

BALAVIN KURAL

Balambika Divya Sangam



Editor's Desk...

As Balambika Divya Sangam (BDS) moves forward with the kumbhabhishekam plans for the Malur temple on **April 10th 2017**, Sri Bala will be in sancharam – showering Her blessings and charm on all who welcome Her into their homes and hearts. The recent Mahotsavam at Chennai brought together devotees from all walks of life to glorify, adorn, and celebrate Sri Bala in their own magical way, through Dolai utsavam, velakku poojai, and archana seva. The event simply mesmerized every individual, from those who were fortunate to take part in the utsavam, to those who held on to every mystical detail through Whatsapp. Each of us wished for Sri Bala in our homes and envied those who could make it possible. This event was a culmination of the effort of the BDS team, the support and encouragement of our Chennai devotees, and Sri Bala's grace. The bhakti and selfless efforts of all those involved, speaks volumes about their spiritual commitment and fervor. BDS is proud to have such dedicated minds on its team.

It brings to our perspective, the meaning of bhakti or devotion. Our Hindu epics bring out exemplary personifications of bhakti, which is the unconditional love that one pours out from the heart. It transcends any law, logic or rationale, and is simply as pure and flawless as it can

be. Lakshmana's devotion as a brother was such that he gave up a royal life to join Lord Rama in the fourteen year exile. Likewise, Lord Rama's devotion to his parents made him seek the path to the forest in all willingness. Hanuman's devotion to Rama represents the devotion to a master with unquestionable service, while expecting the least in return. The devotion to a guru, is one of unquestionable faith and trust. Such examples demonstrate the unconditional nature of the bhakta's love, which grows in him, and ultimately brings him to the feet of God, where he surrenders with complete 'mahavishvasam' – that asks no questions and expects no answers. Such was the bhakti that poured out from the hearts of the people of Chennai, as they embraced Sri Bala and set forth a precedence in divine celebration.

As we grow in our lifetime, crossing over from one level of devotion to another, we seek the blessings of Sri Bala to show us and lead us on this path. Swayed by the illusion and vagaries of our day to day lives, it is no easy task. However, by joining BDS's relentless initiatives that spread the gospel of 'sarvejana sukhinobhavanthu', we can use a helping hand that takes us another step towards Sri Bala's thiruvadi.



Mrs. Asha Manoharan
President—BDS

Inside this issue:

Bala Speaks	2
Special Pooja & Events	2
Temple Construction Updates	3
Chennai Dolai Photos	4—13
Sahadeva & Arjuna	14
BOPS Photos	15
Demystifying Science	16
Who am I?	17
Indus Valley Civilization	19—21
Bala Sahasranamam	22—28
Chennai Dolai Sponsors	31

Balambika Divya Sangam

313/5, Sri Raja Rajeshwari Illam,
6th D Cross, Venkatapura,
Bangalore—560034

Email: balambikadivyasangam2015@gmail.com

Bala Speaks...



"Every man born in this world undergoes pain and suffering. It is not to undermine your ability to survive, but to make you understand the realities of life. It is an essential feature in one's life. Pain and grief is caused by love and attachment. When you love someone, you imagine yourself to be the centre of their universe. This thought when shattered, leads to pain and loss. The attachment you have to people, to materialistic things, all brings with it pain and sorrow. Can you escape from it? No, you cannot escape. But you do have a choice. You can give in and relent, or you can fight, persevere, and create a life worth living, a noble life. Pain is a fact; your evaluation of it, is your choice."

Special Pooja & Events

- ◆ The Dolai Mahostsavam was kickstarted with Bala's sancharam to Chennai. Hordes of devotees participated and made this event spanning 10 days, a spectacular success.
- ◆ As decided recently, BDS Events team had organized Pournami Pooja and Dolai Utsavam at Devotee's house in Malur on 19th July.
- ◆ With the reopening of schools in Malur, the Breakfast Meal program has been resumed and many patrons have come forward to sponsor.
- ◆ The Health & Hygiene and Reading Club activities as part of BOPS have also been kick-started under a new season.



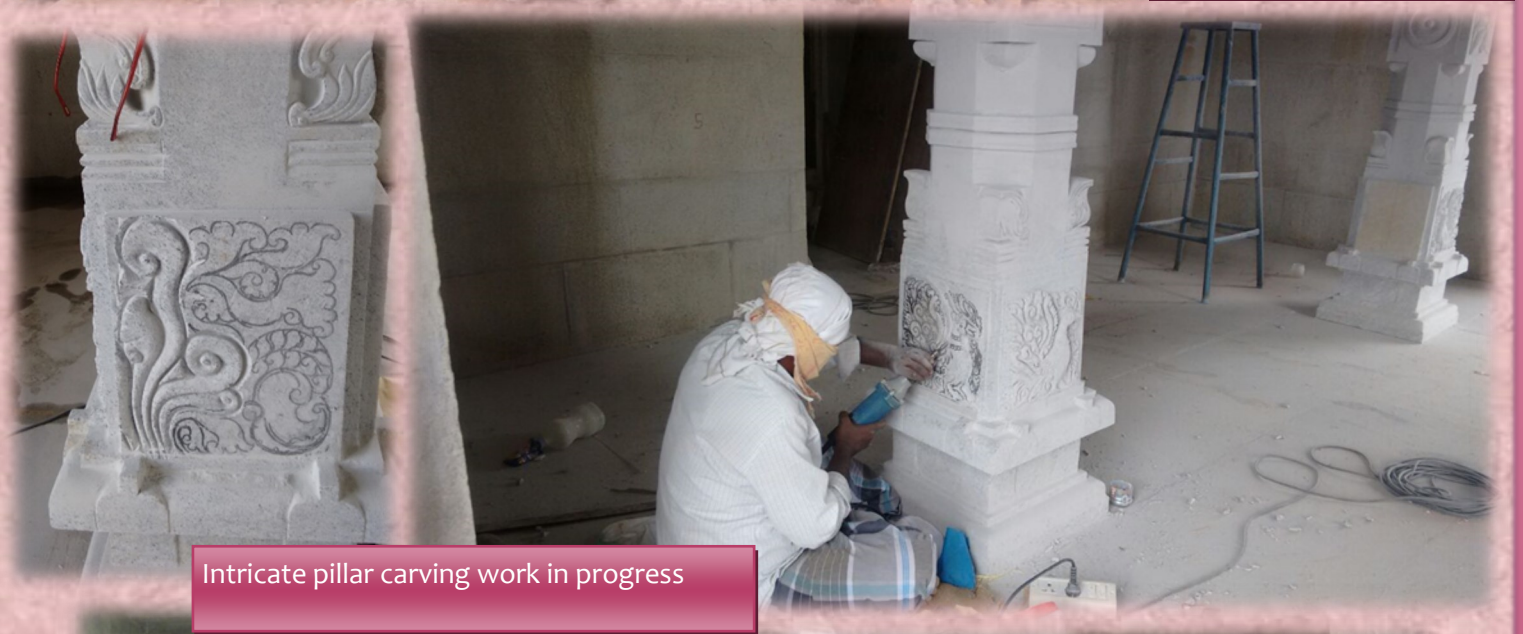
Maha Mantapam roofing work



Temple Construction

Update:

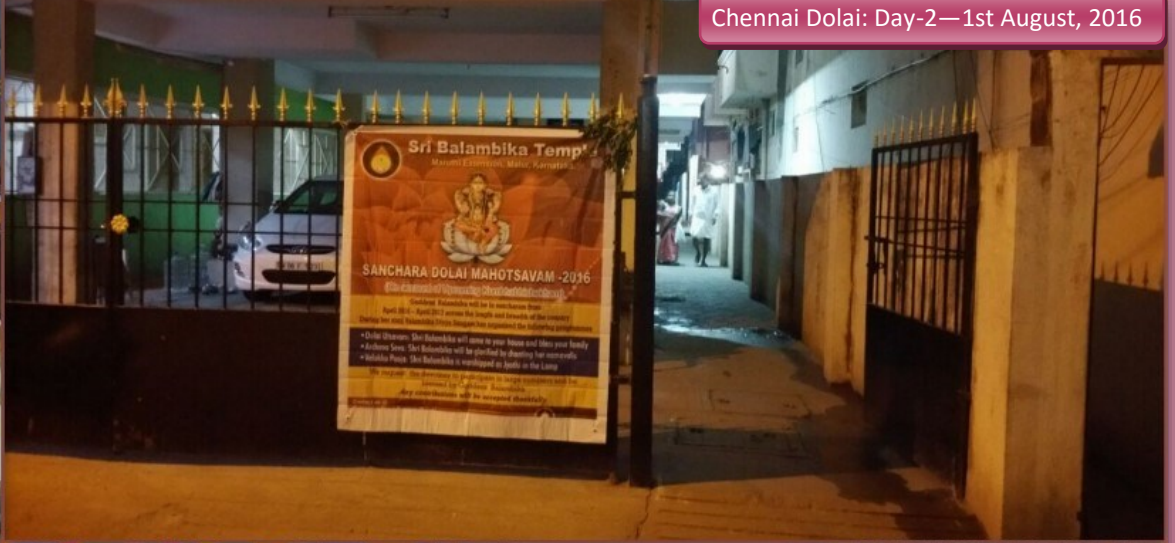
The pillar work consists of detailing and beautification through floral motifs and annapakshi designs. In parallel the plastering of the mahamantapam roof has commenced. What remains are the interiors of the mahamantapam, steps, dwajasthambam and Vigramam installation, which draws us closer to the kumbabhishekam.



Intricate pillar carving work in progress











Chennai Dolai: Day-5—4th August, 2016



Chennai Dolai: Day-6—5th August, 2016





Chennai Dolai: Day-8—7th August, 2016



Chennai Dolai: Day-9—8th August, 2016





Sahadeva & Arjuna

By Thulasinathan Kandasamy

Arjuna slapped himself on his face. "Tell me how long you have been around me?" Arjuna asked thus to Sahadeva. "Since you started practicing," a calm response came from Sahadeva who was looking elsewhere.

There was a reason for Arjuna to be upset. For a fine archer like himself, who could notice the slightest of movements, he didn't even notice a fully grown man like his brother Sahadeva, moving around him and watching each of his moves. It had been a whole day of practice. Arjuna almost felt sick. Krishna swung by and saw the situation.

"I wouldn't worry too much if I were you," Krishna said. Arjuna gave a puzzled look. Krishna responded saying, "Sahadeva is very observant and is capable of literally disappearing into any place or situation. It's not possible to notice him if he decides to go invisible..."

Sahadeva was wondering, "Is it Krishna's presence that makes me joyous or his words?" He told himself, he has been learning this stuff, all days of his wandering, all the days of moving with wanderers, hermits and Brahmins. He loved observing and staying quiet. He can just remain observing for days. It all started with him observing his very own breathing, his own movements consciously. He spent days just observing, observing people and their gestures, changes and flows in the moods of people. He observed the different persona of people when they were alone and among the mob. He could predict people's moves even before they could make it (this is all well before him becoming 'Trikal Gyani', the knower of past, present and future).

Sahadeva recollected all his weird practises, he can observe a person and can become that person's persona. So much so that, if he was observing a Magadhan farmer for a few days, he can just behave like one, even if woken from the deepest sleep. Sahadeva was observing his memory, unfolding the scenes of him watching the bull of a man, the Pandiyan king practising sword. Being a lover of swords and the finest of swordsmen, Sahadeva absolutely loved swordsmanship and he loved the fact that Southerners were excellent swordsmen in general. This Pandiyan king in particular, was very proficient. Sahadeva was impressed to see that the bull king was able to cut a shower of arrows in all directions. Of course, the King couldn't see him. Sahadeva thought, "I will make this guy my ally and friend." (that's what happened when Yudhishtira sent Sahadeva to the South for the Ashwamedha Yagna. This king eventually had a duel with Ashwatthama, the Son of Drona in the Great Mahabharata war).

During his practices, Sahadeva always used to remain very near the edge of anyone's peripheral vision, he neither moved too fast or too slow, nor remained motionless. It was a knack of balancing all. More difficult than tight-rope walking. Keeping the senses at their peak, he could just become one with the environment. He will never involve too much or too less. He was able to move among the Kaurava princes and none could notice him.

Sahadeva realised, it is practice time, he stood straight, observed his breathing, gentle air entering his nostrils, flowing in till the bottom of the belly and taking a turn during exhalation. He held the bow straight in front of his body, almost dividing his body into two symmetric halves, picked up the arrows from the quiver tied to his back and started shooting them at the target one after the other. It was very rhythmic, first use the right hand, pick the arrow shoot, hold using right, pick the arrow using left hand shoot. Hold..pick..shoot..hold..pick..shoot. He just continued. Krishna observing all this uttered, "Savyasachi." Someone that can use both the hands equally skillfully. Krishna recollected that nobody knows Sahadeva is also a Savyasachi. Everyone knew that only Arjuna was. However, Karna and Ashwatthama were also the only other Savyasachis. Sahadeva just continued practicing...

BOPS Week-2: Health & Hygiene Program, Malur



Demystifying Science...

Pralaya—the Great Deluge

We often hear of the mention of the ‘Great Deluge’ or pralaya, in our Hindu mythology, where the entire creation is almost



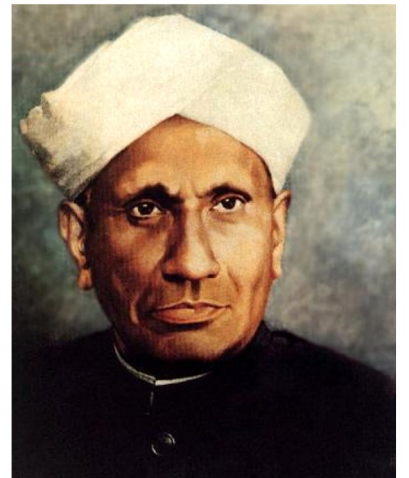
dissolved in a catastrophic flood. According to Matsya Puranam, Lord Vishnu is supposed to have first appeared as a little fish to King Shraddhadeva Manu, who out of compassion, placed the fish in a small cup. As the magical fish grew in leaps and bounds, King Manu moved the fish from cup to pitcher, then from a well to a lake, then river and finally the ocean. The fish who was none other than Lord Vishnu, commanded King Manu to fill a boat with the saptarishis, and one of each species of plant and animal life and escape the deluge that was soon to come. Several other civilizations also speak of such similar accounts, where they escape the torrent, of which Noah’s Ark is very famous as well. All such mythological narratives had some very observable parallels – the deluge was masterminded by God in an attempt to cleanse the universe of sin and evil, and the construction of a colossal boat carrying a chosen few with life forms of all species, to preserve creation and prevent extinction. The Puranas and other religious books attest to this incident, and suggest that God’s ultimate will is to restore peace and order, and thus, the prevalence of dharma! In today’s world, as we speak scientifically, floods are a result of man’s interference with the balance of nature, which again, is adharma. While wetlands and groves which are the sponges of the earth vanish, being replaced by urban settings, we witness miniature versions of ‘pralayam’, as rains overwhelm habitation. As the earth gets warmer due to industrialization, melting snowcaps inundate rivers, causing floods in low-lying areas. Mining for ores and gas, we hollow out the earth – a possible reason for earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides and sinkholes. This global disturbance of balance is enough to trigger nature’s fury, making us susceptible to the consequences, and reminding us to keep our actions in control so as to not incur nature’s wrath.

