

**ESSENCE OF**  
**SARVAM MAAYA PRAKRITI**  
**AND**  
**MAHA VISHNU MAYAM**

***EDITED AND COMPOSED BY***  
***V.D. N. RAO***

Other Scripts by the same Author:

Essence of Puranas:-Maha Bhagavata, Vishnu, Matsya, Varaha, Kurma, Vamana, Narada, Padma; Shiva, Linga, Skanda, Markandeya, Devi Bhagavata;Brahma, Brahma Vaivarta, Agni, Bhavishya, Nilamata; Shri Kamakshi Vilasa-

Dwadasha Divya Sahasranaama:a) Devi Chaturvidha Sahasra naama: Lakshmi, Lalitha, Saraswati, Gayatri;b) Chaturvidha Shiva Sahasra naama-Linga-Shiva-Brahma Puranas and Maha Bhagavata;c) Trividha Vishnu and Yugala Radha-Krishna Sahasra naama-Padma-Skanda-Maha Bharata and Narada Purana. Stotra Kavacha- A Shield of Prayers -Purana Saaraamsha; Select Stories from Puranas

Essence of Dharma Sindhu - Dharma Bindu - Shiva Sahasra Lingarchana-Essence of Paraashara Smriti- Essence of Pradhana Tirtha Mahima- Essence of Ashtaadasha Upanishads: Brihadarankya, Katha, Taittiriya/ Taittiriya Aranyaka , Isha, Svetashvatara, Maha Narayana and Maitreyi, Chhadogya and Kena, Atreya and Kausheetaki, Mundaka, Maandukya, Prashna, Jaabaala and Kaivalya. Also 'Upanishad Saaraamsa' -

Essence of Virat Parva of Maha Bharata- Essence of Bharat Yatra Smriti -Essence of Brahma Sutras- Essence of Sankhya Parijnaana- Essence of Knowledge of Numbers for students-Essence of Narada Charitra; Essence Neeti Chandrika-Essence of Hindu Festivals and AusteritiesEssence of Manu Smriti- Quintessence of Manu Smriti- Essence of Paramartha Saara; Essence of Pratyaksha Bhaskra; Essence of Pratyaksha Chandra; Essence of Vidya-Vigjnaana-Vaak Devi; Essence of Bhagya -Bhogya-Yogyata Lakshmi - Essence of Soundarya Lahari- Essence of Popular Stotras- Essence of Pancha Maha Bhutas- Essence of Taittireeya Aranyaka- Quintessence of Soundarya Lahari- Essence of Gayatri- Essence of Ganesha Mahima - Essence of Shiva Raatri Mahima- Essence of Chaturupanishads- Essence of Ashtaadasha Upanishads - Essence of Bhagavad Gita

Essence of Valmiki Baala Ramayana- Essence of Valmiki Ayodhya Ramayana- Essence of Aranya Ramayana-Essence of Valmiki Kishkindha Ramayana- Essence of Valmiki Sundara Ramayana- Essence of Valmiki Yuddha Ramayana- Essence of Valmiki Uttara Ramayana- Quitesecence of Valmiki Ramayana;

Essence of Veda Vyasa Smriti- Essence of Yagjnyavalkya Smriti-Essence of Aapastamba Dharma Sutras- Essence of Devi Navaratri Mahima- Essence of Aapstamba Grihya Sutras- Essence of Bhishma Parva of Maha Bharata- Essence of Post Life Existence-based on Upanishads, Puranas, and Itihaasaas -

Essence of Nava Graha Mahatmya- Essence of Kaala Chakra- Essence of Pranava- Essence of Drona Parva Of Maha Bharata Yuddha - Essence of Shanti Moksha Maha Bharata-Part One - Essence of Shanti Moksha Maha Bharata- Part 2; Essence of Ashta Dikpaalakaas- Essence of Bhagavan Dattaterya - Magnificence of Tripuraambika ; \* Essence of Sanaatana Dharma \* Essence of Pradhana Gita Samgraha \* Essence of Sanatsujeetiya Bharata ; \* Essence of Maaya Prakriti and Vishnu Mayam

Note: All the above Scriptures already were released on [www. Kamakoti. Org/news](http://www.Kamakoti.Org/news) by the respective references except those marked as of \*

## PREFACE

*Avyaktam Shaasvaram Vishnam Anantam Ajam Avyayam/*

*Sarvaswarupe Sarva Shakti Samanvite, Bhayopadraahino Devi Durga Devi Namostute/*

The above two stanazs denote the Essence of Sarvam Maaya Prakriti and Maha Vishnu Mayam : describing the Nirguna Parama Vishnu as the Sthanu Arupa and Prakriti the Maha Devi while Maha Vishnu as of the Trimurti Swarupa of Brahma- Vishnu - Shiva as responsible for Srishti- Sthiti- Samhaara cycle of Kaala Chakra and as of Vishnu's Dashavataaraas. Shri Lalitha Sasasranaama explains That Maya Prakriti resides inside the Mulaadhaara Chakra that is as Kundalini; 'You penetrate through the Brahma Grandhi or the barrier of Brahma and enable your devotees practising Yoga to be conscious while awake; then a devotee is facilitated to vision Devi in Manipura while in a condition of stupor; further a devotee has to pierce through the Vishnu Grandhi or the Vishnu knot when the Yogi becomes unconscious and his body and thoughts are felt irrelevant; in the Ajnaachaktaanta state the yogi loses his identity; while breaking Rudra Grandhi the Yogi attains cosmic reality and in Sahasraara Chakra as the yogi is stated to seek Salvation. That stage provides Sudhaa sagara or bliss; indeed Devi! You are above these stages and chakras as 'Shatchakopari Samstitha'. You are called as Maha Shakti in union with Maha Deva and is stated to be in the form of a coiled serpent in the state of 'Kundalini' like a thin lotus stem.

Thus Paramatma the Maha Vishnu is denoted as Para Brahma or Maha Narayana- Parameshvara as the Sthaanu had manifested Prakriti the Maha Maya and in turn created Brahma -Vishnu- Maheshvaras as the Tri Murtis and that be so as the Maha Maya be able to command the Tri Murtis. Hence the Concept of Para Brahma or Maha Vishnu or Parameshvara be different from yet unified with the Tri Murtis of Brama- Vishnu -Shiva.

This is how the kaleidoscopic view of Jagat Srishti re emphasizing that the Sthaanu Parabrahma-Parama Vishnu and Parameshvara is indeed different from the Tri Murthis as the agents for the Sthaanu and Maya Prakriti ; for the sake convenience the Maaya Shakti has assumed the forms of Devis Sarasvati- Maha Lakshmi and Gouri Maata as the better halves of the Tri Murti agents of Srishti -Sthiti-Samhara Karanaas.

Having so explained this Presentation seeks to explain The Srishti and Shithi kaaramaas as of Brahma Vishnus only while Shiva as the Samhaara kaarana be not being mentioned

Chapter I is based on Maaya Prakriti - Chapter II on varied features of Vishnu the Sarvaantaryaami -- Chaptert III on Vishnu's Dashaavataaras of Matsya- Kurma- Varaha- Nrisimha-Vaamana-Rama- Parashu Rama-Krishna- Buddha- Kalki Swarupas and Chapter IV on Vishnu Kshetraas.

My basic attachment in my post retirement life of three decades plus was of under the tutelage HH Vijayendra Sarasvati now the Head of Kanchi Muth has for long addressd me as ' Puraan Upanishada vaaru' endearingly with the vaatslya of Guru-Shishyas. .

With my ' vinaya poorvaka padaabhivandanaas' to HH, this fresh flower is thus of Puraanopanishads.

VDN Rao and family.

Chennai. March 21

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## ESSENCE OF SARVAM MAYA PRAKRITI AND MAHA VISHNUMAYAM

### Introduction

‘Avaktam Shasvatam Vishnum Anantam Ajam Ayayam’ - The Unown-Everlasting-Un Born-Un Realizeable. That be what Paramatma all about. The ‘Sthaanu’ created Prakriti ‘Maya’ (Illusion) - the hard outer shell of body hiding the Interior Soul. Prakriti is energy, activity, vibration and creative power. Parameshvara is stable, inactive, immobile and insensitive- yet the Supreme. Paramatma is quiescent and motionless and Shakti that keeps everything pulsating, from planets and stars to the atom, and is inseparably united. The Sthanu Paramatma known as Maha Parameshwara be called matter and Shakti as the energy. Not only are the Sthanu Paramatma and Shakti ones united the Prakriti as the Matter becomes energy. Thus ‘without being united with the Sthaanu Paramatma then the very first vibration by which the Parabrahman becomes aware of Itself is caused by the Maya Shakti. Thereafter it is vibration after vibration in ‘aaroohana and avarohana’ manner being Praana the Life Energy!’ Now, ‘Maya’ is derived from Material Sources, which in turn, is associated with three features of the Super Force, viz. ‘Tamas’ ( Ignorance), ‘Rajas’ ( Passion), Sathva (Goodness). The examples of firewood, smoke and fire were cited to illustrate the three features to represent Brahma (Creation or Earth), Vishnu (Sustenance) and Eswara (destruction or the Final Negation of ‘Maya’). The feature of ‘Tamas’ is akin to material wellbeing, characterised by women, wealth, power and evil. The ‘Rajas’ is akin to the effort of acquisition of knowledge, devotion, yoga and Sacrifice and the final feature, ‘Satva’ or ‘Dharma’ or the release of Inner Energy to align with the Super Force.

Thus Paramatma the Maha Vishnu is denoted as Para Brahma or Maha Narayana- Parameshvara as the ‘Sthaanu’ - the Stable, Fixed and Firm - had manifested Prakriti the Maha Maya and in turn created Brahma -Vishnu- Maheshvaras as the Tri Murtis viz. Brahma Vishnu Shiva and that be so as the Maha Maya be able to command the Tri Murtis of Brahma-Vishnu- Ishvara . Hence the Concept of Para Brahma or Maha Vishnu or Parameshvara be different from the Tri Murtis of Brahma- Vishnu -Shiva. ‘

Lalitha Sahasra Naamaas describe that Maha Devi had mildly rubbed Her finger nails and created the counterparts of Narayana who exterminated the respective Asuras! *Karaanguli nakhotpanna Narayana dashaakritih/ Mulaadhaaraika nilayaa Brahma grandhi Vibhedini, Manipuraantaruditaa Vishnu grandhi Vibhedini/ --Agnachakraantasthaa Rudra granthi Vibhedini, Sahasraaraambujaarudhaa Sudhaa saaraabhi varshini/ Tatillataa samaruchishhatchakopari samsthitaa, Maha Shaktih kundalini bisatantu taneeyasi/ Bhavani Bhavanaagamyaa Bhavaaranya kuthaarikaa, Bhadra Priya Bhadra Murtirbhakta Soubhagyadaayani/ Bhaktapriyaa Bhaktigamyaa Bhakti Vashyaa Bhayaapaha, Shaambhavi Sharadaaraadhyaa Sharvaani Sharma daayani/ Shaankari Shrikari Saadhvi Sharacchandra nibhaanaa, Shaatodari Shantimati Niraadhaaraa Niranjanaa/*

(Devi! You reside inside the Mulaadhaara Chakra that is as Kundalini; You penetrate through the Brahma Grandhi or the barrier of Brahma and enable your devotees practising Yoga to be conscious while awake; then a devotee is facilitated to vision Devi in Manipura while in a condition of stupor; further a devotee has to pierce through the Vishnu Grandhi or the Vishnu knot when the Yogi becomes unconscious and his body and thoughts are felt irrelevant; in the Ajnaachaktaanta state the yogi loses his identity; while breaking Rudra Grandhi the Yogi attains cosmic reality and in Sahasraara Chakra the yogi is stated to

seek Salvation. That stage provides Sudhaa sagara or bliss; indeed Devi! You are above these stages and chakras as ‘Shatchakopari Samstitha’. You are called as Maha Shakti in union with Maha Deva and is stated to be in the form of a coiled serpent in the state of ‘Kundalini’ like a thin lotus stem. Devi Bhavani, Bhavanaaamyaa or Beyond Comprehension as then a Bhavaaranya Kutharika or She would axe the cycle of births and deaths! You would in that Form be a Bhadra Priya, Bhadra Murthi, Bhakta Soubhagyadayani, Bhakti Priya, Bhakti Gamyaa or realisable by Bhakti alone; Bhakti Vasya or Controllable by Bhakti only; Bhayaapaha or you drive out fear of the devotees; Shaambhavi, Sharadaaraadhya, Sharvaani or the consort of Sharva, Sharma dayani or the provides of Eternal Happiness; Shankari, Shrikari, Saadhvi or of Purity; Sharacchanda nibhaanana or Luminous like a Full Moon; Shatodari or slim waisted; Shantimati, and Niradhara or supportless and Niranjana or blemishless).

## **Chapter One**

Devi Bhagavata is quoted: Vishnu remote-controlled by Devi Bhagavati:

Devi Bhagavati or Vidya is known as an amalgam of Three Characteristics, viz. Satvika Sakti, reflected in Goddess Sarasvati; Rajasika Sakti as represented by Goddess Maha Lakshmi; and Tamasika Sakti known as Maha Kali. Also, the Maha Sakti is represented by the Trinity viz. Lords Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver and Siva the Destroyer ( Srishti, Stithi and Laya Karakas). Lord Brahma that His own Premordial Energy of Universal Existence is the result of Her empowerment to Maha Vishnu to execute Her commands! Maha Vishnu reiterated that He is subservient to Devi Bhagavati and is always in Her Tapasya or meditation, but at the same time, enjoys freedom to possess the company of Goddess Lakshmi, to incarnate Himself in various forms and features some times as Dasavataras as Fish, Tortoise, Boar, Man-Loin, Dwarf, Rama, Parasurama, Krishna, Buddha or Kalki; some times as Mohini to distribute ‘Amrit’ or Nectar and so on. But His actions are always remote-controlled and are oriented to protect the Virtuous and punish the Wicked. Thus Maha Vishnu is indeed the Highest Representative of Maha Devi with full freedom to act on His own, within the framework of Her Supreme Control.

Devi Bhagavati blesses Vishnu as Hayagreeva

As Indra and Demi-Gods were performing a Sacrifice in the presence of Brahma and Mahesa, they had all desired Maha Vishnu to preside over the Function and called on Him. But, Lord Vishnu was in ‘Yoga Nidra’ or the Sleep of Deep Meditation and nobody would dare wake Him. More over, interruptions of somebody’s speech, the love of a couple, or waking up a person’s deep sleep are sins equivalent to ‘Brahma hatya’ or killing of a Brahmana. The Lord was seated in a ‘Padmasana’ posture squatting with His legs folded and resting His chin on the top of His Bow with an Arrow fully drawn. As the Sacrifice was to be concluded, Lord Siva advised Lord Brahma to create a White Ant, ‘Vamri’ and directed it to bite the arrow gently which should wake up the Lord to consciousness and thus make the request. The Vamri sensed the delicate situation and requested Brahma to grant it a return boon for the great risk being undertaken in disturbing the Yoga Nidra of no less a personality than Maha Vishnu Himself! Lords Brahma and Siva gave a boon to the Vamri that what ever trickles from the Sacrificial Offerings of Ghee in the Homa Kunda (Fire Pit) would spill out could be collected as its share. As commanded by Brahma, the insect bit the fore-end of the arrow and the tight string gave way at once and the entire Universe reverberated with horrifying sound as the earth quaked, mountains were shaken, Oceans rose high, Sun lost way and Devas got traumatised. Maha Vishnu’s Head was severed with His Crown and there was no trace as to where it fell! Along with Devas, Brahma and Siva cried like human beings as there was a

‘Pralaya’-like situation( Universal Dissolution). Then Deva Guru Brihaspati consoled Indra, Brahma and Siva and emboldened them to countenance the grim situation, as such eventualities did happen in the past.[ Indra had to face several such events when he was dislodged from his throne by Danavas or when his body wore thousand genital marks (since he was infatuated with Ahalya and cheated her into bed, as her husband Sage Gautama was away by assuming the Sage’s body form and thus attracted his curse); similarly Brahma was infatuated with his own creation ‘Satarupa’ an extraordinary woman of beauty and gazed at her as she avoided his attention by moving in all directions when he obtained five heads and in disgust Lord Siva cut one of the heads looking up as a sign of extreme displeasure. The only recourse that Lords Siva and Brahma, accompanied by Indra and Demi-Gods, had was that in one voice, they made an intense appeal to Maha Devi Bhagavati, the Eternal Cause of Causes, the very Original Energy, the Life Force of entire Creation, the Bindu and Pranava, the Sourcing Fountain of knowledge and above all the Embodiment of Charity and Forgiveness. Pleased by the most sincere prayers of Brahma and Siva downward, ‘Nirguna’ Maha Devi hinted that there ought to be a cause for the tragedy. In the company of Maha Lakshmi, once Maha Vishnu laughed by thinking of something. Lakshmi Devi failed to understand the possible reason as to why Vishnu was so much amused about. Was it a spot on Her face or was it due to another woman in His desire? Then as Vishnu did not clarify, Lakshmi assumed ‘Tamasic Guna’ and gave a curse to Him saying that His head should fall off. Thus happened the resultant tragedy despite Her sincere repentance. While this tragedy took place, there was a coincidental incident that a tough Davana of extraordinary cruelty, named Hayagriva or the Demon with the neck of a horse, resorted to severe ‘Tapas’ ( Meditation) to Maha Bhagavati for thousands of years by following a strict regime of Sacrifice and unflinching devotion. Maha Devi appeared before the Rakshasa and granted him a boon that no Power in the Universe could cause death to him, except by an Extraordinary Energy in the form similar to his own viz. Hayagriva form alone could destroy him. Brahma and Siva hastened with the solution to the present gravest tragedy and instructed Devata’s own Architect, Visvakarma to do the needful. The Architect killed a horse at once and fixed its neck to Lord Vishnu’s severed head and thus emerged Lord Hayagriva.

#### Physical Manifestation of Maha Devi to Vishnu

Veda Vyasa had by now known Suka’s confirmed views on marriage and commended Suka’s reading the Great Purana of Maha Bhagavata written by himself in which the process of Creation of Universe was described in detail. In the Purana, he gave the illustration of Lord Vishnu providing solace by Maya Maha Shakti when Vishnu found Himself as a small child at the time of Pralaya or Universal Dissolution. The Lord was floating on water on a banyan tree leaf wondering as to how He was brought in that state and who could have done so? A resonant Celestial Voice was heard in a half stanza saying: ‘All this being witnessed is my doing and there is nothing else eternal’. Even as Maha Vishnu was wondering what was heard, He found a mass of radiance on the skies gradually taking the form of a vision in full manifestation of Maha Bhagavati in the form of Maha Lakshmi with divine robes and ornaments, four arms with conchshell, disc, lotus and mace. She was floating on the Ocean waters along with Her personified Co-Sakties and Vibhuties on either side viz. Rati, Bhuti, Buddhi, Mati, Kirti, Smriti, Dhriti, Sraddha, Medha, Svadha, Svaha, Kshudha, Nidri, Daya, Gari, Tulsi, Pusti, Kshama, Lajja and so on. Maha Vishnu was astonished as never before and with folded hands kept on reciting the incomplete stanza that She was Eternal and nothing else! Maha Lakshmi addressed Vishnu and said that each time there were Universal Dissolutions herebefore, the same scenario happened and there were unifications of His and Hers but He had not realised as He was under the spell of Maha Maya which was Her’s again. She further said that

Her physical Manifestaion at present was unreal as She had none, but a Supreme Force as an amorphous, unknown, everlasing, unborn, all pervading and omniscient Energy. She commanded Vishnu to create Brahma and Siva- each one to create and destroy- and represent the two Gunas of Rajas and Tamas and thus re-start the cycle of life and death under the cover of Maya and that Vishnu should promote Satvika Guna and handle the delicate task of safeguarding and preserving the entire Universe as also protecting 'Dharma' ( Virtue) and 'Nyaya' ( Justice). Further on, the process of creation of Demi- Gods, Sages, and human beings and other species followed and so did the formation of Societies and Principles of Dharmas, Varnashramas, and stages of human life and so on. By inference, Veda Vyasa said that the established practices commended the insitution of marriages, of the duties of Grihasta ( Householder ) and 'karma kanda', followed by retirement, Sanyasa and finally attainment of Salvation- all in a gradual process step by step. An adamant Suka was still not relenting in his attitude and Veda Vyasa suggested Suka's visit to Mithilapura and meet King Janaka for his advice as he had 'Jeevan Mukti' ( Salvation while alive).

### Vision of Maha Bhagavati by Trimurtis

King Janamejaya asked about the significance of 'Maha Devi Bhagavati Yajna' from Veda Vyas, since he felt confused as to who should be targetted to put one's whole hearted devotion, as multi-dimensional attention to Gods might get diffused even to StarYogis, let alone normal human beings, especially because concentration in human mind is highly erratic and fluid against the powerful pull of material distractions. The normal belief had been that one could anchor on either Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver or Mahadeva the Destroyer, each representing the Rajas, or Satvik, or Tamas Gunas respectively, but to say that an amalgam of all the Gunas as Devi Bhagavati was perhaps an oversimplification! Even Sun God whose visibility was a clear phenomenon, is directly perceptible before one's own vision. Veda Vyasa replied that this question was no doubt revelant but was replied in the past by the Trinity themselves. At the stage when Maha Vishnu killed Madhu Kaitabha by expanding His thigh space, the Trinity had clearly comprehended that Devi Parasakti who had no form nor dimension and was the endless and unique energy. There were heavenly directions to the Trinity at the time of Universal Destruction to perform 'Tapasya' or meditate, to Create, to promote and destroy Illusion. As the Trinity themselves got no leads to create what and how, to promote which, and where, that was the Illusion or Maya! The Trinity wondered that as there was no earth but a huge Ocean, no five elements of Nature ( Earth, Light, Air, Sky and water), no five 'Tanmatras' or the causative rudiments, (viz.'Sabda' or Sound, 'Sparsa' or Touch, 'Rupa' or Sight, 'Gandha' or Smell and 'Rasa' or Taste), no sensual organs, and no Gunas or Saguna, Durguna or Nirguna – Goodness, Evil, or Equanimity. How could the process of Creation be initiated! In reply, a 'Vimana' or an Airfloat was sent to carry the Trinity towards the Sky and landed at a place where was no water but ground. The Place looked like a beautiful City with well laid buildings, gardens, water fountains, trees with ripe fruits and splashes of flowers with divine fragrances, conditioned air and lighting-apparently the gate way to Heaven. The aeroplane was lifted up again and flew low to let the Trinity watch the Nandana Garden, Surabhi the Cow, Parijata the Celestial Tree, the Iravata the Divine Elephant, a bevy of Beautiful Apsaras at dance, Gandharvas on singing, and finally the High Throne with glittering gold and jewellery with Indra and Sachi, encircled by Planetary Heads like Varuna, Agni, Surya, Moon and a host of Devatas and their Devis. Further on the Trinity witnessed the Brahma Loka, the Vaikuntha and Kailasa and discovered original Trinity with their wives and accompaniments. Finally, the aeroplane reached 'Sudha Sagar' ( The Ocean of Nectar) and in its midst they found the 'Mani Dvipa' or the Island of Gems in which a Cot with the four legs represented

by Brahma, Vishnu, Mahaswara and all other Demi-Gods was sighted. The Trinity then had the Super Vision of extraordinary radiance, twinkling flashings of a physical manifestation of MAHA DEVI BHAGAVATI ! The top portion of the Cot represented Sada Siva in the form of a colourful rainbow with a red carpet bejewelled and spread over. She sat gracefully smiling wearing a red garment, a garland with red flowers and red sandal paste on her forehead with black eyes and red lips, four hands wearing a noose, a lotus, a goad and an 'Akshaya Patra' ( an eternally filled vessel) as though She was about to give away boons. Even the birds around were chanting mystic incantations of 'Moola Mantras' like 'Hrim'.

[Examples of Moola Mantras (Seed Mantras) are: Om Aim Hreem Srim; Om Ka-A- E- La Hrim, Ha-Sa-Ka-Hala-Hreem, Sakala Hreem; Om Aim Kleem Sauh Sauh Kleem Aim; Om Aim Hreem Kleem Chamundaya Vicchey; Aam Heem Krom Aim Kleem Sauch; Etc]. Her ear-rings were of the shape of ' Sri Chakra'. She was surrounded by Devis like 'Hrillekha' and others like 'Anga Kusuma'. She was seated in a 'Satkona'(seven angled) Yantra format. Lord Vishnu of the Trinity recognised Her as He saw her in the same physical manifestation when He was a toe-sucking boy on a banana leaf floating on a massive water surface and blessed Him to create Brahma and Maheswara and advised that the process of Creation be taken up as soon as possible. Lord Vishnu said that the Trinity was fortunate with their vision of Maha Devi and the 'Tapasya' (meditation) that was performed by them all through the duration of Yugas had succeeded. As He stated like that, Lords Brahma and Eswara were choked with emotion and endless joy and prostrated before the Unparalleled Vision with humility and gratitude. As soon as the Trinity entered the Entry Point of the Sanctum Sanctorium where Devi Bhagavathi was seated smilingly, the three-some of Brahma, Vishnu and Eswara were converted into stunning feminine forms. Another astonishing miracle was that the entire Universe was witnessed on her toe nails including the Trinity and their Abodes, the Pancha Boothas, Indra, all other Devas, Gandharvas, Apsarasas, the humanity, Oceans, Mountains, Sages like Veda Vyas, the Galaxy, view of Sisumara, Asvinis and so on.

### Trinity's Prayers to Maha Bhagavati and Sixteen 'Tatvas'

Completely overcome by awe and humility, Lord Vishnu addressed Maha Bhagavati that He was amazed to witness the entire Universe on Her toe nails including Himself and He was but a miniscule reflection of Herself. Nobody knows how many such Vishnus were created and that She was ' Karanguli nakhotpanna Narayana Dasa Kritis' or She created Ten Incarnations of Narayana by touching Her hand nails! She was 'Om, Hreem and Srim', 'Moola Prakruti' and 'Moola Mantratmika'. She was 'Niradhara' ( Foundation less), 'Nitya' (Eternal), 'Nirguna'(Without Characteristics), 'Nirvikara' ( Changeless) and 'Dhyana Dhatru Dhyaya Rupa' ( The Meditation, The Meditator and The Meditated). She was the material Cause of Prakriti (Nature) , Maya (Illusion) and the 'Tatvas'\*. She was the Super Power but yet She bestows Kindness readily and spontaneously ( Avyaja Karuna Poora Purita)!

[ **Tatvas** \*: 1) 'Jnanendriyas': Five of sense organs, viz, Eyes, Nose, Tongue, Mouth, and Skin; 2) 'Karmendriyas': or Five Organs for Action viz: mouth, feet, hands, genital and anus; 3) Five 'Tanmatras' or inner basics of elements or light, sound, taste, smell and consciousness; 4) Five 'Antahkaranas': Mind or thought, Buddhi or Understanding, Siddha or Power of mind leading to Jayam or success and Angaram or Excitement; 5) Six 'Adharas' or Foundations: Muladhara, Svadhistana, Manipura, Anantha, Visuddhi and Angana; 6) 'Dhatu's' or Seven Body Constituents: Serum, Blood, Semen, Brain marrow, Flesh, Bone and Skin. 7) Ten 'Vayus' or Vital Airs: Prana ( Near Heart), Apana ( Top to bottom), Samana ( Near Throat), Vyana ( Total Body), Utthana ( near navel), Nahana ( movements and speech), Koormana ( causing disgust or dismay), Kiriharana ( facial), Devadatta

( exhaled by yawning) and Dhanajaya ( remaining in the body after death) 8) Five ‘Kosas’ or body parts: Annamaya ( food body), Manomaya(Composed of mind), Pranamaya (the force holding body and mind), Vijnanamaya ( body of intellect) and Anantamaya (the body of Bliss); 9) ‘Nava Dvaras’ or Nine Doors : two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth, genital and excretionary channel. 10) Eight ‘Vikaras’ or Vices: Lust, meanness, anger, carelessness, showiness, ferocity, haughtiness, and jealousy. 11) Three ‘Mandalas’ or Body Regions : Agni Mandala or the fire place in lower abdomen, Aditya Mandala or the Place of Sun in stomach, and Chandra Mandala or the Region of Moon in head and shoulders. 12) Three Temperaments viz. flatulency or excessive self importance, melancholy or pensive sadness, bilious temperament or irritability, Phlegmatic temperament or indifference. 13) Three ‘Gunas’ or attributes: Satva ( Goodness), Rajas ( Passion) and Tamas ( Ignorance). 14) Five ‘Avasthas’ or Inner Soul abodes in body parts viz. ‘Sakiram’ or Fully Alive and Vigilant connected to forehead, ‘Svapnam’ or dormant soul in a state of dream connected to neck, ‘Sujjuti’ or insensibility of soul connected to breast, ‘Turiyam’ or abstraction of mind while soul is connected to navel and ‘Turiyathitam’ or a state of death when the soul is sunk into mooladharam. 16) Ten ‘Nadis’ or nerve connections viz. Idakala or the nerve beginning from big toe of right foot to left nostril, ‘Pinkala’ nerve connecting the big toe of left foot to right nostril, ‘Kantari’ or nerves beginning from navel to neck assuming seven folds of seven tones of human voice, ‘Suguva’ or the optical nerves interconnecting ten branches, ‘Purudan’ or the auditory nerves linking one hundred twenty lines, Guru beginning from navel to flat stomach, ‘Sangini’ on flat belly, ‘Suzi Muna’ the nervous link connecting Adharas like Mooladhara, Svadhishtana etc. and Atti and Alambuda connecting miscellaneous body parts.]

Lords Brahma and Siva also paid their reverent prayers to Maha Devi Bhagavati and She bestowed Her blessings to them to dutifully discharge their respective duties to Her entire satisfaction, as they had raised queries before their departure by airflight; She commanded them to initiate the fulfillment of tasks assigned to them forthwith. She obliged Lord Maheswara by repeating the nine lettered Mantra to be repeated by them as often as possible viz. ‘Om Hrium Srim Chandrikayai Namah’ along with the Moola (Seed) Mantra. Brahma too was extremely ecstatic with the mind-boggling Darshan (Vision) and most of His doubts appeared to have been cleared excepting one however that still remained with him. He wondered whether what Vedas affirmed again and again that the Maha Purusha was the one and only Super Energy beyond comprehension and if so, whether that Incomprehensible Power was Herself! In that case, whether Maha Purusha and Maha Devi Bhagavati were just the same? Was Maha Purusha a Feminine Shakti or a Male Supreme Force?

#### Devi Bhagavati Explains about Her Vibhutis ( Manifestations & Powers)

To the pointed queries expressed by Lord Brahma, Maha Devi gave clarifications in no uncertain terms that Maha Purusha and Herself was just the same as a lamp and reflection in a mirror and that She was neither a female nor a male, but a Unique Genderless Nirguna. Any changes witnessed are due to the interplay of ‘Antah Karanas’ or natural instincts like Mind, Buddhi, ( Mental Power) and ‘Ahankara’ ( Ego) on the one hand and ‘Maya’( Illusion) on the other. At the time of Creation following the Great Dissolution (Pralaya), the dissimilarities occurred as Gender, ‘Karma’ ( Fate) and ‘Anthah Karanas’ all created by ‘Maya’. It was at that time of Creation, that The Supreme Energy assumed various ‘Vibhutis’ or Manifestations like Sri (Prosperity), Buddhi(Brainpower), Daya (Compassion), Dhriti (Tolerance), Smriti (Memory), Shraddha (Conviction), Medha ( Acumen), Lajja (Shame), Shanti ( Peace), Nidra ( Sleep), Pipasa ( Desire), Vidya ( Comprehension), Spriha ( Awakeness or Alertness) and Shakti

( Power). Maha Devi continued to state that She was the Para, Madhyama and Pasyanti ( Mystic expressions of the Supreme Power indicating the Stages of Manifestations of the Eternal Force); She was Para Shakti beyond one's Comprehension, Madhyama Shakti who was both Expressed and Unexpressed ( Vyakta –Avyakta) and Pasyanti Shakti who was Fully Manifested and recognisable with Physical Form or Sakara Shakti; She was also present in thirty five million 'Nadis' through out a human body (the tubular organs of the body like arteries, veins, intestines, blood vessels, pulses etc. She was in Vasa (fat), majja ( marrow), Tvak (skin) and Drishti ( eye sight) clearly present in each and every part of 'Samsara'. So was the case of non moving objects of Creation either animate or inanimate. Maha Devi further affirmed that She was seen as Brahmi or Sarasvati, Vaishnavi or Lakshmi, Eswari as Gauri, Indrani as Indra, Varuni as Varuna, and so on whose formations were all Hers, making the counterpart Purushas perform their tasks as the Maha Devi's agents or instruments of action. She was the Gunas of Satva, Rajas and Tamas; Ahamkaras-Jnana Sakti ( the Power of Knowledge), Kriya Sakti ( The Power of Action) and Artha Sakti ( The Power of Wealth or Maya the Illusion); The various Tatvas and Maha Tatva; and the interplay of Five Tanmatras or Subtle Elements viz. ( Touch, See, Breathe, Hear and Taste) and Five Basic Elements ( Earth, Air, Water, Fire and Sky) known as the Process of 'Panchee- Karana' resulting in Five Causes. This was made into a Jeeva ( Living Entity) and the Cosmic Totality of That would be Brahma, stated Devi Bhagavati!

#### The 'Gunas' ( Attributes) and their Characteristics

Further to Lord Brahma's conversation with Maha Devi, the features of the Three 'Gunas' or attributes were explained to Narada. Normally, Faith is known to exist in the form of three Gunas viz. Sattva Guna, Rajas Guna and Tamas Guna. Sattva is described as the fountain of Goodness and happiness in a pure form. Its colour is stated to be white standing for purity, integrity, happiness, contentment, forgiveness and faith. The Rajas Guna is stated to be red in colour and is featured as false pride, deceit, avarice, hatred and selfishness. The Tamo Guna standing for black colour is stated to feature ignorance, lack of resources, anger, fear and quarrelsomeness. There is no set identity of the Gunas but are intermingled and rapidly changeable. A person who is Good basically might spurt out into anger and pride and change over in the same breath to fear. But surely the resultant impact would be disastrous. As, Lord Krishna stated in Bhagavad Gita: *Dhyayato vishayam pumsaha sanghas theshupa jayate /Sangat sanjayatey kama kamakrodhobhi jaaythey / Krodhaha bhavati sammohaha, sammohat smriti vibhramaha / Smritir bhramsaha buddhi naso buddhi nashoth prayatyati.* ' An unfulfilled desire would lead to anger. Anger leads to obsession. Obsession leads to failure of memory ( focussed thinking) and lack of memory leads to mental balance! Narada reacted instantly to the Principles of 'Gunas' saying that normally one felt that Lords Vishnu, Brahma and Siva represented Satvic, Rajasic and Tamasic Gunas respectively but the description was not fully represented in their cases. Brahma replied that the predominance of their Gunas was described but there was no water-tight segregation possible in their cases too as in the case of human beings. He gave the illustration of a lamp, but the wick, the oil and the flame together provided light. The three materials denoted the Rajas, Satvik and Tamas Gunas, just as each or any living being could –and normally did- synthesise the Gunas. In this connection Brahma gave the example to Narada of an illiterate Brahmana, Satyavrata who turned out to be a Learned Sage, by the Grace of Maha Devi Sarasvati.

#### How Satyavrata an illiterate Brahmin became a Learned Sage?

The description about Maha Devi's appearance to Trinity and the explanation provided to them by Her about Herself was given to Narada by Lord Brahma. This was handed over to Veda Vyasa by Narada and down the line to Suta Muni and in turn to the King Janmejaya as to how Devi Sarasvati interpreted the foolish Brahmana boy's ignorant chatter noise as Her Bija (Seed) Mantra and blessed him. In Kosala Desa of Lord Rama, there lived a Virtuous Brahmana named Deva Dutta desirous of begetting a Son performed 'Puttreshti' Yagna with great devotion. Suhotra acted as the Brahma of the Sacrifice, Sage Yagnavalkya as 'Athurv', Brihaspati as 'Hota', Paila as 'Prastotha', Govila as 'Udghata' and many learned Brahmanas as the Key Assistants. There was a Superintendent Brahmana too for the Soma Sacrifice who was to measure the Principal Area for the Yagna, collect the Sacred Vessels, fetch the Sacrifice Animal and manage the Function all through. Rig Veda and Yajur Vedas were rendered and Govila as Udghata being an expert of Sama Veda initiated its recital. But, Deva Dutta became restless since Govila was taking deep breath in the Sama Veda rendering in accented voice, viz. 'Uddhata', 'Anuddhata' and 'Svarita' and finally 'Ratantara Sama' in seven tunes. Govila's rendering was objected by Deva Dutta; he shouted on Govila and said: "you are rendering the Veda in bits and pieces as an ignorant and dumb person!" This insinuation in the open house angered Govila and he cursed as follows: "Your son will be ignorant and dumb too"! Deva Dutta regretted his remarks and begged of Govila's pardon. Govila in turn excused Deva Dutta and lightened the curse to say: "Although your son will be initially stupid and dumb, later in life will be a Learned Sage by the grace of Maha Devi Sarasvati." As Deva Dutta was blessed with a son in due course, he was named Utathya. But, he had indeed turned out to be a stupid and dumb boy attracting his parents' frustration and disgust for him. One day, the boy disappeared as he was harassed too much and went into a dense forest without aim. He was surviving with fruits and sitting under a tree took a resolve that he would never tell a lie, come what might. In course of time, he built a hermitage with the help of villagers nearby and gradually came to be known as Muni Satyavrata as a person who always spoke truth. One day, a hunter passed by and asked the so-called Muni whether a boar passed by; actually the boar which was wounded by the hunter's arrows had indeed taken refuge in his own hermitage and while entering the abode it gave a very pitiable look as though it entreated him not to inform the hunter that the animal was hiding in his own hermitage. Satyavrata being a truth stating person was in a dilemma. Somehow, he did not tell the truth as he felt that the hunter had his selfish reason to catch and kill the boar whereas the boar deserved mercy since it was hurt and gave a frightened and mercy seeking look. So he replied the hunter saying 'aim, aim and aim', without meaning anything. The hunter knew that the Muni had the name for telling the truth only and left away. Meanwhile, the boar left the place into the forest thus rescued. Eversince then he kept repeating the word 'aim', 'aim', 'aim' for everything. Indeed the word was the first letter of the Seed Mantra of Devi Maha Sarasvathi viz. Om **Aim** Dheem Kleem! Maha Devi Sarasvathi was pleased with the continuous repetition of only one word of the 'Moola Mantra' untiringly and gradually he pronounced the word OM also by the grace of Maha Devi Herself! Eventually Satyavrata became a renowned Sage as per the blessing of the Sage Govila and a proud son of Deva Dutta and his virtuous wife. Apparently, there were many factors working in favour of Satyavrata to transform himself from an illiterate to a Sage: the immediate blessing was by Sarsawati Herself as he was persistent in his dedication to speak the truth always and reciting even one word of the Seed Mantra out of sheer ignorance though, the blessing of Sage Govil who diluted the curse into a favour, the forest life and sense of renunciation, the act of mercy shown to the hurt boar vis-à-vis the selfish hunter who might have hurt Satyavrata too but for his weighing the pros and cons in his cool judgment and finally, his own 'Karma' as 'Prarabhda' or 'Sanchita' actions of the past as carry forward were all the beneficent causes.

### Amba Yajna-Regulations and Precedent Performers

King Janamejaya sought for the details of Amba Yajna from Maharshi Veda Vyasa. Sages and Brahmanas perform the Sacrifice in Satvik manner, Kshatriyas and Kings perform in the 'Rajas' fashion, while Rakshasas do these in 'Tamasa' style. Satvik Yajnas are executed in ideal manner normally in 'Uttarayana' or when Sun's direction changes from south to north, by highly puritan Brahmanas with their rightly earned resources as per strict adherence of Rules and Regulations prescribed and invariably for the larger benefit of the Society rather than for their own selfish motives. Rajo-oriented Yjanas too are aimed at the welfare of the Subjects of a country or a Rajya but once the Raja decides to organise the Yajna only to satisfy the Royal ego, then errors or motivations creep in the function. For instance, the 'Sarpa Yajna' had a definite purpose of vengeance and such events are initially commenced with bangs, but end up with whimpers. The Yajnas with motives domineering selfishness or obsession do get successful in the short term but finally the end result would invariably be a negative or boomeranging impact at the end. For instance, the Sacrifices performed by Demons like Hiranya Kasipu or Indrajit or Bhasmasura are purely motivated for selfish reasons. Certainly, the motivations in performing the Yajnas play an important role. King Dasaratha performed 'Putra Kameshti' was a success as it was done perfectly; but the Yajna done by Indra by Visvarupa as a duplicate Brihaspati was a fiasco ending Indra beheading Visvarupa as the latter, who was of the origin of Daitya clan, uttered mantras appeasing a few Daityas instead of Gods. King Drupada did the Putra Yajna out of spite for Dronacharya and thus an angry son Dristhtadyumna was born and Draupadi an example of distressed woman had several problems in her matrimonial life commencing from marrying five Pandavas, her end-less humiliation by Kauravas after the defeat of Dhritarashtra in an open assault on her before her brave husbands in a full Royal Court, travails in twelve years of forest life, her 'Ajnathavas' ( Hiding phase of life) for a year as Sairandhri as a servant maid, the harassment by Keechaka and so on. Even the Rajasuya Yajna concluded by Dharmaraja himself in the presence of Lord Krisna was a flop as the sordid drama that happened to Pandavas followed thereafter, apparently due to the ego factor that was in play at the time of the Yajna! Many Tamasa-oriented Yajnas were held by several Daithyas which had all temporary triumphs but in the long-run were fatal at the end.

Besides the above types of Yajnas, Veda Vyasa described an entirely distinct kind known as 'Manasika Yajna' ( Sacrifice by Mind), which is nodoubt difficult but once executed well would be extremely effective. The performer has to be completely devoid of sensual pleasures and attractions, has to preplan all the items of Yajna material, keep ready with purity of mind and body, pre-arrange Brahmana Priests and designate them as the Yajna Brahma, Adharyu, Hota, Prastota, Udgata, Pratihatra and Assistants and pre-worship them, imagine a huge hall for the Sacrifice, plan out the Central portion as the Altar ( raised ceremonial structure) and the Homa Kunda or the Fire Pit; imagine the lighting of five 'Agnis' represented by the five Prana Vayus or five Life Forces viz. 'Prana', 'Apana', 'Vyana', 'Samana' and 'Udana' in the Fire Pit with considerable care and caution, accompanied by the concerned 'Mantras' Viz. Prana standing for 'Garhastya', Apana for 'Ahavaniya', Vyana for 'Dakshina', Samana for 'Avasatya' and Udana for 'Sabya Agni'. One should be extremely careful and concentrated while lighting the respective Fires as any defect or shortcoming might have extreme ill-effects. In the Manasic Yajna, mind is the performer, Presiding Deity is 'Nirguna' Brahma and Maha Devi Bhagavati or the 'Nirguna Sakti' is the targetted Receiver of the Fire Oblations. The offering of Prana Vayus are in the form of materials meant for the Homa Kunda or the 'Kundalini'. Then by means of 'Samadhi' ( the final stage of Yoga) the Nirvikalpa Mind is surrendered to Devi through the Performer's consciousness or to the Self ( Atma) which attains

‘Moksha’ ( Final Liberation). The mortal form of ‘Jiva’ is stated to continue as long its ‘Prarabhdha’ remains. Indeed, this type of Manasika Yajna is not meant for ordinary persons in any case, as this is the highest effort that a human being could possibly execute. But, Veda Vyasa had certainly recommended to perform a Rajasic Yajna aiming at Maha Devi Bhagavati as per the Rules and Regulations described earlier to King Janamejaya, instead of seeking to ‘Sarpa Yajna’ which would be only vengeful but could never provide liberation to his father’s soul, after the latter’s very enduring effort in hearing Maha Bhagavata from Maha Muni Suka during his very last week’s life!

#### Lord Vishnu performs Amba Yajna

Being inquisitive, King Janamejaya enquired of Veda Vyasa as to when and who executed Amba Yajna first. When Trimurthis returned after Maha Bhagavati’s Vision, they created Satya Loka , Vaikuntha and Kailasa and took charge of their tasks assigned by Maha Devi. From the Ocean was formed Earth, called ‘Medini’, made out of the marrow of the foremost Demons, Madhu and Kaitabha, and also as ‘Mahi Dhara’, the Great Holder, which was supported by the Grand Serpent, Anantha. Brahma initiated the Creation process with the mountains to stabilise the Earth, including the ‘Meru’, the Principal Mountain. He created Marichi, Narada, Atri, Pulakasthya, Pulaha, Kratu, Daksha and Vasishtha as ‘Manasa Puthras’ or the Offspring of His Mind. From Marichi was born to Kasyapa; from Kasyapa were born Diti and Aditi and the latter gave birth to Danavas ( Demons) and Devatas ( Demi-Gods). Kasyapa created human beings, animals, serpents and other animate beings. Brahma created Svambhu Manu from his lower part of the body and Satarupa emerged from Brahma’s left hand. Manu and Satarupa gave birth to two sons, Priyavrata and Uttanapada and three daughters. And thus Creation proceeded further. Meanwhile, Indra Loka or Swarga ( Heaven) was also created and so were the Planetary Heads and other Celestial Creations including Kubera, Yama, Gandharvas, Apsaras and so on. Thus after the Procedure of Creation was stabilised, Lord Vishnu got an inspiration from Maha Bhagavati and decided to perform Amba Yajna and informed Brahma, Eswar, Indra and the Devatas and the Sages Vasishtha, Kasyapa, Daksha, Vamana Deva and Brihaspathi who were all in position. A gigantic Yajna Hall was built and the Altar too, the twenty seven Priests were appointed, the Yajna material was procured as per ‘Shastras’, the Agni Kunda was prepared out of brick and wood and Kundalini was kindled by Yoga, along side the rendering of Mantras and Moola Mantras strictly as per concerned Scriptures. At the successful end of Amba Yajna, a sonorous voice of Maha Devi announced that She was indeed pleased with the Proceedings just concluded, that She appointed Lord Vishnu as the Leader and Prime Deity to be prayed to by Brahma, Maheswara, Indra and all the rest; that any problem faced by any one of them should be resolved by Him on their request by assuming His ‘Avataras’ as appropriate ; and that She was deputing ‘Shaktis’ like ‘Varahi’ and ‘Narasimhi’ and popularise them by making appearances as Idols to be worshipped all over to supplement the efforts of Trinity.

#### Para Brahma Gnaana

Maharshi Veda Vyasa described to King Janamejaya in reply to the above and similar questions about the experience of Mother Earth in bearing the very heavy load of Evil Persons even in the ‘Dvapara Yuga’ itself and in ‘Kali Yuga’ it surely would be far worse! Assuming the form of a cow, ‘Bhu Mata’ (Earth) wailed that ferocious Kings like Jarasandha, Sisupala, Kamsa, Naraka, Salva and Kesi were ruling and there appeared to be no relief forthcoming in the near future. She approached Indra, Brahma and finally to Lord Vishnu who told Brahma that the Trinity were responsible for the ‘Srishti’, ‘Stithi’ and ‘Laya’

( Creation, Preservation and Destruction ) and were certainly not independent by themselves, as they were carrying on with their own duties. The Decider would have to determine as to how the understandable problem of Bhu Devi (Earth) be tackled, since her difficulties were genuine. ‘Let us all pray to Her and we have to follow Her Instructions’, said Lord Vishnu. On making a group prayer, the Prime Force Maha Maya appeared on the horizon with all Her splendour and made an order that as a first step, Sage Kasyapa be born as Anaka Dundhubhi Vasudeva ( there were the joyous sounds of drums at the time of his birth), along his wife Aditi as Devaki; Vishnu as Krishna; The Supreme Maha Maya Herself to be born as Yashoda; Maha Maya to send Vishnu as Her Avatar to the prison and arrange Dundhubhi Vasudeva to transfer Krishna to Yashoda, the wife of Nanda who would be the foster mother of Krishna; She Herself would transfer Ananta Deva (Balarama) from Devaki to Yashoda; both Krishna and Balarama as they grew would destroy a number of Evil Forces; the Pandavas would be born as part incarnations of Yama Raja as Dharma Raja, Vayu Deva as Bhima, Indra as Arjuna, and Asvini Kumaras as Nakula and Sahadeva; the incarnate of Vasuki would be born as Bhishma; remnant forces of Evil would all be destroyed at the Battle of ‘Maha Bharata’ at Kurukshetra by arranging several situations of extraordinary nature at the battle field; and even far before the Great Battle right from the stage of Kuru Vamsa and the contemporary timed-dynasties!

Thus the pointed queries of King Janamejaya raised to Maharshi Veda Vyasa could be squarely answerable by the fascinating explanations of the actions of Maha Maya most of which were ‘situational adjustments’[\*]created by the Players in the Large Dimension Dramas themselves as influenced by Her Maya; while the rest of the explanations were reflections of Maha Bhagavati’s Supreme Illusion! The following Pages would unravel or disentangle the ‘knots’ to some of the queries made by the King. [\* The explanation as to why all the Pandava brothers married the same lady was due to Arjuna’s breaking the ‘Matsya Yantra’and Draupadi was to select only Arjuna but that would not be permissible when the elders were not married yet; the ‘Dharma Sandeha’( The riddle of virtue) was solved by Arjuna’s mother, Draupadi herself, King Drupada, Arjuna’s other brothers, Bhishma and other elders of Kuru Vamsa and the Sages who attended the function. Another query of Janamejaya related to Bhishma’s ‘Pratigna’ ( the Great Vow of life) neither to accept Kingship nor marry lest next generation might claim the throne and the need to perpetuate the dynasty was important; as per Sastras such situations be overcome to let the widows of erstwhile Kings be married to any Brahmana and as such Veda Vyasa was instructed by his mother Satyawati and he could not disobey his mother.]

Maha Maya’s assurance to lighten the burden of Bhu Devi was thus taking shape. Vasudeva and Devaki were born, linked with their earlier births as Sage Kasyapa and Aditi. Kamsa who was Kalanemi in his previous birth killed ‘Sadgarbhas’or the six sons of successively. Sadgarbhas were traced back to the good six sons of Sage Marichi and his wife Urna in the first Manvantara of Swayambhu Prajapati. They laughed at Lord Brahma as He became passionate to His own daughter Sarasvati and Brahma cursed them to be born to Danavas. Thus they were born to Demon Kalanemi. In their subsequent birth, the six of them were born to Hiranyakasipu but were very virtuous and prayed to Brahma, who was happy that they were devotional. Brahma named them ‘Sadgarbhas’ and gave them boons of longevity. As Hiranyakasipu realised that they were not giving heed to his words, he banished them to Patala to be born again as Devaki’s six sons killed by Kamsa who was Kalanemi in his earlier birth.

#### Procedure of worshipping Maha Devi

After ensuring external and internal purity ( ‘Bahya Suddhi’ and ‘Antar Suddhi’) and squatted with concentration, one should initiate ‘Achamana’ ( sipping water thrice) with ‘Kesavaya Svaha, Narayanaya Svaha, Madhavaya Svaha etc; be ready with articles of worship; perform ‘Pranayama’ or controlled breathing; follow by ‘Bhuta Suddhi’ or purification of the old and installing the new representation of Devi Bhagavati and observe internal ‘dhyana’ (meditating) to mean: dissolve Earth into Water, Water into Fire, Fire into Air, Air into Ether, Ether into ‘Ahamkara’, ‘Ahamkara’ into ‘Mahat’(Great Energy) and ‘Mahat’ into ‘Prakriti’ or ‘Maya’, or in other words imagine transformation of the Five Elements into Moola Prakriti; follow Bhuta Suddhi by ‘Jeeva Suddhi’ or align the Self with Parama Devi; proceed further by mentally setting Six Chakras (outer- most circle inserted by an inner circle, further inserted by four more inner circles one within another) thus arranging the installation of ‘Shat chakropasthitha Samsthitha’ simultaneously pronouncing the afore mentioned nine lettered Mantra, viz. ‘Om Aim Hrim Kleem Chamundaya Vicche’ and align the Mantra to the six chakras as also touching the relevant body parts of the Worshipper concerned. The ‘Kartha’ or the Worshipper should perform ‘Sankalpa’ or mentioning the ‘Tidhi’(date), ‘Vara’ ( day) ‘Nakshatra’ or the relevant ‘Star’ of the day, ‘Aayana’ or the Course of the Solar Movement, Month, Year, Manvantara, Yuga, Place, Name of the Performer, ‘Gotra’ etc.; sprinkle water on the self, surroundings, articles and place of worship and recite the Mantra to remove obstacles for worship viz. ‘Astraya Phat’; place the Sacred Copper Plate in position; [ readily available from contemporary markets or draw two hexagonal triangles - one straight and another inverted- crossing each other, draw a figure outside that image, an octagonal form of eight petals and outside this a ‘Bhupura’ or boundary lines. On the eight petals are inscribed the Bija Mantras with the ninth word inscribed at the central Ovum]. The ‘Bindu’ or ‘Adhara Shakti’ or the Super Energy at the Central Ovum which one has to worship. The ‘Yantra’( diagram) is expected to resemble human body and is a mystical representation of Devi Maha Bhagavati to be worshipped.

Actual Puja commences while seated facing east and looking at the tip of the top triangle of the Yantra. The lowest triangle at the bottom right represents Lord Ganesha whose prayer is a traditional must. The bottom left hand side is governed by Sun God, top left Corner by Lord Vishnu, and top right corner by Lord Shiva. The ‘Lokapalas’ or Direction-wise Guards protect as follows: Indra guards East, Agni( Fire) guards South East, Lord Yama guards South, Nirrti South West, Varuna the God of Rain and Water guards the West, ‘Vayu’ the God of Air guards North West, Soma or Moon guards North, and Ishana protects North East. After propitiating the Devas and Lokapalakas, Puja to Devi Bhagavati starts by *Kara Nyasa and Anga Nyasa*. The Karanyasa Mantras are: Aim- angushtabhyam Namah, Hreem- Tarjaneebhyam Namah, Sreem - Madhyamabham Namah, Aim- Anamikabhyam Namah, Kleem Kanishthikam Namah, Souh Karatala prushthabhyam Namah. Anganyasa Mantras are: Aim Hridayaya Namah, Hreem Sirase Svaha, Sreem Sikhayavoushat, Aim Kavachahum, Kleem Netratraya aushath, Sauh Astrayaphut. Salutations to Maha Devi as follows:

Om Aim Sreem Aim Kleem Souh-Kriya Shakti Peethayai-Shri Padukayam Pujaami - Om Aim Sreem Aim Kleem Souh-Jnana Shakti Kundalinyai- -DO- Om Aim Sreem Aim Kleem Souh- Iccha Shakti Maha Tripura Sundaryai- -DO-Nithyamba Pujas: The following Mantras to added after each Nityamba:- Om Aim Hreem Shreem Aim Kleem Souh XXXX Sri Padukayam Pujaya Namah  
Example: Do Kameswari Nityamba Do  
Bhagamalini Nityamba, Nityaklinna Nityamba, Bherunda Nityamba, Vahnivasini Nityamba, Maha Vajreswari Nityamba, Sivaduti Nityamba, Tvarita Nityama, Kula Sundari Nityamba, Nitya Nityamba, Neelapataka Nithyamba, Vijaya Nithyamba, Sarva Mangala Nithyamba, Jwalamalini Nitymaba, Chitra

Nityamba, Maha Nitya Nityamba, Parameswara Nityamba, Parameswari Devi, Mitresamayi Devi, Shashtheesa Mayi Devi, Uddishamayi Devi, Charyanathamayi Devi, Lopamudramayi Devi, Agashyamayi Devi, Kala- tapanamayi Devi, Dharmacharyamayi Devi, Muthakesivaramayi Devi, Deepakalanathamayi Devi, Vishnudevamayi Devi, Prabhakara Devamayi Devi, Vasudevayamayi Devi, Ratnadevimayi Devi and Sri Ramanandamayi Devi.

Navavarana Puja- Names of Devis in Nine Enclosures

‘Pradhama Avarana’ (First Enclosure) in Three Outer Lines:

First Line: Anima Sidhamba, Laghima Sidhamba, Mahima Sidhamba, Isitva Sidhamba, Vasitva Sidhamba, Prakamya Sidhamba, Bhuti Sidhamba, Iccha Sidhamba, Prapti Sidhamba and Sarva Kama Sidhamba.

Second Line: Sri Brahmi Matraka, Maheswari Matraka, Kaumari Matraka, Vaishnavi Matraka, Varahi Matraka, Mahendri Matraka, Chamunda Matraka, and Mahalakshmi Matraka.

Third Line: Sarva Sankshobhini Devi, Sarva Vidravini Devi, Sarvakarshini Devi, Sarva vashankari Devi, Sarvonmadini Devi, Sarva Mahankusa Devi, Sarva Khechhari Devi, Sarva Beeja Devi, Sarva Yoni Devi, Sarva Trikhanda Devi, Trilokya Mohana Chakraswamini Devi and Prakata Yogini Devi.

‘Dvitheeya Avarana’ (Second Enclosure): Kamakarshini Shakti, Buddhyakarshini Shakti, Ahankarakarshini Shakti, Sabdakarshini Shakti, Sparshakarshini Shakti, Rupakarshini Shakti, Rasakarshini Shakti, Gandhakarshini Shakti, Chittakarshini Shakti, Dhairyakarshini Shakti, Smrutyakarshini Shakti, Namakarshini Shakti, Beejakarshini Shakti, Atmakarshini Shakti, Amrutakarshini Shakti, Sharirakarshini Shakti, Sarva Aasha Paripurka Chakraswamini and Gupta Yogini.

‘Truteeya Avarana’ ( Third Enclosure): Anga Kusuma Shakti, Ananga Mekhala Shakti, Ananga Madana Shakti, Ananga Madanatura Shakti, Ananga Rekha Shakti, Ananga Vegini Shakti, Ananga Ankusha Shakti, Ananga Malini Shakti, Sarva Sankshobhana Chakraswamini, and Gupta thara Yogini.

‘Chaturdha Avarana’ ( Fourth Enclosure): Sarvakshobhini Devi, Sarva Vidravini Devi, Sarvakarshini Devi, Sarvahladini Devi, Sarva Sammohini Devi, Sarva-Sthambhini Devi, Sarvajhrumbhini Devi, Sarvavashankari Devi, Sarva Ranjani Devi, Sarvonmadini Devi, Sarvatha Sadhika Devi, Sarva Sampatti Purani Devi, Sarva Mantramayi Devi, Sarva Dvandva Kshayankari Devi, Sarva Soubhagya Dayaka Chakraswamini Devi and Sampradaya Yogini Devi.

‘Panchama Avarana’ (Fifth Enclosure): Sarva Siddhiprada Devi, Sarva Sampathprada Devi, Sarva Priyankari Devi, Sarva Mangala Karini Devi, Sarva Kamaprada Devi, Sarva Dhuhkha Vimochani Devi, Sarva Mrithyu Prasamani Devi, Sarva Vighna Nivarini Devi, Sarvanga Sundari Devi, Sarva Sowbhagya Dayani Devi, Sarva Ardha Sadhaka Chakraswamini and Kulotheerna Yogini.

‘Shashtha Avarana’ ( Sixth Enclosure): Sarvagya Devi, Sarva Shakti Devi, Sarva Aishvarya Pradayani Devi, Sarva Jnanamayi Devi, Sarva Vyadhi Vinasini Devi, Sarvadhara Swarupa Devi, Sarva Papahari Devi, Sarva Anandamayi Devi, Sarva Raksha Swarupini Devi, Sara Epsitha Phalaprada Devi, Sarva Rakshakara Chakra Swamini and Nigarbha Yogini.

‘Saptama Avarana’ ( Seventh Enclosure): Vasini Vagdevi, Kameswari Vagdevi, Modhini Vagdevi, Vimala Vagdevi, Aruna Vagdevi, Jayani Vagdevi, Sarva Eswari Vagdevi, Kaulini Vagdevi, Sarva Rogahara Chakraswaini, Rahasya yogini, Banini, Chapini, Paasini and Ankusini.

‘Ashta’ Avarana’ (Eighth Enclosure): Maha Kameswari Devi, Maha Vajreswari Devi, Maha Bhagamalini Devi, Sarva Siddhiprada Chakraswamini and Ati Rahasya Yogini.

‘Nava Avarana’ ( Ninth Enclosure): Sri Sri Bhattarika, Sarvanandamaya Chakraswamini and Parapara Rahasya Yogini.

Conclusion of Navavarana Puja:

Tripura Devi Namah: Dhyayami; Tripuresi Devi Namah: Avahayami; Tripura Sundari Devi Namah :Asanam Samarpayami; Tripurasiddhi Devi Namah: Snanam Samarpayami; Tripuramba Devi Namah: Vastram Samarpayami; Maha Tripura Sundari Devi Namah: Abharamam Samarpayami; Maha Maheswari Devi Namah: Gandham Dharayami; Maha Maharagni Devi Namah: Pushpam Pujayami; Srimad Simhasana Iiswaryai Devi Namah: Padam Pujaami; Lalitha Devi Namah: Gulphou Pujayami; Maha Raagni Namah: Janghou Pujayami; Paramakushi Namah: Januni Pujayami; Chapinyai Namah :Urum Pujayami; Tripurayi Namah: Katim Pujayami; Maha Sundaryai Namah: Nabhim Pujayami; Sundaryai Namah: Vasitrayam Pujayami; Chakranathaya Namah: Udaram Pujayami; Charinyai Namah: Kantham Pujayami; Chakreswaryai Namah: Oshtham Pujayami; Maha Devai Namah: Kapolam Pujayami; Kameswaryai Namah: Dantapanktim Pujayami; Parama Eswaryai Namah: Chbukam Pujayami; Kamaraja Priyayai Namah: Nasika Dwayam Pujaami; Kamakotikayai Namah: Bhru Madhyam Pujaami; Sarv Patalayai Namah: Mukham Pujayami; Kulanthayai Namh: Parswam Pujaami; Amnayanathyayai Namah: Siram Pujamami; Sarva Amnaya Nivasinyai Namah : Padukam Pujayami; Maha Sringara Nayikayai Namah : Sarvangyani Pujayami.

Maha Sakti Devi Namah: Dhoopam Aghrapaami; Maha Guptha Devi Namah: Deepam Darshayami; Maha Gupta Devi Namah: Nivedaym Samarpayami; Maha Ananda Devi Namah: Tamboolam Sarpayami; Maha Skanda Devi Namah: Mantra Pushpam Samarpayami; Maha Maha Sri Chakra Nagara Samragini Namah: Pradakshina Namaskaran Samarpayami. [Note: If the detailed worship on the above lines is not possible to perform, at least the following powerful Panchadasakshari mantra may be recited 108 times each day keeping in view the Sri Yantra with concentration:

Ka E La Hreem-Ha Sa Ka Ha La Hreem-Sa Ka La Hreem ]

#### Ultimate Supremacy of Bhagavati Unquestionable

Interaction of Maha Maya and Ahamkara ( Illusion Vs. Egoism) takes place so intensely that the false concept of ‘first person –I or Mine’ often overshadows the Truth of Reality. Normal human beings are the major sufferers of this interaction and understandably so because of their vulnerability to defeats and successes happening at every step in life, resulting in sorrows and joys. Strangely enough however, Devas who are expected to be the repositories of equanimity often tend to be the victims of this conflict. Worse would be in the case of Trinity sometimes! The conflict of Realism versus self-centeredness came to fore when Vishnu and Mahadeva began to claim supremacy over each other. Their inner awareness was overshadowed as they fought and tended to divide loyalties among Devas and the susceptible humans. The clash continued and they used to brag before their respective spouses who were quiet as they knew

the Reality. As the collision took a serious turn, both Maha Lakshmi and Girija Devi left their respective abodes. Both Vishnu and Siva lost their controls and Shaktis. As both realised their follies and prayed to Maha Bhagavati, She appeared along with spouses and warned them that indeed they were like the grain and shell and in both the cases they were the shells and the Devi incarnations were the respective grains.

#### Devas and Trinity pray to Maha Bhagavati of 'Nirguna' and 'Nirakara'

In their own multi-disciplinary method, the entire Deva community, blessed in the presence of Trinity, made Vows to perform extreme Tapasya to please Maha Bhagavati; some resorted to continuous recitation of Her thousands of Holy Names or Her seed mantras; some executed Chandrayana Vratas of consuming one meal a day by gradually reducing the fist-wise intake by each passing day; some performed 'Antar Yagna's ( Inner Sacrifices) or 'Prana Agnihotra Yagna' or transforming external fire sacrifice into Interior Prana or Life Energy ( in other words, Fire Sacrifice of one's Vital force). With such intense Tapasyas by Devas, Maha Bhagavati appeared and indicated that the menace of Takasura could be overcome only by Lord Kumara , the son of Maha Deva and Devi Parvati, who from Her own Shakti, would soon be born to King Himavanta. This blessing of Bhagavati was a mighty relief to all Devas who expressed their extreme gratitude to Her. They bowed to Her saying *Om Tat Twamasi*. [ Om ('A: Srishti or Creation; Sthithi: Protection; Laya: Destruction), Tat (That Awareness), Twam (Eternity), Asi: ('I' or self)]. In other words: The Awareness of that Great Eternal Energy is within the Self. The Eternal Energy is far beyond the Five Stages of Consciousness or Sheaths viz. 'Annamaya' (manifested or perceptible material dimension), 'Pranamaya' (energy dimension), 'Manomaya' ( mind formed dimension arising out of thought, will and emotion), 'Vijnanamaya' (dimension of experience) and 'Anandamaya' ( Final dimension of Bliss). The Three Phases of 'Sat', 'Chit', 'Ananda' or Wakefulness, Deep Sleep and 'Samadhi' are likened to 'Tatvamasi', thus Devas prayed to Devi Bhagavati.

Devi Bhagavati blessed the Devas and Trinity describing Herself as Nirguna and Nirakara but to facilitate the understanding of a Reality Being of Super Force, She assumed the Attributes and Shape of a Physical body so that Her Presence is anchored in the imagination of one's mind. The Cover basically is Maya or a Make-Believe. Before Creation of the Universe, there was only the Supreme Energy and nothing else, which created Maha Maya or The Great Illusion of Existence. Maya interferes with the process of Awakening the Reality; it is like the heat of fire, the rays of Sun, the coolness of Moon, the force of Wind and so on. Paramatma or the Super Soul is at once identifiable in 'Saguna' form or in 'Nirguna' concept. The capacity to sift Reality from Illusion becomes enabled by Brahma Gyana which in turn emerges from 'Chaitanya' or Logic; this takes three forms viz. Icchha Sakti (the will), Jnana Shakti (where- with all), Kriya Shakti (the action be it in the form of meditation, Bhakti or Yoga). The 'Sat Chit Ananda' or the Reality Prompted Awakening of Bliss is the Final Reality! As Himavanta had the benefit of Bhagavati's Appearance, She blessed him too with the boon of Girija becoming his daughter soon and the latter would be an Extension of Bhagavati, the Cause of Causes, the Entire Creation of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva down to each atom of which Himavanta, Girija Devi, Skand Kumara, and the Demon Tarkasura would all be the actors in the forthcoming drama. Himavanta requested Maha Devi to reveal Her Magnificent 'Virat Rupa' or the Colossal Form and She obliged!

#### 'Ashtanga' ( Eight Limbed) Yoga' Practice – Rules and Regulations

Himavanta was bewildered to witness the Virat Rupa of Devi and when She ended that view and gone back to Her normal Self which by itself was fantastic, Himavanta emboldened himself as to how he

could recall Her Physical Form from time to time. Maha Devi suggested that the only plausible way to retain Her image would be through Yoga Practice. The basic step in Yoga is to integrate the 'Jeevatma' with 'Paramathma' and win over the 'Arishat Varga' or the Six enemies of lust, anger, greediness, infatuation, ego and envy. Then one follows '**Yama**' ( the tenfold practice of 'Ahimsa' or nonviolence, 'Satyam' or truthfulness, 'asteyam' or non-pilfering of mind and deed; 'Brahmacharya' or celibacy, 'Mita Ahara' or frugal eating, 'Bahya anthara Suchi' or external and internal cleanliness, 'Naithikitha' or morality, 'Daya' or mercy, 'Kshamata' or pardon and 'Sthirata' or stability), '**Niyama**' ( the ten fold practice of 'Tapasya' or atonement, 'Astikyatha' or unflinching faith in God, Vedas, Devas and Virtue; 'Santhushti' or contentment, 'Danaseelatha' or charity for good causes, 'Puja' or worship of Almighty, 'Siddhanta Acharana' or practice of established precepts, 'Hri' or refrain from evil acts, 'Sraddha' or fortitude in performing acts of faith, 'Japam' or repetitive and silent utterances of Mantras, Gayatri, and prayers; and ' Homams' or daily oblations to Sacred Fire) and five '**Asanas**' or postures viz.

1)'Padmasana' comprising of crossing the legs and drawing the feet of legs on the opposite thighs and simultaneously catching the toes of the right leg with the right hand right round the back and vice versa and sitting upright with ease

( Note: As this posture is practised only by expert Yogis, it would be sufficient to cross the hands on opposite thighs without stretching the hands from the back); 2) 'Swastikasan' or place the soles of the feet completely under the thighs and sit erect; 3)'Bhadrasan' or placing the two heels on the two sides of the two nerves of the testicles near the anus and catching the two heels by the two hands at the lower parts of the testicles and sitting at ease. 4) 'Vajra Asana' or the Diamond posture consists of placing the feet on the two thighs and placing the fingers below the two thighs with hands and finally 5) 'Virasan' comprising sitting cross on the hams or hollow area behind the knee in placing the right foot under the right thigh and vice versa sitting straight and at ease.)

The next step in Yoga is Pranayama comprising three processes viz. *Puraka* or breathing in by 'Ida' or left nostril and recite 'OM' sixteen times, then *Kumbhaka* or retain the breath in 'Susumna' nadi and reciting OM sixty four times, and *Rechaka* or exhale by 'Pingala' nadi or right nostril by reciting OM thirty two times slowly. Pranayama may be done as many times as possible, say twelve times to start with and increase the number further to sixteen or so forth. Pranayama could be 'Sagarbha' or any Mantra of one's choice or Vigarbha or just recite the Pranava Mantra or OM. When one does Pranayama fast, one would sweat out and that is a good practice. But that is for beginners only. When the exercise is performed faster and longer, then one gets body shivers which is of a middle order. The ultimate is when the practice reaches the peak then one would rise in the air! Pranayama follows Pratyahara , which means allowing senses to travel to specific objects spontaneously and forcibly reversing the travel from the objects back to senses. One has to hold 'Prana Vayu' or Life providing air in one's body system at twelve places viz. toes, heels, knees, thighs, genitals, navel, heart, neck, throat, soft palate, nose, middle of the eye brows or 'Bhrukuti' and from these finally to the top of the head or Brahma Nadi.; this practice is known as 'Dharana' or holding up the Prana Vayu at each organ. Thereafter, the Yogi has to execute 'Dhyana' or meditation by clearing the mind and concentrating one's choice of Almighty. The Ultimate peak is known as 'Samadhi' or Bliss, which could be in the form of ' Samprajnata' or 'Sa-vikalpik' when there is the consciousness of who is the Doer, what is the Doing and which is the Deed or the Actor, Action and Act, but in all these cases the Target is only one that is Eternal Almighty; simply stated in other words, Savikalpik Samadhi distinguishes the Atma and Paramathma, seeking to unify one into another. The Nirvikalpik Samadhi sounds like *Aham Brahma Asmi*, or God is me! Maha Bhagavati thus

described in brief the practice of Ashtanga Yoga or the Eight Limbed Yoga practice viz. Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi.

### ‘Nadis’ and ‘Chakras’

Devi Bhagavati described to Himavanta about physiological cum psychological analysis of human body, especially of various Nadis (Life webs) and Chakras. The word ‘Nad’ means streams; in the context of Yoga, Nadis are channels of Kundalini Energy as also of connectors of nerves or ‘Snayus’. The subtle yoga channels of energy from mind as well as ‘Chitta’ or consciousness of the self are through various physiological cords, vessels/tubes, nerves, muscles, arteries and veins. There are 350,000 Nadis in human body (Ayurveda mentioned 7,50,000 Nadis) but the principal nadis are fourteen viz. Sushumna, Ida, Pingala, Gandhari, Hastajihva, Yashasvini, Pusha, Alambusha, Kuhu, Shankini, Payasvini, Sarasvati, Varuni and Yashodhara. The most important Nadis however are the first three above. Sushumna is at the center of the spinal cord and is of the nature of Moon, Sun and Agni or Fire. It originates from Sacral plexus or a network of nerves at the spinal base upto the head at the top; it is from *Moola Adhara Chakra* and terminating at Sahasrara Chakra. Normally, Sushumna is inactive except when pranayama is performed. ‘Ida’ nadi is to the left of Sushumna, representing moon providing nectar like energy and ‘Pingala’ nadi is to the right side of Sushumna providing male like power. There is a cobweb like formation in the innermost area of Sushumna, called Vichitra or Chitrini Bhulinga Nadi, the centre of which is the seat of Ichha Shakti (Energy of Desire), ‘Jnana Shakti’ (Energy of Knowledge) and ‘Kriya Shakti’ (Energy of Action). The middle portion of the Bhulinga nadi has the luminosity of several Suns, above which is the Maya Bija Haratma representing the sound like ‘Ha’. Thereabove is ‘Kula Kundalini’ representing Serpent Fire of red colour. Outside the Kundalini is the ‘Adhara Nilaya’ of yellow lotus colour denoting four letters viz. Va, Saa, Sa, Sa; this is the base or Moola Adhara supported by six lotus formations. Beyond the Moola Adhara is the *Manipura Chakra* of cloud lightning colour comprising ten lotus petals representing ten letters da, dha, na, ta, tha, da, dha, na, pa, pha. This Mani Padma is the dwelling spot of Vishnu. Beyond the Mani Padma is ‘*Anahata Padma*’ with twelve petals representing Kha, Ga, Gha, ma, cha, chha, ja, jha, lya, ta, tha. In the middle is Banalingam, giving out the sound of Sabda Brahma. Thereafter is *Rudra Chakra* which represents, sixteen letters : a, a’, i, i’, u, u’, ri, ri’, li, lri, e, ai, o, ar, am, ah. It is in this place that ‘Jeevatma’ gets purified into ‘Paramatma’ and hence known as ‘*Visuddha Chakra*’. Further beyond is ‘*Ajna Chakra*’ in between the two eyebrows where the ‘self’ resides representing two letters ha, and ksha, one commanding another or Paramatma commanding Jeevatma. Even above is the ‘*Kailasa Chakra*’ which Yogis call as *Rodhini Chakra* the central point is the ‘Bindu Sthan’. In other words, a perfect Yogi has to perform Puraka, Pranayama, fix the mind on Mooladhara lotus, contract and arouse Kundalini Shakti by lifting by ‘Vayu’ between anus and genitals, pierce through the Adi Swayam Linga through various lotus petals and lotuses as described above, reach Sahasrara or thousand petal lotus and Bindu Chakra by the Union of Prakriti and Purusha. Could there be another example of the breaking of barriers as delineated in ‘Lalitha Sahasranama’ as follows!

*‘Mooladharaika nilaya, Brahma Grandhi vibhedini/ Manipurantharuditha Vishnu grandhi vibhedini/ Ajna Chakrantharalakstha Rudragrandhi vibhedini/ Sahasraambujarudha/ Sudha Sarabhi Varshinii / Tatillatha Samaruchih Shatchakropathi Samstitha / Mahasakthih Kundalini/ bisathanthu taniyasi/*

Indeed it would be rather difficult to practise Yoga on the above lines and hence would adopt ‘Avayava Yoga’ (limb wise) initially as described above viz. overcome ‘Shadvargas’ and practise Yama, Niyama,

Asana, Pranayama, Prathyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi and then after lapse of many weeks and months of practice one could succeed in the above discipline!

### External and Internal Ways of Worship

In the context of performing worship to Devi Bhagavati, two principal approaches were mentioned, the external and internal. The former kind is two fold again ie. Vedic and Tantrik. The Dharmik route is as per Vedic precepts and meditating Devi Bhagavati with 'Karma' or Sacrifice with 'Jnana' (Knowledge) and 'Bhakti' or devotion. Maha Deva Himself created Tamasic Sastras like Vama, Kapalika, Koulaka, Bhairava and so on. He also created five 'Agamas' viz. Shaiva, Vaishnava, Saurava, Sattva and Ganapathiya. The 'Varnashrama' method is followed according to the prescribed principles and worship Maha Devi accordingly. Another route in external worship way, is to follow the routine of waking up in the early hours of pre-dawn, pray to Maha Devi in the form of Kundalini Fire situated at Mooladhara travelling upto Sushumana Nadi, after morning ablutions and 'Sandhyavandana' as also 'Agni Homa', settle down after 'Asana', 'Sankalp', 'Bhutha Sudhhi' ( purification of body elements through respiratory control) and perform 'Matrika Nyasa'. The 'Nyasa' is to be executed by arranging the seed Mantra of Hrilleka- 'HRIM' by arranging the word 'Ha' in 'Mooladhara', 'Ra' in the heart, 'I' in the middle of the eyebrows and finally the full word 'Hrim' at the top of the head. The 'Nyasas' over, one should set up the four principles of Dharma ( Virtue), 'Jnana' ( wisdom), 'Vairagyam' ( detachment) and 'Vaibhogam' ( Prosperity) in the four directions of East, South, West and North and retain the image in the Centre of Maha Devi as seated on 'Pancha Prethas' viz. Brhama, Vishnu, Rudra, Sadasiva and Maheswara underneath. Maha Devi's seat is over and above the 'Pancha Bhutas' ( Five Elements viz. Earth, Water, Effulgence, Air and Sky) and 'Pancha Avasthas' or Five States of Existence, viz. 'Jagriti' ( awakeness), 'Swapna' (Dreaming), 'Sushupti' ( Deep Sleep), 'Turiya' ( Happiness), 'Ateetha rupa' ( the status of Bliss). One should meditate with concentration by way of 'Japam' (recitation of Devi's names), 'Argham' Offer water with ; sprinkling water with 'Astra Mantram Phut' for purifying the worship material as also the self, execute 'prana prathishtha' ( instal Life), 'Avahana' ( Invocation), 'Arghyam' ( Offering Water), 'Deepam' ( lighting of oil-soaked cotton wicks), Pushpam ( offering flowers), 'Naivedam' ( offering elaborate eats) and various other Services to Maha Devi especially 'Kshamarpana', finally distribution of 'Prasad'. Having described the worship methodologies of Worship, Devi blessed Himavata with Her 'Avatar' as Parvati to be born to him and be married to Lord Shankara and the Holy Couple would beget Lord Subrahmanya or 'Shadanana' who was destined by Devi to exterminate the most ferocious demon of the times and re-establish 'Dharma' once again.

### Brahma Gyan ( The Knowledge of Almighty)

Having outlined the precepts of Yoga, Devi Bhagavati was requested by the King of Himalayas to enlighten him as to how best to acquire 'Brahma Gyan' so that the Knowledge thus gained, albeit peripherally, be harnessed to take steps towards Her. Indeed, Brahma Gyan is not simple to acquire even to Illustrious Maharshis, Devatas and even Trinity, since its Wisdom is higher, deeper and far more mysterious and perplexing than the orbit of realisation of anybody, let alone human beings. When one refers to Brahma Gyan, it is not to be misconstrued as the knowledge of Lord Brahma of the Trinity, but the highest of all ie. the Supreme Brahman who is Devi Bhagavati Herself, whom there is indeed nothing there beyond. That particular Brahma who is eternal, imperishable, all-knowing, and all powerful is the Unique and higher than the highest or the 'Nirguna Brahma' who does take physical forms at Her ( or

His) will. It is that target that one should hit by utilising the ‘Bow’ of meditation and the ‘arrows’ of OM Mantras. It is that Mystic Brahman who is the converging point of three effective paths viz. ‘Sravana’ (Absorbing by way of hearing), ‘Manana’ (Cogitating by way of mental absorption) and ‘Dhyana’ (mental concentration by way of meditation)). It is that ‘Antaryamin Purusha’ (The Inner most Soul) that one has to seek and that is what Brahma Upasana all about. The ‘Atma’ is a bridge to ‘Paramatma’. Atma or Antaryamin is encased within physical frame which is tied up with 750,000 ‘nadis’ (Life webs) fastened to the navel as the center of wheel and this ‘Antaryamin’ resides in the heart. ‘Prajna’ or inner consciousness is a link to Maha Tatva or Prakruti on one hand and ‘Paramatma’ on the other. When human beings could maintain balance of the three qualities of Sattva, Rajasa and Tamo gunas or when the five bonds of ‘Samsara’ or normal life are blunted if not severed, then ‘Jeeva’ is qualified for the entrance test for further stages of Enlightenment. [The five bonds are ‘Avidya’ or ignorance or lack of inclination, ‘linga deha’ or the raw physical form, ‘Paramachchada Prakriti’ bond or severe snapping of impulses or reactions whatsoever, ‘Kama’ bond or the pull of desires, and ‘Karma’ bond of fate]. The ‘Jnani’ (The Pursuer) of Enlightenment reaches thus the threshold of the Universe and passes by ‘Sisumara’ (literally meaning the Infant Killer or the dolphin shaped sea mammal) or the constellation of North Pole (Ursa Minor) where he becomes devoid of passions far beyond ‘Gunas’, Tatvas and Bonds and enters the Golden Sheath or the Cosmic Egg. From there lies a sheet or a continuous path of Infinite Effulgence where there are no directions of north, east, west or south; no time measurements, no space dimensions but only ‘Brahma Conscience’ or ‘Hiranmaya Kosa’. Maha Bhagavati Devi thus defined the ‘Brahma Gyan’ as the Supreme Knowledge of Herself which is neither in Heavens, nor Satyaloka, nor Vaikuntha, nor even Kailasa but in one self who transforms the self or the ‘Atman’ unto ‘Paramatman’. Finally, the destination is within oneself and nowhere else viz. the heart likened with the Lotus Within! In this connection, Maha Devi emphasised the role of a Guru (Spiritual Teacher) who is superior to one’s own father; for the parental combination provides birth but the Spiritual Instructor endeavors to break the cycle of births and deaths, by providing ‘Brahma Gyan’. Of course, one’s father is competent to teach Brahma Vidya, other things being equal/ In the context of imparting Brahma Gyan, Maha Devi Herself provided an anecdote to Himavanta. A Muni named Dadhyam prayed to Indra for instructing him Brahma Gyan. Indra agreed on one condition that he should never impart to anybody else and that his head would be cut if the Muni did so. But Aswini Devata brothers approached the Muni after a few days and assured the Muni that his head would be pre-cut and kept safe and meanwhile a horse head would be fixed in place of the original head; from the horse head the Sage might teach Brahma Gyan to the Aswini Brothers and once Indra cut the horse head then the original head of the Sage would be replaced!

#### Maha Bhagavati’s ‘Virat Swarupa’

Maha Vishnu and Devatas were in raptures when Himavanta’s request to Maha Bhagavati to display Her Colossal Form was granted. Her upper portion of the head is Satya Loka, Sun and Moon the eyes, Vedas Her utterances, the entire Universe is Her heart, Earth is Her loins, Bhuvarka is the navel, Maharloka is the neck, Janarloka Her face, Tapoloka the lower part of Her head, Indras and Devathas in Svarloka are Her arms, sound emerges from Her ears, Aswini Twins Her nostrils, fire is within Her face, eye brows represent Brahma, water Her stomach, Lord Yama the Demi-God of death Her larger teeth, smaller teeth Her affection, Her Maya or Illusion is Her bewitching smile, Her side looks is Creation, Her lip is modesty and lower lip is materialism, unfairness is Her back, Prajapati is Organ of creation, Oceans are Her bowels, mountains are bones, veins are rivers, body hairs are trees, hairs on Her head are clouds, Her

clothings are twilights, Her mind is Moon, Vishnu Her Vijnana Shakti, and Her destroying Shakti is Rudra. Bhagavati's magnified appearance was at once awesome and frightening, pleasing and alluring, cruel and kind, smiling but haughty. She is exceptionally radiant like several Suns and remarkably spic in Her highly gorgeous form.

#### Mani Dvipa the Abode of Devi Bhagavati

Being far superior to Kailasa, Vaikuntha and Goloka, the Sarvaloka or Mani Dvipa is the residence of Devi Bhagavati in whom the entire Creation rests! Indeed She resides everywhere and anywhere but notionally at Mani Dvipa and the description is transcribed in detail by Maharshi Veda Vyasa apparently for the consumption of mortals to carry conviction into their consciousness. Surrounded by 'Sudha Sagara' ( The Ocean of Nectar), Manidvipa has a strong iron enclosure of several Yojanas far and wide with four gates well guarded by Devas and Devis. Within the First Enclosure, there is an Enclosure of white metal made of an amalgam of zinc and tin/copper which touches Heavens and is hundred times higher than the walls of the outer Enclosure. This Enclosure is interspersed with gardens and forests with a wide range of trees and plants, flowers with intoxicating fragrances, luscious fruits along with streams of fruit juices and gregarious animals and birds of staggering variety. The third Enclosure is made of copper with a height of seven yojanas comprising several 'Kalpavrikshas', with golden leaves/ flowers and fruits yielding gems, fulfilling desires of any imagination. The King of the Gardens along with the wives Madhu Sri and Madhava Sri maintains an excellent Spring Season, where Gandharvas reside, rendering divinely songs and music. The Fourth Enclosure made of lead with its wall height is again seven yojanas and within the Enclosure are the Sanatanaka trees with flowers whose fragrance reaches as far as ten yojanas and fresh fruits providing sweet juices of great quality and its King with the two queens Sukra Sri and Sudha Sri always maintains enjoyable mild summer where Siddhas and Devas reside here. The Fifth Enclosure made of brass with a spread of ten yojanas is maintained by its Chief as a perennial Rainy Season accompanied by twelve of his wives, viz. Nabha Sri, Nabhyasya Sri, Sravasya, Rasyasalini, Amba, Dula, Niranti, Varidhara, Abhramanti, Megha Yantika, Varshayanti, and Chivunika. The Trees grown in the Gardens of this Enclosure are Hari Chandana. The Sixth Enclosure is made of walls with five-fold irons and its Gardens grow Mandara Trees and creepers; the wives of its Chief are Isalakshmi and Urjalakshmi maintaining the Season of Autumn. Here again Siddhas reside with their wives. The Seventh Enclosure of seven Yojanas of length is made of Silver, its Chief maintaining Hemanta ( dewy) Season with his two wives Saha Sri and Sahasya Sri with Parijata as its main tree and flowers. The Eighth Enclosure is made of molten gold with Kadamba garden in the center with Tapas Sri and Tapasya Sri as the wives of the King and the fruits of the trees yield honey that is consumed aplenty by Siddhas and wives who are the inhabitants and the season again is dewy. The 'Navavarana' or the Ninth Enclosure is made of Pushparaga gems of Kumkum (saffron) colour which is abundant all over inside the Enclosure like forests, trees, rivers, flowers, lotuses, 'Mandapas' ( Halls), pillars and so on. All the 'Dikpalakas' of High Regency reside in the Eight Directions of the Enclosure, with the thousand eye bodied Indra in the East in Amaravati on Airavata with Sachi Devi, 'Vajra Ayudha' or thunderbolt, the Celestial Apsarasas and the rest; Agni Deva in South East with his two wives Svaha and Svadha, his Vahana and other belongings; Yama Dharmaraja in the South with his 'Yama danda' ( his Symbol the Celestial Rod) along with Chitragupta; Nirruti in the South West with his axe and wife representing Rakshasas; Varuna Deva in the West with his wife Varuni and 'Pasa' ( the noose), drinking Varuni honey and with the King of Fishes as his Vahana (Vehicle) and surrounded by aquatic animals; Vayu Deva in the North West with his wife, forty nine members of his Vayu family along with groups of Yogis adept in Pranayama and other

practices along with his Deer Vahana; the King of Yakshas and Unparalleled Possessor of Gems and Jewels Kubera in the North along with his two Shaktis Viriddhi and Riddhi and his Generals Manibhadra, Purnabhadra, Maniman, Manikandhara, Manisvargi, Manibhushana and Manikar Muktheadhari; Rudra Deva in the North East with other Rudras who are angry and red eyed, armed and mighty, frightful and revolting, fiery mouthed and detestably distorted, some times ten handed or thousand handed, odd number footed and odd number mouthed; in the company of Bhadrakalis and Matriganas, Rudranis and Pramadhaganas making ‘Attahasas’ or reverberating screeches and so on. Tenth Enclosure made of Padmaraga Mani inside which are the Sixty four ‘Kalas’ like Pingalakshi, Visalakshi, Vriddhi, Samriddhi, Svaha, Svadha and so on each of these having hundreds of akshouhini strong armies and individually each of these ‘Kalas’ have the unimaginable Power of destroying a lakh of ‘Brahmandas’(Universes)! The Eleventh Enclosure is made of Gomeda Mani and within this are the sin-destroying and beneficent Maha Shaktis viz. Vidya, Hri, Pushti, Prajna, Sinivali, Kuhu, Rudra, Virya, Prabha, Nanda, Poshani, Riddhida, Subha, Kalaratri, Maharatri, Bhadra Kali, Kapardini, Vikriti, Dandi, Mundini, Sendhu Kanda, Sikhandini, Nisumbha Sumbha Madini, Mahishasura Mardini, Rudrani, Sankarardha Saririni, Nari, Nirayani, Trisulini, Palini, Ambika and Hladini. The Twelfth Enclosure made of Diamonds and is the dwelling place of Bhuvaneswari, and is surrounded by Eight Shakties viz. Anangarupa, Ananaga Madana, Madanantara, Bhuvana Vega, Bhuvana Palika, Sarvasisira, Ananga Vedana and Ananda Madana; each of these Main Attendants of Bhuvaneswari has a lakh of Attendants. The Thirteenth Enclosure is made of Vaiduryas and the Residences of Eight Matrikas viz. Brahmi, Mahesvari, Kaumari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Indrani, Chamunda and Mahalakshmi. The Fourteenth Enclosure made of Indranilamani, which is the Most Auspicious Place of the Sixteen Petalled Holy Lotus with Sixteen Maha Shaktis resident viz. Karali, Vikarali, Uma, Sarasvati, Sri, Durga, Ushas, Lakshmi, Sruti, Smriti, Dhriti, Sraddha, Medha, Mati, Kanti and Arya. The Fifteenth Enclosure made of ‘Mukta’ or Pearls inside which reside Eight Shaktis Ananga Kusuma, Ananga Kusuma Tura, Ananga Madana, Ananga Madanatura, Bhuvanapala, Ganganavega, Sasirekha, and Gangana Vegarekha. The Sixteenth Enclosure which is made of Marakatha (Vaidurya) is hexagonal of Yantra Shape, and on the eastern corner of the Center is the Brahma with Devi Gayatri with Vedas, Sastras and Puranas as well as their Expansions; on the Western corner is Maha Vishnu and Savitri along with their own Expansions; on the North Western corner is Maha Rudra and Sarasvati with Rudra and Parvati Expansions and Sixty four Agamas and all Tantras; on the South Eastern side is the abodes of Kubera and Maha Lakshmi; on the Western corner side are the Couple of Madana and Rati Devi and on the North Eastern side are Ganesha and Pushti Devi. The Seventeenth one is made of Prabala (Red like Saffron) Devi Bhagavati’s five Elements viz. Hrillekha, Gagana, Raktha, Karailika, and Mahochuchusma; and finally, the Eighteenth Enclosure is built with Navaratnas ( Nine Jewels) with Bhagavati in the Center with ‘Pancha Amnayas’ (Eastern Amnaya is Creation by Mantra Yoga, Southern is Maintenance by Bhakti, Western is Pralay by Karma Yoga, Northern is Grace by Jnana Yoga and Urdhva Amnaya is Liberation); ten Maha Vidyas (Kali, Tara, Chhinnamasta, Bhuvaneswari, Bagala, Dhumavati, Matangi, Shodasi and Bhairavi) and Avatars viz. Bhuvanesvaris Pasamkusavari, Bhairavi, Kapala, Amkusa, Paramada, Sri Krodha, Triptavasarudha, Nityaklinna, Annapurnesvari and Tvarita. **Ratnagriha** or the Crown Palace of Mula Prakriti or Maha Devi Bhagavati is beyond the Eighteenth Enclosure, built of Chintamani Gems with thousands of pillars built by Suryamani Gems or Vidyutkantamani Gems. Four huge ‘Mandapas’ or halls each with thousand pillars in the Palace are made of kaleidoscopic and artistic mix of ‘Navaratnas’ ( The Nine Gems) viz. Mukta, Manikya, Vaidurya, Gomeda, Vajra, Vidruma, Padmaraga, Nila and Marakatas with dazzling lights and exhilarating perfumes suited to the Themes of the Halls designated as Shringara, Mukti, Jnana and Ekanta. In the Central place

of each of the Halls, there is a Very Special Chintamani Griha or the Sanctum Sanctorum on a raised platform with a plank supported by the four legs of Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra and Mahesvara and the plank is Sadasiva Himself! The Maha Tatvas are the stair cases leading to the Upper Chambers. Mula Prakriti and Maha Purusha constitute two halves of the Physical Formation of Maha Devi cum Maha Deva with Five Faces of Each Half, with corresponding three Eyes and four arms and armoury, one hand reserved exclusively for providing boons. The Attending Sakhies are those surrounding the 'Ardhanarisara' are Icchaa Sakti, Jnaana Sakti and Kriya Sakti who are always present with the Maha Bhagavati along with Lajja, Tushti, Pushti, Kirti, Kanti, Kshama, Daya, Buddhi, Medha, Smriti and Lakshmi in their physical Forms. The Nine Pitha Shaktis Jaya, Vijaya, Ajita, Aparajita, Nitya, Vilasini, Dogdhri, Aghora and Mangala are at the constant Service. Devi Bhagavati is simultaneously present in all the Mandapas; enjoying Vedas, Hymns of Praise, and Music in Shringara Hall; freeing Jivas from bondages in Mukti Hall; rendering advice and instructions in Jnana Hall and conducting consultations in Ekanta Mandapa with Ministers like Ananga Kusuma etc. on matters of vital significance related to Creation, Preservation and Destruction of Evil. Indeed the inhabitants of Mani Dvipa are all those who have attained Samipya, Salokya, Sarupya and Sarsti. They have no Arishdvargas to overcome, no tatvas to gain, no gunas to regulate, no Yogas to perform, no ambitions or desires to fulfil. They have no concepts of time, death, age, distance, body, mind, light, season or the 'Tapatriyas'. Human beings normally tend to describe the negativity of life always but the Eternal State of Perfect Equilibrium is some thing utterly unimaginable! Maharshi Veda Vyas assured that reading, listening or imagining about Mani Dvipa and of the Glories of Devi Bhagavati would provide peace of mind, contentment and fresh springs of hope, purpose and direction of life. Especially so, when new projects are launched and new actions are initiated as also when apprehensions, obstacles, diseases, tragedies or even the facing of death are envisaged by anybody.

### Shri Lalita Sahasra Naama Stotra

Preface : Anga Nyaasa and Karanyasa: *Asyashri Lalitaa Sahasranaama Stotra maalaa Mantrasya, Vasinyaadi Vaagdevataa Rishayah Anushthup Chhandaha Shri Lalitaa Mahaa Tripura Sundari Devataa, Aim-Shaktih, Sau Keelakam, Mama Chaturvidha Purushartha Siddhardhey Japey Viniyogah; Aim – Angushthaabhyaam Namah; Kleem –Tarjaneebhyaam Namah; Souh-Madhyamaabhyam Namah; Souh-Anamikaabhyaam Namah; Kleem-Kanishthikaabhyaam Namah; Aim-Karatala Kara Prushthaabhyam Namah; Aim – Hridayaayanamah; Kleem-Sirasey Swaahaa; Sou-Shikhaaya vashat; Souh-Kavachaaya hum; kleem-Netra Trayaaya Voushath; Aim-Astraaya phat; Bhurbhuvassuvaro dikbandhah/*

Dhyanam:

*Arunaam Karunaatarangitaaksheem dhrita paashaankusha pushpa baana chaapaam, Animaadibhiraavritaam Mayukhai rahamityeva Vibhaavaye Mahesheem/ Dhyayet Padmaasananthaam Vikasita Vadanaam Padma Patraayataaksheem, Hemaabhaam Peeta Vastraam Karakalitalasaddhema Padmaam Varaangeem/ Sarvaalankaara yuktaam Sakala mabhayadaam Bhakta namraam Bhavaaneem, Shri Vidyaam Shaantamurtim Sakala Suranutaam Sarva Sampatpradaatmeem/ Sakumkuma vilepanaamalika chumbi kasturikaam, Samandahasitekshanaam Sashara Paashaankushaam/ Avesha Jana Mohini marunamaalya bhushojjwalaam, Japaakusuma bhaasuraam Japavidhouh smaredambikaam/*

(May I meditate that Maha Raajni whose natural complexion is red; whose eyes are full of kindness; whose hands are ornamented by a noose, a goad, a bow and flowery arrows and who is surrounded by

Ashta Siddhis like Anima, Garima, Laghima and Vasitwa; indeed she is right within in me! May I meditate Bhavani, that Shri Vidya or the Symbol of Knowledge, Shantamurti or the Epitome of Peace and Sarva Sampadpradaatrem or the benelolent provider of prosperity, as she dispels fears and provides protection to all; She is seated comfortably on a lotus with majestic face, sparkling eyes akin to lotus petals, donning a golden dress with a benign smile! May I meditate the smiling Mother who sports arrows and bow, besides a noose and goad; she is decorated with red japa kusuma flower garlands and ornaments, and with a forehead painted with vermillion and musk that intoxicated.)

*Om Aim Hreem Shreem Shri Matrey Namah/Shri Maataa Shri Mahaaraahni Shrimat Sihaasaneshwari, Chidagni Kunda sambhuta Deva Kaarya Samudyataa/ Udyadbhaanu Sahasraabhaa Chaturbaahu Samanvitaa, Raaga Swarupa pashaadhyaa Krodha Kaaraankushojjwalaa/ Manorupekshu Kodanda Pancha Tanmatra Saayakaa, Nijaaruna Prabhaapura majjadbhramaanda mandalaa/ Champakaashoka sougandhika lasatkacha, Kuruvindamanishreni Kanatkotira mandita/*

(Sacred Mother! You are the Extraordinary Queen seated on the Throne mounted by lions; You are generated from the fire-pit of self-realisation; You sparkle with the lustre of thousand Suryas with four arms with a goad in the right hand as though you spur your devotees to follow the right path and at the same time displaying your displeasure with a noose up your upper left hand to correct them where-ever necessary; Devi! You carry a sugar-cane bow with the determination of materialising the Universe with your left lower hand, while actually taking up the deed of Creation with the aid of Five Tanmatras or Elements by another hand of yourself. Indeed the magnificence of your creation is spread all over as Omnipresent. Your Hairdo is endowed with the natural perfume of Champaka-Ashoka-Punnaaga flowers; You are embellished with a Crown bejewelled with special precious stones of Kurukulla as though they signify various emotions and feelings).

*Ashtami Chandra Vibhraaja dalikasthala shobhitaa, Mukha Chandra kalankaabha Mriganaabhi viseshakaa/ Vadanasmara maangalya Griha torana jillikaa, Vaktra Lakshmi pareevaaha chalan meenaabha lochanaa/ Nava Champaka pushpaabha naasadanda viraajitaa, Taaraa kanti tiraskaari naasaabharana bhaasuraa/ Kadamba manjari krupta Karna pura Manoharaa, Taatanka yugali bhuta tapanodupa Mandalaa/*

( Lalita Devi! Your broad forehead is dazzling with an adornment of an eighth night's half Moon while the Tilaka or the streak of Musk on the forehead is likened to a smudge on Chandra! Your eye brows represent Victory Arches on the gorgeous face comparable to a 'Manmatha Bhavana'! Your charismatic eyes are like the sparkle of fishes in the Ocean of charm; Your nose is comparable to a freshly blossomed Champaka flower; the gleam of the diamonds worn on the ornament of your nose puts to shame the combined shine of Stars on the Sky; the decoration of a bouquet of Champaka flowers above your ears is cute and appealing; indeed You roam around a lot in the Kadamba Gardens. Your ear-rings are represented by Sun and Moon and have a cosmic relevance.)

*Padma raaga shilaadarsha paribhavi kapolabhuh, Navavidruma bimbashrinyakkari radanacchada/ Suddha Vidyaankuraakaara Dwijapankti dwayojjwalaa, Karpura veetikaamoda Samaakarshaddi - gantaraa/ Nija sallaapa Maadhurya vinirbhita kacchapi, Mandasmita prabhaapura majjad Kaamesha Maanasaa/ Anaakalita saadrusya chubuka Shree Viraajitaa, Kaameshabaddha Mangalya sutra shobhita kantharaa/*

(Devi! Your rosy and smooth cheeks defy rubies and blood red lips flout corals and bimba fruit; the two perfect sets of your scintillating teeth represent Dwija-Pankti or the rows of Learned Brahmanas thus signifying pure Knowledge; the whiff of aroma from your face as emanated from the camphor and betel leaves that you take in your mouth fills in the whole Universe signifying that the 'Omkaara Naada' from

your mouth resonates every where; Your banter / Chit-chat is far sweeter than the trained tunes of the stringed instrument of Veena and is suggestive of the resonance of Vedas; Your pretty smile to Kameswara overpowers his thoughts and mind; Your chin is uniquely shaped and is above depiction; the Mangala Sutra tied by Kameshwara around Lalita Devi symbolises the very close affinity and inseparability of Prakriti and Maha Purusha or Shiva and Parvati.)

*Kanakaangada keyura kamaneeya bhujaanvita, Ratnagraiveya Chintaakalola Muktaa phalaanvita/  
Kameswara premaratna mani pratipanastani, Naabhyaalawaala romaali lataa phalakuchadwayi/  
Lakshya romalataa dhaarataa samunneya Madhyamaa, Stanabhaara dalan madhya pattabandha  
valitrayee/ Arunaaruna Kousumbha vastra bhaasvatkati tati, Ratna kinkinika Ramya rashanaa daama  
bhushitaa/ Kaamesajnaata soubhagya maadramoru dwayaanvita, Maanikya makutaakaara Jaanudwaya  
viraajitaa/ Indragopa parikshipta smara tunaabhajanghikaa, Gudha gulphaa Kurma Prushtha Jayishnu  
Prapadaanvita/*

(Devi! You are ornamented on your excellent hands with golden ‘Angadas’ or armlets and ‘Keyura’ or wringlets as alluded to the Mantras of these descriptions; You are adorned with diamond and pearl necklaces alluded to the ‘Mantraaksharaas’; Lalitaamba! the intimacy of Your love with Shiva is evident by the closeness of your body parts including your thin waist, folds of skin, soft thighs and buttocks covered by bright red saree, your knees ornated with crowns speckled with nine gems and the legs are decorated by gold-studded Indra Gopa Manis; Your golden waist-belt has diamond-studded bells called ‘kinkinis’ making mild vibrations as signified by small recitations of Mantras and Your feet are vaulted like the back of tortoises indicating ‘Prapada’).

*Nakha deedhiti sanchhanna namajjana Tamogunaa, Padadwaya prabhaajaala paraakruta saroruhaa/  
Sinjaana mani manjeera mandita Shri Padaambujaa, Maraali manda gamanaa Mahaalaavanya  
sevadhih/ Sarvaarunaa navadyaangi Sarvaabharana bhushitaa, Shiva Kaameshwaraankasthaa Shivaa  
swaadheena vallabhaa/ Sumeru shringa madhyathaa Shri mannagara naayika, Chintaamani  
grihaantasthaa Pancha Brahmaasana sthitaa/*

(Devi! The radiance of your toe-nails rescinds darkness and ignorance and your devotees are enabled to retract from Tamoguna; your sacred feet which are white and spotless do oversmart lotus flowers and they too disperse mental dullness just as a Guru enhances knowledge and sharpness; Your feet are indeed the final goal of worship as they have jingling anklets like Mantraaksharas which facilitate unreserved devotion. The pace and grace of your steps are slow yet steady like that of a Swan as they seek to inculcate gradual transformation and purification of the Soul and there by realise the Final Truth which is deep, complex, hard to cross through and wade like an Ocean. Thus You are bright, red, clean and blemishless from top to bottom; You are adorned with all kinds of ornaments and is the Emblem of Perfection! You are also the Synthesis of Shiva and Shakti and have an ideal partner under your control; Devi! You are ideally situated on the middle top of Meru Mountain or the Center of Shri Chakra and as the Empress of Shri Nagara in the Palace of Chitamani Ratnas as the Prime Deity with Five Brahmas around viz. Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Ishana and Sada Shiva; the reference is that Lalitaambika is situated as the Supreme above all the Brahmas). [Beyond the two Chakras viz. Mulaadhaara and Swadhishtaana in every body, there are Grandhis or layers called Brahma Grandhi; beyond Manipura and Anahata is Vishnu grandhi; beyond Vishudda and Agnaa chakra is Rudra granthi; from Ajnaadhaara to the Skull-Center is stated to be Ishwara Sthaana, above which is stated to be Dwadashanta where Sada Shiva is situated; finally Devi Lalita is seated as Chit Kalaa above the Pancha Brahmaas]

*Maha Padmaatavi sasmtha Kadamba Vana Vaasini, Sudhaa saagara madhyastaa Kaamaak -shi Kaama  
daayani/ Devارشigana sanghaata stuyamaamaanaatma Vaibhavaa, Bhandaa –asura Vadhodyukta Shakti  
senaa samanvita/ Sampatkari Samaarudha Sindhura Vraja sevitaa, Ashwarudhaadhishtitaashwa koti*

*koti bhiraavrutaa/ Chakraraaja Rathaarudha, Sarvaayudha Parishkruta, Geyachakra Rathaarudha  
Mantrini parisevitaa/ Kirichakra Ratha -arudha Dandanaathaa puraskritaa, Jwalaamaalinikaakshipta  
Vahni Praakaara madhyagaa/*

(Maha Devi! You reside in the Maha Padmavati Forest of Lotuses being the contact place of a person and the Supreme; more specifically in the interior of the Kadamba Vana where Yantras predominate; also you are in the midst of Sudha Sagara or Bliss or the Center of Shri Chakra's Bindushtaana as Kamakshi the Goddess of Kanchipura the bestower of desires; Devi! You responded to the Prayers of Devaas and Maharshis from 'Chidagni Kunda' to perform the most significant 'Deva Karya'; You are indeed the best equipped with an army and armoury of qualities of selflessness, determination and skill to kill Bhandasura the Grand Fund of Ignorance, Ego, and extreme self-image coupled no doubt with courage, capability and invincibility; Devi! You have the advantage of having Sampatkari as the Head of Elephants who is blessed with extraordinary abilities of intelligence to drive the elephants with features like selflessness and perfection comparable to sense aptitudes or Tatwaas. Also there were crores of Shaktis riding horses each of whom specialised in mental abilities to win over -as alluded- the Evil with Virtue. She rode over the Shri Chakra chariot with her full armoury; She was accompanied by Mantrini on the Geya Chakra Ratha, Mantrini being Devi's mind; Vaaraahi the Commander alighted the Kiri Chakra and was ahead of Devi; You were in the center of Jwaala maalaas or rings of flames)

*Bhandasainyavadhodyukta Shakti Vikrama harshitaa, Nitya paraakramaatopa nireekshana  
samutsukaa/ Bhanda putra vadhodyuka Baaalaa vikrama nanditaa, Mantrinyambaa virachatha vishanga  
vadha toshitaa/ Vishukra praana harana Vaaraahi Veerya nanditaa, Kameswara mukhaa loka kalpita  
Shri Ganeshwara/ Maha GaneshanirbhinnmaVighnayantra praharshitaa, Bhandasuraendra Nirmukta  
shastra pratyastha varshini/ Karaanguli nakhotpanna Narayana dashaakritih, Mahaa  
Paashupataasraagni nirdagdhaasura sainikaa/*

(Devi! You were delighted to view the large army about to destroy Bhandasura; you were also happy to witness the gallantry of Nitya Shaktis; you were glad that Shri Bala your daughter killed the sons of Bhandasura; you enjoyed that Mantrinyamba terminated Vishnga and Devi Vaaraahi killed Vishukra; then Ganeswara was materialised from your face and the latter destroyed all the Yantras such as various hindrances; You rained Astra Shastras to demoralise Bhandasura; as Bhandasura created Hiraynaaksha, Hiranya kashipu, Ravana and other Arch-Enemies of Devas, you mildly rubbed your finger nails and created the counterparts of Narayana who exterminated the respective Asuras!; by using Pashupatastra, you let an ocean of warriors get converted as heaps of ash).

*Kameswaraastra nirdagdha sa Bhandasura sunyaka, Brahmopendra Mahendraadi Deva samsthuta  
vaibhavaa/ Haranetraagni sandhagdha Kaama Sanjeevanoushadhih, Shrimadvaagbhava kutaika  
Swarupa mukha Pankajaa/ Kanthaathahkati paryanta Madhyakuta Swarupini, Shakti kutaika taapanna  
Katyatdho -bhaaga dhaarini/ Mula yantraatmikaa Mula kuta traya kalebara, Kulaamritaika rasikaa Kula  
sanketa paalini/ Kulaanganaa Kulaantasthaa Kaulini Kulayogini, Akulaa Saayaantasthaa  
Samayaachaara tatparaa/*

(Devi! You had burnt Shunyaka Nagara along with Bhandasura and his warriors and finally completed the Deva Karya; Brahma-Upendra-Mahendras were totally gratified and extolled you. You had then revived Manmatha who was burnt off by Maha Deva's third eye. Your resplendent lotus face then revealed the source of speech and the Panchadashi Mantra, which was the Source Mantra that described Your Neck-to-Waist besides the body- part underneath as well as the Mula-Mantra; the Tri Kutaas of your physique akin to the Panchadashi are called Shri-Kama-Kala Kutaas. You are Kulaamrita Rasika or the enjoyer of the nectar of chastity and purity; 'Kula' is stated to be a combined expression of 'Maataa' the one who measures or approves; 'Maanam' is the measure or the quantity to be approved and the 'Meyam'

or the one to be approved; Kula sanketa palini is the Enforcer of of the Kula or basically the Tradition of Spiritualism and thus Kulaangana is the Force of the Tradition; Kulantastha or the insider of the Kula conversant with 'Aachaara-Vyvahaaras'; You are the Kaulini or the household-dietary and Kula Yogini or Lalita Devi herself; You are Akula who is far above a specific Kula as she represents all the Kulas or Traditions; Samayantastha or the one who is of Shiva-Lalitha's Identity but as construed by varied contexts; Devi! You therefore assume various Forms as per exigencies.)

*Mulaadhaaraika nilayaa Brahma grandhi Vibhedini, Manipuraantarudita Vishnu grandhi Vibhedini/ Agnaachakraantasthaa Rudra granthi Vibhedini, Sahasraaraambujaarudhaa Sudhaa saaraabhi varshini/ Tatillataa samaruchishshachakopari samsthitaa, Maha Shatktih kundalini bisatantu taneeyasi/ Bhavani Bhavanaagamyaa Bhavaaranyaa kuthaarikaa, Bhadra Priya Bhadra Murtirbhakta Soubhagyadaayani/ Bhaktapriyaa Bhaktigamyaa Bhakti Vashyaa Bhayaapaha, Shaambhavi Sharadaaraadhyaa Sharvaani Sharma daayani/ Shaankari Shrikari Saadhvi Sharacchandra nibhaanaa, Shaatodari Shantimati Niraadhaaraa Niranjanaa/*

(Devi! You reside inside the Mulaadhaara Chakra that is as Kundalini; You penetrate through the Brahma Grandhi or the barrier of Brahma and enable your devotees practising Yoga to be conscious while awake; then a devotee is facilitated to vision Devi in Manipura while in a condition of stupor; further a devotee has to pierce through the Vishnu Grandhi or the Vishnu knot when the Yogi becomes unconscious and his body and thoughts are felt irrelevant; in the Ajnaachaktaanta state the yogi loses his identity; while breaking Rudra Grandhi the Yogi attains cosmic reality and in Sahasraara Chakra the yogi is stated to seek Salvation. That stage provides Sudhaa sagara or bliss; indeed Devi! You are above these stages and chakras as 'Shachakopari Samstitha'. You are called as Maha Shakti in union with Maha Deva and is stated to be in the form of a coiled serpent in the state of 'Kundalini' like a thin lotus stem. Devi Bhavani, Bhavanaagamyaa or Beyond Comprehension as then a Bhavaaranyaa Kutharika or She would axe the cycle of births and deaths! You would in that Form be a Bhadra Priya, Bhadra Murthi, Bhakta Soubhagyadaayani, Bhakti Priya, Bhakti Gamyaa or realisable by Bhakti alone; Bhakti Vasya or Controllable by Bhakti only; Bhayaapaha or you drive out fear of the devotees; Shaambhavi, Sharadaaraadhyaa, Sharvaani or the consort of Sharva, Sharma dayani or the provides of Eternal Happiness; Shankari, Shrikari, Saadhvi or of Purity; Sharacchandra nibhaanana or Luminous like a Full Moon; Shatodari or slim waisted; Shantimati, and Niradhara or supportless and Niranjana or blemishless).

*Nirlepa Nirmala Nitya Niraakara Niraakula, Nirgunaa Nishkalaa Shantaa Nishkaamaa Nirupaplava/ Nityamuktaa Nirvikaaraa Nishprapancha Niraashraya, Nitya Shuddha Nitya Buddhaa Niravadyaa Nirantaraa/ Nishkaaranaa Nishkalankaa Nirupaadhirnirishwara, Neeraagaa Raaga mathani Nirmada Madashalini/ Nischinta Nirahankaaraa Nirmohaa Mohanaashani Nirmama Mamataa hantri Nishpaapaa Paapanaashani/ Nishkrodhaa Krodhashamani Nirlobhaa Lobhanaashani, Nissamshayaa Samshayaghni Nirbhavaa Bhava naashani/ Nirvikalpaa Niraabaadhaa Nirbheda Bheda naashani, Nirnaashaa Mrityu mathani Nishkrya Nishparigrahaa/*

(Nirlepa or Transparent; Nitya or Everlasting; Niraakaara or Formless; Nirakula or composed; Nirguna or Featureless; Nishkala or Undividable; Shanta; Nishkaama or desireless; Nirupaplava or Imperishable; Nitya Mukta or Ever Unrestricted; Nirvikara or Immutable; Nishprapancha or Beyond the Universe; Niraashraya or Unfounded; Nitya Shuddha, Nitya Buddha, Niravadya or Irrefutable; Nirantara; Nishkarana or the Causeless since You are the Cause of Causes; Nishkalanka or Spotless; Nirupaadhi or Unaccompanied; Nirishwara or the Ultimate; Niraaga or Uncommitted; Raga Mathani or Devoid of Attachments; Nirmada or Modest; Madanaashani or the destroyer of arrogance; Nischinta or Worryless; Nirahankaara or Egoless; Nirmoha or Illusionless; Mohanaashani or Destroyer of Obsessions; Nirmama or Selfless; Mamataahantri or terminator of attachments; Nishpaapa or Sinless; Paapanaashani; Nishkrodha; Krodha Shamani; Nirlobha greedless; Lobha naashani; Nissamsaya or devoid of doubts; Samsayaghni or

smasher of doubts; Nirbhava or Unborn; Bhavanaashyani or Destroyer of the Cycle of births and deaths; Nirvikalpa or devoid of actions; Nirbaadha; Nirbheda or Consistent ; Bhedanaashani or destroys distinctions; Nirnaasha or Indestructible; Mrutyumathani or demolisher of death; Nishkriya or Actionless; and Nishparigraha or Accepts nothing)

*Nistula Neela Chikura Nirapaaya Nirathyaya, Durlabha Durgama Durgaa Duhkhahantri Sukhapradaa/ Dushta doora Duraachaarashamani Doshavarjita, Sarvajnaa Saandra Karunaa Samaanaadhika varjitaa/ Sarva Shaktimayi Sarva Mangalaa Sadgatipradaa, Sarveshwari Sarvamayi Sarva mantra swarupini/ Sarva Yantraatmikaa Sarva Tantra Rupaa Manonmani, Maaheshwari Maha Devi Maha Lakshmi Mrudapriyaa/ Mahaa Rupaa Mahaa Pujyaa Mahaa Paataka Naashini, Mahaa Maayaa Mahaa Satwaa Mahaa Shaktirahaaratih/ Mahaa Bhogaa Mahaishwarya Mahaa Veeryaa Mahaa Balaa, Maha Buddhir Mahaasiddhir Mahaa Yogeshwreshwari/*

( Nistula or Unparalleled; Nilachikura or dark haired; Nirapaaya or far above any danger; Durlabha or difficult to achieve; Durgama or Difficult to reach; Durga or the famed Swarupa of Shakti who killed Mahishaasura; Duhkhahantri or the destroyer of distresses; Sukhaprada or the Provider of Happiness; Dushta dooraa or away from Evil; Duraachara shamini or the reliever of evil deeds; Doshavarjita or devoid of imperfections; Sarvajna or All Knowing; Saandra Karuna or Provider of Great Benevolence; Samaanaadhika Varjita or Matchless; Sarva Shaktimayi or Omni Potent; Sarva Mangala or the Symbol of Auspiciousness; Sadgatiprada or the Provider of Righteousness; Sarveshwari; Sarvamayi or Omni Present; Sarva Mantra Swarupini or the Personification of all Mantras; Sarva Yantraatmika or The Epitome of All Yantras; Sarva Tantra Rupa or the Unique Form of all Tantras; Manonmayi or of Heightened Form of Consciousness; Maheshwari; Maha Devi; Maha Lakshmi; Mridapriya or the beloved of Shiva; Maha Rupa; Maha Pujya; Maha Paataka Naashani; Maha Maya; Maha Satwa or of Unique Energy; Maha Shakti; Maha Rati or beyond Sensual Pleasures as she is Bliss herself; Maha Bhoga; Mahaishwarya; Maha Veeryaa; Mahaa Balaa; Mahaa Buddhi; Maha Siddhi and Maha Yogeshwreshwari).

*Maha Tantraa Maha Mantraa Mahaa Yantraa Mahaasanaa, Mahaayaagakramaadaadhyaa Mahaa Bhairava Pujitaa/ Maheshwara Mahaa Kalpa Mahaa Taandava Saakshini, Mahaa Kaamesha Mahishi Mahaa Tripura Sundari/ Chatussastyupacharaadhyaa Chatussashti Kalaamayi, Mahaachatusshashti koti Yoginigana sevita/ Manu Vidyaa Chandra Vidyaa Chandra mandala madhyagaa, Chaarurupaa Chaaruhaasaa Charu Chandra Kalaadharaa/ Charaachara Janannathaa Chakra raaja niketana, Parvati Padmanayanaa, Padmaraaga samaprabhaa/ Pancha Pretaasanaaseena Pancha Brahma Swarupini, Chinmayi Parama anandaa Vijnanaa Ghana rupiney/ Dhyana dhyaatru dhyeya Rupaa Dharma – adharma Vivarjitaa, Vishwa rupa Jaagarani Swapanti Taijasaatmikaa/ Suptaa Pragjnaat -mika Turyaa Sarvaavastha Vivarjitaa, Srishti Kartri Brahma Rupaa Gopti Govinda Rupiney/ Samhaarini Rudrarupa Tirodhaanakareshwari, Sadaa Shivaanugrahadada Pancha krutya Paraayana!*

(Devi Lalita! You are the Maha Tantra, Maha Mantra, Maha Yantra, Mahaasana or Seated on Elevation; Mahaa Yaga Kramaaraadhyaa or worshipped at various Maha Yagnas like Amba Yagna; You are worshipped by Maha Bhairava or Maha Deva himself; You witnessed the Cosmic Dance of Maheshwara at the end of Maha Kalpa; You are the Maha Kamesha's Queen; Maha Tripura Sundari! You are worshipped sixty four types of services; Amba! You are the Origin of sixty four Kalaas or Arts as contained in Vedas and various other Scriptures; also served by sixty four crores of Maha Yoginis; You are the Manu Vidya and Chandra Vidya and are situated on the middle of the Moon's orbit; You are Charu Rupa or of the Magnificent Form; of Charu Haasa or with enchanting smile; with the adornment of Ashtama Chandra; the Maha Raajni of Charaacharas in the Universe; the Dweller of the Chakra Raajaas like Shri Chakra; Parvati! Padma Nayana; Glittering with Padma Raagaas or Rubies; Seated on the Five Pretaas of Brahma-Vishnu- Rudra-Ishwara-Sadaashivaas if they are not provided by life by You! You are

of the Form of Five Brahmas; Chinmayi or of Supreme Consciousness; the Paramananda or of Unique Bliss; Vijnana Ghana Rupini or of the Inimitable Swarupini of Vijnana; the Dhyana-Dhyaatru- Dheya Rupa or of the Form of the Meditation-the Meditator and the Meditated! You are beyond Dharma or Adharma! The Vishwa Swarupa; You are Jaagarani or the Ever Wakeful; the Swapanti or in Dreams; the Taijasatmika or in a State of Stupor; or in Supta or Trance; Pragjnaatmika or in a Casual Body without full Consciousness; Turiya or the Fourth Stage when the Senses are inactive on the verge of senselessness; Devi! You are however beyond all these previous stages as you are Sarvaavastha Vivarjita.! Lalita Devi! You are the Srishti Kartri being Brahma Rupini; the Goptri or the Protector as Govinda Rupini; Samhaarini or the Annihilator as of Rudra Rupa; the Tirodhaanakari or as the withdrawing Swarupini as Ishwara and finally the Sadaa Shiva who provides Anugraha or impetus to Re-Create again; such are the Five Swarupas of Yourself Devi viz. Brahma- Vishnu- Rudra-Ishwara and Sada Shiva; You Lalita Devi! Are thus the Pancha Krutya Paraayana or the Practitioner of Five Sacred Deeds!)

*Bhanu mandala madhyastaa Bhiravi Bhaga maalini, Padmaasana Bhagavati Padmanaabha Sahodari/ Unmesha Nimishotpanna Vipanna Bhuvanaavalih, Sahasra Seersha Vadanaa Sahasraakshi Sahasra paat/ Aabrahmakeeta janani Varnaashrama vidhaayani, Nijaaajnaa Rupa nigamaa Punyaapunya Phalapraadaa/ Shruti seemanta Sindoori kruta paadaabja dhulikaa, Sakalaagama Sandoha Shukti Samputa Mouktikaa/ Purushaardha pradaa Purnaa Bhogini Bhuvaneshwari, Ambikaanaadi nidhanaa Hari Brahmendra Sevita, Hreenkaari Hreemati Hridyaa Heyopaadeya varjita/ Raja Raajaarchita Raajni Ramyaa Raageva Lochana, Ranjani Ramani Rasyaa Ranatkinkini mekhala/Ramaa Rakenduvadanaa ati Rupaa Rati Priya, Rakshaakari Raakshasaghi Ramaa Ramana lampataa/ Kaamyaa Kamakalaaarupa Kadamba kusumapriyaa, Kalyaani Jagati kanda Karunaaras Saagara/*

(You are in the center of Surya Mandala; Bhairavi! with a garland of Suryas seated in Padmasana posture as Bhagavati the sister of Padmanabha; Devi! As you open your eyes Bhuvanaas are sprouted and destroyed as you close the eyes; You have thousand heads, faces, eyes and feet; the Unique Mother of all Beings from Brahma down to worms; the Prime Regulator of Varashrama Vidhana; Vedas are at your behest; you provide the results of every deed of the Beings as per the content of virtue or otherwise; the particles of your Lotus feet tuns red as 'Sinduri' which adorns the foreheads of virtuous women; the collection of pearl oyster shells comparable to 'Agamaas' is your ornament; You bestow the fulfilment of the Purusharthas viz. Dharma-Artha-Kaama-Mokshas; You are Purna or the Totality; Bhogini or the Ever-enjoying; Bhuvaneshwari; Ambika; Ananda nidhaana or the Fund of Joy; worshipped by Hari-Brahma-Indra; Narayani; Nada Rupa or of sounds ranging from subtle to gross forms; Devoid of a name or a form; Lalita! You are Hrimkari since the sound 'Hreem' covers Srishti-Sthiti-Samhara; Hrimati or Symbol of Modesty; Hridya or Happiness replete within heart; Heyopadeyavarjita or with nothing to accept or reject; Rajaraajaarchita or worshipped by the Lord of Riches viz. Kubera; Raajni or the Supreme Queen; Ramya; Rajeevalochana or Lotus Eyed; Ranjani the one who delights; Ramani; Rasyaa or the sense perception; Ranat kinkini mekhala or adorned with waist belt with small bells; Rama or the Consort of Vishnu; of Ratipriya as Devi liked Rati since she revived Manmatha the husband of Rati; Rakshakari or the One who provides security; Raakshasaghi the destroyer of Rakshasas; Rama the highest representative of femininity; Ramana Lampata or deeply involved with husband; Kadamba kusuma priya or highly fascinated by Kadamba flowers; Kalyani or the Symbol of Auspiciousness; Jajatikanda or the root-cause of the Universe; Karunaarasa Saagara or the Ocean of Kindness).

*Kaalavati Kalaalaapaa Kanta kaadambari Priyaa, Varadaa Vaamanayanana Vaaruni Mada Vihvalaa/ Vishwaadhikaa Veda Vedyaa Vindyaachala nivaasini, Vidhaatri Veda Janani Vishnu Maayaa vilaasini/ Kshetra Swarupa Kshetreshi Kshetra Kshetrajna paalini, Kshaya vridhi vinirmuktaa Kshetrapaalasamarchita/ Vijayaa Vimalaa vandyaa Vandaaru jana Vatsala, Vaavaadivi Vaamakeshi Vahnimandala vaasini/ Bhaktimat kalpalathikaa Pashu paasha vimochani, Samhrutaasesha paashanda*

*Sadaachaara pravartikaa/Tapartayaagni samtapta Samaahlaadana chandrikaa,Taruni  
Taapasaaraadhyaa Tanumadhyaa Tamopahaa/*

(You are the Kalavati or of sixty four Arts and all they were your own expressions; you are the Paramount Form of Feminine Beauty fond of honey or bliss; the bestower of Boons; the beautiful-eyed; intoxicated with 'Varuni'-the wine of dates alternatively called the Varuni 'Nadi'- or a body tendon ; the Vishwaadhika or the Sublime; Vindhya chala nivasini; Vidhatri or Sarasvati the Consort of Brahma; Veda Janani or the Mother of Vedas; the Vishnu Maya; Vilasini; Kshetra Swarupa or of Supreme Consciousness; Kshetreshi; Kshetra Kshetrajna Paalini or the Supreme Administrator of the Kshetra or inner self of Jeeva and the his/her domain; Kshaya Vriddhi Vinirmukta or You have neither growth nor decadence; you are worshipped by Maha Deva the Kshetrapalaka; Devi! You are always victorious; Vimala or Clean; Vandyaa or worshipped by all; Vandaaru jana Vatsala or you have attachment to devoted children; Vaagvaadini or Proficient in speech; Vamakeshi or the consort of Vamakeshwara popular in the Tantrik Science; Vahni Mandala Vaasini or the Resider in the Region of Agni; Bhaktimatkalpa latika or Vriksha that fulfills the desires of devotees; Pashu Paasha Vimochani or the Reliever of Bonds like Ignorance, Jealousy, Attachment and Anger; Samhritaasesha Paashanda or Demolition of Non-Believers; Sadaachaara Pravartika or the Enforcer of 'Sadaachaara' or Good Behaviour; You provide Moonshine like cool relief from 'Tapatrayaagnis' or the Agnis of the Three Difficulties viz. Adhyatmika or of Internal or Psychological nature, Adhibhoutika or External or Physiological nature and Adhi Daivika nature like earthquakes, droughts and such natural calamities; Taruni or Ever Youthful Female; Taapasaaraadhyaa or worshipped by 'Taapasis' engaged in constant meditation; Tanu Madhya or slender waisted; Tamopaha or destroyer of Ignorance).

*Chitistatpada Lakshyaardhaa Chideka Rasarupini, Swaatmaananda lavibhuta Brahmaadya -ananda  
santatih/ Paraa pratyakhchiti Rupa Pashyanti Para Devataa, Madhyamaa Vaikhari Rupaa Bhakta  
Maanasa Hamsikaa/ Kaameswara Praana Naadi Kritajnaa Kaama Pujitaa, Shrighaara Rasa Sampurnaa  
Jayaa Jaalandhara Sthitaa/ Odyana peetha nilayaa Bindumandala vaasini, Rahoyaaga  
kramaadaadhyaa Rahastarpana Tarpitaa/ Sadyah Prasaadini Vishwa Saakshini Saakshi Varjitaa,  
Shadanga Devataa yuktaa Shaadgunya pari puritaa/ Nityaklinna Nirupamaa Nirvaana Sukhadaayani/  
Nityaa Shodasikaa Rupaa Shri Kanthaartha Sharirini/ Prabhavati Prabhaarupaa Prasiddhaa  
Parameshari, Moola Prakriti ravyaktaa Vyaaktaavyakta Swarupini/*

(You are the Sacchidaananda Swarupini who is the most sought after and targetted at; Chideka Rasa Rupini or the Unique Form of Bliss; The Bliss experienced by Brahma downward to every Being was but a drop of the the Ocean of that Bliss; You are the Ultimate Super Consciousness present in each Being that could hardly be realised nor suitably expressed by Vagdevi, as is present in a subtle and intermediate stage between you the Para Deva and an individual; You are the Swan that moves about in the 'Bhakta Maanasa Sarovara'; You are the life-force of Kameshwara; the Kritajnaa or the Evaluator of the actions of Ten Entities viz. Pancha Bhutas, Sun-Moon-Stars-Birth-Death and the Kaala or the Time; Kama Pujita; Shringara Rasa Sampurna; Jaya; Jaalandhara Sthitaa or Positioned in the Jaalandhara Peetha or Anaahata Chakra; Odyana Pitha Nilaya or located in Ajnaa Chakraa or between your Bhrukuti or between your eye-brows; Bindu Mandaka Vaasini or situated in the Central Point of Shri Chakra; Raho yaga Kramaaraadhyaa or worshipped by 'Rahasya Yaga' (Antar Yaga ) rituals; Rahastarpina Tarpita or Devi! You are contented by Secret Tarpanas or Sacrificial Offerings; Sadya Prasaadini or pleased with prescribed rituals; Vishwa Saakshini or the Witness of Univesal Actions! Saakshi Varjitaa or none could ever realise your own deeds; Shadanga Devataa Yuktaa or You are the Chief of Six 'Angaas' or Six 'Konaas' stated to be Heart-Head-Tuft-Eyes-Shield or Kavacha and 'Astra' or Weapon; also Shadgunya Pari Purita or the Six Angles of the Shri Chakra stated to be Qualities like Virtue, Jnaana, Yasha, Aishwarya, Sampada and Vairagya or detachment; Nitya klinna or Ever Merciful; Nirupama or Uaparalleled; Nirvaana Sukha Daayani or the Bestower of Nirvaana or Moksha; Nitya Shodasikaa Rupa

or the Kalaas of Chandra or the brightening features of Moon day by day; Shri Kanthaartha Sharirini or Artha Naareeshwari; Prabhavati or Provider of Illumination all the directions; Prabha Rupa or of Epitome of Radiance; Prasiddha the most well known in the Form of the First Person 'I'! Parameshwari; Mula Prakriti; Avyakta or Imperceptible; yet Vyaktaavyakta or Evident but Unmanifested).

*Vyaapini vividhaakaara Vidyaavidyaa Swarupini, Maha Kamesha nayana kmdaahlaada Koamudi/ Bhakta haarda Tamobheda Bhaanumadbhaanu santatih, Shiva dooti Shivaa –raadhyaa Shiva Murtih Shivankari/ Shivapriyaa Shivaparaa Shishteshtaa Shistapujitaa, Aprameyaa Swaprakaashaa Manovaachaamagocharaa/ Chicchhaktischetanaa rupaa Jada Shaktirjadaatmikaa, Gayatree vyahrutih Sandhyaa Dwijabrinda nishevita/ Tatwaasanaa Tatwamayi Pancha koshaantara sthita, Nisseema mahimaa Nitya Youvanaa Madashaalini/ Madaghurnita Raktaakshi Mada paatala gandabhuh, Chandanadrava digdhaangi Chaampeya kusuma priyaa/ Kushalaa Komalaakaaraa Kurukullaa Kuleswari, Kula kunda-layaa Koula maarga tatpara sevita/ Kumaara Gana naathaambaa tustih pushtirmatir-dhrutih, Shaantsswastimati Kaantirmandini Vighna naashani/*

(Devi! You are omnipresent in myriad forms either as Knowledge or Ignorance; You are pleasing to Mahesha like a moonshine does to a Lili flower; Your splendour disperses the darkness of ignorance to your Bhaktaas like the bright Sun does to the Worlds; You are Shiva's Sevika adoring Sada Shiva as Shiva Murti, Shivankari and Shiva Para. Persons with good demeanour worship you and you too are pleased with their Pujas; Aprameya or immeasurable; Swa Prakasha or Brilliant on your own; Mano vaachaama gochara or Beyond the comprehension of one's mind or speech; You are Chit Shakti or the Power of your own Perception; the Chetana Rupa or Awareness and Responsiveness; at the same time you are also Jada Shakti or non-responsive; in any case, none has the capacity to know you! Gayatri! Vyahruti or the Syllables of Gayatri Mantra; the Sandhya; Dwija brinda nishevita or pleased by Brahmanas; You are seated in Tatwa or Truth; Tatwamayi; Pancha Koshaantara Sthita or the Dweller of Five Sheaths viz. Kaamamaya, Manomaya, Atimanasa, Vigyaana and Hiranmaya Koshaas; you are of boundless command; ever youthful; blissful; with blood red eyes of superiority; red cheeks full of bliss; with body smeared with sandal wood paste; desirous of champaka flowers; proficient in all deeds; subtle and gentle; Goddess named Kukukulla dominating the Shri Chakra who is also known as critical and objective; Kuleshwari; Kulakundalaya or Paramatma inside Muladhara Chakra; Kulamarga tatpara sevita or worshipped by those conversant with Kaulamarga practices; Mother of Skanda and Ganesha representing prowess and overcoming obstacles; Tusti or embodiment of happiness; Pushti or of sound health; Dhriti or courage and endurance; Shanti or tranquility; Kanti or glow and warmth; Nandini or the Ever Vivacious and Vighna nashini or remover of all hurdles).

*Tejovati Trinayana Lolaakshi Kamarupini, Malini Hamsini Mataa MalayachalaVaasini/ Sumukhi Nalini Subhruh Shobhana Sura Nayika, Kaala kanthi Kantimati Kshobhini Sukshma Rupini/ Vajreshwari Vamadevi Vayovastha vivarjita, Siddheshwari Siddha Vidya Siddha Maataa Yashaswini/ Vishuddha chakra nilaya Rakta Varna Trilochana, Khatwaangaadi praharana vadanika samanvita/ Paayasaanna Priyaa Pashuloka Bhayankari, Amritaadi Maha Shakti samvrita Daakineshwari/ Anaahataabja nilayaa Shyaamaabhaa Vadana dwayaa, Damshtrojjwalaaksha maalaadidharaa Rudhira samsthitaa/ Kaala raatryaadi Shaktoughavritaasnighnoudana Priya, Mahaa Veerendra varadaa Raakinyaambaa Swarupini/ Mani puraabja nilayaa vadanatraya samyutaa, Vajraayudhaapetaa Daamaryadi bhiraavrita/*

(Tejovati or full of Illumination; Tri Nayana or the Three Eyed of Surya-Chandra-Agnis; Lokaakshi Kamarupini or of alluring eyes being the Symbol of Feminine Longing for the Universe; Malini or the wearer of garlands; Hamsini or a Swan representative of Pavitrata and Vairagya; Mataa or Shri Maata; Malayachala Vasini or the Resident of Malaya Mountain; Sumukhi or Bright-Faced; Nalini or like a Lotus; Subhru or of Eye brows that bring in auspiciousness; Sobhana; Sura nayika; Kalaakanti or the

spouse of Shiva who by that epithet killed Darukasura; Kantimati; Kshobini or Excited to Create the Universe; Sukshma Rupini or of Subtle Form; Vajreshwari one of the Goddesses of Shri Chakra; Vamadevi or Shiva's left Body-Part viz. Artha Naareeshwari; Vayovasthaa vivarjita or devoid of age; Shiddeshwari; Siddha Vidya or Shri Vidya; Siddha Mata or the Mother Siddha ready to protect devotees; Yashaswini; Visuddha Chakra Nilaya or the Resider of Vishuddha Lotus with sixteen petals; Arakta Varna or of Blood-red colour; Trilochana; Khatvangaadi- Praharana or a mace with a skull at its end used as a weapon; Vadanaika samanvita or with a Unique Face; Payasaanna Priya or fond of rice cooked in milk; Twakstha or absorbed in the Skin tissues; Pashu Loka Bhayankari or Dreadful to the Boorish and the Ignorant; Amritaadi Maha Shakti Samvarta or Encircled by Great Shaktis like Amritaakarshini; Daakineshwari residing in Vishudda Chakra; Anaahataabja Nilaya or inhabitant of Anaahataabja Chakra with the name of Raakini; Shyaamaabhaa or in the Form of a maiden of Shyama colour of black and blue; Vadana dwaya or Bi-Faced; Damshtrojvala or bright with tusks; Aksha -maalaadhara or the carrier of a Rosary bead garland; Rudhira Samsthita or the occupant of blood-tissues; Kaalaraatraadi Shakouga Vrita or enclosed by Shaktis like Kaalaraatri; Snigdhoodana Priya or contented by consuming fried rice; Mahaa Veerendra Varadaa or the Provider of boons to Maha Veeraas / Tri Murtis and Indra; Raakinyaamba Swarupini or of the Swarupa of Raakinyamba; Manipuraabja nilaya or the inhabitant of Manipura Padma with ten petals; Vadana Traya Samyutaa or with Three Faces; Vajraadikaayudhopeta or fortified with Vajraayudhaa and other weaponries like thunderclaps; Daamaryaadibhiraavruta or encircled by Yoginis like Damari, Mangala, Pingala, Dhanya, Bhadraka, Ulka, Siddha etc.

*Rakta varnaa maamsa nishthaa gudaanna preeta manasaa, Samasta Bhakta Sukhadaa Laakinyaambaa Swarupini/ Swaadhishtaanaambujagataa Chatutvaktra Manoharaa, Shulaadyaayudha sampanna Peeta varnaati garvitaa/ Medo nishthaa Madhu preeta bandinyaadi samanvitaa, Dadhyaannasakta hridayaa Daakini rupa dhaarini/ Mulaa dhaaraambujaarudhaa Panchavakraasthi samsthitaa, Ankushaadi prahananaaVaradaadi nisevitaa/ Mudgoudanaasakta chitthaa Saakinyaambaa Swarupini, Ajnaa chakraabja nilayaa Shiklavarnaa Shadaanana/ Majjaa samsthaa Hamsavati Mukhya Shakti samanvitaa, Haridraannaika rasikaa Haakini rupa dhaarini/ Sahasra dala Padmastaa Sarva Varnobhi sevita, Sarvaayuda dharaa Shukla samsthitaa Sarvato mukhi/ Sarvoudana preeta chittaa Yaakinyaambaa Swarupini, Swaahaa Swadhaa matirmedhaa Shrutih Smritiranuttamaa/*

(Rakta Varna; Maamsa Nishta or inhabitant in the tissues of flesh; Gudaanna Preeta Manasa or likes to eat rice mixed with jaggery; Samasta Bhakta Sukhada or Provides with contentment to one and all; the Mother Form of Lakini; Swadhishtaanaambuja Gata or the Insider of the Padma Chakra named that name; Chaturvaktra Manohara or Enchanting with Four Attractive Faces; Shulaadyayudha Sampanna or is fortified with armaments like Shula; Pita Varna or of Yellow colour; Ati-Garvita or highly distinguished; Medo nishtha or absorbed in the tissue of fat; Madhu Preeta or having a penchant for honey; Bandinyaadi samanvita or in the Company of Bandini and other Shaktis; Dadhyannasakta hridaya or with a longing for curd rice; Kaakini Rupa dhaarini or taking over the Form of Kaakini; Mulaadhaaraambujaa rudha or mounted on Mulaadhara at the base point; Panchavakra or Five Faced; Asthi Samsthita or present in the bone tissues; Ankushaadi Praharana or equipped with Ankusha or goad and shovel and other weaponry; Varadaadi nisevita or worshipped by Varada and such other Yoginis; Mudgoudana sakta chitta or delighted in the taste of green gram cooked rice; Saakinyaambaa Swarupini or taking over the Form of Saakini Shakti; Ajnaachakaabja nilaya or resides in the two petalled Agnaachakra in between the eyebrows; Shuka varana or of Pure White Colour; Shadaanana or of Six Faces; Majja Samstha or of the tissue of brain; Hamsavati; Mukhya Shakti Samanvita or of Powers of respiration; Haridraannaika Rashika or fond of Turmeric; Haakini rupa dhaarini or assumes the Form of Hakini in the Shri Chakra; Sahasra dala padmasthaa or the inhabitant inside in the thousand leafed Lotus; Sava Varnobhi sevita or magnificent all the Alphabet Letters; from A to Ksha; Sarvaayudha dhara or is well equipped with all Astra-Shastraas; Shukla samsthitaa or the abode of 'Ojas' or tissue of Virility; Sarvatomukhi or has the power visioning from all the directions; Sarvoudana preeta chitta or fond of all kinds of food; Yaakinyaambaa Swarupini or of the Form of Yakinyaamba; Devi! You are Swaahaa or the oblataion to

Agni and Swadha or oblation to Pitaras; Mati or Buddhi / Intellect; Shruti or Veda; Smriti or Manu Shastra about morality and Anuttama or the Supreme Most).

*Punya keertih Punya labhyaa Punya Shravana Keertanaa, Pulomajaarchitaa Bandha mochani Bandhuraalakaa/ Vimarsha rupini Vidyaa viyadaadi Jagatprasuh, Sarva Vyaadhi prashamani Sarva Mrityu nivaarini/ Agraganyaachintha rupaa Kalikalmasha naashani, Katyaayani Kalahantri Kamalaaksha nishevita/ Taambula purita mukhi daadimi Kusuma prabhaa, Mrigaakshi Mohini Mukhya Mridaani Mitra Rupini/ Nitya truptaa Bhaktanidhir niyantri Nikhileswari, Maitryaadi Vaasanaalabhyaa Mahaa Pralaya Saakshini/ Paraa Shaktih Paraa Nishtha Prajnaana ghana rupini, Maadhvi paanaalasaa matthaa Maatrikaa Varna rupini/ Mahaa Kailasa nilayaa Mrinala Mridu dorlataa, Mahaniyaa dayaa murtir Mahaa saamraajya shaalini/ Atma Vidyaa Mahaa Vidyaa Shri Vidyaa Kaama Sevita, Shri Shodashaakshari Vidyaa Trikuta Kaamakotikaa/*

Devi! The auspicious episodes of your glory provide worth and value to your Devotees; such merits are derived due to the attainment of good results of previous births; merely hearing and extolling your magnificence would be commendable; Pulomajarchita or the wife of Indra worshipped You to avoid the torments faced by Nahusha the short time Indra, you saved her with your grace; Bandha Mochani or the liberator of Samsara's bindings; Barbaraalakaa or with beautiful and wavy hair style enhancing charm; Vimarsha Rupini or high capacity to distinguish realities of life or otherwise; Vidya the Epitome of Knowledge; Viyadaadi Jagat Prasuh or You provide relief from the Elements of Nature; Sarva Vyaadhi Prashamani or the Curer of all kinds Physical and mental deficiencies; Sarva Mrityu Nivarini or the diffuser of all types of death; Agraganya or the Superlative; Achintya rupa or Unapproachable by thought and imagination; Kali Kalmasha Naashini or the demolisher of sins prone to Kali Yuga; Katyaayani Devi; Kalahantri or the destroyer of the Concept of Time; Kamalaaksha Nivesita or worshipped by Vishnu; Tambula Poorita Mukhi or satisfied with mouthful of betel-leaf juice; Daadimi Kusuma Prabha or likened with the redness of pomogranate flower; Mrigaakshi or of the fascinating eyes of a deer; Mohini; Mukhya the Chief; Mridani or the Queen of Maha Deva; Mitra Rupini or of the Form of Surya; Nitya Tripta or always contented; Bhakta Nidhi or the Ever Available Fund of Fulfillment of Devotees; Niyantri or the Designer and Enforcer of Rules and Regulations; Maitraadi Vaasanaalabhya or the attainer of excellent propensities like Maitri or amity and rapport; Maha Pralaya Saakshini or the Sole Witness of the Great Dissolution; Paraa Shakti; Paraa Nishtha or the Ultimate Spiritual Effort; Prajnaana Ghana Rupini or the Embodiment of the Highest Consciousness; Maadhvi Paanaalasaa or Intoxicated by Spiritual Excellence; Mattha or fully oblivious of the worldly affairs due to that kind of intoxication; Maatrikaa Varna rupini or of the various Forms of Matrikas; Maha Kailasa Nilaya; Mrinala Mridu Dorlata or with the soft hands like those of Lotus Stalks; Maaniya; Daya Murti; Mahaa Saamraajya Shaalini; Atma Vidya or the Knowledge of the Supreme Self; Maha Vidya; Shri Vidya or of Mantras like Bala, Pancha Dashi, Sodashi and soon; Kama Sevita or worshipped by Manmatha; Shri Shodasaakshari Vidya viz. the Mantra of Shri Raja Rajeshwari Mantra; Trikuta or of Mantra Panchaadashi comprising Three Kutaas viz. Kaamaraaja, Vaagbhava and Shakti Kutaas and Kaama Kotika or Devi has the eminence of Shiva).

*Kataaksha kinkari bhuta Kamalaakoti Sevita, Shirasthita Chandranibhaa Phaalasthendra Dhanuh Prabha/ Hridayasthaa Ravi prakhyaa Trikonaantara deepikaa, Daakshaayani Daitya hantri Daksha Yagna Vinaashini/ Daraandolita Deergaakshi Darahaasojjwalanmukhi, Guru Murtirguna nidhirgomaataa guha janma bhuh/ Devesi danda nitisthaa daharaakaasha rupini, Pratipanmukyharaakaanta Tithi Mandala Pujita/ Kalaatmikaa Kalaanaathaa Kavyaalaapa vinodini, Sachaamara Ramaa Vaani Savya dakshina sevita/ Adi Shaktirameyaatmaa Paramaa Paavanaakritih, Aneka koti Brahmaanda Janani Divya Vigrahaa/ Kleenkaari Kevalaa Guhyaa Kaivalya pada daayini, Tripuraa Trijagadvandya Trimurtistridasheshwari/ Tryakshari Divya gandaadhyaa Sindura Tilakaanchitaa, Umaa Shailendra Ganayaa Gouri Gandharva Sevita/*

(Devi! Your gracious looks could create crores of Lakshmi Devis who in turn create innumerable forms of prosperity to your devotees; You are situated at the 'Brahma Randhra' of one's head; Chandranibha! or of Chandra Devas's sheen; Phaalkastaa or the resident of forehead shining with the varied colours of rainbows; You are Hridayasthaa or situated in the hearts; Ravi Prakhya or of Surya's brilliance; Trikonaantara Deepikaa or the luminosity of the triangle inside the Shri Chakra; Dakshayni; Daitya hantri the killer of Daityas; Daksha Yagna Vidnaashani; Daraandolita deergaakshi or with long eyes moving slightly; Darahaaso-jjvalan mukhi or with a smile indicative of your internal gladness; Guru Murti or the Ultimate Teacher; Guna nidhi or the Fund of Satwa-Raajasika-Taamasika Gunaas! Deveshi! Danda Nitistha or the Enforcer of Punishments; Daharaakaasha Rupini or of the Form of Space above all the Lokaas or figuratively the space inside the heart of Lotus! Pratipan-mukhyaraakaantaa or the Forms of the fifteen phases of Moon as Devi is worshipped; Kalaatmika or of Chandra's Sixteen, Surya's twenty four and Agni's ten 'Kalaas' or units of splendour; Kalaa naathaa or the Chief of Kalaas; Kaavyaalaapa Vinodini or possessive of interest in Literary Activities; Sachaamara Ramaa Vaani Savya Dakshina Sevita or served with 'Chamara' hand-fan by Lakshmi and Saraswati on Your right and left sides; Adi Shakti; Ameya or quantifiable; Atma; Parama or the Final; Paavanaakruti or the Form of Sanctity; Aneka Koti Brahmaanda Janani or the Mother of countless Universes; Divya Vighraha; Kleem -kaari or the representation of the Beeja by that name; Kevala or the Unique; Guhya or Enigmatic; Kaivalya pada daayani or the bestower of Moksha; Tri Pura or of Three Characteristics; Tri Jagad Vandyaa or worshipped by the Three Lokas; Tri Murti; Tri Dasheswari or the Ultimate of Three Dashaas or of Jeevatma-Jaagriti-Paramatma or otherwise : a Person-Awakening and Ishwari; Tryakshari or Three Bija Mantras; Divya Gandhaadhyaa or the Form of Celestial Fragrance; Sindura Tilakanchita or Devi with Sindura on her forehead; Uma; Shailendra Tanaya or the daughter of a Mountain King; Gauri; Gandharva Sevita or worshipped by Gandharvas).

*Vishwa Garbha Swarna Garbha Varadaa Vaagadhiswari, Dhyana gamya paricchedyaa Jnaanada Jnaana Vighrahaa/ Sarva Vedaanta Samvedyaa Satyaananda Swarupini, Lopaa- mudraarchitaa leelaa klipta Brahmaandalaa/ Adrusyaa Drusya Rahitaa Vigjnaatri Vedyaa –varjitaa, Yogini Yogadaa Yogyaa Yogaanandaa Yugandharaa/ Icchaa Shakti Jnaana Shakti Kriyaa Shakti Swarupini, Sarvaadhaaraa Supratishthaa Sadasadrupa dhaarini/ Ashta Murtirajajaitri Loka Yatraa vidhaayani, Ekaakini Bhumarupaa Nirdwaitaa Dwaita Varjitaa/ Annadaa Vasudaa Vriddhha Brahmaatmyaikya Swarupini, Brihati Brahmani Braahmi Brahmaanandaa Balipriyaa/ Bhaashaa rupaa Brihatsenaa Bhaavaabhaava vivarjitaa, Sukhaaraadhyaa Shubhakari Shobhanaa Sulabhaagatih/ Rajarajeswari Raajya daayini Raja vallabhaa, Rajatkripaa Raaja Peetha nijaashritaah/* (

Vishwa garbha or the Universe is in her; Swarna garbha or the Mother of Vedas and Bijaaksharaas; Avarada or opposite of Varada / Bestower; Vaagadhishwari or Saraswati; Dhyana gamya or the Target of Meditation; Aparicchedyaa or Undividable; Jnaanada or the Giver of Knowledge; Jnaana Vighraha or the Epitome of Jnana; Sarva Vedanta Samvedya or All the means of Knowledge like Vedas and Vedaangas are meant only to realise Devi; Satyaananda Swarupini or the Form of Truth and Happiness; Lopaamudraachita or worshipped by Devi Lopamudraa the wife of Agastya; Leelaa Klipta Brahmaanda mandalaa or You create the several Brahmandaas only for your happiness; Adrushya or Unseen; Drusya rahita or Unvisionable; Vigjnaatri or the Power of Knowledge; Vedyaa Varjitaa or You have nothing to see; Yogini; Yogadaa or the Giver of Yoga; Yogananda; Yugandhara or the Protector of Yugas or Time; Icchaa Shakti, Jnaana Shakti, Kriya Shakti Swarupini or the Shakti of Will, Knowledge and Deed and their Forms; Sarvaadhaara; Supratishtha or Well-Established; Sat-Asat Rupa Dharini; Ashta Murti or Lakshmi-Medha-Dhara-Pushti-Gauri-Tushti-Prabha-Dhriti; Ajaa Jaitri or the Conquerer of the Unborn or Ignorance; Loka Yatraa Vidhayani or the Decider of Life-Circle; Ekaakini the Most Lonely; Bhumarupa or of the State beyond Consciousness; Nirdwaita or Unique or The Singular; Beyond Duality; Ananda; Vasuda or Provider of Prosperity; Vriddhha or the Oldest; Brihati or Huge; Brahmani or the Wife of Brahma or Saraswati; Brahmaananda; Bali Priya or Fond of Sacrifices; Bhasha Rupa or The Form of Language; Brihatsena or the Possessor of Massive Army; Sukhaaradhyaa or worshippable with ease;

Shubhakari or the Provider of Auspiciousness; Shobhana Sulabhaa Gatih or the easiest way of securing Salvation; Raja Rajeswari or the Maha Raajni; Rajya Dayani or the bestower of Kingdoms; Rajya Vallabha; Rajat Kripa or the Merciful with grace; and Raja peetha Nivesita Nijaashraya or your devotees are seated around you on thrones of Rajyas).

*Rajya Lakshmih Kosha nathaa Koshanaathaa Chaturanga Baleshwari, Saamraajya daayani Satya sandhaa Saagara mekhala/ Dikshita Daitya shamani Sarva loka vashankari, Sarvaardha Dhaartri Savitri Sacchidaananda Rupini/ Desakaalaa paricchinna sarvaga Sarva Mohini, Saraswati Shastra mayi Guhaambaa Guhya Rupini/ Sarvopaadhi vinirmuktaa Sadaa Shiva Pativrataa, Sampradaayeshwari Saadhvi Gurumandala Rupini/ Kulotteerna Bhagaaraadhyaa Mayaa Madhumati Mahi, Ganaambaa Guhyakaaraadhyaa Komalaangi Gurupriyaa/ Swatantraa Sarva Tantresi Dakshinaamurti Rupini, Sanakaadi Samaaraadhyaa Shiva Jnaana Pradaayani/ Chitkalaananda kalikaa Premarupaa Priyankari, Naamapaaraa –yana preeta Nandi Vidya Nateswari/ Midhyaa Jagadadhishtaanaa Muktidaa Muktirupini, Laasyapriyaa Layakari Lajja Rambhaadi Vanditaa/*

(Rajya Lakshmi! You are the Koshanathaa or the Treasurer or the Chief of Koshas or Sheaths / domains viz. Manomaya, Praanamaya, Annamaya, Anaandamaya and Vigyanamaya; Chaturanga Baleswari or the Head of four types of Army viz. Cavalry, Elephantry, Chariotry and Infantry; Samrajya dayani; Satya sandha the Upkeeper of Words and Abider of Truth; Saagara mehalaa or Oceans are your girdles; Dikshita or the Initiator of Mantras; Daitya Shamani or the Destroyer of Daityas; Sarva loka vashankari or the Administrator of all Lokas; Sarvaartha daatri or the Bestower of Purusharthaas of Dharma-Artha-Kaama-Moksha; Savitri; Sacchidaananda Rupini; Desakaalaa Paricchinna or Unconditioned by Space and Time; Sarvaga or Present always and every where; Sarva Mohini or the Supreme Enchantress; Saraswati; Shastramayee or the Essence of Shastras; Guhambaa or the Mother of Skanda; Guhya Rupini or the Form of Secrecy; Sarvopaadhi Vinirmuktaa or beyond all limitations and bindings; Sadasiva Pativrata; Sampradaayeshwari or the Queen of Traditions; Saadhvi or the female Sadhu; Guru mandala rupini or the Tradition of Gurus; Kulottirna or beyond Kula or tradition; Bhagaaraadhyaa or worshipped by Sun; Maya or Illusion; Madhumati or Blissful; Mahi or Bhumi; Ganaambaa or Mother of Ganaas and Ganesha; Komalaangi or of delicate Body Parts; Guru Priya or the Beloved of Shiva the Adi Guru; Swatantra or Independent; Sarva Tantreshi or the Ruler of Tantras; Dakshinaamurti Rupini or manifested as Shiva's Form as Adi Guru; Sanakadi Samaaraadhyaa or worshipped by Maha Munis like Sanaka; Shiva jnaana pradaayani or the provider of Shiva Tatwa or Awareness; Chitkala or Pure Consciousness; Ananda Kalika or the inhabitant of joy; Prema Rupa; Naama paaraayana preeta or is fond of recitation of her names; Nandi Vidya or the Mantra by which Nandeswara pleased her; Nateswari or the Queen of NatyaShastra; Midhyaa Jagadadhishtaana or the Presider of the Illusory Universe; Muktidaa or the Provider of Salvation; Mukti Rupini or the Form of Salvation; Lasya Priya or fond of Cosmic Dance; Layakari or the Pralayakaarini; Lajja or Modesty; and Rambhaadi vandita or worshipped by Apsaras like Rambha).

*Bhavadaava Sudhaa Vrishtih Paapaaranya Davaanala, Dourbhaagya toolavaatulaa Jaraa-dhvaantaravi prabhaa/ Bhyagyaabhi chandrikaa Bhakta chittha keki Ghanaa Ghana, Roga Parvatadambholirmrityudaaru kuthaarika/ Maheshwari Maha Kaali Mahaa Graasaa Mahaashana, Aparnaa Chandikaa Chandamundaasura nishudini/ Ksharaksharaatmika Sarva Lokeshi Vishwa dhaarini, Trivarga dhaatri Subhaga Traimbikaa Trigunaatmika/ Swargaapa vargadaa Shuddhaa Japaapapushpa nibhaakrutih, Ojovati Dyutidharaa Yagjna rupaa Priyavrataa/ Duraaraadhyaa Duraadharsha Paatali Kusumapriyaa, Mahati Meru nilayaa Mandaara kusuma priyaa/ Veeraaraadhyaa Viraadrupaa Virajaa Vishwato mukhi, Pratyakgrupaa Paraakaashaa Praanadaa Praana rupini/ Maartaanda Bhairavaaraadhyaa Mantrininyasta raajyadhuh, Tripureshi Jaatsenaa nistraigunya Paraaparaa/*

(Bhavadaava Sudhaa Vrishtih or the rain of Amrita drowns the forest of Samsaara; Paapaaranya dawaanala or the Fire broken in the Forest would destroy the woods of sins; Jaraadhwaanta Ravi prabhaa or old age is dispersed by the emerging Surya's rays; Bhakta Chitta keki gahanaa ghana or as a Peacock dances at the sight of clouds on the Sky, Lalita Devi prompts devotees to dance with their devotion; Roga Parvata Dambholi or Devi smashes diseases of the mind and body of devotees; Mrityu daaru kuthaarika Devi! You are the axe that brings down the tree of death; Maheshwari! Maha Kaali! Mahaa Graasaa or the gigantic heap of Food; Mahaashana or the huge serve of food to the devotees; Aparna or She who paid penance to Shiva even without eating leaves; Chandika or furious with the Evil; Chanda Mundaasura Nishudini or the Terminator of the Asuras called Chanda and Munda; Kshara ksharaatmika or of the Swarupa of both destructible and indestructible forms; Sarva Lokeshi; Vishwa dhaarini or who covers all the Lokaas with her shield; Trivarga Dhaatri or the Upholder of Dharma-Artha-and Kaama; Subhaga or the Form of Surya; Traimbika or the Three Eyed of Surya-Chandra and Agni; Trigunaatmika or of the Swarupa of Satwa-Raajasa- Tamo gunaas; Swargaapavarga -daa or the provider of Swarga of Happiness for a limited period till the Punya Phala is drained but Apavarga is everlasting Salvation; Suddha; Ojovati or the giver of vitality; Dyuti- dhara or the provider of illumination of knowledge; Yajna Swarupa; Priya Vrata or Devi likes all kinds of Vratas; Duraaraadhyaa or She does not encourage worship by those who are unable to control their own misgivings; Duraadharsha or does not assist those who out of evil influences refuse to reform themselves; Paatali Kusuma Priya or Devi likes Paatali flowers; Meru nilaya or Meru Mountain is her Place of stay; Mandara Kusuma Priya; Veeraa- raadhyaa or worshipped by the courageous; Vitat Rupa or of Macro Form; Viraja or without Rajasika Guna; Vishwato mukhi or directly facing the Universe; Pratyagrupa or introvert; Paraakaasha or the Ultimate Cosmos; Pranada or the Life-giver; Prana Rupini or the very life; Martanda Bhavravaaraadhyaa or the one worshipped by Bhairava named Martanda [ Of the other Bhayairavas are stated to be Kaala Bhairava, Kshetrapala Bhairava, Ruru Bhairava, Chanda Bhairava, Asitanga Bhairava, Krodha Bhairava and Unmatta Bhairava]; Mantran – yasta Rajyadhuh or she entrusts the duties of administration to her Minister Raja Shyamala; Tripuresi; Jayatsena or she has her ever-victorious divine army; Nistraigunya or unscathed by the Three Gunas and Paraapara or the Ultimate Reality).

*Satyajnaanaanda Rupaa Saamararya Paraayanaa, Kapardini Kalaamaalaa Kaamadhuk Kaama rupini/ Kalaanidhih Kaavya Kalaa Rasajnaa Rasa sevadhih, Pushtaa Puraatanaa Pujaaya Pushkaraa Pushkarekshanaa/ Param Jyotih Paramdhaama Paramaanuh Paraatparaa, Paasha hastaa Paasha hantri Paramantra Vibhedini/ Murtaamurtaa Nitya triptaa Muni Maanasa hamsikaa, Satya vrataa Satya rupaa Sarvaantaryaamini Sati/ Brahmaani Brahma janani Bahu rupaa Budhaarchitaa, Prasavitri Prachandaajnaa Pratishthaa Prakataakritih/ Praaneswari Praana daatri Panchaasatpeetha rupini, Vishunkhalaa Viviktasthaa Veeramaataa viyatprashuh/ Mukundaa Mukti nilayaa Mula Vighraha rupini, Bhaavajnaa Bhava rogaghnee Bhava Chakra pravartini/ Chhandassaaraa Saastra saaraa mantra saaraa Taloari, Udaara keerti ruddhaama Vaibhavaa Varna rupini/*

(Devi! Your characteristics are Truth-Knowledge-Bliss; desirous of maintaining the equal eminence of Shiva; Kapardni! Kalaa maalaa! Kamadhuk or Kamadhenu; Kama Rupini! Kalaa Nidhi! Kavya kalaa! Rasajna or proficient in tastes; Rasa Sevadhi or Sea of bliss; Pushta or well-nurtured; Puratana; Puja; Pushkara or the Sacred Tirtha by that name; Pushhkarekshana or with charming eyes like lotus-petals; Parama Jyoti or the Supreme Luminosity that provides radiance to Surya-Chandra-Agni; Parama dhaama or the zenith point where Devi resides; Paramaanu or the infinitesimal atom; Paraatpara or Out of reach to the Peak; Pasha Hasta or Pasha in her hand; Paasha hantri or the smasher of bonds; Paramantra vibhedini or the demolisher of Evil Mantras; Murtaamurtaa or Perceptible and Imperceptible Forms; Nitya Triptaa or always satisfied with services tendered with devotion; Muni Maanasa Hamsikaa or is like a female Swan swimming in the pious minds of Sages; SatyaVrata; Satya Rupa; Sarvaantaryamini; Bhaahmani; Brahma Janani; Bahu Rupa; Budhaarchita or worshipped by Jananis or the Enlightened; Prasavitri or the one who delivers; Prachanda Ever Irrated; Pratishtha or of well-established prestige; Prakataakriti or well experienced Form; Praaneswari; Praana daatri or Provider of Life Force; Panchaashat Peetha Rupini or

the Seat of fifty six alphabet letters from ‘A’ to ‘Ksha’; Vishrunkhala or free from shackles; Viviktastha or readily realisable in Sacred Places; Vira Mata! Viyatprashuh or who created Akasha; Mukunda; Mukti Niyaya or of Five Kinds of Mukti viz. Salokya, Saamipya; Saarupa, Saayujya and Brahma; Mula Vighraha Rupini or the Very Original Sourcer of all kinds of Energies; Bhaavajna or who knows the Bhaavas or thoughts and the Reality; Bhava Rogaghi or the destroyer of all types of diseases; Bhava chakra Pravartini or the Animator of the Cycle of births and deaths; Talodari! you have the Nether Lokas in your belly! You are the Essence of Chhandaas or Prosody-the Essence of Shastras; the Essence of Mantras and you enjoy Keerti and unending magnificence as also the Embodiment of Varnaas and Vedas).

*Janmamrityu jaraatapa Jana vishraanti daayini, Sarvopanishadudghushtaa Santyateeta kalaatmika/ Gambheera Gaganaantastha Garvitaa Gaanalolupaa, Kalpanaatahitaa Kaashtaakaantaa Kantaardha Vighraha/ Karya kaarana nirmuktaa Kaamakeli tarangitaa, Kanatkanaka taatankaa Leelaa vighraha dhaarini/ Ajaa Kshaya vinirmuktaa Mugdhaa Kshipra prasaadini, Antarmukha Samaaraadhyaa Bahirmukha sudurlabhaa/ Trayee Tri –varga nilayaa Tristhaa Tripuramaalini, Niraamayaa Niuraalambaa Swaatmaaraamaa Sudhaa srutih/ Samsaara panka nirmagna samuddharana Panditaa, Yagnapriyaa Yagna kartri Yajamaana Swarupini / Dharmaadhaaraa Dhanaadhyakhsaa Dhana Dhaanya vivardhini, Vipra Priyaa Vipra rupaa Vishwa bhramana kaarini/ Vishwa graasaa Vidrumaabhava Vaishnavi Vishnu rupini, Ayoniryonni nilayaa kutasthaa Kularupini/*

(Devi! You have been the Saviour of all those devotees who were smitten in the Birth-Death-Old Age syndrome by providing them knowledge and solace; all the Upanishads had declared that there was no duality of existence and that there was only one viz. You who were Santyatita Kalaatmika or the Singular Force, Gambhira or Complex to Know, Gaganaantasta or present in Sky and Space beyond; Garvita or rightfully proud as the Cause and Creation; You were lost in the resonance of Sama Vedaa; Kalpanaa Rahita or of Pure Consciousness; Kaashta or the Target to reach; Aakaanta or Anantha; Kaantaardha Vighraha or Artha Naareeswara; Karya Kaarana Nirmukta or Devoid of Cause and Effect; Kamakeli tarangita or engaged in constant play with Shiva; Kanatkanaka Tatanka or of sparkling golden ear- rings; Leelaa Vighraha Dhaarini or You change many Forms for your own fun; Aja or birthless; Kshaya vinirmuktaa or devoid of degeneration; Mugdhaa or Unassuming; Kshipra Prasaadini or the Provider of her kindness to her devotees; Antarmukha Samaaraadhyaa or who could be worshipped through introspection; but you are difficult to be realised only by external services without that firm faith; Trayi or of the personification of Three Vedas of Ruk-Yajur-Saamaa; Trivarga nilaya or of Three Gunas; Tripura Malini, Niraamaya or of no ill health; Niraalamba or Niraadhaara / supportless; Swatmaaraama or Self-delighted; Sudhaa Shruti or the Stream of Bliss experienced from one’s own devotion; Samsara panka nirmagna Samuddharana Pandita or Devi! You are an expert to lift up sincere devotees from the quagmire of Samsara just as Bhagavan Varaha rescued Bhu Devi from Rasaatala! You are Yagna Priya, Yagna Kartri and Yajamaana Swarupini; You are Dharmaadhaara; Dhana -adhyaksha; Dhana Dhaanya Vivarthini or the Developer of wealth and food; You are Vipra Priya; Vipra Rupa; Vishwa Bhramama Kaarini or rotates the wheel of travel round the World involving Jeevas; You are also Vishwa graasa or the Rotator of the various lokas till Pralaya halts the wheel; Vidrumaabhava or the radiance of coral from the Vidruma Tree of Knowledge; Vaishnavi; Vishnu Rupini; Ayoniryonni nilaya or the Root Cause being the first triangle of Shri Chakra and the Source of the Causes; Kutastha or the Peak of Ignorance; Devi! You are Kula Rupini in the normal sense of Varnaashrama but also referring to Kula being Mulaadhaara Chakra).

*Veera goshtipriya Veera Naishkarmyaa naada Rupini, Vigjnaana Kakalaa Kalyaa Vidagdhaa Baindavaasanaa/Tatwaadhikaa Tatwmayi Tatwamadtha Swarupini, Saamagaana priya Soumya Sadaa Shiva Kutumbini/ Savyaapasavya maargasthaa Sarvaapadvinivaarini, Swasthaa Swabhaava madhuraa Dhiraa Dhira samarchitaa/ Chaitanyaarghya sanaara –adhyaa Chaitanya Kusumapriya, Sadoditaa*

*Sadaa Tushtaa Tarunaaditya Paatalaa/ Dakshinaa Dakshinaaraaghyaa Darasmera mukhaambujaa, Kaulini Kevalaanarghya Kaivalya ada daayani/ Stotapriyaa Stutimati Shruti samstuta vaibhavaa, Manasvinimaanavati Maheshi Mangalaakritih/ Vishwa Maataa Jagaddhaatri Visaalaakshi Viraagini, Pragalbhaa Paramodaaraa Paraamodaa Manomayi/ Vyomakeshi Vimaanasthaa Vajrini Vaamakeswari, Pancha Yagna priyaa Pancha preta manchaadhi shayani/*

(Viragoshti priya or Devi is interested in the Advanced ‘Upaasakaas’ or concentrated Meditators and their goshti or discourses; Veera! as you had killed Bhandasura; Naishkarmya or without any action since no action is to be done by her seriously; Nadarupini or Shabda Brahma; Vigjnaana kalana kalya or perceiving Knowledge by way of ‘Atmaanubhava’; Vidagdha or proficient; Bainavaasana or seated in ‘Bindu’ or the central point of Shri Chakra the precise place of Shiva; Tatwaadhika or surpassing the zones of Tatwa like Shabda, Sprarsha and so on; Tatwamayi or however She is the Sarva Tatwa Swarupa; Tatwamartha Swarupini or the symbol of what Tatwa is all about; Saama gaana priya; Soumya; Sada Shiva Kutumbini or the entirety of ‘Charaachara Srishti’! Savyaapasaya Maargasthaa or the Savya Marga or Dakshina Marga followed by Sages, Brahmanas and Maharshis but Apasavya Marga is followed by Bhairavas and so on called Vaama marga; Sarvaapad vinivaarini or eliminator of disasters; Swastha or Self- Established; Swabhava Madhura or of Natural Pleasantness; Dhira or courageous; Dhira Samarchita or worshipped by the dauntless but not by timid or foolish; Chaitanyaarghya Samaaraadhyaa or worshipped by those who are enlightened with Sacred Water; Chaitanya Kusuma Priya or Devi enjoys being offered ‘Atma Jnaana’ as a flower of worship; Sadoditaa : Devi is always in the fresh memory of her devotees; Sadaa Tusthaa or always gratified due to reverences paid by the devotees; Tarunaaditya Patala or she is like a rising Sun of crimson hue; Dakshinaadakhshinaaraadhyaa or or Devi is worshipped by Savyaapasavya marga; Darasmera Mukhaambujaa or she is ever pleasant and smiling to devotees; Kaulini or worshipped by the followers of the specified Tantra; Kevala or Solitary; Anarghya Kaivalya Pada daayani or Devi bestows the matchless Kaivalya to the devotees; Stotra Priya; Stutimati or she is possessive of such inimitable characteristics that are adorable; Shruti Samstuta Vaibhava or the glories of Devi are commended by Vedas and Shastras; She is Manaswini or Controller of Mind; Manavati; Maheshi; Mangalaakriti; Viswa maataa; Jagaddhaatri; Vishalaakshi; Vairaagini or detached; Pragalbha or dominant; Paramodaara or highly liberal; Paraamoda or of Ultimate Gladness; Manomayi or of Pure Mind; Vyomakeshi or Aakaasha as her hair; Vimanastha; Vajrini; Vaamakeshwari or worshipped by Vaamakeshwara Tantra; Panchagni priya or of worship to Deva, Pitara, Brahma, Bhuta and Manushya; Panchapreta Manchaadhi shayani or of Five Pretas viz. Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Sada Shiva and Maheswara).

*Panchami Pancha Bhutesi Pancha samkhyopacharini, Shaswati Shashwataishravyya Sharmadaa Shambumohini/ Dharaa Dharasutaa Dhanyaa Dharmini Dharma vardhini, Lokaatita Gunaatitaa Sarvaatita Shamatmika/ Bandhuka Kusuma prakhyaa Baalaa Lilaa Vinodini, Sumangali Sukhakari Suveshaadhyaa Suvaasini/ Suvaasinyarchana preetaa Shobhanaa Shuddha Maanasaa, Bindu Tarpana Santushtaa Purvajaa Tripuraambikaa/ Dasha Mudraa Samaaraadhyaa Tripuraa Shri Vashankari, Jnaana Mudraa Jnaana Gamya Jnaana Jneya Swaripini/ Yoni Mudraa Trikhandeshi Trigunaambaa Trikonagaa, Anaghaadhbhuta Chaaritraa Vaanchitaartha Pradaayani/ Abhyaasaatishayajnaataa Shadadhwaateeta rupini, Avyaaaja Karunaa Murtiajnaana dhwaanta Deepikaa/ Aabaala Gopa Veditaa Sarvaanullanghya Shasanaa/ Shri Chakra Raaja Nilayaa Shrimat Tripura Sundari/ Shri Shivaa Shiva Shaktyaika rupini Lalitaambikaa, Evam Shri Lalitaa Devyaa Naamnaam Saaharakam Jaguh/ Iti Shri Brahmaanda Puraaney Uttara Khandey Shri Haya- greevaagasthya Samvaadey Shri Lalitaa Rahasya naama Saahasra Stotra Kathanam Naama Dwriteeyodhyaayah/*

Panchami or the Spouse of the fifth Lord mentioned afore; You are Pancha Bhuteshi or the Sovereign of Prithvi-Aapas-Tejas-Vayu-Aakash; Pancha Samkhyopa –Charini viz. Lam ( Gandham), Ham (Pushpam), Yam (Incense), Vam (Naivedyam) and Sam (Naanaa Vidhopachaaraan); Shaswati (Ever

Lasting); Shasvathaishwarya or Eternal Wealth; Sharmadaa (Provider of Happiness); Shambhu Mohini; Dhara or the Massive Support; Dhara Suta or the daughter of Himavaan; Dhanyaa or the Blessed One as Shambhu Patni; Dharmini or the Embodiment of Virtue and Truth; Dhama Vardhini or the Organiser of Dharma; Lokaateeta or surpasser of Lokaas; Gunaatita or far beyond the Tri Gunas; Sarvaatita or transcends Universes; Shamaatmika or the Personification of Tranquility; Bandhuka Kusuma Prakhyaa or like the Red Bandhuka Flower; Bala or Bala Tripura Sundari; Leelaa Vinodini or Enjoying the Playful Sport of Universal Creation and so on; Sumangali or the Most Auspicious wedded spouse of Shiva; Sukhakari; Suveshaadhya or dressed up perfectly with Vastra, precious jewellery, sandal paste; perfumery, betel juice in mouth and so on; Suvasini; Suvaasinyarchana preetaa or appy to be worshipped by Suvaasinis; Asobhana or eternally youthful and charming; Suddha Maanasa or of Pure Heart and Thought; Bindu Tarpana Samtushta or she is very contented by performing Bindu Tarpana in the Shri Chakra's inner most Chakra called Sarvaananda maya; Purvaja or the First Movement of Supreme Consciousness of Herself; Tripuraambika; Dasa Mudra Samaaraadhya or worshipped by Ten Mudras or hand-finger gestures [viz. Sankshobhini (Jolting), Baana (Arrow), Aakarshana (Attraction), Vashya (Power), Unmaada (Ecstasy), Mahaankusha (the Great Goad), Khechary ( Flying), Vijayini (Victory), Trikhanda (Three Sections) and Dhanu (Bow)] ; Tripuraa Shri Vashamkari or the Fifth Chakra of Shri Chakra; Jnaana Mudra or the Gesture of Upadesha or Initiation forming a circle with the thumb and index fingers stretching the other fingers to signify the Final Reality is complete; Jnaana Gamya or Jnaana is the Goal; Jnaana-Jneya Swarupini or Lalita Devi is the Knowledge as also the Jneya or the one to Know; Yoni Mudra one of the Mudras; Tri Khandeshi or another Mudra indicating the Unity of Tri Khandas; Triguna; Ambaa; Tri Konagaa; Anagha or free from Sins; Adbhuta Chaaritra; Vaanchitarta prayayani or Fulfiller of desires; Abyaasaatisaya Jnaataa or Devi could be realised by constant practice of meditation and puja; Shadadhwatita Rupini or Six methods of Realisation of Lalita Devi include three related to Shakti called Mantraawaas viz. Varnas, Padaas or words and Mantras as also three Tatwardhaas of Shiva including Kalaas, Tatwaas and Bhuvanaas; AvyaaJaKarunaa Murti referring to Maternal Affection; Ajnaana dhwaanta deepikaa or the Great Illumination that destroys darkness / ignorance; Aabaala Gopaala Viditaa or known to Children and even Cowherds; Sarnaanullangha Shasana or none could ever disobey this Shasana or Ruling; This command is by Shri Chakra Raja Nilaya, Shrimat Tripura Sundari, Shri Shiva, Shiva Shaktaika Swarupini and Shri Lalitambika!!)

### Lalita Sahasra Naama Phala Shruti

*Iteyna Naama Sahasramcha kathitam tey Ghatodbhavah, Rahasyaanaam rahasyamcha Lalitaa preeti daayakam/ Anena sadrusham Stotram na Bhutam na Bhavishyati, Sarva roga prashanam Sarva sampadprabandhakam/Sarvaapamrityu shamanakaala Mrityu nivaarinam, Sarvajjwaraarti shamanam Deerghayushyapradaayakam/PutrapradamaputraanaamPurushaarthapradaayakamIdam Viseshaacchridevyaa Stotram Preetividhaayakam/ Japennityam Prayatnena Lalitopaasti tatparah, Praatah Snaatwaa Vidhaanena Sandhyaa Karma samaapyacha/ Puja griham tato gatwaa Chakra RaaJam samarchyayet, Japey sahasram vaa Trishatam shatameyvacha/*

(Agastya Muni! Recitation of this highly Sacred and Secret Lalita Sahasra-naama Stotra is unparalleled either in the Past or in Future. This Stotra prevents diseases, untimely and nagging deaths, extends life, bestows progeny and fulfills the Purushardhaas of Dharma-Artha-Kaama-Moksha. Hayagrivadeva strongly advised that one should make a sincere effort to recite the Stotra after purifying the body and mind, enter the Puja Griha, perform the Sandhyaa Vandana and Gayatri Japa, worship the Shri Chakra formally and then recite the Devi Lalita Sahasra Naamaavali. The Punya that is accrued by bathing in Sacred Rivers like Ganga innumerable times or the Fruit secured by performing Prathishta of countless Shiva Lingas in Varanasi or the Phala secured by giving away Daanaas during Surya Grahana or Solar Eclipse at Kurukshetra would indeed exceed the Recitation of the Sahasra Naama. Digging wells and water bodies in deserts, performing Ashwamedha Yagnas on the banks of Ganga, organising 'Anna

Daanaas'to several Brahmanas, would all far exceed the Punya gained by the Recitation. Reciting even one Sranza of the Stotra would suffice to demolish serious sins, especially neglecting daily duties and continuously and conciously resorting to confirmed deeds of vice. It is like going to Himalayas to get rid of biting cold would be as infructuous as demolishig sins by means other than of reciting the Sahasra Naama! The Phala Shruti futher stated that the Recitation of the Stotras would be specially fruiful on Sacred days of Sankraanti, Vishu, birthdays of Self and near-dears, Navamis, Chaturdashis, Purnimas and on all Fridays. On Purnami evenings one could vision Devi Lalita in the Chandra Bimba and recitation at that time would provide far-reaching fruits of worship of which Devi Sahasranama is a significant input.

*Sarva vyaadhi nivruttvartham Sprushtwaa Bhasma Japedidam Tadbhasma dhaaranaadeva nashyanti Vyaadhayah Kshanaat!*

(To overcome all kinds of ailments, one should apply bhasma or ash on the body of the patient concerned by reciting the Stotra and indeed the latter would recover as soon as the Recitation is over. Persons affected by 'Graha Peedaas' or obstacles posed by Nava Grahas are bathed in the waters collected by vessels would soon be freed from the Planetary Aberrations. Even poison in the body would melt away by consuming water infused with the Mantras. A 'kanya' of one's desire for a man, or a childless woman intensely craving for a child, a bhakta desirous of overcoming 'dushta prayogaas' of Low Class and Abhicharika Shaktis, a devoted person who is a victim of theives and robbers or any such devotees of need, or redressal or justice are all well advised to most earnestly worship Lalita Devi who would fulfil all human aspirations with certainty.

#### Shri Lalita Trishati Naama Stotra

*Sakumkuma vilepanaa malikachumbi Kasturikaam,  
Samanda hasitekshanaam Sashara Chaapa pashaamkushaam/  
Asesha jana Mohinimaruna maalya bhushaambaraam,  
Japaakusuma bhaasuraam Japavidhou smaredambikaam/*

Nyasah: Asya Sri Lalita Trishathi Stotra Maha Mantrasya, Bhagavan Hayagreeva Rishih; Anushtup Chandah; Sri Lalita Maha Tripura Sundhari Devata, Ayim Bija- Klim Shaktih-Sou keelakam-Mama Chaturvidha Purushartha Siddhyardhey Japey Viniyogah Lamityaadabhiramganyaasa Karanyaasaah Kaaryaah Dhyaanam:

*Ati Madhura Chaapa Hastaamaparimitaa moda baana Sowbhagyaam,  
Arunaamatishaya Karunaamabhinava Kula Sundarim Vandey/*

( My salutations to you Devi! You carry a Sacred Bow with Sugar Cane with countless arrows that bestow prosperity; indeed you are the embodiment of kindness and happiness with youthful beauty)

*Kakaara Roopa Kalyani Kalyana Guna Shalini  
Kalyana Shaila Nilaya Kamaniya Kalavathi  
Kamalakshi Kalmashagni Karunamritha Sagara  
Kadambha Kananavaasa Kadamba Kusuma Priya  
Kandarpa Vidya Kandarpa Janakaapaanga Veekshanaa  
Karpooora veetee Sourabhya Kallolitha Kakuptataa  
Kali Dosha Haraa Kanja Lochanaa Kamra Vighrahaa  
Karmadi Saakshini Karayatree Kamra Phala Pradha/*

(Devi! You are the representation of the Alphabet ‘**Ka**’ that stands for **Radiance** which incidentally is the First Letter of the Pancha Dashi Maha Mantra viz. *Ka Ye Ee La Hreem, Ha Sa Ka Ha La Hreem, Sakala Hreem*; You are Kalyani or the Essence of Auspiciousness; with all characteristics of Goodness; mounted on the peak of virtue; you are the tasteful refinement and an abode of aesthetics; with alluring lotus-eyes; a proven destroyer of filthy sins; Karunaamrita Saagaraa or a nectar-like ocean of compassion; freely moving about celestial gardens of Kadamba trees as you would love to be adorned with the fragrant Kadamba flowers like clean thoughts and deeds; You are the adorable Personification of Love and its total knowledge; as the Mother of Love, materialised Manmadha by your mere sight; Devi! You enjoy the juice of betel leaves with the taste of scented material and spread the whole Universe with joy; you destroy the evil effects of Kali Yuga; you protect the worlds with your lotus-eyed looks; you are possessed of a demeanor that binds every mind; you are the sole witness of every thought and deed prompting every one to perform actions and also decide on the outcome of all such actions.)

*Ekaara Roopachaikaaksharainyekaakshraakrithih  
Ethathaditya Nirdehyaa chaikaananda Chidaakrithih  
Evamithyaagama bodhya chaika Bhakthi madarchidaa  
Ekagra Chitta nirdhyathachaishanaa rahitadruta  
Ela Sugandhi Chikura chainahkuta Vinasini  
Eka Bhogaachaika Rasachaikaikaishwarya Pradayini  
Ekaatha Pathra Samrajyapradha chaikaanta Poojitha  
Edhamaana Prabhaachaijadanejjagadeeswari  
Eka Veeraadi Samsevyaaachaika Prabhaava Shalini*

(Devi! You are of the alphabet Form ‘**Ea**’ standing for Para Brahma or the **Absolute Truth** and that is the Second Letter of the ‘Pancha Dashaakshari’; this is also the Unique and Sacred Letter OM; indeed you are the image of each and every Letter and can not be decided as this or that Letter since you are the Epitome of Knowledge and Enlightenment; You are beyond the description that Scriptures could impart and could be possibly be realised only by single-minded devotion; you could be meditated with focussed determination and pure thought by total surrender and detachment ; Devi! Your hairs are of sweet flavours; you are the personification of pleasures and love rescinding all traces of sins and vices; you can bestow the greatest gift of ‘Ekaishwarya’; you can even grant the wish of becoming an Emperor of the Universe effortlessly; you can be overcome by worship in concentrated solitude; Jagadeshwari! You are the Outstanding Sourcer of Splendour and Energy worshipped by the most Valiant and the Resolute as you are the Eka Prabhaava Shalini or the Unique Symbol of Magnificence!)

*Eekaara Roopini Eesithri chepsitaartha pradayini  
Eedrigithya Vinirdishya cheshvaratya Vidhayini  
Eeshaanaadi Brahmamayi cheshatwaadyashta Siddhidha  
Eekshithri Eekshana Srushtyanda Kotireeshwara Vallabha  
Eeditha cheshwaraardhaanga Shareereshaadhi Devatha  
Eeshwara Prerana Kari chesha Thandava Saakshini  
Eeshwarothesanga Nilaya chetibaadhaa Vinasini  
Eeha Virahitha chesha Shakthireeshat Smithaanana/*

(You are the Third Letter **Ee** of the Alphabet symbolising **Supreme Energy** that mobilises the Universe; the motivation and drive of actions; the benevolent provider of the ‘Eepsitarthaas’ or desires irrespective of limitations or restrictions; in fact you make the devotees feel that they are of ‘Ishvaratwa’ by themselves! Devi! You are the Union of Pancha Devas viz. Brahma-Vishnu-Rudra-Ishwara-Sadaa Shiva; You are the Benefactor of Ashta Siddhis viz. Anima, Mahima, Garima, Laghima, Prapti, Prakamya, Ishatwa and Vashitya; You are Eekshtri or the Cause and Observer; by your mere looks are created crores of Beings; the Sacred Scriptures are not tired of your grandeur; Eshwara Vallabha! Eswaraartha Sharirini!

Eshwaraadhi Devata! Eshwara Prerana kari! Eshwara Tandava Saakshini or the Distinctive Spectator of Shiva's Cosmic Dance; the Exclusive Seater on Shiva's lap; Devi! You are the Singular Power that could terminate all kinds of catastrophes; you are desireless as no aspiration is beyond you; the Supreme Shakti within Eshwara; and of the Supreme Countenance of magnetic smiles!

*Lakaara Roopa Lalitha Lakshmi Vani Nishevitha  
Laakhini Lalana Roopa Lasadh Dharadima Paatala  
Lalanthika Lasadhphaalaa Lalata Nayanaarchita  
Lakshanojjwala Divyangi Laksha Kodyanda Nayika  
Lakshyarth Lakshanaagamy Labdhakama Lathathanuh  
Lalaamarajadalika Lamba Muktha Lathanchitha  
Lambodara Prasurlabhyaa Lajjaadhyaa Laya Varjitha*

( Lalita Devi! You are of the Form of the Letter **La** connoting upsurge of **Mental Calibre** or sagacity being the fourth Letter of the Pancha Dashaakshari Mantra; Lalita or the Emblem of Softness and Simplicity of a Mother to a Child; served by Lakshmi the Symbol of Prosperity and Vani the Insignia of Learning; You are Laakhini or of easy access; Laalana Rupa or of the feminine quality of nurturing; of the delicious tenderness of an opened pomegranate and of a lustrous forehead embellished with a red dot of Tilaka; Devi! You are venerated by Parameshwara who has a third eye on his Lalaata; you are splendid with excellence as the Utmost Sovereign of Lakhs and Crores of Universes; the Lakshyarth or the Inner Connotation and Lakshyagamy or the Ultimate Destination to reach; Labhda Kaama or the Fulfillment of Desires; Lataatanu or of a supple physique over which creepers tend to crawl; Devi! You are adorned with red Tilaka on the forehead and with long chains of pearls; indeed you are attainable with pure commitment though! Ganeshwara Mataa! You shy away from the unworthy; and as the Everlasting One you are immune from Pralayas or the Great Annihilations).

*Hreemkaara Roopa Hreemkaara Nilaya Hreem Pada Priya  
Hreemkaara Beejaa Hreemkaara Mantra Hreemkaara Lakshana  
Hreemkara Japa Supreetha Hreemathih Hreemvibhushana  
Hreem Shila Hreem Padaaraadhya Hreem Garbha Hreem Padaabhidha  
Hreemkara Vaachya Hreemkara Poojya Hreemkara Peethigaa  
Hreemkara Vedy Hreemkara Chinthya Hreem Hreem Shareerini*

( Devi! You are the **Hreemkaara** Shakti symbolising **Power and Authority** being the Fifth Letter of the Alphabets and the Heem Mantra of Pancha Dashaakshari; You reside in the Hreem Shabda as you are highly fascinated with it; you are the latent implication of the Mantra which is typically of your own; you readily get invoked by the 'brand' and be responsive to its recitation; indeed you are Hreemati or heart-mind-Soul; Hreem Vibhushana or its Ornament; Hreem Sheela or possessive of the features of Brahma-Vishnu-Maheshwara; You are easily accessible by the worship of the word Hreem; You are the Vachya or the Meaning; the Pujya or the worshippingable; the Peethika or the basis; the Vedy or the realisable; the Chintya or the conduit of meditation; Hreem or the Provider of Fulfillment; Hreem Sharirini or of Hreem as your Physique; Devi! You indeed are the byword of Hreem!

*Hakara Roopa Haladhrith Poojitha Harinekshana  
Harapriya Haraaraadhya Hari Brahmendravaditha  
Haya Rudhaa Sevithanghrir Hayamedha Samarchita  
Haryaksha Vahanaa Hamsa Vahanaa Hatha Danava  
Hathyadi Papa Samani Haridashwaadi Sewitha  
Hasthi Kumbhothunga Kucha Hasthi Kritthi Priyaangana  
Haridra Kumkumaa Digdhaa Haryaswadya Amaraaarchidha  
Harikesha Sakhi Hadhi Vidya Halaa Madaalasa*

(Devi! You are of **Ha** kaara Rupa or of the sixth Letter of Alphabet signifying **Courage and Intrepidity** for the demolition of Shatru Sena or of the Armies of Antagonists; recitation of the Hakaara of Panchadasakshari Mantra is stated to overcome enemies from within and without; You are worshipped by Balarama who had the reputation of carrying a Plough to assert his prowess in battles; Harinekshana or of the attractiveness of deer's looks; Harapriya or the darling of Maha Deva; you are worshipped by Shiva and saluted reverentially by Vishnu-Brahma-and Indras ; the entire cavalry mounted on horses perform sincere pujas to secure victories; the Performers of Ashmamedha Yagnas seek your benevolence to obtain their desires; Durga Devi who mounts on Lions too beseeches your grace; Saraswati who rides a Swan implores your assistance; Devas who kill Danavas beg of your kindness; Being merciful you mitigate the severity of even sins like murders; Indra who rides green horses is ever reverential to you; those feminine Shaktis whose breasts are as elevated as elephant heads crave your indulgence and venerate you; You are the beloved of Lord Shiva who likes to be clad with Gaja Charma or Elephant Skin as he granted the dying wish of Gajasura whom he sent to Kailasha; Lalita! Your brilliant body is smeared with haridra-kumkuma powder pastes (turmeric and saffron); Indra and Amaras are never tired of worship as you are their constant Saviour; Hariksha Sakhi or the Companion of Shiva with green tresses; Devi! You are the Symbol of Haadi Vidya viz. Ha-Sa-Ka-La-Hrim--Ha-Sa-Ka-Ha-La-Hrim--Sa-Ka-La-Hrim; You are intoxicated with the grape juice of the Ocean of wine!)

*Sakaara Roopa Sarvagjna Sarveshi Sarva Mangala  
Sarva Karthri Sarva Dharthri Sarva Hanthri Sanathani  
Sarvaanavadya Sarvanga Sundari Sarva Saakshini  
Sarvaatmika Sarva Sowkhya Daatri Sarva Vimohini  
Sarvaadhara Sarvagatha Sarvaavaguna Varjitha  
Sarvaaruna Sarva Maatha Sarva Bhushana Bhushitha/*

(The Sixth Letter of Alphabet '**Sa**' as also the Sixth Letter of Panchadashaakshari embodies **Affluence and Contentment**; Devi! You are the Omniscient; Omni-Potent; the Form of Auspiciousness; Sarva Kartri or the Performer of all the Deeds; Sarva Dhatri or the One who is the fulcrum of all the Beings and again Sarva Hantri or the Destroyer of Every Thing; the Sanaatani or the Ageless, Originless and the Everlasting; the Spotless; the Sarvaanga Sundari; the Singular Witness of the Happenings; the all Pervasive Super-Soul; the Provider of Happiness to one and all; the Spell-Binder; the Foundation of Every Entity; the Omni-Present; Devoid of all Shortcomings; the ever fresh beginning like the emerging Sun's crimson on the horizon; the Mother of all and every thing; and the finality of Ornamentation as you are the Supreme Embellishment yourself!)

*Kakaarthaa Kaala Hanthri Kameshi Kamithartha Daa  
Kama Sanjivani Kalya Kathina Sthana Mandala  
Kara Bhoruh Kalaa Nadha Mukhi Kacha Jitambudaa  
Kataakshasyandi Karuna Kapaali Pranan Nayika  
Karunya Vighrahaa Kanthaa Kanthi Dhootha Japavalih  
Kalalaapaa Kambhu Kanthi Kara Nirjitha Pallavaa  
Kalpavalli Sama Bhujia Kasthuree Thilakojjwalaa/*

(The Eighth Letter of Alphabet '**Ka**' stands for **Illumination and Perception** being the eighth Shabda of the Pancha Dashaakshari Mantra of Lalita Devi; You are Kaala Hantri or the Terminator of the Terminator or the Concluder of the Time-Cycle at the time of the Great Annihilation; Kameshi! You govern hopes and aspirations; you also fulfil the wishes; indeed you revived Kaama the Deity of Love from his end from a heap of ash burnt from Shiva's Third Eye; you are the Originator, Adroiter and Bestower of all the Fine Arts; the Possessor of firm and hard breasts and of robust thighs like those of an elephant trunk; of a charming countenance like the full moon; with hair like dark and thick clouds; of

compassionate looks ready to ignore the blemishes of Beings; Devi! You are the consort of Kapaali; the Embodiment of Benevolence; Kantaa or the Flagship of Femininity; far more shimmering than the best of flowers; with punctuated style of conversation; with a conch-like neck and hands of gentleness like soft flower-buds; your arms are charming and thin like Kalpa Valli creepers; Lalita! Your forehead is embellished with Kasturi Tilaka or the thin spot of musk.)

*Hakaaraartha Hamsa Gatirhaatakaabharanojjwalaa  
Haarahaari kuchaabhoga Haakini Halya Varjitha  
Harithpathi Samaaraadhyaa Hathaathkaara Hathaasura  
Harsha Pradaa Havirbhoktri Haarda Santhama Saapahaa  
Halleehaalsya Santhushta Hamsa Mantrartha Rupini  
Hanopaadaana Nirmuktha Harshini Hari Sodari  
Haahaa Hoohoo Mukha Sthutya Hani Vridhdi Vivarjitha  
Hayyangavina Hridaya Harikopaarunamshukaa/*

(The Letter ‘**Hakaara**’ signifies **Wealth and Gallantry** being the ninth Letter of Pancha Dashaakshari; Devi! You are a Hamsa Gamana or of a Swan’s Pace; adorned with golden ornaments; your jewellery on the chest does indeed allure Shiva; you are Hakini or the One who snaps servitudes to usher freedom literally as also of the chains of Samsara; you refrain from the evil thoughts and deeds; you are adored by the Ashta Dikpalakas viz. Indra, Agni, Yama, Nirruti, Vaayu, Varuna, Kubera and Ishaana; you killed Asuras instantly and suddenly by your bravery; acclaimed as the Source of Bliss; you relish the dance of maidens ; you have unparalleled expertise in Hamsa Mantra and the regulation of Pranayaama; you are devoid of desires but distributes happiness and contentment; the sister of Hari; Gandharvas praise you on your face as Haahaa Hoohu; you are far above the features of growth, decay or death; on witnessing the tribulations of various Beings, your heart melts like butter but on getting angry your visage turns red.

*Lakaarartha Latha Poojya Laya Sthithudbhaveswari  
Lasya Darshana Santhushta Labhaalaabha Vivarjitha  
Langhyetharaagjnaa Lavanya Shalini Laghu Siddhida  
LaakshaarasaSavarnaabha Lakshmanagraja Poojitha  
Labhyetara Labdha Bhakthi Sulabha Langalaayudhaa  
Lagna Chaamara Hastha Shri Sharada Parivijitha  
Lajjaapada Samaraadhyaa Lampata Lakuleshwari  
Labdha Maanaa Labdha Rasaa Labdha Sampath Samunnatih/*

(Devi! The Tenth Letter ‘**La**’ of the Alphabet is also the Tenth of the Pancha Dasaakshari is indicative of ‘**Karma**’ or the result of the deeds of one’s past. You are esteemed and worshipped by the womanhood of chastity; the Supreme of the Universe in all the stages of Birth, Growth and Destruction alike; witnessing the joyous dance of women gives you immense pleasure; You are far above the considerations of profits and losses; Mother, your instructions are always carried out and never questioned and indeed none whosoever dared to ask you questions! You are matchless in elegance and poise; you give away Siddhis with least devotion and reverence; you shower kindness with minimal efforts like melting gold is sealed in wax; Lord Shri Rama the incarnation of Vishnu performed regular pujaas to you to bestow the capacity to uproot Adharma; you save persons regardless of their deeds and fruits; you are very easily won over with selfless devotion; some times you carry plough as a weapon like Adi Sesha to punish the vicious; Lakshmi and Sharada serve you with ‘Chaamara’ as a hand fan; you make exceptions to Principles of your own making some times to save situations; Devi! Several Groups of persons from varied backgrounds are unanimous in their unity in devotion to you albeit in the methodologies of their worship; you are venerated by one and all as you are the Finality of Happiness and Prosperity.)

*Hrinkaarini Hrinkaraadi Hrim Madhya Hrim Shikhamanah*

*Hrimkaara Kundaagni Shikha Hrimkaara Shashi Chandrika  
Hrimkaara Bhaskara Ruchir hrimkaraamboda Chanchalaa  
Hrimkara Kanda Kuritaa Hrimkaaraika Paraayanaa  
Hrimkara Deerghika Hamsi Hrimkarodyana Kekini  
Hrimkaaraanya Harini Hrimkaaraavaala Vallari  
Hrimkara Panjara Suki Hrimkarangana Deepika  
Hrimkara Kandaraa Simhi Hrimkaraambhuja Bhiringika  
Hrimkara Sumano Maadhvi Hrimkaara Tharu Manjari*

(Devi! You are the Emblem of the Eleventh Letter of the Pancha Dashaakshari Mantra **Hreemkara** denoting **All-Pervasiveness** of the Supreme Shakti; Hrimkaaraadi signifies Hrim and Om Mantraas; Hrim Madhya means the Cause of Universal Existence and yourself; Hrim Shikhamani or you wear Hrim on your head; you are the Agni Kunda and Agni Shikha named Hrimkaara; You are the life-providing rays of Mooshine which too is called Hrim; you are the heat and dazzle generated by Surya Deva which is named Hrim; it is the lightning of black clouds and yourself which is called Hrim; it is yourself and the germination of tuber from a seed which is Hrim; you are the Reciter of Hrim as you trust and depend on it; it is the Hamsa / Swan moving freely in a Sarovara is called Hrim; the Peacock dancing with gay abandon in a garden is called Hrim; the deer enjoying its playful jumps in a forest is known as Hrim; you as the climber from a flower bed is Hrim; the green parrot in a cage is Hrim; the deepika or the light kept in a court yard is Hrim; a lion resting in a mountain cave is Hrim; Devi! Even an insect which is yourself hovering around a lotus in water is Hrim; the honey in a flower which too is of your own Form is Hrim; a cluster of flowers that appears on a tree is also called Hrim!

*Sakaraakhya Samarasaa Sakalaagama Samstutaa  
Sarva Vedantha Tatparya Bhoomi Sad Asada Asraya  
Sakhala Satchidananda Saadhya Sadgathi Dayini  
Sanakadi Muni Dhyeya Sada Shiva Kutumbini  
Sakaladhishtaana Roopa Sathya Roopa Samaa Krithih  
Sarva Prapancha Nirmathri Samanadhika Varjitha  
Sarvothunga Sangahina Saguna Sakaleshtadaa/*

(Devi! You are the Twelfth Form of the Alphabet ‘Sa’ which is also the twelfth Letter of the Pancha Dasaakshari Mantra indicating **Gunaateeta Shakti** or the Power of Featurelessness. You are the underlying energy that is all-pervasive all over in the Universe; commended by all the Scriptures in a single tone; you are the Singular Abode where the Essence of Vedantas is manifested; that indeed is the Place where Truth and Illusion are clearly distinguished; you are the Finality where you are in your Full Form of Sacchidanada or the Union of Truth-Awakening-Bliss; yet, you are not in imagination but possible of Realisation; you bestow the blessing of Sadgati or the Path for Realisation; Maha Munis like Sanaka had meditated and achieved you; as the counterpart of Maha Deva you belong to the Totality; the Merger Point of all kinds of Faiths and Institutions of worships; You are the Substance of Truth and Impartial in the true sense; you have materialised the Prapancha; you are the matchless; you are the Supreme; you have no features; you have no attachments; and indeed you are the Greatest Provider of what one wishes and deserves!)

*Kakaarini Kavya Lola Kameshwara Manohara  
Kameswara Prananaadi Kamesotsanga Vasini  
Kameshwara Alingatangi Kameshwara Sukha Pradha  
Kameshwara Pranayini Kameshwara Vilasini  
Kameshwara Tapasiddhi Kameshwara Manah Priya  
Kameshwara Pranadhaa Kameshwara Vimohini  
Kameshwara Brahma Vidya Kameshwara Griheswari*

*Kameshwaraahladhakari Kameshwara Maheswari  
Kameshwari Kama Koti Nilaya Kaankshithartadaa/*

(Kakaarini or the Thirteenth Letter of Alphabet ‘**Ka**’ denoting **Fullfillment** and also the Thirteenth Letter of the Pancha Dasaakshari Mantra; Devi! You derive immense pleasure as you are acclaimed in ‘Kavyaas’ or Spiritual Texts; you are the enticer of Maha Deva’s thoughts; the true reflector of Kameshwara’s thoughts and dispositions; you are always present in his blissful company; in fact you are in the physical union of Kameshwara; providing happiness to Kameshwara as his heart’s throb and pulse-watcher; indeed you are the fruit of Kameshwara’s ‘Tapasshakti’; you are his dearest; Life’s Master; and Mesmeriser; you are the Brahma Vidya that enables you to reach the destination of Kameswara; you reside in the Abode of Kameshwara which is truly the Universe in totality! You gladden Kameshwara as Maheshwari of Kameshwara; as Kameshwari, you are the alternative Form of Kameshwara; you are Kamakoti Nilaya fulfilling all kinds of ‘Kaamaas’ or desires.)

*Lakarini Labdha Roopa Labhdhadhir Labhdha Vanchitha  
Labhdha Paapa Manodoora Labhdha Ahankara Durgama  
Labhdha Shakthi Labhdha Deha Labdha Iswarya Samunnathi  
Labhdha Vriddhi Labhdha Leela Labhdha Youvana Shalini  
Labhdaatishyaya Sarvaangaa Soundarya Labhdha Vibhrama  
Labhdha Ragaa Labhdha Gati Labhdha Nanaagama Sthithih  
Labhdha Bhoga Labhdha Sukhaa Labhdha Harshaabhi Pujita/*

(Lakaarini Devi! You are the Alphabet Letter ‘**La**’, the Fourteenth word of the Pancha Dasaakshari Mantra signifying ‘**Prapti**’ or the Deservedness or Merit; you are the Swarupa of Fulfillment; achievable by Jnaana; the Provider of desires; distanced from Sinners; impossible of achievement by egomaniacs; the giver of powers to those whom you will; and the bestower of Affluence whom you select; Devi! You are infinite and there is nothing more that you could accomplish; you are spirited and bouncy at your own volition; you are youthful forever; you are the Epitome of Beauty as you prefer; you get the Universe surprised as per your discretion; you have fulfilled all that you decided; you have secured an illustrious husband as per your option; you direct the Scriptures at your command; you enjoy for the sake of yourself and experience the highest mark of fulfillment)

*Hrimkara Moorthirhrimkaara Soudha Shringa Kaphotika  
Hrimkara Dughabdhi Sudha Hrimkara Kamalendra  
Hrimkara Mani Deeparchi Hrimkara Tharusharika  
Hrimkara Petikaa Manirhrimkaradarsha Bimbikha  
Hrimkara Koshaasilatha Hrimkara Sthana Narthaki  
Hrimkara Shuktikaa Mukthaamanirhrimkara Bodhitha  
Hrimkaramaya Souvarna Stambha Vidruma Puthrika  
Hrimkara Vedhoupanishad Hrimkaraadhwara Dakshina  
Hrimkara Nandaanarama Nava Kalpaka Vallari  
Hrimkara Himavath Ganga Hrimkaraarnava Kousthubha  
Hrimkara Mantra Sarwaswaa Hrimkarapara Sowkhyada/*

(Hrimkaara Murti! You are the characterisation of **Hrim** the final and fifteenth Letter of Devi Panchadashaakshari Mantra indicative of **Paripurnata** or Fullness; You are comparable to a Dove representing Peace and Tranquility atop the Palace called Hrim; the ‘Amrit’ churned from the Ocean of Milk named as Hrim; the Lakshmi Swarupa seated comfortably on the surface of a Lotus flower as designated by the Mantra of Hrim; the lustrous ‘Mani Deepa’ dispelling darkness around is called Hrim; the singing bird sitting pretty on a lofty tree is called Hrim; the charming ‘Mani’ kept secure in a box is called Hrim; the reflection of an Image in a mirror is called Hrim; the sharp sword encased in a sheath is

called Hrim; a vibrant dansuese in action on a broad stage to a mellifluous musical note is called Hrim; a pearl in an oyster shell is called Hrim; Devi! The process of Instruction to devotees about the meaning of the Scriptures is called Hrim; the precious Murti decorated on golden pillars is Hrim; the Upanishads arranged on top of Vedas is called Hrim; the Dakshina tipped to a Dwarapalaka is also known as Hrim; the ever climbing creeper from a plant bed in a garden is called Hrim; the River of Ganges on the Himalayan Mountain Range is designated as Hrim; the invaluable Koustubha thrown up from by the waves from the depths of an Ocean is called Hrim; the Totality of Mantras materialised in the Universe is summarised as Hrim; and the maximum Fund of Happiness collected from all over in the Universe too is called Hrim!)

[Pancha Dasi Maha Mantra : Ka- Ea- Ee-La-Hreem, Ha Sa Ka Ha La Hreem, Sa-Ka-La-Hreem ]

### Shri Lalitaa Trishati Stotra Phala Shruti

Chanting Lalita Trishati even once sets the mind-set straight and clean. The more one chants or even hears, the more one takes steps forward. Bhagavan Hayagriva assured Agasthya Muni that by chanting Lalita Trishati even once would help to attain peace of mind. Its practice without desires transforms the heart, mind and Soul. Fulfillment follows as a consequence, for the Decider is Lalita Herself. As one sows, so one reaps!

### Devi Bhagavati Sahasranaama vide Kurma Purana

(Devi Bhagavati! You are Shiva, Uma, Paraa Shakti, Ananta, Nishkala, Amala, Shantaa, Maheswari, Nitya, Shashvati, Paramaakshara, Achintya, Kevala, Anantya, Shivatmika, Paramatmika, Anaadi, Avyaya, Shuddha, Devatmika, Sarvaga, Achala, Eka, Vividha Rupa, Mayaatita, Sunirmala, Maha Maheshwari, Satya, Maha Devi, Niranjana, Kaashthaa, Sarva Hridyayastha, Chetanaa Shakti Rupa, Atilaalasa or of Extreme Desire; Nanda, Sarvatmika, Vidya, Jyoti Rupa, Amritaakshara, Shanti, Pratishtha, Nivrutti, Amrita Prada, Vyoma Murti, Vyomalaya, Vyomaadhaara, Achuyta, Amara, Anadi nidhana, Amogha, Kaaranaatmika, Kala, Akala, Kratu, Pradhamaja, Amrita naabhi, Atma Samshraya, Praneshwarapriya, Mataa, Maha Mahisha Ghaatini, Praaneshwari, Praana rupa, Pradhaana Purusheswari, Sarva Shakti Kalaakaara, Jyotsna, Akasha Rupa, Mahimasпада, Sarva Kaarya niyantri, Sarva Bhuteshwari, Anaadi, Avyatagaha, Mahananda, Sanatani, Akashayoni, Yogastha, Maha Yogeshwreshwari, Maha Maya, Sudhushpura, Mula Prakriti, Ishwari, Samsaarayoni, Sakala, Sarva Shakti Samudbhava, Samsaara Paaraa, Durvaara, Durnireeksha, Duraasadaa or difficult to Realise; Praana Shakti, Praana Vidya, Yogini, Paramaa, Kalaa, Maha Vibhuti, Durdharsha, Mula Prakriti Sambhava, Anaadyananta Vibhava, Paraartha, Purusharaini Purusha or Purusha performing Agni-Manthana; Saraga Sthitiriyanta kaarini, Sudurvaacchaa, Duratyaya, Shabdayoni, Shabdamayi, Naadaakhyaa, Naada Vighraha, Pradhaana Purushaateeta, Pradhaana Purushatmika, Puraani, Chinmayi, Adi Swarupa Purusha, Purusha Rupini, Bhutaantaraatma, Kutasthaa, Maha Purusha Sanjita, Janma Mrityu Jaraateeta, Sarva Shakti Samanvita, Vyaapini, Anivaancchinna, Pradhaananu Praveshini, Kshetrajna Shakti, Avyakta Lakshana, Mala Varjita, Anaadi Mayaa sambhinna or Anadi Maya Rupa; Tritatwa, Prakriti, Guha, Maha Mayaa Samutpanna, Taamasi, Pourushi, Dhruva, Vyaktaavyaktaatmika, Krishna, Raktaa, Shukla, Prasutika, Akaarya, Karyajanai, Nityaprasava dharmini, Sargapralaya nirmukta, Srishthisthityanta dharmini, Brahma garbha, Chaturvishaa or the Final of the Twenty Four Tatwaas; Padmanaabha, Achyutaatmika, Vaidyuti, Shaswati, Yoni or Mula Kaarini; Jagan Maata, Ishwarapriya, Sarvaadhaara, Maha Rupa, Sarvaishwarya samanvita, Vishwa Rupa, Maha Garbha, Visweshocchaanuvartini, Maheeyasi, Brahma Yoni, Maha Lakshmi Samud -bhava, Maha Vimaana Madhyasta, Maha Nidra, Atmahetuka, Sarva Saadhaarani, Sukshma, Avidya, Paramaarthika, Anantarupa, Anantasthaa, Devi, Purusha Mohini, Anekaaraara samsthaanaa, Kaala traya vivarjita, Brahma Jnaanaa, Hara Murti, Brahma Vishnu Shivatmika, Brahmoshivavishnujanani, Brahmaakhyaa, Brahma samshraya, Vyaktaa, Prathamaja, Braahmi, Mahati,

Jnaana rupini, Vairaagyai-shwarya dharmaatmika, Brahma Murti, Hridiyastah, Apamyoni, Swayambhuti, Maanasi, Tatwa sambhava, Ishwarini, Sharvaani, Shankaraarthasharirini, Bhavani, Rudraani, Maha Lakshmi, Ambika, Maheshwara samutpanna, Bhaktimukti phalapraada, Sarveshwari, Sarva vandya, Nityamudita maanasa, Bhahmopendranamita, Shankarecchaanuvartini, Ishwaraardhasanagata, Maheshwara pativrata, Sakrudvibhavita, Sarva, Samudraparisoshini, Parvati, Himavatputri, Paramaananda daayini, Gunaadhyaa, Yogajaa, Yogya, Jnaana Murti, Vikaasini, Savitri, Kamala, Lakshmi, Shree, Vishnuhridaya sthita, Saroja nilaya, Mudra, Yoga Nidra, Asuraardini, Sarasvati, Sarva Vidya, Jagajjeshtha, Sumangala, Vagdevi, Varada, Vaachaya, Kirti, Sarvaartha saadhika, Yogishwari, Brahma Vidya, Maha Vidya, Sushobhana, Guhya Vidya, Atma Vidya, Dharma Vidya, Atmabhavita, Swaha, Shivambhara, Siddhi, Swadhaa, Medha, Dhruti, Shruti, Niti, Suniti, Sukruti, Madhavi, Nara vaahini, Aja, Vibhavari, Sowmya, Bhogini, Bhogadayini, Shobha, Vashamkari, Chanchala, Malini, Parameshthini, Trailokya Sundari, Ramya, Sundari, Kaamachaarini, Mahanubhava, Satwastha, Maha Mahisha Mardini, Padmamaalaa, Paapahara, Vichitra, Mukutaanana, Kanta, Chitraambaradhara, Divyaabharana bhushita, Hamsaakhya, Vyomanilaya, Jagatsrishthi vivardhini, Niryantra, Yantra vaahastha, Nandini, Bhadrakalika, Adithya varna, Kaumari, Mayuravaravaahini, Vrishasanagata, Gauri, Mahakaali, Suraarchita, Aditi, Niyata, Roudri, Padmagarbha, Vivaahana, Virupaakshi, Lolihana, Mahapura nivaasini, Mahaphala, Anavadyangi, Kamarupa, Vichitraratnamakuta, Pranataarthi prabhanjani, Koushiki, Karshani, Raatri, Tridashaarti vinaashini, Bahurupa, Surupa, Virupa, Rupavarjita, Bhaktaarthi shamani, Bhavya, Bhavabhaava vinaashini, Nirguna, Nityavibhava, Nissaraa, Nirupatrapa, Yashaswini, Saamagiti, Bhavaanga nilayaalaya, Diksha, Vidyadhari, Deepta, Mahendraviniipatini, Sarvaatishayani, Vidya, Sarva Siddha pradaayini, Sarveshwara priya, Taarkshya, Samudraantara vaasini, Akalanka, Niraadhaara, Nityasiddhaa, Niraamaya, Kamadhenu, Vrishadgarbha, Dheemati, Mohanaashini, Nissankalpa, Niraatanka, Devadevi, Manonmani, Maha Bhagavati, Durha, Vaasudeva samudbhava, Mahendropendra bhagini, Bhakti gamya, Paraavara, Jnaanajneya, Jaraatita, Vedanta vishya, Gati, Dakshina, Dahana, Daahyaa, Sarva bhuta namaskruta, Yogamaayaa, Vibhaavajna, Maha Maya, Maheeyasi, Sandhyaa, Sarvasamudbhuti, Vrikshaavriksha-shrayaanati, Beejankura samudbhuti, Maha Shakti, Mahamati, Khyati, Pragjna, Chiti, Samvita, Maha Bhogindrashayini, Vikruti, Shankari, Shastri, Gana gandharvasevita, Vaishwaanari, Mahaashaala, Devasena, Grihapriya, Maharaatri, Shivaananda, Shachi, Duhswapna naashini, Ijyaa, Puja, Jagaddhaatri, Durvijneya, Swarupini, Guhaambika, Gunotpatti, Mahaapetha, Marutsuta, Havya vaahanaantagaadi, Havyavaaha samudbhava, Jagadyoni, Jaganmaata, Janmamritujaraatiga, Buddhimaataa, Buddhimati, Purushaantara vaasini, Taraswini, Samaadhistha, Trinetra, Divisamstita, Sarvendriyamanomaata, Sarva bhuta hridisthita, Samsaara taarini, Vidya, Brahmavaadi manolaya, Brahmaani, Brihati, Braahmi, Brahmabhuta, Bhavaarani, Hiranmayi, Mahaa ratri, Samsaara parivartika, Sumaalini, Surupa, Bhavini, Taarini, Prabha, Unmeelani, Sarvasaha, Sarvapratyaya saakshini, Susowmya, Chandra vadana, Tandavaasakta maanasa, Satva shuddhikari, Shuddhi, Mala- traya vinashini, Jagatpriya, Trimurti, Amritaashraya, Naraashraya, Niraahaara, Nirarankushanod -bhava, Chandrahasta, Vichitraangi, Stragvini, Padmadhaarini, Paraavaravidhaanajna, Maha Purusha Purvaja, Vidyeshwarapriya, Vidya, Vidyujjihva, Jitashrama, Vidyaamayee, Sahasraakshi, Sahasra vadanaatmaja, Sahasra rashmi, Satvastha, Maheshwara padaashraya, Maanya, Mahadeva Manorama, Vyoma Lakshmi, Simharatha, Chekitaana, Amitaprabha, Veereshwari, Vimaanastha, Vishoka, Shoka naashini, Anaahata, Kundalini, Nalini, Padmavaasini, Sadaanandaa, Sadaakeerti, Sarva bhutaashraya -sthita, Vaagdevata, Brahmakalaa, Kalaatita, Kalaarani, Brahmashri, Brahma hridaya, Brahmavishnu-Shivapriya, Vyomashakti, Kriya Shakti, Jnaana Shakti, Paraagati, Kshobhika, Bandhika, Bhedya, Bhedaabheda vivarjita, Abhinna, Abhinna samsthaana, Vamshini, Vamsha haarini, Guhya Shakti, Gunaatita, Sarvada, Sarvato mukhi, Bhagini, Bhagavatpatni, Sakala, Kaala kaarini, Sarvavit, Sarvatobhadra, Guhyaatita, Guhaarani, Prakriya, Yoga maata, Ganga, Vishveshwreshwari, Kapila, Kaapila, Kanta, Kanakaabha, Kalaantara, Punya, Pushkarini, Bhokti, Purandara purassara, Poshani, Paramaishwarya bhutida, Bhuti bhushana, Panchabrahma samutpatti, Paramaartharth vighraha, Dharmodaya, Bhanumati, Yogijneya, Manohara, Manojava, Manoraksha, Taapasi, Veda Rupini, Veda Shakti, Vedamata, Veda vidyaa prakaashini, Yogeshwreshwari, Maata, Maha Shakti, Manomayi, Vishwaavastha, Vyanmurti, Vidyunmaala, Vihaayasi, Kinkari, Surabhi, Vandya, Nandini, Nandi

vallabha, Bharati, Paramaananda, Paraapara vibhedika, Sarva praharanotpeta, Kaamya, Kameshwareshwari, Achintya, Achintya vibhava, Hrillekha, Kanakaprabha, Kushmaandi, Dhana ratnaadhya, Sugandha, Gandha dayini, Trivikrama padodbhuta, Dhanushpaani, Shivodaya, Sudurlabha, Dhanaadhyaksha, Dhanya, Pingala lochana, Shanti, Prabhavati, Deepi, Pankajaayata lochana, Aadyaa, Hridkamalodbhuta, Gavaam Maataa, Rana priya, Satkriya, Girija, Shudda, Nitya pushta, Nirantara, Durga, Katyayani, Chandi, Charchika, Shanta vighraha, Hiranyavarna, Rajani, Jagadyantra pravartika, Mandaaradri nivaasa, Sharada, Swarnamalini, Ratnamala, Ratnagarbha, Prithvi, Vishwapramaathini, Padmaanana, Padmanibha, Nitya tushta, Amritodbhava, Dhunvati, Duhprakamya, Surya Mataa, Drushadwati, Mahendra bhagini, Maanya, Varenya, Varadarpana, Kalyani, Kamala, Rama, Panchabhuta, Varaprada, Vaachyaa, Vareshwari, Vandya, Durjaya, Duratikrama, Kaalaraatri, Mahavega, Virabhadra priya, Hitaa, Bhadrakaali, Jaganmaata, Bhakta Kalyana dayini, Karaala, Pingalaakaara, Namabheda, Amahamada, Yashashwini, Yashoda, Shadhwa parivartika, Shankini, Padmini, Saankhya, Sankhya yoga parvartika, Chaitra, Samvatsararudha, Jagat sampuranindrija, Shumbhaari, Khechari, Swasthaa, Kambugriva, Kalipriya, Khagadhwaja, Khagaarudha, Paraadharya, Paramalini, Aaishvarya vartma nilaya, Virakta, Garudaasana, Jayanti, Hridguha, Ramya, Gahwareshta, Ganaagrani, Sankalpasiddha, Saamyasthaa, Sarva Vijaana dayini, Kalikalmasha hantri, Guhyopanishat, Uttama, Nishta, Drishti, Smriti, Vyaapti, Pushti, Tushti, Krayavati, Vishvaamareshwareshaana, Bhukti, Mukti, Shiva, Amrita, Lohita, Sarpamaala, Bhishani, Vanamalini, Anbanta shayana, Asnanya, Naranaaraayanodbhava, Nrisimhi, Daitya Mathani, Shanka chakragadaadhara, ankarshana sdamutpatti, Ambikaapada samshraya, Maha jwaala, Maha murti, Sumurti, Sarva kaama dhruk, Suprabha, Sustana, Gauri, Dharmakaamaartha mokshadaa, Bhrumadhya nilaya, Purva, Purana purushaarani, Mahavibhutida, Madhyaa, Sarojanayana, Samaa, Ashtaadasha bhuja, Anaadya, Nilotpala dala prabha, Sarva Shaktyaasanaarudha, Dharmaadharma vivarjita, Vairagya jnaana nirata, Niraaloka, Nireendriya, Vichitra gahanaadhaara, Shaswata sthaana vaasini, Staaneshwari, Nirananda, Trishula vara dhaarini, Asesha Devataa Murti, Ddevata, Varadevata, Ganaabika, Giriputri, Nishumbha vinipaatini, Avarna, Varna rahita, Niravaana, Beeja sambhava, Anantavarna, Anantastha, Shankari, Shaanta Maanasa, Agotra, Gomati, Goptri, Guhyarupa, Gunottara, Gou, Geeh, Gavyapriya, Gouni, Ganeshwara namaskrutya, Satyamাত্রা, Satya sandha, Trisandhya, Sandhivarjita, Sarvadaashraya, Sankhya, Sankhyaayoga samudbhava, Asankhyeya, Aprameyaakhya, Shunya, Shudda kulodbhava, Bindunaada samutpatti, Shambhuvaama, Shashiprabha, Visanga, Bheda rahita, Manoja, Madhusudani, Mahashri, Shri samutpatti, Tamah paare pratishthita, Tritatwa maata, Trividha, Susukshma pada samshraya, Shaantaatita, Malaatita, Nirvikara, Niraashraya, Shivaakhya, Chitta nilaya, Shinajnaana Swarupini, Daitya daanava nirmaatri, Kashyapi, Kaalakaalpika, Shastrayoni, Kriyamurti, Chaturvarga pradarshika, Narayani, Narodbhuti, Kaumudi, Lingadharini, Kaamuki, Lalitha, Bhava, Paraabhava bhutida, Parantajata Mahima, Badava, Vamaloohana, Subhadra, Devaki, Sita, Vedavedaanga paaraga, Manaswini, Manyumaata, Maha Manyu Samudbhava, Amrutya, Amrita,

The above ‘Sahasra Naamaas’ of Bhagavati rendered by Himavan pleased Devi and she gave him ‘Upadesha’ and an ever grateful Himavan assumed the role of her father and performed the Immortal Shiva Parvati wedding for ‘Loka Kalyaana’. The Phala Shruti of the above Devi Sahasra Naamaas was stated as follows: ( Whosoever recites always with Cleanliness and Sincerity the above Commendation of Deva Bhagavati in the presence of Maha Deva would be steered clear of his or her sins and irregularities of on-going life and attains Devi Loka even beyond Brahma Loka; such persons would definitely avoid Arishtaas or impact of Evil effects; all the possible drawbacks and obstacles of Grahaas /Planets would be overcome and by the Grace of Shankara, Devi Lakshmi would bestow the devotee ample prosperity and longevity).

