly. She decided to burn herself with the corpse of her husband. Meanwhile, an old married lady (Sumangali) came to Lakshamma, and said "Lakshamma Don't worry. I believe that your husband will be alive. I have learnt that a greatman has come over to the bank of river Kaveri with his disciples. The villagers are wondering at his bright appearance and speech. His name is Abburi Brahmanya Tirtha. I believe if you serve him, there will be a good result."

Then Lakshamma thought "It is true. If I serve that great man, my husband may be alive. With his kindness, the qualities of my sowbhagya will be protected. Otherwise I will seek permission from him to burn along with the dead-body of my husband".

Lakshamma proceeded towards the bank of river Kaveri. Swamy Brahmanya Teertha was in meditation.

Lakshamma fell on the feet of the sage. Swamiji opened his eyes and blessed her "Deergha Sumangali Bhava". Then she said to him "I do not know what you are saying. My husband is on the death-bed. I have come over here to seek your permission to die along with my husband's pyre". "The word uttered by me is the word of Sri Hari. It never becomes false, never too. Your husband is alive. If your husband is dead, such word would not have come out. I will come with you. Let us go" saying thus Brahmanya Teertha moved towards the village.

They stood before the house of Ramadeva who had no movement.

"Oh! Ramadeva! Stop long sleep. Wakeup. See how all your people are in grief" said swamy Brahmanya Teertha. There was a movement in the body of Ramadeva. Slowly he opened his eyes and saw an ascetic before him. His relatives and friends were around him.

Ramadeva saluted with folding hands swamiji, and said "I am fine with the touch of your feet. I have rebirth with your grace. Please let me know how to be free from my debt. I am ready to serve you".

Give your first son

"You will get a male child. You must surrender your first born son to me" said Brahmanya Teertha. Ramadeva was in deep thoughtfulness for a while.

"Oh! Son! It is the grace of Lord Sri Hari. Your son will not be lay man. The great Prahlada is going to take birth for the welfare of World. Your dynasty will be sanctified" said Brahmanya Teertha.

Lakshamma tried to tell something. "Mother! I know what you are going to ask me. Trust me. If the son takes birth outside the house, he belongs to me. If he takes birth in the house he is yours." said Brahmanya Teertha, indirectly.

Ramadeva and his wife Lakshamma both agreed for it. In an auspicious time Brahmanya Teertha made Ramadeva to perform "Putra Kamesti." Lakshamma became pregnant. She gave birth to a male child outside the house. Parents gave the child to Brahmanya Teertha as agreed. They named him Yatiraja. Brahmanya Teertha performed sacred thread ceremony in the presence of his parents in the Asram. After sometime, Lakshamma gave birth to another male child. With this child, their desire was fulfilled.

Gurukulavasam (Residential school)

In those days Mulabagilu was a famous educational Centre. Scholars like Sreepadarayalu were teaching their disciples Vedanta, sacred writings of philosophy and law. Sreepadaraya was also a relative of Brahmanya Teertha in the previous life. After performing sacred thread ceremony to Yatiraja, he was sent to Sreepadaraya to learn Sastras of Vedanta.

At an auspicious moment, teaching of Vedanta was started. Sreepadaraya felt happy for the boy's understanding capacity. He was astonished at the shrewdness of Yatiraja in Sastras and Vedanta.

Coiled up the snake

One day Yatiraja was in deep meditation. Surprisingly, one snake came and coiled him up. The inmates of mutt (monastery) were afraid of the scene. There was no movement in Yatiraja. Disciples went and informed the matter to Guru Sreepadaraya who rushed to the spot out of affection for his disciples. Sreepadaraya noticed the snake coiling up Yatiraja. The snake appeared to him as a divine one. It was understood that the founder of Mulabagilu peetham, Sreepadmanabha Teertha came to bless Yatiraja in the form of a snake. Padmanabha Teertha was considered an incarnate of Adishesha. It was clearly known to Sreepadaraya that Padmanabha Teertha came to protect Vyasaraaya from the influence of poison and to bless him with eloquence in argument and counter-arguments. After sometime the snake disappeared. The disciples of Sreepadaraya heaved a sigh of relief. Yatiraja got up from his meditation.