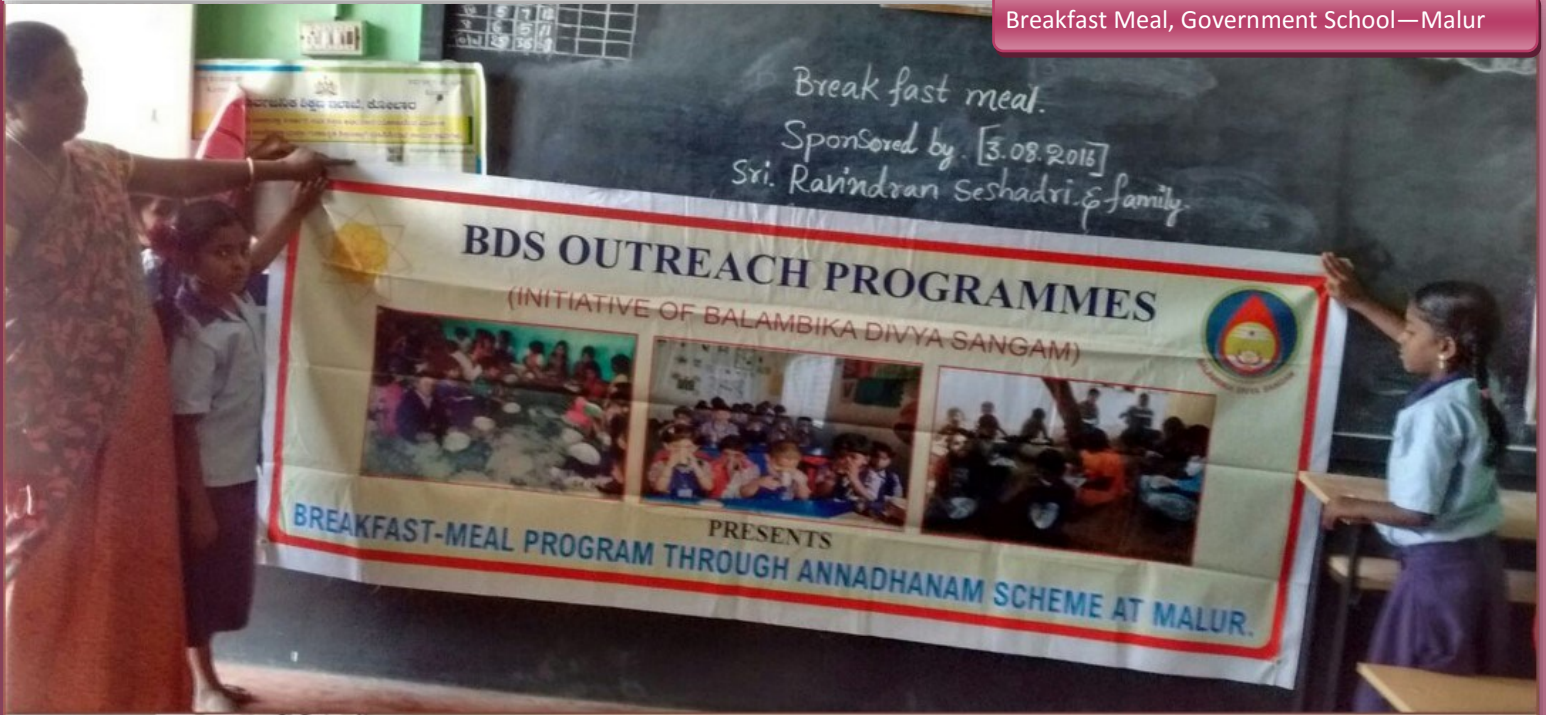
Who am I?

1. I am often described as a genius who won a Nobel Prize with research equipment worth just Rs. 300...
2. I was born on 7th November, 1888 at Tiruchirappalli (a.k.a Trichy) in Madras Province.
3. My father initially taught in a school in Thiruvanaikaval (Trichy) and later became a lecturer in Presidency College - Madras.
4. I passed my matriculation exam when I was 11 years old, and the F.A exam (XII Standard) at the age of 13.
5. At the tender age of 14, Professor Eliot of Presidency College, Madras, saw me as a little boy in his B.A class and mistook me to have strayed in by mistake.
6. Within the next 2 years, I graduated in Physics with a Gold Medal.
7. At the age of 19, I was appointed the Assistant Accountant General (a high Govt. Post) in the Finance Department in Calcutta.
8. Due to my love of Science, in 1917, I sacrificed my highly paying post and took up a Professor position at The University of Calcutta.
9. I was deeply interested in musical instruments such as Veena, Violin, Mridangam etc., and explained the complex vibrations of the strings and the characteristic tones.
10. I loved teaching and always wanted to inspire research through that medium.
11. On my journey back from England after a Science Conference, the blue colour of the sea inspired my lifetime work on "Molecular scattering of light".
12. On 16th March 1928, I announced the discovery of a new phenomenon that established the fact that light is made of particles.
13. I was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in the year 1930 by the Swedish Academy of Sciences.
14. I used Alcohol to demonstrate my scientific discovery during the Nobel Prize ceremony, but refused to touch it during the dinner that followed, choosing to remain loyal to my roots and tradition.
15. In 1933, I came to Bangalore as the Director of Tata Institute (now known as IISc - Indian Institute of Science)
16. By 1948, I established my own research centre in Bangalore. It bore the words, "The Institute is not open to visitors. Please do not disturb us."
17. I believed the new discoveries confirm the existence of God; Science was my God and work, my Religion.
18. There are many things named after me: a road in New Delhi, a building in IISc, a locality in Eastern Bangalore, a Hospital and even a fictional ship in Star Trek...
19. I passed away peacefully in the early hours of 21st November, 1970 at the lawns of my Research Institute.

Sir. C. V. Raman

was an Indian physicist who carried out ground-breaking work in the field of light scattering. He discovered that when light traverses a transparent material, some of the deflected light changes in wavelength. This phenomenon, subsequently known as Raman scattering or the Raman effect. In 1954, India honoured him with its highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna.





Indus Valley Civilization: Geography and Chronology

In the previous newsletter, a glimpse into the multifarious and sustained history of ancient India was provided. This edition would elaborate on the Indus Valley civilization, focusing on its geography and chronology.

Introduction:

The Indus Valley Civilization was a Bronze Age civilization that developed on the Indus river floodplain in the North-western region of the Indian subcontinent (consisting mainly of what is now Pakistan and Northwest India) around 5000 years ago. At the peak of its glory, the civilization was spread over an area of 1,260,000 sq. km., with a population of well over 5 million, making it the largest known ancient civilization. In addition, it is one of the world's earliest urban civilizations, along with its contemporaries, Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq) and Ancient Egypt. The Indus Valley civilization is also known by several other names, including the Indus civilization and the Harappan civilization, due to the fact that the first discovered city was located at Harappa. In spite of their significant achievements in architecture, metallurgy, arts, and technology, the Indus Valley civilization left no discernible written record of their grandeur. Despite numerous attempts by linguists and scholars from around the world, the Indus Valley language is yet to be deciphered.