#### Maha Maya as explained vide Markandeya Purana

(Devi Bhagavati! You are Shiva, Uma, Paraa Shakti, Ananta, Nishkala, Amala, Shantaa, Maheswari, Nitya, Shashvati, Paramaakshara, Achintya, Kevala, Anantya, Shivatmika, Paramatmika, Anaadi,

Avyaya, Shuddha, Devatmika, Sarvaga, Achala, Eka, Vividha Rupa, Mayaatita, Sunirmala, Maha Maheshwari, Satya, Maha Devi, Niranjana, Kaashthaa, Sarva Hridiyastha, Chetanaa Shakti Rupa, Atilaalasa or of Extreme Desire; Nanda, Sarvatmika, Vidya, Jyoti Rupa, Amritaakshara, Shanti, Pratishtha, Nivrutti, Amrita Prada, Vyoma Murti, Vyomalaya, Vyomaadhaara, Achuyta, Amara, Anadi nidhana, Amogha, Kaaranaatmika, Kala, Akala, Kratu, Pradhamaja, Amrita naabhi, Atma Samshraya, Praneshwarapriya, Mataa, Maha Mahisha Ghaatini, Praaneshwari, Praana rupa, Pradhaana Purusheswari, Sarva Shakti Kalaakaara, Jyotsna, Akasha Rupa, Mahimaspada, Sarva Kaarya niyantri, Sarva Bhuteshwari, Anaadi, Avyatagaha, Mahananda, Sanatani, Akashayoni, Yogastha, Maha Yogeshwreshwari, Maha Maya, Sudhushpura, Mula Prakriti, Ishwari, Samsaarayoni, Sakala, Sarva Shakti Samudbhava, Samsaara Paaraa, Durvaara, Durnireeksha, Duraasadaa or difficult to Realise; Praana Shakti, Praana Vidya, Yogini, Paramaa, Kalaa, Maha Vibhuti, Durdharsha, Mula Prakriti Sambhava, Anaadyananta Vibhava, Paraartha, Purusharaini Purusha or Purusha performing Agni-Manthana; Saraga Sthitiryanta kaarini, Sudurvaacchaa, Duratyaya, Shabdayoni, Shabdamayi, Naadaakhyaa, Naada Vighraha, Pradhaana Purushaateeta, Pradhaana Purushatmika, Puraani, Chinmayi, Adi Swarupa Purusha, Purusha Rupini, Bhutaantaraatma, Kutasthaa, Maha Purusha Sanjnita, Janma Mrityu Jaraateeta, Sarva Shakti Samanvita, Vyaapini, Anivaancchinna, Pradhaananu Praveshini, Kshetrajna Shakti, Avyakta Lakshana, Mala Varjita, Anaadi Mayaa sambhinna or Anadi Maya Rupa; Tritatwa, Prakriti, Guha, Maha Mayaa Samutpanna, Taamasi, Pourushi, Dhruva, Vyaktaavyaktaatmika, Krishna, Raktaa, Shukla, Prasutika, Akaarya, Karyajanai, Nityaprasava dharmini, Sargapralaya nirmukta, Srishtisthityanta dharmini, Brahma garbha, Chaturvishaa or the Final of the Twenty Four Tatwaas; Padmanaabha, Achyutaatmika, Vaidyuti, Shaswati, Yoni or Mula Kaarini; Jagan Maata, Ishwarapriya, Sarvaadhaara, Maha Rupa, Sarvaishwarya samanvitaa, Vishwa Rupa, Maha Garbha, Visweshocchaanuvartini, Maheeyasi, Brahma Yoni, Maha Lakshmi Samud-bhava, Maha Vimaana Madhyasta, Maha Nidra, Atmahetuka, Sarva Saadhaarani, Sukshma, Avidya, Paramaarthika, Anantarupa, Anantasthaa, Devi, Purusha Mohini, Anekaaraara samsthaanaa, Kaala traya vivarjita, Brahma Jnaanaa, Hara Murti, Brahma Vishnu Shivatmika, Brahmoshivavishnujanani, Brahmaakhyaa, Brahma samshraya, Vyaktaa, Prathamaja, Braahmi, Mahati, Jnaana rupini, Vairaagyai-shwarya dharmaatmika, Brahma Murti, Hridiyastah, Apamyoni, Swayambhuti, Maanasi, Tatwa sambhava, Ishwarini, Sharvaani, Shankaraarthasharirini, Bhavani, Rudraani, Maha Lakshmi, Ambika, Maheshwara samutpanna, Bhaktimukti phalapada, Sarveshwari, Sarva vandya, Nityamudita maanasa, Bhahmopendranamita, Shankarecchaanuvartini, Ishwaraardhasanagata, Maheshwara pativrata, Sakrudvibhavita, Sarva, Samudraparisoshini, Parvati, Himavatputri, Paramaananda daayini, Gunaadhyaa, Yogajaa, Yoga, Jnaana Murti, Vikaasini, Savitri, Kamala, Lakshmi, Shree, Vishnuhridaya sthita, Saroja nilaya, Mudra, Yoga Nidra, Asuraardini, Sarasvati, Sarva Vidya, Jagajjeshtha, Sumangala, Vagdevi, Varada, Vaachaya, Kirti, Sarvaartha saadhika, Yogishwari, Brahma Vidya, Maha Vidya, Sushobhana, Guhya Vidya, Atma Vidya, Dharma Vidya, Atmabhavita, Swaha, Shivambhara, Siddhi, Swadhaa, Medha, Dhruvi, Shruti, Niti, Suniti, Sukruti, Madhavi, Nara vaahini, Aja, Vibhavari, Sowmya, Bhogini, Bhogadayini, Shobha, Vashamkari, Chanchala, Malini, Parameshthini, Trailokya Sundari, Ramya, Sundari, Kaamachaarini, Mahanubhava, Satwastha, Maha Mahisha Mardini, Padmamaalaa, Paapahara, Vichitra, Mukutaanana, Kanta, Chitraambaradhara, Divyaabharana bhushita, Hamsaakhyaa, Vyomanilaya, Jagatsrishthi vivardhini, Niryantra, Yantra vaahastha, Nandini, Bhadrakalika, Adithya varna, Kaumari, Mayuravaravaahini, Vrishasanagata, Gauri, Mahakaali, Suraarchita, Aditi, Niyata, Roudri, Padmagarbha, Vivaahana, Virupaakshi, Lolihana, Mahapura nivaasini, Mahaphala, Anavadyangi, Kamarupa, Vichitraratnamakuta, Pranataarthi prabhanjani, Koushiki, Karshani, Raatri, Tridashaarti vinaashini, Bahurupa, Surupa, Virupa, Rupavarjita,

Bhaktaarathi shamani, Bhavya, Bhavabhaava vinaashini, Nirguna, Nityavibhava, Nissaraa, Nirupatrapa, Yashaswini, Saamagiti, Bhavaanga nilayaalaya, Diksha, Vidydhari, Deepta, Mahendravinipatini, Sarvaatishayani, Vidya, Sarva Siddha pradaayini, Sarveshwara priya, Taarkshya, Samudraantara vaasini, Akalanka, Niraadhaara, Nityasiddhaa, Niraamaya, Kamadhenu, Vrishadgarbha, Dheemati, Mohanaashini, Nissankalpa, Niraatanka, Devadevi, Manonmani, Maha Bhagavati, Durha, Vaasudeva samudbhava, Mahendropendra bhagini, Bhakti gamya, Paraavara, Jnaanajneya, Jaraatita, Vedanta vishya, Gati, Dakshina, Dahana, Daahyaa, Sarva bhuta namaskruta, Yogamaayaa, Vibhaavajna, Maha Maya, Maheeyasi, Sandhyaa, Sarvasamudbhuti, Vrikshaavriksha-shrayaanati, Beejankura samudbhuti, Maha Shakti, Mahamati, Khyati, Pragjna, Chiti, Samvita, Maha Bhogindrashaayini, Vikruti, Shankari, Shastri, Gana gandharvasevita, Vaishwaanari, Mahaashaala, Devasena, Grihapriya, Maharaatri, Shivaananda, Shachi, Duhswapna naashini, Ijyaa, Puja, Jagaddhaatri, Durvijneya, Swarupini, Guhaambika, Gunotpatti, Mahaapetha, Marutsuta, Havya vaahanaantagaadi, Havyavaaha samudbhava, Jagadyoni, Jaganmaata, Janmamritujaraatiga, Buddhimaataa, Buddhimati, Purushaantara vaasini, Taraswini, Samaadhistha, Trinetra, Divisamstha, Sarvendriyamanomaata, Sarva bhuta hridisthita, Samsaara taarini, Vidya, Brahmavaadi manolaya, Brahmaani, Brihati, Braahmi, Brahmabhuta, Bhavaarani, Hiranmayi, Mahaa ratri, Samsaara parivartika, Sumaalini, Surupa, Bhavini, Taarini, Prabha, Unmeelani, Sarvasaha, Sarvapratyaya saakshini, Susowmya, Chandra vadana, Tandavaasakta maanasa, Satva shuddhikari, Shuddhi, Mala- traya vinashini, Jagatpriya, Trimurti, Amritaashraya, Naraashraya, Niraahaara, Nirarankushanod -bhava, Chandrahasta, Vichitraangi, Stragvini, Padmadhaarini, Paraavaravidhaanajna, Maha Purusha Purvaja, Vidyeshwarapriya, Vidya, Vidyujjihva, Jitashrama, Vidyaamayi, Sahasraakshi, Sahasra vadanaatmaja, Sahasra rashmi, Satvastha, Maheshwara padaashraya, Maanya, Mahadeva Manorama, Vyoma Lakshmi, Simharatha, Chekitaana, Amitaprabha, Veereshwari, Vimaanastha, Vishoka, Shoka naashini, Anaahata, Kundalini, Nalini, Padmavaasini, Sadaanandaa, Sadaakeerti, Sarva bhutaashraya -sthita, Vaagdevata, Brahmakalaa, Kalaatita, Kalaarani, Brahmashri, Brahma hridaya, Brahmavishnu-Shivapriya, Vyomashakti, Kriya Shakti, Jnaana Shakti, Paraagati, Kshobbhika, Bandhika, Bhedya, Bhedaabheda vivarjita, Abhinna, Abhinna samsthaana, Vamshini, Vamsha haarini, Guhya Shakti, Gunaatita, Sarvada, Sarvato mukhi, Bhagini, Bhagavatpatni, Sakala, Kaala kaarini, Sarvaviti, Sarvatobhadra, Guhyaatita, Guhaarani, Prakriya, Yoga maata, Ganga, Vishveshwareshwari, Kapila, Kaapila, Kanta, Kanakaabha, Kalaantara, Punya, Pushkarini, Bhokti, Purandara purassara, Poshani, Paramaishwarya bhutida, Bhuti bhushana, Panchabrahma samutpatti, Paramaartharth vighraha, Dharmodaya, Bhanumati, Yogijneya, Manohara, Manojava, Manoraksha, Taapasi, Veda Rupini, Veda Shakti, Vedamata, Veda vidyaa prakaashini, Yogeshwareshwari, Maata, Maha Shakti, Manomayi, Vishwaavastha, Viyanmurti, Vidyunmaala, Vihaayasi, Kinkari, Surabhi, Vandyaa, Nandini, Nandi vallabha, Bharati, Paramaananda, Paraapara vibhedika, Sarva praharanotpeta, Kaamya, Kameshwareshwari, Achintya, Achintya vibhava, Hrillekha, Kanakaprabha, Kushmaandi, Dhana ratnaadhya, Sugandha, Gandha dayini, Trivikrama padodbhuta, Dhanushpaani, Shivodaya, Sudurlabha, Dhanaadhyaksha, Dhanya, Pingala lochana, Shanti, Prabhavati, Deepi, Pankajaayata lochana, Aadyaa, Hridkamalodbhuta, Gavaam Maataa, Rana priya, Satkriya, Girija, Shudda, Nitya pushta, Nirantara, Durga, Katyayani, Chandi, Charchika, Shanta vighraha, Hiranyavarna, Rajani, Jagadyantra pravartika, Mandaaradri nivaasa, Sharada, Swarnamalini, Ratnamala, Ratnagarbha, Prithvi, Vishwapramaathini, Padmaanana, Padmanibha, Nitya tushta, Amritodbhava, Dhunvati, Duhprakamya, Surya Mataa, Drushadwati, Mahendra bhagini, Maanya, Varenia, Varadarpita, Kalyani, Kamala, Rama, Panchabhuta, Varaprada, Vaachyaa, Vareshwari, Vandyaa, Durjaya, Duratikrama, Kaalaraatri, Mahavega, Virabhadra priya, Hitaa, Bhadrakaali, Jaganmaata, Bhakta Kalyana dayini, Karaala, Pingalaakaara, Namabheda,

Amahamada, Yashashwini, Yashoda, Shadhwa parivartika, Shankini, Padmini, Saankhya, Sankhya yoga parvartika, Chaitra, Samvatsararudha, Jagat sampuranindrija, Shumbhaari, Khechari, Swasthaa, Kambugriva, Kalipriya, Khagadhwaja, Khagaarudha, Paraadharya, Paramalini, Aaishvarya vartma nilaya, Virakta, Garudaasana, Jayanti, Hridguha, Ramya, Gahwaresththa, Ganaagrani, Sankalpasiddha, Saamyasthaa, Sarva Vijaana dayini, Kalikalmasha hantri, Guhyopanishat, Uttama, Nishta, Drishti, Smriti, Vyaapti, Pushti, Tushti, Krayavati, Vishvaamareshwareshaana, Bhukti, Mukti, Shiva, Amrita, Lohita, Sarpamaala, Bhishani, Vanamalini, Anbanta shayana, Asnanya, Naranaaraayanodbhava, Nrisimhi, Daitya Mathani, Shanka chakragadaadhara, ankarshana sdamutpatti, Ambikaapada samshraya, Maha jwaala, Maha murti, Sumurti, Sarva kaama dhruk, Suprabha, Sustana, Gauri, Dharmakaamaartha mokshadaa, Bhrumadhya nilaya, Purva, Purana purushaarani, Mahavibhutida, Madhyaa, Sarojanayana, Samaa, Ashtaadasha bhujaa, Anaadya, Nilotpala dala prabha, Sarva Shaktyaasanaarudha, Dharmaadharma vivarjita, Vairagya jnaana nirata, Niraaloka, Nireendriya, Vichitra gahanaadhaara, Shaswata sthaana vaasini, Staaneshwari, Nirananda, Trishula vara dhaarini, Asesha Devataa Murti, Ddevata, Varadevata, Ganaabika, Giriputri, Nishumbha vinipaadini, Avarna, Varna rahita, Niravaana, Beeja sambhava, Anantavarna, Anantastha, Shankari, Shaanta Maanasa, Agotra, Gomati, Goptri, Guhyarupa, Gunottara, Gou, Geeh, Gavyapriya, Gouni, Ganeshwara namaskrutya, Satyamaatra, Satya sandha, Trisandhya, Sandhivarjita, Sarvadaashraya, Sankhya, Sankhyaayoga samudbhava, Asankhyeya, Aprameyaakhya, Shunya, Shudda kulodbhava, Bindunaada samutpatti, Shambhuvaama, Shashiprabha, Visanga, Bheda rahita, Manoja, Madhusudani, Mahashri, Shri samutpatti, Tamah paare pratishthita, Tritatwa maata, Trividha, Susukshma pada samshraya, Shaantaatita, Malaatita, Nirvikara, Niraashraya, Shivaakhya, Chitta nilaya, Shinajnaana Swarupini, Daitya daanava nirmaatri, Kashyapi, Kaalakalpika, Shastrayoni, Kriyamurti, Chaturvarga pradarshika, Narayani, Narodbhuti, Kaumudi, Lingadharini, Kaamuki, Lalitha, Bhava, Paraabhava bhutida, Parantajata Mahima, Badava, Vamalochana, Subhadra, Devaki, Sita, Vedavedaanga paaraga, Manaswini, Manyumaata, Maha Manyu Samudbhava, Amrutya, Amrita,

The above ‘Sahasra Naamaas’ of Bhagavati rendered by Himavan pleased Devi and she gave him ‘Upadesha’ and an ever grateful Himavan assumed the role of her father and performed the Immortal Shiva Parvati wedding for ‘Loka Kalyaana’. The Phala Shruti of the above Devi Sahasra Naamaas was stated as follows: ( Whosoever recites always with Cleanliness and Sincerity the above Commendation of Deva Bhagavati in the presence of Maha Deva would be steered clear of his or her sins and irregularities of on-going life and attains Devi Loka even beyond Brahma Loka; such persons would definitely avoid Arishtaas or impact of Evil effects; all the possible drawbacks and obstacles of Grahaas /Planets would be overcome and by the Grace of Shankara, Devi Lakshmi would bestow the devotee ample prosperity and longevity).

#### Devi Mahatmya vide Markandeya Purana

(Maha Maya enables Vishnu to kill the Demon Brothers Madhu and Kaitabha)

Maha Maya tends to obscure human feelings and insensitize any illwill towards their own children for their wrong doings affecting the parents. *Tanmaatrasa vismayah Kaayom Yoganidra Jagatpathey, Maha Maya Harischaisha tatha sammohyatey Jagat/ Jnaaninaamapi chetaamsi Devi Bhagavati hi saa, Baladaa krishya mohaaya Maha Maya prayacchati/ Tayaa visrujatey Viswam Jagadethacharaacharam, saa vidya Paramaa Muktiheturbhuta Sanaatani/ samsaarabandhu hethuscha saiva Sarveswarewari/*

(It is not surprising to say: Maha Maya is the Nidraswarup (Sleepy Illusion) of Jagatpati Hari who spreads over the net of ignorance all over the Universe. It is that Bhagavati Maha Maya who pulls down intelligent human beings forcefully into ignorance; is that Devi who creates the totality of the Universe, turns benvolent to humanity and bestows Salvation; is that highest 'Hetuswarup Sanatani Brahmagyana Swapura Vidya' or the Everlasting Reason of Reasons-the Embodiment of Brahma Gyan Vidya; She is the Eswari of Eshwaris who is the cause and effect of Birth and Death and the final Provider of 'Mukti'. The King Surata asked Muni Megha as to who was that All-Pervading Maha Maya, and how did it come into being? The Muni replied that it was highly incorrect to say that Maha Maya came into being at a time since it was Everlasting; however one could surmise the Great Illusion was recognised at the end of a 'Kalpa' as the whole Universe got submerged into fathomless waters at the time of Grand Annihilation and Bhagavan Vishnu was resting in 'Yoganidra' or the Yogic Sleep. It was at that very time, there were two 'Asuras', named Madhu and Kaitabha, who were materialised from the ear-rejects of Vishnu; they chased Brahma who prayed to Nidra Bhagavati (Goddess Of Slumber) so that Vishnu could be woken up. He said: Devi! *Twam Swaha Twam Swadha Twamhi Vashatkaarah Swaraatmika, Sudha twamakshare nithye Tridhaamaatratmika -asthitha/ Ardhamaatraa sthitha nithya Yaanucchhaarya viseshatahah, Twameva Sandhya Saavitri twam Devi Janani Para/* (You are the 'Swaha' Mantra of the 'Havis' or oblations to Agni meant for Devatas; the Swadha Swarup of the 'Shraddha' to Pitras; You are the 'Vashatkar' Mantra Swarup of 'Havis' meant for Indra; You are the Sudha Swarup of the Three 'Matras' (Letters) of Deerga, Hraswa and Pluth Rupas; You are the famous Gayatri Swarup; and You are the Sublime Mother of the Universe). Brahma continued the Prayer to say: Devi! You are the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of 'Srishti' (Creation); You are the Maha Vidya (The Highest Form of Learning), Maha Medha (Highest Brain Power), Maha Maya, Maha Smriti (Highest Consciousness), Maha Moha (The Highest Obsession); You are the Trigunatmika Prakriti of Satva, Rajas and Tamo Gunas; You are the 'Kalaratri Bhayankara Yama Swarup'; You are the 'Lakshmi beeja', Ishwari, Lazza (Embodiment of Modesty), Buddhi, Divya Gyan, Pushti, Thsti, Shanthi, and Kshanti Swarup, Khadgini, Shulini, Gadini, Chakrini, Shankhini, Dhanushdharini, Sowmya, Soumyatara, Apeksha Sundari; How could one be able to commend You!! Devi, You are most humbly requested to spread Your 'Mayajal' or the Wide Net of Illusion over the two Demon Brothers of Madhu and Kaitabha, wake up Maha Vishnu from the Yoga Nidra and facilitate Him to destroy the demon brothers who tended to grow in form and might minute by minute! Bhagavan Vishnu woke up and fought with the Demon Warriors for five thousand years relentlessly, but there was no sign of surrender of the Asuras as they were apparently fighting by their turns whereas Vishnu was battling single handed. Maha Maya advised Vishnu to seek a boon from the brothers as they were indeed invincible, but out of bravado, they asked a boon from them instead. Cashing immediately on the offer made by the Demon Brothers, Vishnu asked them to die in their hands; the Brothers agreed to die in His hands on the condition where there was no trace of water in that Vast Universe which was full of Water. Lord Vishnu expanded his thighs far and wide, thus materialising a dry area of his massive thighs and killed the Evil Brothers who threatened Lord Brahma!

#### Maha Devi destroys Mahishasura and his clan (Gratitude Hymns to Devi included)

The most ferocious and brutal Demon of the times, Mahishasura, harassed and subdued King Indra and all the Devas including Surya, Agni, Pavan, Yama, Varuna etc. and occupied the Throne of the Swarga. Mahishasura's cruel acts created havoc among the helpless Munis and human beings and there was no end to the persecution that they were subjected to. The Trimurthis-Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara- got

so angry that they their eyebrows released massive Fires of Fury which got combined as a huge ‘Agni Parvat’ (Fire Mountain), into which the individual Energies of all the Devas headed by

Indra got merged too. The Form of Maha Devi so materialised created a luminous face with combined Shaktis in a formidable feminine form: while Yama’s powers created her hair, Vishnu’s power provided both her arms, Chandra’s radiance gave sparkling jewels, Indra contributed the belly, Varuna’s powers created thighs, Prithvi the rear, Brahma contributed the feet, Surya provided the fingers of the feet; Vasuganas contributed hand fingers; Kubera’s ‘Tejas’ created the nose, Prajapati’s energy provided the teeth, Pavaka created all her three eyes, both the ‘Sandhyas’ gave away ‘bhrukutis’ (mid-portion of eye brows) and Vayu supplied the Devi’s ears. Maha Deva then contributed his Shula from his own, Narayana gave away a Chakra born out of his Chakra, Varuna gave a Shankha, Hutashana / Agni his Shakti, Vayu the Dhanus with powerful arrows, Indra gave his Vajra and a bell from Iravata, Yama gave his ‘Kaladanda’, Varuna a ‘Pasha’, Daksha Prajapati his Akshaya Maala (Rosary), Brahma his Kamanadalu (water vessel), Surya supplied his rays into Maha Devi’s skin pores; Kaal gave away his ‘Khadga’ (sword); Samudra Deva contributed pure pearls, shining clothes, valuable chudamani, precious ear-rings, and bangles; Moon gave away ‘Bhuja Kirtis’ (Shoulder-Ornaments), neck laces, and finger rings; Vishwakarma donated ‘Astras’, ‘Kavacha’ (Body Secure); Himalaya provided the carrier Simha (Lion); and like wise all the various Devas gifted various items of their valuable possessions. When suddenly, there was a bewildering roar of a Lion’s resound, the ‘Trilokas’ shuddered and felt that it was the end of the Universe! Mahishasura and his followers got startled with unprecedented shivers and took time to realise that indeed that was not the end of the Universe, but the beginning of the historic battle. Maha Devi’s radiance got spread all over the directions when her thousand arms came into flashes of mercurial actions. The Senapati of Mahishasura’s army named *Chakshusa* began a fierce fight and an additional ‘Chaturangani Sena’ (Four-winged army force comprising soldiers, horses, elephants and chariots) of an Asura named *Chamara* joined the stream while another sixty thousand chariots and following army led by *Udagra* too joined the Force. A further Force of one crore chariots reinforced the existing army of Mahishasura, which was led by Maha Hanu. Another Asura called *Asiloma* led a five crore ratha sena, and yet another Rakshasa named *Bakshal* brought in sixty thousand chariots further reinforcements, thus making a highly formidable force; further forces joined the fray from other directions. On the other hand, Maha Devi’s ‘niswas’ and ‘ucchvas’ (exhaling and inhaling of breathing) created crores of her army and killed crores of enemy forces too. The hell-like of Mahishasura army was destroyed like flies in huge flames. In this melee, Chakshura’s charioteer died, his chariot was destroyed and as he tried to leap over Maha Devi, her Lion tore his body into pieces; Chamara became offensive as Chakshura died and sped up his elephant towards Devi along with his ‘Mayavi’ Shakties; Devi’s lion leapt in the air sky-high and with one pounce squeezed his elephant to death and Chamar’s body was hit with such a smash that there were no traces of his body parts. In the battle that ensued, Udagra was hit by Devi’s forceful throws of stones and boulders, while *Uddhatasura* was crushed by Devi’s mace hits. Next, the demon *Bashkal* was destroyed by her Bhindipala and *Tamra and Andhak* were shot by her arrows. By the blaze of her Three Eyes, Maha Devi burnt off three demons called *Ugraveerya, Ugrastha and Maha Hanu*. She cut into pieces the head of Bidalasura by the might of her sword. *Durdar and Durmukh* tried to send mantik arrows at her but the return arrows sent them away to Yamaloka. Devi Kaalarathri used Kaladanda and Kalasura was put to instant death. She sported her Khadga with a light touch and *Ugradarshan* flew away to a far off place never to return. *Asiloma* who led a five crore army of Charioteers fell like a sick bird on

the battle ground with the fire that emerged from Devi's angry eyebrows! The Devi Ganas and the Great Lion who went berserk as Mahishasura's army made a depleted and demoralised retreat to save them.

Now, **Mahishasura** led a fresh reserve of army, assuming his original form of a Mahisha or a buffalo, made several offensive gestures by way of forcefully pulling up his powerful horns high, by taking speedy circlings, by throwing up his mighty tail and by thumping his hooves making sounds like earthquakes. The Asura jumped forward towards the Lion who created havoc and killed many of his warriors, whereby Maha Devi became livid with rage but Mahisha too got enraged and dug deep into the Earth and threw mountains by braying with frightful reverberation. The Asura's breathing was so heavy that mountains shivered and sand storms got into motion with high velocity. **Chandi Devi** desired to kill Mahishasura in one go, but Maha Devi restrained Chandi and threw a powerful rope around the buffalo neck; She then assumed the form of a roaring lion, then as a huge elephant, and like a mammoth 'Veera Purusha'. Meanwhile Chandika Devi consumed a huge cup of wine, got drunk with a resounding laugh with blood red eyes and said like a drunkard; 'Oh miserable Stupid! Keep on with your roar as long as my wine is swallowed; your last moments have now started ticking and you should soon leave this World as your ignominious life would get terminated.' By so saying, Chandi jumped up and strangled Mahishasura's mighty neck and sliced it open; soon Rishi ganas performed 'Veda Parayana', Gandharvas sang sonorous hymns of praise for Devi Chandi who was but a shadow of Maha Devi, Apsaras danced to their glory and Devas headed by Indra went into deep raptures in great jubilation with unreserved gratitude to Parama Maha Devi. In one high voice, all the Devas glorified Maha Devi as follows: 'We greet with reverence that Ambika Devi, whose capability is spread all over the moving and non-moving objects of the universe, whose Supreme Energy enables all the Deva Murthis to be on their own; whose Origin or Qualities defy description by Brahma, Vishnu or Mahendra, let alone illustrious Maharshis; and whose unparalleled kindness and consideration is ever-fulfilling and never failing to humanity. We salute Devi Chandika who would ever neglect nor ignore those who have unqualified faith and commitment in that Punya Swarupa (Embodiment of Propitiousness) and also never spare those who persist in evil deeds and never have the psyche of remorse nor any sense of guilt. *Ya Shreeh Swayam Sukrutinaam Bhavaneshwa Lakshmih Paapaatmanaam Krutadiyaam hrudayeshu buddhhih, Shraddhaa sataam kulajanaprabhavasya lajjaataam twa natah sma paripaalaya Devi Viswam/* (We greet Her who is present in the form of Wealth in the houses of the Virtuous; who disappears in the form of poverty in the residences of the vily and the vicious; who is present with those who are well read and of clean conscience as also of practitioners of Shraddha or diligence, Buddhi or Composure and Lazza or Modesty.) How are we competent to describe your Achintha Rupa? Devas further exclaimed: *Hethuh Samasta jagataam Trigunaapi Devairna Jnaayase Hariharaadibhi rapyapara, Sarvaashraya akhilamidam Jagadamsha bhutamavyakrutaa hi paramaa prakrutistwama adya* (Hey Devi, You are the Adya Prakruti devoid of 'Vikaras' of Satva, Raja and Tamo gunatmika and thus the Cause of the Universe; Even Vishnu and Maha Deva who are subject to 'Raga Dveshas' would not be able to realise Your 'Tatva'; You are the nucleus of all the Materialistic Manifestations). *Yasya Samastasurathah Samudeeranena Truption Prayaanti Sakaleshu makhesu Devi, Swaahaasi vai Pitruganasya cha truption hethuruchaaryase twam eva janaihi swadhacha* (Devi, in all the 'Yagnas', taking your mere name would satisfy all the Devas, since the two Expressions of Swaha and Swadha signify your own Swarupas or Forms. *Ya muktiheturavichintha mahaavrataa twamabhayasyasey suniyatendriaya tatwa saaraih, Mokshaardibhirmuni bharista samasta doshai vidhyaamsi saa Bhagavati Paramaa Devi* ( Hey Devi, the Subject matter of 'Upaasana' or concentrated meditation of Munis targetted to you is stated to be the

Moksha Vidya, which is Yourself as that is devoid of sins and impurities of any kind). *Shabdaatmika suvimalargya jushaam nidhaana mudreetatha ramya pada paathavataam cha samnaam, Devi trayee Bhagavati bhava bhaavanaaya vaartaasi sarva jagataam paramaarti hantreem/ Medhasi Devi viditakhila shastra saraa Durgasi Durga bhava saagaranaurasangah, Sreehi Kaitabhaarithrudayaika krutaadhipasaa Gauri thvameva Shashi mouli kruta prathishtha* ( Devi! You are the ‘Shabdamaya Tri Veda Swarupi’ or the Complete Form of Three Vedas with intonation; the nucleus-like Pranava Swarup of Ruk, Yajur and Sama Vedas; the embodiment of Opulence, the Life Providing Security and the destroyer of all difficulties and physical ailments. Devi! You are the Buddhi Swarupa because You are the unique Ship which alone could pass through the Ocean of ‘Samsara’ and Devi Lakshmi, the heart-throb of Vishnu- the destroyer of Madhu Kaitabha demons-as well as Devi Gauri firmly installed on the left thigh of Bhagavan Sashisekhara! ) *Devi Prasada parama Bhagavati Bhavaaya Sadyo vinaayashayasi kopavati kuleeni, Vignatameta –dauardhunaiva yadastametadreetam Balam savipulam Mahishasurasya / the sammataa janapadeshu dhanaani teshaam Yashaamsi na cha seedati bandhuvargah, Dhanyaasta eva nibhrutatmajabhrutya daaraa eshaam sadaabhyudayadaa bhavati prasanna* / (Devi! Kindly be free from anger as You must bestow on us peace, prosperity and propitiousness; if You are irritated due to Mahishasura and army which you had already destroyed, Your normal composure gets disturbed and hence should please regain and soon recover Your complete ‘Kalaas’ (features); when You are cooled and inspirational, then only our worship gets maximum advantages, since only in those Regions where Pujas are performed sincerely that the persons concerned become wealthy, famous, and contented with good progeny, family and servants. It is with Your kindness that human beings preform Dharmic acts, leave behind the fears of death and disease and reach the goals of attaining ‘Swarga’ thus providing the benefits of the Three Lokas). *Trailokyametadakhilam ripunaashanena traatham twaya samaramardani thepi hatwa, neetaa divam ripuganaa bhayamapya paastmasmaakamunmada suraari bhavam Namasthey/ Shulena Paahi no Devi Paahi khadgena chaambike, Ghantaaswanena nah Paahi chaapajyaanah swanenacha/ Praachyam raksha prateetyancha Chandike raksha Dakshiney/ Bhraamanenaathma shulasya urraraayam tatheswari / Soumyani yaani Ruupaani Trailokye vicharitanti they, yaani chaathyanta ghoraani thy rakshaasmantatha bhuvam/ khadga shula gadaadeeni yaani chaastraani thembikey karapallava sangeenithairasmaanthraksha sarvatah/* (Devi, You have killed all the enemies, saved the Tree Lokas, bestowed Swarga to them all and demolished our fears and saved us; do protect us with your Shula, Khadga, Ghanta, Dhanush and its ‘tankaara’ or sound; Chandika! Eswari! Do protect us by circling our East, West, South and North directions; You have as many frightening Forms as benign Forms which move about all over the Three Worlds; do save us with all Your varied Forms and always guard us with Your arms and armoury). Highly pleased by the above commendations of Devatas, Maha Devi gave an opportunity to them to ask for boons and they said politely that after the killing of Mahishasura, they had no further requests to make, excepting that She should kindly respond as and when exigencies might arise in future and She said: ‘Thadhaastu’! (Be it so!)

Shumbha and Nishumbha executed by Maha Devi -(‘Stotras’ of ‘Ya Sarva Bhuteshu’, ‘Sarva Mangala Maangalye’ and ‘Sarva Swarupey’ included)

The most infamous Danava brothers, from the notorious lineage of the Hiranyakasipu, attacked Indra the King of Devas; diverted the ‘havis’ or the uncooked offerings to Agni at Yagnas meant for Devas to themselves; performed the tasks of Surya, Chandra, Kubera, Varuna, Vayu and other Devatas and turned all the Devas from Swarga, who became wanderers and as refugees in forests. They remembered the assurance given by Devi Vishnu Maya, when they celebrated Her victory at the devastation of

Mahishasura and his followers; at that time She said: *Tasmaakam varo dattho yathaptsu smrutaakkhilah, bhavataam naashayashyaami tatshanah paramaapadaah* (As and when You remember me when faced with a hardship, I will demolish your difficulties at once!). Thus Devas headed by Indra made a desperate appeal to Maha Devi as follows:

Devas said: Our Greetings to Devi, Maha Devi, Shiva, Praakriti, Bhadra, Roudra, Nithya, Gauri, Dhaatri, Jagatpratishtha, Kruthya, Prakasharupa, Chandrarupa, Paramaanandarupa, Kalyani, Buddhi rupa, Siddhirupa, Naikruti swarupa, Lakshmirupa, Sharvaani swarupa, Durga, Durgapaara, Saara, Sarvakaarini, Khyati, Krishna, Dhumraswarupa, Atyanta Sowmya, Atyanta Roudra and Karyarupini. We greet that Devi who resides in all Beings in the form of Vishnumaya, Chetana swarupa or the Spirit of Awakening, Nidra rupa or in a semi-conscious state, Kshudarupa or in the form of hunger, Chhayarupa or in the form of a shadow, Shaktirupa or in the form of Energy, Trishnarupa or in the form of thirst, Kshantirupa or in the form of Fortitude or Patience, Jaatirupa or Varnashramarupa, Lazzarupa or the form of immense modesty, shanti rupa or the form of Eternal Peace, Shraddharupa or the form of Absolute Faith or conviction, kraanti rupa or in the form of dynamism and challenge, Lakshmirupa or in the form of Aiswharya / Opulence, Dhruti rupa or in the form of Great Endurance/ Staying Power, Vritti rupa or esoteric experiences of Yogis such as Mualadhara / Bliss, Swadhishtana / feeling of delusion, Manipura / disgust, Anahata / repentance, Vishuddha / Purity etc. ; Smritirupa or Vedas / Sacred Scriptures, Dayarupa or the form of unparalleled mercy, Nitirupa or High Morality / Integrity, Tushti rupa or the form of towering contentment, Pushti rupa or the form of sublime glory, Matru rupa or the form of Universal mother who creates and preserves and Bhranti rupa or the form of Great Illusion or Make-belief Maya. We are beholden to that Devi who is the controller of the whole Universe, its creations, the ‘Indriayas’ and the Omni Present Vidya or the Supreme Energy.)

As Devas extolled Maha Devi, Devi Parvati was bathing in the pure water of Ganga and realizing that Devas were dislodged from the Swaraloka, appeared before them as Ambika whose popular name was Kaushiki or Kalika of dark skin but of unprecedented charm and beauty. Devas realised that Devi Kaushiki decided to reside at the top of Himalayas. Two Danavas named Chanda and Munda, the followers of their Masters Shumbha and Nishumbha of the lineage of Hiranyakasipu, happened to vision Kaushiki Devi on the Himalayas and were completely taken aback at her extraordinary magnificence. They hurried up to their Masters and conveyed to them of their greatest discovery of Devi Kausiki. They said that their Masters had no doubt achieved the most precious possessions of the Universe like the Iravata Elephant, Uchaiswa Horse, Parijata Tree, Hamsa (Swan) Viman, Maha Padma Nidhi of Kubera, Kinjilkini called Kamal from Samudra Deva, Kanchanasraavi named Umbrella from Varuna Deva, the most valuable Ratha or Chariot from the Foremost Prajapati, Maranaprada Shakti of Lord Yama, the most potent ‘Pasha’ of Varuna Deva, all the richest ‘Ratnas’ or jewels of Samudra Deva and the ‘Uttariya and Vastra’ (clothes) sanctified by ‘Vahni’ (Flames) of Agni Deva; But without possessing the Rarest ‘Stree Rathna’ or the Most Invaluable Jewel of a Woman was visioned by Chanda and Munda would pale into insignificance before that prized possession! When Chanda and Munda described so much about the ‘Stree Ratna’, Shumbha and Nishumbha sent an able emissary called Sugreeva to Devi Kausiki to convince her about their unique qualities of proven bravery and capability. Devi replied: What ever had been said was indeed correct, since the two great brothers were the mightiest warriors in the Trilokas, but she had a ‘Pratigna’ or Vow viz. : *Yo mam jayati samgraame darpa vyapohati, yo me pratibalo loke sa me Bhartaa bhavishyati, tadha gacchatu Shumbhotra Nishumbho vaa Mahaasurah, maam jitva kim chirenaatra paanim grihaantu me laghu/*

(Whosoever could win me over in a battle, crush my pride and equalise my Shakti would be my Master; now, let either Shumbh or Nishumbh try their luck and take on me in the duel and why delay further?). As the emissary told Devi in great anger that let alone Shumbha or Nishumbha but even he could take her by hair and present her before his Masters, as Devi replied coolly that it was not proper to harm an emissary and as such he would better convey what she had said to his Masters. Enraged by this arrogance of Devi, Shumbh instructed Dhumralochan to bring her by hook or crook. The latter ran up to Devi Ambika with a view to humble her, but by her mere 'Hunkaar' sound, the Demon got turned into ash; his huge army of soldiers came to action as they shot arrows, a variety of objects like Shulas and Shaktis and despatched horses, elephants and chariots. The Carrier of Ambika, named Kesari (Lion) got provoked with anger and with an earth-shaking roar, jumped out in lakhs of Forms and tore the bodies of soldiers apart into pieces. Shumbha went into white rage with biting lips as Dhumralochana was turned into ash and his large army of front ranking soldiers was destroyed; he ordered Chanda and Munda to march a huge army and drag 'that woman' tied up by her long hairs and present her before him. When Chanda Mundas led an ocean-like 'Chaturanga Bala' or the Four Divisioned army comprising Charioteers, Elephants, Horses and Foot Soldiers adept in offensive warfare with high skills of military power, they all witnessed a grand and lonely female figure sporting a mischievous smile on the mountain top. From the smile of Devi's face, there was a sudden transformation of her skin to black, her eyes became red, her teeth got protrusive and her tongue was elongated. This appalling figure of Devi jumped from the mountain top along with the roaring Lion, creating lakhs of such figures all over, and playing one elephant against another, one horse against another and one chariot against another, breaking heads, and turning the battle field into streams of blood and disfigured bodies without heads of many, limbs of several and carcasses of lakhs of dead animals. As the ocean-like army of committed soldiers was massacred, both Mundasura and Chandasura rushed towards Ambika Devi, one raining away strings of 'Astras' and another flinging sharp weapons at mighty speed simultaneously, She threw around illusionary meshes which placed both of them into straight-jackets and with powerful blows smashed their heads; the ferocious Devi took the broken heads of the Asura brothers into her hands and laughed so violently that thundered the Earth and Sky, thus attaining the memorable epithet of Chamundi.

The desperate Shumbha and Nikumbha ordered that the entire reserve army be marched with Udhayudh leading eighty six core Group of Commanders, Kambu Daitya with eighty four, Kotiveerya with fifty, Dhumravamsajat with hundred Group Commanders, each of them being equal to the combined efforts of Devas who ran away once before as they could hardly defend Indra's Chair. Noticing the desperate effort of the Danava brothers, Parama Devas including Brahma, Shiva, Vishnu, Kartikeya and Indra collected their respective Shaktis; Brahma flew by his Hamsa Vahana (Swan) along with his Brahmani Shakti, Vishnu by Garuda as also Varaha Shakti, Narasimha Shakti etc. Devi Chandika asked Shiva to warn the Shumbha and Nishumbha brothers to end up the war even at this stage and make a retreat to Patala and leaving Swarga. But the highly arrogant brothers heckled at Maheswara and there was no way but to return to the battle field. Brahma utilised Brahmani Shakti to pour forceful waterfalls from his Kamanadalu; Maheswari Shakti through Tri-Shulas, Vaishnavi Shakti through innumerable 'Chakras', Kaumari Shakti through Shulas, Indra by Vajra, Varahi Shakti by Damshras, Naarasimha Shakti by the help of sharp nails etc. The highly notorious core Group commanders were thus destroyed without trace. Raktabija, the sister's son of Shubha and Nishumbha Brothers had the boon of creating as many Raktabija Danavas as the blood drops of each new body. Devi Ambika desired Chamundi to lap up the blood even before fresh Raktabijas were born. But there was a mismatch in the blood drops and the

instant creation of further Danavas and hence Devi decided to extend her tongue so farther that finally blood drops dried up and Raktabija met his termination. Both Devas and Munis witnessed this strange happening and were mesmerised as to how Devi Ambika tackled the tricky situation!

When even the invincible Raktabija got killed despite his crafty tricks, Shumbha and Nishumbha came face to face against Devi. Both the brothers rained arrows on her while she poured heavy waterfall-like Astras from the clouds and kept the brothers at dismay. Suddenly, Nishumbh hit the head of Devi's lion on his head. Devi retaliated like a lightning and used an 'Astra' named 'Kshurapra', and destroyed his sword; he used a Shakti while Devi despatched a double Shakti. He threw a 'Shula' against her but she shielded it with her 'Mushtighaath' (grasp of her grip). He threw at Devi his mace and she responded it with her Trishul. Losing further patience, Devi Ambika finally felled Nishumbha on the ground with a torrential knock of her arrows. As Nishumbh fell down, Shumbha expanded his body all over the sky assuming eight hands with a variety of potent arms and approached her like a flash. That was the time when Ambika sounded her conchshell as though the ultimate time had arrived to script the end of Shumbha. In the most ferocious form of Kaali, Devi Ambika jumped up sky high and as she came down with a thud and as Shumbhasura released his final Astra called 'Ugradeepti' emitting flames and heat which was controlled by her 'Maholka' Astra. Then Devi said: 'you 'Duratma', you have still not realised my Power. This is all my Creation; I am the Cause, I am the Doer and I am the Act; you are a part of my scheme; never think high of you; your time of death is ticking!' As she was saying this, Shumbhasura reached to her like a flash and tried to jump at her but she slapped him so hard that he tumbled down. She pierced her Shula right into his heart and he fell on to earth with a thud as there was a quake and Rivers and Oceans overflowed and mountains quivered momentarily. But soon there was a clear sky, good omens appeared, there were pleasant rains of flowers, Apsaras danced to their glory, Gandharvas sang mellifluous hymns in praise of Devi, Trimurthis exclaimed that truth was vindicated, Devas led by Indra fell into raptures with joyful tears in their eyes and Maharshis and Yogis predicted the arrival of a propitious era here again. Out of immense gratitude, Devas commended Ambika Devi as follows:

Devi! We are your refugees and we are thankful to have demolished our great grief; kindly cool down, Akhila Jagajjanani, Visveshwari, You grant us safety as you are the Eswari, the unique fulcrum of the Universe residing on Earth in the form of water but satisfying the totality of 'Srishti' as Your gallantry is irresistible. You are the unending and valiant Vaishnavi Shakti; You are the cause of creation and the great Illusion, You have got the entirety of the World mesmerised, You have the compassion to lead us to Salvation. You have the 'Murthivishesha' or Boundless Form; the Form of all females and in fact the entire Femineness, Mother! You are spread all over and how could anybody praise You, as You are beyond the bounds of commendation. As You are present among all of the Beings, and the final goal of life, we all tend to praise You, but You are a 'Nirguna' devoid of all features and impulses stated to be a 'Brahma Swarupa' and as such which kind of tribute could be paid to You! Devi, You reside in the hearts and souls of all the Beings as 'Buddhi Rupa' and Provider of Swarga Mukti, Devi Narayani! You are equally capable of Universal Devastation instantly; assuming evolving powers of 'Kalaas' signifying positive forms and 'Kaashthas' indicating negative impulses with equal ease. Devi, You are the embodiment of alround propitiousness, Shiva Swarupa or the Form of auspiciousness, Fulfiller of all kinds of desires, I seek refuge from You Triambaka or of Three Forms of Shaktis viz. Lakshmi, Sarasvati and Parvati; Gauri, Narayani; My sincere Namastes or Greetings. Oh! Sanatani, Gunashraya, Gunamaya, Narayani, Shakti Bhuta, You are the Epitome of Srishti or Creation, Sthiti or Existence and Vinaasha or Demolition;

You are the Saviour of those helpless victims of insecurity and sorrow; Being of Brahma Swarupa, You fly by a Swan-shaped aeroplane and sprinkle water with kushagrass along with powerful and Sacred 'Mantras' to save such sufferers. You ride over the bull in the form of Maheswari with half moon, sporting ornaments of Serpents and carrying Trishul; You don the Form of Kaumari Shakti along with Peacock and Rooster; Greetings to You as the Vaishnavi Shakti on the battle field duly adorned with Shankha, Chakra, Gada and Saranga; You as the Mahavarahi or the Great Boar lifting Earth from the deep waters of Patala loka by Your 'damshtas'; You are the Saviour of Tri Lokas as Naarasimhi who slaughtered the Daitya Hiranya Kasipu; You have the bejewelled golden Kireeta or the headgear, a diamond like strong physique with a sparkling thousand eyes and exterminated the mighty Vritrasura. You are the Indrani and Narayani who with a Shivaduta Swarupa killed innumerable Danavas by Your mere sound reverberation. You are the assassinator of Chanda-Munda Rakshasas, my salutations. You are the personification of Lakshmi (Prosperity), Lazza (modesty), Shraddha (fortitude), Swadha (Righteousness / oblations at Yagnas), Maharatri (the darkest night or the Great Delusion), Mahamoha Swarupa (the Form of Mighty Obsession), Dhruva (the Constant), Medha (the intellect), Sarasvati (personification of Knowledge), Vara (Shreshtha or the Noblest), Babhravi (Fiery or the Fierce), Bhuti (Frightful) and Tamasi (Dark Night or of Tamasika nature). Devi! My humble obeisances to You, the representation of hands, feet, eyes, head, face, hearing power, nose or the totality of a Physique.

*Sarva swarupe sarva Shakti samanvity- bhakopaastraahino Devi Durga Devi namostute/*

Devi! You are Sarva Swarupa, Sarveswari, Sarva Shakti Samanvita or the Possessor of Omni-Potence; Katyayani, kindly secure all the Beings from the Tranquillity of Your Three Eyes. Bhadra Kaali, Save us by using the blistering flames of Your frightening face and the powerful Trishul against the infamous and brutal Rakshasas. Let the deafening echo of the forceful 'Ghanta' (Bell) in Your possession which demoralises the reckless Danavas and demolishes their arrogance pardon our accumulated sins and provide us an amnesty. Devi Chandika! Let the sparkling sword of Your mighty hands slice open the body parts of the Asuras so that streams of blood and fat rush out and let the reflections of the sword's radiance purify us and provide protection to us. Devi! If You are satisfied our ailments vanish away, but otherwise all our possessions and desires are destroyed at once; those who are dedicated to You never face any difficulties, however insurmountable they might be. Would it be possible to assume myriad forms to smash the highly immoral Danavas with all their viles and powers by any other woman? Could there be any other capability beyond Yours which excels with the expertise of forty Vidyas, Six Shastras, Vedas, and incomparable Gyan and mental acumen that keeps the equilibrium and stability to the Universe which is surfeit with dark desires and passions! Devi! By staying in the deep Waters of Oceans, You reach any and every spot of the Universe where there is a Rakshasa, a cruel serpent, an enemy, a thief, or a Davaanala (Huge Fire) to safety and well being. You are Vishweswari since You stand guard to us; You are Vishwatma since You are the Soul of the Vishwam or the Vishwaadhara, being saluted by Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara with reverence and admiration. Devi! Just as You have got rid of the World from the Rakshasas now, do sustain Your kindness in removing our enemies, natural calamities, diseases, disasters, dread and disorders of any description!

Extremely gratified by the eulogies of Devas, Maha Devi assured unremitting support to Devas as and when there would be a need besides saving the virtuous and punishing the guilty as an integral part of Her scheme of activities. She stated that in the course of Vivaswata Manvantara, She would be born again as Vindhyachalavasini and kill Vaipachitta named Danavas; while She would eat the Rakshasas at that time,

She would be known as ‘Raktadantika’ as Her teeth would look like blood-red ‘Dadimi Kusuma’. Some hundred years hence, Munis would make Group Prayers for her as there would be severe drought and famine of water and Munis could perceive her by her red eyes alone as ‘Shataakshi’ since She would be ‘Ayoni janita’ or born on Her own. As there would be no rains for long time, She utilised Her own Physique and generated food grains and vegetables to sustain humanity to be acclaimed as ‘Shakambhari’ and assuming a frightful form at Himalayas killed a very treacherous Demon called Durgama. When Muniganas would pacify her with their prayers, She would be popular as Bhima Devi. When another ‘Mahasura’, called Aruna would torment Trilokas some time later, She would assume the form of Six-legged ‘Bhramaras’ (Bees) in countless numbers and annihilate the Asura and his companions.

Devi Mahatmya Phala Shruti: Those who read or hear the eulogies about Maha Devi, particularly on Ashtami, Navami or Chaturdashi days would qualify human beings for diminishing sins, removal of poverty, as also safe-guarding against enemies, robbers, fire and water hazards, weapons, diseases, family unrest and general discontentment. The specific households, where ‘Devi Mahtatmya’ is observed, are never neglected by Devi; in fact She resides there for good. The auspicious timings when Pujas, Agni Karyas, Marriages, Festival Days, and such other propitious Functions are celebrated, Maha Devi doubles up happiness and satisfaction to those responsible for the house-holds. *Bhava kaaley Nrinaam saiva Lakshmi buddhi pradaa grihey, Sevaabhaavey tatha Lakshmi vinashyayopjaayatey/ Stutaa Sampujita Pushpair gandhadhupaadibhistatha, Dadaati vittham Putracscha Matim Dharmeygatim Shubham/*

## Chapter Two

### Now the Sanatana Srishti

Universal Creation by the Supreme Energy of Paramatma as also his Alternative Power called Prakriti / Maya, which further materialised ‘Maha Tatwa’ or the Great Awareness. The Maha Tatwa made possible the appearance of ‘Ahamkara’ or the Inherent Consciousness which identified a sense of belonging or Identity (Ego in Abstractness). This got transformed into ‘Bhutas’ or Entities. In the *Sanatana Srishti*, the First Ever such Entity was created on its own and hence called ‘Swayambhu’ / Narayana who created ‘Apo Naaraa’ or the Radiant Water first and was thus known as ‘Narayana’ who floated on water. He deposited his ‘Veerya’ or virility as an indication of his resolve to create and as a result there appeared a Golden Egg and floated on the Radiant Water. ‘Hiranya garbha’ Brahma himself sat in the Egg for a year; the Egg had two parts viz. ‘Diva’/Urthva Loka and ‘Bhuva’/ Earth, the space in between being ‘Aakaasha’. He then created ‘Dasa Dishas’ or Ten Directions viz. Uttara (North), Ishanya (North-East), Purva (East), Agneya (South-East), Dakshina (South), South-West (Nairutya), West (Paschima), North-West (Vayavya), Urthwa (Overhead) and Athodik (Underneath). Further, he created Kaala (Time), Manasa (Thought), Vaak (Speech), Kaama (Desire), Krodha (Anger), and Rati (Physical joy).

### Purusha and Prakriti, Maha Tatwa and Kshetrajna, Brahmanda and Tri Murtis

Bhagavan Vishnu destroyed the Evil Forces in a Nimisha or a Minute of Time. It was that Paramatma Brahma, the Pradhana Purusheshwara, the Swayambhu or Self Born, the Undefinable and the Everlasting- materialised Prakriti of ‘Sat-Asat’ or of Real-Falsity nature with Pancha-Pramaanaas like Pratyaksha, Anumaana, Agama, Kevalaadi Proofs and Shat-Shraanta or Six Types of Vehicles; this Prakriti is devoid of Gandha-Rasa-Sparsha or Smell-Taste-Touch; Indeed that Prakriti is the Cause of Creation; the Sanatana or the Most Ancient, the Everlasting Form of the Universe; the Unknown, All-

Pervading, Sarva Bhutaanaam, Sukshmam or the Minutest, Trigunam of Satwa-Rajas-Taamasa. As there was no illumination before Srishti, Prakriti was of Tamo Guna but as the thought of Srishti Illumination emerged and that indeed was the Kshetrajna, named Maha Tatwa; It was that MahaTatwa that inspired Satwa Guna and Maha Srishti! The transformation of Maha Purusha and his 'alter-ego' Prakriti ie the Kshetrajna and Maha Tatwa led to the Brahmanda or the Golden Egg in which sat the Four Faced Hiranya Garbha-Brahma, the Creator. Within the Golden Egg, are situated Seven Lokas, Prithivi, Seven Samudras and Seven Dwipas, Massive Mountains and Thousands of Rivers. Within the Golden Egg are the Sun, Moon, Stars, Planets, Wind and Lokaloka. While there is an enclosure of water as huge as ten times more around the Golden Egg, there is ten times more of Tejas or Radiance surrounding the water. Ten times larger than the enclosure of Illumination is of Vayu (Wind). Around the the enclosure of Wind is that of Ether (Akaasha or the Sky) which is ten times more of Wind. Even enveloping the enclosure of 'Nabhas' or Ether is that of 'Bhutadi' (Ahamkara or Ego) and that too ten times larger. Yet another enclosure to Bhutadi is ten times more of Nabhas , but that of 'Mahat' is equally bigger to Bhutadi. Filnally, Mahat is surrounded by 'Pradhana' or the Supreme. Thus there are seven enclosures around the Cosmic Egg viz. water, radiance, wind, ether, Bhutadi, Mahat and the Pradhana the Unknown; all these 'Avaranaas' cling to each other.

#### Maha Pralaya , Vishnu as Yajna Varaha and Process of Creation by Brahma

To start with, Pradhana Purusha manifested the two characteristics of Satwa Guna, one to sustain the Universe and another to dissolve it; then followed the Rajo Guna coming to play an equal role: *Shasvataah Paramaa Guhyaah Sarvatmaan Shariranaah, Satwam Vishnu Rajo Brahma Tamo Rudrah Prajapati/ ---Yeta yeva Trayoloka Yeta yeva Trayo Gunaah, Yeta yeva Trayo Veda Yeta yeva Trayognaha/ Parasparaanvayaa hyotey Parasparanuvrataah, Parasparena vartintey prerayanti parasparam/* (The Trinities are Everlasing and mysterious; their Physiques and Souls are manifested; Satwa Guna is represented by Vishnu, Rajo Guna by Brahma and Tamo Guna by Rudra. – They alone are the Three Lokas, Three Gunas, Three Vedas and Three Agnis viz. Ahavaniya, Garhapatya and Dakshina. These Entities have mutual inter-association, mutual attachment, mutual help, mutual union and mutual inter-dependence). Thus the Self-born Pradhana Purusha has Three Swarupas as Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara. Some times as Brahma he creates the Lokas, some times as Vishnu he sustains and some other times as Rudra he demolishes. *Brahma kamala patraahshah Kaalo jaatyanjanaprabhah, Purushah Pundareekaaksho Rupena Paramaatmanah/ Ekadhaa sa Dwidhaa chaiva Tridhaacha Bahudhaa Punah, Yogeshwara shariraani karoti vikarochita/ Naanaakruti kriyaarupaamaashrayanti Swaleelaya, Tridhaa yadurtatey Lokey tasmaatriguna muchyatey/* (Paramatma displays some times as Brahma with lotus petal like eyes, Kaala Deva Rudra has the sparkle of his eyes always and Vishnu has lotus eyes. Like wise Paramatma has a single Rupa, some times as two, or three or innumerable; the Supreme Lord makes physical variations of sizes, shapes, activities, complexions and features; it is a pastime for Bhavan and came to be called a Trigunatmika.

At the Kalpantara Pralaya or the Great Extermination of the Universe, the whole World got submerged in deep water as 'Ekarnava' or a single sheet of Water and the 'Sthaavara Jangamaas' or the Mobile and Immobile Beings were all submerged, then Para Brahma called **Narayana**, who was of 'Sahasraaksha, Sahasrapaat, Sahasra Shirsha' or of thousand eyes, feet and heads, was resting on the huge surface of water: *Apo Naara iti proktaa Apo vai Nara Sunavah, Ayanam tasya taah proktaastena Narayanah smritah/* ( 'Apah' denotes 'Nara' or water; 'Naaraas' or the children or waves of 'Nara'; and Nara is a

Being or Entity ; Nara plus Ayana is Narayana as he who rests on Samsara or water) . Narayana sought to locate Prithvi (Earth) deep down in water and assumed Varaahaavatara or the Incarnation of a Huge Boar like a mountain with ten yojanas of girth and hundred yojanas of height (one Yojana being 12 km), with a body of cloud-like complexion and extreme radiance of many Lightnings, Fire and Sun; making thunderous and high-pitched sounds and having broad shoulders, sharp fangs, white teeth and pointed nails. The YajnaVaraha is described as follows: *Diksha Samaapteeshtim damshttrah kratu danto Juhuumukhah, Agni jihvo darbha romaa Brahma seersho Mahatapaah/ Veda skandho havirgandhirhavyakavyaadi vegavaan, Praagvamsha kaayo Dyutimaan naanaa Dikshaabhiranvitah/ Dakshinaa hridayo Yogi Shraddhaa satwa -mayo Vibhuh, Upaakarma ruchischaiva pravagyaavarta bhushanah/ Naanaachhandogati patho guhyopanishadaasanah, Maayaapatnisahaayo vai Giri shringamivocchrayah/ Aho raatrekshana dharo Vedanga shruti bhushanah, Aajya gandhah struvastundah Samaghosa swano Mahaan/ Satyadharma mayah Shrimaan Karma vikrama saskrutah, Prayaschitta nakho ghorah Pashujaanurmahaamakhah/ Udgaadaantro Homa Lingah Phala beeja mahoushadheeh, Vaadyantaraatmasatrasya naasmikaasomashonitah/* ( The Yagna Varaha took up the diksha or Initiation of the Kratu or the Sacrifice with his ‘damshttras’ or curved fangs and teeth holding the ‘Juhu’ or the crescent shaped wooden ladle with which to make the offerings of ghee; Agni was his tongue to lap up the Sacrifice; Darbha grasses were the Varaha’s hairs; Brahma one of the Chief of ‘Ritviks’ or the Brahmanas performing the Sacrifice was comparable to Varaha Murti’s Head; Vedaas were his shoulders; his body-aroma was his ‘havis’ or the Sacrificial Offering; the Havya and Kavya or the offerings to Devas and Pitru Devas respectively constituted his body-speed with which the Sacrificial Offerings were made; the ‘Praagvamsha’ or the East-bound Chamber in which the guests at the Sacrifice were seated was Varaha’s kaaya or the spacious physique; He was highly radiant and capable of accepting several Dikshas like the one being performed; He was the Master of Yoga full of Shraddha and Satwa or Sincerity and Resolve; he had Upakarma or extra study of Vedas and an expert in ‘Pragvargya’ or the Introductory Ceremony to the long-duration Soma Sacrifice; his ‘Avarta Bhushana’ or the ornamental and circular curls of the boar chest; the representation of various ‘Chaandas’ or Poetic Meters as his pathway; Upanishads as his seat; his able assistance is Maya as his spouse; his height was that of a mountain peak; his eyes representing Sun and moon and day and night; Vedangas and Shritis were his ear-ornaments; his body smell was that of ‘Ajya’ or the Ghee offering; Sruva or the sacrificial ladle is like his snout or muzzle; his voice was like the high pitch of the chanting of Sama Veda hymns; ‘Udgata’ or the elongated Sama Veda hymn was like his entrail or intestines; homa was his Linga or Symbol; fruits and seeds are his testicles; the altar of sacrifice was his heart; He was an Epitome of Satya Dharma and Soma Rasa was his own blood.) Thus Yajna Varaha Deva, as Nasika Soma sonita, dived deep into waters and lifted up Earth, allocated waters into Oceans and Rivers on Earth, materialised Mountains to stabilise the waters thus allocated, broadly created Sapta Dwipas on Earth, materialised Bhurbhuva -suraadi Lokas and their inhabitants on the same pattern as in the previous Kalpas before the Great Pralaya.

Then He meditated for long before taking up Srishti and Avidya or Ignorance came to emerge in Five Forms viz. *Tamo Moho Maha Mohastaamisrodhyandha Sanjnitah/* (The five Knots of Avidya were Tamas, Moha, Maha Moha, Tamisra and Andha Misra viz. Darkness, Delusion, Great Delusion, Pitch Darkness and Blind Darkness. He desired to initiate Creation and meditated; as there was darkness all around, he made the First ‘Abhavika Srishti’ of aimless and casual nature and the result was of purposeless vegetation around mountains and trees; the thought of the Second ‘Tiryaksrota’ or a Zig-zag channel / flow (srota is a flow and tiryak is wavery) flashed in his mind and the persons produced were

ignorant and egoistic. He then meditated further and the result was of ‘Satvika’ or ‘Urthwa Srota Srishti’, the Third in the Series of Creation; the Superior and Divine Beings thus created were highly virtuous, ever-happy, truthful and full of Satva Guna and they were Devas, whose Chief Mentor was Brahma himself. This Srishti was no doubt very satisfactory and Brahma was contented but he felt that there should also be the Fourth Creation of an ‘Arvaak (Abhimuka) Srotas’ titled ‘Sadhaka Sarga’ with a mix of Satvika and Rajasika nature with Tamasika features as well; the end products were Siddhas, Gandharva-like Beings and Manushyas. The Fifth Creation is titled Anugraha (Blessings) Sarga comprising four divisions viz. Viparyaya (Loss of Awareness), Shakti (Strength), Siddha (Accomplishment) and Mukhya (Principal); in other words Persons in these categories have little consciousness to begin with, gain strength, reach the Goal and then join the blessed category but they all are in the cycle of births and deaths. The Sixth Category related to the Bhutaadi Srishti of Creatures and Elements.

Put it differently: Para Brahma’s first Creation was that of ‘Mahat’ or The Primary Principle; the Second was that of Tanmatras called Bhuta Sarga; the Third was Vaikarika Creation or Aindria Srishti relevant to Sense Organs as Prakruta creations evolved by full consciousness and fore-knowledge; the Fourth Category was Mukhya Sarga related to the Creation of Immobiles; the Fifth was of Tiryak Srota of animals and lower species; the Sixth was Urthva Srota of Divine nature viz. Devatas; the Seventh was of Arvak Srota or Sadhakas including Manushyas; and the Eighth was of Anugraha Sarga as per the four classifications afore-mentioned. The Ninth category was of Kaumara Sarga of the Manasa Putras of Brahma viz. Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanaatana and Sanat Kumaras of extreme brilliance but were ‘Viraktaas’ or dis-interested in and dis-associated from the Deed of Creation as they excelled in the quest of Paramatma.

The subsequent Srishti related to ‘Sthaanaatmas’ or Deities of their own Positions like Water, Fire, Earth, Air, Sky, Antariksha / Ether, Swarga, Diks (Directions), Oceans, Rivers, Vegetables, Medicinal and other herbs and medicines, Kaala Pramana of Measures of Time, Days and Nights, Weeks, Fortnights, Months, Years, Yugas, Maha Yugas and Kalpas. Brahma then created Devatas, Pitru Devas, Nine Manasa Putras named Bhrigu, Angira, Marichi, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Daksha, Atri and Vasishta who were acclaimed as Nava Brahmas. He created Rudra from his anger; created the concepts of Sankalpa (Conception), Dharma (Virtue) and Vyavasaya (Endeavour and Enterprise). Out of the Pancha Praanaas or Five branches of Life’s breath viz. Praana-Udana- Vyaana-Samana-and Apaana, Daksha was created from the speech, Marichi from the eyes, Angirasa from the head, Bhrigu from the heart and Atri from the ears, all from Brahma’s Praana Vayu; besides Pulastya from Udana Vayu, Pulaha from his Vyana Vayu, Vasishta from his Samaana Vayu and Kratu from Apaana Vayu. Brahma continued Srishti of Devas from his mouth, Pitras from his chest, human beings from his organ of generation, Asuraas from his buttocks; Brahmanas from his face, Kshatriyas from his chest, Vaishyas from his thighs and others from his feet. He also created lightning, thunder, clouds, rainbows, Mantras of Rig-Yajur-Saama Vedas, Yaksha-Piscacha-Gandharva-Apsara-Kinnara-Raakshaas; birds, animals, reptiles and seeds.

As Brahma spent his thousand Yugas long first night, he found water all around and resurrected Earth again -and on the broad lines of what Varaha Swarupa indicated- materialised formally the Chatur Lokaas, Sapta Dwipas and Sapta Samudras. He revived the Srishti of Antariksha, Sun, Moon and other Planets, Pitras, Time, Yugas, Purusharthas of Dharma-Artha-Kaama-and Mokshas. From his first face of the ‘Chaturmukha’, he created Gayatri, Ruks, Yagni related Agni shtoma etc; Veda Vangmaya, Veda

Chhandas, and various Agni-Karyas; from his Southern Face were generated Yajur Veda, Traishthub Chhandas; Panchadasa Stomas and Brihat Stoma; from his western face emerged Saama Suktaas, Jagati Chhandas, Papta dasa Stoma; Atiraatra of Jyotishthoma etc; from Brahma's fourth Face emerged Atharva Veda, Anushtub and Vairaja Chhanda etc. Through out the Yuga Periods, there were countless species of Creation were materialised of 'Charaachara' or mobile and Immobile nature, defying description.

Brahma continued his Manasika Srishti or Mind-Born Creation and as a result were generated Pancha Karthas viz. Rudra, Dharma, Manasa, Ruchi and Akriti, all illustrious in their own right in the context of 'Prajaa Rakshnana' or Safety of the Public. As and when 'Aoushadhis' became short of supply and availability, Rudra Deva came to recscue and recreated the material and the grateful Bhaktas make offerings to him by the herbs and medicines in gratitude; when shortages of these were felt, Rishis and Brahmanas perform Vanaspati Homas from material placed in Three Kapaalaas or Plates along with three kinds of Mantras of Chhandaas viz. Gayatri-Trishtup and Jagati and that was why Rudra was called Traimabika or he who was worshipped from three 'Ambakaas' or Kapaalaas or Plates. Dharma the next Creation of Brahma had been a Promoter of Virtue which revived Man Kind and other Significant Species; Manas (Knowledge), Ruchi ( Shraddha /Faith) and Akriti (Beauty) were the other Entities assisting Dharma as they respectively denoted Mind, Interest and Physique. By applying Tamasika Guna, Brahma desired to put to use the traits of Dharma and halved his body into two and created Shata Rupa or of Hundred Forms and the latter was indeed virtually the mother of humanity. After severe Tapas for thousands of years Shatarupa was blessed with a famed husband viz. Swayambhu the First Manu who too was of Brahma's own 'Amsha' or variation; their progeny were two sons viz. Priyavrata and Uttanapada (father of the the reputed Dhruva) and two daughters viz. Akuti and Prasuti. Akuti was married to Ruchi Prajapati whose sons were Yajna and Dakshina. Prasuti was married to Daksha Prajapati whose thirteen daughters viz. Shraddha, Lakshmi, Dhriti, Tusthi, Pushti, Medha, Kriya, Buddhi, Lajja, Vasu, Shanti, Siddhi and Kirti were wedded to Dharma; the rest of them and their husbands were as follows: Sati-Rudra, Khyati-Bhrigu, Sambhuti-Marichi, Smriti-Angirasa, Priti-Pulaha, Kshema-Kratu, Sannati-Pulastya, Anasuya-Atri, Urja-Vasishta, Agni-Swaha and Swadha-Pitaras. ( Brahmanda Purana))

#### 'Virat Purusha' – the Primeval Force

Described as 'Purusha', the Primeval Force of Creation possesses countless heads, eyes and feet pervading the entire Universe, far beyond the miniscule level of human comprehension. He is Omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. He is immortal, intangible, and inexpressible. Whatever has been described, visualised or imagined by way of His Glory is far surpassed. It is stated in *Purusha Suktham* (a Vedic compilation of Hymns) that hardly one quarter of the Purusha is comprehended as the totality of His Creation and the rest of Him is unmanifested. From the manifested part sprang the 'Brahmanda' or the Cosmos, the countless forms of living or non-living species and the Five Elements (Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Sky) as also the Divine Architect, 'Visva Karma', The Master-Builder. The Gigantic and Colossal Manifestation of the Material World be likened with the Body of The Absolute Truth, wherein the concepts of Time-The Past, The Present and The Future-converge into One. Sages conceived the 'Virat Swarupa' or The Body comprising Various Limbs: The Bottoms of The Feet as 'Patala'; the Heels and Toes as the Planets named 'Rasatala'; Ankles as 'Mahatala' Planets; the Shanks as 'Talatala' Planets; The Knees as the 'Mahatala' Planets; the two Thighs as 'Atala' and 'Vitala' Planets; The Hips as the 'Mahitala' Planets and the Navel as the Inter- Space. The Chest of The Giant Body is likened to the Luminary Planetary System, The Neck as the 'Mahar' Planets; and The Mouth and Forehead are the

‘Janas’ and ‘Tapas’ Planetary Systems respectively. The Sages described the Topmost Planetary Structure comprising Thousand Heads as ‘Satya Loka’; His Arms as Demi-Gods (‘Devatas’) conducted by ‘Indra’ as the Chief; the Ten Directional Sides as His Ears; the Physical Sound as Sense of Hearing; the Two Nostrils as Aswini Kumars; Material Fragrance as The Sense of Smell; His Throat as the Blistering Fire; His Eyepits as the Outer Space; Eye Balls as the Power of Vision (The Sun); Eye Lids as Day and Night; Eye Brows are the Places where Brahma and Super Personalities Reside; His Palate is the Director of Water ‘Varuna’; and His Tongue is the Spring of Juices or the Sense of Taste; Cerebral Passage are the Vedas; His Jaws of Teeth are the Lord ‘Yama’, the Dispenser of Death and Justice; The Set of Teeth is the Art of Affection; His Smile is the most fascinating and deceptive Material Energy; Upper Portion of His Lips is Modesty; His Chin is the Craving and Thirst; His Breast is Religion and His Back Irreligion; His Genitals the Brahma or the Creator; His Two Testicles are Mitra-Varunas; His Waist is the Ocean; His Bones are the Hills and Mountains; The Veins of His Gigantic Body are the Rivers; His Body Hairs are Trees; His Breath is the Omnipotent Air; His Movements are Passing Ages; His Actions are the Reactions or the Three Modes of Material Nature; Hairs on His Head are the Clouds carrying water / rain; His Intelligence is the Supreme Cause of Material Creation; His Mind is the Moon or the Reservoir of all Changes; His Ego is Rudradeva; His Residence is Humanity; His Musical Rhythm is the Celestial Existence of ‘Gandharvas’ ‘Vidyadharas’ and Angels; and so on. The Face of the Gigantic Body is of ‘Brahmanas’, Arms are ‘Khsatriyas’, Thighs are ‘Vaisyas’ and Feet are under the protection of ‘Sudras’. The ‘Virat Purusha’ has no beginning or end; is all powerful and all-prevading. The broad concept of ‘Virat Purusha’, beyond which there could be no other Reality and the rest a mere illusion. It is that ‘Reality’ which needs to be realised and deeply meditated to. This is the very the first step to Introspection. It is the Supreme Lord Who is in one’s own Heart. The marginal pleasures of Life are short-lived and it is unfortunate and foolish to pursue such quickly vanishing joys of corporal nature. It is equally wasteful to work hard and get highly engrossed into such quickly evaporating material rather than pursue the substantive and ever lasting happiness. Indeed, strict regimen of resisting the free play of Five Sensory Features ( ‘Pancha Indriya’) is an intelligent way of channelising all the physical and mental energies in full force to achieve solid and everlasting bliss rather than chase inefficient and useless actions that would only land into disappointments and dejections at the end of one’s own Life’s journey. As such, it would be prudent to retain the minimum possible means of living and reject the unwanted and superfluous wants for which the labours to be put in are inversely proportionate to the gains secured. For example, adequate amount of money to eke out a living is good enough rather than seek immense wealth, which has no limit anyway. Sensual life to the desirable extent of procreating children is good enough rather than get entangled with endless conjugal life that has no limit but would lead to complicated health problems. Taking to the habit of drinking wine would certainly lead to the path of misery. Thus each desire should be properly weighed in terms of bare necessity rather than by a false feeling of so-called prestige, or status or Show. By such a frugal and most minimal existence, the unwanted chaff over the grain would make enormous room in terms of effort, time and purity of thought to concentrate on the imprint of The Supreme Self residing right within everybody’s own heart admeasuring some six inches with a Miniature Replica of the ‘Virat Purusha’. Then would commence the process of aligning the Miniature within and the Collossal Superforce all over, limb by limb, ie. hand by hand, head by head.

Prajaapati - Hiranya garbha vide Maha Narayanopanishad is quoted

Prajapati the Immortal

Stanza 1: *Ambhasya paare bhuvanasya madhye naakasya pushthe mahato maheeyaan, shukrena jyotirishi samanuvishthah Prajaapatishcharati garbhe anantah/* Prajapati in the form of endless waters generated Bhur-Bhuvah- Swah or Bhumi-Aakasha-Swarga and above all a seed in the form of a foetus which multiplies into countless species as the latter are born-preserved for a while and degenerated. *Sukra* or Prajapati himself enters *Pranis* or Beings and after sustenance and destruction then *Jyotirishi* or transmigrates the *Antaratma* or the Inner Conscience. Thus the Paramatma replicates into *Antaratma* and the *Jeeva* or the Embodied Being rolls on in the eternal cycle of births and deaths merely carrying the load of *Karma* or the sum total of *Paapa Punyas* in the cycle of Time or the *Kaala maana*.

Stanza 2: *Yasmin tridasamcha vichaiti sarvayasmim Devaa adhi vishve nishaduh, tadeva bhutam tadubhavyamaa idam tadakshare parama vyoman/* Prajapati the *Karta* having created the *Bhokta* or the recipient declared that He is the cause of existence of every creature as embodied besides the entirety of all the causes too including preservation-dissolution-repeated transmigration of Souls too. As the imperishable *Antaratma* the Inner Conscience, Paramatma is the ‘raison d’être’ as manifested *Vyoman* or *Aakaasha* which is but a constituent element of the Universe and in turn was the cause of the four elements of *Prithivi-Aapas-Tejas-and Vayu* or the Earth-Water-Fire -and Air.

Stanza 3: *Yenaavritam kham cha Divam maheemcha yenaaditya stapanti tejasaam bhrajasaam cha, yamantah Samudre kavayo vayanti tadakshare parama prajaah/* It is that Prajapati who fills in *Mahim-kham-divam* or the earth-space-and heaven besides the *Pratyaksha Bhaskara* provides radiation and illumination who also binds what the Sages firmly believe as the bond connecting the imperishable Paramatma and the *Jeevas*. *Samudra* or the Great Ocean is stated as the ‘daharaakaasha’ or the Internal Sky or the Self Consciousness of *Jeevas* and the *Akaasha* the Sky above are linked by way of meditation as believed. Thus the *Antaratma* and the Paramatma are integrated by the medium of intense realisation and sacrifice of worldly desires.

Stanzas 4-5: *Yatah prasuto toyena jeevaan vyachasarja bhumyaam yadoshamdheebhih purushaan pashumscha vivesham bhutaani charaacharaani/ Atahparam naanyadaneeyasam hi paraatparam yanmahanto mahaantam, tadekamavkyatarupam vishvam puranam tamasah parastaat/* The Universe got manifested by *Prakriti* - the *alter ego* of Paramatma- including the *Pancha Bhutas* or the Four Elements besides *bhumyaam- charaacharani bhutaan-oushadheebhi-Purushaan- pashun* or the great earth-moving and immovables-herbs / food- human beings-and all kinds of species; Chhandogya Upanishad is quoted: VI.iii.1-4) *Teshaam khaltheshaam bhutaanaam trinyeva beejaani bhavanti, andajaam, jeevajaam udbhijjam iti// Seyam devataikshata, hantaaham imaashtisro Devataa anena jeevena aatmaanu pravishya naama rupe vyakaravaaniti//* (Creatures or Beings acquiring own Souls are of three kinds of seeds, viz. those which are born of eggs/ Andajas like birds, serpents; born of wombs like human beings and animals viz. jeevajas; and born of plants viz. udbhujas or those due to sprouting; another category is stated to be svedajas or born of mire and body warmth like bugs and lice but these too are stated to have been born of udbhujas basically. Now it is that Deity in the form of an Individual Self which enters into these three kinds of bodies minus however its organs and senses) Thus *Prakriti* assumes countless forms and features as She is *tamasah parastaat* or beyond darkness and *Paraat param* and *aneeyasam* or the highest than the highest and the subtle most excepting Paramatma! .

Stanza 6: *Tadevatam tadubhavyamaahustadeva Brahma paramam kaveenaam ishtaaputam bahudhaa jaatam jaayamaanam vishvam vibhaati bhuvanasya naabhih/* Maharshis asserted that the above

statements were absolutely justified as truthful realities. Vedas confirm too the same by the usage of the terms of *Ritam* and *Satyam* or as being accurate and truthful. ‘Ritam’ refers to the physical, moral and spiritual import of each and every human being, while the word ‘Truthfulness’ refers to individual duty and social responsibility. In other words worship and morality by the Self and one’s own obligation to Society constitute the Reality of fulfillment of human existence as the nave of a wheel as supported by the spokes of edicts detailed by Vedas. Parabrahma is indeed the support of existence of the Beings in the Universe while Prakriti is the manifestation of the Universe.

Stanza 7: *Tadevaagnih tadvaayuh tat Suryastadindu chandramaah, tadeva Shukramamritam tad Brahma tadaapah sa Prajapatih/* The Maha Prakriti who generated included the ‘Jagadupakaaraka Agni’ or the Fire that which is the benefactor to the Universe; then the Vayu Deva the sustainer; then the radiant and ever illuminator Surya; Moon the Lord of herbs; the Stardom and the Sukramamritam or the nectar the parental seed to perpetuate the human and all other species; Water and the other Pancha Bhutas or the Basic Elements; the Unique Brahma Deva and Prajapati the Creators of ‘charaachara jagat’ - the ‘Pranis’.

Stanzas 8-9: *Sarve nimeshaa jagjniro vidyutah purushaadabhi, kalaa muhurtah kaashthaad ahoraatraa - ssha sarvashah/ Artha maasaa maasaah rutavah samvascharasta kalpantamaam, sa aapah pradudhe ubhe ime anrarikshamayo Suvah/* The Self Illuminated Personality generated the Kaala maana or the Time Cycle comprising nimeshas-kalaas-muhurtas-kaashthaas, days, fortnights, months, Seasons or Ritus viz. Vasanta or Spring-Greeshma or Summer Varsha or monsoon-Sharat or Monsoon-Hemanta or pre winter-and Shishira or winter, besides Samvatsaras or Years. Indeed this Brahman milked water besides antariksha or firmament and suvarloka or the swarga.

Stanzas 10-11: *Naina murthwam na tiryancha na madhye parijagrabhat, na tasyesho kaschin tasya naama mahadyashah/ Na sadrushe tishthanti rupamasya na chakshushaa pashyati kaschanainam, hridaa maneeshaa manasaabhikalpto ya yevam viduramritaaste bhavanti/* (None ever could ever perceive His form or features and none ever view Him by the mortal eyes. None indeed could realise that profile- its limits across nor his middle portion and physical presentation and much less about his might and glory! Yet those who could realise Him by one’s inner vision by control of mind, concentration and constant meditation or yoga; indeed such class of superior humans is cited as in Svetaashwara Upanishad being worthy of of quoting: **I.xiv**) *Svadeham aranim kritvaa oranavam co’ttaraaramim, dhyanaa nirmatsathanaabhyaasaat devam pashyen nigudhavat/* (Struggle to surmount all kinds of impediments is fraught with innumerable means of material desires and practices on one hand and sharpen the edge of spiritual bent of mind with tenacity, dedication and extraordinary faith on one’s own ability on the other hand. This is some thing that calls for a revolutionary transformation in one’s daily routine and psyche. It demands sufferance, self-negation, and total abstinence to the point of break down by way of extreme self denial. Control of mind and detachment by the severe possible hold and command of organs and senses of chakshu-shravana-naasika-manasika-twak media as also the yoga practice without desired ends and the corresponding controls but even without pursuing and terminating the further strife to merely attain ‘siddhis’ like Anima and Garimaadi powers but of the Ultimate Siddhi of uniting the Self with the Supreme with no interference and curiosity of materialism and its ends but bring out to one’s fold from one’s own heart!) **I.xv**) *Tileshu tailam dadhineeva sarpir aapas srotassu araneeshchaagnih, evam aatmaatmani grihyetusau satyenainam tapasaa yonupashyati/* (One’s own ‘Antaratma’ or the Innermost Consciousness needs to be churned out by persistent practice as detailed in the above stanza, by way of struggle, friction and persistence just as oil is extracted from sesamum seeds, butter from cream of milk, water by digging deep from dried earth, and as Agni by friction of ‘aarani’ or wood sticks! In the constant and even tiring efforts of truthfulness and extreme austerities, the Individual of total commitment might thus be able to discover the Final Truth finally; *ghritam iva payasi niguudham bhute bhute cha vasati*

*vijnaanam satatam manthetavyam manasaa manthena bhutena/* or ‘Constant churning of a clean and transparent mind is the quintessence of the exploration, just as of ghee in milk which again is obtained after constant churning!)

### Hiranyagarbha : Manifestation of Universe- Purusha Suktam

#### Section I -Chapter II : *Adbhayah sambhuto Hiranyagarbha ityushtou/*

*Adbhayah sambhutam Prithivyai rasaaccha Vishwakarmaanah samavartataadhi,tasya Twashtha vividha drupayeti tatpurushasya Vishvamaajaanamagre/ Vedahametam Purusham mahantam aaditya varnam tamasah parastaat, tamevam vidwaanabhrita iha bhavati naanyah panthaavidyateyanaaya/ Prajaapatischarati gabherantah ajaayamaano bahuthaa vijaayate, tasya dheeraah parijaananti yonim, Mareechinaam padamicchanti vedhasah/ Yo devebhya aatapati, yo Devaanaam purohitah, Purveyo devebhyo jaatah namo Ruchaaya baahyave/Rucham Brahmaam janayantah, Devaa agretadbruvan, yassatvaivam Braahmano vidyaat, tasya Deva asan vasho/ Hreescha te Lakshmeeshva patnanou, ahoraatre paarshveh nakshani rupayam, ashvinau vyaaktam, ishtam manishaana, amum manishana, sarvam manushani/* This Universe was created by Para Brahman by virtue of Five Elements of Earth-Water-Air-Agni-and Akaasha. He-of course- is indeed far superior to Aditya, Indra and other Celestial Celebrities. Surya Deva called as Tvashta rises in the mornings embodying His radiance. Into this mortal world which at one stage was engulfed in total darkness and gloom, the celestial illumination from the singular source of Bhaskara brought amazing transformation with brightness and activity. Indeed but for this, there is no other path of success and immortality! This alternate form of Parameshwara viz. Prajapati shines for the benefit of all the Devas; He is invoked as their beneficiary as also their Chief. Devadhi Deva! Hree and Lakshmi are your consorts; you are the personification of Tri Murtis of Brahma-Vishnu-Maheswara.Days and Nights are your two sides. Ashvini Kumars are your mouth.You are the Lord of all the Beings moving about in the Inter Space of Heaven and Earth causing days and nights. Indeed you are the ‘Ajam’ or the Unborn being the Inner Consciousness of one and all in the Universe. You are also the Hiranyagarbha who along with the power of Maya is the singular support to heaven and earth; You are the Supreme controller of bipeds and quadrupeds of the earth; you too are the ‘shttava jangamas’ in the Creation. Your glory is evident from mountains like Himalayas as also from oceans and rivers.

Section I -Chapter III -stanzas 1-3 on Hiranyagarbha: *Hiranyagarbhah samavartataagre bhutasya jaatah patireka aaseet, sa daadhaara prithiveem dyaamutemaam kasmai Devaaaya havishaa vidhema/ Yah praanato nimishato mahitwaika idraajaa jagato babhuva, ya Isha asya dwipadaaschatushpadah kasmai Devaaya havishaa vidhema/ Ya aatmadaa balamdaa, ya aatmadaa balamdaa yasya upaasate prashimsha yasya devaah, yasya chhaayaamritam yasya mrityuh kasmai Devaa ya havisham vidhema/* By the might of Paramatma and the supreme power of Maya Prakriti, Prajapati was generated. The same Paramatma the unique also commissioned Hiranyagarbha the Creator to prop up Trilokas viz. Bhumi-Antariksha- and Swarga. Devas are contented by the ‘yagjna phalas’ as performed by the virtuous sections of the Society as prompted by Sages and dwijas and their worship, sacrifices and dharmic karyas sustain ‘dharma’ and ‘nyaya’ or virtue and justice. Thus Hiranyagarbha is the Sovereign controller of all the Beings in ‘srishti’ ie. humanity and all the Beings plus as all the bipeds, quadruples and so on and is latent as their internal nucleus. He is the reality within them all bestowing strength and sustenance like a shadow till such time destiny takes them in the whirlwind of deaths and births yet grants them immortality jumping from body to another.

Stanzas 4-8: *Yasyame himavanto mahitwaa yasya samudra rasayaa sahaahuh, yasyemaah pradishe yasya baahu kasmai Devaaya havishaa vidhema/ Yah krandasi avasaa tastabhaane asyaikshetaam manasaa rojamaane, yatraadhisura uditau vyeti kasmai Devaaya havishaa vidhema/ Yena dyourugraa prithivi cha dridhe yena suvah stabhitam yena naakah, yo antarikshe rajaso vimaanah kasmai Devaaya havishaa vidhema/ Aapoha yanmahatirvishwamaayam daksham dadhaanaa janantiragnima, tato Devaanaam nira- vartataasurekah kasmai Devaaya havishaa vidhema/ Yaschidaapo mahinaa paryapashyaddaksham dadhaanaa janayanteeragnima, yo Deveshvadhi Deva eka aaseet kasmai Devaaya havishaa vidhema/* It is the brilliance and splendour of Hiranyagarbha Brahma that the the high peaks of Himalayas or the magnitude and energy of Oceans and massive rivers are declared and His hands are deeply involved in dispensing justice in eight directions to all the Beings as they deserve. It is His extraordinary capability that Earth and Space are held in their respective positions and Bhaskara Deva moves eternally by His Rise and Disappearance day in and day out! It is He who firmed up the terrestrial , the sky and the heavenly regions and created ‘Rajasa’ feature in the antariksha! It is due to His glory that ‘aapas’ or water got materialised and eventually Agni or the Fire and thereafter the form of ‘vayu’ or deity of Wind and Praana the life force. It is thus Hiranyagarbha who set the chain of the Basic Elements of Nature which made the ‘charaacharajagat’ exist and sustain. The origin of waters and fire had admirably made vedic tasks of potent worship. Thus all the respective Devas are in place to kick-start the momentum of the Universe thus standing out as the Leader of Devas and as the Supreme Creator.

Stanzas 9-12: *Esha hi Devah pradishe sarvaah purvo hi jaatah sa vu garbhe anantah, sa vijaya maanah sa janishyamaanah pratyangmukhaastishthati vishwatomukhah/ Vishvatashchakshuruta vishvato mukho vishvato hasta uta vishvaaspaat, sabahubhyaam namati sam pataschaidwavivaa prithivi janayana Deva ekah/ Venastat pashyan vishwaa bhuvanaani vidwaan yatra vishwam bhavatyeka needam, yasmintridasam cha vi chaikas yotah pritischa vibhuh prajaasu/ Pra tadvoche amritam nu vidwaan gandharvo naam nihitam guhaasu, treenipadaa nihitaa guhaamsu yastedveda Savituh pitaa sat/* ( Hiranya-garbha eulogized and admired by the various Scriptures was initially materialised in Swarga and as enveloped in his womb the entire Universe was Paramatma’s prime representative and resides in every Being in ‘Srishti’ as a nucleus as the ‘Antaratma’ or the Inner Consciousness. Being the cause and effect of all the ‘Pranis’ connects them all in successive cycle of births and deaths. Svetaashwara Upanishad is quoted as a repeat: **II.xvi-xvii**) *Esha ha Devah pradishe sarvaah purvo hi jaatah sa vu garbhe anantah, sa eva jaatah sa janishyamaanah pratyam janaamsstishthati sarvatomukhah// Yo Devognau yopsu yo vishwam bhuvanam aavivesah, ya oshadheeshu yo vanaspatishu tasmai devaaya namo namah//* ( This Devadhadhi Deva is Omnipresent at once First Born yet would be born again and always present within a garbha and is multi-faced, multi-faceted and multi-directional. Essentially anchored to each and every Being as the Inner Self , Paramatma is inside and outside Agni, Water, Prakriti, Food, Plants, Trees, Medicines and name it any; indeed name it any!)

This Self radiant Hiranya garbha as the ‘antaratma’ the creator of Trilokas by Himself and out of his own self and is the sculptor of each and ever Being in the creation with ‘panchendriyas’ or the body parts like the eyes, ears, hand and feet and their senses. Svetaashwara Upanishad is quoted further vide **III.xiii-xv**) *Angushtha maatrah purushontaraatmaa sadaa janaanaam hridaye sannivishthah, hridaa manveesho manasaabhi klipto yadaa etad vidur amritaaste bhananti// Sahasra sheershaa purushah sahasraahshah sahasra paat,sabhumim vishvato vritwaa ati atisthad dasaangulam// Purusha evedamsarvam yad bhutam yaccha bhavyam utaamritatavasyeshaano yad annenaatirohati//* (The Inner Self is hardly of thumb size always resident of his heart the hub of distributing every arising from Praana the breathing; mind is the charioteer of the organs and senses. Those who realise the significance of the Self knows it all. The Virat Purusha or the Cosmic Person is stated to have endless number of heads, eyes, and feet of far reaching command and the numerical thousand each of these body parts is by way of suggestive magnitude. The

Maha Purusha Ishvara encompasses and envelopes Bhumi on all the sides, but again this is an understatement of ‘dashangulam’ or of ten inches seeking to express in brief as that expression briefly covers Sapta Lokas, Sapta Paatalas, Sapta Dvipas, Sapta Samudras, Sapta Parvatas, and so on apart from the ‘Kaalamana’ the Eternal Time Schedule! *Purusha eve vedam sarvam*/ or the Maha Purusha Parameshwara is indeed the totality of the Cosmos, of whatever has been, is and will certainly be too! He is the Over Lord of the Universe and of Immortality quite irrespective of the considerations of the Past-Present and Future and what ever grows ‘annatarena’ or based on the basis of food and the resultant vital energy ! Incidentally, the Inner Self is no doubt well within the Body and its actions but clearly unaffected by its acts and their consequences) . Yet, He controls ‘dharma and adharma’ or virtue and vice by shapes every Being’s act with the latter’s hands and legs or the actions.

### Purusha Suktam

1) *Sahasra Sirsha Purushah Sahasraakshah Sahasra paat, Sa Bhubim Vishvato Vrutwaa Atyatishthaddashaagulam*/ (Bhagawan/ Maha Purusha who has countless heads, eyes and feet is omnipresent but looks compressed as a ten-inch measured Entity!) 2) *Purusha ye Vedagum sarvam yadbhutam yaccha bhavyam, Utaamritatwa--syeshaanah yadanney naa ti rohati*/ (He is and was always present submerging the past and the future and is indestructible and far beyond the ephemeral Universe) 3) *Yetaavaa nasya Mahimaa Atojyaaya -gumscha Puurushah, Paadosya Vishwa Bhutaani Tripaadasya -amritam Divi*/ (What ever is visualised in the Creation is indeed a minute fraction of His magnificence and what ever is comprehensible is but a quarter of the Eternal Unknown) 4) *Tripaadurdhwa Udait Purushaha Paadosyehaa bhavaatpunah, Tato Vishvan -gvyakraamat saashanaa nashaney abhi*/ (Three-fourths of the Unknown apart, one fourth emerged as the Universe and the Maha Purusha is manifested across the Totality of the Beings including the animate and inanimate worlds) 5) *Tasmaadwiraadajaayata VirajaAdhi Puurushah, Sa jaato Atyarichyata paschaadbhumimatho purah*/ (From out of that Adi Purusha, the Brahmanda came into Existence and Brahma spread himself all over and became Omni Present. Then He created Earth and Life to Praanis.) 6) *Yatpurushena havishaa Deva Yagna matanvata,, Vasanto Asyaaseedaajyam Greeshma Idhmasharaddhavih*/ (The Yagna Karyas done by Devatas with Maha Purusha as the Aahuti converted Vasanta Kaala as Ghee, Greeshma Kaala as Indhana or the wooden pieces, and Sarat Kaala as Havi or Naivedya); 7) *Saptaasyaasanparidhayah Trissapta Samidhah Kritaah, Devaad Yagnam tanvaanaah Abadhnan Purusham Pashum*/ (To this Yagna, Pancha Bhutaas of ‘Prithi-vyaapas-tejo- vaayura akaashaas’ and the Day and Night as the ‘Parithis’ or the boundaries of the Yagna Kunda; twenty one Tatwaas viz. Pancha Karmendriyas, Pancha Jnaanendriyas, Pancha Bhutas, Three Ahamkaaras, Three Tanmatras of Sprasha-Rupa-Rasa; and Mahatawa as Samidhaas; Devatas as Ritwiks and Brahma as Yagna Pashu) 8) *Tam Yagnam barhishi proukshan Purusham jaatama -gratah, Tena Devaa Ayajanta Saadhyaa Rishayascha ye*/ (All the Participants of the Yagna viz. Devas, Sadhyaas, Rishis and such others perform the ‘Prokshana’ or sprinkled the Sacred Water on the Yagna Purusha and accomplished the Yagna); 9) *Tasmaad yagnaat Sarvahutah Sambhrutam prushadaajyam, Pashugstaagschakrey vaayavyaan Aranyaangraamaschaye*/ (In this Universal Yagna emerged ‘Dadhighrita’ or Curd-Ghee Mix, Birds, Ferocious and normal animals, and such others were created); 10) *Tasmaadyagnaatsarva hutah Ruchassaamaani jajniirey, Chaandaagumsi jajniirey tasmaat Yajustasmaa dajaayata*/ (In this Prapancha Yagna were created Rig Veda Mantras, Sama Veda Mantras, Gayatri and other Chaandasaas out of which Yajur Vedas too emerged). 11)

*Tasmaadashwaa Ajaayanta yekeycho bhayaadatah, Gaavo hajagnirey tasmaat tasmaa jyaataa Ajaavayah*/ (From this Yagna were created horses, two lined teeth Mrigas, Pashus of four legs like cattle, sheep and buffalos). 12) *Yat Purusham vyadadhu katidhaavyakalpayan, Mukham kimasya kou baahoo kaavuroo paadaavuchyete*/ (As Devas made the Sacrifice of Brahma, of what all Forms were manifested; of which type was His Face; of what kind were His hands and of form were His thighs and Feet?) 13) *Brahmanasya Mukhamaaseet Baahoo Raajanyah krutah, Vooroo tadasya yadvyshyahi Padbhyaagum Shudro Ajaayata*/ (From the Lord’s face emerged Brahmanas, His hands came

Kshatriyas, His thighs the Vaishyas and His feet the Shudras); 14) *Chandramaa Manaso jaatah Chaksho Suryo Ajaayatam, Mukhaadindraaschaagnischa Praanaadvaayurajaayata/* (From His Mind was manifested Chandra Deva, His eyes Surya Deva, His face Indra and Agni and from His Prana the Vayu Deva); 15) *Naabhyaa aaseedantariksham Seershno Dhyoh Samavartata, Padbhyaam Bhumir-dishaha Shrotraat tataa Lokaagum Akalpayan/* (From the Lord's navel came out the 'Antariksha', His Head the Swarga, His Feet the Earth, Dishas or Directions from His Ears; and likewise the various Lokaas); 16) *Vedaahametam Purusham Mahaantam, Aditya Varnam Tamasastupaarey, Sarvaani Rupaani Vichitya Dheerah Naamaani krutwaabhivadan yadaastey/* ( Thus I have realised that Paramatma manifested Himself in innumerable Forms and nomenclatures and that He is a Kaarya- shila or of Practicalities, Mahimanvita or of Undefined Grandeur, the Ever Lustrous Sun-Like Appearance or of Inner Consciousness far away from Darkness or Agjnaana); 17) *Dhaataa purastaa -dyaumuhaa jahaara Shakrah pravidwaanpadishaschatasrha, Tamevam Vidwaanamrita iha bhavati Naanyah pandhaa Ayanaaya Vidyatey/* ( It is that illustrious and knowledgeable person possessive of the Supreme Awareness realising Paramatma and recognises and visualises Indra and other Dishaa -dhipaas that is qualified to attain Mukti; indeed there is no other route to Moksha!) 18) *Yagnena Yagnamayajanta Devaah Taani Dharmaani Prathamanyaasan, tey ha naakam Mahi Maanah sachantey yatra purvey Saadhyaah santi Devaah/* (Devataas came to worship Paramatma by means of this Yagna and assumed the Primary Forms of Manifestations of Dharma; The intial and arduous procedures of Dharma that were assiduously practised by Devatas and Sadhyaas came to the Guidelines and whosoever followed the Regulations like performing Yagnas are competent to achieve higher Lokas.) 19) *Adbhyah sambhutaha Prithivyairasaascha Vishva karmanah samavartataatdhi tasya, Twashtaa Vidadhadrupameti tatpurushasya Vishva -ajanamagrey/* ( As the Universe got manifested from water and the Essence of Bhumi, Paramatma created Brahma and the latter created the Universe. That Brahma filled in the Fourteen Lokas and thus the whole Creation is the handi- work of Brahma!) 20) *Vedaaha meham Purusham Mahaantam Aditya Varnam tamasah parastaat , Tamevam Vidwanamrita iha bhavati naanyah pandhaa Vidyateya -naaya/* ( If any person could realise that Supreme Soul who is too magnificent to vision like Surya much less to visualise then he is as good as Paramatma Himself; that is the way to attainment and the the path of Glory and Moksha.) 21) *Prajaapatischarati garbhay Antah Ajaaya-maano bahudhaavija -atey tasya, Dheeraah parijaa -nanti yonim Mareecheenaam padamicchanti vedhasah/* ( Paramatma is reputed as a highly action-oriented Splendrous and Supreme Being who has neither beginning or termination. Mahaatmas and Maharshis like Marichi are indeed aware of His Accurate Form and crave and toil to Attain Him) 22) *Yo Devebhya Aatapati yo Devaa -naam Purohitah, Purvoyo Devebhoy Jaatah Namu Ruchaa Braahmaye/* ( May I prostrate before the hallow of that Paramatma who illuminates Devas, whom Devas earnestly consider in the highest esteem as they are but His own reflections and who is the Eternal and Singular Truth). 23) *Rucham Braahmam janayantah Devaa Agrey tadabruvan, Yasthyai -vam Brahmano idvaat tasya Asan vashey.* ( As Devas made great endeavours to understand an inkling of what Paramatma was all about as they could never get even some clues initially, then Devas realised that whosoever among the Devotees similarly made enormous efforts to execute genuine quests about Him should automatically obtain their control mechanism too.) 24) *Hreesha tey Lakshmischa Patnou Aho raatrey paarsvey Nakshatraani Rupam Ashvinou vyaattham/* (Hey Vishnu Bhagavan! Your 'Ardhaanganis' or 'Better Halves' are Hree Devi the Symbol of Modesty and Lakshmi Devi the Emblem of Prosperity are your side manifestations of 'Ahoratraas' or day and night. The Nakshatraas constitute your Celestial Formation. And Ashvini Devatas are the full visage of yours as flower blooms!) 25) *Ishtam Nanishaana Amum Manishaana Sarvam manishaana, Om taccham yoraavrinee Mahey/* (Bhagavaan! We beseech your kindness and grace a to grant us the bestowing of successful and worthwhile fulfillment of our *Iham* and *Param* ; Bhagavan!)]While reciting Purusha Sukta, the Karta should perform Nyasa as follows: First and Second Ruchas with left and right hands; third and fourth and fifth Ruchas with left and right feet; fifth and sixth Ruchas with left and right knees; seventh and eighth Ruchas with left and right katis or waists; the ninth Rucha with naabhi or navel; the tenth with Hridaya; the eleventh with kantha or neck; the twelfth and thirteenth with left and right hands; the fourteenth Rucha with face; and the sixteenth Rucha with head. This is how the 'Anga Nyasa' be

achieved with the major limbs of the Kartha. The last of the Ruchas is tuned with the Hridaya and the last of the of the Ruchas are recited with the rest of the body parts. The Puja materials include Kalasha, Shankha, Ghanta etc. and after prokshana of the 'Saamagri' the Kartha performs Arghya and Achamaniya and commences the worship to Vishnu Pratima with the 'Shodashopachaaraas' as per the Shodashopa Ruchas of Purusha Sukta: With the First Rucha, Avahana be done; if Salagraama is not in Place, Mantra Pushpa Khanda be recited and with the prayer *Shri Maha Vishnavey namah, Shri Krishnaaya, Shiva Vinaayaka Surya Shaktibhyah etc.* Then with the Second Rucha 'Aasana' be provided, the Third with 'Paadya', fourth with 'Arghya', fifth with Aachamana, Sixth with 'Snaana'-if possible Panchamrita Snaana with Chandana, Go Ksheera, Karpura, Kunkuma and Agarū Suvaasita Jala by reciting *Aapyaayasva* and /or Suvarna gharmaanū- vaaka, Maha Purusha Vidya, Purusha Sukta and Raajana Saama. With the Seventh Rucha, the Seventh Service be provided by Vastra, the eighth with Yagnopaveeta, the ninth with Gandha, the tenth with Pushpa, the eleventh with Dhupa, the twelfth with Deepa- Ghanta- Mangala Vaayujya; the thirteenth with Naivedya-Taambula-Phala-Dakshina-Neeraajana; the fourteenth with Saashtaanga Pranaama or Prostration; the fifteenth with Visarjana or Pushpaanjali. All the Sixteen Services need to be done with the accompanying recitals of the concerned Ruchas of Purusha Sukta, while performing Aachamana at the end of each Service and Anna-Aahutis and Pushpas. Brihat Paraashara Samhita summed up as Aasana-Paadya- Arghya-Aachamana- Snaana- Panchamrita Snaana- Vastrea-Yagnopaveeta-Gandha-Pushpa-Dhupa-Deepa-Naivedya- Taamboola- Phala- Dakshina- Neeraajana-Pushpaanjali. After the Puja on these lines, the Karta should touch the feet of the Pratima and should pray to say: *Prapannam paahimaameesha bheetam Mrityugrahaarnavaat/* (Ishwara! Provide me the Shield to the fearful onslaughts of the Ocean of 'Mrityugraha'! Thereafter, the Nirmalya or the left - overs of the Puja be placed on the heads of the Karta and those who join in the worship, take the Shanka Jala on the heads as also swallow it up. But do not keep the flowers kept on Vishnu Pratimas's head on one's head. It is stated that the Tirtha from Brahmana's feet is taken in first and then Vishnu Padodaka be taken. Shialagrama -shila jala should be taken in but not sprinkled on head.

Puja Phala: To quote Skanda Purana: *Kaamaasaktothavaa Kruddhah Shaalagraama shilaarchanaat, Bhaktya vaa yadi vaabhaktya Kalou muktimavaapnuyaat/ Kathaam yah kurutey Vishnoh Shaalagraama shilaa -gratah, Vaivasata bhayam naasti tathaa cha Kalikaalajam/ Paayaschittam hi paapaanaam Kalou padodakam Hareyh, Ghrutey shirasi peetey cha Sarvaatyushtanti Devataah/* (Either due to the desire of fulfillment of a wish or due to anger of not fulfillment or by way of even disbelief, if any person performs a half-hearted puja to a Salagrama Shila, he or she in Kaliyuga is sure to succeed Salvation. If a person sits before a Sala -grama and listens to Vishnu Kathaa, that person is certain to escape the fear of Yama! In Kali Yuga, the easy paraschitta from sins committed constitutes the consumption of Vishnu padodaka and its reverential Dharana on one's head.

#### Satya Narayana Vrata:

One of the most popular Vratas observed across the length and breadth of Bharat, especially on Ekaadashis is of the Lord of Eternal Truth popular as Satya Narayana. This is observed by all sections of Hindus with no restriction of caste and creed. Bhavishya Purana is quoted about the proceedings of the Vrata and significantly enough of the Stories of Past who had very successfully observed the vrata and the huge benefits that accrued to them: *Satyavratam Satyaparam Trisatyam Satyasya yonim nihitam cha Satyey, Satyasya Satyamrita Satyanetram Satyaatmikam twaam Sharanam prapannah/Antarbhavenanta bhavantamevahyatatya janto mrigayanti santah, Asantama pya ntyahimantarena Santam gunamtam kimu yanti santah/* (The objective of accomplishing Sacchinaananda Paramaatma is to perform Satya Narayana Vratam- which is the vehicle full of Truth, always absorptive of Truth, True-visioned and Truth-Souled; I seek refuge in Swami Satyanarayana! The fact that all human beings seek 'Satya Tatva' or the Consciousness of Truth is indeed transparent and patent; it is also clear that selfless dedication to Satya Narayana is the ultimate goal!) Vyasa Deva narrated that Sage Shounaka requested Sutha Maha Muni on behalf of a congregation of Munis at Naimisharanya as to which would be the most effective and none-

too-complicated method of Realisation of Paramatma! Maha Muni Suta instantly took the name of Satyanarayana and prayed to him as follows: *Navaambhojanetram Ramakelipaattram Chaturbaahu chaameekaram chaarugaatram/ Jagatraana hetum ripow dhumraketum sadaa Satyanarayana stoumi Devam* (I pray to Bhagavan Satyanarayana who has the enchanting eyes of delicate and fully opened Lotus, who is deservingly playful with Bhagavati Lakshmi, who possesses four shapely arms and stunningly shimmering Physique of gold and the Unique Source of Might to shield the Universe against Evil Forces!) *Shri Ramam Saha Lakshmanam Sakarunam Seetaanvitam Satvikam, Vaidehimukhapadma lubdha mathupam Poulasya samhaarakam/ Vandey Vandya padaambujam Suravaram Bhaktaanukampaakaram, Shatrughnena Hanumantaacha Bharatena sevitam Raghavam* ( I salute with reverence Bhagavan Shri Rama who is the epitome of benevolence, whose lotus-like feet are always worshipped, who readily responds to devotees with mercy, who retains Lakshmana with Him and is accompanied by Devi Sita while benignly glancing at her lotus-like graceful face; who is worshipped by Shatrughna, Hanuman and Bharata; who is the destroyer of Poulastya, and the Symbol of Truth and Virtue as the Supreme of Devas).

Sutha Maha Muni then proceeded to narrate the First Katha (Episode) of Devarshi Narada who having gone around the World in his periodic visits came down to Martya Loka (Bhu Loka) and felt sad that human beings were suffering a lot without any relief from their miseries; he approached Vishnu Deva and prayed for a solution to offer to the human beings who were constant targets of diseases, poverty, natural calamities and discontentment. Lord Vishnu replied instantly that the easiest and effective means of providing reprieve from human sufferings would be the sincere performance of Satyanarayana Vrata; genuine and heartfelt observance of this Vrata would indeed effect in endowing with wealth to the unfortunate, excellent children, Kingdoms to those who lost their positions, good quality vision to the blind, freedom to those who were imprisoned, courage to the frightened and fulfillment of one's wants long cherished. The brief procedure of executing the Vrata is to make a firm resolve to do so without hindrances, keep a Tulasi Manjari in hands and pray to Shrihari as follows: *Narayanam saandraghanaava daantam, Chaturbhujam peetamaarvaasasam/ Prasanna vaktram Navakanja lochanam, Sanandanaadyaika rupa sevitam bhaje/ Karomi the Vratam Deva saayamkaaley twadarchanam, Shrutva Gaadhaam twadeeyam hi prasaadam tey bhajaamyaham/* (Bhagavan Narayana! You possess dark-cloud complexion, grand four arms, tranquil appearance, attractive eyes like fresh lotus, and worshipped by Sanaka Sanandana and other well-known Sages; I am always dedicated in my sincere devotion to You and have determined to perform puja by this evening and then only secure your 'Prasad' (blessings). Thereafter, commence the formal worship with five 'Kalashas' and instal Satyanarayana 'Pratima' in gold or silver or as per one's convenience. The Puja would be according to 'Purusha Sukta Mantra vidhana' by way of the prescribed 'Shodasopacharas' viz. 'Avaahayami' (Invocation), 'Suvarna Simha Samarpana' (improvising a Golden chair), 'Padyam' (washing the Deity's feet), 'Arghyam' (providing water to clean His hands), 'Aachamaneeyam' (offering water for sipping), 'Suddhodaka Snaana' (bathing the Deity's Pratima with appropriate Mantra), 'Vastra Yugmam' (offering double clothing), 'Yagnopaveetam' (Providing the Sacred Thread), 'Gandham' (offering Sandal Paste), then 'Puja' by reciting the Names of Satyanarayana /Vishnu , either sixteen or hundred sixteen or thousand hundred sixteen, along with flowers or Tulasi leaves only by men and 'Akshatas' or rice grains mixed with turmeric powder, 'Dhupam' (Incense material), 'Deepam' or lighting of oil-soaked cotton vicks, 'Puspham' or a variety of fragrant flowers; 'Naivedyam' or a full meal as Prasada comprising 'Bhakshya' or Sweets and Savouries, 'Bhojya' or cereals and preparations, 'lehya' or items of tongue-licking type, 'Choshya' or items taken in as liquids and 'Paneeya' or drinks; 'Tambula' or betel leaves and betel nuts', 'Neerajanam' or camphor lighting shown to Deity with the accompanying sounds of bells, 'Matra Pupshpam' / Vedic Chanting, 'Pradakshina' or circumambulation, 'Saastanga Namaskara' or reverential prostration along with 'Aparaadha Mantra' to say that the Puja so performed was incomplete with accepted mistakes and should be forgiven. The worship should climax with 'Chatram' or symbolic holding of umbrella, 'Chamaram' or symbolic fanning to the Deity, 'Nrityam' or devotional ecstasy displayed in dance form, 'Geetam' or devotional singing in praise of Satyanarayana, 'Andolika' or symbolic swinging of Deity in a decorated

swing; 'Ashwaarohana' and 'Gajaarohana' or symbolic rides of the Lord on horses and elephants and all other possible 'Upacharas' or Devotional Services devoid of capacity, devotion, 'Mantram' or requisite formality and attention! At the End, the following Mantra be recited while performing 'Homa' or offering to Agnihotra atleast hundred and eight times, viz. Namoh Bhagavatey nityam Satyadevaaya dheemahi, Chatuh Pradaatha daatrey cha Namastubhyam Namoh namah (My humble salutations to You Satyanarayana to whom we meditate always; You are the Master and Donor of the Four Kinds of 'Purusha Arthaas' viz. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha'; do grant us the same to us too). By so saying, Devarshi Narada left for Satya loka with the resolve of performing Satya Narayana 'Puja' as soon as possible. Suta Maha Muni then narrated Second Katha (Episode) signifying the 'Mahatmya' of Bhagavan Satyanarayana to the Sages who convened at Naimisharanya: In the city of Kashi, there was a pious, learned and poor Brahmana, called Shatananda with his wife and children, eking his livelihood by 'Yayavaara' or begging for rice from door to door. During his rounds of begging, an old Brahmana approached Shatananda and advised that instead of begging to look after his family, he should certainly perform the formal worship of Bhagavan Satyanarayana who was like a boat in the deep waters of 'Samsara'. By so saying the old Brahmana disappeared and there was a stunning and dazzling figure of Narayana Himself standing before Shatananda with Shankha, Chakra, Gada and Saranga! The Brahmana got utterly shocked, instantly prostrated and prayed to Bhagavan as follows: Bhagavan Satyanarayana! You are the Cause and the Cause-Maker of the Universe, the Saviour of the Hapless, the Provider of Propitiousness, the Last Resort of Shelter and Protection, the Epitome of Virtue, the Form of Purity and Auspiciousness, the Invisible yet Visible, the destroyer of the 'Tapatrayas' of Adhi Bhautika, Adhi Daivika and Adhyatmika Nature; the Designer and the Design of the Universe as well as its final Demolisher; the Unique Provider of the Best of the World; today I am the most contented as my life's unknown and impossible desire has been achieved and what is more that I have heard Your Voice; could there be a bigger miracle that very effortlessly this dream has really come true! When asked by Shatananda as to the procedure of performing the Vrata, Bhagavan replied that there was no need for ample money to perform it, but it would involve endless devotion and sincerity of purpose. What ever daily earnings that might be secured on account of pleading for food that day would be sufficient, with which to fetch the Puja material required for sugar, milk, gandha, flowers, fruits, dhup / deepa, betel leaves and coconuts and after Puja, the Prashad be shared with Brahmanas, family members, neighbours, relatives and others irrespective of caste, creed and social status. Bhagavan further asked that the Vrata be popularised along with the details of the Procedure and the Mantras to be utilised for it among Kings, Merchants and all the Commoners so that they too would get the advantage. By so saying, the Lord disappeared and on the following day, Shatananda took a resolve to perform the Vrata to the best of his ability and on receiving double the amount than his daily earnings, secured the material as required and managed the Vrata very well. He strained every breath of his to popularise the purpose, procedure and reward of observing the Vrata and ever since then, Satyanarayana Vrata became popular all over since quick rewards started flowing in; thus there emerged universal acceptance and popularity of the most famous Satyanarayana Vrata. On his part, Shatananda attained recognition and social esteem not only in Kashi but all over wherever Hindu Faith prevailed and after his end his Soul got absorbed into Bhagavan. The Third Katha related to the King of Badari Khanda named Chandrachuda at Manipurak Nagara who was highly virtuous, soft spoken and popular among his Subjects. He was a devout 'Vishnu Bhakta'. But, the Mlecchas of Vindhya Desha attacked Chandrachuda who having been defeated in a fierce battle had to flee into forests and strayed into Kashi Nagara and discovered that the entire population was highly contented and enjoyed quality life devoid of diseases, untimely deaths, robberies and natural calamities. He then came to realise that the key to the all round happiness of Kasi was entirely due to the constant observance of Satya Narayana Vrata and that the Originator of this Sacred Vrata was a Brahmana called Sadananda (Shatanand) who had the Vision of Bhagavan Vishnu Himself. Chandrachuda approached Sadananda and secured his 'Upadesha' of the Format, Content, Method and the instant Fruit of the Vrata and immediately performed the Vrata sincerely. Bhagavan Satya Narayana appeared before the King and presented a powerful Sword to use against the Mlecchaas who had forcefully occupied his throne and Kingdom. The King thanked Sadananda profusely and having reassembled his army devastated six

thousand Mlecchhas, retrieved his Kingdom and the lost prestige, thanks to the observance of Satya Narayan Vrata. Back to his throne, King Chandrachuda prevailed on all his Subjects to perform Satya Narayana Vrata as often as possible and before all Auspicious Tasks like Weddings, Birth days and Nama Karana functions were initiated and most definitely on every Purnima day of each month. The King ruled his Kingdom with great veneration for Satya Deva for sixty long years having built a new Capital and ultimately reached Vishnu loka leaving behind a great heritage of peace, prosperity and lasting fame. The Fourth Episode was of Bhills/ Nishadas (Wood cutters) who happened to visit Kashi Nagar to sell their wood, got lost in the City and approached the Hermitage of Vishnu Das (Shatananda) as they felt thirsty. They were impressed with an on-going worship in the Hermitage, even as Vishnu Das not only quenched their thirst but also encouraged witnessing the proceedings of Satya Narayana Vrata. The Nishads took the Prasad at the conclusion of the Vrata with humility and high devotion and tried to take leave of Vishnu Das. The latter enquired whether they would also like to perform the Vrata and the Nishads exclaimed that it was not possible for them to do so; they said that performance of a Puja was not only expensive but they were completely illiterate and could never observe this kind of a complicated Puja in their life time ever! *Satyanarayana Vrata is neither expensive nor complicated; what is significant is the devotion and commitment rather than riches nor knowledge.* This was made amply clear to the Bhills; he said that Lord Krishna while visiting Hastinapura did not accept the Chief Guest Status of Duryodhana but stayed in the humble cottage of Vidura instead! Krishna again took away the ‘tandulakanas’ (rice-fries) from Sudama (Kuchela) with affection and bestowed such wealth that was not in the reach of Kings even; similarly He was so close to the illiterate and innocent Gopas and Gopis but kept aloof from even Great Sages! Having said this, Vishnu Das prescribed a simple and straight-forward format of observing the Vrata and enabled the Bhills to perform the worship in an effortless and easy way which even unintelligent children could follow provided however their hearts were transparent and Bhakti was paramount. The community of Bhills was thus prompted and encouraged by Vishnu Das, whereby they started earning by the sale of wood and gained profits and confidence in course of time. Eventually, their devotion became intense and their life-style changed so much that took firm steps towards attainment Vishnu Loka!

The Fifth Episode centered on a Vaisya called Sadhu and his son-in-law. The famous King Chandrachuda of Manipuraka Nagar referred to in the Third Episode above was once performing Satya Narayana Puja along with a large number of followers, when a wealthy Vanika from Ratnapur landed by his ship filled up with considerable riches. When the highly decorated Puja Mandap, Sadhu enquired as to what was going on at that busy Place, he was told that Satyanarayana Vrat was being performed under the auspices of Chandrachuda Maharaj along with several other devotees. Sadhu was also interested as he had no offspring and thus joined the group and prayed to Satya Narayana to bless him with a child. The Sabhapati was conveyed of the wish of the Vanika and as though Bhagavan Himself approved the wish, the desire was approved but on the condition that soon after securing a child he should perform the Vrata in a manner that would become of the rich Vanika. In course of time, Sadhu’s wife conceived and a female child was born. The Name-Giving Function was celebrated with great pomp and show of the wealthy Vanika and the baby was named Kalavati after consultations of her ‘Kundalini’. The wife of Vanika reminded of Sadhu’s promise that now that they were blessed with a child, the Vanika should recall the promise made by him to perform Satya Narayana Vrata. He kept on delaying the fulfillment the promise somehow. Meanwhile, Kalavati was growing into a fine girl and Vanika commenced searching for a suitable bridegroom; *Ashta varsha bhaved Gauri Nava varsha cha Rohini, Dasa varsha bhavet Kanya tathah proudhaa Rajaswala* (An eight year old girl is known as Gauri and a Nine Year old is Rohini, a ten year old is said to be a Kanya and Proudha having come of age suitable for marriage!). Thus Vanika Sadhu planned for Kalavati’s wedding first rather than redeeming the promise made to Satya Narayana Deva. A suitable son-in-law named Sankhapati who was very rich too was selected as Kalavati’s husband. After the wedding, Sadhu kept his son-in-law in his own house as his business partner and the joint business flourished well. On the reminder of Sadhu’s wife about the promise to perform Satya Narayana Vrata, Sadhu postponed again till his daughter’s securing a child. A few days

later, Sadhu accompanied by his son-in-law undertook a business tour beyond River Narmada. They stayed out for long and the promise to perform the Vrata was almost forgotten. As though Bhagavan got angry about the callousness of Sadhu in redeeming his promise about the Vrata, the two-some of in-laws faced considerable difficulties in the business and on their return journey back home stayed at a Guest house overnight and at that very night there was a theft in the King's Palace and both Sadhu and son-in-law got entangled as they were strangers there and got imprisoned; moreover, there was expensive pearl-necklace found on the body of the son-in-law of Sadhu. While the two were languishing in the prison awaiting judgment for robbery, there was a theft in Sadhu's house at his native place and both Kalavati and daughter suddenly turned as paupers and were some how eking their existence.

In the Sixth Katha, Suta Maha Muni explained that Bhagavan Vishnu could utilise the means of 'Tapatrayas' viz. Adhyatmika, Adhi Daivika and Adhi-Bhoutika forms to punish a human being when a person would go astray from 'Dharma'; in the case of Vanika Sadhu, the promise to execute Satya Narayana Vrata was wantonly ignored. Vishnu and his wife Lakshmi Devi had four sons viz. Dharma, Yagna, King and Thief and Lakshmi was equally fond of all of them. The charity given to Brahmanas and Guests is of the form of Dharma which targets Money; the Deva Yagna and Pitru Yagna are of the forms of Yagnas and in this case too Money is involved; a King who is responsible to safeguard both Dharma and Yagna also aims at Rajya Lakshmi and finally a 'Chor' (Thief) too is after Money in the final analysis. In the case of Vanika Sadhu, he was basically a Thief as he did not redeem his pledge to Satya Narayana Himself and hence there were two thefts were involved-one by way of suspicion by the King and another a theft in Sadhu's own residence. Thus the victims of the unhappiness of Satya Narayana were all the members of Sadhu's family, thus analysed Suta Muni about the consequences. Be that as it might, Kalavati could not withstand her hunger and approached a Brahmana's house where a Vrata of Satya Narayana was being observed; she returned home late along with the 'Prashad' or the remains of the Offering to the Deity at the Puja. The mother was annoyed that Kalavati returned home late but as was conveyed by Kalavati that the delay was due to a Satya Narayana Vrata; Kalavati was then reminded of the lapse that occurred in not performing the Vrata and approached a past companion's house and begged money for performing the Vrata. Her companion replied that in the heydays of Kalavati, the latter gave a loan which would now be returned. Thus, Kalavati performed the Vrata as prescribed and Swami Satyanarayana was indeed satisfied. As a result, Vishnu Deva came into the dreams of the King who kept Sadhu and son-in-law in his custody; the former ordered the King to free the alleged prisoners, Sadhu and Shankhapati at once. Next morning the King called the Minister about the strange dream of Satya Narayana and his instruction to the King. The Minister called the Prisoners and found out their full antecedents. The King apologised to Sadhu, gave lot of money and freed them. Sadhu and son-in-law got back to their ship but even now there was no hint of remorse for not having performed the Vrata. Bhagavan took the form of a Hermit near the Ship and asked Sadhu and his son-in-law as to what was in the Ship. As a matter of fact there were many valuables forcefully taken by the King's soldiers from the Ship and since restored, besides many gifts from the King to them when released after their imprisonment. But Sadhu and son-in-law mocked at the Hermit and replied that the ship contained only dried leaves and grass and there was nothing worthy of donating to him. The hermit replied: 'Tadhashtu' (So be it!). Sadhu and son-in-law really and literally discovered dried leaves and grass, instead of the valuables in the Ship! They were stunned and searched for the hermit and fell on his feet. The hermit reprimanded Sadhu by recalling all the incidents when Sadhu first encountered the 'Pratima' (Idol) of the Satya Narayana at the Palace of King Chandrachuda; he prayed for a child and pledged that he would perform Satya Narayana Vrata befitting his status but on getting a child he did not do so; he said that when the child grew of age and after her wedding, he would perform the Vrata but again he did not; he asked for lot of wealth which was also granted, but still he did not redeem the pledge; when he was imprisoned and sought help then too, did not; when he was let free from the prison and Bhagavan's help was sought even then he never thought that Bhagavan gave the help; now too, he lied and said there was nothing for charity in the ship except grass and dried leaves! Sadhu then fell flat on his knees, displayed genuine shame and repentance and prayed as follows: *Satya Swarupam Satyasandham Satya Narayanam Harim, Yatsatyatvena Jagatastvam Satyam twaam Namaamyaham/ Twanmayaa mohitat-mano na*

*Pashyayantyatmanah Shubham, Duhkaambhodhou sadaa magna Duhkhecha Sukhamaaninah/ Moodhoham Dhana garvena Madaandheekruta lochanah, na jaane swaatmanah Kshemam kathampashyaami Mudhadhih/ Kshamaswa mamadouraatmyam tapodhaamne Hare Namah, Aajnaapayatmadaasyam me yena tey charanow smarey/* (Satya Swarupa! Satyasandha! Satya Narayana Bhagavan Hari! Human Beings tend to become victims of ‘Maya’ (Illusion) and get victimised with the thoughts that happiness is in the deep Oceans of ‘Samsara’ and seek to attain those momentary joys; persons like me become arrogant and ego owing to small amounts of wealth and imagine no end of themselves foolishly; You are well-known as ever-merciful to those who are repentant. Mahatma! Could You not provide me one chance of correcting myself to devote my entire Self at the lotus-like feet of ours!). Bhagavan Satya Narayana, the ever-compassionate replied positively and blessed the Vanika. A few days later, the ship of Sadhu sailed off and a message reached Kalavati that her husband was arriving ashore soon. She was so excited that the concluding part of the Satya Narayana Vrata being performed was ignored and did not even secure the ‘Prasada’ presented to Bhagavan as the ‘Naivedya’ and ran off to welcome the husband. But as soon as the ship was cited from a distance, she witnessed the horror of the sinking ship! Kalavati fell unconscious and after recovering her senses prepared herself to immolate in a Fire- Pit. As she was about to jump into the Fire, a Celestial Voice was heard saying that Kalavati who was already performing the Vrata did the unpardonable indiscretion of ignoring the Prasada and hence the calamity of the sinking ship, but if she went back to the house and took the Prasada with veneration, then the situation might change for the better! Kalavati was ashamed of her and did the amends at once; the sinking ship stood up and got anchored safe. There was a happy reunion of the family. Indeed, none could ever ignore the Lord who is other-wise ever-forgiving, considerate and clement! In Kali Yuga, the most fruitful, effective and instantly result-oriented worship is indeed that of Satya Narayana Vrata, undoubtedly. [ Essence of Hindu Festivals]

Ekaamra/ Purushottama Kshetras and King Indradyumna’s Temple of Jagannatha (‘Kaarunya Sthava Varnana’ /Vishnu Stotra included)

Maharshi Lomaharshana narrated to the Sages assembled at Naimisharanya under the leadership of Suta Maha Muni about the significance of Ekaamra and Purushottama Kshetras as told by Lord Brahma himself originally. Ekaamra Kshetra had as much of popular belief and reputation of Varanasi with Koti Shiva Lingas and eight Tirthas where at the beginning of the present Kalpa there was stated to have been a huge mango tree and hence the name of Ekaamra (literally meaning Mango orchards). It was also stated that the sacred waters of various Tirthas, Rivers, Sarovaras, Pushkari, Tataakas and Vapis, besides the Oceans surrounding Bharata Desha were collected by Devatas and poured into the famed Bindudsara Tirtha where Tribhuvaneswara (Bhuvaneswar of Orissa) Lingaabhisheka was performed. Since then Agahana / Margaseersha Krishna Paksha Ashtami has been the day when devotees undertake Tirtha Yatra to the Temple when they take sacred bath in the Bindusarovara and at the time of Vishu Yoga perform Tila tarpanas to Devataas, Rishis, and Pitras to attain the Ashva Yaaga Phala. It has been the belief that Tarpanmaas and Pitru Pinda Daanaas / charities to learned Brahmanas at the timings of Grahanaas or Solar and Lunar Eclipses, Vishuva yogas, Samkranti, Ayanaarambhaas, and such other significant Festival Days would yield hundred fold fruits of similar acts in other Kshetras. Thereafter, devotees should enter the Temple and perform Abhisheka, and Puja with Bilwapatra, Lotus and other flowers along with the chanting of Vedic and Tantrika Mantras and ‘Shodashopachaaraas’/ Sixteen Services with Gandha, Pushpa, Phala, Chandana, Dhupa, Deepa, Naivedya, Upahaara, Stuti, Saashtaanga Pranaama, Geeta-Vaadya, Nritya, Japa, Namaskaara and Pradakshina. From the Temple in the Four Directions of Paschima, Purva, Dakshina and Uttara are situated Kshetras some two and half yojanas away, of which **Bhaskareshwara Linga** is the most significant as also other Kshetras. There had also been several other Tirthas not far from Ekaamra Kshetra. Towards the East Coast near the Samudra in the Utkala Desha was the famed Purushottama Kshetra where the all-pervading Jagannatha resided; Brahma Deva stated that besides himself, Shiva, Indra, Agni and other Devataas set up their residences as also Gandharvas, Apsaraas, Pitras, Yakshas, Vidyadharas, Siddhaas, Rishis, also Prajapatis, Garuda, Kinnara, Naaga,

Vedas, Shastras and Itihaasa Puranaas were all present and the Place which got sanctified further with Purushotthama's presence too had acquired unique significance. Those who would visit this extraordinary Tirtha and get the Darshan of Purushotthama would never ever enter Yamaloka but be safe on Swargapatha.

The illustrious and highly virtuous King Indradyumna of Malwadesha with Avantika (Ujjain) as his Capital City on the banks of the Sacred River Kshipra was famed as a unique Administrator with such qualities that his subjects followed Varnaashrama, lived with peaceful contentment and prosperity without fear or ill-health and respectful of values of Dharmik life viz. Dharma-Artha-Kaama-Moksha. Already in Avantika, there had been for times immemorial a Mahaakala Temple of Trinetradhaari Maha Deva whose darshan and worship had proven fulfillment of the wishes of lakhs of visiting devotees. Besides the Sacred Kshipra and several water bodies, there also was a Shivakunda, an instant sin-demolisher, in the vicinity of Mahaakala and devotees who bathed in it; offered Tarpanas to Devas, Rishis and Pitras and entered the Temple to worship Mahaakaala with Lingabhisheka, Pushpa, Gandha, dhupa, deepa, naivedya and pradakshinas were blessed with Ashwamedha Yagna Phala, paapa-mukti and Shivaloka prapti. There was also Govinda Swami Temple which when visited and worshipped, the fruits are stated to relieve the souls of twenty one previous generations. Besides, there also was the Temple of Vikrama Swami whose darshan ensured Swarga Prapti as the King was conducting regular discussions of Itihaasa- Puranas, Shastra-Vedanga deliberations and so on and even Indra and Deva-Devis were stated to attend the Pravachanas!

The King had a long standing ambition to build an unparelled and world famed Temple of Jagannadha with the Idols of Krishna, Balarama and their sister Subhadra where regular and formal worship should be organized with Snaana, Daana, Tapa, Homa and Deva Darshana every day for generations who would seek Moksha to crowds of devotees. With a view to identify a suitable Place for building a Huge Place of Jagannadha as envisaged by the King, the latter undertook a Yatra, with elephants, horses, chariots, and soldiers and the Public towards the southern direction ending the Eastern Sea-coast.

It was at this juncture that the Sages at Naimisharanya interrupted the narration of Maharshi Lomaharshana as to how such most Sacred and appropriate Purushotthama Kshetra was selected by the King Indradyumna? In reply to the query, the Maharshi quoted Lord Bramha that Devi Lakshmi asked Janardana on the same issue and the latter asserted as follows since he had the vision of the future: 'Purushottama Tirtha would for sure one of the most celebrated Tirthas, where Devas, Daityas, Danavas and Marichi-like Maharshis were indeed aware already; he further said that on the Southern Sea-coast there would be a mammoth Vata-Vriksha (Banyan Tree) in a large area of ten yojanas and that would be the most ideal Place for developing Purushotthama Kshetra. This massive Vata Vriksha was in place already and did not get swept away by water even at the Kalpaantara and Sages and Yogis meditated under the Tree and dissolved severest sins like Brahmahatya of previous births. To the north of that Vata Vriksha was situated a Keshava Temple already and from it, there was a Massive Mahal which was indeed the Dharmamaya Abode of Swayambhu Vishnu by praying whom devotees were making a bee-line to Vaikuntha! By realizing this, Yama Dharma Raja approached me (Vishnu) and I assured Yama Deva that this specific Pratima would be hidden by me.' King Indradyumna crossed Mahanadi on the either sides of which the lands were fertile, Brahmanas were pious engaged in Yagnas, Homas, worships, fastings and Swadhyaas; Varnaashramas were flourishing and the King came to realize that the destination was reached where the Temple task was to be taken up. He ordered his Samanta Rajas nearby to let the building material arrive, Shilpis were ordered to arrive to quicken the making of various Idols and the Astrologers were summoned to fix up suitable dates of various stages of construction. Efforts were intensified to locate the famed Swayambhu Purushotthama Vighraha which was misplaced from the Keshava Temple. As advised by Raja Purohitas and Panditaas, the King performed Ashwamedha Yagna. Simultaneously the Temple Construction was completed too. But there was no trace of the Purushottama Pratima yet and the King was terribly worried and prayed to the Lord at length:

*Vaasudeva Namastestu Namastey Moksha Kaaranaa, Traahi maam Sarva Lokesha Janmasamsaara saagaraat/ Nirmalaambara samkaasha Namastey Purushotthaama, Sankarshana Namastestu traahi maam Dharanidhara/ Namastey Hemagarbhaaya Namastey Makaradhwaja, Ratikaanta Namastestu traahi maam Shambaraantaka/ Namastenjana samkaasha Namastey Bhaktavatsala, Aniruddha Namastestu traahi maam Varado bhava/ Namastey Vibhudaavaasa Namastey Vibhudapriya, Naraayana Namastestu traahi maam sharanaagatam/ Namastey Balinaam Shreshtha NamasteyLaangalaayudha, Chaturmukha Jagaddhaamatraahimaam Prapitaamaha/ Namastey Neela meghaabha Namastey Tridashaarchita, Traahi Vishno Jagannaatha magnam maambhava saagarey/*

(Vaasudeva, Moksha Kaarana! Save me from the cycle of birth and death; you are like the clean and clear Sky; my salutations to you Purushottama the best of Beings, Sankarshana who attracts the Universe, Dharanidhara the Holder of Earth's total weight, the Golden-bellied or the Shaaligraama Shila, the Makaradhwaja or the Flier of the Flag of a Crocodile on your chariot; Ratikanta or the Swarupa of Manmatha who is an embodiment of Charm and beauty; Shambraantaka or the destroyer of Shambaraasura; Anjana Sankaasha or of Shyamala / light blue colour; Bhaktavatsala or He who is considerate to devotees; Varadaayaka or the Bestower of Boons; Aniruddha; Vibudhaavaasa and Vibudhapriya or He who rests with and fond of Devas; Natayana or He who lies on a Huge Water sheet in Yoga Nidra; I crave for your indulgence and refuge; You are of the Swarupa of Balarama the Symbol of Strength; You are the Halaayudha; Charurmukha; Jagaddhaama; Prapitaamaha, Neela Meghaaya, Tridashaarchita, Vishnu and Jannaadha; I am fully drowned in the Ocean of Samsara; do lift me up and save me!)

King Indradyumna continued his prayer to Jagannadha as follows: You are the annihilator of the invincible Daitya Hiranyakashipu as the incarnation of Nrisimha whose vision was like that of Pralayaagni; save me! You were the Avatar of Maha Varaaha who lifted up Bhudevi from the clutches of Daitya Hiranyaaksha from Rasatalala; lift me up from the deep and distressful Ocean of Samsara; You are the incarnation of Krishna who arrived on Bhumi to terminate innumerable Raakshasaas and Evil Forces and revived Dharma in various Forms of yours like Balarama; You are of the Swarupas like Garuda, Dikpaalakaas and so on and my salutations to one and all; Do bestow on me the boons of Dharma, Artha, Kaama and Moksha; You may be of myriad Forms but the Advaita or the Singular and Unique;

*Ekaastwam hi Harey Vyaapi Chitaswabhaavo Niranjana, Paramam, tava Rupam yadрупam Bhaavaabhaavavivarjitam, Nirlepam Nirgunam Shreshtham Kutastamachalam Dhruvam!---Kadaa Manushya Lokegha Kadaa Tiryaggateshucha, Jalayantrey yathaa chakrey ghatee rajju nibandhanaa/ Yaatichyortham tathaa madhey bhraman gacchaami yogatah, Evam Samsara chakreysminbhairavey Romaharshaney/ Bhramaami suchiram kaalam naantam pashyaami karhichit, Najaaney kim karomyadya Harey Vyaakulitendriyah/ Shoka trishnaabhi bhutoham Kaandisiko vichetanah, Idaaneem twaamaham Deva vihvalah Sharanam gatah/ Traahimaam Duhkhatam Krishnamagnam Samsara Saagarey, Kripaam kuru Jagannaatha Bhaktam maam yadi manyasey!*

(Deva! I am not aware of when I shall be in Naraka or Swarga; when would I be on Bhumi and when as an animal or a bird! I have been in the cycle of birth and death just as a string around a pot, once on top and once on bottom as a mechanical appliance lifting water from a well in the 'Kalachakra' and there does not seem to be an end to the 'Bhramana' or unending revolution; I am at a complete loss to realize as to when is the termination of this endless cycle as I am victimized as a 'Kandiseeka' or a migrant/ distressed wanderer from one life to another. Bhagavan Krishna! Kindly liberate me from these unending and repetitive flights in the pursuit of everlasting mirages!)

As the King Indradumna prayed on the above lines, Jagannatha was pleased and granted darshan in the pure-hearted dreams of the King; the Lord who was in His full Form with Shankha-Chakra-Gada and

Saranga directed the King to reach the Sea shore in the early morning time all alone with an axe in hands into the Sea which would give way to lead him to reach a place where he would sight a Maha Vriksha and without any hesitation cut the Tree; while cutting it, Jagannadha said that the King would discover a fabulous ‘Vastu’ and should consider that Vastu as the Pratima of Jannaatha for installation in the Temple awaiting the installation. The King was overwhelmed with the vision of Paramatma in the dream, recited Vishnu Mantra and Vishnu Sukta, reached the Sea Shore with extreme devotion and did exactly as directed; he found the Maha Vriksha, cut it into pieces and found Bhagavan Vishnu and Vishwakarma in the Forms of two Brahmanas; the latter interrogated the King as to why the latter was cutting the Tree and the King replied smilingly and with extreme veneration that he was directed by the Adyanta Rahita Bhagavan Jagannaathaa Himself! The Brahmanas complimented the efforts of the King and one of them directed the other Brahmana to prepare the Pratimas on the lines prescribed by Him saying:

*Krishnarupam param shaantam padmapatraayatekshanam, Srivatsa Koustubha dharam Shankha Chakra Gadaadharam, Gouraangam Kshira varnaabhaam dviteeyam Swastikaankitam/ Laangalaastradharam Deva manantaakhyam Mahabalam, Deva Daanava Gandharva Yaksha Vidyaadharoragaih/ Na Vigjnaatohi tasyaantasteynaananta iti smrutatah, Bhagineem Vaasudevasya Rukmavarnaam Sushobhanaam/ Triteeyaam vai Subhadraamcha Sarva Lakshana Lakshitaam!*

(Bhagavan Shri Krishna is of extreme peaceful visage; his eyes are large and sparkling like a lotus; his chest is adorned with the Emblem of Srivatsa and with Koustubha jewel; and his hands are decorated with Shankha, Chakra and Gada. The Second Idol of Bhagavan Balarama should be of milk-like Gaura Varna; of Swastika Chihna / Signage; with Hala/ plough as his Ayudha named Ananta or Interminable / Endless, whom none could describe including Deva- Daanava-Gandharva- Yaksha-Vidyadhara-Nagas! The third Pratma would be of Subhadra the sister of Vaasudeva and Balarama whose sacred Physique was golden and auspicious!) As soon as the description of the features of the Three Idols was given, the Junior Brahmana materialized the Pratimas exactly on the lines; first of Balabhadra, then of Vaasudeva and finally of Devi Subhadra. Then the King asked the Brahmanas as to who they were precisely- were they Devataas o Yakshaas, Vidyadharaas, Ahwini kumars are Brahma and Vishnus! Bhagavan replied that he was not a Devata, Yaksha, Indra, Brahma and Rudra, but might be as well construed as Vishnu himself! As the latter’s identity was revealed, the King was non-plussed and broke down into ecstatic bewilderment and implored him as follows:

*Shriyahkaanta Namasteystu Shripatey Peetavaasavey, Shreedha Shreesha Shri Nivaasa Namaste Shreeniketana/ Adhyam Purushameeshaanam Sarvesham Sarvatomukham, Nishkalam Paramam Devam Pranatosmi Sarvatomukham, Nishkalam Paramam Devam Pranatosmi Sanaatanam/ Shabdaateetam Gunaateetam Baavaabhaava Vivarjitam, Nirlepam Nirgunam Sooksham Sarvajnam Sarvabhaavanam/ Praavrunmegha prateekaasham Go Brahmana hitey ratam, Sarveshaameva goptaram vyaapinam Sarva bhaavinam/ Shankhachakradharam Devam Gadaa musaladhaarinam, Namasye Varadam Devam Neelotpaladala chhivam/ Naga paryankashayanam Ksheerodaarnava shaayinam/ Namasyeham Hrisheekesham Sarva papa harim Harim/ Punastwaam Deva Devesham Namastye Varadam Vibhum, Sarva LokeshwaramVishnum Moksha Kaaranam -avyayam/*

(Lakshmikanta! Peetaambara dhari! Shrinivasa! I greet you the Adipurusha, Ishaana, Sarveswara, Sarvatomukha or He visions in all directions; Nishaka, Sanatana, Parama Deva, Shabda-Gunaateeta or He who is beyond the reach of Sound or Features; devoid of Bhava or Abhava / belief or non-belief; Nirlepa, Nirguna, Sukshma, Sarvajna, and Saviour; Your Form is dark like the clouds of Rainy Season; You are always engaged in the safety of cows and Brahmanas; Sarvajna or the Omniscient and the Supreme Creator; You are the Highest Deity with Shanka-Chakra-Gada-Musala ready to save; the Ever Provider to one and all; Sesha Shaayi; Hrishikesha; Sarva Paapa Haari; Moksha Kaarana, Sarva Vyapi Vishnu; my obeisances to you Sarva Lokesha!).

The King then asked for the boon of attaining Vishnupada which was impossible even for Devaasuras, Gandharvas, Yaksha, Siddha, Saadhyta, Vidyaadhara, Naaga, Guhya, Kinnara, Parama Yogis and Maharshis. Lord Jagannatha not only granted the boon and also blessed him to continue the Kingship for nineteen thousand years to ensure the observance of worship at the Purushottama Kshetra; he also materialized an Indradymna Sarovara to immortalize human memory of the most illustrious King as long as Jagannatha's Presence in the Purushottama Kshetra would continue. It is stated that a devotee would accomplish Great Punya /Fruit by worshipping Lord Jannaatha at Purushottama Kshetra by observing strict devotion and fasting on Jyeshtha Shuddha Dwadashi as he or she would acquire by standing upright with devotion for seventy thousand years at Kurukshetra by stringent austerity. Even a passing Darshan of the Shikhara of the Purushottama Temple from a distance would demolish Sarva Paapaas of the Past and Present. [ Brahma Purana]

### Pralaya Mukunda

At the time of Pralaya or the Great Annihilation at the Kalpaantara, Chandra, Surya and Vayu faced near-extinction as also of the Sthaavara-Jangamaas /moveable and immobile Beings. That was the time when Pralaya kaala Surya became too fierce and there were cloud-bursts and severe lightnings. Pralayaagni surrounded the entire Universe and there were indeed no survivors, except Markandeya who was struggling to swim against the hurricane and thunder storm. Suddenly he heard a whisper-like voice which said: come near the Vata Vriksha and come to my refuge! The Maharshi wondered as to where the feeble voice emerged from. He was astonished as he looked up the high and sprawling Banyan where he visioned a charming Balarupadhari Krishna Bhagavan with four hands armed with Shankha-Chakra-Gada-Saranga with peacock feathers on his golden Kireeta, Vanamaala, sparkling ear-rings and Koustubha Mani! Markandeya was highly refreshed from his physical exhaustion and fatigue as he visioned the fantastic appearance but continued to ruminate it as a false hallucination! He rubbed on his eyes repeatedly in utter disbelief. Then came the profound voice saying: My child, you are too tired; come near to me for solace and enter into my body for soothing relaxation. On hearing the Celestial Voice of Bala Gopala, the Maharshi turned motionless and speechless and entered Bala Krishna's face as though in a state of stupor and blankness and gradually entered in Paramatma's belly where he saw for himself Pancha Bhutas, Sapta Lokas of Bhur-Bhuvar-Swar-Mahar-Jana-Tapas and Satya; Sapta Paataalas viz. Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Pataala, Rasaatala and Mahatala; Sapta Dwipas viz. Jambu, Plaksha, Shaalmala, Kusha, Krouncha, Shaaka and Pushkara; Sapta Samudras, Sapta Parvatas, Indra and other Devas, Siddha, Chaarana, Naga, Muni, Yaksha, Apsara and finally the Charaachara Srishti! Markandeya gradually recovered semi-consciousness and extolled Bala Mukunda as follows:

*Devadeva Jagannatha Maayaa Balavapurdhara, Traahimaam Chaaru Padmaaksha Duhkhitam  
Sharanaagatam/ -----Tavodarey cha Devesa mayaadrushto charaacharam, Vismitham vishannascha  
traahimaam Purushottama/ Samsaaremin -niraalambey praseeda Purushottama Praseeda  
Vibhudhassreshta praseeda vibhudapriya/ Praseeda vibhudhaamnaatha praseeda vibhutaalaya,  
Praseeda sarva Lokesa Jagat Kaarana Kaarana/ Praseeda Sarvakruddeva Praseeda mama Bhudhara,  
Praseeda salilaavaasa praseeda Madhusudana/ Praseeda Kamalaakaantya Praseeda Tridasheswara,  
Praseeda Kamsakesighna praseedaarishta naashana/ Praseeda Krishna Daityaghna praseeda  
danujaantaka, Praseeda Mathuraavaasa Praseeda Yadunandana/ Praseeda Shakraavaraja Praseeda  
varadaavyaya, Twam Mahi twam Jalam Devah twamagnistwam sameerana/ Twam nabhastwam  
Manaschaiva twamahankaara eva cha, Twam Buddhih Prakritischaiva Satvaadyastwam Jagatpatey/  
Purushastwam Jagadyaapi Purushaadapichottamah, Twamindranyaani Sarvaani Shabdaadyaa  
vishayaah Prabho/ Twam Dikpaalascha Dharmaascha Vedaa Yagnaah sadakshinaah, Twamindrastwam  
Shivo Devastwam Havistwam Hutaashana/ Twam Yamah Pitruaardevah twam Rakshaadhipatih  
Swayam, Varunastwamapaam Naathah twam Vaayustwam Dhaneswarah/ Twameesaanas  
twamanantastwam Ganeshascha, Shanmukha Vasavastwam tathaa Rudraaptwa maadityaascha  
khecharaah/ Daanavaastwam tathaa Yakshaastwam Daityaah Samarudganaah, Siddhaas -charapsaraso*

*Naagaa Gandharwaastwam sa Chaaranaah/ PitaraVaakakhilyaascha Prajaanaam patayochyuta,  
Munayastwamrushi ganaastwa maswinou Nisaacharaah/ Anyaascha Jaatayastwamhi yatkinchitjeeva  
sanjnitam, Kinchaatra bahunoktena Brahamaastamba gocharam/ Bhutam Bhavyam Bhavishyam cha  
twam Jagatsa charaacharam, Yatthe rupam Param Deva kutasthamachalam dhruvam/  
Brahmaadyaastanna jaananti kathamanyelpamedhasah, Deva Shuddhaa swabhaavosi Nityastwam  
Prakrutey parah/ Avyaktah Shaaswatonantah Sarvavyaapi Maheswarah, Twamaakaashah parah Shaanto  
Aaajastwam Vibhuravyayah/*

(Deva Deva! Mayaa Baala Murtidhara! Padmaaksha! Kindly save me as I am shattered. I have visualized the ‘Charaachara Jagat’ in your belly. I am indeed shocked and frightened. Please show me mercy as I am in a confused situation. You are the cause of existence. You are the Pancha Bhutaas of Earth-Water-Light and heat-Air and Sky; You are the Ahamkaara or Self-Recognition and Ego; You are the Maha-Tatwa and Buddhi; the Prakriti; You are the Triguna Swarupa or of Satwa-Rajo-Tamo Gunaas; You are the Dikpaalakas or the Chiefs of the Ten-Direcrtions; the Ashtaa Vasus; Ekaadasha Rudras; Dwadasaadyas; Gandharvas; Devas and Danavas; Forty Nine Marudganaas; Pitru Devataas; Vaalakhilyaas; Prajaapatis; Sapta Rishis; two Ashvinis; Unimaginable number of Jeevas; the Visionary of Brahmaadi Beings; Bhuta-Bhavya-Bhavishya Rupa; and ‘Kutastha’ beyond imagination of even Brahma downward; the Nitya-Suddha-Buddha-Mukta-Swarupa; Avyakta- Shaswata-Ananta-Sarva Vyapi-Maheswara-Shanta and Aakaasha Rupa).

As Markandeya completed his Stuti of Bala Mukunda, the Maharshi sought clarification from Bhagavan about Maha Tatwa, Maya and Bhagavan and the latter smiled and stated: Even Brahma and Devas could not comprehend about the Concepts but keeping in view the Supreme Pitru Bhakti, Deva Bhakti and the high-order of Brahmacharya of the Muni, the Lord granted the greatest dispensation to the Sage by way of ‘Sakshaatkaara’ and safety at the Pralaya; Bhagavan then outlined his clarifications in brief: At the beginning of Srishti, he created water and called it as *Naara* and since my *Ayana* or *Nivaasa* / residence was the Naara, Bhagavan was named as Naara-Ayana or **Naraayana**; Bhagavan Narayana was the Supreme Creator, the Sanaatana or the Most Ancient, Avinaashi (Indestructible), and Srashta and Samharta; He said that he was Vishnu, Brahma, Indra, Kuybera, Pretaraja Yama, Shiva, Chandrama, Prajapati Kashyapa, Dhata, Vidhata and Yajna. He stated that his Face was Agni, his Feet were Prithvi, his eyes were Surya and Chandra, Dyuloka his Mastaka or Head, Akaasha and Dashaas his ears, his sweat the Jala; the whole Universe was his Body, the Sky, Directions and Vayu. Veda Vidwans performing Deva Yagnaas worship Him only. He bore the brunt of the Universe in the form of Sesha Naga who in turn carried the weight of Samudras, Parvatas and so on; as the Varaha Rupa he salvaged the sinking Prithvi all by himself from Rasatala; He assumed the Form of Badabaagni to absorb Sea Water and gave it back in the Form of Rains from the Meghas; from his face were born Brahmanas, shoulders and hands were created the Kshatriyas, Vaishyas from his highs and Sudras from his feet; from him were created Jnaanarupi Sanyaasis, Jijnaasus, and Adhyatmika Vettas; He was the Script- Maker of Ruk-Yajur-Sama and Atharva Vedas; He was the Samvartaka (Code-Creator) Jyoti, Samvartaka Agni, Samvartaka Surya, and Samvartaka Vayu; the millions of Nakshatras /Stars on the Sky were his body hairs; the Oceans full of Ratnas and the Dasha-Dishaas were also own Form; the concepts of Satya, Daana, Tapasya and Ahimsa were all his creations; and the Antah- karana or the Inner Conscience of all Beings was also his own Form. Bala Mukunda further clarified that when ever Dharma or the Outlines of Virtuous Existence / Behaviour prescribed by Him got disturbed or distorted to extreme situations, He himself assumed Avatars or Incarnations as per the required exigencies to destroy the Evil Forces and restore Dharma again: *Yadaa yadaahi Dharmasya Glaanir bhavati Sattama, Abhyuttaana –madharmasya tadaatmaanam Srujaanmyaham/*

\Having heard this, Markandeya was indeed thrilled and Bhagavan asked whether the Maharshi had any other clarification required. Markandeya replied that there had been a feeling about the Supremacy of Narayana versus Shiva and to dispel this doubt for the benefit of the posterity, he proposed to build a

Temple of Shiva. Bala Mukunda smiled and stated that he had already taken pains to clarify that there was indeed only one Supreme Shakti named as Narayana or Shiva, or Brahma or Indra or Devis, or Devatas or of myriad other Rupas but the cover of Maya made different interpretations, while indeed the Supreme Energy was one and only one despite ill-advised classifications made by human beings on the basis of various Forms, Names, Features, Gunas, Sex, and so on; indeed these men and women ascribed to various Deities either with ill-founded and misleading judgments or to serve their own selfish gains or by sheer ignorance of realities; although Vedas and Vedangas explained and highlighted specific aspects of that Supreme Force, the Public got confused and believed ‘the woods for the forest’.

Bhagavan thus said: *Yadetparamam Devam Kaaranam Bhuvaneshwaram, Lingamaaraadhana -arthaaya naanaa bhaava prashaantaye/ Mamaadishidena Viprendra kuru sheeghram Shivaalayam, Tatprabhaavaacchiva lokey tishthatwam cha tathaakshayam/ Shivey Samsthaapitey Vipra mama Samsthaapanam bhavet, Naavayorantaram kinchideka bhaavou dwidhaa krutou/ Yo Rudrah sa swayam Vishnuryo Vishnuh sa Maheswarah Ubhayanorantaram naasti Pavanaakaashayoriva/ Mohito naabhi jaanaatiya yeva Garudhadhwajah, Vrishabhaadhwajah sa yeveti Tripuraghnam Trilochanam/ Tavanaamaankitam tasmaakkuru Vipra Shivaalayam, Uttarey Deva Devasya kuru teertham Sushobhanam/ Markandeya hrudo naama Naralokeshu Vishrutah, Bhavishyati Dwija shreshtha Sarva Paapa pranaashanah/*

(Hey Vipra! You must soon build a Temple in which Parama Shiva Linga should be set up for the Aradhana of Bhuvaneshwara who was the cause of the Universe so that you would be blessed in Shiva Loka for ever. Indeed setting up a Shiva Linga would be as good as establishing my Pratima. There was no differentiation in Shiva and Vishnu whatsoever as they were of the same Tatwa like that of Akaash and Vayu. Those ignorant of this reality was like those disrespecting Garudadhwaja and Vrishadhwaja. Hence, I instruct you to soon construct a Shivalaya to firmly establish the fact that Hara and Hari were just the same; I shall then materialize a Sarovara to be named as ‘Markandeya Hlaadam’ at the North of the Temple in which sincere bathing would demolish the person taking Snaana in it would be fully rid of the past sins and gain propitiousness.)

By so saying, Bala Mukunda blessed Markandeya and disappeared.

#### Pancha Tirthas - Mahatmya and Puja Vidhana

Brahma Deva briefed the formal procedure of worship at Pancha Tirthas (Indradyumna Sarovara, Markandeyahlada, Akshaya Vata, Sweta Madhava and Samudra) viz. Snaana, Daana, Darshana and Puja of Parama Shiva and Vishnu Rupas to the Munis at Naimishaaranya as conveyed by Suta Muni. On entering the Markandeya Hrida, a devotee should face Northern Direction and perform three dips in water navel- deep, reciting the following: *Samsaara saagarey magnam Paapagrasta machetanam, Traahi maam Bhaganetraghna Tripuraarey namostutey/ Namah Shivaaya Shaantaaya Sarva paapa haraayacha, Snaanam karomi Devesha mama Nashyatu paatakam/* (Bhaganetra Naashaka Shiva! Tripuraasura Shatru! Shanta Swarupa! I am deeply engaged in Samsaara; protect me from my sins and grant me benevolence). After the Snaana, formal Tarpana should be performed to Devas, Rishis and Pitras; then the devotees should enter the Shiva Temple, perform three Pradakshinas, recite Markandeswaraaya Namah and Mula Mantra / Aghora Mantra and invoke Paramashiva with the following: *Trilochana Namastestu Namastey Shahi Bhushana, Traahi maam twam Virupaaksha Mahadeva Namostutey/* After formal worship was concluded the Shiva Linga, then three parikramaas be performed to a Vata Vriksha by saying: *Om Namoh Avyakta Swarupaaya Mahaa Praaya kaariney, Mahdrasamopavishtaaya Nyagrodhaaya Namostuey/ Amaratwam sadaa kalpey Hareshchaayatanam Vata, Nyagrodha Hara mey paapam Kalpavriksha Namostutey/*

Pradakshinas of the Vata Vriksha Vishnu Rupa and Garuda Rupa signifying the Paralaya Vata Vriksha of Bala Mukunda would yield the Mahaphala of Mukti from Brahmahatyaadi paatakaas, besides bestowing

the Ashwamedha Yagna Phala. Following the Vata Vriksha Parikrama, the devotee would then feast his /her eyes with the darshana of Shri Krishna, Balarama and Devi Subhadra: first worship Balabhadra reciting the hymn:

*Namastey Haladhrugraama namastey Musalaayudha, Namstey Revatikaanta Namastey Bhaktavatsala/ Namastey Balinaam Shreshtha namasty Dharaneedhara, Pralambaarey Namostu traahi maam Krishna purvaja!* Pursuant to Babhadra Puja, the devotee would then be engrossed with the recital of Dwadashaaksharan Mantra viz. Om Bhagavatey Vaasudevaaya and execute the formal Puja to Shri Krishna Deva with Gandha-Pushpa-Dhupa-Deepa-Phala- Naivedya-Kirtana- Natya and Pranaamas, followed by the following: ‘

*Jaya Krishna Jagannatha Jayasarvaagha naashana, Jaya Chanura Keshighna Jaya Kamsa nishudana/ Jaya Padma Palaashaaksha Jaya chakra Gadaa- dhara, Jaya Nilaamubuda shyaama Jaya sarva Sukhaprada/ Jayadeva Jagatpujya Jaya samsara naashana, Jayalokapatey naatha Jayavaanchaa phalaprada/ Samsaara saagarey ghorey nissarey dukkha pheniley, Krodhagraahaakuley Roudrey Vishayodaka samplavey/ Naanaarogormikaliley mahaavarta sudustarey, Nimagnoham Sura shreshta Traahimaam Purushotthama/ Evam Prasaadya Devesam Varadam Bhaktavatsalam, Sarva Paapa haram Devam sarva kaama phalapradam/ Peenaamsam Dwibhujam Krishnam Padmapatraayatekshanam, Mahoraskam Mahabaahum Peetavastram Shubhaananam/ Sankhachakra gadaa paanim Makutaangada bhushanam, Sarva lakshana Samyuktam Vanamaalaa vibhushitam/ Any person performed Krishna Stuti as above would indeed accomplish the fruits of Ashvamedha Yagnaas and Sarva Tirha Darshana- Veda-Yagna-Daana-Vrata-Niyama-Tapasya and Brahmacharya! Finally, a devotee should pray to Subhadra Devi as follows: *Namastey Sarvage Devi namastey Shubha Soukhyadey, Traahi maam Pancha Patraakshi Katyaayani Namostutey/* A devotee would thus complete the darshanas of Subhadra Devi too.*

#### Nrisimha, Sweta Madhava and Matsya Madhava Mahatmyas

Bhagavan Nrisimha Deva as Man-Lion Swarupa had been a significant resident Deity of Purushotthama Tirtha after the extermination of the Demon Hiranya Kashipu; the Bhagavan’s mere presence ensured the orderly existence of human beings in the pursuit of the Chaturvidha Purushaarthas of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Mokshas; in fact, Bhagavan Nrisimha had been always assuring the safety of the entire ‘Charaachara Jagat’ viz. the Beings of Marthya, Swarga and Pataala lokas. To all the ‘Nrisimha Upasakaas’ practising a hermit- life by eating leaves, fruits and material grown under-ground like potatoes etc.; drinking natural water and meditating Nrisimha Deva in forests and forsaken Places, there would be nothing impossible to accomplish in life and beyond. Any human being performing meditation to Nrisimha on Shukla Dwadashis by the Nrisimha Mantra twenty lakh times would have nothing else to ask for as the devotee would become replete with success and virtue , besides demolishing Maha Patakaas even.

*Krutwaa padakshinam tatra Narasimham Prapujayet, Punya Gandhaadirdhupaih pranasya shiraasaa Prabhu/ Karpura chandanaaktaani jaatee pushpaani mastakey, Pradadyaannara Simhasya tatha siddhihi Prajaayatey/ Bhagavan Sarvakaryeshu na kwachitprati hasyatey hanyatey, Tejhsodhum na shaktaahssyurbrahma Rudraa dayassuraah/ Kim punardaanavaalokey Siddha Gandharva Maanushaah, Vidyaadharaa Yakshaganaah sa Kinnara Mahoragaah/ Manrtam yaa naasuraanhanthum Japanteykenya sadhakaah, Tey Sarvey Pralayam yaanti drushtwaadityaagni varchasah/ Sakrujjaptam tu kavacham divyam rakshatey -sarvamupadravam, Dwirjaptam Kavacham Diwyam rakshatey Devadaanavaat/ Gandharwaah Kinnaraa Yaksha Vidyaadhara Mahoragaah, Bhutaah Piscaachaa Rakshaamsi ye chaney paripandhanah/ Trijaptam kavacham Divya mabhedyam cha Suraasuraaih, Dwaadasa -abhyantarey chaiva yojanaanaam Dwijotthamaa/*

( After Pradakshina, devotees should perform the ‘Shodasopacharaas’ or the Sixteen Services of Aavaahana- Asana-Pratimabhisheka-Vastra- Yagnopaveeta-Pushpa-Phala- Gandha- Dhupa-Dipa-Mantra Pushpa-Naivedya-Taamboola- Geeta- Vaadya-Nrittha-and Swasti. Chandana and Pushpa should be placed on the heads of the devotees so that they attained complete satisfaction of the worship. Indeed, even Rudra and Brahma would be unable to withstand the ‘Tejas’ of Bhagavan Nrisimha, not to mention of Danava- Siddha- Gandharva and Maanavas. Asuras had been in the habit of practicing Abhicharika Mantras but simple meditation of Nrisimha Mantras should not only save the targets of such Mantras but destroy the practitioners of such worships. Recitation of Nrisimha Kavacha twice a day would ward off all Evil Spirits and demolish all obstacles created by Danava- Yaksha-Bhuta-Preta-Piscachas and even of Devas; recitation of the Kavacha thrice would fortify the practitioners some twelve Yojanas away and even Suraasuraas could never create any physical ailments, mental dis-satisfactions and psychological imbalances. In fact, mere ‘Smaran’ or thought of Nrisimha at the times of battles, difficulties, lonely places, fright of thieves / bandits or tigers, peril of life, poison, fire and water hazards, threat of Royalty or Authorities, fear of Sea, distress by Grahās, physical ailments would provide instant liberation and safety. Darshan of Nrisimha Deva would assure such relief as the early day break would dispel all kinds of troubles and tribulations. Dedication to Nrisimha by any class of Society-be it Brahmana or Kshatriya or Vaishya or Sudras or women -is highly fruitful while formal pujas would guarantee fulfillment in life and Vishnu loka later.

Lord Brahma then narrated the legend of Sweta Madhava Mahatmya to the next generation as conveyed by Suta Maharshi to the congregation of Munis. There was a valiant King named Sweta in Satya Yuga who was famed for Dharma, Satya, and Daanas. His Praja was of the normal longevity of ten thousand years and there were no untimely deaths of age, disease, or natural calamities. Unfortunately once, there was a premature death of a child of Muni Kapala Gautama, who took the body to the Royal Court and the King declared that if he failed to bring the child back to life within a week from Yama Loka, then he would enter a Fire-pit for self-immolation! King Sweta worshipped Maha Deva with a lakh of Nila Kamalaas with tremendous dedication and reverence and the latter along with Devi Parvati gave darshan and as a proof of Sweta’s sincerity and directed Yama Dharma Raja to revive the Muni’s son to life. Subsequently, King Sweta administered his Kingdom without any problem for thousand years. In course of time, the King performed Keshavaaradhana and Vrata as per Vedic prescriptions and undertook a pilgrimage to Purushottama Tirtha on the East Coast and had a Darshan of Lord Jagannaatha, Lord Balarama and their Sister Devi Subhadra to his heart’s contentment. It was at that time, he decided to build a Temple dedicated to Sweta Madhava and having prepared a Pratima he did the Pratishtha of the Lord in great veneration and faith with a month’s mouna vrata, fastings, celibacy, ‘dwadashaakshara’ mantra japa, daily pujas, homas; ‘jagaaranas’ and collective prayers, Stutis and Purana Pravachanas. At a crowing grand- finale function, the King prostrated before the Pratima of Sweta Madhava and recited a Stuti as follows:

*Om Namō Vaasudevaaya Namah Sankarshanaaya cha, Pradyumnaaniruddhaya Namō Naraayanaaya cha/ Namostu Bahurupaaya Viswarupaaya Vedhasey, Nirgunaayaapr -arkyaaya Shuchaye Shubhra karminey/ Om Namah Padmanaabhaaya Padmagarbhod -bhavaaya cha, Namostu Padmavarnaaya Padmasaastaayatey Namah/ Om Namō Pushakaraakshaaya Sahasra -akshaaya meedhushey, Namah Saharapaadaaya Sahasrabhujamaanvaye/ Om Namostu Varaahaaya Varadaaya Sumedhasey, Varishthaaya Varenayaa Sharanyaayaachyutaaya cha/ Om Namō Balarupaaya Balapadmaprabhaaya cha/ Balarkasoma netraaya munjakashaaya dheematey/ Keshavaaya Namō Nityam Namō Naraayanayecha, Madhavaaya Varishthaaya Govindaaya Namō Namah /Om Namō Vishnavy Niyam Devaaya Vasuretasey, Madhusudanaaya Namah Shuddhaayaamshu dharaayacha/ Namonantaaya Sukshmaaya Namah Shri Vatsadhaariney, Trivikramaaya cha Namō Divyapeetaambaraayacha/ Srishti Kartrey Namastubhyam Goptrey Dhaatreya Namō Namah, Namostu guna bhutaaya Nirgunaaya Namō Namah/ Namō Vaamana Rupaaya Namō Vaamana Karmaney, Namō Vaamana Netraaya Namō Vaamana vaahiney/ Namō Ramyaaya Pujaaya Namostavyaktarupiney, Aaprataarkyaaya Shuddhaaya Namō bhaya*

*haraayacha/ Samsaaraarnavapotaaya Prashaantaaya swarupiney, Shivaaya Sowmya Rupaaya Rudraayottaranaayacha/Bhavabhanga ktrutey chaiva Bhavabhoga pradaaya cha, Bhavasanghaata rupaaya Bhavasrishtikruteynamah/ Om Namō Divyarupaaya Somaagniswasitaayacha, Soma Suryaamsu kshaaya Go Brahmana hitaayacha/ Om Namah Rukswarupaaya Padakramaswarupiney, Ruksutaaa Namastubhuam Nama Ruksaadhanaayacha/ Om Nano Yajushaam Dhaatreya Yajoorupa dharaayacha, Yajurya -ajyaaya jushtaaya Yajushaam patayenamah/ Om Namah Shripateya Deva Shridharaayav Varaacha, Shriya Kaantaaya Daantaaya yogi chintyaaya Yoginey/ Om Namah Saama Rupaaya Saamadhwani varaayayacha, Om Namah Saama Sowmyaaya Samayoga videya namah/ Saamnecha Saamagetaaya Om Namah Saamadhaariney, Saama Yagna videya chaiva Namah Saamakaraaya - cha/Namastvatharva sirasye Namotharva swarupiney, Namostwadharvapaadaaya Namotharva karaayacha/ Om Namō Vajra Sirshaaya Mathukaitabhya ghaatiney, Mahodadhi jalasthaaya Vedaaharana kaariney/ Namō Deepti Swarupaaya Hrishisheekshaaya vain amah, Namō Bhagavateya tubhyam Vaasu devaaa teya namah/ Narayana namastubhyam Namō Loka hitaayacha, Om Namō Moha naashaaya Bhava bhanga karaayacha/ Gati pradaaya Namō namō bandha haraayacha, Thrailokya tejasaam Kartreya Namastejasswarupiney/Yogeswaraaya Shuddhaaya Raamaayottaranaayacha, Sukhaaya Sukha Netraaya Namassukrutadhaariney/ Vaasudevaaya Vandyaya Vaamadevaaya vainamah, Dehinaam deha kartreya cha Bhedabhangakaraayacha, Devairvandita dehaaya Namasteya Divyamouliney, Namō Vaasanivaasaaya Vaasavyavaharaayacha/ Om Namō Vasukartreya cha Vasuvaasa pradaayacha/ Namō Yagna Swarupaaya Yagneshaaya cha Yoginey/ Yatiyoga kareshaaya Namō Yagnaanga dhaariney, Sankashanaaya cha Namah Pralamba Mathanaayacha, Meghaghosha swanotteerna vegalaangalka dhaari]ney, Namostu Gnaaninaam Gnaana Naraayana paraayana/*

(Om! My greetings to you Vaasudeva, Sankarshana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Narayana! You have several Rupas like Vishwa Rupa, Vidhata, Nirguna, Atyarka, Shuddha, Shubha Karma, Padmanabha, Padmagarbodbhava, Pusharaaksha, Sasraaksha, Meedhusa / Shiva Swarupa, Padmavarna, Sahasrapada, Sahasrabhuja, Varaaharupa dhaari, Varada, Subuddhi, Varishtha, Varenya, Sharanaagata rakshana, Achyuta, Balarupadhaari, Balasurya, Chandrarupa, Keshava, Narayana, Madhava, Varishtha, Vishnu, Nitya, Vasureta, Madhusudana, Suddhaamsudhara, Ananta, Suksha swarupa, Shrivatsadhaari, Trivikrama, Divyapeetaambara, Srishti karta, Guna Swarupa, Nirguna, Vamana Rupa, VamanaKarmaney, Vaman netra, Vamanavahana, Ramya, Puja, Avyata Swarupa, Atarkya, Shuddha, Bhayahara, Samsara Sumudra Taarana, Parama Shanta, Chaitanya Swarupa, Shiva, Sowmya Swarupa, Rudra, Uddharakarta, Bhavabhangakara or Samsarasamharakara, Bhavabhoga prada, Bhavasanghaatakara, Bhava Stishti Karta, Divyarupa, Somaagnivayurupa, Chandra Surya Kirana Keshava, Go-Brahmana Hita, Om Rukswarupa, Padakrama Swarupa, RukVedastuta, Ruksaadhana / Ruchajapasaadhaka, Yajurveda dhaatreya, Yajurupadhara, Yajurveda mantraaraadhya, Shripati, Deva, Lakshmipriya, Yogadhyeyi, Yoga; Om Saama swarupa, Shreshtha Saamadhwani, Saama / Shaanta bhava, Sowmya, Saamayogi, Saama Vedokta Yagna Swarupa; Atharva Sirsha, Atharva Swarupa, Atharvapada, Atharva-kara, Vajraseersha, Madhukaitabha ghaataka, Maha Saagara Shayana, Vedodhhaara, Deepti Swarupa, Hrishikesha, Vaasudeva, Narayana, Lokahita, Mohanaashaka, Vishwa samhaara kaari, Prabho, Uttamagati Pradaaya, Bandhahara, Trilokatejokara, Tejaswarupa, Yogeswara, Shuddha, Raamaayottarana, Sukha Swarupa, Sukha Netra, Sukritadhara, Vaasudeva, Vandyaya, Vaamadeva, Utpattikarana, Bhedadrishti bhangakara, Devairvandita Deva, Divya Makutadharanakara, Vaasanivaasaaya, Vaasavyavaharaaya, Vasukarta, Vasuvaasa prada, Yagna Swarupa, Yagneshaaya, Yatiyogakara, Yagnaanga dhara, Sankarshana, Pralambmathana, Meghavaani gambheera, Prachandavega halaayudha Balarama, Jnaana Swarupa, and Narayana! Highly pleased by the Stuti, Sweta Madhava granted Vaikuntha to the King which was impossible to accomplish even to Devas, Siddhaas, Maha Munis and Parama Yogis; he also awarded the boon to bless the Temple where Sweta Madhava's Sacred Idol was set up would be named as Sweta Ganga Tirtha and the Sweta Gangaajala sprinkled on a devotee's head by the end of Kushaa grass would bestow access to Swarga after death and darshan of the Idol would secure full contentment.

Brahma Deva then continued the Mahatmya of Matsya Madhava Samudra which was not far away from Sweta Madhava Kshetra. Marjana Vidhi or the Method of Snaana / Bathing especially on Jyeshtha Purnima coinciding with Jyeshtha Nakshatra was stated to be of far-reaching consequence in the Samudra. After initial 'Achamana' and recital of Ashtakshara Mantra viz. OM NAMO NARAYANAYA, recalling that Narayana (Naara /water and Ayana / Residing Place) was floating in Yoganidra and signifying that Matsyaavatara of Narayana salvaged Bhudevi from Rasatala, a devotee in the Samudra must perform NYASA or coordination of the Mantra and Karapushtha or from hands to back as follows: OM shabda with left foot, NA with right foot, MO with left kati and NA with right Kati or waist, RA with Naabhi or navel, YA with left shoulder, NA with right shoulder, YA withnMastak or head, to be followed by total NYASA down to upper physique from Hridaya-Sides-back-and upward. Now, ANGANYASA or the Mantra and Body Parts vas follows: Govinda with East, Madhusudana with South, Sridhara with West, Keshava with North, Agneya with Vishnu, Madhava with Nirruti, Hrishikesha with Vayavya, Vamana with Ishana, Vaaraaha with Adhomukha, and Trivikrama with Urdhvamukha. Thereafter, a devotee should recite the Mantra:

*Twamagnirdeepadaam Natha retoghaah kaamadeepanah, Pradhaanah Sarvabhutaanaam Jeevaanaam Prabhu-ravyayah/ Amrutasyaaranitwam hi Devayonirapaam Patey, Vrujinam Hara Sarvam Namostutey tey/*

(Jagnaatha! You are Agni, the Provider of Veerya and the Light of Good Wishes; You are the Foremost all the Beings and the Unique of Indistructibility. Samudra! You are the generator of Amrita and of Devatas alike. Do kindly mitigate my sins; Tirtharaja! My greetings to You.) After Snaana thrice, recite Aghamarshana Sukta, perform Achamana, Pranayama, Sandhyopaasana, Gayatri Mantra, Surya Namaskaraas and Pradakshinaas, Swadhyaya seated towards East, Deva /Rishi Tarpana followed by Tila Tarpana to Pitru Devatas, Shraadhha and Havan. After these tasks, prepare on the Samudra Tata / Seashore an Ashtadala Mandala or Eight-Leafed Lotus shaped square reciting Ashtaakshara Mantra and perform the formal Puja, with the Upachaaraas or Services of Avahana / Bhagavan Pratima's Invocation, Aasana or Seat, Arghya /water, Padya / wash of feet, Madhuparka , Achamaniya or offer of water, Snaana /bathing, Vastra, Vilepana of Gandha, Yagnopaveeta or the Sacred Thread, Alamkaara with jewellery, Dhupa, Deepa and Naivedya with Bhakshya-Bhojya- Lehya-Choshya and Paaniyas. Each of the Services to Jagannatha must be accompanied by the relevant Mantra and the Mula Mantra of Om Namō Narayanaya namah. In the Ashta dalas of the Lotus Vasudeva would be worshipped in the Eastern Leaf, Sankarshana in the Southern Leaf, Pradyumna in the Paschima, Aniruddha on the Uttara Dasha, Varaha in the Agnikona, Narasimha in the Nairuti Dasha, Madava in the Vayavya and Trivikrama in the Ishhana dasha; Guruda in the front of the Astadala Kamala, Chakra in the Vaamabhaga, Shankha in the Dakshina Bhaaga, Maha Gada again with Chakra, and Dhanush/ Shaaranga along with Chakra; again Khadga on the left, Tarakas on the right and so on.

Formal Pujas would also be done to Indra, Agni, Yama, Nirruti, Varuna, Vayu, Kubera, Ishaana, Ananta and finally to Brahma. The Mula Mantra to dominate the whole Puja would be Om Namō Narayanaaya Namah. The Worship on these lines at the Pancha Tirtha afore mentioned viz. Indradymna Sarovara, Markandeya hlada, Akshayavata, Jagannatha Mandira, and Matsya Madhava Samudra would destroy the sins of the devotees and fetch the Maha Punya of performing Ashwamedha Yagna!

### Vishnu Mahima, Kalpa Srishti, Tatwas and Brahma- Vishnu- Shiva Swarupa

Creation of Universe and the delineation of Vishnu, Adi Srishti andTatwaas:

*Parah Paraanaam Parmah Paramaatmasamsthitah, Rupavarnaadi nirdesha viseshana vivarjitah/ pakshyavinaashyaabhyam Parinaamarthijanmabhih, Varjitah shakyaatey vaktum yah sadaasteeti kevalam/*

*Sarvatraasou Samastamcha vasayatreti vai yatah, Tatah sa Vaasudeveti Vidvadbhih Paripathyatey/  
Tadbrahma Paramam Nityam Ajamakshaya- amavyayam, Eka Swarupam tu Sadaa heyaabhaavaachha  
Nirmalam/ Tadaiva Sarwamevaitadha Vyaktaavyakta Swarupavat, Tathaa PurusharupenaKaalarupena  
cha sthitam/ Parasya Brahmano rupam Purushaha Prathamam Dwija, Vyaktaavyakteytathaivanye Rupey  
KaalstathaaParam/*

(That whosoever is beyond the ‘Paraaa’ or Prakriti, Parama Sreshtha, Paramatma within Antaraatma on Innermost Super Consciousness who is devoid of Rupa or Form, Varna or Colour, Naama or Name, Viseshana or Adjectival features; that Paraapara who does not possess the six stages of Origin, Development, Evolution, Dacadence and Destruction; that Absolute Superlative ‘IS’ in the Present Indefinite Tense who is ‘Sarvatra and Samasta’ or ‘ All Over’ and ‘Everything’!)

That is why Vidwans call him as Vaasudeva who is Karya or deed-Kaarana or cause-Nitya or eternal-Ajanma or Unborn-Akshaya or Evergrowing- Gunaabhaava or featureless- Maha Kaarana or the Great Cause- Prathama Purusha or the Prime Being-Paramaatma or the Supreme Soul- Ajara or Ever Youthful- Nischala or Contant- Shabda Sparshaadi Sunya or bereft of Sound, Touch and so on. It was at ‘Pralaya’ or the Time of Universal Destruction, there was no existence at all; neither it was day time nor night; no Akaasha or Prithivi; nodarkness or light: there was only the absence of Indriyas and Buddhi but only a Supreme Parabrahma as Primary Purusha who manifested into two Rupaas viz.’Kaal’ or ‘Praakriti’ and the Self!

#### Maha Tatwa (The Supreme Manifestation)

That Parabrahma-Paramatma-Vishwa Rupa-Sarvavyaapi-Sarvabhuteshwara-Sarvatma-Parameshwara on its own volition who has no ‘Vikaaraas’ or traits manifested the Self into the Alternative Self with ‘Vikaaraas’:

*Pradhaana Purushouchaapi pravishyaatmeychhayaa Harih, Kshobhayaamaasa Sampraaptey  
Sargakaaley vyayaavyaou/Tathaa Sannidhi maatrena Gandhah Kshobhaaya jaayatey,  
Manasonopakratrutwaattayasou Parameshwarah/ Sayeva Kshobhako Brahman kshobascha  
Purushottamah, Sa shankho cha vikasaabhyaam Pradhaanatvepi cha sthitah/ Vikaasaanuswarupaischa  
Brahma Rupaadibhistathaa, Vyakta Swarupascha tathaa Vishnuh Sarveswareswarah/ Guna saamyatta  
tasmaat tasmaat Khetrajnaadhishthaanaan Muney, Guna vyanjana sambhutih Sarga kaaley  
Dwijottamaa/*

( That Pradhaana Purusha transformed from the State of ‘Nirvikaara’ to that of ‘Vikaara Pradhaana’ or full of characteristics just as fragrance influences the fragrance-free Vastu or material! Thus Purushottama the Nirvikaara basically assumes traits and Paramatma assumed the Samashthi-Vyashthi Rupas or endless manifestations commencing from Brahma and so on and indeed this process of transformation is known as Maha Tatwa! ) This Maha Tatwa is of three major Attributes viz. Saatvika, Tejasa or Raajasa and Taamasa and accordingly of three kinds of Ahamkaaraas or Self-oriented egoistic feelings. The Tamasa Ahamkaara led to the emergencePancha Bhutasas as follows: first by the Tamasa-based Ahamkara created Tanmatras (Subtle forms of Matter); first the *Shabda Tanmatra* or Guna Rupa/ feature of Sound leading to the Creation of Shabda Guna and its alliedAakaashaor the Sky; the Shabda Tanmaatra represented by Sky created the *Sparsha Tanmatra* leading to the manifestation to Vaayu; the Taamasa Guna’s Ahamkara which created Aakasha and Vayu from the Shabda and Sparsha Tanmaatraas respectively led to the emergence of *Rupa Tanmatra* which in turn led to the Tejo Bhuta;further on the Tamasika Guna having created the Sky- Air- Illumination and Heat or Fire further went on to the emergence of *Rasa Tanmatra* and its allied Aapo Bhuta or Jala /Water; finally the Tamasika Guna having interacted with Shabda-Sparsha-Rupa-Rasa Tanmatras and created Sky-Air-Fire-Water, had further reacted with *Gandha Tanmatra* and materialised Prithvi or Earth. Thus the Maha Tatwa created : ‘Prithivyaaas Tejo Vaayuraakaashaas’ or Earth-Water-Radiance-Wind, and Sky. Maha Tatwa’s Raajasa-

ahankara Guna was responsible for the creation of Panchendriyasviz. Pancha Jnanendriyas and Pancha Karmendriyas all driven by Manasa (Mind). The Karmendritas are Paayu (anus), Upastha (marmendriya), hasta, paada, and Vaak; the Jnaanendriyas are Twak (Skin), Chakshu (Eyes), Naasika (Nose), Jihva (Tongue) and Shrotra (Ears). Together with the Pancha Bhutas as above, the Beings of Srishti are thus readied with their Indriyas or Physical Features to face their lives. The Foremost tangible and practical Creation that the Maha Tatwa, as produced by the inter-action of Purusha and Prakriti viz. the Supreme Self and Alternative Shakti was that of the circular-shaped Brahmaanda or the Golden Egg and Paramatma Himself sat inside it as the Hiranyagarbha. It was in this Golden Egg, there were Sumeru and other Mountains, Sapta Samudraas, Nava Grahaas or Nine Planets, Trilokas, Deva-Asura-Manava Praanis and the extensive flora and fauna as also the ten multiplied Pancha Bhutas; indeed the Golden Egg is likened to a Huge Coconut with the kernel inside camouflaged with seven exterior layers of husk; Maha Vishnu Himself assumed the Swarupa of Brahma of Rajo Guna and was engaged in scripting the Creation of the Universe, took over the task of Satvika Guna in administering the Universe so created Yuga-after Yuga and by transforming himself with Tamo Guna destroys the Universe as Rudra Deva at the termination of each Kalpa! After taking to Yoga Nidra on the comfortable Sesha- Shayya or the bed of Sesha Naga, Vishnu would once again assume the Brahma Swarupa to create the Universe once again thus cycling and recycling Srishti- Sthiti- Samhaara: *Srishti Sthityanta karaneem Brahma Vishnu Shivaatmikaam, Sa Sanjnaam yaati Bhagavaaneka eva Janaardana!* (Bhagavan Janardana thus performs all the tasks of Creation, Preservation and Destruction as Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara! *Sa yeva Srujyah sa cha Sarga Kartaa sa yeva Paatyatti cha Paalyatecha, Brahmaadyavasthaabhi rasesha Murtir Vishnur Varishtha Varado Varenyah/* Bhagavan Vishnu alone scripts, secures and smashes the Samsara!)

#### ‘Vishnu Panjara Stotra’ for providing ‘Raksha’ (Safety)

Mahatma Pushkar revealed the significance of Vishnu Panjara Stotra to Parashu Rama, which provides Raksha to whoever recites it. In the past, Bhagavan Brahma endowed the Stotra to Shankara Deva to provide with him safety at the time of battle with Tripuraasura and the same was furnished to Indra by Brihaspati while terminating the demon Bali. This Stotra is popular as a means of securing protection and well being, besides functioning as a shield while facing any impending danger or risk as also to accomplish success and victory:

*Vishnuh praacyaam sthitaschakri Harir-dakshinato Gadee, Prateetchaam Shaarangadhrug  
Vishnurjishnuh khadgee mamottarey/ Hrishikesho Vikoneshu tatcchidreshu Janaardanaah, Krodarupee  
Herirbhumow Narasimheswaraey mama/ Kshuraantamamalam chakram bhramatyetat Sudarshanam,  
Asyaamshumaalaa dushprekshya hantum pretanishaacharaan/ Gadaa cheyam Sahasraarchih pradepta  
paavakojjvalaa, Raksho bhuta pisaachaanaam Daakineenaam cha naashani/ Sharanga visphurjitah  
chaiva Vasudevasya madrapuun, Tiryangmanushya kushmaanada preeytaadeena hantwa seshatah/  
Khangadharojjwala jyotsnaana nirdhuta ye samaahitaah, tey yaantu shaamyataam sadyo Garudeneva  
Pannagaah/ Yey Kushmaandasthaa Yaksha ye Daityaa ye Nishaacharaah, Pretaa vinaayakaah kruraa  
Manushyaa Jaambhagaah Khagaah/ Simhaadayascha pashavo danda suukaascha pannagaah, Sarvey  
bhavantu tey sowmyah Krishnashankharavaaritaah/ Chittavrittiharaa ye mey ye janaah smriti  
haarakaaah, Balowjasaam cha hartaaraschchaayaa vibhramschakaascha ye/ Ye Chopabhoga hartaaro ye  
cha lakshana naasakaah, Kushmaandastey pranashyantu Vishnu chakra ravaahitaah/ Buddhi swasthyam  
Mah swasthyam swasthya –maindriyakam tathaa, Mamaastu Deva devasya Vaasudevasya keertanaat/  
Pushthey purastanmama Dakshinottarey vikonatchaastu Janaardano Haarih, Tameedyameeshaana  
manantamacyhutam Janaardanam pranipatito na seedati/ Yathaa param Brahma Haristathaa paro  
Jagatswarupascha sa eva Keshavah, Satyena teynaachyuta naama keertanaat pranashyetu trividham  
mamaashubham/*

( In the Eastern side is Chakradhaari Vishnu and in the Southern side is Gadaadhaari Shrihari. Bhagavaan Hrishikesha is protecting in the ‘Dikkonas’ or side-angles, Janaardana is situated in the middle portion. Varaaha dhaari Shrihari is protecting on the Bhumi and Bhagavan Nrisimha shields on the Shy. In the other side-lines Sudarshana Chakra is constantly on the move and provides guard all over. If ‘Pretas’ or ‘Nishaacharas’-the night-long tormentors- seek to bother, they would find it impossible to withstand the extreme dazzle of the Sudarshana Chakra. Bhagavan Shri Hari’s ‘Gadaa’ (Mace) called Kaumudi sparkles with thousands of highly explosive rays. These sizzling rays destroy Rakshasas, Bhutas, Piscachas and Daakinis instantly. Bagavan Vaasudeva’s Sharanga Dhanush creates such deafening and reverberating sound waves that ‘Shatru Bhuta Manushya’(most cruel humans), ‘Kushmandas’, ‘Pretas’, ‘Tiryagyonis’ Praanis or these frightening species on way back to be reborn again are extinguished at once. Those named or unnamed enemies to the devotees would get flooded in the tempestuous flows of overwhelming sparks of the ‘Khadga’ (Sword) of Shri Hari, in the same manner as Garuda Deva exterminates serpents. All the species that seek to torture Vishnu’s devotees- be they Kushmanadas, Yakshas, Rakshasas, Pretas, Viyayakas, cruel human beings, hunting birds of huge or miniscule sizes, animals like lions or tigers, snakes, or of any evil spirits, would get overpowered by the ‘Shankha naada’ of Bhagava. May Vishnu Kirtana provide me ‘Buddhi’, ‘Man’ and physical control and bestow ‘Swasthya labha’ or multi-sided equilibrium to my inner- consciousness and purify my Soul to be worthy of the grace of Bhagavan Vishnu. Dedicated Bhaktaas are never let down by the most merciful ‘Paramaatma’; May this ‘Vishnu Panjara’ shield me from wordly distress and lead me on to the Sacred Path of Mukti.

#### Maarjana /Apaamaarjana Stotras for Raksha to self and others

Agni Deva suggested to Narada Muni the following Stotras to provide safety to human beings for themselves and for others as also mitigate difficulties and bestow happiness:

*Om namo Paramaarthyaaya Purushaaya Mahaatmaaney, Aruupa Bahu Rupaaya Vyapiney  
Paramaatmaney/ Nishkalmashaaya Shraddhaaya Dhyaanayoga rataayacha, Namaskrutya Pravakshaami  
yat tatsidhyatu mey vachah/ Varaahaaya Nrisimhaaya Vamanaaya Mahatmaney, Namaskrutya  
Pravakshaami Yat tatsudyhatu meyvacha/ Trivikramaaya Raamaaya Vaikunthaaya Naraaya cha,  
Namaskruthya pravakshaami yat tat siddhyatu mey vacha/*

( Om Paramaarth Swarupa, Prathama Purusha, Mahatma, Niraakaara, Sahsra Rupa, the All Pervading Paramaatma, the Blemishless and the epitome of Purity, Serenity and ever worthy of meditation: may this inner voice of mine be truthful that my protection is always assured by you; Varaha Deva, Narasiha Deva and Vamana Deva, may my fortification be assured; may Trivikrama Deva, Rama and Vaikunthaya, my sincere salutations to you and may my wellbeing be always assured.)

*Varaaha Naraimhesha Vaamanesha Trivikrama, Hayagriva Sarvesha Hrishikesha  
Haraashubham/ Apraajita Chakraadyaischaturbhih Paramaardhaih, Akhanditaanu bhaavaaistwam  
Sarvadushta haro bhava/ Haraamukasya duritam sarvam cha kushalam kuru, Mrithyu  
bandhaarthibhayadam durishtasya cha yatphalam/*

(Bhagavan Varaha, Nrisimha, Vaamaneswara, Trivikrama, Hayagrivesha, Sarvesha, Hrishikesha! The Unconquerable Parameshwara! May all my ‘Ashubhas’ or inauspicious happenings be demolished! May your ‘Chakra of endless energy and other most powerful ‘Aayudhaas’ wipe out my enemies! May my illnesses and bodily afflictions be obliterated and my sins be destroyed, while bestow upon me ‘Sarva Kushalam’ (total propitiousness) and Kshema (safety). Deva! Provide me with the ‘Phala’ of yagnas devoid of imperfections and indemnify me from untimely death, ill health, shackles of any kind, ill-omens, and frights.)

*Paraabhidhyaana sahitaish prayuktam cha abhichaarikam, Garasparsha mahaaroga prayogam jarayaa jara/ Om namo Vasudevaaya namah Krishnaaya khadginey, Namah Pushkara netraaya Keshavaayadi chakriney/ Namah Kamalakinchatkapeeta nirmala vaasasey, Mahahavir puraskandhadhrushta chakriney/Danshtrodhrutakshiti bhrutey Trayee Mutrtimatey namah, Mahayagna Varaahaaya Shobhaaganka shaayaney/Taptahaataka keshantadjjwalatpaavaka lochana, Vajraadhika sprasha Divya Simha Namostutey/ Kaashapaayaati hraswaaya Rugyajushssaama bhushiney, Tubhyam Vaamana Rupaayaakramatey gaam Namoh Namah/*

(Those who have the evil-feelings of harming others by way of performing ‘Abhichaarika Karmas’ or negative deeds such as administering poisonous food / drinks ought to be obliterated and their misdeeds be retaliated. Vasudeva, Khadgadhari, Chakradhari, Kamalanayana and ‘Peetambaradhara’, who wears excellent clothes of saffron colour, please accept my salutations. You are the Yagna Varaha and Veda Vighraha who had saved ‘Prithvi’ and Vedas by your powerful ‘damshttras’ (tusks); You are Narasimha who had piercing and dazzling eyes and iron-like sharp nails by whose mere touch was slaughtered the invincible demon, Hiranya –kashipu; You are Vamana Deva the embodiment of Rug-Yajur and Sama Vedas and manifested as the Virat Swarupa who occupied the Three Worlds to facilitate the re-installation of Devas in Swarga and to bring the Universe to Order as Trivikrama)

*Varaahasesha drishtaani sarva paapa phalaani vai, Marda Marda Mahaa Damshttra Marda Mardacha tatphalam/ Narasimha karaalasya danta praanataanalajjwala, Bhanja bhanja ninaadena dushtaan pashyaarti- naashana/Rugyajussaama garbhaabhi raavirbhavar Vaamanarupadhruk, Prashaam Sarva Duhkhaani nayatvasya Janaardana/ Ekaahikam Dwayahikam cha tatha Tridivasam Jwaram, Chaturthikam tathaatyugram tathaiva satatam jwaram/ Doshothyam sannipaatestham tathaivaganthukam jwaram, Shamamnayaashu Govindachhindhi chhindhyasya Vedanaam/*

( Varaharupi Narayana, please devastate all kinds of dangerous diseases born out of long standing sins; Maha Varaha! Vikata Nrisimha! Do ravage the enemies who occupied my fortunes and fate for long; Vamana deha dhaari! Being the embodiment of all ‘confidential Tatwas, kindly provide solace and alleviate sufferings of physical and psychological nature to human beings. Govinda! Humanity is suffering from descriptions of various diseases like Tridoshaja, Sannipaataja, Agantuka, Ekaahika, Dwaahika, Traahika, Atyanta Ugra, and so on. Please extinguish these and other diseases, Parama Deva!

*Netra dukkham Shiro dukkham dukkhamchodara sambhavaam, Anishwaasamatishwaasham paritaapam savepathum/ Gudaghraanaanghri rogaanscha kushthu rogaamstatha kshayam, kaamalaamdeesthatha rogaanprameyhaamchaati daarunam/ Bhagandara –atisaaraamscha mukharogaamscha valguleem, Ashmareem mutrakrucchaamscha rogaanaamscha daaruana/ ye vaataprabhaavaa rogaa ye cha pittha samudbhavaah, Kaphodbhavaascha ye kechid yechaanye saamnipaatikaah/ Aagantukaaschaye rogaa lutaavisphotakaadayah, the sarvam prashamamyantu Vaasudevasya kirtanaan/ Vilayam yaantutey sarvey Vishnorucchaaraneyacha, Kshayam gacchaantu Govinda naaocchaarana bheshaajaat, Nashyati sakalaa rogaah Satyam Satyam vadaamyaham/*

(May those persons suffering from eyes, head, stomach, breathing, sweating, shivering, mulavyadhi, nasal problems, foot diseases, leprosy, kshaya, kaamalaadi roga, bhagandar, atisaara, facial problems, valguli, stones, kidneys, and so on be cured. By virtue of Vaasudeva Sankeertana, all kinds of Vaataja, Pittaja, kaphaja, sannipaataja, Aagantuka, lutaa (Makari), Visphota (boils) etc. could be cured by the swing of Sudarshana chakra. By taking the names of Achyuta, Ananta and Govinda, various diseases would be destroyed indeed! ‘

*Sthaavaram jangamam vaapi krutrimam chaapi yadvisham, Dantodbhavam nakhabhavamaakaasha prabhavam visham/ Lootikaadi prabhavam yaccha vishamanyatu dukkhadam, Shamam nayatu tatsarvam Vaasudevasya keertanam/ Grahaan Pretagrahaamschaapi tathaa vai daakinigrahaan, Betaalaamsha*

*Pishaachaamscha Gandharvaan Yaksha Raakshasaan/ Shakuniputanaadyaamscha tathaa  
Vainaayakaangrahaan, Mukhamandeem tathaa kruraam Revatim Vrudbharevatim/ Vruddhika –  
akhyaanangrahaams tatha Matrugrahaanapi, Baalaasya Vishnoscharitam hantu Balagrahaanimaan/  
Vriddhaascha ye Grahaah kechida ye cha Balagrahah kwachit, Narasimhaya tey drushtyaa dagdhaa ye  
chaapi Youvaney/ Sataakaraala vadano Naarasimho Mahabalah, Grahaanaseshaannihseshaan karotu  
jagato hitah/ Narasimha Mahasiha Jjwaamaaloggwalaanana, Grahaanaseshaan Sarvesha khaada  
Khaadogni lochana/*

(Bhagavan Vaasudeva's Samkeertana would certainly appease several types of poisons like Sthavara, Jangama, Kritima, Dantodhbhuta, Nakhodhbhuta, Aakaashodhbhuta and Lutikadbyotpanna varieties. Kirtanas on 'Bala Krishna charitra' would decimate Balagrahas like Grahas, Preta Grahas, Dakini Grahas, Vetaals, Pishachaas, Gandharvas, Yakshas, Rakshasas, Shakuni-Putana Grahas, Vinayaka grahas, Mukha mandikaas, Cruel Revatis, Vrudbarevati, Vrudhbhika graha and Matru Grahas. May Bhagavan Narasimha's extreme vision burn off Vriddha, Bala and Yuva Grahas into ashes. Maha Nrisimha! Do devastate all the Dushta Grahas with your piercing looks and provide us liberation.

*Ye roga ye Mahotpaataa Yadvisham ye Mahagrahah, Yaanicha krurabhutaani graha –peedaashcha  
daarunaah/ Shastra khatshu ye doshaa Jwaalaagardhabhakaadayah, Taani Sarvaani Sarvaatmaa  
Paraamaatmaa Janaardana/ Sarva dushtaanirakshaamsi kshayam yaantu Vibhishana, Praachyaam  
Prateehyaam cha dishi Dakshinottarasthaa/ Rakshaam karotu Sarvaatmaa Narasimhah swagarjithaih,  
Divi Bhuvantarikshye cha Pushthitah paarsyetogratah/ Rakshaam karotu Bhagavaan Bahurupee  
Janardana/ Yatha Vishnurjagatsarwam sadevasura maanusham, tey na Satyena drushtaani shamasya  
vrajanu vai/*

(Vasudeva! Do assume which ever Form that you intend to; but destroy all kinds of diseases, utpataas, poison, Maha Grahas, Bhutas, Graha Peedas, 'Shastra kshata' or surgery-oriented tribulations, burns, and any other difficulties. May Sarvatma Nrisimha guard our Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern directions with his frightening roars; May Janardana protect us in Bhuloka, Swarga loka, 'Antariksha' and all that one could not be perceived by us! May Bhagavan Vishnu who is the Swarupa of the entire Universe including Devas, Daityas and human beings provide shield to one and all and safeguard us all from all kinds of physical and other evils and diseases!)

*Yada Vishnow smritey sadyah samkshayam yaanti paatakaah, Satyena tena sakalam dushtamasya  
prashaamyatu, Yathaa Yagneswaro Vishnurdeveshvapi hi geeyatey/ Satyana tena sakalam yanmayoktam  
tathaastu tat, Shantirastu Shivam chaastu dushtamasya prashaamyatu/ Vaasudeva shareetarothaih  
kushainirnaashatam maya, Aapaamaarjitu Govindo Naro Narayanastathaa/ Tathaastu Sarva  
duhkhaanaam pprashamovachanaadvareh, Apaamaarjanakam shastam Sarvarogaadivaaranam/ Aham  
Harih kushaa Vishnur hataa roga mayaa tava/*

(At the very thought of Shri Vishnu, the long-stored groups of sins wilt away instantly and in the same manner all the diseases fade away too. Vishnu is always extolled by all Devatas and this truth underlines the fact that sins and diseases wither away for human beings too. The Kusha grass is stated to emerge from Vishnu's own body and little wonder that the 'Apaamarjana Stotra' enables the sins and maladies of devotees to get flushed out of their physiques for good.

Naama Keertana Mahima vide Padma Purana

'Mahima' of Bhagavan's 'Kirtanas', 'Bhajans' and 'Stutis' vide Padma Purana

Maharshis asked one pertinent question to Suta Maha Muni: *Yeteshaam khalu Tirthaanaam  
Sevanaadhyat phalam bhavet, Sarveshaam kila kruttvaikam karma keva cha lahyatey, Yetathro bruhi*

*Sarvagna karmaivam yadi vartatey/* ( Is there one good alternative task which might replace the fruits of performing various Tirtha Yatras? Maha Muni Suta! Do kindly enlighten us if there is such a possibility.) Maha Muni replied that in Shastras various ‘Sat Karmas’ or Noble Tasks were no doubt prescribed for Brahmanas, but one unique Karma was available open to one and all:

*Hari bhaktih krutaa yena manasaa karmanaa gira, jitam tena jitameva na samshayah/* (Who ever exercises devotion to Sri Hari by way of ‘man-vaani and kriya’/ manasa, vaachaa, karmana or mind, voice, and action would have the ultimate victory without doubt; in other words, ‘bhajan’ involving thinking, singing and playing cymbals all targetted to Narayana would be the unique way of bhakti). This kind of ‘Aradhana’ and recital of ‘Hari Mantra’ would indeed devastate the sinful Piscachas and Evil Spirits instantly.

One single and most devoutful ‘Padakshina’ or circumambulation of the ‘Pratima’ or idol of Bhagavan Srihari would equate the fruits of Tirtha Yatras. One sincere ‘darshan’ (View) of Srihari’s idol is stated to fetch the ‘Sarava Tirtha Phala’ or the fruits of visiting all the Tirthas and one Vishnu naama japa is as sacred as Sarva Mantra Japa or the recital of all the possible Mantras. One mere but hearty Tulasi leaf offered to and glorified by Vishnu Idol could frighten away the scaring face of Yama Raja. Once Sri Krishna’s Pratima is greeted with high dedication should consume the breast-milk of a mother once again as there would be no repeat birth to that person again. Even a Chandala or a Mleccha would get become worthy of consideration or even greetings if that person is saturated in the service and worship of Srihari’s feet. If that were the case of a Chandala, why ask about the example of a Brahmana or a Rajarshi as he would indeed never experience ‘Garbhavaasa’ or pregnancy difficulties once again.

Those devotees who recite the names of Bhagavan in high pitch and dance in ecstasy assume the example of purity and clarity of Ganga water. If a Bhakta of proven merit were met, or touched or conversed to with by any person with similar impulses, then the latter would qualify for redemption of the worst kind of sins. As a devotee performs Pradakshina of the Idol of Srihari by clapping, playing instrumental music and songs / hymns in commendation of Srihari, the sonorous music and voice would chase away hefty sins by such claps, music and song. Even the sight or hearings of persons who preach or read the Essence of Puranas and Scriptures ought to clear the conscience of such viewers or listeners. Indeed there was no doubt that the expression of very name of Sri Krishna was the most potent and pious ‘Parama Tirtha’ than all the Sacred Tirthas put together. That was why Munis, Siddhaas and Yogis had ever visualised any Tirtha better than Lord Krishna Himself. Those who consumed the Prasad of Sri Krishna or kept the ‘Nirmaalya’ on their heads are akin to Sri Krishna Himself and would be rid of the fear or grief of facing Yama Raja. Those who visualised Lord Sri Krishna and Bhagavan Maha Deva in a similar manner would be free from the shackles of Samsara again.

However, those who do not consider Hari and Hara in the same manner but consider them as distinct entities would indeed get trapped in Naraka and not counted as Bhaktas! (*Yesamaanam prapashyanti Harim vai Devataantaram, te yaanti Narakam Ghoraatra taamstu ganayedhwarih*). Whether it is a Pandita or a Murkha (Ignorant), Brahmana or a Chandala, once Bhagavan endeared him, He would assume the responsibility if only that person were to be an unflinching devotee. ‘Nama kirtana’ is one of the easiest ways of pleasing Bhagavan as the hard work involved is minimal but returns are immense; this is why critics wonder whether this route is so easy and such arguers fall preys into hells again and again. What is significant is faith and dedication that pays; Bhagavan prefers those who perform Naama-Japa with trust and conviction and gives a secondary seat to the ‘Pujaris’ of His Temple! ‘Hari-naama’ is the ‘Vajrayudha’ to break the hard mountain of Samsara into pieces!

*Taameva dhanyavaakhyatou yau tu puja karou karou, Uttamaangamutthamaangam thadhharou namra meva yat* (Those are the worthy hands which are put to use in the Puja and Bhajan of Narayana and indeed those are the noble heads which automatically bend down at the thought of Narayana); *Saa jihvaa ya Harim stouti tanmanastatpadaanugam, taani lomaani chochyanthey yaani tatraamni chyostthitam/ Kurvanti tacchha netraambu yadacyuta prasangatah/* (It is that tongue which is the best as it readily softens into Stutis of Narayana; it is that heart which readily melts at the name of Narayana; the feet which rise at the very thought of reverence to Narayana and the eyes which instantly fill up with moisture when one discusses about the compassionate ways of helping out a devotee.)

Alas! How unfortunate are those persons who neglect the easy way of performing ‘bhajan’ and recital of Sri Hari’s name in the quest of temporary attractions and anxiety to earn evermore. How unfortunate that a person craves for a feminine touch and is engaged in futile discussions about women instead of learning the ways and means of accomplishing Mukti. How unfortunate in running after unwanted, momentary and endless attractions of life instead of controlling senses and thoughts!)

*Jihvam labdhvaapi lokesmin krishna naama japetrahi, Labdhvaapi Mukti sopaanam helayaiva chyavanti te/* (Those who possess a tongue do not perform Sri Krishna naama jap; they do have a ladder to attain Mukti but tend to fail in scaling it and fall down invariably).

*Tasmadyatnena vai Vishnum Karmayogena Maanavah/ Karmayogaarchito Vishnuh Praseedatyeva naanyathaa, Tirthaadapyadhikam Tirtha Vishnorbhajana muchyate/* (This is why; human beings ought to make earnest endeavours to observe Karma Yoga and engage themselves in Vishnu Aradhana. Bhagavan Vishnu is pleased by Karma Yoga only and not otherwise. Indeed Vishnu bhajan is far superior to Tirtha Yatras even!)

Sadaachaara Varnana / Principles of Righteous Way of Living (Samvatsara Abdika Vidhi, Varnaashrama Dharma, Dharmadharma Vidhi and Maha Tatwa Nirnaya highlighted)

As Vyasa Maharshi explained the general manner in which Brahmanas are expected to perform their duties towards Devas and Pitru ganaas with Havya-Kavyas or oblations to Agni and other tasks of virtue, the Munis requested the Maharshi to outline the rudiments of ‘Sadaachaara’ or the fundamentals of Ideal Values of Virtuous Life viz. or the Worthy Principles of Moral Conduct / Good Behavior. *Grihastena Sadaakaarya maachaara pari-rakshanam, Nahyaachaara viheenasya bhadramatra paratravaa, Yagna daana tapaaseeha Purushasya na bhuyate, Bhavanti yah sadaachaaram samullanghya pravartate/*

( Grihastaas or family-persons ought to observe and protect Sadaachaara Pravartana as those without it would neither have ‘Iham’ / the contentment of current life or ‘Param’ of post-life; to those who neglect the principles of Sadaachaara are not eligible to the fruits of Yagna- Daana-Tapas). Grihastaas are expected to follow the basic principles of Dharma-Artha and Kaama during the first three quarters of one’s life and in the last quarter of life to activities pertaining to Moksha. Also, half of one’s expected span of life is to be spent with the deeds oriented to Nitya-Naimittika Karmas or daily and occasional tasks of virtue; the persons concerned might perform such deeds as to involve Bharana-Poshana or sustenance and ful-fillment of family needs. But the last quarter of life should be exclusively spent on activities aiming at the collection of ‘Mula Dhana’ of fruits meant for the aftermath of life . In other words, ‘Dharmaacharana’ or practice of Virtue has to be an under-current in the Samsaara Sagara in all the phases of life, especially in the last quarter of life. Care must be taken that each of the ‘Purusharthas’ should not be contradictory to each other. In other words, Dharma should propel such Artha that should not inhibit Dharma; Kaama should not defeat the aspect of Dharma and Artha and likewise Moksha has to be a logical conclusion of the preceding Purusharthas:

*Paraspara anubandhaamscha sarvaanetaanvichintayet, Vipareetaanubandhaamscha budhyadhvam  
taandwiojottama/ Dharmo Dharma anubandhaartho Dharmaana atmaartha peedakah, Ubhaabhyaam  
cha dwidhaa kaamam teyna thou dwidhaa punah/*

A dutiful person has to wake up at the Brahma muhurtha time and think of Dharma and Artha, leave the bed, perform the morning ablutions and commence Sandhya Vandana even when Stars are visible on the Sky. *Asatpralaapamanrutam Vaakpaarushyam cha varjayet, Asacchaastra -masadwaada masatpeyyaam cha vai Dwijaah/* (Blabbering lies, talking offensively, taking resort to arguments of Nastik nature, reading wrong books and writings, giving service to vicious persons must be avoided at any cost. Keeping mental control, daily Havan in the morning and evening should be done dutifully; never try to look at Surya at the Sunrise and Sunset; combing the hair, looking at the mirror, cleaning the teeth, and executing Deva Tarpana must be done well before the Sunrise; avoiding ablutions at Public places, Tirthas and Kshetras; looking at, talking to and touching girls during menses periods; indulging in ablutions in water bodies must be avoided let alone bathing with women; leaving hairs, rotten food, ash, coal, threads, ropes, metallic material and any other offensive materials ought not to be thrown in running water and worse in still waters. Men and women of virtue should never take food before worshipping Devas, Parents, Guests and elders or those with illnesses; eat food observing silence and not moving about; never unduly criticise food preparations; never consume nor accept food from the plates of others; never ever spread rumours; never touch-let alone use the seat, bed, vessels, and personal belongings of persons with questionable credentials; never wear single vastra in the worship of Deities, or reverences to Gurus and elders; never urinate in water, fire and in Public places; never bathe or sleep in nudity even in closed places; never apply oil while taking baths; never face Brahmanas, Cows, Agni, Surya, Chandra and Nakshatras; avoid to perform ablutions facing north in day time and south in the nights; give way politely to Brahmanas, Officials, elders, women in confinement, persons with illnesses, handicaps, drunkenness, loose character women, those who help, children, the arrogant, and generally the avoidable; perform parikrama of temples, elders, Gurus, trees and road junctions from the right side; never wear other's clothes, jewellery, shoes and paadarakshaas; never take head bath with oil on Chaturdashi, Ashtami, and Pournami; never shake feet nor lift hands up; never press one foot with another foot; never brag nor belittle others either on one to one basis or worse still in public; never insult the poor, the ugly, the mentally unstable, the intoxicated, and such other abnormal persons; never give punishment to anybody except sons or Sishyas only with a view to reforming or correcting but never with pre-conceived views, arrogance or vengeance; never drag chairs or cots or any furniture items with feet; never sleep facing north and west but keep the head to south or east; never apply chandan etc. without taking bath; never wear torn clothes; never eat food with dropped hairs, ant or flies-eaten, or seen by dogs ; do not eat with salt kept separately on a plate; never sleep after sun-rise or at sun-set timings; never eat food without taking bath, without properly seated, while in the food or half-asleep; without being attentive or half-heartedly; take food in the morning or evening without taking bath; never sleep in bed with unknown women: *Paradaaraa na gantavyaah purushena vipaschitaa, Ishtaapurtaaayushaam hantree paradaaraa gatirmrunaam/ Na heedrusha manaayushyam lokey kinchana vidyatey, Yaadrusham Purushasyeha paradaaraabhimarshanam/* (Noble men would never resort to Para Stree Sangama and those who did so would not only lose their image, conscience, mental peace and longevity); one must perform 'Achamana' before Sandhya-Devaagni-Pitru Karya-Guru Vandana-Puja-Bhojana timings with clean, foamless, and bad-smelling water facing Dakshina or Uttara / South or North; while performing Achamana, one should avoid five kinds of 'mruda' or earth viz. just outside water bodies, from the backyard of one's own home,

near a mouse's hole, or near around a bath room place and near a water-well; the Achamana should be done after washing hands and feet, and three or four times, twice after wiping eyes, ears, face, nose, lips and head; while doing Achamana, there should not be sounds of slurpings, coughs, sneezes, spittings, gas and if the latter happen then touch right ears and look upward to see Surya Deva and repeat Achamana thrice; do not rattle teeth, pound body parts, and avoid all kinds of mannerisms; never practise Swadhyaya of Vedas, or Sacred Mantras while eating, travelling, walking and lying down; avoid marriages of girls of seven generations before on the paternal side and five generations before on the maternal side; *Kshura Karma* (hair cut) should not be done facing north and the *avoidable* dates for the task are *Chaturthi, Navami and Chaturdashi*; do worship Devas in the early morning hours, pre-noon to Gurus and human beings and mid-day to Pitru-Devas; never sleep during day time, much less unite with wife; rajaswala women should observe four nights of menses and observance of five nights would assure Purushatwa in next birth; in any case, observing aloofness from husband for five nights would be recommended; man-woman unity on even nights after menses would bless male progeny, and on un-even nights, female progeny. Such unity on festival days the progeny would end up in the birth of Adharma Santaana, while in the Sandhya timings would result in napumsakas; never cut jokes in respect of Devatas, Vedas, Dwijaas, Sadhus, Gurus, Pativratas, Yagnaas, Tapaswis and Parivratas; never make friends with mentally retarded, arrogant, stupid, corrupt, characterless, immoral, extra-polite, extravagant, reckless, antagonistic, Asamartha / incapable, impolite, ungrateful, argumentative, cantankerous and irritable; but give respects to Sahrudayas or Good-natured, Yagna dikshitas, Rajas, Snatakas or those who have completed studies in Gurukula, and father-in-law and provide them all considerations.

#### Samvatsara Abdika Vidhi:

One should sincerely perform house- hold duties especially in the context of *Samvatsara Abdikaas*. After ushering in the Brahmanas with reverences, perform Archana at the Vaiswadeva Sthaana or the Place for Pitras; then at Deva sthaanaas or Four Places for worship to Agni, Prajapati, Griha Devataas and Kashyapa, followed by the fifth Ahuti or oblation of Ghee to the above Devas respectively. These oblations would be followed by Bali Puja; in this Puja there would be three vessels – one pertaining to Parjanya or Varuna first; second to Abdevata or Jala /Water and third to Bhu Devi; in these three Places, Bali or offerings of cooked rice as small portions should be offered in three manika paatras or earthen patras; then the offerings of the Bali portions should be addressed to Vaayu in ten directions of East, West, South and North and the respective Sub –Directions. Thereafter, Bali is addressed to Brahma, Antariksha, and Surya. In the Northern Direction balis are addressed to Vishwa Devas and Vishjwa Bhutaas; and to further north bali is offered to Usha and Bhupati. Thus far the Deva Puja; this would be followed by Pitru Puja in Apasavya position of Yagnopaveta: *Swadhaa cha sama ityuktwa Pitrubhyaschaiva dakshiney, Krtuwaapasavyam Vaayavyaam yakshmaitattheti sampadan/ Annavasesha misram vai thoyam dadyaadyathavidhi, Devaanaancha tatah kuryaad Braahmanaanaam Namaskriyaa/* (While changing the direction of Yagnopaveeta to Praacheena direction from the normal position of left to right, the Karta has to recite the Mantra viz. SWADHAAYAINAMAH facing the Pitaraas in the Dakshina disha; then the Mantra viz. YAKSHMAI TATTEY should be recited and leave water in the Vayavya direction. After changing the position of the Yagnopaveeta in the normal position of Savyam, the Karta has then to perform Namaskara with folded hands to Devas and the Brahmanas representing Devas.

Now the description of Tirthas: On the right hand thumb's upper portion of any person there is a line stated to be the 'Brahma Tirtha' situated and from there only the Achamaneeya or sipping of water is to be done; the place where the tarjani or the pointing finger touches the middle portion of the right thumb is known as the 'Pitru Tirtha' where the tarpanas or water oblations and Pinda-pradaanas are to be executed from that place. The finger tops are known as 'Deva Tirtha' and all tarpana and other duties addressed to Devas are to be performed from that place; the little finger is the representation of 'Prajapati Tirtha' and Prajapati-oriented Tarpanas and other tasks are to be done from this little finger.

Other do's and don'ts by way of 'Sadaachaara Pravartana' were described by Veda Vyasa as follows: Agni and Jala are not to be handled simultaneously; feet should not be drawn before Devas, Gurus, Parents and Brahmanas; looking at a cow milching a calf should not be gazed at; drinking water by palmful hands should be shunned; long duration delays of urination and defecation must be avoided; Agni should not be blown with mouth. A place of living where the following provisions are non-existent are better be left for good : *Yatra Vipraa na vastavyam Yatra nnaasti chatushtayam, Runa pradaataa Vaidyascha srotriyah sajanaa Nadee, Jita bhrutyo Nrupo yatra Balavaan Dharma tatparah, Tatra nityam vaseytpraag nah kutah kunrupato sukham/* (One should desert a Place where there is no lender of money, a Physician, a virtuous Brahmana, a running water body and a King who is unable to control his subordinates).

As regards the kind of Bhojan that one should consume, any fried items kept for long or even any type of food ought to be avoided. Any items so stored for more than two days, especially made of wheat and fried in oil or ghee should be refrained from consumption. Each time an item used for cooking or eating made of stone, gold, silver, cloth, utensil etc. must be washed. Utensils in which fried items are prepared would get cleaned by hot water. If and when rotten food is consumed, fasting on three following nights should purify the person concerned. Coming into contact by touch with a woman in menses, of a new born baby, a chandala or a dead body must necessarily take head bath. A Brahmana touching a wet bone must also get purified by a bath, but coming into touch a dry bone should perform Achamana or sipping spoonful of clean water and look up Surya Deva or a cow-face. Never cross human cough remains, urine and excreta, and such impurities and if one did it by mistake, the feet as also the padarakshas must be washed. Never see or converse with women in menses, fallen women, women in conception, napumsakas, nude persons, chandala, and those who carry dead persons and if done so by mistake, one must look at Sun and sky. Personal contact with inedible food, mendicant, cat, donkey, chicken, an abandoned person, chandala, pig, or any such questionable matter or person would be absolved only with bathing. Performance of Nityakarma should not be disturbed at any cost and any infringements would call for Prayaschitthaas or atonements by 'Maranashoucha' or 'Jananashoucha'!

#### Ashuchi-Shuchi Vidhhaana:

Ashoucha is observed by Brahmanas for ten days, Kshatriyas for twelve days, Vaishyas for fifteen days and Shudras for one month. Then Ashoucha is terminated as per 'Shastrokta Karmas' as prescribed. Even before the Ashuchi Suddhi, there would be a 'Mritaka daaha samkaara' ( assuaging the thirst of the departed soul or 'pretatma') to be observed by Sagotris or those who have the same Gotra, by visiting / bathing twelve water bodies on the first, fourth, seventh, and ninth days after the demise. On the fourth day of the demise, the burnt bone remains of the ashes of the body are to be collected from the burial ground and this procedure is called 'Asthi Sanchayana' and there after the remains are immersed in a

Sacred River for ‘Asthi Nimajjana’. ‘Samaanodaka Purushas’ are freed from Ashuchi after the prescribed tenth day.

On the arrival of a child, the father has to take vastrasahita snaana. After the Janana Ashuchi, Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishya and Shudras are freed from the Ashuchi on the tenth, twelfth, fifteenth and thirtieth days and after observing the ‘Shastrokta Dharma’, Shanti Homa- Puja- Namakarana-Bhojana-Daana and other formalities are observed. Such indeed is the Sadaachaara-Pravartana: *Dharmaartha Kaamam sampraapya paratreya cha shobhaanam, Idam rahasya maayushyam dhanyambuddhi vivardhanam/ Sarva Paapaharam Punyam Shripustyaarogyam Shivam, Yashah keertipradamnruunaam Tejobala vivarthanam/ Anushtheyam sadaa pumbhihi Swargasaadhanamuttamam, Brahmanyaih Kshatriyairvaishyaih Shudraaischa Munisattamaah!* (Sadaachaara Pravartana on the above lines by Brahmana-Kshatriya-Vaishya and Sudras would indeed bestow the benefits of Dharma-Artha- Kaama-Moksaha as this indeed is the secret message of Ideal- Living which demolishes all types of Sins, besides providing recognition, longevity, prosperity, good health, all-round fulfillment!

Mentioning the major Principles of Righteous Living, Veda Vyasa described Varnaashram Dharmas as follows: About Brahmanas: *Dayaadaana tapo Deva Yagna Swaadhaaya tatparaihi, Nityodaki bhavedydwipraha kuryaacchaagni parigraham/* Brahmanas are required to practise Daana, Daya, Tapas, Deva-Pitru Yagnas, Swaadhyaya; they should be ‘Nityodakis’ or undaunted by Snaanans irrespective of seasons and ‘Agnopaasakas’ or engaged in the practice of Agni Karyaas. They might perform Yagnas on behalf of others also to eke their livelihood. They should teach Vedas to sishtyas / students and could accept ‘Daana Pratigraha’ as a part of their ‘Shat Karmas’ as prescribed. *Sarvalokahitam-kuryaanaahitam-kasyachid-Dwijaah, MaitriSamasta-tatveshuBrahmannyosttamamam dhanam/* (Brahmanaas are required to work for the general welfare and well being of the Society as a totality and indeed this should be the basic Dharma of any Brahmana.) Kshatriyas: This class is to defend and administer the Society, promote its interests, facilitate Yagnas and the Virtuous Tasks; punish the Evil interests and ensure peace and prosperity. Vaishyas: This class has to perform Pashu paalana, Vaanijya, Krishi / Vyavasaaya or farming; equally importantly Vaishyas have to perform certain duties of Yadhyana, Yagna, Daana, Dharma, Nitya Naimittika Karmas, Anushtana, Brahmana Poshana and Kraya Vikraya. Shudras are expected to serve the earlier Varnaas in the execution of their respective duties and at the same time observe Sarva Bhuta Daya, politeness, diligence, truthfulness, patience, capacity to withstand the vagaries of seasons, friendliness and equanimity. Veda Vyasa also mentioned ‘Aapaddharmaas’ of Brahmanas rendering Kshatriya Dharmas, Kshatriyas assuming the duties of Vaishyas and so on. [Maha Bhagavata Purana provided escape clauses in the context of Varnaashrama Dharma: *Yasya yallakshanam drusyata tat teniva vinirdisat/* In other words: the aspects of aptitude and practice may be endorsed; as such the Principles are of general regulative nature while in practice, the updated considerations of ‘Desha-Kaala-Maana Paristhithis’ would indeed prevail].

Referring to Varna Sankarana or slippages of VarnaDharma, Veda Vyasa quoted Shiva: *BrahmanyamDevi dushpraaptam Visargaadbrahmanam Shubhey, Kshatriyo Vaishya Shudroavaa Nisargaaditimaymatih Karmanaadushkryuteyneh Sthanaadrushyatisadwijah, Shreshtham Varnamanupraapyata smaadaakshipyatey punah/ Sthito Brahmandharmerna Brahmanyamupajeevati, Kshatriyo vaadha Vaishyovaa Brahma bhuyam sa gacchati/Yasya Vipratwamutsrujya Kshatra dharmannishavatey, Brahmanyatsa pari bhrashtah Kshatra yonau Prajaayatey/* (Devi! Brahmanatwa is not easy to attain and it was my arrangement to let human beings be created as per their ‘Swabhavaas’ or

characteristics. But some Brahmanas leave their natural instincts and slip down in their actions; they tend to adopt Kshatriya Dharma and thus get born as Kshatriyas); in the same manner, Vaishyas also slip down as Shudras. *Yastu Shudraha swadharmena Jnaanaa Vijnaana vaancchuchih, Dharmajno Dharma niratah sadharma phalamasnutey/* (Shudra might be as a Shudra himself adopt the Dharma of Brahmana and pursue Jnaana-Vijaana- Vidhana then he would get Brahmatwa Siddhi) and pursue Jnaana-Vijaana- Vidhana then he would get Brahmatwa Siddhi). Brahma's decision as per Brahma-Vaakya or Veda pramana is that Brahmanas ought not to consume Ugraanna, Ganaanna, Shraaddhaanna and Shudraanna and if a Brahmana while dying had that kind of Anna in his Jathara / belly would be destined to be reborn as a Shudra; conversely, a Shudra who attained Brahmanatwa in his ongoing life had the type of Brahmana Bhojana as his jatharaagni would be reborn as a Brahmana and that would be Mahadeva's dispensation: *Yasyaannenaavaseshena jathareymriyatey Dwijah, Taam Taam yonim vrajedvipro yasyaannamupajeevati!* (Whatever may be the Varna in which a person dies with that kind of Jatharaagni has in his /her belly, that person would be reborn with the typical characteristics of that Varna!). The reported view that Parama Shiva expressed-as conveyed by Veda Vyasa was: *Na yonirnaapi samskaaro na Shrutirnacha santatih, Kaaranaani Dwijasttvasya vrutthamevatu vidheeyatey/* (It is not by birth, upbringing, knowledge of Vedas and by the Offspring that a person possesses, but Brahmanatwa is a decisive factor merely on one's own behavior, conduct and actions)!

