

SRI VADIRAJA TEERTHA

SRI VADIRAJA TEERTHA

SRI SODE VADIRAJA MUTT

A BRIEF PERSPECTIVE



(Second edition)

Narrated By

Gowdagere Vijaya Kumar Acharya

FOREWORD

(Second edition)

It is very gratifying to me that the second edition of my narration became necessary in less than three years from the first issue. But this feeling of elation is tinged with an element of sadness and loss. I refer to the passing away of Sri Sri Vishvottama Teertha, the pontiff of Sode Vadiraja mutt on 18th August 2007.

A few months ago I indicated to the Swamiji that am planning on bringing out the second edition of this narration. I sought his blessings. The Swamiji expressed his happiness and gave me his blessings. He also told me of a rather unique event in connection with Sri Vadiraja and gently suggested that I include this in my narration. Sri Vadiraja was once questioned as to why his writings were always in Sanskrit and Kannada. Versatile and gifted as he was, Sri Vadiraja instantly composed two stanzas in five different languages - Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi and Hindi. I have included these stanzas at the end of the Sthothras in this edition. I record my deep sense of gratitude to Sri Sri Vishvottama Teertha for his invaluable suggestion and his blessings.

I dedicate this second edition of my narration to the memory of Sri Sri Vishvottama Teertha Swamiji.

This edition contains a few more photographs connected with Sode Sri Vadiraja mutt. Added also are photographs of the new pontiff of the mutt Sri Sri Visvavallabha Teertha..

All photographs used in this edition too are the handiwork of Mr. M.S.Muralidhar who, along with Mr. N.G. Poorna Srinivas, journeyed with me for the purpose. Many thanks to them.

I record my gratitude to the ready blessings conferred on me by the present pontiff of the mutt Sri Sri Visvavallabha Theertha. When we visited Udupi, he readily and gracefully acceded to our request to photograph him.

Once again Sri A G Suvratheendra of Vani Press, Mysore has done an excellent job of printing. My thanks to him and his staff. Mr. A Srinivasa has again done an admirable job of formatting the text and layout of the photographs. Many thanks to him.

Readers are welcome to tell me of any improvements they feel can be made in future editions.

Gowdagere Vijaya Kumar Acharya

Bangalore

21st October 2007

(Vijayadashami)

FOREWORD

The concepts and precepts of our Sanatana Dharma continue to elude translation. It is however breathtaking in its sweep and strongly rooted in tradition, Vedas, Upanishads and a very large volume of scriptures. At the core are the all-embracing philosophical thoughts that have slowly but steadily evolved. All matter and living beings are inter-linked in a huge web. The idea of transmigration of souls, the trust of liberation from the transitory and that human destiny is determined by action in life are unique concepts

Our land and its people have indeed been very lucky. We have from time to time been blessed by the Lord amidst us correcting our wayward ways. We have also been from time to time blessed by the presence amidst us of enlightened souls as seers, saints and gurus. They have helped synthesise the concept of Dharma and guide us through life. South India and Karnataka in particular have been home to a very large number of such enlightened souls. One such soul is the subject of this narrative.

I owe thanks to my brother in law Sri K. S. Vijay Kumar who took me along to Sode for the first time in 2001. It was he who mooted the idea of a narrative in English. There are a number of publications on the subject in Kannada but very few in other languages. With growing number of our children not familiar with written Kannada, I trust this narrative would serve the purpose of familiarising them with our heritage. It serves the same purpose for those who are not familiar with Kannada. I thank my wife Smt. Leela for her ever so often and gentle prodding and enquiries on progress thus compensating for my inherent laziness.

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On a personal note, my interest in the written word and a healthy appetite for reading was instilled in me early in life by my late father Sri G. K. Acharya and my mother Smt. Rathna Bai. Am pleased that my children Chi. Vinay and Chi. Vasudha have imbibed this habit with active support from my wife Smt. Leela.

During my trips to Sode, I have been blessed by the present pontiff of the mutt Sri Sri Vishvotthama Teertha and believe the completion of this narrative is due to his blessings. My reverential thanks and pranaams to him.

The photographs used are from Sri M.S. Murlidhar who journeyed with me to Sode for the purpose along with my brother in law Sri N.G. Poorna Srinivas. My thanks to them.

My special thanks for the excellent printing work done by Sri Suvratheendra of Vani Press, Mysore. I thank Sri Srinivas for his excellent cover design.

At the end of the narrative I have added two stothras written by Sri Vadiraja Teertha as also a brief supplication to Sri Bhootharaja. I trust and pray that the readers reciting them derive their wishes with the blessings of Sri Vadiraja Teertha.

Readers are welcome to tell me of any improvements they feel can be made in future editions.

Gowdagere Vijaya Kumar Acharya
Bangalore
14th January 2005

SRI VADIRAJA MANTRA

*Kamadhenuh yatha purvam sarvaabheesta palapradaa
Thathakalau Vadirajah sripadobheeshtah sathaam*

*Srinamo Vadirajaaya deerghadaaridrya ghatine
Rajabhogapradathrecha namostu jayadayine*

Very much like the Kamadhenu of the past yugas granting all our wishes, in this Kaliyuga, Sri Vadiraja grants fulfillment of all our wishes

Salutations to you Sri Vadiraja who destroys all our deep seated poverty and bestows upon us all riches and leading us to victory in all our endeavours.

The Beginnings

Sri Madhvacharya (1238-1317 AD) propounded the Dvaita Siddhantha also termed Madhva Philosophy by reinterpreting the *Vedas* and *Shasthras* correctly. In essence, the Dvaita siddhantha asserts

- Narayana (Sri Hari) is the supreme being - omniscient, omnipotent and infinite
- The world as we perceive it is real
- The Jivas are different from the Lord and are subservient to the Lord (The Supreme soul and individual souls are different)
- Individual soul and inert matter are different
- One individual soul is different from another
- One inert matter is different from another
- Individual souls undergoing cycles of birth and death can obtain liberation (*Moksha*) by the Grace of the Lord begotten by pure devotion and virtuous deeds
- Liberation is the attainment of the Lords' lotus feet
- Direct perception, reasoning, *Shasthras*, *Vedas* are the true sources of knowledge
- All *Vedas* and *Shasthras* sing the praise of the Lord

The reinterpretation of the scriptures by Sri Madhvacharya is considered the quintessence of Indian metaphysical thought.

Sri Madhvacharya is believed to be the third incarnation of *Mukhya Prana* or *Vayu* the god of life who, according to authoritative sources, was given the task of correctly interpreting *Shastras* by the Lord himself.

In order to establish and propagate Dvaita system of philosophy, Sri Madhvacharya conducted numerous victorious debates with eminent scholars of other schools of thought. Sri Madhvacharya has also left behind 37 written works consisting of commentaries on *Upanishads*, *Brahmasutras*, *Bhagavatgita*, *Bharatha Tatparya Nirnaya*, *Krishnamruthasara*, *Tantrasara*, *Dvadasha Sthothra* and other authoritative writings. Collectively, his prolific writings are termed '*Sarva Moola Granthaas*'.

Sri Madhvacharya obtained and installed an idol of Sri Krishna of *saligrama* stone in Udupi. This idol, it is believed, was made to Sri Krishna's order towards the end of *Dwapara Yuga* and worshipped by Rukmini. When Lord Krishna vanished, this idol was believed to have been hidden in Rukmini's garden by Arjuna. Sri Madhvacharya also established a system of worship of this idol.

In order to perform regular *pujas* at Udupi, and more importantly to propagate his Dvaita philosophy (also termed *Tatvavada* or *Madhva Siddhantha*), Sri Madhvacharya gave *sanyasa* to eight of his disciples creating eight *mutts*. He also created the *pariyaya* system - the eight pontiffs performing their main tasks on a rotational basis.

One of Sri Madhvacharya's chosen disciples was Sri Vishnu Teertha who became the founder pontiff of Kumbashi *mutt*. During the life and times of Sri Vadiraja Teertha whose activities centered around Sode, Kumbashi *mutt* came to be known as Sode *Mutt* and also as the Sode Vadiraja *Mutt*.

Here is a listing of the guru *parampara* of this *Mutt*:

- 1 Vishnu Teertha
- 2 Vyasa Teertha
- 3 Vedyas Teertha
- 4 Vedagarba Teertha
- 5 Varesha Teertha

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- 6 Vamana Teertha
- 7 Vasudeva Teertha
- 8 Vedavyasa Teertha
- 9 Varaha Teertha
- 10 Vedathma Teertha
- 11 Vishvavandya Teertha
- 12 Ratnagarba Teertha
- 13 Vedanga Teertha
- 14 Vidyapathi Teertha
- 15 Visvavandya Teertha
- 16 Visva Teertha
- 17 Vithala Teertha
- 18 Varadaraja Teertha
- 19 Vagisha Teertha
- 20 **Vadiraja Teertha**
- 21 Vedavedya Teertha
- 22 Vidyanidhi Teertha
- 23 Vedanidhi Teertha
- 24 Varadaraja Teertha
- 25 Vishvadirajendra Teertha
- 26 Vadivandya Teertha
- 27 Vishvavandya Teertha
- 28 Vibudavarya Teertha
- 29 Vishvanidhi Teertha
- 30 Vishvavadishvara Teertha
- 31 Vishvesha Teertha
- 32 Vishvapriya Teertha
- 33 Vishvadhisha Teertha
- 34 Vishvendra Teertha
- 35 Vishvothama Teertha
- 36 Vishvavallabha Teertha (Present pontiff)

As listed above, the illustrious Sri Vadiraja Teertha was the 20th Pontiff of the *mutt* and the present name of the *mutt* incorporates his name.

This is a brief overview of the times and life of the great, gracious and illustrious Sri Vadiraja Teertha.

The locale and setting

Sode, at about 2000 ft altitude, is surrounded by Shalmali river and is situated in the present Uttara Kannada district some 20 kms from Sirsi town. Sode is also known as Sonde and Swadi. Over five centuries ago this was the capital of a province under the aegis of the Vijayanagar empire. Following the fall of the Vijayanagar empire, it became the capital of an independent kingdom for 250 years between the 16-18th centuries. During its heydays, the capital was a very important place. The Swadi kingdom included then towns known today as Karwar, Ankola, Hulekal, Sambrani, Ponda, Jambulin.

The *mutt* is approached by road through beautiful, verdant, thick forests, tall hills and river.

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As one nears the Sode Mutt, first to be sighted is the lake known as *Hayagriva Samudra*. Towards the west of this lake stands a *Dvaja sthamba* in front of the Ramaa Thrivikrama temple. Both the Lord's vehicles - the *Hamsa* and *Garuda* are depicted on this *Dvaja sthamba*.

The Ramaa Thrivikrama temple consists of three parts - the sanctum sanctorum with the lovely idol of Lord Thrivikrama, the stone chariot used for transporting the Lord's idol and the idol of Sri Lakshmi Devi in the chariot.

To the south of this temple stands a stone inscription recording the grant of land to the temple by Arasappa Nayaka and connected events

To the north of the temple and down some 24 steps is the *Rajangana* which also houses the *mutt's* offices. Here is the entrance to the *mutt*, the *puja mandir* (*ananthaasana*), stores and kitchen.

Further down a flight of 24 steps, is the '*Dhavala Ganga*' *pushkarini* along with a smaller '*Sheethala Ganga*' tank nearby. The waters of these tanks are believed to be a confluence of all holy rivers of India. Around the *pushkarini* are located several small temples consecrated by Sri Vadiraja Teertha-Sri Chandramouleshwara on the south, Sri Veera Anjaneya on the west, Sri Venugopalaswamy on the north.

Towards the east of the *pushkarini* is situated the *pancha vrindavans* with the *vrindavan* of Sri Vadiraja Teertha situated in the centre surrounded by four more *vrindavans* forming a perfect square. In front of the *vrindavans* is the temple for Sri Vedavyasa. On the right (to the south) of the *vrindavans* is the temple for the *Kshetrapala* - Bhootharaja. To the north is the *naga vana*.

Also situated near the *pancha vrindavans* are four *moola vrindavans* and five *mruttika vrindavans*.

The latest addition (inaugurated in 2000) is the *Akhyana Mandira* situated in front of the *pancha vrindavans*.

Well planned and built residential accommodation with all facilities is available for visiting pilgrims.

Huvenakere - Birth of Sri Vadiraja

Situated in the present Udipi district is Kumbhasi or Kumbha Kashi. It is reputed to be one of the seven *kshetras* of *Bhargava bhumi* and termed *Gouthama Kshetra*. Village Huvinakere is near Kumbasi and was, five hundred years ago, a dense forest blessed with all beauties of nature and home to several species of flowers and fruits - an ideal place for *Tapasvis*.

In Huvinakere resided a pious brahmin named Ramacharya also known as Deva Bhatta with his equally pious wife Saraswati Devi. Tending to the lands they owned and with unflinching faith in the Lord Sri Hari, the couple led a contented life. Their only source of dissatisfaction was the absence of an issue for a long time. In addition to their regular prayers, Saraswati Devi vowed to offer the Lord Sri Hari a lakh ornaments if blessed with a son.

Sri Vagisha Teertha, the 19th pontiff of the then Kumbhasi Mutt was resident in Kumbhasi. One night, in his dreams, he was told by Lord Bhuvarahaswamy " A brahmin couple seeking birth of a son will approach you. Bless them and grant them *phala manthrakshathe*. They will soon have a very distinguished son. Make them promise to deliver this child to your care". Same night, Ramacharya was guided to seek the blessings of the Pontiff for the birth of a son.

