Chapter - II

A BRIEF PROFILE OF TIRUMALA
TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS
A BRIEF PROFILE OF TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

Before knowing the information needs of pilgrims, it is essential to know about Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams. Hence a brief profile of it is presented in the following paragraphs.

Tirupati is a sacred place of pilgrimage in India. It is famous for the shrine on ‘Seven Hills’ dedicated to Lord Venkateswara (God Vishnu). The name Tirupati itself generally connotes both the town at the foot of the hills known as ‘Tirupati’ and the main pilgrim centre known as ‘Tirumala’ on the hills.

The centres of pilgrimage in this region are the shrine of Sri Venkateswara on the Tirumala hills, the shrines of Sri Govindaraja, Sri Kodanda Rama and Sri Kapileswara in the town of Tirupati. The shrine of Goddess Sri Padmavathi Devi (Alimelumanga), the consort of Sri Venkateswara, is located at Tiruchanur which is three miles south of Tirupati.

Tirupati town is easily accessible by road and train and is about 144 kilometers, from Chennai by road. Renigunta junction (on the way to Tirupati), is on the Chennai-Bombay section of the southern railway. There is also a railway station Tirupati-East, which is next to Renigunta junction. For those who prefer to go by air, Tirupati is connected on a flight between Hyderabad, Chennai and Bangalore. The flight from Hyderabad to Tirupati takes about one hour and thirty minutes and from Tirupati to Chennai it takes half an hour. The airport is at a distance of 12 kilometers from Tirupati town.

There are five well-known paths leading to Tirumala. Of which, two routes start at Alipiri of Tirupati, the stepped path-way, seven miles long and the motor road, twelve miles long. The third route is from Chandragiri. The fourth starts from the Mamandur Railway station and the fifth passes by Nagapatla. Many pilgrims still prefer to walk up the hill by the ancient path way and perform their pilgrimage. It would take about four hours to cover a distance of about seven miles to reach the top. Temples of Narasimha Swami and Sri Ramanuja are on this route used by the pedestrians to Tirumala. There are two towers on this route, the one at the foot of hills is called the Alipiri Gopuram and the second one at the top is the Gali Gopuram. The later can be seen even from a great distance. The ghat road of 12 miles which was
opened to motor in 1944 is pucca surface road built and maintained by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams. From Tirupati railway station, it takes about an hour drive by this route to reach the temple at Tirumala. After 20 years, the second Ghat Road was opened for traffic in 1964.

2.1 Lord Venkateswara

The temple of Sri Venkateswara is situated at Tirumala, surrounded by a cluster of seven beautiful greenery covered hills, known as Seshachala or Venkatachala in Chandragiri Mandal, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh. Lord Sri Venkateswara is known by several names such as ‘Srinivasa’, ‘Balaji’ and ‘Venkatachalapathi’. But Lord Venkateswara is most popularly known as the Lord of the ‘Seven Hills.’ The ‘Seven Hills’ has become the centre of attraction for millions of pilgrims in India since ages. Vaishnava, Acharyas, Alwars and preceptors have all sung in praise of the Lord of Venkatachala. Many of them performed pilgrimages to this temple. All have considered Sri Venkatesvara as the most glorious and amenable form of Lord Vishnu. The great Ramanujacharya performed a pilgrimage to this temple and reformed the rituals and modes of worship in the temple which are followed even to date. The benefits acquired by a pilgrimage to this Holy place are mentioned in the puranas and Venkateswara is described as the great giver of Boons to His devotees.
2.1.1 Historical Importance

The great dynasties of rulers of the southern peninsula have paid in the past rich homage to this ancient shrine. The Pallavas of Kancheepuram (Nineth century A.D), Cholas of Tanjore (a century later), Pandyas of Madurai, and the Kings and chiefs of Vijayanagar (14th and 15th century) vied with one another in endowing this temple with rich offerings and benefactions. However, it was during the Vijayanagar dynasty that the number of benefactions increased. The statues of Sri Krishna Devaraya and his consorts are found installed at the portals of the temple in memory of the great services rendered to this temple by the illustrious ruler. After the decline of the Vijayanagar rulers, the other nobles and chieftains continued paying their homage and gifts to the temple annually.

The Venkateswara temple, situated at Tirumala at an altitude of about 950 meters, has a unique history and position in the Hindu tradition. One can find a plethora of references to the temple in ancient texts. The earliest mention of the shrine was in Tol-kappian, a Tamil literary work of the 2nd century B.C. of the 12 primary Alwars (saints who laid the foundations of the Srivaishnavite tradition), 10 have sung “pasurams”, or poems, in praise of the “Lord of the Seven Hills”, as the presiding deity is commonly known.

Chakravarthi Tondaimam, a devotee, is said to have discovered the “self manifested” (swayambhoo) deity on Venkatadri, one of the Seven Hills that form the Seshachalam range in the Eastern Ghats, and built a shrine dedicated to Venkatesa. The self manifestation of Srinivasa, according to legend, took place at the end of ‘Dvapara Yuga’ and at the start of ‘Kali Yuga’. The idol of Venkateswara has His consort Sri Devi (Lakshmi) nestled on the right side of his chest and displays scars on both shoulders, extending up to the arm pit, as if caused by the constant wear of the bow-string and the arrow pouch.

The temples of Tirumala and Tirupati were under the control of several dynasties. The temple inscriptions indicate that the Tirumala shrine received royal patronage between A.D. 813 and A.D. 1550. After the decline of the Hindu empires, the Tirumala and Tirupati temples came under the sway of the Nawabs of Arcot, and with the advent of the English, the management passed into the hands of the East India Company in 1801. Archival evidence shows that Lord Clive gave instructions to the Nawab of Arcot in 1800 in connection with the arrangements to be made for
providing conveyance to a dignitary who wished to go to Tirumala on pilgrimage. The Mackenzie manuscripts of 1801 (Vol. XVI page 476-C) have recorded the boundaries of the Seven Hills, spread over 250 sq.km. The Company managed the Tirumala temple under the well-defined rules contained in the Bruce Code drawn up in 1821 on the basis of previous usages and customs and did not interfere in its day-to-day affairs.

