

ESSENCE OF AMARNATH YATRA PHALA

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Other Scriptures by same Author

Essence of Puranas:-

Maha Bhagavata, Vishnu Purana, Matsya Purana, Varaha Purana, Kurma Purana,

Vamana Purana, Narada Purana, Padma Purana;

Shiva Purana, Linga Purana, Skanda Purana, Markandeya Purana, Devi Bhagavata;

Brahma Purana, Brahma Vaivarta Purana, Agni Purana, Bhavishya Purana, Nilamata Purana;

Shri Kamakshi Vilasa

Dwadasha Divya Sahasranama:

a) Devi Chaturvidha Sahasra naama: Lakshmi, Lalitha, Saraswati, Gayatri;

b) Chaturvidha Shiva Sahasra naama: Linga-Shiva-Brahma Puranas and Maha Bharata;

c) Trividha Vishnu and Yugala Radha-Krishna Sahasra naama; Padma-Skanda-Maha Bharata and Narada Purana.

Stotra Kavacha-A Shield of Prayers

Purana Saaramsha

Select Stories from Puranas

Essence of Dharma Sindhu

Essence of Shiva Sahasra Lingarchana

Essence of Brahma Sutras (awaiting release)

Essence of Paraashara Smriti (awaiting release)

[Note: All the above Scriptures released on www.Kamakoti.org/news as also on Google by the respective references]

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ESSENCE OF AMARNATH YATRA PHALA

OM SHRI GANESHAAYA NAMAH OM SHRI MAHA DEVAAYA NAMAH

Having heard about the significance of Surya Kshetra of Anantanaag, extreme curiosity was stirred in Devi Parvati's mind and she desired to realise the Rasa Lingaatmika Mahatmya; thus she requested Maha Deva to enlighten about the immense fruits of launching Amarnath Yatra, apparently to benefit the various human and celestial beings; Bhairava Deva readily obliged her and replied:

Rasa Linga Mahatmya

Shrunu Devi pravakshaami yatraamamara naathagam, Yaam shrutwaamapi narah punya –maapnuyaat narah teerthaajam Priye! (Devi Parvati! Do listen to me carefully and attentively about this highly sacred Tirtha of Amarnath which bestows unique achievement of Maha Punya to the visitors. To start with, perform 'Achamana' at Ganges and bathe at the Siddha Kshetra of Padma puri, proceed to Maha Nagar and after Achamana with its water, worship Haridra Ganapati there at the Temple. On resuming the Yatra towards Balihara Maha Kshetra, bathe again to visit Vaagaashrama, perform Achamana at Hasti Karna, take baths again at Chakresha, Devaka Tirtha, Hari Chandra Tirtha, Sthala vaati, Amrita Tirtha, Surya Guha vaati, and at Lambodari. *Tatra Lambodaraa snaanam kuryaadeva matindratah, Tatah Suryadshramam gatwaa Surya gangaa jaleshubhey, Snaatwaa datwaa cha vidhitannamuchyate Brahma hatyayaa/* (By exercising the control of one's own sensory organs and senses, the pilgrims should do now observe Lambodari snaana and enter in the Surya Ashrama and make the formal Surya Ganga snaana followed by formal Daana which helps the reversal of even a major sin of Brahma hatya, let alone minor blemishes). Thereafter perform 'kara paada sprushya' or touch the palms and feet before worship to Ganapati Deva and step forward to 'Buddherashi', bathe at Ashwatara Naga Tirtha, repeat snaana at Buddherashi Ganga, proceed to 'Maamalaka mahagraama' and worship Ganeshwara; *Taam drushtwaa maameshwaram Lingam snaatyaaamaameshavaarini, Snaayaad Bhrugupateh Kshetre Neela Gangaajale tathaa/* (After Ganeshwara Puja, Mameshwara Maha Linga darshana and perform Lingaabisheka with Mamesha Jala and Bhangu Pati Kshetraantara Neela Ganga jala).

Sthaanvaasharaye nadeem punyaam koti janma ashunaashanam, Tatra Panchataramginyaam jalantadavagaahyavai/ Aaruha parvatam Devi! Garbhagaarasyamadhyatah Avaruhyaamaraavatyaam Snaanam bhasmaanga lepanam/ Vibhuti sita dehascha nrityavoono digambarah, Avaruhetrurvata guhaa Mahaa paataka naashineem/ (It is in this venerable river at 'Sthaana -Ashrama' that bathing is capable of demolishing crores of sins; after taking bath in this water flow, carry some of the water to Pancha Tarangini at the foot hill before alighting up the cave hill; at the entrance of the Garbhha Griha at Amaravati, another Snaana is to be performed, Bhasma lepana is to be applied on the body parts while exposing the bare body at the mouth of the Mountain Cave in a manner of half stupor of total dedication and faith. The grand entry into the Cave would be such that even Maha Paatakas are dissolved instantly)

Pranamyaa vidhivat Bhaktyaa Swadhaa Lingam sanatanam, Naro na vipyate paapaaih koti janma samudbhavaih/ (The most memorable moment when a person who undergoes the arduous hardships of

the travel would treasure the unique life time experience of the most imposing and awesome Amerasha Linga darshana even from a distance; indeed that is the split second which the darkness of his or her vision gets brightened with unparalleled luminosity, simultaneously destroying the stored up sins for innumerable past births. Once the trance so experienced from the vision and ‘pranaama’ of the Swadha Linga is secured an instant ‘Mukti’ gets accomplished from the pent up sins of all times in retrospect.) *Darshanaa sparshanaa chhaapi vandanaat, Amareshasya Lingasya mucchate sarva kilbishaih/* (The ‘darshana and sparshana’ or the magnificent vision and the enthralling touch, as accompanied by the personalized worship of the fortunate devotee, would indeed bestow the ultimate obliteration of sins for sure). *Shat snaanaani Vitastaayaamproktaani Jagadambike, Sapta Dasha sthala sthaanisnanaa nyaayaani Sundari/* (Jagadambike! Following is an account of six to seventh varieties of Sacred Snaananas). *Ayo vimshaabhidhaa yatraa smritaa Amaranadhagaa, Evam krityaa nara yaatraam pashyelinga rasatmakam sa yaati Shiva saayujyam yatra naasti kritaakritam/* (Following is an account of thirteen types of Amarnadh yatra and all these are equally relevant to secure Shiva sayujya).

Sarala Narayana Khilya Tirtha:

Devi Parvati next desired to hear from Maha Bhairava Deva about the Sarala Narayana Tirtha and of the **Khilya** Graama Brahmanas and how they **too** attained Amaranath Darshana. Maha Bhairava replied: *Shrunu vakshye Maha Devi Tirtham Khilyayam param, Yatcchutwaa muchyate jantur mahapaataka sanchayaat/* Devi! Now let me enlighten you about the reputation of Khilya Tirtha, where in the days of yore Maharshi Khilya and his follower Siddhas called ‘Vaala khilyas’ lived and performed rigorous ‘Tapas’ by way of constant ‘Upavasas’, continuous practice of abstinence and homa karmas and deep meditation by standing erect on feet thumbs, hanging down the tree branches and so on caring none even in extreme climates. *Vishnu dhyaana paraashaktaah shantamano mahaahjasah, Birena Bhagavan Vihnuhu darshanameeyaavaan prabhuh/* (The Maharshi and his followers executed intense and totally dedicated meditation to Maha Vishnu and he obliged finally and granted his darshan). *Neela jeemuta sankasham prafulla jalajekshanam, Shankha chakra gadaa padmapaani paapa haarim Harim/* (Descending from Garuda Deva, Maha Vishnu emerged from the high skies with gorgeous glow of thick blue clouds, sporting a smile, joyous looks from the eye corners akin to luminous lotus and carrying conch-shell named Panchajanya, Sudarshana Chakra and a mace- all typical of his prowess!). The Khilya Rishis who were in a trance at the celestial vision of Vishnu and extolled Him: *Maha Vishnum Prabha Vishnum Puraanam Meedhushtam Shipivishtam Shravishtam, Gareeyaamsam Chaaruhaasam Varishtham pradyemarasharanam Taaraamshishtam/Vedaatmakam Veda Vedyam Puranam Varam Varenyam Varadam twaam sharanyam, Hiranyagarbham Aadidevadhidevam Hiranyabaahum sharanam twaam prapadye/ Trilokanaadha Lokapalesha Esha Lokaadhara Lokavandya Mahesha Loka dwaara, Vishwarupa Purana Lokatmakam twaam haranam prapadye Partharupam Kshanam baalam tarunam vaikshanam twaam/Prasarya jaalam raagadoshaadi tantram drushtam manahpakshinam praana madhye, Dashagraaham parigrihati satyam Mahapadam sharanam prapadye/ Anadyantam savitaaramajesham Puraatanam navanave, Vedanta vedyam saankhyayogena yogyam bhuyo bhuyah sharanam twaam prapadye/* (Maha Vishnu, Prabha Vishnu, Purana Purusha, Meedhushta, Shipivishta, Shravishta, Sarva Shreshtha, Varishta, Chaaruhaasa, Vedaatmaka, Veda Vedyam, Vara, Varenya, Varada, Hiranya garbha, Devadi deva, Hiranya baahu, Trilokanadha, Loka paalaka, Esha, Lokadhara, Lokavandya, Mahesha, Loka dwaara, Vishwarupa, Lokatma, we seek refuge to us. Partharupa! You are at once a child, a youth and a Vilakshana or without features! You are the one who spreads desires and blemishes all around, you are the one who visions the bird like life-force called ‘praana’ among various Beings and their inner consciences; you are the Maha Pada or the Great Refuge Point surrounded by Grahas. You are the Anadi or the One without Origin and without Termination, the Savitaarama or the One fond of Day Breaks, Vedanta Vedyam, the unique Destination of Sankhya Yogis; Maha Vishnu! We sincerely seek your

protection!') Maha Bhairava continued his narration to Devi Parvati: *Iti stutwaa Maheshaam Maha Vishnum Maheshwaram, Pranamyapaatitaa Bhumou punarutthaapitaah priye/* (This was how the Khilya Rishis extolled Maheshwara-Maha Vishnu by falling on ground and stood up in ecstasy. Maha Vishnu replied that he was extremely delighted to bestow a boon of their choice which might not be available even to Devasuras. The reply was: *Kyonyo varah shreshthi Maheshwara, Tathaapi Varadaamasta teerthamuttamam/* (What else could be a bigger boon to us than our being in our midst!) *YatraVaasaan Maha Vishnoh Siddhim protyamanuttamam, Shrutwaa tashaam vachassoumya maanandaashru pariplitah/ Drushtim padoh samadhaaya Gangaam samudachalayat, Pavanam chaashramam tashaam Muneenaam bhaavitatmanaam/ Swayam tastaicha tatraiva graamey Khilyaabhi- dheyinaam, Abhuta samplavam taavadidam parama paavanam/ Baalakhilyaamitham teertham bhavishyativu na samshayah, Ityuktwaa taamstadaa Vishunurgatontwardhaanamachyath/* (Where there is Maha Vishnu, there itself is the Singular Place for all of us to stay! As this was the reply from the Khilya Rishis, Vishnu decided to settle there itself and the Rishis too washed His feet with their 'Ananda ashru' or the flow of their joyful tears even as Ganga flowed down there as Valakhilya Teertha. Ever since there this Grama has come to acclaim as a Maha Narayana Kshetra!) *Maha Paataka yukto vaa yukto vaahyupapaatakaih, Sadyah pramuchyate snaatwaakshetre Narayanaabhidhe/ Naaraayanaabhidhe kshetrey snaatanvya - mavishankayaa, Ghoraati Kaliyugaaddevi bheerunaa Purushena hi/ Ajanma yhadhi Deveshi peeyate madiiaa mudaa, Maasa maatram jalam tatra peetwaa mucchayedasamshayam/ Naari vaa Purushovaapi graame Khilyaapane pare, Snaatwaa peetwaa cha vidhivanmuchyate Varshatah Priye/ Maatrushwa srupitrushwam bhraaturjaayaabhi kaamukah, Bhrunahaa Brahmahaa chaapi Vyabhichaari tathaiva cha/-- Khilyaayana samam teertham na bhutam nabhavishyati, Naro muktimavaapnoti snaana daana japaarchanaih/ Iti Khelanake graame Kshetre Naraayanaabhidam, Shritwaa pathitvaa muchyeta Maha Paataka kotibhih/*(Those who bathe in this Narayana Kshetra are instantly freed from Maha Patakas and Upapatakas. Men who are timid and facing dangers should especially take bath here so that they pick up immense courage and bravery to withstand the risks of severe Kali. Persons who are in the habit of drunkenness and intoxication are cured forever. All the severe sins of wrong doings by fallen women of bad character, or sinners even on account of Matru-Pitru-Bhratru-Mitru-Patni-Shishu-Sahodari hatyas too are washed off their sins. There is hardly any Tirtha as significant as this Narayana Kshetra and the fruits of snana-daana-japa-archana are indeed unparalleled; who ever even reads, hears or absorbs the outcome of this account is blessed forever!)