Ramacharya and his wife Saraswati Devi (also known as Gowri) approached the Pontiff Sri Vagisha Teertha with their offerings and obtained the *Swamiji's* blessings for the birth of a son. When told that the son so born should be delivered to the care of the Pontiff, the couple felt downhearted and wondered at the turn of events and felt despondent. The *Swamiji* consoled the couple and told them that what would prevail would be god's will. He however offered them some hope and a way out - the child if born indoors would be theirs to keep. If the child be born outside the house, it would go into the Pontiff's care!

Soon after this, Saraswati Devi became pregnant and the couple was very joyful. The husband took great care of his wife, met all her wishes, performed connected celebrations and formalities. Saraswati Devi's wishes during her pregnancy were far from the usual ones of women at such a time. She spent her time in pilgrimage, listening to *puranas*, visiting various temples and specially praying to Lord Bhuvaraha. With the progress of her pregnancy, Saraswati Devi became especially bright - foretelling the birth of a very gifted and enlightened child.

Upon completion of nine months, the husband took all steps to ensure that Saraswati Devi stayed indoors all the time - so that the child would be born indoors when the time came. But fate had other plans for the arrival of the extraordinarily gifted and blessed child. On the day of the birth, Ramacharya was busy in his daily morning *puja*. A cow entered their field close to the house and started grazing on the standing rice crop. Saraswati Devi stepped out of the house to chase the cow away. Pains associated with delivery started as soon as she stepped out of the house. Sri Vagisha Teertha became aware of this through his divine perception and arranged for some ladies to attend to the pregnant woman at once. They assisted in the delivery of a boy outside the house. All this events took place even before Ramacharya became aware of the situation.

The day was Wednesday, *Magha Shudda Dvadashi* in the year *Sharvari* 1402 (1480 AD).

Despite all care from the parents, as the Lord and fate had willed, the boy was born outside the house and thus was privileged to serve Sri Bhuvarahaswamy. With no reservations or sorrow, in praise of the Lords' wishes, the couple handed over the child on a large platter to Sri Vagisha Teertha. All the villagers and the staff of the *mutt* had tears in their eyes at the turn of events. When the pontiff picked up the newborn, the child lifted its folded hands to its head as though in prostration to the *Swamiji*.

Sri Vagisha Teertha blessed the new born by sprinkling holy water. The *Swamiji* then handed over the child to Sri Ramacharya commending him to look after and enjoy the antics of the child and perform its *upanayanam* early. The *Swamiji* also named the

child 'Bhuvaraha' and indicated that he would call for the child as soon as it was time for service of the Lord.

In remembrance of the birth and surrounding events, the field around the house is still called 'Gowri Gadde'. The house itself became a branch of the Sode *mutt*. On Sri Vadiraja's birth anniversary, the rice from this field, to this day, is used as special offering at the celebrations at the *mutt*.

Early years, Education and Sanyas

The child, back home with the parents, regaled them with his childhood antics. Bhuvaraha, even in his early years showed immense interest in godly and spiritual matters and indicated these through his playful ways. He also embodied and grew up with perfect and handsome physical features and glowed with great *Tejas*. He was no wonder the cynosure of his parents and the villagers and afforded them great joy.

On an auspicious day, in his fifth year, Bhuvaraha was initiated into formal learning by the performance of *Aksharaabhyasa* by his father. The teachings from gurus (teachers) appeared a mere formality for the gifted child. He had indeed the ability to absorb what was taught and comprehend much beyond - on occasions narrating to his tutors knowledge they did not possess. As he approached his time for *upanayanam*, Bhuvaraha was initiated into study of sanskrit scriptures - *vedas*, *shasthras* and *puranas*. The father, recognising the innate genius of his child deliberately tried to hide these extraordinary abilities to fend off possible 'evil eyes' from outsiders.

In rapture with the child, Ramacharya and his wife found time flew and lo and behold the child was approaching his 10th year. They however could not forget the arrangements with *Swami Vagisha Teertha*.

The expected call came and the parents presented themselves with the child and a host of relatives in front of the *Swamiji*. The *Swamiji*, unusually elated, welcomed the child indicating that the Lords Bhuravaha and Hayagriva were indeed waiting to be worshipped by the child. The child continued his scholarly studies of the scriptures under the tutelage of Sri Vagisha Teertha. The parents, after watching the progress of their child under Sri Vagisha Teertha prepared to return home with heavy hearts. The *swamiji*, aware of the troubled hearts of the parents, assured them that their son would be initiated into *Sanyasa* only after the birth of another child to them. Bhuvaraha would, the Swamiji assured the parents, be an extraordinary asset to the community and the world at large. By the grace of the Lord Sri Hari, several generations of their family were already blessed by the birth of Bhuvaraha to them. Bhuvaraha, the *Swamiji* pointed out, would attain great heights in spreading the tenets of Sri Madhvacharya.

Sri Vagisha Teertha tutored, tested and examined the boy Bhuvaraha. The *Swamiji* found the boy very dedicated, disinterested in worldly material pursuits (*virakta*), very intelligent, adept and erudite in scriptures, teachings and tenets of Sri Madhvacharya. He was indeed greatly gifted and ready for his mission in life. News of the birth of another son to Sri Ramacharya and his wife arrived. Choosing an auspicious occasion, Sri Vagisha Teertha initiated the boy to *sanyasa* and renamed

him Sri Vadiraja Teertha and bestowed upon him the blessings of his *parampara* and instructed him on *pujavidis* of Lord Bhavaraha, Hayagriva and other icons in the *mutt*.

Having entered the life of a *sanyasi*, ready to take over the office of the pontiff of the *mutt*, Sri Vadiraja Teertha displayed his ever developing effulgent character, his mastery of the scriptures of *sanatana dharma*, his erudition, devotion to Lord Sri Hari, his masterly, innovatively attractive, eloquent debating and presentation skills. He immersed himself in performance of daily prayers, musings and *tapasya* and shone like a golden beacon to one and all.

The Pilgrimage

Ready as he was for his pre-ordained mission of dissemination, spread and propagation of Sri Madhvacharya's tenets and teachings, Sri Vadiraja Teertha set out on an extensive pilgrimage to various holy centres in India. Before proceeding on his pilgrimage Sri Vadiraja Teertha sought and obtained the blessings of his *guru* Sri Vagisha Teertha.

With the blessings of his *guru* Sri Vadiraja Teertha visited his parents. His mother told him of her avowal of '*lakhshabharana*' for his birth. Sri Vadiraja Teertha promised to take care of this and also left a statue of self so that she would not miss him.

Setting out from Udupi, Sri Vadiraja Teertha walked systematically in all four directions visiting holy places in India - twice. As a record of his pilgrimage and as a description of the significance of each of the places he visited, Sri Vadiraja Teertha wrote a treatise - *Teertha prabandha*. This is an enduring compendium of his eventful tour.

During his travels, as later in his life and times, Sri Vadiraja Teertha displayed his mystical and divine powers on several occasions.

Lakshmi Shobhane

The wedding ceremonies of the daughter of a *Jahagirdar* were in progress. At the final stages of *saptapadi*, by a twist of fate, a snake inadvertently trapped in the headwear of the bridegroom freed itself and bit the groom causing his death. Various attempts to revive the groom were fruitless. Music and all other festivities ground to a halt and gloom settled on the gathering.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha was in the area and was approached by the *Jahagirdar* beseeching him to save the *mangalasutra* of his daughter. It was only the previous night that Goddess Lakshmidēvi had appeared in the saint's dreams and instructed him to compose a song in celebration of her wedding. Sri Vadiraja Teertha recited his composition. As the song was coming to an end, the groom woke up as if from sleep. From that day to the present times, the singing of this song written by Sri Vadiraja Teertha - Lakshmi Shobhane - has remained a tradition at weddings.

Boon of a son

A *Jahagirdar* approached Sri Vadiraja Teertha for his blessings for the birth of a son. The seer told him that the devotee would not be blessed with a son in this birth. However, by the performance of good deeds in this birth, he could beget a son in his next birth. Not satisfied with this, the *Jahagirdar* approached a reputed magician for the boon of a son. The magician (who was in fact a performer of witchcraft) assured the *Jahagirdar* of a son in return for 5000 gold coins. The magician gave a fruit to the *Jahagirdar* telling him that his wife would become pregnant within a month after eating the fruit. He collected 2000 gold coins saying that he would be back for the rest as soon as a son is born. The *Jahagirdar's* wife gave birth to a handsome boy in due course. Happy as he was at the turn of events, the *Jahagirdar* gave 10000 gold coins to the magician. The parents doted on their son and watched with pleasure the child grow into boyhood.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha returned to the place in a few years time. Noting the absence of the *Jahagirdar* among his gathered devotees, enquired and was told of the birth of the boy. At the behest of the seer, the *Jahagirdar* was brought to his presence. The seer said to the *Jahagirdar* "Are you so angry as to not visit me?" The *Jahagirdar* said "I was playing with my long awaited son. Please excuse me for not coming to you earlier".

Sri Vadiraja Teertha wished to see the boy. The boy was brought to his presence and the seer told the parents " This child is not suited to you". The parents wanted to know the reason for the seers' conclusion. Upon enquiry, the servants indicated that the child was always playing with cruel and indecent children and was in general, behaving badly. The fond parents felt that, with time the boy would become better mannered. The seer sprinkled holy water (*theertha*) on the boy. Instantly, the boy turned into a frightening figure causing the parents to swoon at the apparition. Regaining their consciousness, the parents asked the seer as to what happened to their child. Commanded by the seer, the ghastly figure told them "I belong to a *bhootagana*, came under the spell of the sorcerer and ordered to be born to these parents. I was also ordered to stay with them for six years and then kill them. I am not at fault. I beg your mercy. Please protect me". The seer ordered the ghastly figure " Go back to where you came from without harming your parents. You shall also be taught how to deal with and punish the sorcerer so you can live without fear of him". The seer then told the *Jahagirdar* and his wife " You have wasted your time and money and put your lives in danger for what was not to be. I came back to protect you who are my devotees. Do spend your time in good deeds and in Lord Sri Hari's service".

Tirupathi and Vijayanagar

During his visit to Kumbhakonam, Sri Vadiraja Teertha debated with several scholars of the time and won them over as devotees to Sri Madhvacharya's tenets. Arriving in Tirupathi to the presence of Lord Sri Venkateshwara atop *Thirumalai*, the seer perceived the presence of several *rishis* of yore at *tapas* on the steps of *Sheshachala* hills and in veneration to them, climbed the hill on his knees so as not to desecrate the area with his feet. At the top, while worshipping Lord Venkateshwara, Sri

Vadiraja Teertha offered a necklace of *saligrama* stones to the Lord. To this day, this necklace adorns the Lord of the seven hills.

The Vijayanagar Empire was at its zenith. Befitting his predecessor, the great and renowned emperor Sri Krishnadeva Raya, Sri Achyutadeva Raya, himself no mean a scholar, encouraged and supported arts, cultural and religious activities. Sri Achyutadeva Raya also was a warrior with numerous victories and an able ruler of his vast kingdom. Sri Vadiraja Teertha was in the vicinity of Hampi, the then Capital of Vijayanagar Empire. Sri Achyutadeva Raya, went out personally with leading citizens and a retinue of scholars to the outskirts of the city to receive and welcome the emperor of seers.

The emperor approached Sri Vadiraja Teertha, prostrated before him and invited him to visit the capital and be his guest. Sri Vadiraja Teertha was then taken into Hampi in a procession with full honours due a royal visitor. Along the route stood the people of Vijayanagar for a glimpse of the famous seer in all his effulgent splendour. The saint, clad in his saffron robes, carrying his saintly spectre (*danda*) and *kamandula* with holy water, with a calm demeanour, dignity and glowing with spiritual effulgence, entered the *asthana* of the emperor of Vijayanagar and was offered all obeisance and honours fit for an emperor. Such was his presence! Thus were blessed the rulers and people of Vijayanagar - by the mere presence of saint Sri Vadiraja Teertha.

After formal welcome ceremonies, Sri Achyutadeva Raya personally indicated the very strained financial position of the state due to heavy expenses incurred during their wars and the need to maintain a sizable army to hold on to their territories. The emperor sought the seer's blessings and help.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha had a dream in his sleep that night. The deity of Hampi's *Yanthrodaraka Hanuman* appeared in the dream and indicated to the seer the existence of a long forgotten treasury near the temple. Early next morning, Sri Vadiraja Teertha, following the directions received in the dream, set out with his retinue and located the treasure buried by the former rulers of the empire. The seer handed over the entire find to the emperor and accepted only two idols - one that of Sri Rama worshipped by Sugriva and second that of Vittalamurthy worshipped by Vali - during the Ramayan times.

With a sense of gratitude, the emperor honoured the seer by seating him on his throne. The emperor, his staff and indeed all the citizens of Hampi paid respectful obeisance to the great seer. The seer was offered the full regalia of the emperor. The emperor contributed generously for the expansion and rebuilding of Udupi Sri Krishna Mutt during Sri Vadiraja Teertha's *pariyaya*.