Dharmaadharma Nirupana: Parama Shiva further delineated to Devi Parvati about those who had Trikarana Shuddhi, Indriya Nigraha, and Ahimsaacharana (Cleanness of Body-Mind-Heart; Control of Senses and Non-Violence). They are eligible to Swarga if they had no desire for other's money except for one's own well earned; if they did not react to other women except one's own lawful wife while treating truly and heartily the others as his mothers, sisters and daughters; if they serve all the Beings with fellow-feelings of warmth and consideration; if they would hurt none directly or indirectly by way of speech, thought or action; if they were always engaged in charity, humility with noble actions, Tapasya, 'Bahyaantara Shuchi' or cleanliness physically and internally; if they were truthful to themselves or their conscience as also transparent in their deeds; if their way of conversation was clear without hidden meanings, convincing, sweet, soft, and endearing without harshness, and arrogance or uppishness; if they were Jnaanavaan, dayaavaan and Kshamaavaan or with maturity, merciful, and forgiving; if they avoided sinners, known rogues and confirmed offenders; if they were full of dedication and devotion to Devas, respectful to Gurus, Vidwans and Elders; and in short their natural instincts were ideal and deserving emulation.

Asked by Devi Parvati as to how the Aayurdaaya or life-span of a Human Being was determined, Parama Shiva explained that every person would have to necessarily reap the fruits of one's own actions; some would be extremely crude, arrogant and cruel resorting to violence in the past births as also in the ongoing life and the compounded effect would result in the longevity of the current Janma. *Paapena karmanaa Devi ukto himsaadhibhuryutah, Ahitam Sarva Bhutaanaam heenaayurupajaayatey/ Shubhena karmanaa Devi prouni ghaata vivarjitah, Nikshistra shastro nirdando na himsati kadaachana/ Na ghaata yati no hantighnantam naivaamunodatey, Sarva Bhateshu Sasneho yathaatmani tathaaparey/ Edrushah Purusho nityam Devi Devatwamasnutey, Upapannaan Sukhaanbhogaan sadaashnaati mudaayutah/ Athaachenmaanushhey lokey kadaachidupapadyatey, Esha Deerghaayushaam maargah suvruttaanaam su karmanaam/ Praani himsaa vimokshena samudeetatah/* ( Those who were in the habit of committing sins and resorting to 'Himsa', they would not only be detested generally but would be subject to

‘Ayuksheena’ or decreasing life-span; conversely those who led a life of merciful and cordial nature would gain nlong life but derseve Devatwa . Shunning violence is the key to longevity!)

Devi Parvati asked Maha Deva further as to what type of Karmaas / deeds and Daanaas / charities would have to be performed to upgrade a person to Swarga Loka and the latter replied as follows: A person with such desire should respect Brahmanas; feed the needy with Bhakshya-Bhojya-Anna-Paaneeyas and Vastras; consruct or be an instrument to cause construction of Yagna Mandapas, Dharmashaalaas, water bodies, wells and ‘Sabha Mandapaas’ for public utility; execute Nitya-Naimittika Karmaas with fortitude and faith; and give away in charity of Aasanaas, Shayanas, Dhana-Dhanya-Vastu-Vaahana-Griha-Vastras. Those who could afford to give away particularly the needy, the helpless, the beggars, the blind, the depressed and tha have-nots turn away their faces or wantonly avoid them and those greedy, miserly, arrogant and non-believers of God would be by the turn of Kaala Chakra would definitely be paid back in their own births or in the subesequent ones but they should surely be in the opposite placements.

Maha Deva explained to Devi Parvati further about Vaachika Dharma Swarupas:

*Aitmahetoh paraarthey vaa Adharmaashrita meyvacha, Ye mrushaa na vadanteeha tey Naraah Swarga gaaminah/ Vrutyartham Dharma hetorvaa kaama kaaraatthadhaivacha, Anrutam ye na bhaashantey tey Naraah Swarhagaaminah/ Shlakshnaam Vaaneem Swacchha varnaam mathuraam paapa varjitaam, Swagateynaabhi bhaashantey naraah Swarga gaaminah/ Parusham ye na bhaashantey katukam nishthuram tathaa, Na paishunyarataah Samtastey Naraah Swarga gaaminah/ ishunam na prabhaashantey Mitrabhedakaram tathaa, para peedaakaram chaivatey Naraah Swarga gaaminah/ Ye varjayanti parusham paradroham cha Maanavaah, Sarva Bhuta samaadaantaastey Naraah Swarga gaaminah/ Shathapralaapaa dwirataa viruddha pari varjakaah, Sowmya pralaapino nithyam tey Naraah Swarga gaaminah/ Na Kopaadvaharantey ye Vaachaam hridaya daarineem, Shantim vindati ye kruddhaastey Naraah Swarga gaaminah/ Yesha Vaanee kruto Devi Dharmah Sevyah sadaa Naraih, Shubha Satya Gunaarnityam Varjaneeyaa mrushaa budhaih/ (Never ever tell Asatya or Untruth either for one’s own sake, for the sake of others, for the sake of life’s betterment, for the sake of Dharma or even for the sake of one’s own life. Never converse with harshness and insolence, nor create misunderstandings and carry tales; the language to be used has to be sincere, soft, heartfelt, and without causing offence: such persons would indeed find their way to Swarga; this indeed the Vaachika Dharma Swarupa! Only such persons whose language is not mixed with Parushata, Nishthurata, Paishunyata, Mitrabheda karana, Paradroha karana, Shatha pralaapana, Hridaya daaruneeta and parapeedaakara!)*

Yet another clarification sought by Devi Parvati from Maha Deva was in respect of Maanasika Karmaas:

*Maanaseyneha Dharmena Samyukaah Purushaahsadaah, Swargam gacchaanti Kalyaani! Tanmey keertayatah shrunu/ Dushpraneetena Manasaa Dushpranee- taantaraakrutih, Naro badhyeta yeneha shrunu vaa tam Shubhaananey/ Aranye vijaneynyastam paraswam drusyatey yadaa, Manasaapi na gruhnanti tey Naraah Swrgagaaminah/ Tathaiva paradaaraanye kaamavrutthaa rahogataah, Manasaapi na himsanti tey Naraah Swarga gaaminah/ Sharum Mitramcha ye nithyam tulyena manasaa naraah, Bhajanti Maitryam Samgamya tey Naraah Swarga gaaminah/ Shrutavanto dayaavantah shuchayah Satyasangaraah, Swairarthaih parisamthushtaastey Naraah Swarga gaaminah/ Avairaaey twanaa yaasaa Maitra chittarataah sadaa, Sarva bhuta dayaavantastey Naraah Swarga gaaminah/ Jnaatavanrtah kriyaavantah Kshamaavantah Suhrutpriyaah, Dharmaadharma vido nityam tey Naraah Swargagaamionah/ Shubhaanaashumaabhaan aam cha Karmanaam phalasanchaye,*

*Niraakaamkshaascha ye Devi tey Naraah Swarga gaaminah/ Paapopetaan varjayanti Deva Dwija paraah sadaa, Samuthhaanamanu praaptaastey Naraah Swarga gaaminah/ Shubhaih Karm,a phalaairdevi mayaitaa parikeertitaah, Swarga maarga paraa bhuyah/*

(Devi! Following are the Maanasika Dharmaas that are the factors of accomplishing Swarga: A person who should control his mind so as to get rid temptations of even discovering ready availability of huge sums of somebody else's money in a lonely jungle! Even in loneliness, the person should not get disturbed with the thoughts of other women; he should observe absolute equanimity with all human beings and concentrate on Veda Shastraadhyana with intense feelings of mental strength, cleanliness and truthfulness with reflective thoughts of segregating Dharma and Adharma and Shubha and Ashubha, without aspiring for returns or fruits of such thoughts and deeds. The person concerned has to purge the heart of mind-driven sinful aberrations but should sustain the thoughts of the Supreme Truth and Energy.)

Finally, Parama Shiva affirmed: *Karma paasha nibaddhaanaam naraanaam dukkha bhaaginaam, Naanyopaayam prapashyaami Vaasudevaatparam dwijaah/ Ye pujayanti tam Devam Shankha chakra gadaadharam, Vaangmanaha Karmabhih samyaktey yaanti paramaam gatim/ Kim teshaam jeeviteyeha pashuvaccheshti teynacha, Yeshaam na pravanam chittham Vaasudevey Jaganmaye/* (All the human beings who were tied tight with Karma paashaas and the resultant distress have one and only one unique source viz. Vaasudeva, the Shankha Chakra Gadaa dhara; he should be worshipped with 'Manovaakkaaya karmas' or with mind, tongue and deeds to take steps forward to Moksha; of which avail is there like animals engaged always in eating and sleeping if a maanava fails to worship Bhagavan Krishna!)

*Pitaamahaadapi parah Shaswatah Purusho Harih, Krishno jaambunadaabhaso vyabhrey Surya yi voditah/ dasabaahurmahaa tejaa Devataarinishudanah, Shri Vatsaanko Hrishikeshaha Sarva Davaivata Pujakah/* (Far superior than Brahma and everlasting is Shri Hari, Vaasudeva or Shri Krishna who shines like the dazzling and magnificent Surya as he is emerging on a cloud-less clear Sky with ten hands and a glorious Srivatsa as the Supreme Lord of Devas). Whosoever takes refuge in Vaasudeva would be the beloved of the entire Deva Samuha including Brahma and Parama Shiva; it is that Bhakta of Vaasudeva who has nothing beyond to crave!

MahaTatwa Nirnaya: In an endeavour to outline even a misty profile of the Supreme Power, Maharshi Veda Vyasa expressed as follows:

*Yattadavyakta majara machintya maja mavyayam, Anidresya rupam chaa paani paadaatya samyutam, Vittam Sarvagatam nityam bhuta yoni makaaranam/ Vyaaptam Vyaaptam yatah sarvam pasyanti suurayah, Tadbrahma paramam dhaama taddhyayam Moksha kaamskshibhih/ Shruti Vaakyoditam Sukshmam tadvishnoh paramam padam, Utpattim Pralayam chaiva Bhutaa-naamaagatim gatim/ Vetti Vidyaamavidyaam cha sa vaachyo Bhagavaaniti, Jnaana Shakti balai –shwarya veerya tejaamsya seshatah/ Bhagavadcchabda vaachyaani vinaa heyairgunaadibhih, Sarvaani tatra bhutaani vasanti Paramaatmani/ Bhuteshucha sa Sarvaatmaa Vaasudevastatah smrutah, Bhuteshu vasatey yomtarva samtyatra cha taaniyat/ Dhaataa Vidhaataa jagataam Vaasudevastatah Prabhu, Sa sarvabhuta prakrutirgunaamscha doshaamscha sarvaa na gunohyateeta/ Ateeta Sarvaavaranaokhilaatmaa tenaavrutam yadbhuvanaantaraalam, Samasta Kalyaana Gunaatmakohi Swashakti leshaadruta bhuta sargah/ Icchhaagruheetaabhi matoru dehah Samsaadhitaasesha jagaddhito sow, Tejo balaishwarya Mahaavaridhah Swaveerya shaktyaadi gunaaika raashih/ Parah Paraanaam Sakalaana yatra kleshaadayah santi Paraa Pareshey/ Sa Eashwaro Vyashti samashti rupo-avyakta swarupah Prakatah*

*swarupah, Sarveshwarah Sarvadrugsarva vettaa samasta shaktih Parameshwaraakhyah/Sanjnaayatey yena tadastadosham Shuddham Param Nirmalamekarupam, Samdrushyatey Vyaapyatha gamyatey vaa tatvajnaana magjnaanamatonnyaduktam!*

(That Para Brahma Tatwa is Avyakta / Inconceivable, Ajara or Ageless, Achitya or Unimaginable, Avyaya or Indestructible, Anirdeshya or Undefined, Arupa or Formless, Apaani paada or devoid of hands and feet, Sarvagata Satya or Eternal Truth, Bhutayoni vyaapyavyaapya or omnipresent among all Beings which is presumably comprehensible only by a handful Tatwa Vettas; It is that Superlative Tatwa who is Vishnu; It is that Unknown Prime Energy which Creates, Sustains and Terminates as also possessive of the awareness of the Process of Evolution and the unique capability to distinguish Vidya or Avidya / knowledge or ignorance. It is that Paramatma who has no features, characteristics, impurities or blemishes but is replete with the Magnificent Shat-Shaktis viz. Jnaana-Bala-Ishwarya-Veerya-Tejo-Yasho Shaktis. It is that Sarvaatma and Parama Tatwa- who is acclaimed by Brahma himself in reply to Maharshis as Vaasudeva; He is the Architect and Builder of Sarva Jagat; He is the root cause of the Mula Tatwa or the Prakriti, far beyond the concept of Existence, yet an integral component of Existence. A miniscule atom of his unimaginable Shakti is responsible for the Vyavastha-Sthiti-Laya of the unending series of 'Bhuvanaantaraalaas' or the Universes. He is the 'Tejo Balaiswarya Mahaavarodha Swaveerya Shaktaadi Gunaika Raashi'; He has the Identity of the Vyashti / Uniqueness and Samashti / Totality; He is the Avyata Swarupa as also the Prakata Swarupa / the Unintelligible and yet Perceptible Form; Sarveswara-Sarvadraddhta-Sarva Shaktiyuta and Parameswara; He is also Parah-Paraanaam-Paraapareshaa or Farther-Beyond-and Farther Beyond! It is that distinct, pure, transparent, spotless, unpolluted, Wholesome, Outstanding and Singular Entity which is conceived as Maha Tatwa. It is only that which is recognised as 'Jnaana' or the Knowledge and Perception leading any one to that Maha Tatwa or providing clues about that Utmost Ultimate and the rest indeed is 'Agjnaana'!) [ Brahma Purana]

#### Concept of Time, Brahma Srishti and Lakshmi-Vishnu's 'Avinaabhavata' (Affinity)

To facilitate the measurement of Time, Kaala Swarupa Vishnu Bhagavan created the concept of 'Kaala' or Time beginning from a Nimesha or blink of an Eye: fifteen Nimeshas make one Kashtha, thirty kashtas make one Kala, thirty Kalas make one Muhurta, thirty muhurtas make a day-night, fifteen day-night make one one paksha (fortnight), two Paksahas-Sukla Paksha and Krishna Paksha make one Maaasa, six months make one Ayana viz. Dakshinayana or the night of Devas and Uttaraayana or their day, twelve months make one Varsha, one Varsha is a day-night to Devas, hundred years of human beings make a Divya Varsha, Satya Yuga comprises of Four thousand Divya Varshas, Treta Yuga comprises three thousand Divya Varshas, Dwapara Yuga comprises of two thousand Divya Varshas, Kali Yuga comprises of one thousand Deva Varshas; one Maha Yuga consists of the total of all the twelve Yugas, thousand Chatur yugas account for one day of Brahma and each day of Brahma comprises of Fourteen Manvantaras. Approximately, each Manvantara consists of eight lakh fifty two thousand Divya Varshas and as per human years each Manvantara consists of thirty crore sixty six lakh twenty thousand years. Fourteen such Manvantaras make a Brahma Day and after such time or at the end of each Brahma day, there would be a Naimittika Brahma Pralaya. Now, Prathama Paraartha of Brahma having been completed at Brahma's half age of Fifty years, the Dwiteeya Paraartha commenced as Varahaka Kalpa is in progress!

In the context of Sarga, Brahma first resorted to Tamasika Srishti of Pancha Avidyas viz. Tamas or Ajnaana (Ignorance), Moha (Passion), Maha Bhoga (Obsession), Taamistra (Krodha / Anger), Andha Tamishra (Extreme and Blind Perversion). Then emerged Jnaana Shunya- Tamomaya and Jada Swarupa Srishti or Creation of Unenlightened, gloomy and desolate material of Five kinds of Vriksha or Trees-

Lataa or creepers and Truna or grass forms of no consequence. As the first faltering steps in Srishti were inconsequential, Brahma performed Tapasya with concentration and resolve and created Tiryak- Shrota Srishti in which Pashu-Pakshi-Mriga Swarupa humans or cattle, birds, animals and Stupid Human Beings full of Ahamkaara or ego- Abhimaan or misplaced self-respect and Avivekata or ignorance. Still dissatisfied with the second attempt, Brahma kept on sharpening his trials: the second trial resulted in Bhuta Sarga, the Third one led to VaikaarikaSarga which essentially was Aindrayika or Indriya Sambandhi or related to attachment of Physical Parts; the Fourth one was of Prakrutika Nature or Buddhi-Purvaka quality which was a Mukhya Sarga related to Parvata-Vriksha-Sthavaraas; the fifth Sarga of Keeta-Patangaas or worms and birds; the sixth Sarga was called Deva Sarga, the seventh Sarga was of Manushya's Creation; the seventh and eighth Sargas were of Praakrita Sarga, the Ninth one was Kaumara Sargawhich was both Prakritiha and Vaikritika Sarga. Then followed the Srishti of Deva-Asura-Pitrugana-Manushyas and of water for which Brahma utilised his body-parts: from his janghas emerged Asuras; from his face were created Sarva Pradhana Devatas; Pitruganas from his body-sides; then by quickly changing his bodies each and every time, created Jyotsna, Pratah kaala, Syamkaala, and in the nights created Rakshasaas and Yakshas, Sarpas and so on. As Brahma was enjoying singing Gandharvas were created. There after he created wolves from his Vaksasthala of chest, goats from his face, cows from his belly; horses, elephants, donkeys, camels and innumerable animals from his feet, and fruits and Aoushadhis from his body hairs. From Brahma's Prathama / Poorva Mukha emerged Gayatri, Rig Veda, Tivrut Soma Rathantara and Agnishtoma Yagna; from his Dakshina Mukha were materialised Yajur Veda, Traishthup Chanda, Pancha Dashastoma, Brihat Saama, and Ukthiki; from Brahma's Western Face came SaamaVeda, Jagati Chhanda, Sapta dashastoma, Vairupa, and Atiraatra and finally from his Uttara Mukha were materialised Eka Vimshati –stoma, Atharva Veda, Aaptoryaamaana, Anushtup Chhanda and Vairaaja. Thus, various body parts of Brahma were created Pishacha, Apsara, Kinnara, and innumerable Sthavara Jangamaas! Brahma then created Varnaashrayaas viz. Brahmanas from his face, Kshatriyas from his chest, Vaishyas from his knees and others from his feet; fulfillment of the prescribed duties of the Varnas were that Karma Nishtha Brahmanas would attain Pitru Loka, Kshatriyas who never leave the battle field and either win or get bruised or killed would attain Indraloka, Vaishyas following their Varna Dharma would secure Vaayu loka and others the Gandharvaloka. Gurukula vaasi Brahmacharis qualify for Urthvaloka Muni loka, Virtuous Grihastaas attain Pitru loka, Vanaprasthaas achieve Saptarshi loka and Sanyasis accomplish Brahma loka! Brahma's Maanasa Putras were Bhrigu, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Angira, Marichi, Daksha, Atri and Vasishtha considered as Nine Brahmas. Khyati, Bhuti, Sambhuti, Kshama, Preeti, Sannati, Urja, Anasuya and Prasuti were Brahma's daughters and were named as the wives of the above husbands respectively. Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana and Sanat Kumaras were also the Brahma Manasa Putras and refused to get married and beget progeny; Brahma got angry and frowned and thus Rudra Deva got materialised; half of Rudra's body was of male and another half was of a female; the male part got divided as eleven parts and the female part too got divided as Sowmya, Krura, Shanta, Ashanta, Shyama, Goura and such other Rupaas. Brahma also created Saamyambhu Manu as the Prajaapati and the latter married Shatarupa; together they gave birth to two sons Pravrata and Uttanapaada; they also begot two daughters viz. Prasuti and Aakruti who were married to Daksha and Ruchi Prajapatis respectively. Daksha and Prasutibegot twenty four Kanyas viz. Shraddha, Lakshmi, Dhruti, Tushti, Medha, Pushti, Kriya, Buddhi, Lazza, Vapu, Shanti, Siddhi and Kirti who were all married to Dharma; eleven more kanyas viz. Khyati, Sati, Sambhuti, Smriti, Preeti, Kshama, Santati and, Anasuya and these were married respectively to Bhrigu, Shiva, Maricha, Angira, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Atri and Vasishtha while Swaha and Swadha were wedded to Agni and Urjja to Pitaras. Akriti and Ruchi Prajapati gave birth to twin girls viz. Yajna and Dakshina.

Having described Tamasika Srishti, then creating a son like himself, he found a boy on his lap with Nilalohita Varna and as the child kept on crying non-stop, he said: *Kim twam rodishi tam Brahmaa rudantam praatyuvaachah, Naama deheti tam sotha pratyu –vaacha Prajapatih, Rudrastwam Deva naamnaasi maa ropdirdhairiyamaavacha/ Ekamutmam punah sotha saptakrutyo rurodavai/ Tatonyaani dadou tasmai sapta naamaani vai Prabhu, Sthaanaani chaishaamashtaanaam parni putraamscha sa*

*Prabhuh/ Bhavam Sharvameshaa -naam tathaa Pashupatih Dwija, Bheemamugram Mahadevamuvaacha sa Pitaamahah/* (Why are you crying away my child; the child asked: keep my name; Brahma said: your name shall be Rudra and now don't you cry again; but the child cried seven times again and thus Brahma gave the child seven more names and at those eight more places decided the names of the child's women and progeny too; the seven more names were Bhava, Sharva, Ishaana, Pashupati, Bheema, Ugra and Mahadeva) Brahma also decided their Positions along with Surya, Varuna, Prithvi, Vaayu, Agni, Aakasha, Yagna dikshita Brahmana and Chandra. Along side, the names of Surya's wives also were decided by Brahma and they were Suvarchala, Usha, Vikeshi, Aparā, Shiva, Swaha, Disha, Diksha, and Rohini. Also Surya's sons names were also given as Shanaischara, Shukra, Lohitanga, Manojava, Skanda, Sarga, Santana and Budha..

#### Mutual Affinity of Vishnu and Lakshmi :

The couple of Bhṛigu Muni and Khyati gave birth to Devi Lakshmi who was wedded to Vishnu. In this context, Maitreya Muni interjected and sought an explanation from Paraashara Maharshi as to how Lakshmi Devi who surfaced at the time of Samudra Mathana by Deva-Danavaas for Amrita was supposed to have been born to Bhṛigu-Khyati couple! Maharshi Parashara replied as follows in extolling Lakshmi:

*Nithaivaishaa Jaganmataa Vishnoh Shriranapaayani, Yathaa Sarvagato Vishnusthathai -veyam Dwijottama/ Artho Vishnuriyam Vaani neetireshaa nayo Hari, Bodho Vishnuriyam Buddhirdharmosou Satkriyaa twiyam/ Srashtaa Vishnuriyam Srushtih Shrir Bhumirbhudharo Harih, Santosho Bhagavaam Lakshmistushti Maitreya Shaswati/ Icchaa Shrir Bhagavan kaamo Yagnesou Dakshinaa twiyam, Aarjaarhutirasou Devi Purudaasho Janaaradanah/ Patneeshaalaa Muney Lakshmih Praagvamsho Madhusudanah, Chitir Lakshmir Hariryupa Idhmaa Shrirbhagavaankushah/ Saama Swarupi Bhagananudgeetih Kamalaalaya, Swahaarlakshmir Jagannatho Vaasudevo Hutaashanah/ Shankaro BhagavaanccchorirGauree Lakshmirdwijottama, Maitreya Keshavah Suryastatprabhaa Kamalaalaya/ Vishnuh Pitruganah Padmaa Swadhaa Shaswata Pushtidaa, Dyauh Shreeh Sarvaatmako Vishuravakaashoti vistara/ Shashaankah Shridharah Kaantih Shristathaivaana paayani, Dhrutir Lakshmeerjagaccheshtaa Vaayuh Sarvatrago Harih/ Jaladhidwija Govindastadwelaa Shirmaha Muney, Lakshmi Swarupamindraani Devendro Madhusudanah/ Yamaschakradharah Saakshaat Dhumrerna Kamalaalayaa, Ruddhih Shtih Shridharo Devah Swayameva Dhaneshwarah/ Gauri Lakshmeermahaa bhaagaa Keshavo Varunah Swayam, Shrirdevasenaa Viprendraha Devasenaapatir Harih/Avashtambho Gadaa paanih Shaktir Lakshmirdwijottama, Kaashtaa Lakshmir nimeshaasou kalaa twiyam/ Jyotsnaa Lakshmih pradiposow sarvah Sarveswaro Harih, Lataabhutaa Jagan maataa Shri Vishnurudruma sanjnitah/ Vibhavari Shrirdivaso Devaschakra gadaa dharah, Varaprado Varo Vishnurvadhu Padmavanaalkayaa/ Nadaswarupi Bhagavaan-chhirnadi rupa samstitaa, Dwajascha Pundareekaakshah Pataakaa Kamalaalaya/ Trishnaa Lakshmir Jagannaadho lobho Narayanah parah, Rati Raagascha Maitreya Lakshmi Govinda yevacha/ Kim chaati bahnoktena Sankshpeyaadou muchyatey/ Deva tiryā Manushyaadou Putraanaa Bhagavaan Harih, Streemaani Shricha vigneṇa nanayorvidyateṇ param)* (Hey Dwijottama! Devi Lakshmi who never leaves Vishnu, is as permanent as Vishnu and is Sarva Vyapi as Vishnu. Lakshmi is the meaning and definition of Vishnu, his voice, his discipline, his morality, his teachings, his mental status, his dharma or virtuosity, and his deeds. Vishnu is the Srashta or the Creator and Lakshmi is the Creation par excellence. Srihari is the 'Bhudhara' and Lakshmi is Bhumi. Bhagavan is Santosha or the Essence of Happiness and Lakshmi is the incarnation of Tushti or Contentment. Bhagavan is 'Kaama' or desire and Lakshmi is the goal of desire. He is Yagna and she is Dakshina. He is the Purodasha and she is Ajyaahuti or the offering of Ghee. Madhava is Yajamana Griha or the House of the Master and Lakshmi is the Patni shaala or the Private Residence of the wife. He is 'Yupa' or the Sacrificial Post and she is 'chita' or the Sacrifice herself; He is the Kusha or the grass used for all Sacred Deeds and she is the 'Idhma' (piece of Sacrificial wood); He is Saama Veda Swarupa and she is the Udgati or the Cantor/ Mantra; and Bhagavan is Hutaashana or the receiver of Homa while Lakshmi is Swaha or the offering. Bhagavan Vishnu is Shankara while Lakshmi is Gauri. Keshava is

Surya while Lakshmi is Prabha; Vishnu is Pitruganaand Lakshmi is Swadha; and He is Aakasha and She is Swargaloka! Hari and Lakshmi respectively are Chandrama and Kaanti; Vaya and Gati /Speed and Dhruti or Adhara /the hold; Samudra and Taranga or the wave; Indra and Indrani; Yama Dharma and Dhumorna; Kubera and Ruddhi; Kartikeya and Devasena; Gadadhara and Shakti; Nimesha-Kashtha; Muhurta-Kala; Deepaka and Jyoti; Vriksha and Lata; Dina-Ratri; Vara- Vadhu; Nada and Nadi; Dhawaja and Pataka; Lobha and Trishna; Rati and Raaga; in brief: he is the symbol of masculinity and she is the emblem of femininity!).

### Samudra Mathana, Emergence of Lakshmi and Amrita ( Vishnu and Lakshmi Stutis)

As Durvasa Muni gifted a fragrant garland to Indra who disrespected and gave it away to Iravata elephant which trampled it, the Muni went wild and cursed him that Rajya Lakshmi would desert Tribhuvanas and Indra's magnificence would disappear. Since Indra's grandeur was lost Daitya-Danavas occupied his throne and Devas became fugitives and approached Brahma Deva. Brahma in turn reached Ksheera Saagara along with Indra and Devas and extolled Bhagavan Narayana as follows:\

*Namaami Sarvam Sarveshamanantamajamavyayam, Lokadhaama Dharaadhaaramaprakaasha mabhedinaam/ Naraayanamaniyamshamaseshaa-naamamaniyasaam, Samastaanaam Garishtham cha Bhuraadeenaam Gareeyasaam/Yatra Sarvam yatah Sarvamatpurnam Matpura saram, Sarva Bhutascha yo Devah paraanaamapi yah Parah/ Parah Paramaatmaat Purushaat Paramaatma Swarupa dhruk, Yogibhischintaye yo sowMuktihetor Mumukshibhih/ Satvaadayo na Santeesho yatra cha Prtaakrutaa ganaah, Sa Shuddhaha Sarva Shudhyebhyaha Pumaanaadyah praseedatu/Proachatey Parameshohi yah shuddhopyapuchaaratah, Praseedatu sa no Vishnuraatmaa yah Sarva dehinaam/ Yah Kaaranamcha Kaaryam cha Karanasyaapi kaaranam, Karyasyaapi cha yah Kaaryam praseedatu sa no Harih/ Karya Kaaryasya yatkaaryam tat Kaaryasyaapi yah Swayam, Tat Kaarya Kaarya Bhuto Yastatascha pranataah sma tam/ Karanam Kaaranasyaapi tasya Kaaranakaaranam, Tat Kaaranamnaam hetum tam pranataah sma Pareshwaram/ Bhoktaaram Bhogya bhutam cha Srashtaaram Srujyamevacha, Kaarya kartu Swarupam tam pranataah sma param padam/ Vishuddha bodhavannityam ajam akshayamavyayam, Avyaktamavikaaram yattadvishnoh paramam padam/ Na sthulamcha sukshmam yatra Visheshanagocharam, Tatpadam Paramam Vishnoh pranamaam sadaamalam/ Yasyayutaam yutaam shaamsho Vishwashaktiriyam shtitaa, Parabrahma Swarupam yat pranamaamstamavyayam/ Yadyoginaha Sadodyhuktaah Punya Papaapa/kshayekshayam, Pashyanti Pranavo chintyam Tad-Vishnoh paramam padam/ Yatra Devaa na Munayo na chaaham na cha Shankarah, Jaananti Parameshasya tad Vishnoh Paramam Padam/ Shaktayo yasya Devasya Brahma Vishnu Shivbaatmikaah, Bhavantiya Bhuta Purvasya tad Vishnoh Paramam Padam/ Sarvesha sarva Bhutaatman Sarva Sarvaashrayaachyuta, Praseeda Vishno Bhaktaanaam Vraja no drushtigocharam/*

(My Salutations to you Narayana! You are an atom among the minutest of atoms and the heaviest by far the heavier than Earth; You are the Nikhilaloka Vishraama, Prithvi's Adhaara Swarupa, Aprakaashya, Amogha, Sarva Rupa, Sarveshwara, Ananta, Ajaya, and Avyaya. Inclusive of me Brahma the totality of Universal Existence is far beyond of our comprehension, even as you exist in it, created by you, preserved by you, and is Sarva Deva maya, Sarva Bhutamaya, Sarva Mokshagami Munijanamaya, Paratma Swarupa, Adi Purusha! Do kindly be merciful! Be kind to us Shuddha Swarupa Shakti and Kala Swarupa ranging from Kalaa-Kaashtha-Muhurtaas to Maha Yugaas! Be pleased Shuddha Swarupa Parameshwara or Parama/Maha Lakshmi Pati; be compassionateto us as you are the Kaarana, Karyarupa, Karanaa's Kaarana, and Karya's Karya. I bend my knees to you for benevolence as you are the Karya or Maha Tatwa, Karya as Ahamkara, Karya as Tanmatra panchaka, Karya as Brahmanda, Karya as Brahma-Dakshaadi Karyabhuta! You are the Jagat Karana (Brahmaadis), Brahmanda Karana, Bhuta Panchaka Karana, PanchaTanmatra Karana, Mula Prakruti Hetu, Bhokta and Bhogya, Srashtaa and Srujya, Karta and Karya Rupa, and Parama and Paramapada, Vishuddha Bodha Swarupa, Nitya, Ajanma, Akshaya,

Avyaya, Avyakta and Avikari, my prostrations to you. My reverential greetings to you who is neither Sthula (Gross) nor Sukshma (Minute), Nirmala-Nitya, and Paramapada! Indeed Your Ayutaamsha or of Ten thousandth Amsha is capable of Vishwa Rachana! Indeed the NityaYukta Yogi ganaas seek to realise even hazy glimpses of the vision of your 'Paada Padmaas' through their extended lives due to their Tapasyas! Indeed, Devaganaas, Maharshiganaas, Shankara and myself could never gauge the magnitude and magnificence of Your Reality! Sarveshwara, Sarva Bhutatma, Sarva Rupa, Sarvaadhaara, Achyuta, Maha Vishno do kindly respond to our supplications!) To supplement the prayers of Brahma Deva, others like Brihaspati, Indra and Devaganaas further prayed to Bhagavan Vishnu along with Shankara and Rudras, Dwadasha Adityas, Ashvani Kumaras, Ashta Vasus, Marud Ganas, Sadhya Ganaas and so on as a final refuge point; and Bhagavaan was satisfied with the sincerity of their Stutis. He replied that they should have to undergo some hard work and sacrifice which only could help accomplish their ends. He required Devas to convince Daityas and Danavas to jointly perform Kshirasagara Mathana or churning of the Ocean of Milk to materialise Amrita (Nectar) besides Auoshadhis or herbs and medicines and so on with Mandharaachala as the huge stick, Vaasuki Naga as the string and any other assistance required could be provided by himself; Daitya-Danavas would readily agree to the proposition, he assured. Vishnu further assured Devatas that the Amrita to be finally emerged would be meant for them alone. The Daitya-Danavas having been convinced keeping in view to the 'Catch' of Amrita, the operation commenced in Sharat Ritu when the Sky was clear and at an Auspicious Muhurta. Danava-Daityas out of self-pride opted for the huge Vaasuki whose mouth gave out poisonous fumes and many of them perished but Devas opted for the tail of the Vasuki. Vishnu assumed Kurmaavataara to provide stability to the process of churning by withstanding the heaviness of Mandhara Mountain and the churning speed. The first round of churning yielded Kamadhenu which opted for Siddhas; then emerged Kalpa Vriksha which was claimed by Devatas; Daanava-Daityas let it go to Devatas as they aimed at Amrita and nothing else! Then followed Apsaraas who were on their own but to serve Swarga loka; Chandrama was claimed by Mahadeva to adorn his head; Maha Lakshmi emerged as Muni Ganaas welcomed her by reciting 'Shri Suktam' of *Hiranya varnaam Harinim Suvarna Rajatasrajaam Chandraam Hiranmayim Lakshmi Jaatavedo mavaavaha/* She is ever readily ornamented Vishnu Deva's chest. Then finally emerged Dhanvantari along with his 'Kamandalu' the Akshaya Patra full of Amrita and Daitya-Danavas forcibly dragged the kamandalu from Dhanvantari. Vishnu Bhagavan assumed the dazzling Mohini Swarupa and spread over a thick screen of Maya over the Danava- Daityas and distributed Nectar among Devas, who were fully contented with the Amrita and Daanavas fled back to Pataala while Indra and the Devas got reinstated to their lost glory.

Lakshmi Stuti : A highly satisfied Indra most humbly welcomed Devi Lakshmi as Rajya Lakshmi by commending her as follows:

*Namasye Sarva lokaanaam Jananimabjasambhavaam, vibhushanam Shriyamunnidra padmaakshim Vishnu Vakshasthala -sthitaam/ Padmaalayaam Padmakaraam Padma patranibhekshanaam, Vandey Padma -mukheem Devim Padmanaabha priyaamaham/ Twam siddhitwam Swadhaa Swaahaa twam Lokapaavani, Sandhyaa raatrih Prabhaa Bhutirmedhaa shraddha Sarasvati/ Yajna Vidyaa Mahaa Vidya Guhya Vidyaa cha Shobhaney, Atma Vidyaa cha Devi twam Vimukti phala daayini/ Aanveekshiki Trayivaartaa Danda neetistwameva cha, Sowmyaasowmyair- jagadrupaistavaithaddevi puritam/ Kaa twanyaa twaamrutey Devi Sarva Yajnamayam vapuh, Adhyaastey Deva Devasya Yogichintyam Gadaabhrutah/ Twayaa Devi Parityaktam Sakalam Bhuvana trayam, Vinashta praayamabhavantwaye daaneem Samedhitam/ Daaraah Putraastathaagaara suhruddhaanya dhanaadikam, Bhavatyetan mahaabhaago nityam twadeekshanaatranaam/ Shareearogya maishwarya maripakshakshayah sukham, Devi twadrushti drushtaanaam Purushaanaam nadurlabham/ Twam Maataa sarvalokaanaam Deva Devo Harih Pitaa, Twayyaividishnunaa chaamba Jagadvyaaptam Charaacharam/ Maa na kosham tathaa goshtham naa gruham maa paricchadam, Maa shariram kalatram cha thyajethaa Sarva paavani/ Mamaa putraanmaa suhrudivarga maa pashunmaa vibhushanam, Twajethaa mama Devasya Vishnurvakshah sthalaalaey/ Statvena Satya shouchaabhyaam tathaa sheelaadi -bhiringunaih, Tyajjantey*

*tey Naraah Sadyah Santyakttaa ye twayamaley/Twayaavilokitaah Sadyah Sheelaadvair -akhilairgunaih kulaishwaryaischayujjyante Purushaa Nirgumaa api/ Sa Slaaghyah sa gunee dhanyah sa kuleenah sa Buddhimaan, Sa Shurah sa cha Vikranto yastwayaa Devi veekshitah/ Sadyo vaigunyamaayanti Sheelaaghah Sakalaa gunaah. Paraangmukhi Jagaddhaatri yasya twam Vishnu vallabhey/ Na tey varnaantu shaktaa Gunaajihvaapi Vedhaah, Praseeda Devi Padmaakshi Maasmaamstyaa-kshim kadaachana/*

(My salutations to you Jagajjanani! You possess a magnetic face with charming eyes like of a lotus adorning the magnificent chest of Vishnu; you reside on a lotus, lotus alone is ornamented in your soft hands, lotus leaves are likened to your eyes, and lotus stem on your husband's navel thus fond of lotus again! You are Siddhi, Swadha, Swaaha, Sudha, Sandhya, Ratri / night, Prabha, Vibhuti, Medha, and Sarasvati. You are the Yajna Vidya of the Science of Karma- Kaanda, Maha Vidya or Upasana, Guhya Vidya or Mahendra jaalor mesmerism, Atma Vidya or route to Mukti, Tarka Vidya or the Scientific Art of Logic, Vedatrayi or the Expert in Three Vedas, Varta of Business and Danda niti or the exponent of Politics! You are all over the Universe to many with tensions due to lack of opportunities and to a select few with all facilities. Is there a person who among all the Tri Lokas could afford to ignore you and make good in their lives! It is only due to your kind vision that a person is blessed with all fulfillments including women, progeny, home, money, good food and happiness. It is only due to your revelation that any body is provided with physical health, prosperity, destruction of enemies, and contentment. You are the Loka Maata or the Mother and Bhagavan Vishnu is Loka Pita or the Father over whom the world is spread all over and dependent. May this Samsara be profuse with our properties, Pashu shaalaas, homes, articles of enjoyment, and over all well being. Please always never ever leave us from our families, well wishers, ornaments, joys and good health. All the human beings bereft of you lose our mental strength, body energy, truthfulness, cleanliness and all other laudable qualities of life. Those who secure your kindness instantly become Buddhimaan, Shaktimaan, Sura veeraas and Dhanavaans; the moment your absence is felt, life gets unworthy, eventless and purposeless. My Mother, never leave me and be ever with me!)

Thus Devi Lakshmi who was the daughter of Bhrigu and Khyati disappeared from Swarga and surfaced again after Samudra Mathana. As and when Vishnu Bhaagavan took to human forms, so did Devi Lakshmi as Prithvi along with Parashu Rama, Devi Sita along with Shri Rama, Devi Rukmini along with Shri Krishna!

*Yaschhetchhrunuyaaajjanma Lakshmyaa yaschja pathennarah, Shriyo na vicchutistasya Gruhey yaavatkulatramam/ Pathyateyyeshu chaiveyam Shristutirmuney, Alakshmiih Kalahaadhaara nateyshthaastey kadaachana/* Those homes in which Lakshmi Stotras are not recited daily become the victims of arguments, quarrels, and poverty; contrarily, Lakshmi Stotraas are heard, read out and recited silently become the abodes of opulence, delight and propitiousness.)

#### Vishnu Vibhuti (All- Pervasiveness) (Vishnu Maha Stuti included)

While all the above are of Vishnu Swarupas only, Janardana also assumes the Chatur Vibhaagas of Srishti-Sthiti and Laya: the first Amsha is of Brahma, the second one of Prajapatis like Marichi; the third is of Kaala and the final one is of Pranis; indeed creation and cremation of Manavaas occurs almost every minute!

Maharshi Parashara thus addressed Sage Maitreya:

*Yete sarvey pravartasya shitow Vishnormahaatmanah, Vibhuti Bhutaa Raajaaney ye chanye Munisattama/ Ye bhavishyanti ye Bhutaah Bhuteswaraa Dwijaa, Tey sarvey Sarva Bhutasya Vishno ramshaa Dwijotthamaa*

(Hey Munisattama! These and various Administrators and Kings engaged in the Upkeep of their respective Territories are all Vishnu Vibhutis. Those Kings in the past and those who in future would be too of Vishnu Rupas! All the Devatas, Daityas, Danavas; all the Pashus, Pakshis, Manavaas, Sarpaas, Nagas; and all the Vrikshas, Parvataas, Grahaas and so on are Narayana Vibhutis are Vishnu Rupas. The Past-Present-Future are Vishnu Rupas. Thus

*Yeva meshaa Jagatsrushtaa Jagatpaadaa tathaa Jagat, Jagatbhakshayitaa Devaha Samastasya Janaardana/ Srishtistityanta kaaleshu Tridhaivam sampravartatey, Gunapravruthya paramam padam Samastasya Janaardana/ Taccha Jnaanamayam vyaapi swasamvedya manoupamam, Chathus prakaaram tadapi Swarupam Paramatmanah./*

( As such, Janardana creates, maintains and finally destroys, he himself the Unique Jagat Swarupa; Bhagavan Vishnu is indeed responsible for Jagadutpatti, Sthiti, and Antaby assuming Tri-Gunas of Satwa-Rajo-Taamasa but basically is Nirguna or Featureless! Paramatmaa's Swarupa is of four kinds viz. Jnaanamaya (Embodiment of Knowledge), Vyapaka (All- Pervading), Swasamvedya or Swayam Prakaasha (Self-Illuminated) and Anupama (Unparalleled).

Then Sage Maitreya desired to know from Maharshi Parashara about an in-depth analysis of the 'Chatush-prakaara' characteristics of Bhagavan; the reply was: Just as Bhagavan is the raison d'être or the cause of the material world, so is he the Sadhana or the 'means' too; the 'Siddhi' is the accomplishment; and 'Sadhya' is called a possibility! In other words, the Yogis aiming at Mukti could follow the 'Sadhanaas' like the Ashtaanga Yoga or the Eight-Limbed Yoga viz. 1) Yama (Yogik Principles), 2) Niyama (Personal discipline), 3) Asana (Yoga Posture), 4) Pranayama (Control of Breathing) 5) Pratyahara (withdrawal of senses) 6) Dharana (Concentration of an object) 7) Dhyana (Meditation) and 8) Samadhi (Mukti). Indeed, thus Parabrahma is Sadhya! This kind of Sadhana by means of Yoga is called *Swaadhana -alambana Jnaana*. There is another type of Jnaana viz. *Aalambana Vijnaana* which discards Samsara and seeks Paramatma by complete withdrawal and renunciation. Yet another type is *Advaita Jnaana* in which the Self seeks merger into the Totality, that is *Aham Brahmaasmi* or I am Brahma meaning thereby that the Inner Conscience or Jeevatma is the same as Paramatma. The aim of the three types of Jnaana target the Supreme Experience of Atma Swarupa Parabrahma that is :

*Nirvyaapaara manaakhyeyam Vyaaptimaatra manupa -mam, Atmasambodha vishayam sattaamaatramalakshanam/ Prashaantamabhayam Shuddham Durvibhaavyamasamshrayam, Vishnorjnaanana mayassyoktamk tadjnaanam Brahma samjnitam/*

[The Jnaana Swarupa Bhagavan Vishnu is Nir-vyaapaaram or devoid of activities of Samsara; Anirvachaneeyam or Undefinable; Vyaptimaatram (Omnipresent), Anupama or Unparalleled), Atmabodha Swarupa (Self-Realising), Alakshana (Featureless), Shanta (Ever Tranquil), Abhaya (Fearless and Protective), Shuddha (High Mark of Purity and Translucent), Bhaavaateetam or beyond comprehension; Ashraya heenam or the Holdless since he is the Supreme Holder Himself; and indeed that is Brahma Jnaana]!

*Evam prakaramalam Nityam Vyapakamakshayam, Samasta heryarahitam Visdhnavaakhayam Paramam padam/ Tad Brahma Paramam Yogi yato naavaratey punah ,Shriyatya punyoparamey kheenakleshoti nirmalah/ Dwey Rupey Brahmaanastasya Murtam cha murtamevacha, Ksaraakshara swarupo tey Sarvabhuteshthavasthitey/ Aksharam Tapp;aram Brahma Ksharam Sarvamidam Jagat, Ekadeshasthitasya agneyerjyotsnaa visteerani tathaa, Parasyabrahmaanah Shaktistathey madakhilam Jagat/*

(In this way Vishnu Paramapada is perceivable which is Nirmala-Nitya- Vyapaka-Akshaya-and Heya Guna varjita; this Unique Form devoid of Paapa- Punya and Samsara Kleshaas is such that would have

no return as the Person concerned gets absorbed into Para Brahma! That Brahma has two manifestations of *Murta and Amurta*! And Akshara is the Everlasting Para Brahma and Kshara is the Transcient Universe. Brahma Shakti is akin to the all powerful Agni which spreads fast its heat and radiance and its impact is also according to the distance or closeness that the Practitioner Yogi concerned.

### Vishnu Maha Stuti:

Muni Maitreya requested Maharshi Parashara to portray Bhagavan Vishnu in his Complete Form and the Maharshi quoted Vasistha Maha Muni as follows:

*Namaskrutyaaprimeyaaya Vishnavey Prabha Vishnavey, Kathayaami yathaakhyatam Visishthena  
Mamaa bhavat/ Aatmaanamasya Jagato Nirlepamagunaamalam, Bibharti Kaustubhamani Swarupam,  
Bhagavaan Harih/ Shri Vatsasamshaana dharamanantena samaashritam, Pradhaanam  
Buddhirapyastey Gada Rupena Madhavey/ Bhutaadimindri-yaadimcha Dwidhaahankaara meeshwarah,  
Bibharti shankha rupena shaaranga rupena cha sthitam/ Chalatswa rupamayantam javeynaantaritaa -  
nilam, Chakraswarupam cha Mano dhaathey Vishnukarey sthitam/ Pancharupaatu yaa Maalaa  
Vyajayanti Gadaabhrutah, Saa bhuta hetu sanjaata Bhutamaalaa cha vai Dwijah/ Yaanindrayanya  
seshaani Buddhi karmaatmakaani vai, Shararupaanyashshaani taani Dhattey Janaardana/ Bibharti  
Yacchaasiratnamachyutotyanta nirmalam, Vidyaamayamtutadjnaanamavidyaakosha samsthitam/ Ithyam  
Pumaampradhaanam cha buddhdyahankaarameva cha, Bhutaanicha Hrisheerkesho Manah  
sarvendriyaanicha, Vidyaavidye cha Maitreya Sarvametata samaashritam/ Astrbhushanaa samsthaana  
Swarupam Rupa varjitah, Bibharti Maayaaruposou Shriyasey Praaninaam Harih/ Savikaaram  
Pradhaanam cha Pumaamsamakhilam Jagat, Bibhrarti Pundareekaaksha Devam Parameshwarah/ Yaa  
Vidyaa yaa tathaavidyaa yatsadyacchaasadavyayam, Tatsarvam Sarva bhutesho Maitreya  
Madhusudaney/ Kalaa kaashtaa nimeshaadidinartwayana haayanaih, Kaala Swarupo Bhagavanpaapo  
Harivyayaha/ Bhurlokotha Bhuvareloka Swarloko Munisattama, Maharjana -stapah Satyam SaptaLoka  
imey Vibhu/ Lokaatma Murtih sarveshaam Purveshaamapi Purvajah, Aadhaarah Sarva Vidyaanaam  
Swayameva Harihsthitah/ Deva Maanusha pashwaadi Swarupairbahubhih sthitah, Tatah  
Sarveswaronanto Bhutamurtiramurtimaan/ Ruchi yajuumshi Saamaani tathaavaatharvnaani vai,  
Itihaasopavedaaschavedanteshu tathoktayah/ Vedaangaani Samastaani Manvaadigaditaani cha,  
Shastraanyaseshaakhyaa- naanyanuvaakaascha ye kwachit/ Kaavyaalaapaascha ye  
kechidgeetakaanyakhilaani cha, Shabdamurtidharasyaitadwipurvishnor mahaatmanah/ Yaani  
Murthaanyamurtaani Yaanyantraayantra vaa kwachit, Santi vai Vastujaataani taani Sarvaani tadupuh/  
Aham Harih Sarvamidam Janaardano naanyattatahb kaarana karya jaatam, Idrungmano yasyana tasya  
bhuyo Bhavodbhavaa Dwandwagadaa bhavanti/*

(Hey Mune! I salute Jagat palaka, and Aprimeya Vishnu and narrate the samewhich Maha Muni Vasistha described earlier: Srihari Bhagavan who is Nirlepa- Nirguna-Nirmala and Shuddha Kshetrajna Swarupa wears Kaustubhamani; Shri Ananta sought the company of Vishnuas Srivatsa Rupa and Buddhi adorned Madhava in the form of Gadaa; Vishnu is also ornamented by Shankha which is of Tamasa Swarupa and Shaaranga Dhanush of Raajasa Ahamkaara; the Chakra which out smarts the speed of Vayu is basically of Satvika Swarupa and adorns the lotus like smooth hands of Vishnu. Bhagavan also wears a Pancha Rupa Vijayanti Maalaa made of Mukta-Manikya-Marakata-Indraneela and Heeraas, representing Pancha Tanmatraas and Pancha Bhutaas. Bhagavan also keeps 'baanaas' or arrows which are the embodiments of Jnaana and Karma! Further Vishnu wears a sharp Khadga or sword which pierces through Avidya and brightens Vidyaamaya Jnaana. Muni Maitreya! In this manner, all kinds of features like Purusha, Pradhana, Buddhi, Ahamkara, Pancha Bhuta, Manas, Indriyas, Vidya and Avidya are all surrounded by Vishnu. Srihari who has basically no Form but in a Maya Swarupa keeps Astras and Ornaments to help and encourage various Praanis. This is how Parameshwara seeks to facilitate the deeds and thoughts of various Beings with the help of Vidya-Avidya, Sat-Asat, and such characteristics. Vishnu is also present as Kaala Swarupa in the form of Kala-Kaashtha- Nimesha- Dina- Ritu- Ayana-and Varsha!

Bhagavan is spread all over the Bhurloka- Bhuvarloka- Swarloka-and Maha-Jana- Tapa-and Satyalokas! He is the Origin of Origin-Purvaja toPurvajas; Sarva Vidyaa Swarupa; Swayam Lokamaa Swarupa; Niraakaaa- Sarveswara- Ananta- Sarva Buta Swarupa inclusiveof Deva-Maanava-Pashu- Pakshi and so on; He is Ruk-Yajur- Sama-Atharva Veda Swarupa; Itihasa-Upavedaas like Ayurveda; Vedanta Vaakya; Vedaanga; Manvaadi krita Dharma Shastra; Purana-Aakhyaana- Anuvaaka (Kalpa Sutra)-Kavya Charha- Sarva Shabda Murti Dhaari-and so on. Whichever Murta-Amurta Padaardhaas exist are of Vishnu's Mighty Physique! He assures: I am the totality of the Universe and there is neither a Karana- Karya- Kaarana beyond me! A person who believes in this simple Truth would have conquered Dwandwa Rupaas and attains me!)Having rendered theVishnu Maha Stuti as above, Maharshi Parashara assured Maitreya Muni that who so ever reads or listens to it would be freed from sins. That person would be eligible for the Punya that daily Snaanaas and worship in Pushkara Kshetra could fetch by merely hearing the Stotra. This unique piece of homage to Maha Purusha Janardana describing the Creation of Deva-Rishi-Gandharva-Pitru-Yaksha and others is adequate to bestow the blessings of Narayana.

#### Kshetra Darshana and Tirtha Snaana Mahima vide Skanda Purana's Vaishnava Khanda

Nandiswar narrated to Markandeya that besides the Gupta Kshetra, Bharat is dotted with innumerable Tirthas and Punya Kshetras all over. The major Siva Pradhan (Siva-Oriented) Kshetras include 'Varanasi' where Avimukta Maha Deva, Visalakshi, Annapurna, Kapala Mochana Tirtha, Kala Bhairava Nivas and the Jeeva Ganga were the highlights; 'Gaya' Tirtha is well reputed as a Holy Place for performing 'Pinda Pradaan'; 'Kedar' where Shankar is present in the Form of Mahisha fulfilling human desires; 'Badarikashrama' where Devi Parvati and Maha Deva worship Vishnu in the form of Nara Narayana; 'Naimisharanya' where Maha Deva was known for destroying Tripurasura; 'Amaresha' Kshetra where Siva is in the form of 'Omkareswara' and Devi Parvati as 'Chandika'; 'Pushkar Maha Tirtha' where Rujogandhi Siva and Puruhuta named Devi reside; 'Ashadhi' named Tirtha Sthaan where 'Ashadh Mahadeva and Rati Devi stay; 'Dandi-Mundi' Tirtha where Mundi named Rudra and 'Dandi' Devatha inhabit; 'Aralakeswar' Kshetra is the abode of 'Sukshma' Siva and 'Sukshmi' Girijakumari; 'Kurukshetra' where 'Sthanu' Deva and 'Sthanupriya' Devi stay; 'Kankhal' where Siva in the form of 'Ugra' and 'Uma' named Devi are housed; 'Attahaas' Tirtha is the Place where Surya Deva worships; 'Srishaila' is a popular Kshetra worshipping 'Mallikarjuna' and 'Bhramaramba', where Brahma did penance for Siddhi before taking up Creation of human beings; 'Kalahasti' on the banks of River 'Suvarnamukhi' displaying 'Kalahasteswara' and 'Bhringamukharalika' (Jnana Prasunamba) where Veda Vyasa worshipped; till date Pujas are performed to appease Rahu and Kethu Devas among the 'Navagrahas'; 'Kancheepura Kshetra' where 'Devi Kamakshi' performed Tapasya under a Mangoe Tree to 'Kamashasan'(Ekambareswar); 'Vyaghrapuri Tirtha' near Tillinanam where Siva is present as famous 'Nataraja' in the dance form at Chidambaram, where Maharshi Patanjali did his 'upasana'; 'Sethubandhana' / 'Rameswara' where Sri Rama and Devi Sita returned from Lanka after killing Ravanaasura and Sita set up a Sand Linga, since Hanuman Deva was unable to bring a fascimile of Kasi Visveswara on time; 'Soma Tirtha' where 'Somnath' is present; 'Gokarna Kshetra' where Bhagavan Gokarneswar is present; 'Brahmapura Kshetra' on the banks of Pushkarini where Brahma established Parama Siva; 'Tripuranthak Kshetra' where the Three Eyed Siva demolishes the devotees' fear of 'Naraka'; 'Prabhasa Kshetra' where Sri Krishna and Balabhadra worship 'Chandrardha Sekhar'; 'Jaalandhar kshetra' where Andhakasura was killed by Siva and Jalandhar did Tapasya to become the Head of 'Shivaganas'; 'Jwalamukhi' Sthaan ( Place) where Devi Jwalamukhi worships 'Kaala Rudra'; 'Triambakeswar' on the banks of Godavari River where Kartikeya secured the Shakti to kill Tarakasura and so on.

#### Arunachala 'Mahatmya'

Both Brahma and Vishnu witnessed one 'Agni Sthumbh' (Pillar of Fire) which was dazzling to eyes and emanating extraordinary heat, without beginning or end. Brahma's Four faces recited Vedas and He performed 'Manasik Puja' (Worship by mind) and so did Lord Vishnu. Bhagavan Siva appeared and was

pleased by their eulogies; they requested that His huge Form of Fire of unbearable radiance and heat be please reduced as a Siva Linga so that worship became possible to all including themselves, Devas and human beings. The gigantic form of the Fire Pillar then got converted as a 'Sthavara Linga' at Arunachal. Most interestingly, even at the time of 'Pralaya' (Great Dissolution), the entire Universe was submerged in water and there was no trace of Earth visible, the Land of Arunachala was never even touched! This Place is in the South of Bharat and Arunachal (Tiruvannamalai) is in the form of Mountain Range comprising the 'Pancha Mukhas' or the Five Faces of Lord Rudra viz. 'Tatpurusha', 'Aghora', 'Sadyojata', 'Vamadeva', 'Eshana' which are visible till date. Nandikeswara told Markandeya that this Sacred Region is like the heart of Devi Prithvi. This Arunachal is expected to be Parameswar Himself and a fourteen kilometre distance surrounding the Mountain is as good as a complete 'Pradakshina' (Circumambulation) of Lord Siva. A large number of persons perform the Pradakshina on every full moon night barefooted and Pournami of Chaitra Month is a very special day as over hundreds of thousands throng the Temple and the Mountain displaying sincere devotion from all over the World. A ten day long celebration culminating on the day of Karthika Deepam or lights day is a massive crowd puller; on that evening a huge lamp is lit in an open vessel with three tons of ghee from the mountain top. Among the 'Pancha Bhutas' (Five Elements), viz. Earth, Water, Fire, Wind and Sky, the Fire is the symbol of Arunachaleswar as a corollary of the Agni Stumbh referred to as above. (The 'Tiruvannaikavil' / 'Jalakantheswara' Linga represents Water, Kancheepuram / Ekambareswara Linga the Earth, Kalahasti represents Vayu and Chidambaram represents Akash or Sky).

Nandikeswar told Markandeya that at the commencement of 'Ayanas' (Fortnights) or Vishuvyog times, worship to Arunachal Linga would be very propitious. Early morning puja is performed with 'Tulasi' leaves, the mid-day puja with 'Amalataasa' and Bel flowers in the evening. By chanting the 'Aghora Mantra' viz. *Aghorebhyothaghorebhyo Namasthey Asthu Rudra rupebhyaha/Tat Purushaaya Vidmahe Maha Devaaya dhimahi, tanno Rudrah Prachodayat/* a devotee performs 'Abishekam' (bath) with thousand 'Kalasas' (vessels) full of water. On 'Sivaratri', special puja is done with Bilvapatras by chanting 'Shata Rudreeyam', observe 'Jaagaran' (night long worship) and Puja with lotus, Ganera and such flowers as well as please the Lord with hymns, instrumental / vocal music and 'Tandava' (dance). The same kind of Puja is performed on birthdays, House warming, travel and such other Special occasions. Nandikeswara informed Markandeya further about Devi Parvathi's Tapasya to wed Lord Siva, their happy union and the birth of Ganesh and Skanda. Meanwhile, a demon duo named **Shumbh and Nikumbh** obtained the boon of invincibility from Brahma Deva and distressed Devas, Sages and virtuous human beings. Vishnu accompanied by Devas approached Maha Deva and He assured quick action against the demons. Parvati who was of dark complexion, desired to please Siva, discarded her dark skin and assumed the form of Kali Kaushiki. As she was doing penance at Vindhya Mountain, the demon brothers desired to marry her and she killed both of them. Subsequently, she was attracted by the scenic beauty of Arunachala and performed Tapasya at the Ashram of Sage Gautama. She kept Devi Durga to stand guard and also appointed Subhaga and Dhundhukumari to watch in all directions while she was in penance. At the same time, Demon **Mahishasur** created havoc in Devaloka and dethroned Indra and Devas. He heard about her beauty and sent an emissary to propose a match with her and Devi Parvati's representative had literally thrown him out. Mahishasur declared war. Powerful Danavas like Karaal, Dhurthar, Vichasunu, Vikaraal, Durmukh, Chanda, Prachanda, Mahamouli, Vikatekshan and Jwalasya were among the mighty demons that were lined up in offence. As there was considerable sound and confusion, Parvati Devi's Tapasya was disturbed and instructed Durga Devi to terminate the demons. Being in a lonely cave on Arunachal Mountain Durga Devi seated on a Lion and jumped onto Earth like Kalika and made frightening sounds. She created from her body crores of 'Matruka -ganas' who made such mayhem and slaughter of the Demons. Chamundi Devi slashed the heads of Chamunda and associates and finally Mahishasura entered the fray. Durga Herself jumped down from the Lion and by her several hands killed Prachanda with Her Plough head; Bindipipal with chamara; Mahamoulika with her knife, Mahahunu with her kirpaan; Ugravakta with her Kuthar, Vikatakshak with Shakti, Jwalamukh with her mudgar and so on. As Mahishasura made his last bid on Durga Devi, the former looked to have

controlled her for a while as he was changing his forms as a lion, tiger, Varaha, Elephant or Mahisha and his Original form. Finally however, Devi Durga overpowered and destroyed the Devil 'Mahishasur' who was felled with a huge sound of a thud and there were innumerable cries of joy and relief world wide. Devi Durga held the Demon's head in one hand, sword in another and greeted Devi Parvati who praised the Vindhyanivasini Durga. Gauri asked Durga to wash off her hands with blood and Durga broke a mountain boulder with her powerful hands to create water reciting the Mantra, 'Namah Shonadrinathaya' and the waterbody so formed had become popular as 'Papanashini' Tirtha ever since. Thereafter an extraordinary 'Jyoti' came to be viewed from the top of the Arunachala Mountain on every Kartika Pournami Sandhya (evening) without any oil, cotton, and firewood and thus the tradition had been carried on (on a man-made basis, of course) to signify this Holy Happening and the Maha Deep continued to be viewed by devotees doing 'Giri Pradakshinas'. While doing the circumambulation, devotees are advised to recite: "My Namaskars (Greetings) to Siva who stays at Merugiri and Kailasa; to Siva who is the son-in-law of Himachal; to the merciful Arunachalanatha who is worshipped by Siva the mid-day like Sun, besides various Devatas like Varuna and Vayu; to Siva on whose head are positioned Ganga and Chandra as ornaments; to Siva whose 'Maya' makes us feel that your Swarup is confused as that of Narayana; to Siva who performs the magnificent Siva 'Thandava' (Dance) and creates ripples of happiness all over the Universe; to you Shambho, Siva, Eshana, who is worshipped by Devas, Gandharvas, Siddhas and Vidyadharas; to Siva the 'Janmadata' of Ganesha and Kartikeya; to Siva who is the husband of Devi Parvati; We are beholden to You to bless us and relieve us of all our physical, mental and 'Daivika' problems beyond our control." Siva blessed Parvati to be present at Arunachal by the name of *Apeethastani* since she left Kartikeya to perform Tapasya without feeding milk to him! Nandikeswar narrated to Marandeya the background of Vrajangada the King of Pandyadesha and how he became a staunch devotee of Arunachaleswara. The King was pious, charitable and Siva worshipper. Once he went by his horse for hunting deep inside the Arunachala forest and ran after a 'Kasturi Mriga' (Deer like animal), without being aware that the King had made a 'Pradakshina' of Arunachal. As Kasturi Mrig ran fast and was untraceable, the King stopped for quenching his thirst at a nearby pond; on return, he found the horse missing. He saw however a strange happening as two Celestial Beings came down from the Sky and recounted that they were two Vidyadharas, named Kanthishali and Kaladhara who were cursed by Sage Durvasa as they plucked flowers from the Sage's garden and became the Kasturi Mrig and the King's horse; the Sage was merciful to relieve them of the curse subsequently that a King would ride one of the accused as a horse and chase another as Kasturi and when a full Pradakshina was performed by the King, the horse and Kasturi animal, then the accused would get back their original positions as Vidyadharas. On hearing the entire background, the King became such a strong devotee of Arunachaleswara that he did considerable works in the Temple Complex and was wholly devoted to the promotional tasks of the Arunachalapathi. Once when Sage Agasthya and his wife Lopamudra visited the Arunachala Tirtha, they complimented the devotion of the King. Considering the dedication to the Tirtha, Bhagavan Siva gave darshan to the King and informed him that he was in his earlier birth Lord Indra but since he did an indiscretion on Kailasa top out of egoism he was cursed but since he was sincerely dedicated as Siva Bhakta, He was pleased to secure Indra's original position. Thus Nandikeswar commended the unparalleled 'Mahatmya' of Arunachala Tirtha.

#### Venkatachala 'Mahatmya'

In the 'Vaishnava Khanda' of Skanda (Kartika) Purana, Varaha Deva gave 'Upadesha' (instruction) of the Sacred Mantra *Om Namah Shri Varahaya Dharanyu Uddharanaya Swaha* to Bhudevi and its significance; the Mantra fulfills all desires and leads to liberation. A Manu called Dharma recited the Mantra persistently and attained Moksha; Indra chanted it and regained his throne that was occupied by demons therebefore and Anantha the Chief of Serpents secured such extraordinary strength as to hold the weight of Prithvi (Earth) on his hoods. Bhudevi expressed her gratitude to Varaha Deva to have saved from the grip of Demon Hiranyakasipu as also taught the Great Mantra. She admired Varaha Deva for providing the power and perseverance to hold the weight of huge mountains and desired Him to describe

to her the names of some of the illustrious Mountains the weight of which was borne by her. These include Sumeru, Himachal, Vindhyaachal, Mandarachal, Gandhamadhan, Chitrakoot, Malyavaan, Pariyatrik, Mahendra, Malay, Sahya, Simhachal, Raivat and Anjana; in the South of Bharat the most significant are Arunachal, Hasthiparvat, Grudhrachal, Ghatikachal and most importantly the **Narayana Giri or Venkatachal** which possesses the Seven Tirthas in the Mountain Range viz. Chakra Tirth, Daiva Tirth, Akasha Ganga, Kumaradhari Kartikeya, Papanashani, Pandava Tirha, and Swami Pushkarini. Varaha Deva affirmed that in Krita Yuga, the most important Mountain Range was that of Anjanagiri; in Treta Yuga it was Narayana Giri; in Dwapar Yuga was Simhachal and in Kali Yuga again the most sacred mountain range is Venkatachala. In Magha month when Surya Deva is in Kumbha Rasi on Purnima day coinciding with the Makha Star, Skanda worships Venkateswara on the banks of Swami Pushkarini Tirtha at the noon time and devotees performing ‘Snaan’ and Puja as also ‘Annadaan’ are blessed by the Lord. Similarly, Snaans, worships and charities at Venkatachal are highly beneficial on the auspicious timings when Surya is in Meena Rasi on Purnima with Uttaraphalguni in Thumbha Tirtha; when Surya is in Mesha Rasi on Purnima with Chitra Star in Akasha Ganga at early mornings; when Surya is in Vrishabha Rasi in Visakha Shukla / Krishna fortnights on Dwadasi Sunday / Tuesday at Pandava Tirtha on evenings; on Sundays of Shukla / Krishna fortnights, coinciding Saptami at Papanashana Tirtha; on Brihaspati / Vyakteeta Yogya, Star Pushya / Sravana Mondays etc;

Varaha Deva described to Bhu Devi that Emperor Akash decided to perform a Grand Yagna on the banks of Arani and while tilling, he found a girl child and as he was issueless, brought her up as their own, named as **Padmavati**. Once Sage Narad met Padmavati as she was grown up as an eligible bride and predicted that she would be the wife of Lord Srinisasa of Venkatachal. Almost immediately she met a Stranger in the Royal Garden and introduced himself as Anant or Veerapati from Venkatachal Mountain and that he was hunting a wolf. Padmavati’s companions rebuffed Ananta Deva that hunting was prohibited in their garden. Anantha returned but desired intensely that Padmavati should become His life partner and sent Vakulamala to the court of Emperor Aakash to negotiate their wedding. The Emperor had no bounds of joy and the holy wedding of Lord Venkateswara and Padmavati took place in style and grandeur when Devi Lakshmi was present to make Padmavati happy and comfortable, whereafter they all resided in Tirumala bestowing boons to lakhs of Devotees till date. Varaha Deva narrated the background of Padmavati’s earlier birth as **Vedavati** to Bhu Devi. Vedavati was a companion of Devi Lakshmi and when the latter became Rama’s spouse as Sita, she left for forests to perform Tapasya, but demon Ravana misbehaved with her and she ended her life by jumping into fire and cursed Ravana that his entire clan would be wiped out because of a woman. Sita was abducted by Ravana by creating such circumstances that Maricha was converted as a Golden Deer; Sita took fancy for it and prevailed Sri Rama to chase the animal which deceitfully wailed as though Rama was in trouble and Lakshmana had to leave Sita alone even by drawing a Lakshman Rekha that none could cross. The vily Ravana dressed as a Tapsvi revealed his real form as soon as she was prevailed to cross the fiery Lakshman Rekha and forcibly took her to Lanka. After Rama killed Ravana, there was ‘Agni-Pariksha’ (Proof of Purity / by Fire), Sita came out unscathed. But the real fact was that Agni Deva hid real Sita in Patala and Agni’s wife Swaha assumed the role of Maya Sita; in fact Vedavati’s earlier birth was of Swaha Devi! Thus, Vedavati / Swaha turned to Maya Sita was Padmavati.

Devi Prithvi enquired of Bhagavan Varaha as to where and how to secure the ‘Darshan’ (Vision) of Lord Venkateswara and the former replied that He would mention of those future happenings as recorded in the past. There was a Nishad (Hunter) in Shyamak Jungle named **Vasu** and his wife Chitravati and Son Vira. Nishad was the Chief of his clan living honestly and peacefully by eating cooked rice and honey. Both his wife and he decided one day to a nearby forest to search for additional stock of honey and entrusted the responsibility of looking after his followers and daily chores to Vira, their son. The daily practice was that the family cooked rice and mixed with honey, offered the same as Naivedya to Venkatachalapati and ate the Prashad. But, Vira in their absence for the day offered some portion of the honeyed rice into Agni, some to tree bushes and the rest was consumed. On return from the other forest, Vasu became furious to

learn that no offer of the honeyed rice was made to Venkatachalapati but gave it away as described above. Vasu felt agitated and remorsefully guilty and even tried to kill his son for what was considered as Sacrilege. Lord Venkatachal appeared before Nishad in full glory with His four hands, fully ornamented and armed and stopped Vasu from harming his son; he was completely taken aback. The Lord said that the acts of his son Vira were infact worth emulation and not condemnation for he did a homam (Offering to Agni); homage to Nature and only the remainder was consumed with dedication as 'prashad'. Nishad was so happy that he heard this from Bhagavan Himself!

Varaha Deva also narrated an incident related to King **Thondaman** and Nishad. As an ideal Prince, he imbibed all the qualities required of a King, viz. of nobility, intellect, valour and devotion to Almighty. Once he took King's permission for hunting in Venkatachal forests, chased an elephant, crossed the River Swarnamukhi and reached the Ashram of Brahmarshi Suka and an Idol of Goddess Renuka nearby. As he proceeded further, he found a 'Pancharangi' (Five Coloured) Parrot screeching the name of 'Srinivasa, Srinivasa' and followed the bird till the mountain top. There he met Nishad who informed that the parrot was very dear to Suka Muni as also to Bhagavan Srihari and hovered around the Pushkarini Tirtha; by so saying the Nishad desired to have a Darshan of the Lord and the Prince too accompanied him. Thondaman was indeed thrilled with the Darshan and witnessed the 'Naivedya' of Cooked rice and honey performed by Vasu Nishad. He was overpowered by the magnificent experience of the Lord and thereafter met Suka Muni and secured his blessings that soon he would become a King after his father's retirement and serve Srinivasa for long time to come. A few days after Thondaman's return to his Capital, he was made the King and started settling in his throne. Suddenly after a few months, Vasu the Nishad approached the Palace in an agitated manner and told the King that he dreamt chasing a 'Varaha' which entered a thick bush, that he started digging up and swooned, that his son was also near him, that the Varaha entered his mind and body and made him say the following: 'Nishada! You must reach King Todarman and ask him to perform 'Abhishek' with lots of milk to a 'Shila' (Stone) underneath this thick bush, pull it out and ask a 'Shilpi' (Sculptor) to prepare an Idol of my features with Bhu Devi on my left lap, set up plants of Tamarind and Champa as are loved by Vishnu and Lakshmi repectively and invite learned Sages and Brahmanas to attend a grand function to be hosted by Tondaman and wait for my further instructions. The King followed the instructions as conveyed by Nishad and called Sages and Brahmanas to a Grand Puja of Varaha Deva and Bhu Devi through an underground passage and continued the daily practice of taking bath, worshipping the Murthis of Varaha and Bhu Devi and arranging 'Prashad' or the left-behinds of Naivedya to Brahmanas and visitors. As this practice got routinised and the interest of Bhaktas snow-balled gradually, a Brahmana stranger approached the King that he was on way to Kasi, Prayaga and a few prominent Tirthas but his wife was unable to travel as she was in the family way; he requested the King to provide accommodation and food to his wife and generally supervise her welfare. The Brahmana returned very late after several months but unfortunately the wife had a miscarriage and died just a couple of days before the return of the Brahmana after visiting several Pilgrimage Centers and Tirthas. The King got frightened at the tragedy as he gave a surety to the Brahmana's wife and approached Srinisasa, who instructed that the Queens as well as the body of the Brahman's wife should be made to take bath in the Asthi Sarovar Tirtha and as the queens took dips in the holy water and came out, the Brahmana's wife too would emerge. The Brahmana was thrilled at the miracle witnessed by co-devotees!

Raja Todarman followed the practice of worshipping Srinivasa with golden lotuses daily. He found one day some Tulasi leaves pulled out from muddy plants and wondered how this indiscretion happened. As the King was wondering about this, there emerged a voice saying: "There is a pot maker (**Kumhara**) who also did daily Puja to me with the muddy Tulasi leaves from his house and that I have accepted his worship too!" The King reached Kurmapuri in search of the Kumhara, who replied to the King that he never ever did any puja to Srinivasa! But when the King said that there was a voice which said these words, the Kumahara and his wife recalled the voice of Srinivasa in their earlier births that as and when a King would knock their hut, and then a Pushpa Viman would arrive to pick them to Vishnuloka! Indeed that had just happened! The King returned to Venkateswara Temple to perform worship again after this

unusual happening and Srinivasa appeared before Tondaman and bestowed him the blessing of a lasting Abode of bliss.

Parikshit, son of Abhimanyu of Pandavas, was no doubt a noble and virtuous King, but unfortunately did the unpardonable sin of hanging a dead serpent around the neck of Samika Muni who was in deep Tapasya and his son Shringi cursed Parikshit that he would be dead within a week as a result of a snake bite. Takshak was assigned the task of killing Parikshit but Brahmana **Kashyap** who could indeed have prevented the tragedy and even demonstrated his ability to do so, was won over by dubious means by Takshak and Kashyap who did the sin was sought to be washed off by a bath in **Swami Pushkarini** and worship to Lord Srinivasa, as advised by Shakalya Muni. Indeed the sin of Kashyap was eradicated by the Grace of Lord Venkateswara.

Another illustration of the Sanctity of Snaan in Swami Pushkarini was given by Sutha Maha Muni to Rishis at a Congregation at Naimisharanya (The forest of Naimisha). A King of Chandravamsa called **Dharma-gupta** was a rare example of nobility and virtue. He went hunting and by the evening desired to perform the Puja of Gayatri and was delayed to late hours and had to stay back on a tree. A lion came running after a wolf and ascended the same tree; it asked the King not to worry and would not hurt him in any way. It asked the King to come to an understanding that it would sleep off half night and he might sleep off the other half. The lion tempted the wolf to drop the King down and share a good portion of the King. The wolf rejected the proposal outright as ingratitude was a far heinous sin than the ‘Panchapatakas’ or the Five known major sins. During the other half of the night when the King was to guard the wolf, the lion gave a similar proposal to him; he accepted and tried to drop the sleeping wolf. But luckily, the wolf was saved and preached the King against ingratitude and gave a curse to the King to become a mad man. It said that he was a Sage, named Dhyanakashtha, who could take any form and told the lion that in his earlier birth he was a Minister in the Court of Kubera and was cursed by Gautama Muni to become a lion as he was standing naked in the Sage’s garden with his woman. As regards Dharmagupta’s curse for ingratitude, Sage Jaimini suggested a bath in the Sacred ‘Swami Pushkarini’ on Venkatadri on the banks of River Suvarnamukhi, followed by worship of Lord Venkateswara. Suta Maha Muni described that those who purify themselves in the Pushkarini would surely avoid hells named Tamisra, Andhamisra, Rourav, Maha Rourav, Kumbhipak, Kaalsutra, Asipatravan and such others. On the other hand, the devotees attain the ‘Punya’ of performing Aswamedha Yagna and achieve Buddhi (Intellect), Lakshmi (Wealth), Kirti (Fame), Sampatthi (Prosperity), Gyan (wisdom), Dharma (Virtue), Manoshuddhi (Purity of mind) and Vairagya (Other Worldliness). **Krishna Tirtha** is a Tirtha named after a deeply devoted Brahmana whose Tapasya was so severe and extensive that his body developed mole-hills (Valmikas) and Indra rained forcefully to wash off the mud. Lord Srinivasa was impressed by the relentless and highly dedicated devotion and blessed him with His Darshan, created a Tirtha after his name, declared that those who have the fortune of bathing in it would become as learned and focussed and bestowed Salvation to him. **Papanashana Tirtha** is such a powerful place that even merely uttering its name, sins of the past and present get vanished. There was a Brahmana named Bhadramati who had enormous knowledge of Vedas and Scriptures but was acutely impoverished having six wives and several children. His each day was a harrowing experience of poverty with several mouths to feed. One of his wives named Kamini told him one day that her father met Sage Narada who described Tirtha called Papanashana lying on the Venkateswar Mountain cluster was a big draw and a bath, preferably after giving away a small token ‘bhudaan’ to a deserving Brahmana followed by a darshan of the Lord would abolish poverty, and fulfil all human desires. This emboldened Bhadramati to travel along with his family to the Srinivasa Mountain. He was fortunate to obtain on way a token of five feet of land. The entire family took bath in the Papanashana Tirtha and gave away charity of the five feet of land to a deserving Brahmana. Bhagavan Vishnu had instantly appeared before Bhadramati; the latter was extremely thrilled at the darshan and eulogised Him as follows: ‘*Namo Namasthekhila karanaaya, Namosthekhila paalakaya/ Namostheyemara nayakaya Namosthekhila Daithya vimardanaya/ Namosthekhila Bhakthajanapriyaya, Namosthekhila Paapavidaaranaya/ Namosthekhila Durjananashakaya, Namosthekhila*

*Tasmai Jagadeeshvaraya/ Namonamah Karanavamayaya, Naraayanaathivikramaya/ Shri Shankha chakraasi gadaadharaaya, Namasthesthu tasmai Purushottamaya/ Namah payoraasi nivaasakaaya, Namasthesthu Lakshmi pathavyaya/ Namasthesthu Suryadyamitha-prabhaaya, Namonamah Punyagathaagathaaya/ Namonamokyenduvilochanaya, Namasthesthudey Yagna phalapadaaya/ Namasthesthu Yagnaangavilochanaya, Namasthesthu thye Sajjanavallabhaaya/Namonamah Kaarana Kaaranaaya, Namasthesthu Shabdaadi vivarjitaaya/ Namasthesthuthyebhheshta sukhahpradaaya, Namonam Bhakta -manoramaaya/ Namonamasthedbhuta karanaaya, Namasthesthuthy Manda radhaarakaya/ Namasthesthuthy Yagnavarrahanaagney, Namonam Hiranyakshavidarakaaya/ Namasthesthuthy Vaamana rupabhaaje, Namasthesthuthy Kshatrakulaanthakaaya/ Namasthesthuthy Ravana mardanaaya, Namasthesthuthy Nanda sutaagrajaaya, Namasthesty kamalaakaantha Namasthesty Sukha daayiney, Ashritarthi nashiney tubhyam bhuyo bhuyo Namonamah/’.* As Bhadrmati praised Lord Srinivasa, He blessed him to enjoy full-swing prosperity to him and family and attain Moksha to him thereafter. ‘**Akashaganga Tirtha**’ was well known for bestowing boons to the highly erudite and dedicated Brahmana called **Ramanuja**. He did Tapasya of rigorous nature on the banks of Akashganga by standing with ‘Panchagni’ (Five flames) around him during the hot summer mid-days and under the sky in heavy rains fully exposed chanting the Ashtakshari Mantra ‘Om Namon Narayanaya’; he ate dry leaves fallen from trees for years together, for some years by drinking water and many other years by consuming air only. Finally, Bhagavan appeared and Ramanuja who was almost dying with the severity of his Tapasya became fully normal and healthy instantly. He received the boons that the Place of Akasha Ganga where Ramanuja had the fortune of discovering Vishnu in person would be an Eternal water-spring and those who performed ‘Snaan’ would change his entire life style and become an ideal Bhakta and at the end they would have no other birth and would get salvation.

In another context, Akash Ganga was immortalised as the Tirtha where Devi **Anjana** executed penance, since she and her husband Vayu Deva were not blessed with a son. Vishnu Bhakta Sage Matangi directed Anjana Devi to reach River Suvarnamukhi, far south of Vindhya Mountain, reach Vrishabhachal on whose top was situated the famous Swami Pushkarini, worship Varaha Deva and Venkateswara, proceed to north, find Akashaganga and perform Snaan in a formal manner along with Vayu Deva. The Sage confirmed that if the couple did so, a Son of unparalleled prowess and ‘Swami Bhakti’ (Loyalty to the Master) would be born, to be called **Hanuman** who was invincible by Devas, Rakshasas, Sages, Brahmanas, Celestial and human beings. As Anjana Devi followed the instructions to the last letter and spirit, Bhagavan Venkateswara appeared before her and blessed that such a Son would be born that his parents would indeed be proud of and play a pivotal role in Treta Yuga as the most powerful personality of ‘Siva Amsa’.

Besides the above, Venkatachala has quite a few other Tirthas like Chakra Tirtha where a Maha Muni Padmanabha prayed to Srinivasa to chase away the dread of Rakshasas and Bhagavan stationed His Sudarshan Chakra known for dispelling the fear of Evil Spirits; Varaha Tirtha, Pandu Tirtha, Tumba Tirtha, Kapila Tirtha, Kumara Tirtha, Jaraharaadi Tirtha Traya, Phalguni Tirtha, Deva Tirtha, Jabaali Tirtha, Sanaka Sanandana Tirtha, Asthi Sarovara Tirtha, Kataha Tirtha and Manvadyashtottara Tirtha.

#### Eight-folded approach to Venkateswara

Sage Suta prescribed an eight-fold Bhakti Route to Lord Venkateswara: 1) To display and ensure ‘Sneha Bhava’ (feeling of friendship) towards His Bhaktas (devotees); 2) To perform service to ‘Bhagavat Bhaktas’ and satisfy them; 3) To perform Puja to Bhagawan with sincerity; 4) All the actions of the Self are to be targetted to Bhagavan; 5) To generate Bhakti and love in the eyes and other ‘Jnanendriyas’ of one self towards Venkateswara; 6) To hear and cogitate about the ‘Mahatmya’ of the Lord and accord importance to whatever is said, described, sung or taught about the same; 7) To keep the name of Srinivasa on one’s lips, thoughts and heart always and 8) To dedicate one self to Lord Venkateswara and take absolute and comprehensive refuge in Him. Those who are fortunate to have even a glimpse of the

fantastic Idol of Venkateswara do experience the awe and satisfaction that leaves behind a lasting familiarity and nearness. Those who think of Srinivasa, either out of curiosity, or greediness, love of materialism, or fear or casual occurrence undergo a definite transformation of outlook, approach to life and morality. If such casual approach has a multiplier effect, could one imagine the far reaching impact of the Eight-folded dedication! As Fire is capable of pulling down a huge mansion within minutes, the stock-pile of sins gets ablaze into ash as fast, provided one takes the shelter of Srinivasa. Human life, which is indeed difficult to secure compared to myriad forms of creatures ranging from animals to insects, is stated to be well spent and appropriately lived through, if one takes asylum of that Supreme Power which is 'Avyaktam' (Unknown), 'Shasvatham' (Everlasting), 'Vishnum' (All Pervading), 'Anantham' (Endless), 'Ajam' (Unborn) and 'Avyayam' (Never Spent out), called Venkateswara!

### Purushottama Kshetra (Utkala Khanda) Mahatmya

As Lord Varaha liberated Bhu Devi from the depths of Rasatala from the clutches of the Demon Hiranyakashipu and Bhu Devi gained normalcy, Lord Brahma resumed the task of Creation again but wondered as to how humanity could be saved from the three major hindrances to life viz. 'Adhibhoutika' or pertaining to the Physical body, 'Adhidaivika' related to occurrences created by Almighty like earthquakes or famines and 'Adhyatmika' (Spiritual issues). He prayed to Lord Narayana for guidance and the latter directed Brahma to visit Purushottama Kshetra on the Sea shore, where Lord Shyama Sundar settled in the form of wooden Idols along with His Brother Balabhadra and Sister Subhadra as also the Sudarshan Chakra and provided solace to humanity from ignorance, lack of direction and discontentment. Brahma reached there as advised by Vishnu and while performing Tapasya got into such a deep and long trance that he was even negligent of the duty of Creation. For a while the Cycle of Life and Death got disturbed as there was no ingress and egress from the Universe. Yamadharma Raja approached Bhagavan Vishnu along whom Devi Lakshmi was seated too. Devi Lakshmi replied that if the reference being given by Yamaraja was to the current issue of the Cycle of Life being disturbed, then it was not possible for Vishnu to leave the Purushottama Kshetra. The Sins of human beings, animals and birds would continue to be burnt off at the Purushottama Kshetra, which was the only hallowed Region unaffected by the Great Deluge ('Pralaya'); even Sage Markandeya who was blessed by 'Paramatma' to achieve immortality for Seven Kalpas had to struggle through the rough waters, till he reached the Purushottama Kshetra where the Divine Tree 'Akshay Vat' was the lone survivor on top of which was Vishnu in a miniature form and advised Markandeya to swim somehow to reach that spot! It was 'Kaal' (Vishnu) as a child who rescued the Sage and the belly of Kaal was bottomless. Lakshmi Devi who was present too there witnessed all these happenings. Brahmarshi Markandeya who had the unique honour of receiving refuge from Vishnu was grateful to the Kshetra and materialised a Water reservoir with the help of Sudarshana Chakra, immortalised as 'Markandeya Kund'. The Sage established a Markandeswara Linga, which was basically of the form of Narayana as also known as Yameswar where Yamaraja was controlled from Mrityu owing to the Sanctity of the Kshetra. Bathing in the Markandeya Kund and worship of Markandeswara Linga is stated to equal the fruit of Aswamedha Yagna.

Devi Lakshmi continued her explanation to Yamadharma Raja that the Purushottama Kshetra was of a conch shape whose North West was dominated by Shankara and the North East by Neelakantha and the Central Portion of a distance of a mile or so was of Narayana. Nearer the Shankara Tirtha is situated the Kapala Vimochana Linga and the third part of the conchshell was of Adya Shakti Vimala Devi. In the Nabhi Sthaan or the Central Region are situated the 'Vat' (Tree) and Bhagavan Purushottama. Thus the Three Portions of the Purushottama Kshetra are popular as Tirtha Raj. There is also a Rohini Kund, the waters of which relieve sins and constituted the tail-end of the Pralayakal water! At the southern tip of the Conchshell is situated Narasimha whose darshan itself is an instant sin destroyer. There are 'Antarvedi' (underlying) Eight Shaktis which are stated to be providing security at the Purushottama Kshetra viz. Devi Mangala in the roots of the Vata Tree, Devi Vimala in the West, Devi Sarva Mangala in the rear lower portion of the Conchshell, on the northern side Devi Arthashini and Devi Lamba, Devi Kalarathri in

the Southern side, Devi Marichika and Devi Chandarupa in the East. Also, Bhagavan Siva assumed Eight Linga Rupas viz. Kapalamochan, Kshetrapal, Yameswar, Markandey -eshwar, Eshana, Bileswar, Neelakantha, and Vateswar. If these Lingas are visioned, touched or worshipped, the devotees have access to Moksha Marga (The Road to Salvation) and if they die, their life-end is tied up with Bhagavan Siva directly without any intervention from Yama Raja.

Sage Jaimini told the Munis at Naimisharanya that King **Indradyumna**, an ardent devotee of Vishnu was keen in having a 'darshan' of the Idol of Neela Madhava at the Temple situated in the Nilachal Mountain's cave, on the coastal side of East Bharatavarsha, in the Utkal Region. The King asked his Priest to ascertain the route and arrange for the trip. One of the Pilgrims who returned from the famed Temple in the foothills of Nilachal Mountain (who perhaps was Bhagavan Jagannatha Himself) described the route to the Royal Priest that the Temple was in Purushottama Kshetra near a holy pond known as Rohin adjacent to a place called Odhra and that there was a Temple of Vasudeva besides which there was a hermitage called 'Shabardeep' leading to the path of Jagannath Temple. The Royal Priest's younger brother *Vidyapati* was approved by the King to make an initial trip so that the King would perform the 'Yatra' (expedition) subsequently. Vidyapati and party undertook a tedious and tiring journey to the Ekamvaran forests at the foothills of Mountain and at the Shabardeep hermitage met *Vishvvasu*. Both Vidyapati and Vishvvasu visited the Place after a steep ascent of the Mountain and finally reached the Rohin Pond and after a bath had Darshan of Neela Madhava. Vidyapati was overwhelmed by the thrilling experience of Jagannatha's Darshan and prayed to Him to his heart's content. Vidyapati was told by Shabar Vishvvasu that several Devas frequented the Temple and brought expensive gifts and garlands to the Lord; when Vidyapati returned back to King Indradyumna the former showed the flowers which never withered as they were celestial! But Vishvvasu gave the disheartening news to Vidyapati that the latter would not be able to have a darshan of Neela Madhava, although something better might happen! Vidyapati was advised not to disclose this fact to the King on his return to the Kingdom as the King might be highly discouraged. Even as Vidyapati returned and was describing the rapturous darshan that he had of Neela Madhava, Sage Narada appeared and desired to accompany the King on his way to the Purushottama Kshetra. The King and his large entourage set for the journey and reached the banks of River Mahanadi for an overnight stay before proceeding to the Jagannatha Temple next morning. The King of Utkal informed the senior King Indradyumna that there was a very heavy sand storm and the Idol of Neela Madhava was underneath a huge heap of debris. Luckily Sage Narada was with Indradyumna and consoled the latter and assured him that Lord Jagannatha was extremely merciful and that something memorable would happen! Next morning the King's full entourage crossed River Mahanadi, worshipped Lord Purushottama at 'Eakaamrechhetra' and further proceeded to Kotishwar Mahalaya to perform Puja to 'Tribhuvaneswara'. The latter appeared before Sage Narada and instructed that King Indradyumna should perform hundred 'Yagyas'; that Lord Jagannatha would manifest Himself from under the debris; that a Vata Tree with four branches would have to be carved out by Viswakarma the Celestial Artist as Four Idols of Lord Jagannatha, Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra the sister of the former brothers and 'Sudarshan Chakra'; that He (Tribhuvaneswara) along with Devi Durga would be present at the top entry of the conchshell shaped Purusha Kshetra; that Lord Brahma would install and consecrate the Holy Idols for the everlasting benefit of generations ahead and the dream and perseverance of King Indradyumna would become fruitful. Sage Narada assured that Lord Tribhuvaneswara's instructions would be followed in full letter and spirit. From there the caravan moved to Nilakantha Mahadeva and worshipped Mahadeva and Durga. The King was anxious to reach the Place where Lord Jagannatha was under the sand; he prayed to Him as though he could visualise the Idol and there emerged a voice from the rubble assuring the King that he would soon have His appearance. Since the first task to be performed was to organise the hundred Yagnas as directed by Tribhuvaneswara, Narad was anxious to take up the construction of the Temple of Lord Nrisimha as that was the Place to complete the Yagnas. Sughat, the son of Viswakarma completed the construction of the Temple within five days, while Vishwakarma made the Idol of Nrisimha which was installed by Narada. Thereafter the task of carving wood for the four major Idols of Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarshan Chakra was taken up and a Celestial voice came saying that the

Idols would emerge on their own, that the oldest worker be sent inside the Main Gate which should be closed till the job was over, that the sound of drums be kept on continuously till the job was going on inside to cover up the sounds from there, that if somebody heard the sounds from inside he would be irrevocably deaf, and that somebody saw what was happening inside that person would be blind for ever. On the fifteenth day, a Celestial Voice emerged that all the Idols were manifested. Thereafter the heavenly voices kept on giving instructions about the colour schemes of the Idols ( Deep blue like clouds for Jagannatha, white for Balabhadra, red like rising Sun for Subhadra and deep red for Sudarshan), the ornament details and so on. As the Idols were getting ready with all finishing touches, Indradyumna was in trance and asked Jagannatha for nothing excepting salvation from the mortal life. Narada, the King and the entire entourage entered the Sanctum Sanctorium chanting 'Dwadasaakshara Mantra' (Om Namo Vasudevaya) in praise of the Lord Jagannatha, 'Purusha Suktam' addressed to Balabhadra, 'Sri Suktam' for Subhadra and appropriate Vedic Mantras for Sudarshana Chakra. Narada visualised the various articles required for the Consecration Ceremony and were secured by the King. A Palace was built for Brahma and three Chariots were readied for the three Deities; the required number of horses- sixteen to Jagannatha, fourteen to Balabhadra and twelve to Subhadra-were readied too. The mast on top of the Chariot of Jagannatha was made with Garuda Vahan (The Lord's Carrier), that of Balabhadra had a plough, and of Subhadra's chariot was a Lotus. Indeed the King was so fortunate that the wherewithall for the Function was instantly procured by Sages and Devas! Finally, at the 'Muhurat'time, Lord Brahma performed the Consecration on Suddha Visakha Ashtami on Thursday with Pushyami as the Nakshatra, as witnessed by Devas, Yakshas, Kinnaras and Maharshis! The famous nine day **Ratha Yatra** commenced on Suddha Ashadha Vidiya and returned from the banks of Bindu Tirtha on the eighth day.

Sage Jaimini explained that Lord Brahma clarified to Raja Indradyumna about a doubt as to *why Jagannath assumed the Wooden Form of Idols*. The 'Daru' (Wooden) Idols represent 'Duhkha vidarana' or destroying of distress and bestowing of endless happiness; as Srihari is 'Darumaya' He therefore manifested in wooden form. At the time of 'Srishti' (Creation) following Pralaya, 'Parabrahma' (The Supreme Being) manifested in the Form of Vedas or the mix of 'Sabda Brahma' and 'Artha Brahma'. Bhagavan Balabhadra is of Rig Ved Swarup, while Subhadra is of Yajur Veda Swarup. Nrisimha is of Sama Veda Swarup and Sudarshan is of Atharva Veda Swarup. If a composite view is taken, the Deities thus represented all the Veda Swarupas and Jagannatha is the sum total and likewise all these forms are Jagannatha Himself. The 'Vata Vriksha' on the Sea Bed at the time of Pralaya was thus the depiction of Bhagavan and the Wooden Idols made out of the Tree are His Symbols!

#### Badari Kshetra Mahatmya

Kartikeya asked Maha Deva as to how human beings with their limited understanding of Spiritual matters especially in Kali Yuga could ever imagine of securing the Four Featured Desires of Samsara viz. Dharma (Virtue), Artha (Prosperity), Kama (Fulfillment of Desires) and Moksha (Liberation). Bhagavan Siva's ready reply was that there were several holy Tirthas and Kshetras dotted all over Bharata Varsha which could transform the outlook of a human being and imbibe piety and virtue; for example there are Rivers like Ganga, Godavari, Narmada, Tapati, Yamuna, Kshipra, Goutami, Kaushiki, Kaveri, Tamraparni, Chandrabhaga, Mahendraja, Chitrotpala, Vetravati, Sarayu, Charmanvati, Shatadu, Payaswini, Gandaki, Baahuda, Sindhu and Sarasvati. Also there are Punya Kshetras like Ayodhya, Dwaraka, Kashi, Mathura, Avanti, Kurukshetra, Rama Tirtha, Kanchi, Purushottama Kshetra, Pushkara, Dardura Kshetra, Varaha Kshetra and Badari which are all boon providing Places. Bathing, vision of the Idols, performing Puja to them, practising austerities and giving away Charity constitute the best means of washing off sins, fulfilling desires, enabling noble deeds and even securing Salvation.

*Badari Kshetra* is one of the most outstanding and ancient Pilgrimage Points on Himalayas where Bhagavan Narayana Himself resides. Mahadeva described to Skanda that the significance of 'darshan' in Kashi, Kailash and Shri Parvat is far more superior than that of Badari where the foot prints of Srihari

apart, this Kshetra is also the abode of Agni since the latter as ‘Sarvabhakshak’ (consumer of any material worthy of consumption or not) prayed to Vishnu to absolve him of the sins and Bhagavan Vishnu provided refuge at His feet where no sin could reach Agni. Also, Kedar Kshetra is in the same region as Badari where Siva’s magnificent Linga is present and even a darshan and if possible an ‘Abhishek’ and Puja of the Linga would instantly perish the sins of a devotee. Moreover, Mahadeva’s fifteen ‘Kalas’(features) are present in the Kedar Linga and worship of the Linga by way of ‘Japa’ (continuous recital) of Siva’s name, ‘Manana’ (Constant thinking about Him), ‘Stuti’( Extolling Him) and ‘Bhajan’(Singing in praise of Him) would assure that there would be freedom from the vicious cycle of births and deaths! Thus Parameswara advised Skanda that Badari Kshetra has the double advantage of worship to Narayana and Mahadeva as this Unified Point on Himalayas is an ideal Pilgrimage Center. ‘Snaan’ at Agni Tirtha absolves even the ‘Pancha Patakas’ or the extreme Five Sins, besides performing ‘Pranaayam’ and other Yogic Exercises.

Lord Siva explained to Kartikeya that there were *Five Sacred ‘Shilas’* or Rocks, viz. Naradi, Narasimhi, Varahi, Garudi and Markandeyi, each one of them being capable of fulfillment and contentment. Sage *Narada* sat once on a rock and did severe Tapasya for visualising Lord Vishnu. When Narayana along with Devi Lakshmi gave darshan, Narada asked for the boons of ever lasting devotion to Him, never leaving the rock on which he did Tapasya and creating a Tirtha nearby which should absolve the sins of those who bathe in it and worship Narayana there. *Markandeya* the great devotee met Sage Narada at Mathura and was advised that he should visit Badari Kshetra and pray to Narayana. Markandeya did accordingly and was fortunate to secure the darshan of Sri Hari after continuously reciting the Ashtakshara Mantra viz. Om Namō Narayanaya. He was dumbfounded when Bhagavan Vishnu stood before him in full glory with four hands ornamented with Shankh, Chakra, Gada and Saranga. After extolling Narayana to his heart’s content, Markandeya desired for ‘Janma rahitya’ or freedom from births, that his devotion to Narayana should become stronger and unflinching, that He should be always present at the rock where he was having the darshan of Bhagavan and that He should bless devotees when they visited the Markandeya Shila. *Garuda* was the son of Sage Kashyap and Devi Vinata whose ambition was to emulate the example of his brother Aruna who was Surya Deva’s charioteer and had the intense desire of becoming the Carrier of Bhagava Vishnu. He chose Badari Kshetra on the top of the adjacent ‘Gandhamadan Parvat’ (Mountain) and was in penance for years together with undaunted grit and devotion. As Lord Narayana finally gave darshan, Garud extolled Him as Trividha Murti integrating the Forms of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara as also of ‘Ashta Shaktis’(Eight Powers) and the Supreme Might of the Universe. Vishnu was pleased and materialised ‘Panchamukha Ganga’ or the five faced Ganges with the waters of which gave the unique opportunity to Garuda to wash His feet. He also granted the boons of making him His personal ‘Vahan’ (Carrier), of becoming invincible by any force in the Three Worlds, of making him a never-failing personal devotee of Bhagavan and of fulfilling the desires of those who visit the Garuda Shila and worship Bhagavan Narayana. *Narasimha Deva* in one of Lord Vishnu’s incarnations annihilated the Demon Hiranyakasipu and saved the illustrious devotee Prahlada; He looked like Fire while massacring the Demon with His sharp nails and was in a highly infuriated mood when all the Devas prayed to Him to calm down. After becoming somewhat composed, He declared that He would settle at Vishalapuri (Badarikashram); all the Sages were extremely delighted that Narasimha would be present at Narasimha Shila for facilitating their constant worship and also to bless Bhaktas visiting the Shila. *Bhagavan Varaha* who pulled up Bhu Devi from the underworld of Rasatala destroyed Demon Hiranyaksha and saved the Vedas and Holy Scriptures. The Varaha incarnation of Lord Vishnu appeared at Vishalapuri as Varaha Shila and continued to bless the devotees at the Shila.

Devas approached Lord Brahma to complain that in the Satya Yuga virtuous human beings, Sages and they could easily access Bhagavan Vishnu, while in Treta Yuga they could visualise Bhagavan through ‘Yogabhyas’ only but in Dwapar Yuga, His Darshan had become virtually impossible and in the future during the Kali Yuga, human beings might even question or ignore the existence of Vishnu! Accordingly, a Delegation of Devas was led by Brahma to Bhagavan Vishnu at Kshirasagara (Ocean of Milk), as

Vishnu replied only to Brahma that Devas had become quite irresponsible and ignorant without even realising the very obvious existence of Himself at Badarikashrama! In fact, Bhagavan kept in view the limitations of human beings in Kali Yuga and as such made His Darshan very easy and possible. As the gist of Vishnu's admonition to Devas was conveyed, they became ashamed and made instant trips to worship Badari Narayana at Badarikashama. That was why this Kshetra acquired additional significance. It is stated that even if a grain of 'Prasad' (Left over of the offering given to Badari Narayana) is consumed, the devotee concerned who visited the Holy Kshetra would get rid of all kinds of Patakas (sins) including Maha Pancha Patakas. There is a strong belief down the ages that visitors to the Holy Region would attain Vishnu Swarupa, whose heart is replete with the Vision of Narayana, whose tongue and ears are full of His glories, whose stomach is with even a morsel of His Prashad and whose kneeled head touches the feet of Narayana's Idol. The worst Sins like killing the Virtuous, intoxication, robberies and incest with 'Guru Patni' equivalent to one's mother would all evaporate once the above requirements are fulfilled. If Bhojan daan is performed among Sanyasins and good Brahmanas and the Prasad is consumed then the benefits of Badarika Darshan and worship are indeed doubled. Bhagavan Siva described the significance of several Tirthas like *Kapala Tirtha* in the Badarika Region to Kartikeya. This Tirtha is very popular as Pinda Daanas are formally organised to provide relief to Pitraganas from various hells and is thus known as Pitru Tirtha. Considered highly important, this Sacred Spot is greeted with heads down by Devas and Rakshasas alike as the belief had been that this was Brahma's 'Pancha Sira Kapala' or the Fifth skull top which was snipped by Siva Deva for Brahma's indiscretion of getting attracted to His own Creation of Devi Sarasvati (His daughter). [An alternative Story was that Brahma spoke a lie that he saw the top portion of the huge Siva Linga which indeed was endless]. *Brahma Tirtha* signified Vishnu's Avatar of Hayagreeva as the two Demon Brothers called Madhu and Kaitabha stole the Vedas and Brahma witnessed the extraordinary Vision of Hahagreeva emerging from a Kund (Pond) to terminate the Demons. Siva informed Kartikeya that after rescuing the Vedas, the 'Deva Rupī Vedas' were deposited in the Brahma Kund and 'Jnaana Rupī Vedas' were given away to Brahma. Hence the high importance of 'Snaan', worship and Daan at the Brahma Kund. To the North of the Kund flows *River Saraswati* along side the Kapala Tirtha where Pitru Karyas (tasks to relieve the past generations) are held. Vishnu established the Vagdevi River most appropriately as Deva Rupī Vedas, Jnaana Rupī Vedas, Pitra Loka and Bhuloka are all concentrated in Badarikashrama which is the confluence of Three Lokas! Bathing in the Holy River Saraswati, its worship, Stuti (Praise) and sincere greetings would indeed enhance a devotee's vocal and mental power and ensure that the ensuing generation's abilities would never ever fail. South of Sarasvati coming from the mountains is *Indrapada Tirtha* where Lord Indra conducted Tapasya, fasting and worship and is stated to bestow the devotees who also perform the same austerities as Indra did. Nearby the Indrapada Tirtha are situated the *Manasodbheda Tirtha* and *Vasudhara Tirtha* both being of considerable importance. Not far from Indrapada Tirtha is the *Pancha Tirtha Complex* comprising Five Streams named Prabhas, Pushkar, Gaya, Naimish and Kurukshetra. There is also an important *Soma Tirtha* where Chandra Deva performed Tapasya to Narayana and secured the boons of becoming the Chief of Nakshatras (Stars), Aushadhis (Medicines), Grahas (Planets) and the entire Brahmana Community. Further there are *Dwadasha Aditya Tirtha*, *Chatuhstotra Tirtha*, *Satyapada Tirtha*, *Meru Tirtha*, *Lokapala Tirtha*, *Dandapushkarin* and *Ganga Sangam*.

#### Significance of the month of Kartika

Sage Narada enquired of Lord Brahma as to which was the best month of a year, who was the best Deity to worship and which was the best Tirtha to visit. Brahma's instant reply was that the best month of a Year was Kartika, the Supreme Deity to worship was Narayana and the most Sacred Tirtha was Badari Kshetra. As regards Kartika Month, Bhagavan Vishnu always accorded high esteem and whatever good deeds were performed in the 'Masa' were fully accepted by all the Devas since they were readily available there through out the month. The acts and endeavours of the devotees like 'Snaan', 'Daan', 'Bhojan', 'Vrath', 'Til'(Sesame Seeds), Dhenu (Cows), 'Suvarna' (Gold), 'Rajat' (Silver), 'Bhumi' (Land), 'Vastra'(Clothing), Tapasya, Japa, Homa, Yagna, Annadaan, Puja with Tulasi leaves, Abhishek

of Vishnu's Idol with Ganges and other holy river waters as also 'Panchamrit' comprising milk, ghee, curd, honey and sugar; 'Shodasopacharas' to Deities, Veda- parayana, Purana Shravan, Bhajans, Deva Stutis, Visits to Temples, fasting, abstinence, 'Jaagarans' (Keeping awake in the night singing hymns), Guru Seva etc. would indeed secure manifold returns in the consecrated month of Kartik. At every time during the day and night, 'kirtans'(Stanzas) on one's own lips must be uttered like 'Govinda Govinda Hare Murari, Govinda Govinda Mukunda Krishna, Govinda Govinda Rathangapane, Govinda Damodara Maadhaveti'. Specific time on each day must also be apportioned for 'Bhagavat Geeta Paath' or reading as many Chapters as possible. Also, a devotee must observe sleeping on the floor and if possible perform Kanya Daan and Vidya Daan in the month. Practice of the month long austerity and good conduct even in one Kartika month in a year ought to result in tangible benefits for sure!

One has to observe certain don'ts during Kartika Month such as **avoiding** use of oil on the body and food (except on Naraka Chaturdasi), food from others, fruits with many seeds, rice, left over or spoilt food, heavy food and twice a day, drinking intoxicants, use of glass items, eating group food or from prostitute, Grama Purohit, Sudras, Shraddhas and from women during menses period; eating in lotus leaves, consuming brinjals, carrots, 'Loki, onions and masoor dal; eating on Ekadashi days; turning off guests at eating time; conversing with chandal, Mlechha, Patita (women with bad character), Vratahin ( those not observing the rules of Kartika month), hater of Brahmanas, those who talk ill of others, non believers of God/ Godmen and immoral beings. During the month of Kartika, **Snanaas** (bathings) acquire considerable importance. Those who are devoted to Surya Deva, Ganesha, Shakti, Siva and Vishnu are all required to formally observe Kartika Snanas. Snanas in favour of Surya need to be followed as long as Surya is in 'Tula' Rasi. Snanas in favour of Shankara be performed from Asvayuja Pournami to Kartika Pournami. Bathings in favour of Devis be observed from Aswayuja Shukla Pradhana day till Karthika Krishna Chaturdasi while for Ganesha Snanas are to be performed From Ashvin Krishna Chaturdasi till Kartika Krishna Chaturdasi. Bhagavan Janardana would be pleased with formal Snaanas from Aswin Shukla Ekadashi till Kartika Shukla Ekadashi. Those who observe the Snana Procedure during the month of Kartika would be free from the tribulations of Yama Dharma Raja. Special Snaans and worship to Radha and Gopala during the month preferably under a Tulasi Tree have immense significance. While observing Kartika Snaans the following Stanza is recited: *Kartikeham Karishyami Pratha Snaanam Janardana, Preethyartham Tava Devesha Damodara maya saha*. (Janardana! Deveshwara Damodara! I am performing my early morning Snaan to please You and Devi Lakshmi). Also recite the following: *Grihaanaarghya maya dattam Radhaya Sahiti Hare, Namah Kamala -naabhaaya Nammasthey Jalashhayiney, Namasthesthu Hrishikesham Gruhaanaarghya Namosthutey*. (Bhagavan! Please accept this 'Arghya' (handful of water) of mine to please You and Devi Radha; My greetings to you Kamalanaabha, greetings to You Jalashaayiney; greetings to You Hrishikesham; my repeated greetings to You!). Before taking bath, one should take the name of 'Pavitra Ganga'(Holy Ganges); while taking the bath on the head, recite 'Purusha Suktam' / 'Sri Suktam' and after the Snaan, take Tulasi in hand and perform 'Achaman'(Sipping water thrice with the Names of Keshava, Narayana, Madhava etc.) and later apply Tilak / Vibhudi/ Kumkum on the forehead. Cold water snaan is always preferable to hot water for double Punya. It is said that there are four types of Snaan viz. 'Vayavya' (along with 'Godhuli'/Cow dung); 'Varuna' (in the Sea and Holy Rivers); 'Brahma' or with Veda Mantras and 'Divya' or as Sun rays pass on the body. Snaanas by women should not be with Veda Mantras.

Lord Brahma affirmed that the fortnight from Kartika Krishna Trayodasi to the end of the month ie from Deepavali on the Amavasya of Aswayuja should be observed as Festival Days. The 'Pradosha' time of that Trayodasi is the most significant time when Lord Yama is worshipped with 'Deepas' at the main door of the residence and Naivedya to ensure that there would never be an 'Apamrutyu' or Akaala Mrithyu (premature and sudden death) in the family. Yama Raja would be pleased with the recitation of the Mantra after the worship: *Mrityuna pasha dandaabhyam Kaalena cha maya saha, Trayodashyam Deepa daanaath Suryajah Preeyathamiti* [With this Deepa daan on Trayodashi, may Surya's son Yama be pleased without Mrityu (Death), Pasha (Yama's rope of death), Danda (Yama's stick) and 'Kaal'

(Death time)] Thereafter, on Kartika Amavasya morning, worship is to be performed to Devatas and at the Pradosha time of the same evening, strings of 'Deepas' should be lit and Devi Lakshmi is worshipped saying: 'Devi Lakshmi! We welcome You with 'Deepa Jyoti' (the splendour of these Lamps) as You are the Symbol of Limitless Illumination; You are the representation of Surya, Chandra, Agni, and Gold (Prosperity); Do make Your residence as our own!' Thus the Kartika Krishna Paksha is the most auspicious fortnight praying for 'Apamrityu' / Good Health to Yama raja and Wealth for Devi Lakshmi ushering an era of happiness. If during the entire Kartik Month-or atleast 'Pancha Rathras' (five nights), a devotee recites 'Om Namo Narayanaya' as well as reads / hears 'Vishnu Sahasranam' and 'Gajendra Moksha Paatha', he secures freedom from want, disease, adversity and discontent. Most certainly, the austerities observed on Kartika Ekadashi day alone would ensure contentment in 'Iham' (Current Life) and bliss in 'Param' (Post Life). Each act of virtue on the most auspicious day of Kartika Ekadashi is bound to obtain a multiplier effect endlessly.

### Margasirsha Mahatmya

While addressing a group of Munis, Sage Sutha narrated that Lord Brahma asked Bhagavan Narayana about the significance of Margasirsha Month and the reply was that in His earlier incarnation as Krishna, He advised thousands of Gopikas and Gopas to observe austerities during that month by performing 'Snaans', 'Pujas', fastings and total dedication to Him to attain Salvation. Thus Gopikas and Gopas adopted a daily routine of waking up early; taking bath with Tulasi roots of earth on head by reciting the Mula Mantra of 'Om Namo Narayanaya' and Gayatri Mantra; praying to Ganga saying 'Vishnupaada prasuthaasi Vaishnavi Vishnu devatha, Thrahi naha thvam aghaatthasmaat aajanma maranaanthikat' (Hey Gangey, You were materialised from Vishnu's feet, thus known as Vaishnavi, Vishnu is your Devata, please save me of my sins from birth to death); and applying mritthika (earth) on the body by reciting 'Ashvakraanthey Rathakraanthey Vishnu kraanthey Vasundharey, Mrittikey hara mey Paapam yanmayaa dushkrutam krutam/ Uddhrutasi Varaahena Krishnena Shata baahunaa, Namasthey Sarva bhutaanam prabhavarani Suvrathey' ( Hey Vasundharey, Bhagavan Vishnu rides horses and chariots over your physique, I request your Mrittika to wash off my sins like the fire from the pit, you are the creator and tolerator of all beings and the Supreme Lord Varaha lifted you with His thousand hands from deep waters, I salute you!). After the former bath and wearing clean clothes, the routine continues with applying 'Vibhudi' (ash of homa or of cow dung), perform 'Sandhya Vandan' / Gayatri Japa followed by Vishnu Puja with 'Ghantanaad' (ringing bell), Chandana, Pushpa, Tulasidal, dhoop, deepa and other 'Shodasopacharas', 'Stutipaaath' (Extolling hymns) of Vishnu Sahasranaam, Bhishmastavaraj, Gajendra Moksha, Anusmriti and Bhagavad Gita, Mantrajap viz. 'Om Namo Damodaraya Namah' and 'Saashtanga Pranaam' (prostration or lying on the ground by putting both the hands, both the feet, both the knees together, as also chest, forehead, heart, mouth, and vision) and finally recite the Mantra: *Mantra heenam, Kriya heenam, Bhakti heenam Janaardana, Yat pujitam maya Deva Paripurnam tha dasthu the/ Anaya Dhyaanaa vaahanaadi Shodasopachaaraaya Bhagavaan Sarvaatmakah-Supreeta Suparasanno varado bhavatu-* so saying-*Devataa Prasaadam Sirasa grihnnami, ye that phalam Parameswar-arpanamasthu.* (Hey Janaardana, my worship to You is without Mantras, without rituals, and without devotion; kindly accept my worship without these qualities; also without meditation, 'Vahanas' or Carriers, and such other Sixteen Services, I am concluding my worship; kindly be pleased with my worship and ignore all my limitations).

In Kampilya Nagar in the past, there was a King Virabahu who was righteous and devoted and his wife Kantimati too was devout. He was visited by Sage Bharadvaj and was pleased by their high merit and good qualities. The Sage told the King that he was a cruel and sinful Shudra in his previous birth who never believed in Narayana, but his present wife was his previous wife too and was a dutiful and devout woman. While in a forest hunting once, the Shudra found an aged Muni named Devasharma who lost his way into the forest and was pitifully exhausted unable to move. The cruel hunter somehow felt pity on the old person and carried him into his abode and offered him fruits and water. Asked about him, the Shudra

confessed to the Muni that he was a cruel hunter, was irreligious and unpardonable; meanwhile his wife gave some fruits and water which the Muni accepted. As the hunter expressed sincere remorse for his earlier actions and showed keen desire to pray to Vishnu. Muni Devasharma opined that the sincerity shown by the hunter in rescuing an old and tired Sanyasi like him and providing timely assistance and service to him was itself an indication of the innumerable sins committed by him in the past. The Sage having narrated the story of the hunter gave 'Upadesha' (teaching) to the King about the significance of the month of Margasirsha and of the worship of Narayana by performing the '**Akhanda Ekadashi Vrata**' commencing from Dashami through Dwadashi. On the evening of Dashami when Sun becomes less severe, one has to observe 'Nakta Vrata' or light meal; on Ekadashi day, one should avoid frequent drinking of water, violence, impurity, speaking lies, consumption of betel leaves, cleaning of teeth more than once, sleeping during the day, mating, gambling, non-observance of Jaagaran and conversation with sinners. On Ekadashi day, one should observe strict fasting which means avoiding comfort. On the following Dwadashi day, one should observe the avoidables of Ekadashi as also keep away from other's food, honey, and use of oils on the body as also consume the same. But the fast could be terminated to the 'Karta' (the devotee) on Dwadashi, only after providing Bhojan to Brahmanas. After observing the Akhanda Vrata for one full year till the last Dwadashi, '**Udyapan**' or conclusion is executed on the Margasirsha Shukla Ekadashi by engaging twelve Brahmanas and one 'Acharya' (Chief) and his wife. First of all, the Acharya and the Brahmanas should be invited with Arghya, Padya, Vastra and Dakshina. The Acharya would then supervise the preparation of 'Chakra Kamala Mandala' based on a white cloth, sub-divided into five segments each having five copper 'Kalashas' (vessels) duly garlanded around and on top of the Kalashas are set with the Idols of Lakshmi Narayana and the Shankha and Chakra. To the northern side there should be 'Havan Kund' where 'homas' are performed with Veda Mantras. The Idols are worshipped with Dhupa, Deepa, Naivedya, Arathi and other services, besides Yaksha Kardama Puja (comprising Camphor, Agar, Kasturi, and Anga lepa) and Parikrama / Pradakshina. Later on, there should be recitals of Pavamana Sukta, Mantras viz. 'Madhavaata ruthaayatey', 'Tejosi' etc. Sukranja etc. Vaachyam Brahma (Samam), 'Pavitravantam Suryasya', 'Vishnormahasi' etc. followed by Samidha homa, Charu homa, Tila homa and so on. Finally, charities should take place including Kalasha (Vessel) Daan, Vastra (Clothing) Daan, Suvarna (Gold) Daan and Artha (Cash) Daan as per the devotee's capacity and convenience.

### Vaisakha Month's Significance

Sage Narada confirmed from Brahma that 'Vaisakha Masa' was of immense consequence as it fulfills all desires to human beings just as a mother did to children. The month is very dear to Vishnu and confers several boons to those who deserve. The month is the essence of Dharma, Yagna, Kriya (noble tasks) and Tapasya. Vaisakha is a 'Dharma Sadhaka' (Virtue-prone) month, just as Veda Vidya is the preeminent of Vidyas, 'Pranava' is the superlative of Mantras, 'Kalpa Vriksha' is the paramount of Trees, Surya Deva is the most superior of all radiances, Sudarshan Chakra is the most powerful among all Shastras and Astras, Gold is the best of all metals, Siva is the unique among Vaishnavas and 'Kaustubh' is the best among the jewels. Those who perform 'Snaan' even before Sunrise are valued by Narayana. Just as Vaishakha, there is no Yuga like Satya, no charity like that of water, no prosperity like farming, no Tapasya like Upavas (fasting), no happiness like giving away, no virtue like mercy and forgiving, no superiority like good health, and above all there is no Bhagavan like Vishnu.

During the month of Vaishakha, 'Jala Daan' assumes high importance as those who wish to attain affluence must resort to ways and means of supplying water to public; road side outlets to travellers are of great utility especially in Summer season. Planting trees for shade, providing umbrellas, footwear and fans to individuals, 'Anna daan' or mid day meals and free accommodation in rest houses especially to 'Yatris' and devising other facilities have enormous and far reaching 'Punya'; the donors of these items would automatically receive manifold benefits in 'Iham' (current life) and 'Param', especially the 'Naraka lokas' which one ought to visit after life. To those who give away clothing in charity would be rid of

difficulties at birth and death; to those who donate mats that Lord Vishnu Himself rests on; to those who give away bed sheets would have comfortable sleep; to those who provide relaxed clothing to Brahmanas their life span would be extended; to those who donate flowers would be blessed with luxuries in life; to those who offer chandan would enjoy happiness; to those who construct free rest houses would become Kings; to those who provide free facilities of gardens, water wells, and 'Mandapas' would have the happiness of good children; and to those who perform rites to 'Pitras' by offering Kasturi, Camphor, fragrant material and pots full of scented waters are sure to achieve various types of reliefs in the 'Paraloka'. While these are illustrative types of charities and the far reaching results of benevolence, the avoidable tasks during the Vaisakha month are eight-folded viz. applying oils on body, bathing in the house, sleeping during the day timings, eating in glass utensils, sleeping on water beds, keeping away from avoidable foods, eating more than once a day and eating in the night. If one takes Vaishakha bath before Sun-rise in any of the Seven Gangas viz. Ganga, Buddha Ganga (Godavari), Kalindi or Yamuna, Saraswathi, Kaveri, Narmada and Veni, the person concerned would be saved from even 'Pancha Patakas', let alone lesser level sins. Daanas of 'Kanda'/'Moola' (Underground Vegetables), Phala (Fruits) Shakha (Plain Vegetables), Salt, Gud, Edible Leaves, and water would have endless benefits.

While performing 'Snaanas' during Vaishaka, the following Mantras should be read in praise of Madhusudan as follows: *Madhusudan Devesha Vaishaakhe Meshage Ravai, Prathahsnaanam karishyaami nirvighnam kuru Madhava*. (Hey Madhusudan, Deveswara Madhava, I am performing Vaishakha month bathing early morning when Surya Deva is situated in Mesha Rasi; Kindly accomplish my bathing without hindrance and bless me). After the bath, one should offer 'Arghya' (Handful of water) looking at Sun: *Vaishaakhe Meshage Bhaanau Praathah Snaana paraayanah, Arghyam theham pradaasmahi gruhaana Madhusudana*. (I am formally offering the 'Arghya' during early morning of Vaishaka when Surya is in Mesha Rasi; kindly accept, Madhusudana!)

Once there was a King named Kirtiman in Kashipura who went hunting in forests and being desirous of visiting the 'Ashram' of Sage Vasishtha found several of the Sage's disciples offering the shade of umbrellas, fruits and cool drinks to passers by. They were unmindful of normal human beings and Kings like him and asked why were they doing the service, they did not reply. On meeting Vasishtha, the King enquired about the acts of the disciples and the Sage described the significance of Vaisakha Month. Pursuant to this the King ordered that the good example of the disciples of the Sage be followed in the nook and corner of the entire Kingdom and was able to save the lives of several of his subjects, especially Brahmanas by providing rest houses, planting trees, supplying food and cool water and creating innumerable facilities to his people. Also, the King organised a Kingdom-wide campaign of propagating Dharma in the Vaishakha Month and spreading the awareness of the 'do's and don'ts' as also strictly enforcing early morning bathings, performances of daanas, 'Pujas' by individual families and a general uplift of Dharma. This resulted in a very thin outgo of deaths from his Kingdom in the months of Vaishaka and Lord Yamaraja made an appeal to Brahma that the traffic of deaths and births registered in the Kingdom of Kirtiman was highly disturbed, that there was little difference of 'Swarga' and 'Naraka' and even those few deaths in the Kingdom made a bee-line to Vaikuntha! Amused by the complaint of Yamaraja, Brahma accompanied by Yamaraja approached the 'Ksheera Sagar' (Ocean of Milk) and Vishnu replied smilingly that He would rather leave away His Srivatsa, Kaustubh jewel, Vijayanti Mala, Sweta Dwip, Vaikuntha, Ksheera Sagar, Sesha Nag, Garud or even Devi Lakshmi, but would never abandon His Bhakta Raja Kirtiman. He further said that He would desire to multiply the good illustrations of that King and extend their lives for thousands of Years. He warned Yamadhararaja not to interfere with the observance of the 'Mahatmya' of the month of Vaisakha. However, Lord Vishnu provided for a special dispensation in favour of Yamadhararaja that the devotees of Vaisakha month should perform a special Puja in his favour during the first half of the month before Purnima and give away a Daan of potful of water, curd and Anna (rice/foodgrains) to appease him. Only after the special Puja that one should observe Pujas to Pitras, Gurus and Bhagavan Vishnu in their names and charity be given to

Brahmanas offering cool water, curd, Anna, fruits, betel leaves/ nuts and 'dakshina' along with a copper vessel and an Idol of Maha Vishnu.

The importance of Vaisakha *Akshaya Triteeya* through the end of the month was illustrated by a King Purushaya of Panchaladesha who no doubt was virtuous and noble but lost his kingdom following a famine in his Kingdom and the opportune neighbouring Kings defeated and sent Purushaya into exile. Two Sages explained that Purushaya was a cruel hunter in his previous birth but luckily he showed two old and very thirsty passers-by about the location of a waterbody and hence he became a King; yet Purushaya never performed charity and hence faced bad days. The Sages suggested that the next day was Vaisakha Akshaya Triteeya and the King could therefore observe early morning Snaan, Puja to Lakshmipati, perform charity by way of water-dispensers for the benefit of thirsty passers- by and such other good deeds. Purushaya realised the fault and executed several charitable deeds during Akshaya Triteeya through Amavasya and regained his kingdom eventually and decided to provide many charities in the entire month of Vaisakha month every year. Eventually, the King became a great devotee of Lord Vishnu, had His darshan and attained 'Sayujya'.

While all the days of Vaishakha Month are significant, *Ekadashi*, assumes special value. The ideal deeds like Snaan, Daan, Homa, Deva Puja and other Punya Karmas like Japas, Stotras and Katha Shravanas bestow instant results. Those who suffer from illness and acute poverty would be free from Purana Shravana; those who are blind, widows, or normal men, women, and children, youth, old, decrepit and the rest would all be able to lessen or even remove their problems as a result of their virtues on Ekadashi of the month. Similarly, *Amavasya* of Vaisakha Month is of the great impact for Pitru Puja and for performing 'Shraddhas', 'Pinda daanas' and 'Tila Tarpanas'.

#### Ayodhya 'Mahatmya' and the Import of 'Tirthas' around

Bhagavan Vishnu's right foot thumb created Ganga and left foot thumb created Sarayu and thus both the Rivers are Sacred and bathings of these 'Tirthas' bestow purity of high merit and destroy the effect of evil deeds even of the intensity of the 'Maha Patakas' or the Great Sins. The origin of the word Ayodhya emerged from the amalgam of 'Akar' standing for Brahma, 'Yakar' for Vishnu and 'dhakar' standing for Rudra. Ayodhya is the 'Adipuri' of Lord Vishnu, also the abode of Sudarshana Chakra and as such the sin demolisher. The City has the shape of a fish ranging from Go-Prathara Tirtha in the West to 'Asi' Tirtha in the East. In the days of yore, there was a famous Brahmana by name Vishnu Sharma who did such Tapasya with great resolve and sacrifice for several years that finally Bhagavan appeared before him in His full Form and materialised a Holy Tirtha from His Chakra which was named **Chakra Tirtha**. Persons doing bath, worship and charity at this Sacred Tirtha are believed to enjoy long and happy life and after termination of life achieve Mukti. Lord Brahma decided to visit Ayodhya once and materialised a vast Tirtha, named after Him ie. **Brahma Kunda**, and said that He would reside there for good. Sage Lomesh did his bathing in the **Runa Vimochan Tirtha** and declared that the waters possess the great quality of 'runa vimochana' or getting rid of debts of the current and previous births. Not far from Brahma Kunda is a **Papa Vimochan Tirtha** where a Brahmana named Narahari who became a victim of bad company and performed several great sins including cursing the Vedas; but luckily he met a few Sadhus visiting Ayodhya once and along with them performed Snaan, Puja and Daan in the name of Narayana on a special day of Magha Krishna Chaturdasi and all his sins were washed out since he was basically a Brahmana who fell a prey to wrong actions. There was also a Tirtha which had the history of Shri Ram disowning Lakshman due to certain peculiar circumstances; Shri Ram instructed Lakshman to guard the main entry and who ever entered would be punished since the former and Kaala Devata were meditating together on Deva Karya (a certain task of Devas) and were not to be disturbed. But Sage Durvasa arrived and pressurised Lakshman to inform Rama of his arrival and Lakshman had to be punished of being disowned. The forsaken Lakshman did severe Tapasya to Parameswara to absolve the indiscretion that he had done due to Durvasa's unexpected entry. This made 'Seshanag' (whose Avatar was Lakshmana)

appear and the extraordinary radiance and heat of the jewels of the thousand hoods of Seshanag pierced through the banks of Sarayu River and up came a **Sahasradhara Tirtha**. Indra and Devas also appeared and the indiscretion of Lakshmana due to circumstances beyond his control was pardoned. Such is the power of the Tirtha that even Lakshman's blunders were pardoned and devotees performing 'Snaan', 'Puja' and 'Daan' in the name of Seshanag (Naga Puja) especially in Vaisakha Month would never bother the fear of Snakes. Away from Sahasradhara Tirtha is **Swargadwara** as the name indicates the Tirtha is expected to have the nearest access to Swarga where devotees perform sacred tasks for a month including fasting, Japas, tapas, havans, dhyanas, Adhyayanas (Studies of Sacred Books) and Danaas including Godaanas, Bhu daanas, Vastra danaas, etc. Popularly believed as the abode of Siva, Shri Rama along with His younger brothers was in the habit of frequenting the Tirtha not only to review the good deeds of Brahmanas but all human beings, animals, birds and even the smallest flies for granting boons to each and everybody. **Chandrahari Tirtha** is named after Chandrahari or Bhagavan Vishnu and following 'Snaan' at the Tirtha, devotees observe Chandrahari Vrata on Purnima in the Month with Daan, Vrata Puja and homam. After eighty three years four months on Purnimasi day, the Vrata's 'Udyapan' is performed on the completion of **Sahasra Chandra Darshana**. The Udyapan includes Pujas of Ganesha, Vishnu, Gauri, Siva, Sixteen Matrikas, Chandra Homa, Chandra Mantra Japa, Soma Sukta, Chandra nyasa, Kalaanyasa, Arghya Mantra in favour of Chandra, Daan of Sixteen Kalasas full of milk, Vastra Daan, Dakshina and 'Bhojan'. On the following day, 'punah puja' (Puja again) is performed again to Srihari. Completion of the Function accordingly would reserve a prominent Place to the devotee in Chandra Loka, at the end of his life. To the Agneya direction of Chandrahari Tirtha is situated **Dharmahari Tirtha** which was set up by an erudite Brahmana who was well read in Vedas and visited Ayodhya the abode of Bhagavan Vishnu. He was highly thrilled to have a darshan of Bhagavan who was immensely pleased by the devotee's eulogy and gave the boon of manifesting Himself in form of an Idol as Dharmahari at the Place where He appeared before the Brahmana and assured that in future, whosoever took the 'Snaan' at Swargadwar Tirtha and performed penance, Puja, and charities would be blessed and become sin-free. To South of Dharmahari, is situated '**Swarnakhani Tirtha**' where Lord Kubera showered gold rain in Ayodhya to please King Raghu. The King completed 'Vishva Digvijaya' Yagna and since then Snaans at the Tirtha on Vaisakha Sukla Dwadashi would fulfill their desires including possession of immense Gold and prosperity. **Sambheda Tirtha** is known as 'Tilodaki' where the water too has the colour of Black Til and is used for 'Pitru Tarpanas' with black Til ie. Sesamum Seeds. Tarpanas on Bhadrapada Krishna Amavasya would help relieve the travails of Pitras and the sins of their seven generations get burnt off with the worship of Narayana. To the West of the Sambheda Tirtha, is the **Sita Kunda** which was set up by Sita Herself. **Guptahari** was the Place in Ayodhya where Lord Vishnu stayed without the knowledge of Asuras who were creating havoc in Bhuloka; Devas and Bhagavan Shankar approached the Lord who assured that He would execute Tapasya for the security of Devas and annihilate them by taking the Avatar of Sri Rama. After taking Snaan at Guptahari, devotees pay respects at **Chakrahari Tirtha** perform Japas and Homas and proceed further to **Gopratarra ghat** of Sarayu Sangam on Margasirsha Sukla Dwadasi for Sacred baths. In Sarayu and Dadhra Sangam, there are ten crores of Tirthas where devotees offer Pitra Tarpanas and Daans as per individual capacities and inclinations. The auspicious days as considered by devotees for rituals, homas, Daanas etc. all along the banks of Sarayu River include Amavasya, Purnimas, Dwadashi Tithis, 'Ayana' change days, 'Vyaktipaathayoga' days (as per individual horoscopes) etc. Just as Manikarnika is most Sacred at Kasi, Chakra Tirtha at Naimisha Forest and Mahakaal Mandir at Ujjain, Gopratarra Tirtha is the most significant at Ayodhya as that was the Place of '**Parama Gaman**' (Great Departure) of Lord Sri Rama. Besides the above, there are other important Tirthas like **Ksheerodak Tirtha** (where King Dasarath performed 'Putra Kameshthi' or Yagna aiming at begetting children and devotees execute 'Vratas' on Aswin Shukla Ekadashi); **Brihaspati Kund** (the abode of Deva Guru Brihaspati); **Rukmini Kund** (which was constructed by Devi Rukmini and Lord Krishna too stays in the Tirtha and devotees perform Vaishnava Mantra Homa, Brahmana Puja and 'Krishna Archana' on Kartika Krishna Navami and observe annual Yatra or Procession with great pomp); **Dhana Yaksha** Yagna where King Harischandra donated his entire Kingdom to Sage Viswamitra who entrusted the responsibility of giving security to the Kingdom by one Yaksha; **Vasishtha Kunda** (where Sage Vasishtha and his wife

Maha Pativrata Devi Arundhati stay and bless devotees); **Yogini Kund** (where sixty four Yoginis reside and provide ‘Sidhis’ to men and women); **Urvashi Kund** (where those males who bathe desirous of getting access to Swarga) and **Ghoshaarka Kund** (where King Ghosh did severe Tapasya to Surya Deva and devotees bathing and worshipping Him on Sundays bestows good health and contentment. One of the most distinct and popular Places in the vicinity of Ayodhya is **Gaya Kupa** where ‘Shraddhas’ to Pitras are performed not only to relieve the ancestors from their miseries and experiences of Narakaloka (hells) but also seek the blessings of Devas and Rishis; Somavati Amavasya is the day when the Shraddhas offered to Pitras are most fruitful but the ‘Pitra Karyas’ (The Acts addressed to ancestors) on the specific Tithi (day when the concerned ancestor passed away) are equally significant. As a last resort, such ‘Karyas’ performed on any day visiting Gaya Kshetra are also stated important, since Shraddhas offered would help provide respite to the Souls of the deceased. **Manasa Tirtha** is known for ‘Piscacha Vimochana’ as Snaan and Daan on Agahana Sukla Chaturdasi ensure that never in births ahead would become a Piscacha. As Sri Rama stood for seven noble features, **Seven Noble Tirthas** emerged viz. Satya Tirtha, Kshama Tirtha, Sarva bhuta daya Tirtha, Indriyanigraha Tirtha, Satyavaadita Tirtha, Jnana Tirtha and Tapas Tirtha. Ayodhya is also famous for **Sri Rama Janma Sthaan** where Sri Rama Navami Celebrations are at peak in the City.

#### Setu Tirtha (Rameswara Kshetra)

In the Brahma Khanda of Skanda Purana, Suta Maha Muni addressed a Conclave of Rishis and narrated the significance of Setu Bandhan/ Tirtha as also of Rameswara Kshetra which were visualised and built by Sri Rama; even visioning these Places would bestow Mukti from Samsara. Emphasising the Unity of Vishnu and Siva, the Three Sacred Places viz. Setu (bridge), Rameswara Linga and Gandhamadan Mountain constitute the composite identity. If one lies down on Setu’s banks and sticks the sand on the body, the number of as many sand particles would absolve as many Brahmahatya sins! The touch of the wind on one’s body from the mid-banks of Setu would pardon ten thousand ‘Surapanaas’ (drinking intoxicants). If one does ‘Snaan’ at the Tirtha and seeks relief on somebody else’s favour, then too the sins of the proxy beneficiaries are washed off. The Five Brahmahatya sinners, who spoil the roads, prepare food for them only, abuse Brahmanas and Sanyasis, accept the food of a Chandala and sell Vedas are also excused by the holy bath at Setu Tirtha. Those who offer charity but deny in reality, those who teach Dharma (Virtue) but hate and ridicule the teachers, who obstruct cows from drinking water from public places, abandon ‘Upasana’ (meditation), steals food meant for Devas, drink wine from women who too drink and consume food from fallen and poverty stricken women also secure reprieve as the Setu and Ramalingeswara Snaan and worship are very powerful. Those who steal Kanda-Moolas (earth sprouted / underneathed vegetables) and fruits, Kasturi, silk materials, milk, Chandan, Camphor, honey, ghee, glass and copper material and Rudrakshas are considered as sinful as those who steal gold; but even such deplorable persons are forgiven by visiting Setu Kshetra. Incest of all kinds which is as abhorable as sleeping with Guru’s wife is also exonerated by the Setu Kshetra. If for any reason, one is unable to visit the Setu / Ramalinga Temple, he or she could depute a trustworthy person on his behalf by bearing the expenses.

As Lord Sri Ram, Devi Sita and Lakshman were consigned to the forest, Dandakaranya, for twelve years following His father’s instruction and resided at a hermitage called ‘Panchavati’, the Demon Ravana sura tricked Devi Sita with a Golden Deer in the disguise of another Demon Maricha and forcibly abducted her to his kingdom of Lanka. Rama and Lakshmana were in futile search of Sita and made friends with Hanuman and Sugriva. The latter was helped by Rama to kill Vali and made him the King of Kishkintha. Hanuman crossed the Ocean, met Devi Sita by raising confidence in her about him as a Bhakta of Sri Ram by giving her ‘chudamani’ (jewellery of hers brought from Rama) and gave a taste of his prowess to Ravana by destroying the forests and major parts of Lanka’s Capital City. Hanuman returned back to Rama and gave the news of Sita’s whereabouts. Rama, Lakshmana, Sugriva, Hanuman, Jambavan and other great warriors of Vanara Sena (the monkey’s army) travelled many Kingdoms en route to Mahendra

Mountain. Vibhishan, younger brother of Ravana joined Rama as he did not approve of Ravana's evil policies. Rama decided to cross the Ocean but only the mighty Hanuman could perform the great leap to Lanka and others would not be able to do so. It was also not possible to navigate as several boats were not available in such short time. Rama therefore prayed to Samudra Deva, the God of Ocean, for three days but the Deva did not respond. Rama grew angry and took his Dhanush (bow and arrow) to punish the Ocean. Samudra Deva appeared and agreed to help Rama; there were only two ways of reaching Lanka viz. by drying up the Ocean which might not be a plausible solution or by asking 'Nala' of the army of Sugriva who like his father Viswakarma was an adept to prepare a Setu (Bridge). The monkey brigade could throw any thing like boulders, stones or even pebbles, Samudra on his part would hold of whatever is thrown into the waters and Nala could shape up a bridge in view of his inborn talent. Thus commenced the '**Setu Bandhan**' with the help of any material including trees, plants, flowers, and even grass thrown into the deep waters by Nala and soon enough a remarkable bridge was planned right across the Ocean which was of a huge dimension of ten Yojanas width and hundred yojanas length. Lord Sri Rama determined an excellent 'Muhurat' (auspicious time) for Ganesh Puja and Maheswara Puja at the Devipatthan Nagar. The Setubandhan Mantra recited by all those involved in the mammoth task stated: *Raghuvira padanyasa Pavitrikruta Pamsavey, Dasakantha siraccheda hetavey Setavey namah / Ketavey Ramachandrasya Moksha maargonka hetavey, Sitaayaa Maanasambhoja bhaanavey Setava namah* (This Place has become sacred with the dust of Sri Ram's feet; this Setu is the one being constructed to devastate the ten heads of Ravana; this is the Ketu (dhwaja or flag symbol) being built as the proof of 'Moksha Sadhana' or the Route to Salvation, Sri Rama's universal distinction and Devi Sita's happiness like the opening of her lotus like heart with Surya Deva's high radiance. Our Geetings to this immortal Setu! Starting the task of Setu Bandhan, the construction was accomplished within five days!)

There are several Tirthas on either side of the Setu, but most significant are twenty four. The most important ones are Chakra Tirtha, Betala varada Tirtha, and Paapavinashana Tirtha which were famous. Then there are Sitasarovar Tirtha, Mangala Tirtha and Amritavaapika. Again, there are Brahmakund, Hanumakund, Agasthya Tirtha, Rama Tirtha, Lakshmana Tirtha, Jaya Tirtha, Lakshmi Tirtha, Agni Tirtha, Chakra Tirtha, Siva Tirtha, Shankha Tirtha, Yamuna Tirtha, Ganga Tirtha, Gaya Tirtha, Koti Tirtha, Saadhyamrita Tirtha, Maanasa Tirtha and Dhanushkodi Tirtha. These are only illustrative Tirthas which are all Sin demolishers. **Chakra Tirtha** is known as the foremost and original one where a Vaishnava Mahatma called Galava resided. He performed rigorous Tapasya for several years without any human contact by eating leaves, then water and subsequently with only Vayu (air), ignoring the harshness of summer, winter and rains. He had targetted Lord Vishnu and disregarded every thing else in the World. Bhagavan was pleased with the determination of the Vaishnava's devotion and gave His 'Darshan'. Galava was indeed extremely happy but requested Bhagavan to save him from Devils known as Hunger, thirst and physical disability experienced during the course of his Tapasya; he was obsessed about his scare and Bhagavan asked His Sudarshan Chakra to throw away the Devils and keep one of the Chakra's 'Amsas' (features) there which would be immortalised as Chakra Tirtha bestowing fearlessness and Mukti. **SitaKund** was the Place where Devi Sita was asked by Rama to enter an 'Agni Kunda' and came out to vindicate her chastity although she stayed in Ravana's custody for long and there were doubts raised by a handful of citizens of Ayodhya. After taking Snaan at Sita Kund which bestows purity of thought and action, devotees visit **Mangala Tirtha** to signify the virtues of altruism, selflessness and nonviolence as were taught to King Manojava by fate who taxed Brahmanas, never gave charity and was unscrupulous with his Subjects, eventually lost his Kingdom, suffered the worst poverty and hunger in forests but was saved by Sage Parasara who advised the King to visit Mangala Tirtha and eventually regained his Kingdom. **Ekantaramanatha** was the Confidential Place where after crossing Sethu Rama was engrossed with Lakshman, Sugriva, Vibhishana, Hanuman and Jambavan in planning the Battle with Ravana and the Sea was peaceful, less noisy and conducive for mental ability. **Amrita vati** was next to Ekantaramanatha which was like nectar providing contentment and great enthusiasm. **Brahma Kund** was a sin destroyer, fulfiller of human desires and most auspicious after performing Snaan and charities. **Hanuma Kund** Snaan blesses childless parents of highly virtuous and brave sons. **Rama Tirtha** is

known for securing innumerable Siddhis like ability to fly on the sky, excellence in various ‘Kalaas’ or Art Forms, free mobility among various Deva lokas and capacity to converse with Devatas. The Tirtha Snaan yields many noble traits which Sri Rama Chandra stood for like Truthfulness, extraordinary courage, invincibility and obeying the orders of His father in letter and spirit. Worship at **Lakshmana Tirtha** confers faith in virtue, bravery, conviction and loyalty. **Koti Tirtha** was the source of Holy Waters of Ganga, Yamuna and several other Rivers which were materialised by Sri Rama to perform the ‘Abhisheka’ or Sacred Bathing of the Rameswara Linga at the time of ‘Pratishtha’ (Setting up) to undertake ‘Prayaschitta’ or Self-Purification of Sri Rama to demolish the ‘Brahmahatya Pataka’ which was among the Five Greatest Sins, ie.killing of Brahmanas like Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Indra jit. Sage Narada advised Sri Krishna to take Snaan at Koti Tirtha after assassination of his maternal uncle, the merciless King Kamsa. **Dhanush Tirtha** was materialised as Ravana was killed and Vibhishana was made the King; the latter entreated Rama to destroy the Setu as all the Vanaras returned to Gandhamadan Mountain from Lanka and since any enterprising King from Bharat might walk across easily and attack the Lanka Kingdom in future. Setu was destroyed by Rama and Snaan / Daan and worship at Dhanush Tirtha became a Sin-destroyer, the Place of Pitru ‘Karyas’ and for Salvation.

**Rameswara Maha Linga** is the most hallowed Parameswara Linga established by Rama and Sita for the twin reasons of Prayaschitta to atone from Brahma Patakas as also by way of gratitude and veneration to Maha Deva. In consultation with Maha Munis, Sri Ram decided to perform the ‘Pratishtha’ of Rameswara Linga at the most auspicious ‘Muhurat’and commissioned Hanuman to bring the Linga from Maha Deva at Kailasa Mountain. Hanuman raced to Kailasa by the Sky route in a record time but could not secure Siva Darshana fast and had to meditate Maha Deva for days together. Finally, Maha Deva blessed Rameswara Linga and without loss of time Hanuman sought to return to Gandhamaadana where the Consecration was planned. Unfortunately however Hunuman could not meet the deadline of the Muhurat for the Consecration of the Linga and Devi Sita had to perforce prepare a Sand Linga that was set up as a temporary stop-gap but in reality that became the real Linga virtually.Later a Nandisewara Linga too was set up and Ahishekas were performed amid recitals of Vedas and other appropriate Mantras by the Holy Waters from Koti Tirtha. Meanwhile Hanuman returned from Kailasa but was highly disappointed and felt that all his efforts proved futile. Sri Rama assuaged Hanuma’s hurt feelings and told him that he was a Great Tatva Gyani himself and that he knew well that Atma was eternal and human body was ephemeral subject to emotions like anger, desire, envy, infatuation and disappointment. Having said that Rama did the Pratishtha of the Hanumadiswara Linga and announced that devotees should have the Darshan of this Linga even before the worship of Rameswar Linga as the former which was gifted by Siva Himself bestowed courage, enterprise, loyalty and great devotion. As regards Rameswara Linga, devotees who secure darshan; perform worship, Abhishek, Veda Pathana, Charities, Kirtanas, and so on are among the top Bhaktas whose sins perish like Agni would do to flies! The kinds of Bhakti to Siva Linga are basically eight-fold: Devotees of Rameswara should display devotion and kindness; they should worship the Devotees of the Linga and satisfy them; perform worship to Siva without reservations; their each and every action, emotion and feelings ought to be reflected in the devotee’s physique, mind and Inner Consciousness; listen carefully to the Sacred Stories of Rameswara Mahatmya; their love and attachment to Rameswara should result in their voices full of emotions, eyes full of tears, their instant reactions in terms of hair rising incidents when related to them; remembering the name of Rameswara and perform ‘Japa’always by reciting the Mantra: *Ramanatha Mahadeva maam Raksha Karunanithey, Iti Yaha Satatam bruyat Kalinasow na bandhyatey;* and taking refuge in Him, carry on one’s life! [The list of Major Tirthas at Rameswaram includes: Chakra Tirtham at Darbhhashayanam; Vetala Varada at South of Chakra Tirtha; Wells inside Rathna Swami Temple: Lakshmi Tirtha, Chakra Tirtha, Siva Tirtha, Yamuna Tirtha, Ganga Tirtha, Gaya Tirtha, Koti Tirtha, Sadhyamrita Tirtha, Jambava Tirtha, Angada Tirtha, Sarva Tirtha, Chandra Tirtha, Surya Tirtha, Brahmahatti Vimochana Tirtha, Madhava Tirtha, Nala Tirtha, Nila Tirtha, Gavaya Tirtha, Gavaska Tirtha, Gandhamaadana Tirtha, Savitri Tirtha, Sarasvati Tirtha and Gayatri Tirtha; Near Ekantarama Temple: Amrita vapi, Mangala Tirtha, Runa Vimochana Tirtha and Pancha Pandava Tirtha; At Gandhamaadana Mountain, there is Paapa Vinaasana, and on way there are

Nakula Tirtha, Sahadeva Tirtha, Bhima Tirtha, Draupadi Tirtha, Arjuna Tirtha, and Sugriva Tirtha; at Pamban the Tirthas are of Kapila, Bhairava and Amrita; Nearby Ratna Swami Temple are Hanuma Kunda, Agasthya Tirtham and Lashmana Kundam; Agni Tirtha at the East beach of the Sea and Dhanushkodi at the Sea etc.] The Procedure for Sethu Tirtha is to greet Samudra first, offer Arghya daan, recite the Mantra saying ‘Hey Sagara, Swami of Rivers, allow me to take bath and wash off my sins just as a snake rejects its old skin’; thus one takes three dips; offers Tarpanas to Devas, Rishis and Pitras; takes bath at Chakra Tirtha, Kapila Tirtha, Sita kund, Runa Vimochana Tirtha, Rama Tirtha, Lakshmana Tirtha, Papanashana Tirtha, Brahma Tirtha, Dhanush kodi, Agni Tirtha and so on.

### **Prabhasa Kshetra Mahatmya**

In the final ‘Prabhasa Khanda’ of Skanda Purana, Sage Lomaharshana described to the Congregation of Munis headed by Suta Maha Muni at Naimisharanya the details of the Eighteen Maha Puranas and as many Upa Puranas. The Maha Puranas along with the number of Stanzas contained in each of them are: Brahma Purana (10,000 stanzas), Vishnu Purana (23,000), Siva Purana (24,000), Padma Purana (55,000), Vayu Purana (24,000), Srimad Bhagavata Purana (18,000), Narada Purana (25,000), Markandeya Purana (9000), Agni Purana (16,000), Bhavishyat Purana (14,500), Brahma Vaivarta Purana (18000), Linga Purana ( 11,000), Varaha Purana (24,000 ), *Skanda Purana* (81,000), Vamana Purana (10,000), Kurma Purana (17,000), Matsya Purana (14,000), Garuda Purana (18,000) and Brahmanda Purana (12,200). The Upa Puranas are Sanatkumara, Narasimha, Skanda, Siva Dharma, Durvasa, Narada, Kapila, Manu, Ushana, Brahmanda, Varuna, Kalika, Maheswara, Samba, Shaura, Parashara, Maricha and Bhargava. The Maha Puranas are broadly categorised covering the Gunas (Characteristics) of Satvik, Rajasic and Tamasic nature of Lords Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara, thus Vishnu Purana, Bhagavata, Narada, Garuda, Padma and Varaha Puranas of Satvik nature; Brahmanda, Brahma Vaivarta, Markandeya, Bhavishya, Vamana and Brahma Puranas of Rajasic nature; and Matsya, Kurma, Linga, Siva, Skanda and Agni Puranas of Tamasik nature. The major aspects covered in each of the Puranas are Sarga (Creation), Pratisarga (Destruction), Vamsa (The description of Dynasties), Manvantar and Vamshanucharit (about the events covering the generation next). Having thus given the background of the various Puranas, Sage Lomesh concluded the narration of Skanda Purana’s final ‘Khanda’ with the following Invocation to Bhagavan Siva:

*Om Namo Deva devaya Sivaya Paramatmaney, Aprameya swarupaaya Vyaktaavyakta Swarupiney/Twam Patir yoginaa mesha Twayi Sarva Prathishthitam, TwamYagnastvam Vashatkaarastham Omkarah Prajapatih/* (My Greetings to You, Devadideva Paramatma Siva! You have a Sacred Form which is rootless with a ‘Saakara’ or Fully Manifested Form and at the same time a ‘Niraakara’ or of Unmanifested and Unknown Appearance. You are in the control of Yogis, and everything is established in You. You are the ‘Vashatkar’ (the knowledge content of enjoyable sound), the Omkar and the Prajapati.

Bhagvan Siva told Devi Parvati that in Kali Yuga the World would be full of ‘Nastiks’ (non-believers of God), so-called ‘Hetuvaadis’ or Reason-mongers and Sinners; they would neither have mental capability nor faith in themselves. They would tend to argue in circles foolishly and often dispute the very existence the Supernatural Force which created, preserved and destroyed the Universe. They would heckle at the purpose of visiting Punya Kshetras while Almighty created as many as three crore and fifty lakh Tirthas and Kshetras all over ‘Bharat’, the ‘Karma bhumi’, with the hope that human beings might avail the golden opportunities of visiting at least a few of these Sacred Places, either by decision, coincidence, or even by mistake! Maha Deva further told Parvati that with sincerity and devotion any Place was worthy

of worshipping to the Supreme Energy and the existence of the available Tirthas was only suggestive, but some of these had definite 'Mahatmya' and happened to raise strong faith so as to anchor one's devotion to. On Earth, the Naimisha Tirtha and on Sky Pushkar Tirtha are well established. Also, there are Kedar, Prayag, Vipasha (Vyas), Urmila, Krishna, Vena, Maha Devi, Chandrabhaga (Chenav), Saraswati, Ganga Saagara Sangam, Kasipura, Shatabhadra, Sindhu, Godavari, Kapila, Shona, Payodhi, Kaushiki, Devakhat, Gaya, Dwaravati and *Prabhasa*. Emphasising Prabhasa, Maha Deva said that He materialised a highly powerful Linga there which had the radiance of Sun and the heat of Agni and the Sacred Mix of Three Shaktis viz. 'Iccha' (Desire), 'Gyan' (Knowledge) and 'Kriya' (Devotional Acts). This is the Place where the most famous Somnath Linga manifested as 'Swayambhu' or on its own. Prabhasa Kshetra is known for attaining Siddhis and Salvation. Its East is adorned by the destroyer of darkness Suryanarayana, while the West has the abode of Madhava Deva, South has the Sea and North is Devi Bhavani. The Tirtha is five Yojanas wide and long square with Vajrini in East, Nyankumati in the West, Maheswari in the South and the Sea in the North. The Garbha Griha or the Sanctum Sanctorum is spread over from South to North by Sea to Kauraveswari Devi while from East to West is spread over from Gomukha to Aswamedhik Tirtha. Within the Garbha Griha are a number of Tirthas, Sarovars, Wells, and Deva Mandirs which are all sin-destroyers and Providers of Desires. The First Part of the Prabhasa Kshetra is dedicated to Maheswara, the Second Region is of Vaishnava and the Third Part is Brahma 'Bhaga'. The Central Region has crores of Tirthas. The Brahma Vibhaga is stated to be dominated by Icchha Shakti, Vaishnava Bhaga is known for Kriya Shakti and the Rudra Bhaga is governed by Gyana Shakti. Bhagavan Siva stated that apart from Himalaya, Gandhamaadan, Kailas, Nishadh, Meru, Trikut, Manasarovar, Devodyan and Nandanavan, Prabhasa is one Place where He would like to accord significance. Those who stayed in the Kshetra and recite Mrithyunjaya Mantra and Shata Rudreeya on daily basis would secure Brahma Gyan within six months. Shata Rudra Mantra is denoted as the Soul of Siva Swarupa. Even mere stay in Prabhas is eventful without Bhakti bhava and worship with recitals and other acts would indeed derive far larger and unimaginable consequences. Since Somnath Linga is present at Prabhas, crores of Rudra's manifestations are attracted from all over the Universe, especially on Vaishakha Chaturdasi. There is a concentration of Practitioners of Yoga, Sankhya and Pancha Ratras as they are readily dedicated to Prabhas which is considered as a happening Kshetra. Vedavadi Purush who is immersed in Veda Gyan known as Kaalagni Rudra or Kalabhairava Rupa is firmly seated in Prabahas. Death in Prabhasa is a sure climb-up to Kailasa. This Kshetra is protected by Vishwanath in South and Dandapaani in North. Various Ganaadhakshas who act as per the commands of Bhagavan include Maha Rudra, Chandisha, Ghantaakarna, Gomukha, Vinayaka, Mahanaada, Kaakavakra, Subhekshana, Eakaksha, Dundubhi, Chanda, Taalajaghna, Bhumi Danda, Danda, Shankhukarna, Vaidhruti, Taaladanda, Maha Teja, Chipitaaksha, Hayaanana, Swavakra, Vidaalavadana, Simhamukh, Vyaghramukh and Virabhadra. These Ganadhyakshas are led by Ganesha to guard the Kshetra. They keep an eye on the evil-doers and facilitate Bhaktas in their Rituals and other activities. Those who undertake bathings in the Kshetra attain the result equivalent to ten 'Godaanas'. Those who die in Praachi Sarasvati would reach Siva Loka. Those who give away material such as Curd and Blankets have unique benefits. Those who provide food to a needy Brahmana at Brahmasthan secures benefits by a crorefold. As regards *Soma Linga* Swarup, it assumes Rigveda Form in the early morning, before noon time the Yajurved Form, afternoon the Linga assumes Sama Veda Form, and the evening time the Atharva Veda Form. In the Prabhasa Kshetra, the Siva Swarup Soma Linga has the unique features of Nirbhaya, Nirmala, Nitya, Nirapeksha, Nirashraya, Niranjana, Nishprapancha, Nissanga and Nirupadrava. The Sparsha Linga of *Someswara* had been in existence since humanity arrived; Kalpas after Kalpas or ages after ages and each time there was a Pralaya and new eras

commenced, Bhagavan assumed new Names with the change of Brahmas for the sixth time and the seventh one at present is called Shatanand as Siva's name is Someshwara. The names in the first Kalpa of Brahma and Siva respectively were Virinchi and Mritunjaya, and the subsequent ones were Padmabhu and Kaalaagni Rudra, Swayambhu and Amritesh, Parameshthi and Anamaya, Surajyeshtha and Krittivasa, and Hemagarbha and Bharavanath. The eighth and the next Brahma-Someswara combination would be Chaturmukha and Prana natha. Similarly the names of Parvati Devi in the first Kalpa onward were Jaganmatha, Jagadyoni, Shaambhavi, Viswa Rupini, Nandini, Ganambika, and Vibhuti. The eighth to the eighteenth Devis would be Shubhra, Ananda, Vaama -lochana, Varaarooha, Sumangala, Mahamaya, Anantha, Bhutamata, Uttama, Pitru Kalpa and Dakshayani; the nineteenth was that of Parvati. The present name of Somanatha Siva emerged since Chandra deva performed severe Tapasya to Siva and secured the boon of creating Siva Linga to be named Soma Linga. Chandra Deva obtained several boons from Parama Siva that the devotees worshipping Someswara Linga would become free from various 'doshas' or deficiencies like 'Bhuta dosha' or threats from Supernatural Spirits like Dakinis, Pretas, Betals, Rakshasas, Nava Grahas, Putanas, Piscachas, Matrukas, Bala Grahas, Jvara rupi Grahas, and Vridha Grahas; diseases like Atisaara, Bhagandar, Pathari Rog, Mutra kruccha, and such others; Sarpa Doshas; 'Chora Bhaya' (Fear of Thieves) etc. would all be burnt like dry wood against fire. Kaalaagni Rudra's presence in the Kshetra is the safest shield against any kind of problems, both mild and insurmountable alike. Bhagavan Siva told Parvati further that there might be crores of Tirthas but Prabhasa was unique as that was the seat of all the 'Tatvas' of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva; Brahma was endowed with twenty four Tatvas, Vishnu with twenty five Tatvas and Siva with thirty six Tatvas. Thus Prabhasa is the most powerful Tatvamaya Kshetra, providing propitiousness to men and women of all 'Varnas', animals, birds and reptiles! This Glorious Tirtha comprises all the Pancha Bhutas or Five Elements of Nature with Brahma in the Form of Prithvi, Vishnu in the Form of Water, Rudra in the Form of Tejas (Illumination / Heat), Kubera in the Form of Vayu (Ether), and Sada Siva Himself in the Form of Aakasha (Sky). There are Eight 'Adi Guhas' or Original Caves signifying water viz. Amaresh, Prabhas, Naimisha, Pushkar, Aashaasdhi, Danda, Bharabhuti, and Laangali. Also, there are 'Ati Guha' Kshetras signifying Tejas viz. Harishchandra, Sri Shaila, Jaaleswar, Preetikeswar, Mahakaal, Madhyama, Kedara and Bhairava. Further, there are 'Guha Gruhantara' Kshetras signifying 'Vayu' viz. Gaya, Kasi, Kurukshetra, Kankhal Tirtha, Vimala Tirtha, Attahaasa, Mahendra and Bhima. Signifying 'Akaash' (Sky), Eight 'Pavitratmak' (hallowed) Kshetras are Vastrapath, Rudrakoti, Jeshyeswar, Mahalaya, Gokarna, Rudrakarna, Karnaaksha and Sthapa. There are also eight more Kshetras denoting 'Prithvi' (Earth) viz. Chhagal, Bruhasudh, Maakoth, Achaleswar, Kalanjaravan, Shanka -karna, Sthaleswar and Suleswar. Among all these, Prabhas is the abode of water and radiance representing both Siva and Vishnu, a vital fact unnoticed by several devotees! Lord Siva re-emphasised the fact that from the Sea in South to Kaureswari River born to Surya Deva the Region in between is Prabhasa literally meaning Radiance. That is why Devotees visiting Prabhasa Kshetra never miss having a Darshan of *Surya Deva Temple* and perform 'Arka Puja' and Daan. Not far from Surya Temple is the renowned *Siddheswara Linga* which fulfills the wishes of devotees from the days of yore known as Jaigeshवेश्वर. In the earlier 'Kalpa', there was one Great Yogi named Jaigeshwa who was an extraordinary devotee of 'Mahodaya', a Swayambhu Linga; as Parama Siva was fond of smearing ashes on His body, the Yogi too smeared ash and even slept on ashes. Mahadeva was pleased and gave darshan to Jaigeshwa, complemented on his spiritual efforts, blessed him to become popular as Yogacharya and granted him Salvation; the Mahodaya Linga came to be called as Jaigeshwara Linga and in Kaliyuga when Sages called Balkhilas attained Siddhis and the Linga came to be popular as Siddha Linga.

Another interesting incident was narrated by Parama Siva to Devi Parvati as to how Chandra was associated with Someswara Linga and Somnath Temple: As Chandra neglected his twenty seven wives viz. 'Nakshatras' (Stars) excepting Rohini, Daksha Prajapati who was the father-in-law of Chandra cursed him to fade away in his brightness and Chandra became dimmer by each day. He worshipped a Siva Linga established by Brahma Himself for long and Bhagavan Siva modified the curse of Daksha that Chandra would lose his sheen from Purnima onward till the end Krishna Paksha or the second half of the dark fortnight and gradually become brighter by each night subsequently from Amavasya of the dark month to Purnima again. The Place where the boon was granted by Siva to Chandra to partially reverse Daksha's curse (to brighten up the first half and darken up the second half by each night) was Prabhasa derived from the word 'Prabha'. Chandra requested Viswakarma, the Architect of Devas to design and develop the Prabhasa Region as also construct Someswara Linga Temple and appointed Priests to carry on the daily rituals of worship attend to the devotees. The name of Someswar had become synonymous with Eswara as Chandra. Siva came to adorn His Head with Chandra ever since he was born at the time of churning the Ocean, keeping the 'Halahal' (Poisonous flames) in His throat and Devi Mohini's distribution of Amrit, Rahu Graha's cheating into the queue of Devas, Chandra's complaint and Rahu's chase to Chandra and Siva's rescue to Chandra. Further, Chandra being the nearest luminous Planet to Earth, Lord Brahma bestowed special dispensations to him viz. to provide various 'beejas' (seeds) and 'Aushadhis' (medicines and medicinal plants). The beejas facilitate the production of rice, wheat, oils, grams etc. while plants enable to produce fruits, vegetables, sugar and such edibles besides medicines of innumerable variety of life giving and life sustaining nature. Chandra is also the Chief Controller of Brahmanas. Devotees who observe Bhakti, Snaan, Daan and worship at Prabhasa are bestowed with all kinds of benefits, especially when they recite the Mantra: *Om namo Devadevaya Siti kanthaya Dandine, Rudraya Vaamahasthaya Chakriney Vedhase namah/ Sarasvati cha Savitri Devamata Vibhavari Sannidhaney Bhavatwatra Tirthey Paapapranashiney/* This Mantra is common to any devotee performing 'Snaan' at any Tirtha. To the South of Somnath is situated the *Padma Tirtha*. One should take a resolve even at Somnath that a devotee would resort to have the head tonsured and after the 'mundan' take bath and then enter the Padma Tirtha for a sacred bath in the Ocean as one should not enter it otherwise. It is the belief that the head hair carries all sins and thus needs to be removed before the Tirtha. For women however tonsure is not prescribed but making a symbolic cut would suffice. The following Mantra needs to be recited before a dip in the Ocean: *Om Namoh Vishnu Guptaya Vishnurupaya the namah, Saannidhye Bhava Devesha Saagare Lavanaambasi /* The devotees are then required to perform Tarpan to Devas, Rishis and Ancestors of three generations. Brahma is stated to have commanded Samudra Deva (the Ocean) that the salt water be converted as of Amrita Tatva. Near *Agni Teertha*, flows the *Sacred River Saraswati* which comprised Five Streams viz. Harini, Vajrini, Nyanku, Kapila and Sarasvati. Lord Vishnu instructed the River Sarasvati to carry out 'Badabagni' (Submarine Fire) from North of Bharat to Prabhasa Kshetra Westward into the Ocean. But Samudra was frightened as Badabagni was carried by Sarasvati and high tides appeared as a result. Lord Vishnu advised that Badabagni should be sucked into the Ocean in very small quantities as through a needle's eye; thus the same continues to be sucked in slowly and hence the fury of the tides due to the exhalation of Badabagni at Prabhasa. Besides the Someswar and Siddheswar, Agni Tirtha and Padma Tirtha and River Sarasvati, Prabhasa Kshetra also possesses Kapardeswar, Kedareshwar, Bhimeswar, Navagraheswar, Eleven Rudras and Balarupadhari Brahma, Sweteswar, Bhaireswar, Kalkaleswar, Ukthunkeswar, Vaidyanareswar, Gauthameswar, Yogeswar, Pandaveswar, Pratyusheswar, Anileswar, Prabhaseswar, Rameswar, Lakshmaneswar, Bhuteswar, Lomeswar, Ratneswar, Vainateneswar and so on as also Eleven Rudras and Brahmarupadhari

Brahma. The visit of Prabhasa Kshetra is stated to be incomplete without the worship of three major Devis, viz. Mangla, Visalakshi and Chatvar: representing three types of Power that is, the Power of Will, the Power of Action and the Power of Knowledge respectively. Mangala Devi represents Brahma Shakti; Visalakshi represents Vishnu Shakti and Chatvar the Siva Shakti. Chandra performed rigid Tapasya to the Shakti of Will for thousand years and since Chandra's will power was on test to secure propitiousness, the Devi was called Mangala. In a fierce battle between Devas and Danavas, the tricky Demons were elusive and Vishnu remembered Mahamaya called Visalakshi or the Shakti with large eyes to overcome the Danavas. The Goddess called Chatvara Priya who was the embodiment of Knowledge with the 'Amsa' (Feature) of Siva was another Devi worshipped without fail at the Prabhasa. Most importantly, devotees to Prabhasa are blessed to perform Shraaddha / Tarpan at the Sacred *Goshpada Tirtha*. It has been stated that Pirtu Devas jump with joy that their sons, grand sons and great grand sons who arrived at the Tirtha expect that they would satisfy them with 'Shraaddhas' with wheat / rice, til, honey, akshatas (rice with turmeric) and 'kheer' to quench their thirst and hunger: The Mantra says: *Pita Pitaamahschaiva Prapitaamaha eva tu, Maata Pitamaheechaiva thathaiva prapitamahe/ Matamahastaspita cha prapita maha kaadayah, tesham pinde mayadattho hyaksharyamupatishthatu, Om namo Bhagavatey Bhatrey Somabhaumejya rupiney/* Right from Brahma and all Devas anticipate that the devotee would perform Tarpanas in their favour but also Rishis, Pitras, and deceased Parents of two generations.

### **Dwaraka 'Mahatmya'**

Having recounted in brief the events that happened in Dwapara Yuga and its Central Figure Sri Krishna as the Avatar of Maha Vishnu, his various childhood miracles of killing several cruel Demons, his magnificent role in Maha Bharata culminating in the Historic Battle of Pandavas and Kauravas vindicating Virtue and Truth against Vice and Falsehood and finally the mortal end of his incarnation, Maha Muni Shaunaka faced the inevitable apprehension of Rishis as to how human beings would redeem themselves from the grave sins that would be committed in Kali Yuga without the presence of Lord Krishna! Some of the prominent Sages of that time approached Lord Brahma and posed the question that in the impending Era of Sin, how could the virtuous and God-fearing devotees in a rather minority existence vis-à-vis the majority of the wicked or at any rate the escapist human beings of Kali Yuga would survive, let alone worship the Almighty! Lord Brahma directed the Sages to Patala Loka to meet Bhakta Prahlada (who caused the death of his father, the Demon Hiranyakasipu, by Narasimha the Avatar of Lord Vishnu) and King Bali (who gave away three Worlds in charity to Lord Vamana in another Avatar of Vishnu). Both Prahlada and Bali were distressed about the impending dark days of Kali Yuga when moral and spiritual standards would be eroded from bad to worse with the passage of time. However, they revealed that by the Grace of Bhagavan Vishnu there was a Sacred Place on the Western Coast of Bharat called Kushasthalipuri where the Holy River Gomati flowed and submerged with the Ocean. There was the hallowed Temple of Dwaraka with the benign presence of Tribhuvan Vishnu in the form of Krishna with four hands with Shankha, Chakra, Gada and 'Abhaya Mudra' (the Protective Hand); before leaving the mortal World, Krishna left behind sixteen of His 'Kalas' or Divine Powers which were imbibed into the Idol. Bathing in Chakra Tirtha in Dwaraka would have far reaching benefits to wash off sins and confer boons of fulfillment, Peace and excellent health. While approaching the Temple, devotees are advised to recite 'Vishnu Sahasranama', 'Bhishmastavaraj', 'Gajendra Moksha' etc. as also sing hymns of 'Krishna Leelas' or 'Vishnu Avatars'. At the outset, they pray to Ganesha to ward off any impediments in the 'Yatra' and Darshan of Krishna, pray to the elder brother of Krishna viz. Balarama and then proceed to have the Vision of Shyama Varna (Blue coloured) Krishna, even a glimpse of whose 'darshan' destroys the sins committed during their childhood, youth or elderly age of the current and earlier lives. It is said and firmly believed that each step in the Temple is as fruitful as performing an 'Aswamedha Yagna'. A Pilgrimage to Dwaraka is as propitious as reaching 'Vishnu Dham'. After

worshipping Bhagavan Krishna, the devotees visit the Holy River Gomati whose mere vision brings in auspiciousness. Prahlada narrated the tale as to how Sage Vasishtha was responsible to bring Gomati from Heaven to Earth. After Pralaya or the Great Dissolution, Lord Vishnu was in Yoga Nidra and from His navel sprouted a Lotus on top of which sat Lord Brahma; Vishnu commanded Brahma to undertake the task of 'Srishti' (Creation). Brahma created His Ten 'Manasa Putras', including Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana and Sanat Kumaras with the hope of helping in the task of Creation, but they were more interested in performing 'Tapas' instead of being householders; they chose the West Coast to execute the meditation for several years and fortunately had the vision of 'Sudarshana Chakra' and asked the Manasa Putras to offer 'Arghya' (water) to welcome Maha Vishnu who was about to arrive. But there was no water to tender Arghya; Lord Brahma asked Ganga to flow down to Earth from Heaven with the name of Gomati and to follow Sage Vasishtha to follow as a daughter to a father. The Manasa Putras thanked Ganga and Vasishtha and desired the Sage to father the Sacred Gomati, with whose waters the Sages performed Arghya on the arrival of Bhagavan Vishnu. The Sacrosanct Spot where Sudarshan Chakra made its appearance was since called as Chakra Tirtha. A devotee is to certainly go to the River, do 'Sashtanga' or prostration, clean the hands, take up Kusha grass and 'Akshatas' or rice grains mixed with Turmeric powder and provide 'Arghya' by reciting the Mantra : Brahmalokat samayathey Visishtatanaye Shubhe, Sarva paapa vishuthaartha dadamarghya cha Gomati / Vasishtha duhitaddevi Shaktijyeshthe Yashaswini, Thrailokya vandithy Devi Paapam me hara Gomati! (Gomati! You arrived here from Brahma loka as the daughter of Vasishtha; may you clean up my sins as I offer 'Arghya' to you; Your Shakti is mighty Gomati Devi, the great destroyer of my failings). After saying this, the devotee needs to apply 'mruttika' or the mud of the River bank on the body parts, perform 'Snaan' with Veda Mantras, offer Tarpanas to Devas, Rishis and Pitras and charities especially of Cows to redeem from 'Pitru Runa' of indebtedness to forefathers. From the River Gomati to Chakra Tirtha, a similar procedure is followed with the following Mantra before taking the bath: Om Namo Vishnu Rapaaya Vishnu chakrayathey namah, Gruhaanaarghya maa dattham Sarva kaama prado bhavah. (My Greetings to You Vishnu Chakra who is Vishnu Himself; do accept my 'Arghya' and fulfil my desires). *'Vishupaadotbhava Tirtha'* in Dwaraka is the Sarovar which Lord Krishna materialised by asking Ganga to arrive to facilitate Devi Rukmini's bathing and is also called Vaishnavi since it generated from Lord Vishnu's feet; this Tirtha's Snaan by devotees followed by Pitru Tarpanas, Shraddhas, and charities especially to 'Anga viheen' or those who are blind or otherwise defective of any limb are considered vital. *Gopi Sarovar* symbolises the arrival of Gopikas and Gopas from Vraja Bhumi to Dwaraka to personally meet Krishna and desired to stay back as they went in raptures on meeting Him; Lord Krishna was asked by Gopis whether He missed them too and Krishna replied with a smile that He always resided not only in the hearts of Gopas and Gopikas but all the human beings, the entire 'Charachar' (mobile and immobile) beings as He was the Creator and Sustainer. As He bestowed the Brahma Gyan to Gopikas, they decided to live there always and Bhagavan desired 'Maya' the Architect of Daithyas that a significant Tirtha built as the abode of all Gopikas. Devotees visiting the Gopi Sarovar are advised to offer Arghya by reciting the Mantra: Namasthey Gopa Rupaya Vishnavey Paramaat -maney, Go Prachaara Jagannatha Gruhaarghya namosthutey. Similarly, other Tirthas of distinction include Brahma Kund, Chandra Sarovar, Indra Sarovar, Mahadeva Sarovar, Gauri Sarovar, Varuna Sarovar and Panchanadi Tirtha. Those who are not able to visit Dwaraka may atleast read the details of this extraordinary Kshetra, especially on Dwadasi Tithis of each month and definitely on Krishna Ashtami days of every Year. Sitting at one's own home, one would have access to the most merciful Sri Krishna who always cares for those who cares for Him. Each minute that is spent in His Glorious Memory is certain to be rewarded. Each step taken toward Him for His vision is a step to Vaikunthadham. 'Jagarans' or Awakenings of Night by taking Krishna's name, constant vision of His Swarup (Idol), 'Kirtans' about Him, reading the Sacred Gita Vachan, hearing about His Leelas, dedicating to Him wholly as though nothing else matters in life are all the deeds to take those small, firm but steady steps to Vishnu dham!

### Veda Vriksha, Veda Vyasaas, Veda Vibhajana, Vedangaas and Puranas

Maharshi Parashara presented an analysis of Vedas to Maitreya Maha Muni as to how various Veda Vyasaas of different Yugas attempted divisions of Vedas. He compared Vedas as a Maha Vriksha comprising Veda Shaakhaas (Branches) in thousands and it would be impossible to declare classifications as they vary by Yugas, Times and Situations. Even in Dwapara Yuga there were variations as noticed in different Manvantaras. But one fact appeared to be clear that Bhagavan Vishnu created Veda Vyasaas of his own 'Amsha' or Alternatives who kept in view the contexts and exigencies of Loka Kalyana made the best possible variations from the Single Veda now in Four 'Shakhaas'. In the evolution of the twenty eight Dwapara Yugas, as many Vyasaas emerged from the positions of Brahma, Prajapati, Shukracharya, Brihaspati, Surya, Mrityu, Indra, Vasishta, Sarasvata, Tridhama, Trishikha, Bharadwaja, Antariksha, Varni, Traiyaruna, Dhananjaya, Kratigjna, Jaya, Bharadwaja, Gautama, Haryatma, Vaajashravaa Muni, Somavamsha's Trina Bindu, Riksha, / Valmiki, Shakti, Jatukarna and the latest Krishna Dwaipayana (the son of Maharshi Parashara). The Maharshi stated that after his son Krishna Dwaipayana, the next Vyasa would be Ashwatthama. Having prefaced thus about the Evolution of Veda Vyasaas, Parasara Maharshi defined and conceptualised the 'Avinaashi Ekaakshara Mantra' O Mas Brahma. This Pranava Brahma represents Bhuloka-Bhuvraloka-Swarloka; that Pranava Brahma also represents Ruk-Yajur- Saama and Atharvana Shakhas of the Paramaika Veda Vriksha.

Rig Veda Shakha: As prompted by Lord Brahma, Mahatma Krishna Dwaipaayana Vyasa took the assistance of four of his disciples to fully assimilate the Totality of the Single Veda and entrusted the task to Maha Munis viz. Paila in regard to Rig Veda, Vaishampayana to Yajur Veda, Jaimini to Saama Veda and Sumantu to Atharva Veda; besides Vyasa entrusted the task of Itihasas and Puranas to Maha Muni Lomaharshana. In the days of yore, there was only Yajur Veda and that was divided as four Vedas on the basis of 'Yagna-anushthana Vyavasta' or the Procedures of Performing Yagnas and the Chyatur hotra Vidhi was as follows: Yajur Veda Vidhi by Adhvaryu, Ruk Veda Vidhi by Hota, Sama Veda Vidhi by Udgata and Atharva Veda Karma by Brahma. Subsequently, Vyasa did the editing of Ruk and Yajur Vedas and part-scripting of Sama Veda; through Atharva Veda, Vyasa then established the Raja Karma and Brahma-twa. Thus Vyasa had done the distribution of the Chatur Vedas in the form of Four Veda Vrikshas from the Maha Veda Vriksha. As regards the Rig Veda Vriksha, Maharshi Paila divided this Veda into two Shaakhaas and made his Sishyas Indraprimiti and Bashkala responsible to read them. Bashkala made further division into four Upa Shakhaas which in turn were subdivided among four further Sishyas viz. Bodhya, Agni maadhak, Yajnyavalkya and Parashara (ie the present Purana Karta of Vishnu Purana). Further on, Indraprimiti taught his son Manduka Muni. In this Parampara (link) of Sishya-Prasishyaas, Shakalya Veda Mitra scripted Samhitaas or Annotations and sub divided the same among five further sub-branches and taught these to Mudgala, Gomukha, Vaatsya and Shaaliya. Yet another of his pupils called Shakapurna prepared three Veda Samhitas and a fourth Grandha on 'Nirukta'. And thus the Sishyas carried on the Samhitas further.

Yajur Veda Shakha: Maharshi Vaishampayana who was entrusted Yajur Veda by Veda Vyasa converted the Shakha into a Tree which got twenty seven Shakhas. One of the most intelligent Sishyas of the Maharshi was called Yagnavalkya. Once the Guru could not to reach a Meet of all the co-Students at an appointed time and date failing which the punishment was to be Brahma hatya pataka; the Guru and requested his Sishyas to perform a Vrata as an atonement. But the egoistic Yagnavalkya boasted that he alone was enough to perform the Vrata and the enraged Vaishampayana cursed Yagnavalkya and asked him to vomit whatever was learnt by him since he talked as though he was Supreme and others were useless! Yagnavalkya apologised no doubt but Guru did not relent; although the former said that he himself could do the Vrata out of veneration and devotion to his Guru but did not out of arrogance nor out of spite for his co-students! Any way, Yagnavalkya pulled out Yajurveda in the form of a blood-stained

Murti and left the Guru. The Sishyas consumed the remains of what Yagnavalkya vomitted by assuming the forms of ‘Tithiris’ or partridges and hence that part of Veda is called Titthiriya! Yagnavalkya then extolled SuryaDevastating: *Namassavitrey dwaaraaya Mukteyramita tejasey, Rugyajussaama bhutaaya Trayee dhaamney cha tey Namah/*---and as the latter appeared before the Muni in the form of an ‘Ashvya’ horse and bestowed to him the Yajur Veda in Vajapa / form thus called Vajapa Yajur Veda, which even Vaishampayana was not conversant with!

*(Yaagnyavalkyastadaa praaha pranipatya Divaakaram, Yajumshi taani mey dehi yaani santi na mey Gurou!)*

The Vaaja Shrutis that Kanva and other Maharshis realised were of as many as fifteen Shaakhaas which indeed were of Yagna-valkya’s own ‘Pravritti’ or distinction.

Saama Veda Shaakha: Jaimini’s son Sumantu and his son Sukarma dealt with one each of the branches of Sama Veda. Then Sukarma made thousand sub branches of Sama Veda and taught some to KausalyaHiranya Nabha and the rest to another Sishya named Paushpanji. Hiranyanabha had five hundred Sishyas and they learnt Udeechya Saamaga. Hiranya naabha also propagated Praachya Saamaga. Paushpanji had four main Sishyas viz. Lokaakshi, Naudhami, Kakshivaan and Laangali and these and their next generations popularised their own Samhitas. Hiranyanabha’s yet another disciple Maha Muni Kriti and his pupils taught twenty four Samhitaas further.

Adharva Veda Shaakha: Sumantu Muni taught Atharva Veda to his pupil Kabandha and the latter taught one branch of Atharva Veda to each to Deva darsha and Patthya. Deva Darsha’s sishyas were Megha, Brahmabali, Shoaulkaayani and Pippala. Pathya’s students were Jaabaali, Kumudaadi and Shounaka and they were responsible to segregate Samhitaas. Shounaka sub-divided his Samhitas to Vibhru and Saindhava. The latter’s sishya Munjikesha further distributed his Samhitaas into five Kalpaas named Nakshatra Kalpa, Veda Kalpa, Samhita Kalpa, Angirasa Kalpa and Shanti Kalpa; it is stated that the ‘Ruchaas’ or Hymns of these Kalpaas are among the popular Vikalpas.

Puranas: Purana Visharada Veda Vyasa made a format of various Purana Samhitas viz. Akhayana, Upaakhyaana, Gaathaa, and Kalpa Shuddhi. Lomaharshana Suta was the most acclaimed Sishya whom Vyasa made him study in depth. Suta’s pupils were Sumati, Agnivarcha, Mitraayu, Shaamsapaayana, Akrutavarna, and Saavarni; Lomaharshana construed his works on their Samhitas. Parashara Maharshi stated that the Vishnu Purana Samhitaas were scripted on these bases. Among the Eighteen Puranas the foremost was stated to be Brahma Purana, followed by Paadmya, Vaishnava, Shaiva, Bhagavata, Naaradeeya, Markandeya, Agneya, Bhavishyata, Brahma Vaivarta, Lainga, Vaaraaha, Skanda, Vaamana, Kourma, Maatsya, Gaaruda, and Brahmanda Purana. Munis scripted several Upa-Puranaas too. Among all these, descriptions were invariably made about Srishti, Pralaya, Devataadi Vamshaas, Manvantaraas, Raja Vamsha Charitraas and so on. Sarga, Prati Sarga, Vamsha, and Manvantaraadi varnanaas are invariably covered in the Works of Vaishnava Orientation.

Vidyas: Maharshi Parashara enumerated fourteen Vidyas viz. Shat Vedangas, Four Vedas, Meemaamsa, Nyaya, Puraana and Dharma Shastra. In addition four more main Vidyas were to be included viz. Ayurveda, Dhanurveda, Gandhrva, and Artha Shastra. Among Rishis, there are three major categories viz. Brahmarshis, Devarshis and Rajarshis.

#### Now the Description of Planets vide Maha Bhagata Purana

Bhuloka is a Planet known as divided into Seven Parts, resembling a Lotus flower, each leaf with the names as above. Its length and breadth is one million yojanas or eight million miles. Jambu Dweepa which is in the middle of the spiral of the Planet has a length and breadth of one hundred thousand

Yojanas or 800,000 miles and is subdivided into nine regions. It is surrounded by saline water. Sumeru Mountain is like the pericarp of the lotus like Bhuloka and is the axis of Jambu Dweepa; its height is as much as the breadth of Jambu Dweepa ie. 100,000 yojanas or 800,000 miles. Pluksha Dweepa, named after Pluksha Tree, is around the Jambu Dweepa and is double the size of the former. It is surrounded by an Ocean of sugar cane juice which is also of the size of the Pluksha Dweepa. Its inhabitants- Hamsas, Patangas, Urdhvayanas and Satyangas live for thousand years and pray to Sun and Lord Vishnu; they are beautiful like demigods. Salmali Dweepa, named after Salmali Tree, is again double the size of the Pluksha Dweepa and has the Sura Sagara or the Ocean of Liquor around it, inhabiting Srutidharas, Vidyadharas, Vasundharas and Isadharas, all praying to Moon and Lord Vishnu. Among the seven Rivers of the Dweepa were Anumati, Sarasvathi, Sinevali, Raha and Kuhu and the seventh was the Home of Garuda praying to Lord Vishnu. Semi God of Moon created two fortnights, viz. Sukla Paksha and Krishna Paksha. Kusa Dweepa is again double the size of Salmali Dweepa ie. 800,000 yojanas (64,00,000 miles) and is known for Kusa Grass, used for Sacred Rituals (Homams, Yagyas and all Holy Acts) and is appropriately surrounded by an Ocean of Ghee and the form of God of Fire (in mild form). It is inhabited by Kusalas, Kovidas, Abhiyuktas and Kulakas, corresponding to Jambu Dweepa's four castes- Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vyasyas and Sudras. Krouncha Dweepa, named after the Krouncha Mountain is surrounded by an Ocean of Milk and Butter and is the second form of Varuna or Water, again the size of Kusa Dweepa, ie. of the size of 1600,000 yojanas ( 124,80,000 miles), inhabited by Purushas, Rabhas, Vanikas and Devakas. Shaka Dweepa, named after Shaka tree providing fragrance all around, has the dual form of Vayu, or Air and is double the size of Krouncha Dweepa, inhabiting four castes- Ratavrata, Satyavrata, Danavavrata and Anuvrata, all practising Pranayama and mustic Yoga. Pushkara Dweepa has 64,00,000 yojanas (51, 200,000 miles) surrounded by Sweet Water and is the Seat of Lord Brahma known as 'Karma Maya'. In the middle of the Dweepa is the Mountain Manasottara. Between the Mountains of Meru and Manasottara is so much distance as from Mountain Manasottara and Lokaloka Mountain. In other words, the distance between Mountain Meru to Mountain Lokaloka, is a quarter of the diameter of the Universe, (125,000,000 Yojanas or one billion miles).

Lokaloka is the border beyond which are the three other Lokas, viz. Bhurloka, Bhuvarloka, and Swarloka. On the top of Lokaloka, there are four Gajapatis controlling the planetary system on the four directions; They are Rishabha, Pushkara Chuda, Vamana and Aparajita. The distance from Lokaloka to Bhuvarloka is as much distance as from Meru to Lokaloka. That is a billion miles further. This space is named Aloka Varsha. Lord Sun is situated in Anthariksha in between Bhurlok and the Bhuvarlok. It is the Sun Planet which reveals the entire Universe from various directions and is thus the centre. Sun is the potent energy who is seen and felt to normal human beings and indeed the super indicator to all parts of the Universe, including the sky, the World, the higher planets and the lower planets.

The entire Universe has a diameter of fifty crore yojanas or 4 billion miles. Like the grain of wheat, the lower part of the Universe topping the Earth is sliced half way of the upper part with Antariksha or the outer space as the divider. The Planet Of Sun is situated in the outer space moving forward from north to south (Dakshinyahana) and from south to north again (Uttarayana), emanating tremendous heat and light. The setting of Dakshinyahana to Uttarayana is considered to be of significance as it heralds the six monthly movement influencing the trend of fortunes. As per the movement of Sun through the equator, or beneath it or above and from Tropic of Capricorn (Makara) to that of Cancer (Karkataka) and back, the zodiac signs are passed through too in a systematic manner and the duration of day and night too are short, equal or different. When Sun passes through Aries (Mesha) and Libra (Tula), days and night are equal. As Sun passes through the five Signs headed by Taurus (Vrishabha), the duration of day increases till Cancer and thereafter decreases by half an hour a day each month till Capricorn (Karkataka) in Libra, when day and night are equal again. When Sun passes through the Five Signs beginning from Vrischika, the duration of days decreases compared to nights until Capricorn and gradually increases month after month till they are equal in Aries. As a rule, till Sun travels north the nights become longer and when Sun travels south the days become longer. Sun travels around Manasottara Mountain in a circle. On the

Mountain to the east of Sumeru is the Devadhani, the residence of Indra, the King of Gods; to the South is Samyami, the Abode of Yama Raja, God of Death; the West is Nimkolani of Varuna, the God of Rains/Water; and the north is Vibhavari the abode of Moon. Thrayimaya, named as the Chariot of Sun visits all the abodes of Indra, Yama, Varuna and Moon traverses all the Residences of these Gods covering the words 'Bhur Bhuva Swaha' at a speed of 27 million miles approx in one muhūrta (30 muhūrta a day)! Interestingly, the Chariot of Sun God is 28 million miles long and seven million miles wide! Arunadeva, the Charioteer, controls the horses and sits in front of the Sun God, but looks backward to Sun. It is said that there might be thousands of rays of Sun, but the important ones are only seven, representing Seven Planets, Viz. Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn

Moon travels faster than Sun. The distance between Sun and Moon is 100,000 yojanas (800,000 miles). In two lunar fortnights, Moon passes through a period of a Samvatsara or a year. In two and quarter days, Moon passes through a month of the Sun, or in one day, it passes through a fortnight of the Sun. Hence, the divergence of Solar and Lunar calculations and Calendars. As the Moon is waxing, it is a day for Gods and a night for Pitru Devatas. The waxing fortnight gradually diminishes the shine till the Moon-fall day (Amavasya) and the waning Moon picks up the shine day by day till Moon-rise day (Pournami). Moon is known as 'Jeeva' (life-provider), or 'Manomaya' (mind-alterer) or 'Annamaya' (potency provider from herbs and plants), 'Amritamaya' (source of life to all) and 'Sarvamaya' (all pervading). From Moon to the Group of Stars, the distance is 200,000 yojanas (16,00,000 miles). Headed by Abhijit, there are twenty eight Stars revolving on their own axis. Above the Group of Stars is the **Planet of Venus (Sukra)** almost of the distance from the Moon to the Group of Stars. It is a benevolent planet, especially as a provider of good rains and prosperity and moves at the same pace as Sun God. **Mercury (Budha)**, the son of Moon is situated from Venus (16,00,000 miles) or 72,00,000 miles from Earth and this Planet too is benevolent excepting when not moving along with Sun, thus causing cyclones, excess or no rainfall and dusty storms. Equidistant from Mercury or 80,80,000 miles above Earth, is **the Planet of Mars (Mangal)**, which is generally not considered favourable, travelling along with other planets every three fortnights and creates tensions. **The Planet of Jupiter (Guru)** is away from Earth by some 10,400,000 miles-again 16,00,000 miles away from the planet of Mars- is considered generally benevolent to Brahmins and Universe, unless takes a curved path in conjunction with other planets. **Saturn**, which is 12 million miles above Earth is also considered generally unhelpful. Normally, each planet is 16,00,000 miles apart from another planet, but the distance from Saturn to the Group of '**Sapta Rishis**' or the Seven Sages is 8,800,000 miles from Saturn ie. 20,800,000 miles from Earth. Indeed, the Seven Sages are always the great well wishers of the entire Universe. The Sapta Rishis, viz. Marichi, Angirasa, Atri, Pulsastya, Pulaha, Krathu, and Vasishtaborn in Lord Brahma's thoughts to help in the act of Creation. (Reference Maha Bharatha; Shanti Parva). The Seven Sage **Constellation of the Great Bear (Ursa Major)** is indeed the great well wisher of the entire Universe. The Sapta Rishis circambulate around the Pole Star, or Dhruva Tara, which is as good as the Abode of Supreme Lord Himself and is prayed to by religious mortals and Gods alike.

### Sisumara Planetary System

Some 13,00,000 yojanas (10,400,000 miles) above the 'Great Bear' shines high the Pole Star and the 'Sisumara System' or the Great Machine, comprising the Stars and Planets, resembling a Dolphin in water. Scholars of the Science of Astronomy compare the Formation as an Illustration or an Image of The Supreme Almighty Vasudava Himself, as this 'Jyothi anekam' (Multi-Splendour par excellence) or 'Sisumara Samsthanam' (The Grand Wheel Establishment) is clearly visible on the Sky, and as the The Supreme Almighty is invisible anyway! In other words, it would never be possible to comprehend the Portrait of 'Virat Purusha', let alone by human beings but by Sages and even by Gods or Trinity too, but one could visualise the similarity of God- Head with the Sisumara and be contented with it atleast. The various planets and a multitude of Stars revolve around the Pole Star or the Dhruva Star, each moving around in their own Orbits at their own heights and are not clustered due to law of gravity. The body of

Dolphin-like Sisumara Chakra is coiled with its head downward, the Pole Star (Dhruva) at its tail, on the body of its tail are the Planets of demi-Gods viz. Prajapati, Agni, Indra and Dharma; the base of the tail are the Planets of Dhata and Vidhata; at the hip position are the Sapta Rishis; the right side of the Sisumara Chakra are the Constellations of fourteen Stars beginning from Abijit to Punarvasu; on the left side of the coiled body are the Stars of Pushya to Uttarashadha, thus balancing the body with equal weight of the Stars; on the back side of the body is the Group of Stars known as Ajaviti and on the abdomen flows the Ganges that flows in the Sky (the Milky Way Galaxy), which is the home of Solar System with an estimated 400 billion Stars and planets and thousands of clusters and nebulae; on the upper chin of Sisumara is Agasti; on the lower chin Yamaraja; on its mouth Mars; Genitals Saturn; on the back of its neck Jupiter; on its chest the Sun and the core of heart Narayana Himself; within its mind the Moon; navel the Venus; breasts Aswini Kumars; within its life-air or Pranapana is Mercury; neck Rahu; all over body the comets and pores innumerable Stars. Thus Sisumara Chakra is a mini version of the Supreme Almighty Himself. [Vishnu Sahasranamam (Sloka 47 states: *Anirvannah Stavishtho bhur\_dharma yupo Mahamakhah/ Nakshatra nemi\_nakshatri Kshama Kshamah Samihanah*).

Anirvannah (He Who Is Never Unhappy); Stavishtho: (He Who Is Colossal); Bhuh: The Supporter of All; Dharma Yupa: (He Who Is United With Dharma or Virtue); Maha makhah: (The Greatest Yagna or Sacrifice leading to Moksha or Salvation); Nakshatra nemi: (He Who Makes the Stars Move or He Who Mobilises the Sisumara Chakra and along with it the Entire Universe); Nakshatri (The Driving Force of Sisumara); Kshamah: (He Who Is Most Competent); Kshamah: (The Non-Reduceable or The Remainder Entity After The Pralay Or The Final Deluge); Samihanah: (Regulator and Well-Wisher)] Suka Muni advised King Parikshith to recite the Sisumara Chakra Mantra as follows:

*etat uha eva bhagavatah vishnoh srava Devata mayam rupam ahah ahah sandhayam prayatah vasyatah niriksamana upatistheta namo jyotir-lokaya kalayananimisam pataye maha-purusayabhidhimahiti:*

etat—this; u ha--indeed; eva--certainly; bhagavatah--of the Supreme personality of Godhead; vishnoh--of Lord Vishnu; sarva-devata-mayam--consisting of all the demi-gods; rupam--form; ahah-ahah--always; sandhyayam--in the morning, noon and evening; prayatah--meditating upon; vasyatah--controlling the words; niriksamana--observing; upatistheta--one should worship; namah--respectful obeisances; jyotir-lokaya--unto the resting place of all the planetary systems; kalayanaya--in the form of supreme time; animisam--of the demigods; pataye--unto the master; maha-purushaya--unto the Supreme person; abhidhimahi--let us meditate; iti--thus. The body of the sisumara, thus described, should be considered the external form of Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Morning, noon and evening, one should silently observe the form of the Lord as the Sisumara-chakra and worship Him with the above mantra.

Having explained the Concept of Sisumara, Suta Maharshi described the Subterranean Heavenly Planets. Beneath Sun-God, about 10,000 Yojanas (80,000 miles) is situated the Planet of Rahu, basically an 'Asura' who had surreptitiously taken drops of 'Amritha', the everlasting life-giving ambrosia while the Divine Drink was being distributed by 'Mohini' the Feminine Incarnation of Lord Vishnu after the churning of Oceans by Demi-Gods and Demons. Similarly Ketu was another clandestine beneficiary of a few drops of 'Amritha' and both Sun and Moon were the Demi-Gods who complained about the distribution of 'Amritha' by Mohini, who had used the Sudarsani wheel to deform both Rahu and Ketu. As the latter were inimical to Sun and Moon, they cause periodical eclipses. Below Rahu by 10,000 Yojanas (80,000 miles) are Siddha Loka, Karana Loka and Vidyadhar Loka and below that level is the Sky, the Antariksha where Yakshas, Rakshasas, Pisachas and Ghosts reside and hover around. There is no movement of air beyond that level and the Planet of Earth is situated some 100 yojanas or 800 miles thereunder. Large birds like eagles and Swans can fly upto that limit.

Underneath the Earth are the Seven Lokas in the sub terrain heavens named Bilwa Swarga and the expanse of Earth equals the Seven Lokas, viz. Atala, Vitala, Suthala, Talatala, Mahatala, Rasatala and Patala. The residents are Daityas, Danavas and Nagas, all of them highly fond of material enjoyments, excellent living conditions and luxurious palaces, gardens and such other comforts. Wine, women, food and various sensuous pleasures are common. There is no Sun, no concept of day and night, no light nor time and such other set regulations pertaining to weeks, months, years, or seasons. There is lot of illumination from the precious gems carried on the hoods of the Serpent residents. There are no physical ailments as the usage of herbs and vegetable based medicines is plenty. There is no bad odour of the body or surroundings. Feelings of poverty, frustration, disease and envy are alien and excepting at the set timings of death; life is worth living otherwise. In Atala, there is a Demon, named Bala who has perfected mystic powers and by simply yawning created three kinds of women, viz. Swarinis, Kaminis and Pumskalies. Vitala is the Loka where Goblins, Ghosts and other followers of God Siva inhabit, and is strongly believed that the Lord is responsible for the Gold Mines and the consequent pleasures of possession of Jewellery. Suthala is the place of residence of Bali Maharaja, universally acclaimed as the King of Charity (stated to be still alive); it is well known that out of an apprehension of Lord Indra and other Demi-Gods, Lord Narayana Himself had to take the Incarnation as 'Vamana' and asked for three steps of land as Guru Dakshina and in the bargain, occupied the entire Universe with His three steps of land in charity, i.e. one foot on the Earth, another the Skies and Heavens and the third on his head which was pushed down by Vamanadeva's big toe by eighty thousand miles to the Planet of Suthala. Talatala is another planet ruled by Demon Maya, who is noted for his expertise in sorcery and black magic. But Lord Siva, who is Tripurari and the Super Tantric Himself, destroyed the Kingdom of Demon Maya, who not only surrendered to the Lord but also pleased Him by his devotion subsequently and thus had the security of the Kingdom by Lord Siva Himself. Mahatala is the Planet underneath Talatala which is inhabited by many-hooded snake sons of Kadru and descendants, facing always a big threat from Garuda, the carrier of Vishnu. Underneath the Mahatala is Rasatala, which is inhabited by the most heinous and powerful snakes hiding in holes, as they were cursed by a messenger of Lord Indra not to stay open. Finally, Patala or Nagaloka is the abode of very ferocious clans of snakes headed by Vasuki. The inhabitants are multi-headed ones carrying precious gems on their hoods, some with five gems, some ten, some hundred and a few with thousand or more gems emanating radiance of extra-ordinary nature to such an extent that the gems of these 'nagas' light up the entire Bilwa Swarga or even beyond! Nearly 240,000 miles under Patala is the Incarnation of Vishnu, the enormous Lord Ananta with countless hoods, bearing the fantastic weight of the entire Universe. Also known as Lord Sankarshana, the Incarnation is worshipped by Lord Siva, who is the embodiment of 'Tamas' or darkness. The massive Universe is like a tiny mustard seed on just one of the thousands of hoods of Ananta. At the time of Pralay or the Final Destruction of the Universe, the Super Power or the Greatest and the Best Ananta makes a slight move between His Eye Brows and then comes out the Three Eyed Rudra who actually manifests 'Ekadasa Rudras' to perform the task of terminating the Universe. That is the Grand Finale as well as the Beginning of Creation afresh!

Commencing from the description of Priyavrata's (the Son of Manu's) chariot travel of Bhuloka and its organised division into Seven Regions, Maha Muni Suka thus provided to King Parikshith a brief glimpse of the Great Lord's Creation of the entire Universe, including the Loka loka, Bhur-Bhuvar- Swar lokas, the Planets, the Great Susumara Chakra / Wheel, the Sub-terrestrial Heavenly Planets and the Bilwa Swarga and the finality of the Universe's existence and re-creation. Now would be an Account of Hellish Planets that the Maha Muni delineated:

Depending on the positive or negative activities of human beings pursuing various material forces, in different modes of existence like Virtue, Passion or Ignorance, the end results are reflected in the punishments or rewards prearranged. The punishments allotted are executed in the Hellish Planets, stated to exist in the intermediate space beneath Bhu Loka and Gharbodaya Ocean. There are an estimated 28 Narakas, including Tamasra, Ardhamisra, Raurava, Maha Rourava, Kambhipaka, Kalasutra, Asi Patravani, Sukramukha, Andha Kupa, Karmibhojana, Taptasurmi, Vajra Kantaka, Vatarani, Pranarodha, Raktaksha

Bhojana and so on. The kind of cruelties inflicted on the sinners are not only severe but for long durations, some of these are for several years, depending on the severity of the sins.

Now both the 'Nivrutti Marga' ( Liberation Route ) and Pravritti Marga ( Natural Route) of realising the Supreme Force had been enlightened. Yet, the awareness of Godhead notwithstanding, human beings continue to indulge in sins and are not able to overcome temptations even though they sure know that death is inevitable and its aftermath is indeed hell-bent. The process of repeated sinning and atonement might be infructuous. As is often stated: prevention is far better and ideal than cure, just as an elephant having been cleaned up once tends to play with mud again and the process of sinning and atonement is endless; the real root needs to be axed; lest the plant of sin would grow again and again. : Indeed the crux of the problem lies in axing the root, lest the plant of sin would grow again and again. In this context, he provided a grand example as to how sincere atonement and complete surrender to the Almighty should be deemed as dismissal of temporary sins, as the real root is the axing the plant of sin, even before the plant grows well before it becomes a big tree!

#### New Brihaspati Visvarupa teaches 'Narayana Kavacha' to Indra

Indra's Court is a master-piece of the Universe, with Indra as a cynosure, surrounded by several semi-Gods and seated along with him by Sachi Devi. Guru Brihaspati, the Great Guide and Teacher of all the Subjects of the Court was among the Principal Advisor. In this ideal setting unfortunately, Brihaspati felt humiliated by Indra, as due respect to a Spiritual Master was not paid to him as Indra started cutting short and interrupting the Guru often. In course of time, Brihaspati stopped attending the Court. Indra no doubt apologised to the Guru, but the Guru did not relent. Lord Brahma called Indra and reprimanded him for his follies and had to look for an alternative. At the request of Demi-Gods, Brahma then appointed Visvarupa, the son of Diti's daughter Rachana and Prajapati Tvasta. Lord Brahma suitably briefed Visvarupa and taught the basic principles of an Acharya ( Teacher) who should consider Brahma as father, Indra as brother, Mercy as a sister, the planet of Earth as mother, guest as Agni and all living entities as Lord Vishnu Himself. He underlined the need for balancing the strength of Sukracharya, the Guru of Demons. Visvarupa taught the Narayana Kavacha ( The Shield of Narayana) to Indra and Semi-Gods. Being seated properly, the initial mantra be recited viz. ' Apavitrah Pavitro va , Sarvavasthangathopiva, Yah smaret pundarikasham sa bahyahabhantara suchih, SriVishnu Sri Vishnu Sri Vishnu.' Thus purified, the Mantra be recited as: 'Om Namo Narayanaya' touching eight parts of the body systematically-feet, knees, thighs, abdomen, heart, chest, mouth and head- both in Utpatti Nyasa (Start-up) and Samhara Nyasa ( Close-up) , ie. in reverse order.e mantra is recited as 'Ya Narayanaya Namo Om' in the reverse order. The next mantra is : 'Om Bhagavatey Vasudevaya' by touching the four finger tips touching the joints of thumbs, starting from the right hand and then the left hand. The next mantra is recited as ' Om namo vishnave namah', by aligning Om with heart, 'Vi' with top of the head, 'sh' with eyebrows, 'na' with tuft (sikha), 've' with eyes, 'na' with joints of body and 'mah' as a weapon. While reciting the mantras, one should visualise the Supreme Lord seated on Garuda's back and with his eight arms Viz. conchshell, disc, shield, sword, club, arrows, bow and strings. The Narayana Kavacha protects in different forms of the Supreme Force, such as Matysa ( Great Fish) from water, Vamana ( The Dwarf) from all the three Worlds, Narasimha ( Man-Lion) in forests and battle fronts, Varaha ( The Boar) from the bottom of the Seas, Parasurama with axe from Unkind Kings and Mountains, Rama from tribulations in foreign countries, Narayana from false religious systems, Nara from unwanted pride, Dattathreya from mystic forces, Sanat Kumara from undue desires, Kurma ( Tortoise) from hellish planets, Narada from worship offences, Dhanvantari from physical ailments, Rishabhadeva from extreme heat and cold, Yagna from defamations, Balarama from reptiles, Vyasa from ignorance, Buddha from laziness, Kalki from irreligion and so on. The 'Kavacha' provides protection to the devotees during day and night by Kesava, Narayana, Madhava, Govinda, Vishnu, Madhusudana, Hrishikesa, Padmanabha, Janardana, and Vasudeva. Similarly, the eight arms provide protection from all possible evils and ventualities. Narayana

Shield is meant for each and every body, from Devatas to normal mortals. With the help of Narayana Kavacha, Indra defeated demons and rejuvenated the supremacy of Devas again.

Shri Vishnu Sahasra Naama Stotra vide Padma Purana

*Asya Shri Vishnornaama Sahasra Stotrasya Shri Maha Deva Rishih, Anushthup Chhandahah,  
Paramaatma Devata, Hreem Beejam, Shrih Shaktih, Kleem Keelakam, Chaturvarga Dharmaarthartha  
Kaama Mokshaarthey Japee Viniyogah/*

*Om Vaasudevaaya Vidmahey, Mahha Hamsaaya dhimahi, Tanno Vishnuh Prachodayat/Anganyaasa  
Karanyaasa Vidhi purva yada pathet, Tatphalam Kotigunanti bhavatyeva na samshayah/*

*ANGANYASA: Shri Vaasudeva Param Bhrahmeyti Hridayam Mula Praritiriti Shirah/ Mahaa Varaah iti  
Shikha/ Suryavamshadwaja iti Kavacham/ Brahmaadi kaamyaa lalitya Jagadaashcharya shaishava iti  
netram/ Paarthartha khanditaasesha ityastam Namō Naraayanayeti nyasam Sarvatra kaarayet/  
Om Namō Naraayanaaya Purushaaya Mahaatmaney, Vishuddha Sattvaaya Mahaa Hamsaaya Dhimahi,  
tanno Devah parachodayaat/*

*Kleem Krishnaaya vidmahey, Heem Raamaaya Dhimahey tanno Devah prachodayaat/ Sham  
Narasimhaaya vidmahey, Shri Kanthaaya dhimahey, tanno Vishunuh prachodayaat/Om Vaasu Devaaya  
vidmahey, Devaki sutaaya dhimahey, tannah Krishnah prachodayaat/Om hraam, hreem, hruum, hrauim,  
hroaum, hrah, kleem Krishnaaya Govindaaya, Gopeejana vallabhaya namah swaha/Iti Mantra  
samuccharya yajed vaa Vishnumakhayam, Shrinivaasah Jagannadhah tatah stotram pattheth  
sudheeh/Om Vaasudevah param Brahma Paramaatma Paraatparah/*

*Paramdhaaa Paramjyotih Param Tatwam Param Padam / Param Shivah Paro dheyah Param Jnaanam  
Para Gatih/ Paramaarthah Parasshreshtha Paraanandah Parodayah, Parovyaktatparam Vyoma  
Paramaarthih Pareshwarah/ Niraamayo Nirvikaaro Nirvikalpo Nirlepo Nirvagnah/ Nirguno  
Nishkalankonantobhyayochintyochalochintyah, Ateendriyomitotparō Nityoneehovayokshayah/  
Sarvajnah Sarvagah Sarvah Sarvadah Sarva bhaavanah, Sarvasaastaa Sarva saakshee Pujyah Sarvasya  
Sarvadruk/ Sarva Shaktih Sarva saarah Sarvaatmaa Sarvato mukhah, Sarva Vaasah Sarva Rupah  
Sarvaadih Sarvadukhahaa/ Sarvaarthah Sarvatobhadrah Sarva kaarana kaaranam, Sarvatishiyatah  
Sarvaadhyakshah Sarveshvareshvarah/ Shadvamshako Maha Vishnurmahaaguhyo Mahaa Vibhuh,  
Nityodito Nitya yukto Nityaanandah Sanaatanah/ Mayaapatihryogapatih Kaivalyrapatatmabhuh, Janma  
mrityu jaraateetah Kaalaateeto Bhavaatigah! Purnah Satyah Shuddha Buddha swarupo Nityachinmayah,  
Yogapriya Yoga gamyo bhava bandhaikamochakah/ Purana Purushah Prataykchaitanyah  
Purushottamah, Vedanta Vedyo Durjayastaapatra vivarjitah/ Brahmavidyaashrayonaghah  
Swaprakaashah Swayam Prabhuh, Saropaaya Udaaseenah Pravavah Sarvatah Samah/ Sarvaanavadyo  
Dushpraayah –stureeyahstamasah parah, Kutastah Sarvasamshilashto Vaangamnogocharaatigah/  
Samkarshanah Sarvaharah Kaalah Sarva bhayankarah, Annulyanghayah Chitragatih MahaaRudrah  
Duraasadah/ Mulaprakritraanandaha Pradyumno Vishwamohanah, Mahaamaayo Vishwa beejam  
Parashaktih Sukhouakabhuh/ Sarvakaamyoantaleelah Sarvabhuta vashankarah, Aniruddhah Sarvajeevo  
Hrisheekesho Manh Patih/ Nirupaadhiprio Hamsoksharah Sarvaniyajakah, Brahma praaneshwarah  
sarvabhutabhrit Dehanayakah/ Kshetrajnah Prakritiswami Purusho Viswasutradhruk, Antaryaami  
Tridhaamantahsaakshi Nirguna Eswarah/ Yogigamyah Padmanaabhah Seshashaayee Shriyah Patih, Shri  
Shivopasya paaambojo Nityashreeh Shriniketana/ Nitya vakshasthala Shrih Shrinidhih Shrihoro Harih,  
Vashyashih Nischala Shridō Vishnuh Ksheeraabhi mandirah/ Kaustubhodbhaasitoraksah Maadhavo  
Jagadaatihaa, Shrivatsa vakshaa Nisseemakalyanaguna bhaajanam/ Peetaambaro Jagannatho  
Jagatraataa Jagatpitaa, Jagatbandhurjagatsrashtaa Jagaddhvaata Jagannidhih/ Jagadekasphuradveeryo  
Naamhavaadi Jaganmayah Sarvasiddhaartha Sarvaranjitah/ Sarvameghodyamo Brahma  
Rudraadyatkrushta chetanah, Shambhoh Pitaamahō Brahmapitaa Sharaadyadheeswarah/*

*Sarva Devapriyah Sarvadeva murtiranuttamah, Sarva Devaika sharanam Sarvadevaika devata/ Yajñabhṛgya phalado Yagnesho Yagna bhaavanah, Yagnatraataa Yagnapumaan Vanamaali Dwijapriyah/ Dwijaikamaanado Viprakula Devosuraantakah, Sarvadushtaantakruh Sarva sajjanaanda paalakah/ Saptalokaika jatharah Saptalokaika mandanah, Srishtisthityanta krut Chakri Sharangadhanvaa Gadaadharah/ Shankhabhṛnnandaki Padma paani garuda vaahanah, Anirdeshyavapuh Sarava Pujya Triloka paavanah/ Anantakirtih Nisseema Pourushah Saramangalah, Suryakoti prateekaasho Yaakoti duraasadah/ Kandarpakoti laavanyo Durgakotyarimardanah, Samudrakoti gambheerah Tirthakoti samaahvayah/ Brahmakoti jagatsrashta Vaayukoti maaha balah, Koteendindu jagadaanandi Shambhukoti Maheshwarah/ Kuberakoti Lakshmivaan Shakrakoti vilaasavaan, Himatkoti nishkampaha Koti Brahmaanda Vighraha/ Kutyashwamegha paapaghnah Yagna koti samaarchanah, Sudhhakoti Swasthya hetuh Kamadhukoti kaamadah/ Brahmadevyakoti rupah Shipivishtah Shuchishravaah, Vishyambharah Teerthapaadah Punyashravana keertanah/ Adi Devo Jagajjaitro Mukundah Kaalanemiha, Vaikunthonanta maahaatmyo Maha yogeswa –rotsavah/ Nitya trupto Lasadbhaavo Nishshankho Narakaantakah, Deenaanaathaika sharanam Vishvaika Vyasanaapahah/ Jagat kripaakshamah Nityam Kripaluhu Sajjanaashrayah, Yogeswarah Sadodeeranah Vridhi Kshaya vivarjitah/ Adhikshajo Vishwaretaah Prajaapati shataadhipah, Shakra Brahmaarchita padah Shambhu Brahmordhva dhaamagah/ Surya Somekshanah Vishwa bhokta Sarvasya paaragah, Jagatsetuh Dharmasetudharah Vishwa dhurandharah/ Nirmamokhila lokeshah Nissangah Adbhuta Bhogavaan Vashya maayah Vasya Viswaha Vishvakse nah Suṛottamah/ Sarva Shreyapatiḥ Divya Anarghya Bhushana Bhushitah, Sarva Lakshana Lakshanah Sarva daityendra darpah/ Samasta Deva Sarvaswam Sarva Daivata nayakah, Samasta Deva Kavacham Sarva Deva Shiromanīḥ/ Samasta Devata Durgah Prapannashani panjarah, Samastabhayahannama Bhagavan Vishtarashravaah/ Vibhuh Sarvahitodarkah Hataarih Swaratipradah, Sarva Daivata jeevesho Brahmanaadi niyojakah/ Brahma Shambhu Paraardhaayuhu Brahmajyeshthah Sishuswaraat, Virat Bhakti paraadheenah Stutyah Stotraartha saadhakah/ Paraartha kartaa Krutyajnah Krutya sadonjhitah, Sadaanandah Sadaabhadrah Sadaa Shantah Sadaa Shaivah/ Sada Priyah Sadaa Tushtah Sadaa Pushtah Sadaaarchitah, Sadaa Putah Paananaagnayah Veda gruhnnah Vrishaakapiḥ/ Sahara naama Triyugah Chaturmurtiḥ Chatur Bhujah, Bhuta Bhavya Bhavannathah Maha Purusha Purvajah/ Naaraayano manjukeshah Sarvayoga viniḥsrutah Veda Saarah Yajna saarah Saama saarah Taponidhiḥ/ Sandhya sreshthah Puraanarshih Nishthaa Shanti Paraayanam, Shivah Trishulavidhvansi Shri Kanthaika Varapradah/ Narah Krishnah Hariḥ Dharmanandanah Dharmajeevanah Adi Kartaa Sarva Satyah Sarva Streeratna darpah/ Trikaala jita Kandarpah Urvashisruk Muniswarah Adyah Kavīḥ Hayagrivah Sarva Vaageswareswarah/ Sarva Deva mayo Brahma Guruh Vaageeswaripatiḥ, Ananta Vidya Prabhavaḥ Mulaavidya vinaashakah/ Saarvajnadah Namajjadya naashakah Madhu -sudanah, Aneka mantra kotishah Shabda Brahmaika paaragah/ Adi Vidwan Veda Karta Vedaatma Shruti Saagarah, Brahmaartha Vedaapaharanah Sarva Vignaana Janmabhuh/ Vidyaaaraajah Jnaana murthiḥ Jnaana Sindhuḥ, Akhanda dheeh, Matsya Devah Maha Shringah Jagajjeevahinna dhruk/ Leelaa vyaptha akhilambhodhiḥ Rigvedaadi pravartakah, Adi Kurmah Ahilaadhaarah Trineekruta jagadbharah/ Amareekrita Devoughah Peeyushapati kaaranam, Atmaadhaarah Dharaadhaarah Yagnaangah Dharani dharah/ Hiranyakshaharah Prithivipatiḥ Shraaddhadi kalpakah, Samasta Pitru bheetighnah Samasta Pitru Jeevanam/ Havyakavyaika bhuk Havya kavaika phala daayakah, Romaantarleena jaladhiḥ Kshobhitaasesha Saagarah/ Mahaa Varaah Yagnaghna dhwasakah Yaagnikaashrayah, Shri Nrisimhaḥ Divya Simhaḥ Sarvaanishthartha duhkhaḥ/ Eka Virah Adbhutabalah Yantra mantrika bhanjanah, Brahmaadi dusshah jyotiḥ Yugaantaagniyati bhishanah/ Koti vajradhinakhah Jagadyuprekshya murtidhruk, Matruchakra pramadhanah Maha Matru Ganeshwarah/ Achintyamogha Viryadyah Samastaasuradhasmarah, Hiranyakshipuchhedi Kaalah Sankarshanipatiḥ/ Kritantavahanah Sadyah Samasta bhayanaashanah, Sarva Vighnaatakah Sarva Siddhidaha Sarva purakah/ Samasta paataka dhwaṁsi Siddhi Mantradhikaahvyah, Bhairaveshah Haartighnah Kaalakoti duraasadah/ Daitya –garbhastraavinama Sphutidad Brahmaanda garjitah, Smrutamaatraakhila traataa Adbhuta rupah Maha Hariḥ/ Brahmacharyashirah pindi Dikpaalah Ardhangā Bhushanah, Dwadashaarka shirodaamaa Rudrasirshaika nupurah/ Yoginigrasta girijaatraata Bhairavatarjakah Virachakreswarah Atyugrah Yamaarih Kaalasamvarah/ Krodheswarah*

*Rudra chandiparivaraadi dushtabhuk, Sarvaakshobhyah Mrityu Mrityuh Kaala Mrityu nivartakah/  
 Asaadhya sarva rogahnah sarvadurgahasoumyakrit, Ganeshakoti darpagnah Dussaha seshagotraha/  
 Deva Danava durdarshah Jagadbhayadabhishakah, Samasta durgatitraata Jagadbhakshak bhakshakah/  
 Ugreshah Ambaramaarjarah KaalaMushaka Bhakshakah, Anantaayudha dordandi Nrisimhah  
 Veerabhadrajit/ Yogini chakra guhyo shah Shakraaripu maamsa bhuk, Rudro Naraayano  
 Mesharupashankara vaahanah/ Mesharupa Shivaatraata Dushta Shakti sahasrabhuk, Tulasivallabho  
 Veero Vaamaa charaakhileshtadah/ Maha Shivah Shivaarudhah Bhairavaika kappala dhruk,  
 Jjillichakreshwarah Shakra divya mohanah rupadah/ Gauri sowbhaagyado  
 MayanidhiMayabhayaapahah, Brahma tejo mayah Brahmashrimayah Trayeemayah/ Subrahmany  
 Balidwamsi Vaamanah Aditi duhkaha, Upendro Nripati Vishnuh Kashyapaanda mandanah/ Bali  
 swaarajyadah Sarva Deva vipannadah Achytah, Urukramah Tirtha paadah Tripadastha Trivikramah/  
 Vyoma paadah swapaadambhah Pavitratajagatrayah, Brahmeshadyabhivandyaangrih Dyuta Dharmaa  
 Ahidhaavanah/ Achityadbhuta vistaaro Vishva vriksho Mahabalalah, Rahu murthaa paraanchita Bhrigu  
 patni shiroharah/ Paapaastrastah Sadaa Punyah Daityashaanitya khandakah, Puritaakhila Devaashah  
 Vishvarthaikaavataara krit/ Swamaaya nitya guptaatmaa Sadaa Bhakta chintaamanih, Varadah  
 Kaartaveeryadi raja raajyapradah Anaghah/ Vishwashlyaaghyah Amitaachaarah Dattatreyah  
 Muneeshwarah, Parashaktisadaa slishtah Yogaananda sadonmadah/ Samastendraari Teyjohat  
 Paramaamrita Padmapah, Anasuya ratna garbham Bhoga moksha sukha pradah/ Jamadagni kulaatityah  
 Renukaadbhuta shakti dhruk, Matru hathyadi nirlepah Skandajit vipra raajyadah/ Sarvakshatraantakrut  
 Vira darpaha Kaarta viryajit, Saptadwipavati daata Shivaarchaka yashah pradah/ Bheemah Parashu  
 Raamascha Shivaachaaryaika vishwabhu, Shivaakhila Jnaana kosha Bhishmaachaaryah Agni Devaah/  
 Dronaachaarya Guruh Vishwa jaitra Dhanwa Kritaantajit, Adviteeya tapo murthih Brahmacharyaika  
 dakshinah/ Manusreshthah Sataam Setuh Mahiyaan Vrishabhah Virat, Adi Rajah Kshiti Pitah Sarva  
 Ratnaika doha krut/ Prithuh Janmaadyeka dakshah Geeh Shri Kartika swayamvritah, Jagadvrithipradah  
 Chakravarti Sreshthah Advayastradhruk/ Sanakaadi muni praapya bhavatbhakti vardhanah,  
 Varnaashramaadi Dharmaanaam Kartha Vakta Pravartakah/ Suryavamsha dwajah Ramah Raghavah  
 Sadgunaarnavah, Kaakusthah Vira rajyaaryah Rajadharma dhurandharah/ Nityaswasthyaashrayah  
 Sarvabhadra graahi Shubhaikadhrukh, Nara Ratnam Ratnagarbhah Dharmaadhyakshah Maha Nidhih/  
 Sarvashreshthaashrayah Sarva Shastraastragrama viryavan, Jagadishah Daasharathih Sarva  
 ratnaashrayo Nripah/ Samasta Dharmasuh Sarvadharmas drashta khilaartihaa, Ateendro Jnana Vijnana  
 paaradrashta Kshamaambudhih/ Sarva prakrushtah Shishteshtah Harshashokadyanakulah, Pitra  
 ajnaatyakta saamraajyah sampannoda nirbhayah/ Guhaadeshaarpithaishwaryah  
 Shivasparthaajataadharah, Chitrakutaapta ratnaadrih Jagadeesho Vaneycharah/ Yadheshtaamogha  
 sarvaastrah Devendra tanayaakshiha, Brahmendraadinathaisheekah Maarichagnah Viraadhaha/  
 Brahma shaapa hataasesha dankakaranya paavanah, Chaturdasha sahasrogara kshoghnaika sharaika  
 dhruk/ Kharaarih Trishirohanta Dushanagnah Janaardanah, Jataayushognigatidah Agastya sarvasya  
 mantrarat/ Leeladhanushkotyapaasta Dundhubhyasthita Mahachalah, Saptataala vyadhaakrishta  
 dhwasta paataala Danavah/ Sugriva raajyadah Aheenamanasaiva abhayapradah , Hanumadrudra  
 mukhyeshah Samastakapi dehabhrit/ Sanaaga daitya baanaaika vyakulikrita Saagarah, Samlecchakoti  
 baanaika sushka nirdagdha saagarah/ Samudraadbhuta purvaika bandha setuh yashonidhih, Asaadhya  
 saadhakah Lankaasamulotsaada Dakshinah/ Varadruptha jagachhalya Poulatsya kula kruntanah,  
 Ravanagnah Prahatsechit Kumbhakarnabhit Ugraha/ Ravanaika shirascchetta Nisshankaindraika  
 rajyadah, Swaraaswargatwa vicchedi Devendraanindrataaharah/ Rakshodevatvahrut  
 Dharmaadharmavighnah Purushthutah, Natimaatra dashasyarih Dutta Rajya Vibhishanah/  
 Sudhavishtimritaasesha swasainyojjivanaika krut, Deva Brahmana naamaika dhata Sarvaamararchitah/  
 Brahma Surya Rudraadi vrindaarpita Sati priyah, Ayodhyaakhila Rajaagraganya Sarvabhuta  
 Manoharah/ Swamyatulya kripaadandah Heenotkrushtaika Satpriyah, Shvyapakshyaadi nyaaya darsha  
 Heenaarthathika Sadhakah/*

*Vadhavyaajanuchita krittarakah Akhila tulya krit, Pavitrayaadhikya muktaatmaa Priyantakah  
 Smaraarijit/ Saakshaat Kusha Lava chhandraavitah Aparajitah, Kossalendrah Veera baahuh*

Satyadhatyakta sodarah/ Sharasandhaana nirdhuat dharani mandalah Jayah, Brahmaadi kaamasaamnidhya sanaathi krita Daivatah/ Brahmaloakaapta chaanadaaladya sesha praani saarthakah, Swarneeta gardhabhaswadi chirayodhyaavanaika krit/ Ramo Dwiteeya Soumitrah Lakshmanah Praratendra jit, Vishnu Bhaktah Sa Raamaanghni paduka rajya nivirtti/ Bharatah Asankhya Gandharva kotighnah Lavanatmakah, Shatrughnah Vaidyarat Ayurvedagabhoushadhipatih/ Nityamritakarah Dhanvantari Yagno jagahharah, Suryarighnah Suraajeevah Dakshineshah Dwijapriyah/ Chhinna murthaapadesharkah Sessaanga sthaapitaamarah, Vishwarthaa Seshakrit Rahu shira chheetthaa Akshataakutih/ Vaajapeyaadinaamaagnih Veda dharma paraayanah, Sweta dwipa patih Sankhapraneta Sarva Siddhivirat/ Vishwa Prakaashita Jnaana Yoga moha tamisraha, Devahyutatmajah Sidhah Kapilah Kardama –atmajah/ Yogaswami Dhyana bhanga sagraatmaja bhasmakrit, Dharmah Vrishendrah Surabhipatih Shaddhaatma bhaavitah/ Shambhuh Tripuradaahaika sthairya Vishvaradhoduhah, Bhakta Shambhugitah Daityaamrita vaapeesamastapah / Maha Pralaya Vishvaika nilayah Akhila Naagarat, Sesha Devah Sahasraakshah Sahasraasya Shirobhujah/ Phanaamani kanikarayojitaachhaambuda Kshitih, Kaalaagn Rudra Janako Mushalastro Halaayudhah/ Neelaambaro Vaaruneeshah Manovaakkaaya doshah, Asantosha drishti maatrapaati thaika Dashaanah/ Bilasamyamanah Ghorah Rouhineyah Pralambaha, Mushtikaghnaha Dwividah Kalinikarshanah Balah/ Ravati Ramanah Purva Bhakti kheda achyuta agrajah, Devaki Vasudevahya Kashipaaditi nandanah/ Vaarshneyah Satvataam Shreshtha Shourih Yadukuleswarah Naraaktitih Param Brahma Savyasaachi Varapradah/ Brahmadikaamya laalitya Jagadaaschrya Shashavah, Putanathah Shakatabhit Yamalaarjuna bhanjakah/ Vaataasuraarih Keshagnah Dhenukaarih Gaveeswarah, Damodarah Gopadevah Yashodaananda dayakah/ Kaaleeya Mardanah Sarva Gopa Gopijanapriyah, Leelaagovardhana dharo Govindo Gokulotsavah/

Arishtamathanah Kamonmattha Gopi Vimuktidad, Sadyah Kuvalayaapeeda ghaati Chanura mardanah/ Kamsaarih Ugrasenaadi rajya vyapaaristaamarah, Sudharnagkita Bhulokah Jaraasandha balaantakah/ Tyakta bhagna Jaraasandhah Bhimasena Yashah pradah, Samdipani mritaapadya data Kaalaantakaadijit/ Samasta naaraka traata Sarva Bhupati koti jitah, Rukminiramano Rukmishasano Naraantakah/ Samasta Sundarikantho Muraari Garudhadhwajah, Eakaaki Jita Rudraarka Marudyakhileswarah/

Devendra darpah Kalpa drumaanjali bhutalah, Banabahu sharsrachhit Nandyadi ganakotijit/ Leelajita Mahadevah Maha Devaika pujitah, Indraatharjuna Nirbhanga jayadah Pandavaikadhruk/ Kashiraja shiracchhetta Rudrashaktaika mardanah, Visweshwara Pasaadaadhyah Kashirajasutardanah/ Shambhu pratignaa vidhvamsi Kashinirdardhanayakah, Kashisharana kotighnah Lokashikashaa dwijaarchakah/ Shiva teevra tapo vashyah Puraashiva Varapradah, Shankaraika pratishthaadhruk Swayam Shashanka pujakah/ Shivakanyavrata patih Krishna rupa Shivaariha, Mahalakshmi vapur Gauritraata Vaidala Vritraha/ Swadhaama Muchukundaika nishkaala Yavaneshta krit, Yamuna patih Aneetaparileena dwijaatmah/ Shri Daamarangka Bhaktaartha bhumya -neeteyendriya vaibhavah, Duvrutta Sishupaalaika Muktido Dwarakeshwarah/ Aachandaaladika praapya Dwarakaa nidhi kotikrit, Akurodhbhava Mukhaika Bhaktah Swacchanda Muktidah/ Sabaala stree kreedaamrita vaapi kritaarnavah, Brahmaastra dagdha garbhasta Pareekshijeevana krit/ Parileena dwiha sutaanetaa Arjuna mada –apahaha, Goodha mudra krita grasta Bhishmadyaakhila Kauravah/ Yadaartha khanditaa sesha Divyastra Partha moha hrit, Garbha shaapacchala dhawasta Yadavorvibhiraapah/ Jaraavyadhaari gatidah smrita maatraakhileshtadah, Kaama devo Ratipatih Manmadhah Shambaraantakah/ Anangah Jita Gourishah Ratikantah Sadeptsitah, Pushpeshuh Vishwa Vijayi Smarah Kameshvari Priyah/ Ushapatih Vishwaketuh Vishwatriptah Adhi Puurushah, Chaturatma Chaturvyuhah Chaturyuga vidhaayakah/ Chaturvedaika Vishwaatma Sarvotkrushtamsha kotisuuh, Asshramaatma Puranarshih Vyasah Shaakhaa Sahasra krit/ Maha Bharaa Nirmata Kaveendro Baadarayanah, Krishna Dwaipayana Sarva Purushartha bodhakah/ Vedantakartaa Brahmaikavyanjakah Puru Vamsha krit, Buddhah Jnaana jitaa sesha Deva Devi Jagatpriyah/ Niraayudhah Jagajjaitrah Shri Dhanah Dushta mohanah, Daitya Veda Bahishkarta

*Vedaartha Shuti gopakah/ Shouddhhodanih Drushta Dishtah Sukahdah Sadasampattih, Yayaa yogyaakhila kripah*

*Sarva shunyokhileshtadah/ Chatuhkoti pruthak Tatwa Pragnaapaar amitheshwararh, Paakhanda vedamaargeshah Paakhanda shruti gopakah/ Kalki Vishnuh Yashah putrah Kalikaala vilopakah, Samasta mlecccha dushtaghnah Sarvashishtah Dwijaatikrit/*

*Satya pravartakah Devadwija deergha Kshudhaapaha, Ashwavaaraadih Ekanta Prithvi durgati naashanah/ Sadyah Kshamaanta Lakshmi krita Nashtanih Sesha Dharmavit, Ananta Swarna Yaagaika hema purnaakhiladwijah/ Asaadhyaika jagatcchastah Vishva bandhah Jayadhwajah, Atmatatwaadhipah Kartu shreyshtah vidhirumaapatih/ Bhatru shreshthah Prajeshagrayah Marichih Janakaagrani, Kashyapah Devaraat Indrah Prahladaah Daityarat Shahi/ Nakshatreshah Ravistejah Shreshthah Shurah Kaviswarah,*

*Maharshirat Bhiguh Vishnuh Adityeshah Baliswarat/ Vaayuh Vahnih Shuchishreshthah Shankaro Rudraarat Guruh, Vidwattamah Chitrarathah Gandharvaagrayah Aksharotthamah/ Varnaadih Agrayastree Gauri Shaktyagraya Shrih Naradah Devarshirat Pandavaagrayah Arjunah Vaadah Pravaadarat/ Pavanah Pavaneshanah Varunah Yaadasaampatih Gangaa Tirthottamah Dyutam Chhalakaagrayam Varaushadham/ Annam Sudarshanah Astraagyam Praharanottamam, Uchhaishravah Vajirajah Irvatah Ibeshwarah/ Arundhati Eka Patneesah Ashwatthah Asesha Vriksharaat, Adhyatma Vidya Vidyaagrayah Pranavah Cchhaandsaam varah/ Meruh Giripatih Maargah Maasaagrayah Kaal sattamah, Dinaadhyatmaa Purva siddhah Kapilah Saama Vedarat/ Taaksharyah Khagendrah Rutvagnayah Vasantah Kalpapaadapah, Daatru shreshthah aamadhenuh Aartighnaagrayah Suhyuttamah/ Chintamanah Gurushreshthah Maataa Hitamayah Pitah, Simhah Mrigendrah Naagendrah Vaasukih Nrirarah Nripah/ Varneshah Braahmanah Chetah Karanaagraya Namoh Namah, Ityetad Vasudevasya Vishnornaama sahasrakam/ (Padma Purana, Uttarahanda)*

(Vishnu Sahasra naama Stotram is a sure means of ‘Paapa Vimochana’. It clears all difficulties; enhances quality of Life; keeps conscience clean; fulfills desires; keeps away poverty, diseases, and natural disasters; secures from thieves, snakes, cruel animals and evil spirits; brings in recognition and name; accords the Punya of Yagna, Tapa, Daana, Vrata and Tirtha Yatras; and finally acts as a unique ladder to Salvation)

*Naasti Vishnoh Paramdhama Naasti Vishnoh Param Tapah, Naasti Vishnoh Paro Dharma Naasti Mantra Hyavaishnavah/ Naasi Vishno Param Satyam Naasti Vishnoh Paro Japah, Naasti Vishnoh Param Dhyanam Naasti Vishnoh Param Gatih/ Kim tasya Bahurbhi Mantraih Shastraih kim Bahu vistaraih, Vajapeya Sahastrairva Bhakriyasya Jannardaney/ Sarva Tirthamayo Vishnuh Sarva Shastramayah Prabhu, Sarva Kratumayo Vishnuh Satyam Satyam vadaamyaham/*

(There is no better ‘Parama Dhama’ than Vishnu, no better ‘Tapas’ than Vishnu, no better ‘Dharma’ than Vishnu, no better Mantra than Vishnu, no better Truth than Vishnu, no better ‘Japa’ than Vishnu, no better ‘Dhyana’ than Vishnu, no better ‘Gati’ or route than Vishnu! Are there many other Mantras, Shastras, Vajapeyas, Tirthas or Kratus? In the final analysis, it is all about Vishnu, Vishnu and Vishnu alone!)

