CHAPTER - II

ECRR & SARASWATHI NILAYAM, KALAJYOTHI

A BRIEF HISTORY
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1. LIBRARY MOVEMENT IN RAYALASEEMA IN ANDHRA PRADESH: A NEW LOOK

Rayalaseema is one of the regions of Andhra Pradesh. It consists of four districts, namely, Anantapur, Chittoor, Cuddapah, and Kurnool. Since the library movement of Andhra Pradesh has its vast history and prominent place in the Indian library movement. It is chosen to highlight all the remarkable and notable library activities in one of the regions of Andhra Pradesh - Rayalaseema so as to offer an expositionss of the facts of the library movement in the region.

The literature pertaining to the library movement in Andhra Pradesh written by different people is concentrated only on the public library movement. But the library movement also includes the development of public libraries, academic libraries, special libraries, and library science education as well. It also depicts the personalities who contributed to the cause of the library movement.
2. PUBLIC LIBRARY MOVEMENT IN RAYALASEEMA

(a) Anantapur District:

The development of library movement in the district is closely associated not only with the historic national struggle in pre-independent India, but also with the series of adult literacy campaigns organised from time to time. The earliest of the reading rooms in the district was the one established at Anantapur, in 1883. This was followed by a newspaper club started at Penukonda in 1884. The other notable ones are the newspaper club at Kambadur started in 1893 and the Edward Coronation Reading Room at Dharmavaram started in 1910 which are reported to continue even now. The Edward Coronation Reading Room now called ECRR and Saraswathi Nilayam Library. It is the part of Kalajyothi. This library had celebrated its Swarna Jayanti Ustavs in 1977.

From 1912, the Panchayat Boards came forward to start libraries and Reading Rooms in the District. The earliest among them was the one started at Veldurthi in 1912 and in 1913 at Lepakshi, followed by one then in 1915 at Enumuladoddi, another in 1916 at Cholasamudram and another in 1919 at Hindupur etc. Later the District Board started a library at Anantapur in 1928. From the year 1929 onwards, the municipalities in the district came forward to maintain the libraries. The first among them was the Hindupur Municipality which took over the existing public library in 1929 - 30, followed by and in 1938 the Tadipatri Municipality in 1938 which opened a free reading room and public library. Later in 1947 - 48 the Anantapur Municipality
established a couple of Reading room-cum-libraries. In 1961 the Guntakal Municipality started two libraries, one for adults and another for children in 1963.

In pursuance of the Madras Public Library Act 1948, the local library authority, Anantapur, was constituted in 1950 for the purpose of starting the District Central Library. Later the Andhra Pradesh Public Library Act 1960 enabled the public library system to increase its branch libraries, in the district.

In Anantapur district two private aided libraries were still existing and rendering services. They are located in Dharmavaram. They are ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam and Kriyasakti library. But in 1959 Krivasakti Library merged in Zilla Grandhalaya Samsthas.

The other notable libraries in Anantapur District are Aravinda Library and Arya Vysya Library at Tadipatri. Saradha Mitramandali Grandhalayam at Bethapalli in Gooty Taluk, Thimmapuram Sevamandir Grandhalayam in Kalyandurg Taluk. Vijaya Vidyarthi Grandhalayam at Beluguppa, Rayalseema Sahakara Shikshnalaya Grandhalayam in Anantapur Town, Sree Krishnadevaraya Grandhalayam in Hindupur. In addition to these libraries, libraries by private management and also municipal libraries, panchayat libraries are also established. In all the total number of libraries in Anantapur district is nearly one hundred and thirty. These are being running with the financial assistance of the state government.
As in July, 1993, there are 70 branch libraries, including the Municipal libraries taken over from the Dharmavaram and Anantapur municipalities during 1991 and 6 village libraries under the Zilla Grandhayala Samstha of Anantapur. In addition to these, there are 11 Aided libraries maintained by private organisations in the District.