During the next visit of the seer to Hampi, the emperor Sri Achyuta Dava Raya was seriously ill. Several attempts at treatment were futile. Sri Vadiraja Teertha cured the emperor of his illness by the holy water (*Theerthodaka*) he was carrying.

A few years later when Sri Vadiraja Teertha visited Hampi, Sri Venkatapathi Raya was the emperor. The emperor had just successfully defended his empire from attacks from his enemies and was celebrating his victories. As part of the celebrations, the emperor had invited and was honouring among others, numerous

scholars. A scholar's meeting and seminars were arranged. Sri Vadiraja Teertha was invited to the meet, welcomed and accorded all honours. In the course of the seminar, Sri Vadiraja Teertha successfully established the relevance and correctness of Sri Madhvacharya's *tatoavada* through discourses and debates. In recognition of this, the Vijayanagar empire honoured Sri Vadiraja Teertha with the title of 'Prasangaabharana Teertha' at a specially organised grand function. In the presence of the emperor, his staff and eminent citizens of the state, to the sound of music, Sri Vadiraja Teertha was lauded and heralded as follows:

Swastisrimat

Paramahansa parivraajakacharya, padavaakya pramaana, paaraavara paarina, sarvatantra svatantra, srimadvaishnava siddantha prathistaapanacharya, sri hayavadanamurthy dvipadasevaadurina, maadvamathodharaka, mayamataavidvamsaka, asetu himachala digvijayakaaraka, Bhavisameera, Sri Bhuvanaraha vedavyasa divyapadapadmaarak, jagadguru srimadaanandatheertha bhagavatpaadacharyamatapracharaka, srimad vishnu theerthiya shubasampradayapravartaka, srimadvaagishatheertha karakamala sanjaatha, srimadrajatapeetha purastha, yathiraat sodamathadeeshvara, srimadvadiraja gurusaarvabhouma paraak, bahu paraak.

Rukmanesha Vijaya

Sri Vadiraja Teertha during his pilgrimage arrived in present day Pune then called *Punyapattana*. A discussion among leading scholars on the choice of the best narrative prose of the times was in progress at the royal *darbar*. Sri Vadiraja Teertha too graced the ongoing meeting. Following scrutiny of a large number of texts, the gathering of scholars opined that Maghakavi's composition of *Shishupaalavodha* emulating the elegance of words and expressions in Kalidasa's works was the best and recommended that the same be accorded full recognition and honours at the royal court. Sri Vadiraja Teertha stated that there was a much better composition back in his town and asked for 19 days time to present the same for scrutiny by scholars.

Over the next 19 days, Sri Vadiraja Teertha wrote a chapter each day of his magnum opus *Rukmanesha Vijaya* and presented the same to the scholars at the council. This *Kavya* was deliberated upon, discussed and debated over for eight days by the scholars. It was finally agreed that the work presented by the seer was indeed superior in all respects than their earlier findings. They concluded that this work had indeed the beauty of Kalidasa's works and was error free. This work of Sri Vadiraja Teertha was chosen the best of the time and accorded such recognition by being termed '*kaavyaraja*' by the council of scholars and the king.

The hero of this *kaavya* by Sri Vadiraja Teertha is the Lord Sri Krishna himself and the heroine none other than Rukmini. The story was of their lovely wedding, devotion to each other, embellished with extraordinary and beautiful choice of words replete with meaning. No wonder it was recognised as the *Kaavyaraja* of the day.

Jain Idol turns into Vitthala

Sri Vadiraja Teertha arrived in the area of the present South Kannada district. The then ruler of the province who was a devout Jain received the seer and provided all

comforts for his rest. The ruler then took the seer on a tour of his palace and inviting him to his *puja* room showed him the beautiful idol of *Jina swami*. Sri Vadiraja Teertha exclaimed that the idol looked like that of Lord Vitthala and asked the ruler if he would agree to let him have the idol if that was indeed so. The ruler agreed. The seer held the idol in his hands and meditated on Sri Vitthala. The idol, in the hands of Sri Vadiraja Teertha, turned into a beautiful one of Lord Sri Vitthala with hands on the his midriff. The *raja* presented the idol to the seer. To this day this idol is present and worshipped in the Sode *mutt*.

Befriending of cow and tiger

Sri Vadiraja Teertha arrived in Subramanya *Khsethra* on way to kumar *parvatha* (hill) to engage himself in penance. On the foothills, a cow ran into the presence of the seer while trying to escape from a lurching tiger. Sri Vadiraja Teertha took hold of the tiger's ears and admonished it for trying to harm the cow. The tiger calmed down, lost its sense of hunger and cowered in supplication. It also gave up stalking of the cow. The seer proceeded to the top of the hill for *tapas* inside a cave. The tiger accompanied the seer and stood guard during the penance. Sri Vadiraja Teertha here met the eternal living person of the first pontiff of his *mutt* - Sri Vishnu Teertha, saluted, held a dialogue with him and was given a special idol of his deity.

Overwhelming of waylaying robbers

Sri Vadiraja Teertha along with his retinue was approaching Pandharapur and was waylaid by a group of robbers. Noticing the ferociousness of the robbers, persons accompanying the seer bolted from the scene. The seer stayed put. The box containing his *puja* idols over his head, the seer smilingly confronted the robbers. The robbers were amazed at the complete lack of fear on the face of the seer. Overwhelmed by the serenity, grace and the aura around the seer, the robbers carried the abandoned goods of the *mutt* and escorted the seer to Pandharapur.

Tirupathi and on to Rameshwaram

Sri Vadiraja Teertha arrived on his second visit to Tirupathi, praised and sang to Lord Sri Venkateswara. From Tirupathi, Sri Vadiraja Teertha visited several holy *kshetras* in south India right upto Rameshwaram. The raja at Cochin became a disciple of the seer accepting the supremacy of the tenets of dvaita philosophy. Sri Vadiraja Teertha reorganised the administration of the madhva mutts and *puja vidhis* of Lord Sri Anantapadmanabha.

Consecration of Manjunatha at Dharmasthla

Sri Vadiraja Teertha arrived at Sri Subramanya *kshetra*, performed *pujas* to *Samputa* Narasimha and Sri Subramanya and then visited the place of confluence of Netravati and Kumaradhara rivers at a place known as Navoor. At an elevated place was situated a *shivalaya* and was home to a thousand naturally formed *shivalingas*. Difficulty in obtaining of water at that level meant that no *abhishek* could be offered to the deities. Sri Vadiraja Teertha struck a dry old well with his holy *spectre* (*dhandu*) and then and there established a supply of flowing water for the *abhishek* of the deities. In recognition and appreciation of the divine power of the seer and his service to the area, the local ruler donated a large tract of surrounding land to him

with all honours. To this day, water supply continues through what has come to be known as *Dandatheertha*.

Hearing of the gift of water by Sri Vadiraja Teertha, the custodian of a place called Kuduma *kshethra* invited the seer to his place and received him with all due respects and honours. This *kshethra* was the abode of *Appanna Bhoota* and was a regular pilgrim centre to a large number of devotees who came there with prayers and offerings of thanksgiving for the deity. The residents of the area were known for their piety, adherence to truth and generosity. The custodian, Sri Devaraja Hegde, a Jain, was a great philanthropist who offered the pilgrims all facilities - accommodation, food and generous gifts of clothing etc. It was such a generous and pious soul who invited and received Sri Vadiraja Teertha at Kuduma *kshetra*.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha, recognising the place as *Bhootalaya*, advised the custodian that it would be appropriate to consecrate the place with Sri *Bhootanatha*. The seer also indicated that Sri Manjunatha too should be established and consecrated at the holy place. He also directed that the *Shivalinga* from Kadari near Mangalore should be brought for the purpose since the same was once worshipped at Kashi and subsequently brought to Kadari's *Saptharshi kunda*.

Sri Devraj Hegde made all appropriate arrangements for the intended ceremonies. Sri Vadiraja Teertha performed all prescribed rites, installed and consecrated Sri Manjunatha. The place was thus blessed and adorned with the divine presence of Sri Manjunatha. At the head of the *Linga* was placed the *saligrama* of Lord Sri Narasimha. Sri Vadiraja Teertha also renamed the *kshethra* as 'Dharmasthala'.

Anugraha of Mookambike

Sri Vadiraja Teertha was camping at Kollur near the temple of Mookambike. A group of persons jealous of the seer's growing reputation, decided to sully the same. They arranged to hide and tie up a youngster known to them and spread rumours that the seer had kidnapped the boy and secreted him away. Sri Vadiraja Teertha took the incident calmly saying that the presiding goddess Mukambike would know of the truth and he would leave the whole matter to her decision. Goddess Mukambike apparently appeared in the boy's dream one night, untied him and the boy ran to the presence of Sri Vadiraja Teertha and reported to him on the whole matter. Before the seer could summon the perpetrators, they came running to him, prostrated themselves and begged his pardon. The seer praised goddess Mukambike for her timely intervention and blessings.

Attempt to loot Kumbhasi Mutt

Sri Vadiraja Teertha was resident at Kumbasi *mutt* and involved deeply in his daily *pujas* and activities intended to spread the message of *Dharma* and *tatvavada*. The head of the village, one Ramakrishna Prabhu, hatched a plan to ransack and loot the property of the *mutt*. He arranged for a group of thieves to surround the *mutt* one night and prevent any resident from exiting. The seer, with his *kamandalu* and *danda* walked out right in front of the thieves without their being aware of the same. The seer also had all goods removed from the *mutt* right in front of the noses of the gathered thieves. The thieves could not even locate an entrance to the *Mutt* to carry out their plans.

Failing in his plans and having become aware of the yoga *shakti* of the seer, the conspirator came to the presence of the seer and begged his forgiveness. Records at Udupi Sri Krishna *mutt* indicate that in 1614 AD one Ramakrishna Prabhu (possibly the grandson of the conspirator - in atonement of the attempt to loot the Mutt) gifted gold ornaments to Lord Sri Krishna during the time of the *paryaya* of Sri Vedavedya Teertha.

Debates for Tatvavada

Sri Vadiraja Teertha was camping at Narasimha *theertha* near the confluence of rivers Neela and Bheemarathi. Mallana, a scholar who strongly held anti Vishnu views challenged the seer for a debate on their respective tenets. Sri Vadiraja Teertha presented lucidly the interpretations and conclusions of Sri Madhvacharya's philosophy (*Tatvavada*) in all its glory. Mallana could not countenance the arguments of Sri Vadiraja Teertha. In anger and despair, Mallana, aware of the importance of the *danda* with the seer, hatched a plan to steal and break the *danda* of the seer. The Lord willed it otherwise. Mallana had a dream in which the Lord of the *Kshetra*, Sri Narasimha appeared and instructed him to surrender to Sri Vadiraja Teertha. Initially, the seer refused to see Mallana as he had expressed hatred of Lord Sri Hari. Mallana pleaded with the seer and affirmed that he was no longer anti Vishnu and sought the blessings of the seer. Sri Vadiraja Teertha blessed his new devotee.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha authored a treatise termed '*Pashanda matha khandana*' exposing the errors and untenability of earlier interpretations of the scriptures. Following this, the seer was at *tapasya* at his Malalu *mutt*. A group of *Shaivaites* (lingayats), upset with contents of the treatise and unable to counter effectively the same, decided to attack and terminate the life of the seer and engaged one Vatasnabi, an evil thief to carry out their plans. This person neared the seer to carry out his heinous task. The very personality, grace and the aura surrounding the seer caused Vatasnabi to drop his weapons, prostrate himself in obeisance to the *swamiji*. He revealed to the seer the plot hatched and begged for his pardon and blessings so he could turn a new leaf in his life.

A reputed *advaita* scholar once invited Sri Vadiraja Teertha to debate their tenets, but when the seer arrived, he proposed a postponement of three days. By then the seer's *paryaya* would necessitate his remaining at Udupi, the seer deputed one of his disciples, Pandurangi Ananda Bhat, duly blessing him with *phalamanthrakshate* for the proposed debate. Pandurangi Ananda Bhat successfully faulted all interpretations of scriptures from the *advaita* scholar. He also proved the simple aptness and spiritual beauty of *tatvavada* (*Dvaita* tenets) by illustrating the truths drawn from various scriptures. The disciple obtained a letter from the *advaita* scholar conceding his defeat and delivered the same to Sri Vadiraja Teertha who was then at Udupi.

Events in the North and Delhi

Sri Vadiraja Teertha arrived in Mathura - the birthplace of Sri Krishna. In his travelogue *Theerthaprabhanda* the seer describes that town as an impenetrable fortress guarded by an army of devout *Vaishnavites* with their chanting of *hari nama* as

weapons and *pujas* to Sri Hari as their armour. The seer also visited Vrindavan, Ayodhya and Kurukshetra.

At Ayodhya, the seer found a temple for Sri Rama damaged, burnt down and looted by muslim raiders. Sri Vadiraja Teertha's divine instinct led him to discover half buried pristine statues of *Garuda* and *Mukhyaprana* (Sri Hanuman). The seer, with the intention of installing them in Udupi, dug them out of the ground. Sultan Humayun's troops prevented him from doing so and took him into the presence of the Sultan on charges of theft of valuables. Compelled to open the sacred bundle of statues, the seer revealed them to the Sultan with a curse that he be deprived of his kingdom. Realising his folly, the Sultan profusely sought the seer's pardon. The seer responded with his blessing that the Sultan would regain the lost kingdom. The Sultan then generously bundled up all effects available from his coffers and presented the same to Sri Vadiraja Teertha. Having no use for the riches, the saint had the same dumped into the holy river Ganga.

