

# Balavin Kural

## Balambika Divya Sangam

### From the Editor's desk...

*Namaaskarams.*

*Last month was very hectic for me with lots of activities, amongst the note worthy ones was the annual temple visit. As always it was very refreshing and also brought fresh air with it though the temples we visited were very old. The temple's history was very interesting as we went about seeing the temple and we felt the sense of belonging because we have read them in fiction stories like Ponniyan Selvan and we could relate to what was said in the books. As my thoughts wandered thinking of the greatness of the temples, the magnitude of this great country could also be felt. Temple construction has begun way back from 5 BC onwards. The temples were constructed according to the shilpa sastras which is seen even today. The temples that we visited followed a particular pattern. The structures were more or less the same. It had a Jagati which is nothing but a raised surface, platform or terrace upon which the temple is placed. The antarala which is a small antichamber between the garbagriha and the mantapa then there was the*

*mantapa which were of different types namely*

*the Ardha Mandapam: intermediary space between the temple exterior and the garba griha (sanctum sanctorum) or the other mandapas of the temple*

*Asthana Mandapam: assembly hall*

*Kalyana Mandapam: dedicated to ritual marriage celebration of the Lord with Goddess*

*Maha Mandapam: (Maha=big) When there are several mandapas in the temple, it is the biggest and the tallest. It is used for conducting religious discourses.*

*Nandi Mandapam (or Nandi mandir): Pavilion with a statue of the sacred nandi, looking at the statue or the lingam of Shiva.*

*The garba graha which is the main place where shiva is kept.*

*The koshtam had in almost all the temples the same idols, to the left of shiva there was dakshinamoorthy and to the right it is brahma and to the extreme back was lingobhavar. Though these temples were constructed during dif-*



*ferent periods they all had the same pattern. These temples were all nearly 1000 - 1500 years old, so the structures were simple and it did not have fancied gopurams like how we see today, they all had dome shaped structures covering the roof of the temple, so the concept of decorative gopurams was only a recent concept spanning around 500 to 700 years.*

*Let me allow you to read the rest of the newsletter as always.*

*Sarvejana Subinobhavanthu*

### Editorial Team

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### Upcoming Events:

#### Bala Sahasranamam Parayanam:

Mythili Sundararajan's residence, Bangalore, India  
Contact: [myyasundar@gmail.com](mailto:myyasundar@gmail.com)  
Chakravarthy's residence, Ohio, USA.  
Contact: [95chikki@gmail.com](mailto:95chikki@gmail.com)  
Anuradha Srinivasan's residence, Chicago, USA  
Contact: [asriniv65@gmail.com](mailto: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  
Smt. Asha Manoharan  
[asha.raji@gmail.com](mailto:asha.raji@gmail.com)

#### Annadanam and Milk scheme:

Annadanam and serving of milk to nursery children, is performed at Modern English School, Malur. Those who are interested in contributing towards this cause, please contact  
Smt. Asha Manoharan  
[asha.raji@gmail.com](mailto:asha.raji@gmail.com)

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## *Bala Speaks...*

*“Courage is not just physical bravery but endurance, mental stamina and innovation.”*

*When you do something you need to have courage and the conviction to do the action intended. It is a very important attribute which is worthy of one's respect. Courage is not just physical bravery, but endurance, mental stamina and innovation. Fear and courage are brothers; courage is not absence of fear but triumph over it. Secondly, passion to do things, that is what pushes your fear aside and makes you do extraordinary things. It helps you rediscover what you are and helps you to accept challenges. Passion is and should always be the heart of courage. Thirdly letting go off the familiar things: this will help you to discover new things. You cannot discover new oceans unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shore. So have the courage to live life to the fullest.*

