

**REPORT**

**Title: A Live Document Digitization: A Renascent Vaishnavite and Saivite Traditional Hymnal Songs' Chanting in the month of Margazhi**

**Date: 05.01.2021 to 14.01.2021**

From the 9<sup>th</sup> Century AD onwards the month of Marghazhi has been consecrated for the auspicious worshipping of the Hindu Gods and Goddesses'. Therefore, no other auspicious ceremonies like Marriages, Housewarming and Ear-embellishments are celebrated during the month of Marghazhi in South India, It goes without saying the whole month of Marghazhi is totally dedicated for devotional revivals.

One of the Famous devotional poets of Vaishnavism, the Poetess Andal, has sung "Thiruppavai", a hymnological lyrical anthology of Tamil Poems, comprising 30 songs earmarked/sung by the said Sri Andal , in order to wake up the Divine from his Supine Sleep from his Divine Serpent Bed. Andal is the only Woman Saint among the 12 Azhwars. Almost in many of her songs, Andal addresses her Deity Lord Ranganatha as "One who lives on the Serpent Bed in SriRangam Temple. Her songs are simple and Melodic, and articulate her love for her Divine Lord Ranganatha, whom she regards as her Divine Spouse. In her first song in Thiruppavai, Andal sings of her journey on a Bright Moon Day in the month of Marghazhi to be aboard of her beloved deity, Lord Vishnu. She urges the other girls to join her in her journey.

In the same way, the Saivite Poet, Sri Manickavasagar has produced an anthology of 30 poems called "Thiruvembavai" in the same 9<sup>th</sup> Century AD, sung each and every day of early morning of Marghazhi before the temple of Lord Shiva. Those songs have been ever sung with all the Musical accompaniments.

This year in 2021, Dharma Samrakshana Samithi, Puducherry, has approached this Regional Centre of IGNC for Associating with them in the conduct of Marghazhi Bhajans, where songs of Devotion sung by Ancient Devotees and other Musicians in praise of the Hindu God and Goddesses have been sung along with the hymns ofThiruvembavai and Thiruppavai.

The Marghazhi Bhajan has been conducted in the Urban as well as in the Suburban outskirts asalong the villages in Puducherry from 16.12.2020 and continued till 13.01.2021 i.e. in the Tamil Month of Marghazhi. Every Day, the Bhajan started at 5.30 a.m. in a particular temple located in the area earmarked for the Bhajan on the particular day. After the Circumambulation of the streets in

that locality, the Bhajan ended by 7.00 a.m at the same temple where it started. On the conclusion of the Bhajan, every day, Breakfast/Prasadam has been distributed to the participants. These arrangements were taken care of by Dharma Samrakshana Samithi.

As per the approval granted, this Regional Centre in Puducherry has associated with the said Samithi from 5<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2021. Thiru R. Karthikeyan, Accounts Officer of this Regional Centre, has participated and has observed the conduct of the Bhajan on all the days. Thiru Radja, P. Project Assistant of this Regional Centre has also assisted in the works of Photo/Video graphing the Bhajan. Every Day, number of people have participated in the Bhajans among them the Senior Citizens to Children of both sexes have thronged. Specifically, College Students have also shown their keen interest in participating on most of the days and expressed their enriched knowledge by singing and playing Musical instruments as well as dancing on the streets.

Following the Bhajan and on its conclusion, as a customary practice, Radha Kalyanam was also celebrated on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2021. The celebration of Radha Kalyanam narrates the Wedding held between Lord Krishna and Radha for which a group of Bhagavathars, experts in conducting the Radha Kalyanam, have conducted the celebration where number of people too have participated. Dr. Gopal J, the Regional Director, IGNCA has also participated in the celebration on 17.01.2022 and given away the certificates to those participated in the Marghazhi Bhajan.

Thus, the programme of MARGHAZHI Bhajan, followed by the Celebrations of Radha Kalyanam, has gone well and it is hoped that the Programme might have kindled the innermost recesses of the young generation to get imbibed with and to follow the footpaths of the holy generations of the past.