Returning to Udupi from his pilgrimage, Sri Vadiraja Teertha installed the pristine idols he had carried from Ayodhya in the forecourt of the idol of Lord Sri Krishna - Sri Hanuman's at the North and that of Garuda to the South.

When Sri Vadiraja Teertha arrived in Indraprastha during his second round of pilgrimage, the Sultan received him with all state honours and again offered jewels, elephants, horses etc and sought the seer's continued blessings. The seer told the Sultan he would be blessed with a son who would be righteous and acquire world renown. This son was the future emperor Akbar.

Travelling out of Indraprastha, the seer, with his entourage, halted at a garden under a large tree. He opened his *samputa* of idols for his daily *puja*. The local citizens informed him that the place was inauspicious since a prince was buried there. The seer told them that the place was indeed sacred and the prince was not dead. Amazed, the residents sent word to the king who came running to the seer's presence. At the instance of the seer the grave was dug up, the coffin opened and the prince was found in a coma but not dead. Sri Vadiraja Teertha sprinkled holy water on the prince. The prince woke up as if from deep sleep and stepped out of the coffin. With gratitude, the king presented the seer with great riches.

At Kashi (Benares)

An ancient holy city, Kashi has always been host to large throng of pilgrims. It has also been home always to a galaxy of scholars of various beliefs, tenets, well versed and familiar with *vedas*, *vedanthas*, *puranas*, *shastras* and all other scriptures and practices of *sanatana dharma*. To win against them in a debate, lucidly and successfully present the *tatvavada* tenet of Sri Madhvacharya solidly and rightly based on contents and statements from the scriptures was not an easy task. That however, was what Sri Vadiraja Teertha did, earning the respect of the scholars and gathering devotees. The seer also earned a place of honour at Kashi *Vidyapeetha* and was endowed with the title of '*Sarvajna Shikhaamani*'.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha was one night resting with his retinue of staff and devotees on the banks of the river Ganga. The area was home to a large number of huge crocodiles. The members of the seer's retinue expressed their fears of attacks from

these crocodiles. The seer, with his *danda* created a *mandala* around the rest area by drawing a line on the ground. The crocodiles dared not cross this line and left the area in peace.

A Lakh Ornaments

Continuing his pilgrimage, Sri Vadiraja Teertha arrived at Prayag - known as the king of pilgrim centres. The seer drew great comfort from bathing in the *triveni sangam* and *darshan* of prayag madhava. Here he gave lessons to his pupils on the epic Mahabharatha and its meanings. Mahabharatha scripture signifies the quintessence of our *dharmic* way of life, representative and illustrative of ideal values of all aspects and disciplines of life.

While conducting lessons on Mahabharatha *tatparya nirnaya*, Sri Vadiraja Teertha, one day, became aware of the presence of Sri Vedavyasa. Sri Vedavyasa reminded the seer of his mother's avowal of a lakh ornaments to the Lord. Sri Vedavyasa also indicated to the seer that his interpretation and explanation of a lakh of most difficult words contained in the Mahabharatha would be the best ornament for the Lord. Sri Vadiraja Teertha completed this work and offered it to the Lord on behalf of his mother. When told of this, his mother was overjoyed at having her illustrious son fulfilling her vow to the Lord.

Badarikashrama

Badari is reached after crossing six confluences of holy river Ganga. Here sits Lord Badarinarayana in *padmasana* holding *chakra* and conch in his two upheld arms and lotus in the hands resting on his laps. Close by is a *yagakunda* where God Brahma performed a *yaga* when the Lord manifested in the form of Hayagriva.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha arrived in Badari and to the presence of Sri Vedavyasa who was engaged in *tapas* at his *ashram* on the banks of river Hymavathi. Being aware of this with his *divyadhrishti*, Sri Vedavyasa received the seer and embraced and showered him with blessings. During Pandavas ascent to the heavens, Bheemasena had placed the idol of Lord Narasimha (worshipped by the Pandavas) at a place known as Bheemkunda. Sri Vedavyasa instructed the seer to obtain this idol. On way to Bheemakunda, Sri Vadiraja Teertha stopped and worshipped the idol of Lord Trivikrama in a stone chariot. This idol was then invisible to normal human eyes. Sri Vadiraja Teertha located and collected the idol of Lord Narasimha from Bheemakunda.

Bhootharaja

Narayanacharya of Narala village was in the services of Sri Vadiraja Teertha and remained with the seer while he was with Sri Vyasa Teertha. As a misadventure, Narayanacharya, unduly proud of his scholarship and association with the seer hid himself to test the seer during performance of some rituals. This only earned him a curse from the seer to turn into a *brahma rakshasa* (demon). Upon repentance and request for release, Sri Vadiraja Teertha offered the following solution: "Roam the forests and towns asking a certain question of whomsoever you encounter. When you get the right answer, you will be released from the curse." A few years later, the demon encountered the seer himself and obtained the right answer. Thus was he

released from the curse and resumed his earlier life. This Narayanacharya, believed to attain the position of god Rudra over time, continued in services of the *swamiji*. Until that day, Narayanacharya also known as Bhootharaja with his prowess and powers will continue to serve Sri Vadiraja Teertha. Bhootharaja remains in Sode as protector of the place ensuring that no whiff of injustice or wrongs occurs there. When Sri Vadiraja Teertha decided to end his incarnation, it was Bhootharaja who arranged to construct the *pancha vrindavans*. He too has a temple close to the *vrindavans* and for centuries continues to stand there protecting the place and destroying the difficulties of the pilgrims and devotees of Sri Vadiraja Teertha. The pilgrims in turn first visit the shrine of Bhootharaja and roll a coconut towards him before they visit the *vrindavans*.

Hayagriva Murthy

The incarnation of the Lord - Hayagriva - bestowed his blessings and favoured Sri Vadiraja Teertha. In turn, the seer had a special place for Hayagriva in his heart and was devoted to this form and offered special and regular *pujas* to the deity. It was Hayagriva mantra (*ham Hayagrivaya namah*) that was bestowed upon him from his guru at the time of the seer's initiation as an ascetic. It was the idol of the same form that the seer obtained from Bheemakunda as instructed by Sri Vedavyasa at Badarikashrama. All compositions of the seer were also dedicated to Lord Hayagriva (Hayavadana).

Sri Madhvacharya has cited the significance of Hayagriva mantra in his '*tantrasaara*' indicating Hayagriva as the form of god that displays through his nose and face all knowledge. By invocation of this form one begets the divine blessings of expertise in all knowledge, learning, debating skills, courage and strength to overcome obstacles in life.

Mention of Lord Hayagriva is made in the second canto of *Bhagavatha* wherein sage Narada describes the form thus " Following my *Yagnam* this is the form in which the Lord appeared to me, blessed me and gave *upadesha* to me. In god Hayagriva's breath resides the vedas, from his face emerge all knowledge. Obeisance to god Hayagriva who is the manifestation of all knowledge, who is the confidant of all gods and who is invoked and prayed to by all wise men".

By early 16th century the Portugese had established their rule in Goa including part of Karnataka. They zealously pursued conversion to christianity of the local Hindu populace. Cornered and fearing the vigourous and duressive action of the Portugese, a large number of *Daivagna* Brahmins fled the area. They sought refuge along the western coast of India - as far away as Gangoll, Kundapur, Basrur, Mangalore, Bantwal as also in the present Ratnagiri and Cochin districts. These were mainly artisans and jewellers under the patronage of the Vijayanagar empire. In their new settlements, these refugees tried to eke out their living in pursuit of their age old crafts and preserve their heritage and *dharmic* way of life.

Once one of these artisans was approached by a brahmin with an order for an exquisite statue of god Sri Ganapathi for his worship. This had to be cast in *panchaloha* - an alloy of five metals. The artisan very carefully prepared a mould and into it poured the molten metal alloy. The mould was stripped and out came a beautiful statue of Sri Hayagriva swamy - far from the intended one of Sri Ganesha !

Worried about this, the artisan waited for the hot metal to cool so he could recast the same. The metal would not cool for three days and try as he did, the artisan kept on getting out the idol of Sri Hayagriva alone. He realised that the Lord had indeed bestowed his favour on him. Sri Hayagriva appeared in all his splendour in the dreams of the artisan. The artisan was told by Lord Hayagriva that an enlightened *swamiji* would visit very soon and that the new idol should be handed over to the visitor. The artisan wondering at the turn of events and the blessings he had received shared this extraordinary news with his wife and members of the community.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha, in his dreams was instructed by Sri Hayagriva to go and collect the ready idol for his worship. Through his intuitive eye Sri Vadiraja Teertha located the idol and proceeded to meet the artisan. The artisan was awe struck at the expected appearance of the sublime seer along with his retinue of pupils and scholars.

Overwhelmed at having received the blessings of Lord Hayagriva and now at the effulgent presence of Sri Vadiraja Teertha, the artisan stood spell bound and speechless. He wondered at the extraordinary blessings of the Lord and knew that the events would lead to new beginnings for himself and his community members. The artisan prostrated himself before Sri Vadiraja Teertha, welcomed him and in all humility proffered the beautifully finished idol of Lord Sri Hayagriva. The artisan also sought the blessings of Sri Vadiraja Teertha for himself, his family and all his community members.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha expressed appreciation of the artisan's community members who had braved troubles in defense of their pursuit of *dharma* and preservation of their beliefs. The seer also told the community that the recent events only confirmed that the Lord bestows his blessings on those that believe in him and are prepared to defend their faith. The seer also told the artisan that he too was the beneficiary of the munificence of the Lord since he was a devotee of Lord Hayagriva ever since *guropodesha* from his *guru* Sri Vagisha Teertha. Sri Vadiraja Teertha extended his blessings to all members of the community, initiated them to Madhva tenets and welcomed them as the followers and devotees of his *mutt*.

Accompanied by the community members, the idol of Sri Hayagriva was taken in a grand procession to Sri Vadiraja's *mutt*. There the beautiful, effulgent statue was consecrated with all fanfare and celebrations and to the sounds of recital of prescribed *veda mantras*. The idol had indeed brightened the whole area with its splendour.

To this day, the members of the community who were instructed in Dvaita Vedanta and received into the fold as special *shishyas* by Sri Vadiraja Teertha continue in service of the *mutt*. They continue to make offerings to the Mutt and Lord Hayagriva. They continue to be recipients of the blessings, love and affection of Sri Vadiraja Teertha.

Manifestation of divinity and an exemplary practitioner of *Bhakti Yoga* himself, Sri Vadiraja Teertha always had a special devotion to and performed pujas for Lord Hayagriva. A cooked mixture of gram dal, jaggery, cardamom, coconut powder, raisins and ghee was offered to Lord Hayagriva after the day's worship. Sri Vadiraja

Teertha used to hold up the above offering over his head in a platter. Lord Sri Hayagriva appearing in the form of a white horse, used to place his front legs over the shoulder of the seer and accept the special offering. Such was their relationship. To this day, a similar preparation is offered to Lord Hayagriva at the *mutt* everyday. The preparation is given the name of the Lord himself - Hayagriva.

Many were those who were vanquished by Sri Vadiraja Teertha's eloquence, erudition, mesmerising debating skills in interpreting and presentation of Dvaita philosophy. Many of those so vanquished accepted the tenets of Dvaita philosophy and became ardent students and devotees of Sri Vadiraja Teertha. A few of them however felt belittled and plotted to avenge their defeat by assassinating the seer. When Sri Vadiraja Teertha was on a visit to Ahobala *Kshethra* they sought to carry out their evil plans by adding poison to the offerings daily made by the seer to Lord Hayagriva. On the day, the white horse came to accept the offering only after repeated entreaties of the seer. It also consumed the entire offering without leaving any for the seer to share. Lord Hayagriva manifested when the seer was sleeping that night and told him of the evil plot. Next day, those who plotted the seer's demise were themselves found dead.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha had taken into his fold brahmins from a village known as Mattu. Others members of the community who could not tolerate this, arranged one day to introduce a very potent poison into the preparation of the special offering to Lord Hayagriva. This was intended to take the lives of all the pupils and residents of the *mutt* who would partake of the offering. That day too Lord Hayagriva in form of the resplendent white horse appeared as usual but consumed the whole quantity of the *Naivedyam*, thus frustrating the evil plotters. Sri Vadiraja Teertha was told of the plot and how the Lord had countered it. The seer also noticed that the white horse had turned into a green color due to the ingestion of the poison. The seer asked for and obtained from the villagers seeds of a particular type of brinjal - green rounded ones with white stripes. The seer himself planted these seeds, grew the brinjals and administered a preparation of the same to the form of the horse of Lord Hayagriva. Over 45 days of such offerings, the pristine whiteness of the horse was restored except for a small portion of the neck. This brinjal, to this day, is known by as Vadiraja *gulla*.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha was camping in Belur in the present Hassan district. A rich landowner was told of a beautiful white horse that used to enter his field every day and feasted on the crop of gram. The watchmen could not locate the horse try as they did. One day the landowner himself chased the white horse and found that it neared Sri Vadiraja Teertha and vanished mysteriously. The landowner complained of this loss to the seer and beseeched him to let him catch the white horse. Sri Vadiraja Teertha asked the landowner to visit him next morning. The landowner presented himself to the seer next morning and was asked to be watchful and was also cautioned to block the view of one of his eyes with butter. After his daily pujas, the swamiji placed his regular offering in a gold platter to Lord Hayagriva and held it above his head. As usual, Lord Hayagriva sprang out from his idol in the resplendent form of a white as moon horse, rested front legs on the seer's shoulders and partook of the offering. The landowner was so dazzled by the sight that he retained sight only of the protected eye. Realising his good fortune and the blessings of Lord Hayagriva, the landowner gifted his field to the temple. To this day, this

SRI VADIRAJA TEERTHA

field in the villages of Nittoor, Kavanthi and Dasarahalli remains in possession of the Sode *mutt*.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha was camping in village Alur. One day, the seer had bathed at river shankuthirtha, offered *puja* at the nearby Lord Sri Janardana's temple and was resting on the shores of the river. The local chieftan rode into the presence of the swamiji in pursuit of an extraordinarily brilliant white horse. The white horse had disappeared as soon as it neared the seer. The chieftan prostrated himself to the seer and told him of the white horse. Sri Vadiraja Teertha in tears of happiness, complemented the chieftan on his good fortune at having been bestowed the rare gift of sighting of Lord Hayagriva. The chieftan, elated at his good fortune, gave a gift of an area of well over 30 acres of land to Sri Vadiraja Teertha with a request to continue performing *pujas* there. This land too is still owned by the Sode *mutt*.

