

HINDU NEWS



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Singapore's Deepavali Light Up 2017

MESSAGES

R Jayachandran

Chairman, Hindu Endowments Board

2017 has come to a close and we have paused to take stock of how this year went. At the same time we are making the necessary resolutions to roll out plans for a better 2018.

HEB administered temples continued to witness increased patronage with steady growth in demand for religious services. Our PGP Hall has become a choice venue for weddings and other community events. We are constantly looking for ways to enhance facilities at the hall and we have now put in place a system to make booking of hall facilities a seamless process.

This is also the year that we embarked on an extensive IT initiative at the temples - fully automating our temple services. . This means that devotees would be able to book and pay for prayer services and facilities at HEB temples from the comfort of their home or office. To cut down on the wait time to buy archanais and other religious services at the temples, we have introduced Point-of-Sale counters.

HEB temples have an ongoing kitchen maintenance programme which involves acquiring modern, efficient kitchen equipment to ensure that the annathanams and prasadam are prepared and served efficiently and hygienically.

The year 2018, from HEB's perspective, is an important year. Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple's Maha Samprokshanam (Maha Kumbabishegam) will be held on Sunday, 22 April 2018. In relation to the Maha Samprokshanam, the Temple is being renovated according to traditional temple practices or as per Agama Sastra. Right advisors have been engaged to do an excellent job of ensuring that the temple is renovated as prescribed in our Sastras.

We will witness a once in a century coincidence of a lunar eclipse occurring on the same day as Thaipusam which falls on 31 January 2018. It is the practice to close the temple during an eclipse and as such, we need to follow that age-old tradition despite it being Thaipusam day. HEB, together with the Sri Thendayuthapani Temple Management, will take efforts to ensure that despite the eclipse and early temple closure, all devotees have a fulfilling devotional experience. On behalf of the Hindu Endowments Board, I wish you all a great 2018!

Rajan Krishnan

Chairman, Hindu Advisory Board

2017 saw the introduction of many new interfaith initiatives. Hindu Advisory Board (HAB) together with the Hindu Endowments Board (HEB) jointly hosted a first Deepavali Tea for faith leaders and members. The Deepavali Tea, as did the other inter faith events in 2017, gave people of different faiths a chance to participate and share in each other's festivals, thereby bringing a better appreciation of the meaning and the commonality of these festivals.

In July, both the Hindu Advisory and Endowments Boards hosted the first Indonesia- Singapore Interfaith & Intercultural Dialogue and Exchange. The theme of the visit was 'Sharing of Best Practices, Lessons Learnt and Way Forward'. Several Ministries, including the Ministry for Culture, Community and Youth, were involved in this cross-border cultural and interfaith exchange which gave HAB a better insight into best practices of faith communities. HAB will continue to work together with other religious organisations, Hindu temples and Hindu organisations to continue to develop a resilient interfaith network as well as to offer any assistance or advice on the practice of Hinduism in Singapore. HAB wishes everyone the very best for the New Year!

THAIPUSAM 2018 – A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE



The next Thaipusam festival is on Wednesday, 31 January 2018. It coincides with a Lunar eclipse (Chandra Grahanam). Eclipses are significant in Hinduism. When an eclipse can be seen in Singapore, our Temples will remain closed during the period of the eclipse.

The two organising Temples, Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple and Sri Thendayuthapani Temple have decided on the timing to close the

temples. The joint committee has also been in intensive discussion on the various options that need to be explored so that devotees carrying Kavadis are able to fulfill their vows as quickly and as smoothly as possible.

Many devotees have been asking questions and we are featuring some of them here.

1. Why do we need to close the temple during lunar eclipse?

Historically, eclipses are seen as a period during which the energy and rays from the sun and moon are blocked from reaching Earth. This affects us adversely and the belief is to avoid being outdoors. In a religious sense, eclipses are considered inauspicious.

2. Do all temples close during an eclipse?

Yes. Where an eclipse is seen in a country, Hindu temples in that country will be closed.

3. How do we determine the time of closure?

The time of closure is determined based on Indian astronomical calculations. There are several different methodologies, astronomical traditions and locations that are used which may vary the time slightly. Western astronomical calculations are also taken into account.

4. Did we consult the religious authorities?

Thaipusam is a festival for Lord Murugan. Thus, Sri Thendayuthapani Temple consulted Palani Murugan Temple in Tamil Nadu before deciding on the closure.

5. Has a lunar eclipse happened before during previous Thaipusams?

There is no known record of an eclipse in Singapore on Thaipusam day. Thus, this is indeed a very rare occurrence.

6. What time does Thaipusam 2018 procession start?

Paalkudams start entering Sri Thendayuthapani Temple from 10.31pm on Tuesday, 30 January 2018. Thus, the procession from Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple will start at 9.30pm.

7. How long does it take to reach Sri Thendayuthapani Temple at Tank Road?

Kavadis take about 3 to 4 hours on average and Paalkudams take about 1 hour to reach the Temple.

8. What time does the procession end?

The lunar eclipse starts from 6.51pm on 31 January 2018. Sri Thendayuthapani Temple will start their Arthajama Poojai (Day-end prayer) from 6.30pm. Therefore, Kavadis need to enter Sri

Thendayuthapani Temple by 6.30pm. Knowing that there may be some delay at Clemenceau Road, Kavadis need to leave Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple by 1.00pm.

9. What measures are we implementing to speed-up the procession in 2018?

We are discussing with the relevant authorities to ensure that we can speed-up the procession. These measures may take the form of more overtaking lanes, second lane nearer to Sri Thendayuthapani Temple, etc. Sri Thendayuthapani Temple's management committee is also making arrangements to ensure faster devotee flow inside the temple.

10. Where can we get more information on Thaipusam 2018?

All information pertaining to Thaipusam 2018 is available on the website www.thaipusam.sg and the information is in Tamil and English. Devotees can address any concerns they may have on the feedback page available on the website.

தைப்பூசம் 2018 ஓர் அபூர்வ அனுபவம்

அடுத்த ஆண்டின் தைப்பூசம், ஜனவரி மாதம் 31ஆம் தேதி நடைபெறவிருக்கிறது. அந்நாளில் சந்திர கிரகணமும் நிகழ்கிறது. கிரகணங்கள் இந்து சமயத்தில் ஒரு முக்கிய அங்கம் வகிக்கின்றன. கிரகணம் சிங்கப்பூரில் தென்படும்போது கிரகணம் முடியும்வரை ஆலயங்கள் மூடப்பட்டிருக்கும்.

ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீநிவாசப் பெருமாள் கோயிலும் ஸ்ரீ தெண்டாயுதபாணி கோயிலும், கோயில் மூடும் நேரத்தை நிர்ணயித்துள்ளன. அதோடு, பக்தர்கள் துரிதமாகவும் சுலபமாகவும் தங்களது பிரார்த்தனைகளையும் நேர்த்திக் கடன்களையும் முடிப்பதற்கு பல்வேறு வழிகளையும் அவை ஆராய்ந்து வருகின்றன.

உங்களின் பல கேள்விகளுக்கு இங்கே விடை அளிக்க முற்பட்டுள்ளோம்.

1. கிரகணத்தின்போது ஏன் கோயில்களை மூட வேண்டும்?

கிரகணத்தின்போது சூரிய அல்லது சந்திர ஒளிக்கதிர்களும் அவற்றின் சக்தியும் பூமிக்கு வருவது தடுக்கப்படுகிறது. இது நம்மைப் பாதிக்கும் என்ற நம்பிக்கையில் அந்நாளில் அனைவரையும் வீட்டில் இருக்கும்படி கூறி கோயில்களை மூடினார்கள். சூரியனையோ சந்திரனையோ மறைப்பதால், கிரகணங்கள் சரியான சகுனம் இல்லை என்றும் நம்பப்படுகிறது. அதானாலும் கோயில்கள் மூடப்பட்டன.

2. கிரகணத்தின் போது அனைத்து கோயில்களும் மூடப்படுமா?

ஆம். கிரகணம் தென்படும் நாட்களில் இந்துக்கோயில்கள் மூடப்படும்.

3. எத்தனை மணிக்கு கோயில்களை மூடவேண்டும் என்பதை எப்படி நிர்ணயிப்பது?