"Son! You are a divine gift of God. The divine grace of Padmanabha Teertha has been showered upon you and may you live for a hundred years" saying thus he blessed him and allowed him to assist in performance of pooja. Sreepadaraya gave him a favourite statue of

Gopala Krishna and said "Oh! Son! My favourite God is satisfied by you. This divine statue is not an ordinary one. I have got it on the bathing Ghat of river Bheema at Panduranga Kshetram. You will be blessed with all good fortunes" blessed Sreepadaraya. Yatiraja stayed at Mulibagilu for twelve years and learnt all sastras and later on moved to Abburu.

Occupation of seat of Hermitage

Brahmanya Teertha was not an ordinary ascetic. He was the eleventh teacher in the series of Sree Madhwacharya. Brahmanya Teertha became old, when Yatiraja came to Mulabagilu. Brahmanya Teertha thought that Yatiraja was qualified to occupy the seat of hermitage, after him.

It was the year 1478 i.e., The day was Bahula Dwadasi of Vaisakha Masa, Brahmanya Teertha crowned Yatiraja in the name of Vyasa Teertha and handed over the charge of peetam according to tradition. Sometime after this incident, Brahmanya Teertha entered into Vaikuntham. Yatiraja performed due rites to his Guru Brahmanya Teertha and proceeded to wander about in a country.

Wandering about in a country

There is a proverb "Desa Nodu! Kosa Odu" in kannada. It means "See the Country-Read the Books". Vyasateertha began to tour all over the country to establish the empire of Bhakti. After occupying the

seat of peetham, he went to visit Guru Sreepadaraya at Mulabagilu. There he met Salva Narasimharaya, who honoured Guru Sreepadaraya and Vyasateertha. This was the first honour to Vyasateertha. With the blessings of Guru and co-operation of the ruler, Vyasateertha proceeded on piligrimage in North India.

Argument with Pakshadhara Misra

In those days every piligrimage centre was a famous education institution. Mithila was one of those educational institutions. There was a great scholar in logic namely Pakshadhara Misra. He was not only a scholar in logic but also in all other Sastras. He had a firm belief that no body could defeat him in argument. A great number of scholars were defeated by him. Vyasateertha was prepared to argue with Pakshadhara. Arguments and counter-arguments continued for a period of ten days. At last Pakshadhara was defeated. He bowed his head before Vyasateertha. It was not the nature of Vyasateertha to insult the defeated persons.

"Oh! Pakshadhara Misra! Oh! Pandit! I honour your scholarship. I appreciate your eloquence. I pray you to stay at Mithila and propogate Bhakti cult" said Vyasateertha.

Restoration of Life to the Prince

Delhi is another city visited by Vyasateertha. He had a bath at river Yamuna and took rest in a garden outside the town. He started the pooja in the garden. The watchmen of the garden thought that he would sit

for sometime and go. But when Vyasateertha started pooja, they came to him and said "Swamy! it is not a garden. It is a burial ground. The dead body of a prince was buried under this tree to-day. You seem to be a great person and a stranger to this place. Please go and perform pooja in another place".

"Oh! are you saying that the tomb is under this tree and the body of a prince is buried. Do not speak lies. The prince is alive." said Vyasateertha.

The guardians of the garden did not know what to say. They went to Sultan and informed the matter. After listening to them, the ruler Bahalool Lodi came to the burial ground at once.

"Your son is not dead. Your devotion towards God saved you. If you want you can examine" said Vyasateertha.

Immediately, servants digged the tomb. A corpse was seen in the wooden Box. Vyasaraya sprinkled sacred water from couch on the prince. Prince woke up. Witnessing the wonder, Sultan was astonished. He invited Vyasateertha to his palace and honoured him in a grand manner. He requested Vyasateertha to stay in his province. But Vyasateertha did not agree.