(b) Chittoor District

The library movement in Chittoor district is not much notable from the point of view of public libraries organised by private bodies. However, its history reveals that the first reading room and library was opened as far back as in 1870 in Madanapalli Town under the name of the American Mission Free Reading Room and another in 1880, the American Mission Free Reading Room at Chittoor. Mention could also be made of the Hanuman Library Association in 1917 at Narayanavanam and the Theosophical Society Library at Chittor.

It was with the enactment of the Madras Library Act of 1948, which was later replaced by the Andhra Pradesh Public Library Act 1960, that the library movement received a considerable impetus in the district of Chittor. It is on 14.08.1952 that the District Central Library was started and today it has 66 branch libraries, 2 children's libraries and one women's library, apart from four village and aided libraries. Now this public library system is serving 21,54,559 readers in the district.
(c) Cuddapah District

The library movement of this district is also intimately connected with the national movement and a series of adult literacy campaigns. The establishment and development of libraries and reading rooms, mostly done by private enterprises were strengthened by the efforts of voluntary organisations like the Ramakrishna Samaj (1917), the Theosophical Society of Cuddapah and the Arya Vysya Samaj of Proddatur (1919). It is, however, on record that the first village library called “Saraswathi Village Mandirs” is reported to have been started in 1989 at Pulivendala. In 1923 at Velur a library known as Seetarama Chandrika Library was established and later it is merged with Brown Library at Cuddapah. In this Brown Library now there is nearly a collection of 18,500 books. This library celebrated its Golden Jubilee (75 years) function in 1998. It has its own library building which was started in 29.11.1995. Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University recognised it as a Research oriented library. This library is still providing services to the user.

The District Board started a district library at Cuddapah during 1930 - 31 and during 1939 and 1947 some major panchayats like Nandaluru, Jammalamadugu, Badvel, Pulivendala and Rajampeta started libraries for the public. The Madras Public Library Act 1948, which later became Andhra Pradesh Public Library Act 1960, created a landmark in the growth of the library movement in the district. It resulted in the opening of the District Central Library in 1960. On July 1993 it has 50 branch libraries, 2 children’s libraries, one own’s library. In addition to these, there are 10 village libraries.
(d) Kurnool District

The library movement in Kurnool district is of very recent origin. As per history, the first reading club was opened in as far back as 1864 in Kurnool town under the name of the Book Club of European Gentlemen. During 1883 and 1900 Library cum reading rooms were started at several places like Markapur, Alur, Adoni, Nandyal, Pyapili, Yemmiganur and Kosigi. Also in 1883 a reading room at Nandyal and in 1889 the Venkata Krishna Nilayam Reading Room at Markapur were opened.

As was done in other districts, the library movement received considerable impetus after the enactment of the Madras Public Library Act 1948, which was later replaced by the Andhra Pradesh Public Library Act 1960. The District Central Library was established in 1950. Now it has 58 branch libraries, one children’s library and five village libraries. In addition to these, there are ten Aided libraries and four book deposit centres. There are also seven Municipal Reading Rooms in the District.

3. LIBRARIES IN DHARMAVARAM

Dharmavaram is an internationally recognised place in Anantapur district. It is located in the south west part of Andhra Pradesh. Dharmavaram town was at first started by Kriyasakti Odayar. Prasanthi Nilayam (Puttaparti), the above of Bhagavan Satya Sai Baba is very close to Dharmavaram. It is a good manufacturing centre for silk sarees. The silk sarees of Dharmavaram are well known everywhere in India. It is famous as traditional centre for education. It is recognised not only famous for silk industry but
also for poets, freedom fighters. Dharmavaram is also noted for the public library movement and the public aided libraries.

In Dharmavaram, there are two private public aided libraries namely Kriyasakti Library and ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam. These two libraries were established before independence.