Maamaka Linga Gananaatha Kshetra:

Devi Parvati desired to know from Maha Bhairava about the 'Shubha prada, Punya prada and Paapa Vinashaka' Maamalaka Kshetra where Maha Ganapati bestowed his immense blessings and boons to whosoever worshipped and prayed and have the devotees freed from their sins collected for long. *Shrunu Devi pravakshyami Mamala kam shubham yasya darshana maatrena nashyante vighnaashayah/* (Bhagavan Bhairava enlightened her that Maamalaka Linga Kshetra darshana was by itself would secure auspiciousness and root out all sins as that happened to be the seat of Vighna Nayaka). *Samsthaapya Ganapam Devam dandakasya Muneswaram, Gatah khelanakaadurdhawam dandakasya muneswaram/* (Having kept the Idol of Ganesha near the two doors of the Mandir, apparently before formal installation, the Munis proceeded out for a while). Meanwhile, a party of Devas out of sheer curiosity sought to rush in the Temple and Ganesha objected Devas not to enter. Even then, Maha Deva at that time in Pataala Loka got furious and shouted against the concerned Devatas. *Drushtwaa kroshaantameeshaam Devo Ganapatistatwaran, Swayambhuh Sambhrayayutah paataalaadyutthitah/* As Ishaana shouted, Ganapati realised that the situation was getting out of control. Shiva appeared along with his 'Parashu' and appeared at the spot; *Maamevai pravadyatya Maha ganapatistadaa, Sarva Devaastu tacchaabdhe Bhuvalleenaahyaa samshayam/* (Since Ganapati Deva warned and used the word: 'no, do not do so',

Devas got absorbed into Maha Deva). *Yatah praleena Deveshu Ishware sacchidatmani, tathah sa pradhito graamo Maamukhyo jagatraye/* (That was why Devas got integrated into Maha Deva, this village became reputed as *Maamalaka*.) *Maa maagacchata Deveshu bhayalleenaah Pare Shive, Tatah sa prokto Deveshi Graamo Maamala sanjnyakah/* (Devatas reappeared subsequently but got scared away and were asked by Parameshwara to stay back; thus the Place came to be reputed as *Mamalaka*) *Dushtwaa Ganapati trathaah Pataalaaaduddhitam Priye, Tadaa provaachatam Devam Ganesham Vai Shivah swayam/* (Devi! as Ganapati came in his full form from Patala Loka, Devas got scared again looking at Ganesha when Shiva appeared to them, asked Ganapati smilingly, and stated as follows) *Yasmamaamne maameti shabdham twam krutwaachodaya chalah, Tasmaadatra chiram tishtha vighna samghaan prabhaashayah/* (Ganesha! You used the expression of ‘no, no’ and appeared yourself! Therefore, you now have to be here forever. And keep on removing the obstacles of bhaktas). *Yah kaschinna maanave lokehyaatra twaam pujayishyati, Sarvaan Vighna naaninirvijatya siddhim samadhi gacchati/* (Whosoever in the world arrives here and worships you with faith would indeed fulfill his or her desires fulfilled, hurdles and hindrances smashed and secure victories) *Sarvaanmaanavaapnoti Ganapati prasaadatah, Varshe Varshetuyah kaschinmaadhava maasenityashah/* (During the Madhava Maasa or Vaishakha month, especially on Shukla Chaturdashi day, those who worship Ganesha with devotion and reverence would indeed be blessed with Karya siddhi or fulfillment of desires/ *Vinayaka chaturdhyam vaa pujayeddyoga Ganeshwaram, Maameshwara sameepetu hyanantam phalamaapnuyaat/* (Significantly on Bhadrapada Shukla Vinaayaka Chaturthis, those devotees who perform Ganesha Puja would have the fruits of worship to Mameshwara and never have possible re-births again)/ *Iti datwaa varam Devo Ganeshaya swayam Harah, Punyevai Dandakaranye leeno Maamaashwaraakhyaya/* (Parmeshwara himself granted the blessing to Ganesha and along with Mameshwara got absorbed in the Dandakaranya). *Drushtwaa Mameshwaram Lingam punye Mamalake Narah, Pujaitwaa Ganapati mashwamedha mavaapnuyaat/* (Those who worship Mameshwara Linga and then perform Ganapati Deva formally would be bestowed with the fruits of Horse sacrifice). *Snaatwaa Mameshwara kunde drushtwaa Mamalakam Vibhum, Naro navipyate paapaih Padmapatramivaabhasaa/* (After duly taking bath in the Maameshwara Kunda and worship Mamalaka Vibhu, persons would never become like water drops on lotus leaf and disappear but stick on to the seat of eternity forever!) *Swayambhuvam Ganapati Maamaleshwara sannidhou, yah pujayetparam bhaktyaa jyotishtomavaapnuyaat/* (Those who in the presence of Mameshwara Maha Lingeshwara, dutifully perform ‘shodashopacharas’ or the traditional services viz. ‘Aavahana-Snana-Asana-Vastra-Yagopaveeta-Gandha-Pushpa- Patra-Phala- Naivedya-Karpura Aarati-Mantra-Pradakshina- Sashtanga vandana-Gaana- Nritya- Kshamapana are bestowed with ‘tejomaya parama jyotiprakasha’ or an inner personality of unique splendor!) *Vinaayakam cha Maamesham drushtwaa praapnoti pushkalam, Phalam cha Somayaagasya Naro niyama samyutah/* (Those Bhaktas, who execute worship as per ‘vidhi purva niyama’ or with clean body and clean mind, would become eligible for having Soma Yagna phala). This confidential account of Maamakeshwara-Vighnesha episode is thus concluded and whoever reads- hears and digests it shall doubtless become freed from long stored sins of serious nature.

River Lambodari and magnificance of Ganeshwara:

Expressing satisfaction of hearing the account of Maamakeshwara Linga and the glory of Ganeshwara whose worship is as much rewarding as of Mamakeshwara’s, Devi Parvati desired to learn from Maha Bhirava about the background of River Lambodari. Maha Deva instructed Ganesha once not to allow into

the privacy with Devi Parvati. This instruction of Maha Deva was also heard by Nandi Deva for compliance. It was at that very time, Devendra accompanied by Devas, desired to pay his homage to Parameshwara but Gana Nayaka declined the supplication of Indra. An offended Indra attacked Gana naatha with his Vajrayudha; *Humkaarena Ganeshopi baahu mastambhyadvareh, Swabaahum stambhitam drushtwaa Shakro Ganapati tadaa, Tushtaavavaaribhi dandavatpranipaatyasah/* (Maha Ganesha got furious at Indra's offence and having sounded a 'humkaara' retaliated and turned Indra's shoulders and hands frozen. Indra realized his unpardonable indiscretion and fell at the feet of Ganesha Deva and extolled him as follows: *Aprameya gunam nityam Ganesham Sura pujitam, Parvati priya putram cha pranamasye Ganeshwaram/* (Salutations to you Ganesha who is always worshipped by us Devas; you are not only the beloved son of Devi Parvati but also of incomparable features and of well distinguished invincibility) *Devaanaam adikartaaramaadi madhyanta vartitam, Chidachit chitruda gambhiram pranaami Vinayakam/* (You are the foremost of the Devas, Adi pujya or the very first one worthy of all Gods, Adi Madhyaantarahita or the One with neither beginning nor middle and no termination. You are the Chit Swarupa and Gambheera or of profound and complex personality: kindly accept this Indra's salutations) *Vedaantaih Surasidhvaischa-agamairapi sundaram, Sukshmam Shantam Briha sthulam, pranamaami Geneshwaram/* (My homage to you Gansha! and so do all Vedanta-Sura-Siddhi-Agamas for your outstanding and sharpest intelligence and minutest comprehension as also of tranquil nature and composure; you are at the same time of legendary and giant size and strength) *Shantam Chit- Adwayam Devam Vimarshodbhava rupitam, Tatwa saaram MahaTatwam pranamasye Ganeshwaram/* (You are indeed the embodiment of Shantam or of unique equanimity, Chit or of endless joy, Adwayam or Singular and Unique, Vimarshodbhava rupitam or of critically assessed Swarupa, the Essence of Tatwas and the Maha Tatwa!) *Brahmaadwayaa Anavadcchedyam Shivaadwaya vibhoditam, Swaprakaasham Paraatparam prapadyetam Vinaayakam/* (The combined Form of Indra and Brahma, the One impossible to break, Swaprakaasha or the Auto-Luminous, Paraatpara Vinayaka, my sincere prostrations!) *Modakaahara Paramam Saakshaamaalaankaram Param, Trinetrām Gana vaktram chatam prapadye Maheshwaram/* (Ganesha! You are a 'modaka bhokta', hand carrier of Aksha Mala, Trinetra, and Ganaadhipa; I beseech you for my refuge) *Sudattam parashum chaiva dhaarayantam bhujadwaye, Rakta Vastrambaradham rakta maalaa dharam tathaa/* (You carry with you a powerful axe gifted to you worn on your hands and don blood red clothes as also red complexioned ornamentation; I seek your 'raksha' or protection!) *Vighna raasheem vikarantam karakshepa muhurmuuh, Anantam Paramam Tatwam Saaraat- saara taram param, Vedagamyam prapadye Gana naayakam/* (Vighna Deva! You are a paramount smasher of obstacles with your own handiworks; Ananta! Parama Tatwa! You are indeed the quintessence of the essences, the Ultimate Goal of Vedas, Gana Nayaka, my prostrations!) *Aprameya gunyaapi Vyakshaaya Varavarnini, Vinaayakaaya Devaaya bhuyo bnhuyo namo namah/* (You are Aprameya Guna Swarupa! Vyakshaaya! Vara varnini! Devaadi Deva! My respectful homage to you again and again!)

