

Contribution of Veerashaiva Mutts to social welfare in Tumkur District

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Abstract

Veerashaivism is started in the 12th century by Guru Basaveshwara; Veerashaiva has the aim to stop the evil, traditions, to stop bifurcating people by birth, to stop male female inequality, to provide education to people. Veerashaiva literature explains the clear proper concept of GOD, and provides a way to worship the GOD in the form of Ishtalinga. And rejects all the superstitions beliefs.

In Veerashaiva all are equal by birth; differentiation is based on the knowledge they possess. This is equivalent of current education system. i.e. any one becomes an officer by scoring good marks not by taking birth in officer's house.

Any one can become Veerashaiva by receiving Ishtalinga by 'Ishtalinga Deeksha' (consecrate). In Veerashaiva Ishtalinga Dharane will be performed when the mother is pregnant (around 7 months of pregnancy). Mother will wear her child's Ishtalinga with her owns one. Once birth takes place the first ritual will be 'Lingadharane' (tying Ishtalinga to baby). Once the child is grown up around 12-15 of ages Ishtalinga Deekhsa (consecrate) will be performed by Deeksha Guru (Guru one who provides Deeksha).

Veerashaiva is nourished by the council type body called Anubhava Mantapa (which is equivalent to current parliament) The proceedings of the Anubhava Mantapa are recorded in the form of Vachana literature. The members of Anubhava Mantapa are common men who have rich knowledge of spirituality even though they are financially politically poor. And these all are have very high moral, spiritual and crystal clear knowledge of supreme reality & about life.

In Veerashaiva Kaayaka (working for survival with divine mind set) is mandatory to each and every individual being. Without Kaayaka nobody has right to live. Guru Basava preached to spend part of the earning from Kaayaka to the poor/society welfare known as Daasooaha. It's a voluntary (not forced) contribution from one's own earned wealth (not any others or family members wealth). Present paper looks at contruution of Sree Siddaganga Matha (also called Siddaganga Kshetra) with other mutts to Tumkur district

Key words: Veershiava mutts, Kaayaka, siddaganga, Dasoha, Tumkur.

Introduction

In traditional Hinduism humans are bifurcated by birth as follows: Brahmins 1st grade, Kshatriyas 2nd grade, Vaiyas 3rd grade, Shudra 4th grade, Asprushya (untouchable) 5th grade. If a person took birth in Asprushya even though he is a brilliant he can not achieve 1st grade or 2nd grade. In this society system Guru Basaveshwara came as light of hope and cleared out this ladder of Varna saying this is human created not GOD made system and started equality in all humans by providing education, explained the concept of GOD in easy and common man's language. When education reached the down trodden people they started writing their spiritual experiences, a drummer, wood cutter, cobbler, barber pot maker so on all were became great writers they explained the spirituality in the Vachanas.

Sree Siddaganga Math is an ancient ashram fostering a continuous line of illustrious "Shiva Yogi Siddapurushas". The Math was established by Sree Gosala Siddeshwara Swamiji in 15th century A.D.

In this tradition of illustrious shivyogis, it has progressed with unique contributions from Sree Sree Ataveeshwara Swamigalu, Sree Sree Uddana Shivayoigalu and His Holiness Dr. Sree Sree Sivakumara Swamigalu.

The Math is situated amidst a divinely serene and colorful landscape at a distance of 63 Km from Bangalore, India. The Math has been developed in to a much visited pilgrimage.

Sree Siddaganga Math is a unique Gurukula providing education to more than 10000 poor children with free food and shelter, without any discrimination of caste or creed. The Math also runs blind schools at various places & over 100 blind children are given free education & food with independent hostel facilities.

The Math established Sree Siddaganga Education Society in 1963 & runs more than 128 educational institutions. The Math also organises annual Agricultural & Industrial exhibition for the benefit of Farmers.