Vyasateertha visited a famous University "Kanchi" in south India. Nalanda and Takshasila had lost their splendour. Universities of Navadweepam in Bengal and Kanchi in south India were flourishing. Scholars of Kanchi did not care Vyasateertha when he visited

Kanchi University. They demanded the meeting of scholars with Vyasateertha, prior to his entry into the premises of the temple to get the honours.

Vyasateertha agreed to argue with the local scholars. He stayed in the house of disciples. He challenged that at anytime, any body can argue either with his disciples or with him. Many scholars participated in arguments with his disciples and got defeated. Some of the scholars who came to argue with Vyasateertha could not face his eloquence and became dumb. Vyasateertha did not insult any one of them. He appreciated their knowledge and scholarship and honoured them in befitting manner. They praised the noble quality of Vyasateertha. They praised him that they never saw a noble Guru like Vyasateertha who had matchless qualities. The authorities of the temple had no other way but to obey his word.

Consumption of poison

When Vyasateertha stayed at Kanchi, one incident occurred. People who were jealous of Vyasateertha hatched a secret plan to kill him. They contacted the cook and joined hands with him. The cook accepted to mix poison in Swamiji's food. In turn the jealous scholars were prepared to give more money to the cook for killing Vyasateertha.

Vyasateertha performed pooja of Lord Gopala krishna marvellously in the house of his disciple. Teertha and prasada were distributed. Vyasateertha sat to take his food. The cook served the food faltering.

Vyasateertha had disturbance in his stomach. He completed his meals. The cook was trembling. He fell on the feet of Vyasateertha and sought pardon.

"Oh! Son! Oh! my son! There is no fault of yours. You are only an instrument. You have served the poison. I have offered poisonous food to God Gopala Krishna. That's why the poison has become nectar" said Vyasateertha.

When he uttered these words, Vyasateertha recollected the grace showered on him by Padmanabha Teertha at Mulibagilu. After this incident, the temple authorities of Kanchi Varadaraja welcomed Vyasateertha with great honour.

Service to Sreenivasa

Salwa Narasimharaya was ruling Vijayanagara empire. He had great respect for Sreepadaraya. He was always grateful to Swamiji thinking that his blessings made him an emperor from feudatory prince. He invited Sreepadaraya to Vijayanagara and requested him to be his Raja Guru. Sreepadaraya disliked politics. He did not like to leave the peaceful land of Mulabagilu. Sreepadaraya suggested the name of Vyasateertha who was young and intelligent. Salwa Narasimharaya agreed to it. The ceremony of occupation of Guru peetham by Vyasateertha was celebrated on grand scale.

Climbing of Mountain on knees

In those days the services offered to Lord Srinivasa were not in proper procedure. The dynasty offering

services to Sreenivasa became issueless. The manager of the temple, Mahanta had made several requests to the king to introduce proper arrangements strictly. On account of it, Vyasateertha moved to Tirupati. Mahanta gave warm welcome to Vyasateertha. But Vyasateertha denied to sit in the palanquin. The seven hills of Lord Venkateswara appeared not as hills but as Adisesha. The whole mountain appeared full of Salagramas. His mind refused to step on the mountain. He climbed the mountain on his Knees. He took bath in Pushkarini and prayed to God.

"Oh! God! Always you are smiling. Your face is like a shining lotus. You wear the vertical mark on forehead. It is decorated with diamonds. You are decorated with large number of jewels. I pray you when you are with Lakshmi Devi.

Oh Lord! You have a beautiful conch (Sankhu) and Chakra (weapon of Vishnu) in your hands. Your right hand gives protection and left hand on the waist saves people from samsara sagara. There is a sacred mole called Sreevatsam on the breast, and you have an ornament made of gold and jewels namely Kowstubham. You are as handsome as crores of cupids combined and are fascinating with yellow robes. God! I pray to you every morning of the day.

Oh! God! You have lotus feet. You are the is abode of peace and happiness. Your ankle is decorated with anklet made of gems. You are witnessing the entire

world. Oh! Lord! Venkateswara! I worship you with rosy hands.