As Indra who did earlier the indiscretion of attacking Ganesha realised his fault and praised him profusely, Ganesha excused Indra and was pleased even when the latter was freed from tightened hands. *Prani patya Meheshasya sunum mantra Vinayakam, Krodha samharakam naama stotram Ganapate sadaa, Trikaalam shraddhayaa yuktah pathan muccheta sankataat/* (Those human beings who greet the illustrious son of Maha Deva with faith and dedication and read Ganapati Stotra thrice a day shall indeed be totally freed from any kind of obstacles in life and reap auspiciousness always. *Tato Ganapatirdeva*

trushitah kshudthitopicha, Bhuktyaa swaduphalam tatrapapou Gangaam pushkalaam/ (As Ganesha felt hungry, he first had his belly full with lots of eats and drank plenty of Ganga). *Peetwaa Gangaam sa Vigheshastadaa Lambodaro bhavat, Lambodaroti vai naamnaa hyaajuhaara rahastadaa/* (Ganesha who drank abundant volumes of Ganga had thus achieved the encomium of Lambodara! Since then Ganapati Deva came to be worshipped by way of homa prakriyas even in ‘ekaanta’ or in privacy as individuals.) *Shuskaam drushtyaa tatra Gangaadharo Ganapateyh Priye, Dhamaruna hantasya hyaadura mudaramtadaa/* (Maha Bhairava addressed Devi Parvati and conveyed that since Ganesha drank up so much of Ganga water that Parama Shiva had to utilize his ‘damaru’ to revive the dried up Ganga!) *Amaammukhale Gangaam tataa Ganapathih priye yasmaa Lambodaraattasya Ganeshasya vinistrutaa, Tasmaatproktaa puraa vidhibrahmaa Lambodari Nadee/* (Then Ganesha released Ganga from his huge belly by his mouth and that was how Ganga came to be reputed as Lambodari as described by Purana TatwaVettas.) *Lambo- daryaa Narah snaatwaa muchyate sarva kilbishaih, Sho bhu hiranya vaasaamsi Lambodara nadi tatey, Yo dadaati Dwija shreshtho Ananta phalamaapnuyaat/*(Any person who takes bath in Lambodari River should be freed from sins and gives away Daana at this Tirtha of cows, crop fields, gold and ornaments, clothes and so on would attain ‘Ananta Punya’). *Lambodara Nadi teere yah snaanayatparayaamudaa, Sa yaati Shiva saalokya yatra gatwaana shochate/* (Bhaktas who bathe in the sacred Lambodari River with clean heart and conscience are sure to destroy their sins and attain Shiva sayujya) *Itithe kathitam Devi Lambodari nadee shubhaa, Shrutwaa subhaktitah punkhim pataka naashani/ Itesha patalo guhyah kalikalmasha naashanah, Shrutonu dhyataah pathito Maha paapaapanuttame/* (Devi! The significance of Lambodari River has thus been given and whoever reads or listens about this shall indeed be freed from all types of blemishes.)

Bhrigu Tirtha Mahatmya

Divyam varsha sahasram tu Parishila yute Vane, Jagaama paramarshescha niyatasya paraatpani/ Ajagaama tadaa tantu Vishnur darshayatam mudaa, Sarverdeva ganaih saadham Bhriguh provaachatam Harim/ (As Maharshi Bhrigu performed ‘tapas’ for thousands of Deva-years at Parishilayuta Vana with intense concentration and dedication, Maha Vishnu was immensely pleased and gave his darshan as accompanied by Devas; then Bhrigu was overwhelmed with joy and praised Vishnu with ecstasy: *Vishno jishno Mahaa Vishnum Prabha Vishnu Sureshwaram, Dandavatrani patyaashu bhuyombhuyo namaskarot /*(Hey Vishno, Jishno, Pabha Vishnu, Sureswara! Here are my heartfelt prostrations to you, again and again). *Uttaapya pranatam tatra Bhrugum Vishnuh Sanatanah, Anandaashru pariklinnam Murthaanitam Munim/ Aalingantuh anyonyam Bhrigu Vishnu Maheshwari! Tadanga prasweda bhaverbhuvaih Parama Paavanaih, Punyam Teerthamabhuh Devi Parishulavane shubhe/ Bhrugoraa-linganaadyasmaaddari svedanamudbhavam, Punyam tatpradhitam tasmaad Bhrigu Teertha Maheshwari!* (As Bhrigu Maharshi prostrated to Vishnu and stood up, he embraced Vishnu and so did Vishnu to Bhrigu out of affection. When they embraced with each other thus, the sweat that flowed from their bodies got materialized as a water body in the Parishilana Vana and that came to be called the Sacred Bhrigu Tirtha!) *Bhigu Tirthe Narah snaatwaa datwaa vastram cha Ratnadeepam cha dadyaadyatnena Maanavaah/* (Persons who bathe with faith in that Bhrigu Tirtha and perform Vastraadi daanas are stated to yield remarkable fruits). Apart from uprooting even grave sins like Brahma hatya, the Bhrigu Tirtha is of high significance in pleasing Pitru Devas by duly performing Shraddha Tarpana Karmas.

Nilā Ganga Vṛittānta, especially significant for women

Shrunu Devi pravakshyam Nilā Gangā samudbhavam, Yacchrutvā prāpyate Matyeh Agnishtoma phalam Priye/ (Bhagavan Mahā Bhīrava recounted the episode of Nilā Ganga's origin and auspiciousness and assured that those who bathe and worship in this Sacred River would certainly reap the fruit of performing Agnishtoma Sacrifice). Once Shiva and Parvati were playful and in the course of time, she desired to see Mahā Deva in a mirror as his face was smeared with 'Kālanjana' or black lepana to enhance the beauty of eyes and provide coolness to them. *Drishtāwānjanāktavadanam swam Devo Bnagavanharah, Jataabhirvaikshadadanam Kāalanjana yaatam shubham/* (Mahā Deva saw the reflection of his face as smeared with the Kāalanjana sportively and playfully enough again wiped out the black lepana with his jatas or his crown hair). *Prakshālaayaamaasa tadaa vadanam Gangamāa Shive, Saa vai Gangā samutranna kāalambanjana nibhaabhavat/* (As Parama Shiva cleaned up his face with Ganga water, as that flow got mixed up with the black 'anjana' and made way to Nilā Ganga!) *Nilā Gangeti vikhyātaā Mahā Paataka naashani, Nilā Gangāam narah snātvā Mahā Papāih pramuchyate/* (Thus Nilā Ganga originated from Mahā Deva's 'Mukha Prakshālana' or out of His face wash! Those who take bath in this River are stated to get fully freed from 'Mahā Patakas') *Neelyanga dharana spurshaatta dhvamsam sargatosatah, Atma doshaadi streenaam vainaasham sanayati param/* (Once the Sacred waters of Nilā Ganga merely touch the body parts of persons especially women, their physical blemishes are fully destroyed) *Nilā Gangamridamchaapi yo dadyadangake swake, Sayaati Brahma sadanam yatra gatwānashochate/* (Once the mrittika of Nilā Ganga is smeared all over the body-parts then they would attain Brahma Loka prāpti and all the mortal woes are terminated) *Tathāa Nilajalam punyam Mahāa Paapa pranaashanam/ Itesha patalo guhye streenaam paapa pranaashanah, Ishwari vachanaaddevi trimalaaghnah prakeertitaah/* (Thus Nilā Ganga ensures the total destruction of Mahā Paapas; especially in the case of women and the three secret maladies of their physique are removed and cleaned up.)

Sthāna-ashrama and Peshā Parvata Mahatmya

Shrunu Devi pravakshyaami Sthānvaashrama vanam mahat, Yacchrutvā muchyate jantuh Mahā Paataka kotibhih/ (Mahā Bhairava Deva then described the Mahima of Sthāna Ashrama and this account for sure would provide relief to countless Manavas. In the days of yore, Sati Devī the illustrious daughter of Dakṣha Prajapati took to committed service to Mahā Deva as he was engrossed in rigorous meditation for thousands of years without movement in the state of Samādhi). *Sevaaparaahyabhutatra Chirandevī Maheshwari, Sthānūvatsam sthitho yatra Maheshastapai sthitah/* (Even as Shiva continued his Tapas as 'Sthānu' or in the state of motionlessness, Maheshwari was unnerved and continued to assist in the tapas most faithfully and untiringly). *Sthānvaashramstatah prokto mahā pataka naashanah/* (This place where the Tapas continued for centuries eventually turned out to be a popular spot as 'Sthānvaashrama') *Stānvaashrama sameepe tuyah snānaayaatsura vandite, Sa yaati Shiva sadanam yatra gatwāna shochate/* (Sura Vandya Devī! The popularity of the Ashram became so intense that those who took their 'shudda snānas' or Sacred Baths yielded ready results of mental peace and instant fulfillment of their wishes, besides strong impulses of Shiva Loka Prāpti ahead) *Sthānvaashrame tu yo Devī shraddham kritvā vidhanatah, Pitarah tripti maa yaantishata kalpam na samshyah/* (Those who performed Pitru Shraaddha-Tarpanas, the Pitru Devas attained contentment as evidenced by the tangible results reported) *Mahā paataka yukto vaayukto vaah upapaatakaih, Sthānvaashrama Vane punye muchyate sarva*

kilbishai/ (Persons who have committed Maha Paatakas or Upa Paatakas should be able to attain mukti by paying a visit to Sthaanaashrama and perform formal ‘Snaanas’ and ‘Jala paanaas’). *Gavaam koti sahasrasya samyan daanasyamatphalam, Tatphalam kotirunitam snaatwaa Sthaanyaashrame jale/* (That Punya which one could reap from the snaanas of Sthaaneshwara would equate the charity of thousand cows to a deserving Brahmana) *Kurukshetre Prayaagecha Gangaa Saagara Sangame, Snatwaa yatphala maapnoti tat sthaanoddarshanaa Priye/* (Devi Parvati!Sthaanu darshana prapti is as assured as that of snaanas as attainable from Kuru Kshetra, Prayaga, Ganga Sagara Sangama). *Sthaanaavaashrama sameepetusnaanam krutwaa vidhaanatah, Ashwamedhaadi yagjnaanaam godaanaanaamparam phalam/* (Sthaanvaashrama Snaanas done as per prescribed vidhana are as purifying as Ashwamedha yagnas and Godaanas). *Kshomam hiranyam vastram vaa paramam punyamapnuyaat, Devaarchanamatra kurvam tila tarpanamevacha, Japaschamuchyate jantuh Mahaa Pataka kotibhih/ Sthaanaashamam Bhaktya kurvan vaikilbishaapaham, Nakaroti Mahaa Snaananaan daanavaam Jagadambike, Sayaati narakam ghoram janma janmani paatake/* (Daanas of silk clothes, gold or atleast Vastra daana would fetch far reaching phala at Sthaanaashrama where Devatarchana, Pitru tila tarpana, tapas and such other deeds of virtue yielding several times of phala compared to other Kshetras. But those who having visited there do not undertake any Dharma karyas like snaana, daana, japa, tarpanadis would get relieved from curses including experience of narakas.) *Raakshasaacha Puraadevam darshanaarthamupaagataah, Devaih saadhamchamilitaah Sthaanvaashrame samantatah/* (In the past, both Devas and Rakshasas used to vie with each other in visiting the Ashrama) In fact, they used to compete with each others to seek Maha Deva’s darshana. *Giryaarohana kaale tu Daityaah pishtaah Surottamaih, Pishtaa Daityaastatra gire leenastraiva Sundari/* (Devi Sundari! On the occasions of ascending the Mountain, Devas used to harass Daityas and vice versa and having ascended the mountain many Daityas used to get absorbed and Devas were getting happy at the discomfiture and humiliation of Daityas) *Yasmin Girou Deva ganaih pishtaah Daityaah samutatah, Sa girih Paramodwaaram peshaaakhyah pradhito bhuvi/* (The mountain which was pounded by devas and daityas alike had since called popularly as **Pesha Parvata**) *Kurukshetre Parayaagecha Gangaa Saagara sangame, Snaanaadyat phalamaapnoti tat Peshasya tu darshanaat/* (The fruits of Kurukshetra, Prayaga and Gangaa sagara sangama snaanas fall far short of Pesha darshana!) *Gireraarohane Devi yaakanto renubindavah, Taapanti Vaajapeyaani praapnotyeva na samshayah/* (Devi! The number of particles in ascending the Pesha Mountain might perhaps equate the quantum of performing the Vaajapeya yagna phala!) *Naimishe cha Prayagecha Gangaa sagara sangame, Vaaranaasyaa shata guna sahasram kurujaangalaat/* (Pesha parvata darshana would be hundred times larger than the Punya of Naimisharanya, Prayaga, Ganga sagara and Vaaranaasi put together!) *Aarodhumicchati yastu Girim Devi samantatah, ‘Shri Shri Shri Shitikantheshu imam Mantram’ anusmaret/* (Devi! Those desirous of ascending the Pesha Parvata are advised to chant ‘Shri Shri Shri Shitikantha’ Mantra not only avoid tiresomeness but to attain all round auspiciousness). *Sa Brahma bhavanam yaati yatra gatwaana shobhate/* (Devotees with grit and determination who having ascended the Pesha Parvata are desirous of visiting Brahma Bhavana and are indeed blessed as that Unique Place is totally devoid of worldly concerns). *Mahanti Meru tulyaani Paapaani yadi Sundari, Taanyatya darshanaa Devam naashamaa yaanti tat kshanaat/* (Sundari! The kind of Patakas that a Being might perpetrate as equal to the heights of Meru Parvata would simply evaporate instantly once Pesha Parvata darshana is accomplished!) *Sayati cha Shiva sthaanam yatra naasti kritaa kritam, Vidhina yo Naro Devi Pesha maaruhate Narah/* (Devi! Those who could finally ascend and reach the top are as good as having reached Shiva Sthaanam as they leave behind all tribulations, and nothing else indeed is unattainable in

Life). *Pesha Darsahana maatrena Bhutaah Pretaah Pishachakaah, Daakinyaadyaascha Sarvaasthaa naashamaayanti tatkshanaat!*(The darshana of Pesha Parvata's top would annihilate Bhuta, Preta Pishacha, Daakini and such other evil Shaktis at once) *Namaskaroti Deveshi Punyam Pesha girim Narah, Aaruhya Punyamaapnoti Satyam Satyam Varaanane/* (Deveshi! Varaanane! A person who would indeed ascend the Pesha Parvata is such that is worthy of salutation; this indeed is the Truth, the Truth and Truth again!) *Iti proktaa maya Devi! Peshasya Mahimaa gireh, Shrutonudhyaatah pathitah Mahaa Pataka naashanah/* Such is the Mahima of Pesha Mountain that happens to one as a destroyer of Maha Patakas.