பஞ்சாங்க முறைப்படி, அந்தந்த நாட்டிற்கு உள்ள வானியல் பாரம்பரியம்படியும் மேற்கத்திய வானியல் முறைப்படியும் சரியான கிரகண காலம் கணிக்கப்படுகிறது.

4. மற்ற சமைய அமைப்புகளை இதுபற்றிக் கலந்து ஆலோசனை செய்தீர்களா?

தைப்பூசம் முருகக் கடவுளின் திருவிழா. ஆகையால், ஸ்ரீ தெண்டாயுதபாணி கோயில் தமிழ் நாட்டின் பழனி முருகன் கோயிலைத் தொடர்புக்கொண்டு முடிவுகளை எடுத்திருக்கிறது.

5. இதற்கு முன்பு தைப்பூசத்தின்போது கிரகணம் நிகழ்ந்திருக்கிறதா?

தைப்பூசத்தின்போது கிரகணம் நிகழ்ந்ததாக இதுவரை எந்த வரலாற்றுக் குறிப்பும் இல்லை. எனவே இது உண்மையில் அரிய ஒரு நிகழ்வு.

6. தைப்பூசத் திருவிழா ஊர்வலம் எப்போது தொடங்கும்?

பால்குடங்கள் 30 ஜனவரி 2018 இரவு 10.30 மணியிலிருந்து டேங்க் ரோடு கோயிலுக்குள்

செல்லத் தொடங்கலாம். அதனால் பால்குடங்கள் ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீநிவாசப் பெருமாள் கோயிலைவிட்டு இரவு சுமார் 9.30 மணிக்கு புறப்பட வேண்டும்.



7. ஸ்ரீ தெண்டாயுதபாணி கோயிலை அடைய எவ்வளவு நேரம் எடுக்கும்?

அலகுக்காவடிகள் சராசரியாக 3 மணி முதல் 4 மணி நேரமும், பால்குடங்கள் சுமார் 1 மணி நேரமும் எடுக்கும்.

8. எத்தனை மணியளவில் தைப்பூசத்திருவிழா முடியும்?

சந்திர கிரகணம் 31 ஜனவரி 2018 அன்று மாலை 6.51 மணிக்குத் தொடங்குகிறது. மாலை 6.30 மணியளவில் ஸ்ரீ தெண்டாயுதபாணி கோயிலில் அர்த்தஜாம பூஜை (இறுதிப் பூஜை) தொடங்கும். ஆகையால், மாலை 6.30 மணிக்குள் காவடி டேங்க் ரோடு கோயிலுக்குள் நுழைய வேண்டும். கிலமன்ஸ்சியு சாலையில் தாமதங்கள் ஏற்படக்கூடும் என்பதால் காவடிகள் மதியம் 1.00 மணிக்குள் ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீநிவாசப் பெருமாள் கோயிலில் இருந்து புறப்படவேண்டும்.

9. 2018 ஊர்வலத்தை துரிதப்படுத்த நாம் என்ன நடவடிக்கைகளை எடுக்கிறோம்?

அதிகாரிகளோடு கலந்துரையாடி முக்கிய மாற்றங்களைச் செய்ய இருக்கிறோம். இரண்டாம் நடைவழி, வேகமாய் கடந்து செல்ல வழி என்பவை அவற்றுள் சில. அதோடு, ஸ்ரீ தெண்டாயுதபாணி கோயிலுக்குள்ளும் வேகமாய் நகர்வதற்கான சில ஆயத்தங்களையும் திட்டமிடுகிறோம்.

10. தைப்பூசம் 2018 பற்றி மேலும் விவரம் அறிய எங்கே செல்லாம்?

தைப்பூசம் 2018 தொடர்பான அனைத்து தகவல்களும் www.thaipusam.sg என்ற இணையத்தளத்தில் தமிழிலும் ஆங்கிலத்திலும் கிடைக்கும். வலைத்தளத்திலுள்ள கருத்து தெரிவிக்கும் பகுதியில் தங்களுக்குரிய அக்கறைகள் குறித்து பக்தர்கள் பதிவு செய்யலாம்.

ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீநிவாசப் பெருமாள் கோயில் மஹா சம்ப்ரோக்ஷணம் (மஹா கும்பாபிஷேகம்)

திருமலை திருப்பதி ஸ்ரீ வேங்கடாசலபதிப் பெருமாள் நமது ஆலயத்தில் ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீநிவாசப் பெருமாள் எனும் திருநாமத்தில் ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீதேவி, ஸ்ரீ பூதேவியடன் எழுந்தருளி, பக்தர்களுக்கு அருள்பாலித்து வருகிறார். இந்த ஆலயத்தில் 12 ஆண்டுகளுக்குப் பிறகு, மஹா சம்ப்ரோக்ஷணத்தை (மஹா கும்பாபிஷேகம்) முன்னிட்டு, திருப்பணிகள் நடைபெற்று வருகின்றன.

வருகிற 2018-ஆம் ஆண்டு ஏப்ரல் மாதம் 22-ஆம் தேதி மஹா சம்ப்ரோக்ஷணம் (மஹா கும்பாபிஷேகம்) 10 கால யாக பூஜைகளுடன் விமர்சையாக ஸ்ரீ வைகானஸ ஆகம முறைப்படி நடைபெற இருக்கிறது.

பல்வேறு சிறப்பு யாக பூஜைகள் நடைபெற்று, கடந்த ஏப்ரல் 29 மற்றும் 30-ஆம் தேதியில் விமான பாலாலயம் நடைபெற்றது. அனைத்து சன்னிதியின் விமானங்கள் மற்றும் ராஜகோபுரத்தில் திருப்பணிகள் நடைபெறுவதால், அந்தந்தக் கலசங்களில் உள்ள சக்தியைப் படத்தில் ஆவாஹனம் செய்யும் நிகழ்வுதான் இந்த விமான பாலாலயமாகும். இரண்டு கால யாக பூஜைகள் நடைபெற்று விமான பாலாலயம் சிறப்பாக நடைபெற்றது.

அடுத்ததாக, அக்டோபர் 19 ஆம் தேதி முதல் 29 ஆம் தேதி வரை பத்து தினங்களுக்கு மஹாசுதர்ஸன லக்ஷ்மஹாயாகம் சிறப்பாக நடைபெற்றது. பக்தர்களின் நலன் வேண்டி, 1 லக்ஷம் (1,00,000) ஆவர்த்தி மஹா சுதர்ஸன, லக்ஷ்மி நரசிம்ம மூலமந்த்ர ஹோமம் நடைபெற்றது.

இந்தியாவிலிருந்து தேர்ச்சிபெற்ற பத்து வைகானஸ பட்டாச்சாரியார்கள் இந்த யாகத்தினை சிறப்பாக நடத்தி வைத்தார்கள். இந்த யாகத்தில் கலந்து கொண்ட பக்தர்களுக்கு 10 தினங்கள்



நவம்பர் மாதம் 21, 22, 23 தேதி ஆகிய மூன்று தினங்களும் நடைபெற்ற பெருமாள் பாலாலயம் 4 கால யாக பூஜை.



யாக சாலையிலிருந்து பெருமாள் மற்ற பரிவார தெய்வங்கள் புறப்பட்டு பாலாலயத்திற்கு எழுந்தருளினர்.



பெருமாள் மற்றும் ஸ்ரீதேவி, பூதேவி தெய்வங்களுக்கு ஆராதனை.

யாகபூஜையில் வைத்து பூஜிக்கப்பட்ட மஹா சுதர்சன யந்திரம் பிரசாதமாக வழங்கப்பட்டது. ஆயிரக்கணக்கானப் பக்தர்கள் கலந்துகொண்டு, ஸ்ரீ மஹாசுதர்சன, லக்ஷ்மி நரசிம்மர் அருளைப்பெற்று மகிழ்ந்தனர்.

அதனைத்தொடர்ந்து, நவம்பர் மாதம் 21, 22, 23 தேதி ஆகிய மூன்று தினங்களும் பெருமாள் பாலாலயம் 4 கால யாக பூஜைகளுடன் நடைபெற்றது.

இந்த யாகத்திற்காக 12 குண்டங்கள் நிர்மாணிக்கப்பட்டு, 12 அர்ச்சகர்கள் இந்தியாவிலிருந்து வந்து வைகானஸ ஆகம முறைப்படி யாகத்தை சிறப்பாக நடத்தி வைத்தனர்.