Sree Siddaganga Math (Shrine - a Holy Place) in India has been regarded as a place conjectured with knowledge and wisdom, religion and culture, secular and above all a place enshrined with Basava Philosophy of "MAHA DASOHA KSHETRA" (Offering Holy meals to pilgrims), and admired by entire society.

The Math has been working for the welfare of human race, aimed to build a secular and welfare India, through its creative and multifaceted activities in the true letters and spirit of Basava and his disciples as envisaged in "Sarve Janaha Sukhino Bhavantu". The Heads of this Holy place have traced this path and their entire life was lived with the motto and mission "Work is Worship".

Sree Siddaganga Math is surrounded by hillocks. Some of the well knowns are: Ramagiri (or Ramalinga) Hills, Siddaganga Hills. These hillocks have number of caves with Shivalinga in them, and the caves have also become the places of research in Shaiva history. The famous Shivagange Hills is also located near Sree Siddaganga Math. The Shivayogi's were saints with desire for spiritual attainments were always attracted to and attached to the purity of nature and its serene surroundings. They considered NATURE as the CREATOR's gift to the human beings, hence they never dissuaded it.

The caves of Sree Siddaganga hills are regarded as the residences of Shivayogis who took active role in the Basava movement of 12th Century A.D. We find even today many caves in Siddaganga and other hills; four in Ramalinga hills, three in Siddaganga hills and Seven-Eight caves in Shivaganga hills, and most of them are still in good condition.

"Shoonya Sampadane" the concept and work is regarded as one of the seminal literary and philosophical contributions of 12th century AD. It is found that the Siddaganga Math from the early years of its establishment had some links with this philosophy, as many sharanas from this place had created literary works on this subject. The well known among them are; Gummalapur Siddalingeshwara Shoonya Sampadane, Siddaveerannadeya Shoonya Sampadane and so on. This kind of philosophical contribution by many sharanas of this place is aptly considered as responsible for the spread of the philosophy of Kalyana Basava and of his followers. Besides these versions of Shoonya Sampadane many literary and epical works of the highest order bear their origin to this place. This kind of a religious scenario is clearly observed in the geographical area spread between Hardanahalli to Mysore. The topographical area covering Siddaganga, Shivaganga, Gubbi, Yedyur, and Hardanahalli etc., was regarded as a place for spreading Sharana Sahitya (Literature), culture and the religious endowment from 12th to 18th century. This has been influenced by the contributions made by the sharanas of Basava period and the same tradition is followed by Sree Siddaganga. The area is also endowed with religious movement, as the number of Math in and around the place has been found. The Shivaganaga had 64 Maths, few of which are in existence now. There were another 64 Maths, including the Sarpabhusan Math in the heart of Bangalore city. These were the abodes of great religious leaders who propagated the mission of "Work is Worship" the basic philosophy of Sree Basaveshwara.

Objective:

This paper seeks explore role played by of veershaiva Mutts to social welfare in Tumkur District

Siddaganga after Basava

After Kalyana Kranti (Revolution) in 12th Century many sharanas, and the disciples of Basava went to different places of the country. They used the hillocks, caves and the nearby Maths as their residences to undertake many social, religious and people oriented welfare activities. As such, Sree Channabasaveshwara the ardent desciple of Sree Basava went to a faraway place Ulavi in the thick forest of Supa Taluk of Western Ghats. Similarly, another group of disciples went Sree Shaila and yet another came to Shivaganga headed by Sree Chikka Siddesha.

From 15th century onwards, in number of places the tradition of Sharanas was spread such as in Gummalapur and so on. Three sharanas Revanasidda, Murulasidda and Siddamalla said to have moved from Shivaganga and they stayed in Ramagiri, Shivagiri, Siddagiri and Nelamane hills. Similarly, for many Sharanas the Siddaganga hills became their abodes.