Sesha Naaga Parvata Mahima

Shrunu Sushroni vakshyaami Sheshasya Naga Rupinah, Mahatmyam cha prabhuti cha sarva paapa pranaashanam/ Devi Sushroni! The great significance of Shesha Naaga Parvata is now being described as this indeed is such as to extinguish all kinds by sins and misdemeanors that normally human beings commit. In the days of Satya Yuga; there was a Sacred Place named Chamareshwara in the Himalaya Range of Mountains. Quite a few of Celestial Beings like Deva-Siddha-Gandharvas were lined up there for worshipping Parameshwara. *Etasminnantare kaschidwaaarupa dharo Bali, Daiyendro bhum Maha Veeryastapogarvena garvitah, Atrasthaam samuha Devaannirayaa maasa shaktitah/* (Among such worshippers was King Bali Daitya who on account of prowess and dominance assumed Vaayu Rupa and tormented Devas) Then the hapless Indra and Devas approached Shambu Deva for refuge. They prayed to Maha Deva as follows: *Namaste Deva devaaya Shambhave Paramatmane, Jagstheti vinaashaaya hetu bhutaayavai namah/ Twam Maataa Sarva Bhutaanaam twameva Jagataam Pitaa, Twam suhrud - bandhurevaasi tato naanya Jagatraye/ Anaadhaanaam tu naadhastavamagateenaam gatistathaa, Aateenaam aartihaa twam vai twameva sharanam Vibho/* (Our sincere and devotion-ful greetings to you Paramatma! You are the Jagat-Sthiti-Vinaasha or the cause of Universal Existence, Preservation and Destruction alike; You are the Mother Figure as also the Sustainer and the Father of Creation; the Supreme Creator and the Friend-Philosopher-Guide and ultimate refuge point of mortals and immortals. You are the 'Anaadha Nadha' and we beseech you for our safety and merciful compassion.) *Iti stuwa Maha Deva praaduraaseet daya nidhih, Uvacha shlathayaa vaachaa Devan vai dukkha bhaajinah/ Saravashrutam maya Devaa Daiyendra swaduraatunah, Mayaa samvardhitaa Daityaacchettum naarhaah Suradhipaah/ Tasmad brajaddhvam sharanam sharanaarti pranaashanam, Bhagavantam Chaturbaahum Shankha Chakra Gadaadharam, Ksheera saagara madhyastam Seshashaayinamevacha/* (As Deva ganas prayed to Maha Deva that he should save them from the harassment from Daityas, Bhagavan Shiva explained to them that he himself was the preserver and promoter of the Daityas and as such that it would not be appropriate for him to take action against them; however his advice would be to approach Chaturbhuj Vishnu adorned with Sahankha-Chakra-Gada-Saranga resting on Shesha Naaga in yoga nidra on Ksheera saagara and that he would be the correct Deity to take refuge from.) Having advised thus Maha deva disappeared and thrilled by the Darshana of Maha deva himself, Devas proceeded to Vaikuntha and made their supplications thus:

Namo namo Anantaaya Rupaateetaayavai namah, Namah Sarva rupaaya sarvaatitaaya vai namah/ Ganeshaaya Gunajnaaya Gunateetaaya vai namah, Sarveshaaya cha Sarvasmai cha namah/Vedaaya Vedarupaaya Vedagamyaatenamah, Dhyanaaya Dhyanaagamaaya Dhyanaatitaayavai Namah/ Jagatkarte namastubhyam Jagadvatre chavainamah, Jagatpaaolana samstahta chittaya Chitswarupine/ (Ananta, Rupaateeta, Sarva Swarupa, Sarva ateeta, Jagat sthiti-Vinashaka Karana bhuta, our high

reverences; Ganesha, Gunajna, Gunaatita, Sarvesha- do accept our prostrations to you; Veda Swarupa, Veda Swaupa, Veda Gamyaa! Dhyana Swarupa, Dhyana gamya, Dhyaana ateeta; Jagat karta, Jagat vaktri, Jajat palaka ad Jagat harta, Chitta, Chitswarupine! Our danda pranamas or prostrations to you)

As Maha Vishnu was extolled thus, he was highly pleased and assured Devas thus: *Gacchavam Deva devesha naakam shoka haram param, Tam dushtam sakulam hanmi Vatarupam duraasadam/* (Devadeva Indra! You and all the Devas may return to Swarga without worries; I shall assume Vayu Rupa and terminate the Daityas and their Chief Maha Bali. *Ityuktwa tadaddh Vishnu bhaktaanaamaarti naashanah, Paataalaat Girirajevai pradurbuto Bhagatprabhuh/* (Having thus pacified Devendra and Devas, Maha Vishnu who is popular as ‘Arti naashaka’ or the ever smasher of the griefs of the needy travelled in the form of winds along the slopes of the high mountains and reappeared deep down at Patala Loka). *Sheshasharudhah Chaturbaahuh sa Lakshmikopi saayudhah, Ajnaapayaamaas tadaa shesham shata phanaanvitam/* (Maha Vishnu as always carried by Sesa Naaga Deva shining with four hands and the Ayudhas or armoury and accompanied by Devi Lakshmi instructed Shesha Naag as follows) *Vaatam piba phanotbhutamsahasra vadanaistathaa, Praanaam starpaya Nagesha yatah stavam Pava naashanah/* (Nagesha! Do first devour the Vayu Rupa Daitya and having snubbed his life force, you will achieve the encomium of ‘Pava naashana’ the powerful terminator of winds.) As Bhagavan Vishnu instructed Maha Sesa Naaga, he assumed Vayu Swarupa and sniffed out the Maha Bali Daitya in seconds who too was in Wind Form and thus the terrible harassment experienced by Devendra and Devas was finally terminated. Maha Vishnu then instructed Adi Shesha Deva as follows: *Atra tishtha Phanendra twam bhayam naashayavaatajam, Tadaa prabhuti Deveshi Naagobhu cchesha sanjakah/ Sushramaabhidho Naago varnito yogisattamah, Yatra snaatwaashramam yaati sukhena manujah Priye/* (Phanendra! You do reside here only and ensure to dismiss all difficulties arising out of fierce winds to visitors to this Holy Kshetra. Then Sesa Naag started residing at this place and as such this mountain had come to be referred to as Sesa Naag Parvata and Yoga sheshthas acclaimed it as ‘Sushras’! Any traveller arriving at this place would enjoy Great Tranquility especially after a refreshing Snaana and attain divinity!) *Sukhenaatra pluto lokaamstat ssamaannagopisya shramah, Swashramopi budhah prokto Naaga raajopi Sundari/*(As Maha Sesa continued to reside here and engage himself in Loka Raksha, in course of time his transfer of residence created ‘Shrama’ or weariness; that why was he was nick named ‘Swaashrama Naga Raja’) No doubt, he got tired but Devas were able to secure ‘Swaashrama’ or great relief! That is why humans have come to get safety and thanks to the continuous visits of Devas reaped the great advantage of Paapa Vimukti. *Darshanaa sprushyanaa snaanaat daanaat japa tapaattathaa, Swadhyaaya stutihyanantam punyamaapnuyaat/* (Persons visiting the Sesa Naaga Parvata are certain to reap Ananta Koti Punya by their darshana, sparshana, snaana, daana, japa, tapa, swaadhyaya, stuti, pujas) *Kamala pujaadyatra sthiraam prapnoti vaigiraam, Smaranaadapi Deveshi muchyate paapa sanchayah/* (Worship with lotus flowers to the Sacred Mountain would bestow excellent ‘Vaak Shuddhi’; indeed even smarana or remembrance would yield ‘Paapa Vimukti’. *Bahunaatra kimuktena Naagaraajasya Sundari, Brahma haamuchyate muchyate sadyah paanaaddaana jalasyavai/* (Sundari! The fruits of Sesa Naaga darshana are endless. Drinking the waters from this place and performing charities here would demolish Brahma hatyadi blemishes too instantly.) *Mahagonasa naamaana maruhe yatraarohana maatre na gacche Yamamandiram/* (Merely ascending the Maha Gonasa Parvata or at least put a foot forward towards the ascent would certainly avoid journey to Yama Mandira!)

Glory of Vayu Daitya Varjana Tirtha

Maha Bhirava continued his narration of the significance of select Tirthas to Devi Parvati in the context of Amarnaadha Yatraa phala. *Vaayunaa paribhutaascha Devaaste sharanam gataah, Deva Devam Maha Devam tushtuh parayaa giraa/* Devas headed by Indra approached Maha Deva to save them of the horrors caused by Vayu Daityas like Samirana. They invoked him and on his darshan, extolled him as follows: *Namo Devaadhivevaaya Sharvaya Shambhavebhuv, Adimadhyanta shunyaaya Paraya Prabhavenamah, Namobhairava rupaya Bhimaaya Bhaya naashine, Bhayanakaaya Devaaya Munja mekhaline namah/ Namomrita swarupaaya Mrityurmrityu vinaashine, Kalaanidhi vibhushaaya Kaala rupaayate namah/ Shantaaya Shweta deaata shanti vaahaaye namah, Amareshaaya Devaaya bhuyo bhuyo namo namah/* Bhagavan Parameshawara replied: *Shrutam mayaa purvameva baadhya daanavasya cha, Atraiva mathikam krutwaa tishthadwama vishankamaa/* (I am already aware that Daitya Danavas have been harassing and tormenting you; do not worry; you may stay here in peace for some time) Devas got emboldened by the assurance of Maha Deva; they improvised 'mathika' or rock built shelters without the passing of winds: *Mathikaasu cha Deveshaa kuroodhvam Vayu varjanam/ Ityam krutwaa tato Deva mathikaastatra prastaraih, Sthitaastatraiva Deveshi! Mathikaasu sukhaanvitaah/ Vaayuh shashaasa sumahan Daityah parama daarunah, Darshayaamaasa tadugram rupam daityam Purandarah/* (As assured by Maha Deva, Devas lived comfortably for some time in rock shelters with the least interaction of winds. Meanwhile gradually, Indra and Vaya Deva detected the Mahogra Swarupas or of grotesque and frightening forms of the Daityas). *Drushtwaa Daitya mugrav rupamindro vajram samaadadhadhou, Ahasaddaanavam Devastatraiva Vayu varjane/* (Getting ready with his vajraayudha, Indra saw the monstrous Daitya and instantly exterminated him called Vayu Varjana) *Vayu Varjana naamakhyam teertham bhutam Suraarchite, Anantam punyamaapnoti Vayu Varjana darshanaat/* (That specific spot where Vayu Varjana was annihilated by Indra became famed eventually and that Tirtha Darshana itself bestows Koti Punya Phala) *Maha pataka yuktovaa yuktovaaavopapatakaih, Muchyate patakodhaara drushtwaavai Vayuvarjanam/* (At the very sight of this 'Sthala', Maha Patakas and Upa Patakas of Manavas are evaporated at once). Snaanas, jala grahana, tila daanas at this significant Tirtha go a long way in reaping innumerable fruits. *Vau varjana deshetu krutwaa Shraaddhamatindratah, Pitarastripi - maayanti Shata kalpam na shamshayah/* (Those who execute shraaddha and tarpana karmas at this Vayu varjana Kshetra with faith and dedication should undoubtedly please Pitru Devas through Kalpa kalaas and grant immense blessings) *Mathikaam yena kurvanti tatraiva Vayu varjane, Daarunam Narakam yaanti Shatakalpa na shamshayah/* (Contrarily, having visited this Kshetra one ought to build 'Mathika nirmana' lest the visitors would be cursed for hundreds of kalpa kaalaas). *Yona kuryaan Mahadevi Snaanam daanam japam havih, Sa yaati Narakam ghoram tatteertham nishphalam phalam/* (Maha Devi! Those who arrive at the Vayu varjana Tirtha do not heed to perform snaana, daana, japa, homas should have to risk narakas and their Tirtha Yatras would turn out fruitless).