#### Vishnu Sahasra Nama vide Skanda Purana

*Shuklaambara dharam Vishnum Shashivarnam Chaturbhujam, Prasanna Vadanam Dhyayet Sarva Vighnopashantaye/ Laabhastheshaam Jayastheshaam Kruthastheshaam Paraajayahayah, Eshamindiravashyamo Hridayastho Janaardana/]*

**Viniyogah:** Om Asya Shri Vishnu Sahasranaama Stotra Maha Mantrasya Brahma Rishi Vishnurdevata Anushtup chhandah Sarva Kaamaavaapyatrtha Jape Viniyogah. (In this Vishnu Sahasranaama Stotra, Brahma is Rishi, Vishnu is Devata, Chhanda is Anushtup; to fulfil all desires, this Japa / Recitation is being rendered.) **Dhyanam:** Sajalaladaneelam darshithodaara sheelam, Karatalaghrutashailam Venuvaadye Rasaalam/Vrajajana kulapaalam Kaaminikelilolam, Tharunathulasimilaalam naimi Gopaalavaalam. (I greet Gopala whose appearance was blue like the radiance of fresh water, whose essential nature was of kindness, who lifted the Mountain of Govardhana with His hands, who played a big sonorous flute, who administered the People of Vraja with care, who was in the habit of performing childish pranks for the entertainment of the women of Vraja and whose neck adorned the highly attractive garland of Tulasi leaves). Following is the Vishnusahasra Nama Stotram:

Om Vishnur jishnur hrishikeshah Sarvaatma Sarva Bhavanah, Swargah Sharvareenatho Bhutagramashayaashayah/ Anaadinidhano Devah Sarvagnah Sarva sambhavah, Sarva –vyapee Jagatdhaataa Jaganmayah/ Sarvaakritidharah Sarvey Viswarupee Janaardana, Ajaatma Sashvatho Nithyo Vishvaadhaaro Vibhuh Prabhuh / Brahmarupaika rupascha Sarva rupadharo Harah, Kaalaagni Prabhavo Vaayuhu Pralayanthakarokshayah / Mahaarnavo Maha Megho Jala budbuda Sambhavah, Samskruto vikruto Matsyo Maha Matsyo thimingalah / Anantho Vaasukih Sesho Varaaho Dharaneedharah, Payaksheera Vivekaadyo Hamso Haimagiri sthitah / Hayagreevo Vishaalaaksho Hayakarno Hayakruthih, Manthano Ratnahaari cha Kurmodhyaraadharah / Vinidro Nidritho Nandi Sunando Nandanapriyah, Naabhi naala mrinaali cha Swayambhuschaturaanah / Prajaapati paro Dakshah Srishtikartha Prajaakarah, Marichih Kashyapo Vatsah Surasura guru Kavih/ Vaamano Vaamabhaagi cha Vaamakarma Brihadyupuh, Trilokakramano Deepo Baliyagna Vinaashanah / Yagna Hartho Yagna Kartho Yagnesho Yagnabhuk Vibhuh, Sahasranshu Bhago Bhaanurvishwan Raviramshumaan /Thigmatejasvalpatejah Karma Saakshi Manuryamah, Devarajah Surapatir daanavaarih Sachipatih / Agnirvaayusakho Vahnir varuno Yadasaampatih, Nairruto Naadanonaadi RakshoYaksha dhanaadhipah/ Kubero Vitthavaan Vego Vasupaalo Vilaasakruth, Amrithashravanah Somah Somapaana -karah Sudhih/ Sarvoushadhikarah Srimaanishaaakaro Divaakarah, Vishaarirvishahartha cha Vishakanthadharo Girih/ Neelakantho Vrushi Rudro Bhalachandrohumaapatih, Sivah Shanto Vashi Veero Dhyani Mani cha Maanadah/ Krimikeeto Mrigavyadho Mrigaha Mrigavatsalah, Vatuko Bhairavo Baalah Kapaali Dandavigraha/ Smashaanavaasi Maamsaashi Dhushta naasi Samaanthakruth, Yoginistrasako Yogi Dhyanaastho Dhyana –vaasanah / Senaanih Sainyadah Skando Mahakaalo Ganaadhipah, Adidevo Ganapathir –vighnaha Vighnanaashanah / Ruddhisiddhiprado Danti Bhalachandro Gajaanana, Nrisimha Ugradamshtascha Nakhi Daanavanaashakrit / Prahlada posha kartha cha Sarva daitya janeswarah, Salabha Saagarh Saashi Kalpadruma Vikalpakah / Hemaado Hemabhaagi cha Himakartha Himaachalah, Bhudharo Bhumido Meruh Kailasa Sikharo Girih / Loka -lokantaro Loki Biloki Bhuvaneswarah, Dikpaalo Dikpathirdivyo Divyakaayo Jitendriah / Virupo Rupavan Ragi Nrithya Geetavisaaradah, Haha Huhu Chitraratho Devashi Naradah Sakha / Viswadevah Saadhya Devah Grithaasheeschalochalah, Kapilo Jalpako Vaadi Duttho Haihayasangharaat/ Vasishto Vaamadevascha Saptarshipravaras Bharguh, Jaamadagnyo Mahaveerah KshatriyantakaroRishih/ Hiranyakashipuschaiva Hiranyaksho Harapriyah, Agastih PulahoRakshah Paulosthyo Ravano Ghatah/ DevaariTapasastapi Vibhishana Harapriyah, Tejasvi Tejassteyji Eesho Rajapathih Prabhuh/ Daasarathi Raaghavo Ramo Raghuvamsa vivardhanah, Seetaapathih Pathih Srimaan Brahmany Bhaktavatsalah/ Sannadah Kavachi Khadgi Cheeravaasa Digambarah, Kireeti Kundali Chaapi Shankha chakri Gadadharah/ Kausalyonandanodaro Bhumishaayee Griha Priyah, Saumithro Barato Baalah Shatrughno Bharataagrajah / Lakshmanah Paraviraghnah Stree Shahaayaka Kapeeswarah, Hanuman Ruksha Raajascha Sugreevo Balinaashanah/ Dutapriyo Dutakaarihyangado Gadatham Varah, Vanadhwamsi Bani Vegee VaanaroVaananaradhvajah/ Laanguli Nakhi Damshtree hahakaro varah, Bhavasetur mahasethu bhaddha Setu Rameswarah/ Jaanaki Vallabhah Kaami Kireeti Kundali Khagi, Pundareeka Visaalaaksho Mahabaahur ghanaakrutih/ Chanchalchapalah Kaami Vaami Vaamankavasalah, Strepriyah Streeparah Strainah Striyo Vaamankavasakah/ Jithavairi Jitakaamo Jitakrodho Jitendriyah, Shantho Daantho

Dayaraamohyekastreevratha dharakah/ Saatvikah Satvasamsthano Madahaa Krodhaha Kharah,  
 Bahuraakshasa samveethah Sarva Raakshsa naashakrut/ Raavanaaree Ranakshudra dasa mastaka  
 chhedakah, Raajyakaari Yagnakaari Daata Bhokta Tapodhanah/ Ayodhyadhipatih Kaantho  
 Vaikunthokuntha vigrah, Satyavrato Vratī Surastapi Satyaphalapradah/ Sarva Saakshi Sarvagascha  
 Sarvapraanaharovyayah, Praanaschyapaanaascha Vyanodanah Samaanakah/ Naagah Krukalah  
 Kurmischa Devadattho Dhananjayah, Sarvapraanivido Vyaapi Yogadharaka –dharakah/  
 Tatvavidstatvadas tatvi Sarva Tatva Visharadah, Dhyanaato Dhyanaashaali cha Manasvi Yoga vitthamah/  
 Brahmajno Brahmado Brahmajnaata cha Brahma sambhava, Agnaatyavith vido topo Jyoti Rupo  
 Niranjana/ Jnaanado Jnaanah Gyani Guruh Sishyopadeshikah, Susishyah Sikshitah Shaali Sishya  
 Sikshaa Visharadah/ Mantrado Mantraha Mantri Tantri Tantrajanapriyah, Sanmanthro Mantravid mantri  
 Yantra mantraika bhanjanah/ Maarano Mohano Mohi Stambhocchatana krut Khalah, Bahumaayo  
 Vimaayascha Mahamayaa vimohakah/ Mokshado Bandhako Vandiyakarshanah, Hreenkaaro Beeja  
 Rupeecha Kleenkarah Keelakaadhipah / Saunkaara Shaktimaancchaktih Sarva Shakti Dhara dharah,  
 Akarokaara Omkaarascchando Gayatra Sambhavah /Vedo Vedavido Vedi Vedadhyayi sadaa Sivah,  
 Rukyajur Saamaarthaveshah Saamagaana –karokari/ Tripado Bahupaadi cha Satpathah Sarvatomukhah,  
 Praakrutah Samskruto Yogi Geetagranda prahelikah/ Saguno Vigunashcchando Nissango Viguno guni,  
 Nirguno Gunavaan Sangi Karmi Dharmicha Karmadah/ Nishkarma Kamakaami cha Nissangah Sanga  
 Varjithah, Nirlobho Nirahankaari Nishkichana Jana Priyah/ Sarva Sangakaro Raagi Sarvathyagi  
 Bahiswarah, Ekapaado Dwipaadascha Bahu paadolyalpa paadakah / Dwipadastripadah Paadi Vipaaadi  
 Padasangrahaha, Khecharo Bhucharo Bhraami Bhrungakeeta madhupriyah/ Ruthuh Samvatsaro  
 Maasoyanah Pakshoharnishaha, Krutha Tretha Kalischaiwa Dwaparascchaturakrutih / Deshakaalakarah  
 Kaalah Kula dharmah Sanaatanah, Kalaa Kaashtha Palaa NadyoThaamah Pakshah Sithasithah/ Yugo  
 Yugandharo Yogyo Yuga dharma pravartakah, Kulaacharah Kulakarah Kula Daivakarah Kuli/  
 Chaturashramachari cha Gruhastho hyathithipriyah, Vanastho Vanachaari cha Vaanaprastha  
 ashramashrami / Vatuko Brahmachaari cha Shikhasutri Kamandali, Trijati Dhyanaavaan Dhyaanī  
 Badrikaashrama vaasakruta/ Hemaadri Prabhavo Haimo Hemaraashi –himaamkarah,  
 Mahaaprasthanako Vipra Viraagi Raagavaan Gruhi/ Naranarayano Naagi Kedaarodarvigraha,  
 Gangadwara Tapassarastapovana Taponidhi/ Nidhiresha Maha Padmah Padmaakara shriyalayah,  
 Padmanabhah Pareetatma Parivrat Purushottamamah/ Paraanandaha Puraanascha Samradraja  
 viraajakah, Chakrastha Chakravaalasya Chakravarthi Niradhipah/ Ayurvedavido Vaidyo  
 Dhanvantarischa Rogahaa, Aushadhi beejasambhuto Rogi Roga Vinashakrut /  
 Chetanaschetakoyachintya Chittha Chinta Vinashakruth, Ateendrayah Sukhasparshascharchari  
 Vihangamah / Garudah Pakshirajascha Chakshusho Viataatmajah, Vishnu yaana Vimaanastho  
 Manomaya –turangamah / Bahuvrishti karo Varshi Airavanaviraavanah, Ucchauhshrava Hayogami  
 Haridashvo Haripriyah / Pravrushe Meghamaali cha Gajaratnam Purandarah, Vasudo Vasudharascha  
 Nidraaluh Pannagaasanah/ Seshashaayi Jaleshahi Vyasah Satyavati sutah, Veda Vyasakaro Vaagmi  
 Bahushaakhaa Vikalpakah / Smritih Puraana dharmarthi Paraavara vichakshanah, Sahasra sheersho  
 Sahasraakshah Sahasravadanajjvalah / Sahasrabahuh Sahasranshuh Sahasra Kiranonnatatah,  
 Bahusirshekasirsha cha Trishira Vishirah shikhi/ Jatilo Bhasmaragi cha Divyambaradharah Suchih,  
 Anurupo Brihadrupo Virupo Vikarakrithih/ Samudramaadhako Maathi Sarvaratnadaroharih, Vajra  
 vaiduryako Vajri Chintamani mahamani/ Anirmulyo Mahamulyo Nirmulyah Surabhih Sukhee, Pitaa  
 Maatha Shishurbandhurdhata Twashtararymaa Yamah / Anthastho Bahyakari cha Bahih –stho vai  
 Bahiswarah, Paavanah Paavakah Paki Sarva Bhakshi Huthashanah/ Bhagavan Bhagahaa Bhaagi  
 Bhavabhanjo Bhayankarah, Kayasthah Karyakari cha Karyakartha Karapradah/ Eka Dharma  
 Dwidharma cha Sukhi Dutyopa jeevakah, Palakas tarakas –thraatha Kaalo Mushaka bhakshakah /  
 Sanjeevano Jeevakartha Sajeevo Jivasambhavah, Shadvimshako Maha Vishnuh Sarva Vyapi  
 Maheswarah / Divyangado Muktamaali Srivatso Makaradhwajah, ShyamamurthirGhanashyamah  
 Peetavaasah Shubhaanananah/ Chiravaasa vivaasaascha Bhuta Daanava Vallabhah Amrithomritha  
 bhaagi cha Mohini Swarupa Dharakah /Divyadrishtih Samadrushtiddeva danava vamchakah,  
 Kabandhah Kethukari cha Swarbhaanuschandra taapanah / Graharaajo Grahi Graahah Sarvagraha  
 Vimochakah,daanamaanajapo homah Saanukuulah Shubhagrahah / Vighnakartha apahartha cha

Vighnanasho Vinayakah, Apakaaropakaari cha Sarva Siddhi Phala Pradah / Sevakah Samadaani cha  
 Bhedhi Dandi cha Matsari, Dayavaan Daanasheelascha Daani Yajva Pratigrahi / Haviragnicharusthaali  
 Samidascha Tilo Yavah, Hotovuddhata Shuchih Kundah Saamago Vaikruthih savah / Dravyam Paatraani  
 Sankalpo Musalo Haaranih Kushah, Deekshito Mandapo Vediryajamaanah Pashuh Krathuh / Dakshina  
 Swastimaan Swasthihaasheervadah Shubhapradah, Adivruksho Mahavruksho Devavruksho Vanaspathih  
 /Prayaago Venimaan Veni Nyagrodhaakshayo vatah, Sutirthastirthakaari cha Tirtharajo Vrathi Vratihah /  
 Vrittidaata Prudhuh Patro Dogdha Gorvatsa evacha, Ksheeram Kshiravahah Ksheeri Ksheera bhaga  
 vibhaga vith / Rajyabhaagavido bhaagi Sarva bhaaga vikalpah, Vaahano Vaahako vegi paadachari  
 Tapaswarah / Gopano Gopako Gopi Gopakanyaviharakrit, Vaasudevo Visaalaakshah Krishno  
 Gopijanapriyah/ Devakinandano Nandi Nandagopa grishaasrayi, Yashodanandano Dami Damodara  
 Ulookhali / Putanaari Trinaavartahaari Shakataprabhanjakah, Navanitapriyo Vaagmi Vatsapaalaka  
 baalaah/ Vasurupadharo Vatsi Vatsaha Dhenukaanthakrit, Vakaarirvanavaasi cha Vanakreeda  
 visaradah / Krishavarnaakrutih Kantho Venuvetra vidhaarakah, Gopamokshakaro Moksho  
 Yamunapulinaturah / Mayavatsakaro Maayi Brahma mayapamohakah, Atmasaara viharaksho  
 Gopadarakadarakah / Gochari Gopatirgopo Govardhanadharo Bali, Kaaleeya –mardanaah Kaali  
 Yamunaa hrada vihaarakah / Sankarshano Balashalyadhyo Baladevo Halaayudhah, Laangali Musali  
 Chakri Ramo Rohininandanah / Yamunaararshanodwaro Neelavaasaa Hali thadha, Revati ramano,  
 Lololo Bahumaanakarh Parah / Dhenukaari Mahaviro Gopakanya Vidushakah, Kaama maana harah  
 Kaami Gopivaasopa taskarah/ Venu vaadi cha Naadi cha Nritya geetavisharadah , Gopimohakaro  
 Gaano Raasako Rajanicharah / Divyamali Vimaalicha Vanamaala vibhushitah, Kaitabharischa  
 Kamsaarimadhuha Madhusudanah / Chaanuramardano Mallo Mushti Mushtaka Nashaka krit, Muraha  
 Modako Modi Madghana Narakanthakrit / Vidyadhyayi Bhumishayi Sudaamascha Sakha Sukhi, Sakalo  
 Vikalo Vaidyah Kalitovai Kalanidhih / Vidyashaali Vishaalicha Prtru Matru Vimokshakah, Rukmini  
 ramano ramyah Kaalindipatih Shankhaha/ Panchajanyo Maha Padmo Bahunayaka nayakah,  
 Dundhumaaro Nikumbaghna Shambara -anto Rati Priyah / Pradumna Aniruddhischa Saatvataampatir  
 arjunah, Phalgunascha Gudakeshaha Savyasaachi Dhananjayah / Kiriticha Dhanushpaanirveda  
 visharadah, Sikhandi Saatyakih Shaivyo Bhimo Bhimaparakramah / Paanchaala abhimanyus cha  
 Saubhadro Draupatipathih, Yudhishtaro Dharmaraajah Satyavaadi Suchivratih / Nakulah sahademascha  
 Karno Duryadhano Ghrini, Gaangeyosya Gadaapaanir Bhishmo Bhiradhi sutah /  
 PanchaakshurDhritaraashtro Bhaaradjoshya Gautamah, Asvatthama Vikarnakar –nascha Jahuryu  
 dhavisharadah / Shamantiko Gadi Gaalvo Vishwamitro Duraasadah, Durvaasa Durvinitischa  
 Markandeyo Maha Munih / Lomasho Nirmalo (A)lomi Dhirghayuscha Chiro(A)chari, Punarjeevamritho  
 Baavi Bhuto Bhavyo Bhavisyakah / Trikaalosya Trilingascha Trinethrar Tripathipathih, Yaadavo  
 Yaagnyavalkyas cha Yadurvamsava vardhanah / Shalyakridi Vikridascha Yadavaantha Kalih Kalih,  
 Sadyo Hridayo Daayado Dayabhaakdayi Dayi / Mahodadhirmahipushto Neela Parvata Vaasa krit,  
 Eakavarno Vivarnascha Sarva varna bahischarah / Yagna Nandi Veda Nandi Vedabaaho Balo Balih,  
 Vaidyari Baadhako Bhaago Jannadho Jagatpathih / Bhaki BhagavatoBhaagi Vibhakto Bhagavatpriyah,  
 Trigramosya Navavaranyo Grihopanishadaasanah / Shaalagraama shilatayukto Vishalo  
 Gandakaasrayah, Ritudevah Shruthah Shraavi Shrutabodhaha Shritashravaah / Kalkih Kaalakalah Kalki  
 Dushta mlecccha vinaashakrit, Kunkumi Dhavalo Dhirah Kshamaakaro Vrishakapih / Kinkarah Kinnarah  
 Kanvaha Keki Kimpurushadhipah, Ekaroma Viroma cha Bahuroma Brihatkavih/ Vrajapraharano Vajri  
 Brihaghno Vaasavaanujah, Bahutirtha karastirthah Sarva Tirtha Javeswarah/ Vyatipaato paraagascha  
 Daana Vriddhikarah Shubhah, Asankheyoprameyascha Sankhyakaaro Visankhyahah /  
 Mihikoththarakstaro Balachandrah Sudhakarah, Nirlokascha Nirakaari Brahma kaaraika kaarakah /  
 Dauhitrakah Putrakah Poutro Napta Vamsadharo dharah / Dravibhuto Dayaluscha Sarva Siddhi prado  
 manih, Aaadhaaropi Vidhaarascha Dharaasunuh Sumangalaha / Mangalo Mangalaakaaro Mangalyaha  
 Sarva Mangalah/ Naamnaam Sahasram Naamedam Vishnortulatejasah, Sarva Siddhi karam Kaamyam  
 Punyam Hariharatmakam/ Yah Pathethpratrudhaya Shuchi bhutva Samaahitah, Yaschedam  
 Shrunuyannityam Naro Nischala Maanasah, Trisandhyam Shraddhayah yuktah Sarva Paapapaih  
 Pramuchyatey/

The above Vishnu Sahasranaama bestows all kinds of ‘Siddhis’ (Accomplishments) and fulfills all desires. Those who read or hear the ‘Stotra’ with concentration and earnestness during Three Sandhyas a day would for certain become free from past and present sins. After reading the Stotra, a Devotee should sincerely greet Bhagavan Vishnu and read: Sahasraakshah Sahasraanghrih Sahasravadanobjjalah, Sahasranaamanthaakshah Sahasrabhuja the Namaha / (Source: Avanti Khanda of Skanda Purana)

### Vishnu Maaya-Narada Episodes and experiences

Narada Maharshi and Veda Vyasa exchanged their own experiences about the play of ‘Maha Maya’ or ‘Prakriti’ (The Great Illusion) in the Hermitage of Vyasa on the banks of River Saraswati. Vyasa narrated in passing about the incidents relevant to his family as to how his father was enticed with his mother viz. Parashara Maharshi and Satyavati a fisher woman; how his mother Satyavati insisted to sleep with his dead younger brother to beget children to uphold the family royalty; how he himself got tempted with an Apsara called Ghrithachi and gave birth to Suka Muni; how intensely he loved his son and wanted him to become a house holder; how frustrated was he till Janaka as ‘Videha’ (Body-less) was able to become a Grihasti; how elated that he felt when finally his son agreed to be a Grihasti and finally how distraught his son attained Salvation!

It was then the turn of Narada to narrate his autobiography and how Maha Maya had influenced his own life. Narada (‘Nara’ stands for knowledge and ‘Da’ stands for Giver or Provider) is popular as a ‘Loka Sanchari’ or a Universal Tourist. He is also popular as ‘Kalaha Priya’ or as an instigator but his end-objective would always be for ‘Loka Kalyana’ or for Universal Benefit. Even at the time of generation as a Manasika Putra or Mind-Born son of Brahma, Narada was engulfed with Maya as Brahma asked the son to become a house-holder and procreate progeny but Narada refused flatly; he said : would there be a fool to leave the outstanding nectar of service to Krishna and take to the drink of poison called Samsara! Brahma was terribly disappointed and visibly angry especially since the earlier brothers of Narada viz. Sanaka-Sanandana-Sanatana and Sanat Kumaras also politely refused to become ‘Grihasties’ and Narada’s reaction was more assertive disregard of his consideration to a father! Brahma then cursed Narada to become a yogi; a quixotic, glibly and dreamy person with frivolous nature; as an indulger in ‘Shringar’ (Romance) and Music; a Veena Player, a talkative wanderer; as the son of a servant maid, and after repeated births finally he would return to Brahma and become a Supreme Gyani! Narada was taken aback by such lashing of curses from Brahma and having requested the father to bless him to be a Jatismara or with memory of previous births and a staunch devotee of Narayana, gave a return curse to Brahma too that he would not be worshipped in the entire Universe by way of Srotra, Kavacha, Mantra , Puja, Vrata or Agni Homa for the next three Kalpas!

Narada was reborn as a Gandharva Prince named Upabarhana -literally meaning as one with Devotion. He was married to fifty daughters of another Gandharva King and the eldest of his wives was Malavati an illustrious Pativrata. He however had a flimsy fancy for Rambha and for this indiscretion Brahma cursed him to terminate his life by the yogic of death; thus he practised Yoga by breaking Six Chakras (Muladhara, Swadhistana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddha and Agjna) and Sixteen Nadis (Ida, Sushumna, Medha, Pingala, Praanahaarini, Sarva Jnanaprada, Manah Samyamani, Vishuddha, Niruddha, Vayasancharini, Jnana jrumbharana karini, Sarva Pranahara and Punarjeevanakarini) and died the Yoga way! Malavati got furious that on a flimsy cause of fancying Rambha, Brahma gave the disproportionate penalty of death to Narada and protested to Devas and Tri Murtis that she would immolate in Homagni.

Vishnu realised how powerful a curse of Maha Pativrata like Malavati could be and assumed the form of a Brahmana Vidyarthi enquiring of Malavati whether the death of her husband was due to physical nature and if so he could be revived by the means of Ayurved; or else if the death was due to Yoga, then too there would be ways of reviving him the Yoga way! As the death was due to Yoga, the Brahmana boy prayed to Agni and the jatharagini of the Gandharva was kindled; Kama Deva gave back to the latter's desires and aspirations; Vayu gave back his breathing; Surya restored his eye-sight; Vani his power of speech; Dharma revived his Gyan and Brahma and Vishnu revived the Gandharva Narada finally.

Another episode of Narada's life related to Daksha Prajapati's curse to him to become a Grihasti or a house holder as Narada instructed the Prajapati's progeny of Haryasvas to avoid Samsara or family life. Narada and a Devarshi Parvata undertook a journey to Bhuloka once and due to the 'chaturmaasa' of the rainy season halted at King Sanjaya as their valued guest. The King asked his unmarried daughter Damayanti to supervise the daily needs of the Rishis for their worship. In course of time Narada developed a fancy for Damayanti since their common interest was music. Indeed Narada was an expert *par excellence*. He had his own musical instrument and mastered the art of music, dance and the rest of the fine arts. Little wonder that Damayanti went into raptures in the company of Narada Parvata Maharshi noticed visible change in Narada and the Princess and confronted Narada who confirmed his longing for the Princess. Parvata Maharshi got annoyed, cursed Narada to get a monkey face and left the Kingdom out of disgust. Meanwhile Damayanti- Narada romance prospered as both were lovers of music. Damayanti argued that Kinnaras had horse faces too but were music experts par excellence; having convinced her parents thus she married Narada. After a few years Parvata Maharshi paid a visit to the Kingdom and finding that Narada- Damayanti couple were happy, withdrew the curse of Narada's monkey face as the couple was happy. Such was the impact of Brahma's curse to Narada that he should be a Grihasti and no longer a Brahmachari.

Yet another Story of Narada was about his womanhood! Lord Vishnu and Narada were exchanging views about the impact of Maya and indirectly mentioned that he saved himself from it excepting that he was cursed by Brahma and Daksha and had problems. Vishnu asked for his vehicle Garuda and suggested to Narada to go for a drive across the sky. He stopped Garuda at the City of Kannauj and desired that he and Narada could refresh bathing in a Lake. Narada kept his clothes, Kamandalu, and Veena on the banks of the Lake and dipped first in the water. The moment he dipped and came out, Narada turned into a charming and youthful maiden not knowing his memory and identity. Vishnu quietly slipped out along with Narada's personal belongings and disappeared. Meanwhile, King of Kannauj arrived at the Lake for a swim and was overwhelmed with the outstanding beauty of the woman (Narada) and asked her antecedents; she did not know but he took her to his Capital and married her as per Vedic tradition and named her Sowbhagya Sundari. The King declared her as the Principal Queen and their marital life was a total success and gave birth to twelve sons. But as there was a terrible war all the sons were killed and the Queen and King reached a lake to observe the obsequies of the sons and the Queen too had a dip in the Sarovara and she emerged from the water as Narada! Such was the power of Maha Maya that Vishnu taught to Narada who learnt its impact the hard way! The Basic Laws prescribed by Maha Maya Bhagavati as enforced by the Trinity and their deputies and the actions are as per the mix of their Actions are performed as per their Gunas in various proportions as per their 'Prarabdha' or fate ! That was the lesson for Narada!

Vishnu Maya was also narrated in Bhavishya Purana: Yudhishtara asked Shri Krishna to elucidate on 'Vishnu Maya' or the delusion which human beings are often subjected to as they were unable to resist the temptations. Bhagavan Krishna replied that in the past Brahmarshi Narada too put a similar query and that he replied like-wise. He asked Narada to hold Krishna's little finger and follow what Krishna had to witness. There was an old Brahmana (Krishna himself!) called Yagna Sharma who had all the requisite accompaniments like a tuft, Yagnopaveeta, Kamandalu, Mriga charma or deer skin on which to seat, Kusha grass on his fingers and reciting Vedas. Narada visited Jambu dwipa with the scene of Yagna Sharma. The Brahmana visited the banks of River Vedavati in Vidisha Nagar; there was a Vaishya called Seerabhadra and the Vaishya extended all courtesies to the Brahmana and politely invited him for lunch. Bhagavan Krishna in the disguise of the Brahmana smiled and blessed the Vaishya saying that his business and farm-work might flourish. From there both Krishna and Narada moved on to Veni Village on the banks of Ganges and met a very poor Brahmana called Goswami. Krishna in disguise along with Narada too in disguise told the Brahmana that they were coming to that Place from a very far off area and would like to be their guest for food, shelter and night halt. Next morning while leaving, Krishna told his host that let his farm not produce enough food and let his family not secure children!! Narada wondered that while Krishna did not accept the Vaishya's food, nor his home comfort, but still he blessed him to let his business and farming flourish; but in the case of the miserably poor Brahmana with no recourse to fall back still managed to make the guests fairly well but Bhavan Krishna instead of blessing him to let his farming flourish and so should his family, did not bless the Brahmana at all! Krishna replied to Narada that while the well-to-do Vaishya did not have to exert to provide excellent food and luxurious bed to sleep in, where as the poor Brahmana went out of the way to provide maximum possible adjustments; the Vaishya deserved a blessing for more prosperity but the poor Brahmana dereserved Mukti but not worldly gains!

#### Special implication of Ekadashi Vrata-the legend of King Rukmangada

As the 'Purvi Bhag' of Narada Purana was concluded in the form of Questions of Narada Maharshi and Replies from Sanaka Kumara brothers, the narration by Suta Muni to the Sages headed by Shounaka Muni was successfully terminated. Then Maharshi Vasishtha took over the narration of 'Uttari Bhag' of the Purana, as was stated by Maharshi Narada-the author of the Purana. Maharshi Vasishtha underlined the special connotation of Ekadashi Vrata to King Mandhata of Ikshavaku Clan and the ancestor of Lord Shi Rama. As Ekadashi was stated to be the Special Day of Vishnu, observance of 'Upavasa', 'Puja' and 'Vrata' on this day ought to be a pre-requisite to qualify the abolition of all the sins of a devotee. In fact, the advantage of performing the Vrata in full faith and high dedication as prescribed would secure the fruits of executing several Ashwamedha and Rajasuya Yagas, besides avoiding Yama Darshana! It is neither the Sacred Ganga, Gaya, Kashi, Pushkar, Kurukshetra, Narmada, Devika, Yamuna and Chandrabhaga that are stated to be more momentous than the Vrata. To signify the import of the Vrata, the Story of *King Rukmangada* was mentioned; he was in the habit of publicising through announcements on elephant tops the fact that the specific day was that of Ekadashi Vrata and all the citizens must observe fast, Puja, and penances as prescribed. The announcement was to alert that all the citizens in the age groups between eight and eighty five years ought to observe the fast and puja on that day and whosoever ate food and did not worship Vishnu would be liable for heavy punishment. Thus since a law was enforced, most of the citizens made a bee-line to Vishnu-dham and Lord Yama Dharma Raja became free and Chitrugupta was jobless, as the paths leading to Yamaloka which were otherwise over-crowded had very few sinners in thin streams. Maharshi Narada made a visit to Yama loka and enquired of Dharma Raja as to why the hells which were highly noisy and bristling with tremendous activity became suddenly quiet and motionless! Dharma Raja informed Narada that King Rukmangada enforced 'Upavas' and Puja on

Ekadashi days extended to Dwadashis also. As prompted by Narada, Dharma Raja accompanied by Chitrugupta reached Lord Brahma and complained that King Rukmangada was creating obstacles in the discharge of their duties and as per the Book of Instructions in Naraka, those who did not discharge their responsibilities even receiving their remunerations and enjoying the benefits of their postings would become worms; those officials who were corrupt and negligent of duties would suffer in Narakas for hundred 'Kalpas' of time; those who perform a deed by cheating the Master would serve as mice in the house of the Master; and those officials who misuse the services of subordinates for their own personal benefit would become cats. In the background of the Rule Book, King Rukmangada was placing hardship in the discharge of the duties of the Officials; so complained Dharma Raja and Chitrugupta. Lord Brahma replied that after all even by saying one word of 'Hari' by the tip of a person's tongue, the Punya accrued would surpass that of Tirtha Yatras to Kurushetra and Kasi; if a person had done the Ekadasha Vrat then 'Yagna Phalas' would be surely accrued and as such the actions taken by King Rukmangada were worthy of emulation, but not of condemnation. Yama Raja too was basically agreeable, as Narayana Himself involved in this case. To overcome this peculiar situation of encouraging King Rukmangada's efforts to popularise the 'Ekadasha Vrata' and at the same time ensure that Dharma Raja's duties are not stalled, Brahma created a charming woman called 'Mohini' who enticed the King Rukmangada while seated near a famous Shiva Linga on top of Mandarachala in the Kingdom, singing a highly enchanting lyric. The King who excelled in Vishnu's worship and even succeeded that the out flow of his citizens to Vaikuntha far exceeded to that of Yamaloka asked his son Dharmanga to share the responsibilities of Kingship, but tutored him well in following the principles of Dharma, especially in performing the Ekadasha Vrata. He however conceded that there could be exceptions to observe the Vrata such as expectant mothers, Kumari Kanyas, persons suffering from diseases or with disturbed minds due to reasons beyond their control. Meanwhile, with the arrival of Mohini on the scene, King Rukmangada lost control of his senses and decided to marry her at any cost. She agreed but said that although she might not ask for anything including his entire Kingdom, the only condition however was that whatever she might ask for must be instantly agreed to by him. The King stated that he would never disagree to whatever she desired and as he belonged to the illustrious Ikshvaku Vamsa he would never lie in his life time. Mohini asserted that she was the daughter of Brahma and would not like to be wedded without 'Veda Sakshi'. On way to his Capital along with Mohini, a lizard came under the feet of the horse on which the King and Mohini were seated. The lizard was crushed and was about to die but talked in a female human voice and requested the King to bestow the 'Punya' that he earned from the Vijaya Dwadashi Vrata as earned by him recently so that she could attain Salvation; Mohini did not like the entire incident and asked the King to travel forthwith without wasting time; the merciful King ignored Mohini's wish and donated the Punya of the Dwadashi Vrata to the lizard; the latter narrated the account of her previous birth and used 'Vashikarana Mantra' so that her husband was under thumb always and hence her birth as a lizard yet with the memory of her previous life. On reaching his Palace, the son Dharmanga welcomed the new couple who were married, and openly conveyed his request to the father's earlier wives including his mother that whatever was instructed by Mohini should be considered as the King's personal instructions. But, there were quite a few personal insinuations that Mohini subjected to the King to show him down but he suffered. Both the Prince Dharmanga and his mother cooperated with Mohini whole-heartedly since they did not desire to hurt the King. But the blow came when Mohini insisted that the King should not fast on Ekadashi days! The King begged Mohini not to insist to do so since he observed the Vrata all through his life and in fact enforced a law among his subjects who adopted the habit through the entire Kingdom. There are so many sins like 'sambhog' on Amavasya, hair-cut on Chaturdashi and use of oil on Shashthi which are balanced by fasting on Ekadashi; giving wrong evidences, cheating the management of Establishments being served, obstructing wedding proposals of unmarried Kanyas, ingratitude, breaking promises of charity to Brahmanas, 'Manikut' or selling fake jewellery against market prices, 'Tulakut' or incorrect use of 'Sensitive Balances' while selling material, 'Kanyakut' or arranging a blemished girl, etc. are too excused by Ekadashi fasting. But Mohini was unconvinced and insisted against Ekadashi Vrata and blamed the King to break the promises to her at their wedding time. She even argued with several Brahmanas and Rishis like Gautam that only Sanyasis or widows are justified to undertake fastings on Ekadashi. King

Rukmangada's senior wife Sandhyavali too tried to convince Mohini not to insist on husband's observing Ekadashi Vrata / taking food against his wishes and cited the examples of 'Pativratas'. In turn, Mohini asked Sandhyavali that in case the King did not agree to observe the Ekadashi Upavas, then she (Sandhyavali) might as well ask the King to lift his sword to cut the Prince Dharmangada's head and throw into her (Mohini's) lap! The son Dharmangada happily agreed to the proposal of getting killed rather than letting his father down and forcing him to break the Ekadashi Vrata. As the King was rather prepared to cut his own son's head, Mohini became unconscious. Just at that time, Bhagavan Vishnu appeared and bestowed Vaikuntha not only to the King, but to the Prince and the Queen Sandhyavali for their firm convictions and steadfastness to cling to Virtues as great and memorable examples to the world thus vindicating the magnitude and high value of the Ekadashi Vrata to the posterity. The hapless woman Mohini when regained consciousness found the dead bodies of the King, Sandhyavali and Dharmangada and was totally shocked and almost deranged, even as the Purohit of Rukmangada sprinkled water from his vessel and cursed her that she would be burnt into ashes. Vayu Deva refused to take away her soul which when reached on the path of heavens and even hells, her entry was denied. Her tormented soul was refused entry into the Patala and other lower lokas too. Finally, the Raja Purohit of Lord Brahma, called Vasudeva, took pity on the devastated, shamefully shaken and highly repentant soul of Mohini, revived her human form and sought to provide a fresh lease of life as a part of reformation process by describing the 'Mahimas' of the soul purifying Ganga 'Snaan' and observance of 'Nakta Vratas', Shiva Pujas, Shivaradhana on successive Purnima and Amavasya fastings, and Tirtha Yatras to Gaya for Pindadaanas for five days, Avamukti Kshetra, Purushottama Kshetra in Utkala Desha for darshan of Bhagavan Krishna, Balarama and Subhadra, darshanas of Bhagavan Nrisimha, Sweta Madhava, Matsya Madhava, Kalpa Vriksha, Prayaga Kshetra, Kuru Kshetra, Ganga Dwara (Hari Dwara), Badarikashrama, Siddhanatha Kamakshi, Prabhasa Kshetra, Pushkara, Panchavati, Pubdaripura, Gokarna, Lakshmanachala, Setu Kshetra, Narmada, Avanti, Mathura and Brindavana; ultimately Mohini having performed different kinds of 'Prayaschittas' (atonements), performed 'Mantra Yukta Yamuna Pravesha' or dissolution into the Holy River of Yamuna along with appropriate recitation of Mantras. Such was the story of belittling Ekashi Vrata! [ Narada Purana]

#### Vishnu Puja on Shukla Ekadashis and Vishnu Panjara Stotra

Performance of Vishnu Puja on every Shukla Ekadashi called Akhanda Vrata followed by the Recital of Vishnu Panjara Stotra is stated to be an important component of Dharmik Life. This routine requirement needs to be followed by men and women of any 'Varna' with fasting and 'Baahyaantara Shuchi' or cleanliness of body and mind and by Puja with 'Avahana' (Invocation) –Panchaamrita Snaana with Ghee, Gandhodaka, Fruit Pulp, Honey and Curd; Vastra, Yagnopa -veeta, Pushpa, Phala, Dhupa, Deepa, Naivedyas, Taambula, Vaadya, Mantra Pushpa, Sangeeta, Japa, Homa and Stotra. The Stuti should be by way of Vishnu Panjara Stotra as follows: *Namostutey Padmanabha Padmaadhava Mahadyutey, Dharmarth Kaama Mokshaani Twa -akhandaani Bhavantumey/ Vikaasi Padmapatraaksha Yathaakhandosi Sarvatah, Tena Satyena Dharmaadyaa Akhandaah Santu Keshava/ Namonamastey Govinda gruhya Sudarshanam, Praachyam rakshasva maam Vishno twaamaham sharanam gatah/ Gadaam Kaumodikeem gruhya Padmanaabhaamita dyutey, Yaamyam rakshasva maam Vishno twaamaham sharanam gatah/ Halamaadaaya sounandam Namastey Purushottama, Praateekshaam raksha mey Vishno bhavantam sharanam gatah/ Musalam Shaantanam gruhya Pundarikaaksha rakshamaam, Uttarasyaam Jagannaatha bhavantam sharanamgatah/ Shaarangamaadaaya cha Dhanurastram Naraayanam harey, Namastey Raksha Rakshoghnam Ishanyaayaam sharanam gatah/ Panchajanyam Mahaashankhamantarbodhyam cha pankajam, Pragrahya rakshamaam Vishno Aagneyaam Yagna sukara/ Charma Suryashatam gruhya khadgamchandramasam tathaa, Nairrutyaam maam cha rakshasva Divya Murtey Nrikesatin/ Vijayanteem pragrahya twam Srivatsam kanthabhushanam, Vaavyaam raksha maam Deva Ashvaseersha Namostutey/ Vainateyam samaaruha Antarikshey Janaandana, Maam twam raksaajita sadaa Namastey twa paraajita/ Vishaalaaksham Samaaruha rakshamaam twam rasaataley, Akuupaara Namastubhyam Mahamoha Namotutey/*

*Karasheershaangagghni parveshu tathaashta baahu panjaram, Krutwaa rakshaswa maam Deva Namastey Purushottama/ (Salutations Padmmanabha Lakshmiapati!*

With your blessings, may our Life's objectives of Dharma-Artha-Klama-Moksha be accomplished; as you are spread out in all the directions, our desires of Dharma-Artha- Kama-Moksha be fulfilled endlessly. Govinda! Do kindly take up your Sudarshana Chakra and protect me from Eastern Side as I am your refugee; Mahadyuti Padmanabha! Do kindly pick up your Koumudi Gada/ mace and save my Southern side as I seek your shelter; Purushottama ! Do take up your Saunanda namak ' Hala'/ Plough and protect me from the western side; Pundarikaaksha! I beg you to save my Musala named Shaantana and safeguard my Northern side; do kindly select your Saaranga Dhanush and Narayanaastra to shield my Ishaana Kona as I am defenceless; Yagna Varaha Vishno! I implore you to take up the renowned Panchajanya Shankhu / conchshell as also your Lotus Flower and disperse my enemies from the Agneya Side; Maha Nrisimha! Please lift up your Chandra naamaka shield and Surya naamak Khadga and guard my Nirruti direction; Hayagriva Deva! Please sport your Garland named Vijayanti and Srivatsa naamaka necklace to defend my Vayavya Kona; Vainateya! Do alight your Garuda vahana and assure my safety from 'Antariksha'/ Sky; by assuming the Maha Kurma Rupa, Bhagavan! Kindly protect me from the Rasatala side too so that nothing untoward could happen to me from down-under; Vishaalaaksha! Maha Moha! Save me with Eight of Your endless hands, do create an Ashta-dasha or Eight Direction Safety Cage for me assuring Total Shield to me). This Sacred Vishnu Panjara was stated to have been recited by Mahadeva Shankara to provide a Total Cover of Protection to Devi Katyayani Durga in the context of the destruction of Mahishasura, Raktabeeja and other countless Asuras. [ Vaamana Purana]

'Vishnu Panjara Stotra' for providing 'Raksha' (Safety)

This Stotra is popular as a means of securing protection and well being, besides functioning as a shield while facing any impending danger or risk as also to accomplish success and victory:

*Vishnuh praacyaam sthitaschakri Harir-dakshinato Gadee, Prateetchaam Shaarangadhruj  
Vishnurjishnuh khadgee mamottarey/ Hrishikesho Vikoneshu tatcchidreshu Janaardana, Krodarupee  
Herirbhumow Narasimheswrarey mama/ Kshuraantamamalam chakram bhramatyetat Sudarshanam,  
Asyaamshumaalaa dushprekshya hantum pretanishaacharaan/ Gadaa cheyam Sahasraarchih pradeepta  
paavakojjvalaa, Raksho bhuta pisaachaanaam Daakineenaam cha naashani/ Sharanga visphurjitah  
chaiva Vasudevasya madrapuun, Tiryangmanushya kushmaanada preeytaadeena hantwa seshatah/  
Khangadhharojjwala jyotsnaana nirdhuta ye samaahitaah, tey yaantu shaamyataam sadyo Garudeneva  
Pannagaah/ Yey Kushmaandasthaa Yaksha ye Daityaa ye Nishaacharaah, Pretaa vinaayakaah kruraa  
Manushyaa Jaambhagaah Khagaah/ Simhaadayascha pashavo danda suukaascha pannagaah, Sarvey  
bhavantu tey sowmyah Krishnashankharavaaritaah/ Chittavrittiharaa ye mey ye janaah smriti  
haarakaa, Balowjasaam cha hartaarascchaayaa vibhramschakaascha ye/ Ye Chopabhoga hartaaro ye  
cha lakshana naasakaah, Kushmaandastey pranashyantu Vishnu chakra ravaahitaah/ Buddhi swasthyam  
Mah swasthyam swasthya –maindriyakam tathaa, Mamaastu Deva devasya Vaasudevasya keertanaat/  
Pushthey purastaanmama Dakshinottarey vikonatchaastu Janaardano Haarih, Tameedyameeshaana  
manantamacyhutam Janaardanam pranipatito na seedati/ Yathaa param Brahma Haristathaa paro  
Jagatswarupascha sa eva Keshavah, Satyena teynaachyuta naama keertanaat pranashyetu trividham  
mamaashubham/*

( In the Eastern side is Chakradhaari Vishnu and in the Southern side is Gadaadhaari Shrihari. Bhagavaan Hrishikesh is protecting in the 'Dikkonas' or side-angles, Janaardana is situated in the middle portion. Varaaha dhaari Shrihari is protecting on the Bhumi and Bhagavan Nrisimha shields on the Shy. In the other side-lines Sudarshana Chakra is constantly on the move and provides guard all over. If 'Pretas' or 'Nishaacharas'-the night-long tormentors- seek to bother, they would find it impossible to withstand the

extreme dazzle of the Sudarshana Chakra. Bhagavan Shri Hari's 'Gadaa' (Mace) called Kaumudi sparkles with thousands of highly explosive rays. These sizzling rays destroy Rakshasas, Bhutas, Piscachas and Daakinis instantly. Bagavan Vaasudeva's Sharanga Dhanush creates such deafening and reverberating sound waves that 'Shatru Bhuta Manushya' (most cruel humans), 'Kushmandas', 'Pretas', 'Tiryagyoni' Praanis or these frightening species on way back to be reborn again are extinguished at once. Those named or unnamed enemies to the devotees would get flooded in the tempestuous flows of overwhelming sparks of the 'Khadga' (Sword) of Shri Hari, in the same manner as Garuda Deva exterminates serpents. All the species that seek to torture Vishnu's devotees-be they Kushmanadas, Yakshas, Rakshasas, Pretas, Viyayakas, cruel human beings, hunting birds of huge or miniscule sizes, animals like lions or tigers, snakes, or of any evil spirits, would get overpowered by the 'Shankha naada' of Bhagava. May Vishnu Kirtana provide me 'Buddhi', 'Man' and physical control and bestow 'Swasthya labha' or multi-sided equilibrium to my inner- conciousness and purify my Soul to be worthy of the grace of Bhagavan Vishnu. Dedicated Bhaktaas are never let down by the most merciful 'Paramaatma'; May this 'Vishnu Panjara' shield me from wordly distress and lead me on to the Sacred Path of Mukti. [ Agni Purana]

### Maarjana /Apaamaarjana Stotras for Raksha to self and others

Agni Deva suggested to Narada Muni the following Stotras to provide safety to human beings for themselves and for others as also mitigate difficulties and bestow happiness:

*Om namo Paramaarthyaaya Purushaaya Mahaatmaaney, Aruupa Bahu Rupaaya Vyapiney  
Paramaatmaney/ Nishkalmashaaya Shraddhaaya Dhyaanayoga rataayacha, Namaskrutya Pravakshaami  
yat tatsidhyatu mey vachah/ Varaahaaya Nrisimhaaya Vamanaaya Mahatmaney, Namaskrutya  
Pravakshaami Yat tatsudyhatu meyvacha/ Trivikramaaya Raamaaya Vaikunthaaya Naraaya cha,  
Namaskruthya pravakshaami yat tat siddhyatu mey vacha/*

( Om Paramaarth Swarupa, Prathama Purusha, Mahatma, Niraakaara, Sahsra Rupa, the All Pervading Paramaatma, the Blemishless and the epitome of Purity, Serenity and ever worthy of meditation: may this inner voice of mine be truthful that my protection is always assured by you; Varaha Deva, Narasiha Deva and Vamana Deva, may my fortification be assured; may Trivikrama Deva, Rama and Vaikunthaya, my sincere salutations to you and may my wellbeing be always assured.)

*Varaaha Naraimhesha Vaamanesha Trivikrama, Hayagriva Sarvesha Hrishikesha  
Haraashubham/Aparaajita Chakraadyaischaturbhih Paramaardhaih, Akhanditaanu bhaavaaistwam  
Sarvadushta haro bhava/Haraamukasya duritam sarvam cha kushalam kuru, Mrithyu  
bandhaarthibhayadam durishtasya cha yatphalam/*

(Bhagavan Varaha, Nrisimha, Vaamaneswara, Trivikrama, Hayagrivesha, Sarvesha, Hrishikesha! The Unconquerable Parameshwara! May all my 'Ashubhas' or inauspicious happenings be demolished! May your 'Chakra of endless energy and other most powerful 'Aayudhaas' wipe out my enemies! May my illnesses and bodily afflictions be obliterated and my sins be destroyed, while bestow upon me 'Sarva Kushalam' (total propitiousness) and Kshema (safety). Deva! Provide me with the 'Phala' of yagnas devoid of imperfections and indemnify me from untimely death, ill health, shackles of any kind, ill-omens, and frights.)

*Paraabhidhyaana sahitaih prayuktam cha abhichaarikam, Garasparsha mahaaroga prayogam jarayaa  
jara/ Om namo Vasudevaaya namah Krishnaaya khadginey, Namah Pushkara netraaya Keshavaayadi  
chakriney/ Namah Kamalakinchatkapeeta nirmala vaasasey, Mahahavir puraskandhadhrushta  
chakriney/ Danshtrodhrutakshiti bhrutey Trayee Mutrimatey namah, Mahayagna Varaahaaya  
Shobhaaganka shaayaney/Taptahaataka kshaantadijwalatpaavaka lochana, Vajraadhika sprasha Divya*

*Simha Namostutey/ Kaashapaayaati hraswaaya Rugyajushssaama bhushiney, Tubhyam Vaamana  
Rupaayaakramatey gaam Namoh Namah/*

(Those who have the evil-feelings of harming others by way of performing ‘Abhichaarika Karmas’ or negative deeds such as administering poisonous food / drinks ought to be obliterated and their misdeeds be retaliated. Vasudeva, Khadgadhari, Chakradhari, Kamalanayana and ‘Peetambaradhara’, who wears excellent clothes of saffron colour, please accept my salutations. You are the Yagna Varaha and Veda Vighraha who had saved ‘Prithvi’ and Vedas by your powerful ‘damshtas’ (tusks); You are Narasimha who had piercing and dazzling eyes and iron-like sharp nails by whose mere touch was slaughtered the invincible demon, Hiranya –kashipu; You are Vamana Deva the embodiment of Rug-Yajur and Sama Vedas and manifested as the Virat Swarupa who occupied the Three Worlds to facilitate the re-installation of Devas in Swarga and to bring the Universe to Order as Trivikrama)

*Varaahasesha drishtaani sarva paapa phalaani vai, Marda Marda Mahaa Damshtara Marda Mardacha  
tatphalam/ Narasimha karaalasya danta praanataanalajjwala, Bhanja bhanja ninaadena dushtaan  
pashyaarti- naashana/Rugyajussaama garbhaabhi raavirbhavar Vaamanarupadhruk, Prashaam Sarva  
Duhkhaani nayatvasya Janaardana/ Ekaahikam Dwayahikam cha tatha Tridivasam Jwaram,  
Chaturthikam tathaatyugram tathaiva satatam jwaram/ Doshothyam sannipaatestham tathaivaganthukam  
jwaram, Shamamnayaashu Govindachhindhi chhindhyasya Vedanaam/*

( Varaharupi Narayana, please devastate all kinds of dangerous diseases born out of long standing sins; Maha Varaha! Vikata Nrisimha! Do ravage the enemies who occupied my fortunes and fate for long; Vamana deha dhaari! Being the embodiment of all ‘confidential Tatwas, kindly provide solace and alleviate sufferings of physical and psychological nature to human beings. Govinda! Humanity is suffering from descriptions of various diseases like Tridoshaja, Sannipaataja, Agantuka, Ekaahika, Dwaahika, Traahika, Atyanta Ugra, and so on. Please extinguish these and other diseases, Parama Deva!

*Netra duhkham Shiro duhkham duhkhamchodara sambhavaam, Anishwaasamatishwaasham paritaapam  
savepathum/ Gudaghraanaanghri rogaanscha kushthu rogaamstatha kshayam, kaamalaamdeesthatha  
rogaanprameyaamchaati daarunam/ Bhagandara –atisaaraamscha mukharogaamscha valguleem,  
Ashmareem mutrakrucchaamscha rogaanaamscha daarunaan/ ye vaataprabhaavaa rogaa ye cha pittha  
samudbhavaah, Kaphodbhavaascha ye kechid yechaanye saamnipaatikaah/ Aagantukaaschaye rogaa  
lutaavisphotakaadayah, the sarvam prashamamyantu Vaasudevasya kirtanaan/ Vilayam yaantutey  
sarvey Vishnorucchaaraneyacha, Kshayam gacchaantu Govinda naacchaarana bhashajaat, Nashyati  
sakalaa rogaah Satyam Satyam vadaamyaham/*

(May those persons suffering from eyes, head, stomach, breathing, sweating, shivering, mulavyadhi, nasal problems, foot diseases, leprosy, kshaya, kaamalaadi roga, bhagandar, atisaara, facial problems, valguli, stones, kidneys, and so on be cured. By virtue of Vaasudeva Sankeertana, all kinds of Vaataja, Pittaja, kaphaja, sannipaataja, Aagantuka, lutaa (Makari), Visphota (boils) etc. could be cured by the swing of Suarshana chakra. By taking the names of Achyuta, Ananta and Govinda, various diseases would be destroyed indeed!

*Sthaavaram jangamam vaapi krutrimam chaapi yadvisham, Dantodbhavam nakhabhavamakaasha  
prabhavam visham/ Lootikaadi prabhavam yaccha vishamanyatu duhkhadam, Shamam nayatu tatsarvam  
Vaasudevasya keertanam/ Grahaan Pretagrahaamschaapi tathaa vai daakinigrahaan, Betaalaamsha  
Pishaachaamscha Gandharvaan Yaksha Raakshasaan/ Shakuniputanaadyaamscha tathaa  
Vainaayakaangrahaan, Mukhamandeem tathaa kruraam Revatim Vrudbharevatim/ Vriddhika –  
akhyaanangrahaams tatha Matrugrahaanapi, Baalaasya Vishnoscharitam hantu Balagrahaanimaan/  
Vriddhaascha ye Grahaah kechida ye cha Balagrahaah kwachit, Narasimhaya tey drushtyaa dagdhaa ye*

*chaapi Youvaney/ Sataakaraala vadano Naarasimho Mahabalah, Grahaanaseshaannihsheshaan karotu jagato hitah/ Narasimha Mahasiha Jjwaamaalajjwalaanana, Grahaanaseshaan Sarvesha khaada Khaadogni lochana/*

(Bhagavan Vaasudeva's Samkeertana would certainly appease several types of poisons like Sthavara, Jangama, Kritima, Dantodhbhuta, Nakhodbhuta, Aakaashodbhuta and Lutikadbyotpanna varieties. Kirtanas on 'Bala Krishna charitra' would decimate Balagrahas like Grahas, Preta Grahas, Dakini Grahas, Vetaals, Pishachaas, Gandharvas, Yakshas, Rakshasas, Shakuni-Putana Grahas, Vinayaka grahas, Mukha mandikaas, Cruel Revatis, Vrudbarevati, Vrudhbhika graha and Matru Grahas. May Bhagavan Narasimha's extreme vision burn off Vriddha, Bala and Yuva Grahas into ashes. Maha Nrisimha! Do devastate all the Dushta Grahas with your piercing looks and provide us liberation.

*Ye rogaa ye Mahotpaataa Yadvisham ye Mahagrahah, Yaanicha krurabhutaani graha -peedaashcha daarunaah/ Shastra khatshu ye doshaa Jwaalaagardhabhakaadayah, Taani Sarvaani Sarvaatmaa Paraamaatmaa Janaardana/ Sarva dushtaanirakshaamsi kshayam yaantu Vibhishana, Praachyaam Pratechyaam cha dishi Dakshinottarasthaa/ Rakshaam karotu Sarvaatmaa Narasimha swagarjithaih, Divi Bhuvantarikshye cha Pushthitah paarsyetogratah/ Rakshaam karotu Bhagavaan Bahurupee Janardana/ Yatha Vishnurjagatsarwam sadevasura maanusham, tey na Satyena drushtani shamasya vrajantu vai/*

(Vasudeva! Do assume which ever Form that you intend to; but destroy all kinds of diseases, utpataas, poison, Maha Grahas, Bhutas, Graha Peedas, 'Shastra kshata' or surgery-oriented tribulations, burns, and any other difficulties. May Sarvatma Nrisimha guard our Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern directions with his frightening roars; May Janardana protect us in Bhuloka, Swarga loka, 'Antariksha' and all that one could not be perceived by us! May Bhagavan Vishnu who is the Swarupa of the entire Universe including Devas, Daityas and human beings provide shield to one and all and safeguard us all from all kinds of physical and other evils and diseases!)

*Aada Vishnow smritey sadyah samkshayam yaanti paatakaah, Satyena tena sakalam dushtamasya prashaamyatu, Yathaa Yagneswaro Vishnurdeveshvapi hi geeyatey/ Satyana tena sakalam yanmayoktam tathaastu tat, Shantirastu Shivam chaastu dushtamasya prashaamyatu/ Vaasudeva shareetarothaih kushainirnaashatam maya, Aapaamaarjitu Govindo Naro Narayanastathaa/ Tathaastu Sarva duhkhaanaam pprashamovachanaadvareh, Apaamaarjanakam shastam Sarvarogaadivaaranam/ Aham Harih kushaa Vishnur hataa rogaa mayaa tava/*

(At the very thought of Shri Vishnu, the long-stored groups of sins wilt away instantly and in the same manner all the diseases fade away too. Vishnu is always extolled by all Devatas and this truth underlines the fact that sins and diseases wither away for human beings too. The Kusha grass is stated to emerge from Vishnu's own body and little wonder that the 'Apaamarjana Stotra' enables the sins and maladies of devotees to get flushed out of their physiques for good. [Agni Purana]

### **Chapter Three on Maha Vishnu's Dashaavataaras - An Over View vide Agni Puraana**

Brahma the Srishtikarta explained : My four sons Sanaka, Sanaatana, Sanandana and Sanat-kumāra, who were born from my mind. Sometimes they travel throughout the material and spiritual skies without any definite desire though not for material sense of gratification. but out of their own accord, to preach devotional service. Thus the great sages, upon reaching Vaikuṇṭha in the spiritual world by dint of their mystic yoga performance, perceived unprecedented happiness. They found that the spiritual sky was illuminated by highly decorated vimaanaas piloted by the best devotees of Vaikuṇṭha and was predominated by Vishnu the Supreme Administrator as the Prapancha Sthiti Karana. They entered

vaikuntha the doors exactly as little children enter places without any idea of what it is to trespass. The doormen named Jaya and Vijaya stopped the Kumaraas who cursed them to become rakshasaas and hence the Vishnu's dashaavataaraas as stated as *sambhavaami yuge!*

#### Matsya Avatara:

As the Universe time drew near to Final Destruction including the 'Bhulok' (Earth), 'Swarglok' (Heaven) and 'Bhuvarlok' (intermediate Region), it was flooded with water. As 'Vaivaswata Manu' (son of Surya) was in prayers in River 'Kirtimala'; he found a tiny fish in the water on his palms which begged him not to throw it as big fish might swallow it. Manu kept it in a pot, but soon the fish grew big to occupy the ocean and asked him to build a mammoth Ship and transfer 'Sapta Rishis' (Seven Sages) and a sample each of flora and fauna. Vishnu in the form Matsya declared that the Universe would be flooded soon, that the ship would be saved along with Manu and others, that He would destroy demon 'Hayagriva' and re-create the Universe.

#### Kurma Avatara

As 'Asuras' (Demons) and 'Suras' (Devas) were on fierce battle for long time, Lord 'Brahma' (The Creator) and Lord 'Vishnu' (The Preserver) arrived a truce between the two parties who churned 'Kshira Sagar' (the Ocean of Milk) to attain 'Amrita' (Elixir). The mountain 'Mandara' was commissioned as a rod for the churning and 'Vasuki', the Great Serpent as the rope. Demons grabbed the face of 'Vasuki' out of pride and many perished due to the poisonous flames from its several mouths, whereas Devas preferred to opt for the tail of the Serpent out of veneration for Vasuki. Since the Mountain could not be balanced in the Ocean, Lord Vishnu took the form of a Turtle (Kurma) and withstood the weight and speed of the churning. In the course of churning, came out a colossal poisonous fire, named 'Kalakuta', which engulfed the whole Universe. Lord 'Eswara' swallowed the Great Fire and kept it in His Throat and thus came to be known as 'Neelagriva' (The Blue Throated). Eventually, a number of Objects emerged as a result of the churning but the Demons rejected them all as they were only bent on 'Amritha' and none else. Among the Objects were: 'Sura' (The Divine Drink), 'Parijata' the Tree bringing heavenly fragrance by its flowers since opted by Indra for his Garden; 'Koustubha' the Holy Jewel adorning Lord Vishnu's chest, the Celestial Animals viz. 'Kapila' the Sacred Cow, 'Uttchaiswarya' the Divine Horse and 'Iravata' the Elephant used by Indra; 'Apsaras', the Heavenly Dancers; Lakshmi the Goddess of Wealth, who preferred to be the Consort of Lord Vishnu and finally emerged 'Dhanvantari' - the God of Medicine, along with the most awaited 'Amritha', which was sought to be grabbed by Demons and Gods alike. To sort out the confusion, there appeared a dazzling damsel 'Mohini' (The Unique Enchantress)- who was Lord Vishnu Himself-and both Suras and Asuras accepted her as an arbitrator and 'just' distributor of Amritha. Mohini made both the parties wait for their turn and served Devas first and declared that the stock of Amritha was all consumed and disappointed the Demons. One of the Demons, Rahu- pretended to be the Moon God and consumed Amrita; on conceding the protests of Sun and Moon, Mohini cut his head. But since he managed to take sips of the Life-giving Drink, Rahu survived and in fact managed to secure a boon that he could devour both Sun and Moon and hence the Solar and Lunar Eclipses. As a result of the drama Demons were defeated and Devas retained power in Heaven thus vindicating the Divine Position of Devas.

#### Varaha Avatar:

Sage Kashyapa and his wife Diti gave birth to 'Hiranyaksha', who in turn pleased Lord Brahma, and managed a boon that no force on Earth could destroy him in battles. He conquered all the three worlds, viz. the Earth, Heaven and the Under-World. In fact, he dragged Earth into the depths of the Ocean and there was complete chaos in the Universe. Lord Vishnu had to take the form of a boar, which after a

prolonged battle destroyed the demon and restored Earth by lifting it by His tusks. The Balance of the Universe would have been completely upset if Earth were not saved along with the virtues of Mankind, the Holy Scriptures and the very concept of Righteousness and Godliness.

#### Narasamiha Avatar:

As his elder brother Hiranyaksha was killed by Lord Vishnu, 'Hiranyakashipa' desired to avenge the death. But he realized that unless he pleased Brahma (Lord of Creation) with rigorous meditation and sacrifice, he would not receive the boons that he wanted. Finally, Brahma acceded to all of his wishes that he could not be killed by any human being or beast, by night or day, in the sky or on the Earth or in water. Having secured the boons, the Demon became all powerful and tormented one and all, especially those who prayed to Lord Vishnu. In fact, he insisted that he alone should be prayed to. He attacked Sages, destroyed 'Yagnyas' (Sacrifices) and temples and sought to terminate the Good and the righteous. But his own son, named 'Prahlada', was an ardent devotee of Lord Vishnu from his childhood. Hiranyakashipa tried all means of cajoling, threatening and finally used various methods of killing him. Yet, each time that he sought to destroy the son, he was saved and Prahlada's devotion became more intense than ever. Finally in a fit of desperation, the father asked the son: 'Many a time, I tried to murder you, you are saved! Where is your Vishnu? You say that he is everywhere! Can you show him to me in this pillar?' The son replied coolly that He is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent! Enraged by this reply, the Demon struck the pillar and there emerged Lord Vishnu in the form of Narasimha (Half-Man and Half-Lion), kept the Demon on His lap and tore him into pieces. As per the prescription of the boon received by the demon from Lord Brahma, the annihilation happened neither by a human being nor a beast, not at a time when it was night or day (viz. dusk time) and neither on earth, sky or water! In this Incarnation, Lord Vishnu had thus not only saved Prahlada, as also established a firm victory of Goodness over Evil, Virtue over Sin, and Permanent over Ephemeral!

#### Vamana Avatar:

'Bali', the grandson of Prahlada, was a Demon King in the lineage of Hiranyakashipa, who became all powerful and was most dreaded by 'Devas'. He drove Devas away from Heaven, who fled away to Lord Vishnu for refuge. Vishnu assured Devas that Bali, who was in fact a benevolent King although dominant, would be humbled and that they would be restored to Heaven soon.. Eventually, the Lord was born to Kashyapa and Diti and grew as a midget ('Vamana'). As King Bali was performing a Ritualistic Yagna (Sacrifice), he declared that on the occasion nobody would be turned out without fulfilling their wishes. Vamana arrived and asked for a 'small boon', viz. a three feet of land to be given as a 'dakshina' (a fee) to his Guru (Teacher). The Guru of Demons, Sage 'Shukracharya' suspected that the dwarf was a fake and might perhaps be Lord Vishnu Himself. King Bali said that if the dwarf were the Lord Himself, then the posterity would remember the King as a donor to the Lord. Thus saying the King asked Sage Sukracharya to sprinkle the holy water from a vessel to commence the ritualistic proceedings. Guru Sukracharya still tried to prevent the act of donation and entered the vessel in a miniature form so that the holy water could not be sprinkled. Vamana was clever enough to pierce a piece of grass into the curved mouth of the vessel and thus pricked into one of the eyes of Sukracharya by doing permanent damage to the eye. As the action of donating the three feet of land was complete, Vamana assumed a huge body and occupied one foot with Bhuloka, (Earth), another with Bhuwarloka and still demanded a third step for Swarloka. Thus King Bali had no other recourse to shift himself to 'Patala' (Under World). Lord Vishnu was immensely pleased with Bali's altruism and gave him the boon to bear the title and powers of Lord Indra, the King of Heaven.

#### Parasurama Avatar:

As per the 'Varna Dharma' of Hinduism there are four categories of castes of which the first category is of 'Brahmins' practising ritualistic prayers, Sacrifices, religious preaching, temple-running etc. Next category comprises 'Kshatriyas' or the Warriors and Kings, whose duty is to protect all other classes of people, especially the Brahmins. In this background, Kshatriyas had over a few generations neglected the interests of the three 'Varnas' and became despotic and cruel. It was at this time, that Lord Vishnu came to mortal life as the son of Sage 'Jamadagni' and 'Renuka' and assumed the name of 'Parasu Rama' or the one with an axe to punish the evil. 'Kartaveerya' was the contemporary King who was an ill-famed and cruel tyrant, with thousand hands. He not only subjected his own people with oppression and brutality but became a terror among his neighbouring Kingdoms too. He had a few boons from Lord Dattatreya which were misused and tormented one and all. On one occasion, the King visited the Ashram (the Hermitage) of Jamadagni and was impressed with the Holy Cow, 'Kamadhenu', as the cow could fulfill all desires of human beings. The King had forcibly taken away the Cow, despite Jamadagni's protests. Parasurama waged a war with the King and cut off his thousand hands. His sons retaliated by killing Jamadagni and destroyed the Hermitage, when Parasurama was away. As a sequel, Parasurama had not only killed the progeny of Kartaveerya, but also hunted and shattered the totality of the Kshatriya clan by waging some twenty one wars to avenge the killings of his father and followers. Eventually, Parasurama retired and lived at Mount Mahendra. He returned again to Earth only in the subsequent 'Yuga' (the second in the Time-series of human existence, viz. Threta Yuga').

#### Rama Avatar:

Lord Vishnu's next incarnation was that of Rama. He was born into 'Surya Vamsa' (the ancestry of Sun God) to 'Dasaratha' and 'Kousalya', while his brothers were born to his step mothers as 'Laxmana' to 'Sumithra', 'Bharata' and 'Shatrughna' to 'Kaikeyi'. As the boys grew up, Sage 'Viswamitra' asked for the help of Rama to protect the Yagna (Sacred Ritual) from Demons, as they tended to spoil the Ritual by pouring blood into the 'Agni Kunda' (the Fire Pit). Dasaratha was most reluctant to depute Rama for the purpose as he was still in teens and said that he was prepared to defend the Yagna himself. Viswamitra insisted only on Rama and Dasaratha had to agree; Rama was accompanied by Laxmana too, as he was not only the closest among his brothers, but also devoted to Rama. The Yagna was performed successfully and Rama killed a dreadful 'Rakshasi' (demoness) named 'Tataki' and demon by name 'Subahu'; Rama also threw away thousands of miles off the high Sea another demon named 'Maricha' by the power of his arrows. As a symbol of his appreciation to Rama, Viswamitra taught how to use valuable 'astras' (Divine Arrows) to destroy enemies, in addition to those which were already taught to him by his own Guru 'Vasishtha', another Great Sage in the court of King Dasaratha. On way back to Ayodhya, the Capital of his Kingdom, Viswamithra took Rama to the Capital City ('Mithila') of another King namely 'Janaka'. The latter announced a 'Swayam Vara' (Self-choice of a husband by a daughter; in this case Lady Sita), the criterion of eligibility for a suitable suitor being that 'Shiva Dhanush'-a Divine Set of Bow and Arrow, belonging originally by Lord Shiva Himself- to be fixed and broken. Rama succeeded in breaking the 'Shiva Dhanush' and married Sita, who was basically Goddess Lakshmi, the spouse of Lord Vishnu Himself. Alongside, Janaka performed the weddings of his other daughters to Rama's other brothers, viz .Lakshmana to 'Urmila', Bharata to 'Mandavi', and Shatrughna to 'Shrutakirti'. On way back to Ayodhya after the joyous weddings, Rama had an encounter with Parasurama, another incarnation of Lord Vishnu Himself, as Prasurama was annoyed that Rama broke the Shiva Dhanush. But Rama sought to convince Parasurama and more significantly the entire world that he was indeed the Avatar of Lord Vishnu. As there was a seeming threat posed by Parasurama, Rama broke another powerful Set of Bow and Arrows, viz. 'Narayana Dhanush' as given by Parasurama. On return to Ayodhya, Dasaratha declared Rama to be the 'Yuvraj' (heir apparent). The entire Kingdom and all the citizens felt highly overjoyed and ecstatic at the great news, as even by then, Rama was considered as a role model for humanity and a 'Maryada Purush' ( an exceptionally noble and lovable person). But, the youngest wife of Dasaratha, Kaikeyi, opposed the proposal and as instigated by her maid servant 'Manthara', reminded the King of two of his boons to her that were due to her when she nursed him after a battle with a demon in

the past. She asked for fulfilling her boons that Bharata, her elder son, be made the heir apparent and that Rama be consigned to forests for 14 years. Dasaratha had no choice but to concede her requests. Rama obeyed the paternal wishes, as conveyed to him by Kaikeyi, since Dasaratha had already swooned after hearing the undue demands. Rama was accompanied by Sita and Lakshmana. Subsequently, Dasaratha died of heart attack. Bharata was away from Ayodhya to Mithila, as pre-planned by Kaikeyi, and on return, felt hurt by the terrible turnover of events, reprimanded his mother, refused to become the King, kept the throne unoccupied as he was only a caretaker, that too when asked by Rama whom he met in the forests, and carried back Rama's 'Padukas' (wooden footwear) to Ayodhya to be cherished on the Royal Throne. Meanwhile, Rama and Sita, accompanied by Lakshmana moved on to 'Dandakaranya' (Thick interior of Forests) and lived in a hermitage, named 'Panchavati' on the quiet banks of River 'Godavari'. In course of time, a Rakshasa woman, by name 'Surpanakha' approached Rama and desired to marry her. Rama said that his wife was already with him but perhaps another male viz. Lakshmana might agree to do so. Lakshmana got Ram's coded message and slit Surpanakha's ears and nose. The latter desired to avenge the insult and prevailed on her brother 'Khara' to attack Rama and Lakshmana with his full army. The demon and his men were all killed in the battle and Surpanakha approached the mighty King of Lanka, viz. the ten headed and most dreaded 'Ravana' to retaliate. Enraged by the series of the deadly events, Ravana ordered Maricha to take the form of a Golden Deer to entice Lady Sita, so that Rama would chase it and thus abduct Sita. Rama killed the deer but shouted Rama's name aloud as a ploy and Lakshmana left Sita alone and went in search of Rama. Meanwhile 'Ravana' succeeded in abducting Sita and took her away to Lanka. The Great Kite 'Jatayu' intercepted Ravana to rescue Sita but Ravana killed Jatayu. While dying, Jatayu informed Rama and Lakshmana, who were searching for Sita, that Ravana abducted Sita. Wandering in the forests, Rama made friends with 'Sugriva', the illustrious Monkey Chieftain, along his supporters, especially the Illustrious 'Hanuman', who had become Rama's instant devotee and unfailing follower. Sugriva was being harassed by his elder brother 'Vali', who was a powerful and tyrannical King of 'Kishkintha'. Rama helped Sugriva to kill Vali and made him the King of Kishkintha. Sugriva sent his Monkey soldiers far and wide to locate Sita. Finally, Hanuman crossed the Sea and met Sita in a garden of Ravana under an Ashoka Tree. He identified himself as a devotee of Rama with the help of his golden ring that was given by Rama himself as an identity. Hanuman created havoc in the Ashoka garden and killed many Rakshasa soldiers. Ravana's son, 'Meghanadh' had to utilize his prize 'Brahmastra' (the Divine Weapon of Brahma) to control Hanuman and present him in the royal court of Ravana. King Ravana ordered that Hanuman should be taught a lesson by scorching Hanuman's tail. In turn, Hanuman destroyed palaces, public places and a large part of Lanka's Capital and finally returned to Kishkintha to report the presence of Sita, who was being pressurized to marry Ravana as also the happenings of his visit to Lanka. Rama, Lakshmana, Sugriva, Hanuman, the giant Bear Jambavanta, and the massive Monkey- Brigade reached the shores of the Sea and built a gigantic 'Ram Sethu' (Bridge) across the Sea, inscribing the name of Rama on each rock and let it float! Having crossed the Sea, the 'Rama Sena' (Rama's Army) was composed and formulated to surround the entire Island of Lanka. One of Ravana's brothers, 'Vibhishana', who was a man of principles and morals tried to reason out with Ravana not to combat with Rama on the flimsy grounds of obsession with Sita, but he left the party of Ravana to join Rama, where there was 'Dharma' (Justice and Truth). In the fierce and long drawn battle that ensued, Rama killed Ravana's monstrous brother 'Kumbhakarna' and his outrageous son Meghanadha, alias Indrajit. The all powerful Ravana himself had to be wrecked by Rama by utilizing the massive Brahmastra while the entire Rakshasa community was destroyed by Rama's followers. After a long lapse of fourteen years, Rama, Sita and Lakshmana returned to Ayodhya, accompanied by the memorable Hanuman, Sugriva, Vibhushana and innumerable fellow warriors of the Rama Vijay (Rama's Victory) to witness Lord Rama's Coronation. The popular 'Rama Rajya' (Rama's Administration) was a bench-mark as per Hindu Mythology, witnessing the practice of Dharma in full force. The ideals that were followed were as per Scriptures of the Yore and reached peaks of human existence of Justice and Nobility.

Krishna Avatar:

The eighth incarnation of Lord Vishnu was of Krishna, belonging to the 'Yadava' Community which was traced back to the ancestry of Lord Brahma. The lineage of Brahma commenced from his son 'Atri' onward to- Soma-Pururuva-Ayu-Nahusha-Yayati-and Yadu. Thus Krishna was born into 'Yadava Vamsa' to 'Vasudeva' and 'Devaki' in Mathura. Devaki's wicked brother 'Kamsa' was the tyrant King, who heard a Divine Voice from the Skies that Devaki's eighth son would kill him. Thus he imprisoned his sister and husband and killed each of the babies born to them. Kamsa took extra precautions to ensure that the eighth child ought not to vanish from the prison. Somehow Vasudeva managed to sneak out the child to safety on a stormy midnight into the cradle of a child just born to 'Nanda' and 'Yashoda' at 'Gokul' across the river 'Yamuna' and the couple brought up the child as their own. The baby since exchanged and brought back to the prison flew away from Kamsa's hands trying to kill that baby too, who flew away from Kamsa's hands and thundered from the sky that the real child, Krishna was safe in Gokul. Having spotted the house where Krishna was safe, Kamsa deputed several demons to somehow kill the child; the demons that turned up thus included 'Pothana', 'Arishta', 'Vrushabha', 'Keshi', 'Dhenuka', 'Gardabha' and so on and Krishna killed them all. Krishna also overpowered a poisonous snake, 'Kaliya', in a poisonous pond as he entered the pond chasing a play ball with his friends. Krishna humbled Lord Indra, who rained incessantly at Gokula since the inhabitants of that place did not offer prayers to the Rain God, 'Varuna', by lifting a huge mountain, 'Govardhana' by his little finger. As Krishna and his elder brother 'Balarama' grew up, Kamsa invited them to Mathura on a so-called friendly visit, with the malicious intention of killing them. On their entry into the city, Kamsa let loose a mad elephant, which was killed. Kamsa also arranged a duel with tworenowned wrestlers, but Krishna and Balarama killed them too. Finally Krishna destroyed Kamsa and got rid of a terrible King bringing great relief to all concerned. Close to the end of Kamsa, another mighty devil named 'Jarasandha' challenged Krishna and sought revenge for Kamsa's (his brother in law) death. Jarasandha too was killed by Krishna. Yet another enemy of Krishna, named 'Sisupala' met his extermination later. There was another momentous occasion, when Krishna and his spouse, 'Satyabhama' fought a deadly demon, 'Narakasura'. It was destined that Satyabhama would terminate the Rakshasa, since Krishna pretended unconsciousness on the battle field to enable her to take the lead-role of killing the 'Asura'. The Victory Day was celebrated as 'Deepavali', the Memorable Festival of Lights. This occasion also led to Krishna's presenting a boon to Satyabhama and her request to Krishna to fetch the celestial flower, Parijata, from the Garden of Lord Indra in Swarga). The Story goes on that unfortunately the Parijata Tree brought from Swarga was planted in the Garden of Rukmini, the senior consort of Krishna and led to jealousies and quarrels in Krishna's intimate family affairs! Moreover, Narakasura imprisoned sixteen thousand daughters of various Devas, Gandharvas, and Yakshas-all from celestial families and Krishna married them, besides his own eight Royal Queens! Besides, Radha the beloved of Krishna led to the concept of 'Ras-Leela' or Group Dances and singing by Gopikas (the girls infatuated with Krishna.)

The Chapter on Harivamsa makes references to Krishna's many sons. But, the Stories of 'Pradyumna' and 'Aniruddha' became popular. Through Rukmini, the Principal Consort of Krishna, Pradyumna was born, but as soon as he was born, a Rakshasa named 'Shambhara' abducted the child and threw him in a Sea. A fish swallowed the child but a fisherman caught the fish and out of its stomach emerged Pradyumna. Eventually, Pradyumna killed Shambhara and married 'Mayavati'. Aniruddha was born to the couple and Krishna felt happy. Aniruddha and 'Usha' were in love, but 'Baana'; an evil-minded King did not approve the wedding and fought with Aniruddha. Finally, Krishna vanquished Baana and made Aniruddha and Usha happy. Closely linked with the Avatar of Krishna is the Story of 'Maha Bharata', the Great Indian Epic of Ancient India. In fact, the Mahabharata Epic is but an excuse to enact the drama of 'Pandavas' and 'Kauravas', of which the Central Role is of Krishna himself. Pandavas represented nobility, justice, valour and idealism, where as Kauravas stood for evil, jealousy, meanness and injustice. Krishna sought to depict the good and bad qualities distinctly and reveal that Truth triumphed finally and decidedly.

In the lineage that originated from Brahma to Atri down to Yayati, the latter had two wives viz. Devayani, who had two sons named Yadu and Turvusu, while Sharmishtha had three sons named Druhya, Anu and Puru. Krishna was born into Yadu Vamsa, whereas Kuru into Puru Vamsa. King Shantanu was in Kuru Vamsa and he had two wives, Ganga and Satyawati. Bhishma was born to Ganga, whereas Chitrangada and Vichitraveerya to Satyawati. Chitrangada died early and Vichitraveerya was sickly. Meanwhile, Bhishma conquered the King of Kasi and brought three of his daughters, Amba, Ambica and Ambalika with the intention of having them wedded to Vichitraveerya, his younger brother. The three daughters demanded that Bhishma should marry them since they were conquered by Bhishma, but Bhishma took a vow that he would be a bachelor always as he promised his father to facilitate Kingship to the progeny of Satyawati. The eldest daughter, Amba became furious and killed herself in 'Yoga Agni' as she was not married to Bhishma (In her subsequent birth, Amba was reborn as Sikhandi, a transgender who killed Bhishma subsequently). Since there was a crisis of family lineage to be perpetuated, Bhishma requested Vedavyasa to bless Ambica and Ambalika into bed. The girls did not initially agree and sent their 'Dasi', a servant maid and thus was born 'Vidura'. On the persuasion of Bhishma the sisters followed into the bed later; Ambica closed her eyes in the union and thus begot a blind son named 'Dhritarashtra', while Ambalika paled away in the union with the fright of Vyasa and thus had 'Pandu' as her son with congenital skin disease. Dhritarashtra was married to 'Gandhari', who also preferred to close her eyes with cloth as a respect to her husband. They got hundred sons, most important of them being 'Duryodhana' and 'Dussasana'. Pandu married Kunti and Madri. Even before her wedding, Kunti was blessed with a son, Karna, by the grace of Sun God, and after marriage she begot Yudhishtara through God Dharma (God of Justice), Bhima by 'Vayu' (God of Wind) and Arjun by God Indra. By the grace of Aswini Gods were born to Madri and they were named Nakula and Sahadeva. As a result of a curse by a Sage, Pandu died untimely and ever since then, Pandavas became fatherless and grew under the care of their paternal uncle Dhritarashtra the blind King. (Vidura, the son of a servant maid born to Vedavyasa was disqualified to become the King and thus became the Chief Adviser to the King.) The hundred strong progeny of Dhritarashtra headed by Duryodhana grew up as the spoilt and much pampered children and developed hatred towards their Pandava cousins, day by day. Karna was disowned by Kunti since she was an unwed mother but tried out an experiment to test a boon given by a Sage and invoked Sun God resulting in her pregnancy and birth of a boy; she packed off the child in a box floating in a river and a chariot driver, 'Suta' and his wife Radha brought up the child as their son. Karna had joined Duryodhana. The Kauravas and Pandavas had a common Guru (Teacher), Drona Acharya, to train them in the art of archery and military skills. Invariably, Pandavas excelled Kauravas in the training sessions and that was an added angle of jealousy to Kauravas, which eventually turned out as hatred. As Bhima was an expert in physical duels and the art of using mace in duel-fight, Duryodhana got envious. Similarly, Arjun was an expert in archery and used to draw praise from Drona. Duryodhana sought to pit Karna in the art of archery, but Guru Drona did not allow Karna in the classes, as Karna was not a Prince, as all others were. At once, Duryodhana being the heir apparent to the Throne declared Karna as the Prince of a subordinate State of the Hastinapura Kingdom and made Karna eligible to join the elite of Princes. In course of time, Kauravas tried several means of terminating Pandavas. The evil minded uncle of Kaurava sons, 'Shakuni' had been an active party in all such wicked actions. In fact, there was a group of four villains- 'Dushta Chathushtaya', comprising Duryodhana, Dussasana, Shakuni and Karna- who were responsible to somehow destroy Pandavas. They arranged a mansion made of shellac to inhabit Pandavas and tried to put it on fire overnight. Lord Krishna, who had all along been on the side of Dharma (Justice) and of Pandavas, had forewarned them of the evil plans of Kauravas to burn the mansion and got them transferred safe through a tunnel leading to a village nearby. Pandavas were disguised as a Brahmin family and rented a small house. Kauravas, including the King and the citizens, believed that Pandavas were ablaze in the mansion. Even in disguise as Brahmins, the five Pandava sons and mother Kunti lived on and rescued the entire village by Bhima from the menace of a Rakshasa, named 'Bakasura', who demanded a villager a day as his food. In course of time, they attended a 'Swayamvara' (Bride seeking to secure a suitable bridegroom) of Draupadi, the daughter of King Drupada and among all the aspirant-suitors only Arjuna was able to smash up a fish revolving fast in a circle placed above the head level and

seeing down of its reflection in a water flowing down under. Kaurava sons and Bhishma also attended the function and recognized Pandavas. Kaurava sons were dismayed, but gave great relief to Bhishma and all the well-wishers of Pandava. But, Arjun's victory of winning Draupadi's hand posed a problem since Arjun could not marry ahead of his elder brothers. The puzzle was sorted by Bhishma in consultation with the Sages, Draupadi and elders concerned that she should marry all the Pandava brothers in a lot. Following the Wedding, Bhishma advised King Dhritarashtra to give half of the Kingdom to Pandavas. Thus Yudhishtara became the King and gradually annexed many Kingdoms and became powerful and wealthy. Pandavas celebrated 'Rajasuya Yagna' (Royal Sacrifice) and elected Krishna as the Chief Guest of the Grand Function. Sisupala, another King and cousin of Krishna objected that the honour to Krishna, whom he defeated in successive wars. But the reality was that his mother requested Krishna to spare Sisupala for one hundred mistakes, before he was destined to die in Krishna's hands finally and thus Krishna hid himself from the wars with Sisupala and suffered him thus far. On reaching the hundred mistakes, Krishna terminated Sisupala. As Pandavas were at their climatic position, Kauravas felt highly jealous and as advised by the wily Shakuni, invited Dharmaraja for a Game of Chess, in which Shakuni played foul. Dharmaraja lost not only the Kingdom, but also Draupadi, who was forcibly brought into the Royal Court by Dussasana in the presence of Dhritarashtra, Bhishma, Drona and all the gentry; she was insulted and sought to be disrobed. Further, Dharmaraja was made to agree that Pandavas would spend in the forests for twelve years and an additional year in 'Ajnatavas' (in disguise and not to be noticed or identified by Kauravas or anyone else), failing which, another twelve years of forest life would be re-imposed! After completing the Forest life for twelve years, Pandavas (with the exception of Kunti who stayed with Vidura) took refuge in the Kingdom of 'Virata' in disguised forms viz. Dharmaraja as King Virat's Brahmana- Adviser and companion to play chess, Bhima as the Royal cook, Arjuna as the transgender dance teacher of the King's daughter, Uttara; Nakula and Sahadeva as trainers in the Royal stable of the King's horses and Draupadi as the Queen's Principal Maid. During the disguised stay of Pandavas, Bhima weeded out Keechaka one night without trace, even as the King himself was not unhappy about his brother-in-law's villainy and over-control. In the meantime, Kauravas attacked Virat's Kingdom and forcibly took away thousands of cows of King Virat's. Arjun had then decided to take away the disguise of Pandavas, as the period of one year of 'Ajnatavas' was just concluded. In fact, all the Pandavas revealed their own identities. Arjun had defended Virat's Kingdom single handed and frightened away Kauravas by his powerful arrows and finally utilizing just one 'Sammohan Astra', the Divine Arrow putting the entire Kaurava Army unconscious. Not realizing the real identity of Pandavas, King Virat and family as also the subjects of the Kingdom extended apologies to Pandavas. The Princess Uttara was married to Abhimanyu, the son of Arjun. Back to normalcy after suffering the Forest life for twelve years and the disguised existence for one year, Pandavas demanded their share of Kingdom again. In fact, Bhima, Arjun and Draupadi refused to pardon the innumerable misdeeds of Kauravas and wished to take revenge on the battle field, but for the restraint imposed on them by Dharmaraja. Lord Krishna was deputed for peace talks. Kauravas on the other hand refused to part with even a pin worth of land, let alone five villages for Pandavas. Thus the epoch-making Great Battle of Maha Bharata became inevitable. Kurukshetra was the historic war- field, where the battle lines were drawn and the composition of both the fighting parties were identified. As per options offered by Krishna, Duryadhana secured large number of soldiers and Arjuna agreed to be Krishna's charioteer, without fighting himself. Elders like Bhishma and Drona had to fight on the side of Kauravas, though reluctantly, since they had been loyal to King Dhritarashtra. As several grandfathers and uncle figures, close relatives and cousins were faced on the opposite side for a bloody war, Arjuna got bewildered and made a scene of his inability to fight and jumped out of his chariot. Krishna had then delivered his immortal 'Gita Pravachan' (The Discourse of Gita) which constituted the Quintessence of Holy Hindu Scriptures. He explained in detail that the death of stalwarts like Bhishma and Drona or close relatives of Pandavas or of anybody else, would merely mean the destruction of their physical existence but their Atma (Inner Soul) is indestructible as 'It' would don another body in the never-ending cycle of life, according to the Register of their previous lives viz. 'Sanchita' or the Stored Results of their actions in earlier births and of 'Prarabdha' or their own destinies which would shape their future. Arjuna was just an instrument in the drama of Life. The real quest of life

is to attain the Union of individual Atma or the Inner Soul with 'Paramatma', the Super Soul. This is what 'Gyana' (Knowledge or Awareness) is all about and what Yogis (Sages) have all along endeavored to achieve through the ages. Arjuna was thus pacified and was asked to do his Dharma (Duty). In the fierce battle that followed for eighteen days, there was destruction all around from both the sides of warriors. Bhishma, the war-veteran and Commander-in-Chief withdrew from the battle as he was faced with a trans-gender, named Sikhandi, whom Bhishma refused to fight with and thus fell a victim but did not die; he had the boon to live as per his choice-day and preferred to live through the entire duration of the battle and waited for 'Uttarayan', i.e. the first day of Solar journey upwards the northern direction. Drona, the next Commander stopped fighting at the false news confirmed by Dharmaraja, (ever known for his utterances of Truth only) in hushed tone that his son Aswatthama (meant actually named after an elephant) died. Drona was thus killed by Dhrishtadyumna without resistance. Karna who was the next Commander of Kauravas was arrowed to death by Arjuna, as the former could not remember the secret 'Mantras' (stanzas) while releasing arrows favoring specific Gods to invoke special powers; Karna's amnesia was the resultant curse by a Sage which let him down to Arjun's arrows. The Final chapter of the Great Battle of Mahabharata, the Legendary Epic was scripted by a powerful and climactic duel of maces between Duryodhana and Bhima. As Duryodhana defended his position for long, Krishna gave a gesture to Bhima to hit the opponent on his thighs as the former's body was made sturdy all over excepting the thighs; Gandhari, mother of Duryodhana had the power of fortifying any part of a body by opening her ever closed sight just once but Duryodhana hid the loins and thighs and hence were vulnerable. Thus ended the sordid tale of Duryodhana, who was the Prime Villain of the Epic. Dharmaraja was made the King again to Hastinapur Kingdom and after him, the Dynasty carried on the Kingship by Parikshit, the son of Uttara. Lord Krishna who had firmly re-established Dharma on Earth, not only by his own fascinating deeds to vindicate 'Nyaya' (justice) and Nobility, but also by using Pandavas as instruments to bring success to His efforts. Once again He proved through His Avatar (Incarnation) of Lord Vishnu that each time human existence gets disturbed by evil forces, He would appear as an earthly figure and rectify imbalances of the Universe.

**Buddha Avatar:** As there was an ongoing battle of Devas and Asuras for long time, Devas approached Lord Vishnu to revive 'Dharma' and 'Nyaya' and beseeched Him to take human form once again. The Lord said that 'Mayamoha' would soon take birth as Buddha to one Sudhodana. But the illusions that would be created in the name of Buddha would be such that many evil persons would call themselves as Buddhists and undo all the Golden Traditions established in Vedas and other Scriptures. The misleading ways would advocate materialism in detestable manner and finally end up in the last phase of 'Kali Yuga'.. [Note: While Agni Purana had thus prophesied the sinful and irrecoverable era ahead, Buddha himself was stated to have provided a silver-line in the quest of Truth and Dharma. He preached the concept of Self -Realisation and recommended the right path to this Goal. He found that the basis of evil was unhappiness and desire, while the means of overcoming the evil is the attitude to secure freedom from material happiness. He preached the eight fold path, viz. the right view, the right intention, the right speech, the right thought, the right livelihood, the right action, the right mindfulness and the right concentration. Another significant preaching of Buddha was to follow the principles of 'Ahimsa' (non-violence) and 'Samyam' (Restraint). But in the post-Buddha period, varied interpretations of Buddhism were adopted to suit some of the following generations, including the practice of low and misleading Tantras]

**Kalki Avatar:** Agni Purana also prophesied the Final Avatar of Lord Vishnu as Kalki, to be born to 'Vishnuyasha'. He would be fully armed to destroy the disbelievers of God and perpetrate sins and criminal acts and re-establish Dharma (Virtue) and Nyaya (Justice) and revive the concepts of four 'varnas' (castes,) viz. Brahmana (the nobility), Vaisya (the business class), Kshatriya (the Warriors and Defenders) and Sudra (the Others). The revival of the four 'Ashrams' (Stages of Life) too would happen viz. Balya (Childhood), Grihastha (the family person), Vanaprastha (the senior and religious class) and Sanyasa (Seekers of Truth and death-awaiting). [Note: The popular belief is that by the close of the

fourth phase of Kalki Yuga (era) as against the first phase now, Lord Vishnu would take the 'Avatar' (Incarnation) riding a flying white divine horse, brandishing a sword, destroying the Evil and reviving the Virtue, thus heralding a completely New World Order following the Great Destruction and evolving a Fresh Cycle of Creation.[ Agni Purana. ]

#### Padma Purana explain Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Nrisimha, Vamana and Parasurama 'Avataras'

An 'Avatara' (Incarnation) is like the lighting of a lamp from another lamp; like-wise, Bhagavan is a manifestation of same Bhagavan suited to specific purpose and particular end-use. Among such Avatars of Vishnu, the first well-known manifestation of **Matsya** which retrieved the Sacred Vedas stolen from Brahma by Makarasura, the son of Kashyapa Muni by Diti, one of his four wives besides Aditi, Kadru and Vineeta; Diti's other sons included Hayagriva, Hiranyaksha, Hiranya kashipu, Jamba, Maya etc. Makarasura dived deep into the depths of 'Maha Sagara' (The Great Ocean) along with the Vedas and other Scriptures, in the absence of which the entire order of 'Samsara' (Universe) was totally affected: there were no 'Chatur Varnas'; no Yagnas, Swadhaayas, Vashatkara and the Sacred Rites thus upsetting the Equilibrium of Universal Traditions and Religious / Spiritual Practices. This led to the inevitable Avatara as the Preserver of the Universal Order. By assuming the form of a huge Fish, Vishnu entered the Ocean, killed Makarasura and recovered Vedas and Dharma.

Following a curse given by Maharshi Durvasa, son of Sage Atri, to Indra as the latter ignored the Maharshi while passing by an elephant, Devi Lakshmi in the form of Rajya Lakshmi, deserted Indra Loka and the magnificence of Swarga vanished. As Devas, Indra and Brahma approached Vishnu, Narayana suggested that one way to recall Rajya Lakshmi to Swarga would be to resort to a massive churning of the Ocean involving not only Devas but also Danavas, Rakshasas, Gandhavas and Yakshas. The temptation to Danavas etc. should be to obtain 'Amrit' although there might be several other products of lesser consequence that might emerge as deftly conveyed to the Danavas. The arrangement of the 'Samudra Mathana' was that Manthara Mountain was to be set as the churning rod, Maha Sarpa Vasuki was the string with which to tie up the Mountain and Bhagavan himself as balancing Shakti as the Avatar of **Kurma** (Tortoise) to ensure that the Meru Mountain would be made stable and steady. As the churning started, innumerable of the proud Danavas who opted for the head of thousand faced Vasuki out of pride got perished due to the poisonous flames where as Devas were at the tail end. Eventually, a massive 'Halahala' or the sky-rocketing poisonous flames engulfed the Universe and by the grace of Three Names of Lord Vishnu viz. Om Achyutaya Namah, Om Anantaya Namah and Om Govindaya Namah, Bhagavan Shankara gulped the blue poisonous flames in his throat thus giving him the epithet of Neela Kantha. By the power of the three names of Vishnu, there would never be any hardship faced:

*Achyutaananta Govinda iti naamatrayam Maha Mantram hareh/ yo japetpriyato Bhaktaayaa  
Pranavaadhyam namontakam/ Tasya Mrityu bhayam naasti visharogaagnijam mahat/ Naamatrayam  
Maha Mantramjapedyam prayatatmavaan/ Kaala Mrityu bhayam chaapi tasya naasti kimanyatah*

(Whoever recites the Three Names viz. Om Achyutaaya, Om Anantaaya, and Om Govindaaya sincerely and with dedication, none of the poisonous diseases or Agni- based frights/deaths would affect)! As the churning continued, Maha Lakshmi's elder sister Daridra Devi appeared and was directed to stay in the homes of quarrels, Adharmas, violences and sins as also in the residences where residents of such homes in both the 'Sandhya' timings. As the further churning made progress, there emerged Varuni Devi, Nagaraja Ananta, GarudaPatni, Apsaras, Gandhavas, Iravata, Ucchaisrava Ashwa, Dhanvantari, Parijaata Tree, Surabhi, Maha Lakshmi, Chandra and Devi Tulasi. All the Devas and Brahma requested Maha Lakshmi to be seated on Maha Vishnu's Lotus-like Heart where the whole World would worship on Ekadashi and Dwadashi days. Devas and Brahma eulogized Kurma Rupa Vishnu and requested him to provide shield to Sesha Nag and 'Diggajaas' or the Four Directional Elephants as also Bhu Devi all reting

on the permanent Avatar of Maha Kurma. While the primary reason in the Kurma Avatar was the resurgence of Maha Lakshmi and her manifestation of Rajya Lakshmi who disappeared in Swaraga pursuant to Durvasa's curse to Indra Deva, another major fall-out of 'Ksheera Sagara Mathana' was the emergence of 'Amrit' meant for Devas, which again was distributed by Devi Mohini, another manifestation of Vishnu.

As Hiranyaakasha, the mighty son of Devi Diti pulled up Bhu Devi and dragged her into the depths of the Ocean down deep into the netherland of Rasatala, Lord Vishnu assumed the incarnation of **Maha Varaha** and killed him. Devi Prithvi heaved a great sigh of relief and prayed to Him saying that he was her rediscovery, her mighty 'Adhara' or the Hold, his unique rescuer and without her existence was unreal. Since Devi Prithvi was about to sink but for his timely mercy, she was popularly called Madhavi or the Lord as Madhava. Since Maha Varaha roared as an acknowledgement of her 'Stuti', the resultant sounds were heard as Sama Veda and he lifted the Earth by his horns in one single 'go' and leapt up from Rasatala to restore her back into her original position when Devas showered flowers and Maharshis recited Vedas, describing the Lord's playful deeds. They said that the distance between the Underworld, Prithi and Sky was the only comprehensible Place that one's imagination knew as spread over by Him, but the Unknown still remained a great mystery or Maya! Even as Maha Varaha placed Bhu Devi as a mammoth ship on the endless water, Bhagavan made divisions of Sapta Dwipas and materialized the four Lokas afresh viz. Bhuloka, Bhuvarka, Swaroka and Maharoka and Lord Brahma resumed his task of Creation.

As Hiranyaaksha was killed, his brother Hiranyakashipu reached Meru Giri and did ruthless Tapasya for thousand 'Deva' years and pleased Parama Shiva with the Panchakshari Mantra 'Om Namah Shivaaya' and secured the very exhaustive boon of victory over 'Mrityu' (death) from Devatas, Asuras, Human Beings, Gandharvas, Nagas, Rakshasas, Animals, Birds, Reptiles, Siddhas, Yakshas, Vidyadharas, and Kinnaras, Diseases and 'Astra-Shastras'. Armed by the all comprehensive boon, Hiranyakashipu had truly turned to be the Over-Lord of the whole Universe keeping all the Lokas under his control, commanding Devas and even 'Pancha Bhutas'. He had declared that he should be worshipped in Temples and Yagnas be performed in his name! In course of time, he was blessed with a son named Prahlada and as the latter came of the tender age of a boy was sent to Gurukula where all the glories of Danavas were taught. But Prahlada was a staunch Vaishnava with supreme dedication to Narayana. When he returned from his early spell of Gurukula to his father, he stunned the latter when he was all praise for Vishnu and affirmed that Vishnu was the unique driving force of Universal Existence and that he was the Eternal, Timeless, Indestructible, All- Pervading, Omni Potent and Omni-scient Paramatma. Hiranyakashipu was in great rage that his opponent Vishnu who killed his brother Hiranyaksha was being praised in his presence and was about to kill the boy's Guru; Prahlada confirmed that his Guru tried his very best to divert him from Narayana to his own father as the Supreme but failed and thus the Guru was spared. Then Hiranyakashipu himself sought to tutor the boy by cajoling him, endearing him, self-praising his own achievements and so on. He utilized the Sama (Advice and Mild reproach), Bheda (seeking to divide Vishnu as an Evil Force and himself as an Almighty), Daana (gifts of whatever nature on Earth or elsewhere) and even 'Danda' by way of punishment. But, Prahlada never ever relented and continued to extol the virtues of Vishnu. As his father lost all his patience, he resorted to measures of deadly nature and Prahlada's conviction too got redoubled. The paternal care and affection of Hiranya -kashipu were totally replaced by hatred, vengeance and retaliation for his son who turned out to be his sworn enemy; he exposed him to poisonous snakes which gave him the kiss of death but Prahlada survived while extolling Narayana; he threw him into the cages of tigers which ate up his limbs but still the Parama Bhakta survived singing hymns of Govinda; he got the tender boy crushed under elephants but still the matchless follower of Madhusudana survived praising the Leelas of Keshava; he threw him from high mountain tops but still the most trusted devotee survived rejoicing the ecstasy of Madhava's glories! Finally, Hiranyakashipu got on to his wits' end; he said that if Vishnu were 'Sarva Vyapi' (All Pervasive), he asked Prahlada to show that Narayana any where, say in that Pillar and broke it with his mace, or otherwise he would most certainly stop Prahlada's

breathing. As though there were earth quakes and storms, there emerged the most fearful Man-Lion, **Narasimha**, who had half-body as a giant- like Lion roaring in a manner that the whole World trembled and the other half like a colossal human being as a personification of 'Mrityu' with mighty thighs and legs; the Strange Creation which was neither human nor leonine lifted the massive body of the Danava on his thighs and tore him into pieces with sharp nails and hefty hands, rejoicing the drink of the victim's blood and eating chunks of his meat! No doubt, Devatas were overjoyed at the death of the Danava but were terrified to vision the unusual form of Nrisimha and prayed to him to cool down; they prayed to Devi Lakshmi to pacify the Lord who made efforts to pacify his anger; Prahlada who too was in shock was declared the King to revive Dharma again.

As the grandson of King Prahlada, the illustrious Danava King Bali (son of Virochana), was born as a devout Vaishnava and 'Dharmajna' but at the same time as an enormous warrior who defeated Devas and Marudganas and controlled the Three Lokas. But in King Bali's regime, his 'Prajā' (the Public) was extremely happy when Lord Varuna gave optimal rains, Devi Prithvi yielded excellent crops, cows gave maximum milk, and there was alround Prosperity and Peace. As King Bali was a highly dedicated to Srihari, the usual bitterness among the Public and the Establishment was absent and the values of 'Dharma' and 'Nyaya' (Virtue and Justice) in the Society were intact. But Lord Indra was dislodged from his throne and so were the various Devas. Sage Kashyapa and Devi Aditi prayed to Shrihari and requested to do justice to Devas and Indra as King Bali used 'Maya' to worship Vishnu and at the same time kept Indra and Devas aloof from Swarga cleverly and keeping the best of all the Three worlds with him! Kashyapa thus requested Vishnu to be born to the former and Aditi and by resorting the same kind of Maya, bestow his Throne and Indratwa to to Indra! Bhagavan agreed to be born to Aditi and Kashyapa as **Vamana Avatar**. As Vamana grew up as a Brahmachari, he learnt Vedas and other Scriptures and sporting 'Mriga Charma' (Skin of a Deer), Danda (Stick) and wooden footwear appeared at the Yagna being performed by King Bali and asked for a mere three feet of land as Bhu daan (charity of Land). Daithya Guru Shukracharya warned that this short man Vamana was a fake and was Bhagavan Vishnu himself. King Bali stated that if the Brahmachari was Vishnu himself, which other greater fortune there could be! Vamana then assumed a sky-high proportion of body and measured one foot as the entire Prithvi with land, Samudra, Parvat, Dwip, etc totalling fifty koti Yojanas (13-16 kilo mtr. per Yojana); by way of the 'Dwiteeya Pada' (second foot space), Vamana Deva counted the Nakshtras, Grahas (Planets), Devalokas, Brahmaloaka etc. But the second foot still fell short of the required size of the second foot. Brahma had the opportunity of Vishnu's 'Maha Vishwa Darshan'. As there was no space for the third foot, Vishnu Deva pushed Bali's head down to Rasatala and made him the King of Danavas, Nagas and water-based Beings till the end of the Kalpa!

Maharshi Jamadagni of Bhrgu Vamsha did Tapsya and pleased Surabhi the Celestial Cow and was extremely contented as the Holy Cow fulfilled all his desires and enjoyed a contented life. He married Devi Renuka and performed a Putra Kaameshti Yagna and was blessed with the son named **Parashu Rama**. After his 'Upanayana Samskara' and Gayatri Upadesha, he performed rigorous Tapasya, pleased Kashyapa who taught the Avinashi Mantra *Om Namo Narayanaya Namah* and performed Yagnas, Daanaas etc. One day, Haihaya King Kartavirya happened to visit the Ashram of Jagadagni and was impressed with Surabhi as the Cow that could fulfil all desires and wished to take it away by force. Surabhi killed the King's army and reverted back to Swargaloka. The King grew angry and killed Jamadagni. There Parashurama secured from Lord Vishnu, a 'Parashu' (axe), Vaishnava Dhanush and Shastra-Astras and instructed him to lessen the weight on Earth of highly crazy and egoistic Kshatriyas by killing them. On return to the Ashram, he found his father killed by Kartaviryarjuna and rushed to the latter's Kingdom, killed him, and went all out on a spree of killing Kshatriyas to completely uproot their clans (except Ikshvaku Vamsa as per his mother's request). As Shi Rama pulled down Shiva Dhanush, Parashu Rama surfaced again and challenged Rama to break Vaishnava Dhanush and when Rama did it, retired to the Ashram of Nara-Narayana thereafter.

## Now Matsya Purana explains how Vishnu assumed Matsya Swarupa

Brahma's boon to Satyavrata, Matsyavata, Pralaya and Srishti again

In the past, King Satyavrata / Vaivaswa Muni, the son of Surya Deva, entrusted his Kingdom to his son and did 'Tapasya' for innumerable years to Brahma Deva who was finally pleased and gave the Muni a boon of saving the 'Sthaavara Jangama Jeevas' or all moveable and immobile Beings at the time of next 'Pralaya' or the Great Annihilation of the Universe. In course of time, as Satyavrata was doing Pitru Tarpana in a waterbody and noticed a tiny fish in his palms and entreated him not to throw away but keep in his 'Kamanadalu' (water-vessel) as the big fish would swallow it in the water. Satyavrata took pity, retained the fish and transferred it in a Well. As the fish larger size and filled up the Well, he transferred it to a 'Sarovar' and within days it was growing in size further and further. Satyavrata finally transferred the huge fish to an Ocean and recognised it as Vaasudeva himself. Bhagavan informed the King that very soon there would be a Pralaya when Prithvi (Earth) would get submerged in deep waters with mountains, forests etc. as a mammoth Ship, constructed by Devas would arrive and that he should keep ready samples of various species of 'Svedaja' (born of sweat), 'Andaja' (born of eggs) and 'Udbhija' (born out of Earth) as also 'Jaraayuja' (born from womb such as human beings, animals etc. which were subject to birth and death). Bhagavan further suggested that when the ship arrived he should tie it with the horn of the giant fish. As the Pralaya approached, there would be severe drought in the Universe for spells of years, fiery winds would blow all over, severity of Sun would burn off most of the species, there would be 'badabaagni' / sulphurous fumes from the Seas devastating the flora / fauna as also mountains and forests, and then there would be incessant rain from the Seven clouds of Pralayakaala named Samvarta, Bheemanaada, Drona, Chanda, Balaahak, Vidyudpataak, and Shona.

The Seven Seas would flow in a single flood submerging Earth totally. In this Pralaya, only Surya, Soma, Brahma, Narmada River, Maharshi Markandeya, Shankara, Four Vedas, Puranas, and Suvrata who after the post Pralaya age who would become the Prajapati as the famed Vaivasvata would be the survivors and the rest of Creation including even Devatas. As predicted, at the end of the Chakshusa Manvantara, the ship appeared and along with it a huge rope like serpent was materialised with which Satyavrata connected the ship and the horn of Matsyavata Bhagavan Vishnu and got seated by the ship too. As the Pralaya subsided, Matsya Bhagavan explained to Prajapati Satyavrata who became the Vaivasvata Manu about the re-creation of the Universe and its end again, the creation of humanity, Manvantaras, the illustrious personalities among human beings, 'Bhuvana Vistaar' or the expansion of Srishti, Daana dharma vidhi, Varna and Ashrama vidhaan, reappearance of Devas, Rakshasas, and so on.

Punah Srishti: At the beginning, Swayambhu Vishnu created water first and placed his seed in it and a Golden Egg emerged outside which Bhagavan Aditya and as Vishnu recited Vedas Brahma was in position. The latter divided the Golden Egg into two parts viz. Swargaloka and Bhuloka as the space in between were created the 'Dishas' (The Directions) and 'Akash' (The Sky). From the 'Jaraayu Bhaag' of the Egg appeared Seven Mountains like Meru and from the 'Garbhaashaya' (womb), 'Vidyutmegha Mandal' or the Clouds with Lightning and Rivers, Pitrujanas, Manus, and Seven Seas full of 'Ratnas' (Precious Stones) and Salt, Sugarcane juice, Sura, etc produced out of the water from inside the egg. As Prajapati Deva desired to create out of the Egg which was no longer alive, he materialised 'Martanda' from the dead Egg and hence the name of Mrita+Anda. The 'Rajoguna' of that Mahatma generated 'Chaturmukha Brahma' who in turn crafted Devatas, Asuras, and the entirety of the World including humanity.

Matsya Bhagavan continued to describe to Manu that the Chaturmukha Brahma performed very rigorous Tapasya by the power of which the Vedas were rediscovered and Six Vedangas viz. Siksha, Kalpa, Vyakarana, Nirukta, Jyotisha, and Chhanda were materialised and so did were the 'Upangas' viz.

Puranas, Nyaya, Meemaamsa, and Dharma Shastra.; besides, 'Pada-paatha' or the 'Nirdharana' (methodology) of reciting Vedic Mantras as well as the 'Krama' or the seriatim was decided. There after, Shastras and Puranas were created of which the latter comprised crores of 'Shlokas'. From Brahma's mouth then emerged Eight 'Pramaanas' or Evidences of Meemamsa viz. 'Prathyaksha', 'Anumaama', 'Upamaana', 'Shabda' (Aaptavachana), 'Anupalabhi', 'Arthaapatti', 'Aaitiha', and 'Swabhava' as well as 'Nyaya Shastra'. Brahma desired to produce ten 'Manasa Putras' out of his 'Manosamkalpa', viz. Marichi, Atri, Angira, Pulasthya, Pulaha, Kratu, Pracheta, Vasishtha, Bhrugu, and Narada. Also Brahma created motherless sons, viz. Daksha Prajapati from his right hand thumb, Dharma from chest, Kusumaayudha /Kamadeva from his heart, Lobha (avarice) from his lips, Krodha (Anger) from his eyebrows, Moha (infatuation) from his Buddhi, 'Mada' (Arrogance) from his Ahamkara (Ego), Pramod or Joy from his Kantha (throat), 'mrityu' from his eyes and Bharata Muni from his elbow. The tenth child of Brahma's body was a girl named 'Angaja'. Viswvasu Manu enquired of Matsya Deva about the link of Buddhi- Moha-Ahamkara-Krodha and the reply was that there were the Three Gunas (Features) of Satva-Rajas-Tamas represented by Brahma-Vishnu and Maheswara respectively. Then 'Mahatatva' got generated which led to 'Ahamkara' and the latter led to the creation of Ten 'Indriyas' or Sense Organs, viz. Five 'Jnaanendriyas' governed by Buddhi called Shrotra (Ears), Twacha (Skin), Netra (Eyes), Jivha (Tongue) and Nasika (nose), besides Five Karmendriyas Hasta (Hands), Paada (feet), Vaani (mouth), Paayu (anus) and Mutrendriya. The Ten Indriyas experience ten activities viz. Shabda (sound), Sparsha (Touch), Rupa (Vision), Rasa (taste), and Gandha (smell); also there are Ten Karyas or Deeds viz. 'Utsarga' or ablutions, 'Aanadan' or providing joy, 'Aadaan' (giving away), 'Gaman' (movement) and 'Aalaap'. Besides the Ten Sensory Organs, the Eleventh Organ is 'Manas' or Mind. From these 'Indriyas' or sensory organs, there is a 'Sharir' or Body constituting 'Tanmatras' or Physical Properties. When the urge for 'Srishti' (Creation) is felt by Brahma, the 'Shabda Tanmatra' materialises Aakaasha (Sky); from Aakaasha is Vayu (Air) is generated by the interaction of Shabda and Sparsha. Then Vayu and Sparsha together materialised 'Tejas' or Illumination; hence the interaction of Shabda, Sparsha and Rupa which was the amalgam of three ingredients led to the creation of 'Jal' (water) and the amalgam of Akasha, Vayu, Tejas, and Jala led finally to the creation of Prithvi. This was how the sum total of Twenty Four Tatvas (covering, five jnaanendriyas, five Karmendriyas, Pancha Maha Bhutas, Five Tanmatras, one 'Manas', one Buddhi, One Ahamkara and final one Unique Paramatma); the twenty fifth was of Purushanamak Tatva. Added to this was the Twenty Sixth Tatva called 'Jeevatma' which is controlled by Paramatma and Sages Kapila and other Sankhya Yogis called it as 'Jnaana' with which Brahma aimed at scripting 'Jagat Racchana' While doing so, Brahma divided his body into two parts, one half as a woman and another as a man. The woman Sarasvati came to be known as Shatarupa, also called Savitri, Gayatri and Brahmani. Brahma was astonished at her beauty and as he performed 'Pradakshina' (circumambulation) around him, he was unable to take away his looks on her and thus while staring away he materialised five heads in the four directions and on the sky above. Then he instructed his Manasa Putras like Marichi to go ahead and create human beings and various other species. He wedded Shatarupa who gave birth to Swayambhu Manu. Shatarupa and Brahma also gave birth to Rati, Manas, Tapa, Buddhi, Mahaan, Dik and Sambhrama. Brahma on his own created earlier Vama Deva the Trishula dhaari who in turn created Brahmanas from his face, Kshatriyas from his arms, Viashyas from his thighs and Shudras from his feet. The latter also created Bijli (Lightning), Vajra (Diamond), Megha (Clouds), Indradhanush (Rainbow/ Vibgyor), Chhanda (Prosody), and eightyfour crore Saadhyaganas who were ageless and there after Brahma disallowed further Srishti by Vamadeva who thence onward became a 'Sthanu' or ineligible for Srishti. Swayambhu Manu then initiated the process of Maithuni Srishti (man-woman creation) by wedding a Kanya named Ananti, after Tapasya and by their union begot Priyavrata and Uttanapada. Prajapati Priyavrata had the distinction of demarcating the Sapta Dwipas, while Uttanapada and Sunruta / Suruchi gave birth to the illustrious Dhruva who attained a higher position than that of Saptarishi mandala on the Sky! Agni Kanya- Dhishana- and King Pruthi's son Havirdhan gave birth to Prachina Barhisha Prajapati among other sons and in this lineage was born Daksha Prajapati who gave birth to eighty crores of children by Sankalpa (thought), Darshana (vision) and Sparsha (touch). He also gave birth to ten Dharmas, thirteen Kashyapas, twenty seven Chandramas, four Arishtanemis, two

Shukras, two Kushvaswaas and two Kanyas named Angirasaas. Their descendants included Ten Vishwadevas, Twelve Sandhyas, Thirty nine Marutvatis, Ashtavasus or Eight Vasus viz. Aapa, Soma, Dhruva, Dhara, Anila, Anala, Prathyusha and Prabhasa as also Dwadasa Suryas, Arundhati, Muhurta, Lamba, Yami and Sankalpa. Marichi's son Kashayapa had thirteen wives viz. Aditi, Diti, Danu, Arishta, Surasa, Surabhi, Vinata, Taamra, Krodhavasha, Ira, Kaddu, Viswva, and Muni. Aditi's sons were Devaganas who were Manvantara specific. Diti's sons included Hiranyaksha and Hiranya kashipu. Danu begot hundred sons, Vinita's sons were Garuda and Aruna the charioteers of Vishnu and Surya respectively. Surasa and Kaddu gave birth to the famed serpents like Sesha, Vasuki, Karkotaka, Shankha, Padma, etc.; Surabhi gave birth to Cows and bulls; Arishta created Gandharvas and Kinnaras, Ira produced trees, and related things; Vishwa created Yakshas and Rakshasaas, and Muni created Apsaras and so on.

After describing the highlights of Adi Sarga and Prati Sarga, there was Pratyeka Sarga, in which Pruthu of Surya Vamsha became the 'Adhinayaka' (Chief) of Prithvi, when Brahma appointed Chandrama as the Head of 'Aushadhis' (Medicines), Pitras, Yagnas, Vratas, Tapas, Nakshatras (Stars), Dwijas, Trees, and related entities. Varuna was made in charge of water, Kubera of 'Dhana' (Prosperity), Vishnu in the care of Aditya, Agni of Vasus, Daksha of Prajapathis, Indra of Maruds, Prahlada as the Chief of Daythas and Danavas, Yamaraja of Pitaras; Shiva as in charge of Pishachas, Rakshasas, Pashus, Bhutas, Yakshas, and Vetalas; Himalayas of Parvatas, Samudra as in Charge of Rivers, Chitraratha as the Head of Gandharvas, Vidyadharas, and Kinnaras, Vasuki as the in-charge of Nagas, Takshak of Serpents, Iravata as the Head of Elephants, Garuda as the Leader of Birds, Uhaishrava as the head of horses, Lion as the Chief of Animals, Vrisha as the in-charge of Cows etc. Also Brahma appointed as the in charge of Sargaarambha of Dishas / Directions, Shankha paad as in charge of East, Shanarapaad as the head of South, Suketuman as the Chief of the West, Hiranya Roma as of North.

#### How Bhumi was renamed as Prithvi?

In the past, there was a Prajapati named Anga during the regime of Swayambhu Manu who married the daughter of Mrityu called Sunita, who was very ugly and from their union, a very powerful Sovereign called Vena was born. When Vena came to power, there was predominance of 'Adharma' (Non-Virtue and Injustice) as Vena himself was cruel, non-scrupulous and malicious. As the good advices of Maharshis fell flat on Vena's ears and there was 'Araajakata' or utter lawlessness, the Maharshis gave curses to him and the Brahmanas trapped Vena and killed him. From Vena's body emerged the shadow of a dark and ferocious woman from the dead body of Vena and from the right hand of the body manifested a Figure resembling Prajapati Anga who was a symbol of Dharma and Nyaya, with a 'Kireeta and Kavacha' (golden headgear and body shield), 'Dhanush and Baana' (Bow and Arrows) etc. Since the manifestation came out of the 'Pruthu bhujas' or fat shoulder of Vena, the Figure was named Pruthu. The Brahmanas who killed Vena made Pruthu the 'Chakravarti' and gradually he became the undisputed Chief of the entire World, turned out to be a Super King by virtue of his valour, fame and Tapasya and endeared him as a role-model. He found that there was no Swadhyaya, Vashatkara and Dharma in the Rule of Vena and being extremely annoyed with Bhumi for the negligence of the Moral Values took up his arms and chased her to burn off the sins of moral depravity.

Devi Bhumi was frightened and tried to escape in the form of a Cow. He hounded her but could not run further and out of desperation stopped over and surrendered to Pruthu; she asked him as to what could she do for him and the reply was that the whole 'Charachara Jagat' or the moveable or immobile inhabitants of Earth should be free from any desire whatsoever. Then Pruthu converted Swayambhu Manu as a calf and started extracting milk from Bhumi as cow its udder which turned out to be 'Shudda Anna' with which there were no wants on Earth for the Citizens. On seeing this, Rishis took the example, turned Sun God as the Cowherd, Indra as the calf and milked Prithvi to satisfy their Dharmik desires. Devatas too

were tempted, turned out to be the Cowherds, requested Yama Dharma Raja to be the calf, and squeezed 'Swadha Rasa' into golden vessels to fulfill their own respective desires. The Pitruganas brought their silver vessels to extract as much milk as they wished. Nagas were not far behind as the Nagaraja was the cowherd, Takshak was the calf and filled up a copper vessel to squeeze 'Visha' (poison). 'Asuras' jumped into the queue and milked 'Maya' by converting Virochan-the son of Prahlad as the calf. Yakshas were for long desired to learn 'Antardhana Vidya' or the Lesson of Vanishing, and thus converted Kubera as the calf and extracted the Vidya from the Cow. Pretas and Rakshasas organised themselves and deputed Ropuanabha Preta as the cowherd and Preta Sumali as the calf and extracted blood from the udder. Apsaras and Gandharvas brought Chatraratha as the calf and milked the sweet smell of Lotus leaves from the Kamadhenu, while Natyacharya Gandharva Vararuchi as the cowherd. Mountains too were tempted to fulfil their wishes of milking 'ratnas' (precious stones) and Aushadhis (herbal medicines) into a 'shila patra' or rock vessel; Mahachala Sumeru was the cowherd and Himavanta was the calf. Trees extracted the milky liquid while cutting them from the Cow into a Palaasa Patra, while Shala Vriksha along with flowers and leaves was the Cowherd and many other trees took the form of a calf. Likewise, many species including each and every human being fulfilled their own wishes.

In the regime of Maharaja Pruthu the population was prosperous, happy, long living and highly contented. There was no pauper, no sinner, no fear of Adhi Bhoudhika, Adhi Daivika or Adhyatmika problems (Physical, God-made and Internal). None had diseases nor mutual illwill, no greed, no fear, and no external and internal threats. Little wonder Bhu Devi was called the Prithvi!

#### 'Matsya Purana Phalashruti'

*Etat pavitra maayushyametat kirti vivarthanam, Etat pavitram kalyanam Maha paapa haram Shubham/ Asmaat Puraanaat sukritam naraanaam, Tirthaavali namamavaga -ahanaanaam/ Samastadharmacharanod bhavaanaam, Sadaivalaabhastha mahaa phalaanam/ Etat Puraanam Paramam Sarva dohaavidhaatakam, Matsya rupena harinaa katitham Manavernavey/* (This Matsya Purana is sacred, life-extending, status-providing, sanctifying, propitious and sin-demolishing. It yields the fruits of 'Punya', the benefit of many 'Tirtha Snaanaas' and of virtuous life. This exalted Purana is a purifier of all blemishes. It is likened to Narayana at Pralaya and Manu who assisted the Matsya Deva. *Asmaat Puranaadapi paadamekam pathet tu yah sopi vimukta paapah/* (Whoever reads even half of a Shloka would be rid of all sins and imperfections). If one reads or hears through this confidential and 'Punya-prada' Purana fully, the person concerned would be blessed by Maha Deva with the boon of performing Ashwamedha Yagna as also the 'Avabhruta Snaana'.

*Shivam Vishnum Samarbhyaarcha Brahmaanam Sadivaakaram, Shlokam Shlokaardha paadam vaa Shraddhayaa yah shrunotivaa, Shraavayed vaapi Dharmagnasthala phalam shurunt Dwijaah/ Braahmano labhatey vidyaam Kshatriyo labhatey maheem, Vaishyo dhanamavaapnoti sukham Shudtastu vindita/ Ayushmaan Putravaamschaiva Lakshmivaan papavarjitah, Shrutvaa Puraanamakhilam Shatrubhis -cha paraajitah/*

(When a person reads or listens one-or half a stanza of the Purana sincerely after worshipping Shiva or Vishnu, Brahma or Surya, he or she would secure vidya to a Brahmana, Kingship to a Kshatriya, opulence to a Vaishya and pleasures to a Shudra. If the Purana is read or heard fully would be 'Paapa rahit', 'Putravaan' and 'Lakshmivaan' whom no evil/enemy could over-power!). Whoever disturbs, or leaves halfway, eats 'tambul', sits on a higher seat than that of a 'Purana Vakta', sits without greeting the Vakta, sleeps during the proceedings or is inebriated would be punished with loss of wealth, loss of wife/progeny; and rebirth as a dog, as a crow, as a tree, an Ajagar snake, respectively. Interruption without justification or passing careless and casual remarks or criticism of the 'Vakta' would surely open up gates of hell. But sincerity, devotion and faith would assure 'Iha sukham' and 'Para Moksham'! *Shradhha*

*Bhakti Samaayukta Naanya karyeshu laalasaah, Vaagyataah Shuchayovyagraah shrotaarah Punyabhaaginah/* (Those who possess dedication and commitment devoid of mean attractions pay peaceful attention to this Sacred Purana observing silence are the active partners of propitiousness and recipients of fruits of fulfillment).

## **Kurmaavataara vide 1. Maha Bhagavata 2.Kurma Purana**

### 1. Maha Bhagavata explains: Mammoth Churning of Ocean for ‘Amrith’ ( Nectar)

Proceeding with the narration to King Parikshith, Suka Mahamuni highlighted the Gajendra Moksha incident during the Tamasa Manu’s regime, whereafter the fifth and sixth Manus viz. Raivata and Chakshusa ruled the Universe. It was in the sixth millennium of Chakshusa Manu that Lord Vishnu had incarnated as Ajita who was begotten to Vairaja and Devasambhuti; Ajita in the form of a tortoise was wandering in the Ocean of Milk carrying the Mountain Mandhara on His back and produced ‘Amrit’ by churning the Ocean. Parikshith became highly inquisitive about the famous story and requested the Muni to give full details. As the enmity and intense hatred between the Demi- Gods and Demons took unprecedented proportions, the Demi-Gods assembled on the top of the Sumeru Mountain to seek a solution. Lord Brahma instructed the Devas and Demons to resort to a temporary truce, till arrangements could be made to churn the Ocean of Milk to obtain Amrit, the Divine Drink to provide everlasting life. Garuda, the Vehicle of Lord Vishnu lifted the Mandhara Mountain and placed it into the Ocean as the churning rod. Vasuki the Giant Serpent coiled around the Mountain tightly; the head of the serpent was opted for by the Demons out of pride and the tail was taken by the Demi-Gods as the rope. As the Mountain was not stable and shaky, Ajita in the form of tortoise slid under the Mountain and provided the needed balance. Thus commenced the mammoth churning of the Ocean for ‘Amrit’.

Many Demons perished from the poisonous flames from the mouth of Vasuki. As the churning progressed, the Ocean was shaken up bringing out innumerable species underneath, black clouds emerged fast across the Sky and there was terrible turmoil around. Suddenly, the Sky looked like breaking way, emitting unprecedented poisonous flames, ‘Halahal’, swiftly engulfing the entire Universe. The initial churning was terminated and Demi-Gods headed by Lord Brahma as well as the Demons screamed for help to Lord Siva to save the situation. They all prayed to Him that He was the original life force, the Maha Tatva, the Eternal Truth and the Omni Potent and He only could stop the annihilation of the Universe. In response to the desperate prayers by one and all, Lord Siva swallowed the ‘Halahal’ and retained it in His Throat to safeguard the Worlds within His other body parts. Thus known in the Scriptures; as ‘Neela Greeva’-the Blue Throated, He protected the entire Universe and saved the act of Creation itself. As the process of churning resumed further, a number of Divine Figures commenced emerging: ‘Surabhi’ the Cow required for unending milk and products required for Sacred Rituals as oblations to Fire God by Sages; a Divine Horse, Utthaisvaryu, as desired by King Bali of the Under World; the Divine Elephant ‘Airavata’ and eight She Elephants, which were desired by Indra to possess; Koustubha Mani and Padmaraga Mani-the jewels decorating Lord Vishnu’s chest; ‘Parijata Tree’ to decorate the Celestial Gardens; then emerged Apsaras, the Divine dances to entertain Demi-Gods and Indra; the Goddess of Fortune, Lakshmi whom the Demi- Gods and Demons craved alike to possess but She Herself opted for Lord Vishnu Who is the ultimate Preserver of the Universe; then appeared the dame, Varuni, with voluptuous eyes who could control drunkards, whom King Bali opted for on behalf of the Demon World. Finally, a strong, stout, blackish and young person, known as Dhanvantari, the Physician of the Universe, whom both Demons and Demi- Gods agreed to share. But, the most awaited jar of Nectar noticed by the Demons was forcibly snatched away, to the disappointment of Demi-Gods. But, Lord Vishnu created a cover of ‘Maya’ ( Illusion) and let the Demons fight among themselves for the sips of the Nectar. In the confusion, there appeared an outstanding beauty with most sonorous voice and dazzling figure, who was Lord Himself in the form of Mohini Murthi. She had mesmerised the Demons

who fell in a spell and made them request her to do justice in equitably distributing the Nectar to all by turns. She made formations as per seniority and made them wait for turns. She started with the formations of the Demons, but by means of illusion had actually commenced the distribution among the Demi-Gods. Rahu a Demon somehow got into the camp of Demi- Gods and this was noticed by Sun and Moon, who complained the fact to Mohini Murthi and immediately the Sudarsana Chakra severed Rahu's head, but since he drank the drops of Nectar already, Lord Brahma gave him the status of a Planet; but since then, Rahu became the enemy of Sun and Moon and torment them periodically by way of eclipsing them till date. At this juncture, Lord Vishnu revealed his identity and exhorted the Demons to mend their diabolic actions and take refuge in the Superior Energy instead of becoming slaves of the Eight Materialistic Vices, Viz. Kama ( Desire), Krodha (Anger), Moha (Infatuation), Mada (Arrogance), Lobha ( Avarice) and Matsara ( Jealousy). He advised that in the ultimate analysis, only He would provide salvation which tantamounts to Eternity, which indeed the Nectar that they craved for.

### War by Demons with Demi-Gods

Lord Vishnu's exhortation to the Danavas fell flat on their ears; instead, they became more violent than before, especially as they were denied access to Nectar and got frustrated. Many demons like Taraka, Sumbha, Nisumbha, Jambha and Arista continued to terrorise Trilokas. They were also fortified with boons of invincibility from Lord Brahma on account of their intense prayers and harsh Sacrifices. Led by Indra riding Airavata the celestial Elephant, Demi-Gods like Vayu, Varuna, Agni, Sun, Moon, and various other planets, and associates retaliated. Sumbha and Nisumbha were annihilated by Goddess Durga Devi, Indra defeated Bali, Moon fought with Rahu, Brihaspati with Sukracharya, Lord Siva with Jambha, Sanaischara with Narakusura, Kartikeya with Taraka, Yamaraja with Kalanabha, Surya with hundred sons of Bali headed by Bana and so on. As Demon Kalanemi attacked Garuda, Lord Vishnu's disc severed his head as also those of Mali, Sumali and Malyavan, as these Demons became too powerful in the battle. Demi-Gods Varuna, Vayu and Agni chased and killed thousands of Demons like roaring lions to flocks of deer. After the battle ended, substantial Demon population, especially of those who claimed invincibility, got dwindled to a large extent. But the display of valour, scheming and determination in Deva-Danava War was an unparalleled spectacle witnessed never before nor later.

### 2. Vishnu's Avatara as Kurma, Lakshmi as Maya and Revelation of Tatwa Gyaan vide Kurma Purana

Dwipayana Veda Vyasa Maharshi also called Romaharshana (or he whose body-hairs are imbued with happiness) was inspired by Suta Maha Muni to narrate the happenings of 'Kurma Avatara' of Vishnu to the Sages at Nimisha Forest. As Deva Danavas decided to initiate the act of the Ksheera Samudra Mathana or churning of the Ocean of Milk - on which Narayana was lying normally in yogic slumber- by erecting the Mandara Mountain, Bhagavan Narayana had already assumed the Kurma Rupa or the Form of a gigantic Tortoise. Even by then, Devi Lakshmi the Goddess of Wealth was in position along with Kurma Deva. As Devas and Maharsis like Narada asked Devi Lakshmi to be identified, Narayana replied that she was of his own 'Amsha' or Swarupa:

*Iyamsa Pramashaktirmayi Brahma Rupiney, Maya mama Priyaanantaa yahedam mohitam Jagat/  
Anayaiva Jagat Sarvam Sadevaasura Maanusham, Mohayaami Dwija Sreshtaa grasaami visrujaami cha/  
Utpattim Pralayam chaiva Bhutaanaamagatim gatim, Vijnayaananveekshya chaatmaanam taranti  
vipulaalimaam/ Asyaastwamshaanadhishtaaya Shaktimanto bhavan Dwijaah, Brahmoshanaanadayo  
Devaah Sarva Shaktiriyam mama/ Saishaa Sarva jagatstutih Prakrithistrigunaatmikaa, Praageva  
Mattaha Sanjaataa Shrikalpey Padma vaasini/ Chaturbhujah shankha chakra padma hastaa  
shubhaanvitaa, Koti Surya Pratikaashaa Mohini Sarva dehinaam/ Naalam Devaa Pitara Maanavaa  
Vasuvopicha Mayaametaam Samutturtam ye chaanye Bhuvi dehinah/*

(This Devi Lakshmi is of Vishnu's Swarupa and Parama Shakti Maha Maya who allures the Universe in totality; Her charms are endless and is spread all over with her attractions conjuring one and all and with her assistance what Vishnu creates, destroys and recreates again. Thus Vishnu confirmed that this Maha Shakti was the prime source of energy based on which, Brahma, Shiva and all the Devas which were the ramifications of Maha Maya came to be created by the mix of Three Gunas or features of Satwa-Rajas and Tamas. She thus got originated with four hands possessing Shankha-Chakra-Kamal and Abhaya or Raksha to assure protection to one and all of the Beings in Creation and indeed there was none including Devas, Pitaras, Manavas etc. who could conquer her except by extreme dedication and deep devotion.)

Devi Lakshmi was briefed by Brahma as follows:

*Devidamakhilam Vishwam Sadevasura -maanusham, Mohayitwaamamaadeshaat samsaarey vinipataya/  
Jnaanayoga rataan Daantaan Brahmishthaan Brahma vaadinah, Akrodhanaan Satyaparaan dooratah  
parivarjaya/ Dhyayino nirmamaan Shaantaan dharmikaan vedapaaragaan, Jaapinastaapasaan  
Vipraan dooratah parivarjaya/ Sartyaparaan dooratah parivarjaya/ Vedavedaanta vijnana  
sancchinnaasesha samshayaan, Mahaayajna paraan Vipraan dooratah parivarjaya/ Ye Jayanti  
japairhomair Deva Devam Maheswaram, Swaadhyayanejjayaa dooraat taan prayatnena varjaya/  
Bhakti yoga Samaayuktaaneeswaraarpita maanasaan, Paanaayaamaadishu rataan dooraat  
pariharaamalaam/ Pranavaasaktamanaso Rudra japyapaaraayanaan, Atharva shirasaso- dhyetrun  
Dharmajnaana parivarjaya/*

(Brahma advised Lakshmi Devi to certainly spread the net of Maya on Devas, Asuras, Manushyas and indeed the entire world, but not on those who were always engaged in Jnaana Yoga, Jitendriyata or control of Jnaana-Karmendriyas, Brahma Nishtha or Absorption in Brahmatwa, Brahmavaaditwa or seeking to prove Brahma's existence, krodha shunyata or resistance of anger and Satya paraayanata or Constant pursuit of Truth. Those who are Dhyaanis or Meditators, devoid of desires, ever Peaceful, Dharmik or the Virtuous, Veda Jnaanis, Japa-paraayanaas, and Tapasvis should also be exempt from the Maya. Veda Vedaanta Jnaanis, Yajna paraayanaas or practitioners, Japa- homa- Yajna and Swaadhyaya Murtis too never be exposed to the Lakshmi Maya. Again, those persons who dedicate themselves to Bhagavan and were deeply attached to Praanaayaama viz.Dharana- Dhyana and Samaadhi, 'Pranavopaasana', Rudra Mantra Japa and Athrava sirasaadhyeya and Nitya Ishwaraadhayena are too exempt from the playful exposure of Maya).\

Having heard about the influence of Devi Lakshmi's Maya, Devas and Munis enquired of Vishnu whether there was any body who might have escaped the impact of Maya in the past, Hrishikesha cited one example of a well-read and illustrious Brahmana called **Indradyumna** who in his previous birth was a reputed King also named Indradyumna and claimed invincibility over Devas. But meanwhile Vishnu assumed Kurma Avatara and since the Shaktis of Tri Murtis and of Devas got merged into the Avatara, the King sought refuge into the Avatara; then Kurma Deva blessed the King to take to the next birth as a Brahmana and in his current life practised Vratas, Upavaasaas, Homas and worshipped Vishnu. That was the background of Indradyumna as the King and later as Brahmana. Devi Lakshmi encountered the Brahmana and was overcome by his sincerity and dedication and on revealing her identity as Lakshmi touched the Brahmana with affection and assured that one day Bhagavan Vishnu himself would provide Jnaana to him and disappeared. Brahmana Indradyumna meditated to Vishnu for very many years and decades and finally Bhagavan obliged him with his darshan as the latter fell down on his knees and prayed to him.

Indradyumna's Prayer to Bhagavan Vishnu:

*Yajneshaachyuta Govinda Madhavaananta Keshava, Krishna Vishno Hrishikesha tubhyam  
 Vishwatmaney Namah/Namostutey Puraanaaya Haraye Vishwa Murtaye, Sarga Sthiti Vinaashaanaam  
 Hetaveynanta Shaktaye/ Nirgunaaya Namastubhyam Nishkalaaya amalaatmaney, Purushaaya  
 Namastubhyam Vishwarupaayatey namah/ Namastey Vaasudevaaya Vishnavey Vishwayonaye, Adi  
 Madhyanta Heenaaya Jnaanagamyaya tey namah/ Namastey Nirvikaaraaya Nishprapanchaaya tey  
 namah,Bhedaabheda Viheenaaya Namostwaananda Rupiney/ Namastaaraaya Shaantaaya Namoh  
 Apratihataatmaney, Ananta Murtaye tubhyam amurtaayam Namoh namah/ Namastey Paramaarthaya  
 Maayaatitaaya tey namah, Namastey Parameshaaya Brahmaney Paramatmaney/Namostu tey  
 Susukshmaaya Maha Devayatey namah, Namah Shivaaya Shuddhaaya Namastey Parameshthiney/  
 Twayaiva Srushthimakhilam twameva Paramaagatih, Twam Pitaa Sarva Bhutaanaam twam Maataa  
 Purushottama/ Twamaksharam Paramdhaama Chinmaatram Vyoma Nishkalam, Sarvasyaadhaara –  
 mavyaktamanantam Tamasah Param/ Prapashyanti Paramaatmaanam Jnaana deepena kevalam,  
 Prapadye Bhavato Rupam tad Vishnoh Paramam Padam/ Evam stuvantam Bhagavan Bhutaatmaa  
 Bhutabhaavanah,Upaabhyaamatha hastaabhyaam paspasrsha prahasanniva/*

(My salutations to you Yagna Swami, Achyuta, Govinda, Maadhava, Ananta, Keshava, Krishna, Vishnu, Hrishikesha, Vishwaatma, Puraana Purusha, Vishwa Murti, Hari! You are the cause of Creation, Continuation and Conclusion of the Universe; You possess Unending Energy, You are the Nirguna Swarupa, Nishkala, Vimalatma or of the Pure Soul; Vishwa Rupa Purusha, Vishwa Yoni, vaasudeva, Vishnu; You have neither Beginning-nor the Inter Stage-nor even the Termination; You are realisable only by Jnaana or Paramount Knowledge; You are Nitrvikara or Devoid of Features; Prapancha or Pancha Bhutas; You possess neither dissimilarities nor constancies; but are the Embodiment of Ananda or Bliss! You are the only Power that could save us from the Deep Oceans of Samsara or the Miseries of Life; You are always Peaceful, Tranquil, Wholesome, Ever-Clean and Eternal; You are beyond Illusions, Paramartha Swarupa or the Supreme Goal; Paramatma or the Ultimate Soul; The Everlasting; The Minutest; Maha Deva-Parameshti and Parabrahma! You are the Highest Scripter of Srishti; the Final Destiny; the Purushottama; the Father and Mother of Bhuta-Praanis in Totality; the Avinaashi /Indestructible; Parama dhama or the Last Refuge Point; the Chikitsa Rupa or the Best Physician; Vyoma or the Akaasha; Nishkala or the Transparent; The Adhara or the Fulcrum; Aavyakta or the Unknown; Ananta or The Endless; Nitya Prakasha or the Ever-Resplendent; and Realisable by Yogis only by the Light of Jnaana or the Awareness of Infinity! As Indradyumna extolled Bhagavan Vishnu, the latter was pleased, smiled and touched the Muni and passed on Tatwa Jnaana.) As Indradyuma was in a trance and in a state of bliss, Bhagavan passed on the Fundamentals and Nuances of Tatwa Gyaana.

#### Highlights of Tatwa Gyan:

Bhagawan unfolded the Basic Principles of Tatwa Gyaana with an Intro of Ashrama Dharma, Bhakti Saadhana, Saguna Swarupa Bhavana gradually leading to Nirgunatwa, Virat Swarupa, and Brahma Gyaana. He stated:

*Varnaashramaachaaravataam Pumsaam Devo Maheshwarah,Jnaanena Bhaktiyogena Pujaniyo na  
 chaanyathaa/ Vigjnaaya tatparam Tatwam Vibhutim Karyakaaranam, Pravruttim chaapimey Jnaatwaa  
 Mokshaartheeshwaramarchayet/ Sarva Sangaan parityajya Jnaatwaa Maayaamayam Jajat,Adwaitam  
 bhavayaatmaanam drushyasey Parameshwaram/ Trividhaa Bhaavana Brahmanm prochyamaanaa  
 nibodha mey, Ekaa madvishayaa tatra dwitiyaa Vyakyata samshrayaa, Anyaacha Bhaavanaa Braahmi  
 Vigjneyaa saa gunaatigaa/ Aasaamanyaamchaatha Bhavanaam Bhavayed Budhah, Asaktah  
 Samshrayedaadyaamityesha Vaidiki Shrutih/ Tasmaat Sarva prayatnena tannisthastatparaayanah,  
 Samaaraadhya Vishwesham tato Mokshamavaapyasi/*

(Persons engaged in the Varnaashrama and Ashrama Dharmas should follow the Principles of Bhakti and Jnaana and worship Bhagavan and there would indeed be no other means of *Sadhana*. Those desirous of accomplishing Moksha must perform 'Upasana' by appropriately assessing the intricacies of Parama Tatwa, Vibhutis or Alternate Counter-Part Shaktis, Karya-Kaarana or Cause-Causation Forms and then worship the Supreme Ishwara. There are three kinds of Bhavanas or feelings about Paramatma viz. Saguna Swarupa or in full physical Form; the second feeling relates to a Virat Swarupa or of a Giant Form; the Third relates to Brahma Jnaana Vishaya Bhavana or of the Complex and Unidentifiable Type beyond one's comprehension. A devotee might follow any of the above Bhavanas to perform 'Upasana'; a none too capable person who could imagine Bhagavan in a Complex Swarupa might as well worship Him in the Primary Form of Bhagavan and indeed that type of worship was authorised by Vedas. In any case, Indradyumna was advised by Bhagavan that in any of the Forms of Saguna, Nirguna or Paraaguna, one must perform worship with Nishtha or Dedication to accomplish Moksha). Then Bhagavan explained to the Sage that Paratpara Tatwa was an endless personification of Para Brahma:

*Paratparam Tatwam Param Brahmaikamavyayam, Nityaanandam Swayam Jyotiraksharam Tamasah Param/ Ishwaryam tasya yannityam Vibhutiriti geeyatey, Kaaryam Jagadathaavyaktam Kaaranam Shuddamaksharam/ Aham hi Sarvabhutaanaam- antaryaameeshwarah Parah, Sargasthityanta kartutwam Pravurtirmama geeyatey/ Etad Vigjnaaya Bhaavena Yathaavadakhilam Dwija, Tatastwam Karmayogena Shaaswatam Samyagarchaya/*

(The Para Tatwa beyond one's Imagination is Para Brahma the Ananda Swarupa or the Embodiment of Bliss; Swaprakasha or the Auto-Illuminated; Avinaashi or Indestructible; Ever Prosperous; Ever Lasting; Karyakaarana Swarupa; Srishtisthitisamhaara Karana; and the Maha Tawta and Vibhuti Swarupa. I am the Antaryami Ishwara. Brahmana! Do therefore seek to visualize me and worship me through Karma Yoga, advised Bhagavan).

That was how, the Sage Indradyumna proceeded to worship the Mata Tatwa and attained Moksha.

*Tasmaad Sarva prayatnena Varnaashrama vidhou sthitah, Samaashriyat yaantimam Bhavam Maayaam Lakshmim Tred budhah/*

( This would be the path of observing Varnaashrama Niyamaas as Brahmana Indradyumna did by sincerely dedicating the self to Paramatma that one ought to follow to overcome the Lakshmi Maya!) Indeed that was the backdrop of Kurma Purana by hearing, reciting and analysing which would bestow long life, fulfillment, 'paapa vimochana' and Mukti:

*Dhanyam Yashasyamaanushyam Punyam Mokshapradam Nrunaam, Puraana shravana Vipraah kathanam cha viseshatah/ Shrutwaa chaadhyameyvaikam Sarvapaapaaah pramuchyatey, Upaakhaanamathaikam vaa Brahmalokey Mahiyatey/*

### Evolution of Brahmanda (the Golden Egg) and popular features of the Supreme Architect

*Prakrtutim Purusham chaiva Pravishyashu Maheshwarah, Khshobhayaamaasa yogena Parena Parameshwarah/ Pradhaanaat kshobhamaanaaccha tathaa Pumsah Puraatanaat, Praaduraaseen - mahad beejam Pradhaana Purushatmakam/ Mahatmaanaa Mati Brahma Prabuddhih Khyaatireeshwarah, Prajnaa Dhrutih Smritih Samvidetasmaaditi tat smrutam/ Vaikaarikasthaijamascha Bhuta -adish chaiva Taamasah, Trividhoyamahankaaro Mahatah Sambubhuva ha/ Ahamkaarobhimaanascha kartaa Mantaacha sa smrutah, Atmaacha Pudgalo jeevo yatah Sarvaah pravrutayah/ Pancha Bhutaanyahamkaaraat tanmaatraani cha janjirey, Indriyaani tathaa Devaah Sarvam tasyataatmajam Jagat/*

(Parameshwara assumed the dual Forms of Purusha and Prakriti and following their interaction appeared a Maha Beeja called Mahatma, Mati, Prabuddha, Khyati, Pragjna, Dhruti, Smruti and Samvit. This Maha Tatwa was the 'Adi Karana' or the Prime Cause of Creation or Three Kinds of Ahamkara (Ego or Self Awareness) viz. Vaikarika, Taijasa, and Taamasa. This Ahamkara took to six kinds of Pravrittis or manifestations viz. Abhimaan, Karta, Manta, Atma, Pudgal and Jeeva. The Ahamkara created Pancha Bhutas of Prithvi-Jala-Teja-Vaayu and Akasha or Earth-Water-Radiance-Air and Sky; the Ahamkara also created Five 'Tanmatras' (Subtle Forms of Matter) of Shabda-Sparsha-Rupa-Rasa-Gandha or Sound-Touch-Vision-Taste and Smell; the corresponding Indriyas or Physical Parts of Ears-Skin-Eyes-Tongue and Nose). The undefinable 'Manas' or Mind is stated to be the first Vikara (Change or Transformation) and therefore Vaikarika Srishti got initiated by Vaikarika Ahamkaara. This Srishti comprised five Karmendriyas of hands, legs, mouth and organs of generation and excretion besides Jnanendriyas of Ears, Nose, Eyes, Tongue and Skin and the Eleventh Indriya is of the Manas or Mind which is 'Ubhayaatmaka' or a common feature. This is the Creation of Bhuta -tanmatraas and Bhutaatma Praja Srishti. Vikara prapta Bhutas produced Shabda Tanmatra which further produced Akasha ; the Vaikarika Akasha created Sparsha Tanmatra and created Vaayu; Vaikara prapta Vaayu produced Rupa tanmatra ; (from Vayu Teja got created and further to Rupa); after interaction Teja created Rasa tanmatra which in turn produced Jala and its resultant product of rasa; Jala and Gandha led to Sanghaat or Prithvi Tatwa and so on.

The seven 'Mahaatmas' (Top Significances) viz. the Mahat, Ahamkaara and the Pancha Tatwas are inter-dependent and their combination only could take up Srishti.

*Purushaadhishti Tatvaaccha Avyakataanugrahenacha, Mahadaaayo viseshaantaa hyanda mutpaadayantidey/*

(There was a common role of Purusha, Maha Tatwa, Pancha Bhutas and others in floating the Brahmanada). The Brahmanda was floating on a huge mass of water and inside the Brahmanda was Kshetrajna Purusha also called Hamsa, Hiranya -garbha, Kapila, Chaandomurti and Sanatana. Within the Brahmanda were Meru, Mountains and Samudras. Also present were Devatas, Asuras, Maanavas, Nakshatras, Vayu, Surya and Chandra. Outside the Brahmanda, there was a wide spread of water ten times larger than the size of the Golden Egg. There also was illumination of ten times more of the water and ten times further was the volume of Vayu. Far more voluminous than the size of the Vayu was that of Aakash and far beyond was the Akasha was thick layer of Ahankara; spread all over Ahankara was that of Maha Tatwa; indeed the Maha Tatwa was stated to be of the Great Unknown!

Bhagavan Kurma Deva thus explained to Rishis about the genesis of Brahmanada and confirmed that the Maya surrounded the seven layers of Jala, Tejas, Vayu, Aakash, Ahamkara, Maha Tatwa and Paramatma. He also described with conviction to the Rishis the meaning of some of the Names that He assumed in different contexts:

*Ekopi Sanmahadevastridhaasou samavasthitah, Sargarakshaa layagunairnirgunopi Niranjanah, Ekadhaa sa dwidhaachaiva Tridhaacha Bahudaa punah/ Yogeshwarah Shariraani karoti vikaroticha, Naanaa kruti kriya rupa naamavanti Swaleelayaa/ Hitaayachaiva Bhaktaanaam sa eva grasatey punah, Tridhaa vibhajya chaatmaanam Trikaalye sampravartatey, Srujatey Grasatey chaiva weekshatey cha viseshatah/ Yasmaat srushtaanugruhaati grasateycha punah prajaah, Gunaatmakatwaat Trailoky tasmaadekah sa ucchyatey/ Agrey Hiranya garbhah sa praadurbhutat Sanatanah, Aditwaadaadi Devaasou Ajaatwaadajah smrutah/ Paati yasmaan Prajaah Sarvaah Prajaapatiriti smrutah, Deveshu cha Mahadevo Mahadeva iti smritah/ Brihatvaaccha smruto Brahma Paratwaat Parameshwarah, Vashitwaadapya vashyatwaadishwarah paribhashitah/ Rishih Sarvatragatwena Harih Sarvaharo yatah, Anupaadyaachha Puurvatawaat Swayambhuriti sa smrutah/ Naraayaanamayano yasmaat tena*

*Naaraayanah smrutah, Harah samsaaraharanaad vibhutvaad Vishnuruchyate/ Bhagavaan sarva Vijnanaadavanaadomiti smrutah, Sarvajnah Sarva Vigjnaanaat Sarvah Sarvamayoyatah/ Shiva sa nirmalo yasmaad Vibhu Sarvagato yatah, Taaranaat Sarva duhkhaanaam Taarakah parigeeyate/ Bahunaatra kimuktena Sarvam Brahmamayam Jagat, Aneka bheda bhinnastu kreedayate/ Parameshwarah/*

(Even as a Unique and Singular Entity, the Nirguna-Niranjana assumed Three Forms since the tasks expected were some what self-contradictory viz. Creation-Preservation and Extermination and three distinct Gunas or Features were required to take up the deeds. Maha Deva was in fact accustomed to assume various Forms-some times as one, or two or three and even as in Ananta Rupas or in Endless Profiles. He was playfully habituated to sport different forms, deeds and names appropriate to exigencies of Srishti-Sthiti and Samhara; this was so since he performed the tasks on his own or by his agents. As he executed the deeds simultaneously with the predominance of one Guna or another or all of the Gunas together, he came to be called *Advaita* to the One and Only; at the beginning itself he was the foremost to appear he was named as *Adideva*; as he was never born he was named *Ajanma*; as he was deeply involved in the happenings of one and all among the human beings, he was named *Prajapati* and as he was the Supreme of Prajas or the People; as he was the Foremost of the Devas, he was called as *Maha Deva*; he was the 'Parama' or the Ultimate, and was thus named *Parameshwara*; as he well-known as Sarva Harana at the time of Pralaya of the Universe or at the end of one's Life Journey, he had the name of *Hari*; as he was Self-Generated or put in differently he got Materialised on his own, he was known as *Swayambhu*; as he was popular as the Final Refuge Point or Ayana of one and all, he was named *Naraayana*; it was in another context that he was lying or Ayana on 'Naara' or Water popular as Ksheera Sagara his most popular name was Narayana; as he is Omni Present anywhere in the Universe occupying the Entirety he is called *Vishnu*; as he is the Omni-Scient of the goings-on all over spread the length and breadth of the Totality he had the Unique Epithet of OM; as he was the Epitome of Visishtha Jnana or the Distinctive Knowledge of Everything, he was called *Sarvgjna*; as he was Atma Swarupa he was known as *Sarva*; *Shiva* as he was Mala Shunya; *Vibhu* as he was Sarva Vyapta or All- Pervading and *Taraka* as he could steer clear of any types of obstacles. Indeed, is there a need for overemphasis of the obvious by way of explanations about Parameshwara, his innumerable and varied Rupas, leelaas or his playful activities! Suffice to say that the very Existence of the Universe is owed to him!)

#### Brahmana Dharmas, Ashrama Vidhana and 'Abhinnata' (Indivisibility) of Tri Murtis

Kurma Bhagavan described to Maharshis that after the Sanatana Srishti by Paramatma, Brahma took up the task of Srishti of 'Charaachara Jagat' and created nine Maanasa Putras or Mind-borne Sons viz. Marichi, Bhrigu, Angira, Pulastya, Pulah, Kratu, Daksha, Atri, and Vasishtha. The Four Vedas of Ruk-Yajur-Saama and Atharva constituted the natural appearance of Brahma. At the beginning of Srishti, Trigunas of Satwa-Rajasa and Tamasika were non-existent; there was no Raaga-Dweshas or Desire-Hatred Syndrome and no interplay of 'Arishadvargas' or the Six Basic Enemies of Beings viz. Kama (desire), Krodha (anger), Lobha (greed), Moha (infatuation), Mada (arrogance) and Matsara (jealousy). With the passage of time the concepts of 'Swadharma' and 'Paradharma' accentuated the class-distinction and Brahmana Dharma was defined as :

*Yajanam Yaajanam Daanam Brahmanasya pratigraham, Ahyaapanam cha adhyayanam Shasta Karmaani Dwijoththama/*

(The six major duties of Brahmanas were stated to be the Performance of Yajnaas, enabling and encouraging the Yajna Karmas, giving as also receiving 'Daanaas'; Adhyayana or Reciting Scriptures and Adhyaapana or Teaching them). Daana, Adhyayana and Yajna are the common features of Kshatriyas and Vaishyas while Kshatriyas have the duties of Law-Order -Defence as Vaishyas perform Business,

Agriculture, Trading and Accounting. The other categories are to specialise in Shilpa, Crafts and such other professions.

As regards Ashrama Dharma viz. Garhastya-Vanaprastya-Sanyasa and Brahmacharya, Kurma Bhagavan ordained the following:

*Agnayotithishurushaa Yajno Daanam Suraarchanam, Gruhastasya Samaasena Dharmoyam  
Munipungavaah/ Homo Mula phalaashitwam Swaadhyastapa eva cha, Samvibhaago yathaanyaayam  
Dharmoyam Vanavaasinam/ Bhaiksaashanam cha Mounitwam Tapo dhyaanamviseshatah,  
Samyajnaanam cha vairaagyam Dharmoyam Bhikshukey matah/ Bhikshaachaaryaacha shusrushaa  
Guroh Swaadhyaya eva cha, Sandhyaa karmaagni Kaaryaacha Dharmoyam Brahmachaarinam/*

(Grihastya Dharma mainly entails Upasana of Agnis viz. Garhapatya, Aahavaniya, Dakshinaagni; Atithi Seva; Yagna-Daana- Deva Pujas form the core of Brahmana Vidhi. Havana, Kanda mula phala sevana, Swaadhyaya and Tapas are the Vaana Prastha Dharmaas; Bhiksha bhojana, Mouna Vrata, Tapa, Samyakm Dhyana or Composite worship of Deities, Samyak Jnaana and Vairagya or other worldliness are Sanyasa Dharmas. Brahmachari Dharmas include Bhiksha Bhojana, Guru Seva, Swaadhyaya, Sandhyaa karma and Agni Karyas. While annotating Grihastya Dharma, Kurma Bhagavan clarified that sleeping with one's own wife-subject to specified qualifications was to be concerned as Brahmacharya itself :

*Rithu kaalaa –bhigaamitwam Swadareshu na chaanyatah, Parvarjyam Grihastasya  
Brahmacharyamudaa hritam/*

Also, Kurma Deva proclaimed:

*Vedaabhyasonvaham Shakyaa Shraaddham chaatithi pujanam, Grihastasya Paro Dharma  
Devataabhyarchanam tathaa/Trayaanaamaashramaanaam tu Grihastho yoniruchtatey, Anyey  
tamupajeevanti tasmaancchreyaan Grihaashrami/*

(Grihastya Ashrama is considered the seed of the Four Ashramas and the most significant); more so, the 'Purusharthaas' of human beings are Dharma-Artha-Kaama-Mokshaas and hence the importance of this Ashrama.) But the common requirements of all the Ashrams are:

*Kashamaa Damo Dayaa Daanamalobhastyaaga Eva cha, Aarjivam chaanasuya cha Tirthaanusaranam  
tathaa/ Satyam Santosha Aastikyam Shraddhaa chendriya nigrahah, Devataabhyarchanam Pujaa  
Brahmanaanaam Viseshitah/ Ahimsaa priyavaa ditwamapaishunyamakaltataa, Samaasikamimam  
Dharmam Chaturvarnerbraveen Manuh/*

(Kshama or patience, Daya or compassion, Daada or charity, Alobha or non-greediness, Tyaga or sacrifice, Arjiva /softness of speech and behaviour, Anasuya or lack jealousy / large heartedness; Tirtha Sevana, Satya or Truthfulness, Santosha or Happiness / contentment; Aastikata or Attachment to Vedas and Scriptures; Shraddha or devotion; Jitendriatwa or overcoming of Physical attractions; Deva Puja, Brahmana Puja, Ahimsa / Non-Violence, Madhura Bhashana or nice manner of conversation and Paapa Rahitya or general attitude of sinlessness). In fact the First Manu named Swayambhu Manu prescribed the above noble traits/ common features of all the Human Beings irrespective of the Chaturvarnaas. Among Brahmacharis, there again are of two categories viz. *Upakurvaan and Naishthika Brahma tatpara*; Brahmacharis learn and recite Vedas and then enter into Grihastyaashrama are called Upakurvaanas while those who always remained with Guru are called Naishthika Brahmacharis. Again Grihastis are of two kinds viz. Udaaseenas and Saadhakaas; the former Grihastis lead a virtuous life and simultaneously

take up family responsibilities too are Sadhakas; while those who leave away the Pitru-runa, Devaruna, Rishiruna besides leave family, money and social obligations and remain targetted only at Moksha are Udaseenas. Likewise, Sanyasis are of three categories: Jnaana Sanyasis or those Veda Sanyasis or Bhoutika Sanyasis; Bhoutika Sanyasis in which Bhavana is important, while Veda Sanyasis are of Sankhya or Yoga practitioners; and Karma Sanyasis or the performer of the prescribed karmas or deeds.

### Singularity of Tri Murthis:

Depending on the emphasis of the Satwa-Rajas-Tamasa Gunas of the Eternal and Unique Paramatma, three Murtis were formed as Brahma-Vishnu and Maheshwara:

*Tistrastu Murtayah prokta Brahma Vishnu Maheswaraah, Rajah Satwa Tamoyogaat Parasya Paramatmanah/Anyonyayamanuraktaastey hyanonyamupa jeevinah,Anyonyam pranataashchaiva leelayaa Parameshvaraah/ Braahmi Maaheshwari chaiva tathaivaakshara bhavanaa, Tristrastu Bhavana Rudrey vartantey satatam Dwijaah/ Pravartatey mayyajastramaadyaa chaakshara bhaavanaa,Dwitiya Brahmanah proktraa Devasyaakshara bhaavanaa/ Aham chaiva Maha Devo na bhinnou paramaarthatah, Vibhajya swecchhayaatmaanam sontaraameshwarah sthitah/ Ttrailokya makhilam Srushtim Sadevaasura maanushaam, Purushaha Paratovyaktaad Brahmatwam samupamagat/ Tasmaad Brahmaa Mahadevo Vishnurvishweshwarah Parah, Ekaikssyaiva Smritaastitrastanuh Karyavashaat Prabho/ Tasmaat sarva prayatnena Vandyaaah Pujaah prayatnatah, Yadicchedachiraat sthaanam yattanmokshaakhya mayyayam/*

(Paramatma materialised Trimurtis on the basis of Satwa-Rajo-Tamo Gunas for the three basic responsibilities of Srishti-Sthiti-Samhara; the Three Profiles are dependent on each other, transferable to each other, interested and involved with each other in fulfilling their tasks; they also greet each other, exchange and also supplement each other's thoughts and deeds. Indeed they are indivisible. Also, Rudra is interactive with the inherent thoughts of Brahmi, Maheshwari and Akshara / Vaishnavi. From his side said Bhagavan Vishnu / Kurma Deva that the thoughts of 'A'kshara were spontaneous and of the second Letter of the word Akshara denoted Brahmi and so on. As far as Vishnu and Maheshwara were concerned there indeed was no duplication whatsoever. They were mutually and freely exchangeable, divisible yet wholly singular, mystifying and confusing and were indeed one and the same. It was the same Swarupa of Bhagavan who was like all the three who were close-knit! Indeed all three Murtis are worthy of worship and thus the need for attaining any one of them is similar to realise them all.

### Brahma Srishti and Pancha Sargas

Even as he thought of Srishti, Brahma created darkness involuntarily and as the variations of the darkness, five 'Avidyas' occurred viz. Tamas, Moha, Maha Moha, Tamishra and Andha. With meditation in favour of Paramatma, Brahma then visioned a Seed-like Formation of a Five-divisioned Entity surrounded by darkness viz. Prakasha or Jnaana, Stambha or Jada, Sagjna vihina or Chetana vihina, Naga or Stationary or Immobile like Mountains and Trees and Mukhya or the Principal, thus providing broad hints of *Mukhya Sarga* to Brahma about the kind of Srishti that he could take up; even while taking the pointers or suggestions, Brahma also thought of another category of Srishti viz. *Tiryagsrota* or of Pashu-Pakshi Srishti. These types of Srishti did not greatly impress Brahma and therefore resorted to *Deva Sarga* in which the features of happiness and contentment predominated. After further meditation, Brahma realised that there should be an Arvaakstrota Srishti of Human Beings with a mix of Rajasa-Tamasa Gunas with some Satwa Guna as well and thus launched *Manushya Sarga*. This was followed by *Bhuta Sarga* in which the Creations would not possess capacity to acquire but give away. Thus there were Five Sargas viz. Mukhya, Tiryagsrota, Deva, Manusha and Bhutadi. Thus Brahma's Mahat Sarga comprised the

categories upto Manusha Sarga; Bhuta Sarga was followed as the Second Sarga while the Third was that of Vaikarika / Aindriyaka Sarga; all these Sargas were considered as Abuddhipurvaka or Unintentional.

Then followed Buddhi Purvaka (Deliberate) Srishti and Brahma begot Manasa Putras viz. Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana, Rijhu, and Sanatkumara all of whom being Yogis, Parama Vairaagis, and Ishwara Bhaktas who did not further the Creative Deeds. Despite continued Tapas, Brahma had to wait long, got frustrated and out of his eye drops mingled with anger were materialised from his frown the Rudra Rupa called Nilalohita and ten additional Swarupas ( Bhava, Sharva, Ishana, Pashupati, Bheema, Ugra, Mahadeva, Ekapaada, Ahirbhudani, Hara). Brahma continued Srishti of Jala, Agni, Antariksha, Aakaasha, Vaayu, Prithvi; Nadi, Samudra, Parvata, Vriksha, Vanaspati as also Time-Units like Lava, Kashtha, Kalaa, Muhurtha, Dina-Ratra, Paksha, Maasa, Ayana, Varsha and Yugas. He then created Marichi from his eyes; Bhrihu from his hridaya or heart; Angira from his head; Pulastya from his Udana Vayu; Pulaha from his Vyaana Vayu; Kratu from Brahma's Shanta Swabhava; Daksha from his Prana Vayu; Atri from his ears, Vasishtha from his Samaana Vaayu; Dharma from Vyavasaaya; and Sankalpa from his Sankalpa or Proposition.

Brahma created from his Eastern Face the Gayatri Chhanda, Rigveda, Trivrutsama, Rathantara (Saama) and Agnishtoma among Yagnaas; from his Southern face, he produced Yajurveda, Rishabh Chhanda, Trishthap Chhanda, Pancha dasha Stoma, Brihat Saama and Uktha; from his Western Face, Brahma evolved Sama Veda, Jagati Chhanda, Saptadasha Stoma, Vairupa and Atiratra Yajna; from his Northern face, Brahma materialised twenty one branches of Atharva Veda, Anushthup Chhanda, Aaptoryaama and Vairaja Yagnas. He created Devatas, Rishis, Pitaras and Manushyas; Yaksha, Pishacha, Gandharava, Apsaras, Kinnaras, Rakshasaas, Pakshi-Mriga-Pashu-and Sarpas.

As there was a mixed factor of Dharma and Adharma across the Srishti attempted so far- and more over since the speed of Srishti did not gain momentum- Brahma divided his physique into two Parts: one as Purusha and another as Stree (woman); the latter was named Shata Rupa replete with Jnaana-Vigjnaana and was married to Brahma Putra Swayambhuva Manu. Shata Rupa and Swayambhu gave birth to Priyavrata and Uttanapaada as also two daughters Prasuti and Akriti. Prasuti got married to Daksha Prajapati and Akriti was wedded to Ruchi Prajapati. The latter gave birth to Yajna and Dakshina while Daksha and Prasuti gave birth to twenty four daughters viz. Shraddha, Lakshmi, Dhruti, Tushti, Pushti, Medha, Kriya, Buddhi, Lajja, Vapu, Shanti, Siddhi and Kirti besides Khyati, **Sati**, Sambhuti, Smriti, Preeti, Kshama, Santati, Anasuya, Urga, Swaha and Swadha.

#### Kurma Purana Phala Shruti and Kurma Deva Stuti by Maharshis

*Etat Puranam Paramam Bhashitam Kurmarupinaa, Sakshaat Devaadi Devena Vishnunaa Vishwa yoninaa/ Yah pathet satatam Martyo niyamena samaahitah, Sarva paapa vinirmukto Brahma lokey mahiyatey/*

( Kurma Purana is stated to have been recited by the Kurma Rupa dhari Adideva Vishnu himself. Those who read the Purana with concentration and sincerity would have their Paapaas demolished and attain Brahma Loka.)

If one could formally write down the Purana and gift it to a Vedajna Brahmana during the Vaishakha Month that commendable deed would secure prosperity in the current life and enjoyment of Swarga Sukhaas thereafter; in the subsequent life, he would be reborn with Brahma Vidya. Even reading one chapter of the Purana and assimilate its purport, the Reader would secure Parama Punya.

Persons who aspire for Moksha, especially those who desire to assimilate the latent and intensive meaning of Vedas must read, hear, cogitate and digest the contents of this Purana. Gifting of this Purana to a learned and mature Pandita would add on to the fund of Punya as it would open new vistas of further learning to the receiver as also to the donor.

In short, this Purana opens up fresh frontiers of Learning, especially to visualise Bhagavan Narayana who is stated to be ‘Avyaktam Shaswatam Vishnum -anatamajamavyayam’ or Unknown, Everlasting, Omni Present, Endless , Unborn and Indestructible.

### Stuti of Kurma Deva by Maharshis

*Namastey Kurmarupaaya Vishnavey Paramatmaney, Narayanaya Vishwaaya Vaasudevaaya tey namah/  
Namo namastey Krishnaaya Govindaaya Namo namah, Maadhavaaya Namastubhyam namo  
Yajneshwaraaya cha/ Sahasra shirasey tubhyam sahasraakshaaya tey namah, Namah Sahasra Hastaaya  
Sahasra Charanaayacha/ Om Namo Jnaanarupaaya Paramaastaswa rupiney, Anandaaya  
Namastubhyam Mayatitaaya tey namah/ Namo gudha shariraaya Nirgunaaya Namostutey, Purushaaya  
Puraanaya Satthaamaatra swarupiney/ Namah Sankhyaaya Yogaaya Kevalaaya Namostutey,  
Dharmajnaadhigamyaaya Nishkalaaya Namo namah/ Namostu Vyoma tatwaaya Maha Yogeshwaraaya  
cha, Paraavaaranaam Prabhavey Veda Vedyaya tey Namah/ Namo Buddhaaya Shuddhaaya Namo  
Yuktaaya Hetavey, Namo Namo Namastubhyam Maayiney Vedhasey Namah/ Namostutey Varaahaaya  
Narasimhaaya tey Namah, Vaamanaaya Namastubhyam Hrishikshaaya tey Namah/ Namostu Kaala  
Rudraaya Kaalarupaaya tey Namah, Swargaapavaraga daatrey cha Namo Pratihataatmaney/ Namo  
Yogaadhi gamyaaya Yoginey Yogadaayiney, Devaanaam Pataye tubhyam Devaarti shamanaaya tey/  
Bhagavamstat prasaadena Sarva Samsara naashanam, Asmaabhi –vanditam Jnaanam Yajjatwa  
amritamashnitey/ Shrutaastu vividhaa Dharmaa Vamsha Manvanta –raani cha, Sargascha  
Pratisargascha Brahmaandasyaasya vistarah/ Twam hi Sarva Jagatsaakshi Vishvo Naaraayana parah,  
Traatumarhasyanantaatmamstwameva Sharanam gatih/*

(Our salutations to Kurmarupa Vishnu, Vishwarupa, Narayana, Vaasudeva, Krishna, Govinda, Maadhava, Yagneshwara! You possess thousands of heads, eyes, hands and feet. You are the Pranava Swarupa, Jnaana Rupa, Ananda Rupa Paramatma! You are of Undisclosed Physique, Nirguna and Mayaateeta or Beyond Falsity! You are Purana Purusha, Sattamaatra (Shakti) Swarupa, Sankhya Yoga Rupa, Advitiya or Unique, and Nishkala. Narayana! You are attainable only by Dharma and Jnaana; Vyoma (Sky) Tatwa Swarupa; Maha Yogeshwara; Creator of ‘Paraapara’ Material; Veda Vedyaya; Shudda / Jnaana Swarupa and Embodiment of Purity; Nirakara Swarupa or of Shapeless Form; Buddha or Jnaana Swarupa; Yoga Yukta; Hetu Rupa or the Cause of the Universe; Mayavi or Maya Niyantraka or the Regulator of Illusions; and Vedha or ‘Prapancha Srashta’. Our sincere ‘Pranaams’ to you Vishnu Bhagavan! You had assumed incarnations like Varaha Rupa, Narasimha, and Vamaa Rupa! You are Hrishiksha or Indriyeshwara; Kaala Rudra, Kaala Rupa; and ‘Swargaapavarga Pradaata’ or the Decider of Heaven or otherwise to various Beings. Bhagavan, You are ‘Apratihataatma’ or the Everlasting and Imperishable Soul; Yogaadi gamya or the Goal of Yoga; Maha Yogi and Yoga daataa; Deva Swami and Deva Kashta Shamana or the Reliever of Difficulties faced by Devas. Our prostrations to you Bhagavan! It is through your grace that one secures Mukti from Samsara. It is through your elegance that one obtains Jnaana with which to learn Amritatwa. Kurma Deva! Through you from this Kurma Purana that we have learnt innumerable facts about Dharma, Sarga, Prati Sarga, Brahmanada, and so on. Indeed you are the Permanent Evidence of the Universes that came or in position and yet to emerge; We seek protection from You Vishwarupa, Parama Narayana and Anantaatma!)

### **Varaha Purana**

By assuming the incarnation of Varaha, Lord Vishnu salvaged Earth (Bhu Devi) from being sunk into the under-world of 'Rasatala' by the fierce demon Hiranyakasipu. The Great Boar lifted up Earth by His 'damshttra' (Jaws) even as the demon was annihilated. Bhu Devi was stupified in bewilderment but after recovering from the shock, she was emboldened to pose a volley of queries to Varaha Deva as to how the entire Universe got dissolved, how the process of Creation was revived after each Kalpa, how 'Dharma' (Virtue) and 'Adharma' (Vice) were balanced and in which kind of extreme situations that Lord Vishnu would incarnate in various forms. Lord Varaha outlined Bhu Devi's difficult queries in a brief manner:

### The Origin of Creation :

The Supernatural Power is indeed singular and eternal. Once this fundamental fact is recognised, explanations on the above queries would not be far to seek. At the commencement of Creation, the Supreme Energy created 'Pancha Bhuthas' (The Five Elements) of Air, Sky, Fire, Water and Earth; 'Ahankara' (Ego or the Sense of Self or Personality); the Maha Tatva ( The Great Element); Nature; the Collective and Individual Consciousness reflected in the 'Tri-Gunas' or Three Aspects or qualities of Behaviour viz. 'Satva' ( Pure as coloured white), 'Rajas' ( Passion as coloured red) and 'Tamas' (Ignorance as coloured dark) in varying permutations and combinations; the 'Atman' or 'Kshetrajna' (Soul) and 'Prakriti' or Maya (Illusion); the 'Tanmatras' or the subtle forms of Matter as produced by the interaction of the Three Gunas; the 'Pancha- Indriyas' (Sense Organs) which are created by Tanmatras viz. Eyes, Ears, Nose, Tongue and Skin; the extensions of the Five Sense Organs or the 'Jnanendriyas' (Cognitive) as perceived in the forms of Vision, Sound, Smell, Taste and Touch as also the further extensions viz. the 'Karmendriyas' or the Active Expressions of Speaking, Grasping, Moving, Eliminating and Reproducing. (Together, the Jnanendriyas constitute the Entrance Doors of the Sense Organs and the Karmendriyas constitute the Exit Doors).

### Varaha Deva rescues Bhu Devi, His description, Stuti and Worship

As the entire Universe came to stand still when 'Dishas' (Directions), 'Grahas' (Planets), and Celestial Beings got stuck excepting Thri Murthies, Bhu Devi and Brahma appealed to Bhagavan Vishnu to uplift Her as She was sinking under deep Ocean and to save the Universe.

Bhu Devi prayed to Vishnu desperately saying: '*Praseeda mama Devesha Lokanadha Jagatpathey, Bhaktayaam Sharanam aashraya praseeda mama Madhava*':

Hey, Jagatpathi Devesha Madhava, Kindly have mercy and save me and Devotees like me; You are Surya, Chandra, Yama, Kubera, Indra, Varuna, Agni and Vayu; You are the ephemeral and Eternal; You are the Dishas or Directions, Vidishas or Direction-less; You are the Ten Incarnations; You are the Constant despite passing Yugas; You are the Earth, Wind, Sky, Water and Fire; You are the Sound, Touch, Form, Taste and Smell; You are the Stars, Yama, 'Rasi Chakra' or the ever-moving Cycle of Raasis; You are the concept of Time like months, fortnights, weeks and days; days and nights, Years and Seasons and Six 'Rasas'; You are the Rivers, Oceans, Mountains and Maha 'Sarpas' ( Giant Snakes); Meru, Mandhar, Vindhya, Malaya and Dardura Mountain, Himalaya, Nishidha; Sudarshan Chakra, Pinaka Dhanush, Yoga and Sankhya Shastra; You are the Srishti, Sthiti and Laya Karaka; You are the Sukshma and Brihat Swarupa; You are the 'Maha Yajna', Embodiment of Vedas; Producer of Amrit with which the Deva Lokas are sustained; You are the Adi (Initial), Madhya (Middle) and Anthaswarupa or Antaryami; You are the Medha, Buddhi and Smriti; You are the Griha Devatha and Griha Mangal Kara; Sarva Swarupa, Sarvesa, Sarva Vyapaka! Do save me from sinking; thus prayed Devi Prithvi! The 'Phala Sruti' of Vishnu Stuti by Bhu Devi would heal the sick, bless with progeny, grant a husband / wife, release from prison or legal entanglements and provide contentment in life.

In reply to the 'Stuti' by Bhu Devi, Maha Vishnu assured that as a result of Her Bhakti (devotion) He would lift Her up along with mountains, forests, Samudra, Rivers, Seven Dwipas and all the rest; He assumed a colossal manifestation of six thousand yojanas of height, three thousand yojanas of width and one thousand yojanas of Varaha Roop; He liberated Prithvi by His left 'damshttra' (Jaw) along with the totality of mountains, forests, Sapta Dwipas and their contents including Oceans and Rivers all in tact! Bhu Devi was indeed excited at the unprecedented miracle that had happened and immediately requested Lord Varaha about the Varaha Puja Vidhana'. She posed innumerable queries on the method of Sthapana, Avahana, and Visarjana; the precautions to be observed on the preceding day of the Puja, the best timings to perform the Puja, restrictions of eating during the Puja time and so on. Bhagavan replied that He might not be impressed by thousands of charities or several Yajnas, but even simple-minded persons with concentration and earnestness performed His Bhajan, although full of imperfections, would definitely deserved His consideration! All the same, since Bhu Devi asked certain questions, Varaha Deva gave suitable replies: Whoever prays to Him midnight, or at the time of dusk, or at mid-day and whoever observed fast on Dwadasi days would never be neglected. Merely performing 'Karma' or an act of Puja devoid of devotion and sincerity would not necessarily impress Bhagavan Vishnu. But if a devotee with detachment and concentration did the Dwadasi fast and offered water in his 'anjali' (palms) facing Sun God reciting 'Om Namoh Narayana' Mantra, he would be sure of 'Swargaloka Nivas' for as many drops of water as spilt out from his palms! Those devotees worshipping Narayana offered white **flowers** firmly trusting that Narayana was sitting to accept the offerings along with the Mantra: Sumanah Sumana Grihna Priyo me Bhagavan Harih, Itena Mantrana Sumano dadat; the devotee offers next 'Gandham' (Sandal wood paste) saying:

*'Namosthu Vishnavey Vyaktavyaktha Sugandhi cha, Grahan Grahana Namoh Bhagavatey Vishnavey/ Anena Mantreyna Gandham dadaatu'*; Dhupam (scented incense sticks) saying: Pravishtey me Dhupadhupanam grihnath Bhagavan Achyutah Anena mantryena Dhupam dadathu. Bhagavan said further: Out of my affection oh Devi, I have outlined the 'Pujakram'; while performing 'Naivedyam' of Bhakshya, Bhojya and such other material, devotees tend to ignore my accompaniments like Shanka, Chakra, and Gada and that should be avoided! Those who achieve the Dwadashi Puja with self-satisfaction and clear conscience are exalted and devoid of ill health, constant fear, mental confusion and discontent.

#### Bhagavan Varaha's questionnaire to humanity about the roots of grief and Joy!

The reasons for fear, unhappiness and dissatisfaction among human beings were described by Bhagavan Varaha Himself by posing the following questions: Why should not human beings refrain from feelings of ego and possessive nature instead of turning to the Supreme? Why should persons resort to consuming and selling those prohibited and anti-social items ignoring awareness of the Supreme? Why do human beings turn away poor guests while taking food although they well afford without realising the feelings of the hapless? How could those who are deceitful, desirous of else's wives, always complaining, jealous, evil minded and anti-social be not afraid of the Supreme? Why do people act against their own inner conscience and allow death and disease chase them closely without even being mindful of the consequences, never even blinking an eye about Almighty's Omni- presence? How is it that some persons are beautiful but arrogant, smart but sadistic, outwardly virtuous but inwardly villainous not even with a remote sense of God's existence? Some persons are highly learned and intellectual but some are deaf and dumb; this discrimination is indeed a curse of fate. Is this not a cause of unhappiness? Which worse curse has befallen between two brothers, one with good progeny and one without? Blessed with a human life and not that of an animal or a bird, a person does not even think of Narayana; which worse misfortune does he have, causing unknown mental dissatisfaction? On the contrary, a devotee shares the limited food that he had, but decides to donate half of it to a deserving guest; what more pleasure that he gets! If a bhakta performs Tri Sandhya and worships Vishnu; which better satisfaction that he achieves! Every

month comes one 'Amavasya' and a pious man makes it a point to perform Tarpana to his ancestors of three generations; what better mental contentment that he would possess! If a person's urge does not get disturbed even if several charming women fail to tempt him, what more happiness does the couple achieve together! A person with two wives whom he likes equally well and the wives too are accommodative, what more of an ideal situation there could be! If a person treats his aged parents with respect and care and if the person's wife too is respectful and affectionate to them, could Lord Narayana bless them all in the family any better!

Having narrated the causes of grief or joy to Bhu Devi, Bhagavan Varaha described certain 'Aparadhas' to be avoided in one's mundane life. No doubt, symbolic eating of Bhagavan's Prasad by humans is not disapproved but offering 'Bhog' not suitable to be offered to Devas is unpardonable. In fact, offering of that kind of 'Bhojan' or food which is unfit for consumption to anybody is considered as an 'Aparadh'. Going near to a person without 'Dantadhavan' or cleaning teeth, tongue and face especially if the person is performing 'Dharmik Karma' or a Virtuous Deed is considered as second 'Aparadha'. To approach near or touch the Idol of Varaha Deva is a third Aparadha. Approaching Varah Deva for His 'Darshan', let alone His worship, after seeing a female in the period of menses is noted as a fourth 'Aparadha'. Similarly, a person should perform 'Achanam' after seeing a dead body. Worse still, if a person touches a dead body, one should take head-bath, perform the 'Samskaras' and approach Divinity. The Seventh Aparadha is to perform ablutions during worship time and worse still not to purify the body and mind to resume the interrupted Puja with 'Kshamaapana' Mantra. Wearing a blue 'Vastra' or cloth to perform Vishnu Puja is the eighth 'Aparadha'. Telling lies during Bhagavan Puja is a ninth offence. Touching with impure hands the Puja Items meant for worship is a Tenth Aparadha. The eleventh offence is that an angry person engaged in unreasonable tasks and allowed to do so. The twelfth Aparadha is to use Vishnu's name in the Society to secure favours. The thirteenth offence is to wear a red cloth while performing Vishnu Puja. The fourteenth offence is that the puja is performed by wearing a black vastra. The fifteenth offence is that somebody touches the body of the devotee. A devotee feeding an 'Agnani' / Unethical person by himself is the sixteenth blemish. Performing puja by wearing an uncouth cloth is a seventeenth offence. Worshipping the Deva after consuming fish and meat is considered as a grave mistake. Eating chicken meat before Deva Puja is the nineteenth fault. Touching 'Dipa' (light) and without 'Achaman' and touching Devas is the twentieth mistake. Having visited 'Smashanas' (burial ground) and seeking to touch Deva's Idol without purifying the self by bath etc. is a known blunder and constitutes a grave sin. If Bhagavan Puja is taken up, after consuming 'Pinyakam' (Pitthi), it would be construed as the twenty second offence. Worship after consuming pig meat, wine and kusumb flower are the twenty third, twenty fourth and twenty fifth offences. Whoever wears somebody else's Vastra while performing the Puja of Deva is accused of a blunder numbered twenty sixth in the series of 'Aparadhas'. Consuming the 'Anna Prasada' (food) meant for offering to Devas and Pitras before the 'Naivedya' ('Mantrapurvaka'- offering) constitutes an abject blunder and is the twenty seventh in the series. Those who wear 'padarakshas' (chappals) and perform Deva's worship would have committed a grave error which is counted as the twenty eighth 'Aparadha'. Worship after massage is considered as an affront to Varaha Deva bearing number twenty ninth in the series of 'Aparadhas'. Performers of Deva Puja suffering from 'Ajeerthi' (Stomach upset) attract the thirtieth offence. Those worshippers of Vishnu Deva offering 'Dhoop' or incense would have made a mistake for the thirty first offence since that offer has a negative effect without Gandham (Sandal Paste) and Pushpam (flowers). Finally the Door of Deva's symbolic abode ought to be opened by the resounding sounds of Bheris, conch shells and big bells; else this Aparadha too would have been perpetrated as the thirty third one!

#### A few Illustrations of 'Vishnu Maya'

Bhu Devi was curious to learn about the oft-repeated references to 'Vishnu Maya' by Bhagavan Varaha in His discourses after He salvaged Her from sinking down under.

Bhagavan stated that even Brahma, Shankar, Indra and the entirety of Devas could not comprehend what Vishnu Maya was all about! He gave some telling demonstrations of Nature, Universe, Humans, Devas, Demons, and Sages as a few such occurrences. For instance, the clouds on the Sky pour water on Prithvi at certain places and others are dry. Moon is bright at the commencement of a month but gradually wanes till the Sky gets completely dark by the month end. It is Vishnu Maya that the day/night temperatures change by the Seasons as 'Greeshmas' present extreme heat and 'Hemants' the opposite. Surya emerges on the East early morning and disappears on the West by the dusk. It is from the same physique that red blood and white semen flow which is a form of Maya. During the period of pregnancy a baby has no reaction to materials or senses, but the moment it is out into the world gets to learn, react and act. It is Vishnu Maya that human body normally assumes identity of body parts like two feet, two hands, twenty fingers, two ears, two eyes, back, stomach, etc. Interestingly enough whichever material is consumed as food, water etc. is digested with the help of 'Jathara Agni' and the wastes are rejected out. Vishnu Maya is at work in creating sensory organs and senses and sounds are heard, vision is facilitated, tastes are discerned, odours are smelt, reactions are felt. It is Vishnu Maya doubt that every being of moveable or immobile nature facilitates creation and assumes millions of beings reproduced. Maya is noticeable as rain from Skies or water from underground remains adjusted with pluses here or minuses there, except at the time of 'Pralay' perhaps. Maya Shakti enables clouds to absorb salt water from Seas and turns to tasty water from clouds. Maya in action helps medicines to improve health and also to take away life at times. Indeed it is Vishnu Maya that after birth a child grows from stage to stage as a youth, as a married man, as an old man and finally at the door step of death. From a seed to an Ankur or small plant to a tree and a seed giving tree is again the action of Vishnu Maya. Vishnu Deva gave further illustrations of His lying in Yoga Nidra on 'Sesha Shayya' or Sesha Serpent Bed supported by Anantha Maya holding the entire Universe; it was Varaha Maya that lifted up Bhu Devi from the abysmal lower World. Basically, it is all Vishnu Maya that the negative factors of life are allowed to grow and Incarnations sport to terminate the negative forces! 'Karanam Kaaranam and Kartha' or the Action, Cause, and the Performer syndrome are Vishnu Maya all about.

### **Nrisimhaavataara**

#### Matsya Purana

Daitya Hiranyakashipu was engaged in stiff 'Tapasya' with 'Mouna Vrata' (Silence), 'Manah Samyama' (Control of Mind), 'Indriya Nigrah' (Command of Physical Limbs), 'Brahma charya' (Celibacy) and 'Niyama Palana' (Administering of Regulations) for eleven thousand years in deep water and Lord Brahma arrived at last by his 'Hamsa Vimana' along with Twelve Adityas viz. Dhata, Mitra, Aryama, Shakra, Varuna, Amshuman, Bhaga, Vaivaswanta, Pusha, Savita, Tvashta and Vishnu; Eighteen Vasus viz. Apa, Dhruva, Soma, Dhara, Anila, Anala, Pratyusha and Prabhasa; Forty Marud- ganas from seven categories viz. Avaha, Pravaha, Sambhava, Udvaha, Vivah, Parivaha, and Varvah of seven each; Ekadasha Rudras viz. Hara, Bahurupa, Tryambaka, Aparajita, Vrisha kapi, Shambhu, Kapardi, Raivata, Mriga Vyadha, Sarpa and Kapali, Devas, Saptrashis, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Yakshas etc. In the presence of all these Deities Brahma gave the boon of invincibility from Devatas, Asuras, Gandharvas, Yakshas, Nagas, Rakshasas, human being, piscachas, Rishi ganas with immunity from 'Shaapaas' or curses, Astras, Shastras, Mountains, Trees, neither dried material nor wet, neither during day nor night, from Planets, Grahas, Nakshatras, Ten Directions, Krodha, Kama, varuna, Indra, Yama, Kubera, and Kimpurashas. As Brahma granted the boon to the Daitya accordingly, there were protests from all the Celestial quarters but Brahma conveyed that he had to give away the boons, since in all fairness the Tapasya that was performed by the daitya was genuine and had to be according to the wishes of the Danava. It did not take much time that Hiranya Kashipu waited to dethrone Indra and Devas; controlled Lokapalas, Pancha bhutas, Navagrahas, Dikpalakaas, Adityas, Vasus, Marudganas, and Rudras; obtained Yagna bhagaas and changed the texts of Sacred Scriptures; forced human beings to worship him but not Srihari, humiliated

and killed Vishnu Bhaktas as they did not fall in line and in short tampered Vedic Traditions to his personal advantage. There was hue and cry and Devas who approached Bhagavan Vishnu who assured Devas that he would soon take an incarnation of a species which would defy the imagination of Hiranyakashipu while he took the boons from Brahma. Parama Bhakta of Narayana, Prahlada the son of Hiranyakashipu realised in his Celestial Vision that Lord Vishnu had arrived in an incarnation as Nrisimha (Half Man and Half Lion) and that it was becoming increasingly clear that the Incarnation would end up the King Hiranyakashipu and Daityas. The vision indicated further that in the Physique of the Man-Lion were images of all Devatas, Oceans, Rivers, Himalaya and other Mountains, Stars on the Sky, Adityas, Vasuganas, Kubera, Varuna, Yama, Indra, Marudganas, Gandharvas, Maharshis, Yakshas, Nagas, Piscachas, Rakshasas, Brahma and Shankara.

Even as Prahlada cautioned the Great King in a full House of top officials, the latter commanded the peculiar Man-Lion to be caught where ever it would be, the 'beast' as the King imagined stood then and there right before him; the stunned Danava King lost his senses for a while but quickly recovered his composure and materailised Astras, Kala Chakras, earth-shaking Brahmastras, hell-binding Danava Chakras, Vajraayudhaas, Trishulas, Kankaals, Musalas, Mohanas, Shoshans, Santaapanaas, Vilaapanaas, Vaavyaas, Mathans, Kaapaals, Shaktis, Brahmashitastraas, Somaastras, Kaalamudgaras, Gandharvaastras, Vayavyastras, Hayashirastras, Naagastras, Paishachastras and such 'Maaranastras' against Nrisimha Swami who got more and irritated in devastating the 'Astra-Shastras' which were either smashed by his Vajra-like body or redirected them back to Hiranyakashipu which had to be defended or tore parts of his body in the process. Simultaneously, the hastily grouped warriors, Senapatis, Ministers and the armies of Hiranyakashipu attacked Nrisimha and the highly enraged Bhagavan went so angry that fire balls emerged out of his eyes and relentless roars shattered the distant regions. Even by the fire and sound thus released, the battalions of soldiers whose shapes and forms were nauseating and frightening with faces of donkeys and wild pigs got decimated in thousands. Hiranyakashipu kept on hurling Shakti-weapons which were instantly retaliated by the mere 'Hunkaar' of Bhagavan and as though he was tired of fighting further, he tossed the body of the demon up, sat on an elevated place, kept the body of the demon on his thighs and with his pointed finger nails tore apart his stomach and heart when blood surged out in spirals and the greatest menace in Trlokas breathed his last. As the son of Diti succumbed, the whole universe fell into a strange spell of silence mingled with feelings of deliverance and disbelief, even as Prithvi, Kaal, Chandrama, Akash, Grahaganas, Surya, the Ten Dishas, Oceans, Rivers, Mountains and the Forests suppressed their surging incredibility. Lords Brahma, Rudra and Mahendra led the chorus of spontaneous Eulogy of Nrisimha Deva by Devatas, Gandharvas, Apsaras and Maharshis as follows:

*Param cha siddhim cha Paramcha Devam, Paramcha Mantram Paramam Havischah/  
ParamchaDharmam Paramcha Vishvam,Twaamaahuragryam Purusham Puraanam/ Param shareeram  
Paraamcha Brahma, Paramha Yogam Paramaamcha Vaaneem/ Param rahasyam Paramaam  
gatimcha,Twaamaahargryam Purusham Puraanam/ Yevam Parasyaapi Param Padam yat, Param  
parishyaapi Paramcha Devam/ Evam parisyaapi param cha Bhutam, Twamaahuragryam Purusham  
Puraanam/ Param parasyaapi param rahasyam, Param parasyaapi Param mahatvam/ Param  
parasyaapi param Mahadyat, Twamaahuagryam Purusham Puraanam/Param parasyaapi param  
nidhaanam, Param parasyaapi param pavitram/Param parasyaapi param cha daantam,  
Twamaahuragryam Purusham Puranam/*

(Devadi Deva! You are Brahma, Rudra and Mahendra; the Loka Karta, Samharta, Upasthitaana/ Creator, Destroyer and Preserver; You are imperishable, the Utmost Siddhi /accomplishment; Paratpara, Parama Deva, Parama Mantra, Parama Havi /Invocation to Agni by Ghee; Parama Dharma, Parama Vishwa, Adi Purusha; You are the Supreme Physique, Param Brahma, Parama Yoga, Parama Vaani , Parama Rahasya, Parama Gati / Direction and Target; and Purana Purusha / the Very First Being; indeed you are the Paratpara Pada /Supreme Step Forward, Paratpara Deva, Partpara Bhuta / Organism, Paratpara Mahatva,

Sarva sreshtha / the noblest of all; the One beyond comprehension, the Highest Form of Sacredness and Spotlessness!).

As Brahma and Parameswara expressed the gratitude of Devas and in fact of the entire Universe, Bhagavan Nrisimha was extremely happy, Gandharvas sang tuneful songs in praise of the Lord, Maharshis recited Vedas and Shanti Mantras, Apsaras danced to their heart's content and Devas sounded celestial drums and rained flowers from the skies. Bhagavan Vishnu then boarded Garuda Vahana and flew toward Kshira Sagara. Brahma and Indra assured that the Avatar of Nrisimha Bhagavan would be worshipped for ever since Lord Vishnu would incarnate Himself; he assured that as and when Dharma was in jeopardy, he would reappear again and again in every 'Yuga'.

#### Narasimha's incarnation, Prahlada's Bhakti vide Kurma Purana

Of the thirteen wives of Kashyapa who were the daughters of Daksha viz. Aditi, Diti, Danu, Arishta, Surasa, Surabhi, Vinata, Tamra, Krodhavasha, Ira, Kadru, Muni and Dharmaja, Diti gave birth to Hiranya Kashipu and Hiranyaksha. Hiranyakashipu became arrogant having secured the boon of invincibility from Brahma and tormented Devas, Maharshis and Brahmanas, even to the extent of declaring himself as mightier than Narayana. Devas approached Vishnu who had already created from his 'Amsa' the 'Narasimha' or the Man-Lion Swarupa and despatched him to the Kingdom of Hiranyakashipu. On learning of this, the Daitya commissioned four of his sons viz. Prahlada, Anihlada, Samhlada and Hlada; the sons charged Narasimha with Brahmastra, Vaishnavastra, Kaumarastra and Agneyastra but Narasimha caught hold of the feet of all the Putras and through them all in different directions. Hiranyakashipu confronted Narasimha Deva and tried to hit him on the chest even as the latter disappeared on Garuda. Hiranyaksha the younger brother of Hiranyakashipu recited the Pashupata Mantra against Narasimha but Mahadeva would not harm Vasudeva. That was the time when Prahlada realised the Supremacy of Narasimha:

*Drushtawaa paraahatam twastram Prahlaado bhaagya gouravaat, Meyney Sarvaatmakam Devam  
Vaasudevam sanatanam/Samtyajya sarva shastraani Satyayuktena chetasaa, Nanaama Shirasaa Devam  
yoginaam hridayeshyam/ Stutwaa Naaraayanaih stotraaih Rukyajuh Saaama sambhavaih, Nivaarya  
Pitaram Bhraatrun Hirantaaksham tadaa braveet/ Ayam Naaraayanonantah shaswato Bhagavaanajah,  
Puraana Purusho Devo Mahayogi Jaganmayah/ Ayam Dhaataa Vidhaataa cha wayamjyotirniranjanah,  
Pradhaana Purushastwam Mula Prakritiravyayah/ Ishwarah Sarvabhutaanaamanantaryami gunaatigah,  
Gacchaadhwamenam sharanam Vishnumavyaktamavyayaa/ Ayam sarvaatmanaa vadhyo Nrisimholpa  
pararaakramah,Samaagatosmadbhavanamidaaneem Kaalacheditah/ Vihasya Pitaram Putro Vachah  
Praaha Mahaamatih, Maa Nindaswainameeshaanaam Bhutaanaamekamvyayam/ Katham Devo  
Mahadevah shaswatah Kaalavarjitah, Kaalena hanyatey Vishnuh Kaalaatma Kaalarupadhruk/ Tatah  
Suvarna kashipur duratma vidhichoditah, Nivaaritopi putrena yudodha Harimavyayam/*

(As the powerful Narayanasthra and Shiva's Paashupatastra proved to be ineffective, Prahlada realised that Narasimha was none else other than Vaasudeva Himself and having visioned him as Ruk-Yajur-Saama Swarupa extolled him with Vaishnava Stutis and asked his father, uncle and brothers to stop the battle; he said they should all take shelter from him and not fight with him as he is Anata, Sanatana, Ajanma, Maha Yogi, Purana Purusha, Dhata, Vidhata, Swayam jyoti, Niranjana, Purana Purusha, Tatwa, Mula Prakriti, Avyaya, Ishwara, Antaryami and Avyaya Vishnu. Hiranyakashipu shouted that this Narasimha was indeed worth killing as he entered this place as though he was sent by Kaala or Mrityu to my house for being killed. But smilingly, Prahlada tried to convince the Daitya that Vaasudeva was the Singular Entity who himself was Kaala Varjita( deathless) Kaal (Mrityu or death) and Kaalaatma or the Form of Mrityu himself and there was no question of Kaala Deva despatching Narasimha to their Place; but since Hiranyakashipu was fool hardy, the Lion from Narasimha tore the Daitya's guts and intestines

from his body and cut them into pieces and sent him to hell; as this happened, the highly enraged Bhagavan killed the Daitya Sons, excepting of Prahlada, who was overcome by the presence of Vaasudeva. As Hiranyaksha became the King, his atrocities were intensified against Devas and Sages and finally imprisoned Bhu Devi and dragged her into Rasaatala. Bhagavan assumed the form of Varaha and having killed him and rescued Bhu Devi returned to Vaikuntha. Prahlada anointed his cousin brother Andhaka as the King and rejected the Asura way of life and was fully immersed in Vishnu's worship. In course of time, Prahlada was by the influence of Maya ignored to perform the Puja of a Brahmana Guest who was annoyed and cursed Prahlada that what all the positive fruits were earned by way of Vishnu Puja by him would be lost; thus Prahlada went back to his erstwhile Asura Gunas and neglected Vishnu puja; in fact he attacked Hari once but got snubbed by him. Having recovered from the ill-effects of the Maya, Prahlada then performed worship with redoubled energy to Vishnu

#### Nrisimha Deva vide Brahma Purana

Bhagavan Nrisimha Deva as Man-Lion Swarupa had been a significant resident Deity of Purushottama Tirtha after the extermination of the Demon Hiranya Kashipu; the Bhagavan's mere presence ensured the orderly existence of human beings in the pursuit of the Chaturvidha Purusharthas of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Mokshas; in fact, Bhagavan Nrisimha had been always assuring the safety of the entire 'Charaachara Jagat' viz. the Beings of Marthya, Swarga and Pataala lokas. To all the 'Nrisimha Upasakaas' practising a hermit- life by eating leaves, fruits and material grown under-ground like potatoes etc.; drinking natural water and meditating Nrisimha Deva in forests and forsaken Places, there would be nothing impossible to accomplish in life and beyond. Any human being performing meditation to Nrisimha on Shukla Dwadashis by the Nrisimha Mantra twenty lakh times would have nothing else to ask for as the devotee would become replete with success and virtue, besides demolishing Maha Patakaas even.

*Krutwaa padakshinam tatra Narasimham Prapujayet, Punya Gandhaadirdhupaih pranasya shiraasaa Prabhu/ Karpura chandanaaktaani jaatey pushpaani mastakey, Pradadyaannara Simhasya tatha siddhihi Prajaayatey/ Bhagavan Sarvakaryeshu na kwachitprati hasyatey hanyatey, Tejashodhum na shaktaahssyurbrahma Rudraa dayassuraah/ Kim punardaanavaalokey Siddha Gandharva Maanushaah, Vidyaadharaa Yakshaganaah sa Kinnara Mahoragaah/ Mantram yaa naasuraanhanthum Japanteykenya sadhakaah, Tey Sarvey Pralayam yaanti drushtwaadityaagni varchasah/ Sakrujjaptam tu kavacham divyam rakshatey -sarvamupadravam, Dwirjaptam Kavacham Diwyam rakshatey Devadaanavaat/ Gandharwaah Kinnaraa Yaksha Vidyaadhara Mahoragaah, Bhutaah Piscaachaa Rakshaamsi ye chaney paripandhanah/ Trijaptam kavacham Divya mabhedyam cha Suraasuraaih, Dwaadasa -abhyantarey chaiva yojanaanaam Dwijotthamaa/*

( After Pradakshina, devotees should perform the 'Shodasopacharaas' or the Sixteen Services of Aavaahana- Asana-Pratimabhisheka-Vastra- Yagnopaveeta-Pushpa-Phala- Gandha- Dhupa-Dipa-Mantra Pushpa-Naivedya-Taamboola- Geeta- Vaadya-Nrittha-and Swasti. Chandana and Pushpa should be placed on the heads of the devotees so that they attained complete satisfaction of the worship. Indeed, even Rudra and Brahma would be unable to withstand the 'Tejas' of Bhagavan Nrisimha, not to mention of Danava- Siddha- Gandharva and Maanavas. Asuras had been in the habit of practicing Abhicharika Mantras but simple meditation of Nrisimha Mantras should not only save the targets of such Mantras but destroy the practitioners of such worships. Recitation of Nrisimha Kavacha twice a day would ward off all Evil Spirits and demolish all obstacles created by Danava- Yaksha-Bhuta-Preta-Piscachas and even of Devas; recitation of the Kavacha thrice would fortify the practitioners some twelve Yojanas away and even Suraasuraas could never create any physical ailments, mental dis-satisfactions and psychological imbalances. In fact, mere 'Smaran' or thought of Nrisimha at the times of battles, difficulties, lonely places, fright of thieves / bandits or tigers, peril of life, poison, fire and water hazards, threat of Royalty

or Authorities, fear of Sea, distress by Grahās, physical ailments would provide instant liberation and safety. Darshan of Nrisimha Deva would assure such relief as the early day break would dispel all kinds of troubles and tribulations. Dedication to Nrisimha by any class of Society-be it Brahmana or Kshatriya or Vaishya or Sudras or women -is highly fruitful while formal pujas would guarantee fulfillment in life and Vishnu loka later.

### Maha Bhagavata

#### Hiranyakasipu and Prahlada

Continuing the story of the curse of Sage- Boys to the Gate Keepers of Vaikuntha, Suka Muni elaborated as to how Hiranyakasipu was enraged at the demise of his brother Hiranyaksha, when he sought to push the Planet of Earth into Patala loka and the Incarnation of Lord Vishnu as the Great Boar killed him. To avenge the death of his brother, Hiranyakasipu performed unprecedented austerities to please Lord Brahma. The relentlessness of the austerities was such that fire emerged from the Demon's ears and was spread over the entire Universe. The Five Elements were shaken up and Demi-Gods appealed to Lord Brahma to intervene. As Brahma finally appeared before the Demon, the latter solicited immortality as his desire. As that would not be possible since every being in Creation would have to perish, then the Demon asked for boons that he would be tantamount to immortality, ie he could be killed by no living entity, demi-Gods, any power in the Universe, and neither during day nor night. Thus having been empowered by the benedictions from Lord Brahma, Hiranyakasipu terrorised the entire Universe and insisted he was God himself and as such be worshipped by one and all. His son **Prahlada** was a staunch devotee of Lord Narayana by birth and it became evident that the boy could not be stopped from worshipping the Lord. The Demon King engaged the sons of Guru Sukracharya, (the Head Priest of Demons), named Sanda and Amarka to use their entire patience and forbearance to convert Prahlada's psyche away from the devotion to Narayana but to no avail. Hiranyakasipu tried the essence of the Four known means of 'Sama' ( Intense counseling or brain washing), 'Dana' ( Material benefits), 'Bheda' ( creating aversion against Narayana and appealing for filial duties) and finally the use of 'Danda' ( by creating scare of death or violence of extreme degrees). Prahlada became inflexible and took to extreme devotion of Narayana in the most desperate manner. So did the father who resorted to every possible means of killing the child. An exasperated Demon King finally asked the boy to show Narayana in a column of the Hall. Out came a roar of a frightful species of a mix of man-lion entity who placed the strong body of the Demon King on the Lord's thighs and tore of the Demon's body to pieces. Lord Brahma, Lord Siva, the entire congregation of Demi-Gods led by Indra and the Great Sages appeared to witness how 'Dharma' was revived as the destruction of the enormous Demon King was complete. It was possible for Prahlada alone to gradually bring down the huge fury of Lord Narasimha, Who was neither an animal nor a human being, nor any species of Brahma's creation and the time of destruction was neither day nor night but dusk time, as per the Demon's own charter of death wish! Hiranyakasipu attained 'Sarupya Mukti' thereafter. Prahlada became a highly benevolent King subsequently.

#### Varnashrama and Grihasti Dharma in Prahlada's Regime

Suka Maha Muni informed King Parikshith as to how Prahlada ruled his Kingdom with justice, virtue and as per Scriptures. Narada who was a witness to the manner in which King Prahlada reigned was explained in detail to King Yudhishtara. Prahlada had unreserved devotion to the Supreme Lord, profound knowledge of Scriptures, unparalleled wisdom essential for a Ruler and most importantly a high sense of detachment devoid of material desires. Indeed these are the rarest of qualities that an ideal King could possess.

Taking cue from the ideal governance followed by Prahlada, Narada defined ideal values of Varnashrama Dharma-the Four Class System- to ensure social values in a Society based on Spiritual Principles. Basically stated, the rudimentary observance of religious regime demands tolerance, truthfulness, austerity, simplicity, control of mind and senses, celibacy, charity, contentment, and non-violence. These qualities are applicable to one and all. Among ‘Dvijas’ or twice born-initially by birth and subsequently after the Ceremony of wearing the Holy Thread – are the three categories viz. Brahmanas ( the Class of Religious Practice), the Kshatriyas ( the Class of Defenders of Dharma or Justice), the Vanijya Classs ( the Business and Trading Class) have larger responsibilities of socio-religious nature. Brahmanas should have vedic knowledge and practice and possess the qualities of austerity, spirituality, self control, physical cleanliness, purity of thought and action and daily ritualistic worship. Kshatriyas ought to protect, preserve and enforce regulations of the society and ensure law and order. Vysyas are expected to business interests of the Society, including agriculture and allied activities. The fourth class are meant for servicing the general needs of the Society. But if one shows symptoms of a specific class, the person be accepted to the duties of that category, irrespective of origin of birth. The Veda Base in this connection is: *YasyaYallakshanam proktum / Pumso varnabhivyanjanam / yad anyaprapiti drusyata / tat teniva vinirdisat* – Yasya: of whom; yat:which; lakshanam: symptom; prokta : described ( as above); pumsah : of a person; varna abhivyanjakam : indicating the classification; yat:if; api:also; drusyeta : is seen; tat: that; tena : by that symptom; eva:certainly;vinurdiset: be accepted, [regardless of birth].( Bhagavata Purana:Canto 7, chapter 11, verse:35)

King Yudhishtara requested Narada Maharshi to explain the life style of an ideal householder or ‘Grihasti Dharma’. He must earn his livelihood honestly without being concerned about the end result. Constant contacts with Saintly persons; detachment and contentment without excessive possession; treating the poor, the helpless, innocent children and animals with compassion; practising daily worship and devotion to the Supreme Lord as also Demi-Gods; performing periodical oblations to Fire God, as per Shastras are among the duties. Brahmanas are to offer rituals to forefathers during the dark period of ‘Bhadra’ month and ceremonies during Mahalaya Amavasya during Asvina month. One should perform Shraddha ceremonies on Makara Sankranti day ( when Sun moves upward to north) and/ or Karkataka Sankranti ( when Sun travels to Southern direction) as also on Mesha Sankranti and Tula Sankranti. Ceremonies are also to be performed during Solar/Lunar eclipse days, Akhsaya Tiritiya day, on the ninth lunar day of the bright moon phase in the month of Kartika and on the seventh lunar day of the bright phase of Moon in the month of Magha as also on the Janma Nakshatra days. Besides on the banks of Ganges and Yamuna, religious performances be done in temples or holy rivers, lakes or Sacred Places where Saintly persons live; for example, Pushkara lake, Kurukshetra, Gaya, Prayaga, Pulahasrama, Naimisaranya, banks of Phalgu river, Setubandha, Prabhasa, Dwaraka, Varanasi, Mathura, Pampa, Bindu Sarovara, Badarikasrama, Places where Narmada River flows, Chitrakuta and many other Places dotted all over in Bharata Desa or elsewhere where Lord Narayana is worshipped. In the pursuit of the four ‘end-principles’ of ‘Garhastya’ viz. Dharma ( Virtue), Artha ( Wealth), Kama ( Desire) and Moksha ( Salvation), there are materialistic activities mixed with ‘ the means’ of Adhyatmika ( Introspection), Adhidivika ( Devotion to the Lord) and Adhi Bhowtika (Physical Well Being). One is to be conscious of the ‘Means’ and the ‘Ends’. Equally important is to safeguard the negation of the Principles viz. Vidharma or (Irreligion), Paradharma ( Principles followed by others), Abhasa ( False similarity of religion), Upadharma ( parallel religion) and Chala Dharma ( misleading innocent victims).

Thus ending the narration by Maharshi Narada to Yudhishtara regarding Varnashrama Dharma and Grihasti Dharma.life.

