

Śrī Medhā Dakṣiṇāmūrti Jīrnoddhāra Kumbhābhiṣekam

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Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Saylorsburg, PA

May 17-19, 2024

While it is customary to perform a re-consecration of a temple every twelve years, sometimes the temple structure may suffer damage due to natural forces and thus would require maintenance. In such situations, an interim *kumbhābhiṣekam*, known as *jīrnoddhāra kumbhābhiṣekami*, is performed. Generally, two important purposes are served by a *kumbhābhiṣekam*, which are *pratiṣṭhā* and *prāṇapraṭiṣṭhā*, the installation of the *vigraha* on the *pīṭha* and invoking the power of the deity, respectively. The temple structure of Śrī Siddhi Vināyaka Swāmi sahita Śrī Medhā Dakṣiṇāmūrti Swāmi at Arsha Vidya Gurukulam (AVG), Saylorsburg, PA needed some critical repairs. Upon completion of them a *jīrnoddhāra kumbhābhiṣekam* of the temple was performed during May 17-19, 2024, consisting only of *prāṇapraṭiṣṭhā*, as per the Vedic tradition in the august presence of Pūjya Swami Veditātmānanda Saraswati.

The religious proceedings were conducted for two and a half days in strict adherence to the tradition of the *kumbhābhiṣekam* rituals. They were expertly coordinated by Śrī. Ganesan, the temple priest, and executed by a team of 20 learned priests which included Śrī. Ravi Vādhyār, Śrī. Nataraja Sāstrigal, Śrī. Manikandan, and Śrī. Hariharan from Coimbatore. All of them are *yājurvedikas*. The other priests from the United States who performed the myriads of religious rituals were Śrī. Bhaskar (Yajur Veda), Śrī. Chandrasekhar Smt. Latha Deshmukh as the *yajamāna* and *patnī* for the religious events completed the team. (Sāma Veda), Śrī. Gnanaskandan (Yajur Veda), Śrī. Jayashankara Holla (Ṛg Veda), Śrī. Kailasam (Yajur Veda), Śrī. Krishna Bhat (Yajur Veda), Śrī. Nataraja śrauti (Sāma Veda), Śrī. Padmanabha Nadig (Ṛg Veda), Śrī. Raghavendra Bhat (Yajur Veda), Śrī. Ramesh (Yajur Veda), Śrī. Sabarirajan (Yajur Veda), Śrī. Sharavana Bhat (Ṛg Veda), Śrī. Shyam Bhat (Ṛg Veda), Śrī. Suresh (Yajur Veda), Śrī. Venkataraman (Ṛg Veda), and Śrī. Venugopal (Yajur Veda). Dr. Pramod Deshmukh and

The religious rituals consisted of various *śānti* karmas and *puṣṭi* karmas. The former is performed to eliminate the inauspiciousness in the place, idol, and materials etc. and the latter is done to bring forth the sanctity in them. In this regard, special *homas* were performed invoking nava Durgās and 51 forms of Lord Gaṇapati. The *pañcakāla pūjās* performed over the 2 ½ days included Gaṇeśa pūjā, Dakṣiṇāmūrti mūla mantra *homa*, *viśeṣa dravya homas*, *jayādi homa*, *Śrī rudra triśatī nāmāvalī arcana*, *Śrī rudra*

gaṇapāṭha, *pūrṇāhuti*, *vasordhāra*, *divyopacāra pūjā*, and *dīpārādhanam*. During the *divyopacāra* there was *caturveda pārāyaṇam* in every *kāla pūjā*. The *sāyaṅkāla pūjās* included *drāvidopacāra* (singing of Tamil hymns), *vādyopacāra* (nādasvaram), *nātyopacāra*, and *gaṇapati tālam*. The *ṛtviks* doing alternately *veda pārāyanam* and chanting the *nakṣatra sūkta*, and the singing of the *sāma gānam* by the *sāma veda* priests sanctified the ambience with the *veda ghoṣa*. In addition, there were specific rituals such as *ācārya/ṛtvik varaṇam*, *punyāhavācanam*, *agni-pratiṣṭhāpanam*, *yāgaśālā-vāstu-ārādhana*, *nava-graha-devatā and dvārapālaka ārādhana*, *devatā anujñā*, *kalaśa-ākaraṣaṇam*, *rakṣoghna-homa*, *mṛt-saṅgrahaṇam*, *ankurārpaṇam*, *yātrā dānam*, *sparsāhuti*, and *nāḍi-sandhānam*. A handout prepared by the author of this report describing briefly all the rituals was provided to the attendees to follow the sequence of the events and understand their significance.