அனைத்து சன்னதிகளிலும் திருப்பணி வேலைகள் நடைபெற இருப்பதால், ஆலயத்தின் தென்புறத்தில் சிறிய ஆலயம் (பாலாலயம்) நிர்மாணிக்கப்பட்டு, அனைத்து மூலஸ்தானங்களும் பாலாலயத்திற்குள் எழுந்தருளச்செய்து பிரதிஷ்டைச் செய்யப்பட்டுள்ளன. மேலும் நடைபெறவிருக்கும் மஹா சம்ப்ரோக்ஷணத்திற்காக, 2018-ஆம் ஆண்டு பிப்ரவரி 27-ஆம் தேதி முதல் ஏப்ரல் 15-ஆம் தேதி வரை 48 தினங்கள் யந்திர பூஜை நடைபெறும்.

அனைத்து மூலஸ்தானத்தின் பீடத்திலும் வைக்கப்படும் யந்திரம் அந்தந்த தேவதைகளின் மூலமந்திரம் மற்றும் காயத்ரீ மந்திர எழுத்துக்கள் பொறிக்கப்பட்டு, அந்த யந்திரங்களுக்கு சக்தியூட்டும் வகையில் தினமும் அபிஷேகம், மூலமந்திர ஜபம், மற்றும் ஹோமங்கள் 48 தினங்கள் காலையிலும், மாலையிலும் நடைபெறும்.

பக்தர்கள் ஆலய அலுவகத்துடன் தொடர்புகொண்டு, யந்திரபூஜையில் கலந்துகொள்ள முன்பதிவு செய்து கொள்ளவும்.

மேலும் கும்பாபிஷேகத்தினையொட்டி 7 தினங்கள் நடைபெறும் யாக பூஜைகள், மண்டல பூஜை, சஹஸ்ர கலசாபிஷேகம் முதலிய நிகழ்வுகளின் விபரங்களை அடுத்த பதிவில் பார்ப்போம்.

அனைத்து வழிபாடுகளிலும் பக்தர்கள் கலந்துகொண்டு எல்லாம்வல்ல ஸ்ரீ ஸ்ரீநிவாசப் பெருமானின் திருவருளை அடைய வேண்டுகிறோம்.

WAR AGAINST DIABETES

Diabetes is a medical condition in which the blood glucose levels remain persistently higher than normal. It is becoming more common in Singapore. This may be due in part to ageing population, unhealthy diets and lack of exercise.

Insulin is a hormone produced by the pancreas that allows your body cells to use blood glucose (sugar) for energy. Food is converted into glucose before it is absorbed into our bloodstream. The pancreas then releases insulin to move the glucose from the bloodstream into the body cells for use or storage. People with diabetes are unable to fully use the glucose in their bloodstream because they lack insulin in the body or insulin is ineffective for them.

Types of Diabetes

There are three major types of diabetes:

Type 1 Diabetes

- No insulin is produced due to damaged pancreatic cells.
- Usually diagnosed in children or young adults although it can occur at any age.
- Insulin is needed for treatment.
- Complications are sudden and life-threatening.

Type 2 Diabetes

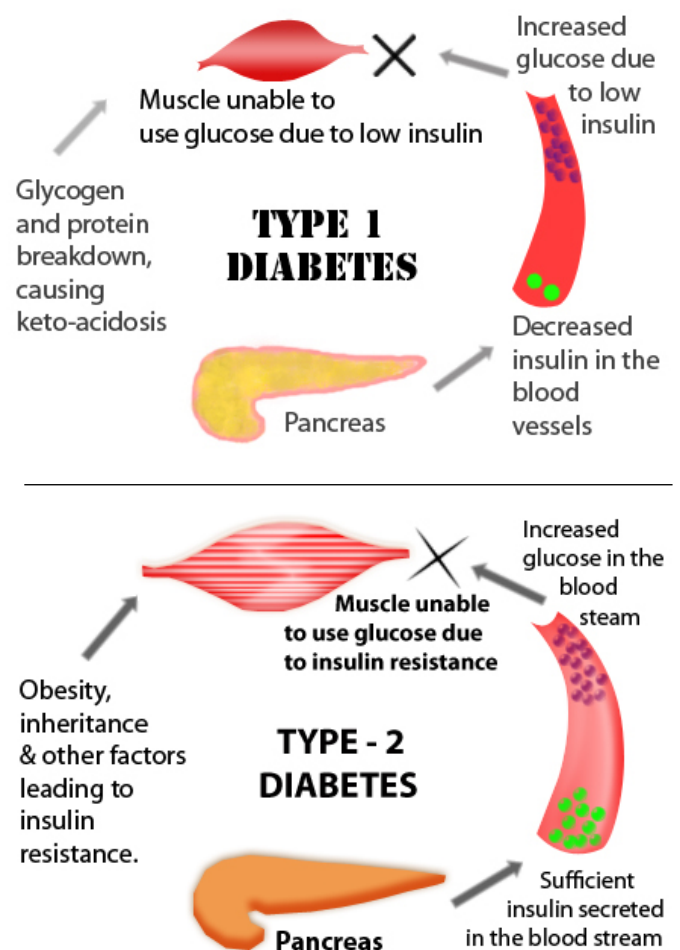
- Insulin produced is not enough or not effective (insulin resistance).
- Occurs more frequently in people over 40 years old, particularly those who are overweight and physically inactive.
- More younger adults and children are developing Type 2 Diabetes.
- Can be controlled with proper diet and exercise but most diabetics also need oral medication.

Gestational Diabetes

This form of diabetes occurs in about 2 to 5 percent of all pregnancies. Women who were not diagnosed to have diabetes previously show high blood glucose levels during pregnancy. Women with Gestational Diabetes need specialised obstetric care to reduce serious complications to the unborn baby.

Signs and Symptoms

The common symptoms of diabetes include frequent thirst despite drinking lots of water, constant hunger and tiredness, itchy skin, passing excessive urine during day and night, weight loss despite a good appetite and poor healing of cuts and wounds.



Complications

Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to high blood glucose (hyperglycaemia) and low blood glucose (hypoglycaemia). Both situations can cause a diabetic to become very sick very quickly and even go into a coma. The long-term complications of diabetes include:

- Coronary heart diseases such as angina or heart attack
- Stroke
- Eye disease
- Kidney disease
- Foot disease such as numbness, ulcers and even gangrene
- Nerve disease which can lead to problems such as impotence and diarrhoea

Treatment

Diabetes is a life-long disease. Your diabetes may be controlled through diet or a combination of diet and medication. Follow your doctor's instructions on diet and/or medication.

Self-care

A diabetic person has to take extra care of his body to maintain good health.

Foot Care

As a diabetic, you have a higher risk of foot problems. In serious cases, it can lead to amputations. Taking care of your feet is very important:

- Wash your feet daily with soap and water.
- After washing, dry them fully, especially in between the toes.
- Keep your toe nails short, trimming them straight across to avoid ingrown toenails.
- Moisturise your feet daily to prevent dryness and cracking of the skin.
- Examine your feet daily for scratches, cuts, blisters and corns. Use a mirror to check the sole of your feet.
- Use shoes that fit well and wear clean cotton socks which have loose fitting elastic tops.
- If you have any corns or any wounds that are not healing well, seek help from your doctor as soon as possible.



Diabetics have to pay careful attention to their feet.

Eye Care

- Diabetes can cause severe eye problems where the small blood vessels in the eyes become damaged (diabetic retinopathy) and can lead to blindness.
- It is important to have regular eye check-ups at least once a year.
- You can get your retinae (inside surfaces of your eyes) photographed by a procedure called retinal photography to detect any damage to small blood vessels. The doctor might also perform laser photocoagulation, a form of high-powered light and heat energy, to prevent further damage.

Skin Care

- Avoid skin injury as diabetes makes the skin more prone to many problems such as rashes, infections and colour changes.
- Wash every part of the body while bathing using mild soap and warm water.
- Dry all parts of the body using a clean towel.
- Pay attention when washing and drying skin folds in areas such as under the breasts, abdominal folds and groin area.
- Apply moisturising cream to keep skin moist and soft.
- Treat all cuts and scratches at once, wash with soap and water and then apply mild antiseptic lotion.
- See a doctor if the skin injury does not heal in two to three days.