3 a. Kriyasakti Library

Kriyasakti Library was started and developed mainly by Siripi Anjaneyulu, Bondlapalli Lakshmi Narayana Sastri and Ramanandha Venkatesamaiah, when the Andhra Pradesh Public Library Act (1960) came into force in the state, this library got merged with Zilla Grandhalaya Samsthas. Now this is functioning as Grade I library and rendering services to the Dharmavaram people.

3 b. ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam

The ECRR and the Saraswathi Nilayam are two separate reading rooms. The ECRR is a Reading Room which is located at Dharmaram peta whereas, the Saraswathi Nilayam located at Kota in Dharmavaram in a small library.

3 b (i) Saraswathi Nilayam

In Dharmavaram Kota, two well educated families started a small library which is called Saraswathi Nilayam. This library was started in 1893 mainly by Y. Hanumantha
Rao. T. Rama Rao and some other philanthropists of Dharmavaram. This library was started at first for the purpose of newspaper reading in the west time. Later it also provided space for discussing matters related to freedom movement. So this library in a way, promoted the library movement and freedom movement.

In this library, the books on kavyas, prabhandas, puranas, spiritual, religious matters were brought in and made available for reading. N. Kumara Sarma worked as a librarian for a decade for this library. This library had served not only the people of Dharmavaram but also those of the nearby villagers. This library used to issue the books to the members only. Because of the fact that most of the books in the library were old collections and also the service was not uptodate it ssed to be of any use to the people. At the same time, the image of the ECRR was becoming better day by day because it has a hand of officials. So the ECRR grew day by day at that time and the image of Saraswathi Nilayam faded day by day.

3 b (ii) Edward Coronation Reading Room (ECRR)

ECRR means Edward Coronation Reading Room. This reading room was started in Dharmavaram in 1910. In Britain, Queen Victoria ruled for a long period of 63 years. There was no other King or Queen are ruled for such a long period of time in the history of Britain. She died on 22nd January 1901. After her death, King Edward VII (Seventh Edward) came into the rule at the age of 62 years. He ruled from the period 1901 to 1910. During this period he ruled very well. The people praised to that emperor as he was a good foreign and external relations. He was a great emperor and an effective leader. He ruled his state by maintaining peace. At the time so many
schools, libraries, reading rooms etc. were started in his name in many places in India. Likewise at that time, the Edward Coronation Reading Room (ECRR) was started at Dharmavaram in Anantapur district.

Edward Coronation Reading Room was started in 1910 by E.N. Venkata Perumalla Naidu, the then Tahsildar of Dharmavaram. He started this library at first for the sake of officials. E.N. Venkata Perumala Naidu was a member of Divyagnana Samajam. At first in this reading room he conducted some Divyagnana meetings, discussions on philosophy. At first, the library brought only the news papers i.e., The Hindu, Mail news papers. At first this reading room served for only officers. Some local members who were officers joined as members. In addition to this library, the members started Tennis Court, Carroms, Chess, Tennicoit to play games in this ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam premises. It has its own building provided with separate almirahs for keeping books and good furniture facilities for its readers.

3 b (iii) Growth of ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam

Edward Coronation Reading Room developed gradually and expanded its service. But Saraswathi library could not provide good services to its members because of the fading interests of its representatives. Because of the management problems it could not provide services to all the readers at a time. It was facing financial problems. Then some of the important persons of Dharmavaram decided to club these two libraries and start a new library to provide good services to the people of Dharmavaram. These two libraries were clubbed together 1926 and named as the ECRR and Saraswathi Nilayam. This library was registered in the name “ECRR and Saraswathi Nilayam”. In
Anantapur district, this was the first registered library. As it expanded its services, the number of readers also gradually increased. This library soon won good name and recognition through providing good services in Andhra Pradesh. This library provides its services to all types of users in Dharmavaram. A tennis court which was started later and developed limited in the premises of the library is meant for its members only. This tennis court is well known in Andhra Pradesh. At first this tennis court was started for the special use of the European collectors. Now all members are entitled to play here. This tennis court has been recognised by the All India Lawn Tennis Association. In addition to this tennis court, the library and kala Jyothi are also providing facilities to the Dharmavaram people for playing games like caroms, chess, tennicoit.