On the evening of the second day, the *utsava mūrti* was carried around the gurukulam premises in a procession to the accompaniment of *nādasvaram* by vidwans Śrī. Murali and Śrī. Durgesh Murali, accompanied by vidwan Śrī. Raghu on the *thavil*, artists visiting from Bengaluru. At the end of the procession when the *utsava mūrti* was brought to the *yāga śālā*, Chenda Melam was performed by PA-NJ Vadhya Vedhi, a percussion ensemble, under the guidance of Śrī. Sanjith Nair. The sonorous sounds of the Chenda Melam engulfed the entire Gurukulam enriching the divine ambience.

On the *kumbhābhiṣekam* day (May 19th), devotees carried 300 plus *kalaśas* energized with the mantras to the temple for the *abhiṣekam*. At the prescribed *muhūrtam* of 10:27 AM, Swami Veditātmānanda Saraswati along with priests Śrī. Ganesan, Śrī. Ravi Vādhyār and Śrī. Nataraja Sāstrigal and the *yajamāna* went up on a crane to perform the *kumbhābhiṣekam* to the *ālaya vimānam*. A helicopter flying above the *vimānam* showered flower graffiti from the sky much to the delight of the crowd. This was immediately followed by *abhiṣekam* to Lord Medhā Dakṣiṇāmūrti and Lord Siddhi Vināyaka inside the temple. Subsequently, the *mahābhiṣekam* to Lord Dakṣiṇāmūrti was performed with various *dravyas* and at the end with the waters from all the *kalaśas*. Pujya Swami Veditātmānanda Saraswati spoke on the significance of the *kumbhābhiṣekam* during the *viśeṣa alaṅkāram*. A benedictory message from Swami Tattavidananda Saraswati was read by Sri. Suddhatma. This was followed by *mahā dīpārādhanam*, *mantrapuṣpam*, and *āśīrvādam*. All the assembled 700+ devotees received the *prasādam* from Swami Veditātmānandaji and Swami Muktatmananda Saraswati and partook in the *anna dānam*.

The *kumbhābhiṣekam* was celebrated in a grand manner, thanks to the many

sponsors who came forward in a short notice to support the event. The eminent presence of Pūjya Swami Vīditātmānanda Saraswati along with Swami Muktatmananda Saraswati, Swami Jnanananda Saraswati, Swamini Agamananda Saraswati, Swamini Svātma-vidyananda Saraswati, Swami Sachidananda Saraswati, Swamini Srividyananda Saraswati, Swamini Atmaprakshananda Saraswati, and Swami Svātmananda Saraswati embellished the event. The Board of Directors and Officers of AVG and the Kumbhabhishekam Committee wholeheartedly supported the event. A team of volunteers including Indira Akella, Vimala Sadasivam, Usha Arunachalam, and others reached out to devotees for *kalasam* sponsorships. The entire event was executed flawlessly by a team of volunteers who were ably coordinated by Śrī. Raj Kuppuswamy. The *rtvik bhojanam* arrangements were superbly executed by a host of volunteers under the guidance Smt. Suseela Swaminathan. Thanks to the efforts of Śrī. Sahadev, Śrī. Niranjan, Śrī. Karthik, Śrī. Sarva, Śrī. Suresh, and Ms. Chitra the audio arrangements during the religious events were remarkable. In addition, thanks to Śrī. Sahadev, Ms. Raji, Śrī. Pandu Kulkarni, and Ms. Richa, the three-day proceedings were broadcast live for the benefits of devotees who were not able to attend the function in person. During the entire 2 ½ days, Śrī. Ramachandran, Smt. Tara Patel, and kitchen staff prepared the sumptuous meals for all the devotees. The entire staff of the Gurukulam was facilitating the smooth operation of the event for the entire duration under the efficient oversight of Śrī. Suddhatma, the manager of AVG.

The memorable and cherishable *kumbhabhishekam* event evoked the fond and reverential memory of Pūjya Śrī Swami Dayananda Saraswati and his invisible presence and blessings. Brahmaleena Swami Pratyagbodhananda Saraswati radiated his welcoming smile from the heavens upon all the visitors to the gurukulam inspiring them to come again. - Report by Dr. V. Swaminathan of Bethlehem, PA.