Geography:

The Indus Valley Civilization flourished around the Indus river basin in the Northwestern part of the Indian subcontinent, encompassing most of present day Pakistan, and extending into the Indian states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, and Punjab (Fig. 1). Similar to the civilizations that arose in Egypt and Peru, the Indus Valley civilization was comprised of rich agricultural lands surrounded by highlands, deserts, and an ocean, namely, the Himalayas in the North/Northeast, Hindu Kush mountains in the West/Northwest, Thar Desert to the East, and the Arabian Sea in the South. The success of the Indus Valley Civilization can be attributed in large part to the Indus River itself. Fed by monsoonal summer rains and winter runoff from the mountains, the Indus River, especially when seen from satellite maps, is an obvious oasis in an otherwise arid region.

Following the discovery of Mohenjo-Daro along the banks of the Indus, and Harappa about 350 miles away, archaeolo-

gists started looking for other sites in the area. Around 500 sites were discovered, but they were buried under the sand in the desert. Archaeologists knew that these towns could not have survived in the desert. Their theories were confirmed, when recent satellite images showed that in what is now Thar Desert, a river used to flow with its own fertile banks. These dry channels of the Ghaggar-Hakra are considered by many to be the Saraswati River mentioned in the Rig Veda. Furthermore, along the Ghaggar-Hakra, there is a relatively high frequency of settlements during the Mature Harappan phase (2600 – 1900 B.C), which suggests a well-watered region that could support agriculture.

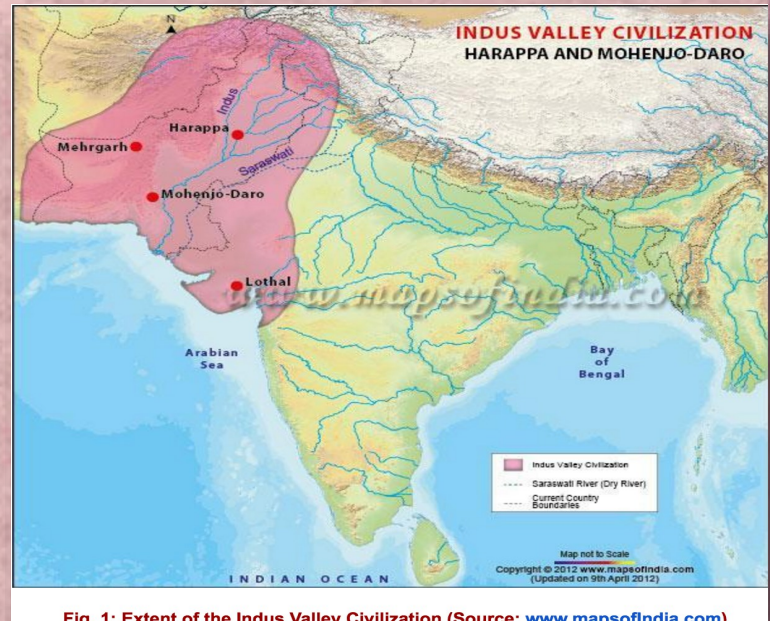


Fig. 1: Extent of the Indus Valley Civilization (Source: www.mapsofindia.com)

Chronology:

Many Stone Age archaeological sites have been discovered throughout the North-western region of the Indian subcontinent (Fig. 2). In particular, isolated remains of *Homo erectus* (oldest known early humans who possessed modern human-like body proportions) have been found in the Narmada Valley in Central India, indicating that India might have been inhabited at least since the Middle Pleistocene era, somewhere between 500,000 and 200,000 years ago. The Mesolithic period in the Indian subcontinent was followed by the Neolithic period, when more extensive settlements occurred, after the end of the last Ice Age approximately 12,000 years ago.

At one time, it was believed that the Indus Valley Civilization was a distant colony of the Mesopotamian civilization. But

this belief changed in 1974, when a French archaeologist Jean Francois Jarige excavated Mehrgarh, a 9000 year old Neolithic (7000 - 3200 BC) site, situated by the Bolan River near the Bolan Pass in Pakistan (near Quetta). This was one of the earliest sites with evidence of farming (wheat and barley) and herding (cattle, sheep and goats) in South Asia, and was located on the principal route between what is now Afghanistan and the Indus Valley. Subsequently, the chronology of the Indus Valley civilization was divided into the Early, Mature and Late phases or Regionalization, Integration, and Localization eras, respectively, with the entire civilization known to have lasted from the 33rd to the 14th century B.C. The timeline of the Indus Valley civilization is summarized in the table below:

Date Range	Phase	Era
7000 – 5500 B.C.	Mehrgarh I (aceramic Neolithic)	Early Food Producing Era
5500 – 3300	Mehrgarh II (ceramic Neolithic)	Regionalization Era 5500 - 2600
3300 – 2600	Early Harappan	
3300 – 2800	Harappan I (Ravi Phase)	
2800 – 2600	Harappan 2 (Kot Diji Phase, Naushahro I, Mehrgarh VII)	Integration Era
2600 – 1900	Mature Harappan (Indus Valley Civilization)	
2600 – 2450	Harappan 3A (Naushahro II)	
2450 – 2200	Harappan 3B	Localization Era
2200 – 1900	Harappan 3C	
1900 – 1300	Late Harappan	
1900 – 1700	Harappan 4	Localization Era
1700 – 1300	Harappan 5	
1300 – 300 B.C.	Iron Age	Indo-Gangetic Tradition

The Early Food Producing Era (7000 - 5500 B.C) is also referred to as the Neolithic period. Since the economy of this era was based on food production, animals were domesticated for the first time and agriculture developed in the Indus Valley. The Regionalization Era (5500 - 2600 B.C) corresponds to a period of regional cultural development, marked by productivity in arts and invention of new crafts. The Integration Era (2600 - 1900 B.C) refers to the mature phase of the Indus Valley Civilization. During this period, various smaller cultures assimilated and numerous urban centers and smaller regional towns emerged. Evidence also points to the common use of a writing system found primarily on pottery or on inscribed seals and tablets. The fourth and final phase of the civilization was the Localization Era (1900 - 1300 B.C). During this era, the civilization started to gradually decline. Scholars have speculated and debated the cause of this decline, but the exact reason is still elusive. Some of the proposed theories are ecological factors such as increased soil alkalinity, persistent drought caused by changes in monsoon patterns, shift in river flow patterns and tectonic up-

lifts leading to widespread flooding. In addition, many Indus Valley Civilization cities show signs of being abandoned and then rebuilt, indicating that they were continuously flooded. Recently, a research team led by geologist Liviu Giosan of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution concluded that climate change in the form of eastward migration of the monsoons led to this decline. As the monsoons kept shifting eastward, the water supply for the agricultural activities dried up, forcing the residents to migrate towards the Ganges basin in the east, where they established smaller villages and isolated farms.