Some healing touches

A person afflicted with leprosy, finding no relief despite prayers at various *khsethras*, approached Sri Vadiraja Teertha who cured him and also bestowed the boon of a son.

A poor brahmin beset with back breaking debts approached the swamiji repeatedly for release. Sri Vadiraja Teertha composed a special mantra to him invoking Goddess Lakshmi and bid him repeat this everyday. At completion of a *mandala* of this mantra, the man found just enough wealth to clear all his debts. In gratitude, the brahmin entered the services of the *mutt* for the balance duration of his life.

Numerous are the recorded instances and anecdotes of Sri Vadiraja Teertha wherein he has displayed his divinity while miraculously curing people of blindness, deformities, illnesses and saving many from difficult situations.

Mouse and serpent

While Sri Vadiraja Teertha was in *tapas*, a serpent repeatedly tried to bite him to death. All it succeeding in doing was to loose it's own teeth. It could not even disturb the seer from his *tapas*.

Once a mouse was chased by a serpent and took refuge under the seat of Sri Vadiraja Teertha. As soon as the serpent found itself in the presence of the seer, it lost its anger and became docile. The seer encouraged the serpent to reside in his *danda* (staff) ending enmity with the mouse. This incident is depicted by the presence of the mouse and serpent in all illustrations of the seer.

Sode Raja and the Mutt

Sri Arasappa Nayaka was the raja of Sode prinicipality. His guru was head of a *Lingayat* (those deeming Lord Shiva or Shankara as the Supreme being) *mutt*. He was also adept at *indrajala*. He had his followers believe that he journeyed by air every morning to *Kailasa*, met Lord Shiva with goddess Parvathi and paid obeisance to them. He had the populace believe that he was thus an incarnation of Lord Shiva himself! With the support of the raja, this guru let loose a reign of terror over the brahmin population. He started compelling them to become *lingayats*. Facing their

unwillingness, the guru chose to physically assault them by elephants and other means. The brahmin residents were in real trouble not knowing what to do.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha was approached by the brahmins for help. The seer arrived in Sode and sat in *tapas* at a garden close to the city. This place is known as *tapovana* and is situated on the banks of Shalmali river - 2 miles from the mutt.

The raja was attacked by his enemies, fought them, lost his soldiers, lost the battle and fled the capital. As fate would have it, he found himself in the presence of Sri Vadiraja Teertha in deep meditation sitting in *padmasana* over a huge rock. The spiritual aura around the *swamiji* rendered the surrounding area brilliantly lit although it was a dark night. The raja stood transfixed and felt he should surrender himself to this enlightened *swamiji*. He prostrated himself to the seer.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha once out of his trance asked the person in front of him as to what he wanted. The raja told him of his rout by the enemies and begged for the seer's blessings and help. Sri Vadiraja Teertha castigated the raja for his action against the brahmins and accused him of *brahma hatya*. The raja was also told that his rout by the enemies was a just result of his mistreatment of the brahmins. The raja lost consciousness at being berated by the seer. Recovering from this, the raja told the seer that he was not directly responsible for the evil actions against brahmins and that these were at the behest of his guru who had controlled him. He begged forgiveness of Sri Vadiraja Teertha and requested his immediate help in restoring his kingdom. If denied this, the raja vowed that he and his family would give up their lives in front of the *swamiji*. If granted help the raja said he would spend the rest of his life in total servitude of Sri Vadiraja Teertha.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha, compassionate and kind hearted as he was, gave the raja a handful of *manthrakashathe* with divine blessings. The seer told the raja "Walk into your kingdom with this *manthrakshate*; your enemy will be routed and flee; come back to me soon after this happens". The raja was bewildered and wondered how he could alone fight a victorious army. Sri Vadiraja Teertha said to the raja "You will not be going alone; our Lord Hayagriva (Hayavadana) will be with you".

The raja proceeded towards his capital and was again bewildered and elated to see thousands of resplendent horses brilliantly and copiously armed marching ahead of him. Without raising his own arms, the raja saw the defeat of his enemy whose army was completely annihilated. The enemy immediately fled and the raja took back the reins of his kingdom. With an overwhelming sense of gratitude the raja returned to Sri Vadiraja Teertha with his full royal regalia. He expressed profusely his sense of gratitude and beseeched the seer to enter his kingdom. The seer consented and was taken to the capital in a golden *palki* and was welcomed into the palace. At the *darbar*, the raja offered all his services to the seer and requested for his orders. Sri Vadiraja Teertha bid the raja summon his guru for a debate.

Arasappa Nayaka arranged for a grand venue for the debate. His guru, pretending to descend from heavens after visiting Lord Shiva and goddess Parvathi, appeared (using his illusory powers) to be walking through air. With the power of his incanted *mantra*, Sri Vadiraja Teertha destroyed the illusion causing a hard landing to ground of the guru. The guru, very alarmed at the power of the seer, masked his sense of fear well and entered the venue set for the debate. Sri Vadiraja Teertha

addressed the raja and all those that were present to hear the debate and said " You are all aware of the difficulties, troubles and torture this guru has inflicted upon the brahmins here in an effort to force them to convert to his faith. He has also misled you with his illusory skills. Whether Lord Shiva himself wants the brahmins to become *lingayats* is a matter to be examined. I propose a debate and discussion of this issue over the next 14 days. Let this guru present his arguments over the first 7 days. I shall then rebut his statements and present my arguments in support of the brahmins. Should I fail in my arguments and presentation, am prepared to become a follower of your *guru*. Should your *guru* loose the debate, he should receive punishment for torturing the brahmins".

The debate covered arguments based on Vedas, Vedanthas and other scriptures. Arguments were also based on all 64 crafts and musical heritage. On the 14th day, the *rajaguru* conceded defeat, was awarded punishment for his misdeeds, shamed and banished from the kingdom.

Arasappa Nayaka declared his allegiance to Sri Vadiraja Teertha's tenet and offered the honour of full royal regalia to the seer along with presenting a large area of land for Sri Vadiraja Teertha's *mutt*. This event and a few following events were recorded on the stone inscription placed near the Thrivikarama temple in the premises of the *mutt*. The ruler also gifted the *puja* bell (with the image of *basava* or *nandi*) of his earlier guru to Sri Vadiraja Teertha. *Vaishnavas* use bells with icons of *Mukhyaprana* (Anjaneya) or *Garuda* for their *pujas*. As an exception the *basava* bell was used by the seer during his *pujas* to Lord Varaha and Lord Hayagriva. The same bell continues to be used to this day for the pontiff's *pujas* at the *mutt*.

The ruler's daughter, sad at the demise of her husband, approached Sri Vadiraja Teertha who immediately composed and recanted a *Dashavathara* hymn containing 108 names of Lord Narayana. This brought back to life the deceased husband. Arasappa Nayaka was very pleased with this development and became most ardent in his devotion to the seer.

The raja of Sode pointed out to Sri Vadiraja Teertha the absence of a good temple in the area and beseeched the seer to arrange for one. The seer instructed the raja to arrange for construction of a beautiful temple. The raja immediately assembled a group of excellent artisans and began construction of a temple in stone. Sri Vadiraja Teertha came to the aid of the artisans once in braking a large rock with only his toes and on another occasion in lifting and positioning of a large block of stone for the roof. Sri Vadiraja Teertha bid Sri Bhootharaja go to Badari and bring back with him the beautiful statue of Lord Sri Trivikrama resplendent in a stone chariot. Sri Bhootharaja went to Badari and picked up the whole chariot with the statue of Lord Sri Trivikrama and started back on his journey. A *rakshasa*, wanting to frustrate the efforts of Sri Bhootharaja confronted him when he was carrying the stone chariot. In order not to loose time, Sri Bhootharaja pulled out one of the stone wheels of the chariot and used it to kill the *rakshasa*. One of the wheels of the chariot remains missing in Sode. The stone chariot containing the statue of Lord Trivikrama reached Sode, was placed in position and consecrated by Sri Vadiraja Teertha on an auspicious day.

In accordance with instructions received from goddess Lakshmidēvi in a dream, Sri Vadiraja Teertha recovered a statue of goddess Lakshmidēvi from the nearby lake,

installed and consecrated the same in front of that of Lord Thrivikrama thus unifying her with her Lord.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha also had the following 5 holy ponds and tanks constructed near the temple: *Dhavalaganga Akaashaganga, Antaraganga, Amrutaganga and Pataalaganga*. The waters in these lakes, it is believed, come from the holy rivers of India. Around the *Dhavalaganga*, the seer had established 8 varieties of trees - Ashwatha (Peepul), Mango, Jack-fruit, Tamarind, Coconut, Gooseberry, Sugarcane and Plantain. All these still flourish around the holy pond.

The Sode raja made provisions by endowments for regular *pujas* at the temples here.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha had completed 4 *paryayas* at Udupi. By the time of his 5th *paryayapuja* at Udupi, the seer decided to allow his aging pupil Sri Vedavedya Teertha conduct the *paryayapuja* at Udupi. Greatly devoted to Lord Sri Krishna, Sri Vadiraja Teertha decided to perform his *paryayapuja* at Sode itself. To this end, the swamiji arranged for installation and consecration of the divine statues of Lord Krishna with his flute, Lord Ananteshwara and Lord Chandremuleswara at Sode. The whole of Sode *Kshethra* was decorated for the period of *paryaya*. Sri Vadiraja Teertha conducted his *paryayapuja* in a very grand manner to Lord Krishna along with Lord Thrivikrama and other deities in his mutt in Sode. The grandeur of this *paryayapuja* attracted thousands of devotees to Sode.

Udupi

While Kumbhasi and the new premises at Sode became the spiritual centres of activities of Sri Vadiraja Teertha, Udupi with the divine presence of Lord Krishna had a special place in his heart. The *Kshethra* received the benefit of exemplary forethought, organisation and management skills of the seer.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha installed with all ceremony and consecrated the two pristine idols he had carried from Ayodhya in the forecourt of the idol of Lord Sri Krishna - Sri Hanuman's at the North and that of Garuda to the South.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha had an ephemeral statue of Sri Madhvacharya made and installed the same within the premises of Lord Sri Krishna's temples. He also arranged for *puja* and offering to Sri Madhvacharya immediately after the *mahapujas* at Lord Sri Krishna's temple. The swamiji also had an idol of Lord Sri Subramanyeshwara installed to the north of the Sri Krishna *mutt*.

The *swamiji* had another image of Sri Madhvacharya prepared and intended to install the same near Lord Ananteshwara temple, where the proponent of *dvaita* philosophy once tutored his disciples. He was however dissuaded (in his dreams) from doing this by Sri Madhvacharya who also told him that although spiritually he continued to reside in Badari, a part of him still remained in Ananteshwara temple blessing his disciples. Sri Vadiraja Teertha then had the statue installed in Pajaka *Kshethra* - the place of birth of Sri Madhvacharya. The seer also arranged for renovation of the home where Sri Mahvacharya was born.

From Delhi, the king had sent a large quantity of gold coins to Sri Vadiraja Teertha as offering to Sri Krishna *mutt*. It was to be used for gold covering of the roof.

Knowing that this would invite undue attention from robbers, the *swamiji* had part of the coins buried in the vicinity of Sri Krishna *mutt*, installed and consecrated god *Nagadeva* (Serpent king) over the site. The rest of the coins were interred in the premises of Sri Vadiraja Teertha's *mutt* in Udupi. An idol of Sri Bhootharaja was ceremonially installed over the treasure.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha, during his 4 *paryaya* periods, arranged for extensive renovations, additions and improvement of Sri Krishna *mutt* at Udupi.

