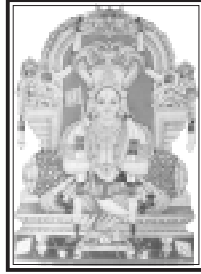


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**The Need of the hour - Sri Manavalamamunigal
Thiruvarasu Project : Restoration of the
Acharya's Thiruvarasu and his ideals**



ACTION COMMITTEE

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**THE SERVICES RENDERED BY
SRI MANAVALA MAMUNIGAL AT SRIRANGAM**

Srirangam: the foremost shrine of the Lord Sri Ranganatha has been worshiped by Brahma, Ikshvaku and Sri Rama Himself. All our Alvars and Acharyas give unparalleled importance to Sri Ranganatha. Yet by the mid 14th century foreign invasions had left the Srirangam temple in a hideous mess:

"Where formerly the shrines had been surrounded by the musical notes of drums (Mridangas) now was heard

the fearful howls of jackals. In place of the aroma of the smoke from the sacred fires in the Brahmin settlements, there was now the stink of raw meat spreading amid shouts of drunken soldiers". [Professor M.R. Sampathkumaran (1988) Sri Manavala Mahamuni in Historical Context, in "Sri Ramanuja Vani"]The task of restoring SriRangam back to its former glory would have been beyond most. Yet mortals do what they can; genius does what it must. Within thirty years, Sri Manavalamamunigal had restored Srirangam to its former architectural, intellectual, cultural and spiritual magnificence. His achievements peaked from 1432-1433 when he faithfully embellished Nampillai's Idu lecture. Lord Ranganatha, listening awestruck and mesmerized, then accepted Sri Manavalamamunigal as His acharya:

***"Srisailesa dayapatram dhibhaktyadi gunarnavam
Yatindra pravanam vande Ramyajamataram munim"***

[I offer my respects to Sri Manavalamamunigal, the receptacle of Srisailesa's (Tiruvaimozhi Pillai's) grace. He is the abode of jnana, bhakti and all other good qualities, and is forever lost in meditation on Sri Ramanuja]

When Sri Ranganatha himself has placed service to Sri Manavalamamunigal at such a premium, one would expect his Thiruvarasu to be maintained with immense tenderness. But what do we actually find?

The immediate surroundings are not fit for a human Visitation.

- * The site is saturated with effluence from Srirangam town.
- * For the past 80 years, no worship is being offered to the saint's remains.

The adjacent Keshava Perumal Sannidhi too lies in a defunct condition.

- * The consequences of such neglect have been alluded to by the Hon. Sri Unnikrishna Panicker, in his Ashtamangala Prasna on Srirangam Koil:

"The north-east position of the temple (wherein lies

the Thiruvarasu of Sri Manavalamamunighal), has to be acquired, spruced up and maintained, as otherwise those responsible will have vamshanasham (end of race). This Perumal (or great man) is acharya for the Lord, and is the reincarnation of Adishesha. There can be no joy for the Lord unless puja be conducted properly to the acharya..."

As in days of yore, the Sri Ranganatha has spoken through a mortal's mouth. With His warning in mind, let us turn our attention to the exiting 'Thiruvarasu-Need of the Hour' project', that seeks to re-construct a Sri Manavala mamunighal Thiruvarasu as a 'nerve centre' for a realisation of the saint's humanitarian, educational and spiritual mission for mankind.

PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THIRUVARASU PROJECT

The Thiruvarasu is not just a structure; it is a vision- an ongoing attempt to transform ourselves and the world around us in conformity with the saint's mission. To this effect, the work will be conducted in four phases:

Phase1: The Thiruvarasu compound & associated Keshava Perumal Sannidhi will cover 2.5 acres including the pathway.

1.1 A modest Thiruvarasu temple, consisting of garbha griha and maha mandapam must be built, and a deity of Sri Manavalamamunighal installed. The deity shall face west, allowing him to fulfil his role as acharya (teacher) of Lord Ranganatha. The garbha griha will be surrounded by a sub-wall adorned with art-work depicting the life and mission of Sri Manavalamamunighal.

1.2 The Thiruvarasu will be surrounded by landscaped gardens and a traditional compound wall.

1.3. The land leading to the Thiruvarasu has to be levelled, and entrance arch for the Thiruvarasu constructed.

The Thiruvarasu will serve as 'a centre of Divine gravity', a beacon of inspiration and guidance for all other phases.

PHASE 2: THE KESAVA PERUMAL SANNIDHI ADJACENT TO THE THIRUVARASU

The Sannidhi must be restored to its former glory and an associated Kalakshepakutam (lecture hall) and dhyana mandapam

Phases 1 & 2 are the immediate priority. With the grace of our great Acharya we have already collected Rs. 11.5 Lakhs .With this fund we have acquired the land (0.5 acres) for the road which leads to the Sacred Tiruvarasu at a cost of Rs. 7 Lakhs.An advance of Rs 4.5 Lakhs (out of a total of Rs. 9 Lakhs payable)has been paid to the owner of the Tiruvarasu land .We have to now acquire another 1 acre adjacent to the Tiruvarasu to construct the Kesaperumal temple .Thus an amount of Rs. 25 Lakhs is required for the acquisition of land alone .So far we have utilised Rs. 11.5 Lakhs . We are now in need of another Rs. 13.5 Lakhs towards the acquisition of the remaining portion of land .

Those donors who contribute a minimum of Rs.9,000/- will help us in purchasing one cent of land for the Sacred Thiruvarasu. In that one cent of land Sthalavriksha from one of the 106 Divyadesams will be planted and Azhwars hymns of that particular Divyadesam will be inscribed in a suitable manner. If there are 50 such donors we can get Rs.4.5 lakhs which can be utilised for the purchase of the land which is the immediate necessity.

Those who are willing to participate in this Noble Kainkaryam are requested to contact A Krishnamachariar The Secretary, Divya Desa Parampariya Padhukappu Peravai, C/o Sri Vaishnava Sri, East Uthara St, Srirangam, Trichy - 6, E-Mail: kicha19@sify.com ☎: 0091-431-2434398