

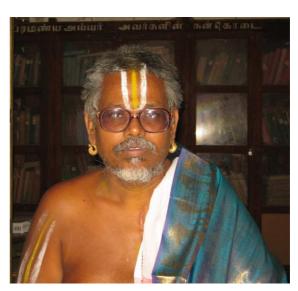
Sri E.B. Rangarajachar Swamy

An article by Sri Oppiliappan Koil Varadhachari Satakopan

The Thirunammam of the 46th Jeeyar is Rg Veda GanapAdi Sri E.B. RangarajacchAr Swamy. The Official name for salutation for us is: *Ubhaya Vedantha Thirukkudanthai*, *Rg Vedam*, *SalaksahNa GanapAdi*, *AgnihOtram*, *ThirumakkOttai EcchampAdi B. RangarAjaacchAr Swamy*. The Middle Name "B" is that of Swamy's Thiru TahappanAr (dear Father), Sriman Bhakta VatsalAcchAr. The ThirunAmam of Bhaktavatsalar relates to that of ThirukkaNNamangai dhivya dEsa EmperumAn, Sri AbhishEkavalli SamEta Sri Bhaktavatsalar (BhattArAvi PerumAL).

Swamy's avatAra dinam is Manmanta Samvatsaram, Aani, Magam (23.06.1955). Thai Maga Nakshatram is that of Thirumazhisai AzhwAr, who was devoted to Thirukkudanthai AarAvamudhan. Sri Rg Veda GhanapAdi Swami is a devout bhakthar of Sri KomaLavalli SamEtha Sri AarAvamudhan as well as Sri BhUmi Devi SamEta Sri Oppiliappan. This Year's Aani Magam falls on Jully 7.

Two Previous Azhagiya Singars were born under Maga Nakshatram: 19th Pattam Sri SrinivAsa Yatheendhra MahA Desikan , Maasi Magam 31st Pattam Sri NaarAyaNa VedAnta Yatheendhra Mahaa Desikan , Kaartikai Magam



Our Swami was born at Thillai ViLAgam, where the famous Sri KodaNda Raamar Koil is. This abhimaana sthalam has the most beautiful, AajAnu Baahu KodaNda Raamar, where the veins on the arms can be seen as well as the Rakshaa Bhandham tied by Mother Kousalyaa, when Her dearest son left for the forest to fulfill the promise made to His Father. Thillai ViLAgam is linked to the Aasramam of the Vedic Rishi BhaaradhvAjar and Lord Raamachandra is said to have stopped here to pay His homage to the Sage on the way back to Ayodhyaa after reunion with Sitaa PirAtti at Lankha. Thillai ViLagam is 20 km south west of Thirutthurai PooNDi (near VedAraNyam). Our Swamy has thus intense Veda Sambhandham from His avataara stalam.

In His own words, NityAgnihOtri Swami says: "I was born at Thillai ViLAgam in ThiruvArur district and studied at the PaatasAlAs at Thiruppati, NaasrathpEttai etc,. My grandfather was U.Ve. ParutthicchEri

VenaktAcchAriar, who was associated with Ahobila Mutt. I have been working for the past 30 years as the Rg Veda Teacher at the Sankara Mutt, KumbakONam".

The 46th Pattam Srimath Azhagiya Singar is a brilliant Vedic Scholar and an authority on Dharma Saastram and Vaidhika anushtAnams. He is a renowned Bruhaspathy. He is a parama Saathvikar and Jn~AnushtAna VairAgya Sevadhee. He has been honored by Vedic Sangeetha Foundation of Chennai three years ago and has been an active participanat in many Sri Matam Kaimkaryams. He is well known

for His KuSaagra Buddhi and Managerial skills.He is fluent in number of languages. Most of all Thirukkudanthai Rg Veda GhanapAdi Swamy has the paripoorNa anugraham of Prakrutham Azhagiya Singar , who proudly points out that in all the history of Sri Matam , GhanapAdi Sawmy is the First NithyAgnihOtri.

It is our prayer to MalOlan for Srimath MalOla Dhivya PaadhukA Sevakar, Sri VaNN SaThakOpa Srl NaarAyaNa Yatheendhra MahA Desikan and the designated Thirukkudanthai NityAgnihOtri Swami to reign together as Periya and Chinna Jeeyar for many years and bless us all.