Vyasateertha lived at Tirumala for 12 years. Even now Vyasarayana Ahnika mandapa exist near Pushkarini. We can identify the place where Vyasateertha taught sastras to his disciples. He showed keen interest in performing regular poojas in many kinds. He introduced Shankhodaka Abhishekam on every Thursday. Poolangi seva and other services such as Abhishekam with civet on Friday were introduced by Vyasateertha. The installation of Bedi Anjaneya idol, re-construction of Ananda Nilaya are the important works done by Vyasateertha. When Vyasateertha visited Lord Venkateswara, he offered the garland of 108 Salagramas. He served God for twelve years and handed over the authority of worship to family members of Tirumala Tatacharya. He returned to Vijayanagaram.

If Vyasateertha had wanted, he could have earned crores of rupees for himself, his family and the mutt. But he had no desire for riches. He was of the opinion that one must earn fame and name with his own ability and capacity but not in any other way.

Religious disturbances at Sreerangam

After the reign of Salwa Narasimharaya, Thammaraya became the ruler. During his period Vyasarayana went to Sreerangam to Desolve the religious conflicts. Sreerangam is a Vaishnava Kshetram. Jambukeswaram is a Siva Kshetram. Sreerangam and

Jambukeswaram were important centres to Vaishnavas and Saivas respectively.

But in those days, there were religious riots. People used to pick up quarrels claiming that their religion was greatest. The Vaishnavas and Saivas had a fight frequently. Saivas claimed that Sreerangam was a Saivakshetram as the same was being called as Jambukeswara. The dispute grew between them as there were no clear cut boundaries.

Vyasaraya reached Sreerangam. He heard the arguments of Vaishnavas and Saivas carefully.

"Oh! elderly people! Vaishnavam and Saivam are two branches of Hinduism. There are no differences between the two branches regarding minute matters. It is better to solve differences by ourselves in a peaceful manner. If all of you agree, I will show a solution" said Vyasateertha.

"Oh! Swamiji! Tell us" said the Vaishnavas and Saivas.

"Hear me! you select one strongman from each group. A strongman should start running either from Saivakshetram or Vaishnavakshetram restraining breath at flag staff. The distance covered by him will be the limit of theirs"said Swamiji.

"Yes" all of them agreed. But they did not know how to run holding the breath tightly. They thought that if one follows as per the word of Vyasateertha, the

remaining area will be others. The assembly became silent.

"I am not a house holder. I am an ascetic. Both of you are equal to me. If you have no objection I will take part in the competition" said Swamiji.

"We have no objection" said Vaishnavas.

"We agreed" said Saivas.

"Here me! We are sages. We believe that Narayana is great. We respect Siva too. So I will start running from the flag staff of the temple of Sreerangam" said Vyasateertha.

All said "yes! agreed"

Vyasateertha ran to a distance of three miles and stopped. It became the limit for Vaishnavas. Vyasateertha installed the idol of Anjaneya Swamy there. The dispute ended in joy.

Prevention of union of Planets (Kuhu Yogam)

The period of Sri Krishna Devaraya was a "Golden Age" in the history of Vijayanagara. Under the guidance of minister Salwa Thimmarusu, military commander Gundaraju, Raja Guru Vyasateertha, Sri Krishna Devaraya ruled the country pleasing the public. Krishna Devaraya had a great respect and devotion for Vyasateertha. When Veera Narasimharaya was on the death bed, he ordered to remove the eyes of Krishna Devaraya. At that time, Vyasateertha suggested

Thimmarusu to hide Krishna Devaraya some where for some time. This made Krishna Devaraya to be grateful to Vyasateertha. Krishna Devaraya constructed Lokapavani mutt for the sake of his Guru Vyasateertha at Chakrateertha in Vijayanagara as a token of respect. Though he was a king, Krishna Devaraya used to stand as a lay man at the entrance of Mutt. Prior to waging a war, Krishna Devaraya used to seek permission of Vyasateertha. On return from war, having won, Krishna Devaraya used to offer Padanamaskaram to Vyasateertha and proceed to Royal Palace. Once a combination of planets having bad was found effects in the horoscope of Krishna Devaraya. Kuhu yogam means the planets Rahu, Sun, Saturn, Mars enter the rasi of Makara on the day of new Moon in unauspicious moments. "It causes disaster to the king and ruin to the kingdom." The astrologers warned the king. Krishna Devaraya was in agony.