## Holy Items of Worship: Vibhuti

The authoritative meanings for the word Vibhuti are: excellence, dignity, majesty, dominion, and some more, and also a celestial missile given to Rama by Viswamitra. Vibhuti in Sanskrit means prosperity, wealth and glory. Shiva, the ascetic is visualized as covered with ash, which is fragrant as mentioned in the commonly chanted "MRITYUNJAYA JAPA MANTRA", (for him) "sugandham" (sweet smelling). When one applies Vibhuti, it is a constant reminder that the material being is perishable and that we should look for the imperishable (Nithya), the Brahman within us. Af-

ter all, isn't the ultimate destination of the human body — ash! Vibhuti is also said to have medicinal value and is used in the mantric type of healing. Saint Thirugnana Sambandar cured the stomach disease of the Jain King, Koonpandian, of Madurai (7th Century) using vibhuti. The saint while composing the poem Mandiram Aavathu Neeru, took a hand full of Vibhuti and applied it on the king's body. This gave the king immediate relief and he converted himself to a Hindu. Vibhuti should be taken with the right hand and applied on the forehead as three horizontal lines. The first line stands for removal of Ahankar

(pride), the next stands for removal of ignorance and the third stands for removal of bad karma (actions). Vibhuti is normally applied on nine parts of the upper body, the forehead, on both the upper arms, elbows, wrists, neck and chest. Vibhuti applied with faith, is said to increase intellectual power and prosperity.



**"Vibhuti is used to denote the sacred ash which is made of burnt dried wood in Vedic rituals."  
-Wikipedia**

## Did you know?

It is the Hindu tradition, people bow down to the Supreme and to the elders by kneeling and bowing one's head to the floor. There are 2 postures, which are practiced by Hindus. The Astanga posture is when all 8 limbs of the body touch the floor (face down sleeping posture). This is also called **Sashtanga Namaskaaram**. This is recommended to be done by the men only. The **Panchanga Pranaamam** or 5 parts of the body touching the floor (head, shoulders and hands, knees, feet) is done by men and women. This is a kneel-

ing posture with the head bowed down to the floor. In temples, prostrations of these types are done only to the Gods. Outside temples they are done to elders. Prostrations should not be done to those who are sleeping or still in wet clothes. One should not also bow down to those who are younger in age. In the Vaishnava practice, the men in the family prostrate and then announce their name, ancestry and school of thought (abhivadanam) after they have had their upanayanam (thread ceremony). Usually one announces his

gotra, the three or five sages one is descendent from, the sutra one follows, the vedas one follows, and followed by the sutra, vedas and one's name to receive blessing from elders. These announcements are not made before God, Sages, Sanyasis, or women other than one's mother. Abhivadanam is an interesting practice handed down from generation to generation without any documentation. It was an unique way of maintaining a record of the family background, school of thought, Vedic study and background of the individual.

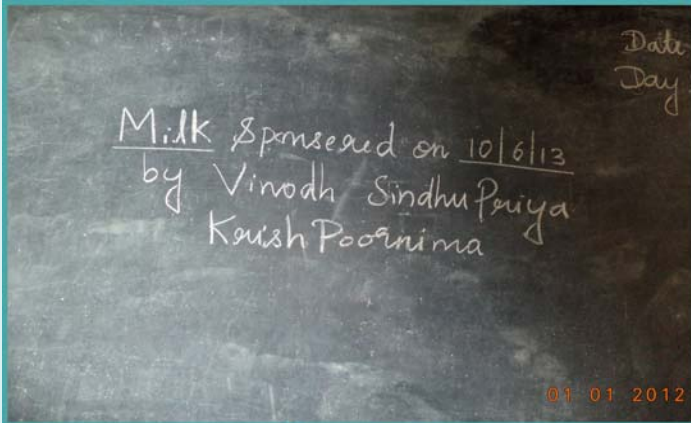


*Namaskaram is the Hindu tradition to bow down to the Supreme and to the elders by kneeling and bowing one's head to the floor.*

# Annadhanam



# Milk Scheme



## Bala Prastha



A long time ago, there lived a King. This King should have been contented with his life, given all the riches and luxuries he had. However, that was not the case! The King always found himself wondering why he just never seemed content with his life. Sure, he had the attention of everyone wherever he went, attended fancy dinners and parties, but somehow, he still felt something was lacking and he couldn't put his finger on it.

One day, the King had woken up earlier than usual to stroll around his palace. He entered his huge living room and came to a stop when he heard someone happily singing away... Following this singing, he saw that it was one of the servants singing and he had a very contented look on his face.

