

Srinivasa Bala Bharati -119
(*Children Series*)

VIDYARANYA

- Dr. B. Narasimhacharyulu

VIDYARANYA

Telugu Version

Dr. M.S.N. Murthy

English Translation

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**Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams,
Tirupati**

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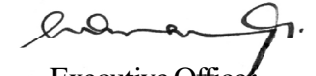
FOREWORD

The mind of little children is gentle, pure. The children who are brought up well become excellent citizens and fetch a good name for their families as well as the nation. They become the cause of our pride in our heritage. If we are able to tell the children about the great men and chaste women in our history and how they achieved such distinction, that would impress strong seals of nobility on their tender minds. That would be of immense benefit to them in their future.

It is with this aim that the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams is publishing the Srinivasa Bala Bharati series. You will find here the lives of the great Indians who lived to fulfil great ideals. Simple words and simple phrases will be used in the narration in the style of telling a story. We hope the little children will make good use of these books.

Our thanks go to Dr.R. Sri Hari, Editor-in-Chief, TTD who thought of this proposal and gathered the needed material to put it into action. Our thanks are also due to the writers and artists who have co-operated with us in this venture.

In the Service of the Lord



Executive Officer,

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams,

Tirupati.

FOREWORD

To-day's children are to-morrow's citizens. They need at tender age apt acquaintance with the life-histories of celebrated persons 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 tenants 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. B. Raghunathacharyulu under "Balabharati Series". The response over 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 with English and Hindi rendering 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 generally intended 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

Our Bharat has acquired renown for great culture, moralistic and dharmic ideals even before other countries in other continents could open their eyes to any cultural greatness. Every one born in this land of ours has been fighting against evil and violation of dharma, the holy law of life and living-thus making our lives fruitful and meaningful. Every one has been acquiring Punya (merit) and nearing God. The presence of great minds and sacred souls is our valuable source of Joy. If we understand their ideals, the effect would be very great. Every boy and girl believing and saying that this is our culture and this is our tradition would dedicate himself or herself to the service of mother land.

In fact there have been many great sages and seers, holy men and women born and grown up have laying foundations of our culture and traditions. They helped the pure flow of splendid living to us all. How fortunate we are! We have behind us a great and sublime history and culture. If those great sages and seers; holy and sacred men and women were not born and inspired us, how could this culture and tradition have come to us? Knowing about and understanding those great minds is an education that gives us valuable knowledge and deep wisdom. Their lives and achievements would throw light and illumine us and our coming generations to forge ahead in glory.

It is with this intention that Bala Bharati Series has come up bringing before you the lives and achievements of great sages and seers.

Now is your chance to know about them and grow.

Children! Come! Come forward to read and learn.

Our hearty welcome to you all.

S.B. Raghunathacharya
Cheif Editor

Amidst the warring religions, humanity was fast losing ground. Mohammadans were bent upon bulldozing down the Hindu culture and on devastation. The living examples of great Indian culture, the mirror to great civilization were subjected to rampant vandalism and destruction. Not only that, mosques were being built in those sacred places. In such turbulent conditions was born the saviour of Indian culture and civilization. He was Sanskrit scholar. He gifted the independent and significant existence to the otherwise dwindling, nay, even gradually vanishing Hindu society. He has taken pledge to save the culture and society.

He reconverted the converted Mohammadan kings into Hinduism and helped to establish Hindu kingdoms and encouraged them. Do you know him, the great doyen of Hindu re-establishment? He is none other than VIDYARANYA SWAMI. The kingdom of Vijayanagara is named after his name as 'Vidyanagara' kingdom. He has enthroned the Vedic culture on the strong edifice by making Sayana successfully interpret the vedas and gave fillip to the Indian culture. We should imbibe his ideals in protecting and furthering our religion, dharma and culture. Now, read his biography.