Establishment of Siddaganga Math

The history of Sree Siddaganga Math starts from 14th century. The Holy names associated with the establishment and the growth of the Math is as follows;

Sree Hardanahalli Gosala Siddeshwara Swamigalu (c1300 - 1350)

Sree Haradanahalli Gosala Siddeshwara was the 15th in the order of peetacharya (Head of Math) of Niranjana Jagadguru. He handed over his headship to the next peetacharya in Haradanahalli and went to Shivaganga with his 101 followers to create his own independent place for his religious work. Then he moved to a hill near Keta Samudra (now Kyathasandra) from Shivaganga. He created 101 caves for his followers for study and meditation and also established the Math at Siddaganga.

To quench the thirst of one of his aged disciple Sree Gosala Siddeshwara hit the rock and a stream of water came out of that rock. The holy water was named as "Siddaganga" and the name was thus given to this place. This holy water has power to heal the mental and physical ailments and is used by all communities.

Sree Gosalasiddeshwara's disciples, Sree Shankaracharya Swamiji continued his work till late 14th Century.

Sree Hardanahalli Gosala Channabasavarajendra Swamigalu followed his guru and came to Siddaganga. He lived in one of the caves of Siddaganga hills for some time and afterwards he moved to Gubbi.

Sree Tontada Siddalingshwar Swamiji, made a revolutionary contribution to the development of Siddaganga Math. Later, he moved to Yedyur and stayed there till his last breath. Though Gosala Siddeshwara was known to have established Siddaganga Math, Sree Sree Tontada Siddalingshwar Swamiji regarded as its first Head. Most of the festivals of daily routine, the monthly, the annual and the car festival are since then held in his name.

developmental activities of Sree Siddaganga Math begins with Sree Atavee Swamigalu.

The history of Sree Siddaganga Math, in the last two centuries can be regarded as highly progressive due to its most revered, respected, humane, empowered with knowledge and wisdom of two of its greatest religious leaders. The first is Sree Sree Uddana Shivayoglu and the second, His Holiness Dr. Sree Sree Sree Sivakumara Swamigalu.

Sree Sree Atavee Swamigalu

Sree Sree Atavee Swamigalu joined Sree Sree Siddalingshwar Swamiji, then the head of Sree Siddaganga Math at the beginning of 19th century.

Sree Sree Atavee Swamigalu came from Koodala of Hanagal Taluk, the place known for the confluence of two sacred rivers "Dharma and Varada". He was performing pujas and other religious routines at "Gurunanjeshwara Gaddige" at Koodala. Due to some painful incident that happened there, he left that place and moved to Naganoor. He again moved from that place inexpressively, and went to Gubbi and settled there performing his routines as usual.

After knowing about the Siddaganga about its special religious character, he came to Siddaganga Math accompanying the pilgrims. He was deeply impressed by its surroundings and the scenario, and the environment of Siddaganga. Then he settled there and fully engaged himself in religious activities and also gave much attention to public contact activities. It was his forethought and inclination towards public good and importance of education that led to the promotion of Dasoha and the Sanskrit Gurukula.

Sree Sree Uddana Shivayogigalu

Sree Sree Uddana Shivayogigalu adorned the seat of Sree Siddaganga Math after Sree Sree Ataveeshwara Swamigalu. At the age of ten he was given a book to read by his guru Sree Sree Phalar Swamigalu that influenced him to go into seclusion. He also engaged in prayers, totally involved in worshipping Shiva and meditation at Siddanabetta Caves.

He was born in c1860 to the couple "Gatteppa-Marulasiddamma" of Lakkur Village, of Nelamangala Taluk. He was the youngest of the family with five elder brothers and four sisters. His foster name was Rudrappa. His father was head of the village and was Farmer by profession. His childhood was spent in looking after his herd and wandering with his friends in Siddanabetta and the nearby Shivaganga. Though he was sent to Kooli Math for schooling, he often spent his time in Siddanabetta and watched surroundings with curiosity which made a lasting impact on him. He could not continue schooling but was adequately literate to read and write and by birth had attained greatness and destined to become the head of Sree Siddaganga Math one day.