"Appaji! Let me know how to prevent ruin of the kingdom and disaster to king. I do not like the destruction of Hindu empire founded by Vidyaranya. Tell me" asked Krishna Devaraya.

"Oh! king! There are means to escape from danger. Vyasateertha is a living God for us to protect us. It is better to sacrifice the kingdom to get rid of influence of kuhuyogam. After the troubles disappear you can again occupy the chair" said Thimmarusu.

Rayalu was in deep thinking for a while.

"Appaji! I am ready to sacrifice the kingdom. But who will come forward to take up the kingdom inviting danger to life. If there are people ready to take the risk, who will return the kingdom once occupied" questioned Krishna Devaraya.

"Oh! king! There are people with kind heart, and great ascetics who had no desire for authority. Such a great person is Vyasateertha. He is a divine tree for us. We will pray him. If he agrees we will come out from danger". said Thimmarusu.

Soon Appaji and Krishna Raya moved to Viswapavana mutt. Vyasateertha did not agree for the proposal. But Vidyaranya appeared before him with his face downcast. He pointed out that the responsibility of saving the kingdom rests on the shoulders of ascetics. Lastly Vyasateertha agreed to save the king and kingdom from troubles.

Ascending the throne of Vijayanagara

The New Moon occurred on Bahula Amavasya, Pushya masam, Vikramanama samvastaram i.e., that day was 30.1.1521. Krishna Devaraya came to Lokapavani mutt. Panegyrist (Vandi Magadhulu) praised Vyasateertha. Others uttered slogans "Jaya" "Jaya". Vyasateertha sat in palanquin. It moved towards Royal palace. Krishna Devaraya followed the palanquin like an ordinary man. Due to bad influence of kuhuyogam, the Royal elephant in lust broke its bond

and entered the Royal street. People were afraid of it. People were scattered. Vyasateertha saw the elephant. He sprinkled Mantrakshatas on it. Elephant stopped. Lust disappeared. Elephant became tame as the cow. People were happy. Krishna Devaraya wondered at the intensity of kuhuyogam. Palanquin reached the Royal court. Vyasateertha stood before the jewelled throne and paid respects with hands folded. He spread his saffron upper robe on the throne. the saffron cloth caught fire and burnt. People wondered at the unforeseen incident. The danger caused due to "kuhuyogam" in the shape of a snake was avoided. Vyasateertha sat on the Royal throne for one and a half hour with a statue of Gopala Krishna in his hand. He heard the appeals of people. On that auspicious occasion, lands for temples were granted. Orders providing jobs to lakhs of people were issued. After getting rid of "kuhuyogam" Vyasateertha made Krishna Devaraya ascend the throne. He proceeded to Lokapavani mutt. The emperor of vedanta empire Sri Vyasateertha by ascending the throne of king became Vyasarayalu. It is a great wonder that the king stood with folded hands like a servant before an ascetic, who ascended the throne. That cannot be seen in the history of any country. He sacrificed the services of Tirupati Srinivasa that fetched crores of rupees. He sacrificed the throne of Vijayanagara empire. It is a wonder of wonders.

Sri Krishna Devaraya performed Ratnabhishekam to Vyasarayalu as a token of gratitude. But Vyasarayalu

distributed those Jewels to scholars, feudal princes, and poor people. In that context Krishna Devaraya gifted the village Kandukuru to Vyasaraaya who got it written in the name of his disciples.

Construction of Vyasa Samudra (Ocean)

Kandukuru is a small village in Anantapur district. There is acute water scarcity in that village. People of Kandukuru village were suffering a lot due to lack of water resources. Vyasaraaya wanted to construct a water tank.

He went to Kandukuru along with his disciples carrying idols of Gopala Krishna. Carrying idols along with him, wherever he goes, is his regular habit. Dedicating everything to Sri Krishna and moving peacefully to other places is his method.