2.1.2 The Temple and its layout

The main temple is a master-piece of Dravidian architecture with its Gopurum or main tower facing the east. The ‘Vimana’ of cupola over the ‘sanctum sanctorum’ is entirely covered with gold plate and is known as ‘Ananda Nilayam’ (abode of joy). The temple consists of three Prakarams or enclosures. The first is the Sampangi Pradakshinam which is the outer-most enclosure. The statue of Krishna Devaraya and his wife can be seen near the outer gate. There is also a copper statue of Todarmal, Minister of Akbar and his wife in this enclosure. The ‘Dhwajastambham’ a pillar covered with gold plate is there. In front of it, is the ‘Balipeetam.’ The second enclosure is the ‘Vimana Pradakshinam’. The Kitchen, Bangarubavi, Yagasala, the ‘Kalyana Mandapam’ and the rooms where the ‘Vahanams’ and ‘Parimalam’ etc., are kept in this enclosure. There are also shrines of ‘Vakula Malika’, ‘Yoganarasimha’, ‘Varadaraja’, ‘Ramanuja’, ‘Senadhipati’, and ‘Garuda’ in this enclosure. The inner-most enclosure is called the ‘Vaikunta Pradakshinam’ which is always kept closed and is opened only on the ‘Vaikunta Ekadasi’ day, the 11th day in the bright lunar fortnight of the month of Dhanus (December-January). The doors of the gate leading into the ‘sanctum sanctorum’ are covered with gold plates and therefore the gate is called ‘Bangaru Vakili’ or golden gate.

The pavilion in front of this is the Ranga Mandapam. The ‘Hundi’, the depositing box of the offerings by the pilgrims is placed here. On entering the ‘Sanctum Sanctorum’, one gets a most inspiring and impressive view of the main deity, Lord Venkateswara (Moola Beram). The other image which is taken out in procession is that of ‘Utsavaberam’ and known as ‘Malayappaswami’. Then there is the idol of ‘Bhiga Sreenivasamurti’, ‘Koluvu Sreenivasamurti’ and ‘Ugra Sreenivasamurthi’. All these are different manifestations and forms of Sri Venkateswara for definite purposes. The layout of the Lord Venkateswara Temple, Tirumala, is shown in Fig.2.1.
Fig. 2.2
Layout of Lord Venkateswara Temple, Tirumala
2.2 Religious Activities

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams has undertaken a number of activities to propagate the cult of Venkateswara and Hindu religious doctrines. For this purpose, TTD has established and taken over many Hindu temples in all over India. Sri Govindaraja Swamy, Sri Kodandarama Swamy, Sri Kapileswara Swamy temples in Tirupati, Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru temple at Tiruchanur, Sri Kalyana Venkateswara Swamy temple at Srinivasa Mangapuram, Sri Vedanarayanaswamy temple at Nagalapuram, Sri Kalyana Venkateswara Swamy temple at Karvetinagaram, Sri Venkateswara Andhra Ashram temple at Pittsburgh and Rishikesh and Sri Sharadhanandasram at Rajpur. The TTD established in 1958 ‘Summer School of Hindu Religion’ in order to educate the pupils and young teachers in the tenets of Hindu religion.

2.2.1 Dharma Prachara Parishad (DPP)

The TTD has created Hindu Dharma Prathisthanam in 1969 to preserve and propagate Vedas, Hindu religion and philosophic thought. Consequent upon statutory change, it became Hindu Dharma Rakshana Samstha in 1979. As a result of further statutory change, in 1987, it was renamed Dharma Prachara Parishad. Its main objectives are: to promote and propagate the Hindu Dharma; to establish and maintain institutions imparting the Hindu Dharma; to prepare, publish and disseminate literature relating to Hindu Dharma; to train Dharmacharyas, Dharma Pracharakas etc., and to organize and maintain institutions imparting knowledge of Vedas, ‘agams’ and purohityam; to conduct sankeerthanas, music programmes, purana pravachanam and harikatha through Sri Venkateswara Arsha Sadassu in Asthana mandapam at Tirumala and at other temples of the TTD; to publish books on religion, Sanathana Dharma and distribute them free of cost to the public; and to give financial assistance for performing yagnas.

2.2.2 Brahmosavam of Lord Venkateswara

The Brahmosavam of Lord Venkateswara, the presiding deity of the Seven Hills, is the most splendid and spectacular of all the festivals in Tirumala, though every day is a festival day in Tirumala. This is a nine day festival. It has its own grandeur and uniqueness. The colourful processions of Lord Venkateswara on all these nine days on various vahanams (vehicles), and the throngs of the pilgrims
without any reference to Religion, or caste and creed, substantiate the age old belief that “If there be heaven on earth, it is this, it is this”.

Brahmotsavam is being commenced from the day of the Ankurarpana, followed by the Dwajarohanam the next day. Most important among the utsavams is the Garudaseva (Garudoutsavam) on the fifth day of the Brahmotsavam with the Lord being carried by the Garuda without His consorts.

2.2.3 Rituals

The daily rituals in the Venkateswara temple at Tirumala are performed on the basis of the Paddati governed by Vaikhanasa Agama rules and regulations with procession of time and place varying according to seasons and conditions.

The daily rituals consisting of different services (sevas) and auspicious views of the idol (darsanams) are according to an order or a set pattern. The order of ritual services vary from season to season. In summer, the services are started by three ‘O’ clock in the morning but in winter they are started by four ‘O’ clock in the morning. The evening service or Pulangi Seva is performed specially on every Thursday. On every Friday, the special services of Tirumanjana Seva and Pulugukappu Seva are performed at the time of decorating the main idol in connection with the Alankarana Seva.

