

# A Day in Sri AhObila Matam



By

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*Sri Matam Hamsa Mudrai*





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॥ श्रीः ॥

॥ श्रीमते श्री लक्ष्मीनृसिंह परब्रह्मणे नमः ॥

॥ श्रीमते वकुळभूषण महागुरवे नमः ॥ ॥ श्रीमते रामानुजाय नमः ॥

॥ श्रीमते निगमान्तमहादेशिकाय नमः ॥

॥ श्रीमत् आदिवणशठकोप यतीन्द्रमहादेशिकाय नमः ॥

॥ श्रीमते श्रीवणशठकोप श्री वेदान्तदेशिकयतीन्द्रमहादेशिकाय नमः ॥

॥ श्रीमते श्री लक्ष्मीनृसिंह दिव्यपादुकासेवक श्रीवण् शठकोप श्री नारायणयतीन्द्रमहादेशिकाय नमः ॥



*Sri Aadhi VaNN SaThakOpan*





## A DAY IN SRI AHOBILA MATAM

### The Day Begins

The day begins at about 5:30 a.m. with the playing of "kottu" a combination of musical instruments such as "paRai", "Thiruchchinnam", and "Jalra". This serves as a wake up call for those who are not already up. If you wait for the 'Kottu' to get up you will have only about an hour and 10 minutes to get ready. You may have to rush through your morning routine.

At about 6:40 a.m. Thavil, Nadaswaram and Thiruchchinnam are ready in front of Srimad Azhagiya Singar's Ashramam waiting for the signal. The cowherd is giving a bath to the cow and calf. As Srimad Azhagiya Singar finishes anushtanam and places the white cloth back in Sri Tridhandam Simad Azhagiya Singar summons a kainkaryapara. This is the signal for "Vadyam" to start. To the sound of Thavil, Nadaswaram, and Thiruchchinnam, Srimad Azhagiya Singar emerges from Anushtanam.



*Great Feeling to Prostrate*





It is a great feeling to prostrate at the lotus feet of Srimad Azhagiya Singar as He emerges from anushtanam. Srimad Azhagiya Singar puts on the padhukai and makes the short walk to the adjacent building wherein resides Sri Malola. As Srimad Azhagiya Singar walks with Sri Tridhandam in His divine hands, kainkaryaparas follow with one holding an ornamental umbrella, one carrying water in the kamandalam, one carrying saamaram and another the silver-dhandam used to keep the devotees from coming too close and accidentally touch Srimad Azhagiya Singar's thirumeni.

More devotees fall on the ground and prostrate. Srimad Azhagaiya Singar always enquires about the welfare of the devotees with a graceful smile.

Reaching the steps of the adjacent building Srimad Azhagiya Singar takes off the padhukai and awaits the kainkaryapara with the kamandalam to pour water at Simad Azhagiya Singar's holy feet. After washing the divine lotus feet, Srimad Azhagiya Singar enters the building. Some of us following along now get to sprinkle the Sri Padha Theertham upon our heads. One of us get to carry the Padhukai upon our head into the building for safe keeping near the entrance.

Most people come to the Sri Matam at about 9:00 a.m., in time for Theertam and Catari. They miss this golden opportunity for touching and sprinkling the Sri Padha Theertham. Therefore, if you ask me, the best time to come to Sri Matam is 6:30 a.m., just before Srimad Azhagiya Singar



*Sri Maalolan in YOga Nidirai*





leaves the Ashramam. This way we get to fall at the louts feet of Acaryan as Simad Azhagiya Singar goes to Sri Malolan for Abhigamana Aradhanai, and also, the opportunity to sprinkle Sri Pada theertham upon our head.

As Srimad Azhagiya Singar approaches Sri Sannidhi more people prostrate. Then, Srimad Azhagiya Singar goes near the Silver Mandapam where SriMalola is in Yoganidrai, and the curtain is drawn. The rest of the devotees wait outside for a cue from Srimad Azhagiya Singar to start the recitation of Sri Lakshminrisimha Suprabhatam composed by the 30th Azhagiya Singar, Sri Srinivasa Vedanta Yatindra Mahadesikan.



*Recitation of Suprabhatam*





## Visvaroopam

As Srimad Azhagiya Singar approaches the Sri Sannidhi, the curtain is drawn. The bhakthas gathered wait in the hall for a cue from Srimad Azhagiya Singar to begin the recitation of Suprabhatam. In a short while, Simad Azhagiya Singar starts, "kowsalya supraja ...." and the goshti gathered outside joins in the recitation of Sri Lakshminrisimha Suprabhatam. In the crisp morning air the melodious sound of "Sri Lakshminrisimhavibho tava suprabhatam" gently waking Sri Malolan from His Yoga Nidra is divinely.

After the conclusion of Suprabhatam kinkaryapararas disperse and return to their duties. They will reassemble at the time of Mangala harati a few minutes later. In the meantime, the gathered bhaktas sing devotional songs.

The Kinkaryapararas are classified into several "departments". These are, Aradhaka, Sannidhi paricharakam, Ashramam, Alangaram, ThirumadaippaLLi, Ugranam, Maniyam, Ashramam, Mrith, Office, Agent, drivers, vAdyam, etc.

Aradhakas perform Ijjai and part of Panaka Aradhanam. They also assist Srimad Azhagiya Singar during abhigamanam. Further, they are responsible for performing Thirumanjanams on Swati days, and on days when devotees sponsor Thirumanjanam for perumal. Aradhakas also perform the aradhanai during Dolais. There are about three to four Aradhakas including the Sri Karyam. The Aradhakas are the senior most among the Kinkaryapararas and therefore highly respected. They maintain an extremely high level of "Acharam" and "Madi".

ThaLigai for Srimad Azhagiya Singar is called "Alankaram". There are normally one or two kinkaryapararas taking care of this duty in turns. They prepare prasadam for Srimad Azhagiya Singar. Anyone interested can sponsor one day's Alankaram by paying a prescribed amount. Then you will receive Srimad Azhagiya Singar prasadam.