Sriyai namaha

VIDYARANYA

श्लो॥ विद्यारण्याय मुनये धर्मरक्षणहेतवे ।
हिन्दूसाम्राज्यसंस्थापनाचार्याय नमो नमः ॥

Pampa Terrain:

There is a small village, by name Hampi, in Karnataka state. The mountain range crowns the village. The river Tungabhadra flows in serpentine way, dart swift speed. On the north of mountain range, lies Rishyamooka mountain, renowned from the times of Ramayana. On this mount is located 'Anegondi' city. It is also known by the name 'Kunjarakona' (which means 'elephant-forest'). On the south of the river is *Hemakuta* mount on one side and Matanga and *Malyavanta* mountains lie on the other. A thick forest covers both of them. In the midst of the forest lies Pampa lake and close to it are situated the temples of Sri Bhuvanesvaridevi and *Sri Pampavati Virupaksa*. The adjoining Kshetra is called Pampa kshetra.

Birth:

There was a village in Pampa kshetra approximately 650 years ago. There lived a Brahmin by name MAYANA. He was a repository of Sanatana Hindu Dharma and its tradition. He was also a righteous and ritualistic householder, belonging to *Bharadvaja* gotra (clan) and following rituals laid down by Bodhayana

school (sutra). Though hailing from Udayagiri, he came over here to earn his livelihood. He spent his life imparting education to pupils. He was simple to the core. His wife '*Srimati*' lived hand in glove with her husband. She was most suited to Mayana. She was of gentle demeanour and helped her husband in all his rites as Arundhati did to Vasistha. They both were polite to the elders and affectionate towards children.

They had no offspring for quite a long time and were much worried about this unfulfilled desire. They went on pilgrimage for this; did pujas, practised vows, and gave generously. Their puja fructified as they were sincere and righteous. They were blessed with a son in (approximately) 1268 A.D. They performed the required natal rituals-such as jatakarma etc. and named the child MADHAVA.

Srimati and Mayana were blessed with two more sons and a daughter, after the birth of Madhava. They named them as Sayana, Bhoganatha and Singali. The birth of these children has brought new light to the life of Srimati and Mayana. They firmly decided to educate the children under great gurus, at any cost. They wanted to make them great scholars.

Primary Education:

Mayana performed their upanayana - thread ceremony - at the right time and taught them himself Vedas and other epics. He infused into them the value of ethics also But not satisfied with this, wanted to leave the children at gurukula of *Sri Sankarananda* located on the bank of Tungabhadra river.

Should uphold Nation's pride:

On one fine day, Mayana reached the gurukula of Sri Sankarananda with his three sons - Madhava and his two brothers. Sri Sankarananda was a strict disciplinarian and would not generally accept to take boys as his disciples. His eyes do not rest on the boys, who are not blessed with the grace of Goddess of Learning. On seeing the children Madhava, Sayana and Bhoganatha with Mayana, he understood the purpose of their visit. Even without Mayana's asking he accepted them as his disciples. The children also had an inexplicable devotion and faith towards Sri Sankarananda. All of a sudden, the children prostrated and touched his feet in reverence. They sent off their father Mayana. Verily, the cordial relation of devotion and love between the teacher and the taught alone helps get the students meaningful education and popularity to the teacher.

While they were still at the gurukula of Sri Sankarananda, their father breathed his last. Their mother, Srimati, encouraged them to continue their studies. She was called the worthy wife of Mayana, for educating the children against all odds. She always prayed god to give them strength and well being .

Within a short period, they learnt Vedanta and Sastras by the grace of Sri Sankarananda. Sri Sankarananda thought of making his disciples useful to the country. One day he called them for a counsel.

"You three were learning many a subject attending upon me. I am very much pleased by the politeness,

obedience and respect shown by you . I strongly wish that you become worthy citizens, and upholders of nation's pride. Therefore you should approach my guru Sri Vidyatirtha and learn a few more things from him. He is presently the pontiff of Kamakoti Pitha at Kanchi. By the power of his penance you will be proficient in all branches of learning. His blessings will not go in vain. His grace is equivalent to the grace of God", said Sri Sankarananda to them.

The disciples were equally happy at this beckoning. They proceeded to Kanchi after prostrating to him and taking his blessings .