Two type of darshans are arranged by TTD. They are Arjita seva and utsavams, and Sarva darshanam. As Arjita Seva (paid sevas) Darshanam is arranged on payment of money but the Sarva darshanam, or Dharma darshanam is arranged without charging any money from the visitors. The details of Arjita seva and utsavams with regard to number of persons allowed, Prasadams, timings and the amount to be paid are given in Table 2.1.
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<td>8-00 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-00 a.m.</td>
<td>11-00 a.m.</td>
<td>March/April</td>
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Arjitha Sevas and Utsavams of Lord Venkateswara, Tirumala

**DAILY SEVAS**

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<td>10-00 a.m.</td>
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**Utsavams of Lord Venkateswara, Tirumala**

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**Sri Brahmotsavam**

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<td>7 Big Laddu, 5 Veddas, 5 Appams, 5 Dosa, Pullukkara Chakrana Pongal, Payasam and Patta Sanga Dupatta, Bovaace piece</td>
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<td>7 Big Laddu, 5 Veddas, 5 Appams, 5 Dosa, 5 Tirumala, Pullukkara Patta Sanga Dupatta, Bovaace piece</td>
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**Nijayata Darshanam**

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<td>1-00 p.m.</td>
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<td>4-00 p.m.</td>
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<td>May</td>
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<td>6-30 a.m.</td>
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<td>8-00 a.m.</td>
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<td>8-00 a.m.</td>
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<td>11-00 a.m.</td>
<td>March/April</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Boor, YTDA, Tirupati paysi**

*Note: Letter addressed to the Pelakula, Sri SS, Tirumala*
2.3 Sources of Income

The temple of Venkateswara is one of the largest income fetching shrines in India. It is the cult of Venkateswara, which has played an important role in bringing vast amounts of revenue to the temple.

The sources of income are the deposits by pilgrim devotees in the offertorium (holy gift box) popularly known as ‘hundi’. The receipts obtained with reference to the paid services popularly known as ‘Arjita Seva’. The special entrance fee, the charges for providing facilities in the choultries, the toll-gate collection at the foot of the hills, the sale of sacred foods (Prasadam), the sale of gold dollars containing the image of the Deity, the canteen sales, the sale of human hair, and the sale TTD of publications.

2.4 Other holy places of pilgrimage at Tirumala

In and around Tirumala Hills, there are several places of pilgrimage one can visit.

Swami Pushkarani (Temple Tank)

This is a large tank, adjacent to the temple in which pilgrims take a holy bath before entering the temple.

Punya Teerthams at Tirumala

Around and near Tirumala Hills, there are about eleven Tirthams which are held to be sacred by devotees. The eleventh Tirthams are Akasaganga, Papavinasam Tirtham, Vaikunta Tirtham, Jabali Tirtham, Gogarbha Tirtham, Chakra Tirtham, Ghona Tirtham, Ramakrishna Tirtham, Kumara Tirtham, Thumburu Tirtham and Pandava Tirtham. These Tirthams (fords) are either beautiful waterfalls or springs located amidst picturesque scenery.

All these holy Tirthams are worthy of a visit if one has the inclination, time, energy and wherewithal.

Geological arch (Silathoranam)

This rare geological formation is situated 1 km north of Lord Venkateswara temple.
TTD Gardens

The Devasthanams maintains beautiful ornamental gardens with rare species of plants and trees.

Asthana Mandapam (Sadas Hall)

This is the venue for the devotional programmes like discourses, music concerts, Harikathas and Bhajanast conducted under the auspices of Dharma Prachara Parishad.

Sri Venkateswar Dhyana Jnana Mandiram (S.V. Museum)

This building, an architectural beauty, houses a museum, meditation centre and photo gallery.

Meditation centres

Devotees can meditate on the Lord and relax his weary minds at the meditation centres located at S.V. Museum and Vaikhatovtsava mandapam, Tirumala.

2.5 Local Temples of TTD

After offering worship to Lord Venkateswara on the Tirumala Hills, the pilgrims come back to Tirupati wherein there are a number of temples to visit. The most famous of them is the temple of 'Sri Govindaraja'. The other temples in and around Tirupati are 'Sri Kodaridarama Temple', 'Sri Kapileswara Temple', 'Nammalwar Temples', 'Sri Padmavathi Temple' (Tiruchanur), 'Kalyana Venkateswara Swamy Temple' (Srinivasa Mangapuram) and 'Prasanna Venkateswara Swamy Temple' (Appalayagunta).

2.6 Administration of TTD

The management of the Devasthanams was first transferred in 1843 to the Mahant Hathiramji Mutt, Tirupati. The Government passed the TTD Act of 1932 to provide better administration and proper utilization of funds. This Act was replaced by an enactment in 1951. Again the Government has replaced it by a comprehensive enactment namely, the Andhra Pradesh (AP) charitable and Hindu Religious Institutions Endowment Act, 1966. The legislature had enacted the TTD Act of 1979 and it was replaced by 1987 Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to the
administration and governance of the TTD. Now the TTD is administered as per provisions of this Act. In the organizational hierarchy, Government of Andhra Pradesh is at the top followed by the TTD Board of Trustees and Executive Officer. The administration of the TTD is vested with the Board of Trustees. The Executive Officer is the Chief Administrative Officer of the TTD. He is responsible for the proper maintenance and custody of the records and properties of the TTD. Hence the present organizational structure of the TTD is given below:

Government

TTD Board of Trustees

Executive Officer

2.6.1 Executive Officer

Government shall appoint an Executive Officer and Joint Executive Officer, Tirumala and Tirupati and Special Grade Deputy Executive Officer. Every officer appointed shall be a person professing Hindu religion. The conditions of service of the officers appointed shall be determined by the Government. Every officer appointed shall be a whole time officer and shall not undertake any work unconnected with his office without the prior permission of the Board of Trustees. Any officer appointed shall be paid out of the funds of the TTD.