Ahobila. *Aho veeryam aho shouryam aho bahu parakramam, Narasimham para daivam aho bilam aho balam/* Ahobila Kshetra is a popular Vaishnava (Vadakala) Kshetra split at two levels called in the Telugu local language as ‘Eguva’ and ‘Diguva’ or Upper and Lower levels- in the ‘nallamala’ forests of Kurnool District of Andhra Pradesh at the distance of 40 km from Nandyala or 150 km from Hyderabad at the Nallamala forest range at an altitude of 1000 ft. plus. That is the fabled Abode of Lord Narasimha or

Prahlada Varada, the fourth incarnation of Maha Vishnu to terminate Hiranya Kashipu the demon who rescued Prahlada the illustrious Vishnu Bhakta. Amrita Valli is the corresponding Devi Lakshmi of the Godeless. Ahobila Kshetra opposite the Akshaya Tirtha where devotees purify themselves with snanas, before entering the Sacred Place portrays nine forms of Narasimha spread among nine Temples viz. Bhargava Nrisimha bestowing Lakshmikara siddhi or excellent prosperity as incarnate at the lower level of Ahobila, Yogananda Nrisimha also at the lower level signifying the aspect of compassion and overcoming problems of one's life; Chatravata Narasimha representing Ketu Graha bestowing comforts of Life and expertise in Fine Arts; Ugra Nrisimha Temple at the upper level along with Chenchu Lakshmi or a Goddess as of a local Tribe Leader's daughter who sought to cool down the fierce form of the Lord and eventually married to her representing Dei Lakshmi herself and teaching devotees the qualities of courage and timidlessness yet of maturity; Varaha Narasimha Swami at the upper level again along with his consort of Lakshmi; Malova Vara Nrisimha along with Shri Lakshmi at Lakshmi Hill granting total fulfillment and auspiciousness to devotees; Jwala Nrisimha as had just annihilated Haranya kashipu since a pond of brick colour with which the Lord had just washed his hands with the blood of the demon called Rakta gunta Tirtham; Paavana Nrisimha or Kshetra Ratna Nrisimha or Pamulati Nrisimha Swami who provides safety and succor to devotees and finally Karanja Nrisimha or He who represents Shadvidha or six types of austerities and purities viz. those of 'Kara- charana- vaak- kaaya-karma- shravana- nayana' or by hands, legs, tongue, mouth, body, actions and mid- borne nature! At the Ahobila Complex, the significant Festivities are Phalguna Month celebrations, Janma Nakshatra ( Swati) Mahotsavas, Gramotsavas, Monthly Celbrations and Tirumanjana Sevas. *Simhachala Tirtha*: Some 16 km near Vishakapattanam in Andhra Pradesh is another significant Nrisimha Kshetra in Bharat is at Simhachala or the Lion Giri viz. Varaha Lakshmi Nrisimha of 15<sup>th</sup> century built by Gajapati Raja of Kalinga, the present part of Odisha State and King Krishnadeva Raya of Vijayanagara also attended the Opening Ceremony Brahmotsavas as given in available Inscriptions. The Legend about this incarnation of Nrisimha is due to the curse to the Gate keepers to Maha Vishnu's Vaikuntha by Brahma Manasa Putras viz. Sanaka Sanandana Sanat Sanatana Kumaras who were stopped entry; the respective Danavas were Harayaksha in Varaha; Ravanaasura and Kumbhakarna in Shri Rama Avatara, and Kamsa and Shishupalain Krishnavatara, besides Hiranya kashipu in Nrisimha Avatara. The Bhakta saved from Hiranya kashipu in the Nrisimha Avatara was Prahlada. Special Festivals at Simhachala are of Akshaya Triteeya with Chandana Lepana or Alankara with Gandha and during Vaishakha Month. The main attractions at the Temple are a fantastic Stone Ratha and a 16 pillored Mandapa depicting Dashawataras and many Nrisimha Swarupas.

### **Vamanaavataara vide Vaamana Purana**

Bali defeats Indra, Vamana's Avatara and Bali's Donation of Three Feet ( Stutis by Kashyapa, Aditi and Brahma and Virat Purusha Varnana)

As King Bali of Daityas took over the reins of Trilokas from Virochana the son of Prahlada and the great Grand father of Hiranyakashipu, Devas lost power in Swarga and the mighty Mayasura and Shambara flew the Flag of Vijayanti too. Yet, the Daityas were steeply engaged in Dharmik deeds, and they were guarding the Sky providing stability all-around:

*Abhaavey Sarva paapaanaam Dharma bhavey sadothitey, Chatush –paadey sthitey dharmey hyadharmey paada vigrahey, Prajaapaalanayukteshu bhraajamaa -neshu Raajasu, Sarva dharma samprayukteshu tadhaashrama nivaasishu/*

(There was complete absence of sinnersw in the Kingdom and Dharma was predominate; Dharma was established on four feet except on one; all the Deputised Kings were performing Administration ideally

and all the Four Varnaas of population were observing Dharma perfectly) It was at that opportune time that the Coronation of Bali Chakravarti took place amidst the chanting of Victory by all concerned. Devi Lakshmi appeared and congratulated at Bali's Elevation to Supremacy along with her 'Amsaas' like the Devis named Hreem, Kirti, Dyuti, Prabha, Dhruti, Kshama, Bhuti, Ruddhi, Divya, Mahamati, Shruti, Smriti, Ida, Shanti, Pushti, Kriya, and also select Apsaraas.

Meanwhile, Devataas were disillusioned at their discomfiture and the climax of Bali's high status especially because of Daitya King's unchallenged success owing to his Dharma Paalana and the lack of any record of Evil deeds by Daityas; they were also denied their shares of Yahna Phalaas. They approached their mother Aditi for solace and advice and in turn she reached her husband Kashyapa Muni. Kashyapa found the situation was delicate and even Brahma might find it difficult as strictly speaking the record of Daityas was above board! Brahma advised that the only way out would be that Tapasya and Aditi would perform strict Tapasya to Vishnu Deva and seek the most difficult boon of Vishnu taking birth as their son! The Couple reached the Banks of Kshira Samudra at a holy spot called Amrita, performed austere Tapasya and 'Kaamada Vrata' for thousand years by controlling their Indriyas, observing silence and Kashyapa chanted Veda Yukta Sukta called Parama Stuti as follows:

*Namastestu tey Devadeva Ekashringa Vrushaarchey Sindhu Vrushaarchey Sindhuvrusha, Vrishaakapey Suravrisha Anaadisambhava Rudra Kapila Vishvaksena/ Sarva Bhutapatey Dhruva Dharmaadharma Vaikuntha Vrishaavarta, Anaadimadhyanidhana Dhananjaya Shuchishravah Prushnatejah/ Nijajaya Amriteshaaya Sanaatana Tridhaama Tushita Mahaa Tatwa, Lokanaatha Padmanaabha Virinchey Bahurupa Akshaya Akshara/ Havyabhujha Khandaparasho Shakra Munjakesha Hamsa Maha Dakshina, Hrishikesha Sukshma Mahaaniyamadhara Viraja Loka pratishtha/ Arupa Agraja Dharmaja Dharma naabha Gabhastinaama, Shatakratunaabha Chandra ratha Surya Tejah Samudravaasah Ajah/ Sahrashirah Sahasrapaad Adhomukhaha Mahapurusha Purushottama, Sahasrabaaho Sahasramurtey Sahastraasya Sahasrasambhavah, Sahasratvam Twamaahuh/ Pushpahaasa Charama twameva Voushat, Vashatkaram twamaahu ragryam Makhesu Praashitaaram Sahasradharam/ Cha Bhuscha Bhuvasha Suwascha Twameva Vedavedya Brahmarshaya, Brahmana priya twameva dhaursi Maatarishvasasi Dharmosi/ Hota Pota Mantaa Netaa Homahetustwameva Agrya, Vishwathaamna twameva dikbhii Subhaanda Ijjyosi/ Sumedhosi Samidhastwameva matirgatirdaata twamasi, Mokshosi Yogisi Srujaasi Dhaataa Parama Yagnosi/ Somesi Dikshitosi Dakshinaasi Vishwamasi, Sthavira Hiranyanaabha Naraayana Trinayana Adityavarna/ Adityatejah Mahapurusha Purushottama Adi Deva Suvikrama, Prabhakara Shambho Swayambho Bhutaadih Mahabhutesi/ Vishva bhuta Vishvam twameva Vishwagoptaasi Pavitramasi, Viswabhuvah Urthvakarma Amrita Divaspatey Vaachaspatey Ghrutaarchey, Ananta Karma Vamsha Praagvamsha Vishvapaatastwameva/ Vaarthinaam Varadositwam, Chaturbhischa dwaabhyaam Panchabhireva cha, Yhyatey cha punar –dhaabhyaam tubhyam Hotraatmaney Namah/*

(Deva Deva, Eka Shringa, Vrishaarchi, Sindhuvrusha, Vrishaakapi, Suravrisha, Anaadi Sambhava, Rudra, Kapila, Vishvaksena, Sarva Bhuapati, Dhruva, Dharmaadharma, Vaikuntha, Vrisha Karta, Anadi - madhya nidhana, Dhanajaya, Shrutishrava, Prushna Teja, Nijajaya, Amriteshaaya, Sanaatana, Tridhaama, Tushita, Mahaa Tatwa, Lokanaatha, Padmanaabha, Virinchi, Bahurupa, Akshaya, Akshara, Havyabhujha, Khandaparashu, Shakra, Munjikesha, Hamsa, Mahaa Dakshina, Hrishikesha, Sukshma, Mahaniyamadhara, Viraja, Lokapratishtha, Arupa, Agraja, Dharmaja, Dharmanaabha, Gabhastunaabha, Shatakratunaabha, Chandra Ratha, Surya Teja, Aja, Sahasra shira, Sahasrapaada, Adhomukha, Maha Purusha, Purushottama, Sahasrabaahu, Sahasra Murti, Sahasrasya, Sahasra Sambhava! I prostrate before you and touch your feet; You are commended as Sahasratva, Pushpahaasa, Charama / Sarvotthama; You are known as Voushta and Vashatkaara; You are Agrya or Sarvotthama, Yagna Praashita or Bhokta, Sahasra dhaara; You are the Bhur-Bhuva-Swah Swarupa; Veda Vedyah or Recognisable through Vedas; Brahmarshaya, Brahmanapriya; Dhyouh or Sarvavyapi like the Sky; Maatarishwa or Speedy like Vayu;

Dharma, Hota, Potha / Vishnu; Mantaa, Netaa, Homa hetu or the Root Cause of Homa; Vishvateja, Agrya or Sarvasreshtha, Subhanda or like the Huge Patrarupa encompassing all Dishas; You are worthy of Yajana or Ijya; Sumedha, Samidha, Mati, Gati, and Daataa; You are Moksha, Yoga, Srashta or the Supreme Creator; Dhata / Dhaarana and Poshana Karta; Parama Yagna, Soma, Dikshita, Dakshina and Vishwa; You are Sthavira, Hiranyanaabha, Narayana, Trinayana, Adityavarna, Aditya Teja, Maha Purusha, Purushottama, Adi Deva, Suvikrama, Prabhakara, Shambhu, Swayambhu, Bhugtaadi, Maha Bhuta, Vishwa Bhuta, and Vishwa; You are the Samsara Raksha, Pavitra, Vishwa bhava or Vishwa Srashta, Urthwa Karma or Uttama Karma, Amrita or Everlasting, Divaspati, Vaachaspati, Ghrutaarchi, Anantakarma, Vamsha, Pragvamsha, Vishwapa or Vishwa Paalaka, Varada or the Bestower of boons; and finally, You are the Hotraatma or who is responsible for producing Agnihotra by way of the seventeen counted Aksharas or Letters viz. Four 'Aashraavayas' plus four 'Astu Shroushads' plus two 'Yajaas' plus five 'Yajaamahyes' and again two 'Vashats').

Devi Aditi also made a commendatory appeal to Janaardana separately and said:

*Namah krutyaarta naashaaya Namah Pushkara maalinee, Namah Parama Kalyaana Kalyaanaadi vedhasey/ Namah Pankajanertaaya Namah Pankaja naabhaey, Namah Pankaja Sambhuti sambhavaayaatma yonaey/ Shriyah Kaantaayaa daantaaya Daantadrushyaaya Chakriney, Namah Padmaasi hastaaya Namah Kanaka retasey/ Tathaatma Jnaana Yagjnaaya Yogi chintyaaya Yoginey, Nirgunaaya Visheshaaya Haraye Brahmarupiney/Jagaccha tishthatey yatra jagato yo na drushyatey, Namah Sthulaati Sukshmaaya tasmai Devaaya Shaaranginey/ Yam na pashyanti pashyanto Jagadapyakhilam Naaha, Apashyadbhirjagadyascha drushyatey hridi samshitah/ Bahirjyotiralakshyo yo lakshyatey Jyotisha parah, Yasminneva yataschaiva Hasyaitadakhilam Jagat/ Tasmai Samasta jagataamamaraaya Namoh Namah, Aadyah Prajaapatih sopi Pitrunaam Pamam Patih, Patih Syraanaam yastasmai namah Krishnaaya Vedhasey/ Yah Pravrutthai Nivruttaischa Kamkabhistu virajjyatey, Swargaapavarga phalado Namastasmai Gadaabhrutey/ Yastu sanchintyamaanopi Sarvam paapam vyapohati, Namastasmai Vishuddhaaya Parasmai Harimedhasey/ Ye pashyanthy akhikaadhaara meeshaana majama- vyayam, na punarjanma smaranam praapnuvanti Namaami tam/ Yaa yagney Yagnaparamairiji- yatey Yagnasamsthitah, Tam Yagna Purusham Vishnum Namaami Prabhumeeswaram/ Geeyatey Sarva Vedeshu Vedavidbhirvidaam gatih/ Yastasmai Vedavidyaaya Nityaaya Viushnavey Namah/ Yato Vishwam samrudbhutam yasmin Pralayameshyati, Vishvodbhava Pratishthaaya Namastasmai Mahaatmaney/ AaBrahma stambha paryantam Vyaptam yena charaacharam, Mayaaajala samunnaddhamtamupendram namaamyaham/ Yotra Toyaswarupastho bibharti –akhilameeshwarah, Vishwam Vishwapatim Vishnum tam Namaami Prajaapatim/ Murtim tamosuramayam taddhidho vinihanti yah, Raatrijam Surya Rupeecha tamupendram namaamyaham/ Yasyaakshini Chandra Suryo Sarvaloka Shubhaashubham, Pashyatah karma satatam tamupendram namaamyaham/ Yasmin Sarveshwarey sarvam Satyametanmayoditam, Naanrutam tamajam Vishnum Namaami Prabhavaavyayam/ Yadyetat Satyamuktam mey Bhuyaschaato Njanardana, Satyena tena sakalaah Puryantaam mey Manorathaah/*

(Prabho! I am grieving with unimaginable anguish which could be destroyed only by you. My Salutations to You Bhagavan who sports lotus garlands and Pushakara malaas; You are the Adi Vidhata who is an embodiment of propitiousness! You are Kamala Nayana, Padmanaabha, the Creator of Brahma, Atmajanma, Lakshmi Pati, Indriya damana, worthy of darshan only by Samayama Yogis, Sudarshana and Khadga dhaari! Only those 'Atmagyanayuta' Yagnakartas, Yogadhyaanis and Yoga Saadhakaas could aspire to visualise your Gunarahita Brahma Swarupa! May I pay my obeisances to you Sharanga Dhari Deva! as you occupy the whole world in a Gross Form and yet possess the tiniest Form which is invisible! Those persons who do not make efforts to visualise you do not get your Darshan any way, but those who have no other desire in life excepting you would readily witness you are blessed with your image in their hearts always for the asking! Your unbelievable Jyoti or extraordinary Radiance is all-pervading in the

entire Universe in which you are present invisibly and contrarily the Universe is but an integral segment of You Parama Deva! In other words, You are all over the Universe, the Universe was created by you and in fact the Universe is of Yours! My humble greetings to you the original Prajapati! Pitara Sreshtha! Devata Swami! Shri Krishna! Here are my Pranaams again and again! You are the Supreme Objective of Pravritti and Nivritti Deeds (Ritualistic and Directly unswerving approach) and the Unique Decider of bestowing Swarga or Moksha the Eternal Bliss! My namashkaaraas to you Vishuddha Swarupa as even my taking your very name and memory would smash all my sins! You are the Avinaashi or Indestructible; Akhilaadhara or the Mighty Clutch of the Entirety; the Only Reliever of the Trap of Birth-Death Cycle! You are perceptible through Yagnaas, the Yagna Murti, the Yagna Sthita and Yagna Purusha! Vedas commend you, Vedajnaas sing your hymns, You are the 'Vidwadjanaashraya' or the one who is fond of the Company of Vidwadjanaas. My Most Revered Paramaatma! The whole Vishwa is your Creation, Sustenance and also the Termination thus You are the Vishva Kartha, Vishva Bharta and the Vishva Harta! I pray to that Highest Magnificence who materialised Surya Swarupa and destroyed darkness for good. To that Sarveswara, the Ajanma, Avyaya, Srashta and Vishnu who is fully aware of the Truth about me and the transparency and earnestness of my Prayers that I am prostrating with humility craving him to grant my wish!) As both Kashyapa Muni and Devi Aditi made their Soul-full Prayers, the impossible Darshan of Bhagavan Vishnu appeared and granted the wish that he would indeed assume His Incarnation with a view to reinstate Indra and Devas to Swarga and Trilokas.

As Aditi got conceived and Bhagavan Vishnu agreed to do so, Prithvi got tremored, Mountains were shaken, and Sapta Samudras were agitated with wobbles of waves and there was strangeness all-around! Bali Chakravarti felt that there were considerable changes in the Nature as mountains were trembling and high Sea tides were on new high and more so Daityas were experiencing paleness and loss of their normal instincts of courage, assertiveness and egoism. Bali approached his grand father Prahlada and asked for the causes of these omens and premonitions. Parama Bhakta Prahlada deeply meditated Bhagavan Srihari and visualised the latter in the Garbha of Devi Aditi and had fleeting scenes of Ashtaadasha Vasus, Ekadasha Rudras, Dwadasha Adityas, two Ashvini Kumaraas, Forty Nine Maruts, Sandhyas, Vishwa Devas, Gandharvas, Nagas, Rakshasaas, his Son Virochana, Bali Chakravarti, Jambha, Kujumbha, Narakasura, Baana, and several other Daityas, Pancha Bhutas, Seas, Mountains, Rivers, Satpa Dwipaas, Brahma, Shiva, Nava Grahas, Daksha and other Prajapatis, Sapta Rishis and so on. Prahlada gave a heavy exhalation and conveyed the details what all he visioned and said that the Greatest Narayana in would soon be descending on Earth in his incarnation as Vamana Deva! Bali could not comprehend the full import of what Prahlada underlined and expressed his surprise whether Vamana Deva could be ever comparable with the Senior most Rakshasaas like Viprachitta, Shibi, Sankha, Ayamshanku, Hayashira, Ashwa Shira, Bhanga kaara, Maha Hanu, Kakkuraaksha and Durjaya. As Bali talked in such thoughtless comparisons with Paramatma and some examples of Danavas however mighty they might be, Prahlada got highly infuriated and shouted at Bali that there could not be bigger immature fool and hollow minded; he said that Bali's evil frame of mind would certainly lead the entire Vamsha of Daityas to doom:

*Yeshaam twameedrusho Rajaa Durbuddhiravivekamaan, Deva devam Mahabhaagam Vaasudevamajam Vibhum, Twaamrutey Paapa sankalpa konya evam vadishyati/ Ya yeto bhava -taa proktaah samasta Daitya daanavaah, Sa Brahmakaastathaa Devaah Staavaraantaa vibhu -tayah/ Twam chaaham cha Jagacchedam Saadridrumanadivanam, Samudradwipalokoyam yaschedam sacharaacharam/ Yasyaabhivaadya vandyasya vyaapinah Paramaatmanah, Ekaam -shaamshi kalaajanma kastameyvam Pravikshyati/ Rutey Vinaasha abhimukham twameka mavivekinam, Durbuddimajitaatmaanam Vridhaanaam Shashanaa -tigam/ Shochaneeyamyasya-mey gehey Jaatastava Pitaadhamah, Yasya twamee -drushah Putro Deva devaavamaanakah/---Nindaam karoshi tasmistwam Krishney Guru Guror Gurow, Yasmaat tasmaadihaiva twamaishwa -ryaad bhramshameyshasi/ Sa Devo Jagataam Naatho Baley Prabhur janaardana, Nanvham pratyavekshyastey Bhaktimaanatra mey Guruh/ Yetaanmaatratra mapya -tra ninditaa Jagato Gurum, Naapekshitastavyaa yasmaat tasnaacchaapam dadaamitey/ Yathaa-mey shirasacche -daadim gurutaram Baley, Twayoktamachutaakshepam Rajya bhrashta stathaa pata/*

*Yathhana Krishnaadaparah Paritraanam Bhavaarnavey, Tathaachirena pashyeyam bhavantam Raajjya - vichutam/*

(Bali! I have not come across a King of this kind who is evil-minded and dull-witted that could blame the Devaadhi Deva, Maha Bhaga, Sarva Vyaapi Vaasudeva; the names of the Daityas that you have taken as the so-called Mighty as also of Brahma and Devas were created by that Paramatma; indeed with just one 'Amsha' of myriad of his Amshaas, he created the whole Charaacharaas and Samasta Vibhutis or Manifestations including you, me, Daityas, Parvataas, Vrikshaas, Rivers, Forests, Samudraas, Sapta Dwipas, and so on and He is Sarva-Vandya, Sarva-Vyapi, and Sarva-Vidita; would there be a Vivekaheen-Murkha-Durbuddhi like you who would pass judgments on Him! What-ever are the reasons due to which you are faulting your Guru/ your father, or his father who is me or the Parama Guru who is Paramatma might be best known to you! Your talking slightly against Narayana is by far the worst since it tantamounts to cutting my head and it is to set right those feelings of pride and egotism that I am giving you a 'Shaap' / Curse that soon you would be dislocated from your Kingdom, Aishwarya, and ego. Chakravarti Bali was distraught and distressed at this most unfortunate happening of Prahlada's curse and was ashamed of himself for his rash, thoughtless and sinful belittling of Bhagavan's uniqueness which had understandably stirred up the anger of a legendary Bhakta of the unparalleled stature of Prahlada. He confessed that there was a total loss of his mental faculties when he conversed at that time due to superciliousness and over-enthusiasm of having defeated Devas which propelled his traits of arrogance; indeed his remarks had correctly hurt his grand father who was fully justified in giving him an irreparable curse but far worse than the curse, his behaviour which hurt elders, like Prahlada, who built a reputation of the family as Narayana Bhaktas, was sullied in the memory of future generations. This was humiliating to the Vamsha that he was squarely responsible! He begged of Prahlada's forgiveness which he did not deserve and would feel repentant ever day and night. Prahlada appreciated Bali's remorse and said that he was incensed up at that moment and the anger led him to obsession which lost his mental equilibrium that caused the pronouncement of the curse, for which he felt extremely sad. But a lesson was provided to Bali and fully converted him as a Parama Bhakta of Narayana. Mean while, Devi Aditi delivered a lovely male child in short stature when Nature assumed a blossomed freshness that was rare, the Gagana Mandala was clean without any trace of pollution and Vayu was pleasantly soft and nicely odoured quite unfamiliar in the human world. The proud parents invited Brahma to perform Jaatakarma and Namakarana as Vamana Murti.

Brahma Stuti to Vamana Deva :It was at that time when Brahma could not suppress his emotions and broke in his ecstasy into an instant Eulogy as follows:

*Jaadheesha Jayaajeya Jaya Vishwa Guro Harey, Janmamrityu jaraateeta Jayaananta Jayaachyuta/  
Jayaajita Jayaasesha Jayaavyakta sthitey Jaya, Jagatojagadantesha sthitey Jaya, Paramaartharthartha  
Sarvajna Inaanajeryarthartha nihsuta/ Jayaasesha Jagatsaakshir Jagagatkartrur Jagat Guro,  
Jagatojagadantesha sthitou paalayatey Jaya/ Jagaakhila Jayaasesha Jaya Sarvahriddistitha, Jagaadi  
madhyaantamaya Sarvajnaana mayottama/ Mumukshubhinirdeshya Nityahrashtha Jayeswara,  
Yogibhirmukti kaamaistu Damaadi guna bhushana/ Jayaatisukshma Durjeya Jaya sthula Jaganmaya,  
Jaya Sukshmaati sukshma twam Jayaanindriya sendriya/ Jaya Swaamaayaa yogastha Seshabhoga  
Jayaashara, Jayaikadamshtra praaptena samuddhita Vasumdhara/ Nrukesarin Suraataati Vakshahsthal  
vidaarana, Saamoprataam Jaya Viswaatman Mayaa Vaamana Keshava/ Nija maayaa paricchhinna  
Jaddhaatarjanaardana, Jayaachintya Jayaaneka Swapupaika vidha Prabho/ Vruddhiswa Vardhitaaneka  
Vikaara Prakrutey Harey, Twayyeshaa Jagataameesho samshtitaa Dharma paddhatih/ Na twaamaham  
na cheshaano Neindraadyaastri dashaa Harey, Jaatumeeshaa na Munyah Sanakaadyaa na Yoginah/  
Twam maayaapata samveeto Jagatyatra Jagatpatey, Kastwaam vetsyati Sarvesha twaprasaadam vinaa  
Narah/ Twamevaaraadhito yasya Prasaada sumukhah Prabho, Sa yeva kevalam Devam vetti twam*

*netaro janah/ Tadeeshwareshwarey -shaana Vibho Buddistwa bhaavana, Prabhavaayasya Vishwasya Vishwaatman Pruthulochana!*

(Victory to you Adheesha, Ajeya, Vishwa Guru Hari, Ananta who is devoid of Birth and End; Achyuta, Ajiota, Asesha, Avyakta Sthita Bhagavan, Paramaarth Purti Nimita, Sarvajna who distinguishes Jnaana and Jneya, Asesha Jagat Saakshi, Jagat Kartaa, Jagat Guru, Jagat-Ajagat Sthita or Existent in Charaachara; Paa lana-Pralaya Swami, Akhila, Asesha, Sarva Hridaya Sthita; Adi-Madhyama-Anta Swarupa; Samasta Jnaana Murti, Uttama, Visualisable only by Mumukshaas, Mukti Sadhana by Yoga sevitaas, Nitya Prasanna and Parameshwara who is ornamented by Dama, Kshama and such other qualities; Atyanta Sukshma Swarupa, Durjeya or realisable with great difficulty; Sthula (Gross) and at the sametime AtiSukhsma (Tiniest); Indriya Sahita and Indriya Rahita; Mayaayuta yogastitha; Sesha shaayi Avinaashi; Bahurupa dhaari; Ekadamshttra Prithvyoddhaara Varaha Rupa or Varaha Rupa who lifted Earth with a single tusk; Hiranyakahipa vakshasthala vidirna Nrisimha; Maya Vaamanarupa dhara; Mayaavruta Samsaara dharana Parameswara or the Holder of Samsara surrounded by Maya; Dhyaananeeka Swarupa dhaarana karaa; Eka Vidhi Vibho! You are the epitome of Buddhi / Intellect; Jagaddharma marga Sthita Prabho! Myself, Shankara, Indra, Sanakaadi Munis and Maha Yogiganaas had failed to understand about you as we are all shrouded by Vishnu Maya; who else could gauge your personality excepting your self! Only those who are dedicated to you and are ever-engaged with your constant 'Araadhana' could have a chance of pleasing you and none else. Ishwareshwara! Ishaana! Vibho! Bhavana! Vishwatma! Pruthulochana! Vishwa Prabhava or Srishti kaarana! Vishnu! May you grow from strength to strength! Victory to you Paramatma!)

As Bhagavan Hrishikesha was prayed to by Brahma, the former smiled and said that in the past Indra and Devas and Kashyapa Muni as also Devi Aditi paid their homages and recited Stotras to him and he assured that he would assume the incarnation of Vamamna Murti; he further assured that he would have Indra and Devatas reinstated as Trilokaadhipatis soon. In course of time Brahma offered Krishna Mrigacharma to Bhagavan and Brihaspati performed Upanayana and Yagnopaveeta dharana; Marichi Maharshi gifted Palaasha danda, Visishtha gave kamandalu, Angira Muni gave a Silk Vastru, Pulaha Muni gave a mat as Aasana, and various other Munis taught the Vatu the purport of Omkaara, Vedas, Shastras, Sankhya Yoga, Darshana Yuktis etc. Having been trained in all these disciplines, Vamana Deva had one fine morning left for the Yagna Shaala of Bali Chakravarti as the latter was executing a Sacred Yagna while carrying his mat, danda /stick, chhatra / umbrella and kamandulu / water vessel. Danava Guru Shukracharya was aware that Vishnu Deva in the form of Vamana Murti was arriving at the Yagna and briefed Bali Chakravarti to be extremely careful as Vishnu was a brave and highly talented person to put words in the mouths of the opponents. The Guru reminded Chakravarti that the latter denied the age-old practice of rights to yagna's shares to Devataas and that Vamana Murti might as well ask for the revival of the practice but those shares were now enjoying by Danava Chiefs. Bali replied to Danava Guru that in case Vishnu in the incarnation of Vamana Murti came and requested for any thing then how could a King say 'no' to it! Bali told the Danava Guru:

*Brahman katha -maham bruyaamanyapi hi yachitah, Naastiti kim Devasya Samsaarasyaaghahaarinah/ Vratopa- vaasairvividhairiyah Prabhurgrunhatey Harih, Sa mey vakshyati deheeti Govindah kimato - dhikam? Naasteeti yanmayanoktamanyeshaamapi yaachataam, Vakshyaami kathamaya -tey tadadya chaamarechutey/Shlaagha eva hi veeraanam Daanaacchaapt samaagamah, Na badhaakaari yadyaanam tadanga Balavat smrutam/*

(Brahmanaachaarya! How could I deny any body requesting me for a favour! And if that Supreme Deva asked me for a charity, then what else would be the alternative! While Parameswara received the fruits of Vrataas, Upavaasaas, and so on from one and all, and if that Parameswara himself asked a boon from me, could there be a greater fortune to me! When even an ordinary person approached me for a favour, then

too that could not be denied by a King; then when Narayana himself asked for it, could such an opportunity presented itself, this chance could never indeed be missed. Even if there are difficulties in executing a charity, the value of charity would get multiplied and ‘Veera purushaas’ would never deter from performing the deed) Having said the above, Bali asked Shukraachaarya:

*Yatagjnaatwaa Munisreshtha!Daanavighna karenamey, Naiva Bhavyam Jagannaatheey Govidey samupastitheey!*

( By understanding the above, Munisreshtha! Please do not create ‘Daana Vighnaas’ or hurdles in the execution of the Charity!). As Vamana Deva arrived at the Yagna shaala, Bali welcomed him, offered ‘Arghya’, ‘Aasana’, Puja and offered him limitless gold, jewellery, elephants, horses, cows, women, clothes, bunches of villages or townships or whatever would be his wish! Vamana Deva replied smilingly:

*Mamagnisharananarthaaya dehi Rajan Padatrayam, Suvarnagraamaratnaadi tadarthibhyah pradeeyataam/*

(Raja! Please provide to me three feet of land to enable me to set up an Agni- Shaala). Bali said that after all three feet would be nothing as he could ask for a lakh of feet which could be given away, but Vamana Deva replied that he was indeed satisfied with that much of Bhumi and if the King were to offer more he might as well provide to the other needy! Bali Chakravarti readily agreed not understanding the implication and as the deed of Daana was being executed and Vamana Deva extended his hand to the King and expanded his Vamana Rupa gradually immediately:

*Sarva Devamayam rupam darshayaamaasa tatksanaat/ Chandra Suryoutu nayaney dyouh shirascharanou Kshitih, Paadaangulyah Pishaachaastu Hastaangulya –scha Gruhakaah/ Vishvedevaascha jaanusthaa janghey Saadhyaah Surottamaah, Yakshaa naksheshu sambhuta rekhaapsaraastathaa/ Drushtirruksaanya seshaani keshaah Suryamshvah Prabhoh, Taarakaa romakupaani romeshu cha Maharshayah/ Baahavo vidishatasya Dishaa Shrotrey Mahatmanah, Ashvinou Shravaney tasya naasaa Vayurmahaatmanah/ Prasadey Chandramaa Devo Mano Dharmah samaashritah, Satyasyaabhavad Vaani Jihvaa Devi Saraswati/ Greevaarditirdeva mataa Vidyaastadvalayastathaa, Swargadwaaramabhunmaitrah twashtaa Pushaa cha vai bhruvou/ Mukhe Vaishvaanarschaascha vrushanou tu Prajaapatih, Hridayamcha Param Brahma Pumstvam vai Kashapo Munih/ Prushthesya Vasavo Devaa Marutah Sarva saandhishu, Vakshashaley tathaa Rudro Dharryachaasya Mahaarnavah/ Udarey chaasya Gandharvaa Marutascha Mahaabalaah, Lakshmirmedhaa Dhrutih Kaantih Sarv Vidyaascha vai Katih/ Sarvajyoteesham Yaaneeha Tapascha Paramam mahat, Tasya Devaadhi Devasya tejah prodbhutamuttamam/ Tanou Kukshishu Vedaascha jaanuni cha Mahaamakhaah, Ishtayah pashavaschaasya Dwujaanaam cheshtitaanicha/ Tasya Devamayam rupam drushtaa Vishnormahaatmanah, Upasarpanti tey Daityaah patangaa iva paavaakam/ Chakshurastu Mahaa Daityaah Paadaangushtham gruheetavaan, Dantaabhyaam tasya vai greevaa mangushtheynaahana dharih/ Prathamya Sarvaansuraan Paadahastathalairvibhuh, Krutwaa Rupam Mahaakaayam Samjahaaraashu Modineem/ Tasya Vikramato Bhumim Chandraadityaou stanaantarey, Nabho Vikramamaanasya sakthidesho stitathaarvibhou/Param Vikramaanasya jaanumuley Prabhaakarou, Vishnoraastaam sthitasyaitow Devapaalana jkarmani/ Jitwaa Lokatrayam taamscha hatwaachaasura pungavaan, Purandaraaya Trailokyam dadou Vishnururukramah/*

(Instantly, Vamana Murti displayed his Virat Swarupa: Chandra and Surya were his two Eyes, Shy was his head, Prithvi his feet, Pishachaas were his foot-fingers, Gruhyakaas were his hand fingers, Vishwa Deva Ganaas were in his jaanus /knees, Sadhyas were his janghaas, Yakshaas were his nails, Apsarsaas were his palm lines, Nakshatras were his Eye sight, Surya kiranass were his hairs, Stars were his body hairs,

Maharshiganaas were in the hair roots, Vidishas were his hands, Dishas were his ears, Ashwini Kumars were his faculty of hearing, Vayu was his nose, Chandra Deva was his joking faculty, Dharma Deva was his thinking capacity, Satya was his voice and Saraswati was his tongue, Deva Mata Aditi was his neck, Vidya was his valiyas or long poles; Pushas were his eye brows, Swarga dwar was his anus, Vaishvanara his face, Prajapati his vrushanaas, Param Brahma was his heart, Kashyapa Muni was his Pumstwa, Vasu Devata was his back, Marutganaas were his Sandhis, Rudra was his Vakshasthala, Mahaarnavaa was his Dhairya, Gangharvas were in his stomach; Lakshmi, Medha, Dhruti, Kaanti and all Vidyaas were in his 'Kati Pradesha'; the luster and radiance in the total Universe as also the Tapo teja or the power of meditation was the reflection of the magnificence of Natayana; Vedas and Scriptures and the huge Yagnaas and the Sacred Deeds of the Virtuous like Maharshis and Brahmanas were all inside in his 'kukshi' or belly. On viewing the Paramatma's 'Virat Swarupa', the so called 'Mahaasuraas' referred to earlier in ignorance by Chakravarti Bali before Prahlada's curse to him got burnt off like flies before a gigantic outbreak of Fire! Having thus occupied the Universe in totality including the sub-terrain Sapta Paatalaas, Vamana Deva stated that since Bali took the water in his hand and donated the THREE FEET of Land, and blessed him to be the King of the Sapta Paatalaas and granted him long life till the end of Manvantara of the on-going Vaiswata Manu. He also blessed Bali that all the 'Homa Phalas' at the time of Shraddhas to be performed even by Brahmanas, besides incomplete and defective Vratas, Agni Kaaryaas without ghee, and Kusha grass roots as also the daanas without detachment would belong to Bali and his followers.

*Ityetat kathitam asya Vishnor mahatmyamutthamam, Shrunuyadyo Vamanasya Sarva Paapaih  
pramuchyate/ Bali Prahlada samvaadam mantritam Bali Shakrayo, Baleyrvishnoscha charitam ye  
smarishyanti Maanavaah/ Naadhayo Vyadhyestesham na cha Mohaakulam Manah, Chuturaajye nijam  
Rajyamishtha- praptim Viyogawaan/ Samaapnoti Mahabhaaga Narah shrutwa kathaamimaam/  
Brahmano Vedamaapnoti Kshatriyo Jayatey Mahim, Vaishyo Dhana Samruddim cha Shudrah  
Sukhamaampunuyaat, Vaamanasya Matmyam shrunvan Paapaih pramuchyate/*

(Whosoever hears of this narration of Vamana Charitra and Mahatmya would have no 'Adhi-Vyadhis' or external and internal problems and be freed from sins; Brahmanas would attain Veda Prapti, Kshatriyas of Victories, Vaishyas of Dhana Samruddhi and Shudras enjoy happiness; As they read or hear of Prahlada-Bali Samvada or of Bali and Vishnu Charitra, one would avoid situations of Official hindrances and achieve the desired goals of life.)

#### Vamana Deva leaves Rasaatala for Brahma Loka and Brahma's worship to Vishnu

After suppressing Bali Chakravarti and restricting him only to the Patala Lokaas and reinstating Indra and all other Devas to their erstwhile positions, a highly pleased Bhagavan Vishnu discarded his Vamana Swarupa and flew to Brahmaloaka by his Garuda Vaahana. As Brahma desired Vishnu to display his Virat Swarupa measuring ten thousand yojanas of elevation and an equal width, Brahma was overjoyed and could not but break into ecstasy and acclaimed the Virat Purusha as follows:

*Om Namastey Devadhi Deva Vaasudeva Eka shringa Bahurupa Vrishaakapey Bhuta bhaavana  
Suraasura vrisha Suraasura Mathana Peetavaasah Srinivaasa Asuranirmaanta Amita nirmita Kapila  
Mahaakapilka Vishvaksena Naraayana/ Dhruvadhwaaja Satyadhwaaja Khadgadhwaja Taaladhwaaja  
Vaikuntha Purushottama Varenya Vishno Aparajita Jaya Jayanta Vijaya Kritaavarta Mahaadeva  
Anaadey Ananta Aadyaanta madhya nidhana Puranjaya Dhanaanajaya Shuchishrava Prushnigarbha/  
Kamala garbha Kamalaalayataaksha Shripatey Vishnu mula Mulaadhivaasa Dharmaadhivaasa  
Dharmavaasa Dharmaadhyaksha Prajaadhyaksha Gadaadhara Shridhara Shrutidhara  
Vanamaalaadhara Lakshmidhara Dharanidhara Padmanaabha/ Virinchey Aarshtishena Mahaasena  
Senaadhyasha Purushtuta Bahukalpa Mahaakalpa Kalpanaamukha Aniruddha Sarvaga Sarvaatman*

*Dwadashaatmaka Suryaatmaka Somaatmaka Kaalaatmaka Vyomaatmaka Bhutaatmaka/ Rasaatmaka Paramatman Sanaatana Munjakesha Harikesha Gudaakesha Keshava Nila Sukshma Sthula Peetha Rakta Shweta Shwetaadhivaasa Raktaambara Priya Preetikara Preetivaasa Hamsa Nilavaasa Seera -dhwaja Sarvalokaadhivaasa/ Kushoshaya Adhokshaja Govinda Janaardana Madhusudana Vamana namastey/ Sahasra sheersoshi Sahasradrugasi Sahasra paadosi twam Kamalosi Mahaa Purushosi Sahasra Baahurasi Sasramurtirasi twaam Devaah Praahum Sahasra Vadanam tey Namastey/Om Namastey Vishwadevesha Vishwabhu Vishwaatmaka Vishwarupa Vishwa sambhava twatto Vishwamidam bhavad Brahmaanaastwan mukhebhuyobhavan Kshatriyaa doh Sambhutaah Urugmaad Vishobhaan Shudraascharana Kamalebhyah/ Naabhyaa Bhavatonta- rikshamajaayata Indraagni Vakrato netraad bhaanurabhunmanasah Shashaankah Aham Prasaadajastwa krodhaat Traimbakah Praanaajjaato bhavato maatarishvaa Shiraso dyuora –jaayata netraadi disho bhuriyam charanaadbhuta Shrotrodbhavaa disho bhavatah Swayambho Nakshatraasteyjodbhavaah/Murtayaschaaamrutayascha Sarvey twattaha Samudbhutaah/ Ato Vishwaatmakosi Om Namastey Pushpahaasosi Mahaahaasosi paramosi Omkaarosi Vashatkaa -rosi Swaahaakaaros Aoushatkaarosi Swadhaakaaros Vedamayosi Tirthamayosi Yajamaana mayosi/ Yajnamamayosi Sarvbadhaataasi Yagnabhoktaasi Shukradhaataasi Bhurda Bhuarda Swarda Swarnada goda Amritadoseeti/ Om Brahmaadirasi Brahmamayosi Yajnosi Vedakaamosi Vedyosi Yajna dhaaros Mahaameenos Mahaasevaasi MahaashiraaAsi/ Nrukesaryasi Hotaasi Homyosi Havyosi Huyamaanosi Hayamedhosi Potaasi Paayayitaasi Putosi Pujoyi Daataasi Hanyamaanosi Hriyamaanosi Hartyaaseeti Om/ Neetarasi Netaasi Agneyaasi Vishwathaamaasi Shrubhadosi Dhruvosi Aaraneyosi/ Dhyaanosi Dhyeyosi Sheyosi Jnaanosi Yashtaasi Daanosi Bhumaasi Yeekshesi Brahmaasi Hotaasi Udgaataasi Gatimataam Gatirasi Jnaaninaam Jnaanamasi Yoginaam Yogosi Mokshigaaminaam Mokshosi Shreemataam Shrirasi Guhyosi Paataasi Paramasi/ Somei Suryosi Deekshaasi Dakshinaasi Narosi Trinayanosi Mahaanayanosi Aditya prabhavosi Surothamosi Shuchirasi Shukrosi Nabhosi Nabhasyosi Ishtosi Urjosi Sahosi Sahasyosi Taposi Tapasyosi Madhurasi/Maadhavosi Kaalosi Sankramosi Vikramosi Paraakramosi Ashyagreevosi Mahaamedhosi Shankarosi Hreeshwarosi Shambhuras Brahmeysoshi Suryosi Mitraavarunosi Praagvamshakaayosi Bhutaadirasi Mahaabhutesi Urthwakarmaasi Kartaasi Sarvapaapa vimochanaasi Trivikramosi Om Namastey/*

( Om Namastey Devaadhideva, Vaasudeva, Ekashringa, Bahurupa, Vrishaakapey, Bhutabhaavana, Suraasura Sreshtha, Devaasura mathana kaara Peetavastra dhaari, Srinivasa, Asuranirmitaanta, Amita nirmita, Kapila, Mahaa Kapila, Vishvaksena, Narayana, Dhruvadhwaaja, Satyadhwaaja, Khadgadhwaja, Taala Dhwaja, Vaikuntha, Prushottama, Varenya, Vishno, Aparaaajita, Jaya, Jayanta, Vijaya, Krutaavarta, Mahadeva, Anaadey, Ananta, Aadyanta, Madhyanidhana, Puranjaya, Dhananjaya, Shuchisrava, Prushnigarbha, Kamalagarbha, Kamalaayataaksha, Shripatey, Vishnu mula, Mulaadhivaasa, Dharmaadhivaasa, Dharmavaasa, Dharmaadhyaksha, Prajaadhyaksha, Gadaadhara, Shridhara, Shrutidhara, Vanamaalaadhara, Lakshmidhara, Dharanidhara, Padmanaabha, Virinchey, Aashtishena, Mahasena, Senaadhyaksha, Purushtuta, Bahukalpa, Mahakalpa, Kalpanaamukha, Aniduddha, Sarvaga, Sarvaatman, Dwadashaatmaka, Suryaatmaka, Somaatmaka, Kaalaatmaka, Vyomaatmaka, Bhutaatmaka, Rasaatmaka, Paramaatman, Sanaatana, Munjakesha, Harikesha Gudaakesha, Keshava, Nila, Sthula, Sukshma, Peeta, Rakta, Shweta, Shwetaadhivaasa, Raktaambarapriya, Preetikara, Preetivaasa, Hamsa, Nilavaasa, Seeradhwaaja, Sarvalokaadhivaasa, Kusheshaya, Adokshaja, Govinda, Janaardana, Madhusudana, Vaamana, Sahsraseersha, Sahasranetra, Sahasrapaad, Kamala, Maha Purusha, Sahasrabaahu, Sahasra Murti, Sahasravadana as addressed by Devas, Om Vishwadevesha, Vishwabhu, Vishyatmaka, Vishwarupa, Vishwa Sambhava, Vishvotpannakaari! From your face were born Brahmanas, Kshatriyas from your hands, Vaishyas from both of your thighs, Sudraas from your feet. Swayambho! From your navel emerged Antariksha or Sky, from your face came Agni and Indra, Surya from your eyes, Chandra from your mind, Brahma from your self Bhagavan! From your anger appeared Trinetra Shankara, Vayu Deva from your life / existence, from your head was materialised Swargaloka, Dishaas or Directions from your ears, the Stars from your brightness, and the entire Murta or Amurta ( Seen and Unseen) Beings were created by You Vishwaatmaka! You are Pushpahaasa, Mahaa

haasa,,Parama, Omkaara, Vashat –kaara, Swaahaakaara, Aoushatkaara,Swadhaa kaara,Veda maya, Tirthamaya, Yajamaanamaya, Yajnamaya, Sarvadhaata, Yajna bhoktaa, Shukradaataa, Bhurda, Bhuvarda, Swarda, Swarnada, Goda, Amritada; Om You are Brahmaadi, Brahmamaya, Yajna, Vedakaama, Vedya, Yajnadhara, Mahaa Meena, Mahaa sena, Mahaa Shira, Nrukesari, Hota, Homya, Havya, Huyamaana, Hayamedha, Potaa, Paavayitaa, Puta, Pujya, daataa, Hanyamaana, Hriyamaana and Hartaa! You are Niti, Netaa, Agnya, Vishwadhaama, Shubhaanda, Dhruva, Aaraneya, Dhyaana, Dhyeya, Jneya, Jnaana, Yashtaa, Daana, Bhumaa, Ikshya, Braham, Hota, Udgaataa, Gati for Gatimaanaas, Jnaana for Jneyaas, Yoga for Yogis, Moksha to Mokshagamis, Shri to Shrimans, Guhya, Paataa and Parama. You are Soma, Surya, Deekshaa, Dakshina, Nara,Trinayana, Mahaanayana, Adityaprabhava, Surottama, Shuchi, Shukra, Nabha, Nabhasya, Isha, Urja, Saha, Sahasya, Tapa, Tapasya, Madhu , Madhava, kaala, Sankrama, Vikrama, Paraakrama, Ashyagreeva, Mahameda, Shankara, Harishwara, Shambh, Brahmesha, Surya, Mitraavaruna, Praagvamshakaaya, Bhutaadi, Mahaabhuta, Urthwakarmaa, Kartaa, Sarva PaapaVimochana, and Om Trivikrama)! As Vishnu Deva was pleased by the ‘Stuti’ of Brahma Deva, the formed asked Brahma to bless him with a boon and Brahma desired that Vishnu should reside in Brahmaloaka in the Swarupa of Brihad Vamana and as Vishnu bestowed the boon, there had been daily worships to Vamana Deva, enjoined by all the Devas, while Apsaras danced with ecstasy, Gandharvas praised the Vamana Deva with soulful and tuneful hymns, Vidyadharaas played memorable instrumental extravaganzas, and Asuras and Siddhas displayed group sessions of frenzied singings!

Bali Daanava in Patala Lokas and worship to Maha Vamana (Sudarshana Stuti and Prahlada’s preaching to King Bali included)

As Vamana Deva who occupied the totality of the Universe pursuant to the illustrious charity of mere Three Feet by Bali Chakravarti, Maha Vamana Murti bestowed the boon of long life to King Bali to administer the Sapta Lokas beneath the Bhumi and Oceans viz. Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Talaatala, Mahatala, Rasaatala and Paataalas. As Vishvakarma constructed a luxurious palace and Bilwa Swarga of the Underworld with no comforts and desires unfulfilled, the cozy life to the hilt, Bali was fully contented with his family and Praja. One day suddenly, the Sudarshana Chakra of Vaikuntha made its appearance and King Bali prostrated before the Chakra and reverentially prayed to it as follows:

*Namasyaami Hareshchakram Daityachakra vidaaranam, Sahasaamshum Sdahasrtaabham Sahasraaram Sunirmalam/ Namasyaami Hareshchakram yasya naabhyaam Pitaamahah, Tundey Trishula dhruk Sharva Aaraamuley Mahaadrayah/ Aareshu smamstitaa Devaah Sendraah Saarkaah Sapaavakaah, Javey yasya sthito Vaayuraapognih Prithivi nabhah/ Aarapraateshu Jeemutaah Soudaaminuruksha taarakaah, Baahyato Muniyo yasya Baalakhilyaadayashathaa/ Tamaayudhavaram Vandey Vaasudevasya Bhaktitah, Yaney Paapam Sharirottham Vaagjam Manasamevacha/ Tanmey dahaswa Deeptaamsho Vishnoschakra Sudarshana, Yanmo Kulodbhavam Paapam Paitrakam Maatrakam tathaa/ Tanmey Haraswa gtarasaa Namastey Achutaayudha, Aadhayo mama nashyantu Vyaadhayo hyaantui Samkshayam/ Iktevamuktwa matimaan Samabhyacchaartha B haktitah, Samsmafran Pundareekaasham Sarva Paapa pranaashanam/ Pujitam Balinaa Chakram krutwaa Nistejasosuraan, Nischakraamaatha Paataalaad vishuvey Dakshiney Muney/ Sudarshaney nirgatey tu Balirviklabvataam gatah, Paramaapadam praapya sasmaara Swa Pitaamaham/*

(My salutations to Vishnu Sudarshana Chakra which smashes the multitudes of Daitya enemies by its endless and most powerful sparkles of extraordinary rays with thousands of spokes and compartments within. I pray most reverentially to the Chakra in whose axis exists Brahma, its periphery resides Trishladhaari Maha Deva, spoke-ends are embellished with mammoth Mountains, inside the compartments are Indra, Surya, Agni, and other Devaas, its speed and velocity likened to Vayu Deva, and its other inhabitants are Varuna, Agni, Bhumi, and Akaasha; its compartment ends are clouds, Vidyut or Electricity, Nakshatraas, etc and in the periphery of the Chakra Bakakhilyas and Munis. May the Chakra

destroy greatest sins of the devotees on account of physical, vocal, and antarika or mind-born blemishes; may the Chakra punch and blow the sins of Vamsa Vaasis of the present and previous generations! As Bali extolled the Chakra and visioned it travelling away southwards, he wondered as to what was the need for its visit to the Bilwa Swarga, prayed to Bhagavan Vamana and remembered his grand father to ascertain the forebodings of the surprise appearance of the Sudarshana). Bhakta Prahlada met the King at once and congratulated Bali at the timely, prognostic and propitious appearance of Sudarshan to remind him and his 'Praja' about the need and urgency for worshipping Bhagavan Vishnu and his incarnation as Vamana Deva!

Prahlaada's exhortation to King Bali and his Subjects: Prahlada addressed the King and through him his entire population of Pataala Lokas as follows:

*Bhavajaladhigataanaam Dwandwavaataa hataanaam Suta duhitru kalatra traana bhaaraarditaanaam, Vishamavishayatoye Majjataama -plavaanaam bhavati sharanameko Vishnupoto Naraayaam/ Ye samshritaa Harimanantamanaadi –madhyam Naaraayanam Suragurum Shubhadam Varennyam, Shuddham Khagendragamanam Kamalaalyesham tey Dharmaraaja karanam na vishanti Dheeraah/ Swapurushamabhiveekshya Paashahastam, Vadati Yamah kila tasya karnamuley, Parihara Madhusudana prapannaan Prabhurahamanya nrunaam na Vaishnavaanaam/ Tathaanyaduttam Narasattamena Ikshvaakunaa Bhaktiyutena nyunam, Ye Vishnu Bhaktaah Purushaah Pruthivyaam Yamasya tey nirvishayaa bhavanti/ Saa jihvaa yaa Harim stutoti tacchhit yattadarpitam, Taaveva kevalam Shlaaghyou yow tatpujaakraou Karou/ Nunam na tou karou proktou Vriksha shaakaagrappallavou, Na yow Pujayatum shaktou Haripaadaambuja dwayam/ Nyunam tat kantha shaalookamathavaa prati jihvaka, Rogovaanyo na saa jihvaa yaana vakti Hareygunaan/ Shochaniyam sabandhu -naam Jeevannapi mruto Narah, Yah Paada pankajam Vishnorna pujayati Bhaktitah/ Ye Naraa Vaasudevasya satatampujaney rataah, Mritaa api na shocchastey Satyam Satyam mayoditam/ Shareeram Maanasam Vaagjam Mritaamurtam charaacharam, Drushyam sprushyamadrushyam cha tatsarvam Keshavaatmakam/ Ye naarchitohi Bhgavaan Chaturthaa vai Trivikramah, Tenaarchitaa na samdeho Lokaah saamara daanavaah/ Yathaa ratnaani jaladhera samkhye –yaani putraka, Tathaa gunaa hi Devasya twasamkhyataastu Chakrinah/ Ye Shankha Chakra -abjakaram sa Shaarangingam Khagendra ketum Varadam Shriyah Patim, Samaashrayantey Bhavabheeti naashanam Samsaaragartena patanti tey punah/ Yeshaam Manasi Govindo Nivaasi Satatam Baley, Na tey paribhavam yaanti na Mrutyoruddijanti cha/ Devam shaarangadharam Vishnum ye praopannah paraayanam, Na teshaam Yamasaalokyam na cha tey Naakoukasah/ Na taam gatim praapruvanti Shruti Shastra Vishaaradaah, Vipraa Daanava shaardula Vishnu Bhaktaa vrajaanti yaam/Yaa Gatirdaithya shaardula hataanaam tu Mahaahavey, Tatodhikaam gatim yaanti Vishnu bhaktaa Narotthamaah/ Yaa Gatirdharma sheelaanaam Saathvikaanaam Mahaatmanaam, Saa Gatirditaa Daitya Bhagavatsevinaamapi/ Sarvaavaasam Vaasudevam Sukshmamavyakta Vighram, Pravishaanti Mahaatmaanam tad Bhaktaa naanyachetasah/ Ananya manaso Bhakatyaa ye Namasyaanti Keshavam, Shuchayastey Mahaatmaanasteertha bhutaa Bhavanti tey/ Gacchhan tishthan swapancha jaagrut pibannashwanna bheekshanashah, Dhyaanam Naraayanam yastu na tonyosti Punya bhaak, Vaikuntham khadga parashum bhava- bandha samucchidam/Pranipatya Yathaanyaayam Samsaarey na punarbhavet, Kshetreshu vasatey nithyam kreedaannaasteymita dyutih/ Aaseenah Sarvadeheshu Karmabhirna sa badhyatey, Yeshaam Vishnum Priyo nityam tey Vishnroh Satatam Priyaah/ Na tey punah sambhavanti tad Bhaktaastatparaayanaah, Dhyaayed Damodaram yastu Bhakti namrorchayet vaa/ Na sa Samsaara pankesmin majjatey Daanaveshwara, Kalyamutthaaya ye Bhaktyaa smaranti Madhusudanam, Stuvantyapyabhi shrinvanti Durgaanyati taranti tey/ Yeshaam Chakra gadaa paanou Bhaktiravyabhichaarini, Tey Yaanti Niyatam sitaanam yatra Yogeshwaro Harih/ Vishnu karma prasaktaanaa \Bhaktaanaam yaa paraagatih, Saa tu Janma sahaastrena na tapobhiravyaapyatey/ Kimjapyestasya Mantrarvaa kim Tapobhih kimaashramaih, Yasya naasti paraa bhaktih satatam Madhusudaney/ Vrithaa Yagnaa Vrithaa Vedaa Vrithaa daanam vrithaa shrutam, Vrithaa Tapascha Keertischa yo dweshti Madhusudanam/ Kim tasya bahubhir mantrair bhaktiryasya Janardaney, Namu Naraayaneti mantrah sarvaarthta saadhakah/ Vishnureva gatiryeshaam*

*krutasteshaam paraajayah, Yeshaamindeevaa shyaamo hridayastho Janardana/ Sarva maangala maangalyam Varennyam Varadam Prabhum, Naraayana Namaskrutya Sarva karmaani kaarayet/ Vishtayo vyatipaataascha ye nanye durneeti sambhavaah, tey naama smaranaad Vishno naasham yaanti Mahaasura/ Tirtha koti sahastraani Tirtha Kotishataanicha, Naraayana pramaanasya kalaam naarhanti shodasheem/ Prithivyaam yaani Tirthaani Punyaanyaya tanaani cha, Taani Sarvaanavaapnoti Vishnor naamaanu kirtanaat/ Praapnuvanti na taamllokaan vratino vaa Tapaswinah, Praapyantey ye tu Krishnasya Namaskaara parairnareyh/ Yopyanya Devaataa bhakto Midhyaarchayati Keshavam, Sopi gacchati Saadhunaam sthaanam Punyakritaam mahat/ Saatatyena Hrishikesham puja itwa tu Sumedhasah, Tey labhyantupavaasasya phalam naasyantra samshayah/ Satatam Shastra drushtena karmanaa Harimarchaya, Tatprasaadaat Paraam Siddhim Baley Praapsyasi shaashvatim/ Tanmanaabhava tadbhaktastadhyaji tam Namaskuru, Tamevaashritya Devesham Sukham Praapyasi Putraka/ Aadyam hyanantamajaram Harimavyayam cha ye vai smarantya harahanruvara Bhuvissthaah, Sarvatragam Shubhadam Brahma mayam puraanam tey yaanti Vaishnavapadam dhruvamakshayanacha/ Ye Maanavaa Vigataraaga paraaparagjnaa Naraayanam Suragurum satatam smaranti, Tey Dhouta paanduraputaa iva Raaja hamsaah Samsaara Saagara jalas ya taranti paaram/ Dhyayanti ye satatam achyutameeshitaaram Nishkalmasham Pravara Padma dalaayataaksham, Dhyaanena tena hata kilimbasha Veda naastey Maatuh Payodhara rasam na punah pibanti/ Ye Kirtayanti Varadam Vara Padma –naabham Shankaabja chakra vara chaapa gadaa si hastam, Padmaalayaavadana Pankaja shatpadaakhyam nyunam praayanti sadanam Madhughaatinastey/ Shrunvanti ye Bhaktiparaa Manushyaah Samkeertyamaanam Bhagavantamaadyam, Tey Mukta paapaah sukhino bhavanti yathaamruta praashana tarpitaastu/ Tasmaad Dhyaanam smaranam keertanam vaa Namnaam Shravanam pathataam Sajjanaanaam, Kaaryam Vishnoh Shraddhaanairmanushyaih Pujaatulyam tat Prashamsanti Devaah/ Baahyaistathaantah Karanairaviklavairyoh naarchayet Keshavameeshitaaram, Pushpaischa Patrairjala pallavaadhibhi nyunam sa mushto Vidhitaskarena/*

( Danava Sreshtha! To those persons who are all drawn into the depths of Samsara Samudra, buffeted by mighty and cruel winds of perils at every mode of life carrying the heavy loads of wife, children and dependents and exposed to daily hazards and threats, the only support and relief is the Unique Ship of Vishnu Bhagavan! He is devoid of a beginning, midway or termination providing auspicious encouragement to one and all who would approach him with faith and devotion. He is an epitome of benevolence and compassion, the Prime Source of Magnanimity and Radiance, Garuda vaahana, Lakshmikanta, Pavitra, Deva Guru, Narayana and the Ultimate Point of Refuge far above the Rule of Yama Dharma Raja, who swears that he is the Administrator of all Beings but certainly not for Vaishnava Bhaktaas! Also, the God of Death confirms that those tongues which extol Hari, those sincere hearts which are absorbed in the meditation of Shri Hari, and those hands which are engaged in performing worship to Hari are never in the purview of Dharma Raja! Those hands which are devoid of worship of Hari are as good as handleless likened to useless and dried up leaves of a tree and those ‘jihvas’ without describing and cherishing the enormous qualities of Hari are just guttural gruffs like the dead wood trunk of a desiccated tree! Those who are not engaged in Hari Seva are as good as dead and those who are committed to the devotion are alive even if dead and continue to be celebrities! For, the totality of physical, mental, psychological and action- reaction impulses are all Vishnu Swarupas; and the Jangama-Sthaavara- Drushya- Sprushya- Murta and Amurta Elements are all indeed of Vishnu Swarupas! Those Suraasura / Manavas who are devoted to Trivikrama Bhagavan in all the four ways of Stuti-Dhyana- Puja and Manana would have performed worship to the whole Universe. There are as many unaccountable ‘Rathnaas’ (jewels) in the depths of Oceans as the Parama gunaas and Rupaas or the countless features and forms of Narayana Bhagavan! But to anchor one’s imagination about that Supreme Being, one could conjecture that the Virat Swarupa of Maha Vamana possesses Shankha, Chakra, Kamala and Sharanga Dhanush in his four arms and is also Garudadhwaaja, Bhava Bheeti Vinashaka or the Destroyer of all fears and troubles, Varada or the Provider of boons, Lakshmi Pati and the Saviour of Deep Troubles. Those who keep Govinda in his heart and Soul is never rejected in life nor is haunted by Mrityu and even experience Naraka. Brahmanas who are well versed with Vedas and Shastras are not recognised as well as

Vishnu Bhaktaas; similarly persons who die in battles and become eligible to Veera Swarga are not superior to Vishnu Bhaktaas. Those who are proven Mahatmas of extraordinary piety and virtue are indeed not rated better than Vishnu Bhaktaas! In fact such Bhaktas get readily absorbed into the Physique of Sarvavaasa, Sukshma, Avyakta, Ananta, Tirtha Swarupa Vaasudeva! There is no parallel to a person who takes the name and fame of Govinda while walking, standing, sitting, sleeping, eating and awake who is esteemed superior to any body else! As one worships in the prescribed manner that Vaikuntha Deva, he or she would indeed accomplish Moksha and would not be subject to rebirth! Even being in Samsaara, a typical Krishna Bhakta is not greatly influenced in his normal profession, since he or she is completely in love with Bhagavan and vice-versa. Those who wake up in the morning and surrender to Narayana every day and keeps the consciousness aligned to the latter is indeed unaffected by mundane affairs or Samsara bandhanaas. As the Bhakta is fully dedicated to Chakra-Gadaadhaari Govinda, that person would indeed carve a niche far ahead of Yogeshwaras for thousand previous lives. Why should persons waste precious time of their lives with Yagnas, Vedas, daanaas, jnaana, Tapas and Kirti! Why should one learn so many Mantras and clutter their minds with mental confusion instead of merely reciting the simplest and unique Maha Mantra of Om Namoh Narayanaaya! Could there be a defeat in one's life if only that person recites always recite the MahaMantra and firmly establish the Swarupa of that Mangala Murti, Varenya, Varadaprada prabhu Narayana! Even the worst evils like Vishtis, Vyaktipaataas, and other physical and mental aberrations fall flat and get smashed with Narayana Smarana which is equivalent to the sevas of crores of Tirthaas! Persons desirous of organising mammoth Bhagavat Sevas for securing 'Kirti' and public recognition as also for displaying their wealth and might end up with nothing tangible whereas a modest, quiet and sincere appeal to Janardana of an individual with total submission to Hrishikesh is by far the most effective and fulfilling! Therefore King Bali! Do perform those prescribed deeds of virtue and worship Hari always. Do get fully engaged in the service of that Saadya, Ananta, Ajara, Sarvatragaami Shubhadaataa, Brahmanmaya, Purana, Avyaya Hari day and night like the illustrious Dhruva who was blessed with an Eternal Position among Vaishnava Padaas! That ought to be the way to Narayana. Do always recite hymns of Madhusudana. Do always execute Dhyana, Smarana, Keertana, Paatha, Naama Shrivana, and Manana. Those who regulate their Swasthya- Baahya-Aantarika Indriyas or Physical Parts and worship Keshava with Pushpa- Patra-Jala- and Pallavaas always avoid the onslaughts of Vidhi Rupa Taskaraas or Fate-determined robbers!)

#### Vamana Purana Vaachana, Shrivana, Pathana Phala Shruti

Maharshi Pulastya who narrated Vamana Purana to Brahmarshi Narada assured that the Purana's Kathana and Vaachana ( recitation) would bestow lofty fame, Bhakti and Vishnu Loka Praapti. The Purana Shraavana-Shrivana would cleanse the body and soul of the Presenter and the Listener just as the Sacred Ganagaajala Snaana. The Purana Shrivana assures that the person concerned and his / her clan would be shielded against physical ailments and 'Abhichara Karma Prayogaas' like Maarana, Mohana, Uchhaatanaadi base-categories of Applications by Evil and Unscrupulous and Jealous persons. Sincere and virtuous human beings taking interest in the Purana would be freed from their accounts of Sins and upgrade their accounts of Punya to the extent of performing Ashwamedha Yagna and Daanaas of Gold, Bhumi, Ashwa, Gou, Ratha and even Elephants. Even the Shrivana of a Chapter even of Vamana Purana would attain purity of mind and clarity of thought. Navagraha Shanti is assured to the person reading or expaining the meaning and purport of even portions of the Purana. Worship of Surya- Chandra Eclipse times and Daanas especially Anna Daanaas and Brahmana Sevas would be highly beneficial while reciting the Purana. But care must be taken not to recite the contents of the Purana to non-believers, Aachara heena Vyaaktis, and confirmed arguers and hecklers. Those who read or listen to the Purana must first assume the best possible disposition of mind and attitude by invoking Narayana with devotion and then only proceed to the Pathana and Manana of this Sacred Account of the Avatara of Vamana Deva as it also firmly establishes the Advaita Siddhanta of the Uniqueness and Oneness of Bhagavan Vishnu and Parama Shiva!

Namo Namah Kaarana Vamanaaya Narayanaamita Vikramaaya  
Shri Shankha Chakraasi Gadaadharaaya Namostu tasmai Purushottamaaya/

### Sins and Remedies- Observance of Vamana Vratha as cures and preventives

A Brahmana of high virtues was travelling to Mathura on foot through dense, lonely and frightening forest and saw five 'Prethas' or skeleton-like goblin figures making fearful sounds standing on way, saying that they were hungry and thirsty and would like to satisfy themselves with the Brahmana's flesh and blood. Unnerved by the scene, the Brave Brahmana enquired of the Five of them to tell about them! The Prethas said that they were formed likewise as a result of curses and that their names respectively were: Paryushith (who ate fresh food but gave rotten food to others), Suucheemukh (who pointed and tempted many Brahmanas with attractive food but gave none), Sheeghra (who asked Brahmanas to come quickly but denied food) Rodhak (who prevented Brahmanas and ate all by himself) and Lekhak (who kept an account of those who were needy but did nothing to help them). These Prethas eat and reside in such households where there is no cleanness, no worship or Mantras of Devas, no respect for Gurus, womanisers, unkept houses devoid of order or regulation, where there is Apathra Daan or charity to undeserving, where good Brahmanas are insulted, evil deeds are done, etc. The virtuous Brahmana told the Prethas that no person could ever become a Pretha if persons observed Vrathas like Ekarathra, Trirathra, and Chandrayanas; or those who respectfully offer good food to the Respectable persons or Sanyasins; those who perform 'Agni homams' in the house; those who show consideration to widows, helpless and needy; those who perform regular pujas, care and respect for parents and elders and such acts of goodness. The Brahmana also affirmed that those who executed Shraddhas on Shukla Chaturthis especially Tuesdays; who did not get irritated often, be not jealous, be forgiving, be venerable to Brahmanas, learned, visited Tirthas, Holy Rivers, Pilgrim Centers, Temples and over all led a normally good life could never become Prethas. On the hand, when a Brahmana dies with food provided by low class person; when a Grihasti (house holder) indulges in extramarital relations; when a person robs donations to Devas, Gurus, and Brahmanas; when a person acquires bridal money in weddings; when a person leaves or cheats parents, brothers, sisters or children; when a person disables those to perform Yajnas or enable those who should not; if a person kills or abets killing of another person or a cow; a thankless person; a smuggler or dealer of land, women, money and material; an atheist, an anti religion and worst of all a person who has committed Five Mahapathakas have all qualified to turn into Prethas! To safeguard any eventuality of becoming a Pretha, Maharshi Vasishtha prescribed a Vamana Deva Vratha to the illustrious King Mandhata. The best day for 'Snan' (bath), 'Daan' (Charity) and 'Havan' is Bhadrapada Sukla Paksha Dwadasi (preferably coinciding with Shravana Nakshatra). After 'Sangama' snan, a devotee needs to give away a 'Kalasha' and charity of a Kapila cow. The Vratha aims at prevention of taking birth into a domonaic family and to ensure 'Swarga Nivas' after demise. At the same time the person performing the Vrath would be aiming at prevention of 'Punarjanma' or further birthlessness and achievement of Moksha. Thereafter a Ghata (Pot) with an Idol of Vamana Deva with cooked rice and accompaniments is to be presented along with an umbrella, footwear, a hand fan and a 'Kamandalu' or a vessel full of Ganga water be donated to a highly deserving Brahmana in the form of Vamana Deva Himself as per Mantras and prescribed manner; The relevant Mantras are:

*'Aagaccha Varadaantha Shripatheya madanugrahaath, Swarnopi nijaamshena Snaanametha dalam kuru (Aavaahanam)-Yatatvam Nakshatra rupena Dwadasyam Nabhasi Sthithaha, Tannakshatramaham Vandey Mano vaanchita siddhaye (Nakshatram)-Namah Kamalanaabhaaya Kamalaalaya Keshava, Kamurthem Sarvatho Vyaapi Naraayana Namosthutey ( Snaanam)-Sarvavyapi Jagadyoney Namha Sarvamaacyuta, Shravana dwadashiyogey Pujaam kruheetva Keshava (Puja)-Dhyupeyam Deva Devesha Shankachakra Gadadhara, Acyutaanantha Govinda Vaasu Deva Namosthutey (Dhupam)-Tejasa tava Lokaascha vidhutah santhi thevyaya, Twam hi Sarvagatham thejo Janaardana Namosthutey ( Deepam)-Adither garbhamaadhaya Vairochani shamaaya cha, Tribhiih kramajitaLoka Vaamanaaya Namosthutey*

*(Naivedyam)-Devathanaam Sambhavastvam hi Yoginaam Paraagathih, Jalashayi Jaadyoney Argham me Prathigruhnataam (Arghyam)-Havyabhuk Havya kartha tvam hota Havyaschameva cha, Sarva murtha Jagadyoney Namasthey Keshavaaya cheti Swaha (Homam)-Hiranyam annam thvam Deva Jalavastramayo Bhanaan, Chhatra daneyna preetho bhava Janaardana (Dakshina)-ParjanyoVarunah Suryah Salilam Keshavah Shivah, Agnimayo Vaishnavanah paapah harathu mevyayah ( Vamana Stuti)- Annam thvashta Yamognischa Paapam harathu mevyayah ( Karaka or Ghata Daanam)-Vamano Buddhi daathacha Dravyastho Vamanah Swayam, Vamanastharako dvaabhyam Vamanaya Namosthutey ( Yajamano)-Vamanah pratigruhyati Vamano me prayacchati, Vamanastharako Dwaabhyam Vamanaya Namoh Namah ( Dwija prathigrahe)-Kapilaangeshu thishthanthe Bhuvanaani Chaturdasha, Datva Kamadugdham Loka bhavanti saphalanrunaam ( Godaanam)-Namah Paapaachhidey tubhyam Devagarbha supujitha, maya visarjito Deva Snanam anyamalankuru ( Visarjanam)-Evam Vidvaamsthu Dwadashayam yo Narah Shraddavaanvithah, Yathra Tathra nabhasye thu krutva phalamaapnuyat /*

(Briefly stated the Puja Vidhaan or Procedure of Vamana Deva Vrata is as follows:

Hey Vamana Deva, kindly bless me by being seated: Avaahan or Welcom- I salute the Shravana Star on this Bhadrapada Sukla Dwadasi: Greeting to Nakshatra- Jalaswarup Narayana, my Greetings: Bath- Sarva Swarupa Achyuta, at this auspicious time, kindly accept my worship( Puja)-Govinda Vasudeva, please accept the Dhupa or scented incense (Dhup)-Janardana, do accept my illumination (Deepa)-Hey Vamadeva, having begotten of Adithi and conquered three lokas in one go, please agree to my food offering (Naivedya)- Narayana, you are Jalashayi, consider my offer of water to quench the thirst (Arghya)-Keshava, you are the Havya Kartha, Havya Bhoktha and Havya Swarupa, do accept my offering of Ghee in Agni (Homa)-You are food, gold, water and clothing; may I offer an umbrella and footwear as a token of my great devotion! (Dakshina)-You are the cloud, Varun, Sun, Water, Shiva Swarupa, Fire, Yama, Kubera and Anantha Deva; I am too insignificant to praise you (Stuti) - Keshava!Please destroy my sins (Ghata Daan);Vamana Deva! You are the performer, the action and the act (Yajananey)-Hey Vishnu; you are the Giver, the Taker and the Taken, Vamana Deva, my repeated greetings (Dwijapratigrahey)-Kapila Cow is considered as one of the Fourteen Worlds, may this Kamadhenu bless both the giver and taker (Go-daan)-Vamana Deva, I have completed this Vrata to the best of my capacity with full of inadequacies, do pardon me and help others in their tasks (Visarjan).As the Brahmana demonstrated the detailed procedure of the Vrata, the Prethas secured Mukti instantly. Whosoever reads or hears or atleast retains the text of the Puja Vidhan would never ever be afraid of the Prethas or Pisachas. If the Vrat is accomplished as instructed, the person concerned is sure to receive the blessings of Vamana Deva who had indeed conquered the Tri Lokas!

Vishnu Puja-‘Aparadha Prayaschyas’ (Correctives for misdeeds)

*‘Karmana Manasa Vaacha ye Paaparuchayo janaah, Aparadhagruhaasthey thu viparithaastu Sadhava / Ajnaanaacha pramadaaccha esham Praaptamayantaram, Praayasthittham dahet Savamaparadha malothitham /*

(Either due to ignorance or carelessness, quite a few ‘Aparaadhaas’ (blunders) are committed in the context of Vishnu’s worship; Corrective steps be taken to burn off all the sins.)

The examples of such blunders are using harsh language; wearing unclean, blue coloured and blood-mixed clothes; disrespect for Gurus and the learned; eating spoilt and inedible food; eating while in Puja, entering Temples and Sacred Places with footwear; Puja of Deities with prohibited flowers; puja in a condition of anger or lust or inebriated stage; Puja in darkness without light, etc. Puja in improper clothing could be corrected by fasts on one day, two days or three days, followed by bath and ‘Panchagavya’(or a mix of equal measure each of cow dung, cow urine, milk, ghee or butter and curd-all cow products) and finally food. Wearing of Blue dress should be preceded by aforesaid procedure plus Paajaapathya Vrata

including 'homam'. Insulting or abusing Gurus or Men of Elders must be compensated by Chandrayana Vrata or eating fistful of food in an increasing scale from one fist on Partham day to Purnami and again from fourteen fists to Amavasya on a decreasing scale! The blunder of eating inedible food or 'Abhaksha Bakshana' would attract the Corrective of Chandrayan Vrata, Prajaapathya and Go Daan and 'Annadaan' or food to anybody after sanctifying as Prasad to any Temple God / Goddess. The sins of Puja in an inebriated condition or wearing footwear in a Temple precinct should be treated with 'Panchagavya'. The indiscretions of performing Puja without flowers or Pushp Mala to Vishnu should be absolved by Mantroktak 'Panchamritha' to the Deity. 'Surapan' or far worse still, the performance of Vishnu Puja in an inebriated condition, the Brahmanas should execute four Chandrayan Vratas in one hundred and twenty days. The rest of the sins ranging from bad stomach with gas to romance or passion with women or worse still Stree Sangam attract light to heavy punishments as per one's own conscience since the nature of 'Paschattapas' (High sense of remorse) and the 'Aparadha Prayastischyas' are to be determined by the norms afore mentioned as per one's own conscience or the Guidelines laid. In any case, the hidden or unnoticed 'Aparadhas' must be warded off with the following steps viz. external and internal cleanliness, concentration, kirthan, recitation, shravanam ('hearing'), 'pathanam' (reading), 'mananam' (Retention), 'dhyanam' (meditation) and surrender.

### **Parashu Rama**

#### King Kaartaveeryarjuna and Parshu Raamavide Brahmanda Puraana- Pararashu Rama Tapasya :

The illustrious Incarnation of Bhagavan Vishnu as Bhargava Rama was the son of Jamadagni Muni and the grandson of the famed Bhrigu Maharshi and Devi Khyati. As instructed by his father and grandfather, Bhargava Rama performed stringent Tapasya in an Ashram in a deep jungle and visiting Maharshis like Bhrigu, Atri, Kratu, Jaabali, Mrikunda were impressed with the high concentration of Bhargava Rama who was seeking to target Shiva in his penance. In course of time, Maha Deva was pleased with Bhargava Rama's devotion and appeared in disguise as a hunter who presented a repulsive person with dark complexion and red eyes with bow and arrows and crude sword and knives of varied sizes and sharpness. He introduced himself as Tosha Pravarsha the Master of The Forest and that no knew person should step in the Forest, much less raise a Hermitage. Even Indra would not be able to reside in this forest without my permission, he said. The hunter then asked Rama as to was he and for what purpose that he was staying in the Forest for such a long time. The former replied that he was performing Tapasya to Maha Deva Shambhu and that he would like please that Sarveshwara, Sarva Sharanya, Abhaya prada, Trinetra, Sarvajna, Tripuraantaka and Shankara. The Hunter heckled at Parashu Rama and said that he was wasting his time. In the course of conversation, Parashu Rama realised that the Hunter was not an ordinary human being; he knew a lot of Shiva as the so called hunter mumbled that Shiva did Brahmahatya and that he snipped Brahma's fifth head. The Hunter further told Parashu Rama that after all he was trying to absolve himself of the sin of his mother's killing! ( Once Jamadagni left for Tapsaya and his wife Renuka Devi went to a river to fetch water and witnessed Prince of Mrityikavati Chitraratha was enjoying swims in the river with his women and momentarily Renuka felt envious of the women; Jamadagni noticed that his wife committed a sin and on returning back to his Ashram he asked his sons to kill her for the sin; none of his elder sons were prepared but Parashshu Rama sliced her neck and killed her at once; apparently, Jamadagni was able to revive Devi Renuka by his Mantra Shakti!). Bhargava Rama then realised that the hunter must be a Siddha! The Hunter further heckled Rama that his Tapasya was futile as he left his old father and killed his mother! Bhargava Rama then asked the hunter to identify himself: Was he Indra or Agni or Surya or Chandra or Vayu or Yama! You have come here to test my sincerity of Tapasya. Mahatma! Do reveal your self, thus prostrated Bhargava Rama and as soon as he stood up, Maha Deva revealed himself and a confused Rama in an ecstatic trance praised him as follows:

*Namastey Nilakanthaaya Nilalohita murtaye, Namastey Bhuta nathaya Bhuta vaasaaya tey namah/ Vkyataavyakta Swarupaaya Maha Devaaya Meedhushey, Shivaaya Bahurupaaya Trinetraaya Namonamah/ Sharanam Bhava Sharva twadbhaktasya Jagatpatey, Bhuyonanyaashrayaanaam tu twameva hi paraayanam/ Yanmaya- aprakrutam Deva duruktam vaapi Shankara, Ajaanataa twaam Bhagavanmama tatkhshantu marhasi/ Ananyavedya Swarupasya Sadbhaavamiha kaha pumaan, Twaamrutey tawa Sarvesha Samyak Shakreti Veditum/ Tasmaatwam Sarvabhavena praseeda mama Shankara, Naanyaast mey gatistubhyam Namobhuyo namonamah/*

Nilakantha, Nilalohita, Bhutanaadha, Bhuta vaasa! You are Perceivable yet impossible to Perceive, Maha Deva, Shiva, Bahurupa, Trinetra, Sharva! Indeed I am your faithful devotee and you are my final refuge; I might have talked lightly about you thinking that you were a normal hunter! Do pardon my ignorance and indiscretion; who else is capable of recognising your own magnanimity excepting yourself! I have no recourse else than surrendering myself to you totally!)

Shiva replied to Rama ‘My Child! I am pleased with your Tapasya. I really wish I could bestow every Shakti to you although You deserve it. Yet, you are still not yet ripe enough to withstand the Rudra Shakti and the related ‘Astraas’; hence you have to perform further Tapasya, resort to Sarva Tirtha Darshanaas and approach me when you consider fit. Subsequently, Bhargava Rama was engaged in Tirtha Darshanaas, fastings, Tapas, Homas, Japas, Snaanaas and other sacred deeds and moved about a lot in Bhumandala. Later, as per the instructions of Maha Deva returned to his Ashram and settled for his Shiva Puja. Meantime, there was a terrible battle between Devas and Asuras and the latter approached Maha Deva for help. Shankara then asked Mahodara to reach Parashurama to bring from his Ashram in Himalayas and the latter was instructed by Shiva to destroy the Asuras. Bhargava was bestowed with a variety of powerful Astra- Shastras and devastated Asuras in large contingents even while the remnants ran away to Rasatala. The victorious Bhargava returned to his Ashram and installed an Idol of the ‘Kiraata’ who confronted him in the Forest and worshipped him with flowers, Chandana, Dhupa, Dipa and Naivedyas. As Shankara made an appearance along with Marudganas and Devas, Rama fell on his feet and extolled him as follows:

Devadeva! Jagannaadha, Tripuraantaka, Sakala adhyaksha, Bhaktavatsala, Sarva Bhutesha, vrishabha - dhvaja, Sakalaadhisha, Kanukaakara, Skaklaavaasa, Sakala Devaarigana Naashaka, Shuli, Kapaali, Sarva Lokaika paala, Nitya Smashna Vaashi, Kailasavaasi, Pashayukta, Kalakuta vishaara, Sarva Vibhu, Amarvandya, Swayambhu, Shaktivaan, Sagatkarma Sakshi, Shambhu, Chandramouli, Sarpakantha haara, Shiva, Paramatma, Vibhuti sanchhanna deha, Suryachandraagninetra, Kapardi, Andhakaasura mardana, Tripura dhvamsi, Daksha Yagna Vinaashaka, Yogijana Dhyeya, Achintya Rupa, Bhakta hridayaambhoja karna madhya varti, Sakalaagama Siddhaanta Saara Rupa, Sakala Yogendra Prabhu, Shankara, Sakala Vyapta Maha mahimna, Paramatma, Sharva, Shaanta, Jagadbrahma, Vishwarupa, Adimadhya rahita, Nitya, Avyakta, Vyaktaavyakta Swarupa, Sthula Sukshmaatma, Vedanta Vedyas, Samasta Vishwa Vignaana Swarupa, Suraasurasangha Shreshtha puja paada, Shrikantha, Srishti karta, Lokakarta, Rajo gunaatma, Hiranyagarbha, Paratpara, Pratyagatma, Tamoguna Vikaara, Jagatsamhaara, Kalpanta Rudra Rupa, Parapara-Vida, Avikara, Nitya, Sadas adaatma, Buddhi Prabodha, and Buddhin- driya Vikara! My salutations to you as you are manifested in various Forms as Vasu-Rudra- Marud-Aditya- Saadhaya and Ashwini Kumaaras! You are Avikara, Aja, Nitya, Sukshma Rupa! You are not controllable and unimaginable even by Brahma! Those who continue in ignorance about you and your three major features of Srishti-Sthiti-Samhara are engaged in the cycle of births and deaths; as even great Scholars are unaware about you, what could I realise about you! Indeed your magnificence is far beyond description and voice; thus I am unable to commend you as my Stuti properly yet I know that you are affectionate to your Bhaktas! Maha Deva was indeed gratified with this kind of touching prayers and bestowed to him all kinds of Astra-Shastra Vidyas, their usages and withdrawing capacities; a outstanding horse; a distinctive chariot, a peerless bow and bunch of arrows, a distinctive Kavacha or body shield, Beeja

Mantras whose recitation could either annihilate the worlds or shower blessings to his followers and in short provided unique Siddhis to Bhargava Rama equipping him with invincible powers enabling him to punish the Evil wherever it existed and at the same time to protect the virtuous and the noble.

King Kaartaveeryarjuna and his invincibility:

The most valiant and invincible King of the times Kaartaviryarjuna of Haihava Vamsha was contemporary to Bhargava Rama halted at the Ashram of Jamadagna once along with his huge army which was tired and famished on an afternoon when Sun was hot and severe; the army did not have the strength to move forward and decided to rest. The King knew that the Ashram would not have the resource to feed the contingent but the Muni did provide excellent food to them. The King wondered as to how the Muni was able to do so and discovered that the Celestial Cow Kama -dhenu was in the Ashram and fulfilled all the requirements of the inmates of the Ashram. The King desired to take away the Kamadhenu to his kingdom but Jamadagni declined politely initially and refused flatly later. The King returned to his Kingdom but sent his Minister to manage to bring the Celestial Cow, if necessary by force. Finally force was used and both the Muni and the Kamadhenu resisted till the last but were tortured; Jamadagni Maharshi was almost killed and Kamadhenu flew to Heaven! The soldiers returned only with the calf which was a wasted exercise since without the mother the calf was no avail anyway. On return to the Ashram, Devi Renuka found her husband lying dead in a pool of blood and fainted and after recovering from the shock with some passage of time, she cried incessantly enquiring about Bhargava Rama. Rama returned from the forest to fetch wood and flowers for homa and puja and was non-plussed about what all had happened. He witnessed his mother beating her chest again and again numbering twenty one times and took a vow that not only King Kartaveeryarjuna would be butchered but would also attack Kshatriyas as a race would be slaughtered twenty one times and wipe out traces of them all; for quite some time now Kshatriyas were harassing Brahmanas and Sages on many counts, mostly out of fear that Brahmanas were gaining upper hand due to their knowledge and out of fear of an inferiority complex. Renuka decided to jump into fire along with her dead husband in the execution of the old practice of 'Sati Sahagamana' but a Celestial Voice stopped her attempt as Jamadagni's life would be revived once again. Bhrigu Maharshi came to learn of his son's death and on seeing his body stated that if he the Maharshi spent all his life as per Vedas and performed all virtuous deeds including Yagnas and Tapas, then Jamadagni his son should rise up from his death bed and sprinkled sacred water on the dying body and up came Jamadagni fully resuscitated due to the glory of Bhrigu. But Bhrigu after full recovery came to realise Bhargava Rama's vow to kill Kartaveeryarjuna and felt sad, not only because that revenge was never the principle of a Brahmana but killing a King by one of his own Subjects would tantamount to 'Rajavadha' which was as atrocious as killing one's own father! Moreso King Kartaveeryarjuna was not only an illustrious King of extraordinary prowess but also an outstanding devotee of Bhagavan Dattaratreya. This created a predicament to Bhargava Rama as there was a vow to kill the King and the Kshatriya Vamsha in twenty one attacks and on the other hand there was the considered advice tantamounting to an instruction of his father not to do so. Jamadagni then advised to pray to Brahma Deva and act according to his considered advice. Brahma too was not acceptable to either of the vows taken by Bhargava and affirmed that it would not be in order that if simply one King perpetrated a sin, there would be little justification to eradicate the entire Kshatriya Vamsha in twenty one battles! Yet, he blessed Rama to recite a Krishna Kavacha titled 'Trailokya Vijaya' and visit Shiva Loka to seek his blessings in the matter. As Bhargava Rama with great difficulty managed an audience with Shiva, the latter too felt that it was not an easy task to terminate King Kartaviryarjuna who by his mere frown a great warrior like was disarmed and had to flee! However, the ever merciful Mahadeva suggested that he like Skanda Kumara should practise not only the Trailokya Vijaya Mantra but several other powerful Mantras like Nagasatra, Paashupata, Brahmastra, Narayanastra, Agneyastra, Varanyastra, Gandharvatra, Garudastra, Jumbhanaastra and many other Astraas; Rama then bowed with the greatest possible happiness and fulfillment to Shiva, Devi Parvati, Ganesha, Skanda and Nandi Deva and returned to his father Jamadagni, fully overjoyed.!

Muni and the grandson of the famed Bhrigu Maharshi and Devi Khyati. As instructed by his father and grandfather, Bhargava Rama performed stringent Tapasya in an Ashram in a deep jungle and visiting Maharshis like Bhrigu, Atri, Kratu, Jaabali, Mrikunda were impressed with the high concentration of Bhargava Rama who was seeking to target Shiva in his penance. In course of time, Maha Deva was pleased with Bhargava Rama's devotion and appeared in disguise as a hunter who presented a repulsive person with dark complexion and red eyes with bow and arrows and crude sword and knives of varied sizes and sharpness. He introduced himself as Tosha Pravarsha the Master of The Forest and that no person should step in the Forest, much less raise a Hermitage. Even Indra would not be able to reside in this forest without my permission, he said. The hunter then asked Rama as to was he and for what purpose that he was staying in the Forest for such a long time. The former replied that he was performing Tapasya to Maha Deva Shambhu and that he would like please that Sarveshwara, Sarva Sharanya, Abhaya prada, Trinetra, Sarvajna, Tripuraantaka and Shankara. The Hunter heckled at Parashu Rama and said that he was wasting his time. In the course of conversation, Parashu Rama realised that the Hunter was not an ordinary human being; he knew a lot of Shiva as the so called hunter mumbled that Shiva did Brahmahatya and that he snipped Brahma's fifth head. The Hunter further told Parashu Rama that after all he was trying to absolve himself of the sin of his mother's killing! ( Once Jamadagni left for Tapsaya and his wife Renuka Devi went to a river to fetch water and witnessed Prince of Mrityukavati were enjoying swims in the river with his women and momentarily Renuka felt envious of the women; Jamadagni noticed that his wife committed a sin and on returning back to his Ashram he asked his sons to kill her for the sin; none of his elder sons were prepared but Parashu Rama sliced her neck and killed her at once; apparently, Jamadagni was able to revive Devi Renuka by his Mantra Shakti!). Bhargava Rama then realised that the hunter must be a Siddha! The Hunter further heckled Rama that his Tapasya was futile as he left his old father and killed his mother! Bhargava Rama then asked the hunter to identify himself: Was he Indra or Agni or Surya or Chandra or Vayu or Yama! You have come here to test my sincerity of Tapasya. Mahatma! Do reveal your self, thus prostrated Bhargava Rama and as soon as he stood up, Maha Deva revealed himself and a confused Rama in an ecstatic trance praised him as follows:

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Sharanam Bhava Sharva twadbhaktasya Jagatpatey, Bhuyonanyaashrayaanaam tu twameva hi  
paraayanam/ Yanmaya- aprakrutam Deva duruktam vaapi Shankara, Ajaanataa twaam Bhagavanmama  
tatkshshantu marhasi/ Ananyavedya Swarupasya Sadbhaavamiha kaha pumaan, Twaamrutey tawa  
Sarvesha Samyak Shakreti Veditum/ Tasmaatwam Sarvabhavena praseeda mama Shankara, Naanyaasti  
mey gatis tubhyam Namoh bhuyo namoh namah/*

( Nilakantha, Nilalohita, Bhutanaadha, Bhuta vaasa! You are Perceivable yet impossible to Perceive, Maha Deva, Shiva, Bahurupa, Trinetra, Sharva! Indeed I am your faithful devotee and you are my final refuge; I might have talked lightly about you thinking that you were a normal hunter! Do pardon my ignorance and indiscretion; who else is capable of recognising your own magnanimity excepting yourself! I have no recourse else than surrendering myself to you totally!)

Shiva replied to Rama: 'My Child! I am pleased with your Tapasya. I really wish I could bestow every Shakti to you although You deserve it. Yet, you are still not yet ripe enough to withstand the Rudra Shakti and the related 'Astraas'; hence you have to perform further Tapasya, resort to SarvaTirtha Darshanaas and approach me when you consider fit. Subsequently, Bhargava Rama was engaged in Tirtha Darshanaas, fastings, Tapas, Homas, Japas, Snaanaas and other sacred deeds and moved about a lot in Bhumandala. Later, as per the instructions of Maha Deva returned to his Ashram and settled for his Shiva Puja. Meantime, there was a terrible battle between Devas and Asuras and the latter approached Maha Deva for help. Shankara then asked Mahodara to reach Parashurama to bring from his Ashram in

Himalayas and the latter was instructed by Shiva to destroy the Asuras. Bhargava was bestowed with a variety of powerful Astra- Shastras and devastated Asuras in large contingents even while the remnants ran away to Rasatala. The victorious Bhargava returned to his Ashram and installed an Idol of the 'Kiraata' confronted him in the Forest and worshipped him with flowers, Chandana, Dhupa, Dipa and Naivedyas. As Shankara made an appearance along with Marudganas and Devas, Rama fell on his feet and extolled him as follows:

*Namastey Deva Devesha Namastey Parameshwara, Namastey Jagatonaatha Namastey Tripurantaka/Namastey Sakalaadhyaksha Namastey Bhakta Vatsala, Namastey Sarva Bhutesha Namastey Vrishabha -dhwaja/ Namstey Sakalaadhisha Namastey Karunaakara, Namastey Sakavaabvaasa Namastey Nilalohita/ Namah Sarva devaa ri gana naashaaya Shuliney, Kapaalinye Namastubhyam Sarvalokaikapaalinye/ Smashanavisiney nityam Namah Kailasa vaashiney, Namostu Paashiney tubhyam Kaala kutavishaashaney/ Vibhavemara vandyaya Prabhavey tey Swayambhuvey, Namokhilajagatkarma saakshibhutaataaya Shambhavey/ Namastripathagaaphena bhaasigaadrendumouliney, Maha bhogindra haaraaya Shivaaya Paramatmaney/ Bhasmasancchaanna dehaaya namorkaaginindu chakshushey, Kapardiney namastubhyamandhakaasura mardiney/ Tripura dhwaamsiney Daksha Yagna vidhwamsiney namah, Girijaakuchakaashmeeraviranjita mahorasey/ Maha Devaaya mahatey Namastey Kritivaasasey, Yogidhyeya swarupaaya Shivaayaachintya tejasey/ Swabhakta hridayaambhoja karnikaa madhya -vartiney, Sakalaagama siddhanta saararupaaya tey namah/ Namoh nikhila yogendra bodhaanaaya -amritaatmaney, Shankaraakhila vyapta mahimney Paramatmaney/ Namah Shartvaaya Shaantaaya Brahmaney Vishwa rupiney, Adimadhyata heenaaya Nityaayaavyakta murtayey/ Vyaktaavyakta swarupaaya sthula sukshmaa- tmaney namah, Namoh Vedaanta Vedyaya Vishwa Vigjnaana rupiney/ Namahsuraasura shreni mouli pushpaarchitaanghnaye, Shri Kanthaaya Jagaddhaatrey Loka Kartrye namoh namah/ Rajogunaataney tubhyam Vishwa srishti vidhaayiney, Huranyagarbha rupaaya Haraaya Jagadaadiye/ Namoh Vishwaatmaney Lokasthithivyaapaara kaariney, Satwa vijnana rupaaya Paraaya Pratyagaatmaney/ Tamoguna Vikaaraaya Jagatsamhaara kaariney, Kalpaantey Rudrarupaaya Paraapaa videy namah/ Avikaaraaya Nityaaya namah Sadasadaatmaney, Tawa yattatrayaananti Yoginopi Sadaamalaah/ Twaamavigjnaa durjeyam Samyad Brahmaadayopi hi, Samsaranti Bhavay nyunam na tatkarmaatmikaaaschiram/ Yaavannapaiti charanou tavaa- jnaana vighaatinah, Taavadbhramati Samsaarey Panditochetanopivaa/ Sa yeva Dakshah sa krutisa Munih sa cha Painditaha, Bhavatascharanaambhojey yena Buddhih sthirikrita/ Su Sukshmatvena Gahanah Sadbhaavastetrayimayah, Vidushaamapi mudhena sa mayaa Jnaaya-tey kattham/ Ashabdagocharatwena Mahimnastwa saamparatam, Stotumupyanalamsamyaktwaamaham jadaadhiriyatah/ Tasmaanagnaanaato vaapi mayaa Bhakyaiva Samstutah, Preetascha Bhava Devecha naanutwam Bhaktavatsalah/*

(Devadeva! Jagannaadha, Tripuraantaka, Sakala adhyaksha, Bhaktavatsala, Sarva Bhutesha, Vrishabhadhwaja, Sakalaadhisha, Kanukaakara, Skaklaavaasa, Sakala Devaarigana Naashaka, Shuli, Kapaali, Sarva Lokaika paala, Nitya SmashnaVaashi, Kailasavaasi, Pashayukta, Kalakutavishaara, Sarva Vibhu, Amarvandyaa, Swayambhu, Shaktivaan, Sagatkarma Sakshi, Shambhu, Chandramouli, Sarpakantha haara, Shiva, Paramatma, Vibhuti sanchhanna deha, Suryachandraagninetra, Kapardi, Andhakaasura mardana, Tripura dhwaamsi, Daksha Yagna Vinaashaka, Yogijana Dhyeya, Achintya Rupa, Bhakta hridayaambhoja karna madhya varti, Sakalaagam Siddhaanta Saara Rupa, Sakala Yogendra Prabhu, Shankara, Sakala Vyapta Maha mahimna, Paramatma, Sharva, Shaanta, Jagadbrahma, Vishwarupa, Adimadhyaa rahita, Nitya, Avyakta, Vyaktaavyakta Swarupa, Sthula Sukshmaatma, Vedanta Vedyaa, Samasta Vishwa vigjnaana Swarupa, Suraasurasangha Shreshtha puja paada, Shrikantha, Srishti karta, Lokakarta, Rajo gunaatma, Hiranyagarbha, Paratpara, Pratyagatma, Tamoguna Vikaara, Jagatsamhaara, Kalpanta Rudra Rupa, Parapara-Vida, Avikara, Nitya, Sadas adaatma, Buddhi Prabodha, and Buddhin- driya Vikara! My salutations to you as you are manifested in various Forms as Vasu-Rudra- Marud-Aditya- Saadhya and Ashwini Kumaaras! You are Avikara, Aja, Nitya, Sukshma Rupa! You are not controllable and unimaginable even by Brahma! Those who continue

in ignorance about you and your three major features of Srishti-Sthiti-Samhara are engaged in the cycle of births and deaths; as even great Scholars are unaware about you, what could I realise about you! Indeed your magnificence is far beyond description and voice; thus I am unable to commend you as my Stuti properly yet I know that you are affectionate to your Bhaktas!)Maha Deva was indeed gratified with this kind of touching prayers and bestowed to him all kinds of Astra-Shastra Vidyas, their usages and withdrawing capacities; a outstanding horse; a distinctive chariot, a peerless bow and bunch of arrows, a distinctive Kavacha or body shield, Beeja Mantras whose recitation could either annihilate the worlds or shower blessings to his followers and in short provided unique Siddhis to Bhargava Rama equipping him with invincible powers enabling him to punish the Evil wherever it existed and at the same time to protect the virtuous and the noble.

### The battle of Bhargava Rama and Kaartaveeryarjuna

On reaching Mahishmati pura the Capital of Kartaveeryarjuna, Parashu Rama sent Maharshi Atreya to the King recalling the latter's atrocities in bringing chaos in the peaceful Ashram, shamelessly demanding Kamadhenu, forcibly trying to seize it and the worst of all killing the Maharshi. The overconfident King replied that he was the Star of Haihaya Vamsha, that his thousand hands were endowed with such enormous might that none could dare to look straight in his eyes and that he had the blessings of Dattatreya and so on. He sent away the emissary to Rama to come prepared for the battle. He jumped into action at once, grouped his enormous army with gusto and led it against Parashu Rama, imagining that the Muni Kumara with little backing except his revenge to be pitted against the sea-like and fully trained army with courage, commitment and colossal Mantra Siddhi. There were twelve Akshouhinis of warriors trying to face a single Bhargava Rama! Even while the King and the army were advancing, there were unwelcome omens like the scenes of some with mutilated body parts, some with dishevelled hair hysterically crying loud, some carrying baskets full of bones with oozing blood, some with loud and continuous sneezes, some carrying bags full oil and salt and also the continuous wail of dogs and jackals but the mighty and haughty King ignored them. As soon as the first contingent of army arrived with racing chariots, horses, elephants and experts in archery under the command of Matsya Raja, the first offensive came from the latter in the form of 'Parvataastra' and Bhargava used Vayavyastra and the former bounced back killing thousands of the Raja's own men in a death trap. By resorting to the offensive, Bharga invoked Narayanaastra as the first contingent of the army with elephants, horses and chariots was wiped out while the Matsya Raja was singled out with four arrows to systematically destroy the Dhvaj (Flag), the Charioteer, the horses and the Matsya King who was hurt in the stomach and got killed by omitting blood. King Kartaveeryarjuna then called upon Brihadbala, Somdutta, Vidarbha Raja, Mithileswara, Nishadaaati, Magada Chief and others; as they all called up the same destinations of death. Then the tactics of war were changed and instead of the various Allies of Kartaveeryarjuna one by one, the Allied Kings surrounded Bhargava some from the rear, some sideways and some others in the front! It was a combined / group attack; the enraged Rama like 'Pralayakalaagni' slaughtered the Kings and their supporters in 'Dasa Dishas' and fought with them all for three days and nights with his axe and slaughtered the stronghold of the Kings that appeared invincible for a while but they caved in finally. King Suchandra who was an outstanding expert in 'Mayavi Yuddha' and an exceptional practitioner of Mantraas entered the battle. Bhargava released 'Narayanaastra' and to his great astonishment and disbelief the Astra proved ineffective. Rama threw up Shiva Shula and that had adorned Suchandra as flower garland. Then Rama invoked **Bhadra Kali** as he knew that She was the most reputed devotee of King Chandra and as she appeared with Trinetras and Trishula: He said: *Namostutey Shankara vallabhaayai Jagatsavitryai Samangalaakrutaayai Naanaa Vibhushanaabhiribhaarigayai Prapannarakshavihitodyamaayai, Daksha prasutai Himavadbhavaayai Maheshaardhaanga samaasthitaayai* --(Shankara Patni!, my salutations to you; you are the Creator of Samsara; You have the reputation of saving those in difficulties; You are the daughter of Daksha, the Arthaangi of Maheswara as also the daughter of Himavanta!). As Bhadra Kali was commended, she gave her appearance and asked Bhargava to despatch Suchandra to her as she was her distinguished devotee ; she suggested that

Bhargava should use Agneyaashtra to send him to her and that he (Suchitra) would become her servant. Then Bhargava Rama did 'Praanayama' and taking the name of Bhadra Kali, shot his arrow with Agneyastra and Suchandra reached Kailasha. Then came Pushkaraaksha who was by no means an insignificant warrior; even as he entered he attacked Rama by raining arrows all around and an angry Rama transmitted Vaaruna- Astra but it was sharply retaliated by Vayavyastra. Rama directed Brahmastra but that too was surprisingly retaliated too. A furious Rama took up his axe and ran up to Pushkaraasha who saved himself by sending 'Panchavishikaashtra' a Five pronged fiery arrow with venomous and hissing cobras and these arrows hit Bhargava on his head, shoulders, and tuft; for a second Rama was taken aback and following his reflexes flew literally upto the opponent and axed his head even as all the Devas watching the battle proceedings bit by bit clapped from the skies at the unbelievable and spontaneous alacrity displayed by Rama.

Finally, Kartaveeryarjuna himself arrived by his four hundred feet long golden and bejewelled chariot drawn by hundred chosen horses, with surprisingly huge stock of arms and armaments; he has thousand hands of unique Shakti. It was stated that when Ravana desired to display his prowess to Kartaveeryarjuna, the latter was busy taking morning baths in many Tirthas and dragged Ravana by clutching his ten heads with one of his thousand hands till the Pradakshinas of Tirtha Yatras were over in Sapta Samudras! The chariot accommodated his hundred- strong warrior sons too, each one of them being a warrior in his own right. The classic battle of the heroes was like that of the clash of two Planets! Both were unique in their own right; both were gifted with unparalleled expertise in Astra-Shastra Vidyas and both were blessed by incarnations of the same Bhagavan; one by Dattatreya and another by Maha Deva and Krishna! As soon as Kaartaveerya commenced the fight releasing Brahmastra, Rama had no choice of releasing another Brahmastra too. Keeping in view the universal havoc that created by the Brahmastras, Bhargava Rama-the Incarnation of Vishnu himself- was aware of the impact and absorbed it by his eyes thus secretly exercising his latent capability even as pretending himself as a mere human being! Indeed his main objective was Loka Kalyana! Having eased the Universe of the devastation thus averted, Bhargava picked up two arrows and directed them at both the ears of Kartaveerya whose face got defaced due to the loss of both the ears!

The King immediately remembered Bhagavan Dattaatreya who in the past, on such extreme situations, appeared before him at once and provided a shield with the help of which he was defying even Loka Paalakas! But now, there was no trace of Bhagavan Dattatreya as the reason was clear: he was no longer a specimen of Virtue and devotion and he ceased to uphold Justice when he became arrogant, selfish, avaricious and cruel to the extent of stealing the Celestial Cow and killing Maharshi Jamadagni without scruples! On the other hand Bhargava Rama had shone by comparison; having taken the vow to avenge his father's death and mother's untold grief, he equipped himself with Tapasya, Japa-Homa-Tirtha Yatras as directed by Maha Deva and Krishna Paramatma, both being the same as well as himself since he assumed a Human Form! As there was no response from Datta Deva, Kartaveerya was thus left to his own fate but since his arrogance was still on display, he put up the show and never gave up. He continued releasing Astraas; he released Agneyastra which was subdued by Rama's Varunastra; he released Gandharvastra which was controlled by Rama's Vayavyastra; the King released Nagastra and Garudastra resisted it. Finally, Kartaveerya threw the 'Shula' that Datta Deva gifted to him for an acute emergency and Bhargava Rama became a victim of it and fell down unconscious; as Devas and other Celestial Beings who were closely witnessing the proceedings of this historic battle of Dharma versus Adharma got panicky and Shankara himself administered 'Sanjivini' to Bhargava Rama. The latter purified himself with Sacred water and recited Krishna Kavacha and released Pashupata while Dutta Bhakta released Sudarshana. As an ample proof of Dharma Vs Adharma Sudarshana got absorbed in Pashupastra and the greatest hero turned a despicable villain finally got burnt as ash, once again vindicating Truth and Justice in the Srishti of that Omni Potent and All- Pervading Supreme!

### Encounter of Bhargava and Ganesha, Face-Off by Parvati and Shiva-Krishna's identity

After exterminating Kartaveerya, Parashu Rama continued the killings of his hundred sons besides quite a few of the Kings who came to assist Kartaveerya; some five of the late King's sons ran for their lives. There after a highly elated Bhargava reached Narmada to take bath and proceeded to Kailass where Maha Deva and Devi Parvati stayed for thanks giving. He saw Nandeswara, Maha Kaala, Raktahsha, Virupaksha, Bhairava, Baana, Ruru, Veerabhadra, Chanda, Bhrgi, Ekaadasha Rudras, Vidyadharas, Bhuta-Preta-Piscachas, Yaksha, Brahma Raakshasa, Kimpurushas and Kartikeya on the left entrance and Ganesha on the right. Ganesha asked Rama to wait as Shiva and Parvati were alone and that he wanted to find their convenience to enter. Rama was restless and felt uncomfortable to have been stopped by a Boy like Ganesha. There was an argument and Parashu Rama raised his axe which Ganesha disliked and lifted up Bhargava with his trunk and swirled him around when Rama saw Bhur- Bhuvar-Swar-Tapo-Urthwa-Mahar- Jana- Satya-Vaikuntha- Golokas and from there dropped Rama into Sapta Pataalaas and back to Kailasa again. This happened before all who assembled there and a highly fuming Bhargava shot his Parashu which partially broke Ganesha's tusk. As nearly half of his tusk fell down, Earth was shaken with spills of blood, Sapta Samudras witnessed reverberating sounds of upheaval, Earth got quaked and there was universal commotion. Devi Parvati who heard the uproar and insinuated Maha Deva that he treated Bhargava like his son and Bhargava gave a gift to Ganesha with a broken trunk! Shiva understood the taunt in the words of Parvati and her face off in the context and heartily remembered Krishna. As Krishna and Radha made their appearance, the entire family of Shiva, Parvati, Ganesha and Skanda greeted them; Bhargava too having greeted the former fell on the feet of Devi Parvati sheepishly and she did not respond. Shri Krishna sought to pacify saying: 'Bhavabhayahaarini! Bhargava Rama fell on your feet seeking your pardon for his indiscretion and rashness. He stated:

*Shrunu Devi Mahaabhaago Vedoktam Vachanam mama, Yac chhutvaa harshitaan nunam havishyasi na samshayah, Vinaayakasto tanayo Mahatmaa Mahataam Mahaan/ Yah Kaamah Krodha Udvego Bhayam naavishatey kadaa, Veda Smriti Puraneshu Samhitaasu cha Bhamini/ Naamaanyasyopadishthaani Supunyaani Mahatmabhih, Yaani taani pravakshyaami nikhilaaghaharaanicha/ Pramathaanaam Ganaayecha naanaa rupaa mahabalaah, Teshaameeshastwayam Yashmaatganeshastena keerttah/ Bhutaani cha Bhavishyaani Vartamaanaani yaanicha, Brahmaandaanyaakhilaan- yeva Yasmimllambodarah sa tu/ Yah sthiro devayogena cchinnam samyojitah punah, Gajasya shirasaa Devi tena porokto Gajaanana/ Chaturthihmuditaschandro darbhinaa shapta Aturah, Anena vidhruto bhaaleey Bhaalachandrasthatah smrutah/ Shaptah puraa Shaptabhistu Munibhih Samkshayah gatah, Jaatavedaa deeptobhudynaasou Shurpa -karnakah/ Puraa Devaasurey yuddhey Pujito Divipadganaih, Vighnam nivaarayaamaasa Vighnanaashath smrutah/ Adyaayam Devi Raamena kuthaarena nipaatyacha, Dashanam Daivato Bhadrehyekadantah krutomunaa/ Bhavishyatyatha paryaaye Braahmano Haravallabhey Vakreebhavishyattundatwaadvakra tundah smruto Budhaaih/ Evam tavaasya putrasya santi naamaani Parvati, Smaranaatpaapa haarini Trikaalaanu- gataanyapi/*

( Devi! Bhavabhaya haarini! Do condone Bhargava who fell on your feet for his momentary fault. Indeed Ganesha your son is one who conquered Kaama (Desire) -Krodha (Anger)- Udvega (Neurosis) and Bhaya (Fear) and his names are highlighted in Vedas and Puranas as they were sin-destroyers; he is Pramatha Gana Natha, Ganesha, Lambodara as he keeps the past-present- future happenings of the Brahmanda in his Udara or belly; he is Gajaavana since due to destiny his head was replaced by that of an Elephant; in the past the Chaturashi Chandra was cursed by Ganesha and Krishna got affected by the blame and thus Vinayaka secured the encomium of Bala Chandra; therefore Chandra's radiance was subject to growth and decadence. Similarly Sapta Rishis cursed Agni but Vinayaka re-kindled Agni again and thus got the name of Jaataveda . Ganesha got the name of Shurpa Karna as his flappy ears could winnow the grains from dirt and pebbles signifying the capacity to sift truth and falsehood. Vinayaka secured the name of Vighna Naayaka as he destroyed obstacles and difficulties at the time of Devaasura battles. Thus for each

name of Ganesha there was an occurrence or backround and from now on he would be called 'Vakratunda' or Crooked Trunk in future. Devi! Let me bestow to Ganesha the boons that in course of time, human beings should worship Ganesha first before Jataka and other Samskaaraas or Birth and Name Giving Ceremonies, Yatras, launch of Commercial Activities, or Vratas or before any Puja performance). Devi Radha further stated: *Prakritih Purushaschobhavanyonyaashraya vighrahow, Dwidhaa bhinnow prakaashetey Prapanchesmin yathaa tathaa/ Twam Chaahamaavayordevi bhedo naivaasti kaschana, Vishnstwamahamevaasmi Shivo dwiguna- taam gatah/ Shivasya Hridaye Vishnurbhavatyaa rupamaasthitah, Mama Rupam Samaasthaaya Vishnoscha hridaye Shivah/ Isha Ramo Maha Bhaage Vaishnavah Shaivataam gatah, Ganeshoyam Shivah Saakshaat Vaishnavastam Samaasthitah/ Eaitayoraavayoh prabhavoschaapibhedo na drushyatey, Evamuktwa sa Radhaa krodey krutwa Gajananam/*

(Prakriti and Purusha are never disconnected and are mutually dependent. It might look that we are two distinct Entities but You and I are the same and we have no difference at all. The concept that I am Vishnu and You are Shiva is indeed absurd and both the Forms are just the same. Ganesha is the Vaishnava Entity called Shiva and Bhargava Rama is the Shaiva Entity named Vishnu. So saying Radha placed Ganesha on her lap and affectionately touched his chins and as soon as that the cuts on his cheeks dried up and Devi Parvati too lifted Bhargava and caressed his tresses. Rama Ganeshas were together again and Krishna kept Skanda on his lap and there was thus a happy union of Shiva and Krishna!

As the task of thanks-giving to Maha Deva and Shri Krishna were accomplished splendidly, Parashu Rama returned home and narrated the entire story of his Tapasya and attaining the Bhakti of Maha Deva, his Tirtha Yatras and accomplishing the Maha Krishnaamrita Stotra, battle with Kaartaveerya and his killing, his encounter with Ganesha, Devi Parvati's subdued anger as Ganesha's trunk was hurt by his 'Kuthaara' and Radha-Krishna Darshana. Jamadagni Muni stated that the vicissitudes experienced by Rama must have been due to the sin of killing Kshatriyas and that Bhargava should atone it through Tapasya again for twelve years. But unfortunately, history repeated again and the five sons of Kartaveerya attacked Jamadagni once again and having killed him took away his head as a souvenir! Bhargava Rama's elder brothers performed 'Uttara Kriyas' (obsequies) to the deceased father. On his return from his twelve-year long penance for atonement as instructed by his father, Bhargava Rama faced a similar situation! This time his reaction was that of a filial duty rather than revenge and launched twenty one systematic attacks of Kartaveerya's sons and indeed of as many as twelve thousand Kshatria Kings and their male progeny searched from the nooks and corners of Earth and wiped out the traces of that Vamsha. Then he and his brothers got dug up Pancha Sarovaras at Kurukshetra and filled them up with the blood oozing heads and mutilated bodies of the Kshatriya Vamsha and performed Pitru Tarpanas and Shraddhas as per Shastras and pleased the Pitras with Snaana-Daana-Mantra-Bhojana- Dakshinas to seek lasting redemption to Pitras to attain higher lokas. The famed Syaantaka Tirtha at Kurukshetra continued to be the Sacred Place for Pitru Karyas. Bhargava further proceeded to Gaya Kshetra to continue the Pitru Karyas at the illustrious Chandra Paada where again the Pitru Devatas receive and bless the 'Karthas' of their offerings till date at the above Tirthas irrespective of any caste or creed. Pinda Pradanas and Tarpanas performed at these Sacred Tirthas with faith and devotion are stated to bestow the best of one's on going life and in the unending series of lives ahead. ]

#### Display of Parashu Rama's 'ahambhava nirmulana' by Shri Rama vide Valmiki Baala Ramayana

After the memorable wedding festivities concluded on the previous day, the next morning Brahmarshi Vishvamitra informed the Kings Dasharatha and Janaka left for tapasya to the peaks of Himalayas and King Dasharatha too solicited to return back with his entourage. King Janaka gifted lakhs of cows, valuable silks, ornaments, elephants, horses, chariots, and foot soldiers. With a view to serving the newly wed devis presently retained with their husbands for some more weeks, he gifted hundreds of servants

and servant maids in addition to which a crore of 'swarna mudras', 'rajata mudras', pearls and other nine gems aplenty as 'kanyaadana' or dowry. Just before the departure of King Dasharatha and his entourage, they all felt uneasy omens of inauspiciousness in the air. Huge and frightful sky birds with sounds of shrill squeaks were hovering on the nearby skylines, shrill sounds resounding from nearby forest animals, and such 'apashakunas' or premonitional warning were pronounced. Even so, gales of dust storms broke off and darkness surrounded. Then King Dasharatha visioned a frightening arrival:

He broke out the news that Parashu Rama the son of Bhṛigukula Jamadagni Maharshi and the great destroyer of Kshatriya Vamsha was about to enter Mithila of the Kingdom of Janaka, with frightful countenance and hanging shrub like matted hairs like 'Kaalaagni' or the flames of death. He was carrying his 'parashu' or the mighty axe with which he fulfilled his dreadful revenge of uprooting the kshatriya vamsha. Maharshi Vasishtha queried: 'Does Parashu Rama still recall his 'pratigina' or universal declaration of dig up and evacuate Kshatriya vamsha once again! As Vasishtha stated thus, both the Kings of Ayodhya and Mithila were non plussed with fright shivering before the flames about to engulf them all. On his arrival, Parashu Rama was atonce served with 'arghya' or cool water to wash his feet and drink by Rishis, he merely uttered: 'Rama Rama! :

Dasharadha nandana Shri Rama! Veera! It is heard that your courage and fame are second to none! You seem to have lifted up and broken down the mighty and incredible 'Shiva Dhanush'! Having been informed thus, I have now brought this another 'dhanush'. This is the ever frightful and invincible 'Parashu Rama Dhanush'. I seek you to draw it straight, and arrange the arrow perfectly and exhibit your valor and capability. As Parashurama thus challenged Shri Rama, King Dasharatha intervened at once to say: Maha Bhargava! You are glorious in the entire universe that having born to the highest tradition of Brahmanatva, performed swaadyaya of vedas, outstanding penances, you have accomplished climactic stature/ Yet by the force of circumstances, punished Kshatriya Kings as a race and wiped out their traces but now have pardoned them eventually. But now having taken now to 'astra sanyasa', why ought you be unkind to only to Rama and in the unfortunate even of his failure, generations of us all would have to end our lives! As King Dasharatha stated in a highly entreating tone, Parasurama ignored the King and continued in highly heckling tone to Shri Rama as though what he had performed was not a miraculous act of breaking down Shiva Dhanush but a sheer fluke or an accidental stroke of chance!

Thus Parushu Rama tauntingly continued as follows: Raghunandana! These are the two supreme and celestial pieces of dhanush; Devatas have been in admiration of their invincibility. Vishvakarma the heavenly engineer himself constructed it as of the strongest and impossible unbreakability. One of these was awarded to Maha Deva Shankara in connection with Tripuraasura and that was what 'Shiva Dhanush' which he had been proudly and arrogantly broken by you. And the second dhanush had been in my hands which was dedicated with humility by groups of Devas to Maha Vishnu used in a series of encounters against the most heinous Danava- Daitya-Rakshasaas gloried as 'Vaishnava Dhanush'. Try to learn and recall that once all the Devas headed by Indra once approached Brahma Deva to assess whether Shiva or Vishnu was more powerful and mightier. Then Brahma created a rift between the two and in a mutual warfare Vishnu due to his mere possession of the Vishnu dhanush made a mere 'humkara' as the Trinetradhara Shiva was stilled with awe. Then the angry Shiva out of frustration threw his dhanush off and Videha desha Rajarshi Devarata held it and did daily veneration for generations. On the other hand, Bhagavan Vishnu having been pleased with Bhṛigu vamshi Rucheeka Muni gifted this Vishnu Dhanush; it was from Maharshi Jamadagni my immortal father that this Vishnu Dhanush had come into my possession ever since. Mahatma Jamadagni having discarded astra-shastras took to intense tapasya having built an ashram and was eventually killed by King Kartaveeryarjuna owing to materialistic obsessions. On learning about the murder of my father by the King, I returned from my penances and avenged Kshatriyas as a race by killing them several times. There after having earned the overlordship of the entire 'prithvi', I performed a 'maha yajna' and donated the prithvi as dakshina to Kashyapa Muni. Having

given the prithvi daana thus have retired to Mahendra Mountain for tapasya everthereafter. Having heard of the destruction of Shiva Dhanush from my celestial vision, have hurried back to the brave young hero here aling with Vishnu Dhanush too. Rama! I have thus brought the Maha Vishnu Dhanush reviving my 'kshaatra dhrama' and if you were to succeed in straightening this dhanush with arrows, then I might give you the opportunity of a mutual duel thereafter.

Although his father King Dasharatha's appeal was cutshort by the long monologue bordering on the self ego of Parashu Rama, Rama had to reply to the latter. He said that he was constrained by the principles of kshatriyas and hence was not elaborating much about his own achievements. Then Rama angrily took away the Vishnu Dhanush and the arrows from Parshu Rama. Bhrgu nandana! As by birth you are a Brahmana and as such you are respect worthy; further you have had affinity with Brahmarshi Vishvamitra too and as such am constrained not to let arrows used on you and cut short your life. 'Bhargava Rama! Even as you have had quickly earned physical and psychological powers due to your tapasya, this Vaishnava Dhanush which you are proud of, now in my hands would never hesitate to demolish you too'. This type of veiled yet composed threat that Rama confronted with against Bhargava Rama had readily attracted the attention and admiration of Deva ganas and Maharshis. Gandharva-apsarasa-siddha-chaarana-yaksha-raakshasa- naagaas too rushed to witness this 'itihasik' scene! As Rama had thus held high on his hands, Bhargava Rama stood stunned and blank and murmured with low and mumbling voice stated: 'Raghu nandana! I had just described to you a while back that I donated Bhumi to Maha Muni Kashyapa and the latter instructed me to leave away bhumi and thus I shifted away to the heights of Mahendra mountain. Now having conceded my failure against the background of my bragging, may I politely return running back to the mountain heights!

Maha Veera Shri Rama! The manner in which you had lifted the Vishnu Dhanush would recall how Maha Vishnu Himself lifted and held at the time of Madhu Kaitabha Daityas who sought to roll up earth and through into Patala! Even as Devatas are witnessing above this happening because of my arrogance and late realisation, may I declare that none indeed could face you in battles and glory.

Kakutsa kulabhushana! Here I stand with all my defeated egos as put to shame by you yet with the satisfaction that the Trilokanatha Vishnu himself had to humble me. Now, I request you to release a mild arrow which could land me safe atop Mahendra Parvata back to my Tapasya!

Having thus reached his ashram atop the Mahendra Parvata Parashu Rama's Self Purification had taken place.

My prostrations to OM kaara which indeed is ever blissfull, as the cause and causation of the Universe as of Supreme Consciousness and as the Srishti- Sthiti -and Samhaara as of the ever revolving Time Cycle. Thus Brahmarshi Narada was addressed by Mahrashi Haritaayana: Has the magnificence of Shri Tripura or of the Tri Stages of Awakennass- Dream State- and Sushupti! That indeed is the Tripura Rahasya. This presentation of Tri Pura Rahasya has been of readily appealed to and absorbed by the Vaidika- Shaiva-Shakteya and Paashupata Vigjnaanais.

Parashu Rama's self confessions and of his humiliations experienced

Then us the blissful Parashu Rama addressed Bhagavan Dattatreya the All Knowing had explained his earlier life experiences. He recalled that formerly he was tormented with his pitru deva Maharshi Jamadagni's collapse and avenged the then entire clan of Kshatriyas. Jamadagni Maharshi was almost killed and Kamadhenu flew to Heaven! The soldiers returned only with the calf which was a wasted exercise since without the mother the calf was no avail anyway. On return to the Ashram, Devi Renuka

found her husband lying dead in a pool of blood and fainted and after recovering from the shock with some passage of time, she cried incessantly enquiring about Bhargava Rama. Rama returned from the forest to fetch wood and flowers for homa and puja and was non-plussed about what all had happened. He witnessed his mother beating her chest again and again numbering twenty one times and took a vow that not only King Kartaveeryarjuna would be butchered but would also attack Kshatriyas as a race would be slaughtered twenty one times and wipe out traces of them all; for quite some time now Kshatriyas were harassing Brahmanas and Sages on many counts, mostly out of fear that Brahmanas were gaining upper hand due to their knowledge and out of fear of an inferiority complex. Renuka decided to jump into fire along with her dead husband in the execution of the old practice of 'Sati Sahagamana' but a Celestial Voice stopped her attempt as Jamadagni's life would be revived once again. Bhrigu Maharshi came to learn of his son's death and on seeing his body stated that if he the Maharshi spent all his life as per Vedas and performed all virtuous deeds including Yagnas and Tapas, then Jamadagni his son should rise up from his death bed and sprinkled sacred water on the dying body and up came Jamadagni fully resuscitated due to the glory of Bhrigu. But Bhrigu after full recovery came to realise Bhargava Rama's vow to kill Kartaveeryarjuna and felt sad, not only because that revenge was never the principle of a Brahmana but killing a King by one of his own Subjects would tantamount to 'Rajavadha' which was as atrocious as killing one's own father! Moreso King Kartaveeryarjuna was not only an illustrious King of extraordinary prowess but also an outstanding devotee of Bhagavan Dattaratreya. This created a predicament to Bhargava Rama as there was a vow to kill the King and the Kshatriya Vamsha in twenty one attacks and on the other hand there was the considered advice tantamounting to an instruction of his father not to do so. Jamadagni then advised to pray to Brahma Deva and act according to his considered advice. Brahma too was not acceptable to either of the vows taken by Bhargava and affirmed that it would not be in order that if simply one King perpetrated a sin, there would be little justification to eradicate the entire Kshatriya Vamsha in twenty one battles!' Puffed up by his ahankaara, Parashu Rama confronted the Epic Hero of Ayodhya as the latter had broken Shiva Dhanush and the climactic Devi Sita's swayamvara and the glorious wedding but had to be humiliated and consequently realised that though Shri Rama was possessive of esteem for Brahmanas in general and Vasishtaadi Maharshis especially.

*Atha maamupasampraapto nirvedah paribhaavitam. tatotyantam pathi mayaa bahudhaa paridevitam/ Samvartamavadhtendram maargekasmaat samaasadam, bhasmacchaannagnivad guudham kathancha vidam tathaa/ Santapta iva neehaaram tam sarvaanga susheetalam sangamyaivaatishi shirabhaavam - aasaadayam tadaa/Mayaa swasthitamaaprishtah praahaamritasupeshalam, susaarapindsnatsarvam nishkrishya pratyapaasayat/ Naaham tadshakam sprushtham rangko raagjneem yathaa tathaa, bhuyah asampraarthitah sotha bhavantam me vinirdithat/ Tadbhavaccharana dvanvam tad aaseediam mayaa, andho janasaamaanyogamivaatyanta sukhaavaham/ Tanme na viditam kinchit Samvarta mniraaha yat, shruram mahatmyamakhilam Tripuraabhakti kaarakam/ Saabhavad rupinee Devee hladi nityam samaahitaa, evam me vartamaanasya kim phalam sama vyaapate//*

Then, Bhagavaan! remorse and depressive gloom came upon me and was put to disgrace and shame as was truly demoralised. On way to Mahendra Mountain to my Ashram while returning back. On the way up I had kept on lamenting while Maharshi Samvarta had unexpectedly crossed my way as of the fire of Vignaana was hiding by the cover of ash and that indeed made me relaxed somewhat. As he enquired of my well being he had then conversed softly and talked of the essence of spiritual knowledge. Yet I was

not quite absorbed of what he sought to explain to me. I was however not able to guess about a Supreme Queen whose prayers could be exceedingly rewarding. He further asserted that Goddess, - an incarnation by you Bhagavan Dattatreya- was ever settled in his inner consciousness. Indeed, who be that Supreme Empress and what kind of rewards as could be reaped!

Then Parashu Rama prostrated to Bhagavan Dattaatreya to very kindly explain what Maharshi Samvarta had sought to analyse as without digesting that outstanding explanation the Tripura Rahasya be truly analysed. Without Rahasya Jnaana, the entire understanding of the Tripura Rahasya be as superficial as a child's play. No doubt, formally Deva samuhaas headed by Indra had repeatedly worshipped by yagjnaas and numberless sacrifices yet were not enabled to the Tripura Rahasya. Maharshi Samvarta had vividly described that all such innumerable efforts were of little avail as Kena and all the Upanishads explained that the screen of Maya be not possible to explain. Indeed absence of Eternal Bliss be not confused as abrogation of sorrow since that could only lead to frustration only. Besides the fear of one's death would perpetuate rebirth and the cycle of births - deaths and rebirths yet again and again repetitively. What ever is done by me is Upaasana of Tripura Sundari and the rest be all a hallucination. Upanishads had amply detailed the methodology of the Upaasana and the resultant Bliss. The manner of Upaasana and the resultant Paramaananda. This Upaasana which had been prescribed by you Bhagavan to perform as per Scriptures, even as per variations on account of mystic symbols and images is similar to ritualistic practices. Further to this, Upasana be practised daily.

Further stanzas of Tripura Rahasyam as followed

*Ityuktvaa charanou moorhna gruheetvaa danda vakratah, atha drishvaa tathaabhutam Bhargavam mukti bhaajanaam, daya maanaswabhaavotha Datto vaktrumupaakramaat/ Vatsa Bhagarva dhanyosmi yasya te buddhireedrushee, abdhau nimajjato nouka sampraatiriva sangjataa, etaavadeva sakritih kriyaabhi ruupasangatah, swaatmaana maarohayati pade parama paavane/ Saa Devi Tripuraa sarvahlaaakaasha rupinee, ananyasharanam bhaktam pratyevamruupinee drutam, hridyaantah patinataa mochyed mrityujaalatah/ Yaavat kartavyavetaalaatra vibheti dhridham nanah, na taavat sukhamapnoti vaitalavishtavat sadaa/ Nrinaam kartavyakaalaahisandrashtaanaam katham shubham, karaala garalaa-vaakraagaanaamiva kvachit/ Kartavyavishasmsarga moorchitam pasyavai jagat, andheebhutam na jaanaati kriyaam swasya hitaatmikaam/ Anyathaa cheshtate bhuuyo mohamapadyate punah, evam vidho hi lokoyham kartavya visha muurcchitah, anaadi kaalatobhume payucchyate visha saagare/ 38--*

As Parashu Rama had explained to Bhagavan Dattaatreya by falling at His Feet, He felt that he be indeed be the ideal person to be about liberation. He stated that you be a person as of a sinking boat in the Samsara saagara. You are of such auspiciousness that one be associated with religious rites and as elevated by a pure state of nature. That Bhagavati Tripura is stated to be of the nature of Supreme Consciousness who be kind to you as She could manifest within the heart of discriminating perception called Sadbuddhi in a devotee who had taken refuge unto Her and liberate you quickly from the snare death to bliss. As long as person be not afraid of the ghost of obligatory duties, so long he would not obtain happiness like one be possessed by an evil spirit ever. How could there be happiness by those persons bitten by a black serpent of the obligatory duties as for those whose bodies be overcome by the flames of a dreadful poison. Indeed the world would become senseless and blind by the contact with the poison of obligations and tasks. It would hardly realise the practice which be of the nature of its own well

being. Otherwise, it might act on a different manner yet again and again repetitily indeed . Bhargavan, may you be blessed as you had arrived at a fortunate and auspicious time.

Having heard that Bhagavan Dattaatreya, Parashu Rama was blissful with all his humility. Then Bhagavan stated: Rama! I would now like to share with you this that the principal cause for one's destruction be of sorrow, suffering, anguish and distress of all the Beings in Srishti especially humanity. The Arishad Vargaas be the offshoots of that suffering; the Shat Gunas are: Kaama or Desire, Krodha or Anger, Lobha or Avarice, Moha or Infatuation, Mada or Ego, Matsara or Jealousy. Every human being is subject to desires; if the desires are not fulfilled, there would be disappointment and eventual frustration; the resultant grief develops anguish and instability of mind ; this further shapes up as anger coupled with wrong judgment and discretion which results in further failures! Such is the impact of the proverbial 'arishad vargas' or the six enemies of human beings viz. *Kaama krodha lobha moha mada matsaras* or excessive desires, anger, selfishness and avarice, infatuation, ego and jealousy. Be that so, association with the seed for the accomplishment of the Supreme Truth. More so, your association with Maharshi Samvarta, you have reached this state of fruitfulness as only such interactions be of everlasting reliefs. Without the 'satsaangatya', how indeed there be modes and turning points of destiny! Satsanga would lead to the Absolute Truth and no other means like mysticism or 'Ashtanga Yoga', reading Scriptures, penances, Sacrifices, pilgrimages, Charity and such pious acts. Not only Demi-Gods and superior Class Celestial Beings, Sages and Godmen but even Demons, Low Category Humans, and even the wild species have all used the means of Satsanga and achieved 'Mukti', compared life with a tree emerging from two seeds, (Sin and Purity), hundreds of roots ( living entities), three patterns of 'Gunas of Satva, Rajas and Tamas (Goodness, Passion and Ignorance), five upper trunks (Elements: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Sky); five lower trunks or sense organs (sound, touch, taste, smell and vision) and eleven 'Karmendriyas' (Hands, legs, eyes, ears, mouth, nose, Genitals) and mind. There are two birds, viz. Jiva (human) and Paramatma and two fruits of misery and happiness, one opts for materialism and another like a Swan endeavours for eternal bliss. When Brahma's sons asked Almighty in the form of Hamsa (Swan) : 'Who are you?'; Hamsa's reply was 'We are five-the Five Elements!'. When Kumaras asked the Swan once again, the reply was 'We are two ; And That Is One Only' ! This indeed is the Eternal Truth and that again is the Essence of 'Satsang' or the Company of One, not of Two! . The indirect reference of means be that having accomplished vairagya or freedom from attachments due to association of satsaangatya, the method of self investigation would tend to generate the consequential viveka and Supreme Consciousness having destroyed the progeny of Arishad Vargaas of kaama krodha lobha moha mada matsaraas. In other words, the methodology of self investigation which smashes off the thoughts and the consequent vicious circle of desires and fulfillment and desires again and seeking to fulfill the same repetitively and thus construct a bridge to run past the ocean of samsara and thus having raced up to attain pure consciousness and nirvikalpa samaadhi or complete absorption of Pure - Indivisible Tripureshwara.

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### **Shri Ramaavataara**

Invocations:

*Aadho Rama tapo vananu gamanam, hathvaa mrugam kanchanam, Vaidehi haranam, jatayu maranam, Sugreeva sambhashanam, Bali nigrahanam, samudhra taranam, Lanka pureem dahanam, paschad*

*Ravana Kumbhakarna madanam, ethat iti Ramayanam/* The Epic Ramayana is summarised as Shri Rama went to forest of Dandakaranya, chased the false deer of Maricha, Maha Jatayu was killed by Ravana, negotiated with Sugreeva to kill Baali, Maha Samudra was crossed with the help of the Monkey Brigade, Lord Hanuman burnt off Lanka, and the Lord killed Kumbhakarna and Ravana. This is Ramayana was all about!

*Raamaaya Ramabhadraaya Ramachandraya Vedhase, Raghunaadhaaya naadhaaya Seetaayaah patanenamah/* Rama! The ever auspicious, ever helpful and tranquil like Moon, my salutations. *Shri Ramachandracharanou manasaa smaraami, Shri Rama chandra charanou vachasagranaami, Shri Ramachandracharanou shirasaa namaami, Shri Ramachandra sharanam prapadye/* My reverences to Shri Rama with a bowed head, memory in mind, stuti in speech, and my body in total surrender! *Dakshine Lakshmano yasya veeme tu Janakaatmaja, Purato Maarutiryasya tam vande Raghunandanam/* My salutations to Shri Rama whose right side is Lakshmana, Devi Sita on left and Hanuman seated ahead. *Lokaabhiraamam ranaranga dheeram Raajeeva netram Raghuvamsha naadham, Kaarunya rupam karunaakaram tam, Shri Ramachandram sharanam prapadye/* May we seek refuge from Shri Rama who looks tranquil and pleasing but on the battle front looks with valor and victorious; he is lotus eyed and placid typical of his race of renowned Kingship! *Raamam shashvatamaprameyamanamam nirvaana shaanti pradam, Brahma Shambhu Phaneendra sevyamanisham Vedaanta Vedyam vibhum/* *Raamaakhyam Jagadeeshvaram Suru Gurum Mayaamanushyam Harim, vande ham karunaakaram Raghuvaram Bhupaala Choodaamanim/* Lord Rama! My total dedication to you as the glorious of Raghu vamsha and the Jewel of the lineage of Kings before and there after. You are the hall mark of kindness, destroyer of sins, the Human form due to illusion, worshipped by Brahma- Shambhu and Sesha, the Master of Devas and Indra, the cynosure of Kings, the personification of kindness and seemingly mortal but eternal ever! *Shri Rama Raameti rameti Raame ram manorame, sahasra naam tat tulyam Rama nama varaanane/* One utterance of the name of Rama equals recitation of Vishnu Sahasra nama thousand times! That is the reason why the name of Rama of dearness and of ever auspiciousness needs to be recited ever says Bhagavan Shiva to Devi Parvati. *Raamaaya Ramabhadraaya Ramachandraya Vedhase, Raghunaadhaaya naadhaaya Seetaayaah patanenamah/* Rama! The ever auspicious, ever helpful and tranquil like Moon, my salutations. *Shri Ramachandracharanou manasaa smaraami, Shri Rama chandra charanou vachasagranaami, Shri Ramachandracharanou shirasaa namaami, Shri Ramachandra sharanam prapadye/* My reverences to Shri Rama with a bowed head, memory in mind, stuti in speech, and my body in total surrender! *Dakshine Lakshmano yasya veeme tu Janakaatmaja, Purato Maarutir yasya tam vande Raghunandanam/* My salutations to Shri Rama whose right side is Lakshmana, Devi Sita on left and Hanuman seated ahead. *Lokaabhiraamam ranaranga dheeram Raajeeva netram Raghu vamsha naadham, Kaarunya rupam karunaakaram tam, Shri Ramachandram sharanam prapadye/* May we seek refuge from Shri Rama who looks tranquil and pleasing but on the battle front looks with valor and victorious; he is lotus eyed and placid typical of his race of renowned Kingship! *Raamam shaashvatamaprameya mananam nirvaana shaanti pradam, Brahma Shambhu Phaneendra sevyamanisham Vedaanta Vedyam vibhum/* *Raamaakhyam Jagadeeshvaram Suru Gurum Mayaamanushyam Harim, vande ham karunaakaram Raghuvaram Bhupaala Choodaamanim/* Lord Rama! My total dedication to you as the glorious of Raghu vamsha and the Jewel of the lineage of Kings before and there after. You are the hall mark of kindness, destroyer of sins, the Human form due to illusion, worshipped by Brahma- Shambhu and Sesha, Devas and Indra, the cynosure of Kings, the personification of kindness and seemingly mortal but eternal!

## Valmiki's Trance

### Introduction:

Before turning over as the famed Valmiki Maharshi, his earlier birth was of a hunter who recieved his counsel from a vidwan that one ought be cautious in causing suffering to any Living Being, be it a human, animal or bird and there would be a retaliatory rebound in the same or the following birth. He further suggested that the burden of past sinfulness be lightened by reciting the name of Shri Rama with devotion and faith. The Vidvan's blessings came true and in the subsequent birth the hunter after reforming himself and practised SHRI RAMA NAMA till his last breath. Brahmana Vidyaarthi Pracheta, the son of Agni Sharma of Bhṛigu Vamsha of the yore, was counselled by Brahmarshi Narada with 'two golden principles of not preaching what he himself would not practise and take to the name and thought of Rama till his death'. The boy learnt the Mantra 'Mara' or to Kill- kill 'ahamkara', 'shadvarga shatrus' of excessive desires, anger, selfishness and avarice, infatuation, ego and jealousy. Constant repetition of 'Mara' turned as 'Rama' gradually developed 'valmikaas' or anthills till his 'atma saakshaatkaara' or Self Realisation and eventually came to be reputed as Valmiki Maharshi. Once when he was bathing in the clear waters of Ganges he sighted two doves while mating but were shot to death by a hunter and the Maharshi cried : *maa nishaada pratishthaa tvamagamah shasshvatih samaah, yat krouncha mithunaa - dekam avadheeh kaama mohitam*/ Nishaada! There could never be rest for long years till eternity, for you killed the mating birds unsuspectingly! This is the 'prerepana' or the inspiration of the illustrious scripting of Valmiki Ramayana!

Maharshi Valmiki asked Brahmarshi Narada: *Konyasmin saampratam loke gunavaan kascha veeryavaan, dharmagjnascha kritagjnascha veeryavaan, dharmagjnascha kritagjnascha Satyavaakyo dhridhavantatah* 'as to who indeed was the Guna- Veerya-Dharmagjna- Kritagjna- Satya Vaadi- Dhridha Sankalpa or of the superior traited- brave- virtuous-ever grateful - truthful and decisive on Earth during the Treta Yuga! *Chaaritrena cha ko yuktah sarva bhuteshu ko hitah vidvaan kah kah samarthascha kaschaika priyadarshanah*/ or He of excellent tradition, helpful most to fellow beings, highly learned, capable most and of readily arresting personality of bodily handsome and gracefulness! *Atmavaan ko jitakrodho dhrutimaan konasuyakah, kasya bibhyati devaascha jaataroshasya samyuge*! Who is that outstading personality on Earth who readily commands awe and authority, of tranquil nature, ever radiant, and who is of affectionate amiability and at the same time is most feared by the worst ferocious evil energies to be faced with! Who is that Idyllic and ultimate perfect Model Personality of the Yuga! Brahmarshi Narada replied to Valmiki Maharshi: ahatma! You have described the traits of a terrestrial Human Being with the extra celestial qualifications of a Human on the terrestrial Earth! Any way, the ready reply is as follows: *Ikshvaaku vamsha prabhavo **Ramo naama** janaih shrutah, niyatatmaa mahaa veeryon dhyutimaan dhrutimaan vashee*/ In the Ikshvaaku Vamsha, an outstanding personality named **Shri Rama** the famed most in Trilokas with unbelievable equanimity, a symbol of courage and bravery, as a Roll Model of a Man in perfection. He was a highly learned, moralistic, expressionalistic, and enemy destroyer of excellence with steel like hands and elevated shoulders, robust legs, broad shoulders and conchshell like neck of enormous strength. His chest and arrow chest were huge too with unprotrusive bone at the neck. He was a typilcal 'aajaana baahu' or his strong hands stretch down to knees with a readily arresting and handsome face of extreme fairness. His forehead was broad and sparkling with big eyes and in sum his personality was spectacular and unique. Shri Rama is named as Dharmajnaata, Satyapratigjna, Hita

Saadhana or fully conversant with the Principles of Virtue, avowed to be Truthful and Accomplish by Medium of Negotiation. He is yashasvi- jnaani- Pavitra- jitendriya or well renowned, knowledgeable, symbol of purity and self controlled. He is an administrator like Prajapati Virat Swarupa Himself- Symbol of Prosperity, Dhanurveda Praveena or the Symbol of Archery, Veda Vedanga Tatvavetta- Kshatriya Dharma Praveena- Master of Memory Power; extremely kind hearted, and an expert of conversation with power of convincing objectively. All the Saadhus and Sadhakas make a queue line to him like all the running waters tend to merge into the Oceans as they feel contented with his ‘darshan’ and if fortunate extremely with his ‘sparshan’! Being bestowed with all the positive traits, his mother Devi Koushalya gets immersed in his exemplary traits endearing him always even as he assumes the oceanlike abundance and Himalayas like composure! *Vishnunaa sadrusho veerye Somvadpriya darshanah, kaalaagni sadrushah krodhe kshamayaa prithivee samah, dhanadena samastyaage satya dharma ivaa parah/Shri Rama* is stated as Vishnu’s prototype in radiance, Chandra like tranquility and coolness, yet of anger of ‘Kaalaagni’, endurance like of Bhudevi, ‘tyaaga and daana’ or give aways like Kubera himself and in Truthfulness like Yama Dharma Raja himself!

Brahmarshi Narada appears to have initiated delineation of Shri Rama to Valmiki Maharshi and thereafter departed for a bath in river Tamasa near Ganga along with his disciples; he addressed his shishya named Bharadvaja and expressed how refreshing was the bath. As he looked around he spotted on the banks of the cool water flows two krouncha birds in chirruping play and fun in a nest on a tree branch. But just then a cruel hunter released an arrow at the loving male bird which got dropped dead in blood and the female bird crooned in anguish and misery. The two love birds had always been together infatuated with each other and Muni Valmiki was truly pained and hurt in his heart and inner consciousness. The natural instinct of the Maharshi prompted him involuntarily to burst out rather reprimandingly: ***Mā niṣāda pratiṣṭhām tvam agamaḥ śāśvatīḥ samāḥ, yat krauñcamithunād ekam avadhīḥ kāmā mohitam/*** ‘Hey hunter! Why have you so mercilessly killed the male partner of such loving birds suddenly! You too would soon die as a retribution!’ Having shouted spontaneously thus, the Maharshi got retrospective and addressed his disciples that a few words were slipped from my tongue as the feeling was intense! The shishyas replied unanimously: ‘*Paada baddhou aksharasamastah tantreelaya samanvitah, shokaartasya pravritto me shloko bhavatu naanyathaa/*’ Guru sire! Whar ever has slipped out from your tongue has admirably fitted itself in a four lined stanza of glory with rhythmic sound metered with perfection of eight letters of prosody just as a ‘veena dhvani’ of the stringed musical instrument! The prime disciple Bharadvaja instantly agreed affirmingly that a meaningful stanza by framed as what the Guru has stated involuntarily! As this incident had happened the entire troupe concluded their bath and moved on to their ashram even as the hot deliberation of the entire ashram was on the singular topic of the day. The Guru shishya ‘samvada’ on the principles of dharma took place subsequently although the background was basically hovering on the morning incident only. Meanwhile, the Charurmukha Brahma himself appeared and alerted Valmiki Maharshi. The latter was taken aback and prostrated to Brahma along paadya- arghya- aasana-puja- stotra formalities while Brahma endearingly made the Maharshi seated comfortably beside him. But the Maharshi was at the back of his mind about the morning incident especially recalling what he stated at that juncture. Brahma smilingly understood what the Maharshi was cogitating about recalling what all the Maharshi stated. He then suggested: ‘Maharshi! What you had stated spontaneously as a stanza was truly as per ‘chhandas’ or prosody and need not torment your psyche so much; let this stanza under reference be the inspiration of scripting the entirety of ‘Rama charitra’; Bhagavan Shri Rama as the incarnation of Maha Vishnu Himself was indeed the exemplary

human figure of the Treta Yuga of virtue- sacrifice-charity-tolerance but simultaneously of bravery- heroism-and everlasting renown!

This was what Brahmarshi Narada conveyed to Valmiki Muni as having expressed by Brahma to Narada. Let this Rama Charitra be publicised so far kept dormant and undescribed and let the world be aware of the completed details as to how dharma prevails as the lasting reality, despite the vicissitudes and tests of Adharma as Truth is vindicated ultimately. Narada with the inspiration of Brahma affirmed to Valmiki Maharshi: Maharshi! what ever you are going to script as the ‘Ramayana’ shall most certainly be true and factual and hence be prepared soon as per ‘anushtup cchandas’. *Yāvat sthāsyanti girayah saritāś ca mahītale, tāvad rāmāyaṇakathā lokeṣu pracariṣyati/ yāvad rāmasya ca kathā tvatkr̥tā pracariṣyati, tāvad ūrdhvam adhaś ca tvam mallokeṣu nivatsyasi/* ‘As long as rivers flow and the might of mountains is sustained, the worlds should be fully saturated with ‘Ramayana Prachaara’. The Ramayana that you would script soon ought to become popular world wide and what ever seriatum and content followed by you would be lasting too! Narada thus informed Valmiki after the disappearance of Lord Brahma. Valmiki Maharshi was nonplussed with the rapid sequence of what all happened on that day. Once sensitised thus, the disciples of Valmiki kept on resounding repeatedly the shloka as they were literally dipped steep in. At the same time Valmiki Maharshi was mentally getting ready to take up the enormous task of Ramanayana of twenty four thousand stanzas plus and seeking to select the style of scripting according to meter as per chhanda vedaanga, with tuneful phrases, conjunctions, and rhymes with aptness and of tunes enriching the content and inner meanings and appropriate emotional appeals embedded therein.

The Maharshi’s Trance: As per Brahmarshi Narada’s directive, Valmiki Maharshi sought to script of Sampurna Ramayana should be to fulfill the human aspirations of Dharma- Artha- Kaama- Mokshas. Then he dutifully squatted in ‘padmaasana’, performed ‘aouposhana’ of water as a mark of ‘trikarana shuddhi’ or three folded purity of manasa-vaachaa-karmana or by way of topping up the thoughts by the heart-word -and deed. Then he pondered over the imaginary picture of Shri Rama- Lakshmana- Devi Sita; the Ayodhya Kingdom reigned by King Dasharatha with his queens; the related incidents of their collective incidents of laughter-mutual conversations-thought patterns, the do’s and don’ts of administration, and such detailing as filled on his powerful thought and memory screen. The Maharshi imagined the scene of the visits of Rama- Lakshmana and Devi Sita in sprawling garden tours and the interesting incidents thereof. Then the Maharshi seated firmly and had a rapid visual coverage on his mental retina. Just on the lines of what Sage Narada described, he visualised the Raghuvamsha Rama’s ‘Kaavya Nirmana’ or the outline of the epic of Ramayana. Rama’s birth, his outstanding bravery, his ready amiability to one and all, his unique popularity, his extreme patience and sense of forgiveness, his unparalleled truthfulness are to be emphasised on the memory screen. Maharshi Valmiki then imprinted on the screen as to how Rama and Lakshmana duo had experienced the amusing as also auspicious acts in the pioneering company of Sage Vishvamitra as imprinted on his retina including Shurpanakha’s teaching a lesson, Mithila King Janaka’s announcement of Devi Sita’s swayamvara, Shiva Dhanush bhanga in an encounter with Parashu Rama and Shri Rama Samvada, detailings of weddings of Sita Rama and Urmila Lakshmana; Rama Rajyaabhisheka vighna, the villainous role of Kaikeyi, Rama Lakshmana Sita Vana Vaasa, Dasharatha shoka vilaapa followed by his death, the sorrow of the public, the devotion of Guha the boatman, the charioteer Sumanta’s loyalty.

Maharshi Valmiki's trance continued: Shri Rama, Lakshmana and Devi Sita reaching Ganges- Bharadwaaja Muni darshana and as per his directive reaching Chitra Koota and enjoying the grandeur of its surroundings and building up a hutment for the threesome to live in-arrival of Bharata to meet them and requesting them to return back - performing the remainder obsequies of their departed father- Bharata's return with the 'Rama Paduka' on his head to keep it back on the 'Rajya Simhasana' with veneration- Bharata's stay at Nandigram-Rama's trio move out to dandaka -aranya-Viraadha vadha- Sharabhangi Muni darshana- Suteekshana samaagama- Anasuya and Sita devi together for some time [ Devi Anasuya the daughter of Kardama Muni and the wife of Atri Maharshi residing in their hermitage in the periphery of Chitrakuta- being the mother of Dattatreya as Tri Murtis sought to test her chastity but converted them as toddling babes, popular as Maha Pativratas like Ahalya, Draupadi, Sita, Tara, Mandodari, Anasuya and Sumati] Having heard the background of Devi Sita's life, Anasuya gifted a miraculous ointment which could maintain her beauty and paativratya for ever!] - Maharshi Agastya darshana as he gifted Vaishnava dhanush to Rama-confrontation with Surpanakha and Lakshmana's cutting off her ears and nose- Shri Rama's killing of Khara- Dushana- Trishira's killings by Rama- his killing of Maricha disguised as a golden deer desired by Devi Sita- avenging his sister Shurpanakha's act, Ravanaasura disguised as a Muni forcibly abducts Devi Sita- Shri Rama's heart -pangs of due to Devi viyoga- Jatayu vadha by Ravanaasura- Rama Lakshmana getting snared by Kabandha the headless demon and their killing of the demon-Rama Lakshmana thrilled by the surroundings of Pampa sarovara- Shabari blessed by Shri Rama- the latter's severe pangs of Devi Sita Viyoga- meeting Hanuman at the foothills of 'Gandhamaadana' mount and along with Hanuman escorted to the exiled Vaanara King, Sugreeva- firming up friendship with Sugreeva-Baali Sugreeva battle- Rama's killing Baali- Sugreeva regained the Kingship- Devi Tara the widow of Baali cries away and Rama assuaging her sorrow-'sharatkaala' interrugn months put a stop of Sugreeva's search for Devi Sita's whereabouts- Sugreeva 'pratijna' or swearing for 'Sita anveshana' or her whereabouts and his extensive for her- the blind Kite Sampati, the brother of Jatayu, with inner vision bestowed by Surya Deva, finally makes a break through of pointing out at Lanka the other side of the ocean shores under King Ravana's rule-Hanuman despatched to Lanka with Rama's golden ring to convince Devi Sita in exile- Hanuman seeks cross the ocean- Sumudra Deva warns Hanuman about 'Minaaki' who would rise up to halt but to be warned by Hanuman, Raakshasi 'Simhini' the shadow detector as Hanuman was flying be killed by him and ' Trikuta' mountatain the indicator of Lanka. Hanuman clearly followed the indicators by Samudra and entered the kingdom of Ravana's Lanka at midnight time. Being lonely he pondered over the next step as he peeped in the palace of Ravana who was enjoying liquor and then waited for the day break assuming a mini monkey form in the Ashoka Vatika and having spotted Devi Sita brooding with successive cryings when he saw Ravana visiting her too as she was surrounded by female rakshasis headed by Trijata. On the exit of Ravana, Hanuman sneaked in and having assumed his normal form approached Devi Sita with prostrations and gave his introduction as the devout follower as a Rama Bhakta. To convince Devi Sita, he handed over Lord Shri Rama's finger ring of gold- in return she gave her 'choodaamani'. Thereafter Hanuman resorted to violent deastruction of Lanka's capital city helter-skelter as the army of Lanka was annihilated and the survivals fled away. He then purposively surrendered by himself so that he would be taken away to the King Ravana who was seated the royal court. In the court, Hanuman thundered and with his tail elongated and got lit up by the Ravana sena burnt off all over the city regions creating a huge scare of the Lanka Capital. There after, Hanuman crossed back the ocean, participated in a revelling party to the waiting co-monkey comrades in the Madhuvan, approached Shri Rama and conceyed about the welfare of Devi Sita and gave back her 'choodamani' the hair ornament as a memoir, made preparations for travel to Lanka,

Rama's interaction with Samudra Deva, Nala the architect constructs a setu bridge across the Sea to let the Vanara Sena and the Selves walk over, overnight surrounding by Rama Sena around Lanka, Vibhishana- Shri Rama 'maitri', Vibhishana giving hints of killing Ravana, Rama's killing of the massive Kumbhakarna, killing of Meghanatha the son of Ravana, Ravana Vinaasha, Devi Sita's final relief, Vibhishana pattaabhisheka at Lanka, Rama's pushpaka vimana yatra with Sita-Lakshmana-Hanuman and Vibhushana and the full entourage to Ayodhya, Bharata's warm reception, Shri Rama - Devi Sita pattaabhisheka celebrations, warm send off to vaanara sena, Devi Sita 'tyaaga' to forests on false accusations by a washerman in Ayodhya, her subsequent happenings and the future episodes were picturesquely described by the outstanding Valmiki Maharshi of eternal fame.

### **Lava Kusha's Song**

[ This Valmiki Ramayana of 24000 stanzas was sung by Lava- Kusha kumars of Shri Rama Devi Sita at a Conference of Muni Mandali before Shri Rama]

As Shri Rama returned to Ayodhya and took over the Kingship, Maharshi Valmiki had deftly reconstructed the proceedings of Ramayana in which he scripted 24000 shlokas over five hundred sargas and seven khandas including Uttara Ramayana. Then Maha Jnaani Valmika wondered whether there could be any personage who could recite as a musical sonnet to let the contents be publicised to the public. Even as he was wondering likewise, the two popular Raja Kumaras Lava and Kusha appeared on his memory screen in the robes of Muni Kumaras and touched his feet respectfully. These two illustrious lads were very intelligent having learnt Veda Vedangas as also the Kshaatra Dharmas from himself! Then he had taught the proceedings of Ramayana upto the date so far. *pāṭhye geye ca madhuram pramāṇais tribhir anvitam, jātibhiḥ saptabhir yuktam tantrīlayasamanvitam/ hāsya śṛṅgāra - kāruṇyaraudravīrabhayānakaiḥ, bībhatsādirasair yuktam kāvyam etad agāyatām/* Valmiki Maharshi described to Lava-Kusha Kumaras not only the full details of Ramayana but also the methodology of singing the entire sonnet as per the Nava Rasas as also of sweetness of shortened-medium-elongated 'swaras' of voice sounds; further the singing should be as per anvitas- shadaja-and sapta swaras, my the veena the stringed musical instrument. The singing needs also as per 'taala- and nava rasaas' of shringara-karuna-hasya-rouudra-bhayanaka and so on. Both Lava and Kusha were also saturated with Gandharva Vidya and its 'sthaana shabda' comprising 'mandra-madhyama and taararupa trividha swaraas'. From the hridaya grandhi or of the heart base or kantha grandhi and shira grandhi, the sounds originating from heart-throat-and head, the swaras are originated as mandra-madhyama-taara or bass-medium-pitched up. [Nava Rasaas: Shringara Rasa is representative of romance- Bibhibhatsa Rasa is on account of reaction to the appalling behavioral pattern of the nature of human and other species-Roudra Rasa is generated by anger-Adbhuta Rasa is the outcome of high esteem and awful wonder of Bhagavan's bravery and valor- Bhaayanka Rasa emanated from instant reaction of several hissing cobras all over-Veera Rasa reflects the puzzling awe of such as of the blood red colour imbibed into the red lotuses-Haasya Rasa is due to 'sakhee- sakhaa jana kreedaa svabhaava- Karuna Rasa in response to Bhakti jana's unstinted and heartfelt devotion- and Shanti is as the Final Destination of 'Tadaatmyata' with Prakriti and Parameshwara!

[Gandharva Vidya: Narada Purana explains: In the Swara Shastra, the Swara of Archika is related to Rig Veda, 'Gaandhik' is to 'Gaadha' and 'Saamik' is to Sama Veda. A 'Swara' is according to 'Ruchas'

(Hymns) and their variations, while in ‘Gathas’ or metered rhythmic verses Sama Veda has ‘Vyavadhānaas’ or pauses. In the entire ‘Vangmaya’ Shastra (Vocabulary), pronunciation originates from ‘Vakshasthala’ (chest), ‘Kantha’ (throat) and ‘Mastaka’ (head); from the chest emerges the low level sounds normally resorted to morning singing, from the Kantha emerge the medium and very broad variety of sounds and from Mastaka are emanated high pitch sounds and their variations of volume. The *Sapta Swaras*-Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Da, and Ni-are ‘Prathama’ (Shadaja), ‘Dwitiya’ (Rishabha), ‘Tritiya’ (Gandhara), ‘Chaturtha’ (Madhyama), ‘Mandra’ (Panchama), ‘Krushtha’ (Dhaivata) and ‘Atiswara’ (Nishadha). Shadaja-Sa- stands for ‘Sagar’ (Sea) with peacock as the representative bird, ‘Muladhara’ (the base of the spine) as the Chakra (body part) and the ruling Deity as Ganapati. Rishabha Re-means bull representing the bird Skylark, ‘Swadhishtana’ or genital as the Chakra and the ruling Deity is Agni. Gandhara Swara ‘Ga’ means Gagan or Sky with goat as the representative animal, ‘Manipura’ (solar plexus/ naval) as the Chakra and Rudra is the concerned Deity. Madhyama-Ma-means the Middle, represented by the bird dove, Anahata (heart) being the relevant body part and Vishnu as the Ruler concerned. Panchama-Pa-means the fifth, represented by nightingale and ‘Vishuddha’ (throat) as the relevant body part and the Ruling Deity is Sage Narada. The Swara titled Dhaivata-Dha- means Dharti or Earth, the representative animal being horse, the relevant Chakra being ‘Aajna’ or the third eye and the Ruler being Sada Shiva. The Seventh Swara viz. Nishada-Ni- meaning Hunter and standing for the animal Elephant, has ‘Sahasrara’ (the crown of the head) as the body part, the Ruler being Surya as the Deity. Besides the Swaras, Shadaja, Madhyama and Gandhara are known as three ‘*Graamaas*’ (gamut or scale in music). Those who render ‘Saama Gana’ approve twenty graamas in Madhyama Swara, fourteen in Shadaja and fifteen in Gandhara.]

*Rupalakṣaṇasāṃpannau madhurasvarabhāṣīṇau, bimbādivoddhṛtau bimbau rāmadehāt tathāparau/*  
 Lava Kusha Kumars are stunningly handsome with excellent natural qualities, speaking in sweet voices in their conversational style. They are just like Shrirama’s prototypes worthy of high appreciation; as and when they converse in the congregations of Rishis or Brahmana panditas, Shri Rama charitra’s singing was always thrilling. Once in one of such ‘sabhas’, the Munis were in trance shedding tears of ecstasy responding with expressions of boundless joy as the stanzas and their tuneful singing was *par excellence!* As the incidents of Ramayana were described as per the contexts, the Munis and Panditas were so much enraptured that some gifted them stood up clapping and gifted valuable clothing, ‘mriga charmas’ on which they were seated and ‘rudraaksha maalaas’ and ‘yagnopaveetaas’ even! Some gifted ‘kamandulas’ or carrying sacred water vessels, ‘mekhalas’ or traditional shawls, walking sticks, ‘yajna paatras’ or vessels for Fire Sacrifices, and even their own ‘koupeenaas’ or underwears even;. All of them were clapping in high appreciation and blessings for the long life and auspiciousness to the boys.. As the lads were singing, they were dancing away as per the tune and the emotion concerned, while swinging the veena instrument, and swaying their fresh flower garlands drawing ready attention to the flocking onlookers. One day, Bharat noticed the gathering appreciative of Lava Kusha’s Ramayana’s song and dance sequence in the open public, and invited them to a concert in the Royal Court in the presence of Shri Rama himself. At the conclusion, Shri Rama remarked addressing Lakshman, Bharata and Shatrughnas: ‘These young lads had rendered Ramayana with such gusto and passion in such realistic style and this concert could be worthy repeatedly to organised manner’. As per the royal decree, crowds got bewitched to trances concert after concert to the unparalleled ecstasy and excitement of the public crowds at various theaters and road shows.

## Now the Substance of Valiki Ramayana Series of Baala-Ayodhya- Aranya- Kishkindha- Sundara- Yuddha -Uttara Khandas

Brahmarshi Narada taught Brahmana Vidyaarthi Pracheta the ‘two golden principles of not preaching what he himself would not practise and take to the name and thought of Rama till his death’. The boy learnt the Mantra ‘Mara’ or to Kill- kill ‘ahamkara’, ‘shadvarga shatrus’ of excessive desires, anger, selfishness and avarice, infatuation, ego and jealousy. Constant repetition of ‘Mara’ turned as ‘Rama’ gradually developed ‘valmikaas’ or anthills till his ‘atma saakshaatkaara’ or Self Realisation and eventually came to be reputed as Valmiki Maharshi. Once when he was bathing in the clear waters of Ganges he sighted two doves while mating but were shot to death by a hunter and the Maharshi cried : *maa nishaada pratishtaa tvamagamaḥ shasshvatiḥ samaah, yat krouncha mithunaa -dekam avadheeh kaama mohitam/* Nishaada! There could never be rest for long years till eternity, for you killed the mating birds unsuspectingly! This is the ‘prerepana’ or the inspiration of the illustrious scripting of Valmiki Ramayana! Maharshi Valmiki asked Brahmarshi Narada: *Konyasmin saampratam loke gunavaan kascha veeryavaan, dharmagjnascha kritagjnascha veeryavaan, dharmagjnascha kritagjnascha Satyavaakyo dhridhavitatah’* as to who indeed was the Guna- Veerya-Dharmagjna- Kritagjna- Satya Vaadi- Dhridha Sankalpa or of the superior traited- brave- virtuous-ever grateful - truthful and decisive on Earth during the Treta Yuga! Ramayana is relevant now as much as in the past -present and for ever as narrated in Six Khandas or sugar cane stems viz. Baala Khanda-Ayodhya Khanda- Aranya Khanda-Kishkindha Khanda-Sundara Khanda-Yuddha Khanda. Baala Khanda comprises seventy seven Sargas- Ayodhya Khanda one hundred nineteen Sargas-Aranya Khanda has seventy three Sargas-Kishkindha Khanda has sixty seven Sargas-Sundara Khanda comprises of sixty eight Sargas- Yuddha Khanda has one twenty eight Sargas. Additionally Uttara Khanda has one hundred eleven Sargas.

### Baala Khanda

The overview of Ramayana by Maharshi in his trance- Valmiki Ramayana of 24000 stanzas was sung by Lava- Kusha kumars of ‘Shri Rama -Devi Sita’ at a Conference of Muni Mandali before Shri Rama- ----- From the Vaivaswa Manvantara to the Ikshvaku Vamsha at Ayodhya till King Dasharatha to Shri Rama- King Dasharatha-Vasishtha- Ministers plan to perform Ashvamedha Yagna and despatch Sumantra the Charioteer request to request Maharshi Rishyashringa- Historic Arrival of Rishyashringa heralding the season to rains- There after Vasishthas gave to the King ‘yagjna diksha’- removed evil influences - made arrangements of the yagjna like architecture, construction and maintenance; groups of jyotishadi vedangas; workforce; nata- naatya -nartaka groups,cooking, culinary,construction of colonies, conference Halls etc.Ashvamedha Yagna executed gloriously- Putra Kaamekshi Yagjna- Celestials preparing for arrival of Maha Purusha-Devas and Indra approached Vishnu to desrtoy Ravasnasura as Vishnu said only in human form Rama, Dasharatha’s son could to so. At the Yagjna, a Maha Purusha emerged from the flames and handed over a ‘payasa patra’ to Dasharatha to distribute to his three queens as instructed.As Rama-Lakshmana-Bharata-Shatrugnas were born thus, Indra and Devas manifested ‘Vaanaraas’ including Hanuman with Ashta Siddhis. Dasharatha distributes ‘payasa’ to queens Koushalya-Sumitra- Kaikeyi -Samskararas to Ramaadi Kumaras; Arrival of Brahmarshi Vishvamitra at Ayodhya to King Dasharatha. Vasishtha assured Dasharatha about Shri Rama’s safety in safeguarding the Vishvamitra Yagjna as the satisfied King allowed Rama Lakshmanas and teach Bala-Atibala. The trio reached Angamuni Ashram-Sarayu-Ganga confluence at Malada- Kurusha Villages where Indra hi d-the reason was that Indra killed brahmana Vritraasura.-They enter ‘Tataka Vana’-Rama Lakshmanas

encounter Tataka and Vishvamitra prevails on stree hatya-Vishvamitra teaches most of archery mantras to Rama Lakshmanas-Vishvamitra takes Rama brothers to the 'Vamana Ashrama' -Yaginas spoilt in other ashramas by Maricha Subahus punished by Rama-'Ashramavashis' conveyed about Janaka's Yagjna and Shiva Dhanush- Vishvamitra seeks take heros to Siddhashrama by difficult terrain and explains about adjacent Kusha Desha, King Kushanabha, Apsara daughters and Vayu Deva-By boat from Shonabhadra to Ganges, Vishvamitra explains about flows of Ganges - birth of Skanda- King Sagara's tapasya for sons- queen Sumati begets 60,000 strong sons while Keshini just only Asamanjasa.Sagara planned Ashvamesha yagna, Indra stole the Sacrificial horse- Sumati's strong sons searched bhuloka-and patalas with pomp and noise-Kapila Muni curses the sons in patala to become stones-Asamanjasa goes in search and conveys the result to Sagara who dies- King Asamanjasa gaveup hopes and so does his son Amshuman and the latter's son Dilip. But Bhagiradha takes up the thread and prays to Ganga from skies at Gokarna Tirtha.Bhagiratha standing by foot fingers, invoked Maha Deva-Crossing Ganga, Rama approaching Vaishali asked about Deva Danavas-Having failed to secure Amrit, Diti- daitya mother-seeks to destroy Indra- Diti fell asleep unconsciously, Indra entered her Garbha with his 'Vajraayudha', saw the fully grown up boy inside ,cajoled him saying 'don't cry, don't cry' and sliced the child into seven parts and further to forty nine sub-parts-Vishvamitra stated that they were at that very place where above instances had occurred when there was an Ikshvaaku Kings Kakutstha- Sumati and then proceed to Mithila the kingdom of Janaka Raja!Sumati showed the way to Gautama Ashram en route Mithila.- Entering King Janaka's Yagnyashaala, Vishvamitra introduces Rama Lalshmanas and their acts of glory so far to King Janaka and his Purohita 'Shataananda'-Having congratulated Rama Lakshmanas, Shatananda makes a detailed coverage on the lifestory of Vishvamitra who as a Kshatriya King through tapsyas became a Brahmarshi!King Vishvamitra sighted Shabali Kamadhenu and demands it but was refused; in a battle Shabala smashed the army but the latter took to severe tapasya.Brahma blesses Vishvamitra be the status of Maharshi-Trishanku desires to reach swarga being mortal and Vishvamitra creates a mid- sky swarga with his tapo bala; -Ambarisha performs Yagjna at Pushkara but as sacrifice animal was stolen, a 'nara pashu boy' was arranged - Vishvamitra took pity but to no avail; got entangled instead by co-Munis.-Vishvamitra disturbed by 'Menaka' at Pushkara, then shifted to heights of himalayas when 'Rambha' disturbed too-Ultimatelyeven as Indra ever stole his food, Maharshi stopped his breathing but kept on his tapsya on Brahma, and the latter conferred the title of 'Brahmarshi'! Vishvamitra conveys Rama's desire to show Shiva Dhanush and Janaka gives the background of the - Dhanush ; King Nimi was gifted Shiva Dhanush at his son Devarata's wedding; Devi Sita as 'Ayonija' as Janaka tills bhuyagjna.-Rama lifted up the Shiva Dhanush as if it were a toy, straightened it with great ease, held the middle part, and as though of a child play broke into two pieces. That breaking resulted in earthshaking like reverberations.King Janaka said:Once wedded to Shri Rama, my daughter ought to be proud to his life partner and bring in glory to Janaka vamsha! Brahmarshi said: tathaastu!- King Janaka sent a messenger to King Dasharatha to state: Shri Rama in the midst of all of us had managed the control and breaking of the age old Shiva Dhanush and as per my repeated announcements would like to propose my daughter Devi Sita to Shri Rama in a wedding ceremony and therefore request you to attend the same along with your queens and the entire retenue. Besides Rama and Devi Sita, may we also propose the wedding of Lakshmana with my younger daughter Urmila too- Dasharadha was pleased and addressed Vasishtha and Ministers to leave next morning -Accompanied by Gurus, wives and intimate and other relatives and friends, King Dasharatha was happy and blissful and instructed Sumantra to let the royal treasurer carry surplus funds of cash, jewellery, nine gems ahead and for their safety there ought to be fool proof defence arrange -ments. A four day procession with needed halts on way moved on with

plentiful food and drinks. On their arrival at the outskirts of the Kingdom, King Janaka made elaborate reception with music, song, dance and ecstatic welcome showers of flowers-In an open Janaka Sabha, Vasishtha narrated the glory of Ikshvaku Vamsha: Brahma Deva the Swayambhu manifested Marichi, from the latter was born Kashyapa whose son was Vivisvaan as the latter gave birth to Vaivasvata Manu. Manu was the foremost Prajapati and from Manu was born Ikshvaku the first King of Ayodhya. Then were highlighted: Pruthu-Mandhata-Sagara- Bhagiratha- Ambareesha-Nahusha-Yayati-Naabhaga- Aja- and Dasharatha- King Janaka explained about his vamsha from renowned King Nimi ,whose son named Mithibeing the ever first Janaka as the ‘vamsha’ known as of Janakas. Then he introduced Kushadhvaja his younger brother desirous of getting his two daughters to Bharata and Shatrughna and declared Mandaveeka and Shutekeerti as their respective wives. respectively.- Public Declarations were made in the presence of Kings, Maharshis, and the public and hectic preparations were made; The vivahika vedika was got ready befitting the status and magnificence of two great Kings. Then Janaka welcomed the brides and bridegrooms.-- After the festivities concluded, guests were showered with precious gifts, the groom's party moved back on the return journey but a terrible sand storm was faced. Parashu Rama arrived shouting ‘Rama Rama’ with terrible anger as the Shiva Dhanush was broken. Dasharatha tried to pacify but with anger, handed over Vishnu Dhanush and challenging Rama to break it if at all possible. An angry Rama not only lifted the dhanush as though Vishnu did against Madhukaitabha daityas but stated that with that very dhanush he could as well demolish Parashu Rama too! An utterly humiliated Parashu Rama was then instructed to return to Mahendra Mountain for ever!- As the return procession finally reached the city of Ayodhya , it was ready with dhvaja-patakas, welcome sounds of drums and music, dances and decorations. Dasharatha along with his sons and new daughters-in-law along with the Queens made an auspicious entry. Later, Raja Kumaras shared royal responsibilities. Rama and Sita became famed as Vishnu and Lakshmi.

### Ayodhya Khanda

Considering Shri Rama's eligibility for Ayodhya's Yuvarajatva,King Dasharatha convenes a durbar meeting -King Dasharatha secures public approval for Rama's Yuvarajatva-Dasharatha discusses the details of Rama's Rajyabhisheka with Vasishtha and asks Rama to attend the Rajya sabha- Rama seeks his mother Devi Koushlya's blessings and endears Lakshmana-Dasharatha and Vasishtha ask Rama and Sita to observe fasting before the celebrations of Yuvarajatva- Ayodhya public's joy and pre-celebrations-Villainous Manthara gets upset on Rama's Yuvarajatva and reaches Kaikeyi and provokes and poisons Kaikeyi's mindset suggesting Rama's Vana Vaasa and Bharata's elevation as Yuvaraja- Fully poisoned by Manthara, Kaikeyi enters ‘Kopa griha’- the symbolic Anger Chamber-King Dasharatha seeks to pacify her beloved queen Kaikeyi-Kaikeyi seeks to remind of Dasharatha's promise of granting her of two boons at a battle as she saved him, demands Rama's ‘vana vaasa’/ Bharata's Rajyabhisheka-Dasharatha's remorse at Kaikeyi's undue demands even having admitted the boons and pleads with Kaikeyi not to insist but in vain - Dasharatha's intense cryings and persistent pleadings with Kaikeyi but she argued in the name of dharma citing the tradition of truthfulness of Ikshvaku ancestors- Kaikeyi's stubbornness to relent - Vashishta Maharshis intervention fails and Charioteer Sumantra asked for Rama's arrival at the King's Palace-Sumantra arrives at Rama's palace while Rama and Lakshmana on the way to King's Palace enjoying public's joy at Rama's elevation-Excellent preparations in the city for the celebrations by the following day- Rama witnessing heart broken Dasharatha and Kaikeyi's rude intervention demanding Rama's Vana Vaasa for fourteen years in prescribed dress code and of Bharat's Kingship-Rama agrees to her terms and proceeds to Koushalya to break the news - Koushalya's sudden and of tragic news leads

to agony and standstill senselessness as Rama seeks to pacify-Lakshmana gets agitated at the turn of the events and so did Kousalya but Rama assuages their badly hurt as Rama explains that 'pitru vaakya paripaalana' ought to be his life's motto and dharma. Rama asked Lakshmana to remove all the preparatory materials like the vessels etc. meant for his Rajyabhisheka since that would be unwanted then-Reacting to remove the material for Rajyabhisheka, Lakshmana argued whether the decision was correct, but Rama once again reiterated as irrevocable - Devi Kousalya, reacting sharply about Rama's decisiveness to undergo vana vaasa resolves to follow him, and Rama invoked the argument of her preserving Pativrata and should not desert her husband-With great difficulty, Rama finally convinces Kousalya to let him leave for 'vana vaasa'and she relented finally.- As Rama left Kousalya with mutual anguish, the Public too was unaware of the tragic development, much less Devi Sita who was horrified-Devi pleads her accompanying Rama for the forest life -Rama dissuades Sita to accompany him for Vana Vaasa-Sita invokes her 'Pativrata Dharma' and insists- Devi Sita sobs heavily and Rama had to finally concede-Lakshmana too insists on accompanying Rama- latter agrees; Rama desires of offering charities- Sita Rama's charity to Vasishtha Kumara Sujyagjna and wife, brahmanas, brahmacharis, servants- Sita Rama Lakshmanas visit Kaikeyi's palace to meet Dasharatha as Nagara vaasis weep away -Sita Rama Lakshmanas approach Dasharatha with queens before vana vaasa; the latter swoons and recovers and embraces them and swoons again-Sumantra criticizes Kaikeyi as the latter justifies-Dasharatha instructs treasure to be sent along with Sumatra for initial phase of vana vaasa; Rama Lakshmanas dressed up in valkals as Vishtha rejects Sita wearing that dress- Dasharatha too rejects Sita wearing Valkava vastras even as Kaikeyi was unhappy, but Rama approves--Dasharatha breaks into cryings, Sumantra arrives with the chariot, Sita receives 'pati seva upadesha' from Kousalya, Rama Sita Lakshmanas bid farewell to all - Sita Rama Lakshmanas perform pradakshinas to Dasharatha and the mothers, Sita Rama Lakshmanas alight the chariot and the crowds get terribly agitated-As the unruly crowd was interrupting the Chariot several times, the citizens were crying away aloud shattering the skies, especially the women folk-King Dasharatha cries and swoons for Rama, distances from Kaikeyi's palace and shifts to Kousalya's-Maha Rani Kousalya's agony asDevi Sumitra assuages Kousalya's tormented psyche-Rama appeals to the Ayodhya public not to hurt Dasaratha or Bharata- the elders of the public insist on following Rama upto Tamasa river banks- Rama Sita Lakshmana's over night stay at Tamasa banks- they leave earliest unnoticed- public felt bad-Ayodhya elders and women got disturbed inability to see off Rama to the deeper forests crossing Tamasa- Ayodhya woman folk cry away Rama Sita Lakshmanas for further 'vana vaasa'- Public of Kosala Janapada throng at the Chariot carrying Ramas whoalso cross Veda shruti-Gomati-Skandika rivers- Ramas arrive at Shringavera pura on the banks of Ganga- stay overnight and Nishada Raja Guha welcomes them-Lakshmana - Guha feel and exchange expressions of sadness-Guha navigates Sita Rama Lakshmanas across Ganga- Rama bids farewell to the reluctant Sumantra- Sita's intense prayers to the Sacred Ganga- after crossing Ganga reach Vatsa desha for night halt- As Rama asks Lakshmana to return back to Ayodhya at least now but Lakshmana protests-Ramas reach Bharadvaja ashram and the Maharshi advises them to settle at Chitrakoota mountain - while they cross Yamuna from Prayaga- Sita prays to Yamuna- their overnight stay at otherside of Yamuna-Ramas reach Chitrakoota-Maharshi Valmiki at ashram- Maharshi teaches Lakshmana Vaastu Shastra- Sumantra reaches Ayodhya- 'aarta naadaas' by public and Dasharatha and queens-Sumantra conveys Shri Rama- Lakshmanas's messages to the parents-Condition of the Ayodhya public and at the state of Rama's distresses Dasharatha extremely- Anguish of Devi Kousalya sought to be assuaged by Sumatra-Kousalya's crying protests against Dasharatha-Regretful Dasharatha with folded hands and prostrations seeks pardon from Kousalya-Dasharatha's confession to Kousalya about his

youthful blunder of killing a Muni Kumara - Having revealed details of the Muni hatya, the helpless cryings of his blind parents - Vriddha Muni's curse that Dasaradha would die in son's absence- Dasharatha - Pursuant to Dasharatha's death, his queens cried out, deathwise-praises and music followed- Queens, Ministers and staff- and public vision the body as retained in oil vessels- Maharshi's assemble with Purohita Vasishtha to decide on the successor Kingship- Vasishtha despatches messengers to Kaikeya kingdom to bring Bharata along with Shatrughna.- As messengers arrive at Bharata's place, the latter felt 'dussvapnas' early morning- Ayodhya's messengers arrive at Bharat's maternal uncle's palace, bring gifts and message to return- Bharata Shatrughnas arrive at Ayodhya and found the city as silent and listless!- Bharata reaches Kaikeyi palace and hears the news of his father's demise and Rama Sita Lakshmana 'vana vaasa' and Bharata's rajyaabhisheka!- The rattled up Bharata protests violently and detests- Kaikeyi's evil mindedness- Bharata's open protests against Kaikeyi- Bharata's 'shapatha' / swearing in the presence of Kousalya- Raja Dasharatha's 'antyeshti' / 'dahana samskaara'- Bharata performs Dasharatha's 'shraaddha karma' and 'maha daanaas'- collection of ashes and 'nimajjana'- 'daaha samskaara'- Shatrughna attacks the villainess Kumbha, the servant maid of Kaikeyi, to senselessness and spares her death! Ministers propose Bharata's 'rajyaabhisheka'- but the latter proposes only temporary authority as Shri Rama ought to be the real King- Bharata initiates the construction of comfortable 'Raja Marga' from Rivers Sarayu to banks of Ganga- As 'mangala vaadyas' were heard on a morning, Bharata felt uneasy and asked Vasishtha to come to Rajya sabha with Ministers and officials- Bharata disagrees with Vasishtha that kingship was Rama's birth right and only a passing solution now- Bharata's vana yatra and night halt at Shringaverapura - Nishada Raja hosts Bharata's overnight stay before crossing Ganga the next day- Bharata and Nishada Raja exchange views of Rama's magnanimity- Nishada Raja extols about the nobility and devotion to Rama of Lakshmana- On hearing details of Rama Sita Lakshmanas, Bharata swooned down, Shatrughna and the mothers cried away, and persisted on the details of the threesome regarding their food and sleeping patterns- Guha showed the bed of 'kusha grass' by which Sita Ramas slept on that night and the 'valkala vastras' left behind- Bharata accompanied by sena, mothers, Munis and public arrives at Bharadvaja ashram- Bharata visits Bharadvaja 'ashram'- The Maharshi bestows Bharata and entire entourage including vast army a heavenly hospitality- Bharata introduces his three mothers and Bharadvaja blesses them and indicates the way to Chitrakoota- Bharata's Chitrakoota yatra described- Shri Rama shows the beauty and grandeur of Chitrakoota to Sita- Shri Rama displays the exquisiteness of River Mandakini to Sita- As the wild beasts and birds running astray of Chitrakoota, Lakshmana went up atop a shaala tree as an army was nearing and Lakshmana was angered- As Lakshmana saw Bharata approaching, he got angry but Rama cooled him down- Bharata and advance party located Rama's 'kuteera' and visited the details inside- Bharata Shatrughnas locate Rama, prostrate and crying- Shri Rama having enquired Bharata's welfare gave elaborate lessons of Kshatra Dharmas on his own- Rama asks Bharata the reason of his arrival as Bharata requests him to return and accept Kingship; but Rama refuses- Bharata requests Rama to reconsider Kingship and informs King Dasharath's sad demise- Rama- Sita- Lakshmanas cry away at father's death- offerings of tarpana and pinda daana - With Vasishtha ahead the three Devis arrive, all the sons prostrate the mothers and Vasishtha too- Bharata broaches about Rama's return & kingship - Bharata again pesters Rama to assume kingship- Shri Rama instructs Bharata to return to Ayodhya at once- Muni Jaabali supports Bharata and his argument that sounded spread of 'nastikata'- Rama asserts that karma and rebirth are the corner stones of 'Astikata'- Vasishtha traces the geneology of Ikshvaku Vamsha and asks to uphold its fame and assume Kingship as the eldest son of Dasharatha- Shri Rama reiterates that 'Pitru Agna' was paramount yet doubled edged that he should undergo vana vaasa and Bharata should rule for that period ! -As Bharata was not ready yet

to return to Ayodhya, Shri Rama grants his ‘charana paadukaas’ and finally bid farewell to Bharata and the entourage-Bharata and the entourage reach back to Maharshi Bharadwaja’s ashram and return to Ayodhya-On return to Ayodhya Bharata realises the sad state of the city of Ayodhya-Bharata installs Shri Rama ‘Paadukaas’ at Nandigrama and administers Ayodhya from there-All the Rishis of Chitrakoota commenced leaving the place due to problems of Rakshasas-Sita Rama Lakshmanas too decided to leave Chitrakoota and proceeded to Maharshi Ashram of Atri and Maha Pativrata Anasuya-Devi Anasuya and Sita exchange views- Anasuya gives gifts to Sita- Sita describes her ‘swayamvara’-Thus Devi Sita having accepted the gifts from Devi Anasuya reaches Shri Rama for overnight stay at Atri Maharshi Ashram for further journey.

[ Some Detail on Ayodhya as follows

Ayodhya: *Akaaro Brahmatah proktam Yakaaro Vishnuruchyate, Dhakaaro Rudra rupascha Ahodhyaanaama raajate/ Sarvopa Paatakaairyuktair rahmahatyaadi paataakai, Na yodhyaa shaktate yasmaattaam ayodhyaam tato viduh/* (Skanda Purana, Vaishnava Khanda Ayodhyaa) Ayodhyaa is defined as ‘A- kaara is Brahma, Ya-kaara is Vishnu and Dha-kaara is Rudra Swarupa; thus Ayodhya is a composite form of Tri Murthis. Maha Pataakas too are demolished by naming the Name of Ayodhya!) Valmiki Ramayana in Bala kaanda exclaims: *Manunaa Maanavendrena saa Puri nirmitaa swayam/* (Manu confirms that he himself constructed Ayodhya himself!) In his opening introduction of Ayodhya Kaanda of Skanda Purana, Maha Muni Suta greets Bhagavan Shri Rama saying: *Namaami Parama-atmanam Ramam rajiva lochanam, Atasikusuma shyamam Ravanaantaka mavyayam /* ( My greetings to Lord Shri Rama the Paramatma who is lotus eyed and of blue colour the terminator of the cruel and vily Ravanaasura). Ayodhya puri is so sancrosanct that sinful beings could ever enter it, let alone reside there! From his right foot thumb emerged Ganga and Sarayu river got manifested from left foot thumb. That is why both the Rivers are Sacred and worthy of prostrations and bathing in these rivers is as effective as destroying Brahma hatya sin. Even before the Avatara of Shri Rama, Ayodhya was the Capital of Surya Vamsha Kings of Ikshwaku; the latter was the son of Vaivashwata Manu and to this dynasty belonged to the illustrious Bhagiratha, Ambarisha, Nahusha, Yayati, Nabhaga, Ajan and Dasharatha. Skanda Purana in Vaishnava Khanda, Ayodhya Mahatmya gives the account of Veda Vijnana Vishnu Sharma whose severe Tapasya attracted Maha Vishnu darshana and the Pandita’s request to him him the boon of constant Vishnu darshana; in turn Maha Vishnu instructed Sudarshana Chakra to dig up Bhumi and bring up Ganga from Patala Loka and the resultant Sacred Water flow was materialised as *Chakra Tirtha*. Earlier, Brahma himself resided at Ayodhya even before the incarnation of Shri Rama and hence the emergence of *Brahma Kund* . Brahma conveyed to Devas about the significance of this Tirtha -as given in Skanda Purana- would be such as that whoever performed formal snaana at the Kund and gave away daana would have been deemed as securing Ahwamedha yagna phala and blessed to fly as clad in Divya Vastras to Brahma Loka for residing there till the ensuing Pralaya. From Brahma kunda to the not too far Sarayu River is *Runa Vimochana Tirtha* where Muni Lomasha popularised specially among his followers who were delighted as the debts of one’s very existence by way of births and deaths to parents and sons and the teacher, quite apart from the material debts of the current and past ‘janmas’ are cleared by snanas at the Tirtha. To the east of the Runa Vimochana Tirtha is the *Paapa mochana Tirtha*. Skanda Purana narrates the story of Panchala desha Brahmana was Maha Paapi who became conscious of his heaping stocks of sins and casually heard the conversation of a Group of Sadhus visiting Ayodhya. He visited Paapa Vimochana Tirtha along with them and happened to bathe on a Maagha Krishna Chaturdashi and also performed daana karyas and he realised an unusual transformation in his psyche and was surprised to

vision a Viman beckoning him and flew to Vishnu dhaam. Ahead of the glorious Paapa machana Tirtha is the *Sahasra dhaara Tirtha* which is known for demolishing all obstacles in life and overcoming enemies by mere snaana with faith and mental discipline. This indeed was the very Tirtha where after the close of the entire Ramayana, Lord Shri Rama instructed Lakshmana to bathe and by his own Mantra Shakti assume the Form of Adi Sesha! Actually, the background was that when Shri Ram who had once had an important visitor viz. Kaal Devata about which even Lakshman was unaware and instructed Lakshman not to enter and allow any visitor to enter either. Lakshman was faithfully guarding the entry of Rama Nivas by taking sincere rounds up and down the 'dwaar'. Meanwhile Maha Tapaswi Durvasa Maharshi who is noted for his short temper arrived and affectionately asked Lakshmana to let Ram inform of his arrival for Rama darshan. Lakshman being aware of Duravas's shaapa shakti alerted Rama of the Muni's arrival. With a view to protect his own Satya Vak Paripalana of Lakshman's disobedience despite his instruction, Rama had to resort to the extreme step of asking Lakshmana to perform Prana tyaga of Lakshmana. As Lakshmana took the form of Adisesha and visited Indra Loka even as the Sahasra Manis and their luster vanished, the lest the Tirtha place on Sarayu diminish significance, Indra and Devas arrived on the Spot ensured and in fact doubled its glory and sanctity and named it Sahasra Dhaara Tirtha and Lord Shri Rama blessed the title too for the benefit of posterity and Loka Kalyan. *Swarga dwaara dhaara*: Skanda Purana further describes as follows: Every Tirtha darshana has one's own benefits yet Swaga dwaara Tirtha has its own: Pratah kaala snana, japa-tapa-havana-upavasa-darshana-dhyaana-adhyana- daanas have their distinct results and those beings like the Chatur varna humans, mriga-pakshi-jala chara-krimi keetakaadi pranis happen to die at this Tirtha are qualified to direct access to Swarga and Vaikuntha dhaam. Bhagavan Vishnu in his Avatara Swarupas, especially of Shri Rama with his wife and brothers are stated at this Tirtha to select beings for their respective Punya Phalas and decide their 'nirnayas' based on their own past karmas overshadowing their contributions at the Swarga dwaara snaanas and punya karma mix. And so does the presence of Kailasha Vaasi along with Devi Parvati and their followers would oversee the process of selection of Beings for the Higher Loka Prapti, asserts the Skanda Purana. Near Swarga dwaara is the Nageshwara nath Mandir; it is stated that originally this Murti was originally made of Kusha grass but later King Vikramadyta resurrected and re-established the Idol with Veda mantras in a move to revive several 'Praachina' or age old Mandirs in Ayodhya. Yattris perform Pinda daana at Swarga dwaara Ghat with great devotion and bhakti. *Chandra Sahasra Tirtha* where Chandra sahasra vrata Udyapana is performed as also Argha danas are done on every Purnima Tithis to Chandra-Rohini Devis. *Swarna Tirtha* where Maharshi Vishwamitra's sishya Koutsa Muni called on Raghu Rama once and said that he wished for so much of wealth which he desired to give to his Guru which Rama too might not possess. Shri Rama thought for a while and requested the Muni to please stay back in his court of Ayodhya overnight. Then Shri Rama invited Kubera Deva to bring considerable gold and on receiving it gave it away to Koutsa Muni. Next morning, Rama gave away all the gold given by Kubera and kept up his word by redonating the same to the Muni and truly satisfied him. This Swarna Tirtha had thus attained a gold-bestowing reputation and fulfill the material desires of who ever performed worship by way of snaana- daana-Japas with utmost faith. One of Ayodhya's major Mandirs is *Kanak Bhavan* which is quite big and mention worthy which was supposed to be of Shri Ram's 'antahpura' or the interior palace hall where Devi Sita resided too. There are big sized Sita Rama Idols seated on a throne together in the Mandir as also the idols of the very past which were however smaller. From Kanaka Bhavan away is the most famed **Shri Rama Janma Sthaana** which was stated to have been rebuilt as Masjid Babri; this Masjid which became the hot controversy was partially destroyed to make way for the original now albeit as a small make believe Mandir. Near to Raa Janma Sthaana are Sita Rasoyi or kitchen, Kopa bhavan or

the Place where the love-fight Rama- Sita couple stayed; Ratna Simhasan or the Royal Throne made of jewels, Ananda Bhavan or the Palace of Joy, Ranga Mahal or the Hall of Music and Dance etc. The other Places worthy of visiting in Ayodhya's Sarayu River banks include *Lakshman Ghat* with a five feet Lakhmana Swami in the Mandir exclusively dedicated to him; *Ahalya Ghat* where Lord Rama is stated to have performed Yagna; *Hanuman gadhi* on an elevated sixty steps an Lord Hanuman in seated form; *Darshaneshwar*, *Mani Parvat* with Ashoka Stupa of broken 200 ft; *Dantana Kund* where Rama was stated to have had his mouth wash, where also Gautama Buddha, while in Ayodhya too rested. *Dasharatha kund* was the Place some few km. away on Sarayu River banks where King Dasharatha's 'Antya Dahana' was stated to have been performed. A mini- Parikrama of some 4 km around Ayodhya touches Ramaghat, Raghunadha Das gaddi, Sita kund, Agni Kund, Vidya kund, Mani Parvat, Kubera parvat, Sugriva parvat, Lakshman ghat, Swarga dwaar and back to Ram ghat. While no doubt Shri Rama Navami Celebrations on Chaitra Shukla Navami are famed for several days every year, Shravana Shukla Paksha festivities and Sarayu River snaaas are considered as very sacred, especially on Kartika Purnima.]

#### Aranya Khand:

Shri Rama - Devi Sita-Lakshmanas felicitated in 'Muni ashramas'- As Rama-Sita -Lashmanas proceeded into the thick forest, they encounterd Rakshasa Viraath- Exchange of hot words by Rama Lakshmanas with Rakshasa Viraatha-Rama Lakshmanas kill Rakshasa Viraatha--Shri Rama-Sita-Lakshmanas visit Sharabhang Muni's ashrama and after 'atithya' the Muni departs for Brahma Loka- Vaanaprastha Munis approach Shri Rama for safety from Rakshasaas and Rama Lakshmanas assure and pacify them Shri Rama-Sita-Lakshmanas reach the ashram of Muni Suteekshna who offers 'atithya' overnight- Next early morning Rama-Sita-Lakshmanas exit Suteekshna ashram-Gathering of innocent commoners and Munis seek protection from frequent- attacks by Rakshasaas and Devi Sita enumerates the tenets of dharma-Rama Lakshmanas assure and make 'pratiginas' of Kshatriya kula duty to safeguard the tenets of Dharma-Rama Sita Lakshmanas visit Panchapsara Tirtha and Maandikarana ashrama and after visiting other Muni Ashramas too, visit the ashram of the brother of Agastya Maharshi who lauds the glory of Agastya- Rama Lakshmanas visit Agastya Maharshi and after welcoming them, Agastya gifts 'diyvaastras'-Maharshi Agastya complements Devi Sita as a 'pativrata' and directs-ama Lakshmanas to construct Panchavati Ashram-On the way to Panchavati, Rama-Sita-Lakshmanas meet the Great Grudhra Raja Jatayu who vividly explains the family background of Jatayu-The compact and vastu based 'Panchavati Parnashaala' of Rama-Sita- Lakshmanas reside comfortably-Happy living by Rama Sita Lakshmanas at Panchavati through Hemanta Ritu and Godavari Snaanaas-Rakshasi Shurpanakha arrives at Panchavati, introduces, proposes to Rama to wed as his wife-Shurpanakha compromises to wed Lakshmana as he was single there but the latter cuts off her ears and nose-Khara incensed the treatment to sister and despatches fourteen rakshasaas to kill Rama Lakshmanas-Shri Rama devastates fourteen followers of Khara- Shurpanakha reaches brother Khara , conveys Rama's killing fourteen rakshasas, provokes Khara to seek revenge-Khara Dushana Rakshasaas along with fourteen thousand sena attack Panchavati of Ramas-Khara then noticed dushhakunas like donkey brayings and squeaks of vultures from the sky, but having ignored these, Khara reaches Shri Rama 'ashrama' -As the dushhakunas loomed large, Rama hopes for the doom of Rakshasaas and victory for himself- as a precaution, he asked Lakshmana to hide Devi Sita in a cave and got readied for the battle-Rakshasaas attack Sri Rama, deva gandharva rishis apprehensive, but the invincible Shri Rama devastates thousands of rakshasaas single handed-Senapati Dushana and thousands of rakshasaas devastated by singular Shri Rama-Trishira, Khara Maha Rakshas's Senapati exterminated-Fierce battle between Shri Rama and Khara Rakshasa by the usage of their

expertise in dhanur vidya-Exchange of heated arguments between Shri Rama and Khara Rakshas whose mace attack defended by Rama -Shri Rama the action hero hits Khara Rakshasa to death and affirms victory celebrated by Celestials and Rishis- Akampana Rakshasa reaches Ravana's Lanka and poisons the latter's mind hatch a vicious plot to lure Devi Sita by a deer impersonated by Mareecha-Shurepanakha hurt physically with mutilated ears and nose arrives grievously at Maha Ravana Sabha:- Highly alarmed and frustrated Shurpanakha incites and ignites her brother Ravana-Ravana was inquisitive from Shurpanakha about details of Rama-Sita-Lakshmanas as the latter asks Sita to be abducted and wedded to Sita ,Ravana's once again approaches Mareecha once again to seek the latter's help- Ravana's once again seeks the help of Mareecha to kidnap Devi Sita-'The self shaken up Mareecha appeals to Ravana to very kindly withdraw the plan in view of Rama's extraordinary mental acumen and physical energy-Mareecha explains his erstwhile experience of Vayavyastra and requests Ravana to pardon him-Mareecha seeks to further convince Ravana's as Mareecha entered having assumed the form of a Maya Harina or a feigned deer-Ravana's resents Mareecha's argumentative pattern and commands Mareecha to get involved in the mission of 'Sitaapaharana' while detailing the plan of abduction-Mareecha issues ultimate warning to the doom of Ravana and disaster of Lanka Kingdom-Rakshasa Mareecha forced by Ravana's to assume the deer form of glitter and attract Sita's attention-Even as Lakshmana doubted about the Maya Mriga, Sita was bent to secure it alive or dead and Rama had to yield to her intense wish proceeded with the chase, while entrusting responsibility to Lakshmana. chase.-Shri Rama kills Mareecha, no doubt, but the latter shouts for help in Rama's tone causing gitters to Sita-As expected, Lakshmana was taken aback by Sita's insinuations against him who was pressurised to reach Shri Rama-Ravana's approaches Devi Sita under Sadhu's garb , familiarises and mesmerises her-Devi Sita introduces herself as the daughter of King Janaka and the husband of the valiant Shri Rama and the cause of their arrival; Ravana proposes to Devi Sita as a co-wife and the latter reacts haughtily-Ravana's explains his own background and valor and Devi Sita ignores and discounts-Ravana's forcibly abducts Devi Sita who cries away helplessly but Maha Jataayu grudhra tries to intervene and seeks to help-Jataayu warns Ravana's to withdraw from the evil act of 'Sitaapaharana' - and otherwise be ready for encounter-Fierce battle between Jataayu and Ravana's but Ravana kills Jatayu-Thus Ravana's finally concludes 'Sitaapaharana' as Devi Sita was kept under vigilant custody-Rattled and shocked Devi Sita shouts being highly critical of Ravana and his heinous actions- As Devi Sita sought to drop down her jewellery and dress to notify Rama Lakshmanas, Ravana kept vigil by five monkeys, and at Lanka in antahpura by eight rakshasis -Ravana's takes Devi Sita to his antahpura and seeks to pressurise her to become his queen-Having suffered Ravana's entreaties, Sita intensified her thoughts on Shri Rama and praised him while angry Ravana instructed rakshasis to take Sita away to Ashoka Vatika and frighten her to surrender-Shri Rama having killed Mareecha returns while noticing bad omens gets concerned about Devi Sita- On a run back to the Ashram, Rama Lakshmanas were subject to innumerable kinds of doubts and reaching there were not able to see Devi Sita and got stunned and terrified- Rama Lakshmans recalled the events before the latter left for Rama at the false shouts of the dying Mareecha and Rama was truly upset by Lakshmana's grave indiscretion-Shri Rama's deep distress at Devi Sita's disappearance- desperate search for her even addressing animals and vegetation around the ashram in frustration-Shri Rama and Lakshmanas got intensely frustrated with their extensive search for Devi Sita-Rama's anguish - his sustained efforts with Lakshmana- following Maya Mriga's southern direction- recognising fallen Sita's dried up flowers and ornaments- and signs of a recently fought battle!-Lakshmana seeks to cool down the unbelievable rage and anger and recounts the fundamental features of self restraint while getting ready to display his outstanding bravery

in human like and Gods like battle!-Rama Lakshmanas witnessed the grievously hurt Maha Grudhra Jataayu who fought for Devi Sita being kidnapped Mahaasura Ravana the Lankeshwara-Shri Rama performs the 'dahana samskaara' of Jataayu -Nasty encounter with Athomukha and blind Rakshasi Kabandha who caught Rama Lakshmanas by its long and surrounding arms within a huge embrace seeking to eat their flesh-By the enormous force of their sheer grit and decisiveness and of mutual consultations, Rama Lakshmanas severed both the mighty shoulders of Kabandha-Tormented by Sthula Rishi, Karbandha got 'vikrita rupa' but he performed tapsya to Brahma for deerghaayu, attacked Indra and vajraayudha's hit raised his stomach over body, now relieved by Rama Lakshmanas - As Kabandha Rakshas's mortal remains secured 'daah samskara' by Rama Lakshmanas, his celestial form reveals details of Ravana vs Sita and advises Rama's friendship with the exiled Vaanara King Sugriva -Kabandha in his celestial form showed the way to Rishyamooka Parvata and Pampa Sarovara, as also of Matanga Muni Ashrama-Rama Lakshmanas proceed towards Matanga Vana and meet Tapasvini Shabari awaiting Shri Rama Lakshmanas all along her life with indefinable devotion.-Having witnessed the glorious departure of Maha Yogini to Bliss, Rama Lakshmanas proceeded along with Pampasarovara in their 'Sitaanveshana'towards Gandhamanana Mountain and meet Sugriva.

#### Kishkindha Khanda:

On reaching Pampa Sarovara Rama was excited at its natural grandeur especially Sita's absence,Lakashmana solaces- as they approached Rishyamooka, Vanaras and Sugriva. As Sugriva and follower vaanaraas were still wondering, Hanuman felt convinced and confident and directed Shri Rama Lakshmanas to approach their head Sugriva the fugitive King of Vaanaras.Hanuman reached Rama Lakshmanas in a Tapasvi form, complemented Rama Lakshmanaas by their appearance as Hanuman was pleased; Lakshmana briefed Hanuman about their purpose of 'Sitaanveshana' and seeking Sugriva's close friendship and active assistance- Hanuman's assurance for unswerving and dutiful cooperation. Firm establishment of Agni Saakshi Friendship of Shri Rama and Sugriva and Shri Rama vows to kill Vaali to pave the way to Sugriva for unopposed Kingship of Vaanara Rajya .As Sugriva showed golden ornaments secured by his followers as Devi Sita threw away down from Ravana's donkey's chariot vimana, Rama readily recognised, cried away and got intensified up with anguish. As Shri Rama expressed his anguish and anger too, Sugriva seeks to assuage Rama's inner feelings and assures 'karya siddhi' finally; reciprocatively Rama assures Sugriva to regain his kingdom and wife too! Rama assures help in killing Vaali and enquires of Sugriva about the details of their mutual enmity.Sugriva then provides an account of the root causes of his antagonism with his elder brother. As Sugriva recounted as to how Vaali displayed his vengeance against him,Sugriva describes Vaali's invincibility, his extermination of Daitya Dundhubhi,throwing off his dead body off to Matanaga Muni, curse of barring entry of Rishyamooka-Rama's test of throwing off Dundubhi's skeleton. Shri Rama's feat of destroying Seven Taala Trees in a row- Sugriva's challenge to Vaali but gets beaten as Sugriva runs to Rishyamooka- Sugriva vilaapa-Rama explains the problem of Vaali Sugriva identity.Much unlike Sugriva got thrashed by Vaali last time, the party of Rama-Sugriva party proceeded again, enjoyed Prakriti Soundarya back to Kishkindha and secures blessings from Sapta Janaashrama Muni.Fully backed by Shri Rama's confident assurances of victory, Sugriva challenged Vaali for a repeat encounter of 'dwandva yuddha' amid thunderous shoutings.Enraged by the repetitive challenges echoing the 'Rani Vaasa', Vaali got ready for the battle but Tara Devi entreated Vaali for a truce of mutual peace, friendship with Rama and 'yuva rajatva' to Sugriva.Ignoring away Devi Tara's earnest appeals for amity with Sugrivas-Ramas, haughty Vaali resorts to battle with Sugriva, gets grievously hurt by Rama baana and succumbs to earth.Falling before death,

Vaali heavily criticizes Rama for his stealthiness, undeserved glory, falsity, and sheer selfishness colliding with Sugriva only to recover Devi Sita, which he too could have with bravery. Shri Rama, having let Vaali steam off his anguish from his deadly fall, replies point by point and fully justifying action in releasing his frightful arrow, yet with sympathy. Vaali calls Devi Tara and Angada Kumara near to his death bed cryingly and Devi Tara's 'vilaapa'. Hanuman seeks to assuage Devi Tara's extreme distress while the latter declared her intention of 'Sati Saha Gamana'. Vaali terminates his life after conveying his death bed wishes about Sugriva and Angada. With Tara's the unbearable distress, Vaali laid down his life. Realising anguish of Tara Devi, Sugriva reacts severely and requests Shri Rama to allow him to die while Tara too requests so- Rama seeks to assuage them. Rama Lakshmanas pacify Sugriva, Tara, and Angada- Vaali's 'dahana samskara/ jalaanjali' by Angada. Hanuman requests Rama Lakshmanas to witness Rajyaabhishakas of Sugriva and Angada, Rama assents and blesses but not by entering Kishkindha. Rama Lakshmana's dialogues at their of Prasavana Giri Cave. Shri Rama describes to Lakshmana about the features of Varsha Ritu. Hanuman prevails on Sugriva to initiate action for Sitaanveshana even before Rama's reminder and instruct Neela Vaanara to assemble the Vanara soldiers to group together. Sharad Ritu Varnana- Shri Rama instructs Lakshmana to reach King Sugriva. Lakshmana proceeds to Sugriva's Rajya Bhavana at Kishkindha with anger yet restrained by Rama's convincing, meets Angada who in turn seeks Sugriva to some how pacify. Hanuman sincerely advises Sugriva to withstand Lakshmana's anger besides consolidate action towards 'Sitaanveshana'. Even admiring Kishkindha's beauty, Lakshmana seeks to enter Sugriva's Inner Chamber by resounding his dhanush and the frightened Sugriva advises Tara's help to cool him down convincingly even before his appearance. Sugriva faces the wrath of Lakshmana and Tara continues to soothen Lakshmana by her tactical talks. Thus Tara managed the anger of Lakshmana convincingly and praised of Rama and his stature vis-à-vis that of Sugriva- Sugriva expresses of Rama's magnificence and his mere supplementary assistance. Sugriva instructs consolidating Vanara Sena and proceeds to Kishkindha and inform compliance to him. Lakshmana returns to Rama as accompanied by Sugriva as he was despatched to ascertain as to why Sugriva did not action for Sitanveshana yet! As Shri Rama had sincerely thanked the efforts in mobilising an ocean like Vanara Sena to fight his battle against Ravana, the grateful Sugriva returns back for further action. Now that the full backing of Vanara Sena along with enthused dedication of 'Swami Karya', Rama instructed Sugriva to take off the efforts of 'Sitaanveshana' in the eastern direction. Sugriva as totally absorbed in the singular task of 'Sitanveshana' and having already despatched one force of Vanaraas to 'purva disha' now forwards another batch to 'dakshina disha'. Sugriva who despatched another strong contingent of Vanara Warriors to the southern direction, now commissions a batch to the Western Side along with Sushena explaining probable areas for 'Sitanveshana'. Sugriva explains the significance of the northern direction for Sitanveshana under the leadership of Shatabali of several 'vaanara veeraas'. As Sugriva despatches the Vanara Sena to the Southern direction, under the command of Yuva Raja Angada, Shri Rama gives his ring to Hanuman to possibly show to Sita Devi to recognise and trust him. While despatching the four directional Vanara Sena, the text of Sugriva's encouraging remarks were as follows- King Sugriva explains to Shri Rama of his own escapades of 'Bhu Bhramana' and hence his vast knowledge and memories of destinations, parvatas, oceans, rives and the geographical detailings! Vanara Senaas that Sugriva organised to the north-west-and eastern sectors for 'Sitanveshana' had returned disappointed with negative results; but from the southern sector were awaited still. Angada seeks to revive the fallen hopes of 'Sitanveshana' of the dakshina vaanara sena, but soon after the tired hungry sena sights a celestial tree-sarovara-and bhavana of a Tapasvini whom Hanuman contacts. As Hanuman enquires of the 'vridha tapasvini',

she displays her 'bhavan', asks about Vanara Sena and their purpose, invites them for bhojan, reveals her identity, and facilitates them towards the Sea shores. As the prescribed time limit for return to Sugriva was over, Angada and other Vaanara Veeras got ready for 'praana tyaga' but clever Hanuman adopted 'bheda -neeti' or of divided opinion saving them all! Angada- having asserted of Sugriva's dubious nature and selfishness while the task of 'Sitaanveshana' was due to Lakshmana's anger- thus gets readied for 'praayopavesha' along with his fellow vaanaras. Gridhra Raja Sampaaati arrives and frightens Vanaras initially but on hearing about the noble deed of 'Sitaanveshana' makes friends - Sampaaati then hears of Ravana's killing of Jatayu, his younger brother. Angada places the badly hurt body of Sampaaati from the mountain top and describes the details of Jatayu as killed by Ravanaasura- Rama Sugriva friendship- Vaali's death- and his 'aamarana upavaasa'. Sampaaati informs the Vanara Veeras as to how his wings were burnt, confirms Ravana-Sita's place details- and performs jalanjali to his brother Jatayu since known from Vanaras of his passing away. Sampaaati conveys to the Vanara Sena Yoddhas of what his son Supaarshvya informed of Devi Sita and Ravana at Lanka. Sampaaati's interacts with his preceptor 'Nishakara Rishi' and explains as to how the wings of both his and his brother Jatayu's wings were burnt in a competition with Surya in the latter's triloka parikrama! Nishakara Muni readily sympathises and wishes recovery to Sampata but instructs him to contribute in the context of Shri Rama Vijaya Karya all his life. Sampaaati eventually recovers fresh wings and enthuses Vanara Veeras to proceed to the farther South and step forward to Lanka. With great excitement and drive, especially fired up by Sampaaati, the vast vaanara sena pushed forward to the Sea bed; then Angada asked the select Yoddhas to express their individual abilities to cross the Sea. As Angada asked select Vanara yoddhas of their ability to cross and return, individual responses were heard- then Jambavan recommends Veera Hanuman for this impossible and daring act. Jambavan along with Angada approaches Anjaneya, recalls the background of the latter's birth and past glories, glorifying him up with extraordinary capabilities, while preparing him to cross the Maha Samudra. As Hanuman was enthused and readied to cross the Maha Sagara, he dashed forward to Mahendra Parvata and climbed it with ease.

### Sundara Khanda

Veera Hanuman leaps off the Ocean towards Ravana's Lanka, gets welcomed on way by Mainaka, encounters Surasa and subdues, kills Simhika, and enjoys the aerial view of Lanka-Description of Lankapuri's beauty, thoughts about the size in which he should enter the interiors of the city and on the description Chandrodaya- Hanuman sought to enter, Rakshasi Nishachari is encountered, he subdues her seriously; she recalls Brahma's warning that once a Vanara gives a hit to her, then Lanka gets its doom and lets him in! Then Hanuman enters Ravana's 'antahpura' comprising many palaces but gets disappointed. Hanuman then enters the 'antahpura' or the interior palaces of Ravana'sura systematically but gets disappointed with no sign and indication of Devi Sita- Hanuman then extended the scope of search for Devi Sita in Ravana's own palace, besides at the houses of his follower Rakshasaas

Description of Ravana Bhavana viz. Pushpaka Vimana- Hanuman witnesses the inside out of the Pushpaka Vimana - indeed it was surfeit with Sundara Kanyas- In the process of 'Devi Sitaanveshana' in the Pushpaka Vimana in Ravana's residence, Hanuman witnessed countless 'strees' of youthful charm being playful inside; why had Ravana forcefully abducted Sita, despite his reputation of never forcing a woman but willingly married! In the process of searching for Devi Sita, Hanuman was confused by seeing Devi Mandodari to Devi Sita! Hanuman on seeing Mandori, took time self assure about Devi Sita, continued the search even while self introspecting of his own honesty in the atmosphere of food-

dance and lust; yet dismissed such thoughts-Hanuman in his remote thoughts wondered and was even concerned of Devi - Sita's very existence but quickly recovered from such apprehensions resumed 'Sitanveshana' yet again with confidence and belief! Despite his sincere efforts of finding Devi Sita, the indications were slimmed and might even return disappointed. Yet, Sampati assured and visited 'Ashoka Vaatika' - While admiring Ashoka Vaatika's prakriti soundarya, Hanuman mused as to how Devi Sita would be happy as she was stated to be an admirer of Prakriti Soundarya-Hanuman yet in his miniature form finally visioned Devi Sita near a 'Chaitya Praasaada Mandira' and identified her and felt ecstatic-Hanuman having finally ensured that Devi Sita was visioned, felt that as to why she, an outstanding Pativrata, why and how Ravana has been disgusting, yet sad.-Hanuman was no doubt happy to see Devi Sita most closely with sympathy, yet contrarily was repulsed with hatred at the sight of the Rakshasa stree encircling her- Ravana'sura along with his beloved females enters Ashoka Vatika and the spot where Devi Sita was being guarded as seen by Anjaneya in his miniature form-Even with a single nasty and desolate glance of the detestable Ravana'sura, Devi Sita was drowned in gloom-fear-and apprehension as noticed by Hanuman-Ravana then addresses Devi Sita opening his heart fancying her, praises her origin, charm and conduct, and seeks to convince her to discard fear complex, to be sympathetic to him, and wait for her consent- Sita emboldens herself and replies highlighting Ravana's wretched manner of abducting her and of his features of cruelty, selfishness, and ego; mocks his ability and readiness to face hero Rama-As Sita heckled Ravana's claim of heroism and his stealthy timidity, asserted her 'pativrata', and challenged him to face Rama- as Ravana threatened her granting three months to change or get killed-Select Rakshasis of learning like Ekajata-Harijata-Vikata and Durmukhi extoll the qualities of bravery of Ravana'sura while seeking to convincingly pressurise Devi Sita to accept the offer of Prime Queenship-While a few of enlightened Rakshasis sought to convince Devi Sita to wed Ravana, the rest of the cruel lot threatened her to death and fancy to taste her flesh, cook it with spices, and eat with wine and dance! Totally rattled by the perilous intimidation of the Rakshasis to nearly kill her and celebrate, Devi Sita nearly resorted to 'praana tyaga' especially cursing her fate still disabling her from Shri Rama darshana- Even as the cruelmost Rakshasis surrounded Devi Sita to attack, the eldest of them named Trijata screamed from her ominous dream and described tragic forebodes of 'Lanka Vinaashana' too soon-Despite Trijata's 'dusvapna' foreboding shouts of disasters about Ravana and Lanka Rajya, Devi Sita continued to cry shell shocked; however gradually recovered due to her own forevisions of auspiciousness-Hanuman witnessed series of Ravana's sweet offers to wed Sita, her no-nonsense reaction, his three month notice, violent threats of Rakshasis, Trijata's forebodings, now desires to appear before her, but how! Veera Hanuman sings Shri Rama Katha exclusively for Devi Sita but she wonders its genuineness! Then Hanuman appears before Devi Sita in his own form and conveys about Shri Rama's welfare, his arrival here, and assures Rama's arrival soon-Devi Sita still unconvinced fully about Hanuman's genuineness, he describes Rama's physical features and mental acumen and bravery, pleading his own authenticity-Devi Sita finally concedes Hanuman's genuineness- then he describes 'guna ganaas', how Rama missed her, Sugriva's help repaying Rama's help by killing Vaali- Sampati's guidance to reach her-Hanuman bestows Shri Rama's finger ring to Devi Sita as a memory refresher- the highly excited Devi Sita falls back to her memory screen, as Hanuman assures Rama's arrival too soon! As Devi Sita seeks Hanuman to hasten Shri Rama's arrival at Lanka, Hanuman suggests carrying her and reach Rama swiftly, but she declines giving reasons, especially stressing Rama's invincibility- Before handing over her 'choodaamani' to Hanuman, Devi Sita recalled how Rama expressed his concern by using 'brahmastra' on a crow- Indra's son- pestered her; the crow went from pillar to post and fell at Rama's feet; though Rama pardoned, still had to block any crows's vision of left eye

eversince! Having taken the possession of precious Sita 'Choodaamani' as a proof of meeting her, Hanuman felt elated to display his grit, devotion and resolution to all concerned, especially for the delight of Rama! Devi Sita reiterated what Anjaneya should convey to Rama about her life's threats while handing over hair clip to Shri Rama; Hanuman reiterates his reaching Rama's soonest. -Veera Hanuman devastates Ashoka Vaatika- on witnessing this, the frightened Rakshasis surrounding Devi Sita ran away to Ravana'sura stating some Celestial Being had reached at the Ashoka Vaatika to destroy it- Ravana'sura on learning of a stranger devastating Pramadaavana, despatches a strong regiment of his army of well trained eight thousand rakshasa force named Kinkaras-Mahabali Vayu Putra then devastates 'Chityapraasada'- the Rakshasa Kuladevatashthana and the rakshasas around it-Veeranjaneya smashes the expertise of 'baana-prayoga' of the Maha Rakshasa Jambumali, as Ravana'sura decided to utilise the extraordinary skills of archer of the Prahasta Putra to pull down the enemy-As Hanuman successfully killed Kinkaras and Jambumali and demolished Pramadaavana and Chatya Praasada along with inmates, enraged Ravana instructed the mighty sons of his Ministers to face Hanuman-With successive deaths of his select Rakshasa Veeras, Ravana'sura had wondered that even one Vanara of Hanuman demoralised him as a wake up call and despatched his five Senapatis who too were killed! Anxiously awaiting Hanuman's destruction by the Five Senapatis and army forces, Ravana got negative messages. As he was dismayed, his son Akshaya Kumara, well versed in war tactics, then too his turn- Shattered with putra shoka and humiliation, Ravana finally asked Indrajit to use his brahmastra to end up the menace of Hanuman and save the Rakshasa Samrajya and his personal prestige and fame at stake! Veera Hanuman was no doubt impressed by Ravana'sura's accomplishments and his own personalised feelings-Pretending as bounded by Indrajit's Brahmastra, though Brahma granted his boon, Hanuman faced Ravana whose Minister asked him why he visited Lanka; he confirmed, he was Shri Rama's messenger-Addressing Ravana, Veera Hanuman detailed Shri Rama's 'Prabhava' and warned that if Devi Sita were in any way hurt, that would be the instant final doom of Ravana and Lanka; Ravana went mad with fury-Infuriated by Hanuman's insinuations of Ravana's record of failures and praising Rama's successes, Ravana'sura orders the vanara be killed-Vibhishana pleads against killing a messenger, as Ravana heeds-As Vibhishana appealed, Ravana consents to burn Hanuman's tail to display the blazings to Lanka's public. As Rakshasis conveyed, Sita prays to Agni to lessen the heat. Hanuman starts the revenge- Hanuman's vengeful 'Lanka Dahana and Vidhvamsa' as the Rakshasas were shocked wonderstruck whether he was of Rudra Swarupa or Rama Bhakta! Veera Anjaneya's successful 'Lanka Dahana' but concerned of Devi Sita's safety- her 'punardarshana'-Hanuman reassuring Devi Sita of soonest arrival of Rama Lakshmanas, jumped off from Arishta Parvata to cross the Maha Sagara as vanara pramukhas were waiting anxiously-As Vayu Putra dashed through thick sky high clouds to return to the ever awaiting Vanara yoddhas, the latter were ever concerned, but his return overjoyed them especially Angada and Jambavan-On his victorious return from Ravana's Lankapuri, Hanuman briefly detailed the happenings, especially Devi Sita darshana, killing spree of Rakshasas, challenge to Ravana, burning his tail and Lanka dhvamsa-Veeranjaneya makes a fervent appeal Vaanaraveeras like Jambavan-Angada-Neela- or Ashvini Kumara Putras Maanda- Dvididaas to relieve Devi Sita from Ravana's clutches for her inhuman harassment- As Hanuman returned successfully, Angada suggested another collective attack, destroy Ravana and others, bring Devi Sita back, but Jambavan advised to return and report back only! On return to Kishkindha vanara veeras plundered Madhavana of fresh sweet fruits and destroyed it. The incharge Vanara Dadhimukha - Sugriva's uncle - was beaten in return-Dadhimukha and staff ran away to Sugriva for protection; he wondered if south bound Vanara Sena with Angada and Hanuman was returning with success'! On Sugriva's instruction, dakshina sena reached reporting success-and of Devi

Sita's safety-Viranjanya details the actual status of Devi Sita's physical and psychological condition to Shri Rama in the presence of Lakshmana Sugriva- Reacting to Hanuman's handing over Devi Sita's 'choodaamani' Shri Rama got worked up with his sweet memories, showing anxiety to hear what was her message to him-Hanuman detailed her actual status and parting appeal still concerned of urgent action to save her very life!