Prior to the advent of Sri Vadiraja Teertha, the period of each *paryaya* was two months. The pontiff's of the eight *mutts*, who by rotation would assume charge of the running of affairs (including all prescribed *pujas*) of Sri Krishna *mutt* for a 2 month period each. The pontiffs needed ample time to pursue their studies of scriptures, write, run their own *mutts*, recruit and tutor pupils, conduct tours and disseminate the tenets of *dvaita vedanta*. The 2 months' period of each *paryaya* would obviously not afford them enough uninterrupted time for all their activities. In recognition of this situation, Sri Vadiraja Teertha proposed an amended period of 2 years for each *paryaya*. It speaks volumes of the standing of Sri Vadiraja Teertha that he obtained readily consent of all the 8 *mutts*.

The 2 year *paryaya* system was initiated thanks to the genius of foresight, organisational and managerial skills of Sri Vadiraja Teertha. The Swamiji also set out new elaborate systems and rituals leading to the assumption of the affairs of Sri Krishna *mutt* by the eight pontiffs in prescribed rotation. Also set into place was a basic system of management of and guidelines for various worship rituals at Sri Krishna *mutt*. This system, in essence, continues to this day.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha arranged for allotment of land and construction of buildings for the 8 *mutts*. The seer also presented to each of the *mutts* an idol of Lord Sri Hayagriva for their daily worship.

Kanakadasa honoured

Sri Kanakadasa, a great devotee of Lord Sri Krishna was resident in Udupi. Sri Vadiraja Teertha had arranged for daily supply of food (*prasada*) to Sri Kanakadasa immediately after *naivedyam* to the Lord. Jealous of the special treatment meted out to Sri Kanakadasa, the staff of the *mutt* deliberately disrupted this arrangement. Aware of this situation, Sri Vadiraja Teertha kept quiet - knowing that the influence of Kanakadasa would be made evident soon. Sri Kanakadasa appealed to Lord Sri Krishna for a remedy. Lord Sri Krishna, every day, brought out and gave an ornament from the temple to his great and ardent devotee. Sri Kanakadasa used to pledge these ornaments with a trader, procured food and fruits, offered the same to the Lord and partook of the same. In due course, the men in charge of the temple noted the missing ornaments and complained to Sri Vadiraja Teertha. The seer already aware of the happenings questioned Sri Kanakadasa and the trader both of whom revealed the truth. Sri Vadiraja Teertha arranged to pay the trader and had the ornaments restored to the temple. The seer also scolded and punished the persons responsible for not recognising the greatness of Sri Kanakadasa and his devotion to the Lord. There was no more disruption in supply of *prasada* to Sri Kanakadasa.

The cooks preparing rice for offering as *naivedyam*, were letting out the excess water from the boiling rice into a drain. One day, Sri Kanakadasa collected some of this flowing water, used it to prepare a hard bread (*roti*) with some flour he had with him and offered it to the Lord as *naivedyam*. When this rice was brought that day for offering to the Lord, Sri Vadiraja Teertha indicated how this portion had already been offered to the Lord by Sri Kanakadasa. The seer had fresh rice cooked again for the daily offering. In memory of this event, to this day hard bread is prepared daily as offering to the Lord.

The Successors

Sri Vadiraja Teertha chose a fitting boy from a pious family, initiated him into *sanyasa*, named him Vedavedya Tertha and arranged for a classical education to enable him to lead the *mutt* when the time came. It was to allow this junior *swamiji* to perform *paryayapujas* at Udupi that Sri Vadiraja Teertha conducted his 5th paryaya in a magnificent manner at Sode itself. Sri Vadiraja Teertha also inducted another well chosen and gifted boy, initiated him to *sanyasa*, named him Vedanidhi Teertha and arranged for suitable education and training for him. The assistance of the two disciples ensured conduct of pujas and other affairs of the *mutt* in an efficient and grand manner. It was believed that Sri Vedanidhi Teertha was a manifestation of Sri Garuda and was highly regarded by the sode ruler Arasappa Nayaka. Once when Sri Vadiraja Teertha was away from Sode, Sri Vedanidhi Teertha was invited by the ruler to his palace where he was told that the prince used to bathe from water out of a gold vessel. Tempted by this untold luxury, the ordained ascetic called for this vessel and bathed from its water. The ascetic also sat on the ruler's throne for a while. On hearing of this, Sri Vadiraja Teertha pointed out to his protégé that he had indeed committed a grave sin and would have to find a way of atonement. As suggested by scholars of *shasthras*, the young ascetic sat in water near Dhavalaganga for 21 days all the while reciting the name of Lord Sri Hari and obtained salvation for his misdeed in the same lifetime.

Vrindavan entry and ascension

The day was Wednesday, *Phalguna bahula tadige* in the year *Sharvari* 1522 (1600 AD).

Having lived 120 years in this mortal world, early in the morning Sri Vadiraja Teertha bathed in the holy *Dhavalanga*, performed his daily *pujas* and meditation. The *swamiji* was ready to depart from this physical world. Sri Vadiraja Teertha, serene, clad in his ochre robes, adorned by his *Tulasi mala* readied to enter his *vrindavan* alive. The *vrindavan* so chosen was the one in the centre of the five *vrindavans* built close to the presence of Lord Thrivikrama.

A grieving throb of humanity gathered at Sode - Arasappa Nayaka with his retinue, Sri Vedavedya Teertha with the staff members of the *mutt*, thousands of devotees, scholars, pupils and others. Their collective sense of impending loss was immense. Blessing the people gathered, in a state of heightened concentration and meditation, with prayers to his very favorite deity Sri Hayagriva, the *swamiji* entered the *vrindavan*. In his hands was the moving string of holy beads indicating the seer's continuing *japa* and meditation. When eventually the string of holy beads slipped from the hands, in accordance with the seer's instructions, the top of the *vrindavan* was covered. The chanting of vedas and veda *mantras* continued.

Moments after covering the *vrindavan* the gathered crowd were overpowered by a strong smell of jasmines accompanied by pealing of several bells and looked up. They sighted Sri Vadiraja Teertha resplendent in a bright chariot of the gods, ready to be taken to the Lord's presence. With a sense of awe, the crowd supplicated themselves to the *swamiji*, expressed their anguish at his departure. Sri Vadiraja Teertha assured the people that he would continue to reside in part in the *vrindavan*, be served by Sri Bhootharaja and would grant the wishes of his devotees. The *swamiji* also dropped from the chariot his gold slippers and shawl. The chariot of the gods then departed with the sublime Sri Vadiraja Teertha.

The central *vrindavan* is adorned in the east by Lord Sri Hayavadana (Hayagriva), in the south by Lord Srirama, in the west by Lord Sri Krishna and on the north by Sri Vedavyasa. By Sri Vadiraja Teertha's indications, the five *vrindavans* have the presence of Lords Sri Vasudeva, Sri Narayana, Sri Pradhyumna, Sri Aniruddha and Sri Sankarshana - the significance of these five forms of the Lord is illustrated in the Bhagavata. The *vrindavans* have also the presence of Mahavishnu, Mahalakshmi, Brahma, Vayudeva, Rudra and Sri Vadiraja Teertha himself.

Swapna Vrindavanaakhyana

After departure of the seer from the material world, his long standing disciple and the successor pontiff of the *mutt* Sri Vedavedya Teertha wished to have a conversation with Sri Vadiraja Teertha. In response to his entreaties, it was indicated to him that in his sleep he could only be granted one boon - of conversation with or *darshan* of Sri Vadiraja Teertha. Sri Vedavedya Teertha wished for *darshan*. Sri Bhootharaja removed the top stone of the central *vrindavan* for a moment allowing Sri Vedavedya Teertha a glimpse of Sri Vadiraja Teertha in meditation. Overjoyed, the new pontiff wanted to speak but before he could do so the stone cover over the *vrindavan* reverted to its position.

Sri Vedanidhi Teertha ardently wished to learn of the greatness of Sri Vadiraja Teertha and constantly served the exemplary seer at the five *vrindavans*. Sri Vadiraja Teertha made use of an extraordinary way of confirming his own status and full import of his life. A mute brahmin was in service at the *mutt*. Every day while the mute brahmin was sleeping, Sri Vadiraja Teertha was communicating his own special status and historical roles and achievements - bit by bit. In the mornings, the mute person would recite the verses taught to him in the presence of Sri Vedanidhi Teertha and would become mute again - until the next morning. This continued over a period of 12 years (1630 to 1642 AD). Sri Vedanidhi Teertha had these verses written down (22 chapters of great import) by one of his disciples Sri Ramacharya. This wonderful narration could be understood wholly only by those who had such a grace bestowed on them by the illustrious Sri Vadiraja Teertha himself. Sri Vedanidhi Teertha chose a few significant *sthothras* as '*anu vrindavanaakhyana*' and had them inscribed in stone in front of Sri Vedvedya Teertha's *vrindavan*.

Sri Vedanidhi Teertha wanted to establish a *Dvaja Sthamba* in front of the Rama Trivikrama temple. Several attempts at this went in vain and the structure could not be set firmly. Sri Vadiraja Teertha appearing in the dreams of Sri Vedanidhi Teertha instructed him to have his image atop *hamsa vahana* carved on the pillar before trying

to erect the same again. The instructions were followed, the *sthamba* was installed in 1640 AD and remains in position to this day.

Haridasas - The phenomenon

No treatise on Sri Vadiraja Teertha is complete without citing his substantial and significant contribution to the phenomenal movement of *Haridasas* and their vast body of literature - *Dasa Sahitya*.

Sri Madhvacharya who propounded the *Dvaita vedanta* laid great emphasis on devotion - *bhakti* towards the Lord. Sri Madhvacharya deemed that this practice of *bhakti* (adoration and devotion) and prayers to the Lord coupled with good acts was the highway for all souls to attain the feet of the Lord (*Moksha*). Sri Madhvacharya is rightly considered the originator of the cult of *bhakti*.

The scriptures and the commentaries on them were all in holy sanskrit which had, over time, become the language of the scholars. In order to bring the substance and teachings of the scriptures to the general populace, a bridge of language and expression was needed. It was the phenomenal movement of an illustrious line of *Haridasas* that so effectively filled the need.

The *Haridasas* wholly identified themselves with the Madhva philosophy they preached. They strongly propagated Madhva tenets in their body of work. Their works and compositions were in *prakrit* Kannada and mark a very important and historical development in Karnataka.

The vast volume of work of *Haridasas* include poems, plays, essays, prose, songs on biographical, physical, metaphysical subjects - all teachings leading to personal self-realisation as they reached out to the masses with a social purpose. Their works in simple, straightforward (albeit at times subtle) language were drawn from the teachings and moral precepts of *Vedas*, *Shastras*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharatha*, *Puranas*, *Alankaras* et al.

Much of the works of the *Haridasas* were set to music by themselves thus enriching carnatic music (a profound musical tradition) with their vast body of compositions full of *bhakti* and metaphysical thoughts. Whether Kannada language enriched *Dasa sahithya* or vice versa would always remain a moot point. The compositions of most *Haridasas* usually ended in a line with their pen name followed by Vitthala.

The *Haridasas* must indeed be of a very evolved and enlightened line of souls. Through their extraordinary and vast body of work and devotional music dealing with adoration and praise of the Lord, teaching philosophy, theology, social and moral issues, the *Haridasas* reached out to the hearts of the masses - in a language and diction they understood. In their works, the *Haridasas* effectively distilled the essence of the teachings of the *vedas* and other scriptures in a language and format easily understood by the masses.

Recorded events suggest that the first composition set to music was that of Sri Narahari Teertha in the 13th century. However, the movement appears to have reached great heights from the middle of the 15th century to 16th century. There was a galaxy of extraordinary souls who contributed greatly to *Dasa sahithya* and

furthered the remarkable phenomenon of *Haridasa* movement. These were the illustrious Sri Vyasaraja Teertha, Sri Padaraja Teertha, Sri Vijayendra Teertha. Sri Narayana Teertha, Sri Vadiraja Teertha, Sri Purandaradasa, Sri Kanakadasa, Sri Vaikuntadasa.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha's significant contributions to Dasa sahithya consists of over 300 keerthanas and stothras in addition to over 700 stanzas of poetry. The variety and range of divine, practical, physical, geographical subjects covered in Sri Vadiraja Teertha's compositions is breathtaking.