2.6.2 Public Relations

The Department of Public Relations in the TTD came into being 1976. It has vastly expanded into a full fledged unit with several wings under its control of Public Relations Officer. It serves as a liaison between the public and the TTD with modern channels of publicity. The Public Relations Officer maintains good relations with pilgrims in general and the press in particular; co-ordinates and supervises the work of editor and the broadcasting sections, photography, publicity using like sapthagiri and various religious and cultural projects; overseas production and distribution of
documentary films, propagates Srinivasa Mission; attends to all advertisement activities; conducts enquiry into complaints from pilgrims and supervises the information centres and many more activities relating to the glorification of the T.T. Devasthanams.

2.7 Facilities to the pilgrims

Due attention was paid to provide free accommodation, comfortable *darshan* and transportation. The first ghat road was opened in 1944. Today, the Devasthanams have made their presence felt in every field of human activity.

The TTD spreads *sanatana dharma* and spiritual consciousness among people through *DharmArt Prachara Parishad*.

The TTD run five charitable institutions, eight hospitals and over 250 Kalyana Mandapams. It promotes Indian culture and tradition by setting up projects like Annamacharya Project, Dasasahitya Project, Alvar Divyaaprabandha Project and Vengnamba Project and by publishing books on Hindu religion, epics, *puranas*, *agamas*, and temples art.

The temple administration also takes care of every aspect of comfort to the pilgrims, free and paid accommodation, provision of hygienic food, orderly *darshan* through queue complex, free transportation, etc., at Tirumala. Free medical aid to pilgrims form part of the routine of the TTD administration.

The present Trust Board which assumed office in 2005 has made substantial contributions to the social and religious uplift of the weaker sections of the people. This Board with its progressive approach heralded a new era in temple administration. The *Dalita Govindam, Kalyanamastu* (mass marriages) and *Srinivasa Kalyanam* held in different places in the State are path breaking efforts of the TTD to bring about a social change at the grass root level. Taking the cue from the great *Acharyas* like Ramanuja who upheld the right of very individual to experience spiritual vision and realize God, the present Board has made sustained efforts to remove social iniquities through various religious programmes.

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The *Amritotsavam* which was held in a spectacular manner focused on many-sided development of the Devasthanams. In a way, it was a splendid offering to the Lord himself whose magnanimity and love radiate eternally.

2.7.1 *Darshan* of the Lord Venkateswara

Lord Venkateswara *darshan* is a mystic appearance. It has been defined by a great writer as a form of happiness induced by being in the presence of great manifestation of collective consciousness. It may be a person, place or thing, and represent past, present or future, so long as it sets up the definite recognizable glow of super personal happiness. *Darshan* has therefore to be experienced subjectively. It involves a total surrender of one’s age to the one real and a taste of infinite happiness that is ever present in all of us, by the merger of our ego with the ever present reality. In the queue sheds, every arrangement has been made for comfortable stay i.e., fans, food packets, drinking water, catering of coffee by coffee Board and toilet facilities. Further, the relays of devotional serials songs, etc., and all the programmes in the *Sadas hall* are shown in T.V in the queue sheds with a view to pass on the waiting time and to see that the pilgrims and worshippers have all the comforts and facilities while in the queue sheds. Special staff has been appointed under the control and close supervision of an officer of the cadre of peishkar. Steps have been taken to see that there are no malpractices in the admission of pilgrims into the queue sheds, that there is no harassment from the ‘dalaries’ and that there is proper coordination between temple staff and queue sheds staff.

2.7.2 *Sudarsan token* / biometric system

Pilgrims were experiencing difficulty to wait in the long queue lines for hours and days along with children and old people. In order to minimize waiting time of the devotees in the *Vaikuntam 'Q'* queue compartments and save pilgrim’s time and reduce their hardship, *Sudarshan/Biometric token* was introduced. The pilgrims can enter *Vaikuntam* Queue Complex-I at the given date and time and complete Srivari *darshanam* within two hours after entering the queue line.
What is Sudarshan

'Sudarshan', a bar-coded wrist band token, is tied to the right hand wrist. It gives reporting time and date of Srivari darshan to the pilgrims. Now wrist band token is replaced with biometric token, where thumb impression of the pilgrim along with digital photo is taken and a token is given with reporting date and time of Srivari darshan. Pilgrim's thumb impression will be verified at Vaikuntam Queue Complex-I. In case, it does not tally with the thumb impression given at the counter, the pilgrim will not be allowed for darshan.

Biometric tokens are also issued for free and paid darshan in all counters located at Tirumala and Tirupati. Free Sudarshan tokens are available at Tirupati only.

Precautions to be taken

- **Sudarshan** (biometric) tokens are issued at the TTD counter only. These tokens are not available elsewhere in Tirupati and Tirumala.
- Tokens are issued for each and every pilgrim and not for groups. Children, who are below 12 years, need not wear Sudarshan. They are allowed free for darshan.
- Do not trust 'dalaries' or touts. For further information, please contact 'TTD Information Centre' nearby for help and assistance.

Where to report for darshan

Paid Sudarshan /biometric token holders have to report at Vaikuntam Queue Complex-I, one hour before darshan time allotted to them.

Free Sudarshan /biometric token holders have to report at 'Supadham' i.e., between Vaikuntam Queue Complex-I and Hathiranji Mutt.

2.7.3 Darshan without sudarshan /biometric tokens

Pilgrims without sudarshan/biometric token can go to Vaikuntam Queue Complex-II for darshan. Their possible darshan time is displayed at the entrance gate itself.
2.7.4 Special Entry for the Handicapped

Persons who are mentally or physically handicapped or advanced in age or terminally ill and who cannot walk will be allowed for darshan through physically handicapped gate at Mahadwaram. They are not allowed along with attendants or dependents. They will be assisted by the scouts and guides. They will be given laddu coupon at the Mahadwaram itself after darshan. They are requested to wait in the waiting hall exclusively constructed for them till the time of darshan is informed to them. Wheel chairs for the physically handicapped persons are available at Rambaghicha Guest House.

2.7.5 Entry for Angapradakshana

Pilgrims who vow to perform Angapradakshana in the Srivari temple, Tirumala, are requested to obtain biometric token from the Arjitham seva counter opposite to VQC-I. It is issued from 8 p.m. onwards. Every day 750 biometric tokens are issued. Out of which, 375 are for male and 375 are for female. Those performing Angapradakshana are requested to take bath in the Swami Pushkarini and report at VQC 1 at the time given for Angapradakshana.