### Yuddha Khanda

As Shri Rama heard Hanuman's Report of Devi Sita's darshana, her desperation, killings of rakshasa veeras and Lanka dahana, he hugged at the success and got concerned of reaching Lanka for action-As Shri Rama was since concerned as to how to cross the Samudra to reach Lanka and meet Devi Sita by devastating Ravana, Sugriva assuages Rama's concern and assures 'setu bandhana' -Veera Hanuman provides the full account of Lanka's impregnability, statistics of gates, inbuilt locational advantages and so on,yet emphasizing the attacking abilities of vanara sena too-Rama Lakshmana Sugriva followed by Maha Vanara Sena advances to the shores of Maha Samudra with confidence to initiate the massive task of 'Setu Bandhana' - As Neela, Mainda, Dvidya Veeras made arrangements of night long rest and safety to vaanara sena, Shri Rama confided his feelings especially in view of Ravana's ultimatum of time limit to Devi Sita-King Ravana convened an emergency conference with his Ministers as the Vanara Sena had reached the Sea shores with Rama in the lead- As Ravana expressed his concern, his Ministers replied that a King of his stature and triloka fame need not get worried especially when vaanaras and humans attack and Indrajit alone could smother them-Ravana was assured by Mahaasura Veeras like Prahasta, Durmukha, Vajradamshtra, Nikumbha and Vajradamshtra to demolish the Vanara, Manushyas if attacked-As Raksha Veeras assured Ravana of assurances with bravado unmindful of enemy strength,Vibhishana requests him to respectfully return Devi Sita safe to Rama and save Lanka's glory and of generations-As Vibhishana approached Ravana again in the latter's Rajamahala, he narrated 'ashubhas' in Lankapuri after Sita's entry, but Ravana was firm not to release her as Rama and Indra even would fail to do so! -Ravana convenes a Public Sabha after tightening security, declares intense feelings for Sita, Kumbhakarna since woken up regrets Ravana's love affair yet challenges Rama's attacks all by himself - As Raksha Mahapaarshva encourages Ravana to force Sita to bed, having kidnapped her anyway, Ravana recalls Brahma's curse to him never to force an unwilling woman to bed, especially after kidnapping-Vibhishana appeals Ravana to release Devi Sita, praising Rama and his valour - Prahasta heckles Vibhishana- as the latter retorts that neither Ravana with 'vyasnaas' nor his followers could match Rama -Indrajit makes fun of Vibhishana- the latter retorts of immaturity of a youth, despite consistent appeals to release Sita, Ravana refuses finally out of desperation Vibhishana leaves Lanka off for good!As Vibhishana seeking asylum from Shri Rama, raises doubts of Vanara Veeras like Sugriva, Angada and so on, Hanuman felt yet that it was genuine for apparent reasons and asks for Rama's instructions- Shri Rama being a 'sharanaagama rakshaka' replies to Sugriva, but Veera Anjana Putra, and asks the Vanara King to allow his darshan -Following in-house deliberation by select Vanara Veeras about Vibhishana's protection, Shri Rama, a 'sharanaagata rakshaka', finally consents and even assures Kingship after Ravana's imminent death- Ravana's spy Shurdula informed of the arrival of MahaVanara Sena at the Samudra teera, Ravana asked Shuka as parrot to Sugriva and try 'bhedopaaya' who wished to kill him but for Rama! - Rama invoked Samudra Deva for three days long, lost patience and threatened by shooting arrows. -Maha Sagara himself personified restraining Rama's fury-advised Vanara's 'maha shilpi', the method of constructing 'Setu Bandhana' to facilitate Rama and the huge Vaanara Sena to cross the Maha Sagara-As Rama with Vanara Sena finally crossed the Sagara, the

flustered Ravana despatched Shukha-Saaranas as Vanaras, Vibhishana gets them caught, but the kind Rama releases yet with an alert message-Ravana asserted not release Devi Sita any way, yet asked Sarana about about Vanara yoddhaas and the latter mentioned Angada, Nala, Shweta, Kumuda, Chanda, Rambha, Sharabha, Panasa, Krodhana, Gavaya- Saarana further added to the list of Vanara Pramukhas like Jambavan- Jambavan, Samnadana, Kratana, Pramaathi, Gavaksha, Kesari, Shatabali and so on now right at the door steps of Lankapuri- As Saarana reported of his findings to Ravana, Shuka detailed about about Sugriva's Ministers, Mainda-Dvididas, Hanuman, Rama Lakshmanas, Sugriva Vibhishanas, and further details of the number of Vanara Sena- As Shuka Saaranas reported yet with implicit praises of enemies, Ravana burst out, stripped them of ministership, asked his spies to see the enemy's status but Vibhishana noticed Shardula as Rama pardoned-Then Shardula the spy ran back, Ravana desired as to the origin of Pramukha Pramukha Vanaras like Jambavan, Sushena, Kesari, Sushena, Dadhimukhi, Sumukha, Sveta, Mainda brothers, Nala, Vegashali and so on-Having shattered by Rama's impending attack by his spies, Ravana sought to a cover up his vicarious pleasure and planned a trick by presenting a Maya Rama Mastaka to Sita to force her to submission-As Ravana showed the maya Rama mastaka to Devi Sita mischievously, she was shattered and requested Ravana to kill her and place her body besides Rama's too-As Devi Sita was drowned in 'duhka saagara' on seeing Rama's severed head, as shown by Mayavi Ravana, dharma buddhi Sarana Rakshsi reveals the truth asserting Rama Vijaya, assuaging Devi's fears-Dharmika Rakshasi Sarana was endeared by Devi Sita who despatched someone to learn of the latest on Ravana's front and returned that Ravana rejected his motherly mantrini's advice to return Sita but to no avail!: Buddhimaan Maalyavaan, on behalf of the Maha Mandali, appealed for 'Sandhi' with the impending attack by Rama citing 'neeti shastra' and especially due to several 'apashakunas' faced by Lankapuri-Even after Malyaavan Mantri demanded for Sandhi, citing several apashakunas experienced by the Lanka public, Ravana reasserting his firm stand and merely instructed for tightening security and walked off- Vibhishana in a 'pakshi rupa' quickly witnessed the details of Ravana Sena at the four dwaaras of Lanka and its center, then Shri Rama indicates the formation of his own Sena- a) Shri Rama along Lakshmana and followers ascended the Suvela Parvata Shihkhara, well known for dhaatu Sampada. b) The picturesque overview especially impressed Vanara Veeras who assumed various forms to wander in Lankapuri while Rama and followers too were overawed at its magnificence-Suddenly Sugriva spotted Ravana at his residential roof, was unable to control to control his anger jumped down challenging him for 'malla yuddha'- as Ravana felt that Sugriva was too good and thus disappeared .As Rama chided Sugriva's undesirable malla yuddha with Ravana and safe return, 'Maha Rama Sena' marches for an gate wise attack- Rama despatches Angada to reach Ravana with an ultimatum of Ravana's doom -Final placement of Rama Sena with followers of Lakshmana- Vibhishana- Sugriva-Maha Vaanaras at the Lankapuri Dwaras coordinating up above and near the gates reminding of Deva- Danava Yuddha!-Dwandva Yuddha of Ravana- Vaanara Bhallukas day long yuddha between Indrajit- Angada, Jambumali- Hanuman, Shatrughna-Vibhishana, Gaja-Neela, Prathasa-Sugriva, Virupasha-Lakshmana and so on-During the night long Rakshasa Vanara Yuddha, Angada defeats Indrajit, but out a shame as the latter disappears by maaya and did 'naagastra bandhanastra prayoga' on Rama Lakshmanas -As Rama Lakshmanas were tied down by 'Nagastra' by Indrajit in hiding, Vaanara Shreasthas tried to locate him who too were the victims of Indrajit's astras as the bewildered Maha Vanaras broke down too-As Indrajit was yet in his invisibility, avoiding the search party of Hanuman, hit Jambavan and other Vaarara Veeras, as Vibhishana pacified Sugriva as 'Satyameva Jayate', as Ravana praised Indrajit-As Vaanaras rescued Rama Lakshmanas from naaga bandhana, Ravana instructed Trijati Rakhasi to show Sita by Pushpaka Vimaana, as she broke out crying-As Sita was broken down in disbelief, she wondered whether

whether Saamudrika Shastra -and Astrological Precepts were truthful assuring final success, but Trijata assured so too yet with hurdles- All of a sudden Shri Rama with his physical and mental strength tore off the 'naaga pasha' but was distressed to see Lakshmana could not, and kept on crying missing him and got readied even to retreat!-Vibhishana distressed at Lakshmana unrecovered, Rama decides to withdraw from the battle; Sushena advises Hanuman to get herbs from Sanjeevani Parvata-Garuda lands freed from 'naaga bandhana'-Rattled by Rama Lakshmana's release, the worried Ravana despatched Dhumraksha, who encouraged his Rakshasas who displayed initial success but Hanuman crashed the chariot and the head of Dhumraksha-Ravanaasura got furious that Dhumraksha was killed by Hanuman, he instructed Vajradamshta to take revenge, as Rakshasa Vaanara Maha Yuddha followed yet Angada crushed Vajradamshta to death-As Angada pulled down Vajradamshta to death, Senapati Akampana volunteered to attack the shatru sena but Veeranjana despatched the Senapati and many Raashasas to Yama Loka-:As even Akampana too was crumbled to death by Hanuman, Ravana hesitated but Senapati Prahasta consented but Maha Vaanara Senapati Neela succeeded to crush the Rakshasa Senapati to death- Ravana's entry with a wallop and exit with a whimper by subduing Sugriva, Lakshmana, Hanuman, Neela Yoddhas but exited as Shri Rama disgraced him!Having left battle with disgrace as defeated by Shri Rama, Ravana instructed that Kumbhakarna be awakened from long slumber; once awakened with food and drink reached Ravana as Vaanaras were scared-Vibhishana traces Kumbhakarna's origin, maha bala and spells of 'deerghanidra'- Ravanaasura literally begs of full scale attack on Rama Sugriva Vaanaras to save his prestige at the stake-Initially having reprimanded Ravana not to have followed the basic principles of dharmika jeevana, pacified the elder brother later and asserted killings of Rama Lakshmana Sugriva Hanuman Vaanaras-As Kumbhakarna boasted off his certain victory, Mahodara warned of Rama's invincibility but the latter was infuriated, demanded Sita's surrender and proceeded against Rama with four more Rakshasa Veeras-Kumbhakarna 'Rana Yatra', notwithstanding spates of 'dusshakunas' - As many Vaanaras were dazed at Kumbhakarna ran away despite Angada's appeals for death with veera swarga, then Maha Vanaras like Neela, Gavaksha, Hanuman then decided to confront the enemy - Displaying initial 'prataapa' against Angada, Sugriva and Hanuman, Kumbhakarna calling Lakshmana as 'baalaka' attacks Rama who had systematically slashed off his right and left shoulders and finally his head and body to Vanara's thrill and the dismay of Ravana ! - On hearing the unbelievable and tragic end of Kumbhakarna, Ravana was stunned and as his sons/ cousins broke down; he realised the retributive impact of his criminal deeds but now too late! - As Ravana felt the never dreamt of Kumbhakarna's fall, Trishira cooled down his anguish while Ravana Putras /cousin kumaras readied yet Narakantaka too resisted much as Angada removed him dead- Hanuman shattered Devantaka and Trishira, Neela demolished Mahodara and Rishabha smashed Mahapaarshva-Atikaya the Kubera Putra whom Ravana considered as his own son; Brahma gifted an impregnable Kavacha to Atikaya; after a bhayankara yuddha, Lakshmana finally killed him by brahmastra itself -Totally smashed to smithereens, Ravanaasura reviewed several Maha Rakshasa Veeras had sacrificed lives for him so far and instructed safety of Lankapuri, specially where Devi Sita resided-Indrajit devastated Vanara Veeras being invisible on skies and by using brahmastra made Rama Lakshmana too victimised as Ravana was thrilled and so were Rakshasas and Lankapura-As Vaanara Veeras wondered with 'kam kartavya' as Rama Lakshmana collapsed senseless, Jambavan advised of fetching Mrita Sanjivini off Himalayas which Hanuman did the glorious act successfully-Sugriva being relieved of Rama Lakshmana's revival, ordered Vanaras to break into Lankapuri and terrorise Rakshasas with flames- Ravana instructed Kumbhakarna Putras, Kumbha Nikumbhas, to attack-As Angada destroyed Rakshasa Kampana and Prajanghaka, Divida killed Shonitaakshaka, Mainda uprooted Yupaksha and Sugriva's 'mushti ghaatas' demolished Kumbhaasura-

As his dear brother Kumbhaasura was killed by Sugriva, Nikumbha attacked Hanuman and got killed by him-As per Ravana's instructions, Makaraaksha challenged Rama with baana varshas for long, but Rama smashed the charioteer, as the asura took to a Shiva shula, yet Rama with his Vayavyastra killed the asura-As instructed by Ravana, Indrajit invoked abhichaara yajna and with antardhana shakti tormented Rama Lakshmanas, but Rama warned Lakshmana of brahmastra prayoga yet the latter made a 'shapatha' to kill Indrajit-Despite repeated warnings of 'stree hatya' as a 'maha paataka', Indrajit drove off Maya Sita Devi by his chariot and stabbed her as rakshasas were insane with joy as Vanara Sena was got demoralised- Hanuman witnessed Sita Devi killed, Vanara sena was aghast and Hanuman had initially pacified the vanara sena and take revenge but later agreed for temporary withdrawal and to inform Rama Sugrivaas-As he heard of Devi Sita's killing, Rama swooned down and Lakshmana did extensive vishleshana of dharmaadharma and sought to revive him, asserting Indrajit's justified killing too soon-Vibhishana spelt out Ravana's insane desire for Devi Sita that he could ever imagine her being killed and Indrajit fooled Hanuman and vanaras of Maya Sita but attack Indrajit's abhichara yajna instantly- following repeated exhortations of Vibhishana, Shri Rama finally dismissing Indrajit's 'maaya Sita's vyavahara' instructed Lakshmana to proceed to Nikumbhila Mandira with Vibhishana and Vanara sena -On arrival at the Nikumbhila, Vanara Rakshasa battle followed - Hanuman challenged Indrajit for malla yuddha, Indrajit raised his dhanur banaas against Hanuman, but Lakshmana raised his dhanush instead-Indrajit heckles Vibhishana for discarding his 'swadhama' - to join Rama but Vibhishana details of his Poulastya ancestry, highlights Ravana's 'duraachaaras' and to get ready to be soon killed by Lakshmana!-Lakshmana-Indrajit exchange of hot words followed by fierce battle mutually yet physically hurting each other on and on but never tired despite blisters and flows of blood as Vibhishana attacked Indrajit-Vibhishana boosted Vanara Veeras morale listing about the Rakshasas smashed up already and inspired them to fight further as Lakshmana-Indrajit battle followed while the latter's chariot etc was shattered-The sequel of Lakshmana -Indrajit maha samgrama concluded with-Lakshmana's domination, the celestial world felt relieved with the vindication of dharma and nyaaya- Lakshmana accompanied by Vibhishana, Sugriva and Vanara Bhalluka Veeras reached Rama who was immensely impressed and praised Lakshmana with intimate affection and recoup from his injuries soon -Totally forlorn with Indrajit's end by Lakshmana, Ravana desired to kill Devi Sita the root cause of the yuddha, but Mantri Suparshva appealed not to kill Sita but instead kill Rama Lakshmanas instead-Having been demoralised with Indrajit's loss, Ravana directed the combined senas of the Mantris as led by them, but Rama utilised gandharvastra which created a spell devastating lakhs of Rakshasas-As many families heroes were dead, affected Rakshasa stree cursed Ravana recalling that Brahma varaas excluded manavas of invincibility while Shiva predicted Devi Sita to be born for Rakshasa vinaashana- Noting the 'arta naadaas' of Lanka's fallen Rakshasas by Rama, Ravana himself attacked vanaras along with senapatis Mahodara, Mahaparshva and Virupaksha-As Ravana was razing Vanaraas they approached Rama Sugrivas, as Sugriva attacked Virupaksha, killed his elephant, angry rakshasa slashed Sugriva who got recovered and destroyed Virupaksha- Ravana having been upset by the fall of Virupaksha, asked Mahodara to regain the success of Rakshasaas; but Sugriva after prolonged one to one encounter could severe 'Mahodara mastaka'-Mahaparshva got furious at the deaths of Virupaksha and Mahodara and demolished numberless vanaras, but Angada with his mighty 'mushti ghaatas'tore off Mahodara's chest and heart with fatality-Furious Ravana re-entered the battle, released 'Taamasastra' killing vanaras, resisted Lakshmana, attacked Rama, got hurt by his roudrastra, as his asuraastra which was realiated by Rama's agneyastra! -As Rama Ravana yuddha was intensified, Lakshmana intervened and the infuriated Ravana released his Mayaasura's Shakti aayudha by which Lakshmana was swooned and Rama asserted

his 'prateekara' - Shri Rama 'vilaapa' for Lakshmana's fainting away, but Vaanara Sushena applied Sanjeevani brought earlier by Hanuman and Lakshmana got revived again and the latter reminds of Rama's 'satya pratigjna' - Indra sent Matali with chariot, Rama initiated baana varsha but Ravana destroyed the chariot, hurled his Shakti aayudha but Rama attacked with arrows and Indra's 'Shakti' too which severely hit Ravana's body- In the course of the dwandva baana praharaas, Ravana boasted off and Rama listed his shameless Sitaapa-harana and such adharmas; Ravana hit Rama and the latter smashed off so much as Ravana's sarathi ran back yet returned later-Agastya Muni's eminent ADITYA HRIDAYA with invocations of Viniyoga - Rishi- Karanyasa- Hridayanga Nyaasa Vidhi Mantras-As Shri Rama was delighted as seated on Indra's Chariot encouraging Matali the celestial charioteer, there were a spate of 'asubha soochanas' for Ravana just ahead of the epic battle of Rama Ravanaas- As Rama Ravana Yuddha got anti climaxed as Ravana's heads sprang up again and again, but neither Shri Rama nor Ravana got tired and continued the battle overnight and the next day too-As Matali reminded of the Brahmastra which Agastya Muni bestowed to Rama, he recalled its universal impact and released on Ravana as his notorious life was closed, vindicating dharma and nyaaya again-As his elder brother Ravanaasura was killed by Shri Rama's brahmastra, Vibhishana broke down, yet Rama declared that Ravana fought like a fearless hero and advised that the antyeshta karma be done soon-Having heard about and seen of the dead Ravana, the antahpura streees were heart broken crying away in general, but some sensible ones wished of Ravana's release of Sita should have reversed the swing to normalcy-Devi Mandodari having placed the dead body of Ravanaasura on her laps, kept on crying away recalling his glories and her excellent marital experiences- Vibhishana performed the dahanaadi antya karmaas-As the joyful Celestials returned to their lokas from their sky high assembly after Rama Vijaya, Shri Rama thanked Matalii, Indra- Sugrivadi Vanaras, and celebrated Vibhishana Pattaabhisheka-Hanuman reached Ashoka Vaatika for Sita darshana-talked at length - she complemented him a lot yet desired not to kill the rakshasis who were after all instructed by Ravana - both proceeded to Rama -Hanuman accompanied Devi Sita for Shri Rama Shri Rama Darshana- Rama chides Vibhishana not to make a big scene, then Devi Sita sights her glorious husband after long miseries at Ravana's directives-Rama asserted that he underwent several issues to resurrect Dharma although Sita's freedom now was only incidental - as she stayed under Ravana's care for long, he would free her seeking her own comfort--Devi Sita explaining and asserting her origin of 'ayonijatva', upbringing and paativratya to Rama and the assembly of public had finally entered into the agni jwaalaas as celestials and the public witnessed-As Devi Sita entered 'agni jwaalaas'set by Lakshmana with Rama's implicit awareness, sarva deva mandali headed by Brahma praised Rama as of Vishnu avatara and Sita as Maha Lakshmi -Reacting to Brahma's declarations, Agni Deva emerged in public view and presented Devi Sita asserting her purity even being in Ravana's 'antahpura' for long as Rama desired to test her so to convince public-Maha Deva complemented Rama and pointed out at Dasharadha's Soul from Swarga as the latter blessed Rama stating that he redeemed his soul as Ashtavakra did to his father and assured Kingship with glory-As Rama requested to Indra to revive the lives of countless dead vaanara-bhallukaas at the yuddha, the latter having realised that it was unprecedented yet granted as dead ones came alive as from deep sleep!-Vibhishana requested Shri Rama to stay back for a few days and enjoy his hospitality, but Rama displayed his anxiety to return the soonest as he was yearning to return to Ayodhya- As Shri Rama alighted the Kubera's Pushpaka Vimana 257 with Sita Lakshmanas, Vibhishana requested Rama to accompany with Sugriva Vaanara sena too, and the celestial vimana had taken off- Enroute Ayodhya, Rama highlighted to Sita of Yuddha bhumi- Setu bandhana vidhana- kishkindha pick up of streees- drishyas of Janasthaana- their crossings of maha nadis- Muni ashramas and Ayodhya finally!-Rama approached Muni Bharadwaaja to enquire of the yoga

kshemaas of his mothers, Bharata and Ayodhy in general, and the all knowing Muni blessed Rama for his glorious return and blessed-Rama with his sharp mindedness instructed Hanuman to visit Nishada Guha about their 'punaagamana' and to Bharata, who was worshipping Rama Padukas, was specially elated. -Hanuman then had briefly narrated to Bharata of the proceedings after the latter's earlier darshana of Shri Rama-Sita-Lakshmanas, till their much awaited Ayodhya Darshana. -As Sita Rama Lakshmanas were arriving, Bharata Shatrugmas made elaborate arrangements at Ayodhya- the much excited Bharata hands over the Kingdom as of a deposit to Rama after a public announcement- Bharata's handing over Ayodhya Rajya- Sita Rama Nagara Yatra-Rajyabhisheka- Valmiki Ramayana Phala Shruti.

### Uttara Khanda

Maharshis of fame arrived from chaturdishes to Ayodhya and congratulated Shri Rama who in humility thanked them- yet wondered apart from Ravana and Kumbhakarna apart, Indrajit was not that distinct - Maharshi Agastya detailed the family reputation of Indrajit-Ravana- Vishraavaasa - Pulastya Prajapati- Vaishravana Maha Muni, the son of Vaishrava, after thousands of years long tapasya was blessed by Brahma Deva, appointed him as Kubera the fourth loka palaka as Kubera settled at Lanka Puri - Sarga Four: Agastya then narrated to Rama about the origins and lives of Heti-Vidyutkesha-Sukesha Rakshasaas - Sarga Five: Maharshi Agastya detailed the famed Sukesha Putra's Maalyavaan-Sumali- and Mali who did maha tapasya to Brahma Deva, attained his vara daana of 'ajeyata' and manifested Lankapuri by Vishvakarma. Sarga Six: Sukesha putras Maalyavan-Sumali- and Mali having performed long tapasya and achieved Brahma Varaas, became arrogant and ambitious, tormented Devas and even got prepared to attack Vishnu Himself Sarga Seven: Malyavan the eldest warned Sumali and Maali against attacking Narayana but Sumali having been hurt by Vishnu baanaas fled away but Maali hurt Garuda was finally killed by Vishnu chakra. Sarga Eight: Malyavan defeated by Vishnu as Sumaali and rakshasaas shifted to Rasaatala Sarga Nine: Vishrava and Kaikasi gave birth to Ravana, Shurpanakha, Kumbhakarna, Vibhishanas as Kubera the cousin, reaches Ravana who out of jealousy decides to perform 'deergha tapsya' at Gokarna - Sarga Ten: Ravana and his brothers performed tapasya for ten thousand years as Brahma granted Ravana of invincibility except from human beings, Vibhishana to fortify dharmatva, but Kumbhakarna for long sleep due to Vaakdevi's intervention. ( p 35 ) Sarga Eleven: Kubera as per his father's advice leaves Lankapuri for Kailasa and Ravana's Rajya Pattabhisheka - Sarga Twelve: Ravana performed the weddings of sister Shurpanakha with Danava Maya's son Mayavi, Maya's daughter Manodari, Vajrajvala Danava's daughter with Kumbhakarna and Shailusha gandharva's daughter Sarama with Vibhishana - Sarga Thirteen: Kumbhakarna's 'maha nidra' attracts attention of 'rishi deva yaksha gandharvas'- Ravana's cruel attack on them- Kubera sends a messenger advising against Ravana's arrogance; but as Kubera highlights nearness to Maha Deva as he too was Shiva bhakta, he killed the emissary- decides killing Kubera too - Sarga Fourteen: Ravanaasura along with mantris and rakshasa sena attacks Yaksha sena and Dikpati -Dhanapati Kubera and after a remarkable victory seizes pushpaka vimana for ever and returns to Lankapuri - Sarga Fifteen: Ravanaasura along with six mantris and their senaas too attacked Yaksha sena and having succeeded forced entry Kubera Bhavana Dwaara 45) Sarga Sixteen: Dashagriva visited 'Sharavana Sarkandavana' as the pushpaka vimana was halted by Nandeshwara- the angry Rakshasa lifted up the mountain, delighting Mahesha, named him as Ravana and gifted a khadga! Sarga Seventeen: Ravana sights Vedavati, a partial form of Maha Lakshmi, performing tapasya for Vishnu- he gets attracted to the tapasvini as she resorted to agnijwalas and curses to take revenge as Sita in next birth- Sarga Eighteen: Ravana in his pushpaka visited King of Maruds in an yajna as Indraadi Devatas ran off, while Maharshi Samvarta advised not to fight; Ravana with pride

returned away as Indraadi Devas gave boons to Maruds.-Sarga Nineteen: Ravana attacked Ayodhya King Anaranya who dared to face him as Rakshasa veeras were defeated but finally Ravana got victorious, yet Anaranya while falling cursed that Rama would soon kill him - Sarga Twenty: Kalahapriya Narada diverted Ravana's tour to swarga loka to Yamaloka and followed himself to watch the proceedings- Sarga Twenty One: As provoked by Narada, Ravana visited Yamaloka, released select pretaatmaas, Yama Dootas attacked the pushpaka vimana damaging it, and Ravana by his paashupataasra destroyed Yama dootaas! - Sarga Twenty Two :As per Narada's mischievous advice, Ravana attacked Yama Raja who desired to relelease Kaala Danda, but Brahma disapproved and thus Ravana declared victory against all Devas including Yama - Sarga Twenty Three:Ravana visits Rasatala Loka, forges friendship with Nivatakavacha- destroys Kalakeya Daitya who killed Shurpanakha's husband-and attacks Varuna Putras, as Varuna visited Brahma Loka for a 'Sangita Sabha'! Sarga Twenty Four : Ravana concludes his trip to adholokas, picked up youthful women on way and stuffed them in pushpaka with cryings to Lankapuri; on arrival made arrangements for widowed Surpanakha's stay further - Sarga Twenty Five: Ravana landed at Lankapuri with the kidnapped strees, Vibhishana chided Ravana recalling how their cousin sister Kumbhini was kidnapped by Madhu- Ravana attacked Madhu but she saved Madhu- Sarga Twenty Six: Provoked by Prakriti Soundarya, Ravana encountered Apsarasa Rambha and forced 'atyaachaara' as her lover Nalakubara, Kubera's son, cursed Ravana never to coerce unwilling woman attracting instant death. - Sarga Twenty Seven: As Ravana sena attacked Indra loka, the latter got confounded ,reached Vishnu who pumped confidence and Vasu, Rudra, Maruds attacked; Savitra Vasu then killed Sumaali as his Rakshasas ran away - Sarga Twenty Eight: As Puloma daitya joined Ravana sena, the latter got fortified, yet Indra putra Jayanta joined in- Rudra Marudganaas attacked Meghanaada- Ravana entered as Indra too- mutual maha yuddha gor initiated - Sarga Twenty Nine: After initial victories of Indra's Deva Sena, Ravana was frustrated, yet Meghanaada advised his father to withdraw from battle and by the aid of his maaya imprisoned Indra and took him to Ravana to Lankapuri -Sarga Thirty: Brahma relieved Indra by imprisonment which was a retriburion of Indra's misconduct with Ahalya- Sarga Thirty One: Ravana - sura along with his mantris and rakashasa sena landed in Kartaveeryaaruna Samrajya for a battle but the latter was out of station, and thus enjoyed Narmada River snanas- Shiva Linga pujas at the banks.-] Sarga Thirty Two: As Arjuna slowed down Narmada pravaha affecting Ravana's Shiva Linga Pratishthaas, Ravana and nishacharas fought fiercely; Arjuna thrashed Ravana and rakshasas, imprisoned taking them his capital.- SargaThirty Three: As Ravana and followers were disgraced under leash, Pulastya Brahma requested Karataveerya to free him yet Ravana still desired to pursue his futther escapades with arrogance and 'ahamkaara'. - Sarga Thirty Four: Despite his humiliation by Kaartaveerya, Ravana reached Vaali busy with Sandhya Vandanas at four oceans yet was inistent as was caught by Vaali who dragged Ravana by shoulders and shamed yet again! - Sarga Thirty Five: Anjaneya,s 'janana-shaishavaavastha' - his ability to float even to reach Surya-mistake Rahu as Surya-angry Indra defended Rahu hitting the child with vajrayudha- enraged Vayu stopped breathings of trilokas - Sarga Thirty Six:Agastya Muni narrates Anjaneya's origin-childhood leelaas- encounter with Surya, Indra's vajra prahara, Vayu Deva stops breathings, Brahma's revival of the child, his Muni's shaapa of forgetfulness -Sarga Thirty Seven: As Shri Rama was woken up from night long charcha with Agastya by 'Vandee jana' with praises. Then he enters Raja Sabha with Bharata Lakshmana Shatrughna Vibhishana, Sugriva , Hanumans too.- Sarga Thirty Eight: As Shri Rama was comfortaly seated in his Raja Sabha, Kings Janaka-Kaikeya Raja-Kashi Rajas arrived to congratulate him and left, while 350 kings of far and near rajyas arrived too in admiration of Rama.- Sarga Thirty Nine: As the hundreds of Kings from far and near gave precious gifts of akshouhini senas,'dhana dhanyakanaka vaahanaas', Rama was overwhelmed and donated away to

Vaanara Veeras with personal attention. - Sarga Forty: Shri Rama duly performs 'satkaaraas' to Vaanara-Bhalluka-Rakshasaas and provides farewell to them all. (p.105) Sarga Forty One: Rama accepts Kubera's 'pushpaka vimana'-Bharata commends arrival of Rama Rajya already -Sarga Forty Two: Shri Rama -Devi Sita's Ashokavani Vihara-Devi Sita's 'garbhini sanketaas'- her desire to Gangaatata vihaara for Maha Muni 'tapo deeksha kaarya darshana- Sarga Forty Three: During his conversation with his childhood select and intimate friends, Rama gathered certain doubts of Devi Sita's conduct due to Ravana's harassment as were collected from the hearsay gossips of his prajaas.- Sarga Forty Three and Forty Four: During his conversation with his childhood select and intimate friends, Rama gathered certain doubts of Devi Sita's conduct due to Ravana's harassment as were collected from the hearsay gossips of his prajaas.- Sarga Forty Six: Excited Sita accompanies Lakshmana to visit Ganga teera Muni ashramas but the latter knew the reality! -Sarga Forty Seven: Lakshmana facilitated Devi Sita to cross Ganga to the other side and gradually informed of Rama's decision of 'Sita parityaga' due to 'loka nindas' about her morality but assuring Valmiki's personal care.- Sarga Forty Eight: As Sita Devi fell unconscious and recovered, Lakshmana tried his best to soothen yet facing the reality she was overwhelmed with grief while Lakshmana departed and she was left dreading her fate ahead! -Sarga Forty Nine: As informed by muni kumaras, Maharshi with his 'diya drishti' reached the banks of Ganga and brought the forlorn Devi Sita brought to his ashram respectfully entrusting ashrama strees to ensure her comfort. - Sarga Forty Nine: As informed by muni kumaras, Maharshi with his 'diya drishti' reached the banks of Ganga and brought the forlorn Devi Sita brought to his ashram respectfully entrusting ashrama strees to ensure her comfort. - Sarga Forty Nine: As informed by muni kumaras, Maharshi with his 'diya drishti' reached the banks of Ganga and brought the forlorn Devi Sita brought to his ashram respectfully entrusting ashrama strees to ensure her comfort - Sarga Fifty Two : Recalling Maha Muni Durvasa's vachanas of 'Vamsha Kalyana' with special reference to Rama, Lakshmana faced Rama with trepidation and pacified him of Sita Viyoga to get back near normalcy. Sargas Fifty Three and Fifty Four: Having regained semi-normalcy, Rama sought to resume the regular Raja Sabha, recalling the example of King Nriga neglecting his Raja Dharma and was subjected to Vipra Shaapas to be a chameleon for yugas! - Sarga Fifty Five: Asked about Ikshvaaku Kings ever busy with Yagnas, Rama cited King Nimi versus Brahmarshi Vasishtha and their mutual curses -. Sarga Fifty Six and Fifty Seven: Brahma's varapraapti to King Nimi and Vasishtha for Mitra-Varuna 's combined virility due to meeting A Urvashi in a Kumbha- King Pururana of Ikshvakus-Vashishtha' new body in the eyes of Videaha Nimi. - Sargas Fifty Eight and Fifty Nine: King Yayati's yagjna upset as Purohita Vasishtha was late-mutual 'shaapaas' as Yayati was bodyless and Vasishtha was 'vayuvileena'- Brahma arranges that joint sperm of Mitra Varunas to revive Vasishtha-Sargas Sixty and Sixty One: Maha Muni Chyavana and followers reach Shri Rama Praja Sabha explaining about the 'atyaachaaraas' on the praja and dharmatmas by Lavanaasura by misusing a 'shula' as gifted by Shiva to his devoted father - Sargas Sixty Two-Three-and Four: Having enquired of Chyavanaadi Munis about details of misdeeds about Lavanaasura, Rama selected Shatrughna to destroy him , briefing him of minute details and facilitated him with Ayodhya Sena - Sarga Sixty Five: Under Rama's directive left for Lavanaasura ,Shatrughna reached Valmiki ashram for a night halt and 'aatithya'- Maharshi narrated ancient Ikshvaku King's curse from Vasishtha and and redemption too - Sarga Sixty Six: Coincidentally, Shatrughna was the single witness of the proceedings of Ikshvaaku Vamsha vriddhi of Kusha Lava Janma of Shri Rama-Devi Sita's twin sons at his destined halt at Valmiki Ashrama-- Sarga Sixty Seven: On way to reach the cruel Lavanaasura, Shatrughna enquired of further details of the Asura from Chyanana Muni who detailed that Mandhata of Ikshvakus was killed by Parama Shiva Shula - Sargas Sixty Eight and Sixty Nine: Having arrived at Madhupuri attacking Lavanaasura suddenly,

Shatrughna followed Shri Rama Vachanas as the asura was without Shiva Shula but attacked with Vishnu Baana that killed Madhu Kaitabhas - Sarga Seventy: By Ramaanugraha, Shatrughna established himself well as the King of Madhuraapuri - administered it very ably for praja soukhya- took a break after fourteen years, sought to return to Ayodhya - Sargas Seventy One and Two : King Shatrughna left for Ayodhya after a twelve year gap-reached Vakmiki ashram- got thrilled by Kusha Lava Ramayana 'sangeeta'-took leave of Sita and Valmiki-met Rama who granted a week soujourn- Sargas Seventy Three and Four: Vriddha brahmana brings his son's dead body to Rama Sabha accusing the King of 'akaala marana' - Narada explains that an ineligible tapasvi as per Scriptures was responsible against varnaashrama dharma! Sargas Seventy Five and Seventy Six: As per Narada's advice, Rama by pushpaka searched for a low class tapasvi performing vedokta tapasya and found one Shambuka doing devatva vaanchha tapasya, killed him to revive vipra baalaka's life.0 Sargas Seventy Seven and Seventy Eight:As Shri Rama accepted the divyaabharanas from Agasthya Maharshi, the latter explained how and why those aabharanas were gifted to him by a dead king as had to resort to 'shava bhakshana' was relieved - Sargas Seventy Nine, Eighty, Eighty One and Eighty Two : Agastya explains origin of Ikshvaaku Putras- youngest son Danda's Rajya with Purohita Shukracharya-Danda's manabhanga of Acharya putri-Acharya's shaapa of Danda Rajya since turned as dandakaranya- Rama returns back to Ayodhya from Agastyaashrama - Sarga Eighty Three : On return to Ayodhya afer killing immoral tapasvi for reiving the dead vipra baalaka threby, Rama proposed Rajasuya Yagjna, as appreciative Bharata assured consoloidation of several rajyas thereafter- Sargas Eighty Four, Eighty Five and Eighty Six: Lakshmana explains the uniqueness of Ashwamedha Yagjna and cited the example of Indra's such Yagjna relieved of his brahma hatya dosha consequent on his killing Vritraasura a brahmana. - Sargas Eighty Seven- Eighty Eight- Eighty Nine and Ninety: Lakshmana re-emphasised the ashvamedha yagjna mahatmya by yet another example of King Ila cursed by Maha Deva Himself with monthly change over of purushava and Streetva! - Sargas Ninety One and Ninety Two :As per Rama's requests, invitees of Co Raja- Maharshi-Brahmana- prajas- Vaanara Rakshasa arrived as elaborate vyavastha of bhojana- nivasaadis arranged-and 'bhubhramana of Yagjnaashva' initiated - Sargas Ninety Three and Ninety Four: In the context of Rama's ashvamedha yagjna, Maharshi Valmiki arrives with Kusha Lava kumaras as the latter rendered tuneful shaastriya singing of Ramayana in Rama Sabha which thrilled all and Rama too! - Sargas Ninety Five and Ninety Six: Being pleased with Kusha Lava Ramayana Gaana, Shri Rama calls for Valmiki who certifies their origin and as Devi Sita accompanied him asserts her paativratya in a maha sabha of Tapasvis and public alike.- Sargas Ninety Seven, Ninety Eight and Ninety Nine: Devi Sita's shapatha grahana and rasaatalala pravesha-Rama's distress and Brahma reminder of Rama as avatara purusha- Rama's long life and several yagjnas with Sita's suvarna pratima- glory of Rama Rajya-Sargas Hundred and Hundred One: At the instance of Bharta's maternal uncle's message, Rama readily agreed to attack Gandharva Desha and following the victory, Bharata kumaras Taksha and Pushkala set up two saamanta rajyas happily ! Sarga Hundred Two: Eventually, Lashmana Kumaras named Angada and Chandraketu got settled at Andadeeya and Chandrakanta Rajyas - Sargas Hundred Three and Hundred Four: At the behest of Brahma, Kaala Devata arrives and conveys to Shri Rama in a 'one to one' secrecy that Vishnu as Shri Rama might like to terminate Ramavataara as Rama too agrees - Sarga Hundred and Five:Even as Kaala Maharshi arrived for Shri Rama for a secret meet but simultaneously Durvasa too arrived and embarrassed Lakshmana had to hear possible evil forebodings, but Rama just reached Durvasa- Sargas Hundred Six and Seven : Being aware of Rama's decision to die, Lakshmana begged Rama to kill him but Rama disowned as that was like killing- Lakshmana stopped his breathing- Rama made Kusha Lavas as independent kings.- Sarga Hundred Eight: As per 'Ramaagjna' Shatrughna too reported to follow

Rama- Sugriva Vibhishanas too arrived to follow Rama yet insrtucted that Hanuman- Jambavan- Mainda Dwividas-Vibhishana to remain till Pralaya kaala - Sargas Nine and Ten Hundred As ‘Ayodhya Purajana’ and others desirous of ‘Rama Parandhaama Yatra’ to River Sarayu, Brahma welcomed Rama as Maha Vishnu while his countless followers were blessed with Sanaanatana Loka Prapti. - Sarga Hundred and Eleven: Sampurna Ramayana’s Upasamhara and Mahatmya .

[ Annexure on Shri Rama’s Uttara Bharata Parikrama before wedding with Devi Sita

Sri Rama's route From Ayodhya to Janakpur was the route used by the bridegroom and his ‘baraatis’ or the Party as also to return to Ayodhya after the Rama-Sita marriage in Janakpur acquired the name ‘Ram-Sita Marg’ long ago. The route of the ‘baaraatis’ is an excellent Road and millions of pilgrims actually cover the distance on foot till date out of veneration!

Shri Rama and Lakshmana guided by Maharshi Vishwamitra, however took another route to reach Janakpur after the slaying of Tataka in Tatakavan (Forest of Tataka).

- 1) Azamgarh: Uttar Pradesh: Shri Ram was only fifteen years old when he and Lakshman set out with Vishwamitra to annihilate the demons who were polluting and obstructing the sacred rituals of his Yagna (fire sacrifice). Their first halt was on the banks of the River Sarayu, twenty kilometers from Ayodhya. Valmiki’s Ramayan describes the tranquil setting against which, Vishwamitra taught the princes about the art of ‘bal’ and ‘atibal’ which endowed them with immunity from disease and eternal good health besides freeing them from pangs of hunger and thirst.
- 2) Balliya: Uttar Pradesh: Walking past Azamgarh, Shri Ram, Lakshman and Sage Vishwamitra reached Balliya where River Sarayu merges with the holy river Ganga. This haven on the banks of the Sarayu was the chosen place for sages who spend long hours in meditation. Shri Ram rested here in the night before he set out at dawn crossing river Ganga to reach Vishwamitra’s Siddhashram. At night, before the princes went to sleep, Vishwamitra narrated to them the story of ‘Kama Deva’ the God of Love who was burned to ashes there by Lord Shiva.
- 3) Buxar: Bihar :Tadaka Vadha:- After crossing the holy Ganga, Shri Ram and Lakshman reached a dense forest where demoness Tataka lived. The dreadful forest was known as Tatkavan. Shri Ram ended Tataka’s reign over the forest by slaying her and freeing its inhabitants from terror. The forest stretched between Bharoli and Baksar in Bihar. Shri Rama performed the first task of his “avtaar” (incarnation) here by destroying the evil demoness.
- 4) Siddhashram: Buxar, Bihar: Vishwamitra’s Siddhashram was located not too far from Buxar. Siddhashram, according to Adhytma Ramayan was a social ashram where religious instruction was imparted to people. Shri Ram and Lakshman sojourned in the ashram for three days after Shri Ram killed Mareech and Subahu, the demons who were tormenting Vishwamitra by spoiling his Yagna with bones and blood. Lakshman destroyed the demon while Shri Ram took on the mighty Maricha, son of Tataka. There are villages existing today on the banks of the River Ganga with the names Marich and Subahu.
- 5) Ahilya Uddhar: Ahroli, Buxar, Bihar. Three kilometers from Buxar in the northern direction is the village Ahroli. Rishi Gautam had his ashram here. According to Ram Charita Manas it was here that Shri Ram delivered Ahilya, the beautiful wife of Rishi Gautam, from a curse of her husband, which had turned her into stone. When Shri Ram and Lakshman left Siddhashram they crossed River Ganga and River Sonbhadra and set foot on the soil of Ahroli village, which still exists in Buxar district.

6) Sonbhadra River, of Gajendra Moksha Fame, Sonpur, near Patna, Bihar: Parev and Trigama are two places of significance. They have a distance of five kilometers between them. When Shri Ram and Lakshman crossed River Sonbhadra, they reached a place before Patna where they spent a night before moving on to Janakpur.

7) Vishala Nagri, Hajipur, Bihar ( near Patna). Shri Ram and Lakshman crossed River Ganga and reached this town with Rishi Vishwamitra who guided them to a garden to rest for a while in its fragrant surroundings.

8) Ahilya Ashram, Darbhanga, Bihar: Valmiki's Ramayan says Gautam Rishi's ashram was in Mithila. Ahilya resided there as Shila. The place was therefore named as Ahiyari after her. Thaiyavalk (Jagvan), Shringi (Sringya), Bhiringi (Bhairav) and Gautam Rishis lived there.

9) Vishwamitra Ashram: Bisaul, Madhubani, Bihar. Bisaul was Rishi Vishwamitra's place of residence. After reaching Janakpur Rishi Vishwamitra stayed there and he set up his ashram in a garden. B) Phulhar Village (Jamuni), Madhubani, Bihar was situated in one of Raja Janak's prime gardens. It was in Jamuni (Madhubani) and was celebrated for a Gauri Temple where Sita prayed regularly. After paying obeisance to his Guru Vishwamitra when Shri Ram entered the floral section of the garden, Sita, who was present there, got her first glimpse of Shri Ram.

10) Matihani: Janakpur, Nepal. In the vicinity of Janakpur was Matihani from where, according to folklore, mud was collected and taken to create the venue for the marriage of Shri Ram and Sita. Matihani has become a sacred place as even today maidens for their marriage take mud from here.

B) Janakpur, Nepal: Janakpur was the capital of Raja Janak's kingdom. It lies 20 kilometers from India's border and is known for a temple of Ma Sita which attracts pilgrims round the year.

C) Rangbhoomi: Janakpur, Nepal. It is believed that the Dhanush Yagya (competition for lifting of the bow) or Sitaswayamvar, as is popularly understood was announced before an invited royal gathering in a huge maidan (field) close to the present Janaki Mandir. It was here that Shri Ram picked up the Shiv Dhanush and broke it into two halves with ease. The important places in Janakpur include Matihani, Rangbhoomi, Dhanusha Mani Mandap. All of them are associated with the legend of Shri Ram and Sita's marriage.

11) Sita Marhi, Bihar: According to beliefs, Mithila, one of the principalities of Raja Janak's Kingdom was passing through the trial of drought and famine. Following royal tradition, Raja Janak took out the golden plow and went to an arid field to plough the soil and appeal to the gods for rain. While performing the ritual, the plow got stuck in a deep groove in the soil. The king's men rushed to pull the plow out of the depth of the soil and lo and behold there was a girl child waiting for help. The childless king happily adopted her as his daughter and named her "Sita", the Sanskrit term by which the cutting side of the plow is known. The name of the village, Sitamarhi, is derived from the name Sita as a result. Travelers going to Janakpur in Nepal invariably stop at Sitamarhi for a "darshan" (sighting) of the land where Sita manifested in the soil.

12) Sitakund Motihari, Bihar : It is said that the 'baraatis' (procession of the bridegroom's family) while returning to the kingdom of Ayodhya after the Ram-Sita marriage stopped at Sitakund Motihari for a little rest. They bathed and freshened themselves in the Sita Kund. One of Sita's bangles fell in the kund (pond), it is believed. The baraatis (Bridegroom's family) offered a puja (worship) to Lord Shiva here. Sitakund is located 20 kms from Motihari in the South Direction. It is a well-known place in the

Northern Indian Belt. Then the baratis arrived at Derwan, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh is not far from Sitakund. The baraatis (Bridegroom's family) had camped at this place and hence the name Derwan. The word "Dev" in Hindi means camp.

13) Dohri Ghat, Mhow, Uttar Pradesh: The true meaning of Dohari is Do Hari, i.e. Two Haris. One commonly used name in the worship of Lord Vishnu is Hari. As per Valmiki Ramayan, the baarat was on the way to Ayodhya when the earlier Avtaar (incarnation) of Vishnu, Parashuram, stopped the baaratis at this place on the banks of the river Sarayu. Parashuram tested Shri Ram and realized who he was. Both the Haris (Parashuram and Ram, the two Vishnu avatars) met here and Parashuram returned to Mahesgiri Mountain after offering his respects to Ram. Raja Dashrath and the "baraatis" then continued their journey back to Ayodhya with Shri Ram.

#### Shri Ram's Vanvasa Parikrama:

It is more difficult to chart a route for Ram's journey during his period of exile. Firstly this is pan-India journey, secondly, Ram, Lakshman and Sita also wandered in the Dandaka Forest for more than 10 years. This mighty forest would encompass in today's date almost the entire state of Madhya Pradesh including parts of Gujarat and Maharashtra on the West and Karnataka on the South. Hence this makes it even more difficult. Still one might charter a basic route. There are many places that Ram visited during this 14 year period during which he had the good fortune of meeting with some of most enlightened sages and beings of that period. They were of course very delighted to meet with Ram themselves with many of them having been foretold the coming of Ram, they waited for years conducting severe penance for that fortunate time to arrive.

1) Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh: was the capital city for the Isvaku Dynasty (Suryavanshi) of Kings. This was also the city where Son of Dasrath, Shri Ram was born (appeared). In twelve kilometers vicinity of Ayodhya there exist holy places like Veda Kund, Sita Kund, Janaura etc. that are also part of the journey of Shri Ram's 'vanvas' (exile) route. It was also from Ayodhya that Shri Ram started his journey along with Sita and Lakshman. Ayodhya was a majestic city comparable to any international city of modern times almost eleven kilometers in length full of parks, gardens, theatres and modern infrastructure and facilities for its citizens. The citizens of Ayodhya loved their Kings. It was at Tamsa River, Uttar Pradesh that Shri Ram along with Sita, Lakshman and Sumantra Minister (Mantri) rested on their first night. The modern name for Tamsa River is Madhar River and the place from where she flows is called Gora Ghat. This place is about twenty kilometers from Ayodhya. On the banks of the Tamsa River there is a place known as Purva Chakiya. The citizens of Ayodhya followed Shri Ram until this spot after their dearest Ram departed from Ayodhya. Shri Ram, Lakshman and Sita disguised themselves and left this spot in the middle of the night so that none of the people would be able to follow him.

2) Sultanpur, Uttar Pradesh on the banks of Gomati River that Sage Valmiki had an ashram. It was from here that Shri Ram crossed the Gomti river. The old name of Sultanpur was Kushannathpur, which was named after the son of Ram, 'Kush'. Vadrathi River, Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh The present day name Sarkani River which is situated around 8 kilometers from Pratapgarh in the Eastern Direction. Shri Ram had crossed this river near the town of Mohanganj, as per Valmiki Ramayan. Sandika River (Sayi River), Mohanganj, Pratapgarh, Uttar Pradesh is situated at a distance of twelve kilometers from Pratapgarh. This place is also commonly known as Dev Ghat. Shri Ram has crossed this river from this spot. There is also a Shiv Temple here that was established by Bharat. This place has been mentioned in the Valmiki as well as Tulsi Ramayan. Further, Balukini River, Pratapgarh, Ramkaleva, Uttar Pradesh is approximately

15 kilometers from Pratapgarh in the Southern Direction. Shri Ram had crossed this river here as has been mentioned in the Valmiki Ramayan.

3) Prayag ( Allahabad), Uttara Pradesh:

A) Shringverpur or the current name Singrora, the capital of Nishad Raj Guha. This place is situated around twenty kilometers North of Allahabad. Shri Ram had rested on a bed of grass here. The next morning he crossed the Ganga River from here and proceeded to the Bharadwaj Ashram. The incident of 'Kevat Prasang' took place here.

B) Sita Kund, Shrinverpur, Prayag. This holy pond is around two kilometers from Shrinverpur. It was from here that Shri Ram sent back their beloved minister Sumantra to Ayodhya.

C) Sangam, Prayag: This is the divine meeting place of the three holy rivers of Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati. Shri Ram himself praised this spot for its spiritual powers, which could uplift mankind. Bharadwaj Rishi had his ashram here. Shri Ram had rested in this ashram for a night. Ram Charita Manas as well as Valmiki Ramayan give a lot of importance to this place.

D) Yamuna Ghat, Simri, Prayag: Shri Ram along with Lakshman and Sita crossed the Yamuna River. In the Valmiki Ramayan the reference to Lakshman constructing a boat to cross the river has been made for this place. After resting overnight on the Simri Ghat Shri Ram crossed the river using the boat made by Lakshman. There are many places on the banks of the Yamuna related to the exile period of Shri Ram like Akshay Vat, Sita Rasoi (Jasra Bazaar), Rishiyan (the abode of Rishis), Murka (Hanuman Mandir).

4) Chitrakoot, Uttar Pradesh:

A) Ramnagar: Shri Ram walked along the banks of the Yamuna River in his onward journey. After crossing the Yamuna River, he reached what is known in today's time as Ramnagar. This place is birthplace of Tulsi Das, the great poet who has written Ram Charita Manas.

B) Valmiki Ashram, Lala Pur, Chitrakoot: After visiting Sage Bharadwaj's Ashram, Shri Ram reached Valmiki's Ashram and he spent the night here. It was here that Sage Valmiki himself suggested to Shri Ram to make Chitrakoot his home for a few days.

C) As suggested by Sage Valmiki, Shri Ram reached Chitrakoot Dham. Shri Ram made his ashram on the Kamadgiri Mountain near the Mandakini River. There were many sages, holy men and Rishis who had made their ashrams (abodes) near the Kamadgiri Mountain. It was this divine spot where Shri Bharat met with Shri Ram and took his padukas (slippers) with him to Ayodhya to place on the throne. Chitrakoot has many places of pilgrimages in its vicinity like Madakini River, Bharatkoop, On the banks of the Mandakini River – Spatik Sheela, Hanuman Dhara and Atri Ashram, Gupt (Secret) Godavari. All these sacred places strengthen the place of Chitrakoot as a one of the most important places of pilgrimages while tracing the footsteps of Shri Ram's journey of exile. After the visit of Bharat to Chitrakoot, many citizens of Ayodhya had started to visit this place. Many of the holy men and sages in this area started to feel disturbed by the presence of so many people and it then that Shri Ram decided to leave this place. Hence all in all Shri Ram would have stayed in Chitrakoot for only about one or two years only. The majority of his exile period he spent in the Dandak Forest.

D) Amravati, Chitrakut, Uttar Pradesh: Around 7 kilometers from Atri Ashram, in the middle of the jungle, there is a beautiful place called Amravati. One of the ancestors of Shri Ram called Ambrish had conducted an intense penance here for many years. After leaving Chitrakut, Shri Ram came to Sage Atri's Ashram. It was here that the Sati Anusuya (pure and chaste wife of Sage Atri) gave the sermon of 'Pati Vrata Dharma' (service to husband) to Mother Sita. After resting in Sage Atri's Ashram for one night,

Shri Ram spent the next night at the place of penance of Ambrish (his ancestor). It was in this forest that Shri Ram killed the Rakshas named Viradh. In the vicinity of Amvarti there is a village called Jamunihayi. There is a very dark and dangerous looking pit called 'Viradh Kund' (pond). This pit is situated three kilometers from Amravati. After killing the demon Viradh, Shri Ram had buried him here.

5) Sharbang Ashram, Satna, Madhya Pradesh: Around 13 kilometers from current day Chithara Station, Satna, Madhya Pradesh is probably where the Shabrang Ashram of the Ramayan is situated. After the slaying of Viradh, Shri Ram visited this ashram. It was here that he had the divine 'darshan' (sighting) of the God Indra. After having the 'darshan' of Shri Ram, Shabrang Rishi with the help of his Yogic Fire destroyed his body and attained salvation.

6) Ramtek, Nagpur, Maharashtra: Ramtek is a beautiful mountain near the city of Nagpur. Shri Ram stayed here for some time. This mountain is also connected with the writer Kalidas who wrote the famous poem 'Meghdoot' according to some historians. Approximately 9 kilometers from here there is a place called Salbardi near which there is a pilgrimage spot called Sita Nahani. According to popular legend, Shri Ram proceeded to the ashram of Sutikshan Muni from here.

7) Nasik, Maharashtra:

A) Sutiksha Muni Ashram: Sapta Srungi; After meeting with Sharbang Rishi, Shri Ram reached the ashram of Sutikshan Muni who had spent 10 years in the Dandaka Forest before reaching here. Sutikshan Muni was the disciple of Agastya Rishi. Shri Ram rested here for some time. He killed many of the demons residing in this area and also took a vow that he would rid this area of all the evil influences. There is an ancient temple of Goddess Sapta Srungi here, which attracts many pilgrims. It is said that Markandeya Rishi wrote the Durga Saptastuti at this holy place. According to popular legend, Durga Ma killed the demon Mahisasur at this place, which is represented by a hole in the mountain, which can be seen till today. The demon was hiding behind the mountain when Durga attacked him.

B) Agastya Ashram: Pimparner, Nasik: Approximately 16 kilometers North of Nasik there is an ashram called Agasteshwar Ashram. Sutiksha Muni had guided Shri Ram to his Guru Agastya Rishi. Sage Agastya presented Ram with many divine weapons and powers here. He also advised Ram to make his Ashram on the banks of the Godavari River and live there.

C) Panchavati: Nasik; On the banks of the Godavari River there is place popularly known as Tapovan, which is the actual Panchvati of the Ramayan era. It was here that Shri Ram, Lakshman and Sita resided here in a small hut. The incident of the cutting off the nose of Demoness Shupnaka took place here. It is from here that 'Nasik' derived its name as the Sanskrit name for nose is 'Nasika'. Khar, Dhooshan, Trishara and 14,000 other Demons were slain by Shri Ram in this area after they attacked Shri Ram on hearing about this incident from their sister. The kidnapping of Sita by Ravan, The slaying of Mareech and the Slaying of Jatayu by Ravan all took place in a forest known as Jansthan in this area. In the ancient times, the ashram of Gautam Rishi was in the holy town of Trimbakeshwar (one of the twelve Jyotirlings) nearby. In order to release himself of the burden of a curse on him, Gautam Rishi had created the Godavari River.

8) Tuljapur ( Maharashtra): There is a famed temple of Devi Tuljabhavani here. It is believed that Shri Ram and Sita roamed in the forests near the temple. It is also here that Lord Shiva and his wife Sati came for the 'darshan' of Shri Ram and Sita. Sati took the form of Sita and tried to get close to Ram in order to test his purity.

9) Ramdurg, Belgaum, Karnataka: A) Kaband Ashram: Kardigud, Near Ramdurg, Belgaum, Karnataka In the Indian state of Karnataka there is a village called Kardigud where it is believed that Kaband Ashram was situated. Shri Ram and Lakshman slayed the demon Kaband here. After he was

killed, Kabandh became a Gandharva and left for his heavenly abode. Before leaving he had requested Shri Ram to visit the Ashram of Shabari.B) Shabri Ashram: Sureban, Near Ramdurg, Belgaum: Around 14 kilometers in the Northern direction from Ram Durg, near the town of Gunga is placed called Sureban. This is place where Shabri, who was a disciple of Sage Matang lived. She had waited long years for her dear Ram to arrive, and on his arrival she fed him berries which she had tasted herself to make sure that they were sweet. This angered Lakshman but Shri Ram pacified him because he could see her intense love and devotion towards him. It was Shabri who then instructed Ram to approach Sugreev in the search for his beloved wife.

10) Hampi, Karnataka :A) Hanuman Halli: Koppal, Hampi: This was the place where Hanuman met Shri Ram and Lakshman for the first time. In fact Sugreev had sent Hanuman to meet with them in order to make sure that they were not the spies of his brother and archenemy Bali. The night Hanuman lifted Shri Ram and Lakshman on his shoulders and took them on Rishimukh Parvat to meet with Sugreev. The capital city of Sugreev 'Kishkinda' is also near by.B) Bellari, Hampi: Near the ancient Kishkinda, around four kilometers from the town of Hampi, there exists a Mountain called Malbhavant (Prastravan) where Shri Ram has spent the monsoon season. The places to see around this area include Bali Bandara, Anjani Parvat (mountain), Matang Rishi Mountain, Spatik Sheela. It was on the Spatik Sheela that the Varan (monkey) Sena (army) had collected for the first time. Hanuman had given the news of Sita to Shri Ram at this place.

11) Tiruchallapalli,Tamil Nadu: The old name for this town is Trishirapalli. This was the abode for Ravan's brother Trishira and so named after him. On the banks of the Kaveri River here there is a beautiful Shiva Temple, which is said to destroy sins. According to popular legend, Shri Ram had prayed to Lord Shiva here in order to free himself of the sin of slaying Khar and Dooshan. On his way to Lanka, Shri Ram had stayed here.

12) Rampad, Kodikarai,Vedaranyam, Tamil Nadu: Along with the entire Vanar (monkey) Sena (army), Shri Ram had proceeded towards the Southern direction from this town. It was also from this place that Shri Ram had the first view of the sea.The footprints of Shri Ram are still found in the forests of this area.

13) Ramanadhapuram,Tamil Nadu: Ramnathpuram is on the shores of the waters bodies on the Southern tip of India. It is on the way to holy pilgrim town of Rameshwaram. It is believed that the foundation stone of the Ram-Setu Bridge constructed by Ram and the entire army to cross over to Sri Lanka is placed here in a small village called 'Chedu Karai'. One can still see the foundation stones of this architectural wonder ten feet below the waters of the ocean. Vibhishan, after having been insulted by Ravan came to seek the help of Ram at this place. The entire strategy for the war was also devised in this town.

Places worth to visit in the neighborhood include Vilundi Tirth, Ekanth Ram, Agni Tirth, Ram Jaroka, Kodanda Ram Mandir, Jata Tirth and Darbhashainam. It is believed that it was in Darbhashainam, that Shri Ram made a Darbhashayana (a seat of grass) and prayed to Varun Devta (God of the Sea) for three continuous days for giving him passage to Lanka. Varun Devta appeared after three days and advised Ram to build a bridge across the sea to Lanka.

14) Rameshvaram, Tamil Nadu: Rameshwaram is one of the twelve Jyotirlingas in India. Shri Ram had established a Shiva Linga Temple here using the sand from the sea. Approximately one or two kilometers from this Temple, Nala vanara (monkey) along with the other vaanaras (monkeys) had made the bridge to Lanka.This bridge was constructed in five days only. Shri Ram crossed over to Lanka with his entire army using this bridge and camped at Suvel Parvat (Mountain). NASA has used modern satellite technology to photograph this bridge and they have actually unearthed an ancient bridge connected India to modern day Sri Lanka!

15) Dhanushkoti: Skanda Purana in reference to Setu Mahatmya describes: ‘ On the shores of the Southern Seas is the most sacred and boon-bestowing Dhanushkodi which is also the high point of destroying ‘ Maha Patakas’ like Brahma Hatya, Suraapaana, Swarna harana, Guru-Shishyadi gamana. This is also the provider of plentiful prosperity and Kailasa Moksha Prada. It uproots indebtedness and poverty for ever. Incidentally, Dhanushkoti partially got submerged into Sea owing to recent cyclonic devastation and partly ascribed to Shri Rama’s own arrows. This historic meeting point of three high Seas of Hind Sagara-Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea is the hallowed Tirtha for Sacred Snaanas, Shraddha-Pinda pradaanas and Daanas. The Legend continues to state that Lord Shri Rama after killing Ravana and his generation except Vibhishana who was subsequently made the King of Lanka, there followed a series of awe- inspiring incidents like Devi Sita’s Agni Pariksha, Hanuman’s despatch to Kasi to fetch a genuine Shiva Linga for installation at Raneshwara, his delayed action to do so, Devi Sita’s installation of Sand Linga, and travel by Pushpaka Vimana back to Ayodhya for the most auspicious Shri Sita-Rama Kalyana at Ayodhya! ]

#### Padma Purana provides a quick retrospective of Ramayana Rama’s episode till Ravana’s extermination

Swayambhu Manu preformed Tapasya to Lord Vishnu for thousand years and when the latter appeared, Manu desired that he would like to have Vishnu as his son. The Lord agreed and said that in fact as a part of the task of Preservation of ‘Dharma’ (Virtue), he would like to appear on Earth from time to time as and when Dharma was threatened and Evil Forces gathered momentum; he said: *Paritranaaya Sadhunaam Vinaasaaya chaDushkrutaam, Dharma samsthaapanaarthaaya sambhavaami yuge yugey!* (I shall no Doubt take human birth to revive Dharma and punish Evil from time to time). As promised by Vishnu, Swayambhu was born in Raghu as King Dasaratha and became the father of Shri Rama in Treta Yuga, as Vasudeva in Yadava Kula in DwapaYuga and one thousand Divya Years hence as Brahmana Harigupta in Samhal Village in Kali Yuga. The two brothers Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu of the Satya Yuga were born as Ravana and Kumbhakarna in Treta Yuga. Muni Pulastya’s son was Muni Vishvava and the latter’s wife was Kaikashi; Ravana and Kumbhakarna were born to Vishvava and Kaikeshi. Kaikeshi also gave birth to Surpanakha and later on to the virtuous devotee of Narayana, Vibhishana. Ravana brothers performed severe Tapasya and secured boons of invincibility from Devas, Danavas and Rakshasas and harassed Devad who fled from Swarga and prayed to Vishnu who assured that he would soon be born to King Dasaratha as Rama and demolish the entire race of Ravana; Vishnu also asked Devas to assume the births of ‘Vanaras’ and assist in this holy task. In the Surya Vamsa, Vaivasvata Muni begot King Ikshvaku and Dasaratha was born to Ikshvaku. Devi Koushalya was born to the King of Koushalya and was wedded to King Dasaratha at Ayodhya on the banks of River Sarayu. Dasaratha also married Sumitra and Kaikeyi. He became a powerful yet righteous King with Sage Vasishtha as the Raja Guru and performed the Putra- Kameshthi Yagna. From the ‘Agni Kunda’ at the eventful Yagna, Maha Vishnu Him self Gave Darshan to Dasaratha and assured that he would soon be born to him to save the Devoted and kill the Evil. He handed over a ‘Kheer Patra’ to the three Devis; Kaushalya and Kaikeyi took half each and gave half of their portions to Sumitra; thus the eldest boy was born to Kaushalya, Bharat was born to Kaikeyi and Lakshmana and Shatrughna were born to Sumitra. Sage Vasishtha named the eldest as ‘Shri Rama’ since that was the ‘Swataha Siddha’ name as he was the husband of Sri Devi and the equivalent of Vishnu’s Sahasranaamaas, providing salvation to the devotees and since his birth was in Chaitra month dear to Vishnu. (*Shriyah kamalavaasivya ramaneya Maha Prabhu Tasmaachhari -Rama ithyasya naamaa*

*siddham puratanam/ Sahasranaamnaam shrishasyatulyam mukti pradam nrunaam, Vishnumaasi samutpanno Vishnurityabhidheeyatey*). As the boys grew up, Rama and Lakshmana was one pair and Bharata and Shatrughna was another. In the meantime, Bhagavati Lakshmi was materialized as King Janaka found her while digging Earth in Yagna by a plough top called 'sita' and thus named Sita and most endearingly brought up as his own daughter. Sage Vishvamitra derided that Rama and Lakshmana should protect one Yagna being organized by him on the banks of Ganga, sine there were always threats of Rakshasas to destroy Yagnas by pouring blood and such other foul material. Very reluctantly, Dasaratha allowed to let them go to protect the Yagna which apparently served many purposes as subtly planned by the Sage: one to let the World Realize that Rama a mere teen-ager was of Vishnu 'Amsa' and introduced Rama to the Rakshasas that they should better beware; Vishvamitra could teach the nuances of shastra-Astra Vidya to the brothers; to afford an exposure to Rama at Sita Swayamvara among the great Kings of the day including a warning to Ravana that the Avatar of Vishnu had arrived; and also to consummate the Sacred Wedding of Rama and Sita. As visualised the Sage, all these and many other events took place: the killing of Rakshasi Tadaki and the Rakshasa called Subahu as also the use of 'Vayavyastra' to sweep away demon Maricha to a far off place so that he would have to float again at a later date to assume the role of 'Maya Golden Deer' before Devi's abduction by Ravana; the liberation of Devi Ahalya by giving her normal form from a stone due to Sage Gautami-her husband's curse; the smash of Shiva Dhanush; the wedding of Rama and Sita apart, Lakshmana was married to Urmila, Bharata to Mandvi, and Shatrughna with Shrutikirti; the rupture of Parasurama's ego by the shatter of Vaishnava Dhanush and his exit from the active life into the Ashram of Nara-Narayana. Even as the City of Ayodhya was going in euphoria with preparations of Shri Rama's becoming the Yuva Raja (the Heir Apparent) of the Kingdom, Devi Kaikeyi declared her intention known that Rama should proceed for a fourteen year long spell of 'Vana Vasa'(forest life) and Bharata to become the Heir Apparent; this was in the light of a boon that Dasaratha gave to Kaikeyi as she saved him on a war front and she reserved to demand it at this juncture. Bharata was out of station at his maternal uncle's place and did not know about the demand; Devi Sita insisted accompanying Rama and so did Lakshmana; Dasaratha was in a swoon, followed by death; the entire population of the Kingdom was crest-fallen; Bharata insisted on Rama's return but on the latter's refusal took Rama's footwear kept on the Throne which was worshipped daily and he became a temporary Administrator on behalf of King Rama. Rama, Sita and Lakshmana then reached the mountain of Chitrakoot for a brief stay at the Ashram of Bharadwaja, further on to the Ashram of Atri Muni where the Muni's wife Devi Anasuya enlightened the regulations of a 'Pativrata' and finally entered the Dandakaranya where they stayed for long with Munis visiting their 'Panchavati' (a thatched cottage). One frightful day, demoness Surpanakha, the sister of Ravana and Kumbhakarna, arrived at the Parnashala and proposed to Rama. Lakshmana cut off her ears and nose and as retaliation two Rakshasas attacked Rama and Lakshmana and the latter killed the demons. Surpanakha approached Ravana who planned the attraction of the golden deer disguised as Maricha. Sita was tempted to secure the deer and Rama alone chased the Maya Mriga and killed the demon while the latter shouted loudly the name of Rama to mislead Sita and Lakshmana so that Lakshmana would leave Sita and Ravana could enter the scene. Lakshmana drew a line around Panchavati with Mantras and asked Sita not to go beyond the line. Ravana arrived as a Muni and asked for alms and Sita wanted him to enter the line but Ravana did not and insisted Sita to come out. As soon as she came out, Ravana appeared in his original form and abducted her by his Pushpak Viman. As Sita was sobbing loudly, the giant bird Jatayu, who was a friend of Dasaratha, made desperate attempts to stop Ravana's Viman but the mighty Ravana slashed the bird's wings as it fell down in a faint. As Rama and Lakshmana did not find Sita on their return, they

frantically searched and the dying Jatayu conveyed that Sita was abducted by Ravana. Having performed obsequies to Jatayu, Rama and Lakshmana reached the Ashram of Devi Shabari a unique devotee of Shri Rama and treated the brothers with fruits and Rama gave her the boon of Vishnu Sayujya. Hanuman met Rama and Lakshmana and assured all kinds of assistance to Rama in finding Sita and eventually to destroy Ravana and his clan. He introduced the fugitive King of Kishkindha named Sugriva, raised confidence to Sugriva in killing his valiant brother Vaali who occupied his throne and after reoccupying his throne sent Hanuman to Lanka in search of Sita. The mighty Hanuman crossed the ocean and spotted Sita in Ashoka Vatika sobbing under an Ashoka tree. Hanuman convinced Sita as a devotee of Rama by showing Rama's ring and assured her that very soon Rama and Lakshmana would reach Lanka with a huge Vanara Sena (Monkey brigade), kill Ravana and his entire followers and relieve her of bondage. Hanuman created havoc in the Ashoka vatika by killing all the security personnel, five Senapatis, seven sons of Ravana's Ministers, and a son of Ravana. Indrajit the elder son of Ravana who also was a reputed warrior having defeated Indra and specialized in wars on the clouds thus securing the epithet of 'Meghanadha' encountered Hanuman who feigned Indrajit's control; Hanuman was face to face with Ravana in the latter's court and allowed himself to let his tail burn which was extended endlessly and destroyed a large part of Ravana's City as a warning to him that soon Rama and Lakshmana would arrive at Lanka to destroy Ravana and his entire tribe. On return to Kishkintha, Hanuman conveyed Rama and others about Sita's bondage. Rama, Lakshmana and the mammoth Vanara Sena under Sugriva's leadership arrived on the sea coast to reach Lanka on the other side of the Ocean. Rama prayed to Samudra Deva (the Deity of the Ocean) to reduce the force of the violent tides and when Samudra Deva did not relent was even ready to punish the Deity. Samudra Deva facilitated the construction of Rama Setu or the Bridge in the name of Rama across the Ocean; huge boulders were thrown into the Ocean with the name of Rama inscribed and the boulders floated enabling the construction of the Bridge. Meanwhile the younger brother of Ravana called Vibhishana, a staunch devotee of Lord Vishnu approached Rama for refuge and soon became a confidant of Rama about matters related to Ravana and his associates. Having crossed the Rama Setu, the gigantic and mighty Monkey Brigade commenced furious battle with the gallant Rakshasas. Indrajit who was a highly renowned warrior fought and killed thousands of Vanaras and succeeded in tying Rama and Lakshmana with 'Nagastra', when Garuda the Carrier of Vishnu appeared and the snakes withered away. Meanwhile Kumbhakarna, another brother of Ravana who had a giant figure fought recklessly killing tens of thousands of Rama Sena, but finally fell down to the torrential rain-like arrows of Shri Rama. Indrajit attacked Lakshmana and made the latter unconscious when Hanuman brought Sanjeevini Mountain with medicinal shrubs got Lakshmana revived; in the fierce battle that followed, Rama and Lakshmana destroyed Indrajit. In the meantime, Ravana desired to perform an 'Abhicharatmika' (Evil-oriented) Yagna out of desperation for Victory, but a few brave Vanaras got scent of it and destroyed the Yagna. Then Ravana rode into the battle with his entire army of massive strength comprising elephants, horses, chariots and infantry and massacred Vanaras. Indra sent his Divya Ratha (Divine Chariot) to Shri Rama with Matangi as the Charioteer and the Greatest Battle of Treta Yuga was fought for seven days and nights, even as all the Devas headed by Indra, besides Brahma and Rudra, watched the Grand Spectacle of Rama-Ravana Yuddha! Rama had systematically smashed Ravana's ten heads, but the destroyed heads were sprouting again and again and Ravana was thundering world shaking shrieks to show Rama's helplessness. Lord Shiva gave a boon to Ravana to let the smashed heads be revived again and again. Finally, Rama pulled up his most powerful 'Brahmastra' to destroy a stock of 'Ambrosia' in his belly (as hinted by Vibhishana) and crushed his chest which pierced through Earth and crashed into Rasatala into the nether world. Instantly, Devas who were visioning the

proceedings from the Skies went into ecstasy showering rain of scented flowers on Rama; Indra, Brahma and Rudra were relieved; Gandharvas and Kinneras sang tuneful lyrics of the Lord; Apsaras danced with immense joy; Sanaka and Sanandana brothers who gave a curse to Jaya and Vijaya the Dwarapaalakas of Vaikuntha as they were obstructed entry to vision Vishnu were satisfied that out of three births the first human birth was completed; Maharshis and Siddhas recited Vedas and Scriptures as also hymns extolling Shri Rama. Rama then appointed Vibhishana as the King of Lanka and blessed him and his progeny to rule till the next Pralaya!

Thereafter Devi Sita was directed to prove her 'Pativratya' (Purity) by entering into an 'Agni Kunda' since she stayed away for long time in Lanka before a huge gathering of spectators; even Devas, Brahma and Rudra witnessed the scene, let alone Rakshasas, Gandharvas, Yakshas, human beings etc. Agni Devata himself brought back from the Agni Kunda and declared Devi Sita as an ever Pure, Chaste, Blameless and a peerless epitome of Pativrati. Besides installing Vibhishana as the King, Indra and Devas too were bestowed with their lost glories denied to them for long due to the much-hated Ravana and his clan. The precious possessions of Swarga like Pushpaka Vimana of Kubera Deva were restored to the respective Devas. Accompanied by Sita and Lakshmana as well as Hanuman, Sugriva, Vibhishana, Vanara Yoddhas (Warriors) including Jambavanta, Nala, Neela, Subhaga, Sharabha, Sushena, and all the survivors among Vanara Sena crossed the Rama Setu, proceeded to the site of 'Shiva Linga Pratishthana' at Rameshwara and further on to Ayodhya to join the celebrations of Victory and Rajabhisheka. On return an anxious Ayodhya awaited the 'Maryada Purusha', the Epic Hero and the Most Significant Avatara of Treta Yuga, proving once again that Lord Vishnu would assume human birth again and again as and when Dharma was in jeopardy and Adharma tended to take an upper hand in the Universe.

#### Shri Rama's departure from Lanka, his coronation & Ramarajya

In Patala Khanda of Padma Purana, Bhagavan Sesha Nag briefly recalled the Events to Maharshi Vasyayan about the activities of Lord Shri Rama, the Epic Hero of Ramayana, after the killing the infamous Ravana at Lanka providing great relief to Indra and Devas, Rishis and the virtuous as also the entire humanity. While narrating the Events, Sesha Nag was in a trance as the spell of Shri Rama was so intense that the Illustrious Serpent, whose bed Bhagavan Vishnu - the incarnation Shri Rama - rested on. Lord Rama bestowed the Kingship of Lanka to Vibhishana, the younger brother of the slain Ravana and sat on Pushpaka Viman along with Devi Sita, Lakshman, Hanuman, Sugriva and various other stalwarts who fought in the Battle with Ravana. Even as the Pushpaka Viman took off from Lanka to Ayodhya, there were showers of scented flowers and reverberating sounds of 'Dundubhis' (drums) from the skies by Devas and on the entire route on Earth there were loud recitals of Veda Mantras by Rishis and Brahmanas signifying the 'Vijaya Yatra' or the Victorious Return to Ayodhya. Raghunandan Rama showed to Sita some glimpses of Places like the Rama Setu by which Vanara Sena or the Monkey Brigade crossed the Ocean, Kishkindha where he met Sugriva and Hanuman, and the spots where he and Lakshmana searched for Sita. The Pushpak Viman approached Nandigram, where all these years of 'Rama Vanavas' King Bharata was ruling Ayodhya on behalf of Shri Rama by decorating the latter's footwear on the Throne, Hanuman was asked to fly earlier and inform Bharata. As the Vimana touched the ground, there was a high moment of emotional meeting of Rama and Bharata. As advance notice was sent, the entire City of Ayodhya prepared itself with festivities and colourful receptions with joyous singing and ecstatic dances to welcome the Maryada Purusha Shri Rama, Maha Sadhvi Sita, the

illustrious brothers Lakshmana and Bharata. With the Pushpak Viman descending down, the entire population of Ayodhyapuri went rapturous rendering high-pitched slogans viz.: Victory to Shri Rama, Victory to Devi Sita, Victory to Lakshmana and Victory to Raja Bharata. Dressed in their best attires befitting the euphoric moments of bliss, the ‘Puravasis’ had no bounds of joy in welcoming the Hero and his Parivar emerging from the Viman. The high tides of humanity who suppressed their emotions during his absence of for fourteen long years were surcharged with passions and inexplicable hilarity. Shri Rama first entered Devi Kaikeya’s Chambers and after prostrating before her asked her if there were any other wishes of hers yet unfulfilled! She stooped her head down in shame and could not utter one word out of remorse and anguish. From there, Shri Rama accompanied by Sita and Lakshmana visited Devi Sumitra and Shatrughna and postrated to her too; she expressed overflowing grief and relief and profusely thanked Rama for his highest consideration for her son Lakshmana. Further on both Rama and Sita entered the Chamber of Devi Kaushalya who swooned first for some time and after recovery embraced the son and daughter-in-law and declared that Sadhvi Sita was the finest example of womanhood for ever! After all the euphoria subsided, Bharat called the Ministers, Astrologers and Maharshi Vasishta to decide on the time and date of Shri Rama Pattabhishekam (Coronation). The Historic Celebration of ‘Rama Rajabhisheka’ was a landmark in Treta Yuga attended by Lord Brahma, Devas, Maharshis and the highly satisfied ‘Prajā, and heralded the highly famed Rama Rajya. As Rama was seated as its Head on the Naksha (Atlas) of ‘Sapta Lokas’ of Prithvi, all the Devas, Daityas, Nagas, Yakshas, Asuras, and of course the entire humanity were performing their respective duties with devotion and care as per established regulations of Dharma (Virtue), Nyaya (Justice), Law and Order, and Social Security. Sadhus and Sages were happy as never before, none resorted to foul means of any kind, women folk had no difficulties and they too observed the regulations as Pativratas; Sacred Activities like Yagnas, Vratas, Punya Karyas, Tirtha Yatras, Daanas, Dhyanas, and Veda Pathanas were in full swing. In response to Rama’s appeals Daityas, Maha Sarpas and other Power Joints of the Rajya, none dared to follow the ways of the Evil. To Devas too Shri Ram made requests not to impose any ‘Adhi Daivika’ based problems such as natural disasters like Earth quakes, floods and droughts or excessive rains or ‘Akaala Maranas’ or premature deaths. The Praja in Rama Rajya were instructed to observe the ‘Varnaashrama Vidhana’, perform useful tasks like construction of wells, Sarovars, Temples, Choultries, Udyanavanas or Public Gardens, Pashu Palana or raising cattle, farming and such useful engagements rather than indulge in unhealthy and anti-social activities such as thieving, pilfering, causing hurt to others, amassing money and squandering for foul tasks, prostitution, betting, racing, drinking and yielding to immoral activities. As Shri Rama was an ideal Institution of ‘Sishta Rakshaka’ (Protector of Virtue and Justice) and ‘Dushta Sikshaka’ (Punisher of the Evil), the normal Praja (General Public) proved to be a darling King owing to his suave and benevolent treatment and as a severe chastiser and Task Master of wrong doings.

As a petty minded Washerman in the Rama Rajya scandalised Sadhvi Sita once that after all she stayed in Ravana’s Lanka for long enough and was not above suspicion concerning her character, Maryada Purusha Shri Rama abandoned her so as to set an example to his Praja. This was the time when Rama intensified the strictness of his administration in the Kingdom. Sreshtha Nag narrated to Vatsyayana that Agastya Maha Muni visited Rama once and in the course of exchange of views, Rama desired to know from Agastya about Ravana’s background, who was the Villian-in-Chief of Ramayana forcing Rama to wage a battle with the Demon for kidnapping Devi Sita. Agastya Muni informed Shri Rama that Lord Brahma’s son was Pulastya and the latter’s son was Vishwavaka with two wives viz. Mandakini and Kaikasi. Mandakini begot Kubera who by virtue of his Tapsya became the Chief of Yakshas and a Pushpak Viman. Ravan, Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana were the sons of Kaikasi. Kubera performed sincere and strict Tapasya and

achieved the position of a 'Loka Palaka' and possessed a Vimana too; he was coming and going to meet his parents by the Vimana. Kaikasi was jealous of Mandakini and so were Ravana and Kumbhakarna against Kubera. This prompted Ravana brothers to perform Tapasya, although Vibhishana did the meditation for noble reasons. Lord Brahma was pleased with Ravana's Tapasya and blessed him to become the King of a large Kingdom and made him superior to Devas; as a result Devas fled from Swarga. Ravana occupied Lanka too and forcibly took away Kubera's Viman. Although Ravana and Kumbhakarna were Brahmanas, they took to the habits of Rakshasas, while they suffered Vibhishana who was virtuous and devoted. But as the evil actions of Ravana and Kumbhakarna were reaching a point of no return, Devas and Indra reached Brahma for help and along with Rudra they all approached Lord Vishnu. The latter declared (by way of an Akaasha vaani or the Voice of Skies) that soon a high merited King of Ayodhya of Surya Vamsa of the clan of 'Ikshvaaku' named Dasaratha would beget four sons from three wives viz. Rama to the eldest wife Kousalya, Lakshmana and Shatrughna to Sumitra and Bharata to Kaikeyi. The declaration also stated that Rama and Lakshmana would completely destroy Ravana and Kumbhakarna as well as their offspring and install Vibhishana as the King of Lanka in a completely new set up following Dharma and Justice. The Akashavaani further said that several Devatas would be born as 'Vaanaras' or monkeys and bears. This was the retrospect of the demolition of Ravana, Kumbhakarna and others of the Clan.

Having learnt of the family background of Ravana and others from Maharshi Agastya, Rama felt extremely remorseful that he had perpetrated 'Brahma hatya' since Ravana was from Brahmana vamsa which was the like the unique tree bearing the various branches of Vedas and Shastras. Agastya told Rama that he was the incarnation of Vishnu who was the Kartha (Originator), Palak (Preserver) and Samharak (Destroyer) and Devi Sita was Maha Vidya Herself and the extreme evil exercised by Ravana gave relief to the world and as such what Rama did was laudable but not regretful. However if there was the least feeling of regret, he might as well perform Aswamedha Yagna as the famous King Manu, Sagara, Marut and Nahusha's son Yayati had in the past and attained 'Parama Pada'. Thus the inspiration to perform the Yagna came forth from Agastya Muni. As a first step, a suitable, sturdy and steady horse was selected with excellent features. Then under the supervision of Vasishtha Muni, the Kingdom's Chief Rishi, Shri Rama tilled a four yojana wide and long bhumi on Sarayu River banks with a golden plough; selected a suitable Yagna Vedika (Platform) with the required number of Mandapas and Agni Kundas decorated with jewels; invited Maharshis and Tapasvis of high standing like Narada, Asita, Parvat, Kapila, Jaatukarnya, Angira, Aashtishena, Atri, Goutami, Haarita, Yagnavalkya, and Sarvat; constructed suitable Ashramas for the Invitee Rishis and disciples; Conferences were held to decide on the format, procedure and daily programming; prescribed do's and don'ts of physical, moral and spiritual content; 'niyamas and nigrahas' (norms and restrictions) etc. Lakshmana brought the Yagnashwa at the appointed time, formal Pujas were performed by Brahmanas and 'Suvasini' Women; the Surya Vamsa flag of Victory was hoisted on the horse; a gold sheet was hung around the horse-neck with an Inscription saying that the horse belonged to Shri Rama and whosoever stopped it would be severely punished; Shatrughna was made over-all in charge of the huge armed Sena (Army), elephants, horses, chariots and carts leading the Yagnashwa; Pushkala the son of Bharata was made in charge of the rear side of the 'Ashwa'; Bhakta Hanuman headed the entourage and at the most propitious Muhurta the Yagna Horse was released, along with the recitals of Veda Mantras and 'Mangala Vadyas' amid big shouts of Victory to Shri Rama Chandra. The Procession with the Yagnashwa in the lead moved on with instruction from Shri Rama that the course of the Ashwa should not be conducted as the horse would move freely. The first halt was at the

Avicchitra Nagari where there was a noted Temple of Devi Kamakshi who appeared before King Samuda performing Tapasya and gave the boon of invincibility; she also asked the King to offer his entire Kingdom and riches to Shatrughna as he would pass through the Nagari along with the horse of Ashvamedha Yagna to be conducted Shri Rama of Surya Vamsha and the killer of Ravana. Accordingly, Shatrughna was given all kinds of honours by King Samuda. After a three day halt, the King made his son a 'Samanta Raja' of Ayodhya and moved on along with Shatrughna and Pushkala. As the Yagnashwa moved on nearing the Ashram of Sage Chyavana and Devi Sukanya, Pradhan Mantri Sumati who was in the entourage of Shatrughna explained their episode: The son of Sage Bhrigu named Chyavan was engaged in very rigorous Tapasya when King Sharyati was performing 'snaan' in the River Narmada and Tarpana to Devas and Pitras; the Princess Sukanya along with her companions was moving about in a forest on the banks of Narmada. Out of fun, Sukanya nearing a bush pierced with a piece of wood into perhaps a couple of glittering worms, but got alarmed when blood spilt out and there were trebles of Earth and lightnings. She ran and informed her father who was resting on the river banks about the incident. The King went up to the bush and found to his horror that Sukanya did not pierce the lighting worms but the eyes of a Sage engrossed in Tapasya, causing him to blindness. The King apologised profusely and offered his teen age daughter to the sick and aged Sage in wedding as a compensation. The daughter Sukanya served the Sage with sincerity and once the two Asvini Kumar Brothers who were passing by were impressed with her 'Pativartya' (seva to husband) and gave her the boons of eye sight to her husband as also youth and charm. In gratitude, the Sage Chyavan, by virtue of his Tapasya, gave the boon to Ashvini Kumars to secure sips of 'Somarasa' (the Celestial Drink) denied to them hitherto as also fulfilled Devatva with eligibility for enjoying 'havis' or the fruit of Yagnas. Lord Indra was furious at these boons to Asvini Kumars and raised his hand to punish them all but the Sage Chyavan in turn held Indra's hand tight and Indra had no option to grant the boons to Ashvini Kumars! While Mantri Sumati narrated the Story of the Sacred Couple of Sage Chyavan and Devi Sukanya, the 'Sacrifice Horse', Shatrughna and the entire entourage reached the Ashram, worshipped them and requested them to visit the Place of the Rama Yagna, as Hanuman carried the Chyavana couple to Rama Chandra and the Place of the Maha Yagna in progress.

As the Yagnashwa moved ahead, Pradhana Mantri Sumati told Shatrughna that they were about to reach Neelachala and the Sacred Temple of Bhagavan Purushottama with four arms on the Mountain top. They reached Ratnaathata Nagar where King Vimal who became extremely excited and organised refreshments to the entire entourage. He also made a symbolic dedication of his Kingdom to Shri Rama and gave away valuable gifts to Shatrughna and others. King Vimal narrated an unusual story about the incidents which happened in the past about the Neelachala Mountain. He quoted a Brahmana visiting the Neelachala Mountain and found outside the Purushottama Temple there were a few Tirtha Yattris who possessed four hands armed with Gada, Chakra, Saranga and a lotus. Similarly a Kirata (Hunter) saw spectacles of a few children with 'Chaturbhujas' armed likewise with glittering robes! When the children were asked by the Kirata, they said that a few morsels of Maha Prasada which fell on the ground were eaten, they came out with the Chaturbhujas! From Neelachala, the Yagnashwa halted at Chakranga Nagar ruled by King Subahu, where Prince Daman felt that the manner the Ashwamegha was publicised all over the World smacked of pride and ego and ordered his Senapati to keep his army ready to fight. On behalf of Shatrughna, Raja Pratapagna shouted that the Yagnaashwa disappeared and Prince Daman replied that he had kept the horse and if possible might get it back after a fight! A battle ensued and Raja Pratapagna was defeated by Daman. Shatrughna wondered as to who was this imp of a Raja Kumar called Daman who

did considerable damage to elephants, horses and chariots and felled on ground the capable Raja Pratappagna wounded with blood! Price Pushkala the son of Bharata was so angry that he swore to control or kill Daman. A fierce battle took place and finally Pushkala defeated Daman Kumar whose body was profusely bleeding and his horse took back to the Court of King Subahu. The King, his brother Suketu who was a master of Gada Yudhha (Battle of Maces) and Subahu's son Chitranga an expert of Battle Designs had all appeared together and designed a 'Krouncha Vyuh'; the entire strength of the sea-like army of Subahu was mobilised and put Shatrughna on red alert. The most powerful warriors of Subahu were kept at the tactical head position and sides of the 'Krouncha Pakshi's war design. Subahu was in desperate and distressed condition as his son was bleeding with wounds on death bed; revenge was the watchword of Subahu's entire army. Shatrughna knew the seriousness of the situation as a minor scuffle restricted to Daman and Pushkala had snow-balled into a full-fledged battle with military offensives and complicated battle designs. He addressed the Shri Rama Sena and exhorted its warriors that the situation was such that had to be faced with alertness, valour and brain power to be able to break the Krouncha Vyuh. Raja Lakshminidhi the son of King Janaka took a vow that he would face Suketu and destroy the Vyuh designed by the latter in no time. There was a one-to-one battle as both were equally worked up and it continued for long time with ups and downs. The warriors then took to 'Gada-Yuddha' (mace-war) and it prolonged for long time; finally, Lakshminidhi was able to overpower Suketu and there were shouts of relief resounded while both the parties appreciated with each other. In the battle that continued, Pushkala killed Chitranga. Subahu was extremely upset with the killings of his brother and son and became most desperate to kill thousands of warriors, elephants, horses and foot-soldiers and finally challenged Shatrughna. Hanuman who was providing cover to Shatrughna as he was in the defensive position and received showers of arrows of King Subahu which hurt Hanuman. The highly enraged Hanuman kicked King Subahu on his chest by his powerful feet and grounded him. It was in a stage of stupor, the King witnessed a vision when Brahma and Devas were eulogizing Shri Rama as an Avatar of Vishnu. Having realised his folly, he made desperate shouts to Daman, Suketu and Vichitra saying that Shri Rama was none else but Bhagavan Vishnu and the battle should end forthwith. There after he apologised to Shatrughna for what all had happened, performed 'Atmarpana' (Surrender) and returned the Yagnashva with honour. As the Yagnashva moved on for a few days, suddenly there emerged a frightful darkness since close friends of the deceased Ravana, two Rakshasas of Patalaloka named Vidyunmali and Ugradamshtara wanted to avenge Ravana's death and luckily for them an opportunity came on its own with the launch of the Yagna and to trap the Rama Sena by hiding the Yagnashwa. The Rakshasa Brothers succeeded in hiding the horse. Bharat Kumar Pushkal made a deadly declaration that if he did not return with the Yagnashwa, then he should be deemed a fictitious devotee of Shri Rama. Hanuman too took a similar vow. Other warriors too took vows and Shatrughna was not far behind. Meanwhile the Rakshasa Brothers shouted: where is Rama; we want to kill him and take revenge! Vidyunmali straightaway targetted Pushkala and threw a 'Shakti' on his chest, while Pushkala rained arrows on the Rakshasa and the latter's chest was pierced through as lot of blood flowed out from his heart and Vidyunmali fell on the ground unconscious. Reacting to this sharply, Ugradamshtara threw a red-hot Trishul from the Demon's vimana on Pushkal's heart and the latter fell unconscious inside his chariot. Hanuman witnessed that Bharat Kumar Pushkal was in risk and instantly expanded his body to pull down the Rakshasa occupants of the Vimana, especially Ugradamshtara and hurled a hot Trishul on the Rakshasa, who in turn used his Maya to bring in a complete cover of darkness in which it was difficult to perceive who was a companion and who was an opponent. Witnessing these fast developments, Shatrughna took the name of Shri Rama and slashed the Cover of Maya that Ugradamshtara brought in by one arrow and

with another quick arrow of Sammohanastra on the battle field. By yet another arrow, he brought down the Viman from where Ugradamshta was fighting. The demon used 'Paashupatastra' against Shatrughna and the latter had no option but to utilise 'Narayanastra' to balance the former. Meanwhile a recovered Vidyunmali was about to toss a Trishul on Shatrughna but a smart Shatrughna hacked the hand of Vidyunmali with an arrow and simultaneously flinged another arrow to pitch down the demon's head. Soon after in quick action, Shatrughan also hurled a 'kripan' (Small knife) on Ugradamshta and killed that demon brother too.

As the Yagnyashva ambled along towards the banks of River Narmada, Prime Minister Sumati suggested to Shatrughna a quick visit to the Ashram of Muni Aranyaka. When the Muni was informed by Sumati that an Ashwamedha Yagna was being performed, the Sage replied that those foolish persons who were wasting their time and energy in performing Yagnas and Vratas during the short life span should be advised to best utilise their time to Shri Rama 'Smarana' (Memory) as Shri Rama was itself an Yagna, a Vrata, a Puja, a Maha Mantra, Veda and Shastra. Then Suman introduced Shatrughna, Bharat Kumar, Hanuman and others and the Sage was thrilled to see them all and re-emphasised that there was no other Deity like Shri Rama and no there bhajan better than his. Shatrughna then arranged Muni Aranyaka's visit to Ayodhya and the Muni after meeting Shri Rama in person felt so satisfied that he did not wish for anything else in life and by the grace of Shri Rama left for Vishnu loka!

The Yagnashva reached the beautiful and properous Devapura at Vindhya where even building walls were made of precious stones and the King Veeramani was an extraordinary devotee of Bhagavan Shiva. The elder Prince Rukmanga arrested the Yagnashwa and brought it to the Capital but since he came to know that the horse belonged to Shri Rama in connection with a Yagna, the King was hesitant to approve the action. Nor Shiva, who was prayed to by the King; the latter said that since the the action was already taken, it would not be in tune with Kshatriya Dharma to take a retreat step. By way of assurance, Shiva too resolved to fight with Lord Rama, since Shiva as a devotee of Sri Rama had as much responsibility to the King who also was a great devotee of Shiva. Thus a vicious circle got into motion. Meanwhile, Brahmarshi Narada alerted all concerned ie. Shatrughan, Shri Rama, the King Veeramani and the typical 'Kalaha Priya' readied the armies of both Sharughna and the King. Raja Veeamamari called his Senatpati and got an excellent army ready and Sharughna advised Rama's army to get readied too. The opening duel was of Rukmanga and Pushkal. Rukmanga recited a Mantra and the chariot of Pushkala commenced 'Bhubhraman' (circling fastly). With difficulty the Rath was stopped but the enraged Pushkala recited a return Mantra which made Rukmanga's chariot fly right up to the Surya mandal where it got burnt and fell down but Rukmanga was thrown out unconscious. King Veeramani was alarmed with fury approaching Pushkala and as a chain reaction Hanuman sought to reach Pushkala for rescue but Pushkala became over confident and prevented Hanuman and asked the latter to help Shatrughna instead. There was a one-to-one battle between Pushkala and Veeramani and by using a mighty arrow in the name of Shri Rama made Veeramani unconscious. Surprisingly, Bhagavan Shiva himself entered the battle field at this juncture as King Veeramani the unique devotee of Shiva fell unconscious! Shiva instructed Veerabhadra to help Veeramani and Nandi to control Hanuman. Thus Veerabhadra killed Pushkala, Shiva Himself made Shatrughna unconscious; at the same time appreciated Hanuman's valour. Hanuman addressed Bhagavan Shiva saying that quite often, Shiva was confirming his devotion to Vishnu and his Avatar Shri Rama, but it was surprising that this time he was fighting against Shri Rama! Hanuman replied that King Veeramani was a great devotee of his and it was a 'Maryada' or Courtesy to defend a devotee just as Rama too would defend his devotees likewise! Basically both were two entities of the Paramatma! Then Hanuman asked Bhagavan Shankara for

granting boons to let all the persons who died in this battle be resuscitated. Shri Rama made his presence at the battle field when Shiva prostrated; Shatrughna, Hanuman and all the rest were highly surprised and the persons who were declared dead in the battle came back alive and all were happy. Shri Rama then explained to one and all that the Dharma of Deities was to safeguard the interests of their Bhaktas and what Shiva did in defending King Veeramani and his side was the best that he had done; that his heart was full of Shiva and vice-versa and those thought other wise would be dispatched to Kumbhapa Narak! Those who were Shiva's devotees were Shri Rama's beloved Bhaktas and those who were Shiva followers were Vishnu's devotees too.

Sesha Nag described to Sage Vatsayan that as the Sacrificial Horse reached the precincts of Valmiki Ashram, Shri Rama's sons Lava and Kusha -who were unaware that Rama was their father as Devi Sita staying in Valmiki Ashram under the care of the Sage's care did not inform the twin boys of the relationship as they were born in the Ashram after Rama abandoned Sita-reacted sharply against the inscription on the Golden Plate hung around the Yagnashva; they tied the horse and brought it inside the Ashram. The soldiers accompanying the horse ignored the two boys who tied the horse out of child play and started untying the horse and instantly, the hands of the soldiers were severed as they ran to Shatrughna to inform the incident. Understandably, Shatrughna grew angry but felt that the boys who did this might not be ordinary but might have perhaps been Devatas at the behest of Indra! Thus he ordered his Senapati Kaalajit to quickly alert the Army for a full-fledged battle. In the battle that ensued between the Senapati and Lava Kumara, the Senapati was killed and there was allround 'hahakar' (frightened shouts) from the Army. Shatrughna asked Pushkal to take a big Army and proceed against the boy Lava. Pushkal said to Lava that he would be gifted a chariot so that both might fight on equal terms; as a reply, Lava destroyed Pushkal's chariot instantly and asked Pushkal now grounded was heckled by Lava on 'equal terms'! In the battle that followed Pushkal rained arrows on Lava and in response despatched a cobra like poisonous arrow aimed at Pushkal's chest and the latter fell flat on the ground. Hanuman who was nearby took the body of Pushkala to Shatrughna who instructed Hanuman to kill Lava mercilessly. The highly charged Hanuman hurled huge trees and boulders and Lava cut them to pieces as a sport. By the severity and swiftness with which poisonous arrows were flung at Hanuman, the latter could not control himself even as the gigantic body that he assumed fell flat on the ground! The highly puzzled Shatrughna wondered as to who these two boys were who felled the Most Valiant Hanuman himself! As he drove the Golden Chariot towards the boys, he felt that their resemblance with Shri Ram was so striking that he asked them as to who they were and what their parentage was. The boys gave a stiff reply that it was not essential to know such details since their horse was captured by them and let him try if he could retrieve it. In the course of the battle, Shatrughna was stunned and stumbled as he had to quickly change his bows that were broken and the chariots that were destroyed and was finally knock down with unconsciousness. As Shatrughna was hit, Raja Surath and others surrounded and resorted to 'Adharma Yuddha' or unjust battle and caused Lava to hurt into unconsciousness. As the news of Lava's state was informed, Devi Sita was informed and Kusha hurried to the warfront and instantly faced Shatrughna who by now got revived and nodoubt knew that Kusha and Lava were twins and the sons of Shri Rama, but the most furious Kush had was on attack with the 'Narayana Astra' hurled on Shatrughna but this powerful arrow was turned ineffective. In reply, Shatrughna took a vow in the name of Shri Rama and released an arrow but the desperate Kusha took the vow on his Mother Devi Sita and retaliated. Shatrughna fell unconscious again. Sugreeva took over the position of Commander in Chief and fought with Kusha as also with Lava who recovered again by then. Sugreeva too fell down and Lava and Kusha tied both Sugreeva and Hanuman and carried them to Devi Sita who was aghast to witness the Maha Viras in that condition.

The boys relented to her instruction to release them but as per Kshatriya Dharma they would have to return to the Battle Field. On releasing both Hanuman and Sugreeva, Devi Sita came to know that Shatrughna was lying unconscious. Devi Sita then remembered Shri Rama and addressed Surya Deva that if she were to be a true Pativrata, Shatrughna should be revived and not only that who ever lost their lives in the Battle should be also revived! Indeed her wish was fulfilled and all was well. As per Sita's instruction, Lava and Kusha released the Yagyashva and the entire entourage headed by Shatrughna returned to Ayodhya after the successful Victory tour of Yagyashva and all the defeated Kings who clashed with Rama Sena were paraded before Shri Rama. But Shri Rama was more curious to learn more about the valour of Lava and Kusha. He was keen on Devi Sita's return to Ayodhya and despatched Lakshmana to bring her back, but she refused to return. She agreed however to send Lava and Kusha after Sage Valmiki trained the boys to sing a ballad before Shri Rama and others. The boys sang the entire Ramayana since the birth of Shri Rama and brothers, including Sita's abandon; Lakshmana leaving her to her fate; her rescue by Maharshi Valmiki her 'Agnatavasa' delivery of the twin brothers; the Sage's excellent training of the boys in warfare and Kshatriya Dharmas, knowledge of Administration and of Kingship; Shri Rama's popularity with Sages, citizens, and each and every being as Maryada Purusha; Sage Vishwamitra's insistence to safeguard his Yagna and the killing of Demoness Tataka and Subahu; Sita's Swayamvara; Kaikeyee's desire to Bharata's becoming the Heir Apparent and Ram's Vanavasi; killing of notorious Rakshasas, Sita's 'Apaharana' (kidnap) by Ravana; Rama's befriending with Sugreeva and Hanuman; Hanuman's trip to Lanka to trace Sita; the crossing of the Ocean; the killing of Ravana and the entire clan, Vibheeshana becoming the Lanka King; the Rama Rajya; Rama abandoning Devi Sita on the basis of a Secret Report of a washerman's allegation about Devi Sita's character notwithstanding Sita's pregnancy; and Rama performing Ashvamedha Yagna. Shri Rama was overwhelmed with emotions at the ballad sung by the twins, his pride to have secured such illustrious twins and the remorse to have abandoned Sadhvi Sita. Already, Sage Valmiki arrived to attend the Ashvamedha Yagna as a respected Guest of Honour at Ayodhya. He narrated how Devi Sita was fortunately seen by him in the forest that Lakshmana abandoned her; her transfer to his Ashram and her continuous grief, the birth of Lava and Kusha, his upbringing with considerable training in Dhanur Veda, Fine Arts, and what all was required by an ideal Kshatriya and a King including the nuances of Administration, Yoga and Siddhis and an exemplary human being worthy of the sons of a Maryada Purusha. Valmiki further stated that he visited Varuna Deva, Agni Deva and other Lokapalaks who had unanimously referred to Devi Sita's purity and piety as a Maha Pativrata Sadhvi born into this world; a ready proof of her 'Shuddhata' and highest devotion to Shri Rama was the coming back alive of lakhs of dead persons at the various battles en route the travel of the Yagnashva, since she wished so! Having heard what all Maharshi Valmiki stated in Public and in the midst of the most recognised and pious Sages-in-Chief soon after the Great Singing of Ramayana by Lava and Kusha, Shri Rama asked Lakshmana to visit Valmiki Ashram and invite Devi Sita to Ayodhya, in the context of the Victory Celebrations as also the Sacred and Historic Termination of Ashvamedha Yagna. As Lakshmana reached the Ashram and requested Devi Sita, she asked him as to how could she return to Ayodhya having been humiliated and discarded with baseless allegations. Lakshmana narrated most convincingly as to what all happened at Ayodhya, how the Twins sang Ramayana and the spontaneous reactions and glorious comments about Devi Sita from the Maharshis, Devas and Loka Palaks (as reported by Sage Valmiki). He prostrated before her and requested her to visit Ayodhya. The Ashvamedha Yagna concluded with the display of the pride of Surya Vamsha, the unreserved gaiety of the Praja of Rama Rajya, the relentless recitals of Veda Mantras by the Maharshis, the blessings of Brahma and Maha Deva; the showers of

flowers from the heavens by Indra, Loka Palakas, Pancha Bhutas and Devas; the joyous singing of Gandarvas and the celestial dances of Apsaras. Most interestingly, even by the touch of Shri Rama the Yagnashva (Sacrificial Horse) turned into a human being redeemed after the touch, since Sage Durvasa cursed the person in the past and when sincerely apologised gave the boon of Rama's sacred touch. Sessa Nag assured Sage Vatsayana that whoever heard or read the proceedings of Shri Rama's Ashvamedha Yagna would get rid off Maha Patakas, secure prosperity, excellent health, and contentment in life; even a chandala or athiest would attain 'Parama Pada'!

#### Sita's 'Paramadhaam and termination of Rama Avatar :

After the successful completion of Ashvamedha Yagna, Shri Rama continued his normal routine of observing celibacy and administration. Shatrughna killed Lavanasura and ruled Madhurapuri; Bharat administered both the banks of River Sindhu and controlled Gandharvas; Lakshman conquered Madra desha, installed his sons as the Kings and returned to Rama for providing service to him. Shri Rama did Ashvamedha Yagna, after installing a Golden Pratima of Sita; in fact he performed several Yagnas in the same manner. Sage Valmiki exhorted Rama about Sita's spotlessness and piousness time and again and Shri Rama finally opined that indeed he was fully aware of her chastity and purity but since the allegation came from the Praja (Public), Sita should prove her innocence before the people. Sita then declared in a huge Sabha that if she performed puja to any body else excepting Shri Ram in her mind, thought, tongue or action then my mother Bhu Devi might take her into her mother's fold. Immediately, there was an Earth-quake and Sita entered into a huge cleavage. Bhu Devi herself lifted Sita into her belly and the great Garuda, the Carrier of Lord Vishnu, lifted her from Rasatala to Vishnu loka as seated on a Golden Vimana. [Sita Samahit sthala called 'Sitamarhi' is near the national highway No. 2 and also connected with Allahabad and Varanasi railway line with Jungiganj, the nearest railway station. It is a well known Hindu pilgrimage and a famed tourist spot; it is said that this temple is the place where Devi Sita went into the earth when she willed it by herself.

After Sita's disappearance, Shri Rama ruled for eleven thousand years. One day, an old Tapasvi came to see Shri Ram and told him that none should enter his Chamber while he was giving an important message from Lord Brahma in secrecy. Shri Rama called Lakshmana and instructed that none should be allowed to enter as long as he was conversing with the Tapasvi and otherwise that person should be punishable with death. Lakshman himself stood at the door and ensured that none would disturb. The Tapasvi conveyed that since the death of Ravana, Kumbhakarna and other demons Rama was to live for eleven thousand years and that it was time for Rama to leave Earth and return to Vaikuntha. While this secret conversation was going on, Durvasa Maharshi arrived and wished to meet Shri Rama, but Lakshmana declined entry stating that a representative of Brahma was in an important conversation and that he could not see Shri Rama then. Durvasa grew angry and threatened Lakshmana with a severe curse if he did not permit entry. As there was no other alternative between Rama's instruction and Durvasa's threat of curse, Lakshman entered River Sarayu, taking his original Swarupa of Ananta Naga with thousand hoods. After the meeting with Kaala Deva in the form of the old Tapasvi, Rama realised that Lakshman also having gone, it was time for him also to terminate his 'Avatar'; he established Kusha in Kushavati Kingdom and Lava in Dwaravati as their Kings. Taking a hint from Shri Rama, Vibishana, Sugriva, Jambavan, Hanuman, Neela, Nala, Sushena and Nishada Raja Guha arrived. Shatrughna performed the coronation of his sons at Ayodhya. The rest of them said that they would not like to stay back on Earth in the absence of Rama

even for a moment. But Rama asked Vibhishana to continue in power at Lanka for long time and instructed Hanuman to continue on Earth forever to sustain the message of Shi Rama. The rest of them accompanied Shri Rama into the Sacred Sarayu River. Bharat, Shatrughna, and all the citizens of Ayodhya along with their wives, Mantris, Servants, Vedikas, Brahmanas, the nearby animals, birds, and all other Beings who accompanied Shri Rama never looked back. As Shri Rama went deep into the River, Lord Brahma, Devas, Rishis and all Celestial Beings extolled Raghunatha even as He took the Huge Form of Maha Vishnu with his four hands along with Bharata as Shankha, Shatrughna as Chakra, as also Gada with Sri Devi and Bhu Devi beside Him.

*Shri Rama Rama Rameti Rame Raame manorame, sahasra naama tattulyam Ramanama varaanane /*  
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[Vishleshana on Veeraanjaneya]

#### Origin of Anjaneya : Kesari-Shambanaada-Anjana Kumari and Vayu Deva

Kesari was the son of Gautami Rishi and Kesari's wife was Devi Anjana who secured a son named Anjaneya. Once Raakshasa Shambasaadana spied on Anjana Kumari who was playfully singing a song but a dirty hand of a Rakshasa tried to draw her close as she was bewildered with fear as was seeking her near, whispering in a heavy: My dear dove! Why are you fleeing from me! As shrieked saying 'help me , help me.' The Rakshasa said : none ever can save you; not even God. Kesari a huge Vanara saw from a tree top and jumped down and intervened. There followed a roaring fight but the Rakshasa overpowered Kesari, who in turn aimed at the rakshasa with his bow and arrows. The fight continued as the Rakshasa took the form of a huge elephant. The rain of arrows continued yet the rakshasa remained invincible since the thick skin of the elephant was infact boomeranging back to Kesari. Then Kesari suddenly assumed a miniature form, flew on to the elephant head, tortured the weakest points of the elephant's brain cells. The Rakshasa in response dropped the miniaturized vaanara down to earth as Kesari's blood cells were cut and blood started flowing out. Meanwhile, the dazed Anjana Kumari prayed to Lord Shiva, and a whispering voice was heard: nothing could happen to the rakshasa as he is invincible, except by the rakshasa's own blood. Anjana Kumari got the hint, secretly crawled on the ground, picked up an arrow from Kesari, smeared rakshasa's own blood there on, whispered to Kesari, reached the bow and arrow to his hands and hit at Rakshasa once again. Meanwhile, Shambasaadana took the form of a huge bull with a view to gore Kesari's writhing body to trample to death by lowering the bull horns. Kesari stood up somehow and shot his arrows- as smeared by Shambaraasura's own blood- at the bull's eyes. The bull's eyes were punctured and the rakshas's blood came out in flows and the Rakshasa collapsed down. Kumari Anjana had quickly smeared the rakshasa's own blood on to Kesari's arrows and supplied to the bow of Kesari. Thus crashed down the Rakshas's huge bull body to death. As Maharshis witnessd by their 'divya drishti' appeared and endeared both Kesari and Anjana and having taken their mutual consent blessed them as ideal couples. Kesari the son of Gautami Rishi and Kesari's wife Anjana secured a grand son named *Hanuman* with the 'Amsa' (facet) of Parama Shiva and Vayu Deva too was responsible in the birth of the boy. Mistaking Surya Deva for a red-coloured fruit, the boy was tempted to fly skywad tried to hold Surya Deva, as Indra threw his Vajra on Hanuman's body and Ravana tried to hold Hanuman's tail but Hanuman never left his firm hold of Surya Deva. Ravan kept on fighting for a year in vain and tried to wriggle out of Hanuman's powerful clasp. Meanwhile Rishi Vishrava arrived at the spot and eulogised Hanuman to release Ravana the terror of the Universe. There after Hanuman resided for long time at Pampapura on the banks of

Pampa River as a strong fixture and was thus acclaimed as ‘Sthanu’. Also since Ravana who had dictated the World and controlled Devas was humiliated by Anjaneya, his name and fame spread as Hanuman: *Nighnanta cha Suraan mukhyan Ravanam Lokaraavanam, Nihanti Mushthirbhayah sa Hanumaaniti vishrutah*. (Ravana who was in the habit of badly hurting Devas and related Demi-Gods and killing Vishnu- Bhaktas without mercy had thus been restrained badly and received a jolt by Hanuman; the ‘Mushtighatas’ or ‘Hanus’ (beatings of closed hand grasps) damaged Ravana was the reason why Hanuman was named as such. Lord Brahma informed Hanuman that during the twenty eighth Tretayuga’s first Part of Vaivaswa Manvantara, Bhagavan Vishnu would take the Incarnation of Shri Rama and that he would achieve Rama’s unreserved devotion to Hanuman and destroy the clan of Ravana, his cruel brothers and sinful sons.

(Valmiki Ramayana’s Kishkindha Khanda)

Jambavan along other veanara veeraas approaches Anjaneya recalling the latter’s birth, latent capabilities and prepares him to cross the maha samudra

As the full strength of lakhs of Vanaras were assembled on the Sea shore, Jambavan addressed Veera Anjaneya: *vīra vānaralokasya sarvaśāstravidām vara, tūṣṇīm ekāntam āśritya hanuman kiṃ na jalpasi/ hanuman harirājasya sugrīvasya samo hy asi, rāmalakṣmaṇayoś cāpi tejasā ca balena ca/ ariṣṭaneminaḥ putrau vainateyo mahābalaḥ, garutmān iva vikhyāta uttamaḥ sarvapakṣiṇām/* Veeraanjaneya! Samasta Shastra Vetta! Why are you seated secluded here quitely on a corner in this miniature ‘swarupa’! You are of Sugriva’s par with, if not excel, by brawn and brain; in fact of Rama Lakshmana’s calibre and of eminence. We know of Kashyapa Prajapati and his progeny of Garuda, the son of Vinata who is reputed as the fastest of the Beings on earth, but indeed that is a weak comparison against you - the ‘*manojavam maaruta tulya vegam, jitendriyam buddhimataam varishtham, vaataatmajam, vaanara yudha mukhyam, Shri Rama dutam sharanam prapadye!*’ Hanuman! I have seen Maha Garuda several times flying across the Samudras and from his mouth are seen Maha Serpents. His wings, their sweep, their strength, and parakrama are no less than of yours. *balaṃ buddhiś ca tejaś ca sattvaṃ ca harisattama, viśiṣṭam sarvabhūteṣu kiṃ ātmānam na budhyase/* Vaanara shiromani! Your bala-buddhi-tejas-and dharya is the outstanding of all the Beings in Brahma shrishti. Then Mahaanjaneya! Why indeed are you not yet ready for jumping off this Samudra! Veeraanjaneya! Your origin and of birth are indescribable: Pujikasthala was indeed a famed Aprasa was cursed to be born as ‘Kapini’ or Vanara Stree famed as Anjana who was wedded to Kesari. As the Kapini had the ability to assume any form as she pleased and during the rainy season was seated on a mountain top dressed in silks, with priceless ornaments and decorated with sweet odoured flowers. Then there was a sweep of wind and Devi Anjana and Vayu Deva touched her tightly. *sā tu tatraiva sambhrāntā suvṛttā vākyam abravīt, ekapatnīvrataṃ idaṃ ko nāśayitum icchati/ añjanāyā vacaḥ śrūtā mārutaḥ pratyabhāṣata, na tvām himsāmi suśroṇi mā bhūt te subhage bhayam/* But Devi Anjana was an ideal ‘Pativrata’ and in that hesitant concern, did not make further advances and was in fact terribly afraid. Then Vayu Deva smiled reassuringly and said: ‘ Who indeed wishes to spoil your paativratya vrata! Sushreni! Don’t you be scared as your mind must be rid of misleading thoughts. *manasāsmi gato yat tvām pariṣvajya yaśasvini, vīryavān buddhisampannaḥ putras tava bhaviṣyati/ abhyutthitaṃ tataḥ sūryam bālo dṛṣṭvā mahāvane, phalaṃ ceti jighṛkṣus tvam utplutyābhyapato divam/* Yashasvini! I would only like to embrace you mentally by way of ‘maanasika sankalpa’ but not physically. As a result of such ‘maanasika samyoga’, you would be blessed with a ‘Maha Bala

Paraakrama, Buddhi Sampanna Putra praapti' who could cross oceans with speed and great ease! Subsequently, Anjana Devi gave birth in a mountain cave! Even in childhood, you always felt that urya Deva too was a sweet fruit on the sky. *śatāni trīṇi gatvātha yojanānām mahākape, tejasā tasya nirdhūto na viśādam tato gataḥ/ tāvad āpatatas tūrṇam antarikṣam mahākape, kṣiptam indreṇa te vajram krodhāviṣṭena dhīmatā/ tataḥ śailāgraśikhare vāmo hanur abhājyata, tato hi nāmadheyam te hanumān iti kīrtiyate/* Maha Kape! Therefore you jumped up by three hundred yojanas once and felt that you could not still reach Surya. You kept on trying and finally reached Surya Deva, but Indra Deva was angry and hit you with his Vajraayudha. That was why your left side - hanu- was hurt and hence your name is 'hanuman'! On seeing the entire scene, Vayu Deva was terribly concerned and thus the Prabhanjana Deva Vaayu stopped his movement in trilokas and then the Ashta Dikpalakas tried their best but finally Brahma Deva had to pacify Vayu Deva blessing Anjaneya would be immune from 'astra shastras'! *vajrasya ca nipātena virujam tvām samīkṣya ca, sahasranetraḥ prītātmā dadau te varam uttamam/ svacchandataś ca maraṇam te bhūyād iti vai prabho, sa tvām kesariṇaḥ putraḥ kṣetrajo bhūmavikramaḥ/ mārutasya aurasāḥ putras tejasā cāpi tatsamaḥ, tvām hi vāyusuto vatsa plavane cāpi tatsamaḥ/* Anjaneya! Even 'vajra prahara' by Indra Deva would be futile on your body and Mrityu is in your control'. Finally, Maha Jaambavaan asserted: *tad vijrmbhasva vikrāntaḥ plavatām uttamo hy asi, tvadvīryam draṣṭukāmeyam sarvā vānaravāhinī/ uttiṣṭha hariśārdūla laṅghayasva mahārṇavam, parā hi sarvabhūtānām hanuman yā gatis tava/ viśāṇṇā harayaḥ sarve hanuman kim upekṣase, vikramasva mahāvego viṣṇus trīn vikramān iva/* Parakrami Mahaanjaneya! Now is the time that you have to proclaim to the trilokas to heighen your stature as the Vanara Sena is longing to witness what you really indeed are. Kindly get up and cross this Maha Sagara in one jump as that indeed is a sure step for Loka Kalyana. All the Vaanara Veeras are right now are on the verge of collapse. As Maha Vishnu as Vamana Deva measured the Universe with three steps, please put forth three steps ahead to sure success!

(Valmilki Ramayana's Sundara Khanda)

### Hanuman crossing the Maha Sagara

Veera Hanuman had decided to perform such impossible feat that no earthly beings could ever perform as he commenced expanding his head and shoulders. His intention was to move about freely all over the earth and cross the Maha Sagara even with the facility of divinities like Surya-Indra-Pavan-Brahma. He took to such gigantic physique that with that body he would trample mountains with his hold and feet into pieces. As the Mountain Mahendra was subdued, the creatures in the mountain caves were rattled and created screeching sounds. As the Mountain was suppressed, the big size serpents made loud hissing sounds seeking to crush the mountain boulders. The thirst and speed of the jumpings of Hanuman shook up the tall and strong trees in such a manner that heaps of flowers fell right onto the surfaces of the gushing and roaring sea waves spreading heavenly smell all around. The plentiful spread of inherent natural herbal medicines on the mountain ranges seemed to have failed the free flows of heaps of poisons as emitted from the huge serpents. Then, tapasvi Vidyadaraas and Siddha Chanuraas felt that some Maha Shaktis were annoyed and parvataas were being broken down and as such left their abodes along with their woman folks and shifted skyward. Then they soon realised that Vewera Hanuman was seeking to cross the Sea. Meanwhile, Hanuman roared with the strength of thousands of lions as if Vayu deva was creating reverberations along with Varuna Deva across the sky. *lāṅgalaṁ ca samāviddham plavamānasya śobhate, ambare vāyuputrasya śakradhvaja ivocchritāḥ/ lāṅgūlacakreṇa mahāñ śukladaṁṣṭro*

*'nilātmajah, vyarocata mahāprājñāḥ pariveśīva bhāskarāḥ/* As Hanuman was virtually floating on winds his tail like the dharma dhwaaja of Lord Indra Deva was similar. Buddhimaan Pavana putra Hanuman's white beard and the tail curled up and twisted in circles as though the globe of the Surya Mandala was flashed up gloriously and thus the Celestials could recognise him readily especially by the flashes of his long and elongated tail. *khe yathaa niputtululkā uttarāntād viniṣṛtā, dṛśyate sānubandhā ca tathā sa kapikuñjarah/ patatpataṁgasamkāśo vyāyataḥ śuśubhe kapiḥ, pravṛddha iva mātāṁgaḥ kakṣayā badhyamānayā/ upariṣṭāc charīreṇa chāyayā cāvagāḍhayā, sāgare mārutāviṣṭā naur ivāsīt tadā kapiḥ/* Just as meteor or rapidly shooting Star creating streaks of incandescence, Hanuman is ever recognised by its tail! Further his Surya like colossal form is recognised by the tail just like an elephant is recognised by the strong iron rod fixed deep on the earth. *khe yathā nipataty ulkā uttarāntād viniṣṛtā, dṛśyate sānubandhā ca tathā sa kapikuñjarah/ patatpataṁgasamkāśo vyāyataḥ śuśubhe kapiḥ, pravṛddha iva mātāṁgaḥ kakṣayā badhyamānayā/ upariṣṭāc charīreṇa chāyayā cāvagāḍhayā, sāgare mārutāviṣṭā naur ivāsīt tadā kapiḥ/* Just as meteor, known as a shooting star or falling star- a comet or asteroid through Earth's atmosphere, -after being heated to incandescence by collisions with air in the upper atmosphere in its wake- Hanuman's tail too is visible on the sky line. Like the ever mobile Surya Deva, Hanuman too is clearly distinguishable on account of his ever long and mighty tail, even as a King of elephants could be seen clearly by the iron rod with which its mobility is halted. *yaṁ yaṁ deśaṁ samudrasya jagāma sa mahākapiḥ, sa sa tasyāṅgavegena sonmāda iva lakṣyate/ sāgarasyormijālānām urasā śailavarṣmaṇām, abhighnaṁs tu mahāvegāḥ pupluve sa mahākapiḥ/ kapivātaś ca balavān meghavātaś ca niṣṛtaḥ, sāgarāṁ bhīmanirghoṣaṁ kampayām āsatur bhr̥ṣam/* Interestingly as and when Hanuman's colossal body moved farther and farther up on the high Sea, the waves rise higher only to see, stare and admire his massively unbelievable physical frame. The Maha Vegashaali Maha Kapi Huanman like of the height of mountains then raced up across by making forcible ways by smashing such waves and making further way by the might of his huge and brawny chest. As the Kapi Shreshtha with mountain like form was dashing with the speed of 'Vaayu', the high tide waves seemed to have been distressed with panic and what with the vayu garjana and the dreadful atmosphere all around. The fishes of small and huge dimensions were jumping up quite high and deep down quite visible to the onlookers on the shores., especially the fishermen running far away from the shores. *daśayojanavisṭrṇā trimśadyojanam āyatā, chāyā vānarasiṁhasya jale cārutarābhavat/ śvetābhraḡha -narājīva vāyuputrānu - gāminī, tasya sā śuśubhe chāyā vitatā lavaṇāmbhasi/* The shadow of Hanuman at that time was of the dimension of ten yojanas of width and thirty yojanas of height looking fantastic from the onlookers on the shores. The shadow of His profile if one could follow was similar to the linings of white clouds up above on the sky. As the Maha Vaanara likes was dashing to the southern direction, Deva-Gandharva-Chaaranas from the high skies were performing rains of flowers; this was especially so as Veera Hanuman was dashing on Shri 'Rama Karya' and Vayu Deva was accordingly cooperating to shover and reach the Great Messenger! Rishi Munis on earth too were showering 'veda pravachana ashirvaadas' too simultaneously. *tasmin plavagaśārdūle plavamāne hanūmati, ikṣvākukulamānārthī cintayām āsa sāgarāḥ/ sāhāyyaṁ vānarendrasya yadi nāhaṁ hanūmataḥ, kariṣyāmi bhaviṣyāmi sarvavācya vivakṣatām/ aham ikṣvākunāthena sagareṇa vivardhitaḥ, ikṣvākusacivaś cāyaṁ nāvasāditum arhati/* The Deva Karya in the context of Anjaneya was intending to perform was in the interest of the famed Ikshvaku Vamsha. In case the Vanara Raja Hanuman were not to have dutifully done then that would have become a target of blamefulness. The glory of Ikshvaku Kula was pioneered by Sagara Chakravarti Himself. In case, Veera Hanuman had not performed the present noble and virtuous deed despite his outstanding ability to help then the posterity would most certainly dishonour Anjaneya! Then Sagara Deva on his part decided to

help Anjaneya by giving the latter some rest and diversion and approached the golden coloured ‘Giri Shreshtha Maina Parvata’. As the Maha Vaanara was dashing to the southern direction, Deva-Gandharva-Chaaranas from the high skies were performing rains of flowers; this was especially so as Veera Hanuman was dashing on Shri ‘Rama Karya’ and Vayu Deva was accordingly cooperating to shover and reach the Great Messenger! Rishi Munis on earth too were showering ‘veda pravachana ashirvaadas’ too simultaneously. *tasmin plavagaśārdūle plavamāne hanūmati, ikṣvākukulamānārthī cintayām āsa sāgarah/ sāhāyām vānarendrasya yadi nāham hanūmataḥ, kariṣyāmi bhaviṣyāmi sarvavācya vivakṣatām/ aham ikṣvākunāthena sagareṇa vivardhitah, ikṣvākusacivaś cāyam nāvasīditum arhati/* The Deva Karya in the context of Anjaneya was intending to perform was in the interest of the famed Ikshvaku Vamsha. In case the Vanara Raja Hanuman were not to have dutifully done then that would have become a target of blamefulness. The glory of Ikshvaku Kula was pioneered by Sagara Chakravarti Himself. In case, Veera Hanuman had not performed the present noble and virtuous deed despite his outstanding ability to help then the posterity would most certainly dishonour Anjaneya! Then Sagara Deva on his part decided to help Anjaneya by giving the latter some rest and diversion and approached the golden coloured ‘Giri Shreshtha Maina Parvata’. Samudra Deva then addressed Mainaka Parvata to cooperate with Anjaneya to relax for a while and said : ‘Shaila Pravara! Please recall that Lord Indra asked you to close the path for Patala as that that way happened to be a direct route to that from where Asuras as their desperation to enter Bhuloka to create a scare here especially to Tapasvis. Thus you are standing here only for that purpose. Shailottama! We are blessed with the inherent ability to grow up or down or to expand or contract. *sa eṣa kapiśārdūlas tvām uparyeti vīryavān, hanūmān rāmakāryārtham bhīmakarmā kham āplutaḥ/ tasya sāhyam mayā kāryam ikṣvākukulavartinaḥ, mama ikṣvākavaḥ pūjyāḥ param pūjyatamās tava/ kuru sāvīryam asmākaṁ na naḥ kāryam atikramet, kartavyam akṛtaṁ kāryam satām manyum udīrayet/* Maha Shaila! Please note that Maha Parakrami Veeraanjaneya is about to cross you on the way to Lanka on Shri Rama Karya siddhi and as you might be aware that Ikshvaku Vamsha Kings are paramount dharmatmas. Veera Hanuman is right travelling across the Sea and one cannot afford to annoy satpurushas like Hanuman especially crossing the Sea but in fact to one’s best to please them. *salilād ūrdhvam uttiṣṭha tiṣṭhatv eṣa kapis tvayi, asmākaṁ atithiś caiva pūjyaś ca plavatām varah/ cāmīkaramahānābha devagandharvasevita, hanūmāns tvayi viśrāntas tataḥ śeṣam gamiṣyati/ kākutsthasyānṣaṁsyam ca maithilyāś ca vivāsanam, śramaṁ ca plavagendrasya samīkṣyotthātum arhasi/ hiraṇyanābho maināko niśamya lavaṇāmbhasaḥ, utpapāta jalāt tūrṇam mahādrumalatāyutaḥ/* That is why , you may please increase your height to facilitate Hanuman to jump down with ease so that he could feel relaxed for a while. Mainaka Parvata Raja! Indeed you are pleased with golden ‘shikhara’. May Hanuman be your honourable guest and let him be falcitated accordingly. Maha Mainaka! You are respected by Devatas and Gandharvas always . After resting for a while, respectable Hanuman would proceed further. As Samudra Deva requested Mainaka Parvata, the latter having raised the height, addressed Hanuman: *duṣkaram kṛtavān karma tvam idaṁ vānarottama, nipatya mama śṛṅgeṣu viśramasva yathāsukham/ rāghāvasya kule jātair udadhiḥ parivardhitah, sa tvām rāmahite yuktaṁ pratyarcayati sāgarah/ kṛte ca pratikartavyam eṣa dharmah sanātanaḥ, so ’yam tat pratikārārthī tvattaḥ saṁmānam arhati/* Vanara shiromane! You have decided on an unprecedented adventure! Now, do please take a brief break before you may proceed further. Samudra Deva has asked me to perform ‘satkaara’. The ancestors of Raghu Vamsha enabled Samudra Vriddhi and now Samudra decided to do good to you as this is as per Sanatana Dharma. Saagara Deva is therefore asking me to do ‘Sanmaana’ to you stating that you have firmed up your decision to cross the Samudra by hundred yojanas and as such you might wish to have some rest and relaxation on your way. Atop this mountain is a wealth of trees with sweet

fruits and a number of herbs and roots for your enjoyment. *atithih kila pūjārhaḥ prākṛto 'pi vijānatā, dharmaṁ jijñāsamānena kiṁ punar yādṛśo bhavān/ tvaṁ hi devavariṣṭhasya mārutasya mahātmanah, putras tasyaiva vegena sadṛśaḥ kapikuñjara/ pūjite tvayi dharmajña pūjām prāpnoti mārutaḥ, tasmāt tvaṁ pūjanīyo me śṛṇu cāpy atra kāraṇam/* Dharma jignāsa purushas asserted that even a normal 'atithi' be treated as 'atithi deva' and you are an unprecedented 'athithi' in your very special context; you are Vayu Putra, Dharma jnaata and worshipping you is as good as worship Vayu Deva Himself! *pūrvam kṛtayuge tāta parvatāḥ pakṣiṇo 'bhava, te 'pi jagmur diśaḥ sarvā garuḍānilaveginah/ tatas teṣu prayāteṣu devasaṁghāḥ saharṣibhiḥ, bhūtāni ca bhayaṁ jagmus teṣāṁ patanaśaṅkayā/ tataḥ kruddhaḥ sahasrākṣaḥ parvatānāṁ śatakratuḥ, pakṣāṁś ciccheda vajreṇa tatra tatra sahasraśaḥ/* In the remote past of Satya Yuga, all the mountains used to have wings and like Garuda Deva had the ability to fly as they wished. But Indra was unhappy and clipped off the wings of the mountains with his 'vajraayudha' and were stayed placed as they were. *sa mām upagataḥ kruddho vajram udyamya devarāt, tato 'haṁ sahasā kṣiptaḥ śvasanena mahātmanā/ asmiṁl lavaṇatoye ca prakṣiptaḥ plavagottama, guptapakṣaḥ samagraś ca tava pitrābhirakṣitaḥ/ tato 'haṁ mānayāmi tvām mānyo hi mama mārutaḥ, tvayā me hy eṣa sambandhaḥ kapimukhya mahāguṇaḥ/* At that very time Indra raised his vajraayudha on me too, but your father Vaayu Deva had carried me off and I fell in the 'kshaara sumudra' and saved me as a great exception. And hence I am ever grateful to him ever since! *asminn evaṁgate kārye sāgarasya mamaiva ca, prītiṁ prītamanā kartuṁ tvaṁ arhasi mahākape/ śramaṁ mokṣaya pūjām ca gṛhāṇa kapisattama, prītiṁ ca bahumanyasva prīto 'smi tava darśanāt/* Thus after a long gap of time, I have the honour of repaying the debt and please accept this offer. Kindly oblige me. Then Kapi shrestha Hanuman replied that he was very pleased as his offer to rest was quite welcome and could not be negated in any case, but in the presence of a huge multitude of Veera Vaanaraas, he made a 'pratigjna' and as such he would not be spare much time. Having thus stated by Maina Parvata, he touched Maina with affection, received his atithya with veneration, and flew in continuation of Shri Rama Karya of Sitanveshana. Then *tato devāḥ sagandharvāḥ siddhāś ca paramarṣayaḥ, abruvan sūryasaṁkāśāṁ surasāṁ nāgamātaram/ ayaṁ vātātmajaḥ śrīmān plavate sāgaropari, hanūmān nāma tasya tvaṁ muhūrtaṁ vighnam ācara/* Deva-Gandharva- Siddha-Maharshis then assembled and approached 'Naaga Maata' to test Veera Hanuman's endurance and create some disturbance of his psychology and will power and prove to the world that it was not his bravado but unswerving determination to accomplish. They asked the Naga Maata to assume the form of a raakshasi: *rākṣasaṁ rūpam āsthāya sughoram parvatopamam, daṁṣṭrākaraṇam piṅgākṣam vaktraṁ kṛtvā nabhaḥsprṣam/ balam icchāmahe jñātuṁ bhūyaś cāsyā parākramam, tvām vijeṣyaty upāyena viṣadam vā gamiṣyati/* In a truly heinous form of hers with grotesque cruelty, yellow eyes and angry looks, the test would be to create horror and dissuade or at any rate delay Hanuman for long enough time. She addressed Hanuman disgustingly: 'Vanara! You have now entered my face and could never get out of it.' Having said thus she expanded her face further and stood right before him. Then Hanuman replied: You may keep expanding your face as much as you would feel far heavier with my weight and volume, and kept quiet; Surasa magnified her face by ten yojanas while Hanuman doubled the size to twenty yojanas, infact he got irritated and further expanded to thirty yojanas. As she made it forty, he did fifty. Suras was still on the counter move and expanded upto sixty yojanas. The competition continued till Surasa made a full hundred yojanas. *tad dṛṣtvā vyāditam tv āsyam vāyuputraḥ sa buddhimān, dīrghajihvam surasayā sughoram narakopamam/ sa saṁkṣipyātmanah kāyam jīmūta iva mārutih, tasmin muhūrte hanumān babhūvāṅguṣṭhamātrakaḥ/ so 'bhipatyāśu tad vaktraṁ niṣpatya ca mahājvaḥ, antarikṣe sthitaḥ śrīmān idaṁ vacanam abravīt/* As Surasa thus expanded her face up to hundred yojanas, Vayu putra Hanuman very cleverly started shrinking his massive body to the size of just

a finger ring. *praviṣṭo 'smi hi te vaktraṁ dākṣāyaṇi namo 'stu te, gamiṣye yatra vaidehī satyaṁ cāstu vacas tava/ taṁ dṛṣṭvā vadanān muktaṁ candraṁ rāhumukhād iva, abravīt surasā devī svena rūpeṇa vānaram/ arthasiddhyai hariśreṣṭha gaccha saumya yathāsukham, samānaya ca vaidehīm rāghaveṇa mahātmanā/ tat tṛtīyaṁ hanumato dṛṣṭvā karma suduṣkaram, sādhu sādhv iti bhūtāni praśaśaṁsus tadā harim/* Then he asserted to the rakshasi swarupa Surasa Naga Devata and thundered: ‘Daksha Kumari! My greetings to you! I have now comfortably entered into your mammoth face and your boon of truthfulness to me stands consolidated and accomplished now. Now I should be able to reach Devi Sita very easily and quickly’. So saying, Veera Hanuman had freed himself from the hundred yojana size of the face of Maha Nagini Surasa just as Chandra Deva gets relieved from the tight clasp of Rahu Graha! Then Maha Nagini complemented Hunuman and wished him best wishes to soon meet Videhanandini Devi Sita soon. Then Hanuman started racing forward as though he was tearing through the red, yellow and white clouds while receiving the compliments of all the Beings on earth for having successfully encountered the third difficult issue to on the way thus far. *plavamānaṁ tu taṁ dṛṣṭvā simhikā nāma rākṣasī, manasā cintayām āsa pravṛddhā kāmārūpiṇī/ adya dīrghasya kālasya bhaviṣyāmy aham āsitā, idaṁ hi me mahat sattvaṁ cirasya vaśam āgatam/ iti saṁcintya manasā chāyām asya samakṣipat, chāyāyām saṁgrhītayām cintayām āsa vānaraḥ/ samākṣipto 'smi sahasā paṅgūkṛtaparākramaḥ, pratilomena vātena mahānau iva sāgare/* He was rushing forward by changing his sizes from miniature to mammoth, he faced the Maha Kaya Rakshasi named Simhika. She was happy to see a Vanara and was delighted that he could be a nice prey to enjoy his delicious meat. Thus thrilled at the golden chance, the rakasasi quickly grabbed that that unfortunately for her that was a mere shadow of Hanuman. She regretted her misgiving to catch the shadow but not the real vanara and ruminated: ‘aho! I have only caught hold of the shadow of the Vanara as the sweep of winds misled me that the shadow was not the real one. *tiryag ūrdhvam adhaś caiva vikṣamāṇas tataḥ kapiḥ, dadarśa sa mahāsattvaṁ utthitam lavaṇāmbhasi/ kapiṛājñā yad ākhyātaṁ sattvaṁ adbhutadarśanam, chāyāgrāhi mahāvīryaṁ tad idaṁ nātra saṁśayaḥ/* Then Hanuman saw up and down and realised that on the banks of the Maha Sagara and its high tides had shown a clear shadow of a huge figure. He recalled that once before Sugriva did mention that a ghastly encounter with a Maha Rakshasi would be possible on reaching the shores of Lanka. *Sa taam buddhvārtha -tattvena simhikāṁ matimān kapiḥ, vyavardhata mahākāyaḥ prāvṛṣṭva balāhakaḥ/ tasya sā kāyam udvikṣya vardhamānaṁ mahākapeḥ, vaktraṁ prasārayām āsa pātālāmbarasam nibham/ sa dadarśa tatas tasyā vikṛtaṁ sumahan mukham, kāyamātraṁ ca medhāvī marmāṇi ca mahākapiḥ/ sa tasyā vivṛte vaktre vajrasamhananaḥ kapiḥ, samkṣipyā muhur ātmānaṁ niṣpapāta mahābalaḥ/* Then had mentally confirmed that the Rakshasi was apparently the Simhika Rakshasi. The latter made a huge roaring sound enlarging her from as if from Patala to Aakaasha and ran after Hanuman. The intelligent Anjaneya aimed at her ‘marma sthaana’ and gave a strong but deadly punch. Then as the proceedings of Hanuman’s landing on the Seashore were being closely monitored, ‘Siddha Charuna Mahatmas’ had instantly visioned the scene Hanuman’s punch effect in the deathwise fall of the huge figure of Simhika. There were hailings from them saying: ‘Kapi Vara! I have just performed a frightful deed indeed by virtue of presence and timely application of your mental caliber. Now hopefully your way ahead is of victory. *asya tv etāni catvāri vānarendra yathā tava, dhṛtir dṛṣṭir matir dākṣyaṁ sa karmasu na sīdati/ sa taiḥ sambhāvitaḥ pūjyaḥ pratipannaprayojanaḥ, jagāmākāśam āviśya pannagāśanavat kapiḥ/ prāptabhūyiṣṭha pāras tu sarvataḥ pratilokayan, yojanānām śatasyānte vanarājīm dadarśa saḥ/ dadarśa ca patann eva vividhadruma bhūṣitam, dvīpaṁ śākhāmṛgaśreṣṭho malayopavanāni ca/* The celestial voices further hailed: ‘Vaanarendra! A Being of dhṛiti-drishti-mati-deeksha or courage- visualisation - application of mind, and dedication would never face failures in life. Thus having successfully killed

Simhika, Hanuman got up to the sky again as having covered the distance of the hundred yojanas of the Sea successfully and reached the Malaya named mountain and saw the gardens there. Then having discarded his varying physical forms of giant to very minute sizes assumed the normal and natural size. Subsequently he stared at the magnificence of Lanka from above. As Hanuman in a miniature form sought to stealthily enter Lankapuri which is like the Bhoga Puri like Bilva swarga surrounded by countless poisonous snakes, had the close view of the city with awe inspiring looks. But then he appeared in his normal stature . Then a Vikaraali Rakshasi shouted at Veera Hanuman: *Kastvam kenacha karyena iha praaptonam vanaalaya, kathayasveha yat tatvam yaavat praanaa dharanti te/ Nashakyam svalivyam Lankaa praveshtum vaanara tvayaa, rakshitaa Ravana balairabhi guptaa samantatah/ Vanara!* Who are you and why are you here! As long as you are alive now, tell me as for which purpose you are here; tell to truth! Are you not aware that entry to Lankapuri is strictly forbidden except with my my permission! Hanuman had sternly shouted: ‘Very arrogant you are; are you not! I may perhaps inform you why I am here; but who are you to interrogate me this way! Your looks are red with anger; but why! Can you not be polite!’ Then Lankini replied: I am the trusted servant woman of King Ravana being the in charge of this gate for entry into Lanka. I feel like beating you so that you may rest in peace for good.’ Then the ever intelligent Hanuman explained to Lankini that he wished to see and enjoy the grand spectacle of Lanka, its of green gardens, excellent buildings and so on, what else! After thus enjoying I would return away’. As Hanuman explained rather unconvincingly with affected innocence, Lankini shouted boisterously and gave a resounding slap to him. *Tatah kritvaa mahaa naadam saa vai Lankaa bhayankaram, talena Vaanarashreshtham taadayaamaas vegitaa/ Stree cheti manyamaanena naatikrodhah swamam kritah, saa tu tena prahaarena vihvalaangee nishaacharee, papaata sahasaa bhumou vikritaanana darshayaa/ Praseeda sumahaa baho traayasva harisattamah, samaye soumya tishthanti satvavaanto maha balaah/* Then Anjaneya extended his left hand, closed his fist and gave her a swooning hit. In fact having realised that Lankini was after all a stree, the hit was not that severe to death. The Nishaachari fell flat on the ground and then her face was distorted. Then Hanuman took pity on her yet sought to put an end to her irritating attitude. Then she had slowly recovered, stood up and slowly responded: Maha bali Vanara! Believe me I am the gatekeeper of the entry into Lankapuri. But I wish to confess something significant: *Idam cha tatthyam shrunume bruvatyayai bruvatvaa vai Harishvara, svayam svayambhuvaa dattham varadaanam yathaa mama/ Yadaa twaam Vaanarah kaschid vikramaad vashamaanayet, tadaa tvaa hi vijeyam rakshasaam bhayamaagatam/ Vanareshvara!* I would now like to truthfully confess as Svayambhu Brahma Himself blessed and stated as follows: ‘ Whenever a Vanara would approach me and hit me with a strong slap down to earth and subdue me, then do realise that hard days would commence to Lankapuri! Maha Veera! By my interaction and altercation with you do herald the doom of Lanka and Maha Ravanaasura! Soumya! With your ‘darshan’ , Lord Brahma’s statement gets vindicated right now! *Sitaanimittam raajastu Ravanasya duraatmanah, rakshasaam chaiva sarveshaam vinaashah samupaagatah/ Tat pravishya harishrashtha pureem Raavana paalitaam, vidhvsatva sarva kaaryaani yaani yaaneeha vaancchasi/ Pravishya shaapopahataam hareeshwara pureem shubhaam raakshasa mukhya paalitaam/* Now only due to the cause of Devi Sita, the days of the arrogant and sinful Ravana’s destruction along with his followers is round the corner. Kapi shreshtha! My best wishes now and do please enter Lankapuri now for good.

Hanuman’s search for Devi Sita

Pavana Putra Hanuman entered Lankapuri in the night, as the sky was enriched with the clouds, the houses of Rakshasaas were silent; the houses were displaying Swasti symbols as also of the shapes, representing ‘Vardhamaana Sangina’ or the representation of progress. The houses are with four entrances in four directions known as ‘Sarvato bhadra’ of Safe from all sides and are stated to bring in prosperity from all the directions! From the interiors of the homes were heard instrumental music sounds, sweet songs, and even ‘swaadhyaya’ mantras of asuras. Some groups of Rakshasas were assembled on high road interjections, mainly extolling the glories the King Ravana, his family members and his close followers. *rājamārgam samāvṛtya sthitam rakṣobalam mahat, dadarśa madhyame gulme rākṣasasya carān bahūn/ dīkṣitān jaṭilān muṇḍān go’jināmbharavāśasaḥ/* One might also notice quite a few ‘Gupatacharaas’ of Ravana or the King’s Intelligence persons, some look having taken ‘deeksha, some with beards and twisted hairs, some dressed in hides of cow or deer skins, some with hidden ‘aayudhas’ or weaponry, and some with open arms. *Ekaakshaaneka varnaascha lambodarapayodharaan, karaalaan bhugnavaktrāmś ca vikaṭān vāmanāmś tathā/ dhanvinaḥ khaḍginaś caiva śataghñī musalāyudhān, parighottamahastāmś ca vicitrakavacojjvalān/* Some of the Rakshasaas are single eyed in their foreheads, and some with varied skin colours; some with their stomachs up to their chins and likewise of varied bodypart combinations. Some are too tall and some too short. Similarly their voices are of unusual sounds. *nātiṣṭhūlān nātikṣān nātidīrghātihrasvakān, virūpān bahurūpāmś ca surūpāmś ca suvarcasah/ śaktivṛkṣāyudhāmś caiva paṭṭiśāśanidhāriṇaḥ, kṣepaṇīpāśahastāmś ca dadarśa sa mahākapiḥ/* Some ‘nishaacharaas’ are unusually fat, of short or too high and similarly their body complexions are queer and disgusting. Most of them were armed differently as per their body statures. *śatasāhasram avyagram ārakṣam madhyamam kapiḥ, prākārāvṛtam atyantam dadarśa sa mahākapiḥ/* Hanuman estimated that over a lack of foot soldiers were guarding the center of Lanka with varied weaponry. Having thus noted the ever preparedness of the army of Ravana and the range of weaponry that the soldiers were well equipped with proceeded to Ravana’s ‘antahpura’ for ‘Sitaanveshana’.

Hanuman then enters the ‘antahpura’ or the interior palaces of Ravana’sura systematically but gets disappointed with no sign and indication of Devi Sita. Hanuman then extended the scope of search for Devi Sita in Ravana’s own palace, besides at the houses of his follower Rakshasaas. Hanuman witnesses the inside out of the Pushpaka Vimana - indeed it was surfeit with Sundara Kanyas. In the process of ‘Devi Sitaanveshana’ in the Pushpaka Vimana in Ravana’s residence, Hanuman witnessed countless ‘strees’ of youthful charm being playful inside; why had Ravana forcefully abducted Sita, despite his reputation of never forcing a woman but willingly married! In the process of searching for Devi Sita, Hanuman was confused by seeing Devi Mandodari to Devi Sita! Hanuman on seeing Mandori, took time self assure about Devi Sita, continued the search even while self introspecting of his own honesty in the atmosphere of food-dance and lust; yet dismissed such thoughts. Hanuman in his remote thoughts wondered and was even concerned of Devi Sita’s very existence but quickly recovered from such apprehensions resumed ‘Sitanveshana’ yet again with confidence and belief! Despite his sincere efforts of finding Devi Sita, the indications were slimmed and might even return disappointed. Yet, visited ‘Ashoka Vaatika’. Hanuman yet in his miniature form finally visioned Devi Sita near a ‘Chaitya Praasaada Mandira’ and identified her and felt ecstatic..

Hanuman finally succeeds Devi Sita Darshana

Hanuman having finally ensured that Devi Sita was visioned, felt that as to why she, an outstanding Pativrata, why and how Ravana has been disgusting, yet sad. Hanuman was no doubt happy to see Devi Sita most closely with sympathy, yet contrarily was repulsed with hatred at the sight of the Rakshasa streets encircling her. Ravana'sura along with his beloved females enters Ashoka Vatika and the spot where Devi Sita was being guarded as seen by Anjaneya in his miniature form. Even with a single nasty and desolate glance of the detestable Ravana'sura, Devi Sita was drowned in gloom-fear-and apprehension as noticed by Hanuman. Ravana then addressed Devi Sita opening his heart fancying her, praises her origin, charm and conduct, and seeks to convince her to discard fear complex, to be sympathetic to him, and wait for her consent. Devi Sita emboldens herself and replies highlighting Ravana's wretched manner of abducting her and of his features of cruelty, selfishness, and ego; mocks his ability and readiness to face hero Rama. As Sita heckled Ravana's claim of heroism and his stealthy timidity, she asserted her 'pativrata', and challenged him to face Rama- as Ravana threatened her granting three months to change or get killed. While a few of enlightened Rakshasis sought to convince Devi Sita to wed Ravana, the rest of the cruel lot threatened her to death and fancy to taste her flesh, cook it with spices, and eat with wine and dance! Totally rattled by the perilous intimidation of the Rakshasis to nearly kill her and celebrate, Devi Sita nearly resorted to 'praana tyaga' especially cursing her fate still disabling her from Shri Rama darshana. Hanuman witnessed series of Ravana's sweet offers to wed Sita, her non-reaction, his three month notice, violent threats of Rakshasis, Trijata's forebodings, now desires to appear before her, but how! Veera Hanuman sings Shri Rama Katha exclusively for Devi Sita but she wonders its genuineness! Then Hanuman appears before Devi Sita in his own form and conveys about Shri Rama's welfare, his arrival here, and assures Rama's arrival soon. Devi Sita still unconvinced fully about Hanuman's genuineness he describes Rama's physical features and mental acumen and bravery, pleading his own authenticity. Devi Sita finally concedes Hanuman's genuineness- then he describes Rama's 'guna ganaas', how Rama missed her, Sugriva's help repaying Rama's help by killing Vaali-Sampati's guidance to reach her. Maha Veera Hanuman bestows Shri Rama's finger ring to Devi Sita as a memory refresher- the highly excited Devi Sita falls back to her memory screen, as Hanuman assures Rama's arrival too soon! As Devi Sita seeks Hanuman to hasten Shri Rama's arrival at Lanka, Hanuman suggests carrying her and reach Rama swiftly, but she declines giving reasons, especially stressing Rama's invincibility. Before handing over her 'choodaamani' to Hanuman, Devi Sita recalled how Rama expressed his concern by using 'brahmastra' on a crow- Indra's son- pestered her; the crow went from pillar to post and fell at Rama's feet; though Rama pardoned, still had to block any crows's vision of left eye ever since! Having taken the possession of precious Sita 'Choodaamani' as a proof of meeting her, Hanuman felt elated to display his grit, devotion and resolution to all concerned, especially for the delight of Rama! Devi Sita reiterated what Anjaneya should convey to Rama about her life's threats while handing over hair clip to Shri Rama; Hanuman reiterates his reaching Rama's soonest. Veera Hanuman devastates Ashoka Vatika- on witnessing this the frightened Rakshasis surrounding Devi Sita ran away to Ravana'sura stating some Celestial Being had reached at the Ashoka Vatika to destroy it. Ravana'sura on learning of a stranger devastating Pramadaavana, despatches a strong regiment of his army of well trained eight thousand rakshasa force named Kinkaras. Mahabali Vayu Putra then devastates 'Chityapraasada'- the Rakshasa Kuladevatas' sthana and the rakshasas around it. Veeranjaneya smashes the expertise of 'baana-prayoga' of the Maha Rakshasa Jambumali, as Ravana'sura decided to utilise the extraordinary skills of archer of the Prahasta Putra to pull down the enemy. As Hanuman successfully killed Kinkaras and Jambumali and demolished Pramadaavana and Chitya Praasada along with inmates, enraged Ravana instructed the mighty sons of his Ministers to face Hanuman. With successive

deaths of his select Rakshasa Veeras, Ravana had wondered that even one Vanara of Hanuman demoralised him as a wake up call and despatched his five Senapatis who too were killed! Anxiously awaiting Hanuman's destruction by the Five Senapatis and army forces, Ravana got negative messages. As he was dismayed, his son Akshaya Kumara, well versed in war tactics, then too his turn. Shattered with putra shoka and humiliation, Ravana finally asked Indrajit to use his brahmastra to end up the menace of Hanuman and save the Rakshasa Samrajya and his personal prestige and fame at stake! Veera Hanuman was no doubt impressed by Ravana's accomplishments and his own personalised feelings. Pretending as bounded by Indrajit's Brahmastra, though Brahma granted his immunity from Brahmastra faced Ravana whose Minister asked him why he visited Lanka; he confirmed, he was Shri Rama's messenger. Addressing Ravana, Veera Hanuman detailed Shri Rama's 'Prabhava' and warned that if Devi Sita were in any way hurt, that would be the instant final doom of Ravana and Lanka; Ravana went mad with fury. Infuriated by Hanuman's insinuations of Ravana's record of failures and praising Rama's successes, Ravana orders the vanara be killed-Vibhishana pleads against killing a messenger, as Ravana heeds. As Vibhishana appealed, Ravana consents to burn Hanuman's tail to display the blazings to Lanka's public. As Rakshasis conveyed, Sita prays to Agni to lessen the heat. Hanuman starts the revenge. Hanuman's vengeful 'Lanka Dahana and Vidhvamsa' as the Rakshasas were shocked wonderstruck whether he was of Rudra Swarupa or Rama Bhakta! Veera Anjaneya's successful 'Lanka Dahana' but concerned of Devi Sita's safety- her 'punardarshana'. Hanuman reassuring Devi Sita of soonest arrival of Rama Lakshmanas, jumped off from Arishta Parvata to cross the Maha Sagara as vanara pramukhas were waiting anxiously. As Vayu Putra dashed through thick sky high clouds to return to the ever awaiting Vanara yoddhas, the latter were ever concerned, but his return overjoyed them especially Angada and Jambavan. On his victorious return from Ravana's Lankapuri, Hanuman briefly detailed the happenings, especially Devi Sita darshana, killing spree of Rakshasas, challenge to Ravana, burning his tail and Lanka dhvamsa. Viranjaneya details the actual status of Devi Sita's physical and psychological condition to Shri Rama in the presence of Lakshmana Sugrivas. Reacting to Hanuman's handing over Devi Sita's 'choodaamani' Rama got worked up with his sweet memories, showing anxiety to hear what was her message to him. Hanuman detailed her actual status and parting appeal still concerned of urgent action to save her very life!

#### Valmiki Yuddhha Khanda Ramayana

##### Shri Rama lauds Hanuman's unique heroism as the latter explains of Lankapuri's impregnability

As Shri Rama heard about Veera Hanuman's memorable success as he was truly impressed and affirmed that none could have ever possibly achieved this kind of achievement on earth, excepting Garuda and Vayu Deva. Even Deva-danava-yaksha-gandharva-naaga-rakshasas could ever dare conquer Lankapuri but Veera Anjaneya who had literally shattered and put it to flames. *ko viśet sudurādharṣām rākṣasaiś ca surakṣitām, yo vīryabalasaṁpanno na samaḥ syād dhanūmataḥ/ bhṛtyakāryaṁ hanumatā sugrīvasya kṛtaṁ mahat, evaṁ vidhāya svabalaṁ sadṛśaṁ vikramasya ca/ yo hi bhṛtyo niyuktaḥ san bhartrā karmaṇi duṣkare/ kuryāt tadanurāgeṇa tam āhuḥ puruṣottamam/* None indeed Hanuman could ever enter and exit after success after challenging Maha Rakshasas in this fashion. He had truly vindicated himself not only as hero but follower and dedicated to a master and King of Vanaras Sugriva should be proud, grateful and fortunate to have a Hanuman for such an unbelievable act. He has accomplished a duty for his master

in this manner and with thunderous success being of the prime rank. Further, a follower who is no doubt faithful and trustworthy is stated as a sincere achiever of medium range while those sevakas who no doubt are disciplined and sincere are the third rank ordinary followers. Further having been dedicated to Swami Karya, he had not only ensured the esteem of me and his King but never bilittled his own too always.

*aham ca raghuvaṁśaś ca lakṣmaṇaś ca mahābalaḥ, vaidehyā darśanenādya dharmataḥ parirakṣitāḥ/ idam tu mama dīnasyā mano bhūyaḥ prakarṣati, yad ihāsyā priyākhyātur na kurmi sadṛśam priyam/ eṣa sarvasvabhūtas tu pariṣvaṅgo hanūmataḥ, mayā kālam imam prāpya dattas tasya mahātmanaḥ/* Now, only he had truly discovered Devi Sita , met her , convinced her, and kept up the prestige of me and Lakshmana. Now I am not in a position to a gift worthy of awarding yet he had truly worthy of offering him yet bestowed to me a life extender and anguish pacifier. I can only offer him an invaluable and heart to heart embrace. Then Shti Rama addressed the Vanara Sena and prominent personalities of distinction: dear comrades! Doubtless, Hero Hanuman had accomplished ‘karya siddhi’ just for my sake, but my enthusiasm is getting blunted right now as to how --best to cross the Maha Samudra and reach the other side of the shores and Devi Sita’s vey life breathing! What indeed could really be the parctical wayforward and reach the other side! Thus Shri Rama became terribly penitent for reaching the other side of the hundred yojana distance of the Maha Sagara ! Then Veera Hanuman provides the full account of Lanka’s impregnability, statistics of gates, inbuilt locational advantages and so on, yet emphasizing the attacking abilities of vanara sena too. As ‘buddhimaan’ Sugriva thus addressed Shri Rama never to get concerned with the task of setu bandhana but trust his own unchallenged valor and encourage him with his own ‘marga darshaka pratibha’ as his outstanding vanara sena are ever ready to bear the brunt with uncommon gusto and zest, Shri Rama addressed Veeranjanya thus: Vaanara Veera! you had already visited Lanka and are fully aware of the details; tell me what was the distance from one dwara durga to another. Then Anjaneya detailed as follows: ‘Bhagavan Shri Rama! I shall give you the details as to how Lankapuri’s safety was ensured, how the rakshasa sena’s safety was ensured, what kind of rakshasa sena was the impact of the love and admiration for Ravana’s dedication and devotion from them, what kind of prosperity that the public of Lankapuri enjoyed, how dreadful was the Maha Samudra and its shores, how many foot soldiers were posted there on the shores, how many vahanas were engaged of those foot soldiers on the shores, etc. Then Hanuman started the detailing: Rama prabho! Lankapuri is fully contented with pleasures of life, several elephants, chariots, and each and every citizen lives with longevity as they do not understand what are physical illnesses and threats to life. The city has huge, strong, four entry gates, with sturdy windows yet impossible to break mountain boulders or mantrik arrows even by invoking Indradi Devas and even Brahma. The purpose of outside vision from the wonderfully trained foot soldiers, calvary, elephantry, charioteers and so on, while the ably flying soldiers send signals of even far distant approaches of the enemies and are thus truly impregnable. The ‘dwaraas’ as constructed by rakshasa veeras and rakshasa architects apart, there are thousands of ‘shataghiyaas’ or of ‘loha gadaas’ or iron maces of four feet breadth ever ready to fire enemy attacks fully loaded to resist and bring it down to ashes in a ‘truti’ of time almost instantly. Each of the ‘dwaaraas’ or the exit-entry high gates, there are ‘kandakaas’ or of bottomless deep waters with ‘maha matsyas’ like whales, sharks and huge crocodiles instantly disappearing. At the same time there are four entry-exit gates equipped with massive wooden bridges of automatic provision to be hoisted and folded down to enter and exit. As and when ‘shatrusena’ seeks to attack and enter, countless precautions are thus ready to defend and reattack by throwing back in to the deep waters. *Swayam prakṛtisampanno yuyutsū rāma rāvaṇaḥ, utthitaś cāpramattaś ca balānām anudarśane/ laṅkā purī nirālambā devadurgā bhayāvahā, nādeyam pārvataṁ vanyam kṛtrimam ca caturvidham/ sthitā pāre samudrasya dūrapārasya rāghava, naupathaś cāpi nāsty*

*atra nirādeśaś ca sarvataḥ/ Raghunadha! Ravanaśura himself keeps his poise while defending or attacking as he keeps reviewing the readiness of his sena always. Thus as of now, Lanka is just not possible to attack even by Devas; having been protected naturally too by mountains and the maha dakshina samudra Ravanaśura had made it impregnable further. ayutaṁ rakṣasāṁ atra paścimadvāram āśritam, sūlahastā durādharṣāḥ sarve khaḍgāgrayodhināḥ/ niyutaṁ rakṣasāṁ atra dakṣiṇadvāram āśritam, caturaṅgeṇa sainyena yodhās tatrāpy anuttamāḥ/ prayutaṁ rakṣasāṁ atra pūrvadvāram samāśritam, carmakhaḍgadharāḥ sarve tathā sarvāstrakovidāḥ/ Behind Lanapuri's eastern gate there is ten thousand rakshasa 'nivaasa', each of them are ready to defend and attack. On the southern gate there is a 'chaturanga sena' of a lakh strength. On the western front the strength is ten times more. arbudaṁ rakṣasāṁ atra uttaradvāram āśritam, rathinaś cāśvavāhāś ca kulaputrāḥ supūjitāḥ/ śataṁ śata sahasrāṇām madhyamaṁ gulmaṁ āśritam, yātudhānā durādharṣāḥ sāgrakoṭiś ca rakṣasāṁ/ te mayā saṁkramā bhagnāḥ parikhāś cāvapūritāḥ, dagdhā ca nagarī lankā prākārāś cāvasāditāḥ/ yena kena tu mārgeṇa tarāma varuṇālayam, hateti nagarī lankāṁ vānarair avadhāryatām/ Now the northern dwaara is truly impenetrable as being safeguarded by an arbuda or ten crore rakshasa yoddhaas either mounted by excellently trained horses or chariots. Moreover the central Lankapuri is the stronghold of Maha Rakshasa Sena with countless Rakshasa Sena of over a crore in reserve. But, I was still able to overcome the obstacles while appropriately adjusting my physical form from diminutive to gigantic stature, smashed the 'praanganaas' and burnt off some one quarter of Lankapuri. We among the 'maha vaanara sena' too do possess the skill and wherewithall to smash down likewise some how. aṅgado dvivido maindo jāmbavān panaso nalaḥ, nīlaḥ senāpatiś caiva balaśeṣeṇa kiṁ tava/ plavamānā hi gatvā tām rāvaṇasya mahāpurīm, saprakārām sabhavanām ānayaṣyanti maithilīm/ evam ājñāpaya kṣipram balānām sarvasaṁgraham, muhūrtena tu yuktena prasthānam abhirocaya/ Shatru bhayankara Shri Rama! The vaanara sena under the commande of King Sugriva is blessed with maha veeraas like Angada, Dvividā, Mainda, Jambavan, Panasa, Nala, and Senapati Neela would suffice to bring you laurels as mere illustrations, apart from the 'apaara vaanara sena. Raghu Nandana! Angadaadi maha vaanaras could fly and on reaching Lankapuri could smash down the protective hills, forests, Lanka dwaras, living residences and the so called Rakshasa veeraas and their kith and kin, and finally rescue Devi Sita safe. In view of all these facts and figures may I assure you that soon enough, let an auspicious time be declared to initiate the duty of 'Setu bandhana' and soon thereafter cross the bridge and attack.*

Vibhishana seeks Shri Rama's refuge and Anjaneya supports as as Sugriva and other Vanaras hesitated while Rama endorsed:

Meanwhile Vibhishana appeals Ravana to release Devi Sita, praising Rama and his valour - Prahasta, Indrajit and other Mantris heckled Vibhishana- as the latter retorts that neither Ravana with 'vyasnaas' nor his followers could match Rama. Despite consistent appeals to release Sita, Ravana refuses finally- out of desperation Vibhishana leaves Lanka off for good! As Vibhishana seeking asylum from Shri Rama, raises doubts of Vaanara Veeras like Sugriva, Angada and so on, Hanuman felt yet that it was genuine for apparent reasons and asks for Rama's instructions. Shri Rama being a 'sharanaagama rakshaka' replies to Sugriva and co vanaraveeraas, especially Veera Anjana Putra, and asks the Vanara King to allow his darshan. On hearing the assurances of Hanuman, Shri Rama was pleased and addressed Sugriva and the rest of select Vanara Veeras as follows: No doubt the new arrival Vibhishana is a maha raksasa of the very clan of Ravanaśura, yet as he had arrived at my refuge. Let me assure you that even among rakshasas too there would be 'neeti shastravettas'! Hence, notwithstanding all other considerations of birth,

upbringing, co existence, one might depart especially after a climactic and continuous excesses of adharma and in any case the fundamental kshaatra dharma requires fulfillment of protection to an enemy. Surely, may the arrival of Vibhishana at this critical juncture be an auspicious omen!

#### Shri Rama prays to Samudra Deva and Setu Bandhana facilitated

Rama invoked Samudra Deva for three days long, lost patience and threatened by shooting arrows. Maha Sagara himself personified restraining Rama's fury-advised Vanara's 'maha shilpi', the method of constructing 'Setu Bandhana' to facilitate Ramas and the huge Vaanara Sena to cross the Maha Sagara-As Rama with Vanara Sena finally crossed the Sagara, the flustered Ravana despatched Shukha-Saaranas as Vanaras, Vibhishana gets them caught, but the kind Rama releases yet with an alert message. Ravana asserted not release Devi Sita any way, yet asked Sarana about about Vanara yoddhaas and the latter mentioned Angada, Nala, Shweta, Kumuda, Chanda, Rambha, Sharabha, Panasa, Krodhana, Gavaya-Saarana further added to the list of Vanara Pramukhas like Jambavan- Jambavan, Samnadana, Kratana, Pramaathi, Gavaksha, Kesari, Shatabali and so on now right at the door steps of Lankapuri- As Saarana reported of his findings to Ravana, Shuka detailed about about Sugriva's Ministers, Mainda-Dvididas, Hanuman, Rama Lakshmanas, Sugriva Vibhishanas, and further details of the number of Vanara Sena. Vibhishana noticed Shardula as Rama pardoned-Then Shardula the spy ran back, Ravana desired as to the origin of Pramukha Pramukha Vanaras like Jambavan, Sushena, Kesari, Sushena, Dadhimukhi, Sumukha, Sveta, Mainda brothers, Nala, Vegashali and so on. Final placement of Rama Sena with followers of Lahshmana- Vibhishana- Sugriva-Maha Vaanaras at the Lankapuri Dwaras coordinating up above and near the gates reminding of Deva- Danava Yuddha!-Dwandva Yuddha of Ravana- Vaanara Bhallukas day long yuddha between Indrajit- Angada, Jambumali- Hanuman, Shatrughna-Vibhishana, Gaja-Neela, Prathasa-Sugriva, Virupasha-Lakshmana and so on-During the night long Rakshasa Vanara Yuddha, Angada defeats Indrajit, but out of shame as the latter disappears by maaya and did 'naagastra bandhanastra prayoga' on Rama Lakshmanas.

#### Rama Lakshmanas tied with Indrajit's 'Nagastra' - Rama wriggled out yet Hanuman was getting readied to reach Himalayas to fetch herbs from Sanjeevani Parvata, Garuda Deva arrived to free Lakshmana

As Rama Lakshmanas were tied down by 'Nagastra' by Indrajit in hiding, Vaanara Shreashthas tried to locate him who too were the victims of Indrajit's astras as the bewildered Maha Vanaras broke down too. As Indrajit was yet in his invisibility, avoiding the search party of Hanuman, hit Jambavan and other Vaarara Veeras, as Vibhisana pacified Sugriva as 'Satyameva Jayate'. As Vaanaras rescued Rama Lakshmanas from naaga bandhana, but Trijata assured so too yet with hurdles. All of a sudden Shri Rama with his physical and mental strength tore off the 'naaga pasha' but was distressed to see Lakshmana could not, and kept on crying missing him and got readied even to retreat! Vibhishana distressed at Lakshmana unrecovered, Rama decides to withdraw from the battle; Sushena advises Hanuman to get herbs from Sanjeevani Parvata but happily, Garuda lands and frees from 'naaga bandhana'.

#### Hanuman killed Dhumraksha, Akampana, Devantaka, Trishira and many Rakshasa Veeraas and contributed to resist Kumbhakarna too whom Shri Rama finally killed.

Rattled by Rama Lakshmanas release, the worried Ravana despatched Dhumraksha, but Hanuman crashed the chariot and the head of Dhumraksha. Ravanaasura got furious that Dhumraakasha was killed by Hanuman, he instructed Vajradamshra to take revenge, as Rakshasa Vaanara Maha Yuddha followed yet Angada crushed Vajradamshta to death. Senapati Akampana volunteered to attack the shatru sena but Veeranjaneya despatched the Senapati and many Raashasas to Yama Loka. As even Akampana too was crumbled to death by Hanuman, Ravana hesitated but Senapati Prahasta consented but Maha Vaanara Senapati Neela succeeded to crush the Rakshasa Senapati to death. Ravana's entry with a wallop and exit with a whimper by subduing Sugriva, Lakshmana, Hanuman, Neela Yoddhas but exited as Shri Rama disgraced him! Having left battle with disgrace as defeated by Shri Rama, Ravana instructed that Kumbhakarna be awoken from long slumber; once awoken with food and drink reached Ravana as Vaanaras were scared- Vibhishana traces Kumbhakarna's origin, maha bala and spells of 'deerghanidra'. As Kumbhakarna boasted off his certain victory, Mahodara warned of Rama's invincibility but the latter was infuriated, demanded Sita's surrender and proceeded against Rama with four more Rakshasa Veeras- Kumbhakarna 'Rana Yatra', notwithstanding spates of 'dusshakunas' - As many Vaanaras were dazed at Kumbhakarna ran away despite Angada's appeals for death with veera swarga, then Maha Vanaras like Neela, Gavaksha, Hanuman then decided to confront the enemy - Displaying initial 'prataapa' against Angada, Sugriva and Hanuman, Kumbhakarna calling Lakshmana as 'baalaka' attacks Rama who had systematically slashed off his right and left shoulders and finally his head and body to Vanara's thrill and the dismay of Ravana ! - On hearing the unbelievable and tragic end of Kumbhakarna, Ravana was stunned and as his sons/ cousins broke down; he realised the retributive impact of his criminal deeds but now too late. As Ravana felt the never dreamt of Kumbhakarna's fall, Trishira cooled down his anguish while Ravana Putras /cousin kumaras readied yet Narakantaka too resisted much as Angada removed him dead- Hanuman shattered Devantaka and Trishira, Neela demolished Mahodara and Rishabha smashed Mahapaarshva- Atikaya the Kubera Putra whom Ravana considered as his own son; Brahma gifted an impregnable Kavacha to Atikaya; after a bhayankara yuddha, Lakshmana finally killed him by brahmastra itself.. Totally smashed to smithereens, Ravanaasura reviewed several Maha Rakshasa Veeraas had sacrificed lives for him so far and instructed safety of Lankapuri, specially where Devi Sita resided- Indrajit devastated Vanara Veeraas being invisible on skies and by using brahmastra made Rama Lakshmanas too victimised as Ravana was thrilled and so were Rakshasaas and Lankapura.

The utmost critical of Ramayana was to save Shri Rama Lakshmanas by Hanuman by fetching Mrita Sanjeevini from 'brahmastra prayoga'

As Vaanara Veeraas wondered with 'kim kartavya' as Rama Lakshmanas collapsed senseless, Jambavan advised of fetching Mrita Sanjeevini off Himalayas which Hanuman did the glorious act successfully. Then Vibhishana broke the silence stating that that after all was not the end of the world any way and assured them all: 'Vaanara Veeraas! Never get disheartened in this manner and this is such a critical moment that one would need to face with determination and resolve. After all, Rama Lakshmanas are in a senseless condition but happily alive. Swayambhu Brahma did provide Indrajit the potent most brahmastra which got the maha purushas temporarily senseless and one would need to negate its temporary spell by seeking and exploring means to negate.' Then Hanuman addressed Vibhishana: 'Rakshasa Raja! I do heartily endorse and appreciate your sense of determination instead exploring ways and means and share our assurances too'. That was the time of nightfall dusk when there was no rakshasa

sanchaara as they ought to be celebrating victory. Hence Vaanara Veeraas though physically hurt somewhat could fortify themselves with mental resolve. Then Vibhishana and Hanuman witnessed Sugriva, Angada, Neela, Sharabha, Gandamaadana, Jambavaan, Sushena, Vegadarshi, Mainda, Nala, Jyotirmukha and Dvidida were in their respective conditions of being rather badly hurt. Vibhishana in that sandhaakaala's dim light recognised Jambavan and said: Arya! Hope you are not so grievously hurt! Jambavan replied: 'Rakshasa Raja, I am able to recognise you only by your voice and my eyes also not enabling to see you due to pain; hope veera Anjaana Vaayu Putra Hanuman is alright! Then Hanuman reached and touched him tenderly and with renewed vigour Jambavan fondled Hanuman with reciprocative gesture and stated: Vaanara Simha! This precisely is the perfect time to save the prestige of we vaanara bhallukaas which even devatas too are unaware of. This is the most critical mode of this crisis as caused by Rama Lakshmanas are to be saved by removing the brahmastra baana. *gatvā paramam adhvānam upary upari sāgaram, himavantam nagaśreṣṭham hanūman gantum arhasi/ tataḥ kāñcanam atyugram ṛṣabham parvatottamam, kailāsaśikharam cāpi drakṣyasy ariniśūdana/ tayoḥ śikharayor madhye pradīptam atulaprabham, sarvaauśadhiyutam vīra drakṣyasy auśadhiparvatam/* Veera Hanuman! Do fly across the maha Samudra and seek to reach the Himalaya Parvata Shreni. Shatru Sudana! On reaching there you would endeavour to sight the suvanamaya Rishabha and Kailasa shikhara darshana. Veera! there between both these mountain shikharaas there is a glittering Mahoshadhi Parvata could be sighted and there would be ever radiant mahoshadhis are aplenty. *tasya vānaraśārdūlacatasro mūrdhni sambhavāḥ, drakṣyasy ośadhayo dīptā dīpayantyo diśo daśa/ mṛtasamjīvanīm caiva viśalyakaraṇīm api, sauvarṇakaraṇīm caiva samdhānīm ca mahauśadhīm/ tāḥ sarvā hanuman gṛhya kṣipram āgantum arhasi, āśvāsaya harīn prāṇair yojya gandhavahātmajāḥ/* Vaana simha! On that parvata shikhara there are four life saving mahoshadhis named Mrita Sajeevani-Vishalyakarani-Suvarna karani and Sandhaayani. Hanuman Pavana Kumara! Try to secure these mahoshadhis at the earliest and fly back to this very spot and promise the praana daana to assert the pride and indelible glory of Vaanaras for generations now and forever. No sooner that Veeraanjaneya heard this that the most experienced bhallula pitaamaha Jambavan detailed than he crossed the mahaa saagara and got dropped on earth as mahaa vrikshas were shattered, parvata shikharaas crumbled and mountains too quaked. Parvataakara Pavana Kumara Hanuman then reached Malaya parvata shikhara. Then there were huge vrishkas, maha sarovaraas where Deva Gandharvas visit often as that was of the area of about sixty yojanaas. Vidyaadhara- Rishi Muni Apsaras reside there with comfort with mriga samuhas in the mountain caves. Pavana kumara Hanuman witnessed groups of Yaksha, Gandharva, Kinnaraas were upset by his gigantic vaanara's sudden appearance. From there, he extended his hands and shoulders like Garuda Deva pushing down dasha dishas and flew up in the high skies towards Himalaya ranges with alarming speed even as the jala jantu samuhas of the Maha Samudra were alarmed. *sa parvatān vṛkṣagaṇān sarāṃsi; nadīs taṭākāni purottamāni, sphītāñjanāms tān api samprapaśyañ; jagāma vegāt pitṛtulyavegaḥ/ ādityapatham āśritya jagāma sa gataśramaḥ, sa dadarśa hariśreṣṭho himavantam nagottamam/ nānāprasravaṇopetaḥ bahukamḍaranirjharam, śvetābhṛacayasaṃkāśaiḥ śikharaiś cārudaśanaiḥ/* Veeraanjaneya's momentum and velocity was truly like his inheritance from his father Vayu Deva, swiftly crossing parvatas, birds, sarovaraas, rivers, nagaris, samruddha jaanapadas, and so on. Veera Hanuman was also like of his father's parakrama vegashaali followed Surya maarga and like Surya Vayus never tired too. Remembering the valuable words of Jambavan; he got quick glimpses of Himalaya ranges, deep caves, shikharas shrouded by clouds, the prakrita soundarya of green tall vrishas and bushes and reached there comfortably. *sa tam samāsādy mahānagendram; atipravṛddhottamaghoraśṛṅgam, dadarśa puṇyāni mahāśramāni; surarṣisaṃghottamasevitāni/ sa brahmakośam rajatālayam ca; śakrālayam rudraśarapramokṣam,/*

*hayānanam brahmaśiraś ca dīptam; dadarśa vaivasvata kimkarāṁś ca/ vajrālayam vaiśvaraṇālayam ca; sūryaprabham sūryanibandhanam ca, brahmāsanam śamkarakārmukam ca; dadarśa nābhim ca vasum̐dharāyāḥ/ kailāsam agryam himavacchilām ca; tathar̥ṣabham kāñcanaśailam agryam/* This Maha Pravata Raja shikharas were glittering like gold and Anjaneya notices parama pavitra ashramas where devarshi samudaayaas reside with rising flames of homa prakriyas. It was on that sprawling mountain range is stated as that of Hiranyagarbha Brahma Bhagavan's 'nivasa sthaana' as his alternate 'rajatanaabhi sthaana' and Indra bhavana too. It was also believed as the very place from where Rudra Deva released his mighty arrow against Tripuraasuraas, also the vaasa sthaana of Bhagavan Hayagriva abd Yama Raja Sevaka nivasa too. Hanuman also witnessed passingly the glimpses of the nivaasa sthaanaas of Agni Deva, Kubera, Dwaadsha Suryas too as also of the places of Chaturmukha Brahma, Shiva Dhanush, Vasundhara naabhi sthaanaas too. Then Veeranjaneya was able to spot out Kailaasha Parvata, Himalaya Shila, Shiva vaahana vrishasha and suvarnamaya Rishabha Parvata. *sa dīptasarvauśadhisampradīptam; dadarśa sarvauśadhiparvatendram/ sa tam samikṣyānalaraśmidīptam; viśiṣṁye vāsavadūtasūnuḥ, āplutya tam cauśadhiparvatendram; tatrauśadhīnām vicayam cakāra/ sa yojanasahasrāṇi samatītya mahākapiḥ, divyauśadhidharam śailam vyacaran mārūtātmajaḥ/ sa parvatān vṛkṣagaṇān sarāṁsi; nadīḥ taṭākāṇi purottamāni, sphītāñjanāṁś tām api samprapaśyaṁ; jagāma vegāt pitṛtulyavegaḥ/* Then Maha - Kapi readily spotted the flashes of dazzle and sparckle of mahoshadhis. He saw the 'agniraashi samaana parvata' and was greatly surprised and jumped off once at the parvata raja and looked for the afore mentioned divoushadhis by Jambavaan. But, having noted that the mountain top was of sprawling saharra yojanas and was unable to distinguish the specific aoushadhis. *sa tā mahātmā hanumān apaśyaṁś; cukopa kopāc ca bhṛṣam nanāda, amṛṣyamāṇo 'gninikāśacakṣur; mahīdharendram tam uvāca vākyam/ kim etad evaṁ suvinīcitam te; yad rāghave nāsi kṛtānukampaḥ, paśyādya madbāhubalābhibhūto; vikīrṇam ātmānam atho nagendra/ sa tasya śṛṅgam sanagam sanāgam; sakāñcanam dhātusahasra - juṣṭam, vikīrṇakūṭam calitāgrasānum; pragrhya vegāt sahasonmamātha/ sa tam samutpātya kham utpapāta; vitrāsyā lokān sasurān surendrān, samstūyamānaḥ khacarair anekair; jagāma vegād garuḍogravīryaḥ/* As it was not possible to do so, Hanuman was frustrated and got angry and made simhagarjanas and with his red looks addressed the parvata raja. 'Nagendra! You seem not to cooperate for the revivl of Shri Rama Lakshmanas who are indeed the yuga purushas. Now get ready to test my 'baahu bala'. Having asserted so, Veera Hanuman held the Maha Parvata Shikhara along with all the dhaatus intact yet with maha vrikshas, elephants and so on and pulled it out with his unimaginable physical grit and grip as the samasta loka vaasis were frightened having been taken aback bewildered and flew off like Garuda Deva as all the celestial beings shovered praises on the Vayu putra's daring escapade. *sa bhāskarādhvānam anuprapannas; tad bhāskarābham śikharam pragrhya, babhau tadā bhāskarasamnikāśo; raveḥ samīpe pratibhāskarābhaḥ/* Following the Surya Marga, like Surya Himself, Pavana Putra lifed the Sanjeevani Parvata right on his massive shoulders. Then Hanuman too was looking like one parvata carrying another parvata. *tam vānarāḥ prekṣya tadā vineduḥ; sa tām api prekṣya mudā nanāda, teṣāṁ samudghuṣṭaravaṁ niśamya; laṅkālayā bhīmataram vineduḥ/* Awaiting long all throught the night for the arrival of Anjaneya, the desperate Vaanara Bhalluka Sena especially the stalwarts like Sugriva-Angada-Jambavaan- Vishishana were overwhelmed the Parvata samaana Veeraanjaneya having placed the Mahoshadhi Parvata with the Mrita Sanjeevani and the other herbal plants to revive Rama Lakskmanas lying unconscious overnight. *tato mahātmā nipapāta tasmiñ; śailottame vānarasainya - madhye, haryuttamebhyaḥ śirasābhivādyā; vibhīṣaṇam tatra ca sasvaje saḥ/ tām apy ubhau mānuṣarājaputrau; tam gandham āghrāya mahauśadhīnām, babhūvatus tatra tadā viśalyāy; uttasthur anye ca haripravīrāḥ/ tato harir gandhavahātmajas tu; tam ośadhīśailam udagravīryaḥ, nināya vegād*

*dhimavantam eva; punaś ca rāmeṇa samājagāma*/Then Hanuman placed the Mahoushadhi Parvata atop Trikuta Parvata where Vaanara Bhalluks Veeraas were anxiously awaiting all through the night, greeted Jambavan, Vibhishana and Vaanara pramuhkas who were truly enraptured and mesmerised with such inexpressible and overwhelming feat of the hero and embraced the outstanding Vanara of eternal fame. Then they had all got collected the ‘murchita dehas’ of Rama Lakshmanas and applied the ‘sugandha vilepana’ and in seconds and minutes, Rama Lakshmanas stood up erect and soon enough, the ‘maantrika baanaas’ were removed as of normal physiques. Then Prachanda Pavana Kumaara Hanuman gave a massive thrust and lashed off the Mahoushadhi Parvataa to reach back to the Himaalayan Range.]

### **Shri Krishnaavataara**

*Vandey Krishnam Gunaateetam Param Brahmaachutam yatah/ Aavirbhu Bhuvah Prakruthi Brahma Vishni Shivaadayah/* (I greet Para Brahma Vaasudeva who is all pervading and everlasting from who had emerged Prakriti Maya, as also Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and other Devas).

#### Exerpts from Brahma Vaivārtha Purana

##### Shri Krishna ‘Stuti’ and ‘Kavacha’

*Vandey tam Paramaataanam Sarva Kaarana Kaaranam, Vinaa yena shavaah sarveyh praanino jagateetaley/ Nirliptam Saakshi rupam cha Sarveshaam sarva karmasu, Vidyaamaanam na drushtam cha Sarveh Sarvatra sarvadaa/ Yena Srashtaacha Prakritih Sarvaadhara Paraatparaa, Brahma Vishnu Shivaa deenaam Prasuryaa Trigunaatmikaa/ Jagatsrashtaaswayam Brahmaa niyato yasya sevayaa,*

*Paataa Vishnushcha Jagataam Samhartaam Shankarah swayam/ Dhyayantey yam Suraah Sarvey Munayo Manavastathaa, Sidhhaascha yoginah Santah Prakriyeh param/ Saakaaramcha Niraakaaram Param Swecchhaamayam Vibhum, Varam Varenyam Varadam Varaaham Vara kaaranam/ Tapah phalam Tapo-beejam tapasaamcha phalapradam, Swayam Tapah Swarupam cha Sarva rupamcha sarvatah/ Sarvaadhaaram Sarva beejam karma tatkarmanaa phalam, tesaamcha Phaladaataaram tadbeeja kshaya kaaranam/ Swayam tejah swarupam cha Bhakta –anugraha vighram, Sevaadhyaanam na ghatatey Bhaktaanaam Vighram binaa/Tat tejo mandalaakaaram Suryakoti samaprabham, Ateeva Karmayeeyam cha Rupam tatra manoharam/Naveena neerada Shyaamam Sharatpankaja lochanam, Sharad paavarna Chandraasyameeshad bhaaswadaasya samanvitam/ Koti kandarpa laavanyam leelaadhaama manoharam, chandanokshita saavargam Ratna bhushitabhushitam/ Dwibhujam Muraleehastam Peetakousheya vaasasam, Kishora vayasam Shaantam Raadhaakantamanantakam/ Gopaanganaa parivrutam kutrachinnirjaney vaney, Kutrachitraasamadhyastham Raadhayaa parisevitam/ Kutrachid Gopavesham cha veshtitam Gopabaalakaih, Shatashringaachalotkrushtey Ramye viridaavaney vaney/ Nikaram Kaamadhenunaam rakshatam shishurupinam, Golokey Virajaateerey Paarijaata vaney Vaney/ Venum kvanaantam madhuram gopi-sammoha kaaranam, Niraamaey cha Vaikunthey kutrichiccha chaturbhujam/Lakshmi kaantam paarshadaisha sevitam cha Chaturbhujaiih, kutrachit Swaamsha rupena Jagataam paalanaayacha/ Swetadweeey Vishnu rupam padmayaa parisevitam, Kutrachit swaamsha kalayaa Brahmaandey Brahma rupinam/ Shiva swarupam Shivadam Saamshena shivarupinam, Swaatmanah Shodashaamshena Sarva -adhaaram Paraatparam/ Swayam Maha Viraadrupam Vishvoghnam yasya lomasu, Leelaayaa Swaamshakalayaa jagataam paalanaaya cha/ Naanaavataaram Vibhrantam beejam tesaam sanaatanam, Vaantam Krutrachit santam yoginaam*

*hridaye sataam/ Praana rupam Praaninaam cha Paramaatmaana meeswaram,tam cha  
stutomashaktaamabalaa Nirgunam Vibhum/ Nirlakshyam cha nireehamcha saaram Vangmanasoparam,  
yam stotumakshayonantah Sahasravadanena cha/Panchavaktraschaturvaktro Gajavaktrah Shadaanana,  
yam stotum na kshamaa Maayaa Mohitaa yaya Maayaa/Yam stotum na kshamaa Shrischa Jadibhuta  
Saraswati, Vedaa na Shaktaa yam stotum ko vaa Vidwamscha Vedavit/ Kim stoumi tamaneeham cha  
shokaartaa stree Paraatparum/*

( I salute Paramaatma who is the Cause of Causes, without whom the whole World and its inhabitants are non-existent as he is the under-current and the Evidence of each and every activity of all Beings; he is the fulcrum of the Universe and the Creation of Tri-Gunaatmika Prakriti who in turn is the Creator of every thing including Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva entrusted with their own activities of Srishti, Palana and Samharana; She is also the Creator of all Devatas, Manus, Siddhaas, Yogis and Saints who are eternally engaged in the devotion of that Paramatma who is far above the Prakriti; that Paramatma who has Visible and at the same time Invisible, who is 'Aakara' or possessive of Form, yet 'Naraakaara' or without Form; who is the boon, the boon-giver, the reason of giving a boon; the seed, the plant, the tree, the fruit and the enjoyer of the fruit, the taste of the fruit as also the destroyer of the fruit. He is a huge fund of Tejas (radiance) but to enable devotees take various Forms, Names, Typical Appearances, and Features. Specified Boons are expected from the Bhaktas like good progeny, knowledge, powers, wealth, good health, fame, or Salvation and indeed he is the instant Provider. He is an Epithet of Radiance with unimaginable shine of crores of Suryas; his Rupa is readily attractive like crores of Kandarapas with the complexion of blue sky with Sharad season's lotus-like eyes; he has a physique smeared with Sandalwood paste all over and ornamented with jewellery and fresh flower garlands full of intoxicating fragrance; with high shoulders wearing scented and sift silks with a Murali in hands full of youthful vigour in the company of Radhaakanta and countless of Gopikas and Gopabalas; visualised sometimes in the Form of a Bala Gopala who did the miracle of lifting the Govardhana mountain with his little finger; some times in the most charming Brindavana forests pressing his tender fingers to produce the celestial music of flute leaning on a tree with crossed legs; some other times in yoga nidra while Devi Lakshmi was pressing his tender feet on the Sesha Nag's bed of coiled softness; yet other times in the Form of Vishnu with four arms adorned with shankha, chakra, gada and Padma while Devas and Sages were singing praiseful hymns and rhythmic utterances of Veda Mantras; while assuming the Swarupa of Parana Shiva at the Shiva dhaama; like a Brahma as the Creator of the 'Charaachara Jagat' and as the Veda Swarupa outlining virtues and their practices and recognising the sublimity of the Unique Paramatma; and as the Virat Swarupa with the Universe within him as the make-believe kaleidoscope with endless variations who is at once a reality but a fantasy full of Maya that is visible yet invisible; legible yet illegible; distinct yet amorphous! Devi Malavati finally said that it would never be possible to gauge what Paramatma was all about, even as Tri Murtis failed in defining him/her/it / and this or that or other! Pancha mukha Maha Deva, Chaturmukha Brahma, Gajaanana Ganesha, Shadaanana Kartikeya, Maya herself lost her way in seeking to define Krishna Deva; Lakshmi and Saraswati made determined efforts but in vain; when such was the reality, a grief-stricken helpless woman like Malavati could only betray her pettiness to define that Maha Shakti called Paramatma!).

#### Brahmanda naamaka Krishna Kavacha:

Brahma Deva requested Shri Krishna to impart the most sacred 'Kavacha' (Shield) to Parama Shiva, Dharma and himself. Shri Krishna told all the three:

Shri Krishna told Brahma, Maheswara and Dharma that he was imparting the highly unattainable and confidential Krishna Kavacha to them, but beware, this Mantra should not be given away in a casual and careless manner since this was a protector to me and whatever power is in me is absorbed in the Kavacha too! Brahma! you should hold this Kavacha and perform Srishti of Three Lokas with the status of Vidhata; Shambho! you too grasp the Kavacha and execute the deed of Destruction and enjoy the same Shakti as my own; Dharma! You too cling to this powerful Kavacha and perform the deed of a 'Karma Saakshi' or an Evidence of all that would happen in the Universe. All three of you do enjoy my confidence and be the beneficiaries of my blessings..

For this Brahmanda paavana Kavacha, Swayam Shrihari himself is Rishi, Gayatriis Chhanda, I, Shri Krishna, am the Devata and am authorising the following Kavacha to secure Dharma, Artha, Kaama and Moksha; this should be recited three lakh times to enable 'Siddhi' (to fructify). Those who fulfil this Kavacha-by reciting it three lakh times and attain Siddhi-would obtain 'Tejas', 'Yoga', 'Jnaana' and 'Bala-paraakrama' as well as in my own case; May 'Omkara' save my head and my greetings saying *Namo Rameswaraaya* secure my fore-head; may my reverence saying *Namo Radheswaraya* protect both of my eyes. Let the shabda *Krishna* govern my ears; let *HeyHarey* shelter my nose; let the *Swaha* mantra save any problem to my tongue; let *Krishnaaya swaaha* accord my well being; let the 'Shodashaakshra' Mantra not create any hardship to my throat; *hreem Krishnaaya namah* should provide safety to my face; the Mantra *Kleem Krishnaaya namah* should guard my both hands; let the Ashtaakshari Mantra *Namo Gopaangeswaraaya* guard my teeth and mouth; let this mantra : *Om Namoh Bhagavatey Raasa mandale - shaa Swaahaa* : Let the Raasa Mandala safeguard my chest by Shri Krishna; *Yem Krishnaaya Swaahaa* : Let this Mantra save any problem to my ears; *Om Vishnavey Swaaha* : Let this Mantra protect my 'Asthipanjara'; *Om Haraye namah* : Let the Mantra shield my body-back and feet; *Om Govardhanoddhaaraya Swaaha* : May Shri Krishna provide shelter to my entire body .Let me be safeguarded by Shri Krishna from the East, by Madhava in the Agneya side, Gopeswara in the Southern side; Nandanandana in the Nirutyakona, Govinda on the western front; Raadhike -swara in the Vayavyakona, Rameswara on the Northern side, Bhagavan Achyuta in the Ishaana kona and let Narayana look after my welfare from all the sides). Shri Krishna said: 'Brahma! This Parama Kavacha for your total protection and is as good as my own Existence. This Kavacha bestows the Punya of performing Ashwamedha and Vajapeya Yagnas and should be worn with external and internal purity.

Mahalakshmi: her exit from Swarga and restoration, and Puja Vidhana  
( 'Shodashopacharas' and 'Stuti' by Indra included)

Parabrahma Paramatma divided himself into two Bhagavans viz. Shri Krishna and Vishnu at the beginning of 'Srishti'. Paramatma also divided into two Devis; from his right side was manifested Devi Radha and from the left Maha Lakshmi. Krishna and Radha resided in 'Goloka' while Vishnu and Lakshmi resided in Vaikuntha. Both Krishna and Vishnu as well as their Consorts were equal in their 'Amshas' traits in terms of Form, Profile, complexion, radiance, fame, dresses, adornments, Gunas, comprehension, voice, gait, morale and psychology, excepting Krishna was with two hands and Narayana with two hands. 'Maha Lakshmi' is called like wise as she is the supreme leader of womanhood representing idealism, virtue, grace, kindness, and all that is propitious and auspicious. She is called 'Swarga Lakshmi' as she is the Archetype of Wealth, Prosperity, and Magnificence. She is 'Rajya Lakshmi' standing for the Excellence of Royalty and Opulence; 'Griha Lakshmi' worshipped in each and every household and the symbol of patience, service, generosity, fertility, devotion and practical wisdom of all 'Grihinis'. In fact, she is not confined to only Ashta Lakshmis viz. Adi Lakshmi, Dhanya Lakshmi,

Dhairya Lakshmi, Gaja Lakshmi, Santana Lakshmi, Vijaya Lakshmi, Vidya Lakshmi and Dhana Lakshmi, but characterizes several good aspects like Arogya Lakshmi, Shri Lakshmi, Shobha Lakshmi, Shubha Lakshmi, Rama, Indira, Chakrika, Kamalika, Kalyani, Vaishnavi, Narayani, Shri Devi, Jalaja, Madhavi, Aishwearya, Padma Priya, Padmakshi, Ulka Vahini and so on. She is present in all materials of significance like Bhushanas, Precious metals and Nava Ratnas, flowers, fruits, water, Kings and Queens, Homes, Palaces, Dhanyas, Vastras, Sacred Places, Deva Pratimas, Mangala Kalashas, Manikyas, Chandana and other fragrances, Dhanya, Vidya-Arogya and Puja related items etc. At the very first, Bhagavan Vishnu performed worship to Maha Lakshmi at Vaikuntha, followed by Brahma, Parama Shiva, Swayambhu Manu, Indra and Devas, Gandharvas, Nagas and Rishis and Munis. Brahma worshipped on Bhadrapada Shuka Ashtami. Vishnu initiated Pujas on Chaitra, Pousha, and Bhadrapada Tuesdays and Fridays.

Durvasa Muni was on way to Kailasha from Vaikuntha en route Swarga; on way he met Indra, blessed him and did the rare honour of gifting a Parijata flower garland which Vishnu presented to the Muni. Out of arrogance, Indra placed the garland around the neck of 'Iraavata'-the Elephant Carrier of Indra! The infuriated Muni felt that this sacrilegious and irreverent act of Indra was not only indicative of disrespect for himself but also an act of unpardonable profanity to Bhagavan Vishnu! He therefore cursed Indra saying that an invaluable gift rewarded to Durvasa by Narayana was parted with and out of consideration to Indra who ignored its inherent worth. Hence, the root cause of Lakshmi, who was the Form of Prosperity, should abandon Swarga forth with. He further said that as a Bhakta of Narayana, he had the least fear for Brahma or Shiva; in fact the head of the elephant which wore the Parajata garland should be sliced off and eventually replace Ganesha's head! With this furious curse of Durvasa, Indra came to senses and realised his unpardonable folly and said: *Aishwaryam vipadaam beejam jnaana pracchanya kaaranam, Muktimargargalam daadhyam Hari bhakti vyavasaayikam/ Janma mrityu jaraa roga shoka bheetaamkuram Param, Sampatthi timiraandham cha Mukti maarga na pashyati/* Aishwaryam or Great Prosperity is the seed from which difficulties arise, suppressing Gyan or Wisdom and the barrier of Mukti Marga creating obstacles all through the way of Hari- Bhakti. Opulence happens to be the seedling to Janma /Birth, Mrityu/ Death, Jara / Old Age, Shoka / grief and Anurag / Desire. It is due to wealth that obstacles and blindness to 'Mukti Marga' are caused). By so saying, Indra fell on Sage Durvasa's feet with subdued ego and repentance. Muni Durvasa pardoned Indra and advised Deva Guru to be involved to perform worship to Shri Krishna. Brihaspati gave him encouragement and said that virtuous and brave persons should not get disheartened on occasions like this; 'Sampatti' or fortune and 'Vipatti' or complex trouble would occur due to the Karma phala of previous births. Deva Guru further said: *Maha vipattow samsaarey yah smaren Madhusudanam, Vipattow tasya Sampattir bhavedyvidityaaha Shankarah/* (A person who remembers the name of Madhusudana at the time of hardship would definitely find a way out from Vipatti to Sampatti according to Shankara). Later on Deva Guru and Indra approached Brahma Deva who in turn took Indra and Devas to Vaikuntha. Bhagavan Vishnu stated that just as the whole Universe was under his control, he himself was bound by what his Bhaktaas dictated to him! Indeed, those who ignored Vishnu, my devotee Lakshmi too would leave that Place at once! After all, Maha Muni Durvasa of Shankara Deva's Amsa was Vishnu's parama Bhakta and his anger was indeed justified! As his shraddha in Govinda was unbreakable, the Muni cursed Indra for his unpardonable blunder. Indeed Lakshmi would instantly leave-and so would Vishnu- that house where there was no sound of 'Shankha' (Conchshell), nor where a Tulasi shrub was worshipped; nor where Shankara Puja was executed, and where Brahmanas were not invited to take food. Bhagavan Vishnu further said that Devi Lakshmi would

not stay in such residences where Vishnu Bhaktas were criticised, where food was served on Ekadashis and Janmashtamis; where unmarried girls of Devi's names were sold or purchased; where guests were not entertained for food or stay; where persons eat food before Sunrise; where persons sleep during the days or those who sleep naked; those Brahmanas who never performed Vratas, fastings, Sandhya vandanas and Vishnu pujas; and where there was 'Jeeva himsa' or Cruelty of human or other beings of any description. Contrarily, Lakshmi would stay permanently in those houses where there are discussions, Bhagavat Kirtanas, singings of hymns, Shankha dhwanis, pujas of Shalagramas and Tulasi, Pujas of Devas and Devis, Devatarchanas and Naivedyas, renderings of Mantras and veneration of Deva Bhaktas, Godmen, Brahmanas and Sumangalis. Having explained on these lines, Vishnu advised Devi Lakshmi to stay in Ksheera Samudra till Devas and Danavas did 'Amrita Manthana' or churning of the Ocean. Soon thereafter, the Sagara Manthana commenced with Mandara Mountain as 'kaashtha' or the Churning rod; Kurmavata / the incarnation of Bhagavan Vishnu as Tortoise to balance the Mountain, Sesha Naaga as the rope with which to rotate the 'kaashtha', and Devas and Danavas as the Churning Parties. As result of the 'Manthana', first emerged 'Halahala' (the massive poisonous flames) which was devoured by Maha Deva and kept in his throat and then surfaced elephant Iravata, Uchhaishvara horse, Sudarshana Chakra, Koustubha Mani, Chandra and Devi Lakshmi whereafter emerged Dhanvantari and Amrit. Devi Lakshmi adorned Vishnu with Vanamali when Vishnu worshipped her, followed by Maha Deva, Brahma, Indra and Devatas when Durvasa's curse to Indra was cleared and Lakshmi's 'Amsha' reappeared as Swarga Lakshmi.

#### Lakshmi Puja by Indra - 'shodashopacharaas' (Sixteen Services) and 'Stuti'

An ever grateful Indra to Devi Lashmi then performed formal worship to the restored Swarga Lakshmi as follows commenced with Dhyana: 'Parama Puja Bhagavati Maha Lakshmi seated on a thousand petalled Lotus illuminated with the lustre of countless Chandras! We are mesmerised to vision your stunning and gorgeous Rupa like that of molten gold wearing silks of extraordinary grace and charismatic smile as the Embodiment of Affluence and Propitiousness. May we deserve the extraordinary fortune of worshipping you in person?'

*Asanam: Amulya Ratna saaram cha nirmitam Vishwakarmanaa, Pashyaani prakrush -taani varaani durlabhaani cha, Aasaanamcha vichitram cha Maha Lakshmi pragruhnataam/ (Bhagavati Maha Lakshmi! May I offer in your service an invaluable and distinguished seat made of Choicest Jewels specially designed and crafted by Vishwakarma, the Celestial Designer!) Paadyam: Shuddham Gangodakamidam Sarva Vanditameepsitam, Paapedhma vahni rupam cha gruhyataam Kamalaalay/*

(Kamalaalaye! This pure and hallowed Ganga water is borne by the heads of one and all as the same is endeared and revered by them; this is considered as Agni Swarupa which burns off all kinds of sins; do kindly accept it to wash your sacred feet); Arghyam: Pushpa chandana durvaadi samyuktam Jaahnaveejalam, Shankha garbhastitam shuddham gruhnataam Padma vaasini/( Padmavaasini! This Ganga water in a Shankha along with flowers, Chandana, Durva and such other consecrated material is offered to you as a welcome drink) Sugandhi Pushpa thailam: Sugandhi pushpa thailam cha Sugandhaamalaki phalam, Deha Soundrya beejam cha gruhnataam Shri Harey Priye! (Shri Hari Priye! This fragrant oil extracted from Amala fruit is a pleasing application to enrich physical beauty and skin smoothening; do please allow it to be used as a bathing device); Dhoop :Vriksha niryaa swarupam cha Gandhadravyaadi samyutam, Shri Krishna kaantey dhupam cha pavitram prati-guhyataam/(Shri Krishna

Kantey! I proffer ‘dhoop’ or the aromatic smoke of incense material mixed with a vegetable gum; do kindly accept this smoke offered with sanctity); Chandan: Malayaachala sambhutam vriksha saaram manoharam, Sugandha yuktam sukhadam Chandanam Devi gruhnataam/ (Devi! this chandana ‘gandha’ which originated from the chandana tree on Malaya mountain is not only sweet-smelling but also provider of coolness; I request you to apply on your body to give soothing effect); Deepam: Jagacchasthuh swarupam cha dhwaanta pradhwansa kaaranam, Pradeepam shuddha rupam cha gruhyataam Parameswari/ (Parameswari! Kindly allow this Sacred Light which is the vision of eyes, remover of darkness and a symbol of Purity to please you and light the surroundings); Naivedya: Naanopahaara rupam cha nanaa rasa samanvitam, Naanaa swaadukaram chaiva Naivedyam Pratigruhnataam/ (Devi! I am tendering this ‘Naivedya’ or the offering of various eats and juices which have been prepared with taste and flavor; I should be obliged of these snacks are consumed to please me). Anna: Annam Brahma swarupam cha Pranarakshana kaaranam, Tushtidam Pushtidam chaiva Devyaannam pratigruhyataam/ (Devi! Annam/ food is considered to be of Brahma Swarupa; food is also a life saving material which ensures eating-satisfaction and enhances strength in the natural way; I request you to taste this food); Kheer: Shaalyakshata supakvam cha sharkaraagavya samyutam suswaadu samanoharam, Swaadu yuktam Maha -Lakshmi Paramaannam Pratigruhyataam/ (Maha Lakshmi! This Kheer or cooked rice with sugar and ghee is specially prepared for your taste; please taste this preparation); Swastika Mishtaanna: Shakaraa gavya pakvam cha suswaadu sumanoharam, Mayaa niveditam LakshmiSwaastikam pratigruhnataam/ (Lakshmi! This is ‘Mrishta- anna’/Sweet rice called Swastika which is a mix of sugar and ghee in cooked rice which is being offered as a Naivedya to you for your kind acceptance). Phala: Naanaa vidhani ramyaani pakkvaani cha phalaanicha, Swaaduyuktaani Kamaley gruhyataam phaladaani cha/ (Devi Kamaley! These are various fruits ripe for eating, which are not only sweet luscious but also desire-fulfilling; may I present these juicy fruits for approval). Dughdha: Surabhistana sambhutam swaadu sumanoharam, Martra -amrutam sugavyam cha gruhnnataamachyuta priye/ (Achyuta Priye! This pure milk which is fresh from Surabhi cow’s udder is meant for Martyaloka residents and is tasty like ambrosia; I beseech you to taste it and gratify me!) Gud / Jaggery: Suswaada rasa samyuktamikshu vriksha samudbhavam, Agnipakkamati swaadu gudam cha prati- guhyataam/ (Devi! this jaggery has been made of sugarcane juice heated up and solidified; indeed this is very sweet and fresh; please savour this). Mrishtaanna: Yava godhuma sashyaanaam churna renu samudbhavam, Supakvam guda gavyaaktam Mrishtaannam Devi gruhyataam/ (Devi! This is a sweet preparation made of wheat and ‘Yava’ grains-mix, nicely cooked with jaggery and ghee which too is very appetizing for favour of your taste); Pishtak: Shasyachurnodbhavam pakkvam Swastikaadi samanvitam, Mayaa niveditam DeviPishtakam pratigruhyataam/ (Devi! This pishtak made of rice powder with Swastika and other signs is a fried and crisp savoury for your taste); Eik/ Sugar cane: Paarthivo vriksha bhedascha vividha dravya kaaranam, Suswaadurasa samyutam Eikshuscha pratigruhyatam/ (Devi! This sugar cane is an extraordinary tree on Earth and is a source of several by products like jaggery, sugar and simple juice from raw cane; this juice is indeed very sweet and succulent; it is my prayer that you may drink up this juice!); Vyanjan: Sheeta vaayu pradam chaiva daahey cha sukhadam param, Kamaley! Gruhyataam chedam vyajanam shweta chaamaram/ (Kamaley! In this stuffy climate, a white ‘chamara’/ hand fan would certainly bring relief and happiness; may I serve you with ‘Vyanjana’ for your comfort); Taamboola: Taambulamcha varam ramyam karpuraadi suvaasitam, Jihwaa jaadyacchedakaram Taamboolam Devi gruhyataam/ (Devi! This ‘Taamboola’ made of tender betel leaves and fragrant materials like ‘karpura’/ camphor and other scented edible digestibles would provide freshness and good feeling to your tongue and mouth; may I tender this to you); Jala: Suvaasitam sheetalamcha pipaasaa naashakaaranam, Jagajjevaa rupamcha jeevanam Devi

gruhyataam/ (Devi! To quench thirst, there is nothing like very cold, nicely scented and life-reviving water; do please accept this as well); Maalya: Deha soundarya bijam cha sadaa Shobha vivardhanam, Kaarpaasaja cha krumijam vasanam Devi gruhyataam/ (Devi! The bouquets and garlands made of a wide variety of fresh and perfumed seasonal flowers provide invaluable joy to the wearers of these as also enhance beauty and grace to them; it is my privilege and unique opportunity to proffer these flowers to you); Achamaneeya: Punya tirthakam chaiva Vishuddham Suddhidam sadaa, Grhnateem Krishna Kaantey twam ramyamaachaneeyakam/ ( Krishna Kaantey! This 'Tirtha jala' which is sanctified on its own as also purify others is highly worthy of 'Achamaneeya'; do accept the same); Shayya: Ratnasaaraadi nirmaanam pushpachandana samyuttm, Ratnabhusha bhushaadhyam sutalpam Devi gruhnnataam/

This invaluable and highly comfortable bed with soft cotton and silk clothing, which is bejewelled and treated with fresh and intoxicating flowers and fragrances, is tendered to you Devi! please do accept this for your relaxation); Apurva Dravya: Yadyad dravyamapurvam cha Prithivyaapi durlabham, Deva bhushaarbhogyam cha taddrayam Devi gruhnnataam/ (Devi! Not only these but whatever invaluable and even impossible materials are available on Earth or elsewhere that are worthy of adorning your body would be available at your nod of head!) After performing the 'Shodashopa -charaas' thus, Indra pleased Devi Lakshmi with the recital of the Moola Mantras which were taught to him by Brahma Deva: These Mantras include: 'Shri Beeja' (Shreem), 'Maya Beeja' (Hreem), 'Kama Beeja' (Kleem), and 'Vani Beeja' (Aim), followed by the word 'Kamalavaasinyai' and further adding the word 'Swaahaa'; the Mantrarajaa would be : SHREEM HREEM KLEEM AIM KAMALAVAASINYAI SWAAHAA/ Kubera recited this Mantra for long time to Devi Lakshmi and attained unprecedented 'Aishwarya' (Wealth); also Daksha Savarni Manu secured unique Sovereignty of 'Sapta Dwipas'. As Bhagavati Maha Lakshmi gave 'darshan' (vision) to Indra Deva, he was overtaken by extreme emotion and praised her as follows:

#### Indra 'Stuti' to Devi Lakshmi

*Om Namō Maha Lakshmyai/  
Om Namah Kamala vaasinyai Naraayanyai Namō Namah,  
Krishnapriyayai Suraaryai Padmaayai cha Namō Namah/  
Padmapakshetranaayai cha Padmaasyaayai Namō Namah,  
Padmaasanaayai Padmasanaayai Padminyai Vaishnavyai cha Namō Namah/  
Sarasampatsarwarupaayai Sarva daatryai Namō Namah,  
Sukhadaayai Moksadaayai Siddhidaayai Namō Namah/  
Haribhakti pradaatryai cha Harshadaatryai Namō Namah,  
Krishna vakshahsthaalaayai cha Krishneyshaayai Namō Namah/  
Krishna shobha swarupayai ratna padmey cha shobhaney,  
Samapattadhishthaatru Devyai Maha Devyai Namō Namah/  
Shasyaadhishthaatru Devyai Shasyaayai cha Namō Namah,  
Namō Buddhiswarupayai Buddhidaayai Namō Namah/  
Vaikunthey yaa Mahaalakshmeeryaa Lakshmeeh ksheerasaagarey,  
Swarga Lakshmeerindra gehey Rajyalakshmeernupaalaye/  
Grihalakshmischa grihaanaam gehey cha Griha Devataa,  
Surabhih saa gavaam Maataa Dakshinaa Yajnakaaminee/  
Aditirdeva mataa twam Kamalaa Kamalaalaye,  
Swaahaa twam cha Havirdaaney Kaavya daavey Swadhaa smrutaa/  
Twam hi Vishnuswarupaa cha Sarvadhaaraa Vasundharaa,  
Shuddha Satwa Swarupaa Twam Naraayanaparaayanaa/*

*Krodha himsaa varjitaa cha Varadaa cha Shubhaananaa,  
Paramaarthapradaa twam cha Haridaasyapradaa Paraa/  
Yayaa vinaa Jagatsarwam Bhasmee bhutamasaarakam,  
Jeevanmritam cha Vishvam cha Shavastulyam yayaa vinaa/  
Sarveshaam cha Paraa twam hi Sarva bandhavarupini,  
Yayaa vinaa na Sambhaashyo Baandharvair baandhavah sadaa/  
Twayaa heeno Bandhu heeno twayaa yuktah sabaandhavah,  
Dharmaartha kaama mokshaanaam twam cha Kaarana rupinee/  
Yathaa Maataa stanandhaanaam shishuunaam Shaishavey sadaa,  
Tathaa twam sarvadaa Maataa Sarveshaam Sarvarupatah/  
Maatru heenah stanaandhascha sa chejjeevati Daivatah,  
Twayaa heeno janah kopina Jeevatyeva nischitam/  
Suprasanna Swarupaa twam maam prasanna Bhavaambikey,  
Vairigrastam cha ishyam dehi mahyaam Sanaatani/  
Vayam yaavat twayaa heenaa bandhu heenascha Bhikshukaah,  
Sarava sampad viheenaascha taava Deva Haripriye/  
Raajyam dehi Shriyam dehi Balam dehi Sureswari,  
Keertim dehi Dhanam dehi Yasho Mahyaamcha dehi vai/  
Kaamamdehi Matim dehi Bhogaan dehi Haripriye,  
Jnaanam dehi Dharmam cha Sarva Soubhaagyameepsitam/  
abhaavamcha Prataapamcha Sarvaadhikaaraevacha,  
Jayam Paraakramam Yuddhey Paramaishwarya meyvacha/*

Bhagavati Kamalavaasini, Devi Narayani, my repeated greetings to you. Samsaara saara bhutaa Krishna Priya Bhagavati Padma! My innumerable greetings to you. You possess lotus eyes and lotus face, Bhagavati Maha Lakshmi! My repeated salutations to you Maha Lakshmi; you are called Padmaasana, Padmini and Devi Vaishnavi; you are also Sukha daayani, Sarva Sampadswarupini, Moksha daayani, and Siddhi daayani. You lead to the Sacred Path of dedication to Shrihari and the Provider of Happiness to those who excel in devotion to Him. My sincere salutation to you as you exist in full bloom on Krishna's chest and is therefore called as Krishna's Hridayeshwari. You are the major possessor of Krishna's Shobha or Splendour and the 'Adhisthatri' (Sovereign) of 'Sampurna Sampatti' (the Totality of Wealth) as also the Adhisthatri of 'Dhanya' (Harvest) and Dhanya Swarupa. You are the Maha Lakshmi of Vaikuntha, Lakshmi of Ksheera Sagara, Rajya Lakshmi of Kingdoms, Swarga Lakshmi in Indra's Swarga, Griha Lakshmi in households, Griha Devata, Go Lakshmi called Surabhi, Dakshina Lakshmi in Yagnaas, Aditi Maataa Lakshmi to Devas, Swaha Lakshmi at Havyapradaana at Yagnaas, and Swadha Lakshmi at the Kavya Pradaana. You are the Bhu Lakshmi, Sudha Satwa Swarupa, 'Akrodhi Swarupa', 'Ahimsa Swarupa', Varada, Sharada, Shubhaa, Paramaarthadaa and Haridaasapradaa. Without you, the entire Universe is dissipated and dead. You are the 'Bandhu Swarupa' and the Gateway to Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. The World is your milk-providing toddler and you are the ever kind Mother whose natural trait is to help with patience! Hari Priye! Till I could not vision you, I am a 'Bandhu heen', a beggar, and a pauper. Mother, grant me Rajya, Opulence, Power, Fame, Prosperity, any possession of my choice, Buddhi, Bhoga, Jnaana, Dharma, Sowbhagya, Prabhava, Pratapa, Adhikaara /Authority, Victory in battles, Parakrama and Paramaishwarya.] Those who recite the above Stuti thrice a day could retain Lakshmi for ever.

### Shri Krishna 'Leelas' and 'Mahatmya'

Highlighting the basic traits of a true Bhakta of Bhagavan Shri Krishna, Maharshi Narayana initiated his discourse to Narada Muni of 'Shri Krishna Janma Khanda' of Brahma Vaivarta Purana. He said:

*Archanam Vandanam Mantra japam Sevanameva cha, Smaranam keertanam shashvad Guna shravana meepsitam/ Nivedanam tasya Daasyam Navadhaa Bhakti lakshanam/* (Bhagavan's puja / worship, Vandana / salutations, Mantra japa / repetitive incantation of Mantras, Seva /Service, Smarana / memorising, keertana / lyric singing, Nirantara Guna shravana / constant hearing of Bhagavan's features, and Dasya bhava / sense of servitude are the traits of Bhaktas). Stating this as the consecrated prologue of the Shri Krishna Khanda, the Maharshi explained the basis of the Unique Shakti of Shri Krishna's taking a human form as an incarnation descending on Earth with the popular human name as Shri Krishna! It was at the specific prayer of Bhu Devi that 'Adharma' and 'Anyaya' were at a peak, that the Supreme Shri Krishna assumed the human form!

*[Yadaa yadaahi Dharmasya glaanir bhavati Bharata! Abhyuddhaana -madharmasya sadaatmaanam srijaamyaham/ Paritraanaaya Saadhuunaam Vinaashaaya cha dushkrutaam Dharma Samsthaapanaaya sambhavaami Yugey yugey/*

(Bhaarata! As and when Dharma is affected, I recreate myself in the form of a human being to save the Virtuous and punish the Evil and reestablish Dharma, Yuga after Yuga!) In Goloka on a day, Gopi Viraja Devi happened to be rather friendly with Shri Krishna and she was making amorous advances to the Lord. Devi Radha felt jealous and moved away from there, while Gopa Shridam sought to stop Radha to explain that Viraja was simple and innocent. Radha out of fury cursed Shridam for siding Viraja that he should become a demon on Earth. Shridam too cursed back Radha that she should be born on Earth. After cursing each other, both of them regretted. Shri Krishna gave a dispensation to Shridam that he would become an invincible Asura by name Shankha chooda and finally get killed by Shankara's Trishula to return to Goloka; Radha would be born into Vraja Bhumi in Gokula in the house of Gopa Vrishabhanu and move about freely in forests and get engaged in Raasa Lilaas along with Krishna and Viraja Devi would be born as a River and from Krishna would beget seven sons named Lavana, Ikshu, Sura, Ghrita, Dadhi, Dugdha and Jala that would be Seven Samudras eventually!

Bhudevi complains of 'Bhubhaara' (extreme sins) and Krishna's human incarnation:

As Bhu Devi was extremely distressed with the excesses being experienced by Asuras, she approached Brahma Deva and bitterly wept that it was not possible to bear the violences and overloads of Evil any longer. Brahma Deva collected all Devas and reached Kailasa where Parama Shiva, Dharma along with Shri Hari travelled to Virajaatata, Shatashringa Parvat, Raasa Mandal, Brindavan and finally landed at Goloka. As Devas were thrilled to reach the Radha Mandir which defied even the imagination of Devas and stood aside; Brahma, Shiva, Dharma and Narayana could not control their emotions to vision the Unique Nirguna Swarupa Shri Krishna and greeted him as follows:

*Varam Varennyam Varadam Varadaanaam cha Kaaranam, Kaaranam Sarva bhutaanaam tejorupam Namaamyaham/ Mangalyam Mangalaayeem cha Mangalam Mangala pradam, Samasta Mangalaadhaaram Tejorupam Namaamyaham/ Sthitam sarvatra Nirlipamaatma rupam Paraatparam, Nireehamavi-tarkyam cha Tejorupam Namaamyaham/ Sagunam Nirgunam Brahma Jyoti rupam Sanaatanam, Saakaaram cha Niraakaaram Tejorupam Namaamyaham/ Twam -anirvachaneeyam cha Vyaktamayaktamekakam, Swecchaamayam Sarva rupam Tejorupam Namaamyaham/ Gunatraya vibhaagaaya Rupatrayadharam param, Kalayaa tey Suraah Sarvey kim Jaananti Shruteyh Param/ Saraadhaaram Sarva Rupam Sarva beejamabeejakam, Sarvaantakamanantam cha Tejorupam Namaa -myaham/ Lakshyam yad Gunarupam cha varnaneeyam vichakshanaih, kim varnayaa-myalakshyam tey*

*Tejorupam Namaamyaham/ Ashareeram Vighrahavadeendriya vada-teendriyam, Yada saakshi Sarva saakshi Tejorupam Namaamyaham/Gamanaarhama –mapaadam Yada chakshuh Sarva darshanam, Hastaasya heenam yad bhoktum Tejo Rupam Namaamyaham/ Vedey nirupitam vastu santah Shataascha varnitum, Vedo nirupitam yatthatejorupam namaamyaham/Sarvesham yadaneesham yad Sarvaadi yadanaadi yat, Sarvaatmakamanaatmam yattrjorupam namaamyaham/ Aham Vidhaata Jagataa Vedaanaam Janakah Swayam, Paataa Dharmo Haro Hartaa stotum Shakto na kopiyat/ Sevayaa tawa Dharmoyam Rakshitaaram cha rakshati, Tawaajgnyaa samharta twayaakaaley nirupitey/ Nishkalipikartaaham twadpaadambhoja sevika, karminaam phala daataacha twam bhaktaanaam cha nah prabhuh/ Brahmaandey vimba sadrushaa bhutwaa vishaniyo vayam, Evam katividhaah santi theshvananteshu sevikaah/Yathaa na sankhyaa renuunaam tathaa tessaamaneeyasaam, Sarveshaam janakschesho yastotum chakah Kashamah/*

(I salute that Tejorupa Paramatma who is Vara, Varenya, Varada, Varadaayaka Kaarana; I commend that Tejorupa who is the Mangala kaari, Mangala Yogya, Mangala Rupa, Mangala Dayaka and Mangaaadhaara; I greet that Tejaswarupa who is Vidyamaan, Nirlipta, Atma Swarupa, Paraatpara, Nireeha, and Avitarkya; I pray to that Tejorupa who is Saguna, Nirguna, Sanaatana, Brahma, Jyoti Swarupa, Saakaara and also Niraakaara. I prostrate before that Tejorupa who is Anirvachaneeya, Vyakta yet Avyakta, Adwiteeya, Swechhaamaya and Sarva Rupa. Paramatma! You assume three gunas and three Swarupas but are far beyond all the Gunas and Swarupas! All the Devas are as a result of your materialisation; you are beyond the reach of ‘Shrutis’. You are the Sarvaadhara, Sarva Swarupa, Adi Karana, Swayam Kaarana rahita, Sava samhara kaara and Anta rahita. Vidwaans might be able to describe you if they could target a Lakshya, but you are Alakshya! How could I describe you as you are indescribable since you are only a Mass of Illumination! You are Figureless but yet have a Figure; ‘Indriyaa Yukta’ but yet ‘Indriyaateeta’! You are the ‘Saakshi’ or the Evidence and Substantiation of every thing, but you have no Saakshi as there is no verification possible. You may not have a pair of feet but possess the proof of the swiftness of light! You may not a pair of eyes but could vision the whole Universe in the minutest details; you may not have hands and a mouth but surely you enjoy our Naivedyas. Vidwans who possess proofs of various ‘Vastus’ mentioned in Vedas including Panchabhutas and so on, but could they provide a proof about yourself? I beseech you to reveal yourself, since you are the Saveswara who has no further Eswara; anything or anybody has a definite beginning but you no Beginning as you are the Beginning! Brahma Deva addressed the Tejorupa saying that he himself was the Creator and the Pronouncer of Vedas; Dharma Deva was the unquestioned Ruler of the Universe and Maha Deva was the unparalleled Samhara Karta; but none of us could determine much less guess as to who you are! Prabho! We three are your Bhaktas and indeed you are our Supreme Master. Brahmanda is a reflection and we are mere images. How can we indeed achieve the competence to describe you! )

As the Tri Murtis went into raptures over the vision of the Tejorupa of Shri Krishna, both Krishna and Radha granted their physical appearances. Shri Krishna replied to the sincere tributes that were made and said: *Aham praanaascha Bhaktaanaam Bhaktaah praanaa mamaapi cha, Dhyaayanti ye cha maam nityam taam smaraami divaanisham/* (I am the life of the Bhaktaas and Bhakti is my life; I am fully engrossed in the thoughts of my devotees day and night!).

Krishna’s instructions to others about various births in Krishnavatara:

There after Krishna convened a meeting of Gopas and Gopis and revealed his plans of their descending in the Vraja Bhumi under the leadership of Nandaraya and asked Devi Radha to take birth in the house of Vrishabhvanu and Kalavati. In fact, Kalavati was of Lakshmi Amsha and was the Manasi kanya of Pitaras but was cursed to be born in Bhuloka by Muni Durvasa. Then Krishna gave instructions that Lakshmi Devi should be born as Rukmini as the daughter of Vidarbha King and he would reach Kundinapuri and marry her. Parvati would be born as Maha Maya to Yashoda and Nandagopa but would be transferred to the prison where Devaki and Vasudeva would be in Kamsa's custody and after her rescue from the cruel hands of Kamsa when a celestial voice informed Kamsa that Krishna was already born and was safe some where, could join Maha Deva again. He asked various Devas and Devis to take birth in various houses of Gopas and Gopis. Some of the significant births as instructed by Krishna were: Skanda as the son of Jambavati (another wife of Krishna) who was of half Amsha of Parvati; Kamadeva as Rukmiki's son in Chhaya Rupa since Rati Devi would be born in the house of Shambarasura; Bharati would be the daughter of Banasura; Brahma would be the son of Pradyumna from Rukmini named as Aniruddha; Ananta Deva would be preserved in Devaki's garbha but would be actually born to Rohini and as he (Balarama) was transferred from one garbha to another would be called 'Samkarshan'; Kalindi would be another 'Patrani' / Chief Queen of Shri Krishna (Surya's daughter Yamuna as Kalindi); Tulasi would be Lakshmana as another Patrani; Vasudha would be Satyabhama; Sarasvati would be Shayaa; Swaha Devi would be Susheela; Ratnamala would be Sanjna the wife of Surya; from the 'Kalaas' of Lotus, there would be sixteen thousand wives of Krishna. (The eight Patranis were Rukmini, Satyabhama, Jambavati, Kalindi, Lakshmana, Bhadra, Mitravinda and Nagnajita). Krishna further instructed that Dharma Deva would be Yudhishtara, Bheem from the Amsha of Vayu Deva, Arjuna from Indra's Vamsha, Nakula and Sahadeva from the Amsha of Ashvini Kumaras, Karna from the Amsha of Surya Deva, Vidura from Yamaraja, Duryodhana from Kali, Shantanu from Samudra, Abhimanyu from Chandra, Bhishma from Vasu Devata, Vasudeva from the Amsha of Kashyapa, Devaki from Aditi, Nandagopala from Vasu, Yashoda as Vasu Patni, Draupadi from the Amsha of Lotus and would be born from Yagna Kunda, Dhrushtadyumna from Agni's Amsha, Subhadra from the Amsha of Shatarupa whose birth was from Devaki's garbha). Many other Gopas and Gopis were born from the Amshas of Devis and Devis. After Shri Krishna's instructions to reappear during the Krishna's incarnation, he was seated with Sarasvati on left and Lakshmi on his right and Radha on his chest. But Radha was unhappy for any separation from Krishna.