4. IMPORTANCE OF THE ECCR & SARASWATHI NILAYAM

At first only some news papers i.e., The Hindu, Mail papers were purchased by this library. Now it has a collection of nearly 10,000 and above books on languages and literature in English, Telugu, Sanskrit, Hindi and Kannada and other books. Most of the books are to do with puranas, Philosophy, and religion. In addition to these, the library has certain collections of poetry, drama, fictions, history, biographies, autobiographies and so on books are available in this library. Now this library is getting nearly 40 daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly magazines. This library helped a lot to the freedom fighters before independence. In this library so many persons got motivated and participated in the freedom movement. This library now stands as a symbol of freedom movement.
5. FINANCE

Andhra Pradesh government provides a grant of Rs. 500/- every year to the ECRR and Saraswathi Nilayam Library. The major part of the income of this library comes from the rent of its Vilasavipani shopping complex.

6. STAFF

In this library, one librarian, one Attender, and four peons are working.

7. ACCELERATED GROWTH AFTER 1950S

During the period between 1910 and 1950 did not get ample recognition in Andhra Pradesh. But after that its fate improved with the coming of some youngsters as the chairmen, and secretaries. This development of the library gained momentum after 1950 due to the dedicated services of some enthusiastic local leaders. The local pleaders (Advocate) Sri. R. Narayana Sastri elected as a Secretary for the ECRR and Saraswathi Nilayam. During his tenure this library developed as much as what it did in all those years in the past. Through his sincere efforts he arranged some meetings with the district and state level leaders and officials to discuss as to how to develop this library.
8. KALAJYOTHI

The ECRR and Saraswathi Nilayam and the Kalajyothi are two separate bodies. Kalajyothi is the inner body of the ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam. The ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam is the library. While Kalajyothi is an open air theatre. These two are called "The ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam and the Kalajyothi". The ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam look after the library. While the Kalajyothi looks after the open air theatre, lawn tennis, chess, and other activities. Thus a part of the work and activities, responsibilities were handed over to Kalajyothi. By the time, some of the interested artists came forward, those who were the members of ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam, thought of to start an open theatre for the purpose of drama artists and to give entertainment to the people Dharmavaram. They agreed among themselves and then the ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam started an open air theatre in its premises by the name Kalajyothi. So that from that time onwards to till today the Kalajyothi became the important part of the ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam. The Kalajyothi was registered as an institution in 1965. So that from that day onwards the library came to be known as the ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam, Kalajyothi.

The Kalajyothi is a wonderful open air theatre in Rayalaseema. No other library has this type of open theatre in its premises. It has a capacity of nearly some thousand people who can see the programmes at a time. It is a modern drama-hall decorated with modern screens, and colourful lights. The Kalajyothi has the following equipment (i.e., Radio, tape recorder, record player, modern orchestra equipments). The Kalajyothi was started for giving entertainment to the people. It has nearly 400 chairs. No other open
air theatre has such facilities in Rayalaseema. The Kalajyothi honoured so many cine artists, dancers, and music artists. No other institution was visited by such a large number of artists, important persons, officials and poets.

9. KALAJYOTHI ACTIVITIES

1. Kalajyothi conducts such programmes as dramas, plays, on the occasion of local and national festivals. It also presents prizes to the artists. It encourages the artists in their field.

2. It also encourages artists outside Dharmavaram town by exhibiting their dramas in Dharmavaram.

3. It conducts every year the ECRR and Saraswathi Nilayam, Kalajyothi Annual Function and also presents annual awards to those serving in different fields.