Sushka Sarovara Vrittaanta

Shrunu Sushroni vaksheham sushkibhutam Sarovaram, yenavigjnaana matrena Naro muchet patakaat/ (Sushroni!-the One who hears attentively-let me explain the account of a dried up Sarovara (Pond) on hearing about which human beings would be freed from Patakas or serious sins committed by them).

Hata sheshaamsi rakshaamsi tirobhutaani vai hrude, Sumaayamaa jalacharaan ghora rupa samanvitaah/ Chira kaalena te tatra punar devaan badhite kurvantomunisandhaanaam vighnanaaschaiva smaatatah/ (Several daityas resided in the pond and used to harass Rishis and common beings). Once, Maha Deva and Maha Devi visited the neglected pond and Munis and Brahmanas complained to them about the cause of the neglect. Maha Deva realised the plight of the Rishis and Brahmanas; *Veeksya vighnikritaan daithaih humkaaram karottadaa, humkaarena hataa Daityai magnastestu sarovare/* Maha Deva sighted the abandoned Sarovara as deserted by the Rishis and made the most frightening sound of Humkara, and instantly some the daityas died while some got silent and hid themselves). *Magnaan drushtwa tato Devishashaapa sara uttamam Munivighna karaan yasmaad rakshase daitya daanavam/* (Devi Parvati then realised that some more Rakshasa-Daitya-Danavas continued to hide themselves and thus gave a curse to the Sarovara to dry up instantly) As the Sarovara dried up, the Raakshasaadis got exposed and Pramadha ganas hunted and destroyed them totally.

Origin and significance of Pancha Tarangini

Vada satyam Maha Deva punyam Panchatarangnim, Yaam drushtwa Mukti maapnoti janmasta bhavairamai/ (Devi Parvati requested Maha Deva to convey the essence of Pancha Tarangini, on hearing about which the pataka mukti of human beings would be assured). *Punyamakshaya maapnoti yamamedhaadikam priye, Puraatandava lagnasya nritya maanasya Dhurjeteh, Kapardhah shtili bhutah Panchathaa cha Sureshwari/* (Devi! Once Shiva was performing Tandava Nritya, one of his jatajutas got loosened and there were outpours of five water flows.) *Tatovaa Panchadha Devi pradurbhuta Kapartahatah, Ganga Bhavati Devi Maha Patakanashani/* (Then ‘paapaharini’ Mother Ganga originated Pancha Tarangini which first fell on Maha Deva’s feet as five Sacred Flows) *Ya Panchadhaa Mehshaani Kapardaat Panchadhaabhavat, Saina proktaa Puraavidbhirnadi Pancha Tarangini/* (Maheshaani! As the five flows of Ganga got divided from Maha Deva’s feet, ‘Purana Tatwavettas’ named the flows as Pancha Taranginis.) *Nadyaam Pancha taranginyaam snaanam kurvaadatindratah, Muchyate paatake ghorai Brahmahatyaadi kotibhih/* (Whoever take sacred baths in the Pancha Tarangini, would be freed from crores of Brahma hatya paatakas) *Goghnaah kritaghno Deveshin bhrunahaa Guru talpam, Snaatwaa datwaa cha vidhivat sadyo muccheta Sundari/* (Those who might have perpetrated Gohatya, Kritaghnatwa, Bhruna hatya or Guru Talpa shayana are purified by mantra purvaka snaana and daana prakriyas instantly) *Kurukshetre Payaagecha Gangaa yaam Naimishe dhavaa Snaatwaa datyaacha vidhivadhyaphalah labhate narah/ Tatphalam samavaapnoti snaatwaa Pancha tarangineem/* The phala that accrued by mantra purvaka snaana- daanaas at Sacred Places like Kurukshetra, Prayaga, Ganga Tiraa, Naimisha and so on tantamounts to such duties at Pancha Tarangini) *Shraaddam cha vidhinaam kuryaat Pinda daanamathaapiva, Pitarah tasyatrupyanti shata kalpam na shamshayah/* (Those who execute shraaddha-pinda daana karmas formally should have the Pitru Devatas contented for hundred kalpas undoubtedly) *Gaam hiranyam suvaasascha kshemam chandanamevacha, Kumkumaagaru karpuram Mriga naabhimpeeshwari, Yoo dadaati Dwijendraaya sa shaivam lokamaapnuyaat/* (Those Dwijas who perform charities at Pancha Tarangini of cows, gold, good quality silk clothes, kesari-Agaru-Karpura-Mriga naabhi chandana and such sugandha materials would be qualified to attain Shiva loka). *Maha Pataka yuktovaa yuktovaaghypa paatakaih, Sadyah pramuchyate jantuh snaatwaa Pancha taranginim/* (Praanis who would have committed Maha Patakas or Upa Patakas and suffer from troubled consciences

are advised to attain 'mukti' from these with retrospective effect of earlier births too by pavitra snaanas at Pancha Tarangini).

Damaruka Shila Garbhagriha Puja-Garbha Kaagara Nivritti Marga

Devi Parvati evinced enthusiasm in learning from Maha Bhairava about the background of Damaruka Ganeshwara, and how he turned into a shila or stone as also how the 'Shilaasthala' evolved itself as a Punya Kshetra. *Shrunu vakshe Maheshani charitam Daamara sambhavam, Ena Karma vipaakena Shilibhuto Ganeshwarah/ Yacchutwaamuchyate janturvighna samsaghnai ranekashah/*(Maha Bhairava narrated the episode as to how Vighna Nayaka turned into a Shila and why various obstacles faced by human beings could be removed into auspiciousness by the darshana and puja of Damaruka Vighnesha) *Paraanartana shilasya Dhurjateh Sandhyayordhyayoh, Shanmukham kreera maanasya Sandhya kaala bhavat Priye/* (Devi Parvati! Parameshwara was totally involved in 'Tandava Nritya' even as Sandhya Kaala was round the corner and Shanmukha Swami was playful with Parvati). At this juncture, Shiva concluded his nritya and got concerned as Sandhya Samaya was over and he would have to take up his nitya-naimitthika karyas. Parvati noticed that Maha Deva was disturbed since he might get late for his daily chores. *Ayam Mahaa Ganodeva damarum guhya tishthat, Sandhyaaya vedanaatha cha chira kaalam Maheshwara/* (Devi Parvati remarked that already Shiva was mentally disturbed yet Ganeshwara had not stopped his Damaruka still!) On hearing this, Shiva feigned a mischievous joke as though to tickle Shanmukha too! But since Ganeshwara continued his damaruka, Shiva got highly irritated since Sandhya time was almost concluded and his daily chores were upset! *Sandhya kaala punastatra vyayatya gaacchika pardhinah, Vimrushya sandhyaalopamsa Deva Devo bhavah swayam, Kruddhaah shashaapa Girije Maha damarukam ganam/* (Since Sandhya kaala was already over, Shiva got furious and declared to Devi Parvati that he was therefore giving a 'shaap' or curse to Ganeshwara) *Yasmaannidraa vashenaapi Sandhya lopah krutasta yah, Mama tasmaacchiram tishthaa shileebhuto Ganaadhamam/* (My night slumber since converted now as 'Avesha' or anger due to my schedule of Sandhya Karyas is exceeded, I curse this 'Ganaadhama Damaruka' or the so called Chief of Ganas alias damakuka as obsessed with the Play of damaru to be converted as a Stone forever!) Having thus given the Shaap as a punishment to Ganesh, who turned into a Shila at once, Maha Deva retreated to Tapasya for a long duration, yet bestowing a boon to humanity as follows: *Yah kaschin maanavo Loke Ganam Daamarukam shreyet, Sa yaati Brahmano Lokamiti Satyam vadaamite/ Yah kaschidapi cheshaati Punya Garbhagamham shrayet, Garbhasta muchyte janturiti Satyana te shape/* (In this world, if anybody reaches the Damaruka Ashrama, that person would doubtless attain Brahma Loka and this indeed is a Truth! Devi Ishaani! Whosoever could enter the 'Sanctum Sanctorum' or the Garbha Griha of the 'Damaruka Ashrama' would achieve 'Garbha Mukti' or the riddance of rebirth! This is a 'Satya vachana' or an essential Truth again too.). Those, who come out of Garbha Dwaara of the Temple, would attain Shiva Loka and have no rebirth. *Yah Kaschadapi cheshaani Brhunahaa Guru talpagah, Maatruhaa Pitruhaa chaapi Suraapo bhraatruhaapicha, Sayaati Paramam divyam padam Sadaa Shivam Priye/* (Anybody who might have committed Patakas like Bhru-Bhatru-Matru-Pitru-Guru hatyaas or Madya Paanas too would then be pardoned out right and become eligible for Shiva Loka Praapti) *Mahaa Paapavanam chhetum prasabhimicchase Priye, Tadaashrayasya Devesha garbhaagaara vinisrutaa/* (If one has an intense desire and conviction to extricate from Maha Paatakas, Upa Patakas, and the worst

kind of sins, one should exit the Garbha dwaara of the Damaruka Sthaana and perform the most severe and sincere worship to Parameshwara!)