Prevention

- Have a proper diet
- Besides insulin and medicines, eating a healthy diet helps you keep your blood glucose under control. It also helps to maintain your weight at a healthy level.
- Engage in regular physical activity
- Regular physical activity is an important part of your diabetes control. It helps to prevent the onset of complications. Exercise also helps to control your weight and keeps your heart healthy. Consult your family doctor before starting any exercise programme.
- Do not smoke
- Smoking worsens the narrowing of blood vessels already caused by diabetes. It reduces blood flow to many organs and leads to many serious complications.
- Limit your alcohol intake
- Alcohol interferes with your meal plan and blood glucose control, especially if you are taking insulin or medicines for your diabetes.

[Source: https://www.healthhub.sg/a-z/diseases-and-conditions/102/topics_diabetes]

MAKING TEMPLE PRASADAM HEALTHIER

We spoke to the cook priests of the four HEB temples and reiterated Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's National Day message on occurrence of diabetes amongst Indians. While most of us are aware that diabetes is common within the community, PM Lee's message brought home the point strongly with statistics showing Indians leading the pack at 6 out of 10 of those 60 years and above being diabetic. The statistics are not to be taken lightly as it is truly a "life or death" issue. How is the community reacting to this and what steps are being taken to avert diabetes or to reverse the trend in the future?

In Hindu temples, food or blessed prasadam is generally distributed after each prayer or annathanams (free meals) are available on festive days. The main ingredients of the prasadam are rice and sugar in various forms. The quantity of rice served is also large.

With that in mind, we posed the question "What are you doing to make temple prasadam healthier?" to the cook priests at the temples. Here are some of the measures they have undertaken.

The cook priests are now more conscious of the amount of ghee, oil, salt and sugar used in their cooking, and are slowly reducing these ingredients. Cook priests feel that the devotees



Ghee, oil, salt and sugar levels are consciously being reduced for health benefits.

should also take the responsibility to reduce unhealthy levels of sugars and not demand for the higher level of sweetness as was before.

For example, in kesari, the rawa (semolina) to sugar ratio used to be 1:1. Lately, this has been reduced to 1:0.5 or even lesser. Most devotees do not complain but there are some who do. The cook priests mentioned that devotees are more conscious of a healthy diet nowadays and request for less sugar in their sweet items.

Secondly, instead of red sugar, they have started using 'karupatti' or 'vellam' (Indian version of gula melaka). Even coffee can be made with 'karupatti' but that will need some time before devotees get used to the taste. Alternatively, one can opt for Sukku coffee, which is healthier. The rice that temples are buying is also of a better quality with a lower Glycemic Index. The secret to lowering sugar levels is consuming lesser quantity of rice.



Healthier choice – vellam or jaggery can be used to sweeten tea instead of refined sugar

The cook priests also mentioned that for annathanam, they are trying to include more vegetables. There are some vegetables which are not a popular choice such as pavakkai (bitter melon) and kovakkai (ivy gourd) but these are good to keep diabetes in check.



Pavakkai and kovakkai are good vegetable options to keep diabetes in check.

BENEFITS OF RADISH

Radish is highly nutritious. It is cultivated in Japan, China and India for thousands of years. Radish is available in white, red, purple or black varieties and can be long and cylindrical or round shape, tapering at its end. Radish is rich in vitamin C, potassium, calcium, vitamin B6, riboflavin, magnesium and copper. It also has medicinal uses in whooping cough, cancer, chesty cough, gastric discomfort, liver problem, constipation, dyspepsia, gallbladder problems, arthritis, gallstones, kidney stones and intestinal parasites. Radish is diuretic and efficacious in treating boils. It is good for the liver and the stomach as it is a good detoxifier and purifies blood. It is useful in jaundice and checks the production of bilirubin. To treat piles, radish is recommended as it has excellent roughage. Its juice soothes the digestive and excretory system. Radish helps to lose weight. Its detoxifying and anti-carcinogenic properties make it part of the treatment of leukoderma. Radish seeds are powdered, soaked in vinegar and ginger juice, and then applied on white patches. It can also be part of the diet.

Radish is very good for skin because it contains vitamin C, phosphorus, zinc and vitamin B-complex elements. Grated raw radish is a good skin cleanser and can be used as a face pack. Its disinfectant properties can help cure drying up of skin, rashes and cracks. It is good for overall health of the kidneys. The anti-pruritic properties help against itching and is efficacious in insect bites. Its juice reduces pain and swelling of the bitten area. Radish juice mixed with black salt is a disinfectant and fights infections, fever and in respiratory disorders.



Radish (Raphanus sativus) belongs to the mustard family. It is known as mulangi in Tamil.

Radish Dhal

Ingredients

Radish (washed, peeled and cubed)	1-2
Tomato	1
Tuvar dhal	1 cup
Chana dhal	1 tbsp
Turmeric	¼ tsp
Cumin powder, roasted	1 tbsp
Green chilli	1
Salt	½ tsp
Coriander leaves, chopped	1 tbsp
Seasoning	
Mustard seeds	½ tbsp
Cumin seeds	½ tbsp
Asafoetida	¼ tsp
Curry leaves, shredded	1 tsp
Oil	1 tbsp

Method

1. Wash the tuvar dhal and cook with the chopped radish pieces, chana dhal, 1 cup of water and turmeric in a pressure cooker for up to 4 whistles.
2. Heat the oil in a saucepan. Add the mustard and cumin seeds and let it splutter. Add asafoetida, curry leaves and green chilli. Saute.
3. Add the chopped tomato, salt and stir fry until the raw smell goes.
4. Add this mixture to the cooked dhal. Bring to a boil and add salt to taste.
5. Garnish with chopped coriander leaves.
6. Add a dash of lemon juice, if desired.
7. Serve with warm rice or rotis.



[Adapted from *Tattvāloka: The Splendour of Truth*]

Tasty tip: You can add a spoonful of sambhar powder to the dhal.

HONOURING OUR VOLUNTEERS

The Hindu Endowments Board (HEB) Volunteer Awards were first introduced in 1999 to recognise the efforts of volunteers who served at HEB-administered temples and in operating units and programmes. Since its inception, more than 400 dedicated volunteers have been recognised with the Volunteer Awards.

This year's event, held on 9 September, honoured the contributions of 62 distinguished volunteers. A short video encapsulating the essence of volunteerism was also unveiled. Mr Heng Chee How, Senior Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office graced the event as Guest of Honour to present the awards.



Venerable Dr Gunaratna from Mahakaruna Buddhist Society being congratulated by Mr Heng Chee How for receiving the Friend of HEB Award.



A thunderous standing ovation was given to all volunteers in recognition of their dedicated service.

PUTTING THE 'BHAKTI' IN PROJECT BHAKTI

By Jayasri Prushuathamun

Coming off the high of last year's grand 15th anniversary celebrations, this year's Annual Project Bhakti Day on 17 September still had the fun factor that the children have come to know and love.

From 10am to 2pm, the children had fun while learning and reinforcing what they had been taught in their Project Bhakti classes. The children were wowed by a storyteller weaving interesting tales, an interactive motivation talk, a few fast-paced bhajans as well as two performances by the students from Sri Sivan Temple and Sri Muneeswaran Temple on Ganesha Chaturthi and Navaratri respectively.

Catering to the younger crowd, the five to ten year olds were treated to a storytelling session by Ms Sashirekka Routan. Armed with a doll and morals-based stories from Hindu scriptures, she took the children on an imaginative ride through the Ramayana, Hitopadesha and even festivals celebrated by Hindus.

While the young ones were eagerly contributing to their interactive storytelling session, the 11 to 15 year olds had a slightly more serious yet enjoyable talk with motivational speaker, Jit Puru. The pre-teens and teens were so engrossed in their quest to better themselves that Jit even ran out of candy rewards. "I learnt never to procrastinate, to put important things first and to take control of my life," said Sriraam Prabhakar, who will be moving on to join his brother in the Teens class next year.

He added, "I am extremely excited to join the Teens class as I have heard from my brother about the interesting and fun activities that he had taken part in this year and I am looking forward to learning and experiencing more through intriguing Hinduism-related activities."