*Sri Sannidi Paricaraka Sri Giri (left) and Aradhaka Sri Vaduvor Nrisimhachariyar Swami (right)*

Sri Sannithi Paricharakas help Srimad Azhagiya Singar and Aradhakas during Aradhanai. They keep all the "upacharams" for Perumal ready and hand them over to Srimad Azhagiya Singar or the Aradhaka at the appropriate time. They collect the fruits and flowers brought in by the devotees and get them ready for offering to Sri Malolan. They also get the Sri Padha Theertham ready. (More about Sri Padha Theertham later.) They distribute Perumal milk after Visvaroopam, Theertham at the conclusion Abhigamanam and Ijjai, and panakam and Perumal Theertam at the end of Panaka Aradhanai in the evening. There are four Sannidi Paricharakas. They, like others, take their duties in turns called "muRai". A "muRai" starts at the conclusion of Abhigamanam on a given day and ends at the conclusion of Abhigamanam the next day. Even though the "muRai" system is followed those who are not on duty also pitch in and help out depending upon need.

ThirumadaippaLLi is where Thaligai is prepared for Sri Malolan and all the Perumual dwelling in the Silver Mandapam. There are about 5 or 6 people in





ThirumadaippaLLi. They work all 7 days, i.e. they are always on duty, no "muRai". On special occasions when large crowds are expected temporary help is hired.

UgrAnam is responsible for handling groceries. They measure and handover the items as and when required by ThirumadaippaLLi. There are two people in UgrAnam. In addition, there are two old women who help with cutting vegetables.



*Ashrama Kainkaryaparas: Sri Desikan (left) and Sri Bhashyam (right)*

Maniyam maintains petty-cash, makes all the purchases for the Sri Matam, distributes sradha-dhakshinai and other sambhavanai, etc. This department is handled by one person.

Ashrama kainkarayam involves assisting Srimad Azhagiya Singar with all of Simad Azhagiya Singar's daily needs. These range from such things as preparing water for nIrAttal, washing kAshayam, and preparing kAshayam, to





setting up phone instruments for tele-upanyasam, etc. There are three Ashrama Paricharakas taking turns, "muRai". These kainkaryaparars have the closest contact with Srimad Azhagiya Singar day-in and day-out. Srimad Azhagiya Singar relies upon them for everything.

Mrith kainkaryam is also in the Ashramam. There are two of them. They perform chores like sweeping the floor, carrying akshadai tray, ornamental umbrella, etc.



*Office Manager Sri Datu Swami (Center)*

There are three Office assistants. They maintain all the records such as bank records, address lists of sishyas, paNdithAs, etc. They go to the bank to deposit/withdraw funds. They go to the post-office to mail stuff. They send out all communications such as invitations, srimukhams, and manthrakshadais. They take attendance during ubhaya vedanta parayanam and make sure sambhavanai is given to the participants according to the level of participation. They assist Srimad Azhagiya Singar with preparing Sri Mukhams. Of all the





kainkaryaparars, these are the people who are busy all the time. It is unbelievable the amount of mail they get, and they respond to each and every mail they receive. Some are easy, just send a packet of Mathradkashadai. Some are more elaborate, like, marriage, upanayanam, or seemandham, perumal garland may have to be sent; if someone is sick special mantharakshadai from Srimad Azhagiya Singar may have to be sent. All in all the office assistants are always busy.

There is one All-India Agent. Once the "sancaram" schedule is finalized, it is this agent who travels to the towns and villages in the sancaram schedule and makes all the necessary arrangements. There are many arrangements to be made. He makes sure the place of stay is adequate in terms of well water, room for Thaligai, room for Perumal Mandapam, free space for kainkaryaparars, suitable room for Srimad Azhagiya Singar and so on. Also, the people who request Srimad Azhagiya Singar to visit are often times not familiar with the protocol of receiving Srimad Azhagiya Singar. The agent helps them get organized. In fact at this very moment, with more than two weeks remaining till the end of ChaturmAsya Sankalpam, the agent is already in Gwalior. Srimad Azhagiya Singar was to travel via Gwalior on September 30th, enroute to New Delhi and then on to Hrishikesh and Badri.

Further, the Agent acts on behalf of Srimad Azhagiya Singar in all legal matters, as a sort of power-of- attorney.

As everyone knows, the entire Sri Matam travels by busses five of them, and one jeep. There are 6 or 7 drivers. Besides these there is always one police escort vehicle traveling with Srimad Azhagiya Singar.

Besides the above, there are about 5 or 6 people for vAdyam. Some of the vAdyam players double for providing kshavaram service.

All in all there are about 40 to 45 kainkaryaparars at any given time at the Sri Matam.





*Appu Swami (MadaippaLLi), Sriraman (Maniyam),  
Bhashyam (Ashramam) Desikan (Ashramam)*

Back to the conclusion of Suprabhatam....,

At the conclusion of the recitation of Suprabhatam, most of the Kainkaryapararas disperse to resume their duties. Some are busier than others. For example, the drivers are typically free at this time. Since Srimad Azhagiya Singar is in Aradhanai, Mrith and Asharam kainkaryapararas are also usually free at this time.

Devotees trickle in and wait for the curtain to open for Visvaroopam. Some sing small verses appropriate for waking up the Lord from yoga nidra. Fresh milk is brought to the Lord. The cow and calf are brought in and made to stand with their backside turned towards Sri Sannidhi. At about 7:15 a.m. the curtain is removed to the sound of auspicious vadyam with Srimad Azhagiya Singar offering Mangala harathi. All the kainkaryapararas now return to the Sannidhi. At the conclusion of the mangala harathi the Aradhakar in duty ("muRai") reads the panjangam details for that day and the next day.





At the end of this, Visvaroopamilk is distributed by one of the Sannidi paricharaka. At this time the recitation of "nithya anusandhaanam" commences with the cue from Srimad Azhagiya Singar, "yo nithyam acchudapadaambuja yugmarugma ...".