2.8 Facilities to the pilgrims going on foot from Alipiri to Tirumala

Many pilgrims take a vow to go on foot from Alipiri to Tirumala through foot path. Pilgrims can use free facilities and bath at Pilgrim Amenities Hall at Srinivasam Complex, Opp. APSRTC Bus stand, Tirupati, 2nd Choultry near Railway station, Tirupati, and Bhudevi Complex, near Alipiri Bus station. TTD runs free buses from Railway Station, Tirupati to Alipiri. Pilgrims are requested to keep their luggage in a suitcase or bag under lock and key. They can deposit their luggage at the Alipiri foot path free luggage centre and obtain a receipt from there. They can collect their luggage after submitting the receipt at luggage collection centre, Tirumala. Their luggage is transported free of cost.

Precautions: Pilgrims suffering from chronic illness like BP, heart and lung diseases are advised not to climb up the hills on foot. There are 3,502 foot steps from Alipiri to Tirumala, and the distance is 9 km. from Alipiri to Tirumala.
Drinking Water and toilets are available all along the foot path and other additional facilities are available to the devotees trekking the holy hills from Alipiri at Tirupati. Already the TTD has setup a sudarshan token issuing counter at Gali Gopuram located half way on the footpath leading to the sacred shrine. Pilgrims are advised to go in groups and avoid going on foot between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m.

2.8.1 Facilities at Tirumala and Tirupati

The amenities like transport, accommodation, health and sanitation, food, etc., are available for pilgrim devotees at Tirumala and Tirupati. They are discussed in brief in the following paragraphs:

2.8.2 Information centres

The TTD has dharmasal, kalyanamandapams information centres, etc., at different places within and outside the State of A.P. so as to popularize its activities.

Information centres with Kalyanamandapams and Dharmasalas attached may be established in all State Capitals and run by Devasthanams. At other places also they may be opened with facilities provided by local people without expenditure to Devasthanam.

These information centres serve the pilgrims with all necessary information and literature about pilgrimage to temple and for propagation of Hindu Religion and Dharma Prathishtanam.

2.8.3 TTD Press

Any religious institution dedicated to the propagation of its tenets will inevitably have contacts with press. The TTD while safe-guarding the glory of our Sanatana dharma publishes religious literature. Hence printing and publishing have become the line activity of the Devasthanams. The TTD maintains a modern press. It publishes books on Hindu religion, its culture and philosophy and prints registers, forms, account books, invoices ledgers etc., required for day-to-day use. TTD publication department publishes different types of books in different languages. It has acquired one photo composing unit with six key boards like printer for proofs to improve the quality and reduce manpower requirements in the press. A number of small books are published for propagating the sanctity of Tirumala and Tirupati.
The press has its own share in enabling the management to cope with the mammoth task of religious mass communication.

2.8.4 Broadcasting

The TTD has a broadcasting unit to broadcast its daily programmes, devotional songs, operates closed circuit television system in the Queue complex and supply of mike sets (Loud speakers) to other temples etc.

2.8.5 Publication Programme

The TTD has an editorial wing headed by the editor. He is incharge of publication and circulation of ‘Sapthagiri Magazine. It helps in providing financial assistance to the authors of religious books as well.

*Sapthagiri*, the monthly religious illustrated journal, published by TTD is one of the largest religious journals with readership of over one lakh. Brought out in five languages Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Hindi and English, the magazine is devoted to spread the Hindu dharma. It publishes articles on *agamas*, art and architecture written by renowned scholars. *Sapthagiri* truly mirrors the spiritual aspiration of the people with the avowed objective of propagating *Srinivasa tatva*. Besides, the magazine contains beautiful photographs of various festivals being held at Tirumala and provides updated information on various activities of TTD. It is a complete family magazine for better living.

Sale of publications: All religious publications and Video and Audio CDs and Cassettes brought out by the TTD are sold through TTD’s bookstall near Rambagicha and in all bank counters and at Bus stand.

2.8.6 Transport

The transport unit is headed by the General Manager drawn from the Andhra Pradesh State Transport Corporation (APSRTC). The TTD operates number of free buses at Tirumala for the convenience of pilgrims. Apart from day-to-day activities, it renders free service to the sick and the disabled old and handicapped (physically challenged).

Free Bus: Free buses are operated at Tirumala for the benefit of pilgrims. It covers cottages, choultries, temple and other places.
2.8.7 Vigilance and Security

The TTD has vigilance and security department mainly to provide security to the properties of the TTD and belongings of pilgrims and maintain order for the smooth conduct of temple rituals. This vigilance department takes up the task of providing security to the various other institutions managed by the TTD.

2.8.8 Engineering Department

The TTD is a vast institution dedicated to the service of pilgrims and it performs several tasks with a view to improve the amenities at Tirumala and Tirupati for the pilgrims. It manages not only temples but also various other organizations and therefore, there is an inherent necessity for an engineering department. It meets the requirements of pilgrims and undertakes construction, maintenance and renovation of temples.

Automobile Clinic

A mobile van with mechanics and spares is available to attend to the repairs of the vehicles stranded on the ghat roads. For help, they may contact toll gate either at Tirupati or Tirumala.

2.8.9 Kalyanakatta

Kalyanakatta is a place where the pilgrim devotees fulfil their vows of tonsure by shaving their heads.

All facilities to complete vow tonsuring, pilgrims are liberally provided by the TTD since tonsured hair belongs to the Lord. It is called ‘black gold’.

Free Tonsure: Pilgrims can fulfil their vow of tonsure at Kalyanakatta, PAC I and II at free of cost.

2.8.10 Welfare Department

The TTD has a welfare department which was established during 1977. It looks after the maintenance of staff quarters, operation of employee’s welfare fund, conduct of sports, games and cultural programmes, redressal of employees, grievances, supervision of the TTD information centres and kalyanamandapams situated outside Tirumala and Tirupati etc.