They went to their village to take the consent of their mother also, before going to Kanchi. She blessed and sent them off to Kanchi, without letting them know of her miserable plight. Mother always wishes her children's well-being, though she is in trouble.

Madhava has reached Kanchipuram with his brothers.

Kanchipuram:

Kanchipuram was an important education centre in South India, in those days. That was the centre for great stalwarts in all the branches of learning i.e. Tarka, Vyakarana, Mimamsa, Sankhya and Yoga; there were logicians, great orators, experts in all Sastras; it was the dwelling place of great poets. Moreover, the customs and traditions of Hinduism are well nourished and protected here itself. The Sri Kamakoti Peetha

here was an important centre for education and culture. It was solely earmarked for Advaita philosophy - theory and practice of it. Still, the followers of other sects of Philosophy also used to study there.

When Madhava went to study at Kanchi, Sri Vidyatirthaswami was pontiff of Kamakoti Peetha. He was also called by the names - Vidyatirtha, Sarvajna Vishnu, Vidyesa, Vidyananda and Vidyasankara. He was a receptacle of mundane and other - worldly learning in other words, para and apara Vidyas, protecting the Hindu dharma as an incarnate of Dakshinamurti Himself.

Studentship at the feet of Vidyatirtha:

Madhava visited Vidyatirtha at an appropriate time i.e. when he was in a serene and tranquil mood and prostrated - made padabhivandana. Madhava said that he was sent by Sri Sankarananda to him for further studies. He requested to be permitted as an inmate and attend the pontiff and study at his feet. Sri Swami was amazed at the radiance of Madhava's face and felt happy at this polite behaviour and admitted them immediately into the Asram. All the teachers recognized the genius and memory power besides his polite behaviour and very much liked him and showed affection on him. Consequently, they taught all the secrets of the lore and learning. Within a short tenure, Madhava, Sayana and Bhoganatha studied perseveringly and became erudite scholars in the

interpretation of the Vedas with ancillary texts, secrets of Mantrasastra, Vyakarana, Vedanta and other Sastras.

Friends:

When Madhava was studying at Kanchi, many geniuses were his classmates. Venkatanatha, Sudarsana and Akshobhya were prominent among them. Venkatanatha and Sudarsana were followers of Visistadvaita and Akshobhya was the follower of Dvaita. Madhava was an Advaitin. But four of them were very friendly. Those were the days when the Hindu unity was paramount casting aside differences of caste and creed, region and language. All aimed at protecting the integrity of Hindu Nation. by defending it against foreign invasions and atrocities.

Venkatanatha made Satyamangalam, a village in Tamil Nadu, as his permanent abode and composed many great treatises in Sanskrit. People called him Vedantadesika with reverence. Sudarsana went to Srirangam and attended upon Lord Ranganatha with the name 'Sudarsanasuri'. He wrote 'Srutaprakasika', a commentary on the gloss of Ramanuja on Brahma Sutras and became world-famous as a result of that.

Return to Pampa:

Madhava completed his studies successfully, and obtained the blessings of his Gurus. Madhava became well-versed in all the branches of learning, returned to Pampa kshetra with his brothers after taking leave from the Gurus. Mother felt immensely happy on seeing

them and sad at the absence of Mayana, as he could not see the growth of the children. Then on, Madhava had taken the charge of family and looked after the mother, brothers and sister, relieving the mother of the responsibility. He made her pleased and happy following her commands and suggestions in running the family affairs. The mother also felt happy at the polite behaviour of children and lived satisfactorily forgetting the wounds of past life due to poverty and distress. Madhava knew pretty well his responsibility as a brother, so he performed his sister Singali's marriage and sent her to in-laws' house.

Household life:

After sister's marriage, he married the daughter of Veetihotri, an orthodox puritan, and performed the marriages of his brothers successfully and became a true householder. He was leading the life of an ordinary nityagnihotri, lived as a teacher disseminating learning and earned his livelihood. He was imparting education, mostly freely alone. He was popular as a teacher and was honorifically called Madhavacharya by people

He lead such an ordinary householder's life till he attained 40 years of age without any doldrums and oddities. But later, the State was in turmoil and many changes inundated his family, changing Madhavacharya in toto.