*SuprabhAtham*





## Seva Kalam

At the conclusion of Visvaroopam, Perumal Milk is distributed. Fruits offered to Perumal are given to the cow and calf. After the panjAngam details are read recitation of Nithyanusandhanam begins. Srimad Azhagiya Singar initiates the recitation of Gadya Thrayiam with the first phrase of the Thaniyan. The Goshti picks up from there.



*sEvAkAlam*

In Sri Matam the recitation of Nithyanusandhanam is referred to as "Gadyam". All the Kainkaryaparass are required to participate in it, from Mrith to drivers, to alangaram, all of them. Srimad Azhagiya Singar usually looks around to see whether anyone is absent or late, enough to keep the kainkaryaparass on their toes. Like Sri Lakshminrisimha who exhibited kindness (towards Prahlada) and fury (against HiranyakaSipu) at the same time, exhibiting fury and kindness at the same time is among the kalyana gunas of Srimad Azhagiya Singar. Even as the kainkaryaparass love Srimad Azhagiya





Singar for Simad Azhagiya Singar's deep and loving care for the welfare of each and every one of them, they fear Simad Azhagiya Singar's divine fury if they fail in such basic duties as joining the Goshti for Gadyam in the morning.

The Nityanusandhanam covers (1) common recitation in which everyone joins, and (2) separate recitation where the Goshti divides into two groups; one recites Dhivya Prabhandham and the other recites Vedam. The common part includes, in the sequence in which they are recited,

The three Gadyams

Sri Nrisimha Pancamrita Sthothram by Lord Rama

Three of Srimad Mukoor Azhagiya Singars sthothras, namely, Pancamrita Sthothram, Sri Lakshminrisimha Karavalamba Sththram, and Sri Lakshminrisimha Prapatti,

Dhivya Prabhandha thaniyan

Thiruppallandu Thaniyan

The first pasuram of ThiruppallaaNdu

Up until Srimad Mukkoo Azhagiya Singar's pancamrita sthothram the recitation is done in one voice, but starting from the Karavalamba Sthothram the recitation proceeds in "sandhai" format, i.e. the first two padas and the last two padas are alternated between two groups.

Also, after the conclusion of Sri Lakshminrisimha Prapatti, the Goshti pauses for Srimad Azhagiya Singar to initiate the Podu Thaniyan, namely, "Kesavarya kripA pAtram ..." after which the goshti proceeds with the rest of the Thaniyan. Similarly, the goshti pauses again at the end of the Thaniyans for Srimad Azhagiya Singar to initiate Thiruppallandu with, "pallANdu, pallANdu...." after which the Goshti picks up the recitation and finishes it.

After the conclusion of the first pasuram of Thirup- pallANdu, the goshti sits down. Until this time the recitation is done with everyone standing. The goshti







sits down in two separate groups. One group recites vedam and the other recites the following prabhandhams:

the rest of thiruppallANdu

ThiruppaLLiyezucci,

Thirupaavai

Periya Thirumozhi thaniyan,

angaN nyalamanca (Periya Thirumozhi 1.7)

kaasaiyaadai (Periya Thirumozhi 2.2)

vaanilamuRuval (Periya Thirumozhi 1.6)

Adaikkalapattu (Desika Prabhandham)

Sri Sannithi adaikkalappattu (Adivan Satakopan adaikkalappattu), and

Sri Lakshminrisimhan adaikkalappattu)

The recitation ends with Srimad Mukkoor Azhagiya Singar's dvAdasa Stotram. This takes a little over one hour. The time is about 8:20 a.m.

For Sri Sannidi Nithyanusandanam book please visit our bookstore by clicking here : <http://www.ahobilamutt.org/bookorders/bkorder01.html>



*Srimad Mukkoor Azhagiya Singar*





## Abigamana Aradhanam

While the recitation is going on Srimad Azhagiya Singar gets ready for morning Thiruavaradhanam called Abhigamanam. For sanyasees, the Abhigamana Aradhanam is very important. Thus, in Sri Sannidi, the Abhigamana Aradhanam is always done only by Srimad Azhagiya Singar.



### *Thirumanajanam*

First, Srimad Azhagiya Singar gets prepared with Bootha Suddi. Then, after offering various upacharams to Sri Malolan, Srimad Azhagiya Singar prepares for Thirumanjanam. Daily thirumanjanam is performed for Cakraththaazhvar, SaLagramas, Swarna Nrisimha, two Sri Satharis (silver and golden), and three acaryas, Injimedu, Devanarvilagam, and Mukkoor Srimad Azhagiya Singars.

Thirumanjanam begins to the accompaniment of vAdyam at about the time the goshti recitation is in the middle of Thiruppaavai. The sound of vAdyam drowns out the goshti. In fact the goshti sitting in two rows facing each other will have to move very close to be able to hear each other for proper





synchronization.

At about the time thirumanjanam is complete the goshti recitation will also be over. The kankaryaparas disperse once again to resume their duties. Now we are left with only sevarthees in the hall. By this time there are about 50 to 60 of them. If it is Sunday or Dwadasi there will be about 200 or more. All of them bring something or other for Malolan, flowers, fruits, nuts, or whatever. Sannidhi paricharakas patiently collect all of them and get them ready for offering by sprinkling water over them.