4. It collects rent from the Vilasavipini shopping complex.

5. It helps to purchase games and sports equipment.

6. It helps to purchase new books for the ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam.

7. It conducts state level Lawn Tennis Games and Chess and other games to encourage sports men by presenting prizes.

8. It works as a mediator among the members and the institution (ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam).

10. KALAJYOTHI - AWARDS

Kalajyothi and the ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam presents Annual awards on the occasion of the Annual day, in the month of February. Three awards are presented
during this function. Mainly these awards are given for those who have contributed to the for 1) Social, political and literary development in the society 2) Those who have worked and served Telugu literature 3) Those who have helped towards the development of the libraries and for the library movement and to those who wrote library literature books. The Kalajyothi started presenting these Annual Awards from the year 1990 - 91. The Kalajyothi Annual function is conducted every year in the month of February and it is celebrated for 3 days. On the first day is conducted the Kalajyothi awards distribution, on the second day is celebrated the “Andhra Nataka Pithamaha” Dharmavaram Ramakrishna Charyula Vardhanthi”. On that day cultural programmes are arranged. On the third day the Tyagaraja Ustavam is celebrated. The Kalajyothi presents three annual awards mainly, they are

1 ) The Kalluru Subba Rao Award  
2 ) “The Sahithi Saraswathi” Siripi Anjaneyulu Award and  
3 ) The Dr. Velaga Venkatappaiah Award. 

1. The Kalluru Subba Rao Award 

This award is presented every year on the occasion of the Annual day of Kalajyothi, the ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam. This award is presented on the first day of its three day function. This award is presented to the persons who have worked in the society for the social, political, economic and literary development. This award is presented in the name of Sri Kalluri Subba Rao who has sacrificed his life for the social, political, economic, and literary development of the society. He was also a freedom fighter.
The following persons were received the awards from 1990 - 91 till uptodate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Velaga Venkatapaiah</td>
<td>1990 - 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Sardesai Tirumala Rao</td>
<td>1991 - 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Y. Rama Subbaiah</td>
<td>1992 - 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Tumati Donnappa</td>
<td>1993 - 94</td>
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<td>Sri. K. Radha Krishnaiah</td>
<td>1994 - 95</td>
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<td>Sri. K. Thippeswamy</td>
<td>1995 - 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. K. Ramakrishnaiah</td>
<td>1996 - 97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Gangappa</td>
<td>1997 - 98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. “The Sahithi Saraswathi” Sirpi Anjaneyulu Award

This award is presented by the Kalajyothi, ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam every year on the first day of the Kalajyothi, ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam Annual Function. This award is presented in memory of Sirpi Anjaneyulu who worked for the development of Telugu literature. He belongs to Dharmavaram Town.

The following persons have received the awards from 1990 - 91 to 1997 - 98.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Sahithi Rathna” Sri Janamaddi Hanumachcha Sastri</td>
<td>1990 - 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Anantha Padmanabha Rao</td>
<td>1992 - 93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Dr. Madhuranthakam Raja Ram 1993 - 94
5. Dr. Chigicherla Krishna Reddy 1994 - 95
6. Dr. T. Rangaswamy 1995 - 96
7. Sri Eluru Yanganna 1996 - 97
8. Dr. P. Chenna Reddy 1997 - 98

3. The Dr. Velaga Venkatappaiah Award

This award is presented by the Kalajyothi, ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam in the Kalajyothi, ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam Annual function. This award instituted in the name of Dr. Velaga Venkatappaiah who has served and worked for the library movement or the development of the libraries. This award is presented every year to the persons who have worked for the library development, the library movement and for the library and information science education.