Parents who have been religiously sending their children for Project Bhakti have seen the progressive interest their children show in Hinduism. Two parents, who are sisters, shared how their five children - Vishal and Sharini Kalaiselvan and Shiva, Eshwar and Triaksha Chandrashekar, all between the ages of five and ten, have taken to singing the bhajans during prayers at home and sharing the stories with their parents.

"When we were kids, our parents sent us for Bhajan and Hinduism classes. So I wanted my children to experience this joy of learning about our religion and way of life. Now, they are able to identify and remember the different Gods and their stories," shared Lalitha Shekar.

Her sister, Shanti Selvaraju is awed with the enthusiasm her children show. "The kids have never complained about waking up early on Sunday mornings and look forward to class! I hope when my kids grow up, they will also give back to society like the volunteer teachers do. The teachers are awesome!" she said.

If anyone is asked what their favourite part of the Annual Day is, the answer is usually the Maatru Pooja. The mothers love the attention, the children put their solemn faces on for the rituals and the teachers drink in the sight of their young charges doing the Pooja with such exuberance and then giving their mothers' warm hugs at the end.

The teachers are not the only ones who revel in the joy of the Pooja - the mothers do too. Having attended the Maatru Pooja for the past three years, Lalitha admits that seeing her children performing the Pooja with such dedication is heartwarming. "My son Eshwar does the prayers with a lot of care and devotion that he will correct his sister when she tries to take a shortcut!"

Former Project Bhakti student and current volunteer teacher Sharala Devi Gopal remembers the values that were inculcated in her as a child. "Back then, Annual Days used to consist of mass bhajans, quizzes from the stories we covered for that semester and skits performed by our teachers. Now the students have their own performances, they get to be part of the Maatru Pooja and even have ice cream for lunch!"

Impressed with the programme and the teachers at Sri Siva Krishna Temple and the activities for the yearly get-together, Shanti has been advocating Project Bhakti to her friends and family. She said, "I felt happy and



Ms Sashirekka Routan, a professional storyteller captivated her audience with morals-based stories from Hindu mythology



Motivational speaker, Jit Puru, engaged the 11 to 15 year olds on coping with exam stress. Students also picked up tips on time management.

honoured to be a mother when my kids washed my feet during the Pooja and when I get to see them perform for other festivals like Navaratri or Ganesha Chaturthi. I have friends who are eager to enrol their children for Project Bhakti in 2018!”

Guided by the stories and activities that she did has a child, Sharala felt the need to pass on what she learnt to the children she teaches as Darma Muneeswaran Temple, just like Sriraam.

Sriraam added, “I will definitely miss my friends, teachers and the action-packed atmosphere and activities I enjoyed at the centre at Sri Sivan temple, as I have not experienced something as wonderful as Project Bhakti. I hope to volunteer with Project Bhakti in the future and impart some of what I have learnt about Hinduism to the next generation.”



A student feeding sugar candy prasadam to his mother at the conclusion of the Maathru Pooja



Showcase of dance talent by students from Sri Muneeswaran Temple

FIRE WALKING FESTIVAL

Theemithi or Fire Walking Festival was held at Sri Mariamman Temple on 8 October 2017. A silver chariot with Goddess Sri Mariamman visited the heartlands on 6 and 7 October 2017 and on 9 October, Goddess Drowpathai was brought to the Little India district in conjunction with the festival.



Silver Chariot with diety of Goddess Sri Mariamman visits the heartlands: Devotees who are unable to travel to the Temple on a regular basis feel blessed with the divine visit from the Goddess.



Chief Pandaram Swaminathan carrying the karagam or holy vessel across the fire pit.

PURATTASI MAHOTSAVAM

Purattasi is an auspicious month to offer thanks to Sri Srinivasa Perumal (Lord Venkateswara) for preserving the universe. Crowds numbering between 10,000 and 15,000 devotees were received at Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple during each Purattasi Saturday. Arrangements were made for devotees to be seated comfortably during the Annathanam. Separate queues were formed for the elderly, those with special needs and families with young children. Each week, the entire operations of the Annathanam were driven by the dedicated volunteer force.



Devotees paying homage to Sri Srinivasa Perumal during the Purattasi Saturday morning prayers.



Volunteers worked tirelessly to serve meals to devotees during each of the Purattasi Saturday Annathanams.

A GITA FORUM FOR EVERYONE

The Bhagavad Gita is often heralded as a text for Karma (action), Jnana (knowledge) and Bhakti (devotion). Scholars and academics have derived many concepts of management, philosophy, etc. from the Bhagavad Gita. As part of its year-long activities, the Gita Jayanti Organising Committee held the annual Gita Forum on 22 October 2017 at PGP Hall.

Sri Sri Sugunendra Theertha Swamiji of the Puttige Mutt (Udupi, Karnataka) spoke on two topics – Relevance of Bhagavad Gita in today's life and Bhagavad Gita as human psychology. The children's art competition organised as a feature of the Forum enabled parents to attend the discourse while their children expressed their devotion through art.



Swamiji captivated his audience with various concepts based on the Bhagavad Gita.



Children expressed their creativity and devotion through art during the competition organised as a feature of the Gita Forum.

GOLD KAVASAM FOR SRI AYYAPPAN

Sri Vairavimada Kalamman Temple was abuzz with activity on 11 November 2017 when Sri Ayyappan was adorned with a new gold kavasam (cladding). Sabarimala Thanthri Brahma Sree Kandararu Rajeevaru (presiding Thanthri in Sabarimala Sree Dharma Sastha Temple), led the prayers before the kavasam was adorned on Sri Ayyappan. Our Namboodhiri Krishnan Perumpally Vasudev and temple priests assisted him. A grand Pushpabishegam (flower offering) was made to Sri Ayyappan later that evening. Devotees were also treated to two days of devotional renditions by Mr Veeramani Raju. The event culminated with a special 108 Bhagavathy Seva Vilakku Poojai conducted by Sree Rajeevaru on 12 November 2017.



Sree Rajeevaru performing the aarati after Sri Ayyappan was adorned with the gold kavacham.



108 devotees performed the special vilakku poojai on 12 November 2017 as a culmination of the two-day event.

FINANCIAL AID FOR TERTIARY STUDENTS

While the Sivadas-HEB Education Fund initially disbursed financial aid to pre-schoolers in 2011, from 2012 it was extended to students in local universities, Institutes of Technical Education and Polytechnics. At the Sivadas-HEB Bursary Awards Ceremony held on 11 November 2017, Dr Janil Puthuchery, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Communications and Information and Ministry of Education presented 127 bursaries worth about \$259,000. As of November 2017, the Fund has helped more than 1300 students and disbursed around \$2.5 million.



Dr Janil (fourth from right) presented the bursaries to students from various tertiary institutions at the award ceremony held at the PGP Hall.



Dr Janil interacting with some of the bursary award recipients.

STRENGTHENING INTERFAITH BONDS

The inaugural Interfaith Deepavali Tea jointly hosted by Hindu Endowments and Hindu Advisory Boards was held on 16 November 2017. Interfaith and community leaders from all ten religions in Singapore were present on the occasion. They learnt about the significance of Deepavali through an informative exhibition, were treated to musical and dance performances, and had an opportunity to savour Deepavali delicacies.



Guests had an opportunity to light and display agal vilakkus (terracotta lamps) at the rangoli.



Mr N Prushuathamun (first from right), Vice-Chairman of the Hindu Advisory Board sharing how Deepavali is celebrated in Singapore

BACK-TO-SCHOOL

'Back-to-School' is an initiative by HEB-Ashram to help school-going children of past and current residents. The event was first introduced in 2015 and reached out to 30 recipients. This year, HEB-Ashram reached out to as many as 45 recipients, including beneficiaries from Sembawang Community Centre. President Halimah Yacob visited HEB-Ashram Halfway House's Back-to-School event and presented gift vouchers to the children on 19 November 2017. During her visit, President Halimah Yacob toured HEB-Ashram's eco-garden. The eco-garden is the pride and joy of the residents of HEB-Ashram who have found gardening to be both rehabilitative and therapeutic. President Halimah said, "Happy to spend the morning at HEB-Ashram Halfway House and to present book vouchers to its residents' school-going children."



President Halimah Yacob with some of the beneficiaries at the event



President Halimah harvesting passion fruit after touring the eco-garden set up with the help of volunteers and HEB-Ashram residents.

