

## *The Divine Grace of Yoga Narasimhar Perumal in Pallakkal*

This divine temple of *Arulmighu Yoga Narasimhar* is located somewhat remotely, amidst the lush-green rice fields of village Pallakkal (with an area slightly less than 300 hectares) in Ambassamudram Taluk of Tirunelveli District in Tamil Nadu. The presiding deity of the temple is *Arulmighu Yoga Narasimhar Perumal*. The Lord is *kula-deivam* to a large and well spread out family, some of whom lived in the vicinity of the temple, less than a century ago. Many others then lived in the surrounding villages of Ravanamudram, Kadayam, Kallaraikurchi etc. Sadly, today there are hardly any in these areas. Way back in 1947, independence of the country offered them all opportunities hitherto unknown to many. Most, if not all, in the family ventured out in the late forties and fifties, in search of greener pastures in Chennai, Mumbai, New Delhi and beyond. The exodus continued into the sixties and seventies, till most households in these areas were virtually empty in the eighties.

With nobody left behind, the family was unable to maintain and upkeep the temple. Someone left behind in the family then (probably in the eighties) seems to have requested the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department (HRCED) of the Government of Tamil Nadu, to take over and administer the temple. In the process, the family lost effective control of their cherished *kula-deivam* temple. Nevertheless, the family continued to support its maintenance and upkeep, though not on any regular or sustainable basis, through periodic (annual, biannual etc.) visits to their *kula-deivam* temple by its members from wherever their avocations took them. During such visits, many family members undertook certain essential repairs and also made arrangements for the supply puja samagris to the Bhattar in the temple for daily pujas and pujas on special occasions like Narasimha jayanthi etc., besides supplementing the support they received from HRCED. The family actively continued its support till the last *kumbabhishekam* of the temple on June 24, 1999, about 22 years ago.

It is interesting to note that the temple itself was shifted to its present location from the Gadanath river basin, where it was built in 1833. Less than a century ago, flash floods in this tributary to Thambarabarani river, submerged the temple and it remained lost to the family for some time. It was then that Narasimha Perumal appeared in the dream of one of the family members and indicated where exactly His Divine Idol remained submerged. It was then retrieved from there and housed in the present temple premises, after due vedic and aghama-shastra processes.

Given this background, some concerned members of the next generation of the family, now retired or in the process of it, have taken an initiative to form a trust for the renovation and consecration of this kula-deivam temple. The trust (Arulmighu Yoga Narasimhar Kovil Seva Trust - [aysevatrut@gmail.com](mailto:aysevatrut@gmail.com)) is in touch with HRCED to obtain necessary permissions to begin work on the project. The trust has also sought the District Collector's assistance in laying an access road to this temple, given the difficulties experienced by the family in visiting it.

In an effort to locate and reach out some its 'lost' family members, some in the family have initiated building a 'family tree', now hosted on the MyHeritage.com web-portal as the Viswanathan Neelakantan Family Tree. It is heartening to note that the tree has at least 500 members for whom *Arulmighu Yoga Narasimhar* is the kula-deivam. The earliest in the family tree could reach is one Naraimhan Padmaneri Panagadu, born in 1775!

The thiru kovil has provided solace to many and Narasimha perumal from his throne there has showered His grace and helped resolve the problems of many devotees from everywhere who throng to the temple on the advise of some astrologers for *papa and dosha nivarthis*.

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