*Properly bedecking Malolan*

Srimad Azhagiya Singar takes great care and pride in properly bedecking Malolan and Dolai Krishna with all the flowers brought in by the devotees. It is like a competition between Srimad Azhagiya Singar and the devotees. As the devotees keep bringing more and more flowers, Simad Azhagiya Singar continues to bedeck Malolan in ever more creative ways. It is one thing to do alangaram to a 6 feet tall perumaal, but, it takes divine ingenuity to be able to





use up roles after roles of flowers upon a moorthy hardly 2 feet tall. It is almost as if the only reason Sri Malolan is here with us is to get bedecked in flowers by Srimad Azhagiya Singar. The result is a sight to behold and cherish, both, the beauty of Sri Malolan and the beauty of Srimad Azhagiya Singar doing alankaram to Sri Malolan. With great care Srimad Azhagiya Singar places each strand of flowers, mixing and matching different colors. Gently Simad Azhagiya Singar gives a push to the swing upon which Sri Malola sits with a graceful smile. Then Simad Azhagiya Singar steps back, inspects and then goes near Malolan and makes some adjustments and steps back once again. Simad Azhagiya Singar repeats this over and over until Simad Azhagiya Singar is fully satisfied with the adornments.



*Sri MAIolan*





## Archanai

After the alangaram comes archanai. The Sannidhi paricharaka recites the ashtotra sada nama of Malolan in a slow and deliberate voice as Srimad Azhagiya Singar does the archanai with golden flowers.



### *Swarna Pushpam*

About two years ago one day two Sanyasis belonging to the Madhwa Sampradayam came to our Sri Sannithi. After having a Dharshan of Malolan the senior sanyasi questioned Srimad Azhagiya Singar on sashtras. Srimad Azhagiya Singar answered their queries with a smile. The senior Yati then submitted two Swarna pushpam (golden flowers) and requested Srimad Azhagiya Singar to use them for daily archanai. Some of the sishyas witnessing the whole thing were so overwhelmed by Srimad Azhagiya Singar's gracefulness they also pledged to give several Swarna Pushpams. Thus started a craze among the Sri Sannidhi sishyas to submit swarna pushpas for Sri Malolan. The two grew to twenty, and soon there were 108. Today there is in excess of 200 swarna pushpams for archanai.





By the time the Archanai is over Thaligai (food) is already ready near the Mandapam. The curtain is drawn and to the accompaniment all the Vadyams and twin Ghantai, Malolan is offered the morning Thaligai.



*After Archanai - Look for the Swarna Pushpam*

After the Thaligai is offered Harathi is made ready. Then, the curtain is opened for Harathi with Vadyam starting once again. The second sound of Vadyam is the sign for all the kankaryaparas to reassemble in the hall. By this time the sishya crowd has swelled to about 200, (on Dwadasi days it will be well in excess of 500).

After the conclusion of Harathi Srimad Azhagiya Singar initiates Satrumurai with "Sitram Siru kale" and the goshti thunders along with the rest of the Satrumurai. Long strands of flower from Malolan is cut into small pieces and distributed to everyone.

During this time Srimad Azhagiya Singar offers the Silver Sri Satari to the Acaryas in the silver mandapam. Then "aruLappadu" (formal offering of theertham and satari to Acaryas) is offered. "aruLappadu" is only for Srimad





Azhagiya Singar everyday. However, on the thirunaktram day of the month for Athivan Satakopan, Srimad Injimedu Azhagiya Singar, Srimad Devenar Vilagam Azhagiya Singar, and Srimad Mukkoor Azhagiya Singar, arulappaadu is offered to them first, and then to the current Azhagiya Singar. As Srimad Azagiya Singar takes Perumal Theertham and places the Golden Sri Satari upon Simad Azhagiya Singar's divine crown, the Goshti pauses the recitation of Satrumurai and the officiating Aradhakar Swami renders,

"Vedamarga pradhishtApanAcArya,  
Paramahamsa ParivrAjakAcArya,  
Sarva tantraswatantra ubhayavedAntAcArya,  
sri bhagavat rAmAnuja siddAnta nirdhAraNa sARva bowma,  
Sri Lakshminrisimha Divya pAduka sevaka SrivaN Satakopa  
Sri nArAyaNa yatIndra mahAdesikan arulappaadu."



*Sri satari*

Then, the goishti resumes satrumurai. Srimad Azhagiya Singar now commences offering the golden Sri Satari to the goshti, starting with the officiating





Aradhakar Swami, followed by the other Aradhakar Swamees and panditAs who may be present. Then comes the rest of the devotees now standing in rows are offered. As Srimad Azhagiya Singar makes the round offering Sri Satari to everyone the two mrith kainkaryaparass use the silver rod to keep the devotees in line preventing them from accidentally touching Srimad Azhagiya Singar . One of the Sri Sannidhi paricharakas follow along with a lamp. Sri Satari comes out of the Silver mandapam only with the accompaniment of a lamp.

It is important to note that only Srimad Azhagiya Singar offers Sri Satari and only after Abhigamanam. Sri Satari is not offered at any other time during the day.

In parallel, Perumal Theertam is served by the Sri Sannidhi paricharakas. Also, ThirumadaippaLLi paricarakas now distribute dried leaves for prasadam. The goshti is still continuing with the Satrmurai. The satrumurai consists of the following:

- \* Thiuppavai
- \* Sitram Sirukalae, Vangak kadal
- \* Periya Thirumozhi - Ahobilam
- \* nallai nence, singavel kunrudaiya
- \* Periya Thirumozhi - Thiruvallur
- \* pandhirukkum, indaikondu
- \* Periya Thiumozhi - Naimisaranyam
- \* Unudai, Edhamvandhu
- \* Adaikkalappattu
- \* thirumagalum, ARu payan
- \* Athivan Satakopan adaikkalappattu







- \* agalame, patthiyulla, AthimaRai
- \* lakshminrisimhan adaikkalappattu
- \* patthu, anaitthulagam
- \* PallaNdu
- \* Sarvadesa, Vedanta Desikan Vazhi Thirunamam
- \* Sarvadesa, Athivan satakopan Vazhi Thirunamam
- \* Srimad Vedanta Desikan Mangalam
- \* Srimad Athivan Satakopan Mangalam
- \* Sri Sannidhi Guruparambarai Thaniyan Sri:pati, Sri:, Viswaksenar, Satakopan, Nathamuni, Pundarikakshar, Ramamisrar, Sri Alavandhar, Mahapurnar, Bhashyakarar, Embar, Parasara Bhattar, NanjIyar, Nampillai, Vadakku Thiruveedhipillai, Sri Rangeswarar, Kesavacaryar, Kamalavasar, Kesavacaryar, Athivan Satakopan, followed by 44 Srimad Azhagiya Singars.
- \* Dasavataara Stotram

By the time Satrumurai is over Prasadam is already served. Next, Samasrayanam and/or Bara Nyasam for sishyas.



