CHAPTER THREE

THE MATH

This chapter deals with the historical antecedents, organizational features of the Moorusavira Math in contemporary times, Pooja Seva Samiti, and certain related matters. Before doing so it is appropriate to understand the connotation of the term, 'math', in its institutional as well as in its organizational settings. This will be followed by a brief reference to Virasaiva Maths in general to serve as a backdrop for the main discussion on the organization and activities of the Moorusavira Math.

The Math: Meaning and Nature

The term 'math' occurs in different contexts in the religious texts and other religious writings pertaining to diverse religions and sects having their roots in the Indian soil. It is almost common knowledge that asceticism constitutes an important element in the religious tradition of this country. The math is often identified as a place which fosters ascetic life. This is brought out in the meaning
suggested by Macdonell¹ who states that the math is "the solitary hut of an ascetic or a student, a monastic school or college. The Sanskrit-English Dictionary² suggests a meaning similar to the one given by MacDonell. The Dictionary mentions that the term 'math' means "the hut of an ascetic or a small cell or room, also a monastery and convent; seminary, college or place of learning; and temple." In addition to being the hut of an ascetic and a place of learning, the math is viewed as "... a free, feeding house for the poor and the infirm, and a resort of religious men as well as of mendicants."³

The views expressed by Wilson regarding religious organization seem to be relevant to consider the organizational character of the math. Wilson states that "the religious organization is the complex of institutionalised roles and procedures which

³. Epigraphia Carnatica VII, Sk. 102.
regulate the relations of man with the supernatural order, however such an order may be conceived. It may involve the regulation of religious practice and the promulgation of true and suppression of false doctrine; procedures for the recruitment of religious specialists, the structure of authority among them the basis, extent and nature of their authority over the laity and its territorial and temporal conditions; the control of religious places, periods, premises, and equipment and such property and temporalities as accrue in the establishment of this control."

Virasaivism is a Saivite religious sect. Pasupatha and Kalamukhas were the prominent Saivite sects existing much before the advent of Basava in Karnataka. The maths established by these sects received recognition by the laity and they became centres of socio-cultural activities. Maths were attached to temples and, in course of time, maths became the abodes of sanyasis. These sanyasis (Swamijis or Acharyas) with their virtuous life and

learning commanded respect in society. They occupied a revered place in society. There was close connection between all the Saivite maths, and particularly between Lakulisa and Kalamukha maths on the one hand, and the Virasaiva maths, on the other. These maths were the centres of educational and spiritual activities. They also provided refuge and support to the wandering mendicants and the needy members of the laity whenever they needed such refuge.

Virasaiva Maths:

Coming to a generalized account of Virasaiva maths, no authentic records exist as to the antiquity of Virasaiva maths. However, a number of scholars hold the view that the present Virasaiva maths could be traced back to the maths established by the Panchacharyas during the period of the Agamas. It is stated that in Swayambuvagama there is a reference to the Panchacharya Peethas. Other scholars hold the view that the Virasaiva maths might have evolved from

the Sunyasimhasana, * or the Anubhava Mantapa, which was founded in the 12th century by Basava. A reference has already been made to this institution in the preceding chapter.

In the present organization of the Virasaiva maths, a distinction is made between (1) the Pattada, or the Guru maths, and (2) the Virakta maths. The former trace their origin to any one of the five Panchacharya Peethas, while the latter trace their origin to the Anubhava Mantapa. The swams of both the types of maths remain celibate. However, there are swams of some Pattada maths who are married. In the contemporary period, the trend towards remaining celibate among the swams of Pattada maths is strong.

The maths are also divided into Putravarga maths and Sishyavarga maths. The distinction between these two types is drawn mainly on the basis of choosing the successor to the office of the swami fallen vacant. A close relative of the swami who had been in office is chosen as the successor in a

* It literally means the "Throne of the Void."
Putravarga math, while in the Sishyavarga math, the devotees have a say in the choice of the successor, quite often the choice of the devotees becoming decisive.

The Virakta math is a Sishyavarga math as the successor to the highest office in a Virakta math is invariably chosen by the devotees in consultation with the swami. Since, under normal circumstances, the highest office of a math falls vacant only on the death of a swami, the choice of a successor, especially in the case of Sisyavarga maths, should be decided upon even during the life-time of the Swami-in-office. Traditionally, the major concern of the Pattada maths is 'achara,' the way in which the conduct of the devotees cohere in terms of the prescribed norms; and, the major concern of the Virakta maths is 'Vicara,' the imparting of religious knowledge. It must be noted, however, that these two functions of the maths are not mutually exclusive, but are complementary.