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2.8.11 Health and sanitation

Power of a Panchayat was conferred on the Executive Officer of the Temple. A Health Officer was appointed under the Public Health Act.

Among the social activities under taken by the TTD, sanitation and medical facilities hold a place of priority. To keep the environment, clean sanitation is considered essential. Therefore, the TTD has taken up several measures to maintain good sanitation in Tirumala as well as in Tirupati especially at the place where the pilgrims stay. Actually, as many as thirteen sanitary inspectors under the health officer work round the clock for the keep of the healthy environment of the temple and create a pleasant atmosphere for the pilgrims.

Free Medical Aid: Pilgrims are given free medical aid at Anwini Hospital and Vaikuntam 'Q' complex I and II. In case of emergency, the patients will be sent to the Ruia Hospital, SVIMS or BIRRD for treatment.

Hospitals and Leprosy Home

Sri Venkateswara Government Ruia Hospital was established at Tirupati by the Government of Andhra Pradesh with a donation of Rs. 20 lakhs and 200 acres of land contributed by the TTD, opened on 24-9-1962, by the then Union Home Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Sastri who said “What the temple of Sri Venkateswara has done is permanent treasure as I see it in Tirupati and stands as a model for the same Akkarampalli area and those beggars suffering from Leprosy were housed, maintained and treated well. Other Leprosy patients were treated as out-patients. Dr. Modi’s eye camp was run with TTD funds annually from 1955 for the benefit of the public.

2.8.12 Food

Free meals to provide hygienic food both at Tirupati and Tirumala is one of the important functions of the TTD. As far as Tirupati is concerned, it being a big town there are large number of hotels. Making food available to all the pilgrims at the Annadanam complex serving milk, snacks and coffee to the devotees waiting in the queue complex (VQC-II), the TTD has decided to do away with the distribution of free meal coupons inside the temple in order to make available food to all the pilgrims. Now, every pilgrim can go to Annadanam complex and have sumptuous
meals even before having darshan. The decision was taken in the interest of the pilgrims who are waiting for darshan. At Tirumala, thousands of devotees congregate for worship of Lord Venkateswara. Every pilgrim is considered an honoured guest and all are provided with basic facilities without any discrimination. The TTD provides free food to all the visiting pilgrims under the S.V. Nitya Annadanam Scheme. Under the scheme, on an average more than 40,000 to 50,000 pilgrims a day are being provided with free food. The TTD takes meticulous every care to provide wholesome meals to all pilgrims in its Annadanam Complex from 9 a.m to 11 p.m.

Several items of anna prasadam such as pulihora, dadhyodanam, pongal, chakkara pongal, chitrannam etc., are offered to the Lord in large quantities. After the offerings of the anna prasadam to the Deity, they are distributed to those pilgrims who come after having darshan of the Lord.

Canteens: TTDs Sri Venkateswara Guest House at Tirumala canteen offers wholesome meals and snacks at moderate rates. Full meal costs Rs.10/- only. Besides, there are many hygienic canteens run by private hoteliers.

2.8.13 Water Supply

Protected water duly chlorinated is supplied to the pilgrims by TTD. Water is made available for washing feet before entering the temple. A convenient method has been devised at Tirumala hills by supplying water through perforated pipes laid across the threshold. Temple tanks are opened on all sides. Water is kept clean and clear to keep the environment hygienically.

2.8.14 Advance Reservation at TTD Information centres

Devotes can reserve accommodation in advance at all TTD information centres located in district headquarters in the State of Andhra Pradesh including Vijayawada and Rajahmundry. They can book advance accommodation at Chennai, Bangalore, Bhubaneswar, Pondicherry, Mumbai and Vellore. Devotees have to pay Rs.100/- to reserve the accommodation. Availability of accommodation in advance booking is displayed prominently at all TTD information centres. Once the accommodation is reserved, a slip will be given to them. Devotees have to show the slip at ARP Counter, Central Reception Office, TTD, and Tirumala. They will be
The APTDC is operating package tours (including accommodation and darshan) with its most comfortable luxury coaches for pleasure travel and darshan of Lord Venkateswara. It is operating package tours from Chennai, Coimbatore, Pondicherry, Karur, Tirupur, Bangalore and Hyderabad, and local temple tours from Tirupati Tirumala. The Kanipakam Tour package covers Kapilatheertham, Kanipakam, Srinivasamagapuram, Tiruchanur and Govindarajaswami temple.

2.9 Pilgrim accommodation at Tirumala and Tirupati

Pilgrims are requested to go to the nearest Sudarshan token counter and obtain the allotted darshan date and time immediately after reaching Tirupati. They can plan their stay at Tirupati or Tirumala and visit local temples accordingly.

It will be difficult to get accommodation at Tirumala during weekends, festivals and seasonal vacations. Pilgrims are requested to stay at Tirupati and go to Tirumala according to the allotted darshan date and time.

Pilgrims are provided with paid accommodation, free choultries and dormitories at Tirupati. They can choose free halls where luggage can be kept in the lockers, sleep in the common hall and make use of common toilets and bath rooms. Such accommodation is available at Srinivasam Complex, and Bhudevi Pilgrim Amenities Complex near Alipiri. They can get free unfurnished rooms and lockers in Choultry near Railway Station. They can avail paid rooms at Srinivasam Complex, Govindaraja Swamy I, II and III Choultries, Sri Venkateswara Guest House, Alipiri Guest House and Sri Padmavathi Guest House, Tirupati.

Free accommodation at Tirumala

There are 800 free rooms in three choultries at Tirumala. Pilgrims can have free rooms at these choultries.
Free rooms to the pilgrims will be allotted at the CRO. Each room can accommodate nearly 10-15 pilgrims. There will be a fan, and bath room in each room. Pilgrims have to deposit Rs.200 which will be refunded after vacation of the room.