*Sri SaTari*





## Samasrayanam/Saranagathi

As the Satrumurai comes to a close, the sishyas wanting to undergo Samsrayanam line up near the Silver maNdapam. The Kainkaryapararas get the Changu and Chakram heated for the Thapa Samskaram. Srimad Azhagiya Singar then applies the Thapa Samskaram. After that, Srimad Azhagiya Singar initiates the sishyas with puNdara samskaram. Then, Srimad Azhagiya Singar takes the throne. The rest of the samskarams are completed near the throne.



### *Pundra Samskaram*

At this point in time, the sishyas who are getting initiated with Panca Samskaram are given Sri pAda tIrtham of Srimad Azhagiya Singar. This is part of the Samarayanam. However, other sishyas gathered can also receive Sri pAda tIrthm. The way to receive tIrtham is to bow down so that Srimad Azhagiya Singar can sprinkle the tIrtham on your head. Then you extend your hand for receiving the tIrtham.





Sri pAda tIrtham is gathered everyday during Abhigamanam. Srimad Azhagiya Singar while seated on a stool extends Simad Azhagiya Singar's divine feet out. One of the Sri Sannidhi paricharakas pours some water on Simad Azhagiya Singar's thiruvadi and collects the divine water in a silver vessel. This is consumed by sishyas to as purifier.

Kainkaryaparas of Sri Ahobila Matam work every single day, i.e. there is no weekend off or anything like that. However, they do get about 50 to 60 days annual vacation. Whenever they take vacation they have to go to the Ashramam and get Manthrakshadai from Srimad Azhagiya Singar before leaving. Srimad Azhagiya Singar will enquire about the reasons for taking vacation and if appropriate will even give money for expenses. When they return from their vacation they can join duty only after purifying him by consuming Sri pAda tIrtham from Srimad Azhagiya Singar.



*Upnyasam*

After the conclusion of Samsrayanam Srimad Azhagiya Singar usually delivers

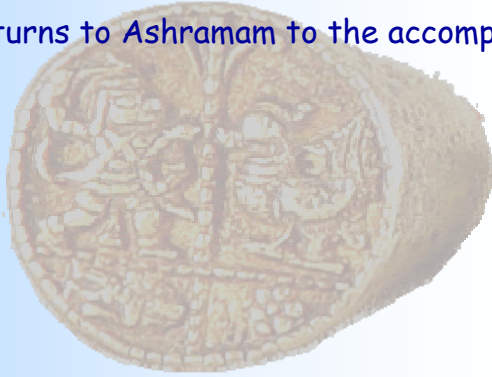




a brief upanyasam. The upanyasam is very simple so that anyone can easily understand and yet captivating for even Vidwans. Often it is about the beauty of Malolan; how even in a remote place like Selaiyur so many devotees come because of the attraction of Malolan; how so many people are undertaking samasrayanam and prapatti; etc.

During this time those who want to perform Saranagati get ready and await Srimad Azhagiya Singar. After the upanyasam Simad Azhagiya Singar goes back to the Silver mandapam and performs Saranagati on behalf of the waiting devotees. Depending upon the adhikari it will either in the mode of Ukti Nishtai or Acarya Nishtai.

Abhiganam thus comes to an auspicious conclusion. Srimad Azhagiya Singar returns to Ashramam to the accompaniment of auspicious Vadyam.





## Dwadasi

Dwadasi is a special day at Sri Ahobila Matam. It is the day on which Srimad Azhagiya Singar performs thirumanjanam for all the Padukais of the forty-four Srimad Azhagiya Singars of the past. Thus it is the only day devotees receive Sri Padha Theertam of all the 44 Srimad Azhagiya Singars, that too from the present Srimad Azhagiya Singar's own divine hands. Thus, we not only get to receive Sri Satari from Srimad Azhagiya Singar like every other day, but we also get to receive Theertham, i.e. Sri padha Theertham, from Srimad Azhagiya Singar. While Srimad Azhagiya Singar goes around the hall to each devotee and offer Sri Satari, for us to receive Sri Padha Theertam we must go to Srimad Azhagiya Singar seated in the divine throne.



*Padukais of all the Azhagiya Singars*

On Dwadasi days Ijjai aradhanam is performed together with Abhigamanam so that Paranai can be done at the appropriate time. Usually by about 10 a.m. everything is completed and Paranai begins soon thereafter.

If the Dwadasi is alpa-dwadasi, i.e. only few seconds of Dwadasi is present, then Paranai must be done very early. In this case the daily activities start





very early so that Thertham and Satari can be completed by about 7 or 7:30 a.m., and paranai immediately after that.

In any case, sishyas throng the premises on Dwadasi to receive Sri Pada Theertam of all the Azhagiya Singars. During the Abhigamana Aradahani one of the Sannidhi Paricharakas gets the Padukas ready on a big wooden tray. Divine water is prepared in many silver sombu. Immediately after Abhigamanam is completed Srimad Azhagiya Singar starts the Paduka Aradhanai. By this time the hall is teeming with devotees. It seems there were in excess of 3000 devotees present during the last Dwadasi two weeks ago.



### *Sri Pada Theertham*

After Srimad Azhagiya Singar gets ready, the devotees form a long line and approach Srimad Azhagiya Singar. First, everyone offers a sambhavanai. It may be 50 paise, or Rs. 5,000, or much more. But each devotee offers something. Then he or she receives the Sri Padha Theertam directly from Srimad Azhagiya Singar. Sometime the crowd is so large that it takes hours to give Sri Padha Theertham to all the sishyas. But Srimad Azhagiya Singar never tires, often enquiring the welfare of the sishyas while granting Sri Pada





Theertam.