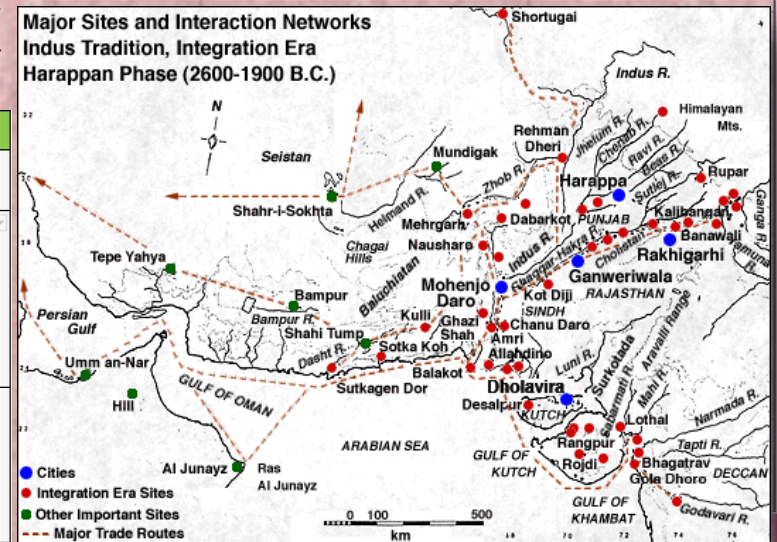


Fig. 2: Archaeological sites (Source: www.harappa.com)

Whatever be the reason for the decline of this great civilization, it is obvious that nature played a vital role in deciding its fate. However, excavations by archaeologists have provided sufficient evidence that the Harappan people did not disappear without leaving behind their pervasive legacy. For example, even today, in many parts of India and Pakistan, there is usage of many Harappan motifs on pottery, ornaments, bullock carts identical to those depicted by Harappan 'toy carts', house plans, terracotta bricks, statues, and advanced working tools. These will be covered in detail in the next newsletter, in addition to how these valuable artifacts and sites were discovered. In conclusion, the significance of the Indus Valley legacy can be aptly summarized in the words of notable American author and archaeologist, Walter A. Fairservis as, *"the answer to the question as to why the Harappan Civilization fell is that it didn't fall at all! It simply stood at the beginning of the mainstream of Indian culture and faded into that current, having brought to it acts of faith, class morality, aspects of technology, and perhaps a cosmology which heralded the eventual supreme achievement that was medieval India."*

References

Books:

1. Mountjoy, S. (2005). Rivers in World History: The Indus River. Chelsea House Publishers.
2. Possehl, L.G. (2002). The Indus Civilization: A Contemporary Perspective: Altamira Press.

Electronic sources:

1. Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Periodization_of_the_Indus_Valley_Civilization
2. www.harappa.com
3. <http://www.historymaestro.com/2010/10/indus-civilization-comprehensive.html>
4. <http://archaeology.about.com/od/mterms/g/mehrgarh.htm>
5. http://archaeology.up.nic.in/doc/mn_jfj.pdf
6. <http://suite101.com/article/mehrgarh--a-9000-year-old-civilization-a291743>
7. <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Mehrgarh>
8. <http://www.allabouthistory.org/indus-valley.htm>
9. <http://www.culturalindia.net/indian-history/ancient-india/indus-valley.html>
10. <http://project-history.blogspot.com/2006/11/geography-of-ancient-india-indus-river.html>
11. http://varnam.nationalinterest.in/2006/09/ghaggar_hakra_and_indus_sarasw/
12. <http://www.adventurecorps.com/archaeo/collapse.html>

Sri Bala Sahasranamam

With Meaning & Commentary by Smt. Asha Manoharan

References to Goddess Balambika (Bala) can be found in the Brahmanda Puranam. Sri Bala Sahasranama Stotram describes and praises the various attributes of Sri Balambika in 113 verses. Since each *nama* represents a unique nature and quality of Sri Balambika, it can be interpreted and discussed to cater to the different needs of an individual. Along with a direct meaning of each *nama*, Smt. Asha Manoharan has provided us with intriguing commentary and examples that a common man can relate to and apply in everyday life. So the next time we chant Sri Bala Sahasranamam, we will not only know the literal meaning of the *stotram*, but will also find a unique way to connect and relate to Sri Balambika.

*bheruṇḍā caṇḍikā caṇḍī cāmuṇḍī muṇḍa mālinī /
aṇurūpā mahārūpā bhūteśī bhuvaneśvarī //*

Bherunda: She is formidable

Ambal is a formidable force, because She is the reservoir of all knowledge. To receive Her knowledge, we need an enormous amount of determination, perseverance and patience.

She renders it through continual worship, devotion and discipline. She allows one to exist in the material world while striving for the plane of brahman. Ambal is the ocean of understanding, the consciousness which vibrates with different types of knowledge. She is the cause of all movements, the source of spiritual light, remover of all ignorance and promoter of knowledge.

Knowledge or consciousness is of 2 main kinds:

1. Self knowledge - Atma Jnana.

Atma Jnana is realizing our true nature or self. That is the goal of every human life. It is got by establishing complete control over the five senses.

2. Objective knowledge - Visaya Jnana.

This is obtained by practicing various disciplines and techniques as a means to self purification and elevation.

This is of 2 kinds:

1. Knowledge of one's existence:

This is an awareness of our own existence from the atman in us.

2. Knowledge of one's true nature:

The understanding of one's true nature is very complex, but it can be understood when the veil of ajnana is removed.

This can be achieved only with the help of Ambal.

So these basic principles need to be adhered to lead a happy and a harmonious life on Earth.

Chandika: being fierce

Ambal is the personification of love and courage, but fierce towards the negative qualities that we have. We see Ambal as a Goddess who is violent, with an angry look and holding a trishul, looking vengeful at the demon at Her feet.

Is She always like that, it scares everyone, but we need to understand the story behind it. The demons at Her feet are forgiven several times before She slays them.

Her love should not be taken to be Her weakness.

Her mercy should not be considered as Her disability.

Her silence should not be taken as her non-existence.

Upanishads describe the demonic qualities that Ambal slays:

1. Lack of discrimination:

When this quality rises above other qualities, then intelligence is deluded by ignorance and we do not know what is right and what is wrong. We consider the fulfillment of desires as the highest goal instead of liberation.

2. Lack of virtue:

This quality prevents us from being clean and leads us astray from customs and traditions (acharams). It fills us with lust, vanity, pride and arrogance. It makes us a self-centered, egoistic, and narrow minded person.

3. Lack of compassion:

This quality drags us down the path of hostility and cruelty, seeking the destruction of one's self and of others.

4. Lack of respect for truth and justice:

Driven by expectations and overcome by thoughts of lust and anger, it coaxes us to accumulate wealth by unjust and unlawful means for the fulfillment of desires.

5. Lack of respect for the inner self:

This demonic quality does not recognize Ambal as the supreme and disrespects the people who believe in Her.

So, these are the qualities She is up against, the battle that we should be fighting. Her love for us turns Her into the Chandi She is.

Chandi: She is the violent and impetuous one

Ambal in the supernova state is called chandi. To devour the demons in and around us, She takes this form. I have already talked about our inner demons. Let's look at the other demons as well.

1. Lust:

This is a demon which needs to be controlled all the time. To have an intense desire or need is bad. Ambal created a sexual intimacy to be fully enjoyed within the marriage relationship. Anything away from it is a sin.

2. Gluttony:

Excessive eating is also an addiction. Food is meant for survival, not for comfort. We should eat what our body wants and how much it wants. Anything more than that is a sin.

3. Greed:

Accumulation in any form is greed. It is truly a crime to mankind. One should know when to say it is enough. This would help a person to lead a peaceful life, otherwise it will lead us on to misery and sorrow. So excessiveness in any form is sin.