**Historical Antecedents of the Math:**

There are divergent views held regarding the antiquity of the Math. One view traces back the
origin of the Math to the 12th century, when a band of three thousand saranas, or, Virasaiva mendicants, are stated to have fled from Kalyan* in order to avoid religious persecution, and took shelter in Hubli, leading to the establishment of math there. Another view traces its origin to the 18th century, when a munificent citizen of Hubli, named Basappa Setti, is said to have built a monastery in the town, and invited a swami known as Moorusavira Swami, to head the monastery. In this connection a lengthy account of the possible circumstances under which this Math was established is given in the Bombay Gazetteer which is cited here in full:

The local story about the origin of the monastery is that Basav's adherents, numbering twenty-one thousand men, were divided into three bodies. The first body included three thousand ascetics or Viraktas, the second six thousand

* Kalyan is a town in Bidar district of Karnataka. It was the capital city of Bijjala, the Kalachuri King during the 12th century. Sri Basaveshwar was Prime Minister under him. The Saranas ran away hither and thither when the religious persecution took place in Kalyan.
ayyas or jangams, that is ordinary priests, and the third twelve thousand laymen. Each body had a head officer of its own class. The head officer of the first or virakta body was a very holy ascetic who was styled Murusavirad Appanavaru or Father of the Three Thousand. Several disciples of the original head of the three thousand ascetics continued his religious title. One of these Murusavirad ascetics lived with the Chief Lingayat Priest Murgi Svami at Chitaldurg in Mysore. They two quarreled and Murusavirad Svami left Chitaldurg and came to New Hubballi about 1727 soon after the fort was built by Basappa Setti. Basappa entertained the Svami with great respect, built a monastery for him close to his house near the site of the Bhuspete reservoir, and called it the Hire Math or High Monastery. The Svami whose name was Gurusiddha Svami, held spiritual control over all Lingayata chief priests in the Bombay Karnataka. His successor was called Gangadhar Svami and these two are the only names which succeeding heads of this monastery have borne.

About 1820 Gurusiddappa Svami, the chief Murusavirad priest at Hubballi, built by public subscription the present large
Murusavirad monastery; and ever since he and his successors have lived there.  

A collection of articles published in Saka 1838 entitled Niranjana Vamsha Ratnakara mentions about the efforts of Basappa Setti to instal a Swami in the math built by him in New Hubli in 1727. According to this work, Gurusidda Swami after leaving Chitradurga did not come direct to the math at New Hubballi, but went first to the math of Jade in Shimoga district. In this math, Kempina Siddabasavaswami was the chief Priest, and Gurusidda Swami took shelter in this math under the protection provided by Siddabasava Swami. It is stated that Basappa Setti approached Siddabasava Swami and solicited the services of a priest whom he could instal in the math at New Hubballi. Siddabasava Swami agreed to send Gurusidda Swami who then moved on to the new math.  

Thus, the account given in the Bombay Gazetteer and the account given in the above work are


7. The author is unknown. In Saddharma Deepike, Sanchike 38, Sri Channamallikarjuna, Haveri, Saka 1858, pp. 87-88.
in agreement that the person who was installed as the High Priest at the Math in Hubli was a disciple of the Murusavirad Appanavar, the head officer of the band of three thousand viraktas who left Kalyan in the 12th century. The only point of disagreement between these two sources is about the way in which Gurusiddha Swami reached Hubli on leaving the Math at Chitaldrug after a dispute with the Chief Priest there. The Bombay Gazetteer mentions that Gurusiddha Swami reached Hubli from Chitaldrug, while the other work mentions that he was induced to come to Hubli from the Math at Jade where he had taken refuge.

However, it must be noted that both the works do not provide any information about the actual destination of the band of three thousand ascetics who left Kalyan in the 12th century. In this connection, it may be pointed out that these three thousand ascetics did not continue to stay together, but spread out to different parts of the country. They are believed to have established maths in towns and villages in north Karnataka, and a math might have been established at Hubli also. This is only a popular belief and there are no historical evidences to show that they were the
founders of the maths existing today in different parts of the region. According to this belief, the origin of the existing Math at Hubli would go back to this period.

Even today, Gurusidda Swami is identified as the founder, or kartru, and a Gadge* in his name exists in the premises of the Math today.