This fascinated the King and he summoned this

man to his chambers. The man entered the King's chambers as ordered. The King asked why he was so happy? To this the man replied: "Your Majesty, I am nothing but a servant, but I make enough of a living to keep my wife and children happy. We don't need too much, a roof over our heads and warm food to fill our tummy. My wife and children are my inspiration; they are content with whatever little I bring home. I am happy because my family is happy."

Hearing this, the King dismissed the servant and summoned his Personal Assistant to his chambers. The King related his personal anguish about his feelings and then related the story of the servant to his Personal Assistant, hoping that somehow, he will be able to come up with some reasoning that here

was a King who could have anything he wished for at a snap of his fingers and yet was not contented, whereas, his servant, having so little was extremely contented.

The Personal Assistant listened attentively and came to a conclusion. He said, "Your Majesty, I believe that the servant has not been made part of The 99 Club." "The 99 Club? And what exactly is that?" the King inquired. To which the Assistant replied, "Your Majesty, to truly know what The 99 Club is, you will have to do the following: place 99 Gold coins in a bag and leave it at this servant's doorstep, you will then understand what The 99 Club is."

That very same evening, the King arranged for 99 Gold coins to be placed in a bag at the servant's doorstep. Although he was slightly



hesitant and he thought he should have put 100 Gold coins into the bag, but since his assistant had advised him to put 99, that is what he did. The servant was just stepping out of his house when he saw a bag at his doorstep. Wondering about its contents, he took it into his house and opened the bag. When he opened the bag, he let out a great big shout of joy... Gold Coins... so many of them. He could hardly believe it. He called his wife to show her the coins. He then took the bag to a table and emptied it out and began to count the coins. Doing so, he realized that there were 99 coins and he thought it was an odd number so he counted again, and again and again only to come to the same conclusion... 99 Gold Coins. He began to wonder, what could have happened to that last one coin? For no one would leave 99 coins.

He began to search his entire house, looked around his backyard for hours, not wanting to lose out on that one coin. Finally, exhausted, he decided that he was going to have to work harder than ever to make up for that one Gold coin to make his

entire collection an even 100 Gold Coins. He got up the next morning, in an extremely horrible mood, shouting at the children and his wife for his delay, not realizing that he had spent most of the night conjuring ways of working hard so that he had enough money to buy himself that gold coin. He went to work as usual - but not in his usual best mood, singing happily; instead he grumpily did his daily errands. Seeing the man's attitude change so drastically, the King was puzzled. He promptly summoned his assistant to his chambers. The King related his thoughts about the servant and once again, his assistant listened. The King could not believe that the servant who until yesterday had been singing away and was happy and content with his life had taken a sudden change of attitude, even though he should have been happier after receiving the gold coins. To this the assistant replied "Ah! But your Majesty, the servant has now officially joined The 99Club." He explained: "The 99 Club is just a name given to those people who have everything but yet are never contented, therefore they are always working hard and striving for that extra one to round it out to 100! We have so much

to be thankful for and we can live with very little in our lives, but the minute we are given something bigger and better, we want even more! We are not the same happy contented person we used to be, we want more and more. And by wanting more and more, we don't realize the price we pay for it. We lose our sleep, our happiness; we hurt the people around us just as a price to pay for our growing needs and desires. That is what joining The 99Club is all about." Hearing this King decided that from that day onwards, he was going to start appreciating all the little things in life.

*Striving for more is always good, but let's not strive so hard and for so much that we loses all those near and dear to our hearts, we shouldn't compromise our happiness for moments of luxuries!*

# Kutti Bala's Birthday Celebration: 24th May, 2013







### Temple Visit: Tiruvomaampuliyur

Moksha is the liberation of the soul or we can say the oneness with God. Liberation can be obtained at different levels. A samsari who conducts his household affairs according to the hindu dharma gets Swarga loga where gods live. A brahmacharya who performs his dharma well enters the Maharloka. A vanasprasti enters the Jnanaloka and Tapoloka to enjoy other pleasures, a sanyasi enters the Satyaloka. Moksha can be attained only by one's words and deeds.