4. Laziness:

It is basically being idle or doing nothing. This needs to be overcome. It is a very negative quality which influences people to avoid work, resist drive and thereby, success eludes them.

5. Envy:

We often feel envious or malicious because of our own conflicts with self-esteem or self-limitation. There is a lack of self-worth and often a feeling of inferiority complex within us. These should be removed; only then one can feel one's worthiness and can take a concrete step towards self-liberation and self-satisfaction.

Chamundi: Slayer of demons

All of us should understand that we all carry the burden of our wrong doings. This wrong doing is called sin. Sin is very real in our lives. We do so many things that aren't pleasing Ambal. Acknowledging that you have wronged is a huge step in our life. A lot of people sin and don't think there is anything wrong with it, while some people finally come to see how destructive sin can be. Think about the various things you do, that lead us to sin.

Here are a few I think leads to sin:

1. Temptation:

Every day, we are tempted to do things that lead us to commit a sin. There was a boy at the grocery store looking at the cookies in the shop. The grocer approached the boy and asked, "What are you up to?" "Nothing," replied the boy. "Well, it looks like you are trying to take a cookie," said the grocer. "You are wrong mister, I am trying not to", replied the boy.

Every time, we should stop ourselves from temptation, because it leads us into trouble. So you better watch out.

2. Anger:

Anger is an emotion, but it doesn't stop at that. It leads us to many wrong doings. Managing your anger is very important to lead a calm and peaceful life. Anger always leads to destruction. So be aware!!!

3. Selfish Behaviour:

This is another common trait which leads to committing a sin. Many of us have a very small world around us and in it, we think about only ourselves. Selfishness hurts other people; you end up losing friends and family. Many of us think that selfishness and pride are survival instincts and they are acceptable. No, it is not.

We need to get rid of these three things to help us lead a sin free life.

The demons Ambal slays are within us and sin stemming out of it is dangerous for us and for the society we live in.

Munda: Pointless

Our life without Ambal is pointless.

Ambal's way is very different from our ways. Her ways are much higher than ours and Her thoughts are much better than ours. So, we should learn to admit this truth and accept Ambal's choice for us and appreciate Her thoughts and try to think what we would have done without Her invisible hand guiding us.

We always blame Ambal when something undesirable happens to us. Why?

When a righteous man turns away from righteousness and commits a crime, all the righteousness he has done will not save him from the karma he has done. He will be rewarded for his righteous act and punished for the crime he has committed. The punishment does not come from Ambal, it comes from the crime.

For every action, there will be an equal and opposite reaction. So the reaction is a consequence of the act that was committed. When we have the mind to accept a reward for our righteous act, we must be humble enough to accept the punishment also.

Why should we blame it on Ambal?

Three most important things to remember:

1. Absence of God in our lives:

The truth is God is with all of us all the time, we think God is absent, because we think God should solve all our problems. Problems in life is a lesson which we should learn, to understand God's way and to learn the righteousness of life. Instead, we want God to live our life by posing all our problems and expecting God to give us a solution. Ask yourself is it fair?

2. Absence of personal encounter with God:

We all expect to have a personal encounter with God in the form of magic spells. God is walking with you, inspiring you through your friend, consoling you through your family, counselling you through your Guru. In spite of all this, you still think God is not being personal with you.

Ask yourself is it fair?

3. Failure to see Ambal's perfect timing for you:

We are so restless for things to happen. If it happens for your friend, it should happen to you immediately. This frame of mind is the one that makes you very vulnerable to life. Follow the pattern of your life, you will understand that She gives you what is necessary, when it is necessary, and how much is necessary.

So wait patiently for Her timing, it never misses the goal.

Malini: One who wears a garland

It is mandatory to offer flowers and floral garlands to Gods and Goddesses during pooja in our culture.

The word pooja often refers to Japam with flowers. So no pooja is complete without flowers and garlands. Flowers in general, can gladden the mind and confer prosperity. Flowers in any colour, any design and fragrance is the creator's masterpiece. The fragrance it holds and the honey it spills, is all exquisite.

1. Flowers symbolize love. By offering floral garlands, we shower our love for the wonderful life She has given us.
2. Flowers represent nature or prakriti. In Devi Bhagavatam, Sri Narada explains the meaning of the syllables, Pra means superior and excellent and the suffix kriti as creation. It simply means excellent creation. So by offering a floral garland, we acknowledge Ambal as an excellent creator and praise Her as Devi Prakriti.
3. The word flower represents prakriti, which can also be considered to have 3 syllables: Pra, kri, ti. Pra signifies the Sattvic guna, Kri denotes Rajo guna and Ti the Tamasic guna.

The excellent quality is the Sattvic guna, which is the unblemished part of our soul, the Rajo guna which merges with the reality, spreads into the reality of things, so as to not make us understand the true reality. Tamo guna is the one which hides real knowledge.

Thus, by offering the floral garland to Ambal, we are actually praying to Ambal to eradicate our Tamo gunas, reduce our Rajo gunas and bless us with more of Sattvic gunas, which is conducive to the "flowering of Consciousness".

4. Traditionally, we offer only sweet smelling flowers as floral garlands and that which is cultivated on a good soil. Through this offering, we are offering ourselves to Ambal letting Her know, we are surrendering ourselves into Her with complete faith. We are transmitting our bhakti bhava or emotion as "yado bhava, Tat bhavet".

It is the bhava of surrender and faith.

Anurupa: nature works according to Her will and She resides in every form

Everything in this world, every living thing works according to Her law and Her will. They have no choice, but to obey.

Ambal's laws are built on logic and so the world is not a haphazard place, but an orderly, logical place which works according to the will of Ambal.

Let us look at the world based on the laws of nature that we know of.

1. Law of biological sciences clearly states that every life has to be formed from life itself, which disproves the theory of evolution, which believes that life was formed by the spontaneous reaction of non-living chemicals. So by far, the laws of science favour Ambal's creation rather than the evolutionist theory.
2. If we look at chemistry, the properties of elements and compounds are not arbitrary. The elements are arranged logically in the periodic table. Substances in the same column have similar properties. This is due to the same electronic structure, if they

are different, then the properties would be different. So Ambal designed them that way and it's in accordance to nature, and nature works according to the will of God.

3. If you look at the solar system, they obey three laws of nature.

- a. Planets move in elliptical orbits
- b. Planets sweep out equal areas at equal times - in other words, planets speed up as they get closer to the sun within the orbit.
- c. The planets that are farther from the sun take much longer to orbit, than the planets that are closer.

These laws show that there is a creator and a mastermind who pulls off these things and who knows how to bring these things together, a beautifully orchestrated play is highly visible here.

4. Let us look at the simple law which we have studied in school.

An object with mass (m) will accelerate at (a) when a net force (F) is applied to it.

It is amazing how every object in this universe consistently obeys this law. This is another classical example of Ambal's consistent application of rules and laws.

5. God's nature is logical and mathematical. Many say Maths is a human invention, but it is Ambal who used Maths as a magic wand to create the beautiful starfish with its wonderful symmetry and the leaves on branches which has perfect set angles. Man could have created the notation for it, but the mathematical truth is applied by Ambal. This is the effortless brilliance, which again shows Her wonderful creation, so I can say boldly that Maths is the language of creation.

6. Creation is conceived only in logic. Once you see that, the creation which was once a mystery, turns out to be a wonderful game of treasure hunt. Without the laws of logic, reasoning is impossible. If we understand logic, we can also appreciate how consistent God is and we can learn to appreciate Her displayed beauty and enjoy the everlasting creation. She has created the right laws of physics, so that chemistry could be correct and life can exist.