KARTHIGAI DEEPAM

Karthigai refers to the Tamil month and ‘deepam’ means light. According to the Saiva Agamas, during the full moon day in the month of Karthigai, Lord Siva is adored as the boundless form of eternal fire. He assumes the form of fire to dispel darkness, ego, jealousy and ignorance in the world to bring forth spiritual enlightenment. Hence, devotees light ghee lamps on Karthigai day to invoke the blessings and guidance of Lord Siva. Religious and community leaders joined Sri Sivan Temple’s Karthigai Deepam celebrations on 2 December 2017.



Neighbours and community leaders at Sri Sivan Temple.



Devotees throng Sri Sivan Temple on the occasion of Karthigai Deepam.

BHALASTHAPANAM PRAYERS FOR SRI SRINIVASA PERUMAL

As a precursor for the slated redevelopment works at Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple, a Sri Sudarsana Laksha Yagam was held from 19 to 29 October 2017. Subsequently, the Moolavars (deities) were relocated to a temporary location (Balaalayam) within the Temple. During the Bhalasthapanam prayers held from 21 to 23 November 2017, the divine powers of the deities were temporarily enshrined in kumbhams (holy vessels). They were energised with various homams (fire sacrifices) and chants, and eventually transferred back to the Moolavars.



Priests performing homam for the respective deities enshrined in Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple during the Bhalasthapanam prayers.



Chief Priest Vasu Bhattar sprinkling the holy water from the main kumbham onto the Moolavars as a mark of transferring the powers back to the deities.

அருள்மிகு அருணாசலேசுவரர் திருக்கோயில்

புடைக்கும் கடவுளாகிய பிரம்மாவும் காக்கும் கடவுளாகிய திருமாலும் இருவருமே பெரியவர்கள் என்று தமக்குள் சர்ச்சை ஏற்பட்டு சிவபெருமானிடம் சென்று தம்மில் யார் பெரியவர் எனக் கேட்டார்கள். சிவபெருமான், எனது அடியை அல்லது முடியை உங்களில் யார் கண்டு வருகிறீர்களோ அவர் தான் பெரியவர் எனக்கூற, திருமால் வராக அவதாரம் எடுத்து அடியைக்காண பூமியைக் குடைந்து சென்றார். அடியைக் காண இயலாமல் சோர்ந்து திரும்பினார். பிரம்மன் அன்னப் பறவையாக உருவெடுத்து சிவபெருமானது முடியைக் காண உயரப் பறந்து சென்றார். முடியைக் காண இயலாமல் தயங்கி பறக்கும்போது சிவன் தலை முடியில் இருந்து தாழம்பூ கீழே இறங்கி வந்ததை கண்டார். அதனிடம் சிவன் முடியை காண எவ்வளவு தூரம் உள்ளது என்று கேட்க, தாழம்பூ, நான் சிவனாரின் சடையில் இருந்து நழுவி நாற்பதாயிரம் ஆண்டுகளாக கீழ் நோக்கி வந்து கொண்டு இருக்கிறேன் என்று கூற, பிரம்மன் முடியைக்காணும் முயற்சியை விடுத்து தாழம்பூவிடம் ஒரு பொய் சொல்லும்படி கூறினார்.



திருமாலிடம், சிவன் முடியை பிரம்மன் கண்டதாக சாட்சி சொல்லும்படி கேட்டுக்கொண்டதற்கு இணங்க, தாழம்பூ சாட்சி சொல்ல, முற்றும் உணர்ந்த சிவபெருமான்,

பொய் சொன்ன பிரம்ம தேவனுக்கு பூலோகத்தில் ஆலயம் அமையாதென்றும், பொய்சாட்சி சொன்ன தாழம்பூ சிவ பூஜைக்கு உதவாது என்றும் சாபமிட்டார். திருமாலும், பிரம்மனும் தான் என்ற அகந்தை நீங்கிட உலகுக்கு உணர்த்த சிவபெருமான் அடியையும், முடியையும் காணமுடியாத ஜோதி பிழம்பாக நின்ற இடம் திருவண்ணாமலை. அது மஹா சிவராத்திரி நாளாகும்.

அருள்மிகு அருணாசலேசுவரர் திருக்கோயில் - தலப்பெருமை

உலகமெல்லாம் போற்றப்படுவது சைவ சமயம். சைவத்திருத்தல நகரம் திருவண்ணாமலை. இத்தலம் நால்வரால் பாடல்பெற்ற திருத்தலம். திருஞான சம்மந்தர், திருநாவுக்கரசர், சுந்தரர் முதலானோர் அண்ணாமலையாரை வந்து தரிசித்துப் பதிகங்கள் பாடியுள்ளார்கள்.

திருமுறைத்தலம்

திருமுறைப் பாடல் பெற்ற 275 திருத்தலங்கள் (சிவன் கோயில்கள்) திருமுறைத்தலங்கள் எனப் போற்றப்படுகின்றன. இவற்றில் 22 திருத்தலங்கள் நடுநாட்டில் (தமிழ்நாட்டின் ஒரு பகுதி) அமைந்துள்ளன. இந்த 22 தலங்களில் மிகவும் சிறப்புடையது திருவண்ணாமலை ஆகும்.

ஆதாரத்தலம்

ஆறு ஆதாரத்தலங்களில் மணிப்பூரக தலமாக விளங்குவது திருவண்ணாமலையாகும். சூரியன், சந்திரன், அஷ்டவசுக்கள் முதலான தெய்வங்களே வழிபட்டதான சிறப்புடையது.

ஞானிகளும் துறவிகளும்

இத்தலம் சித்தர்களின் சரணாலயமாகவும் விளங்குகிறது. பதினெட்டு சித்தர்களில் ஒருவரான இடைக்காட்டுச்சித்தர் இத்தலத்திற்கு உரியவராக விளங்குகிறார். அருணகிரிநாதர், விருபாஷ்டேவர், குகைநமச்சிவாயர், குருநமசிவாயர், தெய்வசிகாமணி, அருணாசல தேசிகர், மகான் சேஷாத்திரி சுவாமிகள், பகவான் ரமண மகரிஷி, யோகி ராம் சுரத்குமார் முதலான

ஞானத்தபோதனர்களை தனது ஜோதியில் இணைத்துக்கொண்ட மகத்துவம் உடையது திருவண்ணாமலை.

மலை வலத்தின் சிறப்பு (சுற்றிவருதல்)

பெரும்பாலான திருத்தலங்களில் தெய்வங்கள் மலைமேல் இருப்பதுண்டு. ஆனால் திருவண்ணாமலையில் மலையே தெய்வமாகவும் வழிபாட்டிற்குரியதாகவும் உள்ளது. அருண் என்றால் சூரியன் - நெருப்பின் நிறமான சிவப்பைக் குறிக்கும். அசலம் என்றால் கிரி என்றும் மலை என்றும் பொருள். எனவே அருணாசலம் என்றால் சிவந்த நிறத்தையுடைய மலை என்று பொருள். இம்மலையில் உயரம் 2688 அடி.

அண்ணாமலையானது கிருதா யுகத்தில் அக்னி மலையாகவும், திரேதாயுகத்தில் மாணிக்க மலையாகவும், துவாபர யுகத்தில் பொன் மலையாகவும், கலியுகத்தில் கல் மலையாகவும் மாறி வந்ததாக அய்தீகம்.

எட்டு திக்கிலும் அஷ்டலிங்கங்களைக் கொண்ட எண்கோண அமைப்பில் திருவண்ணாமலை நகரம் காணப்படுகிறது. அஷ்டலிங்கங்கள் எனப்படுபவை இந்திர லிங்கம், அக்னி லிங்கம், யமலிங்கம், நிருதி லிங்கம், வாயு லிங்கம், குபேர லிங்கம் மற்றும் ஈசான்ய லிங்கம். தேவாரத்தில் புகழப்படும் ஆதி அண்ணாமலை திருக்கோயில் மலை வலப்பாதையில்தான் அமைந்துள்ளது.