Writings of Sri Vadiraja Teertha

Sri Vadiraja Teertha was an erudite and prolific writer and has left behind for posterity a wide range of commentaries, critical appraisals, several independent works on morals and ethics of life, plays, musical and *bhakti* compositions, *stothras*, poems and odes. The important and available works may be listed as follows:

Commentaries, Explanatory and Critical writings

1. *Mahabharatha tatparya nirnaya bhavaprakashika.* 2. *Mahabharata laksahalankara.* 3. *Thalavaakaropanisadhashya teeka.* 4. *Taityopanisadhashya teeka.* 5. *Kathakipanisadhashya teeka.* 6. *Atharvopanisadhashya teeka.* 7. *Mandakopanisadhashya teeka.* 8. *Tantrasara teeka.* 9. *Nyayasudha gurvavarthadeepika.* 10. *Tatvapraakashikagurvavarthadeepika.* 11. *Ishavasya upanisad hashya tippani.* 12. *Shatprashnopanisad hashya teeka tippani.* 13. *Geetabhashya tippani.*

2. Independent shasthra volumes

1. *Nyaayarathnavali.* 2. *Chakramimamsa.* 3. *Upanyaasarathnamala.* 4. *Yuktimallika.* 5. *Haribakhtilatha.* 6. *Sadaacharsmriti.* 7. *Shruthitativaprakashika.* 8. *Sankalpapaddathi.* 9. *Ekadasi nirnaya.* 10. *Bhoogola nirnaya.* 11. *Taaratamya.* 12. *Chinta Khandanam.* 13. *Pashaandamatha Khandanam.* 14. *Kalpalatha.* 15. *Vivaranavranam.* 16. *Shakunamaala.* 17. *Muhurtaraaja.* 18. *Madvavag vajraavali.* 19. *Samskrutasukhta artha.* 20. *Nyayasidhaantha sangraha.* 21. *Adhikarana Namavali.*

3. Independent works (Prose)

1. *Rukmaneesha vijaya.* 2. *Sarasabharathi vilaasa.* 3. *Theerthaprabanda.* 4. *Kavi Kadamba Kantaabhushna.*

4. Sthothras (Prayers)

1. *Rupyapeetha Krishna sthuthi.* 2. *Ashwadhaati.* 3. *Vishnu sthuthi.* 4. *Hayagriva sthuthi.* 5. *Shri shreeshtaguna darpana.* 6. *Venkatesha managaalshtaka.* 7. *Prarthanaadaraka.* 8. *Keshavaadi chaturvimshathimurthy sthuthi.* 9. *Dasasloki.* 10. *Vyaasa sthuthi.* 11. *Abhaya sthuthi.* 12. *Ramesha sthuthi.* 13. *Sankalpa paddhati.* 14. *Krishna sthuthi.* 15. *Sri Krishna sthuthi.* 16. *Ramakrishna sthuthi.* 17. *Ashtamahisheeyukta Krishna sthuthi.* 18. *Aapada sthuthi.* 19. *Trivikrama sthuthi.* 20. *Dashavatara sthuthi.* 21. *Varaha Hayagriva sthuthi.* 22. *Hayagriva sthuthi.* 23. *Hayagriva sthuthi.* 24. *Haryaashtaka.* 25. *Hayagriva panchaka.* 26. *Hayagriva sampada sthuthi.* 27. *Hayagriva kavacha.* 28. *Narasimha Varaha panchaka.* 29. *Ramasthuthi.* 30. *Vyaasa sthuthi.* 31.

Shlokatraya. 32. Vighnaparihaara sthothra. 33. Abhaya sthothra. 34. Runamochana sthothra. 35. Aryavrutta. 36. Sahasrara sthuthi. 37. Chakra sthuthi. 38. Vayu sthuthi. 39. Madhvaashtakha. 40. Madhvamuni prathaapakashtaka. 41. Navagraha sthothra. 42. Kuru sthothra. 43. Tadya sthothra.

5. Kannada writings

1. Vykuntavarnane. 2. Laksmishobane. 3. Gundakriye. 4. Swapnapadha. 5. Bhramarageethe. 6. Narada Koravanji. 7. Swapnagadya. 8. Bhagavatasaara keerthane. 9. Keshavanama. 10. Keechakavadhe. 11. Naivedya prakarana. 12. Namaskara sthothra. 13. Sulaadigalu. 14. Ugabhogagalu. 15. Keerthanegalu.

In addition to above, Sri Vadiraja Teertha has also written in Tulu language a number of works termed as Dashavatara shadnas.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha - a Ruju

The final destiny of all souls is the attainment of *moksha* - a place at the feet of Lord Sri Hari. The repeated births of souls are steps and opportunities for the onward journey to the attainment of *moksha*.

Several mentions in various *puranas* and scriptures refer to a highly evolved line of souls termed as *Rujuganas*. At any given time, these number 100. *Rujuganas* are exemplary in their conduct and are embodiment of supreme knowledge. They are very devoted to Lord Sri Hari and serve him for eternity. The *Rujuganas* have special grace from Lord Sri Hari and follow the tasks allotted to them with great diligence and are ideal *gurus* to all living beings. The *Rujuganas* are of pure consciousness and awareness of cosmic intelligence. The *Rujuganas* are always pure in their thoughts and actions and possess all 32 perfect and holy features. The *Rujuganas* are angelic. They are mostly unconcerned with pursuit of *moksha* and are deemed the highest of souls.

The destiny of the *Rujuganas* is the attainment of the office of *Brahma* by progressive succession. They spend eons of time in meditation and acquisition of all knowledge. Starting from the one called *Kalki*, the *Rujuganas* are termed as *Lathavya* (98), *Vayu* (99) and *Brahma* (100). The *Rujuganas* progress through the various stages of achievement until *Vayu* becomes *Brahma* at the beginning of each *Brahmakalpa*. At this time *Lathavya* moves into the position of *Vayu* and would be ready to become *Brahma* in the next *Brahmakalpa*.

A *Brahmakalpa* is the period of a 1000 *Mahayugas* or 100 years for *Brahma*. A *Mahayuga* is the period of four *Yugas* - *Kruta*, *Treta*, *Dwapara* and *Kali*. A *Mahayuga* is 12,000 god years. One day for *Brahma* is 360 days for human beings. Thus a *Brahmakalpa* is 100 x 360 x 1,000 x 12,000 x 360 years.

Sri Vadiraja Teertha is deemed to be in the position of *Lathavya* in this *Brahmakalpa*. This is asserted by references in various *puranas* and confirmed in the works of various *Haridasas* as also by the seer's own *Swaapnavarindavanaakhyana*.

Idols worshipped at Sode Mutt

SRI VADIRAJA TEERTHA

A listing of the idols worshipped by Sri Vadiraja Teertha and in use at the Sode mutt even to this day would read as follows:

1. Lord Sri Bhuvaraha - the centrepiece of the *mutt* - gifted to the first pontiff Sri Vishnu Teertha by Sri Madhvacharya.
2. 'Vyasa mushti' - self incarnated, obtained from Badarikashrama and worshipped by Sri Madhvacharya.
3. Lord Sri Hayagriva - Obtained by Sri Vadiraja Teertha from Daivajna brahmin artisans as indicated in his dreams.
4. Saligrama of Sri Hayagriva retrieved by Sri Vaidraja Teertha from a cave in Dwaravathi.
5. Lord Krishna with the flute - Received by Sri Vadiraja Teertha from Sri Vishnu Teertha atop Kumara mountain.
6. Lord Sri Narasimha - worshipped by Bheemasena in Dwapara yuga -retrieved by Sri Vadiraja Teertha from Bheemakunda as bidden by Sri Vedavyasa when visiting Badasrikaashrama.
7. Lord Sri Srinivasa with Bhu (in gold)- presented by the Lord himself in the dream to Sri Vadiraja Teertha as a token of his pleasure.
8. Lord Sri Rama and Lord Sri Vitthala (both in silver) - retrieved by Sri Vadiraja Teertha while unearthing buried riches at Hampi - believed to have been worshipped by Vali and Sugriva of the Ramayan times.
9. Lord Sri Vitthala (emerald) - statue of a jain temple that changed into this form at the mere touch of Sri Vadiraja Teertha.
10. Lord Sri Vitthala - once worshipped by Sage Gouthama and retrieved by Sri Vadiraja Teertha.
11. Saligrama of Sri Divya Vishwambara.
12. Lord Sri Mushna Varaahamurthy - obtained by Sri Vadiraja Teertha when visiting Mushni.
13. Lord Sri Hayagriva (silver) - gifted by Sri Vishnu Teertha.
14. Saligrama of holy Dadhivamana.
15. Right aligned Conch - retrieved by Sri Vadiraja Teertha from the seabed in Dwaraka.
16. Right aligned Conch - given to Sri Vishnu Teertha by Sri Madhvacharya.
17. Saligramas from 12 Khsehtras of Sri Lakshminarayana - obtained from Gandaki by Sri Vadiraja Teertha.
18. Mint ring and 'akshaya patra' - extraordinary items gifted by Sri Madhvacharya to his brother and the first pontiif of this mutt.
19. Lord Sri Krishna (bearing a divine smile) - gifted originally to a devout family by Sri Madhvacharya - later offered to the mutt by the family for conduct of special long term prayers.
20. Lord Sri Narayana resplendent on the lotus.

The following items also are present in the mutt:

- Image of Sri Mukhya prana
- Statue of Sri Vadiraja Teertha presented by the seer to his mother
- Sri Vadiraja Teertha's golden footware
- Padmapeetha with the presence of Sri Bhootharaja
- Statue of Sri Vedyavyasa

Previous pontiff of the mutt

The immediate predecessor pontiff of the *mutt* was Sri Sri Vishvothama Teertha. He was born in Srimukha, pushya, bahula, trayodashi (13-1-1934) and was initiated to *sanyasa* in swabhanu, bhadrapada shuddha chaturthi (1943) and had completed four *paryayas* very much like the illustrious Sri Vadiraja Teertha. Sri Sri Vishvothama Teertha passed away on 18-8-2007 at Sode.

Sri Sri Vishvothama Teertha was deeply engrossed in carrying out the tradition of regular *pujas* at the *mutt*. He was also deeply engrossed in studies of the scriptures, study and research into the enormous volume of writings on tatvavada and in tutoring deserving well chosen disciples. He also pursued periods of meditation and contemplation on metaphysical and spiritual matters. The seer lead a simple and ideal monastic life. He very ably organised and managed the affairs of the *mutt*. He continuously and metiuclosly strived to create facilities for the comfort of the pilgrims visiting the *mutt* while renovating the premises of the *mutt*. Under his able guidance, the pilgrims were offered free and sumptuous meals every day.

Under the able guidance of Sri Sri Vishvothama Teertha, renovations and upgrading of facilities were carried out in all other 9 branches of the *mutt* situated at Kumbhasi, Undaru, Hoovinakere (birth place of Sri Vadiraja Teertha), Malali, Panjimar, Udyavara, Thirthahalli, Ranjala, Nadyanthadi.

Under the able and personal guidance of Sri Sri Visvothama Teertha, an educational institute (pre degree) was run at Innanje near the Undaru branch of *mutt*.

Sri Sri Vishvothama Teertha took personal interest in observation of annual festivities, celebrations and *aradanas* of Sri Vadiraja Teertha and Ramaa Thrivikrama in a grand fashion. The seer also recognised, supported and honoured numerous scholars.

Sri Vishvothama Teertha was very much admired for his exemplary conduct, his simple austere ways, his kindness, concern for others, his uparalalled devotion to Sri Vadiraja Teertha and his achievements in preserving and promoting the *parampara* of the *mutt*. The *swamiji* was like a magnet in attracting attention to the *mutt* and its heritage. He was indeed a worthy occupant of the seat once held by the illustrious and extraordinary Sri Vadiraja Teertha.

Present pontiff of the mutt

The present pontiff of the *mutt* is Sri Sri Vishvavallabha Teertha.. He was born on 24th March 1991 and was named Raghava by his parents. He was initiated into *sanayasa* on 14th June 2006 by Sri Sri Vishvothama Teertha. He has been called upon to take charge of the *mutt* at a comparatively young age and will no doubt grow into as illustrious a head of the *mutt* as many of his predecessors.

Hayagriva Sampadaam Sthotram

SRI VADIRAJA TEERTHA

Hayagriva Hayagriva Hayagrivethi vaadinam
naram munchanthi paapaani daradrimiva yoshithah

Hayagriva Hayagriva Hayagrivethi yovadeth
thasya nissarathe vaani jahnu kanyaa pravaahavat

Hayagriva Hayagriva Hayagrivethi yodhvanih
vishobhathe cha vykuntha kavatodhghaanakhsamah

Slokatrayamidham punyam hayagriva padaankitham
Vadirajayathi proktham patthathaam sampaadam padam

The sins of the one who chants hayagriva, hayagriva, hayagriva leave him just as would courtesans abandon a poor man

The speech of one who chants hayagriva, hayagriva, hayagriva would pour forth just as waters of holy ganga in full flow (pleasant, wonderful, blissful, clear and strong)

The very sound of hayagriva, hayagriva, hayagriva is potent enough to open the gates of heaven

By reciting these three shlokhas with the name of lord hayagriva composed by Sri Vadiraja Teertha one would attain riches

Sri Lakshmi Sthothram

Vande aravinda sadanaam vadanaaravindam
Vrindavanaakhyasadanaam madanasya chaambaam
Vrindavanaakhyasadanavanavaam svabhakhtaan
Mandaakinee janakapada hayasyajaayam

One with eyes bright and pristine as a lotus petal, face as pleasing as a lotus flower, mother of god of love (manmatha) residing in vrindavan who would protect those that seek shelter in her; such a one who is spouse of Sri Hayagrivaswamy the father of Devaganga - Sri Lakshmidēvi, my obeisance to you.

Lakshmeem lakshmanasampannaam lakshmanaagrajakaankshineem
Lakshyaamikshanam lakshavitthadaathreem kataakhathah

I pray to Laskhsmidevi who can bestow wealth in lakhs in a trice and who with all her good characteristics has her mind constantly on Lord Sri Hari.

Bhaktaabhayakareem nithyam thruthavaagachhanthi saathvikaah
Sharanam karunaapaangee praaninaam maranam harah

In the belief of your grace and blessings, your devotees seek refuge in you everyday. Please liberate your devotees from sorrows of death (grant them *mokhsa*).

Aham bhaje mudaabhaje hrudaabhaje sadambujhe
Kritaayaam kripalayaam harerathaachhuthaayaam

SRI VADIRAJA TEERTHA

Kind and benevolent Sri Lakshmidēvi who resides in Lord Sri Hari, I rejoice in remembering you and pray to you with all my heart.