Now, it is important for sishyas to note that Samasrayanam and/or Saranagati are usually not done on Dwadasi days. This is not due to any SAstric restriction; for Samasrayanam and Saranagati, any day is a good day, any time is an auspicious time. But, due to the nature of Dwadasi Aradahani Srimad Azhagiya Singar will be extremely busy and pressed for time. This is the reason for not performing Samasrayanam and/or Saranagati on Dwadasi.

However, on occasion, due to unparalleled compassion, Srimad Azhagiya Singar has initiated these divine rites to sishyas even on Dwadasis. On one Dwadasi day a sishya from U.S. went to Sri Sannidhi and requested both Samasrayanam and Saranagati. Srimad Azhagiya Singar asked him to come the next day. But he had to travel that very night and it was just impossible for him to come the next day. Therefore, the sishya expressed disappointment and sought Srimad Azhagiya Singar's permission to get these done during his next trip to India. Seeing the devotee's disappointment Srimad Azhagiya Singar agreed to get Samasrayanam done for him on that Dwadasi day itself. In the midst of an extraordinarily large gathering, Srimad Azhagiya Singar got Samasrayanam done for this sishya and a few other local sishyas as well. Later that evening, during Panaka Aradhanai time, Srimad Azhagiya Singar performed Saranagati for the U.S. sishya at the lotus feet of Sri Malolan. Saranagati during evening Panaka Aradhanai is rare indeed.

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## Ijjai Aradhanam

At the conclusion of Abhigamanam Srimad Azhagiya Singar will administer Samasrayanam and Saranagati for the interested sishyas. Then there will be a brief upanyasam. After the upanyasam Srimad Azhagiya Singar returns to the Ashramam. Before Srimad Azhagiya Singar's return, the Aradhakar on duty gets Srimad Azhagiya Singar's niyamanam (authorization) for commencing the Ijjai aradhanai.



### *Returning to Ashramam*

As Srimad Azhagiya Singar returns to the Ashramam sishyas follow and offer their prayer at the lotus divine feet of Srimad Azhagiya Singar. Srimad Azhagiya Singar enquires the welfare of each and everyone of them with characteristic kindness. The sishyas one by one receive manthrakshadai and leave. This will take about an hour.

Now it is about 11:30 a.m. Ijjai Aradhanai is in full swing at Sri Sannidhi. Srimad Azhagiya Singar starts to read important mail and gives instructions to







the "office" kainkaryaparas on how to handle each mail. Often times Sri Matam officials from other cities will have an audience with Srimad Azhagiya Singar and discuss lowkeeka matters related to Sri Matam adminsitration. Then, at about 12:30 p.m. Srimad Azhagiya Singar gracefully begins anushtanam.

The Ijjai Aradhanai at Sri Sannidhi is nearing completion at this time. For this

Aradhanai, Srimad Azhagiya Singar's "Swarchai" perumal will also be present in Sri Sannidhi. Each Srimad Azhagiya Singar brings a Saligrama Perumal from poorvasramam into AstAnam. This perumal will remain with Srimad Azhagiya Singar through out the reign and when Srimad



*Ijjai Aradanam*

Azhagiya Singar leaves this earth to decorate Sri Vaikundam, this perumal enters the brindavanam by being placed on top of Srimad Azhagiya Singar's divine crown.

Now it is time for Ijjai Nivedanam. Swarna Nrisimha goes to the ThirumadaippaLLi and accepts all the ThaLigai from there. The Ijjai comes to an end with Mangala Harati. By this time most of the sishyas would have left. So, the goshti consists of only a few individuals. Then "perumal theertham" is taken to Ashramam for Srimad Azhagiya Singar. Only after Srimad Azhagiya Singar accepts the "theertham" it is offered to the goshti.



*Swarna Nrisimha*





Immediately after thadIyArAdanai begins. Usually there will be at least 70 to 80 people. On special days like Dwadasi, Thirunakshatram, etc., goshti will range from about 500 to even as high as 3,000.

Meanwhile, Srimad Azhagiya Singar is ready for Bikshai. Srimad Azhagiya Singar's Swarchai perumAl is now back in Ashramam and will accept nivEdanam right from the banana leaf from which Srimad Azhagiya Singar will then commence the bikshai. By about 1 or 1:30 p.m. Srimad Azhagiya Singar is done. Often some woman devotee will seek the privilege of taking away the banana leaf and cleaning the place of Srimad Azhagiya's bikshai. At the direction of Srimad Azhagiya Singar one or more sishyas will get Srimad Azhagiya Singar's prasadam.

Soon after Srimad Azhagiya Singar returns from Bikshai, the Tadiyaradanai will be over. The Swamees now congregate at the Ashramam after having completed the tadiyaradhanai. In the presence of Srimad Azhagiya Singar and to the sound of Vedic recitation Sandalwood paste and beetle leaves are offered to all the Swamees. Then Srimad Azhagiya Singar will bless everyone by sprinkling manthraAkshadai. That marks the end of the afternoon activities. A few of the Swamees stay back to have a few words with Srimad Azhagiya Singar.

At about 2:00 p.m. Srimad Azhagiya Singar is finally free to take rest for about an hour.





## Swati/Periya Thirumanjanam

Usually Ijjai/tadiyaradhanai is over by about 1:30 p.m. Not so on Swati; or if someone sponsors Thirumanjanam for Perumal. Thirumanjanam is performed only for a few Murthees every day during Abhigamanam and Ijjai. However, every Swati, Sri Malolan and Navaneetha Krishnan enjoy Thirumanjanam. Further, sishyas occasionally sponsor periya Thirumanjanam. On such occasions Thirumanjanam for all the Perumals and AcAryAs in the Silver Mandapam is performed. Thus, Swati Thirumanjanam is for Malolan and Dolai Krishnan only; and Periya Thirumanjanam is for all perumals, but only when somebody sponsors.