Political Condition of the Times:

The descendants of the Kakati(ya) ruled from Orugallu (warangal) for three centuries, all the Telugu

speaking people, uniting and bringing them under one rule. The Telugu country was prosperous with crops and wealth. The Telugu people had a peaceful and happy life. Allauddin Khilji, the Sultan of Delhi was jealous of Telugu's wealth and wanted to appropriate it. With such malice, he ordered his commander-in-chief Malik Kafur to attack the Kakati kingdom in 1308 AD. The Kakati warriors fought very ferociously and killed many soldiers of the Moghul army re-attacked Orugallu with enhanced forces. This time Prataparudra Deva had no sufficient force to defend against the enemy; consequently, he entered into a pact with the commander of the Moghuls. Puffed up by his victory, Malik Kafur proceeded to the south.

Sri Ranganatha Shrine:

Malik Kafur eyed badly the shrine of Sri Ranganatha. He thought of plundering the shrine and looting the wealth. He nurtured malicious thoughts towards the temple and its riches and led the armed forces towards Srirangam. People were frightened knowing the advances of the army.

The shrine at Srirangam was a very ancient Hindu pilgrim and sacred centre. It was considered as second Vaikuntha. It has three ramparts and a very strong fort. But it had no capable armed force and armoury.

Protection of the Temple:

Venkatanatha had come to Srirangam to pay a friendly visit to Sudarsanasuri, from his own native

village Satyamangalam, when the forces of the Mohammadans were marching to Srirangam. Venkatanatha and Sudarsana convened a meeting of prominent citizens, in the temple itself. They discussed the protection of the sanctum sanctorum, idols meant for cart-procession and precious ornaments from the plundering forces. Each one came up with a suggestion. But all came to a conclusion that they could not defend against Mohammadans. However Venkatanatha gave a good suggestion at the end of the meeting.

The suggestion was to close the original sanctum sanctorum, to erect an artificial one before it, to install an artificial idol of Sri Ranganatha in it, and later to shift the ornaments and car-festival icons to Tirumala-Tirupati. They rebuilt the second sanctum sanctorum before the arrival of Mohammadans to Srirangam. Sudarsana Suri sneaked through the forest route to Tirupati taking in his custody festival idols and precious jewellery. He deposited the manuscript (written and composed by himself in his hand) copy of "*Srutaprakasika*" with Venkatanatha entreating its protection; it was a commentary on Ramanuja's bhashya on Brahma Sutras.

Attack on the Shrine:

The armed forces of enemy attacked the temple and plundered it and razed it to ground. But the original sanctum sanctorum remained in tact. Kudos to the intelligent move of the prudent Venkatanatha. The enemy has taken the artificial shrine as the real one and

completely devastated it, looted whatever precious articles that were accessible easily, and tortured the people ruthlessly. Venkatanatha saved the manuscript copy of "*Srutaprasika*" handed over to him by Sudarsanasuri, from destruction by the enemy, by concealing it under sand-dunes. The enemy retreated, then Venkatanatha extricated the manuscript copy of '*Srutaprasika*' from the sand and took it to Satyamangalam. Venkatanatha has composed a hymn called "Abhitastava" to infuse confidence and raise the spirit of Hindus, who were subjected to insult and torture at the Mohammadan hands.

Madhava's resolve:

Madhava was very much pained to hear the devastation/calamity at Srirangam. He wanted to know the welfare of his friend Sudarsanasuri and set out to Srirangam. Not finding him there, he went to Satyamangalam to know about his whereabouts. There Venkatanatha narrated about the happenings at Srirangam. He broke down recounting the measures taken to protect the temple of Sri Ranganatha. Madhavacharya was very much moved and felt sad at the condition of Hindus and atrocities meted to them by Mohammadans. His blood boiled to hear the injustice done to the general public. His soul was in turmoil. Venkatanatha recited the hymn "Abhitastava". Madhavacharya understood the clarion call of the hymn, his dormant energy woke up, and motivated him for remedial action. He was determined strongly

to rebuild Srirangam and place ancient Dharma on a strong pedestal. Madhavacharya had returned to his native village. He informed the people of the calamity that had befallen Srirangam. He urged them to defend the nation by countering the Mohammadans and asked them to be ready for the task. Then, he started waiting for the appropriate moment.