One night he left the house dissociating all family ties and his mind drew him towards Siddaganga. In the early morning he met Sree Sree Atavees Swamiji on the threshold of Siddalingeshwara temple. He put his head on his feet and Sree Sree Swamiji enquired about his past. Rudrappa answered that he had come to live in the Math. He was told that living in Math is very strenuous, he has to put in hard work, like picking firewood from the hills, do work in the fields and so on. He agreed and began his service in Siddaganga Math, like cookig food for Sree Sree Atavee Swamiji and other work.

Rudrappa took the entire responsibility of the Math and that of Dasoha. Sree Atavee Swamiji decided in his mind that Rudrappa is the right person to continue his unfinished work. He named him after a sage of 1300 A.D. as Uddana Shivayogi and thus Ruddrappa became Sree Sree Uddana Shivayogi and began his miraculous and healing journey to

shine as a brightest star of Sree Siddaganga Math. The sojourn of Sree Sree Uddana Shivayogiji started thus and many achievements of his time were recorded by people who knew him very closely. The story of Sree Uddana Shivayogiji in the work and in the wisdom and converting Sree Siddaganga Kshetra an abode for the poor to pursue their education without a worry for two square meals, and imbibing secularism in its mission, objects and functions would be written into volumes.

Food Crisis and Service of Dasoha

In the year 1966, the country was seriously suffering from shortage of food grains due to drought. Poor people came to Math in hope that they will get a square meal for the survival. Sree Swamiji realizing the plight of the poor, determined to feed them at any cost. He would starve himself, and see none would go without a meal. Let entire stock of food grains be spent to feed all those who came with hope and expectations, and in search of food. At this juncture, Sree Swamiji himself stood in the kitchen, prepared food with the assistance of his followers. He would feel immensely happy when all went with a satisfied meal. Realizing this, the Karnataka Government enhanced the food grains quota to Math. So it was virtually a magical situation then and also now. It is Sree Swamiji's labour of love and in the religious parlance what is called "WORK IS WORSHIP" made all this difference.

Sree Siddalingeshwara Annual Cattle Fare and Car Festival

Sree Siddalingeshwara Annual Cattle Fare and Car Festival were started by Sree Uddana Shivayogigalu in 1905. This festival is held for 10 days starting from Shivaratri day. This is also coupled with Cattle fare and number of other ceremonies. Throughout this festival, all invitees, devotees and public are provided with free food in Math. This festival combines with the Agriculture and Industry exhibition.

During both the functions, lectures, seminars, cultural programmes like, music drama and dance performances are also arranged and devotees of the Math in hundreds of thousands attend these programmes and participate in the Car Festival.

THE SECULAR AGENDA OF THE MATH AND THE GURUKULA

Gurukula Tradition

Vidyadana (Imparting Education) and Annadana (Offering free food) are the contemporary principles of Indian social and religious culture. Since the time of Basaveshwara these principles of Basava Philosophy are followed with the establishment of Gurukula System of education and Dasoha. Sree Siddaganga Math inheriting this tradition has been carrying out these activities since late 19th Century.

Sree Siddaganga Gurukula is the premier hub of the Math. It is an abode charity of Sree Siddaganga Math and a unique Gurukula which has provided free education, free food and shelter to thousands of poor and rural children without any discrimination and who have come from across the length and breadth of Karnataka and neighbouring states. The heads of Sree Siddaganga Math have always performed such social acts to promote primary and basic education which had been recognised worldwide.

In the year 1902, Late Sree Sree Atavee swamigalu started a small Sanskrit Gurukula, where free education in the ancient text was imparted. The Sanskrit College has an excellent library with more than 20,000 volumes of books in Kannada, English and Sanskrit and it receives 100 magazines in exchange.