There are three Pilgrim Amenities Complexes I, II and III at Tirumala. Each Pilgrim Amenities Complex (PAC) can accommodate nearly 2500 pilgrims. Pilgrims can avail lockers too at free of cost. There are 1000 lockers in each PAC. They can also have free tonsure at these complexes. Free toilet and bath room facilities are available at these complexes round the clock.

Pilgrims in large groups or individuals too can go to Pilgrim Amenities Complex I, II and III. There are large halls with locker facilities. The accommodation and lockers are free to the pilgrims. They will be given mat and a blanket on payment of advance.

Cottage extension

Pilgrims seeking extension for further date, have to go to the Cottage Extension Counter in CRO Office i.e., next to ARP Counter, Incase accommodation is available, extension will be given. They have to pay additional rent.

In case, owing to any problem, pilgrim may not extend the cottage but stays for more than 24 hours, he has to pay additional rent at the time of vacation and show the receipt at the cottage subenquiry.

2.10 Marriage halls

The policy of the TTD has to construct marriage halls (Kalyana mandapams) throughout the state of Andhra Pradesh and in some other state capitals is an act of social benefit to the public.

2.11 Educational Activities

The Tirumala, abode of Lord Venkateswara on the top of Seven Hills is the second richest temple in the world while the town of Tirupati is a place of learning. The TTD is also maintaining a number of educational and health institutions.
With the increase in revenue, the TTD administration has added a social function to its religious agenda. Besides setting up oriental institutions, universities and colleges of general education in the early 1950, TTD donated buildings to help the government to set up Sri Venkateswara University. On the vast land donated by the TTD, the Sri Padmavathi Mahila Viswa Vidyalayam (Women’s University), Sri Venkateswara Veterinary University and Sri Venkateswara Agricultural College, the SVIMS (Deemed University), the Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeeth (Deemed University) and the recently set up Sri Venkateswara Vedic University (2007) stand testimony to the TTD’s concern for the cause of education, health and the overall development of society.

The TTD has been the religious as well as the social and cultural centre of human learning. History bears ample witness to show the existence of great learned scholars and reputed chairs of learning associated with the temple of Lord Sri Venkateswara.

TTD has been championing the cause of Vedic learning at the foot of Lord Venkateswara by the established institutions of oriental learning and TTD has been able to make significant contributions for the cause of modern education at all levels, with its ever growing income at its disposal. It has diversified its services to society. The TTD authorities are running several modern educational institutions as given hereunder:

**Sanskrit Education**

a) S.V. Vedapatasala, Kalyanidam  
b) S.V.O. High School, Tirupati  
c) S.V.O. College, Tirupati  
d) S.V. V.S College, Hyderabad  
e) S.V. Vedic University (S.V. Veda Viswa Vidyalayam), Tirupati

**School Education**

a) S.V. H.S. School, Vellore  
b) S.V. High School, Tirupati  
c) S.P. G.H. School, Tirupati  
d) S.V. High School, Tirumala

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e) S.V. Elementary School, Tirumala
f) S.G.S. High School, Tirupati
g) S.V. Elementary School, Tirupati
h) S.K.R.S. High School, Tirupati
i) S.K.S. Elementary School, Tirupati
j) S.V. Elementary School, Tirupati

College Education
a) S.P.W. College, Tirupati
b) S.V. College, New Delhi
c) S.V. Arts College, Tirupati
d) S.G.S Arts College, Tirupati
e) S.V. College for Music and Dance, Tirupati
f) S.V. Junior College, Tirupati
g) S.P.W. Junior College, Tirupati
h) S.V. Ayurvedic College, Tirupati

Technical Education
a) S.P.W. Polytechnic, Tirupati (Orphanage)
b) Yoga Adyayana Kendram, Tirupati
c) S.V. Art and Sculpture Training Centre, Tirupati

Charitable Institutions
a) S.V. Bramandir, Tirupati
b) S.V. Poor Home, Akkarampalle
c) S.V. School of Deaf and Blind, Tirupati
d) S.V. College of Deaf and Blind, Tirupati

S.V. Poor Home was established in Akkarampalli near Tirupati in 1942 for the disabled. Begging was prevented at Tirumala Hills and beggars, if any, were removed by buses and lorries and the disabled were put in Poor Home and the able bodied were offered work in the Devasthanam public works on daily wages.
S.V. Bala Mandir was established in 1943 for the destitute children. They were given shelter, food, clothing, education, and trained in TTD transport services, printing press and in tailoring. They were employed in TTD institutions giving preference to them.

2.12 Studies on TTD

A few studies have been conducted by various researchers on TTD. They are reviewed in the following paragraphs:

Krishnaswamy Iyengar examined the mode of worship, festivals and rituals practised in the temples. The historical evaluation of the Tirumala temple and its administration were studied. Rama Rao made an attempt to study the temples of Tirumala, Tirupati and Tiruchanoor based on the inscriptions found in the temples and puranic sources. The author presented the history of each temple, important monuments and their architectural features and artistic contents. Sitapati made a study on the history of temples and deities at Tirumala. The author also reviewed the different festivals and customs that were being practised in temples. Kamalanathan carried out research on the historical significance and administration of Tirumala temples in the late sixties of the last century.

Veeraraghavacharaya presented the history of Tirupati in three volumes. The first two volumes contain details of the development of Tirumala temple chronologically under the patronage of various kings and sages while the third volume deals with temple rituals and mode of worship.

Rameshan examined the historical background, epigraphical evidences, architectural and sculptural importance, festivals and rituals of Tirumala temple. Subramanya Sastry, a renowned epigraphist of the TTD, reported at length about the historical and religious significance of Tirumala temple. He explained how the rulers have offered royal patronage for the management of temples in different periods.

Raman, an internationally known archaeologist and art historian, conducted an enquiry into the sculptural and iconographic wealth of temples of Tirumala, Tirupati and Tiruchanoor. The temple and the deity are two inseparable entities like the body and the soul. The holy temples are not only sacred places of worship but
also great centres of fairs and festivals, art and architecture, music and dance. The temple of Tirumala and Tirupati are known for their long and eventful history and architectural beauty. They received unparalleled patronage during the illustrious rule of the Vijayanagara Kings. He concluded that the Tirumala and Tirupati temples can be considered as one of the chief centres of the school of art and sculpture along with Hāmpi, Kanchi, Chandragiri and other place in South India.