Renunciation:

While South India was in such political turmoil, another tragedy strengthened the resolve of Madhavacharya. A short while after his mother died, his wife also met with untimely death. With his mother's death on one hand, and his wife's on the other, fate it was that released him from the worldly life. He did not find the worldly life attractive enough, compared to the protection of the dharma of the Rishis, the Arshadharmas. So, he could not lead his life like an ordinary householder. He resolved to dedicate his entire life for the protection of the country. With the blessings of the pontiff of Sringeri, Sri Bharati Krishna Tirtha, he renounced the world and took the vows of the order of ascetics, the Sannyasasrama, and a new name (as is the custom), VIDYARANYA SWAMI. Thereafter he immersed himself in penance to strengthen his spiritual prowess. By and by, the lay people came to know of his spiritual strength and abilities, and they accepted his goals. Sri Vidyaranya Swami was waiting for the appropriate moment and prepared the people for removal of the enemy's religion, *Paradharma*, and establishing the Hindu Dharma.

Disintegration of the Telugu Country:

Meanwhile, there was another danger due to the Mohammadans. In 1323 AD, Ulugh Khan, son of the Sultan of Delhi, attacked Orugallu, defeated Prataparudra and ended the rule of Kakati dynasty. While being taken as a prisoner to Delhi, Prataparudra died enroute. With that, the Telugu country disintegrated and came directly under the Mohammadan rule. After concluding his campaigns, Ulugh Khan reached Delhi, killed his father and became the sultan of Delhi with the title, Mohammad-bin-Tughlaq. During those days, life became very difficult in the Telugu country. Hindu women were subjected to various cruelties; Hindus were forcibly converted to Islam; the wealth of Hindus was plundered and their properties were completely destroyed.

Unable to bear the Mohammadan rule, the Hindus revolted. The intellectuals and warriors of that time, stood firm against the Turks for the sake of the country's independence, and re-established Hindu rule in the Telugu country. In this situation, amongst those who made remarkable efforts, Harihararaya and Bukkaraya were the main persons.

Harihara and Bukkaraja:

In the court of the Kakati king, Prataparudra Deva, two brothers called Harihara and Bukkaraja were in charge of the treasury. They were Telugu kshatriyas and sons of Sangama, a citizen of the Kakatiya kingdom. After the fall of the Kakatiya kingdom, these

brothers reached the Kampila kingdom on the banks of Tungabhadra and joined the court of Kampilaraya.

During that time, Bahauddin, the commander of the Delhi Sultan revolted against Mohammad bin Tughlaq and tried to establish an independent Muslim kingdom in the Southern country. Tughlaq sent a big army to capture him. Bahauddin took refuge with Kampilaraya. In order to protect him, Kampilaraya joined battle and fierce fight ensued. Though the army of Kampilaraya scored a few initial victories, as the battle raged, it could not withstand the Mohammadan army and in the end, Kampilaraya died a heroic death while fighting. With that, the Kampila kingdom came into the hands of the Mohammadans. Then, the Turkic army took Harihara, Bukkaraja and a few others as prisoners to Delhi. The Sultan appointed a Turk, Malik Nayab to rule Kampila.

Malik Nayab fled to Delhi unable to withstand the popular uprising. Thereupon the Sultan thought that it would be better to appoint a local as his representative. He released Harihara and Bukkaraja from prison and made them convert to Islam. He appointed Harihara as the ruler and Bukkaraja as his commander, gave them an army, and sent them to Kampila. They captured the areas around Kampila and established peace.

Establishment of an Independent Hindu Empire:

The other Hindu kings in the Telugu country chased away the Mohammadans and started establishing independent Hindu kingdoms. Harihararaya

also wanted to follow them and establish an independent Hindu Kingdom. For that to happen, he realized that he needed the assistance of a Guru with spiritual strength, in addition to his army.