இந்த மலையின் சுற்றளவு 14 கிலோமீட்டர் உள்ளது. இம்மலையில் இன்றும் பல சித்தர்கள் வாழ்ந்து வருவதாக வரலாறு. அதன் காரணமாக மலைவலம் வருவது சிறந்தது. குறிப்பாக பெளர்ணமி நாளன்று மலைவலம் வருவது மிகவும் சிறப்பான பலன்களைத்தரும். காரணம் பெளர்ணமி நாளில் விசேடமாக எண்ணற்ற சித்தர்கள் நடமாட்டம் இருப்பதாகவும், மூலிகைக் காற்றுகளின் மணம் வீசுவதால் மனத்திற்கு அமைதியும், உடல் நலத்திற்கு நன்மையும் ஏற்படுவதால், இன்றும் லட்சக்கணக்கான பக்தர்கள் பெளர்ணமியன்று மலைவலம் வந்தும் அருள்மிகு அண்ணாமலையாரை தரிசித்தும் எல்லா நலன்களும் பெறுகிறார்கள் என்பது கண்கூடாக காணும் உண்மை.

[Source: <http://www.arunachaleswarartemple.tnhrcce.in/index-tamil.html>]



ANDAL AND THE MONTH OF MARGAZHI

Andal is the only female of the twelve Azhwars in the Vaishnavite tradition of Hinduism. The Azhwars are the bhakti saints of Vaishnavism who sang their deep love for Lord Vishnu in Tamil so sweet that it is supposed to elevate anyone who sings these hymns to the bliss of oneness with the Lord himself.



Periyazhwar, another one of the twelve Azhwars, was without a child for a long time. He was in service of Lord Vishnu at the temple in Srivilliputhur. Every day, Periyazhwar strung garlands for the Lord. One day, when Periyazhwar was plucking flowers in the temple garden, he found a baby girl under a Tulasi plant. He and his wife named the girl as Kothai and she grew up as Periyazhwar's daughter helping him to string the garlands while listening to the stories and hymns of Lord Krishna, an avatar of Lord Vishnu. As she grew to be a young woman, she longed to be with the Lord and soon only wanted to marry him.

Andal composed two books of hymns dedicated to Lord Vishnu. Thiruppavai, a 30-hymn compilation, calls all to recite the name of Lord Vishnu. It also explains that God may be called by various names but he is one. Thiruppavai is an important book in Tamil literature and the 30 songs are traditionally recited in the month of Margazhi before sunrise. Andal's other poems are also known as Nachiyaar Thirumozhi. Nachiyaar is another one of her names. Her love for the Lord grew and at one time, she wondered how would the garland she had strung would look on Lord Vishnu and adorned it on herself to admire. She would do this every day without her father's knowledge.

One day, Periyazhwar found out and was enraged as garlands meant for the Lord should not be worn by anyone else. That day, he went to the sanctum empty handed and pleaded the forgiveness of the Lord for the act of his daughter. Apparently, the story goes that that Lord Vishnu appeared in Periyazhwar's dream and told him that he would only want the garland adorned by Andal first. Thus, Andal was also called

'Chudikodutha Chudarkodi' (the girl who gave the garland to the Lord after wearing it). This practice is followed till today at the Srivilliputhur Temple. On special occasions, Lord Ranganathar at Sri Rangam and Lord Venkateshwara at Tirupati also adorn the garland after it has been adorned on Andal of Srivilliputhur.

When Andal was of marriageable age, she expressed her desire to marry none other except Lord Ranganathar of Sri Rangam. So true was her devotion that Lord Ranganathar himself



appeared in Periyazhwar's dream to tell him that he too wished to marry Andal. She was then brought to Sri Rangam from Srivilliputhur. It is said that when she entered the sanctum of Lord Ranganathar, she merged with the deity. She is thought to be none other than the avatar of Goddess Lakshmi, Lord Vishnu's consort in Vaikuntha.



Andal used to observe a fast during the month of Margazhi (also known as Dhanurmasa). The month of Margazhi (mid-December to mid-

January) is considered to be a very auspicious month in the Hindu calendar. The sun transits through Sagittarius (Dhanur) sign, the house of Jupiter, during this month. The Ekadasi or 11th day of the first half of the month is known popularly as Vaikunta Ekadasi. It is believed that on this day, the doors of Vaikunta are open for all to enter and attain salvation.

Thus, in the month of Margazhi, devotees come to the temple early in the morning to sing Thiruppavai and contemplate on the Lord. They also fast to attain a higher consciousness as Andal did. It is also believed that the entire Thiruppavai which has 30 verses summarises the essence of the Vedas.

Thiruppavai - Verse 29

சிற்ப்பம் சிறு காலே வந்து உன்னை சேவித்து
 உன் பொற்றாமரை அடியே போற்றும் பொருள் கேளாய்
 பெற்றம் மேய்த்து உண்ணும் குலத்தில் பிறந்து நீ
 குற்று ஏவல் எங்களைக் கொள்ளாமல் போகாது
 இற்றைப் பறை கொள்வான் அன்று காண் கோவிந்தா
 எற்றைக்கும் ஏழ் ஏழ் பிறவிக்கும் உன் தன்னோடு
 உற்றோமே ஆவோம் உனக்கே நாம் ஆட்செய்வோம்
 மற்றை நம் காமங்கள் மாற்றேலோர் எம்பாவாய்



In this very early dawn, we have come to worship,
 Your golden holy feet.
 You were born in our family of cow herds,
 And we are but there to obey your every wish,
 And not come to get only the drums from you, Oh Govinda!
 Forever and for several umpteen births,
 We would be only related to you,
 And we would be thine slaves,
 And so please remove all our other desires.

TEMPLE HISTORY

Sri Sivan Temple

It has been recorded that the Sri Sivan Temple was rebuilt as a solid structure in the early 1850s at the Orchard Road site where the Dhoby Ghaut MRT station is currently located. The Sivalinga was known to be worshiped at this site well before 1850.

An order placing Sri Sivan Temple under the Mohammedan and Hindu Endowments Board (set up in 1907) was gazetted on 18 October 1915. In 1968, the Hindu Endowments Board (HEB) was formed



to manage four temples including the Sri Sivan Temple. During the Second World War, some of the statues of secondary deities and a part of the temple structure were damaged by shells that landed around it. Towards the end of the war, renovations were made to the temple and a consecration ceremony was held in July 1943. In 1954, the Municipal Commissioners requested that the temple be rebuilt 14 feet further from the road to widen Orchard Road. Plans to rebuild the temple were drawn up in 1957. Local contractors and skilled craftsmen from India carried out the construction, sculptural and ornamental works. The consecration ceremony was held on 9 December 1964.



The current Sri Sivan Temple located at Geylang East Avenue 2 is a unique design blending North and South Indian architectural styles, with an octagonal structure with a multi-purpose hall and staff quarters.

In 1983, the Government decided to acquire the land on which the temple stood. An MRT station was to be built underground. Therefore, a transit temple was built next to the Sri Srinivasa Perumal Temple at Serangoon Road. All the deities from the Orchard Road Temple were installed in the new site at Serangoon Road and all daily prayers and festivals celebrated continued without disruption. The Hindu Endowments Board had intended to make the new temple unique in appearance, features and facilities. The Board and the management committee of the temple consulted well-known

temple architects in India. The Board sent a team to study the best of both the North and South Indian Temples. What followed was a unique design with an octagonal structure with a multi-purpose hall and staff quarters.

The new temple was built at a cost of \$6 million on a 3,000-square metre plot at Geylang East. The new site is about four-and-a-half times bigger than the temple's former site at Orchard Road. After ten years of temporary residence at Serangoon Road, the Sri Sivan Temple was consecrated at its present Geylang East site on 30 May 1993.

The major festivals celebrated at Sri Sivan Temple are Vinayagar Sathurthi, Vaikasi Visakam Brahmotsavam, Thirukarthigai, Arudra Dharisanam, Thiruvembavai Vizha, Maha Sivarathiri, Vasantha Navarathiri, Guru Peryarchi, Sani Peyarchi, Navarathiri and Skantha Shasti.

Sri Vairavimada Kaliamman Temple

Sri Vairavimada Kaliamman Temple is one of the oldest temples in Singapore. Originally erected at Killiney Road, the temple was relocated twice before it finally moved to its current site at Lorong 8, Toa Payoh.

The original temple structure at Killiney Road was in the path of a proposed railway line which was to run from Tank Road to the Causeway in Woodlands. As such, the local municipal railway authorities negotiated with the temple's trustees and bought over the temple's land for the purpose of constructing the new railway lines. Trustees of the temple then erected a new structure on vacant land at Orchard Road.