*Ready for Thirumanjanam*

Periya Thirumanjanam may be sponsored for Rs. 3000 and Swati Thirumanjanam for Rs. 1500. If you sponsor the thirumanjanam you must arrange to have a long list of items ready, such as milk, honey, ghee, fruits, vastram, etc. etc. The Kainkaryaparass will help you procure these items.

Getting Malolan and Krishnan ready for Thirumanjanam is a painstakingly slow





task. All the Dhivya Abharanas must be carefully removed from their Thirumeni. With relatively small thirumEni, both the Lords adorn a great variety of AbharaNas. If one is not careful the golden chains may get tangled up. Even more arduous is the task of putting all the jewels back upon the Thirumeni of the Lords. It must proceed in a particular sequence and must be adorned in a specific way. If not, one will run into difficulties completing the task. The Aradhakas do take great care, love and relish doing this. This takes about an hour and a half.

While the Aradhakas get Perumals ready for the Thirumanjanam, the Sri Sannidhi paricharakas get all other items ready such as milk, curd, honey, iLanIr (coconut water), scented water (pannIr), silver kalasams with fresh well water decorated with condiments, vastras, etc.



*Sahasradarai*

Then, to the accompaniment of Vadyam, Thirumanjanam begins, with divine water, milk, curd, and honey. The curtain is drawn and the vastram is changed. Then the curtain is opened and the Thirumanjanam continues with coconut





water, panner, sahasradarai, and so on. The thirumanjanam takes about 45 minutes. The curtain is now drawn again for alankaram. It will be another hour or so for Thaligai and Mangala Harati. Thus, if there is Periya Thirumanjanam by the time Ijjai is concluded and tadiyaradhanam begins it will be close to 3:00 p.m. It will be almost 4:00 clock by the time thamboolam is distributed at the Ashramam. For this reason the kankaryaparas do not particularly look forward to Thirumanjanam.

A picture album of Periya Thiumanjanam is available at this [www.ahobilamutt.org](http://www.ahobilamutt.org) . Click <http://www.ahobilamutt.org/tm-pics/tmpics-1.html> for viewing it.



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## Afternoon sayanam and Sri Bhashyam

After long hours of intensive activity starting around 4:30 a.m., at the conclusion of Ijjai at around 2:00 p.m., Srimad Azhagiya Singar finally gets some rest. The phone is kept disconnected lest Srimad Azhagiya Singar is disturbed. Most kinkaryaparas also take a nap at this time. As you walk around the Sri Matam we see a stark contrast to the hectic activities just a few hours earlier. When camped at Selaiyur since it is just outside Chennai even some of the kinkaryaparas are gone, those with families nearby.

Just after about an hour Srimad Azhagiya Singar is up and getting ready for Sri Bhashya Kalakshepam. The pupils also gather around near the Ashramam. The class consists of Kinkaryaparas who have completed the prerequisite study. A few irregulars also sit in.

The kalakshEпам begins with first Srimad Azhagiya Singar instructing one of the pupils to read the relevant pages of the text. Then, Srimad Azhagiya Singar goes over each soothram carefully and explains it. The class goes on for about couple of hours.

It is about 5:30 p.m. A few sishyas are already gathering around to get Srimad Azhagiya Singar's blessings. After the Sri Bhashya kalakshepam is over they

go in for an audience with Srimad Azhagiya Singar. After this, Srimad Azhagiya Singar spends a few minutes going over the newspapers. This is usually a good time call from the U.S. or Singapore to have a few words with Srimad Azhagiya Singar. Little after 6:00 p.m. Srimad Azhagiya Singar is ready for "neerAttam" and anushtanam.



*PanchAnga Patanam*





## Dolai

Dolai is a unique form of worship celebrated by Sri Sannidhi sishyas for a long time. This is a way of receiving and honoring Srimad Azhagiya Singar along with Lord Dolai Kannan in our homes. This is normally performed in the late afternoon/evening time.



*Dolai for Navaneetha Krishnan*

During Sancharam often the entire Sri Matam will stay in a sishya's residence. For this to be possible the residence must be large enough to accommodate all the kankaryaparas, there must be proper space for the Silver Mandapam of Perumal, convenient room must be available for Srimad Azhagiya Singar Ashramam, enough covered space where cooking with firewood is possible, and not the least of all well water must be readily and conveniently available. Further, the host sishya must be able to bear the expenses of the stay which can run to about Rs. 10,000 or more per day. Therefore, only sishyas with reasonable means will be able to host the entire Sri Sannidhi.

On the other hand, Dolai can be hosted by a much larger cross section of sishyas. The cost is not very high, in the order of Rs. 3,000 to 5,000. Space





and well water requirements are not there. Dolais are held in the evening. Dolai takes about 45 minutes on the average from the time Srimad Azhagiya Singar arrives with Dolai Kannan at the host sishyas house.

During a Dolai Lord Kannan visits the Sishyas house. The procedure is well established and works like clock work. Dolai Kannan and the Dhivyabharanas are ceremoniously brought to the bus in a decorated box while Vadyam and Thiruchchinnam plays auspicious music. The party includes at least one Aradhakar, one or two Sri Sannidhi paricharaka, one or more Ashrama kainkaryaparas, Mryth kainkaryapara and a few others. They all ride with Srimad Azhagiya Singar and Lord Kannan. When they arrive at the host sishya's house Lord Kannan alights to the sound of vadyam and thiruchchinnam and is taken to the main hall. The Sannidhi Paricharakas and the Aradhakar sets up the Dolai and have Kannan in the dolai all decked up in Dhivyabharanas and flowers. The decoration is so exquisite that when the curtain opens no one will be able to take their eyes off Kannan.

