

**ADDRESS BY THIRU BANWARILAL PUROHIT, HON'BLE GOVERNOR
OF TAMIL NADU AT THE INAUGURATION FESTIVAL OF THIRUMURAI COPPER
PLATE INSCRIPTION COPPER TEMPLE WEBSITE LAUNCH ORGANISED BY
ARUBATHUMOOVAR THIRUPANI TRUST AT BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN,
CHENNAI KENDRA, CHENNAI ON 16.12.2018 AT 10.30 P.M**

Anaivarukkum Kaalai Vanakkam

Thiru. K. Pandiyarajan,
Minister for Tamil Official Language and Tamil Culture and Archaeology

Thiru. L.Ganesan
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Thiru. H. Raja

Sri La Sri Arunagirinatha Swamigal

Sri La Sri Masilamani Swamigal

Maruthachchala Adigalar

Distinguished Invitees

Ladies & Gentlemen

I am delighted to be here this morning at the launch of the Website for the Copper Temple proposed to be installed by the Arubathumoovar Thirupani Trust.

The trust has as its objective the inscription of all the Thirumurai verses onto Copper plates which will then be installed as Holy yantras in a New Temple to be constructed. This will help to preserve for future generations the holy texts of the Shaivite lexicon. By this the wisdom of Saiva Siddantam which was discovered by the Nayanmars will be passed on, into the future.

Saiva Siddantham which expounds the greatness of Lord Shiva is the popular philosophical system based on the Saiva Agamas, the Thirumurais and the Meykanda Sastra works.

Siva means one who is perfect and auspicious. His inherent nature is wisdom. Like the sun and its light, he remains inseparable from his Sakthi. Shiva and Shakthi form the Universal element, who is worshipped as God.

The Tamil word for God, Kadavul, meaning one who resides outside and inside, indicates his omnipresence.

According to Saiva Siddhanta, Souls are many. No two persons or beings are alike. Every living being has a soul of its own. Atma and Uyir are other names for soul. The Soul has the capabilities to know, act and desire. These are called Gnanasakthy, Kriyasakthy and Icchasakthy respectively. These capabilities are impaired by the associated entity called anava.

Anavam is the cause of all negative qualities of the soul. It is the source of ego, ignorance, hatred, etc. Anavam is associated with the soul. Like verdigris on copper, or husk on paddy, it has a natural association with the soul. Obscuring soul's power to know is the inherent nature of anavam.

The Law of Karma is one of the foundations of Saiva Sidhantam. Good action result in good or pleasant experiences and evil action results in bad or painful experiences. Saiva Sidhanta aims to lead its followers on the path of goodness and towards God.

Saiva Siddhantam is a rational philosophy. The concept is similar to the scientific concept that matter and energy get transformed from one form to another.

Referring to the universe, the 20th century scientist Albert Einstein said, "It is an expanding Universe". The Nayanmar saint Manickavasagar made the same statement more than about 12 centuries ago.

The deep roots of Saiva Siddhantham in the Tamil psyche are well known. The concept of Saiva Siddhantham is deeply embedded in the minds of Tamils whether it be in Kanyakumari or Kancheepuram. As one goes through Tamil history one finds that after the advent of Jainism there was a period when the concept of Saiva Siddhantham was pushed to the background. With the arrival of the Nayanmars there was a great revival of Saiva Siddhantham.

The Periyapuram is the recorded history of the 63 Nayanmars who attained salvation by their unflinching devotion to Lord Siva.

As a Minister of King Kulotunga Chola II Sekkizhar had access to the lives of the Nayanmars and after he collected the data, he wrote the poem in the Thousand Pillared

Hall of the Chidambaram temple. Legend has it that the Lord himself provided the first verse as a divine voice from the sky declaring "உலகெலாம்" (ulakelam: All the world).

This work is considered the most important initiative of Kulottunga Chola II's reign. Although, it is only a literary embellishment of earlier hagiographies of the Saiva saints composed by Sundarar and Nambiyandar Nambi, it came to be seen as the epitome of high standards of the Chola Culture, because of its literary style.

We can find the narration of recovery of Thevaram hymns in Tirumuraikandapuram composed by Umapathi Sivacharyar. In the 10th century, Raja Raja Chola I recovered the holy text of the Tevaram after hearing excerpts of the hymns sung in his court. The emperor Raja Raja Chola is therefore known as "murai kanda cholan".

His priest Nambiyandar Nambi who began compiling the hymns into a series of volumes called the Tirumurai, arranged the hymns of the three saint poets Sambandar, Appar and Sundarar as the first seven volumes which he called the Tevaram. He compiled Tiruvasakam as the eighth volume, the 28 hymns of nine other saints as the ninth volume, the Tirumandiram of Tirumular and 40 hymns by 12 other poets as the tenth volume. In the eleventh volume, he created the Tirutondar Antadi, i.e. the Necklace of Verses on the Lord's Servants which consisted of 89 verses, with a verse devoted to each of the saints. It was in the 12th century, that the Periya Puranam was added as the twelfth volume of the Tirumurai.

The initiative being taken to preserve the "Tirumurai" through copper plate inscriptions is a farsighted one.

The website has been designed to reach out the public at large on making this initiative a success.

The preservation of records using copper plates is not a new phenomenon. In the past, copper plate inscriptions were mainly used to record title-deeds of land-grants made. The inscriptions followed a standard formula of identifying the royal donor and his lineage, followed by lengthy honorifics of his history, heroic deeds, and his extraordinary personal traits. After this would follow the details of the grant, including the occasion, the recipient, and the penalties involved if the provisions were disregarded or violated.

The Tirumala Venkateswara Temple has a unique collection of about 3000 copper plates on which the Telugu Sankirtans of Annamacharya and his descendants are inscribed.

It is gratifying to see copper plates being used for preserving valuable Tamil Literature. I compliment the Arubathumoovar Thirupani Trust for this initiative of theirs. I am sure that the website being launched today will spread the information about the copper temple far and wide and bring in a large number of devotees who will be willing to help in this noble effort. My best wishes and greetings to the Trust. May success greet them in their endeavours.

Nandri Vanakkam....

Jai Hind....