Hence, we call Her Anurupa.

Maharupa: mighty in form

In the previous post, I had explained how Ambal created this Universe with rules and laws, which speak of nothing but truth.

Today, in describing Her form as Maharupa, we are revisiting the concept of uniqueness.

God made everything according to Her perfect plan to reveal and reflect Herself in the creation. Creation is the testimony to Ambal's power and Her genius. The creation speaks of Her mighty attributes, which no language or speech can explain.

1. She is Unique:

Ambal is unique and completely sovereign over all life and all circumstances. Her plans and purpose will stand and no one can stop Her or say to Her "What are you doing?"

2. She is Truth:

Ambal is perfect and Her ways are the judgment based on truth. She never lies. It is impossible for Her to lie, if She says it will happen, it will actually take place. If we follow the path of Ambal, we need to be perfect and need to be known as an individual who tells the truth, like Ambal. That means when we promise something, we need to keep that promise or not make it in the first place. We need to try, to place ourselves in situations where we don't feel the need to lie or defend either ourselves or our behaviour.

3. She is Hope:

Ambal is hope not only during troubled times, but also during good times. Hope is the knowledge that change is the only constant thing in this world. If the sun rises, it should set. If the tides rises, it should fall by the shore. If you have troubled times, a

good life is not far behind. Ambal wants us to take encouragement from Her character and hope in Her actions. The hope that She will never let us down should be instilled in all of us.

So when does hope turn into dismay?

When we pin our hope in the wrong things. It is so easy to place our hope in the wrong things, it is so easy to get carried away in this material world, so stop yourself and understand what you want, don't run behind things that will fail you. Instead, return back to Ambal and pin all your hopes on Her and enrich your life with peace and prosperity.

Bhutesi: arising or awakening

Thoughts of Ambal give you magnificent energy. Ambal has given you boundless powers to explore and experience.

It is time you explore your choices and directions.

It is time to recognize your fears, so they no longer control you.

It is time you connect with your inner self to recognize yourself.

It is time to wake up to gain confidence to be your own leader.

We are all so different. At different stages in life, we understand things differently. Things we are experiencing no matter how overwhelming it can be, is just an opportunity to learn and understand yourself.

1. Focus on yourself and learn to be yourself:

Very often, I see people thinking about what others might think about them, rather than focusing on themselves. So the result you might aspire to and even go to great lengths to exceed others expectations, falling short of that expectation in any way is a source of disappointment and an opportunity to blame yourself.

So understand what you can do and focus on what you can do and what you cannot do.

2. Acceptance:

Learn to accept who you are and what you are and where you came from. This is very important in cultivating self acceptance. Our ultimate goal is happiness, so to achieve this, self acceptance needs to be cultivated, because happiness and acceptance go hand in hand. In fact, your level of self acceptance determines your level of happiness. The more self acceptance you have, the happier you will be.

3. Build your self confidence:

Not everyone is born with an inbuilt sense of self confidence. You need to build them brick by brick. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses. Look at what you have, recognize them and that is the first step to building your confidence.

So, imbibe these qualities and you will find yourself arising from the ashes like a Phoenix bird, flapping your wings and ready to fly to great heights.

Bhuvaneshwari: Queen of the Universe

Ambal is the sovereign ruler of the Universe.

There is no higher authority. Our Ambal possesses every ability that we can think of. She is all powerful, all knowing, so there is nothing about which She is not aware of, nothing happens without Her divine permission. She commands the forces of nature and uses them to achieve Her divine purpose. She established the scientific laws that regulate the Universe and only She can overrule their effect.

Ambal determines the course of world events. You can make your plans, but only Her purpose will prevail.

Difficulties and suffering are the tools in Her hand with which She shapes you into a perfect person. She has shaped the world the way it is.

Bhuvaneswari sits on the peedam with Abhaya mudra and Varada mudra. In the other two hands, She holds the goad and the noose.

1. Abhaya Mudra: It is the gesture She offers to protect and reassure Her devotees. She protects them from their fears and reassures them that She will liberate them from this life cycle. It also emphasizes the dissolution function She undertakes. She implies that the supreme power and invincibility of Ambal dissolves all difficulties in the path to liberation.

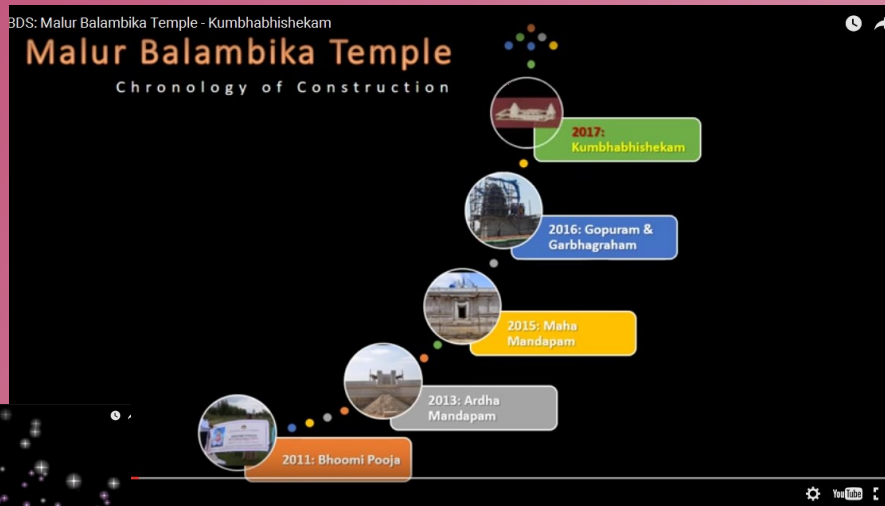
2. Varada Mudra: It is the gesture for granting boons. She promises that She will give boons for our material enjoyment. It offers the devotees prosperity and material enjoyment. It also implies the all-giving magnanimous nature of the Supreme Mother.

3. Goad and the noose: It symbolizes that She is capable of destroying our ahankara and our material attachments.

Thus, as Bhuvaneswari, Ambal sits in the peedam of our hearts, rules the inner and outer world and leads us into salvation.

Bala Sahasranamam on Website, Facebook and YouTube







































BDS: MALUR BALAMBIKA TEMPLE - KUMBHABHISHEKAM

As we fervently move towards the completion of the Temple construction and Kumbhabhishekam, here is a video which traverses through this beautiful journey. The Kumbhabhishekam is the divine culmination of a beatific dream and we want all of you to join hands and be a memorable part of it.

<https://youtu.be/HuUSJdztg4Fg>

Kumbhabhishekam: 10th April, 2017

BDS: Upcoming Events...