Srimath NaarAyaNa Yatheendhra Mahaa Desikan Thiruvadi , DhAsan , Oppiliappan Koil VaradAchAri Sadagopan

<u>Scholarship and humility are his hallmarks – Adapted from The</u> Hindu



Dedication: Agnihotram Ganapadi Sri Rangarajachariyar, 46th Jeer of Ahobila Math; (right) with his family members.

Rig Veda exhorts people to remain united, to be single-minded in their endeavour and to work together for the welfare of the world, according to Sri Rangarajachariyar, who will soon take charge as Jeer of Ahobila Math. He succeeds Sri Narayana Yatin dra Desikar, who is stepping down on health grounds. "If the essence of the Veda is followed by everyone, peace will not be elusive," he says sitting at home on Kalyanaraman Street in Kumbakonam.

The Rig Veda consists of 10,000 mantras, ten mandalams and eight Ashtagams. "Some of the verses used to be chanted in Parliament daily before the session started. I heard this when I visited Parliament in 1970 when Indira Gandhi was the Prime Minister. I attended the All India Veda Sammelan held at Ram Lila Maidan in Delhi and the participants were taken to Parliament at that time," Rangarajachariyar recollects.

Credit to Sankara Math

Announcement about Sri Rangarajachariyar's appointment as the 46th Jeer of Ahobila Math has trickled down and a steady stream of visitors come to get his blessings. Even as he is preparing to don the mantle, Rangarajachariyar recalls his association with Sankara Math which shaped him, helped him to eke out his livelihood for the past 30 years and has elevated him to a divine position.

"It was Paramacharya's wish that I should teach the Vedas at their patasala. Two hundred of my students are now Vedic teachers, thanks to Sankara Math. The house in which I live is Sankara Math's property and I owe all my elevation to Sankara Math and my Guru Azhagiya Singar, 45th Jeer of Ahobila Math," Sri Rangarajachariyar says in all humility. He was honoured by Sankara Math during its golden jubilee celebrations.

"I know my guru, Azhagiya Singar from his Poorvasram days," says Rangarajachariyar. His grandfather Paruthichery Venkatachariyar was associated with Ahobila Math. Born to Bhaktavatsala Iyengar and Rajalakshmi at Thillaivilagam in Tiruvarur district, Rangarajachariyar learnt his 'Kiramanam' at Rajah Veda Patasala at Ammal Agraharam near Tiruvaiyaru. He mastered various aspects of Vaishnavism and philosophy from illustrious gurus, who included Subramanya Ganapadigal, Krishnamoorthy Ganapadigal, Sivaramakrishna Sastrigal,

Ramachandra Sastrigal, Paruthichery Aravamudachariyar, Masulipattinam Ragunatha Ganapadigal, Mukkur Azhagiya Singar and Agnihotram Ramanuja Thathachariyar.

Sri Rangarajachariyar has been an Agnihotri — one who nurtures 'fire' continuously by performing yagna every day before sunrise and after sunset. "I have been doing agnihotram for the past ten years. This calls for a strict regimen and places a lot of restrictions on my wife, Kausalya, also. She has been a pillar of support, not only in my performing agnihotram, but generally in my spiritual journey all these years," says Swami.

"Agnihotram is done for world peace and welfare. I wholeheartedly helped him in this. Now I wholeheartedly accept his sanyas," responds the spouse.

The Ahobila Math tradition permits family life that culminates in sanyasam. "In fact it insists on being a grahasthan," explains Swami. "First Brahmacharyam and then Grahastham. Vanaprastham (husband and wife moving to the forests), the third stage, is not practical these days and hence not observed and finally comes sanyas."

Sri Rangarajachariyar has three daughters — two of them going to school and the eldest in college — and a son. Young Ramji wants to emulate his father and become a Vedic scholar. Govindarajan Ganapadigal, Andavan Veda Patasala teacher from Vaduvur, observes that the new Jeer is a model 'Sthithapragnan' (strong willed and singleminded) as the Gita puts it.

Ashrama Sweegaram (installation of Sri Rangarajachariyar as the new Jeer) will take place on May 8 at Dasavathara Sannidhi, Sri Rangam temple.

The auspicious date has been fixed by Veeravalli Ganapadi Desikachariyar of Vaduvur, principal of Sriman Andavan Vedapatasala.