Thieves obstructed

Once Vyasaraaya was going through the forest. The thieves saw the palanquin and came running. They brandished swords. The bearers of palanquin got frightened. They lowered the palanquin on the ground. Vyasaraaya came out and saw the thieves. The reason why the palanquin was lowered struck his mind.

"Oh! Who are you? What do you want? We are ascetics. What sort of benefit you expect from us" questioned Vyasaraaya.

"Oh! you do not know us? We are thieves. Our leader is Mukhanda. You give all your belongings to

us. If not, you leave hopes on your life." replied the thieves.

"Search the palanquin and take what you want" said Vyasaraaya. The thieves were astonished at hearing the words of swamiji. Thieves expected a sort of agitation from swamiji. As per swamiji's words, thieves walked towards the palanquin. They stretched their hands to catch things inside the palanquin. They drew their hands back immediately. They saw a fearful snake with hissing sound. Some of the thieves ran away. Others fell down. They understood that swamiji was not an ordinary man. They fell upon his feet and begged his forgiveness.

"Oh! my sons! Don't create troubles to ascetics. You take up some work with this amount and lead a good life" said Vyasaraaya and gave them some amount of cash. The thieves saluted him with folded hands who showed them a way for their living and left the place praising swamiji.

Fistful Soil

Vyasaraaya reached Kandukuru along with disciples. There he started the construction of Vyasaraaya Samudra Tank. One small story is in vogue about the construction of the water tank.

The workers were working daily from morning to evening. In the evening Vyasaraaya was giving fistful of

soil to the workers as wages. He was sprinkling Mantrakshatas on them. The workers used to receive the fistful of soil as wages and go home calmly. After reaching home, and untying the knot, they would find more than their expected wages. That's why they were attending to work with enthusiasm every day.

Kanakadasa - Mantropadesam

The Construction of the water Tank called Vyasaraja Samudra was completed. The next work was arranging out-let to the tank. They named the out-let and called it "Lakshminarayana Toomu". But one big boulder (rock) caused hindrance to the out-let. Vyasaraya was thinking breaking the rock. In the meanwhile a person named Kanaka came to Vyasaraya and requested him to teach him Mantra. Kanaka was a shepherd.

"Swamy! Please teach me" Mantra" asked Kanaka.

"You want Matropadesam! "Mahisha Mantram" is befitting to you" said Vyasaraya.

"Swamy! you please teach that Mantra only" asked Kanaka. Vyasaraya taught Mahisha Mantram. Some period has passed and Kanaka came again to Vyasaraya.

"Swamy! I recited Mahisha Mantram as you directed. Mahisham appeared and asked me to express my desire. Please tell me what I have to ask Mahisham". asked Kanaka.

"Kanaka! You are a noble and righteous person. You ask the Mahisham to remove the big rock which obstructed the out-let to the water tank. It is good if the practice of Mantra is useful to the world". said Vsayaraya.

Kanaka agreed. Mahisham made the rock into pieces with his horns. Mahisham (he-buffalo) crushed the big rock into powder by his legs. The rock disappeared. Vyasaraaya felt happy and gave Deeksha (obligation) to Kanaka and allowed him to be one among his disciples. Since then Kanaka became Kanakadasa.

Love for Disciples

Vyasaraaya propogated the cult of Bhakti. There is no creed and caste for Bhakti. Hence without reference to caste, Vyasaraaya admitted Purandaradas, Kanakadas in the group of his disciples. Vyasaraaya announced Purandaradasa as his beloved disciple. He confirmed the greatness of his disciple in the minds of people that Purandaradasa is the only dasa. Some disciples disliked the admission of Kanakadasa. Vyasaraaya proved and explained the Bhakti of Kanakadasa by describing various incidents.

Where is the land unseen by anybody

That day was Ekadasi. Vyasaraaya worshipped Salagrama. He distributed bananas offered to God, for all his disciples. He asked them to eat in a place where nobody could see them. All disciples went to secret places and ate bananas and came back. But

Kanakadasa returned to Vyasaraaya with bananas. Vyasaraaya asked "why did you not eat the bananas?".