Varadachary reviewed certain important aspects of the temple of Lord Venkateswarar and its sacred environment. The author has covered historical facts about the Galigopuram, Varaha and Narasimha shrines, Kalyana mandapam, swarna Ananda Nilaya Vimanam, Swami Pushkarini, Ranganatha Mandapam, Tirumala Raya Mandapam, Anga Pradakshinam, Dhvajasthambham, Bangaaru Vaakili, Sri Garudaivar. Ramar Medai, Kulasekhara Padi, Idol of Sri Venkateswaraswamy, Bangaru Baavi, Akhilandam, Poola Baavi, etc. The author has listed thirty Apacharas which one shall not commit in a place of worship.

Anna Rao conducted a study on the administration of temples. The author dealt with the utilization of temple funds for social progress, code of conduct for temple servants, worshippers, trustees, archakas and other religious officers, daily Pooja kramam, accommodation, darshanam, religious kalakshepams, etc. The author has pointed out that temples not only served as religious institutions but acted as potent factors in the social and educational progress of the nation. They are the centres of great spiritual forces and social advancement. They are the sources of solace to distressed minds and of support to needy bodies. He is of the opinion that money got from the people should be spent for the benefit of the people. He has examined the working of various temples in North India and made suggestions for their better functioning. The author has highlighted the history and growth of the TTD. The issues reviewed include ritual worship in the temples; early history of the TTD; management under state acts; sanitation; medical aid; water supply; canteens; transport; education etc. The author has recommended the prohibition of begging; elimination of middlemen; promotion of the employees on the basis of seniority; creation of reserve fund; establishment of Yoga centre, colleges of Ayurveda, Unani and Homeopathy; running of kalyanakatta on sound lines; establishment of cottage industries to meet the requirements of pilgrims; reorganization of printing press;
unting and auditing; speedy adjustment of advances; installation of suggestion boxes; and distinct statutory position to the TTD.

Rama Devi\textsuperscript{11} conducted a study on the administration of the TTD. Her observations include the TTD Act of 1979, which was passed for better administration and governance.

Subramaayam\textsuperscript{12} analyzed the personnel management practices of the TTD. The author reported that no personnel department is established to look after personnel, their service conditions, complaints, etc. Bhaskar Naidu\textsuperscript{13} studied the employer-employee relations in the TTD. He dealt with recognition of unions, inter-union and intra-union rivalarities, employees' participation in union activities, political affiliation of unions and social relations between employees and management.

Subbaramaiah\textsuperscript{14} assessed the study of an Indian temple with reference to the TTD. He assessed the revenue and expenditure pattern of the TTD. Bhaskara Rao\textsuperscript{15} reviewed the organizational pattern and management of personnel in religious institutions with special reference to the TTD. Besides, he also examined the trends in income and expenditure of the TTD from 1973-74 to 1982-83. Santhi\textsuperscript{16} made an investigation into the income and expenditure of the TTD during the period from 1985 to 1995. Bhagavan\textsuperscript{17} conducted an enquiry into the finances of educational institutions of the TTD. The period of study is confined to 10 years from 1982 to 1991.

Raja Gopala Raju\textsuperscript{18} made a study on the pilgrimage of Tirumala Tirupati. The temple at Tirumala is visited by tens of thousands of pilgrims everyday. The TTD has not spared any pains to provide all the necessary information with regard to the timings for worship and different types of Arjitha (paid) sevas etc., through a network of enquiry offices and information centres, comfortable accommodation, calm and quiet darshanam of the Lord in well organized queue, distribution of free Prasadams to the pilgrims after darshan and free medical service to the sick among the pilgrims. This publication is an explanatory and illustrative guide to the devotees on pilgrimage for darshan of Lord Venkateswara. While darshan and worship of the Lord is the object of the pilgrimage, on route in and around Tirumala and Tirupati, there are numerous sacred places and shrines which a pilgrim may not like to miss, if he knows
about them. This publication is thus intended to enlighten and enrich his knowledge about Lord Venkateswara and the rituals, sevás, utsavams, festivals, etc., in the temple; the several other famous temples and Tirumalas, etc., in and around Tirupati and Tirumala; and the various religious and charitable activities of the TTD. Every aspect of comfort to pilgrims is carefully taken care of by the TTD administration. Arrangements are made for orderly darshan by providing protected shelters with seats and fans, free unfurnished and furnished accommodation at nominal charges, provision of hygienic food at reasonable prices, provision of protected water, health and sanitary arrangements and free medical aid. TTD information centres have been opened in several towns in Andhra Pradesh and other state capitals and abroad, and more centres are planned in the future as well.

Venkata Rathnamachari examined the relationship between religion and society. Religion, in fact, has never been isolated from other institutions. It has significantly influenced social and cultural aspects of the social system. Gopal examined the administration of Tirumala temple. Narayana Reddy studied the sacred complex of Tirumala, one of the most famous places of Hindu pilgrimage in India. The study adopts a comprehensive approach to emphasize the local, regional and peninsular features of the sacred complex of Tirumala.

Pillai in his book ‘Tour and pilgrimage in India’ examined the foreign exchange earning from tourism. Even countries like Peoples Republic of China, which also known as Bamboo curtain until recently has closed its doors to outside influences and have realized that tourist trade is a potential factor for foreign exchange earnings to boost their economy. Countries like Spain depend to a very considerable extent on foreign exchange earnings from tourism for their annual budget. In India the importance of tourism is realized rather late. He stressed the importance of tour and pilgrimage in earning foreign exchange in India. Ramesh made a study on the ‘Kaliyuga Daivam, Lord Venkateswara-A study’ on Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams and its activities.

The above discussion gives a clear picture of the Lord Venkateswara Temple, religious and facilities and services provided to pilgrims by TTD and significant rch studies conducted on TTD.

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