Once upon a time there was a hunter who lived in a forest and his way of living is to hunt animals. One day a tiger was trying to hunt him down, in order to save his life he climbed up a vilva tree and stayed there throughout the night. Thinking he might fall asleep and fall down from the tree, he plucked the leaves of the vilva tree and threw it down. Under the tree was a shiva

lingam and these leaves happened to fall on the shiva lingam and thus unknowingly he was worshipping Shiva the whole night. Pleased with his action, it is believed Shiva appeared before the hunter and liberated him. This is the sthala puranam of the temple Tiruvomaampuliyur.



This temple is the parikara sthalam for guru and also the nakshathara sthalam of Revathi. Here Lord Shiva is called Thuyartheertha Nathar because he liberated the hunter from his miseries and also called Vyagrapureeswarar because a saint named Vyagrapadar (a saint with the tiger's feet) is said to have worshipped Lord Shiva here.

The Goddess here is known as Poonkodinayaki. According to the legend Shiva Dakshinamurthy is said to have revealed the Pranava Mantram to Parvati and hence the sthalam is known as Omaampuliyur (Om Aam Puliyur).

The temple architecture reveals a 3 tier Gopuram facing east. There are images illustrating the sthala puranam in the front man-

dapam. A stone image of Nataraja is seen on the niche reserved for Dakshinamurthy in the sanctum, while dakshinamurthy occupies the grand sabha usually set for Natarajar.

This is the sthalam visited by Thirugnana Sambandar and the thirumurai padigam is puraneermai paan. It has also been visited by Appar.



The temple is located 30 kms from Chidambaram and 6 kms from Katturmannarkudi.

The temple address is,  
 Arumighu Thuyartheertha Nathar Temple  
 Omaampuliyur Post  
 Ayankudi S.O  
 Kattumannarkudi Taluk  
 Cuddalore District  
 Pin- 608306

2013-05-11: Ganapathy Homam



11<sup>th</sup> May 2013

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*There are five principle 'vayus' or "Pancha Vayus" that control functions such as digestion, nerve impulses etc.,*

## You, Me and our cup of Yoga: Pancha Vayu

'Prana' is the life force that exists in all living things or rather in all forms of matter. We already know that, of course, since we have been trying out different methods of pranayama. We also know that pranayama by itself has a great benefit on every aspect of our life be it physical or mental well being. But how exactly does a single force like 'prana' work such wonders on the body and is it possible to localize its effects? To answer these questions it is imperative to understand that prana moves in specific ways in specific regions of the body regulating body functions.

There are five principle 'vayus' or "Pancha

**Vayus"** that control functions such as digestion, nerve impulses etc. These pancha vayus are categorized as: **Prana vayu, Apana vayu, Samana vayu, Udana vayu and Vyana vayu.** These vayus function in unison and can be thought of as elemental forces that govern the physical, mental and emotional characteristics of an individual.

**01. Prana Vayu:** It dominates the region from the abdomen to the base of the throat. The seat of the prana vayu is the heart and it ensures that the heart goes on beating. It works to maintain proper temperature in the body in accordance to environment and sustains the vital or-

gans especially the heart.

**02. Apana Vayu:** It dominates the region in the lower abdomen from the navel to the floor of the pelvis. This Vayu governs the ability to eject or eliminate what is not needed in the system. its effects are felt in the kidneys, colon, rectum ,bladder and genitals. The healthy functioning of the apana vayu is as vital as that of the prana vayu. Without the healthy functioning of apana vayu, one lacks motivation and determination; one feels lazy, dull and even confused, indecisive and befuddled.

**03. Samana Vayu:** It dominates the region between the navel and

The Five Pranas

Prana	Physical Location	Function	Blockages
Vyana (diffusive)	peripheral nervous system, pervades entire body	circulation, movement	poor peripheral circulation, numbness
Udana (ascending)	throat, upper chest, head	thought, speech, exhalation, growth, nervous system	cognition, communication
Prana (inward moving)	heart, chest, lungs	respiration, sensory perception	heart and lung conditions, lethargy
Samana (equalizing)	navel	digestion and metabolism, homeostasis	digestive problems
Apana (descending)	below the navel	elimination, reproduction & childbirth, immunity	menstrual problems, sexual disfunction, constipation, hemorrhoids



the heart. This Vayu controls the metabolism power of the body and the functioning of the digestive organs and glands. This is the force that separates nutrients from toxins; when it is not functioning well, one may retain toxins, leading to shortness of breath and gastric disorders. In the case of the mind, the Samana Vayu is the power by which we separate out or discern beneficial from detrimental, which allows us to assimilate information for the sake of making choices.