He heard that there was Swami Vidyanaraya within his kingdom, in Pampa kshetra. He heard of the Swami's greatness and he went to his asram thinking that by taking refuge with the swami, his desire might be fulfilled. There, he prostrated to Swami Vidyanaraya and narrated his life-story. He explained how he was forcibly converted into a Mohammadan and sought the help of Swami Vidyanaraya. Swami Vidyanaraya also saw in Harihara, the warrior who could fulfill his own goals.

Swami Vidyanaraya made Harihara and Bukkaraja renounce Islam and convert to the Vedic religion and in doing so became a trail blazer. He encouraged Harihara to establish an independent Hindu kingdom and to revolt against Tughlaq.

After establishing an independent Hindu kingdom, Harihara shifted his capital to Anegondi as the Kampila fort was not suitable to face the Sultan of Delhi. However, after the fall of the Kakati king Prataparudra Deva, there was no obstacle to the Mohammadans in coming to and going from the northern banks of Tungabhadra. So, he thought that there was not complete safety from the Turks in Anegondi. He wanted to shift his capital to a place more suited to withstand



the raids of the Mohammadans and started searching a place where it was impossible for the enemy to reach.

Decision on the place:

One day, Harihara and Bukkaraya went, with hunting dogs, to hunt in the forests on the mountains Matanga, Malyavanta and Hemakuta on the southern banks of Tungabhadra, opposite Anegondi. Near the shore of Lake Pampa, a strange event occurred. There, a rabbit chased away the hunting hound of Harihara. Seeing this, Harihara was astonished. He straight away went to Sri Vidyanaraya and told about the strange event witnessed by him. Using the power of his penance, Swami Vidyanaraya understood the greatness of the place. He asked Harihara to build a great city in that place and to shift his capital there. He explained that Harihara's objective could be fulfilled if he builds a city in that place. With the encouragement of Swami Vidyanaraya Harihara undertook the construction.

The place was naturally suited for the construction of a new fort. Tungabhadra river, flowing rapidly through many twists and turns, was not suitable for navigation. So the Mohammadan army could not reach the place using boats. It was also not easy for them to cut through the frightening forests on the mountains.

Swami Vidyanaraya fixed the Muhurta, the auspicious time, for ground breaking (Sankusthapana) as the time when Leo was in ascendancy, in the star pushyami (pushyami-nakshatra-yukta-simha-lagna) on Thursday, the seventh day of the bright fortnight of

the month, Vaisakha, in the year 1258, Salivahana era. To state this in terms used presently, the time fixed was roughly between 4:30 pm and 6:30 pm, on 18-4-1336.

Sankusthapana:

The people came forward on their own volition with great enthusiasm and did whatever they could. They cut the trees and levelled the ground at the place indicated by Sri Vidyanaraya; they ploughed the land and made it suitable; erected great tents; built sacrificial altars; and arranged puja materials, cooking vessels, cow milk, curd, ghee, honey etc. Ministers, priests, sculptors, workers, vassals, commanders, captains - everybody had come for the occasion. Bukkaraya personally supervised the arrangements. Everybody entered into the tents at the time of Muhurta. Man and woman, adult and child - all the people assembled silently around the tents and witnessed the festival of ground-breaking.

Swami Vidyanaraya wanted the new city to last as long as the moon and the stars. He sat on a sand dune on the shore of Lake Pampa. The evening light shining on him, gave a wondrous lustre to him. It was as if the Sun god was blessing with his cool evening rays. There was a steely determination about the demeanor of Swami Vidyanaraya. He called Harihararaya towards him and said: "I shall be in the posture of knowledge (*Jnanamudra*) till the time of the correct Muhurta. At the appointed time, I shall blow a conch. You establish

the Sanku (the critical moment of the ground breaking ceremony) immediately after hearing the sound of the conch."