Outstanding Magnificence of Mrityunjaya Amareshwara

Snaatwaamaraavateem naamneem nadeem parama paavaneem bhasmaangasita dehaa cha bahu vastra vivarjita/ Pralapanjirmvacchiva sandhaanam dehime Parameshwara, Tadaa roheddarivaram tyaktvaa krodaadhi vikriyaam/ (Parameshwara! After taking bath in the most Sacred Amaravati River, smearing bhasma all over the body which shines bright white and wearing limited clothing, do kindly show me the way up the mountains to Shiva Loka! This is how one should pray after winning over the proverbial ‘Arishad Vargas’ of ‘kaama krodha lobha moha mada matsaras’ viz. desire, anger, greed, infatuation, arrogance and envy and firmly resolve with grit, faith, and total dedication to ascend and successfully reach the final destination of Amareshwara up the frighteningly arduous and most tiresome mountain range!) *Tadaa pranamy Devesham Guhastham Amareshwaram, Golakah kundaka vaapi yah kashchidatra nivritah, Sa bhavatu Gano Devi cheti satyana te shapey/* (Devi! As you perform earnest pranaams to Amareshwara Linga inside a mammoth cave, do not get awed and afraid by the picturesque vision of the Linga in the cave whether it presents itself in a Gola-akaara or Kundala-akaara, but assuredly and most truthfully magnificent and over-powering , as I swear, stated most emphatically by Maha Deva)

Shrunu vakshye Maha Tirtham Amareshasya Sundari! Yacchrutwaapi pramucchet maha paataka kotibhih/ (Sundari! I shall now narrate about the significance of Amaresha Maha Tirtha as whoever absorbs the essence of the legend should be freed from crores of sins piled up!) *Sadaa sadaa seettato naivanaaseetkinchina Sundari, Niyatirabhavattasmaat paraaccha paraatparah/Niyatirahamutpanna iti shushruma Sundari, Ahaame Sarva Bhagavatsarve Devaah sa Vaasawaah/* (Sundari! This account is a truth of perfection and reality that is being narrated and that is why has originated from purity of thought and mental discipline. I learn that I was originated from ‘niyati’ or such righteousness and self control). *Rishayah Pitaraschaapi Gandhavoraga Raakshasaah, Yaksha Bhuta Ganaaschaapi Kushmaanaa Bhairavaadayah/ Manushyaa Jambukaah Krura Daitya Daanava pungaa, Yete chaanye cha bahava utpannaa niyateh swayam, Chaturdasha vidho bhuta sargah praadurbhutkalah/* (It is out of this concept of ‘Niyati’ that all Devatas, Rishis, Pitru Devaas, Gandharvaas, Urugas, Rakshasas, Yaksha, Bhutas, Ganaas, Bhairavas, Manushyas, Jambukas, Krura Danava-Daityas and so on, on their own; in fact fourteen types of species were originated). *Mritustaanagrasat sarvaan Devaabhi sa Vaasavaan, Devaste mrityunaa grastaavya kulaahyabhavam Priye/ Sametya sharanam jaguh sharanyam Parameshwaram, Tushtuvuh parama preetyaa Shankarah tamonaashranam/* (Mrityu tormented Devaas, headed by Indra, approached Parama Shiva for refuge and protection and appealed as follows to the ever merciful Shiva):

Om Namah Shivaaya Devaaya Vishnave Prabha Vishnave, Namaschindrakodbodha prakaashaananda rupine/ Paramaaryadashaasthaaya sthaanave Vishwa bhavane, Namaschityayachintyaaya chitijnaaya chidardhine/ (Our prostrations to you Parameshwara; you are Shiva, Vishnu and Prabhavishnu at the same time at once! You are of Chit Swarupa enriched with the splendor of Chandra Deva. You are the Paramardha dashaastha, Sthaanu, Vishwa Bhanu, Chitya, Achintya, Chitijna and Chidardhi! our earnest

salutations to you!) *Vishwa dravya Shitaashesha Swaanta Mohaaya Shubhave, Vimarshine Vidhigjnaaya Mukti Rupaayate namah/* (Parama Shiva, you are of the unique form of Vishwa dravya, Shitaashesha, Swaanta Mohana, Shubha Swarupa, Vimarshi, Mukti Rupa) *Vishesajnaaya Devaaya Jaya Vishvopa kaarine, Vishwa rupaaya Devaaya Vishwa vaasaayate nama/ Nishedha jnaaya Devaaya Tatswarupaaya –tenamah, Namaste Sarva Mrigyaaya Sukshma Maargaarha darshine/*(Our pranams to you Visheshajnaa, Deva, Tat Swarupa, Jaya, Vishyopakaara, Vishwa Rupa, Vishwaavaasa, Nishedhajna, Tatswarupa, Sarva Mrigya Rupa, Shukshma Marga Darshaka) *Namo niyati rupaaya tatwarupayate namah, Mahattwaaya Devaaya Sukshma Tatwaayate namah/ Namomritaaya Devaaya Namomrita swarupine, Mrityunjayaaya Devaaya bhuyo bhuyo namo namah/* (Our prayers to you Niyati Rupa, Tatwa Rupa, Mahattatwa, Sukshma Tatwa, Amrita Rupa, Amrita Swarupine, Mrityunjaya, Maha Deva, Bhuyo bhuyo namyah). As the delegation of Devaas led by Indra commended as above, Maha Deva was pleased and on his enquiry, Indra explained about the constant threats posed by Mrityu to all of them: *Yatah sa mrityur nashyayenno seveccha balena hi, Tatkurushwa Maha Deva bhaiktaanaamaarti naashana/* (Devahideva! Do kindly show us a way out from the strangle hold of Mrityu so that it should not overcome us and torment us; kindly ensure that the desperation and constant threat to your Bhaktas like us be terminated forthwith.) *Shrutwaa Deva vachah soumyam Maheshah pratyuvaacha taan, Mrityupaayam karishyaami sahadhwam kshanamuttamaah/* (Maha Deva realised the gravity of the problem and assured Devas of a solution soon) *Griheetwaa shirastatra Haraschandra kalaam swayam, Sampeedyav Devaanna vadanmrithyu bshesaja peedanaat/ Yaa nisirutaa chaiva tathaa dharaa seetatraa paarmika Priye, Sauva bhutaa nede punyaa naamnaavaih Amaravati/ Ye bindavaschayutaa Devi Shariremrita bindavah, Te bhasma rupataam prapyachyuscheshanataam gataah/* (Bhagavan himself adjusted the Chandra Kala on his head and pulled out a flow of Sacred River named Amaravati from his body. The River materialised into chilled cool drops and as many drops of Amrita that flowed turned out to take the shape of a hallowed Linga decorated with Bhasma and that indeed was the Amara Natha Maha Deva Himself). *Premaateshaam Maha Devi Shivopidravataamagaat, te drushtwaatu Shivam tatra dravibhutam Maheshwari/* (This was how Maha Deva got melted from the desperate cries of Devas to save themselves from the clutches of Mrityu) **That indeed was the Origin of Amara Naatha Linga!** *Tushtu vaargibhih pranemuscha muhurmuhuh/*(Devas raised their voices and showered their ever grateful commendations and prostrated before the Linga again and again) *Sa punardashayaa pusa Devanaam mita kaamyaya, Rasopishaanataam prapya Linga rupobhavatim/* Parama Shiva then gave them a limited darshan once again and then assumed the Holy Form of the Melting Linga) *Lingam rupam Haravokshya dravibhutam Maheshwari, Punah punah pranemuste bhavam kaarumi kamparam/* (Devi Maheshwari, Devas were moved and mesmerised by the most merciful ‘parama tatwa’ of Maha Deva and prostrated before Him repeatedly). *Devaannuti paraadrushtyaa provaacha Surattamah, Harah Paramayaa Vaachaa shrunutwam Devasattamaah/* (Most pleased with the grateful commendations of Devas, Maha Deva addressed them as follows) *Yasmaad bhavadbhidrushtam me Prama Lingam darigrihe, tasmaan Mrityurmushmaanave yadhattemadanugrahaat/*(Devas! Just as you are visioning my Linga Swarupa replete with compassion and love, so does your fright of Mrityu melted off for sure?) *Ihaivah Amaraa bhutwaa gacchavam Shivayujyataam/* (Be here always to accomplish ‘Amaratwa’ and ‘Shiva Saayujya’) *Itah prabhutime Lingah Amareshaakhyamuttamam/ Devaah pradakshine kritwa swam swa maalayamaayamah/* Totally contented, Devas once again prostrated and returned back to their abodes in Swarga). Maha Deva who bestowed boons to Devas earlier, then disappeared himself to the other oblivion of the Mountains.

Maha Bhairava continued his conversation with Devi Parvati futher:*Amaam Soma kalaam Guhya Devaanaam hita kaamyaya, Mrityu naashamchakaaraashu tasmaaddhah Amareshwarah/* (Devi! Having absorbed the Chandra Kalaas day by day following ‘Amavasya’ and thus demolished the fear of Mrityu, then onward Maha Deva attained the fame and name as Mrityunjaya Amereshwara) *Mrityu heena yato Devi cheshwarena kritasuraah, Tatah proktam puraavidbhiramareshwara sanjakam/*(Devi! Parameshwara had blessed Devas to destroy Mrityu and as such the writers of Puranas and Itihaasas as also Tatwavidhis accorded the title of Amareshwara to Him.) *Bhava rogam cha guhyati Bhaktaayaam cheshwarah, Swayam yaddarshanaat proktam hyamereshwaraakhya muttamam/*(Bhagavan Shiva destroyed bhavarogaas or the evils of Samsara especially diseases and problems of body and mind and that is another reason of naming His abode as Amareshwara) *Amaam prabhuti puraantam Kalaam guhyaaticheshwarah, Tatah proktascha tatwagjnaih Bhagavaannamareshwarah/* (As He destroys all kinds of blemishes during the period of Amavashya to Purnima, Bhagavan is named Amareshwara) *Yadaa Suranaaschaiva jaraamarana naashanam, Moksha ishuaryaprada yasmaat proktamamara sanjnakam/*(He bestows moksha or Ultimate Salvation and opulence, destroys old age and untimely deaths and that is why, he is titled Amareshwara) *Idam rasamayam Lingam Mahaprema samudbhavam, Samarasya pradam Devi tava snehaatprakaashitam/* (Devi! This Rasamaya Linga is splendorous by virtue of your wishes too providing excellent rapport between the undoubted faith and devotion of the devotees and me) *Yatraam kritwaa cha Devehi snaatwaamara te jaley, Bhasmanaa lipyachaangaani Moksha maapnoti Maanavaah/* (Devi! Those who perform idea bathing in the Amarendra River and smear Shuddha Bhasma all over the body are blessed with their dedicated worship to me shall certainly attain moksha!) *Kritwaatu tandavam Devi! Guhaayaamcha suharshitah, Amareva kathito Narah parama paavanah/* (Those Manavas who enter the Cave with joy and take to performance of dance with frenzy are stated to purify themselves totally!) *Yassavaasaa grihasta sa yaatii narakam ghoram yavadindra - schatudarshayaa/* (Those Grihastis or house- holders who wear showy clothing and enter the cave are cursed to get punished in Narakas for fourteen Divya years – each such year making hundred human years) *Yah pasched bhasma heenaango Rasa Lingam Sanatanam, Sa kushtecha Bhavaddevi janturjanmani janmani/* (Those humans who do have a darshan of Rasa Linga without ‘bhasma lepana’ on the body would suffer leprosy for repeated births) *Yaatramakrutwayo Devi pasheddai Amareshwaram, Sayaati daarunaan ghoraannarakaanneka vimshatam/* (Those who seek to make a casual visit for fun only without devotion shall be punished in hells for 21 years) Similarly, those who do observe the pre-requirements of the Linga Darshana viz. tandava natya, formal puja, and daan dharma would attract retributions of Teerta Droha, Naraka prapti, Kaala Sutra Naraka respectively. However, Amara naadha Darshana in a formal manner yield untold benefits: *Bhruna haa Guru talpi Suraapi swarna haarakah, etatdrushtwaa Maheshaanamamareshwara danjnakam, Muchyante takshanaat Devi mahaa patakinopi - cha/* (Persons who have committed heinous crimes like Bhruna hatya or destroying human embryos, highly decieving one’s won Guru by spoiling Guru patni etc., drunkards, gold robbers etc. shall be pardoned outright by achieving formal darshana and Puja) *Go maamsa bhaksho Madhupah Surejya tyagi Vatsaha Balahaapi, Garbhaghathi Shavakrut paata kruthcha Sadyomuchedre dikshamaam Linga rupam, Maha krodhi lobha mohaabhi bhutah swarnasteyi Parajaamagaabhi, Chidrapekshi Saadhu nindaaratas - cha dambhaachari Anritavaak alpa buddhih/* (Parvati! Perpetrators of differenrent sins like cow meat eating, wine drinking, abandoning of Deva Puja, killing calves and children and committing patakas; as also Maha krodhis, Maha Lobhis, swindlers of gold articles, habitual indulgers in sex, boasters, nagging critics of others especially Sadhus or the virtuous, the narrow minded and so on would be blessed to