The Growth

This small effort later became a college in 1937 during the period of Sree Sree Uddana Shivayogi Swamiji's time. The two traditions, the Gurukula and the Dasoha have been incessantly followed even to this day and Sree Siddaganga Math has become a unique Gurukula providing education to more than 8000 poor children with free food and shelter. The strength of this Gurukula service has steadily grown in years, as there was only one teacher and 20 students when it was started. By the year 1917 there were about 40 students belonging to all faiths and communities. When Sree Sree Sree Sivakumara Swamiji took responsibility in 1941 it were about 200 students. The ceaseless and untiring efforts of Sree Sree Swamiji have resulted in the present magnitude of more than 10,000 children.

The Admissions

The special characteristic of the Gurukula is its focus on the poor, orphans and children from all parts of Karnataka and even from neighbouring states. In particular they represent all faiths, religious sects, communities and from innumerable castes and beliefs. As per the figures of 1973-1974, it was found that Muslim children were also admitted to the Gurukula. The inmates of Gurukula represented as many as 53 different caste and communities at one time. Admission to the Gurukula is a wonderful sight to watch in the Math premises. Children with their parents directly go to Sree Sree Swamiji with their applications and His Holiness would personally receive them and bless the children and parents by offering admission at the Gurukula. The Math also runs a school for the Blind Children and there is a separate Hostel facility for them.

Conclusion

Social work is relatively a newer and socially less recognized profession, mainly because of its inability to demonstrate the ready visibility of results that follow from its practice. The mainly significant cause behind this inability is the use of social relationships as the major medium of professional practice/help which through their very nature are intangible. The major concern of this practice/help with changing personality structure of people and social structure and system in society both of which again are not distinctly visible. Because of the nascent growth of the profession, there is a lot of confusion in respect of several conditions which are used while teaching in class-room, doing research in social work and practicing the profession with people in need in society. Since effective professional practice demands clarity in conditions of the varied types of concepts used, it becomes obligatory to clarify and describe them and point out the distinction flanked by similar concepts used in social work or the same concepts used in other social sciences like Sociology and Psychology from which social work has heavily borrowed. Some of the noteworthy concepts dealt with here are: charity, shramdan, social action, social protection, social justice, social movement, social network, social policy, social reform, social security, social services, social welfare, and social work.

Education nowadays has become prominent thing as it involves most people to take part in this matter. In addition, it cannot be separated from human's life. Both males and females need to be educated. Education plays an important role in the development of a country. If a country does not have proper education, it may be left behind by other countries which support education. There are many factors that affect the education system. Culture, technology, and economical matters give much impact to the education system of a country. The regulation made by the government affects how the education system works in a country. The education system in Indonesia still uses the one-way communication. The teachers stand in front of in the class and explain all the materials, while the students just sit down on their seats and listen to the teachers. One-way communication has negative effects on the students. They become unconfident to share their opinions or even ask a question. The government should improve this education to a better one. Two-way communication is considered as a better way in teaching method. The development of technology contributes much impact on the education. It can be very useful for many people to get the education. Education is essential in human's life. As time goes by, system of education changes dynamically following the needs of human beings.

Dr. Sree Sree Shivakumara Swamigalu, established Sree Siddaganga Education Society during 1963. Revered Swamiji feels that the world is on the brink of disaster and only two group of persons can save the world, Ideal mother and Ideal Teachers. Only such persons can produce future citizens who can reform the demoralized society and preserve human values. Therefore, the responsibilities of the teaching community is very great. They are the architects of the nation and torch bearers of civilization. Education for character building is the need of the hour and it was the fervent desire of His Holiness to start good college of education to prepare quality teachers to function at the secondary school level. With this ambitions His Holiness Dr. Sree Sree Shivakumara Maha Swamigalu started Sree Siddaganga College of Education in the year 1972. The College has achieved marvels in the last 3 decades of its existence and now it has emerged as full fledged institution, occupying an honored place among the colleges of education in the karnataka State. It is attracting students not only from different parts of Karnataka, but also from the states of Kerala, Andrapradesh, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Delhi

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