#### Concept of Radha-Krishna 'Tadaatmya' (Unification):

Assuring that the two entities of Radha and Krishna are one and the same, Shri Krishna explained that the entire 'Brahmanda' was divided into two parts, it would not be possible that either of the parts could exist without the other, like no fruit could emerge without a flower, no flower would exist without a tree / plant and there would have to be a seedling / seed for these, Prithvi was the foundation, Prithvi's base was Seshanaga, the latter bears the weight by Kurma, Kurma's basis was Vayu and Vayu's 'adhara' / hold was Paramatma (me that is Shri Krishna); indeed Krishna's 'Adhara Swarupa' was Mula Prakriti (that is Radha!). Shri Krishna further stated that Radha was a Sharira Rupini (Physical Entity) as also 'Trigunadhaara Swarupini'; he declared: "I am Your Soul!" If Radha is a body, Krishna is the Supreme Soul! These two Entities are just not different!

*Yathaa ksheerey cha dhaavalyam daahikaacha Hutaashaney, Bhumow gandho Jaley shailyam tathaa twayi mama sthithih/ Dhaavalya dugdhayoraikyam daahikaanalayoryathaa, Bhugandha Jalashaitya -*

*anaam naasti bhedastadhaavayoh/ Mayaa Vinaa twam nijeevaa chaadrushyoham twayaa vinaa, Twayaa vinaa Bhavam kartum naalam Sundari nischitam/ Vinaa mrudaa ghatam karthum yathaa naalam kulaalakah, Vinaa Swarnam Swarakaarolakaaram katrumakshamah/ Swayamaatmaa yathaa nityastathaa twam Prakritih Swaym, Sarava shakti samaayuktaa Sarvaadhaara Sanaatani/*

(You are my Shakti just as there is whiteness in milk, the power of thirst in Agni, Gandha Shakti in Prithvi, and the power of coolness in `water; there is thus no separation of Krishna and Shri Krishna just as the whiteness of milk, thirst of Agni, smell of Earth and coolness of water. Without Krishna, Radha cannot exist and without Radha Krishna would not! Without Radha, Creation of the Universe would be impossible and vice-versa, just as a potter could not produce pots without earth, and a goldsmith could not make ornaments without gold! Just as Krishna's Soul is permanent, Radha's soul too is never-ending; thus Radha-Krishna's perception as alive as Purusha and Prakriti are!

#### Shri Krishna Janma:

As King Kamsa was happy at the conclusion of the wedding of his sister Devaki with Vasudeva, there was an 'Akasha vani' (celestial voice) that thundered to say that Kamsa would be killed by the eighth child of the new couple. Kamsa reacted instantly and sought to kill his sister but the Dharmajna Vasudeva prevailed on him not to do so and thus a pacified Kamsa kept both his sister and brother-in-law into prison and killed six boys each year in a row. As the delivery of the seventh child was nearing, Devi Yogamaya transferred the embriyo into Rohini's garbha, even as Kamsa took ample precautions. Rohini Devi delivered Samkarshana / Balarama. When the eighth conception was confirmed, Devaki's garbha was filled up with Vayu and just at the entry time of the tenth month, Kamsa tightened the security of the gates as he was aware that the eighth child would be his killer. Even as Kamsa was lying restless in his bed awaiting instant call of the Dwarapalakas to convey the news of Devaki's delivery, little did he realise that Brahma and Devas assembled in the prison ready in position to welcome the Supreme Lord of Srishti-Sthiti and Palaya was arriving. The Dwarapalakas were lulled into stupor and the Great Grand Vision of a High Luminosity gave the first Darshan to the proud parents who were in a daze and after a quick recovery of their senses, broke down into ecstasy as the Lord spoke to Vasudeva and Devaki and revealed that in their previous birth they were Kashyapa Muni and Aditi and he bestowed them the boon of their possessing the Lord as their proud son! The rest was history that Vasudeva was directed to transfer the resplendent Child from the delivery room to Nanda-Yashoda couple across River Jamuna in Gokula, brought the latter's female child Maha Maya to the prison in Mathura of Kamsa, Kamsa's attempt to kill the child, Vasudeva and Devaki pleaded that the child was a baby but not a boy, there was an Akash Vani saying: 'You fool Kamsa! Why are trying to kill a baby without a reason; you are not aware of the peculiar ways of Vidhata! The boy who is destined to kill you has already been born and would reveal at the appropriate time.' Kamsa then spared the baby although Devaki and Vasudeva continued to be in shackles; they were indeed aware of the Truth from Shri Krishna himself during his Vision Vasudeva and Devaki prayed to Maha Maya /Parvati Devi and at the time of Rukmini's wedding to Krishna handed over Parvati to Durvasa Muni who had the Amsha of Bhagavan Shankara.

#### Shri Krishna Leelas:

On hearing a Celestial Voice again when he was in his Court, King Kamsa was alerted that Vasudeva transferred his enemy boy Krishna from Mathura to Gokula in the house of Nanda and Yashoda and

brought back Maha maya and Krishna was Narayana himself who would exterminate Kamsa for sure. Along with him, his brother Balaram too was growing in the same house! Kamsa despatched his sister **Putana** to Nanda's house on the pretext that she was a Gopa Kanya from Mathura, gained confidence of Yashoda and fed milk with her breast to which she applied poison with the plan of killing Krishna. But Bala Krishna gave such a powerful bite that she died! Yashoda and Nanda were astounded at the incident and not realising that he was Paramatma himself called Brahmanas to ward off evil eyes and took precautions that such accident would not recur. Putana in her earlier birth was the virtuous wife of King Bali called Ratnamala who prayed to Vamana Deva that her desire was to breast-feed Narayana as a child and Krishna fulfilled her desire now!

Another demon called **Trinaavarta** who suddenly arrived on the banks of Yamuna River as a whirl-wind when Yashoda put Krishna to sleep for fresh and cool air. The storm was felled even big trees and created havoc followed by darkness and in that confusion Krishna was lifted up the sky and the helpless Yashoda fainted. Bala Krishna controlled the Rakshasa by the pressure on his head of his left toe and dropped him to death to the ground with a thud and sent him to Goloka. The demon was the King of Pandyaadesha named Sahasraaksha who was once enjoying a swim in a river near Gandhamadana Mountain along his wives and even noticing the Muni Durvasa with his thousand disciples did not care to greet him with reverence and ignored him. The Muni cursed the King to become a demon; his queens were surprised at the curse to their husband and having prepared an Agni Kunda jumped into it. The King begged the Muni's clemency and the latter gave his 'Shapa vimochan' / relief from the curse when Lord Krishna's foot would touch the demon's head; as regards his queens they would be born into royal families as unwed Kanyas and Krishna would marry them.

Garga Muni performed **Nama Karana** of Krishna: in the word Krishna, 'Ka' kaara indicated Brahma Vachak; 'ru' kaara Ananta (Sesha) Vaachaka; 'sha' kara is Shiva and 'Na' kaara was Dharma vaachaka, 'A' kaara was Vishnu vaachaka and Visarga was of Nara-Narayana Artha bodhaka. Krishna would thus mean Sarva Swarupa, Saradhaara and Sarva Beeja. 'Krish' shabda is nirvana vaachaka, 'na' is moksha bodhak thus indicating the bestower of Nirvaana and moksha. Also the word 'Krish' indicated 'nischeshta' or stand still, 'na' means Bhakti and A' kata is the bestower. Bhagavan is Nishkarma Daataa or the Giver of Deeds without aiming returns. Nanda Kumara gave the following names to Krishna, viz.

*Krishnah, Peetambarah Kamsadwvansi cha Vishtara swavaah, Devakinandaah Sheeshu Yashodanandano Harih, Sanataanochoyto Vishnuh Varveshayah Sarvarupadhtuk, Saradhaarah Sarvagatih Sarava kaaran kaaranah/ Radha bandhu Raadhikatma Raadhikaajeevanah Swayam, Raadhikaasahachaari, cha Raadhaamanasapurakah/ Radhaadhano Raadhikango Raadhikaasakta maanasah, Raadhaapraano Raadhikesho Raadhikaaramanah Swayam/ Raadhikaachitta chorascha Raadhaa praanaadhikah Prabhu, Paripurnatamah Brahma Govindo Garudadhvajah, Naamaanyethaani Krishnasya shrutaani Saampraah Vraja, Janma mrityu haranyeva Raksha Nanda Shubhakshano!*

Nanda Kumara also gave the names of Balarama as Haladharah, Sankarshana, Ananta, Baladeva, Hali, Shitivaasa, Neelaambara, Musali, Revatiramana and Rohinaya. The inseperable pair of brothers was a joy to the well-wishers.

As Yashoda had gone for Yamuna Snaana, Bala Krishna consumed milk, curd and butter in the house freely along with his friends and broke lot of utensils and earthen pots. On return home Yashoda found that Krishna was responsible for the disorder and as a punishment tied him to a huge tree. Even as she got

busy with her chores in the house, she heard sounds of thud since the massive tree fell on the ground and as Yashoda rushed to the spot in the backyard, Krishna's innocent face looked up and Yashoda was told that one Deva greeted Krishna and alighted a Viman up the skies! That was **Nalakubara** the son of Kubera who became a tree as Muni Devala was disturbed of his Tapasya and received a curse awaiting Krishna's sacred touch. Apsara Rambha who was also responsible for the noise was cursed to be the wife of King and was released by Indra's hand touch at an Ashvamedha Yagna.

As Krishna entered the teens, there were a series of mishaps at Gokula while Krishna and his Gopa friends were moving about in the nearby jungles. A huge Rakshasa in the Form of a Crane called **Bakasura** and attacked Shi Krishna; he was so formidable that even the Vajrayudha of Indra made of Dadheecha Muni's backbone turned futile and Devas made 'Hahaakaar' in their battle against him in the past. Shri Krishna took the form of grass and the Asura picked it up and ate it; just as Agastya Muni digested the Asura Vataapi, Krishna emerged from Bakasura's stomach by bursting it out and thus put an end to that mighty demon. **Vrishabhasura Pralamba** attacked Krishna as he was playful with Gopa boys who were frightened but Krishna smiled and gave courage to his friends; he held the bull horns with such power of his hands the horn dropped down with gushing blood and mighty mass of Pralamba came down with a thump and died instantly. **Maha Daitya Keshi** assaulted Krishna approaching him with top speed by digging earth making frightful sounds and trying to bite Krishna with his teeth. But the physique of Krishna was so strong that the Demon's powerful teeth crumbled to dust and the Daitya died instantly. Watching the scene of Keshi's death, Devas sounded drums of victory and rained fragrant flowers in sheer relief and happiness.

Keeping in view of the frightening and frequent occurrences at Gokula, Nanda decided to shift to **Brindavana**, a newly built and well planned Nagar built by Vishwakarma which was five yojanas wide and beautiful. Gopa Vrishabhanu and Kalavati had an excellent Palace in which their daughter Radha lived in. Nandagopa and Yashoda too had a comfortable 'Bhavan' too in which Shri Krishna lived. More than these were the most charming Brindavana, the Madhu vana and the breathtaking Raasa Mandali.

One day, a playful Krishna along with a few friends roamed into the deep green forests of Yamuna banks and reached a lonely 'Sarovar' which seemed to be never frequented. As Krishna and friends discovered heaps of dead cows, Krishna entered the waters all alone. The mighty **Kalia Snake** devoured Krishna but it could not contain it and had to vomit him out. Krishna jumped up the hoods and subdued it. The Great snake fainted and other companion snakes ran helter-skelter. Kaliya's wife Surasa prayed to Krishna and begged him for Salvation. Since Krishna did not reappear for long time, the friends were greatly agitated and reached Nanda, Yashoda and Balarama. After a painfully long interval, there appeared Krishna dancing on the massive heads of the most dreadful Kaliya. The fully subdued and explained that he and his family could not travel to Yamuna River for fear of Garuda; Shri Krishna facilitated Kaliya's smooth passage out of the Kalindi since the Lord's foot prints were easily recognised by Garuda Deva. Meanwhile, Krishna's parents and in fact most of Brindavana vaasis rushed to the Sarovar, despite Balarama's assurances of Krishna's safety only to witness the joyous spectacle of Krishna dancing away on the hoods of Kalia.

As Nanda Gopa was afraid that if Indra Yagna were not performed at the Govardhana Giri, Indra would take revenge and there would be natural disasters. Shri Krishna discounted this false belief; instead there should be worship of Narayana, of the Govardhana Mountain, of Brahmanas, of cows and of Agni Deva

who were all of Narayana Swarupa. Since Krishna persuaded Nanda to perform **Govardhana Puja** instead of Indra Puja. Indra Deva became furious and punished Brindavana with mighty winds and torrential down-pours. There was ‘Ati Vrishti’, ‘Shila Vrishti’, ‘Vajra Vrishti’ and ‘Ulkaapat’. As Nanda Gopa sought to regret his action of not worshipping Indra, the confident Krishna lifted the entire Govardhana Mountain with his left hand and asked all the Brindavana Residents including men, women, children, cows and all other beings to take shelter underneath. Indra thus realised his arrogance and folly; he prayed to Shri Krishna, but more significantly Nanda Gopa and all the Residents of Brindavana were over-awed that they were all indeed so fortunate to be in the company of Paramatma himself!

As directed by Shri Krishna, Gopa boys entered Talavana and plucked fruits from the trees, knowing that **Dhenukasura** who had a Form of a donkey stayed there and even Devas failed to enter it. As expected there was a fearful braying of a donkey apparently of Dhenukasura. The Gopa boys thought that their last minutes of life had arrived and started reciting the name of ‘Krishna, Krishna’. Krishna assured them that there was no fear at all. He said that this Asura was born of Durvasa Muni’s ‘shaap’ (curse) and that he would deal with him alone and asked Balarama to take the boys away. As soon as Dhenukasura faced Krishna, the latter gave a fiery look and even Krishna’s vision was adequate to bring the memory of Asura of his past birth’s happenings. King Bali’s son Sahasika once was attracted to Apsara Tilotthama in an open garden and Tilottama too liked Sahasika. Not realising that Muni Durvasa was in serious Tapasya, the lovers were playful spoiling the Muni’s concentration and thus cursed Sahasika to take the birth of a donkey and be a cruel Daitya and that Tilottama too would be born to Banasura as Devi Usha the wife of Pradyumna. Durvasa however gave a dispensation to the Daitya Dhenkasura that the moment who would seek to attack Sri Krishna in his Human Avatar; Krishna’s sacred vision would give the realisation about his Vamana Avatara and of his father King Bali of Rasatala.

**King Kamsa** the maternal uncle of Shri Krishna, who had been overtaken by fear of death ever since a Celestial Voice cautioned that the eighth child of his sister Devaki and Vasudeva would kill him. He tried his best to have Krishna eliminated even as a child and despatched a number of Evil Powers but each time Krishna was terminating as they attempted. As a result, Kamsa was desperate and restive and one midnight got a bad dream that a frightening black widow with flowing hair, sharp teeth and nails was applying oil on his limbs laughing boisterously accompanied my very tall and grotesque masculine figures performing death-dances! Next morning a shattered Kamsa convened a meeting with his family members, close and trusted Ministers and his Purohit Satyak- a dear disciple of Guru Shukracharya- and conveyed about the horrible dream and its possible effects. Guru Satyak discounted the dream and to ward off the bad omens, and suggested to perform Maheswara Yagna and also puja of the Paashupata Dhanush with Maha Nandi gifted away to Banasura, and the same was in the Royal possession of Kamsa. Kamsa suggested that the proposed Yagna and worship of the Dhanush would be a great opportunity to invite Krishna and Balarama to the festivities and approved Akrura to depute to Brindavana to personally invite Krishna and Balarama brothers to visit Mathura. Akrura, the elder and respected virtuous person of Yadukula headed by Nanda gopa at Brindavana was thrilled at the opportunity of inviting Krishna and Balarama and personally bringing them to Mathura. Kamsa’s plan was to somehow get the brothers of Brindavana and make foolproof arrangements to trap them to death. Devi Radha and Gopikas as well as Nanda and Yashoda, besides the entire Brindavan were most unhappy that Krishna would be separated while on Krishna’s tour to Mathura. Krishna assuaged their feelings, especially of Devi Radha. Having reached Muthura, Krishna and Balarama were surrounded with admiring crowds, straightened and transformed the deformed and ugly girl Kubja into a pretty maiden, accepted the flowers being taken to

the Royal Court by the Maali (gardener), punished the pro-Kamsa dhobi (washerman) on way and threw the Royal dresses in a gutter saying there was no further need for expensive dresses for Kamsa, visited the houses of Akrura and other senior Vishnu Bhaktas to accept delicacies for food, revisited Kubja Devi's residence to bless her and despatch her to Goloka, broke the Paashupata Dhanush with ease and aplomb even as the entire Mathura was agog and awe, met parents Devaki and Vasudaeva even as their tears with profuse ecstasy were overflowing, killed the rogue elephant at the Entrance of the Kamsa Sabha, devastated the massive-bodied Malla Chanura, mesmerised the crowds with his charm and valour; forcibly dragged the most arrogant, merciless, villainous and dreaded King Kamsa to the center of the stage set for the duels with Malla Chanura and called for his Sudarshana Chakra to have the ignominious head of Kamsa sliced! Later on Krishna released his parents from bondage, reinstated Ugrasena, the father of Kamsa as the King and the suppressed Yadava community breathed fresh air of redemption. Garga Muni performed 'Upanayana' (Initiation to Gatatri Mantra) of Balarama and Krishna, the latter underwent formal 'Gurukula Vaasa' or residential education at the house of Sandeepani and as a Guru dakshina brought the dead son of their Guru and his wife back to life!

#### 'Dwaraka Nirman':

On return from 'Guruvaasa', Krishna and Balarama returned to Mathura and planned the construction of Dwaraka puri. Krishna remembered Garuda Deva, Ksheera Sagara and Deva's Architect Vishwakarma. He secured large area in the Seashore from Samudra Deva. Both the brothers discarded Gopa's attire and wore Raja's dresses. He requested Vishwakarma to build a modern, spacious and luxurious Dwaraka Nagar with fantastic facilities for all the residents of Mathura for accommodation on back-to-back basis including human beings, cows and so on. Vishwakarma planned and materialised an ideal City which was a model as per Vaatsu Shastra; huge amounts of building material including precious stones and gold was procured and support Engineers and workforce arrived. The City was got ready and the complete contents of Mathura were transferred overnight and the population was thrilled at the miracle. Dwaraka was inaugurated and Devas including Brahma, Hara, Ananta, Dharma as also Maharshis and of course the Yadavas with great pomp and show!

#### Krishna kills Shishupala and Dantavakra:

Shri Krishna was invited to 'Indraprastha', the New Capital of Pandavass, by Yudhishtara and Panadava brothers to celebrate Rajasuya Yagna and as per the advice of grandfather Bhishma, Krishna was named as the Chief Guest at the celebrations. Sishupala who was Krishna's arch-enemy objected to the proposal [when Sisupala was born to Chedi King Damaghosha and Sutadevi, Krishna called on Suta Devi-cousin sister of Krishna- to see the child but the boy was born ugly with four hands and three eyes; Krishna snipped off the extra hands and eye and a Celestial Voice was heard that the person who snipped off the extra limbs would kill him too. Sishupala's parents begged of Krishna to postpone Sishupala's death, Krishna agreed that he would not harm the child till he committed hundred mistakes against him]. As Sishupala's hundred mistake limit was over at the Rajasuya Yagna, Krishna called for his Sudarshana Chakra which sliced off Shishupala's head. On hearing Shishupala's killing by Krishna, the former's great friend Dantavakra attacked Krishna, and after a duel with maces and killed Dantavakra too. In their earlier births, Sishupala and Dantavakra were Ravanaasura and Kumbhkarna killed by Lord Shri Rama; infact they were the 'Dwarapalakas'/ the Gate Keepers of Vaikuntha who were cursed by Sanaka brothers as they barred entry to Vaikuntha to become two demons in three successive Yugas, but on their

entreating the Sanaka Sages secured a dispensation that they would be killed by Narayana himself: Jaya and Vijaya were thus the demon brothers Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu killed by Narayana in the latter's 'Avatars' as 'Matsya' and 'Nrisimha' in Satya Yuga; by Shri Rama who killed Ravana and Kumbharna in Treta Yuga and by Krishna who killed Shishupala and Dantavakra in Dwapara Yuga.

#### Devi Rukmini's wedding with Krishna:

Vidarbha King Bheeshmaka discussed the proposal of Devi Rukmini's alliance with Krishna in his Court and requested Shatananda, the learned son of Muni Gautama to personally visit Krishna at Dwaraka. But Virarbha Prince Rukmi objected that Krishna was unbecoming of his sister as he was a coward who could not face Jarasandha despite the latter's challenge to Krishna several times, that he got Kalayavan the Mleccha hero and a close friend of Jarasandha killed by foul means by hiding behind King Muchukunda in a cave, that he ran away to a far off place viz. Dwaraka out of fear of Jarasandha and that a better choice as Rukmini's husband could be Shishupala and so on. Despite these objections, the King went ahead and despatched Shatananda to Dwaraka and handed over the Lagna Patrika as a consent from his side. Earlier, King Koutukavash performed the wedding of Balarama with his daughter Devi Ravati and Balarama too was delighted about the offer. The efforts made by Rukmi and his ill- advising companions like Shalva, Shishupala and Dantavakra culminated in a battle with Yadavas and Balarama with his plough and Yadu Sena badly defeated Rukmi. The wedding of Shri Krishna and Devi Rukmini was celebrated in the most befitting manner. (Pursuant to the wedding of Rukmini, Krishna's marriages with Satyabhama, Jambavati, Kalindi, Lakshmana, Bhadra, Mitravinda and Nagnajita; as Shri Krishna killed *Narakasura*, there were sixteen thousand 'Kanyas' imprisoned by the 'Asura' who were all released free but they begged of Krishna to accept them all as their wives, apart from the 'Patranis' or as the Principal Wives mentioned above.

[References about the Great Maha Bharata Battle and the Grand Role of Shri Krishna as a Diplomat, Philosopher, Guide and Saviour of Pandavas were few and far between in the entire Text of Brahma Vaivarta Purana; equally scarce were the allusions of the Termination of Yadu Vamsha. Following is the Essence of the last chapters of 'Krishnajanma Khanda' when Devi Radha who was hitherto at Bridavana suffering pangs of separation from Krishna's 'physical' presence had finally reappeared at 'Siddhaashrama' (described elsewhere in this Purana that Radha and Krishna were reunited at the renowned 'Prabhava Kshetra' It was stated that Krishna's human life was for one hundred and twenty five years; eleven years in Nanda Gopa's house, fourteen years in Bridavana along with Radha, and hundred years in Mathura and Dwaraka; no wonder Devi Radha missed Krishna's company a long time of a century and over a decade on Earth!]

#### The Sacred Union of Devi Radha and Shri Krishna:

Vasudeva performed Rajasuya Yagna as advised Shankara Deva at 'Siddhaashram'. One 'Amsha' of Rukmini and there Devis left for Dwaraka and another was left behind. Krishna asked Nandagopa and Yashoda to return to Gokul from where they originated. Meanwhile Krishna spotted the beautiful face of Devi Radha nearing the Ashram with a group of Gopikas surrounding her. Devi Radha too visioned Krishna from a distance. Having come near Krishna, she said: 'My beloved! I am thrilled to see you. To day the purpose of my life is fulfilled! My five 'Praanaas' are revived and my Soul is filled the bliss. An extremely rare and nearly impossible 'Bandhu Darshan' (Mutual Vision of the closest relatives) gladdens

the ‘Drashta’ (The Visioners) as well as the ‘Drishya’ (The Vision). I have been drowned in the ‘Shoka Sagara’ or the ocean of tears and the burning pangs of ‘Viraha’ or separation. Now, your nectar-like revelation is comparable with the ‘abhisheka’ (Refreshing Bath) of the heat of that severance! In your company, I am as mighty as Shiva, Shivaprada, Shivabeeja and Shiva Swarupa, but my disconnection with you is as unbearable as extreme misfortune and all my actions are lost in wilderness. Even when a wife and husband are disjointed, they do feel the separation; but in our case the ‘Viyoga’ is as serious as that of ‘Prakriti’ and ‘Purusha’! As Radha was saying like this, Gopikas prepared a luxurious bed and having kept scented gandha, flowers, fruits, milk and sweets ran away laughing away loud and mischievously. Krishna replied: Devi Radha! By nature I am the Lord of all the Lokas and am the ‘Antaraatma’ of each and every Being from Brahma downward. In Goloka, I am the fulfilled, unique and everlasting Krishna as the Swami of Radha. At present I am Krishna of Bridavana as ‘Radhaapati’ with two hands in the attire of a Gopala. In Vaikuntha I am the four armed Swami of Lakshmi and Sarasvati. I am the single and Supreme Being divided into two Forms of Prakriti and Purusha. On Earth in Shweta Dwipa on Ksheera Sagara, I am the husband of ‘Maanasi’, ‘Sindhukanya’ and ‘Martya Lakshmi’. I am the Kapila Rishi the husband of Bharati; in Mithila the husband of Sita; in Dwaraka the Swami of Rukmini of Maha Lakshmi Swarupa; it is my Amsa that Pandavas are as the husbands of Draupadi etc.’ When Krishna said these words, Devi Radha prostrated before Krishna. Devi Radha then desired that before Krishna would take her and all the ‘Goloka Vaasis’, she would like to visit the places where ‘Krishna Leelas’ were performed. Next morning, a golden chariot was arranged to visit Gokul where Yashoda and Nanda Gopa welcomed Radha and Krishna and a memorable ‘Mahotsava’/ Festivity was celebrated. To Krishna’s left side sat Radha and to the right sat Yashoda, Nanda, Vrishabhanu and Kalavati and various Gopas, Gopis, relatives, and associates. Krishna performed ‘Gyanopadesha’ to Nanda Gopa. On way the golden chariot passed through ‘Vraja Bhumi’, Viraja River’s view, Shatashringa Mountain, several Raasa mandalis, original Brindavan where crores of Gopa and Gopikas were present; Radha got down the Chariot to converse with them as she felt so happy that she was lost into herself! As Shri Krishna descended from the Chariot, Brahma, Sesa, Surya, Mahendra, Chandra, Agni, Kubera, Varuna, Pavana, Yama, Ishana and other Devas Ashtavasus, Nava Grahas, Ekadasha Rudras, Manus, Munis were all lined up to welcome Paramatma Shri Krishna and praised Him one by one their heart’s content. ’

#### Narayana Maharshi explains about the ‘Tatwa’ of Shri Krishna and Prakriti Devi

*Lambodaro Harirumaapatireesha Seshaa Brahmaadayah Suraganaa Manavo Munindrah, Vaani Shivaa Tripathagaa Kamalaadika yaa Sanchitayeda Bhagavatscharanaaravindam/ Samsaarsaagaramateeva gabhiraghoram Daavaagni sarpa pariveshtita cheshta taangam, Samlanghyagantumabhi vaanchati yo hi daasyam sanchitayed Bhagavatecchharanaara –vindam/ Govardhanoddharana keertirateena khinnaa Bhurdhaarita cha dasaanaagna karena klinnaa, Vishwaani Lomavivareshu Vibharturaadeh Sanchintayed Bhagavat –ccharanaaravindam/ Gopaangana vadana pankaja hat padasya Raaseswaraaya pumshaha, Brindaavaney viharato vrajavesha Vishnoh sanchintayed Bhagavatas –cchananaara vindam/ Chakshurnimesha patito Jagataam vidhaataa tatkarma vatsa kathitumBhuvi kah samarthah/Twamchaapi Naradamuney paramaadareyna sachintitah kuru Harerscharanaaravindam/ Yuyam vayam tasya kalaakalaamshaah kalaakalaamshaah Manavo Muneendraah, Kalaavisheshaa Bhavapaara mukhyaa Mahaan Viraad yasya Kalaa viseshah/ Sahasra seershaa Sirasah pradeshey bibharti siddhaarthasamam cha Vishwam/ Kurmamcha Sesho mashako gajey yathaa Kurmascha Krishnaascya Kalaakalaamshah/ Goloka naathasya vibhiryashomalam shrutow Puraaney nahi kinchana*

*sphutam/ Na Padmaamukhyaah kathitum samarthaah Sarveshwaram tam bhaja Paadmamukhyam/  
Vishveshu Sarveshu cha Vishwa dhaamnah Satyeava Shasvadvidhi Vishnu Rudraah/ Teshaamchaa  
Samkhyaa Shtutayascha Devaah Param na jaananti tameeshwaram bhaja/ Katoti Shrishtimcha  
Vidhervidhaataa Vidhaaya nityaamv Prakrutim Jagatprasuum/ Brahmaadayah Prakritikaascha  
Sarveybhakti pradaam Shreem Prakrutim bhajanti/ Brahma Swarupaa Prakrutir na bhinna yayaacha  
Srishtim kurutey Sanaatanah/ Shriyascha sarvaah kalayaa Jagatsu Maayaacha Sarvey cha tayaa  
vimohitaah/ Naaraayani saa Paramaa Sanaatani Shaktisha pumshah Paramaatmanascha,  
Atmeswaraaschaapi yayaa cha Shaktimaamstayaa vinaa Shrishtamashakta yeva/*

( Maharshi Narayana explained to Narada about the interaction of ‘Maha Tatwa’ of Shri Krishna the Supreme and the Prakriti Devi: The entire Universe is well advised to prostrate before that Everlasting and Endless Bhagavan whom all the Shaktis like Ganesha, Vishnu, Rudra, Seha, Brahma and other Devatas as also Manus, Munis, Saraswati, Parvati, Ganga, Lakshmi and other Devis bend their heads down to. Those who are desirous of swimming across and traversing the ‘Samsara Sagar’ which encircles every Being by the terrible ‘Daavaagni Sarpa’ -the fiery and poisonous serpent- would have to necessarily enjoy the enslavement of the self before Bhagavan Shri Krishna. It is that Shri Krishna -who lifted the Govardhana Mountain with his hand and saved Vajra Bhumi and its inhabitants from the fury and anger of Indra; that he who lifted with ease the entire Bhudevi who was on the verge of sinking into deep Ocean lifted up by the might of his tusks and restored her in her original position; and that he whose skin pores carry endless ‘Brahmandaas’ - to whom we dedicate our very existence. It is that Shri Krishna again who is like the ‘bhramara’/ honey-bee hovering around the sweet faces of Gopikas in Brindavana fully engrossed in the ‘Raasa-kreedaa’ that we should always meditate his sacred feet. Narada! Is there any body in this world that is competent to describe the ‘Leelas’ of Bhagavan Krishna by whose mere eye-twinkle that a great Brahma engaged in ‘Srishti’ gets terminated? Narada! You and I as well as each and every Being are the ‘Kalaas’/ reflections of that Mahat Kala Swarupa! Manus and Munis are of that Maha Kala also! Brahma, Shiva, Adi Sesha with his thousands of hoods holding Earth as though it was a seed of mustard are all of Paramatma’s undescribable ‘Kala’ even as that Paramatma carries Sesha Deva like a fly on an elephant! The Four Vedas failed to describe even an atom of what Shri Krishna in Goloka was all about! Brahma and all the Devatas put together too fell far short of their imagination and far reaching vision to substantiate the Supreme! Shri Krishna was like a Vidhata among unaccountable Vidhataas. Brahma and other Devas are materialised from time to time by Prakriti and Narada! You should worship Prakriti too. Prakriti is not however a separate entity! Prakriti is ‘Maya’ or an Illusion but is reflection of Shi Krishna! Yet, the Lord created the Mula Prakriti or ‘Vishnu Maya’ to assist him and that Maya was materialised in Five Forms viz. Radha; the second manifestation was of Lakshmi as the Embodiment of Wealth; the third is Saraswati, the personification of Knowledge, Vidya, Kalas, who is worshipped by all; the Fourth Amsa is Vedamata Gayatri / Savitri and the Fifth Amsa of Prakriti is Durga denoting Shakti, Capacity and Courage. Together, these five manifestations bestow Aspiration, Prosperity, Knowledge, Sacredness of Vedas and Shakti!

## 2. Excerpts from Bhagavata Puraana on Maha Vishnu’s Krishnaavataara

Lord Krishna was the central-figure of Maha Bhagavata; in fact He dominated the entire scene of Dwapara Yuga in human manifestation. He was an Incarnation of the Supreme Energy or the Primeval Force, believed in as Vishnu or Krishna, for the purpose of identification and for anchoring on as a target of one’s pure thoughts and actions in multitudes of means ranging from simple prayers, devotion, rituals

and Yoga to rigorous Sacrifices as per one's own belief. Thus identified, humanity is able to visualize the Supreme Power - ignorantly or in great faith- and gives a shape or form to the Unknown! It is that Krishna who approached the humans as a model figure with the best of limbs, features, speech, actions, reflexes and most of all as the Provider, Forgiver, Corrector and Sourcer. Krishna's birth was also shrouded in mystery. He made an appearance before the parents Vasudeva and Devaki (Prajapati Sutapa and Prashni in their earlier births) advised them to transfer Him from Mathura to Gokul across the River Yamuna to the place of Nanda and Yashoda as the latter just delivered a baby at the same time but was not aware whether it was a boy or baby due to labour pains. Earlier, the seventh Child of Devaki and Vasudeva was miraculously transferred to Rohini, another wife of Nanda. His maternal uncle Kamsa was afraid of death and killed the previous babies. He tried to smash the head of the eighth child who was Devi Durga Herself. She warned Kamsa from the Sky that the real killer of Kamsa was safe elsewhere. While Gokul was rejoicing the birth of the boys and the cow-herd Chief Nanda and Yashoda and were busy with Jataka Karma (cutting the umbilical chords) and the year long Nandothsava celebrations, Kamsa was engaged in a massive search for babies born anew in his kingdom and ordered them to be killed. His investigators reached Gokul Village too and on witnessing the celebrations they confirmed the presence of the new born. The demoness Puthana who was engaged by Kamsa to kill babies visited Gokul and taking the form of a pretty lady entered Nanda's house. Neither various Gopikas nor Yasoda stopped her, as they were all impressed by her charm and innocent looks. She lifted the Child and put Him on her lap and desired to breast-feed Him. There was deadly poison around her nipple which was sucked by the Lord and even while she was crying for help her real demoniac face and body were twisted and displayed. The entire village got petrified at the shock but the Child was happy and playful. As the Child grew three months old, Nanda's household was busy performing the 'Uthana' function of lifting the Child from cradle to shoulders. While Brahmanas were reciting Hymns (Mantras) and performing offerings to Fire God, there was busy activity around with guests and relatives. The Child was kept in a make-shift bed under the shade of a cart in the court yard, surrounded by Gopikas, children and others. Playfully, the Child lifted one of His soft and tiny legs up as though He was fighting and throwing the cart and indeed the heavy cart was broken into pieces and the mortal remains of a huge monster ('Sakatasur' - a cart demon) sent by Kamsa presented a ghastly sight. In another instance on a day Yashoda kept the Child on her lap when He was a year old and suddenly she realised that the Child was heavy like a mountain and she had to immediately put Him down on the ground. Almost then there was a fearful whirlwind and dust storm and there was darkness all around. The Child was not visible for a while. Gradually, the dust got settled and the entire Village could witness a massive heap of a Demon Trinivarta sent by Kamsa again and the demon's throat was choked and throttled.

On completion of a year, the two sons were named Balaram and Krishna. As they grew they were displaying charming tricks and playful mischief bringing ecstatic joy not only to the parents but to the entire village especially Gopikas (Maidens) with whom endless pranks were played like stealing butter, embarrassing them in several ways and enchanting them all differently; in fact the life style of Gokula Village got transformed to that of a heaven and they were all blessed indeed! But there was an underneath devotion and spiritual awareness prevailing among the persons of Gokula and there was even a sub-conscious feeling that the two boys were not ordinary but incarnations of God. While the playmates were all playing once, Balarama who was elder complained to Yashoda that Krishna was eating earth, the mother found that Krishna's hands were full of dirt and she asked Krishna to open his mouth. Yashoda almost fainted to view the entire Universe in Krishna's mouth with fleeting visions of the Sky, Earth,

mountains, oceans, and the planetary system. She was amazed to realise that Krishna was Vishnu Himself, but too soon she got out of that consciousness created by a transitory illusion ( Maya) and started fondling the Kids as usual. Very often, Krishna looked so innocent that Yashoda discounted the pretty complaints made by Gopis against the lad either out of fondness or envy. As she got fed up one day, she tied Him to a grinding stone kept between twin trees, Yamala and Arjuna in their back yard and started her routine. After a while she heard big noises of falling trees and shrieking screams of Gopikas and there stood two personalities with radiance bowing before the boy Krishna; apparently the two were the opulent and conceited sons of Demi-God of Wealth, Kubera. Narada cursed the sons of Kubera- Nalakubara and Manigriva- to become the twin trees in the backyard of Nanda's house and await Krishna to release the curse.

Nanda and the elders of Gokula felt that weird incidents were happening in the Village and thus decided to shift to a lush green and fertile forest known as Brindavan. Indeed this area was far better, as there was a mountain Govardhan was also nearby. The Vraja Vasis were happier as their lives were more comfortable under His shade. Their crops were richer, climate was healthier and the Gopas and Gopikas had plenty of space to play, enjoy and venture out, in the excellent company of Balarama and Sri Krishna. The sonorous flute of Krishna, the ankle bell sounds of maidens, the joyful dances of men and women, and the social functions of the elders gave a highly romantic and contented atmosphere at the new environs. But at same time, there were a number of incidents continued nevertheless, each fortifying the underlining faith and awe in Balarama and Krishna as super beings. Examples included the killing of Dhenukasura who mixed up with cows and calves of Brindavan; Bakasura, a fresh water wading bird, heron, with a long beak and a gigantic features who attacked Krishna who tore off the powerful jaws and beaks; Aghasura, the huge Python who devoured boys but Krishna entered its enormous mouth and saved them before killing; the fearful serpent Kaliya of lake Kalindi was unapproachable to human beings, animals especially cows, birds, fishes etc. which freely used to stray as the waters were fuming hot with poisonous flames. Krishna's playmates described the lake as entering into Hell gates. But He desired to teach a lesson to Kaliya and family who made an exclusive residence in the lake, often moving out of it in the surroundings, but for the fear of Garuda, the carrier of Lord Vishnu. Krishna however jumped into the lake and attacked the most obnoxious creature and subdued it after a fierce fight for days together. Nanda and Yashoda wanted to enter the lake out of desperation, but Balarama prevented saying that Krishna would emerge dancing on its hundred and one hoods. Indeed He did likewise and ordered Kaliya and family to quit the lake and enter the ocean and assured that His footprints would be recognised by Garuda and as such there was no problem from the serpents to move out. In another instance, demon Pralamba disguised as a cow-herd boy and Balarama sensing it desired to play a game *Hirana Kreedanam* ( *carriers and passengers*) by splitting two parties-one headed by Krishna and another by Balarama. Pralamba disguised as cowherd boy had purposively lost the game so that he would carry away Balarama as he had won. Sitting on the back of the demon, Balarama squeezed the demon's body and sat on him as though as a mountain and thus killed him. Another incidence was Krishna's feat of lifting the mountain Govardhan Giri by His little finger, as Varuna the God of Rains was annoyed with the villagers as they did not perform the traditional worship and lashed with devastating rains continuously. Consequently, Varuna and Indra apologised the indiscretion of Varuna to Lord Krishna.

Krishna's vigorous drive of Spiritual Love

By now the people of Vraja had not only recognised Krishna Consciousness fully but also practised various forms of Worship-be it Rituals, Yoga, Group Bhajans ( Singing the hymns in praise of the Lord), ‘Vrathas’, meditation or ‘Japa’( recite the names of Almighty). Indeed, Krishna Consciousness got spread over far and wide with the Vraja Bhoomi as the nucleus, not only among the humanity but all over the Universe, including the Planetary System, various Demi-Gods and the sub-terrain world. The ‘Gopikas’- women and maidens- of Vraja Bhoomi were specially blessed often participating in Ras Lilas or Community Dance Sessions of Ecstasy; the belief was that ‘Gopikas’ were actually Sages, availing opportunities of physical and Spiritual interaction with Narayana Himself, thereby attaining trances and oneness. To the married women of Vraja Bhoomi especially, the repeated advice from Krishna was that out of affection and faith for Him, they should not neglect their family duties; He said that women in general, away from their fathers, mothers, brothers, husbands and children should not be causes for their worries. He also said: *Bhartuh susrusanam strinam paro dharmo hi amayaya / tat bandhunam cha kalyanah prajanam chanuposanam.* (The highest religious duty of a woman is to sincerely serve her husband, behave well toward his family and take care of the children). The unanimous reply to Krishna’s advice by all Gopikas was that indeed they ought to serve their families best, but in reality they would serve their families with the same dedication as their family would display to serve Almighty as well. [Padma Purana stated that Gopikas were either ‘Sruti Charis’ Personified Veda Scriptures) or ‘Rishi Charis’( Sages of previous births) viz. Nitya Siddhas or Sahana Siddhas respectively, but not normal humans]. Even as Krishna continued His romantic escapades under the garb of Spiritual Activities, the burden on Earth was being reduced in destroying evil forces. Maha Muni Suka described to King Parikshith how the Bull Demon Arishta with a huge hump, mistaken as a mountain by the clouds, roared while scraping the ground with hooves and digging the Earth with horns and created havoc and how Krishna seized the animal by its horns and brought it to the ground and destroyed it. Another demon Kesi, a gigantic horse commissioned by Kamsa attacked Krishna with speed and fury from the high skies and met the same fate as with Arishta.

Narada’s futuriscic vision

Approaching Krishna the Supreme Form of Lord Narayana Himself to worship Him in solitude, Devarshi Narada described the unbelievable miracles of Krishna from his futuristic vision: Being the Supreme Energy of the Universe, which is His own volition to create and play with, Krishna is the Super Controller of Time-the Past, Present and Future. He descends on Earth to protect the virtuous and destroy the Evil; the destruction of Arishta and Kesi are tiny instances of His omni-potency. Thus Narada disclosed the future Events, as follows: ‘Within two days now, Lord Krishna would witness the death of Chanura and Mustika, the man-mountain wrestlers and the massive elephant Kuvalayapida. The cruel King Kamsa would be the next target. The annihilations of Demons Kalayavana, Mura, Sankha and Naraka would follow. Krishna would defeat Indra and present ‘Parijata’- the Heavenly Tree to Queen Rukmini; marry many daughters of Kings after defeating them out of valour; deliver King Nriga from his curse; capture the jewel ‘Samanthaka’ from Jambavantha the Great Bear and marry Jambavati; revive and bring back the dead son of Sandipani Muni from the abode of Yama, the King of death; kill Poundraka, burn the City of Kasi; annihilate Dantavakra and the King of Chedi at Rajasurya Sacrifice; perform several other pastimes at ‘Dwaraka’ and emerge as the Charioteer of Arjuna at the Epic Battle of Mahabharata and after destroying many other Evil Forces lighten the burden of Earth!’ Thus Narada provided to the posterity a sweep of events to happen in future as per his mystic powers. The details of the

Events were described by Suka Mahamuni to King Parikshith. But some of the happenings are highlighted as follows in the following pages.

#### Krishna's demolition of Kamsa and other Demons

Narada disclosed to Kamsa that the killers of Arishta, Kesi and other emissaries sent by the latter to kill Krishna and Balarama were actually the sons of Vasudeva and Devaki but not of Nanda and Yashoda. Kamsa wished to kill his sister and Vasudeva in prison at once but was restrained by Narada. Kamsa called Chanura and Mushtika -the monster-like wrestlers, to get ready for a duel with the boys to be invited for a Bow-Sacrifice in honour of Yadus and asked Akrura of Yadu Vamsa to personally invite and accompany the boys of Nanda to celebrate the Function..There was alround excitement in Mathura as the the illustrious brothers visited the City in person! Several persons gathered to see Krishna and Balarama, the mystifying figures from Brindavan even as large collections of ladies joined the processions as they were mesmerised. On way, the brothers met a washerman and asked for suitable dresses for them, but he was headstrong and talked foul and told them that they were beggars; Krishna nipped his head with his little finger; the miscreants were Kamsa's followers and the notice was sent to the King squarely and he had no sleep in the previous night. They met a weaver and asked for clothes which were presented to them instantly as he recognised Almighty in them and similarly a flower vendor accosted them with humility and garlanded the boys; the brothers blessed them with prosperity and family welfare. While crossing a high road, they witnessed a hunch back Girl named Trivakra, carrying a tray of perfumes to the King's Court and while conversing with her, Krishna pulled her up and straightened her body to convert her as a normal person; the feat was witnessed by many onlookers as a sample miracle. They visited the Bow Arena where the Sacrifice was to be done the day next and broke the 'Indra Dhanush' with ease even as a contingent of soldiers protested and fought. On the day next, the Arena of Wrestling was agog with exhilaration, when Krishna and Balaram entered the place, the mighty elephant Kuvalayapida was shattered in a jiffy. Later they participated in the Wrestling Tournament where Charura, Mustika, Kutha, Sala and Tosala were smashed. There were cheers alround but seeing the other wreslers running away, Kamsa was outraged and sougt to kill the boys himself with his sword. The mystery Boys flew across to the Stage and devastated Kamsa like two ferocius lions tearing a lamb. There was a furore in the assembly and Kamsa's eight brothers headed by Kanka and Nyagrodhaka were crushed too. The Invincible Lords Krishna and Balarama opened the prison gates of their parents and touched their feet, as they were stunned and went into a trance. The Boys paid their obeisances profusely and told them: '*Yas taylor atmajah Kalpa-atmanacha dhanenucha-vrittim na dadyat tam pretha-Sva mamsam khadyanti hi*' (A son, though able to do so, fails to provide for his parents with his physical resources and wealth is forced after his death to eat his own flesh). They further said: '*Sarvartha sambhava deho-janitho poshito Yatah- na taylor yati nirvesam-pitror martyah satayushya*' ( As one's body is acquired by parents, the goals of life are fulfilled since their parents gave birth and sustenance; therefore no mortal man can repay his debts enen if he lives for hundred lives). Vasudeva's son Ugrasena was coronated as the King of Mathura and the Second Birth Celebrations of the Boys was performed 'Thread Ceremony or Yagnopavitha and Gayatri) and relatives and relations were invited. Indeed they missed the presence of their foster parents Nanda and Yashoda as also the inhabitants of Gokul and Brindavan, especially the sprightly Gopikas.

Krishna and Balarama visited their Spiritual Teacher Sandipa Muni who resided at Avanti ( Ujjain) was visited bringing immense joy to the Muni. They offered give 'Guru Dakshina' for the Studies of Dhanur Veda, Martial Arts and War Tactics. The Muni asked for their son dead in the Ocean at Prabhasa

as he was devoured by a Demon Panchajanya ( who had the shape of a conch shell). As the son of the Guru was not in the Demon's stomach, they reached 'Samyamani' the Abode of Yamadhararaja and brought the dead boy alive. Thus Krishna and Balarama gave Guru Dakshina to Sandipa Muni. There after they visited Uddhava, their childhood friend and nephew, requested him to visit the Vraja places and meet their parents and well wishers as also the Gopikas and narrate to them an account of their activities at Mathura. Uddhava on reaching the Places met them all, and narrated the happenings. He returned back, after an emotional and tearful send-off with return messages from all of them, especially Gopikas.

The two Queens of the deceased Kamsa, Asti and Prapthi, approached their father Jarasandha, the highly powerful Monarch of Magadha and asked for retribution for the 'misdeeds' of Balarama and Krishna. With a huge army under him, Jarasandha attacked Mathura with some twenty three Akshouhinis of infantry, cavalry and elephantry and challenged Krishna and Balarama. The Lords shattered the massive opponents even as they had a minor number; and made sure that only Jarasandha be spared so that he would return back to regroup his men and material. Indeed he returned back again and again, getting routed for seventeen times. When Jarasandha was expected to attack for the eighteenth time, -Yavanas, the Mleccha foreign forces- headed by Kalayavana attacked Mathura with thirty million barbarian soldiers of desperation and cruelty. Krishna and Balarama felt that while they would fight with Yavanas, Jarasandha's army might simultaneously harm Yadus. Thus they planned to build a new place, named Dvaraka (with twelve Gates) and asked Visvakarma, the Architect of Devatas who created a beautiful and well structured fortress City touching the Sea. By means of His mystic Yoga Maya ( Power of Illusion), the Citizens of Mathura got transferred, lock-stock and barrel-overnight to Dvaraka and found themselves in luxurious palaces. Even as Balarama was defending Mathura, Krishna attracted the attention of Kalayavana, passing singly by foot, by the Main Gate of Mathura. Kalayavana followed Krishna closely but always unreachable with some distance apart and led the Mlechha into a mountain cave. Thinking that Krishna Himself assumed a new 'Rupa' ( Body) as an old and haggardly person in the cave as Krishna was known for such powers, Kalayavana kicked the old man fast asleep. Indeed He was not Krishna but Muchukunda, the son of Mandhata of Ikshvaku dynasty. He was the defender of Demi-Gods from Daityas for long but since Lord Kartikeya became the Commander of Demi- Gods, the latter relieved Muchukunda of his duties and Kartikeya advised him of retirement and since then he was sleeping in the cave, unaware of hundreds of years passed by! By his very looks of fire, Muchukunda converted Kalayavana into ashes as per Indra's benediction that if anybody disturbed his slumber would be burnt to ashes! Subsequently Krishna granted a wish to Muchukunda to be reborn as a Sage from his Kshatriya's current birth. Muchukunda exited from the cave into a World new from what he knew and realised that Kali Yuga was on the anvil, as the size of humans, animals, birds and trees was reduced considerably. He proceeded to Gandhamadana mountain and reached Nara-Narayana Ashram and meditated for the rest his life. Meanwhile, Krishna and Balarama found Mathura under the seige of Yavanas and with their Chief Kalayavana was missing found themselves shattered by a handful of Yadava soldiers and of course by Krishna and Balarama. The jewellery and wealth plundered by the dead Yavanas, being carried to Dvaraka by the Yadavas was intercepted by Jarasandha. Krishna and Balaram took to their heels ( as Jarasandha was not destined to die in their hands). When chased to a mountain named Pravarshana, Jarasandha put the mountain top afire by his soldiers and felt that the two might have been burnt. [Jarasandha took to prison a number of Kings at Yudhishtar's Rajasuya Yaga since they agreed to Krishna becoming the Chief Guest; subsequently when Krishna, Bhima and Arjun visited Jarasandha's Palace in disguise as Bramanas to free the Kings, the three of them challenged him for a

duel with any one of them and Bhima was chosen.. Jarasandha was not getting killed for many days and Krishna hinted to tear Jarasandha's body by cutting branch of a tree and throwing up the pieces upside down in opposite directions. This was because a Rishi blessed King Brihadhratha ( father of Jarasandha) for a child with a fruit which was cut into two half pieces and distributed to two of his wives, but they delivered a child in two pieces; the child was united by putting the two pieces of their body upside down by a Demoness named Jara and hence the name was Jara-sandha. After Bhima killed Jarasandha, some 21,000 Kings, defeated in wars and imprisoned, were liberated.]

Rukmini abducted by Lord Krishna

Suka Maha Muni then narrated the exciting Story to King Parikshith about Lord Krishna's abduction of Rukmini and their wedding. Rukmini the elder daughter of Bhishmaka, King of Vidarbha and the elder brother Rukmi fancied Krishna to be her husband since her childhood. Krishna too had a longing for her. But Rukmi convinced his father that Sisupala the King of Chedi was the most suitable bridegroom for her. As this was not agreeable to Rukmini despite the pressure of Rukmi and her father, she sent a faithful Brahmana emissary with a confidential note to Krishna, requesting Him to abduct her preceding her Wedding with Sisupala, just after her scheduled worship at the 'Gouri Puja' at the Girija Temple. At the Wedding Ceremony, the Guest List included the Kings like Salva, Jarasandha, Dantavakra and Lord Krishna too. Fearing that Krishna, who proposed earlier to wed Rukmini, might create trouble at the Function, Rukmi as well as Sisupala prepared for any eventuality alerting their Armies; Salva, Jarasandha, and other well wishers too readied their armies too. So did Balarama. Precisely when the Bride entered the Wedding Stage, Krishna took away Rukmini like a surprise flash and both of them fled away in the Chariot of Krishna with the flag of Garuda atop. The armies of Sisupala and associates could hardly prevent the Glorious Abduction. Rukmi was unable to bear the insult and followed Krishna's chariot but was defeated and his moustache and beard were shorn by Krishna as a symbol of His victory. Subsequently, King Bhishmaka performed the wedding most appropriately. Pradyumana was born to Rukmini and Krishna and the son looked exactly like Krishna. When he was hardly ten days old, Demon Sambara kidnapped the child and knowing that he was the son of Krishna threw him in the Sea as a huge fish ate him but was safe in its belly. A fisherman caught hold of the big fish and presented it to the King Sambara who in turn gave it to Mayavati the head cook and cut it to find an attractive baby inside. Narada appeared and revealed the Story to Mayavati of Lord Rudra turning 'Manmadha' (Cupid) into ashes when he and Rati (Cupid's wife) aimed Floral Arrows. Lord Rudra gave boons that in their next birth, Cupid would be born as Lord Krishna's son Pradyumna and Mayavati as Rati. As Pradyumna grew as a youngman, Mayavati desired to marry him despite wide difference of age. Pradyumna was popularly known as 'Vyuha' as the Lord of Intelligence, along with three of His other names viz Vasudeva ( Lord of Consciousness); Sankarshana (Lord of Individuality) and Aniruddha (Lord of Intelligence). Eventually Pradyumna killed Sambara, married Mayavati and stayed with Rukmini and Krishna at Dvaraka.

Samantaka Mani ( Jewel), Satyabhama and Jambavati Secured Maha  
Muni Suka narrated another episode to King Parikshith about double weddings to Krishna in a sequence. King Satrajit was an ardent devotee of Lord Surya and blessed him with a fantastic jewel, known as 'Syamantaka Mani' providing not only dazzling light like Sun God himself, but also yields eight 'bharas' ( approx. ten Kg) of gold daily. Satrajit was overwhelmed with this incredible gift and desired to share the joy with Krishna whom he visited at His abode. Jokingly, Krishna asked Satrajit to spare the jewel for some time and was promptly declined. Satrajit's brother, Prasena, wore the rare jewel and

visited hunting to a forest. A lion killed him and ‘Jambavanta’ the illustrious Bear of Ramayana killed the lion in turn and took it to his cave to let his baby play with it. As Prasena did not return from the forest for a few days, Satrajit asked Krishna whether he knew any thing about Prasena as he did not return back. There were stray doubts expressed in the neighbourhood about Krishna’s credibility in the context. Krishna desired to vindicate His position and proceeded to the forest visited by Prasena and found his dead body and also that of a lion. He traced the foot steps of an animal to a cave and found a baby playing with the jewel. A huge bear entered and a fierce battle ensued for days together. As Krishna defeated the Bear, he felt that an ordinary human being could not be invincible against him and eventually recognised Krishna as another incarnation of Lord Rama or Lord Vishnu Himself. Intensive prayers were made by Jambavan and with humility and devotion he returned to Krishna the precious jewel as also offered his beautiful daughter Jambavati in wedding. On return from the forest, Krishna returned the jewel to Satrajit, who felt humiliated by suspecting Krishna and as an atonement returned the Jewel and requested Him to accept Satyabhama too as His spouse. Subsequently there were five other marriages by Krishna to Kalindi, Mitravinda, Satya, Lakshmana and Bhadra, besides of course, Rukmini, Satyabhama and Jambavati.

On hearing the unbelievable news that ‘Pancha Pandavas’ and mother Kunti were burnt in a Lac house constructed for them by King Dhritarashtra at the instance of ‘Dushta Chatushtaya’ (the Four Villians of Kauravas) –indeed Krishna knew that He arranged their safe exit from the House- Krishna and Balarama left for Hastinapura to personally convey their condolences to the elders of Kuru Vamsa. Taking the advantage of their absence, Evil minded Satadhanvu, as instigated by Akrura and Kritavarma, killed Satrajit in sleep and stole the Syamantaka Jewel. Satyabhama was horrified at her father’s demise and rushed to Hastinapuram to ask the Yadu brothers at once. As Satadhanvu and his instigators trembled at the news of the return of the brothers, Satadhanva kept the invaluable Jewel to the personal care of Akrura and fled fast for his life. Krishna and Balarama chased and killed the culprit but the Jewel was not recovered. Krishna returned to Dvaraka for the obsequies of Satrajit, while Balarama suspected Akrura and recovered from Akrura’s dead body.

The destruction of Narakasura ( Bhaumika)

The end of notorious Bhaumika, the son of Bhumi ( Demi-Goddess of Earth), is celebrated till date on the moon fall day preceding Kartika Month of every year as ‘Deepavali’ (The Festival of Lights). Krishna, accompanied by Satyabhama flew by Garuda to ‘Pragjyotisha’, Capital City of Bhaumasura [now in Assam], surrounded by mountains and ramparts defended by fire, water and unmanned automatic weapons as also protected by ‘Mura Pasha’ - thousand miles-long deadly and sturdy wires as designed by Demon Mura. Krishna shattered the defence buttresses and blew His Panchajanya (Conch shell) with deadening reverberation as Demon Mura’s frontal fortification was destroyed. When provoked, the Demon tossed his powerful club which was slashed by Krishna’s Sudarsana Chakra into pieces and devastated Mura. Seven deadly sons of Mura, who had the knowledge of weapons as fully as their father, pounced in a group but Krishna’s Supreme powers were no match and they too were cracked. Bhaumasura shot at his ‘Sataghni’ - the powerful disc with hundred blades- and later on with his mighty spear with which he defeated Indra too both of which proved futile. Finally Krishna gave His nod to Sudarsana Chakra (Wheel) to pull down the Demon and exterminate him. Thus Bhaumasura was sent to ‘Naraka’ and hence his ignominious title as Narakasura. [Another version is that the Demon was arrowed down by Satyabhama herself, as he secured a blessing from Lord Brahma that only his mother Goddess of

Earth ( Bhumi) could kill him; Satyabhama was the reincarnation of Goddess Earth . It was at Indra's distress call that received Krishna's attention as Varuna's Royalty Insignia, a Mother- Figure Aditi's earrings, and 'Mani Parvata'( Mandara Mountain) where Demi-Gods reside were among the abominable acts of the Demon. As a gesture of good-will, Satyabhama's desire to transfer the 'Parijata' Tree (which emerged in the churning process of Ocean) to her garden from the Heaven was obliged by Indra. Krishna on His part released sixteen thousand royal maidens of Kings defeated by Bhaumasura and consented to marry them, in addition to the eight principal wives. Goddess Earth sought her apology for her son's sins and reiterated her own devotion to Krishna.

#### Aniruddha's wedding with Usha

Banasura, the grand son of the famed King Bali who gave the entire Universe in charity in lieu of three feet to Lord Vamana, was the father of daughter Usha who fell in love with Aniruddha, the son of Pradyumna and the grand son of Lord Krishna. Banasura was a dedicated devotee of Lord Siva, and the Lord awarded several invaluable benedictions to the Demon including powerful war weapons and thousand hands to release the armaments simultaneously. Learning of the romance of his daughter with Aniruddha, the son of Pradyumana -the erstwhile Cupid who was burnt into ashes by Lord Siva's third eye- and the grand son of Krishna (Avatar of Lord Vamana), Banasura quashed the wedding proposal. Aniruddha fought with Banasura as the latter tried to imprison Aniruddha. The fight led to Krishna and Siva face to face, as Banasura was an ardent devotee of Siva. Thus Aniruddha was pitted against Banasura, Pradyumna against Karthikeya, and Krishna against Siva. It appeared that this kind of situation was unprecedented. It also looked that the entire Universe was at a precipice, as mighty 'Astras' were exchanged and each one of them was sufficient to obliterate the Universe from existence. 'Brahmastra' by Siva was replied by another 'Brahmastra' from Krishna; 'Pasupatastra' from Siva was balanced by 'Narayanastra' of Krishna. The entire episode was ridiculous as the Super Powers realised sooner than later. Siva in His humility praised Krishna. Maya, the illusion was apparently at work. After mutual realisation, the battle got terminated and a subdued Banasura requested Aniruddha to wed Usha.

#### Lord Krishna Kills Sisupala

At the invitation of King Yudhishtar to attend the Rajasuya Yagnam (Horse Sacrifice) being performed by Pandavas especially after the devastation of Jarasandha, Lords Krishna and Balarama arrived at Indraprastha, the new beautiful Capital City, built by Maya. As a climax to the Celebrations, a function was held to select the best personality who graced the 'Yagna'. Nobody wished to comment but Sahadeva, the youngest of Pandavas, proposed the name of Krishna. There was a near total approval of the proposal and King Dharmaraja initiated the procedure by inviting priests and Sages. Just at that time, King Sisupala, a great associate of Jarasandha since killed by Bhima, expressed displeasure at the selection of Krishna on the proposal of a mere boy, Sahadeva of Pandavas. He said that elders in age, experience, wisdom were available and there was no special qualification for Krishna excepting that He was a womaniser and a fraud, who ran away from Jarasandha twenty three times in successive wars and his real capability in wars, duels, and dealings involving honesty and frankness were suspect. Sisupala criticised Krishna transgressing all limits of decency. Finally having counted the number of abuses hurled at Him, Krishna hurled His disc 'Sudarsana Wheel to slit Sisupala's neck. Sisupala was the son of King Dhamaghosha and Srutadevi, the latter being the sister of Vasudeva whose son was Lord Krishna. In other words Krishna and Sisupala were cousins. When Sisupala was born, he was dark and ugly with

three eyes and four hands. His parents had almost decided to disown him, but a voice from Heaven suggested not to do so as an Illustrious Person would soon fondle the child and snip out his extra limbs and he himself would also kill him. Krishna's aunt Srutadevi requested Him to postpone the killing of the child as far as possible. Krishna promised that He would wait till his hundredth abuse. Incidentally, Sisupala and Dantavakra were stated to be the Demons of 'Dwapara Yuga' born after the curse of Sanaka Kumara brothers to the Vaikuntha Gate Keepers Jaya and Vijaya. As a sequel to Rajasuya Yagna, there were two major developments: *Firstly*, the unbearable jealousy of Kauravas against Pandavas who became extremely prosperous and popular among the various contemporary Kings and worse than that, the extremely hurt pride of Duryodhana especially when Draupadi the wife of Pandava sons laughed out loudly when he fell straight into a water pool when he thought that there was no water but ground and when he lifted up his robes as there was no ground but a water body. *Secondly*, the battles of Sisupala's great friends-Salva, Dantavakra, Romaharshana, and Virutha were in the offing against Yadavas. While the seeds of jealousy were firmly sown in Duryodhana's mind leading to disastrous consequences for Pandavas thus leading to the Great Battle of Mahabharata, the destructive attempts by Sisupala's friends were almost instant. Salva secured earlier an everlasting air-vehicle from Lord Siva because of deep devotion and landed at Dvaraka when Krishna and Balarama were away at Indraprastha and overpowered Pradyumna who fled from the battle, as Salva presented illusory heads of Krishna and Balaram to him. On return, the Lords shattered the airship and Salva too. Dantavakra and his sons Romaharshana and Viruddha met the same fate. Thus the chapter of Sisupala's death was closed. Simultaneously, the run-up to Mahabharata Battle at Kurukshetra was picking up fast as the foul play of Dices between Shakuni on behalf of Kaurava sons on the one hand and Dharmaraja on behalf of Pandavas. The Battle shaping as an inevitable consequence, Lord Balarama being a neutral figure, especially since Duryodhana was his disciple and Krishna identified himself as Pandava's well-wisher, proceeded on a pilgrimage to Holy Places. His visits covered several holy places including Prayaga, Ganga, Gaya, Godavari, Srisailem, Venkata Hills, Kanchi, Madurai, Kaveri River, Srirangam, Setubandhanam, Rameswaram and Kanya Kumari. He reached Kurukshetra at the time when Bhima and Duryodhana were engaged in a duel with maces as almost terminating the Great Battle.

Sudama, boyhood friend, honoured by Krishna

King Parikshith had a genuine marvel as to why, when and how the Supreme Power of Universe reaches out everywhere and anywhere to motivate the actions of each particle of Creation critically and objectively. Hereagain, the motive force of the 'particle' to act or not to act is provided by the Supreme Force Itself! In reply, Suka Muni narrated a story to exemplify as to how, each action of an entity is conditioned by the Supreme Force and why the entity concerned receives its reward or punishment as the case might be. A boyhood friend of Krishna, named Sudama was a poverty stricken Brahmana with genuine vedic knowledge and piety and his faithful wife had for years dinned into his ears that he should call on the famed Ruler of Bhojas, Vrishnis and Andhakas at Dvaraka, viz. Krishna who was also popular for His actions of charity. When extreme poverty hurt him so much that it ignored false notions of shyness or shame, one day Sudama decided to visit Krishna finally. His wife borrowed a fistful of flat rice from neighbours that was hidden in a dirty cloth. In the City of Dvaraka, Sudama felt it was impossible to reach Krishna, but the latter found Sudama easily and took him home. Krishna and Rukmini- God and Goddess Lakshmi-provided a dreamlike treat of services to him, which by itself was tantamount to abundant Spiritual Bliss. Krishna took away forcefully the dirty cloth hidden with the handful of flat rice as a gift to the Lord who ate half but Rukmini prevented eating the second half, presumably concerned of

exceeding the benediction contemplated. Barring the display of friendship and exchange of nostalgic memories, Sudama returned back with empty hands and on way back felt satisfied fully with the experience, although was apprehensive of his wife's possible reaction that he missed a golden opportunity! On reaching his home, Sudama was taken aback at the miracle that his wretched hut was transformed into a fullfledged Palace with heavenly luxuries! Muni Suka's explanation that the story of Sudama amply clarified the motivation of Super Force for every action. His extreme poverty would have been a result of his previous karma or action, his piety and high dedication to Almighty was his action, and the end result was a fruit of his action too; in all these cases the subtle motivation was received by Almighty and none else.

#### Maha Vishnu's 'Darshan'( Vision) to Krishna and Arjuna

In the context of Narayana Rishi, the legend of Nara Narayana assumes significance. Once, Great Sages performed a Vedic Sacrifice on the banks of River Sarasvati. A controversy engaged their attention about the issue as to Who should be the most appropriate worthy of devotion among the Trinity of Gods- Brahma or Maheswar or Vishnu. They deputed Sage Bhrighu to the Trinity to personally ascertain the fact and verify. Bhrigu visited his father Brahma first and felt insulted since Brahma did not treat him as a Sage but as a son and hence did not stand and greet. Siva no doubt embraced the Sage but he treated him only as a friend but not as a Sage. Later on, Bhrigu visited Vishnu who pretended to be busy with Maha Lakshmi initially (as the Sage kicked Him on His Chest where Lakshmi resides) but later on paid prayers, along with Lakshmi Devi. (In the process however Vishnu nipped Bhrigu's extra eyes on his body). Thus the Grand Congregation decided Vishnu as the Head of the Trinity. Suta Maha Muni narrated the memorable episode in the life of Arjuna. A pious Brahmana in Dvaraka lost a just-born child and reconciled himself as fate. Then he lost another child too and further children also were lost in succession. As the ninth child was still born, the Brahmana was wailing loud on the road- side and Arjuna happened to passby. The Brahmana out of frustration and anger shouted harshly on Arjuna and said that each time a child was dead he approached Ugrasena, Vasudeva, Balarama, Krishna, Pradyumna and others. But to no avail! Arjuna said that he would try to save the next child. He used his mystic powers, some of which secured from Indra as he was Arjuna's son, and guarded the area with diligence and attention. Unfortunately the result was negative and the tenth child too met the same fate. Arjuna took his 'Gandiva'( his own Bow and Arrows) with his full determination and travelled the entire Universe including the Planetary System and sub terrain lokas. As there was no clue yet, Arjuna decided to jump into Holy Fire pit as he could not keep up his promise to the Brahmana. Lord Krishna prevented him from doing so and asked Arjuna to join on His Chariot to ascertain as to what could have happened to the children of the Brahmana couple. They kept on going farther and farther till Krishna's Chariot horses- Saibya, Sugriva, Meghapushpa, and Balahaka- lost their way as there was complete darkness. The Sudarsan Chakra cut through the darkness as its effulgence showed the way and as the radiance was almost blinding, they realised that it was the phenomenon of Brahma Jyothi, the unparalleled Vision. There lied the Ananta-the mammoth Serpent-with thousand hoods with gems radiating fantastic light; on top of the hoods was lying Maha Vishnu comfortably with eight arms with ornaments Viz. conch shell, disc, bow and arrows, mace, the Kaustubh Gem and so on, along with His personal attendants headed by Sunanda and Nanda, His cohorts Pushti, Sri, Kirti and Aja and all His Mystic Powers. In such resonant and vibrant voice, Lord Maha Vishnu said that He was awaiting the arrival of Krishna and Arjun in search of the Brahmana boys who were purposively brought over there. Maha Vishnu asked Krishna and Arjuna

to return after their assignments were over in their births, so that they should spread the message of Dharma (Virtue).

Bhasmasura over-smarted by Lord Vishnu and burnt as ashes

As though to confirm the selection of Lord Vishnu as the Superior of the Trimurty, Suka Muni narrated the happening of Lord Siva's saving by Lord Vishnu. Accompanied by the Supreme Feminine Power 'Shakti', Lord Siva is an embodiment of Three kinds of Material Senses (Characteristics) or three 'Gunas' of Sattva (Emotion), Rajas (Authority) and Tamas (Ignorance). Thus Siva's reactions are instantaneous either as condemnations or blessings. On a spur of the moment that Lord Siva took the decision of giving away a boon to Vrikasura (Bhasmasura), the son of Sakuni-one of the Epic Villains of Mahabharata. The boon was that who ever touched the Demon's hand would be burnt to ashes! The Demon desired to experiment the efficacy of the boon by touching Lord Siva's Head itself! Lord Siva had to take to heels to save His own Head; he fled to various Demi-Gods and Lord Brahma. Finally, He reached Vaikuntha and Lord Vishnu seeing the gravity of the situation, created a Brahmana Student by His Mystic Maya ( Illusion) who met the Demon gasping for breath as he was running and chasing Lord Siva. The Brahmachari stopped Vrikasura and asked him about the problem. The Boy said that whatever was assured from Lord Siva was fake as His earlier boons were never correct and the various boons of invincibility or deathlessness given to Demons were all futile as they were all killed any way. Even in the instant case, Lord Siva's boon would be a failure too. As a proof, the demon himself could put his hand on his head, the Brahmachari said. As a result, Bhasmasura was thus tricked and as soon as his hands were kept on his head, he was burnt to ashes. This ugly situation was thus avoided for Lord Siva.

Great Rishis cursed 'Yadu Vamsa' to be destroyed

Taking a review of the substantial decrease of Earth's burden by way of innumerable killings of Evil Forces ever since Lord Krishna and Balarama were born and right from the stage of wily Poothana's obliteration, the Lords had a somewhat hesitant view in the context whether certain clans like those of Yadus were worthwhile continuing in existence. As a clan, the members were mere shadows without the Two of them, as after their exit from the earth was to take place sooner or later, the dynasty of Yadavas would be burden to the Earth! As though reflecting these views, some of the Yadu boys were playing at a pilgrimage centre, named Pindarika, as highly illustrious Sages were passing by. Out of mischief, one the boys dressed up as a pregnant woman and approached the Sages whether the 'woman' would deliver a male or female. The Great Rishis cursed the Yadu boys that the 'woman' would deliver neither a boy nor a girl but an iron club (a mace). The boys reported this incident to King Ugrasena who was afraid of the consequences. After scratching away the iron into pieces the remnants were thrown into the Sea and a fish swallowed the remainder iron lump and a hunter who caught the fish made an arrow with its pointer-end with the iron lump. In course of time following the curse, all the important personalities shifted to Prabasa Kshetra and the rest who remained back at Dvaraka destroyed each other themselves. . [Prabhasa is a holy place near Veraval Railway Station in the Junagadh region in Gujarat].

Prabhasa Kshetra- Uddhava Gita as of Lord Shri Krishna' Preachings.

A highly dedicated Devotee of Lord Sri Krishna, had the unique privilege of His teachings popularly known as Uddhava Gita, in the post- Prabhasa Yatra period and retirement of Yadu Leaders at the 'Prabhasa Kshetra'. Krishna conveyed that as a curse of Sages to some mischievous boys of the Yadu

Vamsa, the entire dynasty would soon perish due to mutual fightings and that was why the Yadu elders preferred peaceful end of their lives. The Lord said that at the express request of Brahma that He to take to mortal life for the defined purpose of reviving Dharma (Virtue) and destroying the Evil and it was time to return to His Abode Vaikuntha thus ending His Incarnation along with His Plenary Part as Balarama. Seven days hence, the Ocean would submerge the City of Dvaraka and its inhabitants. In such critical situations only when close members of a family perished and acute pain was caused that a person realised the futility of existence and the way in which material forces outweighed against the will of God; even minimal attention to the Almighty would have lightened the heavy mental strain to counter attachments created Maya the Illusion.

Detachment: Varasrama Dharma, Vidhis and Niyamas- Above all 'Satsanga'

Continuing His preachings to Uddhava, Lord Krishna defined the Practice of Detachment by way of Nivrutti or Pravrutti routes. Nivrutthi Marg would call for total abstinence and alignment of Self and the Supreme and Pravrutti Marg is by way of existence in the midst of material attractions controlled however by Regulative Principles, ie. 'Varnasrama Dharma' depending on a fourfold classification of Society viz. Brahmanas (Spiritual and Intellectual pursuits), Kshatriyas (Administration and Defence), Vaisya (Finance, Business and farming) and Sudras (Labourers and Artisans)-the Division being based on Profession, Vocation and their practice or aptitude. [The Veda Base referring to the aspect of 'practice or aptitude concepts' of the Varnasrama Dharma is: *Yasya yallakshanam proktum / pumso Varnabhivyanjakam / yad anyaprapiti drusyata / tat teniva vinirdisat.* ( *Srimad Bhagavata Canto 7, Chapter 11, Stanza: 35*), meaning there by: If one reveals symptoms of being a Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya or Sudra even if he has appeared in a different class, he should be accepted according to those symptoms of classification, regardless of birth.] Besides Varnasrama Dharma, the Regulative Principles prescribe 'Vidhis' or Moral Injunctions like refrain from meat eating ( Ahimsa or non-violence and compassion for co-living beings), consumption of intoxicants ( Purity consciousness), illicit sex (faithfulness/ loyalty), and gambling ( acquisition/austerity and sobriety). The Regulating Principles also prescribe certain optional 'Niyamas' or restraining / preventive measures viz. Internal and external cleanliness ( Bahyantara Suchi), Doing the Rosary ( 'Japam'), penance (meditation), austerity, sacrifice, dependability, hospitality, worship to Almighty; Visits to Temples; and contentment. ( Sage Patanjali's Sutras or Eight fold Observances are : 'Saucham' ( Purity), Tapas ( Penance), 'Swadhyaya' or Study, 'Santosha' ( Contentment), 'Danam' Charity) and 'Eswara Pranadanam' ( Dedication to Almighty). Akin and ancilliary to Vidhis and Niyamas, Lord Krishna highlighted certain Moral and Spiritual Values viz. humility, false prestige, laziness, possessiveness, indulgence, narrow mindedness, immaturity and ignorance arising out of lack of knowledge. To enable one's leading to the path of righteousness, Lord Krishna underlined the guidance of a trustworthy Teacher or Guide. But despite all the efforts and access to appropriate Spiritual knowledge, the hard fact still would remain that factors beyond human control like Time, Situations, placements in one's own life, societal compulsions, locational contexts and the apparent sensitivities of disease, old age, birth and death chain and the like and as such one should atleast control the manageable factors as per the Regulative Principles prescribed. The main reason for this Minimum Programme would be that a very valuable human birth available with difficulty now might not be surefire or guaranteed after the termination of the current one. Any postponement of the Exercise from one stage of existence to another would simply be hazardous since already the process commenced from Stage One of Life and would hardly suffice one's complete life span; hence the stress on the obvious before the end as death is certain while life expectancy is not. Lord Krishna gave the example of two

parrots on the same tree, one on a spree of plundering the fruits and another denying the experience to itself. The intelligent one not getting tempted was like the person strong in restraint and caution. A discreet person never assumed ownership of an action as in the case of first person pronoun, 'I', but as a result of the sense objects arising out of modes of Nature. Like the Sky, Sun or Wind, the person with self-realisation never confused Illusion for Reality. He is never angry or provoked, never negligent of worship and 'Satsanga' (Company of the virtuous and devoted), soft natured, equal minded, non possessive, respectful of others, compassionate and a conquerer of 'Shat Guna' (hunger, thirst, pain, illusion, old age and death). Krishna thus identified the detached person. At the same time, an ideal human being worships Sun through 'Surya Namaskaras', Fire (Agni) through Sacrifices, Water for purification, 'Vayu' (Air) for breath control by 'puraka' (inhaling), Rechaka (Exhaling) and 'Kumbhaka' (retaining) and 'Gayatri' Mantra and finally attain heights of nearness to 'Paramatma'.

Having elaborated the Concept of detachment thus, Lord Krishna laid immense stress 'Satsanga' (Union of Devotee and Krishna) as the most effective conduit to Himself. He stated that the way that Satsanga would lead to Himself, no other means like mysticism or 'Ashtanga Yoga', reading Scriptures, penances, Sacrifices, pilgrimages, Charity and such pious acts. Not only Demi-Gods and superior Class Celestial Beings, Sages and Godmen but even Demons, Low Category Humans, and even the wild species have all used the means of Satsang and achieved 'Mukti' (Salvation) from Me. Uddhava was therefore given the considered preaching that moral and spiritual warnings and rituals would all be replaced by intense effort to forge the oneness of the self and the Supreme. Krishna compared life with a tree emerging from two seeds, (Sin and Purity), hundreds of roots (living entities), three patterns of 'Gunas' (behavior)-Satva, Rajas and Tamas (Goodness, Passion and Ignorance), five upper trunks (Elements: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Sky); five lower trunks or sense organs (sound, touch, taste, smell and vision) and eleven 'Karmendrias' (Hands, legs, eyes, ears, mouth, nose, Genitals) and mind. There are two birds, viz. Jiva (human) and Paramatma (Krishna) and two fruits of misery and happiness, one opts for materialism and another like a Swan endeavours for eternal bliss. When Brahma's sons asked Almighty in the form of Hamsa (Swan) : 'Who are you?'; Hamsa's reply was 'We are five-the Five Elements!'. When Kumaras asked the Swan once again, the reply was 'We are two ; And That Is One Only' ! This indeed is the Eternal Truth and that again is the Essence of 'Satsang' or the Company of One, not of Two!

### The Vedic Routes of Achieving the Union

As Lord Krishna having firmly established the Concept of 'Satsang' or the Attainment of Oneness, Devotee Uddhava desired to ascertain the efficacy of the Vedic Routes leading to the same goal. After all, various rivers lead to the Ocean finally! Hence, Uddhava requested the Lord about the Practice of 'Yoga' for Mystic 'Siddhis', 'Bhakti Yoga' and Idol Worship, 'Jnana Yoga' (Power of Knowledge) and finally 'Sanyasa Yoga' (Total Renunciation or 'Sat or Truth' plus 'Nyasa' or Alliance). Perfection of Yoga for securing Mystic 'Siddhis' is one route which ought not to be misused except for Union with the Supreme. There are eighteen such Siddhis of which a yoga perfectionist aligns with Almighty by eight of them and the rest ten are to be utilised for the good of humanity: Three of the eight Siddhis are 'Anima' to transform the Yogi's body as the smallest unit to enable it to worship in God's smallest form; 'Mahima' to worship Him in the Gross form by assuming the Yogi's body as the largest; and 'laghima' to worship in Him in his lightest form and convert the Yogi's form as the lightest. The rest of five are: 'Prapti' to acquire fixation of mind against material forces, 'Parakamya' to experience whatever is desired to be seen or heard; 'Isita' to control 'Gunas' (features) of Satvik, Rajas and Tamas and 'Isita' to secure the vision of

the Lord, and 'Kamavasita' to obtain Supreme Happiness in worship to Him. Another ten Siddhis are freedom from hunger and thirst, distant hearing and vision (Doora Drishti and Sravanam), moving body as fast as mind, death as per wish, assuming any form as desired, witnessing pastimes of demi-Gods, accomplishment of desires by self, fulfilment of others' orders or as per the wishes of the self, entering another body and knowledge of past, present and future.

Lord Krishna referred to the Three Principles of Vedas or 'Trikaṇḍa': Upasana (Sacrifice, Song and Prayer), Karma or fruitive labour and Jnana (Spiritual Knowledge). [In fact, Bhagavat Gita devoted six chapters each to Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga]. To those who are fed up with materialistic life and are not keen on performing the rituals prescribed by the Scriptures Jnana Yoga is preferable, while who have desires unfulfilled, Karma Yoga would be the answer. The third alternative for a person who is neither too materialistic nor averse to perform service to the Lord, the best suited is the via-media of Bhakti Yoga. The Ashtanga Yoga including the procedures of Yama, Niyama, Asana, Paryvayama, Pratyahara, Dharma, Dhyana and Samadhi calls for the Karma Yoga. Total surrender and dedicated devotion constitutes an elaborate procedure of worship to a nicely decorated and ornamented Idol with full paraphernalia of flowers, incense sticks, camphor, fruits, coconuts, honey, milk, yogurt (all-mixed Panchamrita), sandalwood paste, lamps for lighting ghee soaked vicks, Prasadas as offerings (Bhaktshya', Bhojya, Lehya, Choshya and Paniyas), along with Vedic Hymns to describe 'Avahana' 'Argya', 'Padya', 'Achamana', 'Dhoopa', 'Dipa', 'Naivedya', etc. of 'Shodasopacharyas' (sixteen acts of service). The worship services include recitation of Vedic Prayers like Mantra Pushpam, Purusha Suktam and other Vedic Mantras. Penance by way of fasting, charity, 'Bhajans' (Group Singing and dance), 'Purana Sravanam' (hearing Puranas), visiting holy places and holy persons, performance of 'Vraths' or Sacrifices are all parts of the Bhakti Yoga. The Third Path of Jnana Yoga or the Spiritual Knowledge is the realisation of Prakriti or Maya and 'Purusha' or Paramatma as 'Avyaktam' (Unknown), 'Sasvatam' (Everlasting), 'Vishnu' (all pervading), 'Anantham' (Endless), 'Ajam' (Unborn), 'Avyaam' (Imperishable). By logical deduction, commonsense or personal discernment, Spiritual Evidence and Self-Realisation, there is a firm conviction that the Universe has a beginning and an end. The impermanency of all the contents of the Universe including the existence of the Creator Brahma, the Preserver Vishnu the the destroyer Siva (representing the Three Gunas) down the Planetary System, Demi-Gods, the entire Creation of life, let alone humanity is an extension and manifestation of that Unique Super Energy alone that exists far beyond the measures of Time, Material and Illusions. It is that finality of Truth which eludes Reality that a Jnani seeks to guess- be it by the Karma Route, or Bhakti, or Jnana Yoga or Siddhis that one targets to perceive finally! Hence the Quest for Truth and Meaning of Existence.

#### Destruction of Yadu Dynasity and Krishna 'Niryana'

Thus summarising His Preaching, Lord Krishna asked Uddhava about further doubts, and the Devotee with a very grateful visage, tears rolling down and prostrating in a trance, replied whether darkness, frost, fear and ignorance could ever countenance the brightest Sun, face- to- face and still remain unenlightened! Krishna then instructed Uddhava to travel to Badrikasram on the banks of the Holy Alaknanda River and by observing regulations of a Hermit with fulfilled vigour await the Final Call. On noticing ill-omens on the sky, Krishna also instructed His relatives, associates and wellwishers to proceed forthwith to Prabhatashetra on the banks of River Sarasvathi to avoid the horrible termination of the entire Dynasty of Yadus by mutual destruction, as a result of the cursing of Sages with whom some of the misdirected youngsters of Yadavas. The curse affected all the sub categories of the Dynasty

including Dasarhas, Vrishnis, Andhakas, Bhojas, Satvatas, Madhus and so on. As the deadly hours neared, sons and fathers, uncles and nephews, sons in law and father in laws, brothers and brothers in law had slaughtered each other until the last trace of the once glorious Yadus. The cane stalks on the beachside of the Ocean turned into fearful thunderbolts (since the particles of the iron mace which emerged from the stomach of the 'fake pregnant woman' and were ground and got scattered from the Ocean on the hay and canes) were used as killers for destroying mutually. Lord Balarama having witnessed the horrifying happenings all around sat in composure on the Ocean bed and by the power of Yoga lifted up Himself as His role in the Epic was over successfully and left the mortal remains. Lord Krishna Himself had seen the conclusion of Balarama and lied down under the shadow of a Pipal Tree with His right hand resting under head in full glory with complete ornamentation of Four Handed Form sporting His Conch shell, Sudarsan Wheel, Mace and Lotus as also His Kaustubha Jewel. His left foot toe attracted the attention of a hunter, Jara, as a bird's head and released an arrow on the target. As the hunter approached the target, he found to his greatest dismay and fear, that the targetted 'bird head' was Lord Krishna Himself! Krishna consoled the hunter who was bewildered with shivers that He Himself planned the accident on His own volition to facilitate the mortal termination of His Incarnation. His charioteer Daruka searching for the Lord found stupified Him lying in that state and on regaining his senses hurried to convey the unbelievable news to Pandavas. Meanwhile, Lords Brahma and Siva, leading Demi-Gods, full collection of Planetary Heads appeared at Prabhasa Kshetra, and Celestial Bodies showered flowers, Gandharvas sang welcome songs, and Sages of Top Order recited Vedic Hymns. It appeared that the normal movement of Time and Planets was somewhat disturbed. Lord's Own carrier Garuda appeared to carry Him to Vaikuntha. Arjuna supervised the rites of His mortal form of Paramatma who is Eternal and transferred the women and children of Yadus to Indraprastha the Capital of Pandavas and chose Vajra, a survivor of the Yadu clan as their King. [ Thus concludes the excerpts Maha Bagavata Purana]

#### Now the significant Shri Krishna Shetraas

##### Vraja Mandala- Mathura and Brindavana:

*Mathura:* Puranas signify the Uniqueness of Mathura which is called with varying names like Madhupatra, Madhupuri, Mathura or Madhura as this was described in Itihasas was rid of the torments by Madhu Daitya by Shatrughna the younger brother of Lord Shri Rama of Ramayana and more so as the Sacred Place of Bhagavan Krishna. Varaha Purana describes: *Na vidyate cha Patale nantirikshe na maanushe, Samaanam Mathurayaahi priyam mama Vasundhare/ Saa ramyaa cha sushastaa cha janmabhumistathaa mama/* (There is no other more beloved Tirtha like Mathura for me even better than those in Patala, Antariksha or Bhuloka) *Maha maghyam Prayage tu yat phalam labhate Narah, Tat phalam labhate Devi Madhuraayaam dine dine/* ( The same fruitful results that one could reap at Prayaga the Sangama Place of Three Holy Rivers of Ganga-Jamuna-Saraswati on Magha Month's Pournami is normally available each day at Mathura) *Purna Varha sahasram tu Varanasyaam hi yat phalam, Tat phala labhate Devi Madhraayaam kshanamna hi/* (Residing thousand years at Kasi is considered as fruitful as a 'Kshana' or a moment at Mathura). Similarly, the visit to Pushkara Tirtha and stay there on Kartika Pournami is indeed fruitful and that would bless a person to accomplish with Mathura Yatra. Vishnu Purana also describes that snana and darshana of Mathura Krishna on Janmashtami, Yama Dwiteeya, and Jyeshtha Shukla Dwadashi are considered to be of great consequence. Vajramandali has twelve Sacred 'Vanas' viz. Madhunvana, Kumudavana, Kamyakavana, Bahula vana, Bhadravana, Swadiravana, Shrivana, Mahavana, Lohajinghvana, Bilvavana, Bhandiravana, and the most popular

Brindavana. While each of these Vanas have their own significance, indeed Brindavana is of utmost prominence. Padma Purana underlines the special status of Brindavana: *Guhyad guhyatamam ramyam madhyam Brindaavanam Bhuvi, Aksharam Paramanandam Govindasthaanamavyayam/* (Brindavana on Earth indeed is the body of Bhagavan Srikrishna itself and is seat full of joy and even the touch of the dust would pave the way for salvation. When asked about the way to attainukti, Bhagavan Krishna smilingly replied that let 'Vraja raja' or the dust from Vraja Bhumi may fall on your head! The old name of Madhura was Madhuvana where in the days of yore Swayambhu Manu's grandson Dhruva who sparks on the sky as a Star was directed by Narada Muni to perform severe Tapasya stating *Punyam Madhuvanam yatra saannidhyam nityadaa Hareyh!* and Bhagavan Vishnu blessed him to attain stardom! Madhura on its banks flows Yamuna River and as many as twenty four main 'ghats' are spread out like Vishrama Ghat, Prayaga ghat, Kankhala ghat, Bindu ghat, Bangali ghat, Surya ghat, Chintamani ghat, Dhruva ghat, Rishi ghat, Moksha ghat, Koti ghat, Brahma ghat, Ganesa ghat, Manasa ghat, Dashashwamedha ghat, Chakra tirtha ghat, Krishna ganga ghat, Soma tirtha ghat, Brahma loka ghat, Ghantaabharana ghat, Dharapatana ghat, Sangama Tirtha ghat, Nava Tirtha ghat, and Asikunda ghat Each of these Ghats has an episode to describe such as Vishrama ghat where Krishna and Balarama rested for a while King Kamsa was killed; Asikunda Ghat is renowned as Varaha Kshetra and so on. On all the four sides of Mathura are four Shiva Mandiras viz. Bhuteshwara in the Western side, Pippaleswar on the Eastern side, Rangeswar on the Southern side and on the Northern side is Gokarneshwara. *Dwarakaadheswara* is the most well known Mandir. Besides the other Mandirs are Gatathama Narayana, Vaaraaha, Govinda Mandirs and so on. Mathura Pradakshina or Parikrama is applauded in Varaha Purana: *Mathuraam samanuprapya yastu kuryaat Pradakshinam, Pradakshini kruta tena Sapta Dwipa Vasundhara/* (Those who reach Mathura is perform a parikrama are stated to have performed the same around Sapta Dwipas from Vasundhara or Earth).

*Brindavana:* About 8 km from Mathura is Brindavan comfortably reachable by motor and on way one could see Gita Mandir. Many perform Parikrama to Brindavan daily too. Brahma Vaivarta Purana details the origin of Brindavan that in the Satya Yuga King Kedar's daughter Brinda performed intense Tapasya to attain Krishna Bhagavan [ mortal Krishna was an Incarnation in Dwapara Yuga] and Bhagavan blessed Brinda with his darshan and Brinda Devi was the principal figure in the Rasa Leelas stated to have been performed with Brinda at Brindavana by Lord Krishna the Avatar in Dwapara Yuga. The significant places on the banks of the Sacred Yamuna River are Kaliya Hrada at Nandanavana where Bala Krishna punished Kaliya serpent; Yugala ghat where Yugala Kishora Mandir with Radha Krishna Idols are present; Radhavallabha Mandir with swaambhu Shalagrama shila, Shri Ranga Mandir, Govinda Deva Mandir, Shahji Mandir, Biharji Mandir of Thakur, Krishna Balarama Mandir (Iscon), Madan Mohan (Chaitanya Maha Prabhu) Mandir, Garud Govinda Mandir, Jaipur Mandir, Radha Damodar Mandir, Radha Ras Bihari Ashta Sakhi Mandir, Kesi Ghat where Krishna decimated Kesi demon etc. Not far from Brindavan are Gokula, Mahavana, Baladeva, Nandagaon and Govardhana some 10 km from Mathura. Vraja Desha Parikrama stated to be of 84 kms of distance with a duration of 16 days would witness among others Madhuvan, Talavan, Kumudvan, Danvaktra dhwamsa, Vallabhavana, Radhakund, Govardhana, Paraseeli which Vallabhacharya followers consider this Place as Brindavana, Kamavana, etc.

*Dwaraka:* Skanda Purana in its Prabhasa Khanda describes in detail Dwaraka Dhaam's Mahatmya. *Api keetapatangaadyaah Pashavoya sarisrupaah, Vimuktaah Paapinah sarvey Dwarakaayaah prabhavatah/ Kim punarmanavaa nityam Dwarakaayaam vasantite, Yaa gatih sarva jantunaam Dwarakaa pura vaasinaam saa gatirdurlabha nyunam Muninaamuttheretasam/ Dwarakaa vaasinam drushtwaa*

*sprushtaa chaiva viseshatah, Mahaa paapa viniirmuktaah swartga loke vasantite/ Paamsavo Dwarakaaya vai vaayunaa samudiritaah, Paapinaam muktidaah proktaah kim punardwaaraabhuvi/* (By the grace of Dwaraka, all kinds of sinners born as krimi keetakas or flies, pashu pakshis or serpents- all attain salvation; what else one has to say about those who visit or reside there and become surfeit with Bhagavan Shri Krishna's darshan and worship! Those residents of Dwaraka should attain such kind of salvation as even illustrious Maha Munis with extraordinary control of physical organs and senses might possess!Dwaraka vasi's darshana or sparshana or mere touch, would destroy human's gravest sins and bestow long stay in Swarga. Even the sand blown by the wind of Dwaraka would destroy all the sins; why talk of residence in Dwaraka itself!) Such is the narration by Markandeya Maharshi in this Purana! He further describes that those persons who spend time at Lord Krishna's idol at Dwaraka are blessed and fulfilled deserving to be saluted and prostrated to. Further those devotees of Shri Krishna have the opportunity of bathing his sacred head with milk should reap the fruits performing Ashwamedha Yagna. But those devotees who, with no return favour from the Lord, perform affectionate yet devotional bathing to him should be blessed with Moksha. After the snaana, those who dry and wipe his body with a clean cloth would have his or her past and present sins. Those after bathing and dressing up, decoration of him with a fresh fragrant flower garland while the sound of conch shell is rendered and recite his sahasra naama with faith and dedication, then each word of the 'namaavali' would fetch him the fruit of giving away the daana of a kapila cow per each stanza of it. Additionally the recital of Gita, Gajendra moksha, Bhishma stava, or any of the Stotras by Maharshis would have the same benefit: *Yoga Shastraani Vedantaan yoginah Krishna sannidhou, Pathanti Ravi bimbam tu mithwaayaanti layam Hareyh/ Gitaa Naama shasram tu stavaraajastavanu smritih, Gajendra mokshanam chaapi Krishnasyaa staviya durlabham/* (Those Yogis recite Yoga shastra and Vedanta in the presence of Krishna shall break the barriers of Surya mandala and enter right into Vishnu Dhaam. The Five Maha Stotras viz. Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Vishnu Sahasra naama, Bhishma Stava Raja, Anusmriti and Gajendra Moksha are indeed the dearest Stotras of Bhagavan Shri Krishna. As briefly narrated the Mahatmya of Dwaraka from Skanda Purana, the basic and immediate cause for Lord Krishna headed by Yadavas is explained in Maha Bhagavata Purana, Vishnu Purana, Maha Bharata etc. Maha Bhagavata describes as follows: Pursuant to the termination of Kamsa, the tyrant King of Mathura -who had the discredit of imprisoning his own father Ugrasena out of ill justified ambition as well as his own sister Devaki and brother in law Vasudeva out of fear that their son Krishna, yet unborn might kill him- the two Queens of Kamsa, named Asti and Prapti, approached their father Jarasandha the evil Monarch of Magadha. Jarasandha attacked Mathurawith some twenty three 'akshouhinies' of infantry, cavalry and elephantry and challenged Krishna and Balarama. But as Krishna was to fight with massive opponents even with a minor number of Army basically with Kamsa's carry-forward loyalties, he called for his (Vishnu's) Saaranaga Dhanush with limitless arrows or his mace/ gada named Koumudi while Balarama's Hala or Plough and Musala. Thus Jarasandha despite his huge Army was no match and ran away from the battle. But he regrouped and strengthened his army again and again, each time getting routed. There were such attacks by some seventeen times. When Jarasandha was expected to attack for the eighteenth time, his allies viz, the alien mlechha forces called Yavanas headed by Kalayavana attacked Mathura with a massive thirty million barbarians of desperation and cruelty. Then Krishna and Balarama calculated that no doubt they could face the combined Army of Jarasandha and Kalayavana too but discretion being the better part of valour, especially since Yadava Army should not be hurt at all even in small number, they thought of a Master Stroke: one to eliminate Kalayavana by tricking him and another to shift their Capital of Yadavas from Mathura to Dwaraka. They planned to build a new Capital City named Dwaraka on the West Coast, a

modern City with 12 gates and all amenities and asked Vishwakarma, the Architect-cum-BUILDER ; the latter created a beautiful and well structured fortress touching the western Sea. By means of His mystic Yoga Maya or the power of Illusion, the citizens of Mathura got transferred lock-stock and barrel, over night to Dwaraka and found themselves in their own luxurious Palaces. Even as Balarama was defending Mathura, Lord Krishna attracted the attention of Kalayavana, passing singly by foot, by the main gate of Mathura; Kalayavana followed Krishna closely but always unreachable with some distance apart and led the Mleccha into a Mountain Cave. Thinking that Krishna known for his tricks had himself assumed a new form as an old and haggardly man inside the dark cave kicked him forcefully as the old man was fast asleep. Indeed, the old man was none other than Muchukunda, the son of Mandhata of Ishvaaku dynasty. He was the defender of Demi- Gods from Daityas for long in Treta Yuga and Lord Kartikeya the Commander-in-Chief appreciated Muchukunda's efforts and granted him rest and sleep till Lord Vishnu Himself as his Avatara named Krishna would bless him at a later date in Dwapara Yuga. As Kalayavana forcibly kicked Muchukunda, the former burnt off Kalayavana by his angry looks and realised Krishna as his Saviour when Krishna instructed Muchukunda to perform Tapasya. Thus Krishna got rid of Kalayavana even all the Mathura resident Yadavas got nicely transported to their new Capital Dwaraka! Incidentally, Jarasandha finally got killed by Bhimasena, thanks to Krishna's finger-sign advice to Bhima to tear Jarasandha's body into two and throw the two parts apart topse-turvey; after Bhima killed Jarasandha some thousands of Kings defeated in wars besides countless youthful girls kidnapped were liberated. Skanda Purana prescribes the method of Yatra to Dwaraka Dhaam; after satisfying with wholesome meals to good Vaishnava Bhaktas, the yatris need to sleep on the ground peacefully observing Celibacy and while travelling keep reciting Vishnu Sahasra naama, Purusha Sukta, Shrimad Bhagavatam etc. Then having taken bath in Gomati Nadi, Chakra Tirtha etc. enter the Dham with extreme devotion and total faith. The then Dwaraka township got drowned in the Sea anyway as soon as Lord Krishna disappeared and assiduous researches over considerable time reveal- though contradictory- that the ancient Dwaraka is perhaps under Arabian Sea at Kathiawad. The newly constructed Dwaraka- some 450 km from Ahmedabad- is stated to be on the banks of Gomati River but one version is that this is not Gomati but an extended body of Sea water, and that is why some call Dwaraka as Gomati Mukha where nine ghats have been constructed viz. Sangama Ghat, Narayana Ghat, Vaasudeva Ghat, Go ghat, Parvati ghat, Pandava ghat, Brahma ghat, Suravana ghat and Sarkari ghat. The Main Mandir called Dwarakaadheesh ( also called Ranchodrai Mandir but one of the devotees was stated to have transferred the earlier Shama Sundara Chaturbhuja Murti took it away to Dhakor and another similar Murti appeared in a Well at a Ladwa village and thus got replaced here); this Mandir is said to have been built in 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century. As it stands now has a shikhar height of 170 ft. its entry gate named Swarga Dwar and exit gate as Moksha Dwaar. Besides other Mandirs around Dwarakaadheesha Main Mandir, near Moksha dwaar there is Kusheswar Shiva Mandir which is significant as the legend prescribes that in case the Yatris not obtaining the Darshan of Kusheswara Linga, half of the Dwaraka Yatra Phala is taken away by Daityas. Sharada Mandir is another highlight of Dwaraka as Adi Shankaracharya established one of the Main Peethas as at Puri, Badari, Shringeri and Kanchi.

*Bet (Island) Dwaraka/ Shankho dwar:* is some 15 km from Dwaraka which in the past was a full-fledged Port before the development of Ohka Port. On way from Dwaraka to the Bet is the famed Rukmini Devi Mandir some 2 km near the Main Temple stated to have been built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. In the 'Bet' itself is the old Shamkho Narayan Mandir and the Idols of the Queens of the Lord viz. Lakshmi, Radha, Satyabhama and Jambavati. Shri Krishna Mahal also earlier called Pradyumna Mandir, besides Rancchod

and Trivikrama Mandir are there too on the Bet. In fact, there are Shivalayas, Vaishnava Temples, Hanuman and Devi Mandirs are scattered all over. The well known Gopi Talaab is nearby where Gopikas were stated to bathe often.

*Porbandar/ Sudama Puri:* Besides being the Janmabhumi or birth place of Mahatma Gandhi the Father of the Nation affectionately known as 'Bapu' in the memory of whom Porbandar is rightly proud of, the latter has the legendary fame for being the Sudama puri and a Mandir in the precincts of Porbandar in the Gardens of Rana Sahib is present with the Pratimas of Sudama and his wife were installed. Maha Bhagavata Purana describes the genuine marvel as to why, when and how the Supreme Power of Universe would reach out everywhere and anywhere to motivate actions of each particle to act or not to act. Suka Muni narrated a Story to King Parikshit when the latter got a curse from Muni's son that a flying snake would kill the King within a week's time, since the King felt humiliated as the Muni did not welcome him when he entered the Muni's Ashram; the King picked up a dead snake and 'garlanded' around the Muni's neck in deep Tapasya and as the Muni's son on return found this ugly sight, he gave the 'shaap'. King Parikshith had a genuine marvel as to why, when and how the Supreme Power of Universe reaches out everywhere and anywhere to motivate the actions of each particle of Creation critically and objectively. Hereagain, the motive force of the 'particle' to act or not to act is provided by the Supreme Force Itself! In reply, Suka Muni narrated a story to exemplify as to how, each action of an entity is conditioned by the Supreme Force and why the entity concerned receives its reward or punishment as the case might be. A boyhood friend of Krishna, named Sudama was a poverty stricken Brahmana with genuine vedic knowledge and piety and his faithful wife had for years dinned into his ears that he should call on the famed Ruler of Bhojas, Vrishnis and Andhakas at Dwaraka, viz. Krishna who was also popular for His actions of charity. When extreme poverty hurt him so much that it ignored false notions of shyness or shame, one day Sudama decided to visit Krishna finally. His wife borrowed a fistful of flat rice from neighbours that was hidden in a dirty cloth. In the City of Dwaraka, Sudama felt it was impossible to reach Krishna, but the latter found Sudama easily and took him home. Krishna and Rukmini- God and Goddess Lakshmi- provided a dreamlike treat of services to him, which by itself was tantamount to abundant Spiritual Bliss. Krishna took away forcefully the dirty cloth hidden with the handful of flat rice as a gift to the Lord who ate half but Rukmini prevented eating the second half, presumably concerned of exceeding the benediction contemplated. Barring the display of friendship and exchange of nostalgic memories, Sudama returned back with empty hands and on way back felt satisfied fully with the experience, although was apprehensive of his wife's possible reaction that he missed a golden opportunity! On reaching his home, Sudama was taken aback at the miracle that his wretched hut was transformed into a fullfledged Palace with heavenly luxuries! Muni Suka's explanation that the story of Sudama amply clarified the motivation of Super Force for every action. His extreme poverty would have been a result of his previous karma or action, his piety and high dedication to Almighty was his action, and the end result was a fruit of his action too; in all these cases the subtle motivation was received by Almighty and none else. In the vast expanse of the Sudama Mandir are the smaller Mandirs of Jagannatha, Bilweswar Mandir, Gayatri Mandir, Hingalaj Bhavani Mandir and Girdhari nath Mandir too. There is also Kedarnath Kund where yatris perform snaanas. Among the other Tirhas some distances away from Porbandar are Mula Dwaraka, Harshad Devi or Hara siddhi Mandir, Madhava Tirtha and Kamitela.

*Dakor:* Some 90 km off Ahmedabad the Capital City of Gujarat Dakor is a great attraction to Yatris, most essentially the Rancchodraya Mandir. As to how Rancchod Krishna was transferred from Dwaraka to this

Place has already been explained in describing the Dwaraka reference above. Dakor's extraordinary devotees named Vijaysingh Bodaana and his wife Gangu bhai always used to literally measure the miles of distance from Dakor to Dwaraka back twice a year to bring 'Tulasi Dala' to place at the feet of Dwarakaadheesh earlier called Rancchod Bhagavan twice a year for 82 years. As the couple became too old still persisting the yatras, Bhagavan had extreme compassion and told them that then onward there was no need to visit him but would himself come to Dakor. Then Bhagavan Rancchod travelled by a bullock cart and the royal couple installed the Pratima at Dakor itself to facilitate them to worship ever since till their final departure and absorbed them into Vaikuntha! This appears to have occurred in 1212 AD. and ever since then Kartika Purnima celebrations have never stopped there after. Meanwhile the Bodana Murti of Rancchod was stolen and was hidden locally. Once the Dwaraka Pujari visited once to Dakor and identified the Murti there but out of avarice agreed to exchange it against that much of gold in weight even as it actually weight to a Tulasi Leaf and the nose jewel of the wife of Bodana Chief's wife; simultaneously the Dwarakaadheesha appeared in the dreams of the Dwaraka Pujari and summoned him to return to Dwaraka forthwith and some six months later the Murti was recovered from a well in Dwaraka itself and that Murti was finally installed in Dwaraka Kshetra! Besides on all the Purnima days of the year, Sharad Purnima celebrations at Dakor are so significant and crowded that special buses and railways have to be organised especially from important cities, towns and villages of Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. Besides Rancchod Mandir, the other important Places to be visited are Gautami Sarovar, Maakhani Aaro where the Bodani Chief's wife used to tender with her own hands butter balls to Bhagavan and even now the processions from Dakor are halted at this place and naivedya is offered with sweetened butter and distributed! The processions are also necessarily halted at Lakshmi Mandir on the banks of Gomati Talaab.

Shri Krishna Nirvana at Balka Tirtha resting under Pepal Tree in Prabhasa Kshetra / Somnath, Gujarat: the peepal tree was on the banks of Triveni Sangama of three sacred rivers of Hiranya-Kapila- and Saraswati. Krishna was with his left leg raised and resting on the right, mistaken by a hunter called Jhara as the arrow struck the left toe of left foot fatally. The hunter mistook the toes as the moving bright eyes of a deer from a distance and rushed and begged Krishna's pardon, but Krishna forgave and granted 'mukti'. Pepal tree on the banks of holy Triveni, Sangam of three sacred rivers Hiranya, Kapila and Saraswati. With his left leg raised and resting on the right, Shri Krishna was hit by an arrow released from a distance by a hunter called Jhara. The arrow struck the toe of His left foot thereby Lord Sri Krishna got fatally injured. The Jhara poacher misread the radiance from Lord Sri Krishna's foot as that of an eye of a deer. Jhara poacher immediately rushed to Lord Sri Krishna and begged him pardon. Shri Krishna generously forgave him and blessed him with Mukthi. The place where Lord Shri Krishna was sitting beneath the Pepal tree and got struck by an arrow is known as Bhalka Theerth. Bhalka is the name of a village which is 5 km away from Somnath temple on Prabhas - Veeraval highway. Bhalla in Sanskrit means an arrow. This divine place is immortalized by a temple of Lord Shri Krishna where the marble image of the Lord is depicted in the same posture when He got struck by an arrow, with Jhara poacher kneeling in front of him with folded hands. Here the Lord is depicted in Chaturbhuja form symbolizing that He is the Supreme Lord Shri Mannaarayana. One can also find an ancient Pepal tree at the temple site said to be the same tree under which Lord Shri Krishna was resting when He got struck.

Kurukshetra: *Kurukshetram gamishyaami Kurukshetre vasaamyaham, Ya evam satatam bruyat sopi Paapaih pramuchyate/ Paamsavopi Kurukshetre Vaayuna samudiritaah, Api dushkrita karmaanam nayananti paramam gatim/ Dakshinena Saraswatya drushadvidyuttarena cha, ye vasanti Kurukshetre te*

*vasanti trivishtape/Manasaapyabhikaamasya Kurukshetram Yuddhishtara, Paapaani vipranashyanti Brhama lokam cha gacchati/ Gatwaa hi shraddhayaa yuktah Kurukshetram Kurudvah, Phalam prapnoti cha tadaa Rajasuyaasshwamedhayoh/* ( Even the mere resolve of visiting and staying at Kurukshetra would demolish sins and the dust carried by the winds from there shall indeed purify sinners and lead them to higher planes of virtue. Kurukshetra sprawls all over the region from Rushadwiti from the north to Saraswati River in the south and blessed are those who reside in this are considered to be in heavenly surroundings. The thoughts of undertaking dutiful yatra to Kurukshetra by themselves evaporate blemishes while those who actually complete the yatra as per the regulations specified would have reaped the fruits of executing Rajasuya and Ashwamedha Yagjnas-Shatapata Brahmana Upanishad). It is stated that Maharshis most initially pronounced VedaMantras at this hallowed banks of Saraswati River and it was this very tirtha that Brahma and Devas performed Maha Yagjnas and indeed it was this Sacred Land where Maharshis like Vasishtha and Vishwamitra attained Brahma Jnaana. It was this very Place that the Dharma Kshetra of Kurukshetra fought Dharma Yuddha for eighteen long days and Virtue triumphed against Viciousness and vindicated Adharma for good. It was this very Place again where Lord Srikrishna delivered the eternal message of Bhagavad Gita to posterity as the Quintessence of Veda Shastra Purano - panishads put together! The origin of Kurukshetra is vividly described in the Essence of Vamana Purana which appeared vide [www. Kamakoti.Org/](http://www.Kamakoti.Org/) Articles as also on Google as follows: At the beginning of Satya Yuga, there was a King named Ruksha of Chandra Vamsha who begot King Samvarna. On assuming Kingship, Samvarna entrusted his royal duties to his Guru Vasishtha and moved about carefree. While he was in a Forest named Vibhaja, he met a Deva Kanya called Tapati and both of them got mesmerised with each other. On return, Vasishtha Maharshi learnt of the King's infatuation as the latter was neither eating nor behaving properly. Similar was the situation with the Deva Kanya Tapati. Vasishtha learnt from his Divyadrishti that the Deva Kanya was the daughter of Surya Deva, entered Surya mandala and requested Surya for the alliance and both of them were happily married to eventually beget a boy called **Kuru** who was married to Devi Soudamini. After Kuru became the King, Kuru tried all possibilities of endearing his Praja and during his 'Dharma Paalana' or Virtuous Administration, there were no problems of poverty, thefts, misdirected judgments and health limitations and soon became a popular King. Then he travelled to become more and famous and victorious and entered Daitavana where he saw the Sacred River Sarasvati which was called Brahma Putri, Harijihva and Sudarshana Janani. He derived extreme happiness and satisfaction in the River and towards north of the River and decided to construct a 'Samanta Panchaka Dharmasthaan' spread over an Area of five yojanas width and length. It was learnt that there were five such 'Vedikaas' where Shambhu Deva performed Pancha Yagnas, of which the Uttara Veda on the banks of River Sarasvati was known as the most renowned; the Madhya Veda as popular at Prayaga Kshetra, Purva Veda was at Gaya Tirtha, Dakshina Veda was at Jagannatha puri and the Paschima Veda was at Pushkara Kshetra. King Kuru decided to add the Panchama Veda to be constructed as Samantaka Panchaka Dharmasthana. He procured a golden plough and a pair of animals to commence tilling the land. Indra Deva approached the King Kuru as to what was he desirous of doing and the reply was that he had decided to construct an 'Ashtaanga Bhumi' of *Tapah Satyam Ksamaam Damaam Krushaami Shoucham Daanam cha Yogamcha Brahmacharitaam/* or Meditation - Truthfulness-Endurance-Mercy-Cleanliness-Charity-Yoga and Celibacy which should be called Ashtanga Farming! Indra further asked: Where would be a number of ploughs and how would you procure seeds from! The reply was that Indra should not make fun of an honest endeavour as Indra left quietly. The King himself commenced tilling some four to five yojanas of land daily. Then Lord Vishnu appeared and asked the same question of Indra as to where would he secure the seeds. The King said convincingly that

the seeds would emerge from his body. Vishnu asked the King to extend his hand so that the former could plough and the King could spread the seeds. The King faithfully extended his right hand and at once Bhagavan cut off his hand with his chakra to several pieces! Kuru then extended his left hand and Vishnu sliced off that hand too to thousand pieces. The King offered his thighs one by one which too were cut. Finally King Kuru offered his head and then Vishnu was convinced that the King was very serious in his resolve and asked him to ask for a boon. Kuru replied: *Yaavadetan –mayaa krushtam Dharmaksetram tadastucha, Snaataanaam cha mrutaaaamcha mahapunya phalam twiha/ Upavaasamcha Daanamcha cha snaanam japyam cha Madhava, Homayagna –dikam chaanyacchubham Vaapyashubham Vibho/* (May this Place which I had tilled be declared as Dharma Kshetra; may this Place become a Sacred one where bathing or even dying attain Maha Punya. May the virtuous deeds of Upavaasa-Snaana-Daana-Japa-Havana-Yagna etc be paid for with multiplied fruits!) The King further prayed to Vishnu that he along with Parama Shiva should reside at this Kshetra always. Vishnu not only granted the boons asked by the King but also blessed the Hallowed Place to be called as Kuru Kshetra, that his fame and name would be eternal as long as the Universe would last, that this Kshetra called Kurujangala would be protected by Chandra naamak Yaksha, Vaasuki naamak Sarpa, Shankukarna naamak Vidyaadhara, Sukeshi naamak Rakshseswara, Ajaavan naamak King, Mahadeva naamak Agni and so on. Some eight thousand arrows-men would ensure that sinners of extreme nature would be prevented to perform bathings in the Kshetra ; there is a ‘paapa vinaashaka’ and Sacred Tirtha known as Pruthudaka or Pohovaa Tirtha here and Brahma collected the waters of various Maha Samudras, Punya Tirthas, Rivers and Sarovaraas into it! Brahmasara Tirtha: Maharshi Lomaharshana stated that Brahmasara Tirtha was originally spread from Sannihita Sarovar at Rantuk Sthaana to Ojas Sthaana and further upto Chaturmukha Sthaana; but over passage of time, the Tirtha occupied the space from Viswasvara Shaana to Asthipura and from Vriddha Kanya to Oghavati River. Half way of the Tirtha, it was believed that Rudra attained ‘Sthaanutva’ or ‘Sthiratwa’ (Solidification). Meanwhile, Maha Muni Markandeya prayed to Devi Sarasvati flowing in the form of the illustrious River obliged the Muni to accompany him wherever he wished him to lead and the Muni requested her to link up Brahmasira to Ramahlada to Kurukshetra and thus the latter assumed further significance; In the Kurukshetra Tirtha thus one secures the ‘maha phala’ of bathing and worshipping in Seven Vanaas viz. Kaamuaka Vana, Aditi Vana, Vyasa Vana, Phalaki Vana, Surya Vana, Madhu Vana, and Sheeta Vana; besides nine Sacred Rivers viz. Sarasvati, Vaitarani, Aapaga, Mandakini Ganga, Madhstra, Vaasu Nadi, Koushiki, Drushdyati or Kaggar, and Hiranyavati. Kurukshetra Thirtha Yatra needs to be initiated by obtaining the permission of the Yaksha called Rastuk, proceed to Aditya Vana where Devi Aditi was stated to have performed her Tapasya in favour of her sons viz. Devataas; proceed to Vishnu Sthaan called ‘Savana’, visit VimalaTirtha to worship Vimalaeshwara to reap the fruit of attaining Rudra Loka; Kaushiki sangama to wash off the blemishes stored thus far; Dharani Tirtha to seek relief for ‘Aparadhaas’ of devotees; Daksheswara Shiva in Dakshaashrama to attain the fruit of Ashvamedha Yagna; Shalukini Tirtha ; then move on to Saptiridadi to thrash up fears of serpents; then worship Rastuk Dwarapal for an overnight stay there for Kshama Prarthana and Abheestha Siddhi; then visit Panchanaada Tirtha, Koti Tirtha, and Jwaala Maheshwara. Pilgrims to Kurukshetra are advised to definitely perform ‘Pitru Devaarchana’ at the famed Pushkara Tirtha which was constructed by Parashurama Deva and it was believed that worship there would bestow fulfillment of wishes sought by the devotees. Surya Grahana Snaana at the nearby Sarovara called ‘Saannihitya’ is stated to provide access to Swarga after one’s life. Essentially, Brahmasara Sarovara and the adjacent Sannithisara are deemed as Kurukshetra. Puranas clarify that far well before Maha Bharata Battle, King Kuru built Brahmasara and Sanniti sara Sarovaras. However, there

is a misconception that Dwaipayana / Parashara Sarovar is Kurukshetra itself as that sarovar was actually where Duryodhana and Bhima fought the last leg of Maha Bharata Battle. Factually speaking, Brahma sara and Sannihitisara are at Thanesara township off Kurukshetra by a mile. Brahmasara Sarovara and the adjacent Sannithi sara are approx. 5 km wide and as much of length each. Parashara Sarovara is approx 13km from Thanesara. Surya grahana snaanas are normally performed at Thansara Sarovaras or specifically at Jyoti sara where Lord Krishna along with Yaduvamsheeyas arrived from Dwaraka as per the Dashama Skandha of Maha Bhagavata before the Maha Bharata Battle. It is said that apart from Surya Grahana days, Somavati Amavasyas also yield Maha Phala on performing Snana-Dana-Puja to Surya Deva. Incidentally, portions of Bharata Pita Magatma Gandhi's ashes were formally immersed in the Kurukshetra Sarovara in 1948. The Samnihita besides Brahmasara has special significance for Pitru Tarpanas: Vishnu Dharmottra script underlines: *Punah Sannihityaam vai Kurukshetre visheshatah, Archayeccha Pitrustatra sa putrastwanrunobhavet/* (At the Sannihita Tirtha inside Kurukshetra, whatever Pitru Tarpana and Shraddhas are dutifully executed are highly fulfilling in reducing 'Pitru Runa' or the indebtedness to Pitru Devatas.) Also Vamana Dwadashi, Krishna Janmashtami, Vijaya Dashami of Navaratri are noteworthy for worship at this Tirtha. Thanesara or Sthaaneshwara Tirtha already referred to in the earlier pages on Kedarnath where Shiva-Vishnu Identity was established is so significant that even sprinkling of water on one's head, let alone a snaana, would demolish bodily ailments; in fact, \*King Vena the erstwhile form of Prithu Chakravarti of Dhruva's lineage was cured of his leprosy by such sprinkling of this water! [\* King Vena was an evil doer and Maharshis of the day forcibly churned his body to destroy the evil in it and Prithu Chakravarti the epoch making Conquerer of the entire Universe emerged and eventually he controlled Bhu Devi ran away from his control in the form of a cow but Pruthu subdued her and forced her to yield that kind of milk as various beings ranging from Devas to all celestial beings, Danava-Rakshasa- Daithyas, Rishis, humans, Nagaadi Patala vasis etc in the form that they desired like Devas sought Amrita, Danavadis desired blood, Manushyas asked for foodgrains, Nagas wanted poison and Rishis opted for Tapas! Hence Bhudevi is since named as Prithvi after Pruthu Chakravarti!] Pandavas worshipped Sthaneshwara before Maha Bharata battle for victory. *Chandra Kupa* (well) is in the midst of Brahmasara Sarovara land where Yudhishtara installed 'Vijaya Stambha' after the victory at the Battle. *Bhadra Kali Mandir* not far from Sthanu Tirtha's Shiva Mandir is one of the 51 Shakti Peethas aforementioned as at Kurukshetra where Devi Sati's right ankle bone fell. *Bana Ganga Tirtha* some kilometer from Brahmasara is the Place where Arjun of Pandavas hit his arrow to let a flow of water spring from Earth to quench the thirst of Bheeshma Pitamaha the grand father of Kaurava Pandavas. Quite near to Thaneshwar is *Naabhikamal Tirtha* where Brahma was materialised from the Lotus top that emerged from Lord Vishnu's navel where Brahma's one of rare temples in Bharat besides a Vishnu Mandir too are situated. From Kurukshetraby a less than a km are *Karna Kheda* where Dana Karma gave away considerable charity to Brahmanas before the Great Battle of Kaurava Pandavas of Maha Bharata. From Karna Kheda is the *Aapaga Tirtha* where Pitru Tarpanas are performed especially on Bhadrpada Krishna Paksha Chaturdashi afternoon. In the adjacent neighborhood of Kurukshetra are *Narakataari* where Bhishma the grand father of Pandavas and Kaurava cousins was laid down on Shara Shayya or bed of arrows awaiting the arrival of Uttarayana to end his life as he had the boon of so doing by his mother Ganga Devi. *Kubera Tirtha* is on the banks of Saraswati River where Kubera the Lord of Wealth performed a famed Yagjna. *Markandeya Tirtha* near Kubera Tirtha again on Saraswati River Banks performed worship to Surya Bhagavan and attained final Salvation after living through 'Yugaantar' and beyond Kalpas. *Dadhichi Tirtha* near Markandeya Ashram is the Illustrious one where Maharshi Dadhichi- the son of Bhrigu Maharshi the Brahma Manasa Putra or the mind born son of

Brahma gave away in charity to Deva Chief Lord Indra Deva the Maharshis backbone from which Devas materialised Vajrayudha to destroy Vritrasura the most invincible Demon Son of Vishwarupa Maharshi the son of Twashata in a Brahma Yajna. Dadhicha mastered the Narayana Kavacha. *Aditi Kunda* was the Ashram of Devi Aditi the wife of Maharshi Kashyap the mother of Devas who gave birth to Vamana Deva the Avatar of Vishnu. Besides, there are also Soma Tirtha, Karna Vadha Tirtha, Jayaghara where Arjuna killed Jayadratha who killed the famed Abhimanyu and took his revenge by stopping Sun set as an illusion created by Lord Krishna as Arjuna swore that Jayadratha would be killed before Sunset.

*Parashara-father of Veda Vyasa- Hrada* or the Ashram of Parashara and the Sarovara nearby where Duryodhana on the last eighteenth day of Maha Bharata Battle challenged by Bhima, Duryodhana to come out from hiding and entered into a duel or one- to- one -battle and finally got killed by Bhima.

*Jyotishara Tirhta* is the Place where the epoch making **Bhagavad Gita** was rendered to Arjuna which is meant for posterity too.

Puri Jagannath: Shri Jagannadh is among the foremost four ‘Dhaams’ of Bharata Varsha, viz. Badarinath in Satya Yuga, Rameshwar in Treta Yuga, Dwarka in Dwapar Yuga and Jagannadha in Kali Yuga. This Dhaam is called with several names such as Shri Kshetra, Purushottama Puri, Shankha Kshetra as it has the outline of Conch shell or Vishnu Bhagavan’s ‘Panchajanya’ as also as Shakteyas call it as Uddiyan Peeth since the navel of Devi Sati’s Yajna Swarup fell here as one of the major Shakti Peethas. The legendary belief is that in the distant past, there was the worship of Neelachal and on its top there was Nila Madhava Temple and as the Mountain eventually came down to the ground level as the Nilachala Chhatra where Jagannadha Puri exists now. Skanda Purana gives the origin of this Purushottama Kshetra in details as follows from the Essence of Skanda Purana published vide [www.Kamakoti.Org/](http://www.Kamakoti.Org/) news:Sage Jaimini told the Munis at Naimisharanya that King Indradyumna, an ardent devotee of Vishnu was keen in having a ‘darshan’ of the Idol of Neela Madhava at the Temple situated in the Nilachal Mountain’s cave, on the coastal side of East Bharatavarsha, in the Utkal Region. The King asked his Priest to ascertain the route and arrange for the trip. One of the Pilgrims who returned from the famed Temple in the foothills of Nilachal Mountain (who perhaps was Bhagavan Jagannatha Himself) described the route to the Royal Priest that the Temple was in Purushottama Kshetra near a holy pond known as Rohin adjacent to a place called Odhra and that there was a Temple of Vasudeva besides which there was a hermitage called ‘Shabardeep’ leading to the path of Jagannath Temple. The Royal Priest’s younger brother *Vidyapati* was approved by the King to make an initial trip so that the King would perform the ‘Yatra’ (expedition) subsequently. Vidyapati and party undertook a tedious and tiring journey to the Ekamvaran forests at the foothills of Mountain and at the Shabardeep hermitage met *Vishvavasua*. Both Vidyapati and Vishvavasua visited the Place after a steep ascent of the Mountain and finally reached the Rohin Pond and after a bath had Darshan of Neela Madhava. Vidyapati was overwhelmed by the thrilling experience of Jagannatha’s darshan and prayed to Him to his heart’s content. Vidyapati was told by Shabar Vishvavasua that several Devas frequented the Temple and brought expensive gifts and garlands to the Lord; when Vidyapati returned back to King Indradyumna the former showed the flowers which never withered as they were celestial! But Vishvavasua gave the disheartening news to Vidyapati that the latter would not be able to have a darshan of Neela Madhava, although something better might happen! Vidyapati was advised not to disclose this fact to the King on his return to the Kingdom as the King might be highly discouraged. Even as Vidyapati returned and was describing the rapturous darshan that he had of Neela Madhava, Sage Narada appeared and desired to accompany the King on his way to the Purushottama Kshetra. The King and his large entourage set for the journey and reached the banks of

River Mahanadi for an overnight stay before proceeding to the Jagannatha Temple next morning. The King of Utkal informed the senior King Indradyumna that there was a very heavy sand storm and the Idol of Neela Madhava was underneath a huge heap of debris. Luckily Sage Narada was with Indradyumna and consoled the latter and assured him that Lord Jagannatha was extremely merciful and that something memorable would happen! Next morning the King's full entourage crossed River Mahanadi, worshipped Lord Purushottama at 'Eakaamrechhetra' and further proceeded to Kotishwar Mahalaya to perform Puja to 'Tribhuvaneswara'. The latter appeared before Sage Narada and instructed that King Indradyumna should perform hundred Yagyasa; that Lord Jagannatha would manifest Himself from under the debris; that a Vata Tree with four branches would have to be carved out by Viswakarma the Celestial Artist as Four Idols of Lord Jagannatha, Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra the sister of the former brothers and 'Sudarshan Chakra'; that He (Tribhuvaneswara) along with Devi Durga would be present at the top entry of the conchshell shaped Purusha Kshetra; that Lord Brahma would install and consecrate the Holy Idols for the everlasting benefit of generations ahead and the dream and perseverance of King Indradyumna would become fruitful. Sage Narada assured that Lord Tribhuvaneswara's instructions would be followed in full letter and spirit. From there the caravan moved to Nilakantha Mahadeva and worshipped Mahadeva and Durga. The King was anxious to reach the Place where Lord Jagannatha was under sand; he prayed to Him as though he could visualise the Idol and there emerged a voice from the rubble assuring the King that he would soon have His appearance. Since the first task to be performed was to organise the hundred Yagnas as directed by Tribhuvaneswara, Narad was anxious to take up the construction of the Temple of Lord Nrisimha as that was the Place to complete the Yagnas. Sughat, the son of Viswakarma completed the construction of the Temple within five days, while Vishwakarma made the Idol of Nrisimha which was installed by Narada. Thereafter the task of carving wood for the four major Idols of Jagannath, Balabhadra, Subhadra and Sudarshan Chakra was taken up and a Celestial voice came saying that the Idols would emerge on their own, that the oldest worker be sent inside the Main Gate which should be closed till the job was over, that the sound of drums be kept on continuously till the job was going on inside to cover up the sounds from there, that if somebody heard the sounds from inside he would be irrevocably deaf, and that somebody saw what was happening inside that person would be blind for ever. On the fifteenth day, a Celestial Voice emerged that all the Idols were manifested. Thereafter the heavenly voices kept on giving instructions about the colour schemes of the Idols ( Deep blue like clouds for Jagannatha, white for Balabhadra, red like rising Sun for Subhadra and deep red for Sudarshan), the ornament details and so on. As the Idols were getting ready with all finishing touches, Indradyumna was in trance and asked Jagannatha for nothing excepting salvation from the mortal life. Narada, the King and the entire entourage entered the Sanctum Sanctorium chanting 'Dwadasaakshara Mantra' (Om Namo Vasudevaya) in praise of the Lord Jagannatha, 'Purusha Suktam' addressed to Balabhadra, 'Sri Suktam' for Subhadra and appropriate Vedic Mantras for Sudarshana Chakra. Narada visualised the various articles required for the Consecration Ceremony and were secured by the King. A Palace was built for Brahma and three Chariots were readied for the three Deities; the required number of horses-sixteen to Jagannatha, fourteen to Balabhadra and twelve to Subhadra-were readied too. The mast on top of the Chariot of Jagannatha was made with Garuda Vahan (The Lord's Carrier), that of Balabhadra had a plough, and of Subhadra's chariot was a Lotus. Indeed the King was so fortunate that the wherewithall for the Function was instantly procured by Sages and Devas! Finally, at the 'Muhurat' time, Lord Brahma performed the Consecration on Suddha Visakha Ashtami on Thursday with Pushyami as the Nakshatra, as witnessed by Devas, Yakshas, Kinnaras and Maharshis! The famous nine day **Ratha Yatra** commenced on Suddha Ashadha Vidiya and returned from the banks of Bindu Tirtha on the eighth day. Sage Jaimini

explained that Lord Brahma clarified to Raja Indradyumna about a doubt as to *why Jagannath assumed the Wooden Form of Idols*. The 'Daru' (Wooden) Idols represent 'Duhkha vidarana' or destroying of distress and bestowing of endless happiness; as Srihari is 'Darumaya'. He therefore manifested in wooden form. At the time of 'Srishti' (Creation) following Pralaya, Parabrahma (The Supreme Being) manifested in the Form of Vedas or the mix of 'Sabda Brahma' and 'Artha Brahma'. Bhagavan Balabhadra is of Rig Veda Swarup, while Subhadra is of Yajur Veda Swarup. Nrisimha is of Sama Veda Swarup and Sudarshan is of Atharva Veda Swarup. If a composite view is taken, the Deities thus represented all the Veda Swarupas and Jagannatha is the sum total and likewise all these forms are Jagannatha Himself. The 'Vata Vriksha' on the Sea Bed at the time of Pralaya was thus the depiction of Bhagavan and the Wooden Idols made out of the Tree are His Symbols! The Sacred Jagannatha Mandir is very wide and large within a courtyard with four major gates, the principal Mandir with four gates comprising three portions, one being the 'Sri Mandir' with its minaret which is the highest in which Jagannatha is set up with three huge and most impressive semi ready Vighras of Jagannatha in the middle, Devi Subhadra the sister and Baabhadra to the extreme left with their half carved hands shown up as though blessing the Universe; the second portion devoted to Jagan Mohana Mandir and the third portion as Mukha shaala including a Bhog Mandap. The Main Mandir has the Simha Dwara in the Eastern side, Ashwadwaar in the Southern side, Vyaghra dwaar in the Western side and Hasti Dwaar in the Northern side. Facing right outside the Basic Mandir or the Sanctum is the Aruna Sthambha and having performed a Pradakshina or circumambulation of the Pillar, one enters the right side of the gate into the Sanctum to vision of the most thrilling experience of Jagannatha Tri- Vighras. Opposite the Sanctum, there is a small Vishwanatha Linga; to signify the Linga, the story narrated in the Jagannatha Temple is that a Brahmana had a dream that only after performing Vishweshwara Lingaarchana at Kasi only that Puri Jagannatha darshana and puja would become fruitful. Outside the Pradhana Mandir, an ascent by 25 stepped ladder would lead to a 25 divisioned view of Prakriti or Nature. From the second 'Praakaara' of the Main Temple Dwara one could view the Prasada Market within the Temple itself. Further in the Temple are Agajanana Natha Ganesha, Vatera Maha Deva, Pata Mangala Devi, Satyanarayana Bhagavan, and Vata Vriksha famed as Kalpa Vriksha, Bala Mukunda Vata Patra shaayi, Ganesha Mandir called Siddha Ganesha, Sarva Mangala Devi and so on. In front of the Jagannatha Nija Mandir is a Mukti Mandala with a Simhasana or Throne where Brahma himself used to be seated. Behind the Mukti Mandap is the Mukta Nrisimha Mandir and most significantly Vimala Devi Mandira, the Shakti Peetha of the Kshetra, followed by Sarasvati, Lakshmi Mandiras and in between that of Nila Madhava Mandir and many such other Temples. Special Festivals are organised from Vaishakha Shukla Tritiya to Jyeshtha Krishna Ashtami when Vighras of Madan Mohan, Rama Krishna, Lakshmi- Sarasvati, Pancha Mahadevas viz. Nila kantheshwar, Markandeshwar, Lokanatha, Kapala Lochana, and Jammeshwara Utsava Vighras are taken to Chandana Tataka or Sarovara for bathing and later on for Nauka Vihara or boat sail. On Jyeshtha Shukla Ekadashi, Rukmini harana by Lord Krishna is enacted in the Mandir itself. On Jyeshtha Purnima day, the Vighras of Jagannatha, Subhadra and Balarama are duly bathed and brought to Snaana Mandapa where 108 ghadas of Sacred waters are engaged to bathe the Vighras; it is stated that after the bathing ceremony, Bhagavan Jagannatha gives the Swarupa as Lord Ganesha only for a fortnight the Mandir is re-opened. *The famed Annual Ratha Yatra of Lord Jagannatha* is scheduled to take place on *Ashaadha Shukla Dwiteeya*/ Three chariots which are large and roomy and the first one is to install Lord Bala Rama, the second one to accommodate Subhadra Devi and Sudarshana Chakra and the third one exclusively for Lord Jagannatha himself. By the evening the Chariots reach the Gundicha Mandir. On the second day the Idols are placed in the Mandir and provide darshan to the masses for seven days till Dashami and return. These nine days

are called that Jagannatha and other Murtis provide what is called ‘Aadapadarshana’ and this darshan in a year is considered as most significant. On Shravan Amavasya, Jagannath’s ‘Sevik Utsav’ or Services Festival is celebrated. On Shravan Shukla Paksha Dashami ‘Jhoolan Yatra’ or Swing Travel Festival is celebrated. On Janmashtami the Lord’s Birth day is performed with great pomp and show. On Bhadrapada Krishna Ekadashi the Kaliya Serpent’s Damana is observed. Like wise, Bhadrapada Shukla Ekadashi for Parshwa Parivarta- notsava, Vamana Dwadashi; Sudarshana Vijayotsava on Ashwiyuja Purnima, Navaratri Festivities and Vimala Devi Utsava and so on are observed, besides on all significant days concerned. Incidentally, Jagannaatha Maha Prasad Mahima is universally reputed as it is blemishless and consumed without restrictions of ‘Uchchittashtata dosha’ or eating of the remains of what others already ate or handled by others etc and hence the adage of *Sarvam Jagannaatham!* As regards the ‘Snaana prakriya’ or bathing at this Tirtha, major Places for the purpose are Mahodadhi or Samudra itself especially at Swarga Dwaara or the Sea Shore which is walking distance of a km. or so from the Main Dwara of the Mandir itself, besides Rohini Kund, Indradyumna Sarovar, Markandeya Sarovar, Shweta Ganga, Chandana Taalaab, Lokanaatha Sarovar, and Chakra Tirtha, all not very distant. Other important Mandirs in Puri are Gundicha Mandir already referred to above in the context of the Ratha Yatra about a Km. plus; Kapala Mochana in the South West of the Main Mandir; *Sakshi Gopal Mandir* ( see the reference of Sakshi Gopal Mandir later); Amaramuth right before the Simha Dwaara or the Main Gate of the Main Mandir; Gambhira Math / Radhakanta Math on way to Swarga daara of the Sea, where Chaitanya Maha Prabhu lived for 18 long years; Siddha Bakul where Haridasa Bhajana Sthal is active; Govardhana Peeth or one of the Four Maths established by Adi Shankaraacharya viz. Kanchi Kama Koti, Shringeri Sharadamba, Dwaraka Math, and now the Puri Math, besides of course Badari; Kabira Math at Swarga Dwara on the Sea shore where Patala Ganga Kupa or Well is and where Sant Kabir stayed for some time; Lokanatha Mahadeva Linga Mandir within water also called Shiva Ganga and Chakra Tirtha and Chakra Narayana Mandir opposite Bedi Hanuman Madir or shackled Hanuman since once Hanuman left for Shri Rama Navami Celebrations to Ayodhya and returned and thus is chained ever since! Indeed this Purushottama Kshetra is distinct as *Shankha Kshetra* since it has the Form and Shape of a Conchshell like ‘Pancha janya’. This Shape is explained and represented by Maha Deva since on the Western side is Vrishabhadhwaja, Eastern side is Neeka Kantha, Centre is Kapala Mochana and Arthaasani Devi on the North. This is also the Abode of Eight Devi Peethas: Vata Moola of Jagannatha Mandir is Mangala Devi, on the western side is Vimala Devi, Shankhaakara Prishtha or the Rear Form of Shankha is Sarva Mangala Devi, Eastern side is Marichi, Northern Side is Ardhaasani and Lamba Devi, and Dakshina is represented by Kala Ratri and Chandika. Also, Vateshwara, Kapalamochana, Kshetrapaala, Yameshwara, Markandeshwara, Ishana, Vishweshwara and Neela kantha on the eight places of the Shankha is another explanation.

Sakshi Gopal: is hardly 4-5 km away from Puri and that is why yatris normally worship at Jagannaantha Mndir and proceed to Sakshi Gopal and nearby Radhika Mandir too. One should normally perform snaana and then seek Gapala Darshana and puja offering Tulasi dala maalas to the Deity and fragrant flowers like jasmynes to Devi Radha. There is an interesting legendary back ground stated in connection to the Sakshi Gopal Mandir: once an old Brahmana desirous of walking up to Sakshi Gopala Mandir from Puri and as in olden days there were neither buses or trains and not even proper roads. On way, the old Brahmana met a Brahmana youth and he too was desirous of Gopala darshana. The youth took great care to the Old companion and became friendly. In fact, the youth took excellent care and service to the aged Brahmana. They both had very fulfilling darshana and spent enjoyable time on the return to Puri. The old

Brahmana was well to do while the youth was not only poor but an orphan too. On the return journey itself the old man decided to marry off his daughter to the youth and conveyed so on the way back. On arrival at Puri both reached the house and conveyed the wedding news to the daughter who readily felt happy, but the sons had other plans of a rich boy in the neighbourhood and even proposed to the boy and parents awaiting the father's final return and consent. There came a tussle between the two families and the matter was referred to the King. The latter asked the Brahmana youth to whom the promise was made asked whether there was any evidence when the old man conveyed the wish to do so. The youth replied that Sakshi Gopala himself was the evidence. The youth went back to the Mandir and in great faith asked the Deity in privacy. A voice was heard that the youth should return and Gopala would follow the youth, but should not look back at any cost, lest only the Gopala Pratima would follow but not Gopala himself. The jingling sound of Lord Gopala's anklets continued all the way back and the youth was happy to have really brought Gopala himself. The King and his court's men besides the family members heard the jingling sounds and when the youth turned back finally the King and all concerned as also the youth were amazed to witness the Sakshi Gopala's Idol standing stilled. The King then performed the wedding of the youth with great pomp and show. He also made elaborate plans for installing the new Vighraha of Sakshi Gopal in a Vijaya Yatra in the premises of Jagannatha Mandir itself. In fact, the 'Naivedya bhog' daily offered to Jagannatha used to be first offered to Sakshi Gopal in the Main Mandir premises. But Lord Jagannath appeared in the dreams of the King that this new Vighraha had actually entered the Satya narayana Idol at a Mandir some 5-6 km away from Jagannatha Mandir; the King then worshipped that Satya narayana Temple very often and that Temple got intensified in its popularity. Meanwhile the Sakshi Gopala in the premises of Jagannatha Temple lost its sheen as the latter was dejected without the company of Devi Radha. In course of time, the Mahapatra or the Head Purohit of Jagannatha Temple gave birth to a female child with the 'Amsha' of Vrshabheswari Kumari and she was called Lakshmi. She came of age gradually but her father Bilveshwar Mahapatra started noticing that the Mala or garland of flowers as decorated around the Sakshi Gopal's neck in the previous night was reappearing on Lakshmi's bed; this coincidence came to be the talk of the town. The King installed a Radha Mandir in the premises of Sakshi Gopal and Mahapatra decided to marry off his daughter Lakshmi at the same Muhurat of Devi Radha's installation. But Lakshmi passed away at the very same time of Radha's installation! As all these events happened on Kartika Shukla Navami, this day of the year is celebrated with the Darshan of Sakshi Gopal and Devi Radha as exist in the premises of Jagannatha Temple as also at the original Sakshi Gopal Temple off Puri!

Pandaripura: Another very auspicious and popular Tirthas in Maharashtra is Pandarpur which is keenly worshipped and frequently visited by Bhaktas and by Yatis especially on Ekadashis, more so as this happens to be the Dham of Vithoba and Rakhumayi (Devi Rukmini) besides the permanent Places of Tukaram, Namdeo, Ranka banka, Narahari and such other illustrious Sants. Maha Bhakta Pundareeka was originally responsible for the installation of the Idols on the Sacred banks of River Bhima also called Chandrabhaga. The installed Idol Vithoba carved in black stone stands on the legendary stone which Maha Bhakta Pundarika threw at Bhagavan to stall his entry into his room where his beloved parents were about to sleep, even with his full knowledge that Bhagavan himself was waiting the Bhakta's door step! The Idol is standstill with both Bhagavan's hands resting on his 'kamar' or both sides of his back. Devi Rakhu mayi is installed in a separate Mandir in the vicinity. Mandirs of Balaram, Satyabhama, Jambavati and Radha Devi are outside nearby. On the banks of Chandra bhaga River are the Chandra bhaga Tirtha, Soma Tirtha and so on as also Narada Mandira and Ten Shiva Lingas, besides Vishnu Pada Imprint

besides the Mandirs of Gapalji, Janabai, Ekanath, Namdev, Jnaneeshwar and Tukaram. The legendary background of Pundareeka's installation of Vithoba is as follows briefly: A youth named Pundarika was living in a forest village with his aged parents named Janudeva and Satyavati and originally he was quite an obedient son but after wedding, he started ill treating them to a point that they decided to leave for Kasi even till their death. Pundarika came to know of the plan and he too decided to accompany the parents along his wife. On way to Kasi, he harassed the parents to their great discomfort. In a village on way, they were too tired and halted for a few days at an Ashram, even as Pundarika intensified his maltreatment to his parents. One night he dreamt that two maidens named Ganga and Jamuna provided great service at the Ashram; but after all it was not dream but reality. Pundarika tried next morning to talk to them and indeed their names were as per the dream. They gave him a curt talk and said that a person who treated his parents ill were like worse than animals as even beasts would not treat the parents as he did. Pundarika felt a shock and suddenly realised that parents were like Gods and since then there was a sea change in him. His bhakti to parents as well as to Vishnu got intensified; he had since treated the parents like Gods and Lord Vishnu was so pleased that he appeared at Pundarika's door step. Even while the latter realised that Vishnu himself was standing out, he did not want to disturb the parents who were about to sleep after their meals so affectionately and devotedly he gave to them just then. To ensure that Vishnu should not enter the hermitage, he threw a brick outside to let the Lord know that the parents be better not disturbed! The Lord correctly got Pundarika's message and waited at the door step. After the parents slept off peacefully, Pundarika came out and apologetically fell at the feet of Vishnu and mumbled 'Oh Lord, I did not want to leave on your arrival as I was just putting my parents to sleep! Do pardon me! The Lord was so moved that he offered to grant a boon to him and rightly Pundarika asked that he be near to the Lord for ever! The latter agreed to do so and said that by he be henceforth known as Vittoba since Pundarika addressed the Lord by that very name and the Place wherever the bhakta would install his Idol be known as Pundari pura!

Udipi: Inside the long stretch of Parashurama Kshetra right from Western Ghats of Bharat coastline down to the Arabian Sea, covering Gokarna to Kanyakumari, Udipi is also an important insider of the Kshetra where Chandradeva himself performed long Tapasya to Maha Deva and the latter granted his darshan in the form of Chandra sekharas Shiva Swarupa as at Udipi of the present day as Rajatapeetha pura, Roupya pitha pura and Shivali being nearest big Tirtha from Mangalore Railway station; from Mangalore to Udipi is of a distance of 25 km approx. Udipi is the illustrious Place of Madhvacharya Matha in the Ananteshwara Mandir as Achyutaprakashacharya the preceptor of Madhvacharya instructed the latter to be the Head of the Matha. Just as Adi Shankaraacharya propounded the Advaita Discipline of Hindu Thought that Paramatma is just One and Absolutely Singular, Madhvacharya deviated from that thought and distinguished Paramatma from Jeevatma or the Atma Within viz. the Soul inside a Being with a Life-Span or a perishable Entity without being ever Permanent which Paramatma is. The Madhva Matha is thus the nucleus of the Dwaita Thought essentially existent in the premises of the Ananteshwara Mandir. *Krishna Matha* is in the same premises being the North east of Ananteshwara Mandir. On the ceiling of Krishna Mandir are the hanging decorations of silver leaves and golden flowers in garland forms. As one enters, there is an Idol of Madhvacharya and before that is Lord Krishna's Shalagrama Shila as also of Garuda, besides the same brass vessels with which Madhvacharya performed puja himself. On the four sides of Krishna Mandir are eight Mutts of the Sishyas of Madhvacharya; the core sishyas of the Acharya are in what is called 'Atyokrishta' parampara or the lineage at Palimar Matha, while Admar Matha is for the sishyas of Nrisimha Tirtha and so on. Abjaranya Tithi is significant as that was the Sacred Place

where Chandra Deva achieved Maha Deva's darshan as Chandra sekhar. Indrani Tirtha on a hill top some 2km from Udipi is stated as the Place where Shachi Devi secured the Darshan of the Five Faced Durga as a Swayambhu Shala grama and a Mandir was set up eventually. Also there is a chain of Durga Mandirs in four directions of Udipi at Belur in South, Kaanarpadi in west, at Puttur in North, and at Kadiyali in South- all within a range of 1-3 km. Similarly there are four Subramanya Temples in the precincts of Udipi as Mangoidu, Tangodu, Mricchila kodu and Ariyodu- all being of repute. On the banks of Arabian Sea nearby, Madhvacharya also set up Badaa Bhandeshwara Bala Rama where Samudra snaanas are performed at the timings of Surya- Chandra Grahanas, Amavasyas, and other festival days. It is stated that Parashu Rama set up Seven Mukti Kshetras on the banks of Arabian Sea at Rajhatapeeth, Kumaraadri, Kumbhha Kashi, Dhvajeshwara, Shankara Narayana, Gokarna and Moovva.

together each year drawing some 5 lakhs with no exaggeration.

Waavi ( Sacred Krishna River): On way from Pune to Mahabaleshwar, almost near the latter, is Waayi is am famed Tirtha Sthaana is Waayi is right on the Sacred *Krishna River which actually originates from Jor Village* near Waayi, ie. Wai Taluk, Satara District, near Mahabaleshwar. Just as when Brihaspati ( the Deva Guru) enters Simha Raasi, that period is supposed to be extremely auspicious for bathing in River Godavari, in the similar way, the period when Brihaspati enters Kanya Raashi is considered most propitious for Snaanas at this Vairaja Kshetra of Waayi for the year. On the banks of Krishna River at Waayi are the noted Mandirs of Yagnewshwara Shiva, Maruti, Shyama Varna Rama, and Bhanu Ghat, Joshi Ghat and several other Mandirs like Soneswar, Hatakeswar, Badreshwar, Menavaleshwar in Nana Phaphadnaveshwar Village, and so on. This Sacred Tirtha on the banks of River Krishna, history reveals that Bhagavan Shri Rama along with Devi Sita and Lakshman took baths and Pandavas during Vana Vaasa too had their dips in the Holy Krishna. This Illustrious River Krishna passes through Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh finally merging at Hamsala Divi into the Bay of Bengal Sea and as it passes there are fertile lands causing rich fields of food grains and greeneries. River Krishna has large Tributaries such as Tunga Bhadra Rivers, Kudarli River, Venna, Koyna, Bhima, Mala prabha, Ghata prabha, Yerla, Varna, Dindi, Palera, Moosi, Tarli, Dugdha Ganga, and so on. Among the popular Mandirs on the Sacred Krishna are Yalguresha near Sangli, Amaravati, Kanaka Durga near Vijayawada, Shrishaila Maha Jyotir Linga at Srishailam, Lord Narasimha Swami at Mattapalli in Nalgonda and Vedapalli near Jaggayyapet and Dattateya Temples at Makal all in Andhra Pradesh and Raichur in Karnataka.

Yadagirigutta: is some 60 km from Hyderabad with the famed Lakshmi Narasimha cut out in a cave, mentioned in Skanda Purana as Rishi Aradhana Sthala popular as Vaidya Narasimha to cure chronic diseases due to adverse planetary effects. The legend states that Yadarishi, the son of Rishyashringa Maharshi did penances and the Lord appeared in five forms as Jwala, Yogananda, Gandabherunda and Ugra Swami and thus this Place is known as Pancha Nrisimha Kshetra!

### Shri Ramanuja Sampradaya

Shri Ramanujacharya had set up 84 Peethas and the following 'parampara' or generations of Kavitarika Simha, Sarvatantraswatantra, Vedantaacharya Shrivenkatanadha Deshika or in short Vedanta Deshika etc. Also in the 'sampradaya' or lineage, there are two major differences of 'Vadakalai' or Uttarara Kalaa and 'Tenkulai' or of Dakshina Kalaa. In the first category, the prominence is of Vedanta Deshika writings and

in the second Tenkulai category Shri Varavara Muni's 'parampara' was dominant. Thus the respective writings and the beliefs became significant and the Peethas so sprang up were diverse too. Yet another difference is that 'Ashrama' restriction had not been inevitable, as for instance the 84 Peethas set up by Ramanujacharya were invariably by 'grihasthas' subsequently might have taken to 'Sanyasa' or Renunciation. . The more important Vaishnava Sampradaya Mathas as came up with passage of time are the following:

*Ahobila Matha:* with Shri Lakshmi Nrisimha Bhagavan and Devi Lakshmi as the Deity of worship at Ahobila and the generation of the 'Mathaadhikaris' of the Heads has very large list of 45 plus especially of Shathagopas, Parankushas and Vedantas. *Shri Parakala Matha* essentially based in Mysore with the 'araadhya devas' as Shri Lakshmi Hayagrivas and the Acharyas are all titled as Swamis. The list of the Acharyas is of the 34<sup>th</sup> generation plus. *Shri Totadri Matha:* basically at Vaanmaamlai or Totadri with the Upasya Devatas being Shri Vara Manga Devi and Shri Deva Nayaka Bhagavan. The lineage of Acharyas is 28 plus. *Shri Prativaadi bhayankara parampara:* Established by Shri Prativada bhayankaracharya, who had three disciples viz. Annanappa, Anantacharya and Alakiyamanavaalappa Perumal of Tirunarayana - pura. Of all the tree disciples, Annanappa's following had become most dominant with a long lineage, with Ekamberu - maanaarappa. Anantaacharya had lated for three generations while the third Shishaya could not inspire further following. Uttara Bharata Sampradaaya: Shri Ramanuja Acharya's following got spread across Uttara Bharata, especially Govardhana Peetha, Shri Acharya Peetha and so on. Shri Varada Muni's shishya in the Varadaraja Parampara, viz. Shathagopacharya established Govarhana Peetha.

#### Madhvaacharya Peethas

Dwaitamata pravakta Shri Madhavacharya who made a clear ditinction of Paramatma and a transcient Being had brought a Shri Krishna Idol from Dwaraka as far back as the twelfth century and set it up at Udupi which is some 25 km from Mangalore and handed over the 'pujaadhikaara' to eight desciples. Eventually, the Acharya established eight Mutts as follows: *Paalimaru Matha:* The 'mulaadhikari' or the Prime Authority was appointed as Shri Hrishikesha Swami and since who was the most distinguished of the Matha, was appointed as the 'Atyotkrishta' or the outstanding Chief since this Matha is the foremost one where worship of Shri Rama-Lakshmana and Devi Sita are performed. Direct management of three more Mathas too is organised by the generation of this head. *Admaru Matha:* The 'muladhikari' was of the genealogy of Shri Narasimha Tirtha where the Four Armed Kaaliyamardana Krishna is worshipped; besides, under its management are eight more Madhava Maths. *Shri Krishna pura Matha:* Worship of Dwibhuja Kaliya madana Krisha is performed here and the original 'Adhikari' was Janardana Tirtha; this Matha controls eleven more Mathas. *Shri Puttika Matha:* Worship of Bhagavan Vithala is performed here and the original Swami was Devendra Tirtha and this nucleus Matha controls three more branches. *Sheerur Matha:* Worship of Shri Vithal is organised here too which further controls three more Maths and the original appointee was Vamana Tirtha. *Sode Matha:* Bhagavans Bhu Varaha and Hayagriva are worshipped here and Shri Madhavacharya's younger brother Shri Vishnu Tirtha controlled it besides ten other Maths. *Kaniyur Matha:* Worship of Bhagavan Nrisimha is undertaken here and original Head was Rama Tirth Swami while ten Maths are controlled from here. *Pejavar Matha:* Bhagavan Vithal is worshipped here and original Manager was Adhokshaja Tirtha as four Maths are managed under its management.

#### Madhwa Gouda Sampradaya Tirthas

Shri Goudiya Vaishnavaites had established Maths at different important cities and townships in Bharat, but most essentially at Puri Dham, Navadwip and Brindavan. In Puri, the famed Maths are Jagannaatha Vallabha Math, Shri Puri Goswami Math, Shri Koti Bhoga Math, Shri Tota Gopinatha Math, Sgri Narayana cchaata Math, Shri Haridas Thakur Samadhi Math, Shri Lalitha Vishakha Math, Shri Radha Kanta Math, Shri Siddhavakula Math, Shri Ganga Mata Math; besides there are several Sanatana or Highly committed Maths almost spread across the Puri Kshetra. In Navadwipa, the most illustrious Maths are the Mayapuri, Chaitanya Math, and Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Samadhi Mandira. At Brindavan, at Jugal Ghat, Shri Madan Mohan Malviya secured Goswami Idol and installed it and developed a three hundred old 'Grandhalaya' or Library; Shri Radha Ramana Mandir and a famed Sect of Radha Swami Center is in position. Also, Shri Gopinath Nath Mandir, Shri Gokul Nath Mandir, Advaita Goswami Tapo bhumi vata, Laalaa babu Mandir and Shri Govinda Deva Mandir are popular.

#### Nath Sampradaya Mandiras

Very large Gorakhpura Gaurava Nath Temple with massive Vishva Yagjna Vedis with ever live Agnis, Kali, Shiva, Ganesha and Hanuman Mandiras right on way to 'Smashana'; Gaurava Tilla near Hoshayarpur in Punjab at Jwalamukhi; Purna Nath or Siddha Chowrangi Nath at Syalkot in Punjab; Shri Devi Hingalaaaj on way to Karachi and Kapurtala Tapo Bhumi.

#### Swami Narayana Tirthas

Following are the eight Swami Narayana Tirthas: 1) Shri Nara Narayana Mandir at Ahmedabad: Famed 'Utsavas' are celebrated during Kartika Shukla Ekadashi to Purnima and again during Chaitra Shukla Navami to Purnima. 2) Vadataal Swami Narayana Charotara Kendra on the Ahmedabad-Vadodra Railway line near Boriyaavi presents a beautiful and highly attractive Maha Mandira as built by Swami Narayana himself comprising three 'Khandas' or Compartments, the middle one being of Shri Lakshmi Narayana and Shri Raanchhodji; the Uttara Khanda of Dharma- Mukti-Vasudevas and the Southern part is of Radha-Krishna and Hari Krishna, besides of Swami Narayana himself when he was alive. 3) Gaddha Swami Narayana in Sourashtra's Bhavnagar where massive celebrations are performed during Ashwiyuja Shukla Dwadashi attracting huge crowds for whom elaborate arrangements are made. 4) Sarangapur Swami Narayana Mandir near Betad Junction near Bhavnagar, most famed for 'Kashta Bhajan Hunuman' Mandir, popular all over Gujatat where physical ailments and bhuta-preta problems are expected to get dissolved instantly. Great crowds are attracted especially on Saturdays. Huge celebrations are observed on Ashviyuja Krishna Chaturdashi when Yatris from all over arrive and special arrangements of stay and food are made available. 5) Dholera Bandar at Dhundhu: Swami Narayana Bhagavan Mandir presents Madanmohanadeva Raadhakrishna and Hari -krishna Deities where again arrangements of free lodge and boarding are in place to visitors. 6) Bhuj (Kutch) Swami Narayana Bala Swarupi is highly popular among Sant- Mumukshis. 7) Junaghar in Saurashtra's Swami Narayana Mandir presents Radha Ramana -Radhika Murtis and 8) The famed Chhapeya Swami Narayana Mandir presents Bala Ghana Shyama on the railway line of Luknow-Barabanki-Gonda- Chapeya is yet another Swami Narayana Mandirs country wide.

#### Now Bhagavad Gita Saaraamsha vide Padma Purana

'As Bhagavan Vishnu was in 'Yoga Nidra'(Yogic Slumber) on Sesha Nag in the midst of Ksheera Sagara (Ocean of Milk) stating that he was meditating Bhagavan Maheswara, Devi Maha Lakshmi wondered as

to why did Vishnu assert that he was Paramatma himself and none else! Did he not ask Arjuna in no uncertain terms that he should fight without hesitation and dedicate all actions and results to Him, since He was the Cause, the Causation and the Causer! Fully endorsing what Devi Lakshmi said, Bhagavan defined that out of the Eighteen ‘Adhyayas’ (Chapters) of Bhagavad Gita, five Adhyayas constituted five of his Faces, ten Adhyayas were his ten hands, one Adhyaya was his belly and two were his two feet. He further gave the illustration of Susharma and said that intelligent people like him who read an Adhyaya of Gita a day or half of it or a quarter, or atleast a stanza, would certainly secure Mukti.

Susharma was no doubt a Brahmana by birth but was a chronic sinner; he did neither dhyana nor japa, neither homa nor ‘Atithi Satkar’ or Puja of Guests; on the contrary he was a drunkard, meat eater and a regular womanizer. One day he died of a snake bite. After experiencing retribution in various ‘Narakas’, he was born as a bull and served under an oil-extractor for seven to eight years and died out of hard work and exhaustion. A few persons contributed prayers for the animal’s salvation and among them was a ‘veshya’ (prostitute) who donated some ‘Punya’ on her account. In the rebirth the bull became a pious Brahmana in the same village as a ‘Jyatismara’ with the gift of memory of the past birth. He met the Veshya and enquired as to which Punya that she donated at the death of the bull. She said that she bought a parrot which used to mutter some lines of a stanza always although she did not guess what was it but surely that muttering had highly soothing effect. The Brahmana asked the Parrot and the latter said that she was earlier in an Ashram in a cage where a Rishi was teaching something to his disciples and it learnt it but a hunter stole the bird and sold to the Veshya. The Rishi conveyed that he taught the **First Chapter of Gita!** That was the Punya which the Veshya acquired from the parrot’s muttering that was learnt at the Ashram. Such was the Mahtmya of the **First Chapter.**

Bhagavan Vishnu then explained to Devi Lakshmi the significance of the **Second Chapter of Gita.** A Veda Pandit Deva Sharma of Purandarapura in Dakshina Bharat was anxious to learn and attain ‘Tatwa Gyan’ and came across a visiting Mahatma about his desire. The Mahatma directed Deva Sharma to a Goat Keeper called Mitravan at Sowpur in a forest seated on a rock on the banks of a river bed nearby. Mitravan narrated one of his experiences about a tiger approaching a helpless goat; all other goats fled away but this one waited as though it welcomed the tiger to eat him up. The tiger hesitated and asked the goat as to why he had the courage to stand firmly but did not run. The goat questioned as to why the tiger did not pounce on her! The tiger replied that her hunger subsided suddenly. Both the tiger and the goat met a Mahatma in the forest and he asked them to approach a Vanara Raja (Monkey). The Vanara Raja replied that there was a highly religious Brahmana named Sukarma who meditated in a Shiva Temple not far off for long time. When Sukarma was asked, he said that one Maha Purush appeared in the Temple and Sukarma requested him to teach him Tatwa Gyan. The Maha Purush asked Sukarma to read an inscription on a rock nearby the Temple from the Second Chapter of Gita emphasizing the importance of ‘Abhyasa’ or Practice. Having said this, the Maha Purush disappeared. The Second Chapter states: *Karmaneyvadhī kaarastey maa phaleshu kadaachana, maa karmaphala heturbhuh maa tey sangostva karmani*/(Partha! You have freedom only to perform your duty. The rest is not relevant to you. But You should perform the ‘Karma’ without expecting the fruits). Bhagavan defined a Tatwa Gyani as follows: *Duhksheshvanu dvignamanaah Sukheshu vigataspruhah, Veeta raga bhayakrodhah Sthidheermuniru chyatey* (A Stitha-Pragna or a Tatwa Gyani is he who is least disturbed when there is unhappiness and difficulty and gets elated when there are reasons to be delighted; if one could practise equanimity without desire, fear or anger, that only is the feature of Tatwa Gyan (Sthita Pragnyatwa). Thus the chain of Deva Sharma-the Mahatma-Mitravan the Goat Keeper-the Tiger and the Goat-the Vanara Raja-Sukarma and

the Maha Purush revealed the Message of Tatwa Gyan which simply stated that one should practice one's own duty and Tatwa Gyan would unfold itself!

Describing the Mahatmya of the **Third Chapter of Gita titled Karma Yoga**, Bhagavan cited the example of a Brahmana named Jada who practiced the profession of a 'Vaishya' or of business. He amassed wealth from this line but became a victim of vices. He desired to earn more and travelled to a far off city. On way he halted for the night and slept off under a tree in a village. A gang of robbers looted and killed him and he turned to be a 'Pretaatma' (goblin) and resided on the same tree. Jada's son was a dutiful Brahmana and followed the duties of a Brahmana. As he was concerned of his father's whereabouts, the son asked a friend of his father and he conveyed that the latter was looted and killed on way in a village under a tree. Being highly saddened by the news, he proceeded to Varanasi to perform the obsequies of his father and coincidentally halted under the tree of the same village where his father also halted for an overnight stay and got killed by the gang of robbers. Before he desired to sleep, the son recited the Third Chapter of Gita; his father who was also on the same tree as a Preta appeared before the son, and while boarding an air-plane to Vaikuntha since he was redeemed as a result of the recital of the Third Chapter of Gita, he asked his brothers also to revert to the Brahmana Varna at once and observe the duties concerned and more importantly recite the Third Chapter. Since Jada's son was also visiting Varanasi anyway as planned by him, the son should invoke the forefathers of the Vamsa by reciting the Karma Yoga or the Third Chapter of Gita so that they too would realize Salvation. The principal message of the Third Chapter stressed: *Shreyaṁ swadharmo viguṇaḥ pārthadharmaḥ swanushthaat, Swadharmey nidhanam shreyah Para Dharma bhayaapah/* (Even if one feels that the 'Dharma' or duty of somebody else's is attractive, one must observe one's own Dharma since 'Para Dharma' or Dharma of others is worse than death). Another significant instruction given by Krishna to Arjuna in this Chapter stated: *Mayi sarvaani karmaani sanyasyadhyatma chetasa, niraaseermamo bhutwa yudhyasya vigata jwarah/* (Partha! I create all actions and hence perform your duty targetting me and leaving results to me and fight). As the son followed his father's instruction in letter and spirit and all the forefathers flew to Vaikuntha by air-planes, Yama Dharma Raja was concerned that several ancestors were leaving away to Vaikuntha from Narakas as per the directive of Vishnu dootas and thus double-checked from Lord Vishnu and the latter endorsed the instructions. As Yama Raja enquired of Vishnu whether there were further instructions to him, the latter replied that he should better perform Yama Raja's own Swadharma!

Bhagavan Vishnu narrated to Devi Lakshmi the illustration of Mahatma Bharat worshipping at Vishwanatha Temple of Varanasi on the banks of Ganga, while signifying the Mahatmya of the **Fourth Chapter** of Gita- Jnana Yoga. One day, he desired to rest under the shade of two bilva trees which were located side by side with a gap of five-six feet. Bharat kept his head at the bottom of one bilva and placed his feet at the bottom of another tree and recited the Fourth Chapter and after a while left for his home. Even as he was leaving, he found that the trees were fast drying up and when he reached home he found two 'Kanyas' (young girls) at his house. The Kanyas thanked Bharat profusely and said that they were relieved of a curse by a Tapasvi named Satyatapa that they received at a curse at a Kshetra called 'Chhinna Paapa' (Relieved of Sins) on the banks of River Godavari. The two Kanyas were two 'Apsaras' bathing half nude seeking to entice the Tapasvi at the behest of Lord Indra since the latter felt a threat to his Throne at Swarga, whereas the Tapasvi's desire was to attain 'Jeevan Mukti' or Mukti while he was alive; hence the curse that the Apsaras should turn as trees at Varanasi on the banks of Ganga. When the Apsaras pleaded for mercy, the Tapasvi agreed to get their original forms when a Mahatma called Bharat would one day rest under the trees reciting the contents of Jnana Yoga in the Fourth Chapter of Gita. The redeemed

Apsaras took up to the regular recitation of the Fourth Chapter of Gita. Incidentally, it was in this this Adhyaya titled ‘Jnaana Yoga’ that Lord Krishna declared: *Yadaa yadaahi Dharmasya glaanir bhavat Bharata! Abhyuddhhaana madharmasya sadaatmaanam srijaamyaham/ Paritraanaaya Saadhunaam vinashaya cha dushkirtman, Dharma Samsthaapanaarthaaya Samshavami Yuge Yuge* (Arjuna! As and when Dharma is affected adversely and Adharma prevails, I shall take the ‘Avataras’ (incarnation) to vindicate the cause of the Virtuous and destroy the Forces of the Evil!)

Underlining the magnitude of the **Fifth Chapter** of Bhagavad Gita, Lord Vishnu told Lakshmi example of a Brahmana named Pingala of Madra Desha, ignoring his responsibilities as a Brahmana but built up expertise in music and dance and eventually achieved reputation in the profession as also proximity to the King as his favourite. He married a woman of low caste called Pingali alias Aruna. One night, being jealous of Pinala, Aruna killed him in his sleep. He suffered in Narakas and was born eventually as a vulture and after her death due to pox, Aruna was reborn as a parrot. Being aware of the memory of previous life, the vulture saw the parrot and tore it apart as the latter was dropped in a pond. A hunter spread a net and the vulture was entangled and died as he threw the vulture’s body too fell in the same water body as the parrot fell. Surprisingly, both the birds achieved salvation! They asked Yama Dharma Raja as to what was the reason for both the sinners of equal guilt to head for Swarga since Pingala left the duties of a Brahmana and had loose morals while Aruna killed Pingala! Dharma Raja explained that their dead bodies fell in the same water body leading to a River on the banks of which was a pious Brahmana always reciting the Fifth Chapter of Karma Sanyasa Yoga in Gita!

Bhagavan Vishnu narrated to Devi Lakshmi the value of **Sixth Chapter** of Gita entitled Jnana Yoga and described the virtue, fame and high charitable disposition of the King Janashruti. Even Devas made flying trips as ‘Hamsas’ (Swans) to his Kingdom on the banks of River Godavari with Pratishtanapuri as its Capital to appreciate the noble deeds being executed by the King. Once the King while strolling on the top of the Palace overheard the remarks of flying Hamsas that the King’s greatness and virtue were nearing even those of Mahatma Reik’s who was residing at Manikeswar on the top of Himalaya Mountains beyond the Kashmira Region. The King immediately decided to visit Manikeswara at the Temple of Bhagavan Chandrasekhara where Mahatma Reiki stayed. On way from the Pratishtanapuri, the King along with his big entourage passed through several important Tirthas and worshipped Kasi Vishwanath, Gadadhar at Gaya, Shri Krishna at Mathura near Kalindi (Yamuna) and on to Kashmirapuri where he stopped over at the Manikeshwara Temple of Bhagavan Shiva. At the main Dwara of the Temple, the King spotted a beggar-like Sadhu stationed on an empty cart under a big tree. The King’s Sarathi (charioteer) introduced the King to the Mahatma who made kind enquiries about the various charities, construction of temples, water bodies and public gardens as also Yagnas and Vratas that the King was responsible for. Then the King sought to donate several chariot-full of gifts of Dhana (money)- Dhanya (foodgrains), Cattle, Jewellery and clothes. The Mahatma became suddenly furious and shouted on the King in white anger: ‘Arre Low Class fellow! You think you can buy me with these gifts? Has not somebody told you about me? Take these away and get lost!’ The King was dazed at this sudden spurt of the Mahatma’s rage and was afraid that he might not give a ‘shaap’ (curse) to him. The King profusely apologized and fell on his feet shivering with fear and shame. After the Mahatma cooled down, he conveyed to the King that he always recited the Sixth Chapter of Gita on ‘Jnaana Yoga’: *Yadaa hi nendriyaartheshu na karmaswanu- shajjetey/ Sarva sankalpa sanyaasee yogaarudhastha dochatey* (A Saadhaka or Yogi would become ripe only ‘Indiras’-body parts of external and internal nature- and their

desires are left out, Karmas or duties are too avoided subduing the feelings of the giver or the taker and the totality of the 'You' or 'I' is avoided then only one becomes a Yogi).

Somewhat on the lines of the Brahmana Jada in the Third Chapter earlier, Shankhakarna too followed the Vaishya profession, became extremely rich and desired to marry for the fourth time and proceeded to a neighbouring village. But on way, he was bitten by a serpent and died and was born again as a serpent. He came in the dreams of his sons as a serpent and conveyed that he did crores of cash and jewellery at such and such a shrub in the backyard of their home. Next morning, the brothers dug up at the location as per the dream, but a serpent appeared, desired to ascertain their identity and said that they should recite the **Seventh Chapter of Gita** titled Vigyan Yoga at once. To their utter surprise, the serpent took the form of their father, handed over huge reserve of gold and jewellery to the sons and boarded a Viman destined to Vishnu Loka. The sons were all virtuous, performed Yagnas, charities and such other noble tasks as digging up wells, water bodies and construction of choultries, rest houses etc. for public benefit. Most importantly however was the recitation of the Seventh Chapter of Gita and attained Vishnu Loka! The essence of this Chapter was stated by Bhagavan to Arjuna as follows: *Beejam mam Sarva bhutaanaam viddhi Parthah Sanatanam, buddhirbuddhimatamasmi Tejastejasvinamaham/ Balam balavataam chaham kamaraga vivarjitam, Dharmaa virudho bhuteshu kaamosmi Bharatarshabha/* (Partha! Do realize that the timeless seed responsible for germinating the entire Creation is me; I am the Intelligence to the intelligent; Radiance to the radiant, Physical Power to the powerful etc. I am also the desire and hatred; virtue to the virtuous, vice to the vicious and so on!).

About the 'Mahatyma' of the **Ashtama Adhyaya**, Lord Vishnu gave the example to Devi Lakshmi of Bhava Sharma who lived in Amardakapura in Dakshina Bharat. Being a Brahmana by birth, he married a 'Veshya' and was a meat-eater, wine drinker and a debauche. Once he and his wife were drunk dead and became huge 'Tada Vrikshas' (Palm Trees). Another Brahmana couple called Kushibal and Kumati were wrong examples of deceit, greed, and anger. Kushibal used to accept 'daanaas' of horses and 'Kaala Purusha Pratimas' and were also involved in base tantras. This couple died and turned out to be 'Brahma Rakshasas' and made the 'Tada Vrikshas' as their abode. Once a Vedavedya Brahmana came to rest under the trees, when the Rakshasa couple appeared and asked as to how they could get rid of their Rakshasatva and obtain 'Mukti'. The Brahmana said: 'Brahma Vidya's Upadesha' or teaching, 'Adhyatmika Tatva Vichara' or the Awareness of Inner Consciousness and Karma Vidhi Gyana or the Knowledge of performing Karmas / deeds are the three factors which could redeem them! Then the Brahma Rakshasi got confused and said: *Kim tat Brahma! Kimadhyantakam! Kim Karma!* (Who is this Brahma? What is this Adhyatma? And which is this Karma?) As soon as the Brahma Rakshasi muttered these words, a miracle happened and the Brahma Rakshasa couple attained 'Mukti' and so did the Palm Trees/ Bhava sharma couple! These were the opening lines of **the Eighth Chapter** of Bhagavad Gita entitled Akshara Brahma Yoga and hence the miracle! The further lines of the stanza stated: *Adhi Bhutam cha kim proktam Adhi Daivam ki muchyatey/* (What is Adhi Bhutam? What is Adhi Daivam?) To this question of Arjuna, Bhagavan Krishna's reply was: *Aksharam Brahma Param Swabhaavodhyaatma muchyatey, Bhuta bhaavodbhava karo virangah karma sanjnitah* (Arjuna! The Supreme and Indestructible Soul is Brahma; His nature is Adhyatmika, Adhi Bhautika and Adhi Daivika)!

The significance of the **Ninth Chapter of Gita** was explained by the instance of a goat being given as a sacrifice at a Yagnya by a Brahmana named Madhava who resided at Mahismati Nagar on the banks of River Narmada. The goat talked suddenly in raised human voice to the surprise of the 'Ritviks'

performing the Yagna as also the audience and said that the Yagna was of no avail since it was certain that human beings would have to be born again, their old age and death were inevitable; the goat also said: 'Look at my fate; you are going to kill me now!' Then the onlookers enquired of the goat as to who was it in its earlier birth? The goat replied that he was a Brahmana who desired to perform a sacrifice of a goat kid to appease Devi Chandika, as his son was extremely ill; but Devi Chandika was furious to kill a goat kid to save a child and cursed the Brahmana to become a goat; thus said the goat to the Ritviks and others at the Yagna. It further narrated that in Kurukshetra, a King named Chandra Sharma gave a Kala Purusha Pratima as a 'daan' in connection with a Solar Eclipse and from the Pratima a Chandala couple surfaced about to devour both the King and the Brahmana but the Brahmana was quick in reciting the Ninth Chapter of Gita titled 'Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga' of Gita and the Chandala couple named 'Paapa' (Sin) and 'Ninda' (Blame) disappeared. Bhagavan in this Chapter says: *Ananyaschintanaamto maam ye janaah paryupaasatey, Teshaam nithyaabhi yuktaanaam yogakshemam vahaamyaham* (Those who always think and meditate of me always, I look after them and assure them of their welfare)! Eversince then, the King always recited and reflected of the contents of the Adhyaya and eventually The goat which narrated the incident of Chandra Sharma was released to freedom.

Bhagavan Shankara gave the example to Devi Parvati of Brahmana Dhirabuddhi residing in Kashipura who was an unparalleled 'Vedarupi' (the form of Vedas) who could readily vision 'Atma Tatwa'; it was widely believed that Bhagavan Shankara always held on to Dhirabuddhi's hand, run along with him and care for him wherever the Brahmana moved with affection and consideration. What indeed was the kind of Tapa- Homa-Dhyana that Dhirabuddhi performed to deserve this unique treatment that Bhagavan took such concern about him! Once when Bhagavan sat on the mount of Kailash, one Hamsa (Swan) fell at His feet and narrated that it fell with a thud down while flying above in a Sarovar in Saurashtra; the usually white swan got blackened. The Swan told Bhagavan that a lotus shrub with five beautiful flowers was responsible for this incident; it said that as soon as it flew across the shrub it released sixty five bees when it actually fell and thus its form got black. The Lotus Shrub was in its third previous birth a Brahmana house wife called Sarojavadana, who no doubt was a Pativrata but was attracted too much to a Myna Bird in a cage in their home and was unmindful of her husband's callings as she was immersed in play with the bird; the husband got furious and cursed her to become a Myna bird. The cursed Myna was brought up by a Muni Kanya where the Muni regularly recited the 'Vibhuti Yoga Adhyaya' which was the **Tenth Chapter of Gita** and she learnt the contents fully; in her next birth, the Myna bird was born as an Apsara. Sage Durvasa was performing Tapasya on the banks of a Sarowara when the Apsara was bathing and out of fury, Sage Durvasa cursed the Apsara to become a Lotus shrub which was crossed by the Swan and became black in its form. Such was the power of Vibhuti Yoga (the Tenth Chapter) in which Lord Krishna told Arjuna that all kinds of 'Vibhutis'/ manifestations were his own like radiance, Shaktis, Virtue, Meditation, prosperity and victory. The Vibhutis would include the Swan crossing the lotus shrub was out of ignorance; Brahmani Sarojanavadana's attraction to the Mynah Bird; her husband's anger causing the creation of another Mynah; the cursed Mynah's learning of the 'Dashama Adhyaya' from the Muni; her becoming an Apsara, Sage Durva's curse out of anger creating a lotus shrub, Dhirabuddhi's Vision of Atma Tatva and Parameswara's great affection for Dhirabuddhi!

There would be thousands of instances that would signify the **Eleventh Chapter of Gita** regarding 'Vishva Sandarshana Yoga' and Bhagavan Shiva described only one to Devi Parvati. In Meghankara Nagar on the banks of River Pranita, there was a Parama Bhakta of Vasudeva called Sunandana Muni who undertook a Kshetra Yatra and on way had to halt over a night in a village. The Village head noboubt

welcomed the Muni but said that there was a Rakshasa in the village with whom there was an understanding not to kill any villager but might eat up any stranger who did not specify by the Village head; but the Rakshasa ate up the Village head's son himself by mistake. Sunandana Muni asked the Village head as to how this Rakshasa came to this Village. The background was that there was a Brahmana in the village engaged in farming and used to look after his own farm in the nights. A huge vulture chased a traveller staying overnight in the village near the Brahmana farmer's farm; as the traveller shouted for help since he fell in a ditch and could not pull up by himself, the Brahmana Farmer though could give a helping hand to save the traveller but did not bother. An infuriated Tapasvi cursed the Brahmana Farmer to become a Rakshasa in the village. When the latter begged for mercy, he diluted the curse saying that if any Buddhiman recited the Eleventh Chapter of Gita and also explain its meaning to the Rakshasa then the latter could be liberated from the Rakshasatva. On knowing the background, Sunandana Muni recited and explained the contents of the Adhyaya to the Rakshasa and latter was liberated. Not only that, all the men and women who were killed by the Rakshasa including Village head boy son were lifted up by a Viman to Vishnu loka. The Chapter stated: *Anaadi madhyantamananta veeryam, Ananta baahum Sashi Surya netram/ Pasyaami twaam deepta hutaasa vaktram, Swatejasa vishwamidam tapantam/* (I am enabling you the Vision of the Supreme Form who has no beginning or end; whose might is unlimited; who has innumerable hands; who possesses Surya and Chandra as his eyes; who has a fiery and radiant face like Agni and who has a powerful and red-hot scorching Form.)

One of the major highlights of Bhagavad Gita was the **Bhakti Yoga (Twelfth Chapter)** explained by Shri Krishna to Arjuna as was narrated by Bhagavan Shiva to Devi Parvati. In Kolhapuri of south-west of Bharata Varsha, the most reputed Maha Lakshmi Temple had been fulfilling the desires of Bhaktas for centuries. A young Prince came into the Temple and prayed to her very earnestly as follows: 'Mother! You are the Icchaa Shakti, Jnaana Shakti, and Kriya Shakti all rolled into One Swarupa; You are the Nishkala, Nirmoha, Nitya, Niraakaara, Niranjana, Antarahita, Antahkarana, and Niramaya; You are the Shatchakra Bhedini, Anahata Dhwani, Bindu, Naada and Kalaa; You are Para, Pashyanti, Madhya and Vaikhari; Brahmi, Vaishnavi, and Maaheswari, Vaaraahi, Naarasimhi, Iaindri, Kaumari, Chandika, Savitri and so on. Maha Lakshmi was pleased with the eulogies and asked the Prince of his desire. He told her that his father King Brihadhratha had half-done an Ashwamedha Yagna and died, that although the horse returned successfully after Vijaya Yatra (Victory Travel) it had suddenly disappeared and that his prayer was to secure the missing horse and bless him to complete the Yagna. Bhagavati Lakshmi directed the Prince to approach Siddha Samadhi Muni at the entrance of the Temple and the needful would be done. Siddha Samadhi was approached and the Prince was astonished to vision a few Devatas responsible for the theft of the Yagnashwa at the behest of Indra! He pulled them up and commanded that the horse should be in its original position at once. The Prince was so impressed that he was emboldened to request the Siddha Samadhi to revive his dead father since his body was still in oil at the Yagnashala. The Muni smiled and asked the Prince to take him to the Yagnashaala. Having reached there, the Muni sprinkled 'Mantrajal' and the King emerged afresh from the oil and completed the Yagna successfully. When asked as to how the Muni could miracles to reprimand Devatas to secure the missing horse and also revive the King to life, the Muni's cool reply was that the powers attained was due to the constant recitation and dedication to the Bhakti Yoga (Twelfth Chapter) of Bhagavad Gita alone and nothing else! The Sacred Book states: *Yo na hrushyati na dveshti na shochati na kaamkshati, Shubhaashubha paritya - gee bhakti manyassa me priyah/* (A devotee who is free from likings and dislikings as also from happiness and unhappiness, and who dedicates all my deeds to me totally is my favourite); *Etu Dharmya*

*amritamidam yathoktam paryupaasatey, Shraddhadhaana matparaah bhaktaastheva mey priyah/* (Those devotees who keep unreserved faith in me and observe Dharma as I prescribe are my most beloved ones).

Describing the Mahatmya of the **Thirteenth Chapter** of Gita titled 'Kshetra Kshetragna Yoga', Maha Deva told Devi Parvati that on the banks of River Tungabhadra in the Southern part of Bharata Varsha, there was a popular Kshetra called Harihara Nagar where Vedic Brahmana Hari Dikshith lived. His wife named Kuvaacha was however a characterless slut. Looking for a male companion one night, she treaded into a forest and faced a tiger. The tiger felt that if the woman was of morality then she would not kill her but otherwise she certainly would. As the tiger killed the woman, she landed in several Narakas like Rourava and was reborn as a Chandalini. As she grew, she became a victim of diseases and reached a Temple of Jambhaka Devi where a Brahmana always recited the thirteenth chapter of Gita; the purport of the Adhyaya was to distinguish the Kshetra and Kshetrajna. Steeped into the world of vice, the soul of Kuvaacha had in the past gone through Narakas as an iron rod went through white heat. Also as a Chandalini with diseases in the current life, she underwent difficult times due to diseases and continued ill-health; thus she realized Kshetra Gyana from Devi Jambhaka Temple when the Brahmana explained the meaning of the Chapter verse by verse and she finally reached Vishnu dhama! *Idam Shareeram Kounteyah Kshetramityabhi dheeyatey, Etadyo vethhi tam praahuhu Kshetrajna iti tadvidah/* (Kounteya! This body is known as the Kshetra; by inference, those who realize this truth that if one does honest effort, the Kshetra could lead to 'Ishvara Praapti'). *Kshetrajnam chaapi mam viddhi Sarva kshetreshu Bharata! Kshetra Kshetrajna yorjnaanam yatthad jnaanammatam mama/* (Arjuna! Do realize that I am the Kshetrajna; the real Jnaana is the awareness of the Kshetra and Kshetrajna)!

The **Fourteenth Chapter of Gita- Gunatraya Yoga**-highlighted the 'Bhava bandhana Vimochana' (Relief from the shackles of Samsara) and gave the illustration of the King of Simhala Dwipa viz. Vikrama Betala, who went on a hunting spree on horses showing the way in a forest chasing a few hares. The hares crossed a breach which the dogs could not cross easily and there was a peaceful Ashram of Muni Vatsa who along with his disciples always recited the 'Gunatraya Vibhaga Yoga' of Gita. One of the disciples of the Muni cleaned up his feet with water before entering the Prayer Hall of the Ashram where the recitation was practiced. The sand and water mix became muddy and the hares fell in the slush; as soon as the hares fell in the slush, they were lifted by a Vimana bound for Vishnuloka thanks to the Mahatmya of the recitation of the Adhyaya. Meanwhile the chasing dogs arrived and having fallen in the slush they too were airlifted in the form of Gandharvas. The King Vikrama reached the Ashram and the Prayer Hall and asked the Muni for the reason that the hares and horses went to higher lokas. The Muni explained that there was a Brahmana called Keshava and his wife Vilobhana were both vily; the Brahmana killed the wife and was turned as dogs and the wife was born as hares. Both of these thus were beneficiaries of the Recitation of the Fourteenth Chapter of Gita. The message of the Adhyaya was given by Krishna as follows: *Gunaanetaanateetya treen dehi deha samudbhavaan, Janmamrityu jaraa duhkhaihi vimuktomrita masnutey/* (Once the three gunas of Satva, Rajasa and Tamasa which are responsible for the ration of old age and death, then the Beings break away from the chains of Samsara and attain Salvation.). *Maam cha yopyabhichaarena Bhakti yogena sevatey, sa gunaan Smateethyaitaan Brahma bhuyaya kalpatey/* (He who worships me with unreserved devotion would cross the barriers of the three Gunaas of Satva, Rajas and Tamas and would become eligible to step into the 'Parama Brahma Sthiti' or Highest Salvation!)

**The Fifteenth Chapter** titled Purushottama Prapti Yoga refers to two distinct Beings named Kshara and Akshara. One is who enjoys life as it is faced with pleasures of life; his prepared for good and bad experiences and carries on daily duties and obligations in the surroundings that he lives within. The life that he leads in the ‘samsara’ is compared to a gigantic Ashvattha Tree with sprawling branches, its drooping leaves, and deep rooted and ever expanding foundation. *Urthvamuulamaddhasshaakham ashvattham praahuravyayam, cchandaamsi yasya varnaani yantam veda sa vedavit/* On the other hand Akshara is totally indifferent to what the surrounding ‘samsara’ and its very many and endless distractions and keeping aloof with introspection of what is beyond life and the heavy mix of pleasures and pains that it offers seeks to the Truth of Life beyond. Thus this chapter depicts what is Kshara and Akshara and the secret which is Purushottama!

Maha Deva cited the example to Devi Parvati of an arrogant and uncontrollable elephant named Arimardan belonging to King Khangabahu of Saurashtra in Gujarat, while signifying the **Sixteenth Chapter of Gita** titled ‘Daivasura Sampad Vibhaga Yoga’. A number of elephant tamers from the neighbouring Kingdoms landed to control Arimardana, not only to secure hefty Prizes of high value but also name and fame but to no avail. Heavy iron rods, piercing tridents and such other weapons were used but despite streams of blood flowing from the body, the animal was getting further wilder. One Brahmana arrived at the scene and touched the elephant with affection and everybody was taken aback since it was not even allowing touching it earlier. Queried as to how the miracle happened, the Brahmana that he attained Siddhis due to the relentless recital of the Sixteenth Chapter of Gita. The King then ordered that the elephant be freed and move about freely on the streets of the Nagar and even children used to play with it for fun! *Dambho darpohi maanascha krodhatparaarushya meyvacha, Agnaanam chabhi jaatasya Partha! Sampadaaasurim/* (Partha! Ignorance, arrogance, pretentiousness, egotism, anger and self-image are all natural phenomena of Asuras). *Trividham narakasyedam dwaaram naasana maatmanah, Kaamah krodhastatha lobhah tasmadetatrayam tyajet/* (The three enemies of human beings viz. Kama (desire), Krodha (fury) and Lobha (avarice) are the destroyers of one’s own Soul and are the Entry Points of Naraka; that is why the intelligent persons avoid these). The ignorance of the elephant misdirected him and taming was accomplished by affection, peacefulness, humility and character.

The **Seventeenth Chapter of Bhagavad Gita** viz. Shraddhatraya Vaibhava Yoga was illustrated by the Story of King Khangabahu of Simhala Dwipa, his servant Dussahana and their elephant. Once Dussahana drove the elephant in a race, made it run too fast by poking it by an ‘Ankusha’ and out of annoyance the animal dropped Dussahana dead. The servant in his next birth was born as an elephant and was born in the same Royal Court. The new elephant (Dusshahana) was gifted by the King to a Poet who in turn sold it to the King of Malwa for a good price. But on reaching Malwa, the elephant took suddenly ill and died without food and water. Many experts treated the elephant but to no avail. Medicines, charities and prayers did not help but finally a Brahmana recited the Seventeenth Chapter of Gita and the elephant got recovered and slowly stood up only to collapse and die. The Brahmana who recited the Chapter explained that the dead elephant in his earlier birth he was servant Dusshana and as a result of the holy recitation he attained Moksha. King of Malwa continued the reading of the Seventeenth Chapter and attained Sayujya there after. *Satvaanu rupa sarvaswa shraddhaa bhavati Bharata, Shraddha mayoyam purusho yoyacchhadraassa evam sah/* (Arjuna! The features and ways of life are normally shaped in every human being by his own ‘swabhava’ or personal traits).

The **Eighteenth and last Chapter of Gita** named Moksha Sanyasa Yoga contained the quintessence of Vedas and Shastras signifying the termination of Samsara Bandha or the shackles of Life. It is the destroyer of 'Arishadvargas' of Kama, Krodha, Moha, Mada, Lobha and Matsarya; the final goal of Siddha Purushas; the Rest-Home of Indra and Devas; and the High Point of Entertainment of Sanaka, Sandanda, Sanatana and Sanat Kumaras. Sincere recitation of this Grand and Concluding Chapter of Gita constitutes sure steps forward to Moksha or complete break-away from the endless cycle of life! When Lord Indra was enjoying a dance and music programme of Rambha and other Deva Kanyas, a group of 'Vishnu dootas' arrived in Swarga and announced the arrival of a new Indra soon! Indra wondered whether the incumbent Indra performed Hundred Yagnas successfully; constructed lakhs of water bodies; planted crores of trees for the joy of the travelers; organized countless 'Anna daanas' and charities etc. like he did. He reached Bhagavan Vishnu lying in 'Yoga Nidra' on 'Ksheera Sagara' (the Ocean of Milk) and asked him in an agitated tone as to why his 'Indratva' was at stake! Smilingly, Lord Vishnu replied that the Indra-Elect was a consistent reciter of the Eighteenth Chapter of Gita and that he too could retain his position by performing the same. Indra visited the Kalikagram on the banks of River Godavari by taking the form of a Brahmana and having been so impressed by what he observed there, felt that the position of Indra was none too significant to that of Indra-elect but surely deserved Vishnu Sayujya! Who ever heard or recited even the Mahatmya of Bhagavad Gita would be entitled to 'Yagna Phala' or the Fruits of Performing Yagna.

The Supreme Message of the Final Chapter-and indeed of entire Gita-is summed up as: *Sarva Karmanyapi sadaa kurvaano madvyapaashrayah, Matprasaadaadavaapnoti Shasvatam Padamavyayam/* (Do accomplish the everlasting and indestructible 'Parama pada' by performing the needful 'Karmas' and keeping complete faith in the Everlastingness!)

#### Darshanaas of Pralaya Bala Mukunda, Shiva and Krishna vide Brahma Purana' Markandeya Section

At the time of Pralaya or the Great Annihilation at the Kalpaantara, Chandra, Surya and Vayu faced near-extinction as also of the Sthaavara-Jangamaas /moveable and immobile Beings. That was the time when Pralaya kaala Surya became too fierce and there were cloud-bursts and severe lightnings. Pralayaagni surrounded the entire Universe and there were indeed no survivors, except Markandeya who was struggling to swim against the hurricane and thunder storm. Suddenly he heard a whisper-like voice which said: come near the Vata Vriksha and come to my refuge! The Maharshi wondered as to where the feeble voice emerged from. He was astonished as he looked up the high and sprawling Banyan where he visioned a charming Balarupadhari Krishna Bhagavan with four hands armed with Shankha-Chakra-Gada-Saranga with peacock feathers on his golden Kireeta, Vanamaala, sparkling ear-rings and Koustubha Mani! Markandeya was highly refreshed from his physical exhaustion and fatigue as he visioned the fantastic appearance but continued to ruminate it as a false hallucination! He rubbed on his eyes repeatedly in utter disbelief. Then came the profound voice saying: My child, you are too tired; come near to me for solace and enter into my body for soothing relaxation. On hearing the Celestial Voice of Bala Gopala, the Maharshi turned motionless and speechless and entered Bala Krishna's face as though in a state of stupor and blankness and gradually entered in Paramatma's belly where he saw for himself Pancha Bhutas, Sapta Lokas of Bhur-Bhuvar-Swar-Mahar-Jana-Tapas and Satya; Sapta Paataalas viz. Atala, Vitala, Sutala, Pataala, Rasaatala and Mahatala; Sapta Dwipas viz. Jambu, Plaksha, Shaalmala, Kusha, Krouncha, Shaaka and Pushkara; Sapta Samudras, Sapta Parvatas, Indra and other Devas, Siddha, Chaarana, Naga, Muni, Yaksha, Apsara and finally the Charaachara Srishti! Markandeya gradually

recovered semi-consciousness and extolled Bala Mukunda as follows

*Devadeva Jagannatha Maayaa Balavapurdhara, Traahimaam Chaaru Padmaaksha Duhkhitam  
Sharanaagatam/ -----Tavodarey cha Devesa mayaadrushto charaacharam, Vismitham vishannascha  
traahimaam Purushoththama/ Samsaasesmin -niraalambey praseeda Purushoththama Praseeda  
Vibhudhassreshta praseeda vibhudapriya/ Praseeda vibhudhaamnaatha praseeda vibhutaalaya,  
Praseeda sarva Lokesa Jagat Kaarana Kaarana/ Praseeda Sarvakruddeva Praseeda mama Bhudhara,  
Praseeda salilaavaasa praseeda Madhusudana/ Praseeda Kamalaakaantya Praseeda Tridasheswara,  
Praseeda Kamsakesighna praseedaarishta naashana/ Praseeda Krishna Daityaghna praseeda  
danujaantaka, Praseeda Mathuraavaasa Praseeda Yadunandana/ Praseeda Shakraavaraja Praseeda  
varadaavyaya, Twam Mahi twam Jalam Devah twamagnistwam sameeranah/ Twam nabhastwam  
Manaschaiva twamahankaara eva cha, Twam Buddhih Prakrutischaiva Satvaadyaastwam Jagatpatey/  
Purushastwam Jagadvyaapi Purushaadapichoththamah, Twamindranyaani Sarvaani Shabdaadyaa  
vishayaah Prabho/ Twam Dikpaalascha Dharmaascha Vedaa Yagnaah sadakshinaah, Twamindrastwam  
Shivo Devastwam Havistwam Hutaashanah/ Twam Yamah Pituraardevah twam Rakshaadhipatih  
Swayam, Varunastwamapaam Naathah twam Vaayustwam Dhaneswarah/ Twameesaanas  
twamanantastwam Ganeshascha , Shanmukhah Vasavastwam tathaa Rudraaptwa maadityaascha  
khecharaah/ Daanavaastwam tathaa Yakshaastwam Daityaah Samarudganaah, Siddhaas –charapsaraso  
Naagaa Gandharwaastwam sa Chaaranaah/ PitaroVaakakhilyaascha Prajaanaam patayochyuta,  
Munayastwamrushi ganaastwa maswinou Nisaacharaah/ Anyaascha Jaatayastwamhi yatkinchitjeeva  
sanjnitam, Kinchaatra bahunoktena Brahamaastamba gocharam/ Bhutam Bhavyam Bhavishyam cha  
twam Jagatsa charaacharam, Yatthe rupam Param Deva kutasthamachalam dhruvam/  
Brahmaadyaastanna jaananti kathamanyelpamedhasah, Deva Shuddhaa swabhaavosi Nityastwam  
Prakrutey parah/ Avyaktah Shaaswatontanantah Sarvavyaapi Maheswarah, Twamaakaashah parah Shaanto  
Aajastwam Vibhuravyayah/*

(Deva Deva! Mayaa Baala Murtidhara! Padmaaksha! Kindly save me as I am shattered. I have visualized the ‘Charaachara Jagat’ in your belly. I am indeed shocked and frightened. Please show me mercy as I am in a confused situation. You are the cause of existence. You are the Pancha Bhutaas of Earth-Water-Light and heat-Air and Sky; You are the Ahamkaara or Self-Recognition and Ego; You are the Maha-Tatwa and Buddhi; the Prakriti; You are the Triguna Swarupa or of Satwa-Rajo-Tamo Gunaas; You are the Dikpaalakas or the Chiefs of the Ten-Direcrtions; the Ashtaa Vasus; Ekaadasha Rudras; Dwadasaadityas; Gandharvas; Devas and Danavas; Forty Nine Marudganaas; Pitru Devataas; Vaalakhilyaas; Prajaapatis; Sapta Rishis; two Ashvinis; Unimaginable number of Jeevas; the Visionary of Brahmaadi Beings; Bhuta-Bhavya-Bhavishya Rupa; and ‘Kutastha’ beyond imagination of even Brahma downward; the Nitya-Suddha-Buddha-Mukta-Swarupa; Avyakta- Shaswata-Ananta-Sarva Vyapi-Maheswara-Shanta and Aakaasha Rupa).

As Markandeya completed his Stuti of Bala Mukunda, the Maharshi sought clarification from Bhagavan about Maha Tatwa, Maya and Bhagavan and the latter smiled and stated: Even Brahma and Devas could not comprehend about the Concepts but keeping in view the Supreme Pitru Bhakti, Deva Bhakti and the high-order of Brahmacharya of the Muni, the Lord granted the greatest dispensation to the Sage by way of ‘Sakshaatkaara’ and safety at the Pralaya; Bhagavan then outlined his clarifications in brief: At the beginning of Srishti, he created water and called it as Naara and since my Ayana or Nivaasa / residence

was the Naara, Bhagavan was named as Naara-Ayana or **Naraayana**; Bhagavan Narayana was the Supreme Creator, the Sanaatana or the Most Ancient, Avinaashi (Indestructible), and Srashta and Samharta; He said that he was Vishnu, Brahma, Indra, Kuybera, Pretaraja Yama, Shiva, Chandrama, Prajapati Kashyapa, Dhata, Vidhata and Yajna. He stated that his Face was Agni, his Feet were Prithvi, his eyes were Surya and Chandra, Dyuloka his Mastaka or Head, Akaasha and Dashaas his ears, his sweat the Jala; the whole Universe was his Body, the Sky, Directions and Vayu. Veda Vidwans performing Deva Yagnaas worship Him only. He bore the brunt of the Universe in the form of Sesha Naga who in turn carried the weight of Samudras, Parvatas and so on; as the Varaha Rupa he salvaged the sinking Prithvi all by himself from Rasatala; He assumed the Form of Badabaagni to absorb Sea Water and gave it back in the Form of Rains from the Meghas; from his face were born Brahmanas, shoulders and hands were created the Kshatriyas, Vaishyas from his thighs and Sudras from his feet; from him were created Jnaanarupi Sanyaasis, Jijnaasus, and Adhyatmika Vettas; He was the Script- Maker of Ruk-Yajur-Sama and Atharva Vedas; He was the Samvartaka (Code-Creator) Jyoti, Samvartaka Agni, Samvartaka Surya, and Samvartaka Vayu; the millions of Nakshatras /Stars on the Sky were his body hairs; the Oceans full of Ratnas and the Dasha-Dishaas were also own Form; the concepts of Satya, Daana, Tapasya and Ahimsa were all his creations; and the Antah- karana or the Inner Conscience of all Beings was also his own Form. Bala Mukunda further clarified that when ever Dharma or the Outlines of Virtuous Existence / Behaviour prescribed by Him got disturbed or distorted to extreme situations, He himself assumed Avatars or Incarnations as per the required exigencies to destroy the Evil Forces and restore Dharma again: *Yadaa yadaahi Dharmasya Glaanir bhavati Sattama, Abhyuttaana –madharmasya tadaatmaanam Srujaanmyaham/*

Having heard this, Markandeya was indeed thrilled and Bhagavan asked whether the Maharshi had any other clarification required. Markandeya replied that there had been a feeling about the Supremacy of Narayana versus Shiva and to dispel this doubt for the benefit of the posterity, he proposed to build a Temple of Shiva. Bala Mukunda smiled and stated that he had already taken pains to clarify that there was indeed only one Supreme Shakti named as Narayana or Shiva, or Brahma or Indra or Devis, or Devatas or of myriad other Rupas but the cover of Maya made different interpretations, while indeed the Supreme Energy was one and only one despite ill-advised classifications made by human beings on the basis of various Forms, Names, Features, Gunas, Sex, and so on; indeed these men and women ascribed to various Deities either with ill-founded and misleading judgments or to serve their own selfish gains or by sheer ignorance of realities; although Vedas and Vedangas explained and highlighted specific aspects of that Supreme Force, the Public got confused and believed ‘the woods for the forest’.

Bhagavan thus said: *Yadetparamam Devam Kaaranam Bhuvaneshwaram, Lingamaaraadhana -arthaaya naanaa bhaava prashaantaye/ Mamaadishidena Viprendra kuru sheeghram Shivaalayaam, Tatprabhaavaacchiva lokey tishthatwam cha tathaakshayam/ Shivey Samsthaapitey Vipra mama Samsthaapanam bhavet, Naavayorantaram kinchideka bhaavou dwidhaa krutou/ Yo Rudrah sa swayam Vishnuryo Vishnuh sa Maheswarah Ubhayorantaram naasti Pavanaakaashayoriva/ Mohito naabhi jaanaatiya yeva Garudhadhwajah, Vrishabhaadhwajah sa yeveti Tripuraghnam Trilochanam/ Tavanaamaankitam tasmaakkuru Vipra Shivaalayaam, Uttarey Deva Devasya kuru teertham Sushobhanam/ Markandeya hrudo naama Naralokeshu Vishrutah, Bhavishyati Dwija shreshtha Sarva Paapa pranaashanah/*

(Hey Vipra! You must soon build a Temple in which Parama Shiva Linga should be set up for the Aradhana of Bhuvaneswara who was the cause of the Universe so that you would be blessed in Shiva Loka for ever. Indeed setting up a Shiva Linga would be as good as establishing my Pratima. There was no differentiation in Shiva and Vishnu whatsoever as they were of the same Tatwa like that of Akaash and Vayu. Those ignorant of this reality was like those disrespecting Garudadhawaja and Vrishadhawaja. Hence, I instruct you to soon construct a Shivalaya to firmly establish the fact that Hara and Hari were just the same; I shall then materialize a Sarovara to be named as ‘Markandeya Hlaadam’ at the North of the Temple in which sincere bathing would demolish the person taking Snaana in it would be fully rid of the past sins and gain propitiousness.)

By so saying, Bala Mukunda blessed Markandeya and disappeared ]

[ Now Vishleshana on Devi Tulasi Mahatmya ]

Tulasi leaves yield a volatile oil called eugenol possessing anti bacterial properties which are anti-microbial, anti-inflammarory and expectorant promoting maximum respiratory assistance

*Tulasyamrita janmaasi sadaa twam Keshava Priyey! Keshavaartha chinomi twaam Varadaa bhava shobhaney/ Twadanga sambhavaairnityam pujayaami yathaa Harim, Tatha kuru Pavitrangam Kalou mala vinaashini/* (Tulasi! You are born from Amrita and are the beloved of Keshava always. I select excellent leaves from your Tree for the puja of Bhagavan. Do become the provider of boons from this Puja and enable it in a manner that it pleases Bhagavan Keshava. Mother Tulasi! Only you could clean up the mess of Kali Yug and provide a sense of direction to absolve me of my sins).

Origin of Devi Tulasi :The daughter of King Dharmadhawaja and Malati was named *Tulasi* as both men and women could not weigh the beauty and charm of the Child-Tulanaasmartha- she was named as Tulasi. Being a ‘Jatismara’ with the memory of her previous births, Tulasi performed very strict Tapasya to Brahma Deva who appeared and asked Tulasi to seek a boon.

Tulasi recalled that she was in her earlier birth she was a Gopi by the same name as Tulasi, that she was in Goloka as a close companion of Devi Radha and was fond of a boy called Govinda who was too a Gopa boy in the ‘Raasa Samaaja’ or the Circle of Gopa-Giopikas, that their freindship blossomed into lust, that Devi Radha cursed the lovers to be born into ‘Martyaloka’/ in Bhuloka and assured that on performing Tapasya to Brahma Deva the latter would give the boon of marrying Shri Krishna. Brahma smiled and told Tulasi that the same Gopa was already born with the ‘Amsha’ of Shri Krishna as a Danava King called Shankhachooda residing in Samudra, who was invincible to even Parama Shiva and that he would be her husband initially and subsequently wed Vishnu Deva as his very dear wife when Tulasi would become a Tree /Shrub when the whole Universe would worship as *Vrindaavani*. Devi Tulasi was thrilled at what Brahma revealed about the future course of events, but had a lurking fear of Radha Devi as to whether she would make this dream-like future possible as predicted by Brahma. Brahma again smiled and taught the procedure of pleasing Devi Radha by a Shodashopachara Mantra, Radha Stotra, Kavacha and Puja Vidhana. Tulasi was determined to please Radha and performed incessant ‘Raadhho - paasana’ or the contant memorising of Radha Devi.

Devi Tulasi weds Danava King Shankhachooda a ‘jaatismara’ with memory of previous life and who fought with Devas

In course of time, Tulasi had dreamt of a handsome youth and on the next day a Yogi called Shankhachooda landed at 'Badarivana' who practised Shri Krishna Mantra and Kavacha, thanks to Jaigeeshva Muni. As Tulasi got his darshan at a common place she was readily got attracted to him and vice versa. They exchanged pleasantries as also serious matters of Vedanta content, especially in the background of both of them being Jatismaras, when Brahma appeared and encouraged their Gandharva Vivaha. Even as Shankhachooda was enjoying his new marital life, he was simultaneously warring with Devatas, as he was essentially a Danava and tortured Devas and forcibly dislodged them from Indraloka. He acquired three crore 'Dhanurdhaaris', three lakh race horses, five lakh top rate elephants, Trishula dhaaris, countless chariots, and highly trained Maharathis and virtually became an unconquerable force in the entire Universe. On top of it he was a staunch Krishna devotee and the latter himself bestowed a talisman which fortified his prowess further. Shri Krishna was no doubt aware that the Danava King was performing all acts of Viciousness, brutality and violence; yet the demon's staunch devotion to him far outweighed his vices and cruelties to Devas, Maharhis, Sages and Brahmanas.

Shiva who mediated peace and then fought with no result : The alarming situation prompted Bhagavan Shiva to advise the Danava King and mediated peace with Devas. He used all his skills and powers of bringing about rapprochement; he said: 'Raja! You release the kingdom of Devas and make me and every body happy; you enjoy your own Kingdom and desist from fraternal enmities as Daityas, Danavaas and Devatas are all from the Kashyapa Muni and the own sisters of Diti, Danu and Aditi respectively. Brahma hatya and Jaati droha would be equally despicable etc. He also threatened that besides Indra, Surya, Yama, Varuna, Vayu, Shaneswara, Kubera etc. the illustrious Kumara, Nandi, Bhadra Kaali and he himself too would fight against him and the opponents. But the good advice given by Maha Deva himself fell flat on Shankhachooda's deaf ears and the great battle of Devas and Daanavas which could have been avoided did take place due to the persistence of one Daitya King Shankhachooda! The Danava King descended to the battle field adorned with the Dhanush and arrows that Bhagavan Vishnu gifted to him once. Skanda initiated the battle by destroying Shankha -chooda's chariot, Kavacha, the charioteer and his headgear and making the Danava faint. But the latter recovered quickly and took up a Vishnu Shakti and attacked Skanda, by the powerful strike of which Skanda fell down. Devi Kaali took over and assaulted the Danava who was an expert in Maya Shakti and dodged the Devi. Bhagavan Shiva revived Skanda by his Jnaana Shakti in a moment. Maha Deva then declared a fulfilled war in which Indra was pitted against Vrishaparva, Surya Deva against Viprachittha, Chandra against Dambha, Kaala Deva against Kaleswara, Agni against Gokarna, Kubera versus Kalakeya, Vishwakarma against Mayasura, Mrityu Devata against Bhayankara, Yama Raja against Samhara Danava, Varuna against Kalivinka, Vayu versus Chanchalasura, Budha against Ghratapishtha and Shanaischara versus Raktaksha, Jayanta versus Ratnasaara, Vasugana versus Varchogana, Nalakubara versus Dhumra, Dharma vs. Dhanurdhara, and Mangala vs. Mandukasha. The Adityaganas, Ekadasha Rudras, Rudra ganas headed by Nandeswara, Gandharvas, Yakshas and Kinnaras were all at the battle where the Danava Sena was annihilated mercilessly and there were streams of blood and floating dead bodies of soldiers and animals on the battle front. As there was a climatic moment at the combat, Maha Kali released Brahmastra at the Danava King who retaliated with another Brahmastra with the result was a nought. Then Devi Kaali initiated the Mantra to release 'Brahmastra' when a Celestial Voice was heard to say: King Shankhachooda is a 'Maha Purusha' (Illustrious Noble Being) and Pashupatastra should not be released against him, since he would not be killed by it. In fact, as long as a 'Kavacha' (Shield) given by Shri Hari was carried on his body and as long as his wife's 'Pativratya' (High devotion to her husband) would last, the Danava would continue

to be indestructible as these were the boons to him by Brahma. Bhadrakali then refrained from attacking the King but concentrated on destroying the rest of the Danavas and their Chiefs and so did the other Devas. Meanwhile, Bhagavan Vishnu took the form of an old Brahmana and approached for a boon. When Danava King replied that he could grant him anything, the Brahmana asked for the 'Krishna Kavacha'; the Danava King who abided by his word parted with the Kavacha.

Vishnu impersonates as Shankhachooda and took Tulasi into bed : Bhagavan Vishnu then assumed the Form of Shankhachooda and entered Devi Tulasi's interior room in a delightful mood saying that he won the battle and wished to rest. Devi Tulasi was full of joy and in a celebrating mood of relaxation; the Maya Shankhachooda and Devi Tulasi were happy in their union and thus Tulasi's pativratya got affected. As both the hurdles of 'Krishna Kavacha' being donated by the Danava King to a Brahmana and the ruin of Tulasi's Pativratya by Vishnu impersonating as Shankha -chooda were removed, it was easy for Mahadeva terminating the Danava King who returned to Devi Radha's Rasa-leela party at Goloka as Sudama and Bhagavan Krishna and Devi Radha welcomed him back into their fold. From the body bone remains of Shankhachooda emerged several kinds of 'Shankhaas' (conchshells) which was not only adorned one of Shri Krishna's hands but had since then found a permanent place in every Puja of Govinda.

Mutual curses of Tulasi and Vishnu -Tulasi as a tree and Vishnu as rock / Saalagraama :

Meanwhile Devi Tulasi suspected the Maya Shankhachooda and as Vishnu revealed himself she was upset that original Danava King was no more, cursed Vishnu to become a 'Paashaana'(rock piece) since he was unscrupulous and heartless and played the drama and removed her husband from the scene; ever since formal Vishnu Puja had been through the Sacred Form of a *Shaaligraama*.

Vishnu then gave a reverse curse that Tulasi would become a holy River Gandaki as also as a Sacred Tree / shrub worshipped all over the Universe including Bhuloka, Swargaloka and Pataalalokas.

Vishnu however softened and said that 'Abhisheka' with Tulasi leaves to Narayana would provide the same effect as 'Sampurna Snaan' or baths in all hallowed places including Sarva Kshetras; performing several Yagnas; satisfying Shri Hari with thousands of Abhishekas of holy waters along with 'Tulasi Dalaas'; thousand 'godaanas' to equate a Tulasi patra daana; serving tulasi water at the time of a death; any puja with Tulasi to any Deity as good as lakhs of Ashwanmedha Yagnas or death with a tulasi on hand resulting in access to Vaikuntha. If a person swears with a Tulasi on hand, his pledge is considered to be an unquestioned belief and breaking the vow with a Tulasi would attract Kalasutra and Kubhipaaka Narakas.

Bhagavan Shri Hari further said that in order to make her curse to him true, he would become black 'Paashaanas' (Saligramas) on the banks of River Gandaki and several 'krimi keedas' would bite the imprints of Shri Chakra thus becoming eligible for worship. Those Saligrams which have the colour of Cloud / Shyama Varna would be called Lakshmi Narayana; those stones which have one door and four chakras are called 'Vanamaali'; stones of light blue colour are called 'Lakshmi Janaardana'; those with two doors, four chakras and a cow's horn are called 'Raghavendra'; small stones with two chakras of black colour are known as 'Dadhi Vaamanaas'; very small stones with two chakras and vanamaali are called 'Shridhara'; round stones with clear chakra and Vanamali sign are 'Damodaras'; and so on.

Narayana Rishi described the Puja to Devi Tulasi with the 'Dasaakshara' (Ten worded) Mula Mantra / Beeja Mantra viz. (OM) *SHREEM HREEM KLEEM AIM BRINDAAVINYAI SWAAHAA* comprising Lakshmi Beeja (Shreem), Maya beeja (Hreem), Kaama bija (Kleem) and Vaani beeja (Aim). After reciting the Mantra, formal Puja must be performed, followed by offering ghee soaked Deepa, Dhupa, Sindura, Chandana, Naivedya and flowers followed by the 'Stuti' that Vishnu himself recited:

*Vrindaa rupascha vrikshaascha yadaiktra bhavanti cha, Vidhurbhudaastena Vrindam matpriyaam taam bhajaamyaham/ Puraa babhuva yaa Devi twaadow vrindaavaney vaney, Tena Vrindaavani khyataa soybhaagyam taam bhajaamyaham/ Asamkhyeshu cha viseshu pujitaa yaa nirantaram, Tena Vishwapujitaakhyam Jagat-pujyaam bhajaamyaham/ Asamkhyaaani cha Vishwaani pavitraani yayaa sadaa, Taam Vishwapaavaneem Deveem virahena smraanyaham/ Devaa na tushtaah pushpaanaam samuhena yaya vinaa, Taam Pushpa saaraam Shraddhaam cha drashtumicchhaami shokatah/ Vishwey yatpraaptimaatreya bhaktaanando bhaveda dhruvam, Nandini tena vikhyaataa saa preetaa bhavataabhi me/ Yasya Devyaastulaa naast Visweshu nikhileshu cha, Tulasee tena vikhyaataa taam yaami sharanam priyaam/ Krishna jeevana rupaa yaa shaswatpriyatamaa Sati, Tena Krishna jeevaneeti mama rakkshantu jeevanam/*

(When Vrinda tree and another kind of tree look alike, then intelligent persons call the group of trees as Vrinda only! It is that Vrinda which is popular that I pray; my greetings to that auspicious Devi who emerged in ancient times in Brindavana and was called as *Brindaavani*; I implore that unique tree which is worshipped among innumerable other trees and is called as *Vishwa pujita*; I greet that universally revered tree in veneration; it is the *Pushpasaaraa* which is held in high esteem among several other flowers and is meditated by all Devas that I yearn to vision with emotion and anxiety; may Tulasi be kind to me as she is known for spreading happiness around and fulfil one's desires and that is why her epithet is *Nandini*. I seek shelter from that Devi whose inherent values are impossible to weigh (tulana) and therefore called *Tulasi*. It is that Vrinda Swarupa who is considered as *Krishna jeevani* that protects the life of Shri Krishna!).

In short, Tulasi Stotra is: *Vrindaa Vrindaavani Vishwapujita Vishwapaavani, Pushpa -saaraa Nandini cha Tulasi Krishna jeevani/ Etannaamaashtakam chaiva Stotram Naamaartha samyutam, yah pathet taam cha sapujya soshwamedha phalam labhet/* After the Stotra as above, the formal Puja comprising the 'Shodashopacharaas' are required to be performed by men and women for prosperity, long and healthy life. This is the version of Brahma Vaivartha Purana.

Worship to Devi Tulasi and 'Salagramas' :Traditionally a passionate devotee of Narayana, Deva Savarni's son Vrishadvaja turned out to be a fanatic of Maha Deva to the extent of criticising Narayana. Surya Deva felt hurt not because of Vrishadvaja's devotion to Maha Deva but of the remarks against Narayana. Sun God cursed the devotee that he would be poor forthwith. This irritated Maha Deva and wished to punish Surya Deva, but Narayana pacified Maha Deva saying that the Trinity were of the same status after all. Maha Deva no doubt reconciled but desired to punish Vrishadvaja for his foul mouth. But Vrishadvaja died and so did his son Rathadvaja. The latter had two pious sons, Dharmadvaja and Kusadvaja who worshipped Maha Lakshmi and became Kings. Maha Lakshmi blessed Kusadvaja with a pious daughter Kamala who became a yogini called Vedavati. While at her Tapasya, Ravana confronted Vedavati and made amorous approaches touching her hands. She became furious and cursed him that soon enough he and his family would be destroyed; thus saying she immolated herself in Yoga Fire. Eventually, Maha Vishnu and Lakshmi incarnated as Sri Rama and Sita and were destined to undergo on 'Vanavasa' ( Forest Life), during which period Agni Deva in the form of a Brahmana informed that soon Ravana would plan to kidnap Sita Devi and desired that a fake Sita would be replaced by the original as advised by Devas and that this secret should not be made known even to Lakshmana. Thus the original Sita was protected by Agni and Ravana mistook the fake Devi all along. As Ravana died and Fake Sita was put to 'Agni Pariksha' ( the FireTest), Agni Deva replaced the real Devi instead. Chhaya Sita was asked to practise Tapasya at Pushkara Tirtha and reappear in Dvapara Yuga as Draupadi

in Dvapara Yuga. Thus Vedavati was known as Trihayani, the root cause of destroying Evil Doers in three Yugas.

Devi Tulasi was the daughter of Dharmadvaja and she too turned out to be a Tapasvini, performing extremely severe sacrifices like meditation with 'Panchagni' or Fires on five sides of her body - on four directions and on top. Lord Brahma knew her desire of wedding Narayana Himself. He explained to her that she was fully aware that She was a 'Jatismara' ( person having knowledge of previous birth), that she was Devi Tulsi Gopi in her previous birth as a maid of Radha desirous to have union with Krishna in a 'Rasakreeda' ( dance performance) which was not liked by Radha who cursed her to quit but Krishna advised her to take a fresh birth as the daughter of Dharmadvaja as a Tapasvini. Brahma in turn explained to Tulsi that there was a Gopa ( Cow boy) named Sudama who was of Krishna's 'Amsa' ( a part Extension) - also a 'Jatismara' - as he too was cursed by Devi Radha to become a demon now called Sankhachooda. After marrying him, Brahma said that she would eventually attain union with Krishna as the latter would curse Tulsi to become a Sacred Tree to be prayed to all over the world. Brahma blessed Tulasi to become a Siddha to secure a good husband and also taught to her Radha Mantra, Radha Kavacha, Radha Stotra and the method of Radha Worship to conquer her confidence and in the long run she would secure Krishna Himself. At the same time, Sankhachooda too got enamoured of Tulsi and, with the blessings of Brahma, married her in Gandharva style. But as the Demon tormented Devas and drove them away from their seats, they went in a deputation to Brahma and further on to Sankara who approached Maha Vishnu. But the latter explained that in his earlier birth the demon was Krishna's Rasa Parishad Chief Attendant Sudama who was cursed by Devi Radha to become a Danava and as a Jatismara, he knew he had the Narayana Kavacha to protect himself, but Mahesvara could terminate him by a 'Sula' weapon that would be provided by Himself ( Vishnu) and that He also would spoil the chastity of the demon's wife Tulsi, who too was a Gopi and again a Jatismari. Thus planned Maha Vishnu and asked Devas to get ready for the Deva-Danava War. Mahesvara pitched His huge tent on the banks of River Chandrabhaga, sent an Emissary, Chitraratha, who was taken aback by the strength of the Danava King's mammoth army of three koti ( Crore) warriors surrounding the Danava King and another seven crore moving outside. The Emissary cautioned the Demon that besides Devas, Brahma and Maha Deva under the commandership of Skanda would all be on battle and the demon's army would only be fodder to the killing sprees of the Devas side of the battle, more so since Vishnu Himself gifted a powerful 'Sula' to Mahesha to terminate the Danava King.; as such it still would not be too late for the Danavas to withdraw to Patala. But the Demon King invited all the force to fight the next morning itself! In the hundred year long battle that followed, Devas and Danavas fought close- tooth to tooth and nail to nail; Mahendra pitted against Vrishaparva, Bhaskara to Viprachitti, Agni to Gokarna, Kubera to Kalakeya, Visvakarma to Maya, Yama to Samhara, Varuna to Vikumka, Budha to Dhritaprishtha, Sani and Raktaksha, Eleven Rudras to Eleven Bhayankaras and so on. The Danava King utilised a Shakti Arrow which made Kartika senseless and Bhadra Kali made such a roar which frightened thousands Danavas to death. Brahma used Brahmasstra which proved ineffective. Siva desired to use 'Pasupathasstra', but a Brahmana appeared and stopped its usage since that would destroy the whole world. Then the Brahmana ( Maha Vishnu Himself) spread His Vishnu Maya and influenced Sankhachooda to part with his Narayana Kavacha and finally terminated the Danava King by the 'Sula' gifted by Narayana to Mahesvara. Meanwhile Vishnu Maya was spread again and Devi Tulasi was made to believe that the Danava King Sankhachooda won the battle and Maha Vishnu assuming the form of the King was cheated as Tulsi welcomed him and got her chastity spoiled simultaneously. But she got suspicious in their union and

being afraid of a curse from her, revealed Himself. She was overcome by grief as her beloved husband lost his life and worse still her chastity was affected. Thus Tulsi cursed Vishnu to turn as a stone.

Maha Vishnu consoled her and asked her to assume an extra-terrestrial form as His wife, as the entire drama was enacted by Himself and assured her that she would be His better half in Vaikuntha besides Maha Lakshmi and as a Tulsi Tree would bestow boons to her devotees in the entire Universe. Whatever happiness that He would receive from the 'Abhisheka' (Mantra filled bathing) of Himself thousand times would be bestowed by offering a single leaf of Tulasi; that the benefit of giving away as offerings of several cows would be equated to an offer of a Tulsi leaf; if a dying person is administered a Tulsi leaf, [preferably with Ganges Water], his access to heavens is assured; whoever drinks Tulasi leaf water daily gets the benefit of performing horse sacrifices; Plucked Tulasi leaf kept in the night in a house wards off evil spirits and bad dreams; decorating Tulasi leaves on a Deity is propitious and gifting items along with the leaves is considered as auspicious to the donor and the receiver alike. Contrarily, plucking Tulasi leaves in the nights, particularly on a full Moon or the twelfth day of a month. (Pournami or Dvadasi), or twilight timings, mid-days, while applying oil, during impure days of 'Asuchi', or while donning dresses is strictly prohibited as it attracts great sins. Worship to Tulasi (Holi Basil) done with pure body and heart in a formal manner would certainly bring about excellent peace of mind and spiritual contentment. The every place of Her puja is a Brindavan or a Garden of several plants / trees. She is worshipped by the Eight names as Brinda, Brindavani, Visvapujita, Visvapavani, Tulasi, Pushpasara, Nandani and Krishnajivani. She is worshipped by the ten worded Seed Mantra: *Srim Hrim Aim Kleem Brindavanai Svaha*.

As regards Tulasi's curse to Vishnu to turn as a stone, the Lord consented to become a Stone or 'Salagram' worthy of performing worship as a Symbol of Vishnu and such special Stones are available on the banks of River Gandaki, whose Principal Deity is Tulasi Herself. Such Stones are natural formations of various sizes, forms, convolutions and 'Chakras' (circular formations), embodying armoury or ornaments of the Lord and are kept at Puja Mandirs (Worship Places) of individual households for Daily and Regular Pujas or at Public Places of Devotion. But care must be taken that the Salagram, Conchshell and Tulasi leaves are placed and worshipped all together, lest separation of any of the three items is warned is considered as a great blunder, as it might yield negative results. Normally males perform the Salagrama Puja. Further, the Pujas ought to be performed with all purity and devotion with Vedic Mantras by way of milk 'Abhishekas', flowers, Tulsi leaves, lighting, Naivedyas and such other 'Sevas' (services). Since the Pujas are to be done daily and there should not be failures on that count, and if necessary, the person(s) could be different, but the Puja be performed on a regular basis. This is also detailed in the Purana of Devi Bhagavata.