Unfortunately, the railway authorities once again acquired land owned by the temple and it had to be relocated for the second time. In 1921, a new piece of land at 21 Somerset Road (just in front of the Telecoms building) was purchased for building the temple. The temple structure at this location was constructed by the Mohammedan and Hindu Endowments Board in 1933. A



Sri Vairavimada Kaliamman Temple is located within the Toa Payoh heartlands.



Makara Vilakku is one of the major festivals celebrated at Sri Vairavimada Kaliyamman Temple.

was built before the temple itself. Upon completion of the temple complex, a consecration ceremony was held on 27 March 1986. Sri Vairavimada Kaliyamman Temple holds the honour of introducing Saraswathy Kindergarten – the first Tamil and English pre-school in Singapore. The service proved to be so popular that a full-fledged kindergarten was set up at Kim Keat in 1990. The main festivals celebrated here are Chithira Pournami, Brahmotsavam, Santhanakudam Abishegam, Periyachi Pooja and Makara Villaku.

consecration ceremony was held on 6 December 1933 following its completion.

In September 1970, all 8,854 square feet of land at the temple’s Somerset Road location was acquired for development purposes by the government. On 5 September 1982, the temple was relocated to its present location in Toa Payoh. The deities were housed temporarily at the wedding hall which

SINGAPORE PUBLIC & SCHOOL HOLIDAYS FOR 2018

Public Holidays

Holiday	Date
New Year’s Day	Monday, 1 January
Chinese New Year	Friday, 16 February Saturday, 17 February
Good Friday	Friday, 30 March
Labour Day	Tuesday, 1 May
Vesak Day	Tuesday, 29 May
Hari Raya Puasa	Friday, 15 June
National Day	Thursday, 9 August
Hari Raya Haji	Wednesday, 22 August
Deepavali	Tuesday, 6 November
Christmas Day	Tuesday, 25 December

School Holidays

(For Primary and Secondary Schools)

Semester 1	
Between Terms 1 & 2	Saturday, 10 March to Sunday, 18 March
Between Semesters 1 & 2	Saturday, 26 May to Sunday, 24 June
Semester 2	
Youth Day	Sunday, 1 July & Monday, 2 July
Day after National Day	Friday, 10 August
Teachers' Day	Friday, 31 August
Between Terms 3 & 4	Saturday, 1 September to Sunday, 9 September
Children's Day	Friday, 5 October (for Primary Schools only)
At the End of School Year	Saturday, 17 November to Monday, 31 December

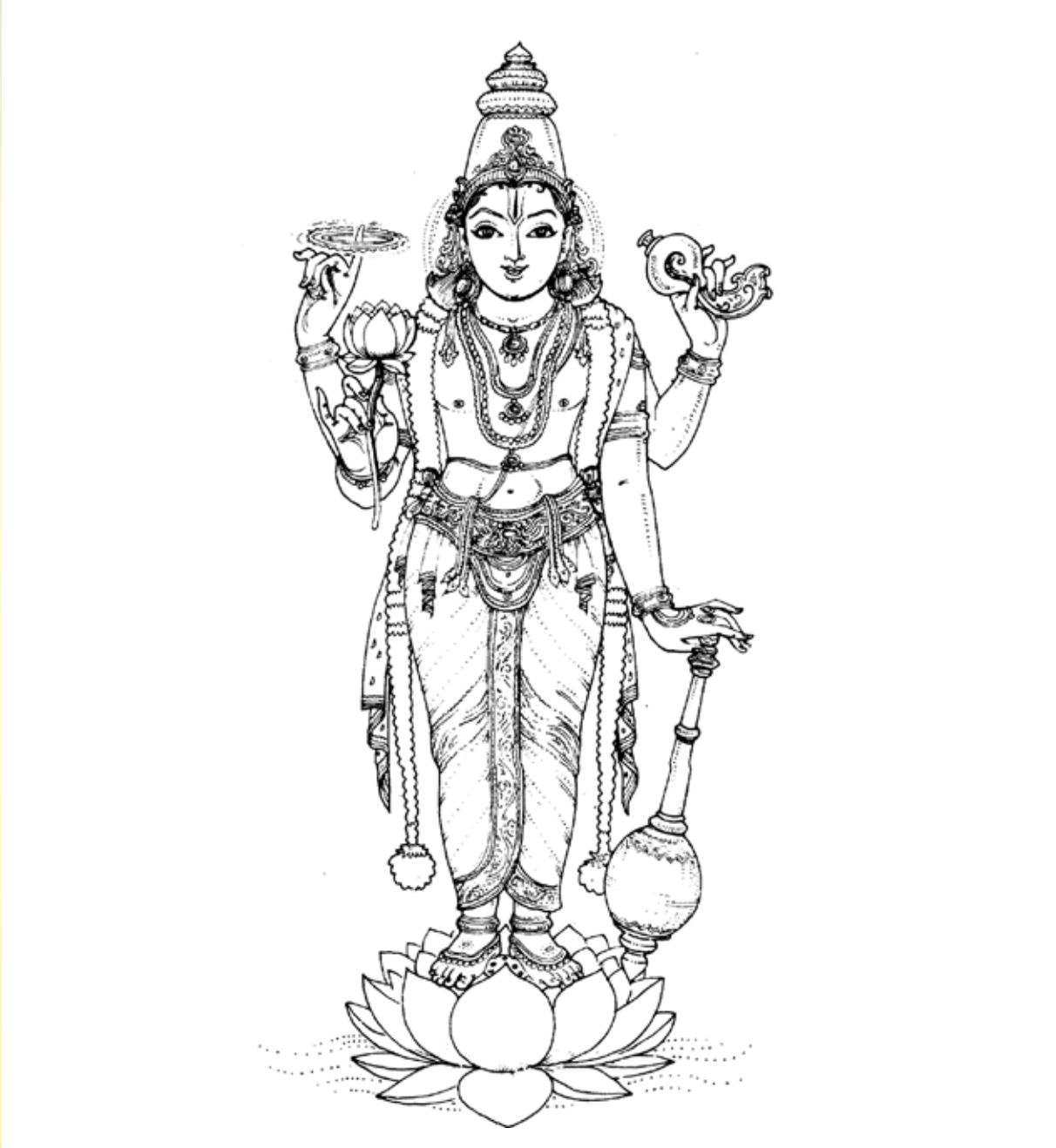


Cut along the line



Kids' Zone

Lord Vishnu is one of the main Gods in Hinduism. He is known as the “preserver” in the Hindu trinity that includes Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva. Lord Vishnu is usually depicted as having a dark or pale blue complexion with four arms. He holds a lotus flower, a mace, a conch and a discus. Colour the picture to give it a complete look.



Category 1 (Age group: 5–8 years)

Name: _____

Age: _____

Contact number: _____

Address: _____

Send in your entries, complete with details by 31 January 2018 to:

The Editor, Hindu News
Hindu Endowments Board
397 Serangoon Road
Singapore 218123



Name The Place

Answer the following questions. Write your answers neatly in the spaces provided.

1. Name the 6 famous abodes of Lord Murugan.

2. What is the abode of Lord Vishnu?

3. Name the abode of Lord Shiva.

4. Lord Krishna lived in these 2 famous places during his childhood. Name them.

5. Name the capital of the Kosala kingdom where Lord Rama lived.

6. Name the famous city that Lord Krishna established from the sea.

7. Name the place where Lord Rama made a Shivalinga out of sand, which is still worshipped today.

8. This famous city of Lord Shiva has 2 names and has been established on the bank of the Ganges River, where it bends in the shape of a crescent moon. Provide their names.

Category 2 (Age group: 9–12 years)

Name: _____

Age: _____

Contact number: _____

Address: _____

Send in your entries, complete with details by 31 January 2018 to:

The Editor, Hindu News
Hindu Endowments Board
397 Serangoon Road
Singapore 218123

Here are the winners of the Kids Zone activities from Hindu News Issue 02-2017:

Category 1 Prize Winners

1st prize: Ayankaren

2nd prize: Rajalakshmi

3rd prize: Suresh Kumar Aarush

Category 2 Prize Winners

1st prize: Shankaran s/o Kesavan

2nd prize: Shivesh s/o Sivaperakas

3rd prize: Sahil Menon

Congratulations to all of you!



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