Mon Aug 15	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI NITHYA SUNDARESHWARAR AND SRI ANNAPOORNESHWARI - BALA'S HOUSE 
Tue Aug 16	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI BALAMBIKA AND SRI SIDDHI VINAYAGAR - AT BALA'S HOUSE  
Thu Aug 18	4:00pm – 7:00pm	⊕  POURNAMI PUJA AT MALUR - MALUR
Fri Aug 19	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI BALAMBIKA AND SRI MAHALAKSHMI 
Mon Aug 22	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI NITHYA SUNDARESHWARAR AND SRI ANNAPOORNESHWARI - BALA'S HOUSE 
Tue Aug 23	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI BALAMBIKA AND SRI SIDDHI VINAYAGAR - AT BALA'S HOUSE  
Fri Aug 26	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI BALAMBIKA AND SRI MAHALAKSHMI 
Mon Aug 29	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI NITHYA SUNDARESHWARAR AND SRI ANNAPOORNESHWARI - BALA'S HOUSE 
Tue Aug 30	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI BALAMBIKA AND SRI SIDDHI VINAYAGAR - AT BALA'S HOUSE  
Fri Sep 2	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI BALAMBIKA AND SRI MAHALAKSHMI 
Mon Sep 5	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI NITHYA SUNDARESHWARAR AND SRI ANNAPOORNESHWARI - BALA'S HOUSE 
Tue Sep 6	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI BALAMBIKA AND SRI SIDDHI VINAYAGAR - AT BALA'S HOUSE  
Fri Sep 9	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI BALAMBIKA AND SRI MAHALAKSHMI 
Mon Sep 12	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI NITHYA SUNDARESHWARAR AND SRI ANNAPOORNESHWARI - BALA'S HOUSE 
Tue Sep 13	10:00am – 11:00am	⊕  ABISHEKAM TO SRI BALAMBIKA AND SRI SIDDHI VINAYAGAR - AT BALA'S HOUSE  

A big Thank You to Chennai Dolai Sponsors!!!

#	NAME	EVENT
1	MR. K MURALIDHARAN	DOLAI
2	MRS. RAJINI ANANDBABU	DOLAI
3	MRS. KAVITHA RAJ KUMAR	DOLAI
4	MR. V SUBBIAH	DOLAI
5	MRS. SURYAVARSHINI	DOLAI
6	MR. SATISH	DOLAI
7	MR. SUBRAMANIAN	DOLAI
8	MRS. VASANTHI RAMAN	DOLAI
9	MRS. DIVYA	DOLAI
10	MR. DESIKAN	DOLAI
11	MR. GOWRI SHANKAR	DOLAI
12	MR. MALAR SAMPATH	DOLAI
13	MR. PARVATHY SANKHAR	DOLAI
14	MRS. NIYTA	DOLAI
15	MR. VIJAYAKUMAR	DOLAI

#	NAME	EVENT
1	MRS. VIJAYALAKSHMI	ARCHANA SEVA
2	MR. MUTHULINGAM	ARCHANA SEVA
3	MR. SAICHARAN	ARCHANA SEVA
4	MRS. MUTHULAKSHMI	ARCHANA SEVA
5	MR. JANARDHAN RAO	ARCHANA SEVA

#	VOLUNTEERS
1	MRS. PRIYA KASTURIRANGAN
2	MR & MRS. KAMALA KANNA
3	MR. MUTHULINGAM
4	MR AND MRS. SAMPATH
5	MRS. MEERA VIJAYA RAGHAVAN
6	MR & MRS. GOWRISHANKAR
7	MRS. CHITRA NARASIMHAM
8	MRS. SHASHIKALA VENKATESH
9	MRS. SHARANYA VIGNESH
10	MR. SHASHANK
11	MR & MRS. RAGHURAMAN
12	MR & MRS. DESIKAN
13	MRS. VASANTHI RAMAN
14	MRS. THANGAM
15	MRS. PADMA

#	OTHER SPONSORS	ITEMS
1	MR. VIJAY	ABHISHEKHAM ITEMS FOR VELAKKU POOJA
2	MRS. BALA TRIPURASUNDARI	POOJA ITEMS FOR VELLAKKU POOJA
3	MR. MURUGESHAN	FLOWERS FOR VELAKKU POOJA
4	MR. KAMALA KANNA	AYODHYA MANDAPAM-CHARGES
5	MRS. MEERA VIJAYA RAGHAVAN	AMBAL'S ABODE (FOR 10 DAYS)
6	MR. SANTHANA GOPALA KRISHNA	TEMPLE ACTIVITIES
7	MRS. S THANGAM	TEMPLE ACTIVITIES
8	MR. G ARAVINDHAN	TEMPLE ACTIVITIES
9	MR. PRAKASH MAMA	KANYA POOJA
10	MRS. ANURADHA SRINIVASAN	DAMPATTI POOJA
11	MRS. SHASHIKALA VENKATESH	SUMANGALI POOJA
12	MRS. MYTHILI SUNDARAJAN	PRASADAM FOR VELLAKKU POOJA
13	MRS. CHITRA CHANDRASHEKHAR	PRASADAM FOR VELLAKKU POOJA
14	MRS. SAROJINI NARAYAN	PRASADAM FOR VELLAKKU POOJA
15	MR. RAGHU	PRADHANA DONOR
16	MR. DESIKAN	PRASADAM FOR VELLAKKU POOJA



BDS Contacts

Bala Sahasranamam Parayanam:

Chakravarthy's residence, Ohio—USA.

▪ 95chikki@gmail.com

Anuradha Srinivasan's residence, Chicago—USA

▪ asriniv65@gmail.com

Dolai Utsavam:

Dolai Utsavam will be performed for Sanchara Bala, in the privacy of one's home, amidst a social gathering.

Devotees who are interested, please contact Temple Manager:

balambikadivyasangam2015@gmail.com

Annadhanam Scheme:

We are feeding the under nourished, low income children in government higher primary school.

Those who are interested in sponsoring, please contact Temple Manager :

balambikadivyasangam2015@gmail.com

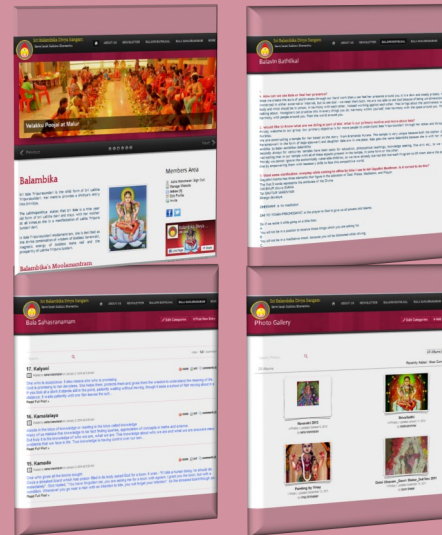
BDS Outreach:

We are having health and hygiene awareness and also dental care for children , if you could sponsor for this program, we would cover more children and help them have proper dental care.

Those who are interested in contributing towards this cause, please contact Temple Manager : balambikadivyasangam2015@gmail.com

Vision of Balambika Divya Sangam

As passionate devotees of Goddess Balambika, and overwhelmed by her grace and benevolence, we have come together from diverse scenarios as one unifying force to form Balambika Divya Sangam. The principal focus of the Sangam is to pursue the age old tenet—**sarvejana sukhinobhavanthu** and pay obeisance to the divine Mother, who is the cause of welfare of the world. Through worship we realize that cast, creed, religion and social status, all melt away before her, for in her eyes, we are all her children.



We are on the web!

<http://balambikathirumanitrust-webs.com>

This is a good place to catch up on all the Sangam activities such as About Us, Temple Updates, Balavin Bathikal, Bala Sahasranamam, archives of earlier Newsletters etc.

Join us on WhatsApp!

To join Balambika Divya Sangam WhatsApp group, please send an email along with phone# to our President Smt. Asha Manoharan at asha.raji@gmail.com



Archana Contributions

Bala Sreenivasan

Rukmani

Vasu Chakravarthy

Sponsor's Corner

Annadhanam

Varun & family

Ravindran Seshadri & family

Pournami Pooja/ Dholai Sponsor

Bhagyalakshmi & family