completely reverse their actions and rectify themselves at the mere darshan of Amar naadha Linga). *Drishtwa Devamamaresha swarupam dravibhutam parvata, nucchhettaasamaa maatra paapasandhascha Devi Satyam Satyam naanrutam te vadaami/Chandraayana Maha krucchhai shatamaantarau naischa yat , Phalam prapnoyasya darshayaat/* (Devi! The unique vision of the gigantic Linga melting fast shall indeed redeem oceanful like sins and this indeed is the Truth and Truth again; the fruits of sighting Amareshwarah would equate Chandrayana-Maha Kruccha Vratas in hundreds). *Kuru kshetre Prayaage cha Naimishe Kurujangale, Gavam koti sahasarya sampradattayam yat phalam, Tat phalam samavaapnoti Amareshasya darshanaat/* (what ever ‘phala’ or reward is available from the charity of thousands and crores of cows at the most Sacred Tirthas like Kurukshetra, Prayaga, Naimisha and Kurujaangala might equate with Amareshwara Linga Darshana). *Susukshmaih sweta vaasobhirmriga kunchuka chandanaih, Karpura swarna pushpascha roupaivaapi Maheshwari, Pujayitwaamaresha - akhyaam Linga Divyam sudhaamayam/* (Maheshwari!Those who perform dedicated puja to Amareshwara with tiny white robes, Mriga Kumkuma Karpura chandanas and golden flowers are certain to become Rudras by themselves and would not get a rebirth!) *Nari va Purusho vaapi pujaye Lingamuttamam, Sayaati Shiva saayujyam yatra gatwaanasho –chati/ Amaresham aha Lingam drushtwaa sprusshwaa kalaam Narah, Sadyo hyamarataam yaati Satyam Satyam Varaanane/*(Be they men or women who have darshan, sparshan and perform ‘Shodashopachaara puja’ in full detail with devotion should indeed attain Amaratwa or Divinity definitely and this is the absolute Truth assured Maha Bhairava to Devi Parvati) *Peetwaa Amara dhaarrantu patitaantu grihantare yopi yaati Shiva sthaanam yatra naasti kritaakrite/* (Even those who take in the melted water of the Maha Linga would be blessed with Shiva Sthaana and there is no bar in doing so but with faith and belief!) *Drishtam Amaranaadhasya rudam yaschavrajeda grihaat, Pade padeshwarudhaanaam yagnjaanaam labhate phalam/* (Those who resolve to take up the Yatra to Amara naadha from their homes shall reap the fruit of performing Ashwamedha Yagna by each and every step towards the destination) *Kapotaamstu ganamstatwaa drishtwaannyandajaan narah, Sa eva Rudro bhavati jayeti pravadanmuhuh/*(Those yaatris who happen to sight doves or damaruka ganas or even other birds or elephants in the high domes of the cave or its premises, should greet with victory sounds of ‘Jai Jai’ as they shall attain Rudra Rupas!)

The Legend of Daamaruka Ganaas turning into Pigeons

Kapotaah ke Ganastatraa katham kritasthitaah Prabho, Vadame kripayaa Shambho lokaanaam hita kaamyayaa/ (Devi Parvati enquired of doves and Ganas as to why and how were there in the cave). *Shrunu Sushroti vakshyaami kapotaame bhavatkila, Yacchrutwaa muchyate jantu jeevaa hatyaati paapakaat/* (Sushroni! Let me explain about the pigeons and Ganas and on hearing about this account human beings would be freed from their blemishes) *Yadaaprabhuti Deveshi Mahaa Daamaruko Ganaah, Tadaaprabhuti tatraiva sthaapite Ganaamayaa/* (Devi, do recall that I installed Maha Daamaruka Ganaas) *Taandavaa vedanaardham cha Sandhyaaklaalasya Sundari, Ekadaa nritya maanasya Sandyaayaam chaiva Dhurjateh, Spardhayaa ‘kuru kurvtya’ chunstremaravindate/* (Sundari, when Shiva was performing Tandava Nritya at the Sandhyaa time, he kept on hearing the sounds of appreciation saying ‘Kuru Kuru’ or ‘do so, do so’; Maha Deva got disturbed and gave a shaap to the ‘Daamaruka Ganas’ to become pigeons) *Yasmat kuru shabdham kurvaanah spardhayaamuhuh, Tasmaat kuru shabam kurvaanah stha chiram Ganaah, Kapota rupaa teerthesmin Vighna sanghaapa haarinaah/ Ityam*

shaptaasato Devi harena Paramatmanaa, Kritwaa rupaastaam Tirtha Vighnaapa haarinaa/ (Maha Deva cursed those Daamaruka Ganas who kept on exclaiming ‘Kuru Kuru’ had ever-since taken the form of pigeons and continue the sounds as such till date; thus Bhagavan blesses to the Yattris by way of conveying the message of destroying their sins through the sounds) *Yodrushtwaatu uhaantastaan Kapotaan gaganaat Priye, Avarooheed Girisharastasmaa teertha drohi smrito buddhaaih/* (Priye! Those who do not vision the pigeon couple inside the cave are expected to be ‘teertha drohis’ not having fulfilled their aspirations) *Tasmaattatra darshaneeyaah Kapotaa Ganasattamaah, Maha paapaharaah proktaah Yaatribhih Paara- maardhikaih)* (That is why these pigeons must be seen and heard as a mark of the fulfillment of their wishes) *Snaatwaa drushtaa shruaachaapi sprushtaa Devi samantatah, Amaraishwaryataam yaati tatah proktaamaraavati/ Amaraatwam naraah snaatwaa sadyamuchyate sankataat/* (Devi! Performance of ‘Snaana Darshana Spursha’ of Amareshwara Linga is a unique experience possible only for a limited Yattris and bestows Amaratwa and that is why this pilgrimage is noted as Amara yatra) *Kali kalmasha ghora naashanam Rasa Lingam samuderitam Priye, Pashupaasha vinaasha kaarakam amareshwara -naakamam param/*(This ‘Parama Rasaramareshwara Linga’ is stated thus to be Ghora Paaapanaashaka and Pashu paasha vimochana kaaraka) *Yah karoti Mahaa Pujaam Swadhaa Lingasya Sundari, Sa yaati Shiva saayujyamiti satyam vadaamite/* (Sundari, it is a unique Truth that is assured by Maha Deva that whosoever performs dedicated worship to this Swadha Linga would be blessed with Shiva saayujya) *Siddhi Lingamidam Devi Buddhi Lingamidam Priya, Shuddhi Lingamidam proktam Vriddhi Lingamidam param/* (Devi, This indeed is acclaimed as Siddhi Linga, Buddhi Linga, Shuddhi Linga and Parama Vriddhi Linga!) *Idam pumavanam Lingam Mahattejobhivardhanam, Kanyaa pradam paavanam cha Paramam yogadam Kalou/* (This Pumsavya Linga is an instant enhancer of Tejas or Brightness, Kanya prada, Paavana prada and supreme yoga kaaraka in these days of kali yuga) *Vinaa dhyaanam vina daanam vinaa yogam yadeechasi, Tadaa shrayasya Dveshi Linga mamara sanjnakam/* (Devi, one might approach Amara Linga if desirous of returns even without dhyana, daana, yoga pre-requirements) *Shariram youvanam dravyam daaraan putraan griham tathaa, Chanchalam sarvato jnaataa Amaresham samaashrayet/* (One should approach Amareshwara without considerations of age, physical well being, monetary considerations or of wife/ husband, children and household) *Yaavanna grasato mrityuryavannendriya viplavah, yaavaddhed jaraa vyaadhih sheerayate Jagadambike/Taava Devaamareshaakhyaam Lingam Rasamaya Priye/* (One can after all reach Amaresha Linga only before Mrityu does not devour, physical limbs create no havoc, old age and disease do not overcome) *Trilokye yaani Teerthaani sthaanaani Jagadambike, Amareshaakhya Lingasyasam Lingam Rasamaya Priye/* (Jagadamba! There is no parallel in the Tirthas, Sthaanaas and so on in the Trilokas comparable with Amaresha Rasamaya Linga!) *Bhuyo bhuyah vimuktena Narah paatakan vaaskalou, Amaresham samaashritya muktiyeva na samshayah/* (What indeed is the use of repeated references! There is no doubt at all that worship to Amareshwara and his total protection assures mukti) *Ityam Mahaatmyaameeshani punyam Amara bnaadhagam, Shrutwaa pathitwaamuccheta Brahma hatyaadi kotibhih/* (Devi! Those who hear, read about and absorb the account of Amaranatha would be redeemed from crores of sins) *Apeya paanaana muchyeta tathaa bhakshasya bhakshanaat, Bandhaa pramuchyate baddho rogaadrogi pramutchyate/* (Persons who are victims of prohibited drinking, consumption of prohibited food, or imprisoned for offences or subjected with diseases are redeemed forth with) *Idam prajanaam soumyam shrotrunam pushiti vardhanam, Pathitwaa paathayitwaavaa muchate sarv kilbishaat/* (From this Amara -shwara Linga Mahatmya, readers would improve their physical well being and excellent health; learning about Him by themselves or hearing from others shall demolish all ailments and sins of both the parties).

Ayushpradam Kaantidam cha keertidam Jagadeeshwari, Dhanadam paputram chaapi Kanyaa pradamuttamam/ (Devi! This Legend would bestow longevity, brightness, reputation, prosperity, and disciplined sons and daughters to those who hear or recite) *Ityedhapatalo guhyaa gopaniyah Kale Priye, Shrutaanudhyaatah pathito Maha Patakahaa Kale/* (This narration is confidential and worthy of keeping confidential too; during these times of kaliyuga, mere studying and absorbing the essence of this Sacred Story shall certainly terminate all indiscretions)

Shrutwaa shrutwaa Maheshaana smaaram smaara manuttamam, Punyamamara naadhasya rasa lingasya sambhavat, Kritaardhaasi kritaardhaasi kritaardhaasi na samshayah/ Kreetasmi Jagadeshaa taaritasmi bhavaranavat (Maheshwara! This highly Sacred Account of the Origin of Amarnatha Rasa Linga has been heard from you and am most grateful as you have so patiently and interestingly narrated that I shall indeed cherish always the proceedings and seek to absorb the contents. Maha Deva! I am ever grateful, thankful and indebted to you once again and again! I am your humble servant having relieved me of the ills and woes of the ocean of ‘Samsaara’) Devi Parvati further eulogized Maha Deva as follows: *Jaya Shambho Trineratwam Jaya Bhaktam kripaambudhey, Jaya Shiva Jayeshyaa Tripuraasura sudana/ Jaya Kapardinbhanganavam Jaya Shula Dharaachyuta, Pinaaka paane Varada Jayaanshaka Madardaka/ Jaya Bhakta Janodaama Kaamanaa Varadeshwara! Jaya bhakti rasaaswaadakhilo Vishwapa/ Jaya ghoraatighoresha Jaya Paapa nivrutana, Jaya Bhairava Bheemesha Jaya Shri Para Bhairava/*

Amarnath Yatra Phala

As Devi Parvati thanked Maha Deva, the latter explained further for the benefit of Bhaktas as follows: *Yatah swam darshayaa Maasa Shravanyam cha Harah swayam, Tatascha kathityaa yatraa Shrananyaam cha Harah swayam, Tatascha kathitaa yatraashravanyaam Punya daayani/ Shravani shukla pakshe yartraa Shravanyaam Punyadaayani, Shravani shukla pakshe tu yaatraam kritwaa vidhyaatah/ Yah prapashyet Purnimaayaam Swadhaa Lingam sanatanam, Yaati Shaivam padam sopi Pashupaasha vivrjitah/* (Maha Deva himself gives darshana and as such yatra on that particular day viz. Shravana Purnima is extremely significant. Those who seek darshana in the fortnight from that day onward would indeed attain full redemption from all types of Maha Patakas and smash away from the shackles of Pashu Paasha!) *Yah prashavanyaam Maha Devi prapashyegiri madhyamam, Lingam Amaranaadha rupasa gacchhecchiva sannidhou/* (Maha Devi! Those who have darshana of Amarnatha Linga in Shravana Nakshatra would be rewarded with Shiva Loka nivasa!) *Sparshanaat Deva Devasya Lingasya Jagadeshwari, Paapa panchaka nirmukto yaati Shaiva param padam/* (Jagadeshwari! Those who have the great fortune of Maha Deva Linga sparsha would redeem themselves of sins in entirety and attain Parama pada). *Vaaranaasyaa dasa gunam Prayaagaaccha shata smritam, Sahasra gunitam Devi Naimishaan kuru, Punya phaladam proktam mayaatava Priyecchayaa/* (Devi! This Amarnath Linga grants the fruits of worship at the Varanasi Linga by ten times, Prayaga’s puja by hundred times, Naimisha by thousand times) *Divya Varsha sahasram tu Linaarbuda prapujanaat, Suvarna pushpa yuktaabhi kshomairvara paramtuyat/ Tatphalam samaapnoti Rasa Lingasya darshanaat/* (Worship of Lingas for several years with golden flowers would equate with Rasa Linga darshana once) *Ekaahye Maha Devi Mriga kapuram chandanaat, Karpura chandanaschaapi pujayemamareshwaram, Aapnoti cha Maha punya Amareshwarasya pujanaat/* (Just once Mriga karpura chandana Puja, if done to