Harervakshasthale dhr̥st̥va shreeyam vismithavaanaham
Parshvayoru bhayordevēem karechamaradharineem

Am surprised at seeing Sri Lakshmidēvi on the chest of Lord Sri Hari also at the same time on both the sides of the Lord with fans in her hand.

Anke cha pankajaaksheem thaam shankapaneermahaathmanah
Kumkumankitha gandhaadyam kankanaadhi vibhooshithaam

Am amazed at the site of Sri Lakshmidēvi adorned with kumkum, paste of sacred chandan, bright in her jewellery and endowed with very pleasing eyes sitting on the lap of Lord Sri Hari himself holding aloft his sacred conch.

Agrahathah prushtashchhapihyadah staduparisthithaa
Sarvathra thaam shreeyam dhr̥st̥va paramananda nirbharah

Am full of joy and wonder at seeing Sri Lakshmidēvi all around (front, rear, above and below) Lord Sri Hari.

Lakshm̥st̥huthimimaam nithyam patthedyasthu vichakshanah
Lakshaparaadhinamapi khsamathe nathra samshayah

When a person recites with devotion this Lakshmi sthōthra everyday, lakhs of his sins will be pardoned by Sri Lakshmidēvi. There is no doubt about this.

Sri Sreeshaguna Sthothram

Yasugandhaasyanaasaadhi navadwaraakhilena ya
Duradarshaa sarva sasyo daya artham ya kareeshinee
| 1 |

The nose, mouth and all nine doors (openings) of the omniscient Mahalakshmi are sweet smelling and she is over and above the cosmos of all inert and living matter. As mother earth she is the cause of progress of all plants.

Ya Nithyapushtaa sarvaangeh soundaryaadi gunairapi
Eeshwareem sarvabhoothanaam tamihpahvaye shreeyam
| 2 |

She is the one who remains forever young and beautiful. She is the one who is the supreme mistress of all living beings and I invite her to my abode.

Maatharlakshmi namasthubbyam maadhavapriya maaninee
Yuvaam vishwasya pitharaavithara yoginau
| 3 |

SRI VADIRAJA TEERTHA

The beloved of Madhava, Mother Lakshmi - my salutations to thee. You and Madhava are the parents of the world and everlastingly inseparable.

Samana kila maathashvamamuna thatha yoginee
Mama naathena devashva vimanaaschana sathvayi
| 4 |

Oh Mother, you are present at all places and ages with my Lord Sri Hari. That is why you are titles 'samana' (equal). The Lord Sri Hari is never cross with you.

Thvam vedamaaninee veda vedyah kila sathe priyah
Thvam moolaprakrutirdeva sa chaadipurusha kila
| 5 |

You are the pride of vedas. Your beloved Sri Hari is the supreme Lord and giver of the Vedas. You are the origin of nature and He, your beloved is the supreme man.

Yasthvaa murasi ddhatthemba kasuthubhadyuti bhaasithe
Sathvaam nyvaachyutah sarva syaathaye sathyapi thyajeth
| 6 |

Lord Sri Hari keeps you in his bosom always adorned with his Kausthuba and will not let go of you even during the time of Pralaya.

Devi thvam lalanaarathnam devosou purushottamah
Yuvam yuvaanau sathatham yuvayorna payadhikaah
| 7 |

Oh Devi, you are a jewel among women and your Lord Sri Hari is the supremely ideal man. Neither of you is older than the other.

Thvam padmineepadmavakthra padmaakshee padmavishtaraa
Padmadvayadharaa padma koshyathasthanashobanaa
| 8 |

Oh Mahalakshmi, you reside in the lotus, your face is like the lotus, your eyes are like the lotus, your seat is the lotus, you hold the lotus in your hands and your bosom is like lotus buds.

Padmahasthaa padmapadaa padmanaabha manahpriyaa
Padmodhbavasya jananee padmaacha varavarninee
| 9 |

Oh Mahalakshmi, your hands and feet are as lovely as the lotus and you are the beloved of the Lord Padmanaabha. You are the mother of the lotus born Brahma. Your name itself is the lotus.

Ambaam peethambarashroneem lambaalakalasanmukheem

SRI VADIRAJA TEERTHA

Bimbaadharoshteem kastoori jambaalathilakaam bhaje
| 10 |

Mahalakshmi is clad in the finest silk, her face beautifully framed by her tresses, lips like ripe fruits and wearing sacred thilak on her forehead.

Rathnodheepthasumaangalya soothraavrata shirodharaam
Kundalaprabhayodhanda gandamandalamandithaam
| 11 |

Mahalakshmi is wearing a necklace studded with bright gems and her cheeks reflect the brilliance of her ear ornament. Such a one, I pray to you.

Kuchakanchuka sanchaari haaranishkaramanoharaam
Kaanchi kinkini manjeera kankanaadhyeyralankhruthaam
| 12 |

Mahalakshmi is most beautiful and adorned with a garland that is swinging over her blouse. She has a golden belt around her midriff with tinkling bells around her ankles and bangles on her arms. Such a one, I pray to you.

Suvarna mantape rathna chitrasimhaasanothame
Namaami harina saakam indiraam krithamandiraam
| 13 |

I bow to you and salute you, Oh Mahalakshmi, the one seated with Lord Sri Hari on a golden throne adorned with precious jewels.

Brahmaadhyah vibhudashresthaabrahmaanadyaah suraanganaah
Yaam poojyanthe sevanthe saa maam paathu ramaasadah
| 14 |

One who is revered by the four faced Brahmaa, Saraswathi and other divine women, such a Ramaa devi - may you always protect me.

Sarvaalankaara bharithou sarvajnau sarvasadgunau
Sharvaadisarvabhokthaugha sarvasarvasvadaayakau
| 15 |

Lakshmi and Narayana are forever well adorned, are all knowing, replete with all divine qualities and are those that grant the wishes of Rudra and all their other devotees. I praise and pray to you Lakshmi and Narayana.

Sumukhau sundaratarau sunaasau sukhachittanuu
Suraaraadhitha Paadadabhjau ramanarayanau sthumah
| 16 |

The faces of Lakshmi and Narayana are beautiful and so are their noses. They are of ephemeral bodies. The gods worship at their feet. Oh Lakshmi and Narayana, I pray to you.

SRI VADIRAJA TEERTHA

Chatuskharpadaa yaa devaa chaturaasyaadbhishthuthaa
Chaturvedothigunaa chaturmoorthehareh priyaah
| 17 |

Mahalakshmi has four tresses. The four headed Brahma and other gods sing praises to her. The four vedas too praise her. She is the beloved of Lord Sri Hari who has four forms such as Vasudeva. Such a one, I salute and bow to you in reverence.

Ghruthaprathikaam thaam nithyam ghruthapoornaannadayineem
Yatheshthavithadhathreem chanathosmya bhayadaamshreeyam | 18 |

The One who always grants her devotees rice with ghee and copious amounts of wealth and always protects them, Oh Mahalakshmi, I bow to you.

Vadiraajena rachitham shree shreeshagunadarpanam
Emamsthavam patthanmarthyah shreemaansyaannaathra samshayah
| 19 |

Those who recite this Shreeshagunadarpanam Sthothra of Lakshmi and Narayana composed by Sri Sri Vadiraja Teertha would become wealthy. There is no doubting this.

Sri Bhootaraja Sthothram

Bhootharaaja namasthubhyam Vadirajaguroh priya
Vidraavaya samaabhaadhaah saadaa thvam rakshanam kuru

Protect me always by destroying all difficulties; Oh Bhootharaja who is the favourite aide of Sri Vadiraja - I salute you.

Recital of above supplication to Sri Bhootharaja brings one great rewards.

Spontaneous composition by Sri Vadiraja in five languages

Kannada

Naanenuballe ninna mahimegalanu neerajaaksha mukunda |
Deenathanadalli nambide biridulla deenarakshaka mukunda | |

Bommanapethu ee jagapothu eerelu lokada eeradi maadi |
Baliyanna metti baagila katti nindiyoo devaa ninagaru saati | |
Joo - Joo | |

Tamil

Kandaun paadangalai Tedinaan vanda ninathhen andhhyeel,

SRI VADIRAJA TEERTHA

Mun undhan pillai indra kripasaeed indhaney kaapatravey | |

Yennappa Krishna maaninkya gunamee en thanga kambiyeh
Vaarthey |
Keelume (kelungal) paavi (paapi) poothaneeyai shooshethha
Shramam brahmaandathheel vyaapithhane namo namo | |
Joo - Joo | |

Telugu

Yashoda baaludaina sri krishna | nee samaanamevaru |
Naa sarva praarthanamulu vini neevau muadamathoo varavmeeyarll | |

Jagamella yelina gokulabaala rajeeva nayanuda, radhavinaoda pattinchu shramadu
parehaarambukooraku nidraseyavoo mrokkedanu neeku | |
Joo - Joo | |

Marathi

Kayradatheel kanda nakoo baalaa vaarijaksha mukunda |
Maaranee koney angaa, saanga namaskara karathoo rey rangaa | |

Madhuresu jananee gokulanagarii aalasaa govindananda kilaarii |
Aavunee thrijaga (bha) daanavavyree nijabaala nanadakumaraa | |
Joo - Joo | |

Hindi

Dil hamaara ko lee hamanaadekha thuma chala vaasurnagavarna
Aala vathsa ko rey ghanna eyva thaana kalajaanathoo prasanna hayavadana | |

Devunee aayaa darshanapaaya naarada gayaa kishanan Bhaiyaa Daasa, hayavadana
theraa baalaa parvisha karoomi thrijagapaala
Joo - Joo | |

Explanatory note

The narration contains a number of words taken directly from usage in Kannada or Sanskrit. Their closest meanings in English would read as follows:

Abhishek : The ritual bathing of an idol.

Aksharabhyasa: Ritual initiation to studies of a child.

Aradana: Annual celebration and festivities commemorating an event.

Blumi: Denotes earth (land).

Brahma hatya: Deemed commitment of a great sin mostly referred to as killing or harming a pious brahmin.

Chakra: The disk associated with Lord Sri Krishna (Vishnu) and borne by him as a weapon against evil.

Darbar: Public audience held at a royal court.

Dvaja sthamba: The flag post like ornamental structure in front of the entrance to a temple.

Garuda: The sacred bird that is the vehicle of Lord Sri Hari/ Narayana.

Hamsa: The sacred bird that is Lord Brahma's vehicle.

Jahagirdar: One who holds and administers land by royal decree. Also refers to the chief of a village or town.

Jivas: Refers in general to living beings also used to denote souls.

Kshethra: A place. Usually used as a suffix to denote a place of religious importance.

Mukhya prana: Refers to the life sustaining air and assigned to Sri Anjaneya / Hanuman - an ardent devotee of Lord Sri Ram (Vishnu).

Mandala: A round of recital of a mantra usually for 48 days.

Mutt: The seat of a spiritual and temperol centre.

Naga vana: Denotes the consecration of idols of Nagadeva (serpent king) usually under a Peepul tree.

Naivedaya: The offering made to the Gods during a puja.

Parampara: Tradition and prescribed rituals and actions.

Parvata: A large hill or mountain.

Paryaya: Performance or holding of a position by rotation.

Paryaya Puja: Pujas performed by heads of number of mutts or persons by rotation for specified periods.

Phalamantrakshathe: The rice (mixed with kumkum or turmeric) used in performance of pujas and given to devotees by swamijis as blessings for good results from the Gods.

Prabanda: Event or narration of an event.

Prasada: The offering of food (naivedya) partaken by the devotees as blessed food.

Puja: The ritual act of worship.

Puja vidis: The scripturally prescribed and defined procedure of worship.

Pushkarini: A tank constructed near a temple and used for bathing by the devotees before entering the temple.

Saligrama: Rare naturally and perfectly formed stones (with water trapped in them but with no apparent outlet) used as representation of gods and used in pujas.

Sanatana Dharma: Age old precepts, principles and tenets of living dubbed as Hinduism in modern times.

Sanyas: Renunciation of worldly interests and pursuit of a spiritual and monastic life.

Shastras: Refer to the vast body of scriptures defining and setting out physical, metaphysical thoughts and processes.

Shishyas: Pupils, students or followers.

Shivalaya: Abode or temple of Lord Shiva.

Swamiji: A respectful prefix used for a seer.

Tapas: The act of deep meditation.

Tapasvi: One who meditates and contemplates on God, meaning of life and eternal values. Also referred to as enlightened souls.

Tapovana: The forest or garden used for meditation and contemplation.

Teertha and Teerthodaka: Refers to water consecrated during pujas and later offered to devotees.

SRI VADIRAJA TEERTHA

Upanayanam: Performance of a ritual connected with growing up of one from childhood to stages of learning. Also known as the 'thread ceremony'.

Vedas: Essential and sustaining cosmic knowledge originating from Brahma (creator) believed reduced to a written form over 5000 years ago.

Veda mantras: Verses for recital contained in the Vedas.

Virakta: On who is devoid of worldly desires.

Vidyapeetha: Seat of learning like a University.

Vrindavan: Generally denotes a structure containing mortal remains of saintly persons, a container of holy basil (tulasi) plant or a sacred place.

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-Mohan Chippagiri
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