It takes about 20 to 30 minutes for setting up the Dolai and getting Lord Kannan decorated. During this time, Srimad Azhagiya Singar may visit one or two other sishya's house nearby (ponnadi satthal = gracing with Simad Azhagiya Singar's golden feet). During a "ponnadi" Srimad Azhagiya Singar is seated in Simad Azhagiya Singar's divine throne and the sishya's family offers upachAras. They prostrate at the lotus feet of Srimad Azhagiya Singar and receive Manthrakshadai.

Being the recipient of "Ponnadi" is considered a great honor by the sishyas. AdiyEn is aware of a government official in Delhi who remained in the same house even after getting promoted and became eligible for a larger house, just because the house he was in had received the grace of Srimad Azhagiya Singar's "ponnadi".

After "ponnadi" Srimad Azhagiya Singar arrives at the host sishya's house and everything is ready. With family and friends gathered there is usually standing room only.







When the alankaram is complete the curtain is taken off. Sishyas start singing for Kannan who sits divinely in the swing (dolai) gently rocking back and forth. Everyone is mesmerized by the beauty of Kannan. Time just stands still. After everyone has had a chance to sing to Kannan, Srimad Azhagiya Singar gives a small upanyasam. Then, curtain is drawn for offering, usually Jeera. Curtain comes off for Mangalaharati followed by distribution of prasadam.

As Srimad Azhagiya Singar prepares to leave, the kankaryaparas load everything back in the bus. With the accompaniment of vadyam and Thiruchchinnam Kannan is brought to the bus and Srimad Azhagiya Singar also boards the bus. Often times there will be two or three Dolais in a given evening. If so Kannan and Srimad Azhagiya Singar are driven to the next host sishya.

At the conclusion of all the Dolais arranged for the evening, Kannan and Srimad Azhagiya Singar return to Sri Sannidhi as the conclusion of Malolan's Panaka Aradhanai for Malolan awaits their return.





## Panaka Aradhanam

Panaka Aradhanam is performed in the evening. Usually Srimad Azhagiya Singar will perform this Aradhanam. However, if there are Dolais and if Srimad Azhagiya Singar returns quite late, then one of the Aradhakas will perform the Panaka Aradhanam.



*Ready for Panaka Aradhanam*

The evening "gong" is sounded by the Vadyam at 5:30 p.m., a signal to get ready for evening Panaka Aradhanai. At 6:30 p.m. parayanam begins with Sri Vishnu Sahasranaamam followed by Dhivya Prabhandham. At about 7:00 p.m. Srimad Azhagiya Singar leaves Ashramam for Panaka Aradhanai. Vadyam follows Srimad Azhagiya Singar playing auspicious music.

By this time the Aradhakar Swamy has removed all the remaining flowers from Abhigamanam and Ijjai. Perumal is eagerly waiting for Srimad Azhagiya Singar to come and decorate Him. Once again, Srimad Azhagiya Singar with great care and imagination bedecks Malolan and Dolai Krishnan with a variety of flowers, often stepping back to not only inspect, but also to get captivated by the





surprising beauty of Malolan, surprising because every time you behold, Malolan presents a different and unique smile (mandhahasam). This was pointed out to adiyEn by one of the Kainkaryaparas.

After the parayanam is completed Malolan accepts panakam and the evening Thaligai. Mangala harati and satrumurai follows. If Ubhaya Vedanta parayanam is in progress, Satrumurai will include the three Vedas and Dhivya Prabhanhdam. The order for this is given in the Nithyanusandhanam book. By the way, if Ubhaya Vedic Parayanam is in progress the afternoon recitation would commence by about 4:00 p.m. During Satrumurai, Panakam and Perumal theertam are distributed to goshti. By the time satrumurai is concluded it is about 8:30 p.m. Prasadam is then now distributed. Evening prasadam is normally "dhudyoannam" and "sundal".



*After Panaka Aradhanam*

At the conclusion of Panaka Aradhanai Srimad Azhagiya Singar returns to Ashramam and once again there is a group of sishyas waiting to have an audience. After a little while everyone is gone. Srimad Azhagiya Singar then





settles down to write for Sri Nrisimha Priya. At the Sri Sannidhi the Silver Mandapam door is closed after all the sishyas have had their dharsan and left.

On days when we have tele-upanyasam Srimad Azhagiya Singar completes Panaka Aradhanam by 7:45 p.m. and is back in the Ashramam waiting for our call. Some sishyas who attended Panaka Aradhanai stick around to listen. For the very first upanyasam during my stay in Selaiyur, there were about 10 to 15 sishyas. All of us were able to comfortably sit in front of Srimad Azhagiya Singar in the Ashramam. But, the word got out about the tele-upanyasam, and for the second upanyasam onwards there were almost 40 to 50 people and everyone could not be seated in the Ashramam. Desikan, one of the Ashrama kankaryaparas and a jack of all trades, made some make-shift arrangements to have a wireless mike installed at the Ashramam with speakers in the large hall that housed the Silver Mandapam and Malolan. Any amount of overflow crowd could then be accommodated.

By the time upanyasam is over the time is almost 10 p.m. Srimad Azhagiya Singar then goes in for Palaharam. It will be about 10:30 p.m. by the time Srimad Azhagiya Singar emerges out. On the days with no upanyasam, Srimad Azhagiya Singar's Palaharam will start at about 9:30 p.m. and end at about 10:00 p.m. Srimad Azhagiya Singar's palaharam is usually Idli, or Dosai, or Poori, or mOr kaLi, or something like that. After returning from palaharam, Srimad Azhagiya Singar looks over newspaper and finally at about 11:00 p.m. commences sayanam.

By this time everyone is in bed in the Sri Muth to the buzzing sound of the ubiquitous fans. Most people sleep in the hall. In Selaiyur, some with family get to sleep in private rooms. The kankaryaparas at the Ashramam are still not done. They share Srimad Azhagiya Singar's prasadam and then clean up for the next day. Finally, at about 11:30 p.m. A day in Sri Sannidhi is over.

*Subham*





*'kuTTi mAlolan with mAlola upAsakar'*

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