The following persons have received this award from 1990 - 91 to 1997 - 98.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Hasya Bharathi” Sri Amalladinne Gopinatu</td>
<td>1990 - 91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Parasara” Sri K. Rosaiah</td>
<td>1991 - 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Alla Raghavaiah</td>
<td>1992 - 93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. P. Kamaiah</td>
<td>1993 - 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri. Dondapati Devadas</td>
<td>1994 - 95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri. R. Madhusudhan Reddy</td>
<td>1995 - 96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam completed its 50 years in 1977 and in the same year it celebrated Swarnosthayam function. Then, A. Harinath was the Secretary. Because of his hard work, the income of the Kalajyothi has increased. During this Swarnosthayam he proposed, to establish organisation the “Sangeetha Surabhi” which was established with modern musical instruments in the premises of the organisation and he also started a shopping complex by the name of “Vilasa Vipani”. The monthly income from this shopping complex (Vilasa Vipani) through rents is nearly Rs. 2000/- above. During these celebrations this institution felicitated those people who dedicated their lives to the library moment, development of library science education namely Dr. Velaga Venkatappaiah, Venkata Reddy and other library representatives.

The ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam celebrated the 100 years function in 1992. On this occasion the Kalajyothi, ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam started to celebrate the Annual Day function and every year in the month of February and started to present above three awards.

11. PERSONS ASSOCIATED IN DEVELOPING THE ECRR & SARASWATHI NILAYAM

R. Narayana Sastri: R. Narayana Sastri has worked as a Secretary for Kalajyothi from 1955 - 1972. He was an advocate by profession. In his days, in the ECRR &
Saraswathi Nilayam he built the Kalajyothi open air theatre and Vignana Sudha. He worked hard and contributed a lot to this institution. In his period this institution has grown very well.

**A. Harinath**: A. Harinath also was an advocate. He worked as a Secretary of the Kalajyothi and ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam from 1972 to 1977. In this period he constructed in the ECRR & Saraswathi premises, the “Vilasa Vipani”, the “Ramakrishna Charyula Memoral Hall”, “Two Guest Rooms”, the “Sangeetha Sudha” etc. He also worked without any selfish motives. He was a good worker. He used to read a lot so he brought so many books from different places for the ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam. He constructed Almarahs, brought chairs and other furniture for the library. The following were developed in his period.

**(a) Vilasa Vipani**: To stand on their own legs they must have finance for Kalajyothi. Otherwise it is too difficult to run at the then Secretary A. Harinath thought deeply and constructed a shopping complex in the front (or) to the west of the ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam. can construct which they gave rent on for shops. From this they received a monthly income of nearly Rs. 25,000/- He also constructed a modern green house room by the name “Sangeetha Sudha” by spending Rs. 2,000/- and also a guest room. From this guest house, there was an income of Rs. 1,200/- per month. This income was used to run institution continuously.
(b) Sangeeta Nruthya Kalasala

Dharmavaram is famous for arts. Likewise it is famous for wealthy and generous persons. There was a proposal to start a Sangeetha, Nruthya Kalasala in the premises of ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam and there was also a proposal to appoint three Sangeetha Nataka Lecturers to give training and encouragement to those who are interested in learning Sangeetham. In memory of Dharmaravam Ramakrishnamacharyulu, they started a Sangeetha Nataka Kalasa.

12. KALAJYOTHI AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS

This library stands to encourage arts and develop culture in the society. This has relation mainly with 'Dharmavaram Samkruthika Mandali'. Yearly it celebrates Ramostavalu, Kathakalashepalu, Purana Sravanalu. Likewise it encourages the Dharmavaram Athletic Association which was at Dharmavaram. Like this, this institution had relationships with other institutions, organizations.

Before Kalajyothi, all the existing activities were looked after by the ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam. But then there was a problem. The activities increased. So that there was a need for the Kalajyothi to look after some activities of the ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam. This institution had a President, a Secretary, and other executive members.
There was no other library in Andhra Pradesh like this library. This library was called as **Trinity** of the institution i.e., for education and reading. It had the ECRR & Saraswathi Nilayam library, for entertainment. It has the Kalajyothi open air theatre and to develop people physically, mentally, it has a play ground. It is usually said that this library is the confluence of a library, a theatre, and a play ground and is rightly called as a “Triveni Sanghamam.”