Effects of daily worship of Tulasi as Maha Vishnu considers Tulasi on par to Lakshmi:

Maharshi Veda Vyasa enlightened a congregation of Sages that Bhagavan Maha Deva described the benefits of Tulasi Tree (Holi Basil) to Kartikeya as it is highly auspicious, desire-fulfilling, very dear to Bhagavan Vishnu and hence called 'Vaishnavi'; in fact, Vishnu considers Tulasi on par with even Lakshmi and far above the ranking of all other leaves and flowers. Daily worship to Bhagavan Vishnu with Tulasi leaves is considered as effective and propitious than even Daana, Homa, Yagnya and Vratas. Needless to say that Tulasi Puja to Bhagavan Vishnu bestows brightness, happiness, luxury items, fame,

Lakshmi, noble ancestry, good wife and children, wealth, health, 'Gyan', Vigyan, Veda and Vedanga , Shastra, Purana, Tantra and Samhitas.

Keeping a Tulasi Garden nearby is as effective and easy as keeping Lord Shri Krishna Himself and thus retaining Devi Lakshmi, Brahma and all other Devas. Thus a short-cut method is worshipping Tulasi to be able to keep all the Deities happy. As a corollary, Pretahs, Piscachas, Kushmandas, Brahma rakshasas, Bhutas and Rakshasas are nowhere in the vicinity and so would be far away from sins, fears, diseases and wants. In Kali Yuga, one effective way is to perform Tulasi Puja, Kirtana, Dhyana, Dharana and other means of worship to dry out and burn off all kinds of Sins and consolidate the path of reaching Swarga and Moksha. Bhagavan Shankara stated: *Pujaney kirtaney dhyaney ropaney dharaney Kalou, Tulasi dahatey paapam Swarga moksham dadaaticha/ Upadesham dadeydasyaah swayamaacharatey punah, sa yaati Paramam Staanam Madhavasya nikanam/* Lord Vishnu said that in all those tasks which were dear to him like Yagnas, Vratas etc. worship with even with one Tulasi leaf enhances the value of such tasks. Further, those who worship Tulasi attain the same fruits of worshipping Gurus, Brahmanas, Devatas and Tirthas.

If one retains a leaf of Tulasi while dying has a path leading upwards to heavens. Those who worship Tulasi regularly and sincerely would not have to take 'Punarjanma' (another birth)! Mere 'Namocchharana' or taking the name of Tulasi frightens Asuras but pleases Vishnu immensely; blessed are those in Kali Yuga who perform puja of 'Shaligramas' or Replicas of Maha Vishnu with Tulasi. What could Yama Raja say to Tulasi : *Tulasyamrita janmaasi sadaa twam Keshava Priyey! Keshavaartha chinomi twaam Varadaa bhava shobhaney/ Twadanga sambhavairnityam pujayaami yathaa Harim, Tatha kuru Pavitrangam Kalou mala vinaashini/* (Tulasi! You are born from Amrita and are the beloved of Kehava always. I select excellent leaves from your Tree for the puja of Bhagavan. Do become the provider of boons from this Puja and enable it in a manner that it pleases Bhagavan Keshava. Mother Tulasi! Only you could clean up the mess of Kali Yug and provide a sense of direction to absolve me of my sins). [Tulasi leaves yield a volatile oil called eugenol possessing anti bacterial properties which are anti- microbial, anti-inflammarory and expectorant promoting maximum respiratory assistance].

Tulasi Puja is forbidden in Ganesha Pujas as Devi Tulasi was infatuated with Ganesha who cursed her

It is against background that Tulasi Leaves are forbidden in Ganesha Puja. Though Tulsi is considered as very auspicious but due to involvement of curse it is prohibited to use tulsi leaves at the time of pooja; one might notice in the course of the Eka Vimshati or 21 leaf pujas of Ganesha puja just one tulasi leaf is offered to Ganesha as an exception. Once Lord Ganesha was engaged in deep meditation. As Ganesha was doing pooja, there came Tulsi. The moment she saw Ganesha, she fell in love with him and requested him to take her as his wife. But Lord Ganesha had turned down the offer but on her continued pestering cursed her that she would marry a demon. After the curse Ganesha took pity on Tulasi and blessed her be to be Lord Vishnu's beloved. Ganesha Vrata Vidhana, be it on Bhadra pada Chaturthi or Sankata Chatuthi or otherwise, the 'Eka vimshati Patra Puja' avoids Tulasi Puja except as of tokenism!

But the glory of Tulasi Puja remains for ever!

### **Gautama Buddhaavatara**

*Buddham sharanam gacchaaami, dharmam sharanam gacchami/*

Recalling Agni Purana's statement of Agni Purana as Buddha Avatar: As there was an ongoing battle of Devas and Asuras for long time, Devas approached Lord Vishnu to revive 'Dharma' and 'Nyaya' and beseeched Him to take human form once again. The Lord said that 'Mayamoha' would soon take birth as Buddha to one Sudhodana. But the illusions that would be created in the name of Buddha would be such that many evil persons would call themselves as Buddhists and undo all the Golden Traditions established in Vedas and other Scriptures. The misleading ways would advocate materialism in detestable manner and finally end up in the last phase of 'Kali Yuga'.. [While Agni Purana had thus prophesied the sinful and irrecoverable era ahead, Buddha himself was stated to have provided a silver-line in the quest of Truth and Dharma. He preached the concept of Self -Realisation and recommended the right path to this Goal. He found that the basis of evil was unhappiness and desire, while the means of overcoming the evil is the attitude to secure freedom from material happiness. He preached the eight fold path, viz. the right view, the right intention, the right speech, the right thought, the right livelihood, the right action, the right mindfulness and the right concentration. Another significant preaching of Buddha was to follow the principles of 'Ahimsa' (non-violence) and 'Samyam' (Restraint). But in the post-Buddha period, varied interpretations of Buddhism were adopted to suit some of the following generations, including the practice of low and misleading Tantras].

Buddha is believed to be the ninth incarnation of Lord Vishnu because of His greatness, wisdom and compassion for all human beings. Considered to be the founder of the Buddhist sect, Hindus even today undertake pilgrimages to Bodhi Gaya and make obeisance to Lord Buddha. A few non-Hindu Western scholars hold the view that Buddha was a Hindu reformer. Kings in Nepal have been revered by their Nepalese subjects as forms of Vishnu many times. In the 'Satapatha Brahmana' Buddha is acclaimed as the ninth avatar of Vishnu, holding the promise of salvation or *nirvana*, in the Kali Yuga. Another school of thought opines that Balarama, foster brother of Krishna was the ninth Avatar of Vishnu. However there is a conflict as some believe Balarama to be an incarnation of Shesha Naag ( the thousand-headed snake on which Vishnu reclines throughout periods of dissolution of the world.) Buddha as the ninth incarnation gained popularity because of the success of Buddha's teachings amongst common folk. To the Shakya King in Kapilavastu is born Gautam Buddha, a Prince among Princes. Abandoning his princely life, Buddha discovers the means of salvation through intense meditation. Once enlightened, he preaches his first sermon 'The Turning of the Wheel of Law' at Sarnath near Banaras.

Providing a simple meaning to human existence and its goal, he admonishes the Brahmanical orthodoxy of his times. Buddhism emerges as an organised religion, in the prosperous age of the mighty Kshatriya kingdoms along the Gangetic plain. The birth of Prince Siddhartha was a significant event in the history of mankind. He was born in 563 B.C. to King Sudhodana and Queen Maya in the royal grove of Lumbini between Devadaha and Kapilavastu. He belonged to the Sakya clan of the *Kshatriya* caste of the solar race.. On the full moon day of Vaishakh 544 BC, Queen Mahamaya was journeying from the capital Kapilavastu to her parents in Devdaha. She stopped under the shade of two *sal* trees at Lumbini and gave birth to Buddha. Their kingdom Kapilavastu lay between the Nepalese foothills and the river Raptu.

The child was named Siddhartha. But even after enlightenment he was better known by his clan name—Gautam the Buddha. He was brought up by his mother's sister, also his stepmother as his mother died soon giving him birth. On the fifth day of the prince's birth, the naming ceremony was performed with a prediction that the new born would be either a universal monarch or Buddha, the supreme enlightened one. Shocked by this prophecy, King Sudhodana enquired, 'What will my son see that will be the

occasion of his forsaking the household life?' The soothsayer said, "Four signs of a man worn by age, a sick man, a dead body and a hermit' Gautam was a serious-minded child who instead of playing with other children often sat alone, lost in his own thoughts. Though Prince Gautam was a Kshatriya, he never hunted and instead tried to protect animals and birds. The King provided his son with all possible luxuries along with the best of education, taking care to protect him from any negative sight. In his youth, Prince Siddhartha married Princess Yasodhara who bore him a son, named Rahul. The king, had three palaces built for him, and at the age of sixteen gifted him forty thousand dancing girls. Yet thirteen years later Gautama left the mundane world in quest of, "The incomparable security of *Nirvana* free from birth and endless reincarnation. During one of his excursions, Siddhartha sighted four incidences which made him aware of the harsh sufferings of life. He saw a frail man weary from age, a diseased man, a starving beggar and a dead body. The events forced him to search for the ultimate truth that eventually changed his life.

At the age of twenty-nine, he abandoned his home in search of the answers to his questions, leaving behind his wife and son, his father and a crown of power and glory. After leaving his homeland, Siddhartha made his way to the hermitage of renowned sages of that time. But found these teachers' range of knowledge was insufficient. He followed the path of self-mortification for six years but could not attain his desired goal. Soon realizing the futility of such an endeavor which had weakened him, he took nourishing food. A woman Sujata offered him *kheer* and a grass cutter gave him a stack of grass to sleep on. Then he began intense meditation until he came to know the absolute truth. He meditated under the Bodhi tree in Bodhgaya at the edge of the river Niranjana, in the present state of Bihar in India.

At the end, in just one night of Vaishakh (C. 528 B.C.), Siddhartha came to know about his previous lives, the cycle of birth and rebirth and how to end infinite sorrow. Siddhartha became Buddha or the Enlightened One on his thirty-fifth birthday. He then spread the message of practicing *ahimsa* or non-violence and detachment from worldly desires, for attaining inner-peace and true knowledge for the next forty-five years. He taught as the Buddha or *Shakyamuni* (the sage of the Shakaya). His teachings formed the basis of the Buddhism religion. At a time when people were losing faith in humanity and religion while sinning along with violence and greed was commonplace, Buddha brought with him peace for mankind. This incarnation reflects the intellectual and spiritual progress of human civilization.

From Gaya, the Buddha proceeded to Sarnath near Varanasi. Here five men became his disciples. Teaching them the truths he had discovered, he formed the first *sangha* or order of monks. Thereafter, he journeyed extensively, preaching truth and gained a large following comprising of scholars, sanyasis, kings and ministers. His day was divided between itinerant preaching in the morning and receiving visitors for discussion at night, with the afternoons reserved for private meditation. He also went home as a *bhikshu* or monk. His father, stepmother, wife and son joined his sangha. In 483 BC, on the same day that he was born, and had attained enlightenment, the Buddha attained Nirvana, as he was freed from birth and endless reincarnation. His death or *parinibbana* occurred around the age of eighty. Shortly before his death, Gautama assembled the members of his order, giving final instructions. 'Look not for refuge to anyone besides yourselves.' His concern was uniquely with deliverance. 'How is Nirvana attained?' The first sermon of Buddha was held at the deer garden in Banaras. Buddha called his teachings midway between asceticism and indulgence. His 'Four Noble Truths, the foundation of all Buddhist beliefs, are:

1. Existence involves suffering. 2. All suffering is caused by human desire and clinging to existence. 3. Getting rid of worldly desires is the end of suffering. 4. To be delivered one must follow the eightfold noble path etched by the enlightened one.

The Eightfold Noble Path is: 1. Right understanding and Right-mindedness 2. Right speech 3. Right action 4. Right living 5. Right effort 6. Right attentiveness 7. Right concentration

Original Buddhism is atheistic, though the gods of Hinduism or Brahman were not explicitly denied, but nowhere did Gautama affirm that a transcendent deity should be invoked or his existence be formally acknowledged." He was strongly opposed by the Brahmins for teaching that gifts to the Buddhist order were of more merit than sacrifices practiced by Hindus.

Buddhism flourished during the reign of King Ashoka (274 - 232 B.C.). In the 2nd century before Christ, King Kanishka sponsored a fourth religious council at Kashmir where two radically different concepts of Buddhism, became known as Mahayana (great vehicle) and Hinayana (small vehicle). The relics of Buddhist saints came to be worshipped, images of Buddha were objects of veneration, monasteries were opened and Buddhism was transformed from an exotic cult to a religion of the many. Until the rise of the Gupta dynasty around 320 A.D., Buddhism fairly held its own in India. But under the Guptas, Hinduism became dominant. Buddhist religion was absorbed into the Hindu tradition which made Buddha an incarnation of Vishnu.

Two types of Buddhism are easily recognized: the Mahayana in China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Tibet, and Nepal; the Hinayana in Thailand, Burma, Ceylon, Cambodia, India and Indonesia.."

*Mahayana* : Mahayana introduced the idea of a deity into the religion. For the purposes of popular religion, Buddha became the supreme deity, much as Krishna was for the average Hindu...

*Hinayana*. Hinayana professes to follow the basic principles of the Pali canon is identified with primitive Buddhism. Certainly its emphasis on the four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path places it nearer to the original teachings of Gautama. Hinayana denies any god outside and above man and so logically concerns itself only with self, which it seeks to spare the trial of continuous rebirth by Nirvana annihilation.

Man seeks salvation or *nirvana*. The teachings of the Buddha are solely to liberate human beings from the misery and sufferings of life, a universal aspiration. Rich and poor alike were attracted by the simplicity of Buddha's teaching and his emphasis on complete equality of all, antithetical to the existing Hindu caste system.

Buddha Purnima : Buddha Jayanti also known as Buddha Purnima is the most sacred festivals of Buddhists, the birth anniversary of Lord Buddha. Falling on the full moon of the fourth lunar month of Vaisakh (April or May) the day commemorates three important events of Buddha's life.

His birth in 623 BC.-- His enlightenment in 588 BC. - His attainment of Nirvana or the complete extinction of self at the age of 80.

Celebrations : Pilgrims come from the world over to Bodh Gaya for attending the celebrations. The day is marked with prayer meets, sermons on the life of Gautam Buddha, religious discourses, constant

recitation of Buddhist scriptures, group meditation, processions, worship of Buddha's statue and symposia. The Mahabodhi Temple wears a festive look, festooned with colourful flags and flowers. Buddhists bathe and wear only white clothes. They gather in their *viharas* for worship, giving alms to monks. They reaffirm their faith in the five principles termed Pancha Sheela 1. Not to take life 2. Not to steal 3. Not to lie 4. Not to consume liquor or other intoxicants 5. Not to commit adultery Buddhists refrain from eating meat and eat *kheer* or rice cooked in milk and sugar, sharing it with the poor. They set up stalls in public places to offer clean drinking water and show kindness to animals.

#### Exerpts from the Essence of Bharat Yatra Smriti on Pradhana Bluddha Kshetras

To the followers of Lord Buddha, four outstanding Principal Tirthas have been selected viz. 1) where he was born, 2) where he attained 'Bodh' or Enlightenment 3) where he initiated explanations World-wide about his unique vision of Dharma and Nyaya or Virtue and Justice; and finally, 4) He attained 'Nirvana'.

1) Lumbini: The birth place of the Lord is from Gorakpur-Nautanva Railway Line and from the latter by 15 km. approx. 2) Bodhgaya is near Gaya 3) Sarnath near Varanasi and 4) Kushi Nagar near Gorakpur by 45 km.

Principal Sthupas: 1) Kushi Nagar 2) Paavagarh 3) Vaishali 4) Kapilavastu 5) Ramagrama 6) Allakalpa 7) Rajagriha and 8) Beta Dwipa or Bet Dwaraka.

Beneath each of the Sthupas some had 'Asthis' or body remains of the Lord and also of 'Bhasma' the Sacred ash

Also other Sthupas: Angara Sthupa at Pippiliya vana; Kumbha Sthupa near Kushi nagar; at these places the famed places are Pavagarh, Rajagriha and Bet Dwaraka.

Besides the above Places, Bouddha Tirthas are popular at the following Sacred Kshetras:

Koushambi: At Bharvari near Alhabad where the Sthupa stands over the Lord's head hair and nails. At Sanchi Hill visible from Vidisha Railway Station near Bhopal, the Sthupa attracts large visitorship of Buddhists but others and at Peshavar in Pakistan as made by Emperor Kanishka over Buddha's eyes

#### Tenets of Buddhism

Lord Buddha's delineation of realising the basic Truths of human existence revolves around 'Samudaya' or the Origin of Suffering viz. the craving material fulfillment, 'Nirodha' or the resistance from Suffering, and the 'Anurodha Marga' or the Eightfold Noble Path viz. right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right mindfulness and right concentration.

Buddhism is practised worldwide with some 550 million followers approx. of which some 370 million follow Mahayana, Thevada or Heenayana 150 million, and Vajrayana some 20 million worldwide. There are some 10 million outside Asia too. In India the practice is essentially of Maha yana and to a lesser extent in Vajrayana. Teravaada is practised in South East Asia especially Sri Lanka, Burma, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and some parts of Vietnam, Malaysia, and Bangladesh and to a minor count in China too. Vajrayana is predominant in China, Mongolia and Tibet. In Japan, the forms of Buddhist practice is essentially of forms are Jodoshu, Jodo Shinshu, Yuzu jushu, Nenbustu jushu shu, etc.

The Texts of Scripts of Buddhism and the practice of the Principles concerned are too complex, intensely distinct and profound as applicable to varied sections of Societies. But the basic Principles remain the same of 'Buddham sharanam gacchhami, Dharmam sharanam gacchhami, Sangham sharanam gacchhami' or Dedication to Buddha Deva, Dedication to Virtue and Dedication to Society. Thus there is an undercurrent of Self control and Constant practice of what the communities concerned have approved and practised.

### **Kalki Avatata of Maha Vishnu**

Racalling Agni Purana as prophesied as the Final Avatar of Lord Vishnu as Kalki, to be born to 'Vishnuyasha'. He would be fully armed to destroy the disbelievers of God and perpetrate sins and criminal acts and re-establish Dharma (Virtue) and Nyaya ( Justice) and revive the concepts of four 'varnas' ( castes,) viz. Brahmana ( the nobility), Vaisya (the business class), Kshatriya ( the Warriors and Defenders) and Sudra ( the Others).The revival of the four 'Ashrams' ( Stages of Life) too would happen viz. Balya (Childhood), Grihastha ( the family person), Vanaprastha ( the senior and religious class) and Sanyasa ( Seekers of Truth and death-awaiting). [Note: The popular belief is that by the close of the fourth phase of Kalki Yuga (era) as against the first phase now, Lord Vishnu would take the 'Avatar' (Incarnation) riding a flying white divine horse, brandishing a sword, destroying the Evil and reviving the Virtue, thus heralding a completely New World Order following the Great Destruction and evolving a Fresh Cycle of Creation.]

Bhavishya Purana explains the Kala Chakra thus:

At the beginning of Creation, there was darkness all around and the Supreme Energy created 'Maha Jal' (the Great Water) first. 'Parabrahma' had his resting place (Ayana) in the water (Naara) and materialised Maya or Prakriti and as a result of the interaction, there was a Golden Egg out of which emerged Brahma. After persistent 'Tapasya' (meditation), Brahma created 'Bhumi' (Earth) from one part of the Egg and aakash' (Sky) from another; from the middle portion of the Egg was created 'Swarga' or the Celestial Region, Eight Directions, 'Samudra' or the Great Ocean, the 'Maha Tatvas' (Great Awareness or Consciousness of Elements) and the 'Charachara Srishti' or the Moveable and Non-moving Beings. After creating the Sky, he created Vayu (Air), Agni (Fire), Jal (water) and Prithvi. Brahma prescribed the names and tasks of each Institution or Entity. He created Devas and their 'Ganas' (troupes), the Yagnas like Jyothistomas; Grahas (Planets), Nakshatras (Stars), Nadis (Rivers), Samudras (Seas), Parvatas (Mountains), Concept of Time like Samvarsaras (Years), Masas (Months), Dinas (days), and Ritus ( Seasons). He created 'Shadvargas' viz. Kama (Desire), Krodha (Anger), Lobha (Greed), Moha (Infatuation), Mada (Ego) and Matsara (Jealousy); Dharma (Virtue), Adharma (Vice), Sukha (Happiness) and Duhkha (Grief) etc. Brahma created Brahmanas from his face, Kshatriyas from his hands, Vaishyas from thighs and Shudras from his feet. He created Rig Veda from his Eastern Face which was received by Vasistha Muni; Yajur Veda from his Southern Head as secured by Yagnyavalkya Muni, Sama Veda from the Western Head achieved by Gautama Muni, Atharva Veda from the Northern Face obtained by Shaunaka Muni, and from his Uprturned Face emerged Eighteen Puranas, Itihasas and Shastras. He divided his body on the right side to generate males and the left side to create women. He materialised a Virat Purusha or a Gigantic Male who performed Tapasya for long time to create Ten Prajapatis viz. Narada, Bhruhu, Vasishtha, Pracheta, Pulaha, Kratu, Pulastya, Atri, Angirasa and Marichi as also a

number of Secondary Rishis. The he created Devatas, Munis, Daityas, Rakshasas, Piscachas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Pitras, Human Beings, Nagas, Serpents, and so on and set them all in their positions. Lightnings, Clouds, Rainbows, Dhumaketus, Ulkas, Thunders, Fishes, Animals, Birds, and moveable and non moveable objects. Eversince ‘Srishti’ or Creation commenced, Brahma’s one day lasts till the end of a ‘Kalpa’ and at the end of his one day comes a ‘Pralaya’(The Great Annihilation); Srishti is resumed by the next morning again. It is said that one ‘Truti’ makes one Nimesha, eighteen nimeshas a Kashtha, thirty kashthas one Kala, thirty kalas one Kshana, twelve kshanas one Muhurta, thirty muhurtas make a day and night, thirty day-nights make one month, two months one Ritu, three Ritus one Ayana, and two Ayanas a year. One day-night of Pitras equals one month of human beings; in other words, Shukla Paksha or a fortnight of humans makes a day for Pitras and Krishna Paksha a night. Satya Yuga comprises 4,800 Divya years or 17, 28,000 solar years; Treta Yuga comprises 3,600 Divya years or 12, 96,000 solar Years; Dwapara Yuga comprises 2,400 Divya years or 8, 64,000 solar years and Kali Yuga comprises 1,200 Divya years or 43,200 solar years; thus one Chatur Yuga or Maha Yuga adds up to 32000 Divya years or 43, 20, 000 solar years. One thousand years of Devas equals one day of Brahma and another thousand Divya years make Brahma’s night; 12,000 Divya years make one Divya Yuga and 170 Maha Yugas make one Manvantara, while fourteen Manvantaras make one Brahma day.

#### Then The advent of Kali Yuga and the Ongoing Phases - Arrival of Gautama Buddha

In the initial years of Kali Yuga, the survivor Mlecchas gradually adopted responses to the new environs, new ways of life and even new language styles. For instance, earlier languages got corrupted and new expressions emerged; Vraja Bhasha, Prakruti, Sanskrit etc. got adapted from ‘Gurundika’ (English) which was also different from Mleccha Bhasha/ Yavani and new corruptions of various languages both in spoken and written scripts got adapted. For instance, Pitru (Father) became ‘Paitar’; Bhatru became Bathar or Brother; Ahuti became Aaju; Ravivar as Sunday; Jaanu became Jain, Raviwar as Sunday; Phalguni as February and Shasthi as Sixty! Simultaneously, Places of Worship in Bharat like Ayodhya, Mathura, Kashi etc. lost their purity and Shabars, Bhills and robbers dominated. At the same time however, even after the first thousand years of Kali Yuga, quite a few pockets of Virtue, though not in the erstwhile pristine form, survived and semblances of Varashrama and devotion to Almighty did not get completely extinct yet. It is believed that a few Devatas continued to travel to ‘Brahmaavarta’ from Swarga loka that is where Ganga flowed. An illustrious Muni by name Kashyapa begot ten sons viz. Dikshit, Upadhyaya, Pathak, Shukla, Mishra, Agnihotri, Dwivedi, Trivedi, Pandya and Chaturvedi. Kashyapa prayed to Devi Sarasvati that Evil Forces had come to control the World and that she being the ‘Loka Mata’ must come to immediate rescue; in response Devi provided enlightenment to the Muni; he established a Kingdom, named after his son King Magadha apparently to resist the Evil Forces. Magadha Kingdom was segregated from Arya desha and was surrounded by Kalinga (Orissa) in Agneya or South East, Avanti in South, Aanart (Gujarat) in Nirruti or South West, Sindhu to the West, Kaikadesha in Vayavya or North West, Madra Desha in North and Kulinda in Ishaanya or North East. In the lineage of King Magadha was the famed Ajata Shatru.

#### **Kali Yuga’s second, third and fourth quarters and Avatara of Kalki**

Suta Maha Muni told Shaunaka and other Munis that as Mlecchhas gained victory over the Dharmic Shaktis gradually Kali Yuga Devi was satisfied. Daityas who were stage managing the victory of Mlecchhas then constructed several ‘Jalayanans’ or Sea borne vessels to Harikhanda (China) where men

were very strong as Devas initially but in course of a few years the 'Maya Yuddha' or the cunning and deceitful battles in which Daityas were well known the Harikhandas residents appealed to Mahendra for protection. Indra asked Vishvakarma to reinvent a 'Yantra' (Machine) by which persons of one part of the World would not be able to travel to another part. On receiving the hint Vishwakarma created a 'Bhrami-Yantra' by using which persons of one 'Khanda' or chunk of a Large Region could not freely travel to another 'Khanda' and also a kind of 'Vatsya' or a less potent Maha Vayu. This Vatsya would destroy Daityas, Yakshas and Piscachas and would protect the honest and Dharmic Brahmanas. This Vatsya gave shelter to all the Brahmanas and other upright persons for a number of Years. This situation that enabled good persons was most unpalatable to Kali Yuga Devi and approached Daitya Raja Bali. Then Bali and Kalki Devi approached Narayana in the form of 'Vamana' who in turn enabled a Brahmana called Kama Sharma and his wife Devahuti on the banks of Yamuna River; he blessed that this couple would give birth to Bhoga Simha and Keli Simha. These two sons would stay in a Kreedavati Nagar and would carry out the wishes of Kali Yuga Devi, especially in the task of wide-spread 'Varna-sankara' or destroying the Rules of 'Varnashrama'. Over two thousand years, the established Regulations made by Lord Brahma and the successive Manus would get thinner and thinner and *by the Second Paada of Kali Yuga*, Kali Devata would be happy to witness that the old Vedic values would be obliterated, that the Daityamaya human beings (fully soaked in Daitya activities) would be of two-and-half feet height, that their life span would be forty years maximum (as against hundred years now) and that they would be free like birds without any 'Karmic regulations! At the end of the Kali's second half there would neither be the institutions of marriages, nor Kingships, nor any social reformer and not even a Karma Karta! The World would be full of the progeny of Bhogi Simha and Keli Simha and this kind of a situation devoid of customs and social norms would prevail for one and quarter lakh years!! In the Third Quarter of Kali Yuga, the average age of human beings would be twenty six years maximum; Bhiringha Muni along with his wife Saurabhi would create Kaulakalpa-named beings who would not hesitate to eat human beings/ kinnaras. These new species of Kaulakalpas would resort to beastly affairs with mothers, sisters and daughters! They would be too sex-blinded and produce too many children and resort to affairs with co-males and animals! In the fourth phase of Kali Yuga the maximum age of humans would not exceed twenty years and live like water-beasts and animals; hells like Tamistra and worse kinds of frightening Places of Retribution would be over-populated. As Yama Dharma Raja found that the influx of dead Beings was assuming alarming proportions, he and Chitra Gupta approached Indra Deva and later on to Brahma Deva and the latter declared that soon enough there would be an 'Avatar' (Incarnation) of Vishnu Deva as **Kalki Deva**; he would be fully armed with 'Kahdga' (Long sword) whose reach would be unimaginably long and widespread as also with a 'Kavacha' (Body-Cover) and 'Dhaal' or Protective Shield, mounted on a huge horse, travelling on 'Yoga Marga' for sixteen thousand years and would turn the entire 'Srishti' to ash-laden devastation! At that time, there would be a cloud burst producing the Great Annihilation of the Universe under alarming and incessant rain called 'Pralaya'! That would be the fresh 'Srishti' heralding the new cycle of Yugas *ab initio!!*

Thus Vyasa the gradual decadence of Dharma by the yugas of Satya-Treta- Dwapara- Kali Yugas especially after Brahma's day fall, then there were prominent prognostications of 'Brahma Pralaya'. One major indication was that at the Mini Pralaya, the Surya Deva's teekshnata from above on the sky and that of Agni Deva all across the Universe was so intensified that the 'praani kotis' were burnt off to ashes. The 'sthaavara jangama sarva pranis' including grass to vrikshaas, from pebbles to mountains were burnt off in a manner of earth seeming like a massive black tortoise shell. As the prithvi having lost its 'gandha

grahana guna' of solidification then gradually got dissolved in to the karanabhuta pralaya jala samriddhi. Then jala pravaahas started of resounding reverberations on all the 'dasha dishas' and the universe got totalled as of jala maya. Then the tejasvi jala guna got absorbed into heat and the rasa heena jala pravaahaas impacted the 'vaayu tatva'. Then the tejasvi guna rupa had taken over from vayutatva and even as agni and vaayu together led to collision and gradually reached 'akaasha' thus the Brahma Pralaya had rapidly crashed into the cause and effect syndrome or set of symptoms.

Thus the Brahma Pralaya had instantly got manifested as of never earlier experienced speed and fury making earth and sky shatterings all across the globe and of ten directions. Thereafter akaasha had since assumed the feature of Vayu guna's sparsha jnaana and then vayu and akaasha then got united and there were a continuous spree of thunders shaking the pancha bhutas of earth-water- fire- winds and sky all together. Then there was neither the rupa-rasa-gandha-sparsha tanmaatras of the pancha bhutas nor of the inherent energies of the respective pancha bhutas even. There were only the 'loka ninaadita shabda paraamparaas' of ever repeated shatterings and the akaasha was merely of 'kevala maha shabda guna yukta' as though the Ever Moving Time Cycle had got jolted up. Then the 'prapancha vyakta drishya' was only of shabda and thus the 'vyaktaavyakta maha tatva in the Brahma Deva's 'manobhava' was presumably of Brahma Pralaya.

In that manner Paramatma swarupa maha yogis had visioned the jnaanamaya bodhya tatva saakshaatkaara had revealed the essence of Avyakta Parabrahma srishti as Brahma's one day time was of thousand chatur yugaas as His night too was of as much of the duration. Thus as explained vide Vishnu and Agni Ppuranaas the nitya naimittika Pralaya is at the end of the Day of Brahma (4.32 Billion Solar Years) occurring at the end of a Kalpa- also known as Brahma's night occurring at the end of Chatur Yugas. 2. Manvantara Pralaya be the end of each of the Manus viz. 307 million Solar years. Praakritik Pralaya, which is of 311 trillion and 40 billion solar years duration, occurs after the completion of life of Brahma of 100 Brahma years. After the completion of one Brahma life cycle, the complete Pancha Mahabhutha or Universe would take place. Praakritik Pralaya is the time for which Vishnu sleeps. The next morning, he again gives birth to a new Lord Brahma and asks him to create new worldly entities. Noticeably, Praakritik Pralaya and the Life of Brahma are of equal duration.

*Swasthiprajabhyah paripaalayantaam nyaayenamargena mahimahshaam gobrahmeneshwasshubhama-  
mastunityam lokaassamataassukisnobhavantu/*

## **Annexures 1. Maha Vishnu 2. Parashakti 3. Pususha and Prakriti as reconciled**

### Annexture 1

*Ashtottara shata sthaanepyaavirbhutam jagatpatim, Namaami Jagataameesham Narayanamanayadhih/* (May I prostrate before the most hallowed Places of worship with intense concentration and dedication to Jagatpati Narayana!) The details of the 108 Maha Punya Kshetras as counted by Vaishnava Alvars are stated as forty in Chola desha, eighteen in Pandyadesha, thirteen in Kerala, two on Madhya desha, Tundeera mandala or Kanchi Pradesha as many as 22, Uttara Desha eleven and additionally Vaikuntha and Khseera Sagara. But this count by Alvars are far more in Bharat . Thus retaining what the Alvars had counted , additional Vishnu Kshetras are given as follows:

1) Shri Rangam at Tiruchinaapalli as dakshinaabhi mukha Shri Ranga -natha shaayi and Shri Ranga Lakshmi on the banks of Kaveri River along with Chandra Pushkarini and Punnaga Tree in the premises of the Temple. Shri Rangam Temple is perhaps unique in terms of its largest and most sprawling area in Bharat. Situated right on River Kaveri as an island, its length is approx. 16 miles and width some three miles. The actual Temple has seven ‘prakaaraas’ or boundary wall constructions, eighteen big or small ‘Gopuras’ and a middle street and four sub streets with houses reserved for pandas or priests , brahmanas and others. Inside the fourth circle, there is a very big ‘Mandapa’ or a raised platform with a ‘Sahasra Stambha’ or a thousand pillars-actually 960- on which are figures of horses and ‘Muthis’ as horsemen. In the fifth enclosure on the southern side there are two gopuras and on the northern gopura there is a beautiful Garuda mandapa with a sizeable Garuda Murti. There is a circular shaped Sarovara named Chandra pushkarini where devotees take bath regularly. Near to the Pushkarini is situated a tree named Kalpa Vriksha, and old idols of Lord Shri Rama and Vaikunthanatha. There behind is the famed *Shri Ranga Nayaki* Lakshmi Temple, opposite which is Kamba Mandapa, where in the olden times, Poet Kamba himself used to recite the Glorious Kamba Ramayana. In the sixth enclosure there is a western gate leading to the seventh enclosure and to its north is the Shri Ranga Nayaka’s own temple. Behind this Mandir are kept under a shaded low ceiling a number of Deva Murti Idols. Yet another such shaded ceiling there are the Idols of Acharya Ramanuja, Vibhishana and Anjaneya vigrahas. From there itself Shri Ranga Mandira Shikhara could be seen. In fact there are stairs leading to the Shikhara and there atop, one could witness the Idol of Vaasudeva. Shri Ranaga Nayaka in his Mandir is witnessed lying as ‘shesha saayi’ as the latter spreads out five of his hoods as the umbrella to the Lord. Near at the feet of Ranga Nayaka are the Devi Ranga Nayaki and Vibhishana as seated. There besides, the Vigrahas of Sri Devi and Bhu Devi as the Utsava Vigrahas or Idols meant for Parikrama are placed too. Significantly enough , the southern side of the Main Mandir flows River Kaveri’s principal flow and all the flows are reachible by well laid straired steps. From the Shukla Pratipada Tithi till Ekaadashi of every Pousha month there are splendid celebrations with special pujas and allied activities as climaxed with Vaikuntha Ekaadashi. The background of this world renowned Sri Ranga Temple was that Lord Brahma himself presented the most hallowed Vigrahas of Sriranga Nayaka and Nayaki to King Ikshvaaku the son of Vaivaswata Manu pursuant to an extreme Tapasya; originally, Shri Ranga Nayaka /Nayaki Vigrahas were installed at Ayodhya and that Mandir became the most sacred descendant Kula Vigrahas for generations. In Treta Yuga, Cholaraja Dharma Varma was invited once by Emperor Dasharatha to Ashwamedha Yagjna and

being greatly impressed by the Sri Ranga Nayaka returned to his Kingdom to perform severe Tapasya; a gathering of Maharshis approached the Chola King and sensitised him that Sri Ranga Nath was himself coming down to his Capital. Meanwhile, Lord Shri Rama killed Ravanaasura at Lanka and returned to Ayodhya in connection with Rama Rajyaabhsheka Celebrations. As Lord Rama distributed send off gifts, King Vibhishana desired to receive the gift of Sri Ranga Nayaka Nayakis. As Vibhishana was returning to Lanka, several Devas strongly felt that the just ravaged Lanka after the Battle was not suitable for the insallation of the Vighrahas and selected the island of Kaveri river; Vibhishana was no doubt disappointed that he could no longer perform the daily worship but Devas suggested that he could visit the selected spot daily for the worship; more so the King Dharma Varma conceded to grant the gift of Dasaratha that Sri Ranga Nayaka be shifted to the ideal Kaveri Island. Vibhishana reconciled to the proposal that he might visit Sri Ranga as so shifted to Kaveri; during one of his chariot rides to the New Temple from Lanka, Vibhishana's chariot hit a Brahmana and as the latter died, the co- Brahmanas caught hold of Vibhishana and were about to kill him while the latter prayed to Lord Sri Rama as the Lord granted long life till the end of the present Kalpa even as his mortal body would disappear so that his immortal self could serve the Lord's another Swarupa as Sri Ranga Nayaka till the Kalpaanta! Hence his presence along with Sri Raga Nayaki as a shasha sayi at ri Ranga Mandir! But Devarshi Narada at once gave the news to one and all in Ayodhya and Lord Rama appeared before the Brahmana in distress facing death and assured that a blunder made by Vibhishana was of Rama's too. As such, the deceased Brahmana got immortalised as an Alwar and till date there is a Shankara Guru kula and Vani Vilas Mudranaalaya at Sri Ranga!

2) Koliyur-Nichulaapuri or Vorayyur near Trishirahpalli where Sundarraja and Vaasa Lakshmi wed in the presence of 33 crore Devas on the banks of a rivulets of Kunmurutti and Kalyana Tirtha

3) Tiruvellaarai or Shvetagiri 10 miles north of Shriranga is the divine temple of Pundarikaaksha with his wives Pankajavalli and Champakavalli Lakshmi Swarupas; this is also the hallowed birth place of Padmaksha or Uyyakkondaar and Vishnuchitta or Aaingaallvar. Shri Vishnuchitta and Shriparakaala performed the Mangala Shasana or consecration to this Kshetra.

4) Anbil or Dhanvinahpura near Trichy and Lalgudi where one could vision Nambi Sundarraja and Allkiyavalli or Sundaravalli as Shesha shaayi; it is stated that Lord Brahma and Maharshi Valmiki had visioned the Vishnu Swarupas. Alvar Bhaktisaara did Mangala Shashana to this Place.

5) Tirupper nagara or Koviladi, Shriramanagar is situated some ten miles from Tanjor where Appakuduttaan Raghunatha and Devi Lakshmi are visioned. This place is on River Kaveri and IndraTirtha where Maharshis Upamanu and Parashara visited and Alvars Bhakti Sagara, Shathagopa, Vishnu chitta and Parakaala did the Mangala Shasana.

6) Kadambanore Uttamara koil north to Sriranga and Anbil is the Temple of Sri Purushottama and Puva Devi Lakshmi as sesha saayi and this hallowed Tirta was visited by Sanaka-Sanandana-Sanaatana-Sanat kumaras and Alwar Sriparakala did mangala shasana or sanctification.

7) Tanjaimaamani koel or Sharanya nagar near Tanjavur comprising three Temples viz. Shri Neela Megha Bhagavan and Sainkamala Valli or Red Lotus Devi Lakshmi as consecrated / Mangala shasana by Alvars Bhutayoi and Sri Parakala; Nrisimha and Tanjai nayaki Lakshmi visioned by Markandeya Maharshi and the third Temple of Manikuntapper/ Manikundala Perumal and Ambujavalli Lakshmi Devi.

8) Tirukkandiyur or Khanda Nagar is some four miles from Tanjaimani kovil with Bhagavan Hara shaapa vimochana Vishnu and Kamala valli Lakshmi depicting Shiva slicing off Lord Brahma's fifth head on his hand and Vishnu pardoning Shiva; this temple was stated to have visited by Agastya Muni and Alvar Striparakala consecrated the Temple.

9) Cuddalore or Sangama Pura is about a mile from Tiruvaiyaaru on the kaveri river banks again where Vaiyagam or Jagadraksha seated along with Padmasana Valli; this was visited by Maha Muni Nandaka and revived and consecrated by Alwar Parakaala

10) Kapilasthalam is four miles away from Cuddalore with the Temple of Gajendra Varada Bhagavan with Ramamani Poktaamara Lakshmi as shesha saayi on the banks of Kaveri and is also called Champakaranya; this sacred Tirtha was famed as both Gajendra and Kapisthala as was visioned by King Gajendra and Bhakta Hanuman; it was consecrated by Alwar Sant Bhakti Sagara. In fact, Alwar Bhaktaanghirenuka was born at Tirumandi-kkudi some four miles away from Kapilasthalam.

11) Pullabhudungudi is another sacred Place very near to Tirumandikkudi where Vallinvalli Rama or Rama with very strong bow and arrows along with Pottamaraiyal / Lotus Lakshmi visioned as sesha saayi or in lying condition. This is the Griddhra Tirtha too where the huge Kite who prevented Ravana'sura to abduct Devi Sita but could not despite the best efforts of the bird and got blessed by Rama to attain salvation. Alwar Sant Shriparakala had done the consecration of this Temple.

12) Aadanur ( Gopuri) is hardly a mile away from Pullabhudungudi where devotees witness Aandalakkamaayan or Bhaktaananda Murti Raghunadha along with Devi Ranganaayaki Lakshmi even as Bhagavan was in lying position. This Kshetra is also famed as Surya Pushkarini. Alwar Parakala is stated to have visioned 'Kaama Dhenu' or the Celestial Cow fulfilling desires of all visitors.

13) Tirukkundai or Kumbakonam is away by five miles from Aadanur where Aaravamuda Perumal Sharangapaani Bagavan is in a lying posture with Komalavalli Lakshmi nearby. River Kaveri and Hema pushkarini are nearby and Hema Maharshi was stated to have the Perumal actually visioned the Sharangapani Perumal himself. The illustrious Alvars Bhutayogi, Maha Yogi, Bhaktisaar, Shathagopa, Vishnuchitta and Parakaala did the consecration of the Great Temple. Sant Bhaktisaar passed away at this very hallowed Place.

14) Tiruvishnugaram or Akasha Nagar is about four miles away from Kubhakonam where Uppiliappan or the Lord Vishnu of Salt features and Bhumi Lakshmi are popular in standing position. This place is also blessed with Arti Pushkarini (Ahoraatra or Day and night). GarudaDeva, Maharshi Markandeya, Kaveri and Dharma were stated to have visited this Temple and Alvars Maha Yogi, Shathagopa and Shri Parakaala had performed the consecration. Interestingly, Uppiliappan receives the 'naivedya' of saltless food only. This place is also Tulasi van. Alwar Shathagopan performed sanctification of the this Uppili Appan Temple.

15) Tirunaaraiyur or Sugandhagiri Temple stands six miles south east of Kumbhakona where Lord Nambi and Nambikkai or Purna and Purni are the deities of Maha Vishnu and Devi Lakshmi and the Temple is situated on the banks of Mani Mukta River. Alwar Sant Shri Parakaala sanctified the Temple along with hundred cows. Interestingly, this Temple of Nambi-Nambakkai is famed for the killing of an Asura who had forcibly taken away the daughter of Muni Medhavi and restored her back to the Sage. Another

episode of this Temple related to a Rakshasa who stole the 'Vairamudi' or Pearl headgear of the Lord but Garuda Deva confronted the Rakshasa and in the scuffle, the 'Manimukta kireeta' fell down in a waterbody which became popular as Mani mukta River. Till date, on significant festival days of the Temple, the Kireeta is taken in a procession, but each time the 'Vairamudi' is weighed, it weighs very differently. There is a Garuda Idol worshipped in the Temple. Incidentally, this hallowed temple is more popular as the Nacchiyar Koel or the Lakshmi Devi's Temple even more than the Nambiar's Temple! Alwar Parakala was unable to sanctify this Temple as he did to many others and interestingly enough he got absorbed on his end as with the Nayika bhaava or with the unique mindedness of the Devi herself!

16) Tiruccherai also called Saarakshetra is just three miles way from Sugandhagiri Temple and Saaranatha Bhagavan along with Saara Lakshmi is worshipped as in erect position of standing; Devi Kaveri as the River worships the Main Deities at the time of Tula Sankranti in the month of Kartika stated to praise Saara Lakshmi as of far greater Mahatmya than that of Ganga Devi! Alwar Sant Shri Parakaala performed Mangala shasana here!

17) Nandapuri Vishnugaram is also situated three miles south of Kumbhakonam. At this sacred place are Vishnugar, Jaganaatha, Nathanatha accompanied by Champakavalli Lakshmi where there is Nandi Titrha too. It is stated that the illustrious Shibi Chakravarthi visited this hallowed place and had the 'saakshat-kaara' or actual vision of Maha Vishnu[ Sibi was tested by Agni and Indra assuming the forms of a pigeon chasing a kite and when prevented by Sibi, the kite demanded the pigeon as its food but the pigeon demanded safety of its very life. Finally, the King measured an equivalent flesh from his thigh as of the pigeon's meat and settled the noble principles of Dharma and Nyaya-Virtue and Justice and became the most ideal King ever!] Similarly Nandi Deva too was blessed by Nathanadha and immortalised the title of Nandapuri Vishnu! Alwar Sriparakala consecrated the Kshetra.

18) Tiruvelliyankudi or Bhargavapuri is a Place of Divinity again 5 miles from Kumbakonam where the devotees see for themselves the Kolabilli Raman or Vichitra Kodanda Raman accompanied by MarakataValli Lakshmi as the Lord is in 'shesha shayana' posture. This temple is also blessed with Shukra Pushkarini the Brahma Tirtha, as visioned by Brahma, Indra, Sukra and Maharshi Parashar too. Alwar Sri Parakaala performed Mangal Shaasana at this place of high virtue. Maharshi Shukracharya overcame his blindness as was caused by Lord Vamana the 'Avatara' or incarnation of Maha Vishnu as he stopped the flow of water from the vessel of King Bali while the latter sought to pour the water from the Vamana's vessel as donating the three lokas in charity and created an obstruction in the nozzle of the Daana Paatra or the charity vessel.

19) Teraullundur or Rathapaata Sthala some three miles off Kutralam Railway Station is blessed with the temple of Aamarudhi Appan Devadhi Deva along with Devi Senkamalavalli or Aruna Kamala valli Lakshmi in standing position. Dharma, Uparichara Vasu and Kaveri had the divine vision of the Deva-Devis and Alwar Parakala performed the Mangala Shasana of the Temple. The background of this Appan and Kamala valli temple is recalled as once there was an argument between the Vasu Devata and Maharshis in regard to a point of dissent in the context of performing yagjnas and in the argument, the chariot of the Vasu fell down from the sky to earth due to the curse of the Maharshis! It is also stated that Dravida Poet who scripted Ramayana viz. Kamba was born at this very place.

20) Tiruvindalur or Indrapur which is three miles near Mayavaram Junction has the divine temple of Sugandha Vananatha, Maruviniya Mandan Bhagavan along with Chandra shaapa vimochanavalli or

Pundarikavalli Lakshmi in 'veera shayana' posture. This Temple has sacred water body viz. Indu Pushkarini, besides the presence of Kaveri River. Chandra Deva prayed to Vishnu to get rid of the curse of his father in law Kashyapa Maharshi as the latter received the complaint of his daughters viz. the thirty one Naksharas that Chandra was in excessive love for Tara the wife of Devaguru Brihaspati in complete neglect of the wives. Alwar Parakala consecrated this holy temple.

21) Shirupuliyur or Vyaghrapura near Parelam Railway Junction at Kollumaagkadi where Arulmakadal or Karuna Samudra Bhagavan is stationed in the holy Temple along with Tirumaa magal Devi or Samudra Kanya Lakshmi in 'sesha shayya' posture near Ananta Sarovara or Manasa Pushkarini. Both Veda Vyas and Vyaghrapaada had the celestial vision at this place while Alwar Shriparakala sanctified the Temple.

22) Tirukkanna -puram or ShriKrishnapur, Kanvapura is on way from Peralam to Tiruvaayur at Nannilam is the hallowed Temple of Shouriraja Bhagavan and Kannapura/ Krishna pura Nayaki Lakshmi in standing position where there is Nityapushkarini as visioned by Kanva Maharshi. Alwars Shathakopa, Kulashakara, Vishnuchitta and Parakaal had together sanctified this Temple. There is a scar on the face of the Shouriraja Bhagavan as the Chola King Kumikantha out of vengeance took to a spree of converting Vishnu Temples destroyed replacing with Shiva Mandiras and a singer at this Kannapura Temple sang very emotional songs meaning as to why Shouriraja tolerated this betrayal of Vishnu Devotees and threw the cymbal at the Bhagavan's idol and even now that scar on the Idol's face continues even as the King was punished for his misdeeds!

23) Tiru Krishnamangai or Krishna Mangalapur near Tiruvaayur is the sacred Temple of Bhaktavatsala Bhagavan along with Abhisheka Valli Lakshmi. Varuna Deva and Lomesha Maharshi had 'saakshaatkara' of the Bhagavan. Local devotees have firm belief that several Devas do personally worship the Idols in view of certain evidences noticed by them. Sri Parakaal Alwar had concecrated the idols in the past.

24) Tirukkannank- gudi (Krishna Kuti) on Tiruvayur-Kouvilore line is situated the holy Temple of Shyamalamenipperumal Bhagavan and Aravindavalli Lakshmi as also Ravana Pushkarini. Maharshis Bhrigu and Gautama visioned the Vishnu- Lakshmi Swarupas and Alwar Sriparakal consecrated the Temple.

25) Tirunaagai or Nagapattinam is famed for the Koil of Soundraya Raja Perumal and Soundaryavalli Lakshmi in standing position where Saara Pushkarini is the famed waterbody. This was the very Temple where Alwar Sriparakaala had the 'saakshaatkaara' of the Lord. Incidentally, there is the Sundara Raja Perumal Koil in Madurai too as the Lord is seated on a throne with Sri Devi and Bhu Devi as also a Madhuvalli Lakshmi sub temple seperately.

26) Kaalisseerama Vishnugaram or Trivikramapur near Shiyali Railway Station is blessed with the Temple of Trivikrama Murti Bhagavan along with Amritavalli Lakshmi are in standing posture where Chakra Tirtha and Shankha Pushkarini too are ever flowing. Shri Ragavenrda Swami spent his last days of life here. It is locally believed that Maharshi Ashtavakra had the 'saakshatkara' at this holy temple. Incidentally, Ulaganadha Perumal Koil in Kanchipura with Vamana Deva with foot up hitting the high ceiling as accompanied with Devi Amudavalli Lakshmi is a famed Vaishnava Temple, besides of course the famous Varadaraja Swami Koil.

27) Tiruvaali Tiru nagari or Parirambhapura near Shiyali again is known well as the koil of Sundara baahu Bhagavan and Amritavalli Lakshmi where two pushkarinis viz. Ilaakshani and Ahladini. This was the temple where Prajapati had the 'saakshatkara' of the Vishnu- Lakshmi Swarupas and so did Alwar Parakaala who also sanctified the Temple.

28) Manimand Koil or Tirunaagur-Nagpuri Koil is near Vaideshwaram Koil has the sacred Nara-Narayan Bhagavan and Pundarikavalli Lakshmi as seated in a pranava viman. This temple is blessed with Indra Pushkarini and Rudra Pushkarini. Both Devendra and Ekadasha Rudras had the 'saakshaatkaara' of the Lord and Alwar Parakala performed the consecration of the deities.

29) Vaikuntha Vishnugaram or Vaikunthapura is Tirunaagur with Shri Vaikunthanaath Pundarikaaksha and Devi Vaikunthavalli Lakshmi as seated in the Ananta vardhana vimana; both Lakshmi Pushkarini and Uttanka Pushkarini are well known here as Uttanka Muni and Upachara Vasu had the 'saakshatkaara' of the Deities and Alwar Sriparakaala performed the temple's 'mangala shaasana' or sanctification.

30) Arimeya Vishnugaram or Nabhapur is situated in Tirunaagar itself where the temple of Kunjamaagkutta Perumal or the Dancer on Clouds and Devi Arunakamala Valli Lakshmi are seated on Uttunga Vimana. This temple has two Tirthas viz. Koti Tirtha and Amuda or Amrita Tirtha. Uttanga Muni visioned the Deities and Sriparakaala had performed the 'Mangala Shashana'.

31) Vishnupurushottamam or Purushottama Temple is again situated in Tirunaagar itself with Purushottama and Devi Nayaki and this hallowed Mandir has the flow of Ksheeragandhi Pushkarini while Upamanyu Muni visited and had the 'saakshatkaara' and Alwar Sri Parakala consecrated the Temple and the Idols.

32) Semponseya Koil or Swarna Mandira too is in Tirunaagar with Swarnaranga natha and Allimaamlar Lakshmi in standing posture as Kanaka Tirtha and Nitya Pushkarini flow and Rudra deva visioned and Alwar Sri Parakaala had sanctified.

33) Tiruttendri-yambalam or Lakshmi Ranga natha in Tirunaagara has two principal deities viz. Senkanamamaal or Arunaakhsa Bhagavan and Senkamala valli or Aruna kamala valli Lakshmi in 'shayana' posture; this Kshetra has Surya Pushkarini while Shesha Deva visioned and Sriparakaala had sanctified the Mandir.

34) Tirumanikkudam or Manikuta is near by Tirunaagur with the temple of Manikutaka naayaka and Devi Tirumakal Lakshmi with Chandra Pushkarini while Garuda Deva had 'saakshaatkaara' and Sri Parakaala Alwar had sanctified.

35) Near by the Tirumanikkudam is the temple of Tirukkaavalampaadi or Talavan with Gopala Krishna Bhagavan and Devis Rukmini and Satyabhama as visioned by Vishvaksena, Mitra and Rudra Devas as the Alwar performed the mangala shasana, while Padma Pushkarini flows near by.

36) Tiruddevanaar Tokai or Keelaicchhaalai Deva nagar near Tirunaagur with the idols of Deva naayak and Kadalamakal or Samudra Kanya Lakshmi along with Shobhana Pushkarini while Maharshi Vasishtha had the 'saakshaatkara' or direct darshan.

37) Tiruvellakulam or Swetahrada near Thiru Devanaar is the Koil of Bhagavan Krishna Narayana along with Devi Purvartirumkala Lakshmi as the Sweta Pushkarini flows and Ikshvaaku vamshiya Svetaraja visioned the Deities.

38) Parthanpalli or Partha sthala also around Tirunaagur is blessed with the presence of Taamirai natha or Padmanatha accompanied by Taamirai nayaki or Padma nayaki in standing posture. Shankha Pushkarini flows here. Varuna Deva, Ekadasha Rudras and Partha Arjuna were fortunate to have their actual vision of the deities and as stated at most of the temples, Alwar Sriparakaala performed the mangala shasana here too.

39) Talaicchanka- naamnamadiyam / Talaicchenkaadu or Shankhapur is hardly three miles away from Parthanapalli where there is a Temple of Naamandiyapperumal Velasudapperumal or Bhagavan Chandra paapa vimochana Chandrakanta along with Devi Tallecchanga Nachiyar - Senkhamala Valli or Aruna Kamala Valli blesses the devotees in the standing position. Chandra Deva and Devas had the 'saakshaatkaara' of the Deities in celebration of the annulment of curse to Chandra. Bhrgu Yogi Alwar, besides Parakala Alwar had dancified the Temple.

40) Tillai Tiruchitrakutam near Chidambaram-the city otherwise popular for the Akasha Linga as Nata Raja- is also the sacred temple of Govinda Raja Bhagavan and Devi Pundarika Valli in shayana or lying position. There is a Pundarika Sarovara too at this Temple. Maha Deva and 3000 dikshitaas besides Kanva Maharshi had 'saakshaatkaara' of the Deities in the Temple. Alwars Kulashekhara besides Parakaala had performed 'mangalaashasana'.

40) Tirukkunadal or Madurai hosts Sundara Raja Perumal accompanied by Vakulavalli, Marakata valli, Varaguna valli, and Madhuravalli Lakshmis too seated comfortably. ChakraTirtha and Hema Pushkarini are the two water bodies. Maharshis Bhrgu and Shounaka had their 'saakshatkara' At this hallowed Temple. Alwar Vishnuchitta and Sant Parakaala performed 'mangalaashasana' at this Temple.

41) Tirumohur or Maahur is some seven miles away from Madurai is the temple of Kala Megha Deva and Mohurvalli or Meghavalli Lakshmi in standing position. At this Temple there is a Ksheeraabhdhi Pushkarini. Rudra, Brahma, Indra and several Devas were all blessed with Megha Deva Vishnu and Meghavalli Lakshmi with their celestial darshan. This was the Place where Vishnu turned into the form of Mohini and distributed Amrit to Devas and subsequently assumed the swarupa of Kaala Megha, as prayed by the Devatas. Alwars Shathagopa and Parakaala did mangalaashasana at this temple.

42) Tirumaaliramcholai or Vrishabhadri is some 12 miles from Madurai being the famous *Alagar Koil*. References to this Mandir are made in a number of Puranas including Varaha Purana, Vamana Purana, Brahmada Purana and Agni Purana! Yama Dharma Raja performed Tapasya to Maha Vishnu by assuming the form of a Vrishabha or a bull and secured his Darshan and thus this Mountain is known as Vrishabhaadri. When in his ecstasy as Maha Vishnu appeared before Yama, the latter danced and from the 'nripura maala' or a string of trinket bells tied around his feet fell out a bell that materialised a water spring called Nripu Ganga, stated to be a wash out of sins by taking bath in it. One needs to purify by the body bath and enter the Temple of Bhagavan Alagar and the original installation of Sundara Raja Narayana / Kalagar along with Sridevi and Bhudevis on either side was performed by Yama Dharma Raja himself. None knows as to when the construction of the Temple was made but the belief is that Shri Poigai Alwar, Bhutattalwar and Payalvar are traced back to have venerated the Idols even during

Dwapara Yuga times as given in Vaishnava Scriptures. Even Pandavas along with Draupadi Devi visited the Temple and stayed in the cave of the Mountain worshipping Alagar Bhagavan and till date there is a Pandava Shayya or the bed rocks in the cave during their 'Agjnata Vaasa' or Living In-cognito following their agreement with Kauravas as they lost the bet in a dice game. The daily abhisheka of the Main Deity continues to be performed by the Nripura Sarovara water only since any other type tends to discolour the Deity. Karuppu Swami is venerated with daily pujas as he is the guardian of the entire establishment at the Temple. A grand festival is celebrated now for five days on Chaitra Shukla Chaturdashi as Bhagavan Sunderraja on the Purnima day commences his Yatra from Madurai reaching Nanduiyur after crossing Vegavati River, rest overnights there, reach Tenur, Ramaraya Mandapa, Mysore Raja Mandapa and return to Vrishabhadri on the fifth day. Another such festival for five days is also organised from Ashadha Shukla Purnima.

43) Srivilliputtur: Famed for Rangamannar Mandir, this Place is some 16 km from Viruddhunagar the birthplace of Perialwar Vishnuchitta Swami, whose daughter Andal or Godamba, stated to be of Devi Lakshmi's Manifestation. This hallowed Place is the abode of Ranganatha / Ranga Mannar as affectionately popular. The Ranganatha Mandir is known for wall paintings depicting Bhagavat Leelas and Incidents of Maha Bharata. At the Sanctum of the Temple are the Idols of Ranganatha and Godamba. At this Temple itself is situated another Mandir underneath which is the Murti of Bhagavan Nrisimha and on the upper level is Seshashayi Vishnu with Devi Lakshmi at his feet, besides Vatapatrasaayi Murti in the company of Garuda Deva and of Maharhis like Durvasa. Nearby the Rangamannar Temple is a Sarovar where Andal Devi used to bathe. Some distance away is Shiva Linga Vishwanatha and a separate Parvati Mandir, where Shiva Ratri Festival is observed. Further to the Shiva Temple is situated a Lord Venkateshwara Mandir with Sridevi and Bhudevis. *Shankarnarayana Koil* is a unique presentation of Shankara and Narayana as half body parts as in the concept of Arthanareeshvara of Shiva- Parvati; interestingly the Hari-Hara Deva Idol is installed in between the two separate Murtis of Shankara and Narayana!

44) Tirukoshtiyur or Goshti pura : Some 10km from Tirupattur on Trichy-Shiva Ganga highway, 50 km from Shiva Ganga and hardly 15-16 km from Karaikudi is Tirukoshtam where Tri Murtis conferred each other as to how to exterminate Hiranyakashipu and was also the birthplace of Nambi Andar the Preceptor of Ramanuja Acharya. More so, this hosts the famed Tirukoshtyur Temple where Lord Perumal is worshipped in a four tier structure in distinct postures as Bhagavan Ktishna in dance form, Soumya Narayana as in shayana / reclining posture, Adheeshta Narayana and the final one as Paramapada natha. It was at the top tier that Ramanujacharya was administered the Ashtakshari Mantra *Namo Narayanaya namah* by his Guru Nambi Adar in the presence of Swami Narasimha. To learn this mantra, Ramanujacharya is stated to have visited 17 times from Srirangam but the Guru declined to meet him each time; as and when he knocked at the Guru's door, he introduced himself as 'Ramanuja has arrived' but there was no response and finally on the 18<sup>th</sup> time he announced saying ' your beloved Ramanuja has arrived and the Guru opened the door. The legend is recalled that having conferred like wise at Ahobila another famed Vaishnava Sthala for planning the termination of Hiranyaaksha by Vishnu's 'Varahavataara' in the past, this would be another 'Goshti' or serious discussion since Hiranyakshpu achieved the boon of non execution of a species of neither a man nor animal and not even a Deva. At the Goshti finally it was decided that the Asura could be killed by a special species viz. Nara + Simha or Narasimha! Hence the solution arrived was that Hiranyakashipu could be killed despite the boon received by the demon. The festivals observed at the Temple are Chitrai Tiruvila (April-May), Maasi Magham

(Feb-March) and Adipooram (July-Aug) each for 10 days. Alwars Bhutayogi, Maha Yogi, Shathagopa, Vishnuchitta and Parakala had all performed mangala shasana to this very sacred Tirtha.

45) Tirummeyyam or Satyagiri is on way from Trichinapalli-Manadurai Railway Line where Satyagirinath Bhagavan and Uyyavadaal Lakshmi. This Place has Satyagiri, Satya Tirtha, and Kadamba Pushkarini. Satya Devata was stated to have had his celestial darshan here.

46) Tiruppullaani or Darbha shayana: The next Railway Station from Rameshwaram is Ramanatha puram where Darbha Shayana Mandir is distinct and popular as Kalyana Jagannatha Devassilaiyar Bhagavan and Devi Kalyana Valli / Devasmilai Lakshmi are presented in standing posture. Before launching the program of Ravana Samhara, Samudra Setu bandhana was the very first step and thus the worship to Samudra Deva was performed. As Sumudra Deva did not initially respond even as Rama requested the Samudra Deva by spreading a bed of Darbha grass, Rama lied on the bed conveying his protest. Finally he had to threaten the Samudradeva that he would destroy the Seas as Samudra appeared and apologised to Rama and as a result, the high tides subsided and the Sea waters lost their pounding speed and roar. Hence the fame of the Darbha shayana Kshetra and the importance of the Mandir with the big Idol of Kodanda Rama with his Dhanush! This Place too is worthy of snaanam, dana and puja especially in Hema Tirtha and Shukra Tirtha besides an Ashwattha Vriksha. Tiruppulani is also situated where Rama inclined as a 'Darbhasayi' (lying on a Darbha mat) soliciting Varuna Deva to facilitate smooth cross-over of the Sea to reach Lanka; Shrines of 'Nava Grahas' whom Rama prayed to remove obstacles during the ensuing Rama-Ravana battle. Maharshi Darbharani had his celestial vision of Rama as darbha shaayi. *Devipattana* also away some 12 miles is where barren women are blessed with progeny as also Jagannadha Shrine where Ravana's brother Vibhishana surrendered to Rama and was made the King of Lanka later on. Skanda Purana refers to this Place as that for hiding the remaining followers of Mahishasura killed by Durga Devi, as they drank the waters of Dharma Pushkarini where Rama performed puja to Nava Grahas but Shri Rama pulled them out and destroyed them at Chakra Tirtha since Sudarshana pulled the Asuras out and terminated. Devi pattana is also called Nava Pashayana a Stone Pillar signifying Nava Grahas.

47) Tiruttamkaalore or Shitodyaana pura in near Shivakaashi where stands a 'divya kshetra' where Appan, Tanakaalappan and Anna nayaki and Ananta nayaki are visualised in standing position. It is stated that Pandya King Shalya had the divya darshan of the Appan and Nayaki and so did Shri Vallabha and Vyaghra Rishis while Alwars Bhuta Yogi and Parkala had sanctified the Divya Vighrahas and the Temple.

48) Sirippillur is Railway station on Viruddh nagar and Tenkashi Railway line is famed for its Periyalvaar or Vishnuchitta Swami's birth as also that of his illustrious daughter ANDAAL or GODAMBA, considered as the incarnation of Sri Lakshmi herself. This hallowed Place has the Temple of Sri Ranga Nath or Ranga Mannar and Godamba as of Lakshmi form. The Main Deities are in shayana posture being under a Vata Vriksha with Garuda Deva in service. The Temple premises has Tirumukkula Tirtha and Alwar Vishnuchitta had performed Magala shasana.

49) Sri Varamangai/ Totadri- Nanganeri: From Tirunelveli to about 20 miles is the sacred Temple of Vanamalai Perumal (Devanayaka Totadri) and Devi Varangmai Lakshmi as they are seated in 'padmaashana'. This extra-ordinary Vaishnava Kshetra of Dakshina Bharata is near to the heart of Shri Ramanujacharya and one of the Moola Peethas of his whose Upa danda, Kaashthasana or the Seat on which he sat, theshankha chakra mudras as always cherished by him are still preserved. Besides the

principal deities, also present are Sri Devi, Bhu Devi, Neela Devi, Vishvaksena, Garuda, Chamara graahini, and Chandra-Suryas. It is stated that Brahma Deva, Devendra, and Maharshis Bhrigu, Lomesha and Markandeya achieved their divine vision and Alwar Shathagopan did mangala snaana. According to Kshetra Mahatmya, the Vanamala Perumal was dug up deep from Earth, and from his body there were some dig pits or cracks felt on the body of the Idol and that is why there is a 'taila snaaa' or oil bath of the idol daily! Half of the oils used for the 'tailabhishkas' are deposited in the Pushkarini which is taken by the devotees for curing incurable skin and indigestion / wind diseases since the waters of Pushkarini possess herbal values from the 'abhishekas'. *This is the center of Totaadri matha.* The charana padukas or the foot wear of the Totadri Perumal are considered as Vishnu Chitta Alwar himself.

50) Tirukkurinkudi or Kurunga nagar: From Totadri/ Vaanmaamalai to some 8 miles south-west is Kurang nagar where Bhagavan Tiruppalkadala Nambi along with Kurukkungudivalli Lakshmi; this Bhagavan is also known as Vaishnava Nambi, Malai Mela Nambi, Ninnar Nambi, Iduna Nambi, Tiruppalkadala Nambi. Parama Shankara himself had the divya darshan of the Bhagavan, while Alvars Bhaktisaara, Shathagopa, Vishnuchitta and Sriparakaal had performed 'mangala shaasana' / sanctification.

51) Tirukkurukur or Alwar-Tirunagari-Shrinagari: In between Tirunelveli and Tiruchendur is the Temple of Adi Nath Perumal and Adi Nayaki in standing posture. At this Place flows Tamra River as also Brahma Tirtha. Brahma, Alwar Sathagopa and the famed poet Madhura Kavi are stated to have divya darshana of the Perumal. The legendary background of this place is described as Bagavan Adi Nath directed Lord Brahma to perform Tapasya – *Hey Ka, Kuru!* Or Brahma Deva! Do perform Tapasya or intense meditation at this Sacred Place! Incidentally, this is the Mukti Place of Alwar Sant Shathagopa!

52) Tulaivillimangalam or Dhanvi Mangala: Two sacred Temples are situated at Alwar Tirunagari viz. Devanath Bhagavan and Devi Karundkingya Lakshmi as also Aravinda Lochana and Kumudakshivalli Lakshmi. The River Tamraparni and Varuna Tirtha are near these twin Temples. Indra, Vayu and Varuna Devas had the benefit of divine vision of these deities. Alwar Shathakopa had concecrated these temples.

53) Shri Vaikuntham has the hallowed temple of Kallippiraan Vaikuntha natha Bhagavan and Vaikuntthar valli Lakshmi both in standing posture on the banks of Tamraparni river, besides Prithu Tirtha. Devaraja Indra and Devas who accompanied had the celestial vision and Alwar Shathagopa did the sanctification.

54) Varagunamangai or Varaguna is close to Sri Vaikuntham with the Temple of Vijayaasana Bhagavan and Varaguna Lakshmi are seated comfortably facing east. At this hallowed place are Deva Pushkarini and Agni Tirtha. Agni Deva had the celestial vision and Alwar Shathagopa performed Mangala Shasana.

55) Tiruppulinkudi or Chinchakuti is close by a mile to Varaguna where there is the temple of Karyanchanavendan Bhagavan and Malaramangai Nacchiyar or Padmajavalli Lakshmi are in shesha saayi posture facing east. Varuna tirtha and Nirruti Tirtha are situated at the Temple premises; Nirruti Dikpaala, Varuna and Dharma Devatas had 'saakshatkaara' and Alwar Shathagopa did the 'Mangala Shaasana' here.

56) Tirukkulandai or Perinkulam Brihattadaag is seven miles near Shri Vaikuntham, where Maayakoothan Bhagavan along with Kulandai Valli or Ghata Valli Lakshmi are signified in a standing posture. Perunkullam or Brihattadaag is adjacent to the holy temple. Brihaspati had the celestial vision.

57) Tirupperai or Shri Naampura is south west of Alwar Tiru nagari as at 51 above. This is the sacred temple of Makarengukkulaikkaadan / Makaraayita karna paasha Perumal and Devi Makaaayitakarna-

paasha Naacchiyar or Nayaki Lakshmi seated eastward. The Temple premises has the sacred Tirtha named Shukra Pushkarini. Brahma, Ishana Rudra and Shukra had all their 'divya saakshaatkaaras' here.

58) Tirukkollur or Mahanidhipura near by a mile to Tirupperai has the sacred temple of Bhagavan Vaittamanidhi / Nikshepanidhi along with Devi Kollurvalli Lakshmi as lying on 'shesha shayya'. Kubera and Madhura Kavi had the divine vision of the deities and Alwar Shathagopa did the 'mangalashasana'.

59) Tiruvantapuram: Trivendram, the Capital of Kerala State, is better known as the Unique Tirtha Sthana being the Abode of Ananta Padma Swami in 'Anantavanam' mentioned in Maha Bharata and Brahma Purana. Lord Padmanabha as relaxing in Yoga Nidra on the soft bed of of Ananta the celestial Serpent bestows the fulfillment of desires of Deva-Danavas, Yogi-Rishi Ganas and sarva charaachara jeevas, especially human beings. The legendary background of this manifestation of Maha Vishnu the singular Preserver of 'Srishti' / Creation as known through Puranas and Epics was that Maha Vishnu disguised as a mischievous boy, who wantonly spoilt a Sacred 'Salagrama'-representing Bhagavan Himself-which a Sage worshipped and out of anger he chased the boy. As the Swami found the boy subsequently wandering on the Sea Beaches, a fisher woman heard a shouting at a boy whom the Swami identified ; she was threatening to throw the boy into the forest near Anantankadu Nagaraja Temple ie the place infested with poisonous serpents. Having got a clue, the Swami discovered the mischievous boy at the Temple forest; as expected the boy was hanging on the top of a 'Illuppa' Tree; even as he saw the boy, the tree branch got broken and suddenly he manifested himself as huge figure of Anantashayana Murti the Vishnu Swarupa with Ananta as his head at Tiru Vollom, nabhi at Tiruvanantapuram and lotus feet at Tiruppadapuram! Swami was dazed as he never ever even in dreams was that boy full of pranks! He broke down in a trance and having recovered somewhat, prayed to the Lord in ecstasy and beseeched him to shorten his alarmingly big swarupa to that of thrice his 'danda' or staff. Even so, the figure got shortened in three parts viz. *Tiru mukham*, *Tiru vudal* and *Tiruppaadam*- that is: Mangala Muhka-Mangala Deha-Mangala Paada or Lotus Feet of Auspiciousness. The Swami offered Naivedya of Rice Kanji, Uppu manga or Salted Raw Mango pieces in a coconut shell. The huge Swarupa of Ananta Padma naabha was installed in a Temple after anointing with chandana kasturi etc. and so on in an appropriate new Temple with the assistance of the King, Brahmanas and Bhaktas on a single massive stone platform with carved embellishments. The Swami is reclining on the Maha Sarpa Ananta / Adi Sesha with hoods facing inwards signifying contemplation. Down his right hand is a Shiva Linga while the Swami has her consorts Sri Devi representing prosperity and Bhu devi representing Patience and Power are seated nearby even as Lord Brahma seated on a Lotus emerges from the Swami's navel. He is surrounded by some 1200 shaligrams from Nepal's Gandaki River banks. Over the Samadhi of the Sadhu Mahatma who discovered the Swami was arranged to the west of the Main Temple, and subsequently the Bilwa Mangala Krishna Mandir stood up over the Samadhi. Two major Shrines inside the Temple are of Ugra Narasimha and Krishna Swami. Ekadashi days are special. Two major Festivals are Alpashy in Oct- Nov and Phanguni in Mar- April each for 10 days; besides every Navaratra is celebrated when Alankaras change daily. Also Laksha Deepam festival is celebrated for 56 days onec in every 6 years, the latest being in Jan 2014 when the atmosphere is simply celestial with Veda Pathanas, Cultural and other activities are continuous and full of faith. Dress code is compulsory and entry restrictions are strictly enforced. The Temple is indeed very opulent with considerable gold, jewellery and liquid cash. Besides ths glorious Temple, Tiruvananta puram is proud of very many other illustrious Temples of repute and faith venerated by thousands of yattris through out the year despite the Seasonal aberrations.

60) Tiruvattaar Adi Keshava ( Parashurama Kshetra): From Trivendram to Tiruvattar the distance is some 7 km where on the banks of River Tamraparni, the Temple of Adikeshava and Marakata Valli Lakshmi is popular. The height of the idol of Adi Keshava as Sesha shaayi Adi Keshava. is as of some 16 feet; from one 'Dwar' or gate, the Bhagavan who is in a lying posture is visible with his Shri Mukha or propitious Face, the second 'dwar' displaying his 'Vakshasthala' or the region of his heart, and the third dwar displays his lotus feet, with his body crushing a Rakshasa. The legendary belief is that the Demon prayed to Brahma and in his liberal mood, allowed free access to a 'Kadali phala vana'/ banyan fruit garden to assuage his hunger; but the demon started harassing the Brahmanas and Rishis interfering in their 'Dharma Karyas' and the latter appealed to Vishnu who suppressed the demon; the latter appealed to Vishnu to always be under his body in that posture. This famed Kshetra is also called Parashurama khetra as Lord Parashu Rama had the 'saakshaatkaara' of Adi Keshava. Alwar Shiromani Shathagopa executed the 'mangalaashaasana' of this Kshetra.

61) Janardana: From Trivendrum to Varkala is some 16 km where Janardana Temple is famed for ever-emerging 'dhup' or the scented smoke of 'Sambrani' or Agarbatti made of scented crystals called 'mengruk' a by-product of bamboo. In fact yattris collect the raw material of dhup from the Temple as that wards off diseases of skin as also a 'drishti' to children and garbhinis or pregnant women. Yattris bathe in a water fall collected from the Arabian Sea merging into a local sub-river and this Tirtha has sweet water called locally as Paapa Mochan or Rinamohan, Savitri, Gayatri and Saraswati; in fact persons observing Samudra Snaanana invariably take their baths at this Sacred Tirtha and then seek the darshan of Janardana whose Temple is at a height after ascending a few steps and washing their feet at a Chakra Tirtha near the entrance of the Temple. In the Center of an open area is the Temple surrounded by smaller Mandirs of Shasta Kumara, and Shankaa beside a Varta Vriksha, in which the main Deity Lord with a four handed Form of Shyama Janardana. The story of the Temple is recalled that once Brahma was performing a holy yagna and during this austerity period, a Sadhu who was moving about at the yagna premises asked for food and as food was served, the Sadhu expressed at the disappointment at the variety and quality of food served. Brahma being the host apologised for the quality. Brahma realised that the principal host Vishnu himself was the Sadhu and prostrated to Janardana who displayed his own form as Brahma requested him to be in same form for ever as the latter consented and ever since the miracle of the Vighraha emitting the scented smoke of Agarbattis always with the scented crystals available aplenty.

62) Tiruvansparisaaram (Ramya sthala): Near Naagar koil is the Tiruvaal Maarban or the Ramya Vakshah-shtala of Venkatachalapati Bhagavan along with Kamalavalli Lakshmi seated purvaabhi mukha. In the premises of the Koil is the Lakshmi Tirtha. In fact, Sumudra snana is stated as of significance here as Kanyakumari Kshetra is only 20 miles southward to this Temple. Vinda Devi and aari Raja are stated to have had divine darshan of the Deva-Devis while Alwar Shathagopa performed mangala shasana here.

63) Tiruchchenkunur or Sourabh pur: In the state of Kerala on way to Tiruvananthapuram and Virudhnagar Railway line there is a town ship named Kottaarkara from where some 30 miles there is a Sacred Temple of Bala Krishna Bhagavan and Senkamalavalli or Arunakamala valli Devi on the banks of River Tiruchitraaru or Chitra. Shankara deva prayed to the Deities in connection with the killing of Padmasura.

64) Kuyttinaad or Shardula nagar is near Tiruchendunur has the hallowed Temple of Maayappiraan/ Adinath Bhagavan with Swarnatantuvalli Lakshmi. Near this Temple flows Papa vimochana Tirtha. Sapta Rishis had the divine vision of Adinatha while Alwars viz. Shathagopa and Parkala did the sanctification.

65) Tiruvandur is near Tiruppuliyur and Papanashanam and the Sacred Temple of Paampanyaippan or Paapanaashana Bhagavan along with Kamalavalli Lakshmi in standing posture. Maharshi Markandeya and Brahmarshi Narada had the 'saakshatkaara' of the Bhagavan and Devi Bhagavati blessed both them.

66) Teruvallivaal or Keralpur is near Teruvandore has the temple of Kolappiraan/ Gopala Krishna and Devi Selvaturikollindu or Balakrishnaayaki. In the premises of this Sacred Temple is the Ghantaakarna Tirtha, besides the River Manimaala. Alwar Sant Shathagopa enjoyed the divya darshana of the Deities.

67) Tirukkudittaanam has the temple of Adbhuta Narayan and Kalpavalli Lakshmi which is not far from Keralpur. This koil in its premises with Bhumi Tirtha had in the days of yore blessed King Rukmanga by the Narayana-Lakshmi Deities[ as quoted from Narada Purana, the King enforced his subjects to observe Ekadashi Vrata by way of fasting and puja to such an extent that the pressure on Yamaloka decreased and traffic to Vaikuntha got a boost on deaths!] Alwar Shathagopan conducted sanctification of this Temple.

68) Tiruvaaranvallai Arranmulai or Samridi Sthala is a few miles away from Sirabhpur mentioned at 63 above. Here Bhagavan Tirukkuralyappan or Shesha bhogaasana and Maha Lakshmi are seated in 'Padmasana' as the temple has Veda Vyasa Sarovara and is on the banks of Pampa River. Brahma Deva had the 'saakshaatkaara' of the deities and Arjuna had the distinction of performing the Idol 'Pratishtha'.

69) Tirukkaatkarai / Maruttat is at Idepalli on Ernakulam- Shornoor Railway line where stands the divya kshetra of Kaatkarai Appan or Maruttataadhisha Bhagavan along with Devi Peruncchelpa nayaki Lakshmi. Maharshi Kapila was blessed here with the darshan of the Murtis and Kapila Tirtha is present!

70) Tirumalikkalam ( Shri Mooli dhaam) is at Angamali-Ernakulam- Shoranur Railway line and the well known temple there is of Tirumalikkalam or Sri Moolidheesha and Devi Madhura veni Lakshmi. Maharshi Hareeta was blessed with his divine vision. The Temple which has a Brihat tadaka was sanctified by Alvars Shathagopa and Parkaala. 71& 72) Vidvatpura and Nava pura Divya Koils on the Shoranoor-Calicut Railway line itself are two Temples of sanctity, one near Pattaambi and another at Enkolam. These are Vidvatpura and Navapura. The former is the Abode of Vidya Bhagavan and Devi Vidya vardhini and the latter is of Bhagavan Narayana and Bhagavati Malarmangai or Devi Puyshpavalli. The former had the saakshatkara of King Ambarisha while the latter by Gajendra while Alvars Shathagopa and Parkala had performed mangala shaasana of the both these two Temples and the Deities.

73) Tiruvayindira puram or Ahindrapur has the Temple at Cuddalore of Deva nayak Bhagavan and Devi Vaikuntha Nayaki Lakshmi. This Place is on the banks of Garuda River and also Shesha Tirtha in its precincts. Both Garuda and Chandra were fortunate of the sakshatkaara of the deities while Acharya Vedanta Deshika scripted 'Deva Nayaka Panchaashat' and dedicated to the Deities. It was at this very place Sri Vedanta Deshika organised 'Aoushadhagiri' and also had the divya darshan of Hayagriva Bhagavan too. The illustrious Alwar Parkala had the fortune of performing the 'Mangala shaasana'.

74) Tirukkovalore on the Villupuram-Katpadi Railway line is the Temple of Aayanar Trivikrama Bhagavan and Pankajavalli Naacchiyar Lakshmi are presented. Bali Chakravarti and Mrikunda Maharshi had their divya darshan of Trivikrama and Lakshmi at this very temple. This is the hallowed Temple where Saroyogi, Bhutayogi and Mahayogi not only had divya darshan and initiated Paramapada yatra!

75) Tiruvallikkoni or Vrindaranya Kshetra is a cluster of Temples at Chennai viz. the famous Partha Saarathi Temple along with Rukmini, Lakshmi, Pradyumna, Anirudda, Balarama, and Satyaki in Ananda

Vimana all in standing position. The belief is that Maharshi Veda Vyasa had done the Pratishtha and Maharshi Atreya initiated the Araadhana. Arjuna, Sumati Maharaja, and Tondaiman Chakravarti had the 'saakshaatkaara'. Mannaatha Bhagavan and Devi Vedavalli in shesha shayya posture had the benefit of 'saakshatkaara' by Bhrigu Maharshi. Telliyaasingar or Nrisimha Deva is in another cluster of temples as he blessed Maharshi Atri and Jaabaali with celestial vision and moksha too. Chakravarti Tirumakan or Lord Shri Rama along with Bharata, Lakshmana, Shatrughna along with Devi Sita is visioned by the devotees as standing in the Pushpaks Vimana facing southward. Deva Perumal as seated on Garuda Deva on sesha vimana is also in another temple cluster as Maharshi Saptaroma had the celestial vision. There is a Kairavini Sarovara in the Temple premises which is stated to merge Pancha Tirthas of Indra-Soma-Meena-Agni-Vishnu and Maharshis viz. Bhrigu, Atri, Marichi, Markandeya, Sumati, Saptaroma and Jaabaali all performed tapasya. Alwars Mahayogi, Bhaktisaara, and Parkaala did mangala shasana here.

76 & 77) Tiruninnarvur and Tiruvevvalur viz. Tinnanore and Veekshaaranya respectively are the two sacred places situated on the Chennai-Arkonam Railway line. The former is known for the temple of Bhaktavatsala Bhadraadri Bhagavan and Devi Ainnaipetta Tayar or Jagajjanani which was visioned in physical swarupas by Varuna Deva while the latter temple of Bhagavan Veera Raaghava and Kanakavalli Lakshmi by Shalahotra Maharshi. Varuna and Hutaashana Tithas are present respectively.

78) Tirukkadikai or Ghatikaachala is a very significant Kshetra which offers ready evidences and proofs of problems of preta badha and vyadhi nivritti or deadly experiences of ghosts and instant relief of body ailments. This temple is dedicated to Yoga Nrisimha and Devi Amritavalli and is situated atop a hill some eight miles away from Sholingur on the Arkonam-Baaja Road. There is a Tatkaal Pushkarini & a Hanuman Mandir.

79) Tiruneermalai or Toyadri is some three miles south of Pallavaram Station near Chennai is again a cluster of temples, viz. Neela megha varna and Padmahasta Lakshmi, Ranganatha and Ranga nayaki, Saanta Nrisimha, Ulaganda or Trivikrama, and Charavarti Tirumakan Shri Rama. Maharshis Valmiki/Bhrigu and Markandeya, besides Bhakta Prahlada had all the divya darshana of the respective Deities.

80) Tiruvidvendai or Varaaha Kshetra near Vandalore Station near Chennai off some 13 miles is the Sacred Temple of Varaha Swami and two of his consorts of Komalavalli and Akhilavalli, and Maharshi Markandeya had the celestial vision of the Deva-Devis.

81) Tirukkadalimalai at Chengalpat-Tirukkulakunnam is known for the temple of Sthala shaayan Bhagavan along with Neelamangai Lahshmi where Garuda River flows. Maharshi Pundarika had the celestial vision. One renowned wrestler named Mahamalla Nrisimha Varma hailed from this place and as such is named Mahamallapur. This is also the birth place of Alwar Sant Bhuta yogi too.

82. Hastigiri / Varada Raja Temple in Kanchipura is the most famed Kshetra of Vaishnavasampradaya besides Tirumala Balaji and Srirangam. The Varada Raja Temple is encircled by three broad enclosures with its east facing eleven storyed gopura with the west facing main entrance and the sanctum of Varada Raja Swami. Its passage from the gopura gate to the sanctum is from the Shata stambha mandapa where the procession of the Utsava Vighras commences. Near to the Mandapa is the Koti Tirtha Sarovara also called 'Anantasara' leading to a bridge and a Madapa and the Temples of Bhagavan Varaha, Sudarshana and Yoga Nara Simha on one side and on the other side is the Ramanujacharya Vighraha and the Vaishnava Peetha Complex, being renowned Eight Maha Peethas like Shri Rangan, Tirukoshthi, Melkote,

Udipi and so on. Ahead the Guruda Stumbha in the second enclosure is the Lakshmi Mandira of Sri Perum Devi and Vishnu Vahanas like Hanuman, Elephant, Horse, Garuda, Mayura, Tiger, Lion, Sharabha etc. In is in the third enclosure is the Varada Raja Temple within a high rise platform called Hastagiri like 'Iravata' as also Yoga Nrisimha, Vishwakshena. Varada Raja Swami is in the posture of a Sesa Shaiya even as lying on a float of water as presumed. The Sanctum of Varada Raja is called Vimana approachable by a staircase of 24 steps and inside the dwara he is Shyama Varna Chaturbhuja with shalagramas as his garland along with his Utsava Murti also. Having had their darshan, yatis take down the staircase and down the sanctum in a parikrama sight the Idols of Andal, Dhanvantari, Ganesha and others. Detailing the Varada Raja Mahatmya, Maharshi Markandeya recalls in Kamakshi Vilasa that Lord Brahma after the conclusion of his Ashwamedha Yagna at the Hari Kshetra on the Hasti Shaila Shikhira extolled Varada Raja Swami as 'Jagan Mohanaakara' or the Universal Mesmeriser with his 'Chaturbahu' Shankha-Chakra- Gadaa-Padma Mudra with his appearance as 'Jagadarakshra'. Markandeya then narrated a legend about the origin of Varada Raja as quoted: Lakshmi and Saraswati asked Brahma to give his honest opinion as to the superiority between them and almost immediately Brahma favoured Lakshmi Devi. Saraswati was highly disappointed and even annoyed with Brahma and took away the 'danda' or an Insignia that Vishnu once gave to her which was the power of Brahma enabling the latter to undertake Srishti or Creation of 'Charaachara Jagat' or of the Moveable and Immovable Beings. Thus the action of Brahma to create was disabled. Brahma did not wish to entreat Saraswati to return the Srishti Danda but left for Himalayas to perform penance to Vishnu to request for an Emblem with Vishnu Amsa to Create instead of a Saraswati-oriented Crest. Vishnu was pleased with Brahma's Tapas and directed Brahma to perform hundred Ashwamedha Yagnas. Brahma then decided that instead of performing hundred such Yagnas it would be sufficient to execute one Yagna at the Hari Kshetra and asked Vishwakarma the Architect cum Builder of Devas to construct a huge Yagna Shaala right opposite the Idol of Narasimha; he discarded Saraswati as his partner at the Yagna but preferred Buddhi Devi as his 'Yagna Patni' to share the duties of a wife as prescribed. Brahma invited Devas, Devarshis like Narada, besides Gandharva-Yaksha- Kinnara-Apsara; Siddha- Saadhya-Muniganaas and decided to perform a Year- long Yagna; he worshipped Ganeshwara first to facilitate the Yagna without obstacles and then worshipped Yoga Narasimha Swami and initiated the Yagna with formal Mantras by appointing Kumara Swami as Adhavarvu, Maheswara as Udagaata, Varuna as Prastota, Yama Dharma Raja as Hota and Indra who performed hundred such Yagnas in the past as the Yagna Brahma. Since Brahma did not invite Saraswati to participate, she was furious and created powerful flames with her Maya Shakti with a view to destroy the Yagna but the Saviour of the Hari Kshetra viz. Vishnu arrested the Maya Shakti's both the hands and disabled her. Saraswati took it as a challenge and released Kapalika Shakti but Vishnu in the Form of Nara Simha destroyed the Shakti. Enraged by her discomfiture, Devi Saraswati released 'Daithyaastra' but Daityaari Narayana made the Astra futile. Vagdevi then created 'Karaala Vadana Kalika' and instructed the Maha Shakti to demolish the Yagna but Vishnu assumed an Eight-Hand Swarupa and having suppressed the Shakti sat firm on her shoulders. Finally with all her powers being overcome, Saraswati was humiliated and swooned out of anger and frustration and took the Form of 'Pralaya Swarupi' called Vegavati River with disastrous speed from Brahmaloaka down to Earth heading towards the Hari Shaila. Vishnu sensed the impending danger and decided to resort to her 'maanabhanga' or assault her physically; having become nude he stood before the lightning flash of gushing waters and like a Huge Log lied across against the flow. Saraswati having visioned Narayana's nudity was thus put to shame and without being able to face him entered a 'Bhu bila' or a big fissure of Earth and escaped. Then the Yagna commenced without any hindrance; the Yagna Pashu or the Sacrificial Horse was let

loose and returned invincible and at the successful completion of the year long Yagna, the ‘Purnaahuti’ or the Ultimate Offering to Agni as the climactic Homa of Cow’s ghee was accomplished and Brahma visioned a Massive Flood of Illumination on the Eastern Sky and offered wide and palmful of concentrated homage to that Spendour . That was the most awaited Moment of Sweta Varaha Kalpa’s Vaivasva Manvantara- Krita Yuga- Nrisimha Bhagavatmika Samvatsara- Vaishakha -Shukla Paksha- Chaturdashi’s Hasta Nakshatra Suryodaya when Devadhi Deva the Supreme Lord of the Universe manifested himself from the Yagna Homaagni’ as **Varada Raja Swami** and handed over the Insignia of Srishti to Brahma Deva. The latter went into raptures and placed the Insignia on his chest with tears of joy and got non-plussed momentarily. After recovering from the pleasant shock, Brahma Deva installed Bhagavan on the Hasti Shaila on a ‘Suvarna Simhasana’ or a Golden Throne in the presence of Devas and other Celestial Beings and Maharshis; in order to cool down the charged and excited atmosphere as also to supposedly quench the thirst of Narayana who was just manifested from Agni, Brahma performed ‘Abhisheka Snaana’ to Varadaraja with potful thousands of Kamadhenu’s ghee with chantings of Sacred Veda Mantras and offered ‘Shodashopacharaas’ or the traditional Sixteen Services such as Aasana- Vastra-Yagnopaveeta-Gandha-Dhupa- Deepa-Pushpa- Phala-Naivedya- Tambula-Mantra Pushpa-Sangeeta-Veda Pathana- Tambula-Chhatra-Chaamaraas. The formal Puja was followed by bhojanas (Hearty Meals) served to Special Invitees with Bakshya- Bhojya-Lehya- Chokshya-Paneenias to all concerned in the Maha Yagna. Also Anna Santarpana or Free Meals were organised to the entire citizens of Kanchipura. Vishwakarma made a ‘Pratibimba Swarupa’ or Replica of ‘Aalaya’; and ‘Nagara’ Pradakshinas or Temple wise and Nagari wise Pradakshinaas or circumambulations were done on Elephant-back; in fact daily worships, Bhojanas and ‘Gajotsavas’ were also organised ever since. Pleased by all these arrangements, Varada Swami addressed ‘Brahmaadidevaas’ and Munis : *Yathaaham Virajaa teerey mama Vaikuntha pattaney, Jagadyaapana sheelaavaad Vishnurityabhidhaayutah/ Prasiddho nivasaamyatra tathaa Kaanchi- purottamey, Harikshetram samaashritya Sarvaabheeshta pradaanatah/ Varadaabhidhayaa khyaat nivasaami niranantaram, Sarvey bhavanto madbhaktaassada maddarshaney rataah/ Sarvadaattraiva tishthantu Vaikunthaadati paavaney, Varshey Varshey Meshamaasi mama Janmadiney Shubhey/ Ghritadhaaraa sahasraabhishechanam mama pujanam, Utsavamcha prakurut Viprabhojana purvakam/* (My Bhaktaas! Just as I had settled in Vaikuntha on the banks of River Viraja and got spread all over the Universe as Vishnu, I will now reside in the Hari Kshetra of Kancheepura; hence those desirous of visioning me could do so with my name as Varada or he who would be the Bestower. In fact I will stay here for good thus making Hari Kshetra as significant as Vaikuntha if not even better! You may therefore even reside at this Kshetra. Every year on my birthday during Mesha month you should all therefore perform ‘Goghrita dhaaraa sahasra -abhishekaa’ or thousand Abhishakaas of Cow Ghee ( bathing) of my Murti and celebrate this day as a Festival and of ‘Brahmana Bhojana.) Then Brahma Deva addressed all the Invitees of the Yagna to follow the instruction of Varadaraja Swami and assured that those who would participate in the Festival on the lines as instructed would secure ‘Maha Phala’. Maharshi Markandeya narrated to King Suratha one telling instance about a devotee who actually experienced this kind of Maha Phala : In the past, one Vaadaadhyayi Vipra named Bhanuvarna of Gokula on the banks of River Yamuna visited Kanchipura and happened to perform ‘Ghritaabhisheka’ most coincidentally on the ‘Janma dina’ of Varadaraja Swami at the Hari Kshetra and on return to Gokula after some time passed away; Bhanu varna was being flown to Swarloka by Devaganaas to honour him with the status of Indra but ‘Haridootaas’ intercepted his Soul and took it away to the Everlasting Vishnupada; such indeed was the graceful gesture of Varadaraja Swami! Whoever recites the above

account of Varadaraja Swami would certainly secure Varadaraja Darshana, as assured by Maharshi Markandeya.

### 83. Venkataachala Mahatmya:

*Venkataadri samam sthaanam brahmanam naasti kinchana, Venkatesha samo Devo na bhuti na bhavishyati/* ( There indeed is no God like Lord Venkateshwara on Earth and none else like the self-manifested singular Deity worthy of faith, commitment and total dedication for now and for ever)!

Crossing the Seven Hills of Vrishabhadri named after Nandi, the Shiva Vahana; Anjanaadri of Lord Hanuman; Neeladri named after Shakti Neela Devi; Garudadri the Vishnu Vahana; Seshadri named after Lord Shesha the comfortable serpent bed- abode of Vishnu; Narayanadri named after Lord Narayana and finally the Venkatadri the hallowed Temple Tirumala Venkateshwara is the 'Deva Sthana' of Andhra. This is one of the wealthiest and most visited Hill Shrines of Hindu Pilgrimage at a height of 3200 ft or 976 m approx. approachable by foot, road, rail and Air, beckoning the glittering 'Suvarna Shikhara' or Golden Top, *par excellence!* Around the Temple, the most significant places of interest included are Axakasha Ganga, Srivaari Sacred Feet, Paapa vinashana, Shri Ramanuja Shrine, Swami Pushkarini, Varaha Swami Temple and down the hills the famed Shri Padmavati Temple.

Being the Outstanding and World famed Tirupati-Tirumala Divya Kshetra, the most Sprawling Temple Town of Balaji literally elevates the yatis to heights of Sacrifice and Faith on the bedrock of Dharma. Magnetising devotees from far and wide, the torrential flood of yatis is perennial here. Indeed Lord Venkateshwara is the wealthiest God of the World, crossing the hopes of the Pope in the Vatican City! *Shrinivasapuram Vedaah Shri Nivasaparam makhaah, Shrinivasa param sarvey tasmaadanyatra vidyate/ Sarva Yagna Tapodaana tirtha snaane tu yat phalam, Tat phalam koti gunitam Srinivaasasya sevayaa/ Venkataadri nivasam tam chintayan ghatikaadwayam, Kulaikavimshatim dhutvaa Vishnu loke maheeyate!* (All the Vedas do merely propose Bhagavan Shrinivasa only exclusively. All the yagna karyas do target Shrinivasa only. Indeed, all kinds of Bhakti or devotion merge into and identify with Shrinivasa alone. The totality of Yajna, Tapa, Daana, Anushthana and Tirtha Snaanas falls far short of Shrinivasa seva! Those residents of Venkatachala engrossed in the true service of Venkateshwara shall liberate the souls of the previous twenty one generations and qualify themselves too to Vishnu Loka). The yatis invariably halt over at Tirupati down the Tirumala's Seven Hills where Govinda Raja Temple set up by Ramanujacharya with the Shesha saayi Narayana is the Main Attraction with some 15 smaller Deva Mandiras in and around the Sanctum. One of the Ashta Peethas of Ramajucharya is also significance here. Tirupati is also the Abode of Kodandra Rama, Devi Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman. Once up the Seven Hills, the prime destination no doubt is that of Lord's Divya darshana, yet the primaries are the Kalyana gattam for the Hair Sacrifice, Swami Pushkarini followed by Varaha Swami darshana and then to the Q complex to Vaikuntha for the climactic experience of bliss. Most significant Tirthas up the Hills are Akasha Ganga, Paapa nashana Tirtha, Vaikuntha Guha dhara, Pandava Tirtha, and Jaabali Tirtha. In the 'Vaishnava Khanda' of Skanda (Kartika) Purana, Varaha Deva gave 'Upadesha' (instruction) of the Sacred Mantra *Om Namah Shri Varahaya Dharanyu Uddharanaya Swaha* to Bhudevi and its significance; the Mantra fulfills all desires and leads to liberation. A Manu called Dharma recited the Mantra persistently and attained Moksha; Indra chanted it and regained his throne that was occupied by demons therebefore and Anantha the Chief of Serpents secured such extraordinary strength as to hold the weight of Prithvi (Earth) on his hoods. Bhudevi expressed her gratitude to Varaha Deva to

have saved from the grip of Demon Hiranyakasipu as also taught the Great Mantra. She admired Varaha Deva for providing the power and perseverance to hold the weight of huge mountains and desired Him to describe to her the names of some of the illustrious Mountains the weight of which was borne by her. These include Sumeru, Himachal, Vindhyachal, Mandarachal, Gandhamadhan, Chitrakoot, Malyavaan, Pariyatrik, Mahendra, Malay, Sahya, Simhachal, Raivat and Anjana; in the South of Bharat the most significant are Arunachal, Hasthiparvat, Grudhrachal, Ghatikachal and most importantly the Narayana Giri or Venkatachala which possesses the Seven Tirthas in the Mountain Range viz. Chakra Tirth, Daiva Tirth, Akasha Ganga, Kumaradhari Kartikeya, Papanashani, Pandava Tirha, and Swami Pushkarini. Varaha Deva affirmed that in Krita Yuga, the most important Mountain Range was that of Anjanagiri; in Treta Yuga it was Narayana Giri; in Dwapar Yuga was Simhachal and in Kali Yuga again the most sacred mountain range is Venkatachala. In Magha month when Surya Deva is in Kumbha Rasi on Purnima day coinciding with the Makha Star, Skanda worships Venkateswara on the banks of Swami Pushkarini Tirtha at the noon time and devotees performing ‘Snaan’ and Puja as also ‘Annadaan’ are blessed by the Lord. Similarly, Snaans, worships and charities at Venkatachal are highly beneficial on the auspicious timings when Surya is in Meena Rasi on Purnima with Uttaraphalgini in Thumbha Tirtha; when Surya is in Mesha Rasi on Purnima with Chitra Star in Akasha Ganga at early mornings; when Surya is in Vrishabha Rasi in Visakha Shukla / Krishna fortnights on Dwadasi Sunday / Tuesday at Pandava Tirtha on evenings; on Sundays of Shukla / Krishna fortnights, coinciding Saptami at Papanashana Tirtha; on Brihaspati / Vyakteeta Yogya, Star Pushya / Sravana Mondays etc; Varaha Deva described to Bhudevi that Emperor Akash decided to perform a Grand Yagna on the banks of Arani and while tilling, he found a girl child and as he was issueless, brought her up as their own, named as Padmavati. Once Sage Narad met Padmavati as she was grown up as an eligible bride and predicted that she would be the wife of Lord Srinisasa of Venkatachal. Almost immediately she met a Stranger in the Royal Garden and introduced himself as Anant or Veerapati from Venkatachal Mountain and that he was hunting a wolf. Padmavati’s companions rebuffed Ananta Deva that hunting was prohibited in their garden. Anantha returned but desired intensely that Padmavati should become His life partner and sent Vakulamala to the court of Emperor Aakash to negotiate their wedding. The Emperor had no bounds of joy and the holy wedding of Lord Venkateswara and Padmavati took place in style and grandeur when Devi Lakshmi was present to make Padmavati happy and comfortable, whereafter they all resided in Tirumala bestowing boons to lakhs of Devotees till date. Varaha Deva narrated the background of Padmavati’s earlier birth as Vedavati to Bhudevi. Vedavati was a companion of Devi Lakshmi and when the latter became Rama’s spouse as Sita, she left for forests to perform Tapasya, but demon Ravana misbehaved with her and she ended her life by jumping into fire and cursed Ravana that his entire clan would be wiped out because of a woman. Sita was abducted by Ravana by creating such circumstances that Maricha was converted as a Golden Deer; Sita took fancy for it and prevailed Sri Rama to chase the animal which deceitfully wailed as though Rama was in trouble and Lakshmana had to leave Sita alone even by drawing a Lakshman Rekha that none could cross. The vily Ravana dressed as a Tapsvi revealed his real form as soon as she was prevailed to cross the fiery Lakshman Rekha and forcibly took her to Lanka. After Rama killed Ravana, there was ‘Agni-Pariksha’ (Proof of Purity / by Fire), Sita came out unscathed. But the real fact was that Agni Deva hid real Sita in Patala and Agni’s wife Swaha assumed the role of Maya Sita; in fact Vedavati’s earlier birth was of Swaha Devi! Thus, Vedavati / Swaha turned to Maya Sita was Padmavati. Devi Prithvi enquired of Bhagavan Varaha as to where and how to secure the ‘Darshan’ (Vision) of Lord Venkateswara and the former replied that He would mention of those future happenings as recorded in the past. There was a Nishad (Hunter) in Shyamak Jungle named Vasu and his wife Chitravati and Son Vira.

Nishad was the Chief of his clan living honestly and peacefully by eating cooked rice and honey. Both his wife and he decided one day to a nearby forest to search for additional stock of honey and entrusted the responsibility of looking after his followers and daily chores to Vira, their son. The daily practice was that the family cooked rice and mixed with honey, offered the same as Naivedya to Venkatachalapati and ate the Prashad. But, Vira in their absence for the day offered some portion of the honeyed rice into Agni, some to tree bushes and the rest was consumed. On return from the other forest, Vasu became furious to learn that no offer of the honeyed rice was made to Venkatachalapati but gave it away as described above. Vasu felt agitated and remorsefully guilty and even tried to kill his son for what was considered as Sacrilege. Lord Venkatachal appeared before Nishad in full glory with His four hands, fully ornamented and armed and stopped Vasu from harming his son; he was completely taken aback. The Lord said that the acts of his son Vira were in fact worth emulation and not condemnation for he did a homam (Offering to Agni); homage to Nature and only the remainder was consumed with dedication as 'prashad'. Nishad was so happy that he heard this from Bhagavan Himself! Varaha Deva also narrated an incident related to King Tondaman and Nishad. As an ideal Prince, he imbibed all the qualities required of a King, viz. of nobility, intellect, valour and devotion to Almighty. Once he took King's permission for hunting in Venkatachal forests, chased an elephant, crossed the River Swarnamukhi and reached the Ashram of Brahmarshi Suka and an Idol of Goddess Renuka nearby. As he proceeded further, he found a 'Pancharangi' (Five Coloured) Parrot screeching the name of 'Srinivasa, Srinivasa' and followed the bird till the mountain top. There he met Nishad who informed that the parrot was very dear to Suka Muni as also to Bhagavan Srihari and hovered around the Pushkarini Tirtha; by so saying the Nishad desired to have a Darshan of the Lord and the Prince too accompanied him. Thondaman was indeed thrilled with the Darshan and witnessed the 'Naivedya' of Cooked rice and honey performed by Vasu Nishad. He was overpowered by the magnificent experience of the Lord and thereafter met Suka Muni and secured his blessings that soon he would become a King after his father's retirement and serve Srinivasa for long time to come. A few days after Thondaman's return to his Capital, he was made the King and started settling in his throne. Suddenly after a few months, Vasu the Nishad approached the Palace in an agitated manner and told the King that he dreamt chasing a 'Varaha' which entered a thick bush, that he started digging up and swooned, that his son was also near him, that the Varaha entered his mind and body and made him say the following: 'Nishada! You must reach King Tondaman and ask him to perform 'Abhishek' with lots of milk to a 'Shila' (Stone) underneath this thick bush, pull it out and ask a 'Shilpi' (Sculptor) to prepare an Idol of my features with Bhu Devi on my left lap, set up plants of Tamarind and Champa as are loved by Vishnu and Lakshmi respectively and invite learned Sages and Brahmanas to attend a grand function to be hosted by Tondaman and wait for my further instructions. The King followed the instructions as conveyed by Nishad and called Sages and Brahmanas to a Grand Puja of Varaha Deva and Bhu Devi through an underground passage and continued the daily practice of taking bath, worshipping the Murthis of Varaha and Bhu Devi and arranging 'Prashad' or the left-behinds of Naivedya to Brahmanas and visitors. As this practice got routinised and the interest of Bhaktas snow-balled gradually, a Brahmana stranger approached the King that he was on way to Kasi, Prayaga and a few prominent Tirthas but his wife was unable to travel as she was in the family way; he requested the King to provide accommodation and food to his wife and generally supervise her welfare. The Brahmana returned very late after several months but unfortunately the wife had a miscarriage and died just a couple of days before the return of the Brahmana after visiting several Pilgrimage Centers and Tirthas. The King got frightened at the tragedy as he gave a surety to the Brahmana's wife and approached Srinivasa, who instructed that the Queens as well as the body of the Brahman's wife should be made to take bath in the

Asthi Sarovar Tirtha and as the queens took dips in the holy water and came out, the Brahmana's wife too would emerge. The Brahmana was thrilled at the miracle witnessed by co-devotees! Raja Tondaman followed the practice of worshipping Srinivasa with golden lotuses daily. He found one day some Tulasi leaves pulled out from muddy plants and wondered how this indiscretion happened. As the King was wondering about this, there emerged a voice saying: "There is a pot maker (Kumhara) who also did daily Puja to me with the muddy Tulasi leaves from his house and that I have accepted his worship too!" The King reached Kurmapuri in search of the Kumhara, who replied to the King that he never ever did any puja to Srinivasa! But when the King said that there was a voice which said these words, the Kumhara and his wife recalled the voice of Srinivasa in their earlier births that as and when a King would knock their hut, and then a Pushpa Viman would arrive to pick them to Vishnuloka! Indeed that had just happened! The King returned to Venkateswara Temple to perform worship again after this unusual happening and Srinivasa appeared before Tondaman and bestowed him the blessing of a lasting Abode of bliss. Parikshit, son of Abhimanyu of Pandavas, was no doubt a noble and virtuous King, but unfortunately did the unpardonable sin of hanging a dead serpent around the neck of Samika Muni who was in deep Tapasya and his son Shringi cursed Parikshit that he would be dead within a week as a result of a snake bite. Takshak was assigned the task of killing Parikshit but Brahmana Kashyap who could indeed have prevented the tragedy and even demonstrated his ability to do so, was won over by dubious means by Takshak and Kashyap who did the sin was sought to be washed off by a bath in Swami Pushkarini and worship to Srinivasa, as advised by Shakalya Muni. Indeed the sin of Kashyap was eradicated by the Grace of Lord Venkateswara. Another illustration of the Sanctity of Snaan in Swami Pushkarini was given by Sutha Maha Muni to Rishis at a Congregation at Naimisharanya (The forest of Naimisha). A King of Chandravamsa called Dharmagupta was a rare example of nobility and virtue. He went hunting and by the evening desired to perform the Puja of Gayatri and was delayed to late hours and had to stay back on a tree. A lion came running after a wolf and ascended the same tree; it asked the King not to worry and would not hurt him in any way. It asked the King to come to an understanding that it would sleep off half night and he might sleep off the other half. The lion tempted the wolf to drop the King down and share a good portion of the King. The wolf rejected the proposal outright as ingratitude was a far heinous sin than the 'Panchapatakas' or the Five known major sins. During the other half of the night when the King was to guard the wolf, the lion gave a similar proposal to him; he accepted and tried to drop the sleeping wolf. But luckily, the wolf was saved and preached the King against ingratitude and gave a curse to the King to become a mad man. It said that he was a Sage, named Dhyanakashtha, who could take any form and told the lion that in his earlier birth he was a Minister in the Court of Kubera and was cursed by Gautama Muni to become a lion as he was standing naked in the Sage's garden with his woman. As regards Dharmagupta's curse for ingratitude, Sage Jaimini suggested a bath in the Sacred 'Swami Pushkarini' on Venkatadri on the banks of River Suvarnamukhi, followed by worship of Lord Venkateswara. Suta Maha Muni described that those who purify themselves in the Pushkarini would surely avoid hells named Tamisra, Andhamisra, Rourav, Maha Rourav, Kumbhipak, Kaalsutra, Asipatravan and such others. On the other hand, the devotees attain the 'Punya' of performing Aswamedha Yagna and achieve Buddhi (Intellect), Lakshmi (Wealth), Kirti (Fame), Sampatthi (Prosperity), Gyan (wisdom), Dharma (Virtue), Manoshuddhi (Purity of mind) and Vairagya (Other Worldliness). Krishna Tirtha is a Tirtha named after a deeply devoted Brahmana whose Tapasya was so severe and extensive that his body developed mole-hills (Valmikas) and Indra rained forcefully to wash off the mud. Lord Srinivasa was impressed by the relentless and highly dedicated devotion and blessed him with His Darshan, created a Tirtha after his name, declared that those who have the fortune of bathing

in it would become as learned and focussed and bestowed Salvation to him. Paapanaasha Tirtha is such a powerful place that even merely uttering its name, sins of the past and present get vanished. There was a Brahmana named Bhadrhamati who had enormous knowledge of Vedas and Scriptures but was acutely impoverished having six wives and several children. His each day was a harrowing experience of poverty with several mouths to feed. One of his wives named Kamini told him one day that her father met Sage Narada who described Tirtha called Papanashana lying on the Venkateswar Mountain cluster was a big draw and a bath, preferably after giving away a small token 'bhudaan' to a deserving Brahmana followed by a darshan of the Lord would abolish poverty, and fulfil all human desires. This emboldened Bhadrhamati to travel along with his family to the Srinivasa Mountain. He was fortunate to obtain on way a token of five feet of land. The entire family took bath in the Papasahana Tirtha and gave away charity of the five feet of land to a deserving Brahmana. Bhagavan Vishnu had instantly appeared before Bhadrhamati; the latter was extremely thrilled at the darshan and eulogised Him as follows: 'Namō Namasthekhila karanaaya, Namō namasthekhila paalakaya/ Namō Namastheyemara nayakaya Namō Namō Daithya vimardanaya/ Namō Namō Bhakthajanapriyaya, Namō Namah Paapavidaaranaya/ Namō Namō Durjananashakaya, Namasthesthu Tasmai Jagadeeshvaraya/ Namō namah Karanavamayaya, Naraayanaathivikramaya/ Shri Shankha chakraasi gadaadharaaya, Namasthesthu tasmai Purushottamaya/ Namah payoraasi nivaasakaaya, Namasthesthu Lakshmi pathavyayaya/ Namasthesthu Suryadyamitha-prabhaaya, Namō Namah Punyagathaagathaaya/ Namō Namokyenduvilochanaya, Namasthesthu Yagna phalapadaaya/ Namasthesthu Yagnaangavilochanaya, Namasthesthu thye Sajjanavallabhaaya/ Namō namah Kaarana Kaaranaaya, Namasthesthu Shabdaadi vivarjitaaya/ Namasthesthuthybhheshta sukhahpradaaya, Namō Namō Bhakta -manoramaaya/ Namō namasthedbhuta karanaaya, Namasthesthuthy Manda radhaarakaya/ Namasthesthuthy Yagnavarrahanaagney, Namō Hiranyakshavidarakaya/ Namasthesthuthy Vaamana rupabhaaje, Namasthesthuthy Kshatrakulaanthakaaya/ Namasthesthuthy Ravana mardanaaya, Namasthesthuthy Nanda sutaagrajaaya, Namasthey kamalaakaantha Namasthey Sukha daayiney, Ashritarthi nashiney tubhyam bhuyo bhuyo Namō namah/'. As Bhadrhamati praised Lord Srinivasa, He blessed him to enjoy full-swing prosperity to him and family and attain Moksha to him thereafter. 'Akasha ganga Tirtha' was well known for bestowing boons to the highly erudite and dedicated Brahmana called Ramanuja. He did Tapasya of rigorous nature on the banks of Akashganga by standing with 'Panchagni' (Five flames) around him during the hot summer mid-days and under the sky in heavy rains fully exposed chanting the Ashtakshari Mantra 'Om Namō Narayanaya'; he ate dry leaves fallen from trees for years together, for some years by drinking water and many other years by consuming air only. Finally, Bhagavan appeared and Ramanuja who was almost dying with the severity of his Tapasya became fully normal and healthy instantly. He received the boons that the Place of Akasha Ganga where Ramanuja had the fortune of discovering Vishnu in person would be an Eternal water-spring and those who performed 'Snaan' would change his entire life style and become an ideal Bhakta and at the end they would have no other birth and would get salvation. In another context, Akash Ganga was immortalised as the Tirtha where Devi Anjana executed penance, since she and her husband Vayu Deva were not blessed with a son. Vishnu Bhakta Sage Matangi directed Anjana Devi to reach River Suvarnamukhi, far south of Vindhya Mountain, reach Vrishabhachal on whose top was situated the famous Swami Pushkarini, worship Varaha Deva and Venkateswara, proceed to north, find Akashaganga and perform Snaan in a formal manner along with Vayu Deva. The Sage confirmed that if the couple did so, a Son of unparalleled prowess and 'Swami Bhakti' (Loyalty to the Master) would be born, to be called Hanuman who was invincible by Devas, Raakshasas, Sages, Brahmanas, Celestial and human beings. As Anjana Devi followed the instructions to the last letter and spirit, Bhagavan Venkateswara appeared before

her and blessed that such a Son would be born that his parents would indeed be proud of and play a pivotal role in Treta Yuga as the most powerful personality of 'Shiva Amsa'. Besides the above, Venakatachal has quite a few other Tirthas like Chakra Tirtha where a Maha Muni Padmanabha prayed to Srinivasa to chase away the dread of Rakshasas and Bhagavan stationed His Sudarshan Chakra known for dispelling the fear of Evil Spirits; Varaha Tirtha, Pandu Tirtha, Tumba Tirtha, Kapila Tirtha, Kumara Tirtha, Jaraharaadi Tirtha Traya, Phalguni Tirtha, Deva Tirtha, Jabaali Tirtha, Sanaka Sanandana Tirtha, Asthi Sarovara Tirtha, Kataha Tirtha and Manvadyashtottara Tirtha. Thus the outstanding significance of Tirupati-Tirumala Deva's unparalleled magnificence of Lord Venkateswara!

84) Tiruvekka or Yatthottakari: This is very near to at Kanchipura Varada Raja Bhagavan's Temple. Shri Yatthottakari Bhagavan and Devi Komalavalli Lakshmi are presented at a Temple as the former is in a shesha saayi posture. In this temple, there is a Saroyogi Pushkarini as Sant Saroyogi was born here. Brahma and Devi Saraswati had their divya darshanas.

85) Ashtabuja also near Varadaraja Temple in Kanchi is dedicated to Bhagavan Adikewshava Chakradhara and Devi Alarmelmangai where King Gajendra had his divya darshana.

86) Tiruttanka near Varadaraja Temple presents Valukkoil Perumal or Deepa Prakasha Deva and Devi Marakavalli Lakshmi. Acharya Vedanta Deshika was born here. Devi Saraswati had her 'sakashatakaara' at this Temple.

87) Uragam / Trivikrama is in Shiva Kanchi Kshetra being a distinguished Avatar of Vishnu as Vamana Deva, the Vighraha is oversized almost hitting the ceiling with one of his feet lifted up. This form of Trivikrama Vishnu is just like as a hooded serpent.

88-89-90-91) Neerakam or Neerakara again near Kanchi at the surrounding sub-temple of Uraga Trivikrama temple is Aradhya Deva Bhagavan Jagadeesha accompanied by Neelamangaivalli Lakshmi; likewise at the sub-temple of Urga Vaamana is Kaarakam presenting Aradhya Deva Karunaakara and Devi Padmaamani; and Kaavarnam too as the surrounding main Trivikrama temple presents Shri Kalwar or Meghaakaara and Devi Kamalavalli Lakshmi. Similarly the fourth sub temple is Araadhya Deva Adi-Varaha and Devi Anjillaivalli. These four sub temples were celestially visioned by Akrura-GarhaRishi-Devi Parvati and Ashvatta Narayana respectively.

92) Paatakam or Pandavadoota is in the Main Kanchi itself where Bhagavan Pandava doota and Devis Rukmini- Satyabhaamas are visioned. Alwars Bhutayogi, Mahayogi, Bhaktisaara and Parkaala had performed mangala shaasana, while King Janamejaya and Maharshi Harita had their divya darshanaas.

93-95) In the Main Kanchi itself, there are the small sized temples viz. Pravalavarnam, Parameshwara Vishshnugaram and Tiruppukkuli but of far reaching significance. Bhagavan Pravalavarna Bhagavan and Devi Pavalavalli who blessed Ashvini Devatas with their divine vision. Juat nearby is Haritavarna Bhagavan and Marakatavalli Lakshmi who granted saakshaatkaara to Bhrigu Maharshi; Vishnugaraam with Paramapadanath and Vaikunthavalli as actually visioned by King Pallavaraya; and at Tiruppukkuli or Gudhra Kshetra with Vijayaraghava Bhagavan and Marakatavalli as visioned by Jatayu which fought with Ravana and sacrificed its life to save Devi Sita.

96) There is a famed Kshetra named Singavellukutram on Kadapa- Guntakal Railway Line, very popular as Ahobila. *Aho veeryam aho shouryam aho bahu parakramam, Narasimham para daivam aho bilam aho*

*balam/ Ahobila Kshetra* is a popular Vaishnava (Vadakala) Kshetra split at two levels called in the Telugu local language as ‘Eguva’ and ‘Diguva’ or Upper and Lower levels- in the ‘nallamala’ forests of Kurnool District of Andhra Pradesh at the distance of 40 km from Nandyala or 150 km from Hyderabad at the Nallamala forest range at an altitude of 1000 ft. plus. That is the fabled Abode of Lord Narasimha or Prahlada Varada, the fourth incarnation of Maha Vishnu to terminate Hiranya Kashipu the demon who rescued Prahlada the illustrious Vishnu Bhakta. Amrita Valli is the corresponding Devi Lakshmi of the Godeless. Ahobila Kshetra opposite the Akshaya Tirtha where devotees purify themselves with snanas, before entering the Sacred Place portrays nine forms of Narasimha spread among nine Temples viz. Bhargava Nrisimha bestowing Lakshmikara siddhi or excellent prosperity as incarnate at the lower level of Ahobila, Yogananda Nrisimha also at the lower level signifying the aspect of compassion and overcoming problems of one’s life; Chatravata Narasimha representing Ketu Graha bestowing comforts of Life and expertise in Fine Arts; Ugra Nrisimha Temple at the upper level along with Chenchu Lakshmi or a Goddess as of a local Tribe Leader’s daughter who sought to cool down the fierce form of the Lord and eventually married to her representing Dei Lakshmi herself and teaching devotees the qualities of courage and timeliness yet of maturity; Varaha Narasimha Swami at the upper level again along with his consort of Lakshmi; Malova Vara Nrisimha along with Shri Lakshmi at Lakshmi Hill granting total fulfillment and auspiciousness to devotees; Jwala Nrisimha as had just annihilated Haranya kashipu since a pond of brick colour with which the Lord had just washed his hands with the blood of the demon called Rakta gunta Tirtham; Paavana Nrisimha or Kshetra Ratna Nrisimha or Pamulati Nrisimha Swami who provides safety and succor to devotees and finally Karanja Nrisimha or He who represents Shadvidha or six types of austerities and purities viz. those of ‘Kara- charana- vaak- kaaya-karma- shravana- nayana’ or by hands, legs, tongue, mouth, body, actions and mind- borne nature! At the Ahobila Complex, the significant Festivities are Phalgun Month celebrations, Janma Nakshatra ( Swati) Mahotsavas, Gramotsavas, Monthly Celebrations and Tirumanjana Sevas. *Simhachala Tirtha*: Some 16 km near Vishakapattanam in Andhra Pradesh is another significant Nrisimha Kshetra in Bharat is at Simhachala or the Lion Giri viz. Varaha Lakshmi Nrisimha of 15<sup>th</sup> century built by Gajapati Raja of Kalinga, the present part of Odisha State and King Krishnadeva Raya of Vijayanagara also attended the Opening Ceremony Brahmotsavas as given in available Inscriptions. The Legend about this incarnation of Nrisimha is due to the curse to the Gate keepers to Maha Vishnu’s Vaikuntha by Brahma Manasa Putras viz. Sanaka Sanandana Sanatana Kumaras who were stopped entry; the respective Danavas were Harayaksha in Varaha; Ravanaasura and Kumbhakarna in Shri Rama Avatara, and Kamsa and Shishupala in Krishnavatara, besides Hiranya kashipu in Nrisimha Avatara. The Bhakta saved from Hiranya kashipu in the Nrisimha Avatara was Prahlada. Special Festivals at Simhachala are of Akshaya Trititeya with Chandana Lepana or Alankara with Gandha and during Vaishakha Month. The main attractions at the Temple are a fantastic Stone Ratha and a 16 pillared Mandapa depicting Dashawataras and many Nrisimha Swarupas.

97) Dwaaraka: Skanda Purana in its Prabhasa Khanda describes in detail Dwaraka Dhaam’s Mahatmya. *Api keetapatangaadyaah Pashavoya sarisrupaah, Vimuktaah Paapinah sarvey Dwarakaayaah prabhavatah/ Kim punarmanavaa nityam Dwarakaayaam vasantite, Yaa gatih sarva jantunaam Dwarakaa pura vaasinaam saa gatirdurlabha nyunam Muninaamuttheretasam/ Dwarakaa vaasinam drushtwaa sprushtaa chaiva viseshatah, Mahaa paapa viniirmuktaah swartga loke vasantite/ Paamsavo Dwarakaaya vai vaayunaa samudiritaah, Paapinaam muktidaah proktaah kim punardwaaraabhavi/* (By the grace of Dwaraka, all kinds of sinners born as krimi keetakas or flies, pashu pakshis or serpents- all

attain salvation; what else one has to say about those who visit or reside there and become surfeit with Bhagavan Shri Krishna's darshan and worship! Those residents of Dwaraka should attain such kind of salvation as even illustrious Maha Munis with extraordinary control of physical organs and senses might possess! Dwaraka vasi's darshana or sparshana or mere touch, would destroy human's gravest sins and bestow long stay in Swarga. Even the sand blown by the wind of Dwaraka would destroy all the sins; why talk of residence in Dwaraka itself!) Such is the narration by Markandeya Maharshi in this Purana! He further describes that those persons who spend time at Lord Krishna's idol at Dwaraka are blessed and fulfilled deserving to be saluted and prostrated to. Further those devotees of Shri Krishna have the opportunity of bathing his sacred head with milk should reap the fruits performing Ashwamedha Yagna. But those devotees who, with no return favour from the Lord, perform affectionate yet devotional bathing to him should be blessed with Moksha. After the snaana, those who dry and wipe his body with a clean cloth would have his or her past and present sins. Those after bathing and dressing up, decoration of him with a fresh fragrant flower garland while the sound of conch shell is rendered and recite his sahasra naama with faith and dedication, then each word of the 'namaavali' would fetch him the fruit of giving away the daana of a kapila cow per each stanza of it. Additionally the recital of Gita, Gajendra moksha, Bhishma stava, or any of the Stotras by Maharshis would have the same benefit: *Yoga Shastraani Vedantaan yoginah Krishna sannidhou, Pathanti Ravi bimbam tu mithwaayaanti layam Hareyh/ Gitaa Naama shasram tu stavaraajastavanu smritih, Gajendra mokshanam chaapi Krishnasyaa staviya durlabham/* (Those Yogis recite Yoga shastra and Vedanta in the presence of Krishna shall break the barriers of Surya mandala and enter right into Vishnu Dhaam. The Five Maha Stotras viz. Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Vishnu Sahasra naama, Bhishma Stava Raja, Anusmriti and Gajendra Moksha are indeed the dearest Stotras of Bhagavan Shri Krishna. As briefly narrated the Mahatmya of Dwaraka from Skanda Purana, the basic and immediate cause for Lord Krishna headed by Yadavas is explained in Maha Bhagavata Purana, Vishnu Purana, Maha Bharata etc. Maha Bhagavata describes as follows: Pursuant to the termination of Kamsa, the tyrant King of Mathura -who had the discredit of imprisoning his own father Ugrasena out of ill justified ambition as well as his own sister Devaki and brother in law Vasudeva out of fear that their son Krishna, yet unborn might kill him- the two Queens of Kamsa, named Asti and Prapti, approached their father Jarasandha the evil Monarch of Magadha. Jarasandha attacked Mathura with some twenty three 'akshouhinies' of infantry, cavalry and elephantry and challenged Krishna and Balarama. But as Krishna was to fight with massive opponents even with a minor number of Army basically with Kamsa's carry-forward loyalties, he called for his (Vishnu's) Saaranaga Dhanush with limitless arrows or his mace/ gada named Koumudi while Balarama's Hala or Plough and Musala. Thus Jarasandha despite his huge Army was no match and ran away from the battle. But he regrouped and strengthened his army again and again, each time getting routed. There were such attacks by some seventeen times. When Jarasandha was expected to attack for the eighteenth time, his allies viz, the alien mlechha forces called Yavanas headed by Kalayavana attacked Mathura with a massive thirty million barbarians of desperation and cruelty. Then Krishna and Balarama calculated that no doubt they could face the combined Army of Jarasandha and Kalayavana too but discretion being the better part of valour, especially since Yadava Army should not be hurt at all even in small number, they thought of a Master Stroke: one to eliminate Kalayavana by tricking him and another to shift their Capital of Yadavas from Mathura to Dwaraka. They planned to build a new Capital City named Dwaraka on the West Coast, a modern City with 12 gates and all amenities and asked Vishwakarma, the Architect-cum-Builder; the latter created a beautiful and well structured fortress touching the western Sea. By means of His mystic Yoga Maya or the power of Illusion, the citizens of Mathura got transferred lock-stock and barrel, over

night to Dwaraka and found themselves in their own luxurious Palaces. Even as Balarama was defending Mathura, Lord Krishna attracted the attention of Kalayavana, passing singly by foot, by the main gate of Mathura; Kalayavana followed Krishna closely but always unreachable with some distance apart and led the Mleccha into a Mountain Cave. Thinking that Krishna known for his tricks had himself assumed a new form as an old and haggardly man inside the dark cave kicked him forcefully as the old man was fast asleep. Indeed, the old man was none other than Muchukunda, the son of Mandhata of Ishvaaku dynasty. He was the defender of Demi- Gods from Daityas for long in Treta Yuga and Lord Kartikeya the Commander-in-Chief appreciated Muchukunda's efforts and granted him rest and sleep till Lord Vishnu Himself as his Avatara named Krishna would bless him at a later date in Dwapara Yuga. As Kalayavana forcibly kicked Muchukunda, the former burnt off Kalayavana by his angry looks and realised Krishna as his Saviour when Krishna instructed Muchukunda to perform Tapasya. Thus Krishna got rid of Kalayavana even all the Mathura resident Yadavas got nicely transported to their new Capital Dwaraka! Incidentally, Jarasandha finally got killed by Bhimasena, thanks to Krishna's finger-sign advice to Bhima to tear Jarasandha's body into two and throw the two parts apart topse-turvey; after Bhima killed Jarasandha some thousands of Kings defeated in wars besides countless youthful girls kidnapped were liberated. Skanda Purana prescribes the method of Yatra to Dwaraka Dhaam; after satisfying with wholesome meals to good Vaishnava Bhaktas, the yatris need to sleep on the ground peacefully observing Celibacy and while travelling keep reciting Vishnu Sahasra naama, Purusha Sukta, Shrimad Bhagavatam etc. Then having taken bath in Gomati Nadi, Chakra Tirtha etc. enter the Dham with extreme devotion and total faith. The then Dwaraka township got drowned in the Sea anyway as soon as Lord Krishna disappeared and assiduous researches over considerable time reveal- though contradictory- that the ancient Dwaraka is perhaps under Arabian Sea at Kathiawad. The newly constructed Dwaraka- some 450 km from Ahmedabad- is stated to be on the banks of Gomati River but one version is that this is not Gomati but an extended body of Sea water, and that is why some call Dwaraka as Gomati Mukha where nine ghats have been constructed viz. Sangama Ghat, Narayana Ghat, Vaasudeva Ghat, Go ghat, Parvati ghat, Pandava ghat, Brahma ghat, Suravana ghat and Sarkari ghat. The Main Mandir called Dwarakaadheesh ( also called Ranchodrai Mandir but one of the devotees was stated to have transferred the earlier Shama Sundara Chaturbhuj Murti took it away to Dhakor and another similar Murti appeared in a Well at a Ladwa village and thus got replaced here); this Mandir is said to have been built in 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century. As it stands now has a shikhar height of 170 ft. its entry gate named Swarga Dwar and exit gate as Moksha Dwaar. Besides other Mandirs around Dwarakaadheesha Main Mandir, near Moksha dwaar there is Kusheswar Shiva Mandir which is significant as the legend prescribes that in case the Yatris not obtaining the Darshan of Kusheswara Linga, half of the Dwaraka Yatra Phala is taken away by Daityas. Sharada Mandir is another highlight of Dwaraka as Adi Shankaracharya established one of the Main Peethas as at Puri, Badari, Shringeri and Kanchi.

*Bet (Island) Dwaraka/ Shankho dwar:* is some 15 km from Dwaraka which in the past was a full-fledged Port before the development of Ohka Port. On way from Dwaraka to the Bet is the famed Rukmini Devi Mandir some 2 km near the Main Temple stated to have been built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. In the 'Bet' itself is the old Shamkho Narayan Mandir and the Idols of the Queens of the Lord viz. Lakshmi, Radha, Satyabhama and Jambavati. Shri Krishna Mahal also earlier called Pradyumna Mandir, besides Rancchod and Trivikrama Mandir are ther too on the Bet. In fact, there are Shivalayas, Vaishnava Temples, Hanuman and Devi Mandirs are scattered all over. The well known Gopi Talaab is nearby where Gopikas were stated to bathe often.

98) Ayodhya: *Akaaro Brahmatah proktam Yakaaro Vishnuruchyate, Dhakaaro Rudra rupascha Ahodhyaanaama raajate/ Sarvopa Paataairyuktair rahmahatyaadi paataakai, Na yodhyaa shaktate yasmaattaam ayodhyaam tato viduh/* (Skanda Purana, Vaishnava Khanda Ayodhyaa) Ayodhyaa is defined as ‘ A- kaara is Brahma, Ya-kaara is Vishnu and Dha-kaara is Rudra Swarupa; thus Ayodhya is a composite form of Tri Murthis. Maha Pataakas too are demolished by naming the Name of Ayodhya!) Valmiki Ramayana in Bala kaanda exclaims: *Manunaa Maanavendrena saa Puri nirmिता swayam/* (Manu confirms that he himself constructed Ayodhya himself!) In his opening introduction of Ayodhya Kaanda of Skanda Purana, Maha Muni Suta greets Bhagavan Shri Rama saying: *Namaami Parama-atmanam Ramam rajiva lochanam, Atasikusuma shyamam Ravanaantaka mavyayam /* ( My greetings to Lord Shri Rama the Paramatma who is lotus eyed and of blue colour the terminator of the cruel and vily Ravanaasura). Ayodhya puri is so sancrosanct that sinful beings could ever enter it, let alone reside there! From his right foot thumb emerged Ganga and Sarayu river got manifested from left foot thumb. That is why both the Rivers are Sacred and worthy of prostrations and bathing in these rivers is as effective as destroying Brahma hatya sin. Even before the Avatara of Shri Rama, Ayodhya was the Capital of Surya Vamsha Kings of Ikshwaku; the latter was the son of Vaivashwata Manu and to this dynasty belonged to the illustrious Bhagiratha, Ambarisha, Nahusha, Yayati, Nabhaga, Ajan and Dasharatha. Skanda Purana in Vaishnava Khanda, Ayodhya Mahatmya gives the account of Veda Vijnana Vishnu Sharma whose severe Tapasya attracted Maha Vishnu darshana and the Pandita’s request to him him the boon of constant Vishnu darshana; in turn Maha Vishnu instructed Sudarshana Chakra to dig up Bhumi and bring up Ganga from Patala Loka and the resultant Sacred Water flow was materialised as *Chakra Tirtha*. Earlier, Brahma himself resided at Ayodhya even before the incarnation of Shri Rama and hence the emergence of *Brahma Kund* . Brahma conveyed to Devas about the significance of this Tirtha -as given in Skanda Purana- would be such as that whoever performed formal snaana at the Kund and gave away daana would have been deemed as securing Ahwamedha yagna phala and blessed to fly as clad in Divya Vastras to Brahma Loka for residing there till the ensuing Pralaya. From Brahma kunda to the not too far Sarayu River is *Runa Vimochana Tirtha* where Muni Lomasha popularised specially among his followers who were delighted as the debts of one’s very existence by way of births and deaths to parents and sons and the teacher, quite apart from the material debts of the current and past ‘janmas’ are cleared by snanas at the Tirtha. To the east of the Runa Vimochana Tirtha is the *Paapa mochana Tirtha*. Skanda Purana narrates the story of Panchala desha Brahmana was Maha Paapi who became conscious of his heaping stocks of sins and casually heard the conversation of a Group of Sadhus visiting Ayodhya. He visited Paapa Vimochana Tirtha along with them and happened to bathe on a Maagha Krishna Chaturdashi and also performed daana karyas and he realised an unusual transformation in his psyche and was surprised to vision a Viman beckoning him and flew to Vishnu dhaam. Ahead of the glorious Paapa machana Tirtha is the *Sahasra dhaara Tirtha* which is known for demolishing all obstacles in life and overcoming enemies by mere snaana with faith and mental discipline. This indeed was the very Tirtha where after the close of the entire Ramayana, Lord Shri Rama instructed Lakshmana to bathe and by his own Mantra Shakti assume the Form of Adi Sesha! Actually, the background was that when Shri Ram who had once had an important visitor viz. Kaal Devata about which even Lakshman was unaware and instructed Lakshman not to enter and allow any visitor to enter either. Lakshman was faithfully guarding the entry of Rama Nivas by taking sincere rounds up and down the ‘dwaar’. Meanwhile Maha Tapaswi Durvasa Maharshi who is noted for his short temper arrived and affectionately asked Lakshmana to let Ram inform of his arrival for Rama darshan. Lakshman being aware of Duravas’s shaapa shakti alerted Rama of the Muni’s arrival. With a view to protect his own Satya Vak Paripalana of Lakshman’s disobedience despite his instruction ,

Rama had to resort to the extreme step of asking Lakshmana to perform Prana tyaga of Lakshmana. As Lakshmana took the form of Adishesha and visited Indra Loka even as the Sahasra Manis and their luster vanished, the lest the Tirtha place on Sarayu diminish significance, Indra and Devas arrived on the Spot ensured and in fact doubled its glory and sanctity and named it Sahasra Dhaara Tirtha and Lord Shri Rama blessed the title too for the benefit of posterity and Loka Kalyan. *Swarga dwara dhaara*: Skanda Purana further describes as follows: Every Tirtha darshana has one's own benefits yet Swaga dwara Tirtha has its own: Pratah kaala snana, japa-tapa-havana-upavasa-darshana-dhyaana-adhyana- daanas have their distinct results and those beings like the Chatur varna humans, mriga-pakshi-jala chara-krimi keetakaadi pranis happen to die at this Tirtha are qualified to direct access to Swarga and Vaikuntha dhaam. Bhagavan Vishnu in his Avatara Swarupas, especially of Shri Rama with his wife and brothers are stated at this Tirtha to select beings for their respective Punya Phalas and decide their 'nirnayas' based on their own past karmas overshadowing their contributions at the Swarga dwaar snaanas and punya karma mix. And so does the presence of Kailasha Vaasi along with Devi Parvati and their followers would oversee the process of selection of Beings for the Higher Loka Prapti, asserts the Skanda Purana. Near Swarga dwaara is the Nageshwara nath Mandir; it is stated that originally this Murti was originally made of Kusha grass but later King Vikramadiya resurrected and re-established the Idol with Veda mantras in a move to revive several 'Praachina' or age old Mandirs in Ayodhya. Yatris perform Pinda daana at Swarga dwaar Ghat with great devotion and bhakti. *Chandra Sahasra Tirtha* where Chandra sahasra vrata Udyapana is performed as also Argha danas are done on every Purnima Tithis to Chandra-Rohini Devis. *Swarna Tirtha* where Maharshi Vishwamitra's sishya Koutsa Muni called on Raghu Rama once and said that he wished for so much of wealth which he desired to give to his Guru which Rama too might not possess. Shri Rama thought for a while and requested the Muni to please stay back in his court of Ayodhya overnight. Then Shri Rama invited Kubera Deva to bring considerable gold and on receiving it gave it away to Koutsa Muni. Next morning, Rama gave away all the gold given by Kubera and kept up his word by redonating the same to the Muni and truly satisfied him. This Swarna Tirtha had thus attained a gold-bestowing reputation and fulfill the material desires of who ever performed worship by way of snaana- daana-Japas with utmost faith. One of Ayodhya's major Mandirs is *Kanak Bhavan* which is quite big and mention worthy which was supposed to be of Shri Ram's 'antahpura' or the interior palace hall where Devi Sita resided too. There are big sized Sita Rama Idols seated on a throne together in the Mandir as also the idols of the very past which were however smaller. From Kanaka Bhavan away is the most famed **Shri Rama Janma Sthaana** which was stated to have been rebuilt as Masjid Babri ; this Masjid which became the hot controversy was partially destroyed to make way for the original now albeit as a small make believe Mandir. Near to Raa Janma Sthaana are Sita Rasoyi or kitchen, Kopa bhavan or the Place where the love-fight Rama- Sita couple stayed; Ratna Simhasan or the Royal Throne made of jewels, Ananda Bhavan or the Palace of Joy, Ranga Mahal or the Hall of Music and Dance etc. The other Places worthy of visiting in Ayodhya's Sarayu River banks include *Lakshman Ghat* with a five feet Lakshmana Swami in the Mandir exclusively dedicated to him; *Ahalya Ghat* where Lord Rama is stated to have performed Yagna; *Hanuman gadhi* on an elevated sixty steps an Lord Hanuman in seated form; *Darshaneshwar*, *Mani Parvat* with Ashoka Stupa of broken 200 ft; *Dantana Kund* where Rama was stated to have had his mouth wash, where also Gautama Buddha, while in Ayodhya too rested. *Dasharatha kund* was the Place some few km. away on Sarayu River banks where King Dasharatha's 'Antya Dahana' was stated to have been performed. A mini- Parikrama of some 4 km around Ayodhya touches Ramaghat, Raghunadha Das gaddi, Sita kund, Agni Kund, Vidya kund, Mani Parvat, Kubera parvat, Sugriva parvat, Lakshman ghat, Swarga dwaar and back to Ram ghat. While no doubt Shri Rama

Navami Celebrations on Chaitra Shukla Navami are famed for several days every year, Shravana Shukla Paksha festivities and Sarayu River snanaas are considered as very sacred, especially on Kartika Purnima. 99) Naimisharanya: The 41st Adhyaya of Uttarakanda of Kurma Purana makes a detailed reference of Naimisharanya when Suta Muni in his address to Rishis and Brahmanas said as follows: *Idam Trailokya vikhyatam Teertham Naimishatanyyamuttamam, Maha Devapriyakaram mahapaatakanaashanam/* (This Naimisha Tirtha is reputed all over the Trilokas as the most beloved of Maha Deva and the demolisher of all kinds of blemishes and sins.) The Purana further states that Lord Brahma materialised this Tirtha to facilitate the Tapasya of Maha Munis like Marichi, Atri, Vasishtha, Kratu, Bhrigu and Angira and their generations as these Maharshis made express supplication to this effect. Brahma told the Maharshis: *Satram sahasramaasadhvam Vaangmanodosha varjitaah, Deshamcha vah pravakshyaami yasmin desho charishyatha/* (Maharshis! Do perform thousands of Yagjnas by sacrificing all kinds of vocal and mental shortcomings; I shall specify a Sanctified spot where you could perform these deeds of virtue) So saying Brahma materialised a Manomaya chakra or Mind borne wheel and asked the Maharshis to follow it soon. He further said: *Yatrasya nemih sheeryet sa Desha Purusharshabhaah, Tatomuvaacha tacchakram te cha tatsamauvrajan, Tyasya vai vrajatah kshipram yatra nemirashershayat, Naimisham tatsmrutam naamna punyam sarvatra pujitam/* (Where-ever the Manomaya chakra's outside circle would break off, that specific spot would indeed be worthy and highly auspicious of executing all deeds of virtue like Yagjnas and so on). That Spot indeed has eventually become famed as having been frequented by Deva, Gandharva, Yaksha, Naaga, Rakshasas too besides Maharshis and Brahmanas who all seek Parameshwara. *Anna daanam tapastaptam snaanam japyaadikam cha yat, Ekaikam paavbayet paapam sapta janmakrutam Dwijaah/* (What ever Punya Karyas like Danas, Tapa, Snaana, Japaadis are executed here should indeed root out all types of sins for seven previous births with retrospective effect). In the days of yore, Vaya Deva himself narrated the Brahmanda Purana as scripted by Brahma to Rishis performing yagjnas here. Also Rudra Deva along with Pramatha Ganas was in the habit of freely moving about this hallowed Naimisharanya! *Atra praanaan parityajya niyamena Dwijaatayah, Brahma lokam gamishyanti yatra gatwaa na jaayate/* (At the last stages of life the prescribed regulations are to eke one's life and indeed be eligible to pack up for Brahma Loka itself and would not have to have a rebirth!). Besides Kurma Purana, Chapters of Shiva Purana, Maha Bhagavata, Maha Bharata and so on are devoted about the Naimisharanya Tirtha where Suta Maha Muni rendered discourses to congregations of Sages headed by Shaunaka Muni about the Eighteen Maha Puranas after performing daily Yagjnas at this hallowed Naimisharanya where the Kala Chakra's paridhi or the circumference or outer circle called 'nemi' collapsed here and hence the Hallowed Place has been called Naimisha on the banks of Gomati River, off 160 km from Luknow the Capital of Uttar Pradesh. Naimisha is also one of the major 51 Sacred Spots for Pitru Sthaanas and the practice of Somavati Amavasya Tarpanas are still organised. During Dwapara Yuga, Balarama Deva performed Yagjnas here, besides Veda Vyasa divided the single Veda to four distinct Vedas, scripted Maha Bharata here too and various other Scriptures. Lalitha Devi's worship is performed at the main Mandir here while Chakra Tirtha is of legendary background. This Tirtha attracts thousands of devotees to perform 'snanas' till date especially on Pournamis and Solar/Lunar eclipse days. *Chakra Tirtham maha Punyam sarva Paapa pranaashanam, Vateete madhya bhage tu prithvyaaah sarvanathakam/ Kurukshetre tu yatpunyam Rahugrassita Divakare, Tat phalam labhate naiva Chakra Tirthasya majjananaat/ Naimishe Chakra tirtheshu snatwa Bharata sattama, Sarvavyaadhi vinirmukto Brahma loka maheeyate/* -Maha Bharata Shanti Parva. (Chakra Tirtha is Maha Punya Prada and Maha Paapa vinashaka; the Tirtha is as significant as that of the Chakra created by Brahma's heart; the maha Phala that is accrued to snanas at Chakra Tirtha is stated to be that one attains at Kurukshetra on Solar

Eclipse day when Rahu devours Surya. Snaanas at Chakra Tirtha are such as the unique smasher of all sins) It is believed that Chakra Tirtha is fathomless and delegations of British swimmers and navigators desirous of disproving the myth organised experiments by diving upto 1000 mts or 30,000 feet depth and gave up for want of oxygen reserves. There is also a 18 ft high Hanunan Idol carrying Rama and Lakshmana on his shoulders as having rescued them from Mahi Ravana hidden in Patala Loka. The local belief is that when Indrajit the son of Ravana was killed in the Ramayana Battle, Ravana asked his brother Mahi Ravana the King of Patala; a conspiracy was hatched to some how abduct Rama Lakshmana and despatch them to Patala so that the brotheres could be sacrificed to Chandi Devi. Vibhishana now in Rama's camp came to know of the plot and warned Hanuman to be vigilant but assuming Vibhishana Rupa, Ravana succeeded in abducting Rama Lakshmana in deep sleep and despatched them to Patala. Hanuman realised the deceipt and reached Patala and with the help of Makaradhwaja who was Hanuman's sweat born son helped entry into Patala and destroyed Mahi Ravana and carried them on his shoulders to Chakra Tirtha at Naimisha. Devi Bhagavata describes the significance of Lalitha Devi Mandira at Naimisha as that of Vishalakshi Mandira at Varanasi: *Varanasyam Vishalaakshi Gauri Mukha nivasini, Kshetre vai Naimishaaranye proktaa saa Linga dharini/* It may be recalled that 51 Shakti Pithas were given in detail in the earlier pages of this Script, but actually 108 Shakti Peethas are stated and the Linga Dharini Lalitha Devi's heart in part [besides at Baidhyanath Dham as Jaya Durga in Jharkhand] also fell of Devi Sati's mortal body at Naimisha. Apart from Vyasa Shukadeva Sthaana afore mentioned, Swayambhu Manu and Devi Shatarupa 'Taposthaana' too is mention worthy as the lineage of Fourteen Manus including the current Vaivaswata Manu got initiated since then. The famed Dashaashwamedha Yagna or the tenth Ashwamedha performed by Shri Rama, Devi Sita and Lakshmanaadi brothers and wives was a memorable success here at Naimisha on Treta Yuga. Annapurna and Vishwanatha mandir at Naimisha is known for devotees executing Pitru Karyas. Dadhichi Kund Snana is stated to be of great importance as that is the Sacred Place where Dadhichi Muni donated his backbone and body with which Indra made Vajrayudha and many other armoury of Devas with which Vritrasura was executed for Loka Kalyan or Universal Relief and Auspiciousness. Suta Muni Gaddi and Pancha Prayaga on the banks of which Akshaya Vata Vriksha are worthy of not missing by yatis. Naimisharanya Parikrama of some 4-5 km covering most of the Sacred Places mentioned is possible. More than this organised tours are conducted from far off Places upto Lucknow for Yagjna karyas and Bhagavata Saptahas for week long stays at Naimisha which provides unique spiritual solace and fulfillment. Hardly 5 km from Naimisha is Gomati River known as Dhouta-paapa and Sita kunda Tirthas too, where Devi Janaki was bathing getting ready for Ashwamedha Yagnas!

100) Mathura : Puranas signify the Uniqueness of Mathura which is called with varying names like Madhupatra, Madhupuri, Mathura or Madhura as this was described in Itihasas was rid of the torments by Madhu Daitya by Shatrughna the younger brother of Lord Shri Rama of Ramayana and more so as the Sacred Place of Bhagavan Krishna. Varaha Purana describes: *Na vidyate cha Patale nantirikshe na maanushe, Samaanam Mathurayaahi priyam mama Vasundhare/ Saa ramyaa cha sushastaa cha janmabhumistathaa mama/* (There is no other more beloved Tirtha like Mathura for me even better than those in Patala, Antariksha or Bhuloka) *Maha maghyam Prayage tu yat phalam labhate Narah, Tat phalam labhate Devi Madhuraayaam dine dine/* ( The same fruitful results that one could reap at Prayaga the Sangama Place of Three Holy Rivers of Ganga-Jamuna-Saraswati on Magha Month's Pournami is normally available each day at Mathura) *Purna Varha sahasram tu Varanasyaam hi yat phalam, Tat phala labhate Devi Madhraayaam kshanamna hi/* (Residing thousand years at Kasi is considered as fruitful as a 'Kshana' or a moment at Mathura). Similarly, the visit to Pushkara Tirtha and stay there on

Kartika Pournami is indeed fruitful and that would bless a person to accomplish with Mathura Yatra. Vishnu Purana also describes that snana and darshana of Mathura Krishna on Janmashtami, Yama Dwiteeya, and Jyeshtha Shukla Dwadashi are considered to be of great consequence. Vajramandali has twelve Sacred 'Vanas' viz. Madhuvana, Kumudavana, Kamyakavana, Bahula vana, Bhadravana, Swadivavana, Shrivana, Mahavana, Lohajinghvana, Bilvavana, Bhandiravana, and the most popular Brindavana. While each of these Vanas have their own significance, indeed Brindavana is of utmost prominence. Padma Purana underlines the special status of Brindavana: *Guhyad guhyatamam ramyam madhyam Brindaavanam Bhuvi, Aksharam Paramanandam Govindasthaanamavyayam/* (Brindavana on Earth indeed is the body of Bhagavan Srikrishna itself and is seat full of joy and even the touch of the dust would pave the way for salvation. When asked about the way to attainukti, Bhagavan Krishna smilingly replied that let 'Vraja raja' or the dust from Vraja Bhumi may fall on your head! The old name of Mathura was Madhuvana where in the days of yore Swayambhu Manu's grandson Dhruva who sparks on the sky as a Star was directed by Narada Muni to perform severe Tapasya stating *Punyam Madhuvanam yatra saannidhyam nityadaa Hareyh!* and Bhagavan Vishnu blessed him to attain stardom! Madhura on its banks flows Yamuna River and as many as twenty four main 'ghats' are spread out like Vishrama Ghat, Prayaga ghat, Kankhala ghat, Bindu ghat, Bangali ghat, Surya ghat, Chintamani ghat, Dhruva ghat, Rishi ghat, Moksha ghat, Koti ghat, Brahma ghat, Ganesa ghat, Manasa ghat, Dashashwamedha ghat, Chakra tirtha ghat, Krishna ganga ghat, Soma tirtha ghat, Brahma loka ghat, Ghantaabharana ghat, Dharapatana ghat, Sangama Tirtha ghat, Nava Tirtha ghat, and Asikunda ghat Each of these Ghats has an episode to describe such as Vishrama ghat where Krishna and Balarama rested for a while King Kamsa was killed; Asikunda Ghat is renowned as Varaha Kshetra and so on. On all the four sides of Mathura are four Shiva Mandiras viz. Bhuteshwara in the Western side, Pippaleswar on the Eastern side, Rangeswar on the Southern side and on the Northern side is Gokarneshwara. *Dwarakaa - dhweshwara* is the most well known Mandir. Besides the other Mandirs are Gatathama Narayana, Vaaraaha, and Govinda Mandirs. Mathura Parikrama is applauded in Varaha Purana: *Mathuraam samanuprapya yastu kuryaat Pradakshinam, Pradakshini kruta tena Sapta Dwipa Vasundhara/* (Those who perform parikramas of Mathura are stated to have done so around Sapta Dwipas from Vasundhara/ Earth).

99. Brindavana: About 8 km from Mathura is Brindavan comfortably reachable by motor and on way one could see Gita Mandir. Many perform Parikrama to Brindavan daily too. Brahma Vaivarta Purana details the origin of Brindavan that in the Satya Yuga King Kedar's daughter Brinda performed intense Tapasya to attain Krishna Bhagavan [ mortal Krishna was an Incarnation in Dwapara Yuga] and Bhagavan blessed Brinda with his darshan and Brinda Devi was the principal figure in the Rasa Leelas stated to have been performed with Brinda at Brindavana by Lord Krishna the Avatar in Dwapara Yuga. The significant places on the banks of the Sacred Yamuna River are Kaliya Hrada at Nandanavana where Bala Krishna punished Kaliya serpent; Yugala ghat where Yugala Kishora Mandir with Radha Krishna Idols are present; Radhavallabha Mandir with swaambhu Shalagrama shila, Shri Ranga Mandir, Govinda Deva Mandir, Shahji Mandir, Biharji Mandir of Thakur, Krishna Balarama Mandir (Iscon), Madan Mohan (Chaitanya Maha Prabhu) Mandir, Garud Govinda Mandir, Jaipur Mandir, Radha Damodar Mandir, Radha Ras Bihari Ashta Sakhi Mandir, Kesi Ghat where Krishna decimated Kesi demon etc. Not far from Brindavan are Gokula, Mahavana, Baladeva, Nandagaon and Govardhana some 10 km from Mathura. Vraja Desha Parikrama stated to be of 84 kms of distance with a duration of 16 days would witness among others Madhuvan, Talavan, Kumudvan, Danvaktra dhwamsa, Vallabhavana, Radhakund, Govardhana, Paraseeli which Vallabhacharya followers consider this Place as Brindavana, Kamavana, etc.

100) Tiruvaayippadi: This is a Shri Krishna Leela sthala. Lord Nava Mohana Krishna along with Devis Rukmini and Satyabhama are visualised as standing together viewing Nanda Deva.. Alwar Vishnuchitta and Goda Devi had their divya darshana

(101) Badarika Dhaam: *Narayanah prabhu Vishnuh shaswatah Purushottamah, Tyasyaatishasah Punyaam vishaalaam Badarimanu, Ashramah khyayate punyastrishu lokeshu vishrutah, Anyatra maranaan muktih sadharma vidhipurvakaat, Badari darshanaadeva muktih pumsaam kare khyaatam/* (Maha Bharata) ( Bhagavan Narayana who is eternal and all pervasive Purushottama and is stated to get concentrated in Badari without exaggeration as its Ashramas are stated to be seats of Maha Punya of universal renown; deaths in all other Punya Kshetras are known for bestowing mukti to any human being especially on practice of one's own Varna dharma but Badari Darshana in itself would suffice to achieve the goal.) There is a detailed chapter on Badarikaashrama Mahatmya in Skanda Purana of Vaikuntha khanda. *Harati hridaya bandham karma paashaadimtaanaam virati padamucchairalpa janmaika bhaajaam/ Janana marana karma shranta vishraanta hetu trijagati manujnaanaam durlabhah satprasangah/* ( In all the Trilokas 'Satsanga' or Ideal Company of persons of virtue is rare to secure, but once they are fortunate then their KarmaPaasha or shackles of Samsara would free their hard knots of heart get loosened and facilitate the hard screws of the ever rotational wheel of births and deaths get released) This being so, the Parama Tirtha Badari is replete with Maha Sadhus as that indeed is the Seat of Narayana and their 'sahavasa' is certain to get the process of snapping the shackles referred above. Maha Bharata also describes similarly: *Yatra Narayano Devah Paramatmaa sanatanah, Tatra kurustram jagat sarvam tirthonyaayatanaani cha/ Tat punyam paramam Brahma tat Teertham tat tapovanam, Tat param pramam Devam bhutaanaam Parameshwaram/ Shaswatam paramam chaiva dhaataaram paramam padam, Yam vidaditwaa na shochanti vidwamsah shastra drushtyah/* ( Where Narayana Himself is, that indeed is the Parama Tirtha or the Outstanding Place in the entire Universe and Tapovana where Parabrahma-Paratpara-Parameshwara who is the Ultimate Spot totally devoid of anguish, anxiety, and everlasting bliss as strongly believed with conviction by Shastra Vettas). Varaha Purana states: *Shri Badarashramam punyam yatra yatra sthitah smaret, Sa yaati Vaishnavam snaanam puraraavritta varjitah/* (From any where any person merely thinks of Badari Kshetra which is the unique Vaishnava sthaana would be redeemed of punarjanma) Reveting back to Badari khand of Skaanda Purana, Skanda Kumara was enlightened by Maha Deva himself that Agni Deva's curse that he would be sarva bhakshaka as the latter performed intense Tapasya after purifying himself in Ganga snana and on obtaining Vishnu darshana extolled him in a trance and Narayana replied that even on a stay for a while at Badari Kshetra would suffice to demolish patakas and due to his benevolence for sure Agni's curse as Sarva bhakshaka would be negated and further more the Tirtha to be henceforth would qualify human beings taking bath in the Agni Tirtha would also be qualified to demolish his or her patakas too. Bhavagan Narayana further assured that the Pancha Maha Patakas that normally humun beings are subjected to-not to mention of minor blemishes- would be washed off by snanas at Five Shila Swarupas of Narayana himself viz. Naradi-Naara simhi-Vaahi-Gaarudi and Markandeyi; he awarded three boons to humanity viz. to those who who stay put at any one of these Shilas; or who reside there for long; or who would perform darshana- sparsha- snaana and achamana. Besides the afore mentioned Shilas are also famed for performing snana- Narayana puja are Kapala Tirtha, Brahma Tirtha, Vasudhara Tirtha, Pancha Tirtha, Soma Tirtha, Dwasashaaditya Tirtha, Bramha kunda, Meru Tirtha, Dandapushkarini Tirtha, Ganga sangama, Dharma Kshetra and so on. Besides these Sciptures descriptions on Badari Maha Kshetra are given in Devi Bhagavata, Varahokta and so on. Hardly a few steps down the Main Entrance of Badarinath

Mandir is the Adi Shankara Temple in which Linga Murti Shiva is situated and further down is Adi Kedara Mandir; in fact, it is stated that these two be first visited before Badari Narayana beneath which is situated the Tapta Kunda or the Agni Tirtha; right nearby are the famed Pancha Shilas viz. Garuda Shila, Narada Shila, Markandeya Shila, Nara Simha Shila and Varaahi Shila. From Tapta Kunda where Yatri enjoy a refreshing bath in hot water of about 45 degree heat and then reach the most renowned **Brahma Kapala** a fairly large platform signifying Lord Brahma's skull of one of his heads relieved by Lord Shiva as he was annoyed with Brahma as the latter got attracted to the beauty of his own creation Saraswati fit to be his own daughter. It is at this Kapala Vimochana Tirtha where Brahma performed severe Tapasya for atonement of his sin that yatri profer Pitru Shraddhas. From Brahma Kunda as Ganga flows and Alaknanda takes a turn from the mountains alongside Brahma Kapala. Then there are Atri-Anasuya Tirtha, Indrapada Tirtha, Mata Mandir, Nara Narayana Parvata, Chakra Tirtha, Satpatha and so on. From Satpatha upward the mountainous terrain is extremely difficult to ascend and once one could do so would find a circular shaped Soma Tirtha might be visible but probably as a sheet of ice and its vicinity one might find if fortunate the Nara Narayana Mountain. On way from Satpatha to Badarinath occurs Alaknanda's another bank and Vasudhara which is about five miles from Badarinath is the Sangam Place of Sarastati leads to Keshava Prayag and Manaagram where Veda Vyas cave is accessible inside which Vyas scripted Eighteen Maha Puranas; a few meters away is situated Ganesh Guha /cave. *The Legendary background states that while Veda Vyasa was mentally scripting the Puranas, Ganesha agreed to write with his trunk on Taala Patras on the mutual agreement that Vyasa should pronounce in a non stop flow while Ganesha should write down in a non stop manner too simultaneously with no slips or interruptions on either side!* There is also the Muchukunda Guha or cave: here again a legendary background is attributed to it: Muchukunda of Iskshvaku Dynasty helped Devas in a tough battle with Daityas under the commandership of Lord Kartikeya; being pleased with the help, Kartikeya asked Muchukunda for a boon and the latter desired to have long rest. Kartikeya granted long rest which lasted from the then Treta Yuga end to Dwapara Yuga and blessed that Lord Vishnu would assume the Avatara as Krishna and till when he would enjoy uninterrupted sleep and would find Krishna but on opening his eyes a Daitya called Kala Yavana would be burnt to death. Exactly on these lines, Krishna, when faced with a battle with Kala Yavana and Jarasandha, misled Kalayanana to chase Krishna and led into the same mountain Cave near Dwaraka where Muchukunda was sleeping and in darkness of the cave made Kalayavana trample Muchukunda who was disturbed and with vision Kalayavana was burnt to death. On recognising Krishna Muchukunda prayed to him profusely and Krishna instructed Muchukunda to stay at the Cave near Managram near Badari Tirtha!

102) Deva Prayaga: Distance from Rishikesh to Devaprayag is 28 km. approx. possible by motor cars etc. where River Bhagirathi the Ganga flow from Gangottari and Alaknanda from Badarinath merge together and is just less than a km. ascent away from Lakshmana Jhoola at Rishikesh adjoining three mountains known as Grudrachal, Narasimhachal and Dashyaradachal. This is also called Sudarshana Kshetra popular for offering Pitru shraaddha and Pitru pinda dana. This is the straight run to Badarinath.

103) Jyotishmutt: This Vishnu Kshetra is some 103 miles away from Haridwar where Parama Purusha Bhagavan along with Parimalavalli Lakhmi is lying as shesha saayi and Devi Parvati had their darshan.

104) Shaalagraamam or popular as Muktinarayana is famed in Nepal, some 100 miles from Gorakpur where Sri Murti Bhagavan and Shri Devi Lakshmi is standing northward. This Kshetra is situated on the banks of River Gandaki and the Temple is also signified with Chakra Tirtha. This is indeed the hallowed

place where *Saalagramashilaas* are available aplenty. Brahma, Rudra and all the Devas had their divya darshanas at these magnificent banks of Gandaki.

105) Haridwar: *Swarga dwarena tattulyam Gangadwaram na samshayah, Tartaabhishekam kurvita kotitirthe samahitah/ Labhate Pundarikamcha kulam chaiva samudbhavet, Tatraika ratri vasena gosahasraphalam labhet/ Saptagange trigange cha shakraavate cha tarpayan, Devaan pitruscha vidhivat punye lokey maheeyate/ Tatah kankhale snatwaa triratiro poshito narah, Ashwamedhaapnoti Swarga lokam cha gacchati/* -Padma Purana, Adikhanda, Tirtha Yatra Parva (Haridwara is undoubtedly akin to Swarga Dwara. Those who bathe at the Ganga there are as good as taking bath at Crores of Tirthas, reaping the fruits of performing Pundarika Yajna and bringing to repute one's own Vamsha. Stayintg at Haridwar over night bestows the return of charities of Sahsra Godaana. Performing Sacred Snanas at the banks of Sapta Ganga, Tri Ganga and Shakravarta and offering Deva Pitru Tarpanas would establish themselves with name and fame in these Lokas; thereafter performing sacred baths at Kankhala and observe fasting for three successive nights shall indeed reap the benefit of Ashwamedha Yagna and after the termination of life shall take to the path of Swarga)

Haridwar is also called Haradwar, Ganga Dwaar and Mayapuri. It is stated to be a combine of Five 'Puris' viz. Mayapuri, Haridwar, Kankhal, Jwalapur and Bhimgoda. It was at this Place that Brahmarshi Narada was enlightened by Sapta Rishis by way of a Maha Bhagavata Saptaah in a large gathering of Munis and Vishnu Bhaktas. The most significant spot in Haridwar is Brahma Kunda or what is popularly known as 'Hari ki Pairi'. Besides Ganga Dwar or Brahma kund or Hari ki paidi are situated in Haridwar another four Tirthas viz. Kushavarta, Bilwakesara, Nila Parvata and Kankhal- *Gangadware Kushavarte Bilwake Nilaparvate, Snaatwa Kankhale Tirthe punarjanma na vidyate/* (Vidhi poorvaka Snaana and Darshana of Bhagawan Vishnu would certainly qualify for no rebirth and Vaikuntha Prapti at each of these.) These Five Sacred Places represent Pouranic Significance as follows: *Brahma Kunda or Hari ki Pairi or Vishnu's foot steps:* Chakravarti Bhagirath had the outstanding reputation of bringing down Ganga from Vishnu's feet in Vaikuntha down to Kailasha as absorbed in the 'Jata jootas' or Maha Deva's course head-hair pleats. As Bhagirath further did Tapsya to Maha Deva, the Holy Ganga flowed down to Earth and another King Sweta prayed to Brahma Deva to let parts of the River to flow to his Kingdom and the flows came upto Brahma Kunda. Since Bhartruhari the brother of King Vikramaditya performed penances to Maha Deva on the banks of Brahma Kund and achieved Salvation, Vikramaditya constructed steps of the Kunda famed subsequently as *Hari ki Paidi*. This has come down as the legend of the yore. *Gavu ghat:* The southern side of Brahma Kund has come to acquire the popularity of redeeming Go hatyhadhi patakas by the Sacred Bathings at the Gavu ghat. *Kushavarta ghat:* Once Dattatreya performed severe 'Tapas' on the banks of Ganga not far from Gavu ghat as he kept his belongings viz. Kusha or the mat of Kusha grass, clothing and kamandalu or the water vessel on the banks of Ganga; one fierce wind blew away these items on the banks in circular fashions and since then the Ghat was then christened as Kushavarta. 'Pitru Karyas' and 'Pinda Danas' especially on Mesha Samkranti days are stated to go a long way resulting in 'Punar janma naasti' or no rebirth again. It is at this Ghat there is the Mandir of Shravana nath. Vishnu Ghat, Maya Devi Mandir, Ganesh ghat, Narayani Shila, Niladhara and Nileshtar, Kalimandir, Chandi Mandir, Anjani Mandir being that of Hanuman's mother, and Gouri shankar Mandir are all lined up there. *Bilwakeshwar:* Not far from 'Hari ki Paidi' the Bilwakeshwara Mandir is stated to the erstwhile abode of Maha Ashwatara Naga of Patala who frequented it for Maha Deva darshan and 'snaanas' at this Tirtha is stated to bestow the Shiva Tulya status. *Kankhal:* This is the Sacred Tirtha which is the joint flow of Niladhara and Kankhal where nomad Munis used to necessarily halt and wash

off all traces of 'Khal' or wickedness. *Daksheshwar Maha Deva* Mandir assumes outstanding significance in view of its Pouranic background of Daksha Prajapatis's Brihaspati Yagna to which his daughter Sati Devi's non invitation due to his hatred to his son-in-law Parama Shiva but still she attended the Yagna and was extremely offended by her father and as such resorted to the extreme step of self immolation in 'Yogaagni' when Maha Deva went berserk with fury, totally destroyed the yagna and beheaded Daksha Prajapati. With a view to mitigate the unusual fury of Maha Deva, Vishnu had to use his Chakra and quietly sliced off Sati Devi's mortal remains and threw away into fifty one pieces which eventually came to be famed as so many Shakti Peethaas signifying Devi Sati's body parts as are venerated till date with awe and wonder. As Devas prayed to Maha Deva in torrential 'Stutis', He gradually cooled down and being a known embodiment of mercy and forgiveness, relented to the Prayers of Devas and allowed to the beheaded Daksha to replace the latter's head with that of the goat meant for sacrifice at the ruined yagna and revived the Prajapati back to life! That is why this Holy Place is of unusual Mahatmya and yattris to Haridwara and is stated that their yatra would be futile without worship at Daksheshwara Maha Deva! This Holy Tirtha attracts unprecedented yattris on Shiva Ratris for its legendary background! Besides the above Tirthas, Haridwar has other Tirthas too like Sati Kund, Kapila Sthaana, Bhima Gouda, Sapta Dhara, Satya Narayana Mandir and Veerabhadreshwar each of which has their own background! From Haridwar to approx. forty miles is situated *Shuka taal* where Vyasa Maharshi's son Shuka Deva taught Maha Bhagavata Purana within a week's time to Panadava's descendant King Parikshit on the banks of Ganga. *Devaband* or *Devivan* some 8 km near Mujaffarnagar off Shaharanpur is known for Durga Mandir where *Durga Saptashati* was recited first as believed by 'Vidwamsas' of erudition.

106) Rishikesh: Hrishik-isha or Vishnu is the Supreme Lord of senses or alternatively Rishik-isha the Over-Lord of Rishis who controls senses. One view about the origin of this Holy Tirtha is that Rishi Raibhya's severe tapasya culminated in Maha Vishnu's darshan at Kubjamrika or Mango Tree (Skanda Purana) while another legend refers to the Tapasya of Brahmana Devadutta to Maha Vishnu as he had staunch faith in the identity of Vishnu as distinct from Shiva. Meanwhile, Indra commissioned Apsarasa named Pramlocha to test the Brahmana's ability to control his senses but failed and the result was their daughter named Ruru who on realising the background of her birth pursued Tapasya to 'Shiva Keshava' and Vishnu appeared and blessed. Varaha Purana thus states: *Maamevaavehi Vishnum swam maa pashya-swaantaram mama, Awaamekena bhaavena pashyastvam siddhimaapyasi/ Purvamantara bhavena drishtavaanasi yanmama, Tena vighnobhavad yena galitam swattapo maha/* (Do realise that Vishnu and Ishwara are just the same and in order to attain siddhi or Salvation soon, this basic identity be underlined. In the past the severe tapsya performed failed and ended up in obstacles) Another legend about the origin of Rishikesh signifies that once Maha Deva was annoyed about Agni Deva's indiscretions and there were severe flames that destroyed the area; Agni atoned for his sins at this Tirtha and thus resulted in the Agni Tirtha. Popularly known as Muni Reta or the Sands of Rishis, this highly Sacred Land was also the Place where Lord Shri Rama performed penance to achieve the abilities to terminate Ravanaasura and the land marks which enabled Rama Lakshmana to cross the Holy Ganga into deep forests are still existent as hanging concrete bridges converted from jute rope bridges-popularly named as Lashman and Ram jhoolas. This Sacred Kshetra is also acclaimed as the Universal Capital of Yoga. .

107) Shri Vaikuntha or Paramapada: Shri Vaikuntha is the Ultimate and Eternal where Vaasudeva Narayana along with Maha Lakshmi lies gloriously on the Ananta Naaga. That is the Sacred most Sthala where Viraja flows, Soma Savana vriksha grows and Shriphala is tasted ever. Anantha, Garuda,

Vishvaksena and such others have their 'nithya darshana'. Alvars Saroyogi, Maha Yogi, Bhaktisaara, Shathagopa, Kulashekhara, and all the rest of Alvars performed mangalaashasana to this Vishnu dhaam!

108) Ksheera Sagara or Tiruppaalkadal: The Ocean of Milk flows among with Sapta Samudras. Ksheerabhdhi Nayaka and His Consort Kasheeraabdhhi Nayaki is in yoga nidra on the bed of Shesha right on the AmritaTirtha. Brahma, Rudra and all the Devas are enjoying their 'Saakshatkaara', while Alwar Sanths are in constant meditation.

Thus concludes the Account of the Prakhyata Vishnu Sthalas by the Glorious Alvars across Bharata!

Ashtottattara Shata Vishnu Sthaanas: *Ashtottara shatastaaneshaavirbhutam Jagatpatim, Naami Jagataameesham Naraayanamananya dheeh/* Narayana is as Vaasudeva in Vaikuntha, Sankarshana at Aamoda; Pradyumna at Pramoda, Aniruddha at Sammoda; Vishnu in Satyaloka; Padmaksha at Surya Mandala; Shesha shayi in Ksheera Saagara; Taaraka in Shweta Dwipa; Narayana at Badarikashrama; Avinashi Hari at Naimisharanya; Shalagrama at Harikshetra; Rahavendra Shri Ramabhadra at Ayodhya; Bala Krishna at Mathura; Madhusudana at Mayapuri; Bhogashayana at Kashi; Avanipat at Avantika; Yadavendra at Dwaraka; Gopijana Vallabha at Vraja Bhumi; Nandanandana at Brindavana; Govinda at Kaliya hrada; Bhava nashaka at Govardhana; Shouri at Gomanta Parvata; Jagatpati at Haridwaara; Veni Madhava at Prayaga; Gadadhara at Gaya; Vishnu at Ganga Sagara Sangama; Raghava at Chitrakuta; Rakshasa hanta at Nuanda grama; Vishwa rupa at Prabhasa; Achala Kurma at Shri Kurma; Purushottama at Neelachala Jagannaatha; Paana Nri-Simha at Simhachala; Gadapani at Tulasivana; Paapahara at Ghrita shaila; Simhaswarupa at Shwetachala; Yogananda at Dharmapuri; Andhra Nayaka at Shri Kaakula; Hiranyantaka at Ahobila; Panduranga Vithala at Pandaripura; Srinivasa Balaji at Tirumala Venkatachala; Narayana at Melkote; Nrisimha at Ghatikachala; Varadaraja Kamala lochana at Kanchipura; Yathotkari at Shiva Kaanchi; in Kanchi itself there are as many as eighteen Vishnu Swarupas; Vijaya Raghava at Grudhra Sarovara thata; Veeraraghava at Vikshaaranyana; Tangashayi at Totadri; Gajarti nashaka at Gajasthala; Maha Bali at Balipura; Jagatpati at Bhakti saara; Maha Varaha at Shri Mushna; Padmalochana at Mahindra; Ranga natha at Sriranga; Janaki vallabha at Shridhama; Saranatha at Sara Kshetra; Harachapa bhanjaka at Khandana; Purna at Shrinivasa Sthala; Suvarna at Swarna Mandira; Maha Vishnu at Vyaghrapuri; Bhakti daata at Bhakti sthaana; Shanta Murti at Shweta hrada; Bharga at Bhargava Sthala; Madhava at Vaikuntha; Bhakta sakha at Purushottama; Sudarshana at Chakra Tirtha; Chakrapani at Kumbhakona; Sharangadhara at Bhutapuri; Gajartihara at Kapisthala; Govinda at Chitrakuta; Anuttama at Uttama; Padmalochana at Shwetachala; Parabrahma at Parthasthala; Madhusudana at Krishna koti; Mahananda at Nandapuri, Vrishaashraya at Vriddhapuri; Asanga at Sangamagrama; Shri Sharana at Sharanya; Jagatpati Gopala at Dakshina Dwaraka; Maha Simha at Simha Kshetra; Mallari at Manimandapa; Nibidakara at Nibida; Jagadishwara at Dhanushkoti; Kalamegha at Mouhura; Sundara at Madurai; Parama Swami at Vrishabhachala; Shri Natha at Varagna; Ramapriya at Kuruka; Goshthipati at Goshthipura; Darbha shayi at Darbha shayana; Shouri at Dhanvi Mangala; Baladhya at Bhramara sthala; Purna at Kurangapura; Srikrishna at Vata sthala; Achyuta at Kshudra Nati pranta and Padmanabha at Anantapura. It is firmly believed that among the above Kshetras, Bhagavan's Vighras were self generated at Eight Places viz. Sriranga, Srimusha, Venkatashala, Shalagrama of Hari Kshetra, Naimisha, Thotadri, Pushkara and Badarikashrama.

Ashtottata Shata Divya / Vishnu Kshetras: It is likely that quite a few of the following Kshetras are repeats of the above list and hence clarification is given the new and older names are mentioned within

brackets: Kshira Sagara (Tiruppalkadal); Shriranga is near Tiruchirapalli; Koliyur or Oraiyur almost a part of Trichinapalli; Shwetagiri is Tiruvallur near Shrirangam; Dhanvinahpura near Lalgudi/ Trichinapalli with Nambi Sundararaja and Sundaravali Deities; Tiruppera/Shri Ramanagar near Tanjavor where Pupapriya Ranganathag and Ranga nayaki Lakshmi are the Deities; Karambanor or Kadabapur near Sriranga / Tiruvallarai with Purushottama and Purva Devi are the Deities; Tanjaimamani koil (Sharanya Nagar) near Tanjavur with three Temples of Neela megha Bhagavan and Arunakamala Nayaki; Nrisimha and Tajjai nayaki Lakshmi; and Manikundala Perumal and Ambujavali; Tirukkandiyur ( Khanda Nagar) near Shartanuya Nagar with Harashapa vimochana Narayana and Devi Lakshmi; Cuddalore (Sangama Pura) and Tituvayyar where Vishnu and Kamkala Valli Lakshmi are present; Kapisthala near Cuddalore and River Kaveri from where Gajendra Varada and Lakshmi hastened to rescue Gajendra to Gandaki River near Bihar and thus there is a Gajendra Pushkarini in place here; this is also place where Hanuman had Sakshat kar of Shri Rama as Bhagavan Vishnu himself!; Pullabhudamokudi (Grudhra Tirtha) where Jatayu realised Rama as ‘Sesha shaayi’ Narayana himself; Adanor or Gopuri where Kamadhenu and Alwar Shriparakaal realised Rama as Maha Vishnu; Tirukkandnadai (Kumbakonam); Tiruvinagaram (Akashnagar); Tirunaaraiyur (Sugandhagiri); Tiruccherai (Saara Kshetra); Nandan Koel; Tiruvelliyankudi (Bhargavapuri); Tirullundur (Rathapaata Shtala); Tiruvandilurn (Indrapura); Shirupuliyur (Vyaghrapura); Tiruvannampuram ( Kanvapura); Tirunnamangai (Krishna Mangalapura); Tirukkannankudi ( Krishna Kuti); Tiruvannagai (Nagapattanam); Kalahasti; Tiruvali Tirunagari (Parirambhapura); Manimadakkoyil (Tirunagur-Nagapuri) ; Vaikunthavinnagaram ( Vaikunthapura); Arimeyavinnagaram (Nabhapura); Vanpurushottamam (Purushottama); Semponseya Koil (Swarna Mandira); Tiruttontriyambalam (Lakshmi Ranganatha); Tirumanikkutam (Manikuta); Tirukkalam padi (Talavana); Tiruddevanaar Tokai ( Keelai –cchalai Devanagara); Tiruvellakkullam ( Shwetahrada or AppanKoil); Parthanpalli( Parthasthala); Talaicchankaamadim-Tallaicchenkadu ( Shankhapura); Tallai Tiruchitra Kutam (Chidambaram); Tirukkundal (Madurai);Tiru mohur (Maahur); Vrishabhadri or Alagar Koil; Tirummeyyam (Satyagiri); Tirukkoshthiyur ( Goshithi pura);Tiruppullani (Darbha shayana);Tiruttankalore (Sheetodyana pura); Shri Villuputtur; Totadri; Tirukkurunkudi; Tirukkurukur; Tiruvallimangalam; Shri Vaikuntham; Varagunimangai (Varaguna); Tiruppulingkudi (Chimchakuti); Tirukkalandai ( Perunguklam-Brihattadaag); Tirupperai (Shrinampura); Tirukkollur (Mahanidhipura); Tiruvananta puram ( Ananta shayanam/Trivendram); Tiruvattaru (Partashutrama Kshetra); Tiruvanparisaaram ( Ramya shtala); Tirucchankanur (Trichur); Kuttunadu or Tiruppuliyur/ Shardulanagar; Tiruvannavandur; Tiruvallavaal (Keralpura); Tirukkadittanam (Gandha nagar); Tiruvaranbalai Aranmulai (Samruddhisthala); Maruttata; Shri Mulidhama; Vidytpura; Navapura; Ateendrapura; Dehalipura; Vrindaranya Kshetra; Tinnanur; Veeksjharanya;Ghatikachala; Toyadri; Vaaraaha Kshetra; Tirunkkagmalai; Hastigiri; Tiruvekka (Yatthottakari); Ashtabhujam; Tiruttanka (Deepa prakasha); Velukkai (Kaamasiki); Uragam (Trivikrama); Neeraakaara; Kaarakam; Kaarvanam; Tirukkalvanore; Patakam(Pandava doota); Chandra chooda, Pravala varna; Pacchaivarnayurt; Parameshwara vinnagaram; Gruddhra Kshetra; Tiruvenkatam or Tirupati/ Tiruvenkatadri; Singavellukkutram; Dwaraka; Ayodhya; Naimisharanya; Mathura; Tiruvayippadi; Deva Prayaga; Jyotishpeetha; Badarikashrama; and Mukti Narayana.

#### Pradhana Devi Sthalas:

*Kanchipuretu Kamkakshi Malaye Bhramari tathaa, Keraletu Kumari saa Ambaanteshu sankthitaa/ Kara veere Maha Lakshmih Kalika Maalaveshu saa, Prayage Lalita Devi Vindhya Vindhyanivashini/ Vaaranaasyaam Vikshalakshi Gayaayam Mangalaavati,vangeshu Sundari Devi Nepale Guhyakeshwari/*

*Iti Dwadasha Rupena Samthita Bharate Shivaa, Etamsaa Darshana Deva Sarva Paapaih pramuchyate/ Ashakto darshane nityam smaret pratah samahitah, Tathaapuypasakah sarvyairaparaadhair vimuchyatey/* (Maha Bhagavati Swarupas are highly popular and worshipped by the Divya namas and the sthalas as follows: Devi Kamakshi at Kanchipura; Devi Bhramaramba at Shrishaila; Devi Kanya Kumari at the Kanyakumari Kshetra; Devi Aanarta Amba at Ambaji in Gujarat; Bhagavati Karaveera Maha Lakshmi at Kolhapuri; Bhagavati Kalika at Ujjain; Devi Lalitamba at Prayaga; and Devi Vindhyavasini at Vindhyagiri ; also renowned are Devi Vishalakshi at Varanasi; Bhagavati Mangalavati at Gaya; Devi Sundari in Bengal; and Devi Guhyeshwari in Nepal. By the darshan of these Devi Vighras, the devotees are sure to have their blemishes demolished; in the event of their inability to visit these Kshetras, thier faithful regular prayers in the early mornings should suffice to put them on to the path of realisation of the Devi's Magnificence!)

#### 51 Siddha Kshetras:

The Maha Kshetras in Bharat where darshana-pujas become possible are enumerated as follows: Kurukshetra; Badari; Narayana Kshetra or Badarikashrama; Gaya Kshetra; Purushottama / Jagannattha Kshetra; Varanasi; Varaha Kshetra near Ayodhya; Pushkara; Naimisharanya; Prabhasa Kshetra; Shookara Kshetra; Muktinath; Rishikesh; Dwaraka; Mathura; Kedara; Pampa Kshetra at Hospet; Bindusara or Siddhapur; Trina Brindavana; Dashapur/ Mandasor of Madhya Pradesh of Maha Bharata fame as also of Pashupati natha ; Ganga-Sagara Sangama; Tejovana; Vishakha Surya or Vikshapatnam; Ujjaini; Dandaka (Nasik); Manasaovara; Nanda Kshetra or Nanda Devi Parvata; Sithaasrama or Bithur near Kanpur stated to be the birthplace of Luv and Kusha, sons of Shri Rama; Kokamukha; Mandara ( Bhagalpur); Mahendra or Mandsa near Srikakulam , Andhra Pradesh famed for ancient Vasudeva Temple; Rishabha-son of Naabhi and father of Bharata after whom Bharata Desha is named ; Skanda Purana mentions of the King; Shalagrama Kshetra / Damodara Kund near Girnar, Gujarat famed for Shivaratri festival attracting lakhs of devotees to Junagad; also famed for Swami Narayan Temple; Go nishkramana; Sahyadri Mountain Range / western ghats covering the entire paschima and Dakshina seacoast of Bharata; Pandya or the Kingship of Pandyas who fought Kurukshetra of Maha Bharata fame closely connected to Madurai; Chitrauta; Gandhamadana or Rameshwar; Haridra; Brindavana; Hastinapura; Lohargula; Devashala; Kumara Kshetra (Tamil nadu and Kerala); Devadaruvana /Assam; Lingasphota related to Sage Patanjali And his School of Yoga Practice; Ayodhya; Kundina; Trikuta; and Mahishmati.

Some other Tirthas: Pancha Kedaras: Kedar nath, Amarnath, Tunganath on way from Kedarnath to Badarinath, Rudranatha from Tunganath and Kapileshwara on crossing Alaknanda there 2km hence. Sapta Badaris: Badari Narayana, Adi Badari in Urugam Village some 2 km hence Kumhara chatti also called Dhanya Badari; Bhavishya Badari,some 7km from Jyoshimutt; Yoga Badari also called Dhyana Badari at Pandukeshwara; another Adi Badari from Kailasa to Thulinga Mutt and Nrisimha Badari at Jyoshi mutt itself. Sapta Nathas: Badari natha, Kedarnatha, Amar natha, Ranga natha, Dwaraka natha, Shri Natha, Govarthana nath. Sapta Saraswatis: Suprabha at Pushkar, Kanchanakshi at Naimisha,Manorama in North Koshala, Odhavati at Kurukshetra, Surenu at Haridwar and Vimalodaka on Himalayas; Sapta Ganga: Bhagirathi, Vriddha Ganga, Kalindi, Saraswati, Kaveri, Narmada and Veni. Sapta Punya Nadis: Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Kaveri, Narmada, and Sindhu. Sapta Kshetras: Kurukshetra, Harhara Kshetra at Sonpur, Prabhasa Kshetra at Veraval, Renuka Kshetra near Mathura, Bhriku Kshetra at Broach, Gujarat; Purushottama Kshetra at PuriJagannatha andSookara Kshetra at Sorome.Pancha Sarovara: Bindu Sarovara at Siddhapur, Narayana Sarovara at Kutch, Gujarat, Pampa Sarovara in

Karnataka, Pushkara Sarovara in Rajasthan, and Manasa Sarovara in Tibet. Navaaranyas: Dandakaranya, Saindhavaranya, Pushkaraaranya, Naimisharanya, Kururaranya, Utpalaavartakaranya, Jambukaranya, Himavadaranya and Arbudaranya. Chaturdasha Prayagas: Prayagaraj, Deva Prayaga:Alaknanda-Bhagirathi; Rudra Prayaga:Alaknanda-Mandakini; Karna Prayaga:Pindara Ganga-Alalnanda;Nada Prayaga:Alaknanda-Nanda; Vishnu Prayaga:Vishnu Ganga-Alaknanda; Surya Prayaga: Alasatarangi-Mandakini; Indra Prayaga:Bhagirathi-Vyasa Ganga;Somaprayaga:Soma Nadi-Mandakini;Bhaskara Prayaga:Bhatavari-Mallahatti; Hari Prayaga: Hariganga-Bhagirathi; Gupta Prayaga: Nila ganga-Bhagirathi; Syama Prayaga: Shyama Ganga-Bhagirathi; and Keshava Prayaga: Alaknanda-Sarasvati/

## **Annexure II on Devi Kshetraas**

### Ashtottara Shata Shakti Peethas:

[Background: Brahma blessed Daksha Prajapati to beget a daughter with the ‘Amsha’ or part-manifestation of Devi Bhagavati as Devi Sati. Already Daksha got sixty daughters, ten married to Dharma, thirteen to Kashyapa Muni, twenty seven to Chandra, two to Bhuta Ganas, two to Kushashwa, six to Garuda and so on. As Sati Devi came of age, she fixed her mind on Rudra Deva and resorted to severe Tapasya. Rudra agreed to marry her, Brahma proposed formally and the marriage took place with pomp and show. Sati and Rudra shifted from Kailasa to Himalayas where Bhagavan enlightened Sati Devi on many matters of Spiritual Significance including the nuances of Mantra-Tantra-Yantra and Yoga. But meanwhile, Daksha Prajapati got increasingly jealous of Rudra Deva. At the ill-famed Daksha Yagna, Daksha denied ‘Pradhana Havis’ or the prime part of the Yagna to Rudra as per the usual practice and even as Sage Dadhichi pointed out the lacuna, the caution was ignored. Sati Devi felt that there was a mistake made by her father and insisted on attending the yagna despite Shiva’s warning and his subsequent approval with great reluctance as Nandi and Rudra Ganas accompanied her. Daksha ignored her entry at the Yagna and in fact talked disparagingly against Rudra Deva. She could not contain Daksha’s criticism of Maha Deva and having produced Yogic Fire ended herself to unite with Bhagavan. As Nandi informed Shiva of the tragedy, the latter pulled out a few hairs from his Jatajuta or the coarse knotted head- hair against a mountain and the energy so created broke the mountain into two parts, one of which having materialised Veerabhadra and another Devi Bhadra Kaali. The enraged Rudra asked them to destroy Daksha Yagna. Veerabhadra beheaded Daksha and together with Bhadra Kaali turned the Yagna into smithereens. Devi Bhagavata Purana stated that Shiva picked up the body remains of Sati Devi and performed furious Shiva Tandava to release his pent up emotions of intense love of Sati and heightened anger for Daksha; Vishnu apprehended Pralaya and used his Sudarshana Chakra to spread out the body remains of Sati and hundred and eight Shakti Peethas came into being. Veda Vyasa affirmed that worship at these Siddha Peethas or even hearing about these would destroy sins and bestow powers to the devotees concerned. Eventually, the instant fury of Shiva was cooled down by the prayers of Brahma and Devas and the ever merciful Shiva agreed to the resuscitation of Daksha by fixing the Goat-head of the Sacrificial animal. The ever grateful Daksha begged of Shiva’s clemency and re-organised Daksha Yagna once again with Maha Deva occupying the High-Seat at any Yagna ever since.]

Two versions of Shakti Peethas are given below, one sourced from Devi Purana by Veda Vyasa and another sourced from Maha Peetha Purana:

I)Veda Vyasa described the Siddha Peethas as mere hearing about these would destroy sins and worshipping the Deities would bestow powers. The face of Gauri is at Kasi with the name of Visalakshi;

that in Naimisharanya as Linga Dharini; Lalitha Devi at Prayaga or Allahabad; in Gandha Madan by the name of Kamuki; in Southern Manasa as Kumuda; in Northern Manasa as Viswakama or the Provider of Desires; in Gomanta by the name of Gomati; in the Mountain of Mandara as Kamacharini; in Chaitraratha by name Mandotkata; in Hastinapura as Jayanti; in Kanyakubja as Gauri; in Malaya Mountain as Rambha; in Ekambara Peetha as Kirtimati; in Visve as Viswesvari; in Pushkara as Puruhuta; in Kedara Peetha as Sanmarga dayani; as Manda at the top of Himalayas; as Bhadrakarnika at Gokarna; as Bhavani at Sthanesvara; as Bilvapatrika at Bilvake; at Madhavi at Srisaila; Bhadra in Bhadresvara; Jara on Varaha Saila; as Kamala at Kamalaya; as Rudrani at Rudrakoti; Kali in Kalanjira; Maha Devi in Salagrama; Jayapriya at Sivalingam; Kapila at Mahalingam; as Muktesvari at Makota; as Kumari in Mayapuri; as Lalitambika at Sanatana; at Mangala at Gaya Kshetra; as Vimala at Puroshottama; as Utpalakshi at Sahasraksha; Mahotpala at Hiranksha; Amoghakshi at Vipasa River; Patala at Pundravardhana; Narayani as Suparsva; Rudra Sundari at Trikuta; Vipula Devi in Vipula; as Kalyani in Malayachala; Ekavira in Shyadri; Chandrika in Harischandra; Ramana in Ramatheertha; as Mrigavati at Yamuna; as Kotini at Kota Theertha; Sugandha at Mandhavadana; Trisandhya at Godavari; Rati Priya at Gandharva; Subhananda in Sivakundam; Nandini at Devika thata; Rukmini in Dvaravati, Radha at Brindavana; Devaki in Mathura; Paramesvari in Patala; Sita in Chitrakuta; Vindhyadhipasini in Vindhya Range; Maha Lakshmi at Karavira; Uma Devi in Vinayaka; Arogya in Vaidyanatha; Mahesvari in Mahakala; as Abhaya in all the Usna Thirthas; Nitamba in Vidhua mountain; Mandavi in Mandavya; Svaha in Mahesvari pura; Prachanda in Chagalanda; Chandika at Amarakantaka; Vararoha in Somesvara; Pushkaravati in Prabhasa; Devamata in Sarasvati; Paravara in Samudra thata; Mahabhaga in Mahalaya; Pingalesvari in Payosni; Simhika in Kritasoucha; Atisankari in Karthika; Lola in Utpalavartaka; Subhadra in Sona Sangam; Lakshmi at Siddhavana; Ananga in Bharatashrama; Visvamukhi in Jalandhara; Tara in Kishkindhya; Pushti in Devadaru Vana; Medha in Kashmira Mandala; Bhima in Himadri; Tusti in Visvesvara Kshetra; Suddhi in Kapalamochana; Mata in Karavarohana; Dhara in Sankhodhara; Dhriti in Pindaraka; Kala in Chandrabhaga River; Sivadharani in Acchoda; Amrita in Vena and as Urvashi in Vadari; also as Medicines in Uttarakuru; as Kuskodaka in Kusadwipa; as Manmatha at Hemakuta; as Satyavadini in Kumuda; as Vandaniya in Asvaththa; as Nidhi Vaisravanalaya; as Gayatri in the mouth of Vedas; as Parvathi near to Siva; Indrani in Devaloka; Sarasvati in the face of Brahma; Prabha in Solar disc; as Vaishnavi in Matrikas; Arundhati among Satis or the chaste women; Tilottama among Ramas; Maha Devi in the form of Great Intelligence or 'Samvid'; Bhramakala in the hearts of the embodied beings. Veda Vyasa told King Janamejaya that even if one recited the names of the hundred and eight Devis, the person concerned would secure immense peace of mind and of course if one visited and worshipped the Deities-at least as many as possible- he or she would attain bliss. The aftermath of Devi Sati's yogic immolation, Sadasiva's unleashed anger on Daksha and the stormy events that ensued witnessed an awful era of sorrow and aimless existence. Sadasiva went into severe Tapasya and Devas lost their usual splendour. That was the time when Danavas gained an upper hand and their Chief Tarakasura who performed rigorous penance to Lord Brahma secured a tricky boon from him of invincibility except from Sadasiva's son, knowing well that Lord Siva was upset by His consort Sati Devi's yogic end and little possibility of Sadasiva's re-marriage and begetting a child even in the distant future! Out of sheer desperation, Devas approached Maha Vishnu for help.

II) The facts about the Shakti Peethas as given in Maha Peetha Purana in fuller detail with Place-Organ/Ornament-Embodiment name of Devi and name of Maha Bhairava are: 1) Chandanwadi to Amarnath in J& K- Throat-Maha Maya-Trisandheswara 2) Attahas village of Dakshindihi, Bardhaman

near Katwa in West Bengal- Left Arm- Lips-Phullara Devi-Vishweshwari 3) Bahula on the banks of Ajay River at Ketugram near Katwa, Burdwan in West Bengal-Left arm-Bahula Devi-Bhiruk Bhairava 4) Bakreshwar on the banks of Paap hara River, District Bhirbhum near Dubrajpur Railway Station, West Bengal-Bhrikuti or the middle part of Eye Brows-Mahishasura Mardini-Vakranath 5) Bhairava Parvat, near Kshipra River in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh-Upper Lip- Devi Avanti-Lambakana Bhairava 6) Bhavanipur Union at Karatoya tata, 28km from Sherpur, Bogra Dist, Bangladesha-Left anklet ornament- Arpana Devi-Vamana Bhairava 7) Gandaki, Pokra, Muktinatha Mandir, Nepal- Body Part temple on fore head-Gandaki Chandi Devi-Chakrapani Bhairava 8) Saptashringi Mandir at Vani in Nasik, Maharashtra- both chins-Bhramari Devi-Vikritaksha Bhairava 9) Hingula in Southern Baluchistan, some 125 km towards North West from Karachi, Pakistan-Brahma randhra of Sati Devi's head- Devi Kattari-Bhimalochana Bhairava 10) Jayanti at Nartiang village in Jaintiya Hills Dt., locally popular as Nartiang Durga Temple in Meghalaya-Left thigh-Devi Jayanti-Kramadishwar Bhairava 11) Jessoreshwari at Ishwaripur, Shyamnagar in Bangladesh-Palms of hands and soles of the feet-Devi Jessoreshwari-Chanda Bhairava 12) Jwalaji, Kangra, Himachal Pradesh-Tongue-Devi Siddhida (Ambika)-Unmatta Bhairava-13) Kalighat, Kolkata, West Bengal-Right toes-Devi Kalika-Nakuleshwar Bhairava 14) Kalmadhava on the banks of Shon River in a cave over hills near Amarakantak, Madhya Pradesh-Left buttock-Kali Devi-Asitanga Bhairava 15) Kamgiri, Kamakhya in Neelachala hills near Guwahati in Assam-genitals-Devi Kamakhya-Unmaada Bhairava 16) Kankali tala on Kopai River banks north east of Bolpur Station in Birbhum Dt; and locally known as Kankaleshwari Mandir, in West Bengal-Bone is the part of body fallen-Devi Devagarbha-Ruru Bhairava 17) Kanyashram Balambika Bhagavati Temple in Kanyakumari of Tamilnadu / also presumed to be in Chittagong, Bangladesh- back the body part-Devi Sharvani-Nimisha Bhairava 18) Karnat, Kangra, Himachal Pradesh- both ears- Devi Jaya Durga-Abhiru Bhairava 19) Kiteetkona village, Lalbagh Court Rd Station, Murshidabad Dt. West Bengal-Ornament of Kireeta or Crown-Devi Vimla-Sanvart Bhairava 20) Anandamani Temple at Ratnavali on the banks of Ratnakar River at Khanakul-Krishna nagar, Hoogly Dt. West Bengal-Right shoulder-Devi Kumari- Shiva Bhairava 21) Bhramari Devi Temple in Jalpaiguri near Boda Village on the banks of Teesta or Tri-Shrota or the Sangam of three water flows, West Bengal-Left leg- Devi Bhramari-Ambara Bhairava 22) Manas under Tibet at the foot of Mount Kailash in the Lake Manasarovara-Tibet-Right hand-Devi Dakshayani- Amara Bhairava 23) Manibandh at Gayatri hills near Pushkar, Rajasthan-Sati Devi's bracelet ornaments fell off there and the Devi's specific name is Devi Gayatri and Sarvanad Bhairava is Maha Deva's specific name 24) Mithila near Janakpur railway station on the Indian border of Nepal-Left shoulder- Devi Uma-Mahodara Bhairava 25) Nainativu/Manipallavaram, Northern Province of Sri Lanka-Devi's anklets-Indrakshi/ Nagapooshani/ Bhuvaneshwari worshipped by Indra, Rama and Ravana too, besides Garuda and Naga devas too-Rakshasheswar/Nayanair Bhairava 26) Nalhati/ Nalateshwari Temple, Birhum Dt. West Bengal-body part fallen being the Devi Sati's vocal chord-Devi's name is Kalika Devi- Yogesh Bhairava 27) Guhyeshwari Temple, near Pashupatinath Temple, Kathmandu, Nepal- both the knees-Devi Maha shira- Kapali Bhairava 28) On Chandranatha hill in the famed Chandranatha Temple in Chittagong Dt. Bangladesh- Right arm-Devi Bhavani-Chandrashekhara Bhairava 29) Panchasagara near Hardwar, Uttarakhand-Lower teeth-Devi Varahi-Maharudra Bhairava 30) Prabhasa Kshetra near Veraval and Somnatha Mandir, Gujarat-Stomach- Devi Chandrabhaga- Vakratunda Bhairava 31) Prayag near Sangam at Alhabad, Uttar Pradesh- Finger is the body part fallen-Devi Lalita-Bhava Bhairava 32) Kurukshetra toen or Thaneshwar /Staneshwar, Haryana-Ankle bone, Savitri / Bhadrakali Devi-Sthanu Bhairava 33) Ramgiri at Chitrakuta on Jhansi-Manikpur Railway Line, Uttar Pradesh- right breast-Devi Shivani-Chanda Bhairava 34) Saintiya's Nandikeshwari Temple under a banyan tree, Birbhum Dt. West Bengal- necklace-

Devi Nandini-Nandikeshwara Bhairava 35) Kotilingeshwar Temple on the banks of Godavari River, near Rajamundry, Andhra Pradesh- cheeks- Rakini Devi / Vishweswari- Vatsnabh / Dandapani Bhairava 36) Shivaharakaraya near Sukkur station from Karachi, Pakistan-Eyes-Mahishasura mardini-Krodhish Bhairava 37) Shondesh at source point of Narmada River in Amarantak, Madhya Pradesh- Right buttock-Narmada Devi- Bhadrasena Bhairava- 38) Shri Parvat, near Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir or alternatively believed as Srishailam on Shiva Parvat hills, Karnool Dt. Andhra Pradesh-Right anklet ornament- Devi Sundari- Sunderanada Bhairava 39) Shri Shail, Dakshina surma near Gotatkar, Sylhet Town, Bangladesh- neck got dropped- Devi's name Maha Lakshmi- Sambaranand Bhairava 40) Shuchi, Shuchindram Temple near Kanyakumari, Tamilnadu- Upper teeth- Devi Narayani-Sanhara Bhairava 41) Sugandha, Shikarpur, Barisal town on the banks of Sonda river, Bangladesh- nose- Sugandha Devi- Trayambika Bhairava 42) Tripura Sundari Temple at Udaipur, Tripura- Right leg- Tripura Sundari- Tripuresha Bhairava 43) Ujaani near Guskara, Burdwan Dt. West Bengal- Right wrist- Devi Mangala Chandika- Kapilambara Bhairava 44) Varanasi at Manikarnika Ghat on the banks of Ganga- Ear ring- Devi Vishalaakshi / Manikarni- Kalabhairava 45) Vibhash, Purba Medinipur, West Bengal-Left ankle- Devi Kapalini (Bhima rupa)- Sarvananda Bhairava 46) Virat near Bhratpur, Rajasthan- left toe- Devi Ambika- Amriseswar Bhairava 47) Bhuteswar Mahadev Temple, Katyayani Peeth, Brindavan, Uttar Pradesh- Hair ringlets- Devi Uma- Bhutesha Bhairava 48) Jalandhar's Devi Talaab, Punjab- Left breast- Tripuramalini- Bhutesha Bhairava 49) Baidyanath dhaam, Jarkhand- Heart- Jaya Durga- Baidyanatha bhairava 50) Puri, Biraja in Jagannatha Temple, Odisha- navel- Bimala Devi-Jagannaath Bhairava 51) Burdwan, West Bengal-Great toe- Jugaadya- Kshera Kandaka Bhairava.]

135) Ashtottara Shata Shakti Tirtha Kshetras: *Ashtottaram cha Tirthaanaam shatametaduhaahritam, yah pattecchrunuyaad vaapi sarva paapaih pramuchyate/ Yesu Tirtheshuyah kritwaa snaanam pashyati maam narah sarva paapa vinurmuktah kalpam Shiva pure vaset/* ( Following are 108 Shakti Kshetras which are read or heard about by itself would reduce the accounts of blemishes committed. Those who take a clean bath with mind of purity and of conscience as followed by 'darshan' of the Devi with varied names should indeed dismantle the heaps of sins.)

Bhagavati Shakti with different names and varied Kshetras be worshipped as under: 1) Devi Vishalaakshi at Kasi; 2) Devi Lingadharini at Naimisharanya 3) Devi Lalitha at Prayaga; 4) Devi Kamakshi at Gandhamaadana Parvata; 5) Devi Kumuda at Manasarovara; 6) Devi Vishwakaaya at Ambar or Aamer; 7) Gomati at Gomanta Parvata; 8) Devi Kamacharini at Mandarachala; 9) Devi Madotkata at Chitrarathavana; 10) Devi Jayanti at Hastinapura; 11) Devi Gauri at Kanyakubja; 12) Devi Rambha at Malayachala; 13) Devi Kirtimati at Ekambara Kshetra; 14) Devi Vishveshwari at Vishra; 15) Devi Puruhuta at Pushkara; 16) Devi Margadayani at Kedara; 17) Devi Nanda at Himachala; 18) Devi Bhadrakarnika at Gokarna; 19) Devi Bhavani at Thaneshwar; 20) Devi Bilwapatrika at Bilwaka; 21) Devi Madhavi at Srishaila; 22) Devi Bhadra at Bhadrashwara; 23) Devi Jaya at Varaahashaila; 24) Devi Kamala at Kamalaalaya or Tituvayur; 25) Devi Rudrani at Rudrakoti; 26) Devi Kaali at Kaalanjar; 27) Devi Kapila at Mahalinga; 28) Devi Mukuteshwari at Markota; 29) Devi Mahadevi at Shalagrama; 30) Devi Jajapriya at Shiva Linga; 31) Devi Kumari at Mayapuri or Haridwar; 32) Devi Lalitha Santana Kshetra; 33) Devi Utpalaakshi at Sahasraaksa; 34) Devi Mahotपाला at Kamalaksha; 35) Devi Mangala at Gangaatata; 36) Devi Vimala at Purushottama Kshetra; 37) Devi Amoghaakshi at Vipasha on the banks of Vyasa River; 38) Devi Paatala at Pundravardhana; 39) Devi Narayani at Supaarshwa; 40) Devi Bhadrasundari at Vikuta; 41) Devi Vipuleshwari at Vipula; 42) Devi Kalyani at Malayachala; 43) Devi Kotavi at Koti Tirtha; 44) Devi Sugandha at Madhava Vana; 45) Devi Trisandhya at Kubjaamraka or Rrshiksha; 46)

Devi Rati Priya at Ganga dwaara or Haridwaara; 47) Devi Sunanda at Shivakunda; 48) Devi Nandini at Devikaa Tata; 49) Devi Rukmini at Dwaraka; 50) Devi Radha at Brindavana; 51) Devi Devika at Mathura; 52) Devi Parameswari at Paatala; 53) Devi Sita at Chitrakuta; 54) Devi Vindhyaavaasini at Vindhyaachala; 55) Devi Ekavira at Sahyanchala; 56) Devi Chandrika at Harischandrapura; 57) Devi Ramana at Rama Tirtha; 58) Devi Mrigaavati at banks of Yamunaa ; 59) Devi Maha Lakshmi at Karaveera or Kolhapuri; 60) Devi Uma Devi at Vinayaka Kshetra 61) Devi Aroga at Vaidyanath; 62) Devi Maheshwari at Maha Kaala; 63) Devi Abhaya at Ushna Tirtha; 64) Devi Amrita at Vindhya kandaara; 65) Devi Mandavi at Mandukya; 66) Devi Swaha at Maheshwarapur or Maahishmati; 67) Devi Prachanda at Chhagalanda; 68) Devi Chandika at Makaranda; 69) Devi Vararooha at Someshwara; 70) Devi Pushkaraavati at Prabhasa Kshetra; 71) Devi Deva Maata at Saraswati Samudra Sangama; 72) Devi Maha Bhaga at Mahalaya; 73) Devi Pingaleshwari at the banks of Payoshni River; 74) Devi Simhika at Krita shoucha; 75) Devi Yashaskari in Kartikeya Kshetra; 76) Devi Lola at Utpalavarta; 77) Devi Subhadra at Shona-Ganga Sagama; 78) Devi Mataa Lakshmi at Siddapur; 79) Devi Anjana at Bhrataashrama; 80) Devi Vishwamukhi at Jalandhar; 81) Devi Tara at Kishkindha Parvat; 82) Devi Pushti at Devadaru vana; 83) Devi Medha in Kashmira; 84) Devi Bhimadevi at Himadri; 85) Devi Pushti at Vishweshwara; 86) Devi Shuddhi at Kapala mochan; 87) Devi Maata at Kayavarohana; 88) Devi Dhvani at Shankodwaar; 89) Devi Dhriti at Pindaraka; 90) Devi Kaala at the banks of River Chandrabhaga; 91) Devi Shivakaarni at Acchoda; 92) Devi Amrita at Venna river bank; 93) Devi Urvashi at Badari vana; 94) Devi Oshadhi at Uttarakuru; 95) Devi Krushodaka at Kusha dvipa; 96) Devi Manyatha at Hemakuta Parvata; 97) Devi Satyavadini at Makuta; 98) Devi Vandaniya at Ashvattha; 99) Devi Nidhi at Alkapuri of Kubera; 100) Devi Gayatri in Vedas; 101) Devi Parvati in Shiva Saannidhya; 102) Devi Indrani in Indra Loka; 103) Devi Saraswati in Brahma Mukha; 104) Devi Prabha in Surya Loka; 105) Devi Vaishnavi among Matrukas; 106) Devi Arundhati among Pativratas; 107) Devi Tilottama among Apсарas; and 108) Devi Brahma kalaa Deha dharini Shakti Swarupas.

### **Annexure III on Purusha and Prakriti as reconciled**

Purusha and Prakriti as reconciled by Parama Tatwas

VDNRAO

Hindu Thought asserts that The Unknown Almighty manifested the ‘Anda Chatustaya’ or the Four-folded ‘Brahmanda’ viz. Shakti, Maya, Prakriti and Prithvi - or the Supreme Energy, the Ignorance/ Make Belief, the Nature and Earth. The entire Universe, replete with that Almighty is all-resplendent in Abstract Form, yet in Entirety. He is on top of the Parama Tatwas; the Shuddha Tatwas or the Pure Elements viz. Paramatma and Maha Shakti and the Parama Tatwas representing the ‘Swa swarupas’ or the Forms of Individual Selves as the Unique Integrated Maha Tatwa. The Swa-Swarupas are representative broadly of Chid-Ananda-Ichaa-Jnaana-Kriya the Pancha Maha Shaktis. The Collective Form is named ‘Atyanta Chamatkaara Swaswarupa’ or the extremely astonishing Reflection of the Avyakta- Shaaswata- Vishnu-Ananta-Aja-Avyaya or the Unknown-Eversasting-All Pervading-Self Manifested and Unending Supreme and there beyond the Maha Tatwa. Now, the Tatwas in depth: Niyati Tatwa relates to where a Purusha resides specifically. Kaala Tatwa specifies the age, maturity of mind and characteristics , sex, and environment and such. Raaga Tatwa of the Purusha concerned, attachment accessories, aspirations and desires. The Purusha seeks fulfillment of this type of material wants. Vidya Tatwa is essentially knowledge based. Indeed knowledge is limitless and as much one acquires, so much more remains. Maha

Maya obstructing the clear vision of Pure Consciousness due to 'Shad Kanchukas' or Six Layers / Coverings and 'Malaas' or defilements of 'Aanava', 'Maayiya' and 'Karma' nature, being the inner most, the interior and the outer parts of the husk that cover in three layers before obtaining the pure grain or Aantaratma the Inner Self with neither desirable nor the totally free from the stains of the pristine Self! Pancha Bhutas, Panchendriyas and Tri-Tatwas viz. Manas, Buddhi and Ahamkara total up to Prakriti. Prakriti is the totality of the 23 products, each produced from the cause and effect cycle and together Prakriti and Purusha activate the entire universe composed of 36 tatwas! From Prakriti up to Earth, creation encases 'Chaitanyam' or the Pure Consciousness by 'dehabhava' or mortal feature as concealed, just as chaff covering the food grain. This Chaitanyam is covered by Maya aided by indriyas or the sense organs or 'kalaas' to specific gross physical elements. Thus the process of Creation is composed by seven steps beginning from Paramatma-Shakti-Sadashiva - Maha Vishnu-Shuddha Vidya or the Pure Knowledge- Maya or the Make Believe and Kaala the Creativity of the Time Schedule ranging from 'kshanas' to 'kalpas'. Viginaana is a flow of Self Awareness and is conceptual only. Hinduism strongly believes that Supreme Consciousness is possible by 'sambhavopaaya' or 'icchopaaya' or as coincidental or as being desirable. It may be like the myth of a rope as a snake. But surely Maha Maya has no role in this illusion. Finally one concludes that the Self Consciousness and Supreme Consciousness are true mirror images since the former has no role in the pluses and minuses of the mortal bodies as per their panchendriyas, mind, buddhi sustained by vital force, the 'praana' and the Individual Consciousness is a mute spectator only and surely the photo image of Paramatma! Being a great sportsman, Paramatma plays hide and seek with make-belief and reality and at times he kicks up a mendicant high to great fortunes. Universal Creation, Preservation and Dissolution akin to waking, dreaming, and dreamless sleep sushupti appear in the Parameshwara Himself and on the ultimate state of the jeevatma merging into Paramatma the Supreme Himself! Just as the huge expanse of sky could never be tarnished and polluted by clouds, smoke or dust, could the acts of Maha Maya which are so mysterious and complex otherwise affect the Inner Self whose mirror image is Almighty Paramatma Himself! Each and every Being in Srishti or the Creation of the Universe is a soft target to 'sukha dukhas', 'mayaa vyamohas', 'janma-maranas' and several problems and predilections. When 'ghata gagana' or ether fills dust in a jar another ether elsewhere at another place too does not fill up with dust. Similarly some human beings might have a tragedy and death in one house but in another street another house might be enjoying a wedding party. Thus 'sukha dukhas' are dispersed; Paramatma is totally unaffected by Maha Maya and in fact He created her himself to assume the Task of Srishti-Sthiti-Samhaara repetitively. Having dismissed the above misconception, Paramatma also smashes up the 'agjnaana' that the Individual Self or the Antarama is separate from Paramatma as the former might be subjected to the pulls of panchendriyas and mind sustained by praana. The entire Universe is the amalgam of three ingredients viz. Prithivi-Prakriti and Maya and these correspond to the gross, the subtle and the most subtle. From Prithvi to Maya this Universe is full of differences. Gold which could be in varied forms and shapes like belts, bracelets or rings and similarly in other metals like silver, copper and zinc or alloys thereof. The Supreme Parameshwara is pure, ever tranquil, 'abheda' or undifferentiated, 'sama' or equable, 'sakalam' or complete, 'amritam' or ever lasting, 'satyam' or the singular manifestation of Truth, that rests in Shakti who is the appearance of natural radiance. Enlightenment is three folded to know, to seek and attain. Only these Ichha-Jnaana-Kriya Shaktis are capable of accomplishing the Akaasha Kusuma the Sky high Flower viz. Paramatma. Thus the Immortal rests and depends on Maha Shakti. Paramatma has the facility of possessing the trident of Maha Shakti viz. the 'iccha-jnaana-kriya Shaktis' with which He could bestow the Beings of Atma Darshana. Thus the Supreme Awareness sums up the concept thus: Iccha-jnaana-

kriya , the three Shaktis named as the trident versus their perfect victories of materialism and their combined manifestation of Maha Maya who further makes the merger of the Beings with Paramatma, even while the latter is totally aware that both the entities are just the same. He achieves the task of external creation of three eggs more with their infinite variety in order to make way into the external world as several subjects and objects to the process of expansion of the balance of the trident Shaktis amalgamated with two further Shaktis viz. 'Sat Chid Ananda' or the commanding power of Consciousness and that of Bliss coupled with the erstwhile Iccha-Jnaana-Kriya Shaktis this totalling five forms of Paramaatma-Shakti- Sadaashiva-Vishnu and Shuddha Vidya are together named Paramatma. The Supreme Lord makes the wheel of Shakti and declares of 'Ahmata' or the 'I am-ness' showing various things in the mirror of the Universe the Maha Maaya. This is how the wheels of Shakti groups are revolved by the Almighty as His eternal sport stating 'Ahamta' or 'Sarvaswam Ahameva'; 'It is Me' as the Universe is reflected like jars in a mirror. From me the entire Universe is derived in varied forms and feelings and essentially I alone am manifested in the bodies of all the Beings with panchandriyas and panchabutas with praana and mind besides all kinds of shades be it illumination or darkness akin to knowledge and ignorance. Besides the body and Indriyas, I create Shaktis in multi-faceted swarupas, and essentially by five principal forms with Sat-chit-ananda or the power pure consciousness and the might of bliss and so on. I am engaged in the play of the 'Srishti Sthiti Samhara'. In me the that the Universe is illuminated and I am the awakeness-dream stage-sushupti and Essence of 'Paramartha'. I am the Vishwa Rupa with hands feet and senses. Yet, even without body and Indriyas, I can see, hear sounds, breath, feel, think and move fastest. The entire Universe is my play ground and illuminate in all modes since the thread of unity ties in all beings like men and women, children , pashus , birds and inanimate beings too. Falsity besides the break of the cycle of births and deaths as also the limitations of 'kaala maana' and so on get severed even as he finds himself in the effulgence of Almighty Himself basking in the eternity of Surya! Once the physical body is destroyed then whither does he dwell especially the full force of Maya Shakti is freed for ever! Then the husk and bran of the grain of his erstwhile form has no further regermination and no further 'aanava- maayiya and karma' tarnishings and defilements. He then attains a state of pure consciousness as of the Supreme Himself! Once the gems of Supreme Vision are collected in the treasure house of one's own mystic heart, which indeed is akin to that of Mahatma's Himself , then in that state of ecstasy, the Self would tend to announce that : 'I am all and everything'! Liberation from the revelation of Maha Shakti that is basically embedded on one's own true Self is Moksha which severs the knots of ignorance. Agnana or fantasy of 'moha' or the perfect knot. This is what needs to be untied and then discover 'atma swaatantra lakshama' or the true feature of freedom of the Self. That indeed is the Ultimate Lesson. As the bonds of ignorance are slashed and liberation has dawned, then he realises that the bondage of physical body alone is the hindrance. Once the seed of life would be scorched it would not be capable of rebirth. As the body once destroyed the limitation on buddhi would be off and the Innerconsciousness merges the unique Pure Consciousness. Once an enlightened person gets the awareness that he is but an agent of whatever is being performed by him is but of Paramatma's volition only and that he was only of mere instrumental nature. The jnaani who decides to execute an action of virtue gets inspired by his Atma Jyoti or the internal illumination. The jnaani who decides to execute an action of virtue gets inspired by his Atma Jyoti or the internal illumination. This is how, the Antaratma of the concerned person of whose spiritual consummation is attained yet continues to exist, albeit with neither fear nor favour yet enjoying the sublimity and the play of divinity on the stage of the materialistic Universe! Such a semi insentient Being moves about and behaves without any normal 'deha vikaaraas' or bodily action-reaction syndromes like arrogance,

happiness at achievements, anger, lust, fear, avarice and delusion, and receipts of admiration from the onlookers and so on like a dumb and speechless one. How in an illuminated person is totally unaffected much unlike the normal embodied person. How indeed, 'mada' or conceit, 'harsha' or happiness and such human limitations could affect a person of the radiance of Atma Jnaana as he would already have had the vision of the non-dual Self! He would as well declare that He would be different as He was the all pervasive Brahman himself!! Since the person in that state of the periphery of 'atma jnaana' has no value of Brahma's worship, havana karyas, and of 'dwaita tatwa'; in that state of non duality, he has no need to worship of a secondary reality as He is Reality already. He has no need to visit Deva Mandiras. There is nothing distinct from Himself to which he has to greet, praise or worship any further! He would thus enjoin those 'bhaktas' and praise or pray to since he is already a liberated Being! To a perfect and mature 'jnaani', either his or of another's is stated as the abode of the Self. This abode comprises of 'Shat Trimshat Tatwas' or thirty six Elements. Now, the tatwas are fully equipped with the respective senses too of the physical organism to perceive any external object. Thus the Gyaani realises that one's body is the temple of the Self. In other words one's own physical body is the abode of his self consciousness which is the 'antaratma' itself. In other words the bodily temple is akin to an external temple itself! The prayer by way of japa symbolises the thirty six tatwas by way of Atma tatwa or Parama Tatwa and as prana the vital force named Prana Shakti by way of inbreathing and outbreathing and the channel of the spinal chord resulting in 'naada' the sound waves expressed as 'anaahata naada' arising from 'chakra madhyama' and its apex of the circle called 'Bindu'. In other words when the 'japa' of a mantra aimed at a certain form of deity, one's consciousness moves the vital breath in a swing of up and down movements even without one's knowledge and the resultant low sound creates ripples of spiritualism of varying degrees. Once Paramatma along with His intrinsic Shaktis is meditated to, along with incessant worship by way of abhisheka, tarpana, archana, homa karyas and so on the resultant joy is boundless. What type of worship is to be done! The reply is 'Atma Paraamasha' or self analysis! Who are the 'parivaaraas' or the worshipped attendants! These are 'Chitanya kaarana bhuta shaktis of Chid-Ananda-Icchaa-Jnaana-Kriya- and Vaibhava Swarupis along 'chakshu-rasana-vaak-ghraana-twak-shrotra indriyas'. Thus the Unity of diversity of inherent Shaktis signifies 'abheda-ananta-atma devata' or the Indivisible- Everlasting - Inner Conscience and the 'naivedya arpanas' or sacrifices are executed by maamsa-rudhiramajjaadis or one's own flesh and blood at the samsara-smashana shareera/ devaalayas or the Temples of Births and Deaths! An enlightened spiritualist who could vision the totality of the Universe as a single entity and could harness his own consciousness into that of a 'smashana' or the ultimate resting point of Beings should be able to realise his own body to be the symbol of the skeleton and drinks the essence of the Universe from his own skull with his own hands! This is the seemingly impossible but to a genuine spiritualist considers as an easy austerity as a 'Vrata'. In other words a true spiritualist needs to be able to see his own dead body as but an example of nothingness and as a non- reality or Maha Maya at the threshold of Pure Consciousness represented by Paramatma; thus an austerity in the form of a 'vrata' towards seeking the Ultimate Truth of discovering the Inner Self as the Almighty alone manifests itself in countless forms and species! ---Visiting a holy place or Tirtha yatra nobout results in punya or merit and deaths in unholy huts of chandalas would invariably transfer the Soul to narakas. This indeed the usual belief. But in what way does an already person of proven enlightenment get affected by further visiting punya kshetras? Just as a grain of rice if separated from the husk and bran would not be utilised for sprouting like other grains, the pure consciousness in the enlightened Beings when separated from their coverings viz. the six 'kanchukaas' or coverings or the offsprings of Maya Shakti around, then the pure consciousness is like Supreme Himself.. The individuals are freed from the karmik and other defilements, then there is no

reason as to why that seed would not sprout once again. The universe and its diverse objects is called by nescience or deep ignorance. The stages of a Being from the actuality or of awakeness-dream stage- sushupti or non- consciousness- and finally the pragjnatwa or the Self Awakening despite the continuance of the physical body. However 'taadaatnya' or merger is possible only after the mortal body falls off. In other words, Samsara begets Agjnana or Ignorance, 'swaatma jnaana' or the Self Awakening as a result of the removal of the six kanchukas and three malas of aanava-mayiya-karma phalas, jeevan mrityu stage might be possible when the self feels like the Supreme but 'tadaatmya' or final merger of the 'Prajnatwa' only after the body falls only. In respect of the generally ignorant persons at the critical time of death the state of destiny causes a merit or otherwise; this may be so not only for a human being but in respect of an animal, bird or reptile but to a person of constant purification of the self with the incessant practice of virtue and merit, the minute of departure would be perhaps as chosen; to such a spiritualist already surfiat with the Shiva Tatwa the moment of departure would not be the simple issue of transmigration from one self to another self as per the destiny. The Enlightened Self in him at that time of enlightenment visions the Supreme Self as a mirror image, even with or without the mortal body. Thus the embodied soul associated with the erstwhile karma and other blemishes, if any, would now not be adding further blemishes barring the past stock. Once the enlightened Self has the blessing of Paramatma to reveal Himself from mountain top as it were, that glimpse was no doubt invaluable from a distance. But the distant view is not visualised as the quintessence as all of the tatwas is not; the gradual steps reveal themselves as the mountain's elevations are crossed and clearer visions are facilitated. After experiencing the pleasures of swarga and higher lokas, the spiritualist, fallen midway on the path of yoga, returns again and again to human births to enable him to further pursue the yogic path in fits and starts. But to the extent of the practice as per the steps earlier crossed in erstwhile births would be intact. Whatever had been gained and enjoyed is a running account of the previous births too. Therefore, who- soever could make all out efforts in as short number of repeated births and deaths as least needed instead prolonging the agonies of 'adhibhouthika'-adhyaatmika-and adhidaivika- natures ie. Physical shortcomings-Psychological barriers- and Natural disasters. This is visualised in one's own heart as the substance of the all pervasive Bliss of the Supreme Learning at the feet of Paramatma Himself.