Harihara took those words as the grace of Swami Vidyanaraya and came back to the venue of Sankusthapana. Meanwhile, Vedic scholars were chanting the mantras of Vedas; ghee oblations were being offered in the sacrificial altar, smoke from the altar was rising like clouds; and everyone was straining his ears for the sound of the conch.

At that moment, the sound of a conch was heard from the direction of Lake Pampa. Hariharaya laid down the Sanku as the priests chanted sacred prayers. The Sanku was worshipped with precious materials like pearls, diamonds, rubies, gold and others. After four kshanas, i.e. about sixteen minutes, one more sound of conch was heard. Hariharaya and others were stunned. With fear and anxiety, they went to the shores of Lake Pampa and submitted to Swami Vidyanaraya the incidence of two conch-sounds being heard. The noble sage was surprised to hear this. He used his *divyadrishi* and understood what transpired and spoke thus:

"My dear children! The first one to blow the conch was a tribal. He blew the conch while passing this way. I was the one who blew the conch the second time. That was the right moment. Had the Sanku been established at the appointed time, this city would have been forever the centre for the protection of the Hindu

Dharma. The arrival of the tribal on this way, and him blowing the conch happened accidentally. You have established the Sanku a few minutes before the Muhurta. Due to that, this city would be the centre of a great empire for only about 250 years. Do not grieve about what has happened. Gird up your loins for the construction work. This is the will of God. Mere humans cannot change destiny by their actions."

Without violating the orders of Swami Vidyanaraya, and as per his desire, Hariharaya built a nice city under the supervision of Bukkaraya.

Naming of the City:

Since the city was built as per the instructions of Sri Vidyanaraya Swami, Hariharaya named the city as 'Vidyanagara'. Since this city was the adode of all kinds of knowledge, the name became justified. Since the city, from the very day of ground breaking, heralded victories to its rulers in all battles, it came to be called as 'Vijayanagara' later on. The firm determination of Swami Vidyanaraya became the prelude to the establishment of this city first known as Vidyanagara and later attained fame as Vijayanagara.

Supervision:

Though he renounced the world, due to his commitment to the revival of Ancient Indian Culture, *Arshasamskriti*, Sri Vidyanaraya Swami served Harihararaya as minister, Royal preceptor (*Rajaguru*), and as a confidant and became the reason for the development of Vijayanagara empire.



After ruling for about twenty years from the day of ground breaking, Harihararaya died. As per the instructions of Sri Vidyaranya Swami, Bukkaraya ascended the throne. Bukkaraya, following in his brother's footsteps, expanded the empire. Swami Vidyaranya served Bukkaraya also as minister and occupied the highest position in the administration of the kingdom.

Festival Idols:

During the time of Bukkaraya, Madhura (Madurai) was under the control of Sultans. Bukkaraya's son Kamparaya went on an offensive in South and liberated Madhura, Jinji (in present Villupuram district in Tamil Nadu) and Srirangam from Muslim rule. As per the advice of Sri Vidyaranya Tirtha, Bukkaraya got the Festival Idols, deposited by Sudarsanasuri in Tirupati due to the fear of attack by Malik Kafur, returned to the temple of Sri Ranganatha Swami in Srirangam. Peace and safety reigned in Srirangam once more, as before.

Books:

Having entrusted the task of defending the country upon Harihararaya and then later Bukkaraya, Swami Vidyaranya personally took up the task of reviving Arshasamskriti. Those were the days when the meaning of Vedas, the very roots of Indian Culture, was not understood properly. He, along with his brother Sayana, wrote a detailed commentary for the four Vedas. In these commentaries, the meaning of Vedas was

explained brilliantly. Without the help of these commentaries, it would not have been possible for us today to understand many things, in the Vedas. Apart from these, Sri Vidyanaraya, who was learned in all branches of knowledge, wrote many other in Sanskrit. In Dharmasastras, he wrote a commentary called "Parasaramadhaviyam" on the Parasarasmriti. In an independent work called "Sarvadarsanasangraha", he wrote the essence of many schools of Philosophy in a succinct manner. He gave the essence of Advaita Vedanta in a very accessible style in the primer, prakaranagrantha, called "Panchadasi". In the great work called "Jaiminiyanayamalavistaram", he wrote about the topics of Mimamsa Sastra (the science of exegesis or critical interpretation of the Vedas), which were not understood by ordinary Sanskrit scholars. These books are so important that every student of Sanskrit has to read at least some of them.