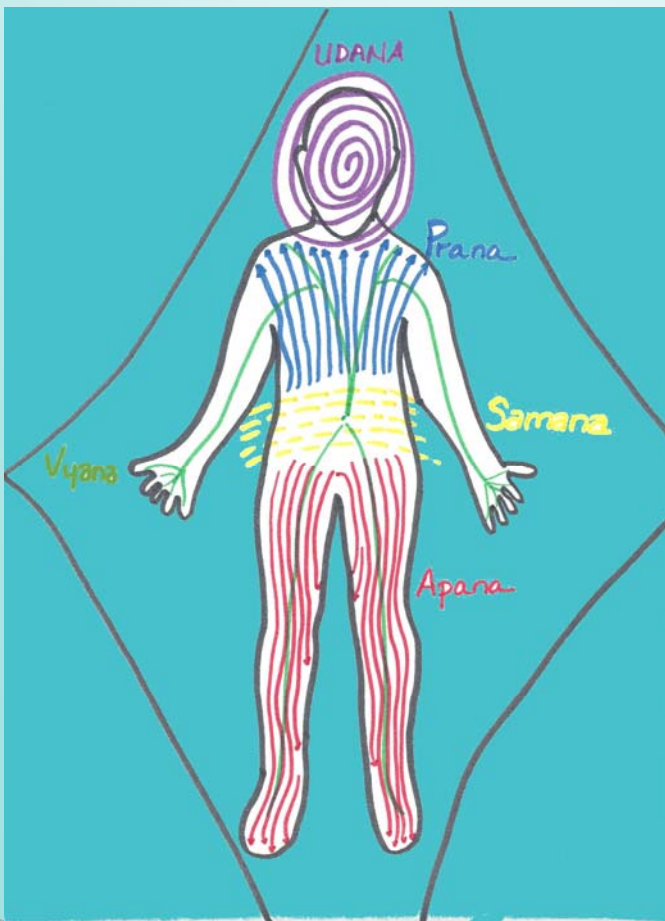
**04. Udana Vayu:** It dominates the region of the throat and head. It governs muscle function and strength as well as the sensory functions. It is the force behind all growth, our ability to stand erect, speech, effort, enthusiasm and will. When udana is unbalanced, speech is disjointed and one cannot speak or articulate ideas properly. Imbalances can also cause shortness of breath and other respiratory problems particularly associated with the throat. Uncoordinated movement in the limbs

or loss of balance are also signs of imbalance of the vayu

**05. Vyana Vayu:** Vyana Vayu moves from the center of the body out to the periphery. This vayu pervades the whole body, and is a coordinating, connecting force. It has no specific seat, but rather coordinates all the powers such as sensory awareness, and runs through the whole network of the 72,000 nadis or passageways of prana in the body, connecting the functions of the nerves, veins, muscles and joints and circulates nutrients and energy. When unbalanced, one feels uncoordinated and clumsy. Coordination between mind and body suffers, and one's own thoughts can be disjointed, fluctuating and rambling. Dysfunctions in Vyana vayu can also lessen our power of sensation.

The practices of yoga, especially asana and pranayama, optimize the functioning of these vayus as well as bring them under our influence. Their energies can then be used to uplift ourselves and restore vibrant health.

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## WE ARE THANKFUL TO...



Archana Contributions

1. Bala Thakshi
2. Richa Anthil
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7. Sonali Nirmal
8. Arjun Arvind
9. Jay
10. Srinivasan Anuradha
11. Kanchana



Pooja Items—Bala's House

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2. Sowmya Ganesh
3. Gowri Shekar
4. Radhika Venkat
5. Shashikala Venkatesan
6. Thothadri
7. Bhuvana Krishnaswamy
8. Lalitha Raghuraman
9. Purnima Prasad
10. Indumathi Sundar
11. Usha Srikanth
12. Muralidharan family



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*Sarve Janah Sukhino Bhavantu*