"No! Swamiji! I am unable to find the place where nobody could see. I see God in every place." answered Kanakadasa. The other disciples felt ashamed at this. A similar incident happened once.

I may go, if I go

One day Vyasaraaya was in the court of scholars. He was surrounded by his disciples and devotees. The subject for discussion was "who is eligible for salvation?". Vyasaraaya questioned Kanakadasa "who will attain salvation?" Pointing his finger towards Purandara dasa.

Kanakadasa replied "No"

Vyasaraaya pointed his finger towards another Dasa.

"No" replied Kanakadasa.

Vyasaraaya put the hand on his own heart and asked Kanakadasa "Shall I go to Vaikuntha?"

"No" replied Kanakadasa.

There arose disturbance in the meeting.

Some of them abused Kanakadasa for his
arrogance.

"How egoistic is he!" some said.

Some others said " He is mad".

But Vyasarayaya did not say anything. He kept silent. Kanakadasa obediently said "I may go, If 'I' goes". "It means if one's ego goes, he will go to Vaikuntha".

Vyasarayaya explained that if "the thought 'I' quits the mind of the person, he goes to Vaikuntham. This is the opinion of Kanakadasa".

Members of the court realised the greatness of Kanakadasa.

Written works (Books)

Vyasarayaya was the author of many books. **Nyayamrutam, Tarkatandavam, Chandrika** are some of the important works. These are called Vyasatrayam. Like 'Pasuras' in Tamil, Vyasarayaya wrote devotional songs in Kannada namely "Devaranamalu". This kind of tradition of Vyasarayaya was brought into popularity by his disciples. "Devaranamalu" of Vyasarayaya are "Siri Krishna Namankitalu". The reputation earned for it was dedicated to Sri Krishna by Vyasarayaya.

Attainment of Moksha

Vyasarayaya was 92 years old. He served Vijayanagara empire for 50 years from the period of Salwa Narasimharaya to the period of Achyutaraya in the status of royal teacher i.e., Raja Guru. So many kings changed and so many kingdoms were destroyed. He witnessed rise and fall of many kings. He gave

importance to the work entrusted to him like Bheeshma. Every work was dedicated to Lord Krishna.

In his old age he visited Udipi and had a darshan of Lord Krishna. This was the last darshan of Sri Krishna to him. He decided to spend last days in Anegondi. King Achyutaraya provided all facilities to Vyasaraaya.

That day was Phalguna Bahula Chaviti in the year Hevalambi. He woke up in the early hours of Brahma Muhurta. He took bath in the sacred river Thungabhadra. He sat folding knees before Brindavanam of Padmanabha Teertha chanting Pranava Mantram and closed eyes. He installed Sri Krishna in his heart whom he worshipped. He gave up vital spark through Brahmarandhram. He took his last breath through yoga.

The bright light equivalent to thousands of Suns released from Brahmarandhram of Vyasaraaya went up to the sky.

Achyutaraya constructed Brindavanam to Vyasaraaya.

There are nine Brindavanas at Anegondi. Gat of them the most important one is Brindavana of Vyasaraaya. There is a story of a 92 year old Supreme Spirit and 50 years of history of Vijayanagara behind Vyasaraaya's Brindavan. This is the biography of a great ascetic who took part politically, socially, and culturally



in service to an empire. He thought that it was the inspiration of the God, that made him serve the empire and he dedicated all the works to God for the welfare of the world.

"He is a heavenly tree that grants desires of people in need. He is a lion to opponents. Gurukrupa, kindness of Vyasaraaya fulfils the desires of disciples."

He dedicated himself to Sri Krishna. He reached the zenith of overwhelming joy in Bhakti. He laid foundation for construction of Dasa kuta. He never cared for his life in protecting the interests of Hindu empire. He had modesty and was altruistic. He is a pioneer to us. We must enroll as members in his Bhakti empire. We must be purified in the river of sacrifice. Only then will we become eligible for kindness of Sri Krishna. We will become servants of the world and make ourselves significant.