Amareshwara, that itself would be adequate to accomplish Maha Punya) *Muktaabhih swarana pushpaina roupyairvaa, Naro muktimavapnoti satyam satyam varaanane/* (Even one puja with pearls, golden and silver articles to Amareshwara Linga would suffice to qualify to secure Mukti) *Ananaischa Vividhai dravye pujayoramashwara, Dhupa deepaischa naivedyaih punyamaapnotivaa ganam/*(Puja with vividha dravyas and dhupa deepa naivedyas to Rasa Linga, would fetch Yajna phala) *Araarikaam Maheshasya ghritaabhyaktaam karotimah, Tilathailaabhishitaam vaa sayaati Paramampadam/*(Following Abhisheka, with ghee or oil, once Bhaktas perform ‘Mangala Arati’ they would fetch the fruits of ‘Paramapada prapti’. *Ghritha guggula samyuktaam dhupamati Sundari, Sarva paapa vinirmukto yaatiMaheshwara padam/* (Sundari! Persons duly performing ‘Arati’ with ghee to the Amareshwara Linga shall reach Maheshwara -pada) *Pradakshinaardha yo Devi yo dadhaan Maheshwari, Pade pade cha medhaanaam sahasram prapnumaan narah/* (Devi, those who perform half circumambulation to Amara Linga, shall reap the reward of Ashwamedha Yagna for each step!) *Tatovaruhhecchalaatushrayeh sangamamuttamam, Shraaddam kritwaa vidhaanena tarpaye Pitru Devataah/*(On return from the Mountains, the Devotees are advised to return back to the flows of the ‘Sangama’ and duly perform Pitru Shraaddha and execute tarpanas to Pitru Devatas and Devas) *Modanti Pitarastasya nrityanti cha samantatah, Adha kurvanti Daayadaah Sangame shraaddhamuttamam/*(Pitru Devas on being satisfied with the Tarpana Shraddhas thus at the Daayaadi Sangama would even dance with happiness). *Gaya pinda pradaanaishcha shatakalpam Sureshwari, Gacchanti yaam triptimitah pitarah Surapujite/ Kshirakhandaadi bhojascha Brahmanaancha bhोजनाat, Taamaapnuvanti Deveshi saktu pindaascha Sangame/* (Sureshwari, Sura pujite! Gaya Pinda pradana is stated to yield contentment to Pirtu Devas for hundred kalpas; but the type of Shraddhas by serving elaborate menu of ‘Ksheera khanda bhojyaadi bhojana’ at Gaya tantamounts to the bland food provided at the Dayaadi Sangama results in much better contentment to the Pitru Devatas). *Kurukshetre Prayaagecha Makarepi Devaakare, Shata kalpam Maheshaani snaanaadyatphala maapnuyaat, Tadaapnoti Narotraiva Ekaahasnaana maatratah/* (Maheshaani! The great Punya phala attainable at Kurukshetra and Prayaga at the entry of Surya Deva into Makara Rashi for hundred kalpas would indeed equate to just one ‘snaana’ at the ‘Daayadi Sangama’!) *Chudaamane Maha Yogi Kuru kshetre cha tarpanaat, Tadaapnoti pitaro yaanti taam yaati Sangame Priye/*(The tarpana phalas at several Kshetras like Kurukshetra and Chudamani would satisfy with one single tarpana at the Sagama) *Amaravati Pancha nadyaah Sangame Surapujite, Naari vaa Purushovaapi duhkuryaacchaadra muttamam,Pitaasya tripyanti Shata Kalpam na shamshayah/ Gaam hiranyam suvaasaamsi kshemam repya Maheshwari, Muktaa phalam manimvaapi yaati Shaivam padam pumaan/* (Sura pujite, Shraddhas performed by men and women at the Pancha Nadi Sangama Tirtha shall no doubt give contentment to Pitaras for hundred kalpas) *Gaam hiranyam suvaasaamsi kshemam repya Maheshwari, Muktaa phalam manim vaapi yaati Shaivam Padam Pumaan/*(Ishwari! Danaas of cows, gold, silk clothes, silver, mukta phalam and precious stones would surely result in Shaiva-pada)

Amarnath yatraanantara Peetha Daana Vidhana and Mahima

Devi Parvati enquired about the procedure of Peetha Daana and Maha Bhairava replied as follows: *Palapapanchaka maadaaya yava pishtasya Sundari, Suchaturbhadrakam kritwaa lepaitwaatu kunkumaih/ Karpura chandanaivaapi Mrigasjaischa Maheshwari, Chatushkoneshu samsthaapya suvarnaanaam chathustayam/ Athavaa repya mudraanaam panchakam Manujeshwari, Archayitwaa*

Gandha Pushpai Brahminaaya samarpiyet/(Sundari! Having drawn chatur bhujas or four segments on a 'Pancha Pallava Peetha' or base smeared with Kesara, Karpura, Chandana and Kasturi Lepas, place four golden items and a gold and pearl in the center –or alternatively silver mudras-and Gandha Pushpaakshas should be given away as daana to a Sad-Brahmana) Aadhara Shaktyadibhi nantraih pujayitwaa suvaasayet, Vastraih shwata patai daivastyaa yagnopaveetakaih, Dakshinaabhi bhakt purva mantenam samuccharet/ (Adhara Shakti Mantras be recited, puja be performed with Sugandha, Sweta Vastras and Yagnopaveeta, besides 'Dakshina Daana'and the following Mantras be recited too:

Yatraa saaphalya hetoscha Amareshasya agjnayaa, Peetham mayaarchitam divyam suvaasobhiralamkritam/ Mrityunjaya Maha Devabhi Samsaara saagaraat, Architam twaswarupaaya Braahmanaaya mamatmane/ (With a view to reap the Maha Phala of Amarnath Yatra, this Divya Peethika Puja has been successfully concluded with the blessings of Maha Bharaiva. Mriyunjaya! Maha Deva! With the unique aspiration of crossing this 'Samsara Samudra' without fear and with total faith, this Divya Peethika is being offered as a token of dedication to you in favour of this learned Brahmana. Then the following be recited: Idam grihaana Vipresha swarupinava shaasinaat, Peethamhyaamare – shasya Mahaapaapa nivrittasye/ (Brahmanottama, undern insructions from Maha Deva, do kindly accept this Divya Peethika as a token of gratitude with your blessings to destroy all my erstwhile sins).

Thus, Maha Bhairava Deva continued his narration to Maha Devi as follows: *Yanmaya dushkruta kinchit-krutam Gurvaannyathaapivaa, Bhrunahatyaadikam paapam Brahma hatyaadikatathaa/Guru hatya - adikam paapam Maatru haytaaikam cha yat, Suvarnastyedaakim paapam Suraapaanamapeeshwari/ Gohatyaanrita bhashitwa krodham lobhamadhaapivaa,Bhatruhatyaagaadanyamrityu krita cheshyaya/ Paradaaraabhighamitwaan Para vaadam parasyava, Bhartrusdyaanyadaa saktam kritaamchesyaat Sureswari/ Laghu sukshma brihadwaapi yatkrutam paapamuttamam,Tatsarvam naashayaayaatu peetha daanaan maheshwari/ Iti Mantrena Deveshi peetham Vipraaya charpayat/ (Sureshwari! The following Mantra be recited with faith while executing the Peetha Daana: 'May Sins and Patakas of varying dimensions perpetrated by youngsters or elderly like Bhruna-Go-Brahmana-Guru- Matru-Bhatru hatyas; swarna harana, suraa paana, Anrita Bhaashana, Krodha, Lobhaadi arishad vargas, Para daara preeti or desire for men other than one's own husband and so on as also small, medium and huge Maha Patakas be dissolved with this Peetha Daana!') Tathaa maya proktamivum tatraanaghe daanamva peethasya para rahasyam, dadaswa Deveshi param kmanyrdaanah Kaler kalpa phala pradaishcha/ Idam rahasyam Paramam naasyeyam yasya kasyachit, Gopaneeyam visheshena Kale siddhi pradamnanaam/(Anaghe! The detail of Peetha Daana has thus been conveyed to you. What indeed is the value of any number of charities in Kali Yuga otherwise! This information is confidential and of high relevance and utility otherwise!) Lakshmyaah kritamidam daanam Parvataacha Majheshwari, Saayujya mapi tatkshan praputah Parameshwari/ (Maheshwari, Lakshmi Devi and Parvati too performed this Peetha daana and they too attained Shiva Sayujya!)*

Having explained the procedure and phala of Peetha Daana, Maha Bhairava gave detailed instructions to Devi Parvati to spread the message of the Amarnath yatra's unique significance to the inhabitants of Maamala Graama as follows: *Tato paapaan mahaagraame Maamalaakhye Maheshwari, Pashupahaarai pushpancha pujaneeyah prayatnatah/ Praasaadya Ganapam tatra naanaa balyupahaarakah,*

Shraayaanna vadale Gangaa yashtim tatraarruyd Budhah/ Yashte hyaadhaara bhutasya Saakshi bhutaasi vaivatah, Yaatkarmascha teerthasya yaatraam mama nivedaya/Yashte!Srishti Swarupasi sthiti pralaya kaarini, Yashte Vishnu prayaasi twam Shiva Shakti swarupini/Tasmaanme paapa sandhaanscha hitwaa mahiswakam padam, Gange Priyaahi Devasywa Shirasi Dhurjate Priye/ Purato Deva Devasya maatraam mama nivedaya/ (Maheshwari! Do visit Maamala Graama, feed the cows, perform pushpa puja formally, execute Bali haaras, worship Ganeshwara to please him, go upto Ganga Tirtha, invite a sizeable congregation of Vidwans and as you yourself are the ready evidence of the happenings at Amaranadha, do sensitise them about the unique significance of the Yatra in great detail. Indeed you are also the Srishti- Sthiti-Pralaya kaarini, Shiva Shakti Swarupini, Vishnu Priya too besides being the beloved of Dhurjati who is the companion of Ganga retained on his head; indeed you are the Supreme Spokeswoman who has the capacity and power of conviction to popularize the message of Amaranatha Yatra Visessa so that large number of common men and women tormented by sins of varying proportions could be relieved and be blessed for Shiva loka prapti!)

Conclusion

Veda parayanam Punyam praapnotyeva na samshayah, Yatraamevam vidham kritwaa punyam Amara nayakam/ (Yatris to Amaranatha are assured of Veda paarayana Punya, but countless other benefits too) Muktimeva samaapnoti vina chendriya nigrahah, Ihaloke sukhi bhutwa Ante saayujya maapnuyat/ (The Yatris would enjoy the rest of their lives with contentment and at the termination of life attain Sayujya)

Iti guhyam maahakhyaam phalamamaraalayam, Yacchrutwaamuchyate Janturmahapaataka kotibhih/ Ityasha patalo guhyo Maha paapa pranaashakah, Shrutascha Pathitaschaapi Hayamedhaadhiyagadah/ (Maha Bhairava assured Devi Parvati: The above narration is a 'Rahasya Vrittaanta' or of Confidential nature that uproots all kinds of Paatakas committed by human beings who have successfully accomplished the pilgrimage to Amara natha. Those who read or listen to this Account will have secured Ashwamedhaadi Yajna Phala!)

[This is the Sacred Description of Shri Bhairava Bhairavi Samvaada on Shri Amaranatha Yatra Phala from Bhringi Samhita of Skanda Purana]

OM TAT SAT/ AMARNATHA LINGAAYA NAMO NAMA/