Apart from writing world famous books in Veda, Vedanta and other sciences, he served Goddess Bharati by writing a poetical work called "Sankaravijayam" and a treatise on music called "Sangitasaram". Sankaravijayam, is the biography of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada who propagated the school of Advaita Philosophy. The work Sangitasaram is no longer available. The system of *raga-mela* presently in vogue in classical Indian music has been first proposed in this work. Therefore, many scholars are of the opinion that Sri Vidyanaraya was the creator of 15 types of melas and 50 types of ragas.

Kaivalyam:

After Sri Bharati Krishna Tirtha, the pontiff of Sringeri peetha, attained siddhi, Sri Vidyanaraya Tirtha ascended the Sri Sankaracharya Sripada Peetha, the throne of Advaita, worshipped Sri Sarada Devi and became a Jivanmukta, i.e. one who has attained liberation even while being alive. In 1386 AD, he left the physical body and attained the *Kaivalyapada*. Sage Vidyanaraya lived for about 118 years for the well-being of the world, and has shown the path to all of us.

Brothers:

The brothers of Vidyanaraya also endeavored for the development of the Vijayanagara empire. Sayanacharya served Sangama Bhupati II, the son of Kamparaya, and then Harihararaya II as *mahamantri*, and strived for the progress of the empire. Bhoganatha was the narmasachiva, the confidant, of Sangama Bhupati II.

Sayana wrote many books. In his "Madhaviya dhatuvrutti", a book on grammar, he proudly stated that he was the son of Mayana and the brother of Madhava. He expressed his gratitude and love for his brother by appending the name of his brother to his book.

Tolerance:

The time of Vidyanagara Empire is unforgettable in the history of the Telugu country. Culture developed in multi-faceted ways. These kings ruled as per Dharma, protected the land, and developed Hindu religion and

culture. These Kings followed the Vedic religion. Saivism, Vaishnavism and Vira Saivism flourished during this period. Many pontiffs belonging to the mathas of the schools of Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva were honoured by the Kings of Vijayanagara. People of all schools lived happily without any differences. Sri Vidyanarya debated with his friend Akshobhya Tirtha, and pleased with his knowledge, honoured him. He was pleasantly surprised to read the book "*Pramanalakshanam*" by Jaya Tirtha, the disciple of Akshobhya Tirtha. He invited Jaya Tirtha to Vijayanagara and felicitated him by taking him out on a procession astride an elephant.

Temples:

Vijayanagara Kings built many new temples. They also repaired many old temples and sustained them by giving land grants. Amongst these temples, the Bhuvaneswari Temple and Pampavati Virupaksha Temple were the oldest. Sri Vidyanarya used to be immersed in a state of *jnana-samadhi*, a state of intense meditation, in the Bhuvaneswari Temple. Harihararaya developed the Sri Virupaksha Temple, and declared his dedication to his preceptor, gratitude and belief in the Vedic Dharma by installing the idol of Sri Vidyanarya Swami in that temple. Harihara became the model for later Vijayanagara kings to follow. Those who came later also developed this temple in many ways and showed their respect and devotion to Sri Vidyanarya Swami. They even mentioned Sri Vidyanarya as the donor in many of their *inams*, grants.

Memorials:

The administrative prowess of these Vijayanagara Kings and the magnificence of those times were profusely praised by the foreigners who witnessed them. This empire shined most magnificently for about 230 years and lost its splendour after defeat by Mohammadans in 1565. Even today, many ruins of buildings and temples are found far away from Hampi to the east, south and west. These ruins remind us of the history of the Vijayanagara empire and the greatness of Sri Vidyanarya. There would be no Indian, who would not shed tears after seeing these. These are the most sacred places of Pilgrimage to Indians.

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