In the beginning, as stated earlier, there was only one chief Virakta math at Kalyan to which all the Virakta maths owed their allegiance. Gradually differences of opinion arose regarding the succession to the Pontificate at Chitradurga. As a result of misunderstanding with Murugha Math regarding succession, it is stated in Harijana Vamsa Ratnakara, that 'Samayas' were born. Samaya means a period. The Virakta maths got themselves alienated from one another progressively and realigned themselves into Samaya groups each Samaya group owing allegiance to a math headed by a noted religious leader. There are five Samayas in all. They are — 1) Kumara Samaya,

* A tomb, which is worshipped.
2) Kempina Samaya, 3) Chilaka Samaya, 4) Sampadane Samaya and 5) Murugha Samaya. Murugha Samaya is traced back to Sunya Simhasana, the seat occupied by Allam Prabhu in the 12th century. Basavanal states that Hubli is the place where Kumara Samaya was established. Moorusavira Math belongs to Kumara Samaya and claims that all the maths belonging to Kumara Samaya are its branch maths. Sadasivaiah opines that there appears to be no historical evidences in regard to the Samayas.

The Physical Setting of the Math:

The Moorusavira Math is situated in the heart of Hubli city on an area of six acres of land. It is at a distance of about three hundred yards from the Pune-Bangalore National Highway that passes through the city, and one and a half kilometers from Hubli railway station. The tower-clock of the Math can be seen from a long distance. As one goes from the eastern direction towards the Math, a newly-built


imposing six storyed main gate of the Math invites the attention of the passers-by. Soon after one enters the gate, one finds one of the Math's guest houses on the left side, and newly built and spacious halls of Dharmasala on both the sides. As one steps further about fifty yards one approaches another "inside" gate. The primary school is located on the left side of this gate. There at a distance of another fifty yards on the left, stands the Holy Math, with its awe-inspiring court-yard.

The Gaddige (shrine or tomb), the building of Dharma Pracharak Mandal, wherein Sanskrit College, Keertana College, Vaidika Pathasala, Paramjyoti Press are located on the right side of the Math, and on the left, in the interior are situated the Kalyana Mantap, the Boarding Home, another guest houses, a drinking water-well and bath-cum-pooja room, flour-mill, and just in front of the Dharma Pracharak Mandala and on the left side of the Math, the Akki Hostel, the Math's offices and the Granthalaya (Library). The old big chariot of the Math is permanently stationed here in between the Math's offices and the Akki Hostel. It has become almost a museum piece as it has not been
used to take the God in procession, and it attracts the visiting devotees of the Math, specially the art lovers among them, since it has rich wood-carvings. Sri Kumareshwar Garden, covering an area of about three-fourths of an acre is behind the Akki Hostel. Generally the Jagadguru takes a stroll in the evenings here. The Jagadguru Gurusiddeshwar General Hostel, the Jagadguru Gangadhar Boys' High School (where the women's college is temporarily housed on the first floor of the school building) and the Mooresavira Math Girls' High School are situated a little away from the Math. There is a vast play-ground in front of the Boys' High School.

The main building of the Math is of a two-storeyed imposing structure. With its tall solid wooden pillars in the front, it has an attractive and imposing front elevation. The walls and pillars are covered with portraits of Virasaiva saints and leaders, and art works. As one enters the main building of the Math, one finds a spacious meeting hall where the Swamiji gives 'darshan' to the devotees. In the side wings of the meeting hall there are store rooms; and adjacent to the meeting hall, kitchen, a spacious dining hall and
a Puja room are situated. On the first floor there is a Shivanubhava Hall and the rooms where the Sadhakas are housed. The Jagadguru has his living quarters on the second floor of the Math. Goshala (dairy) is in the rear of the Math.

Organization of the Math:

The Math in Hubli has numerous branches located in different parts of Karnataka and the neighbouring states of Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu and Maharashtra. Its influence on the lives and activities of the people is felt by persons belonging to various communities and castes, though its influence is more pronounced in respect of those who are adherents of the Virasaiva sect.

The Math is rendering services both in the religious as well as secular fields by establishing and maintaining various agencies, the activities of which may broadly be classified under various service heads such as religious, educational, health, housing, and community services. Twenty institutions are directly controlled and managed by the Math. It has also assisted several institutions by donating sums of money, or by
granting lands, or by providing the necessary buildings. The organizational pattern of the institutions directly run by the Math is analysed in terms of the bases of organization, personnel management, functionaries and their functions, recruitment of personnel, and staff pattern. For the administration of these institutions, trusts are formed.

The registered bodies given in Table 1 depict the various institutions run and managed by the Jagadguru through: (1) Trusts, (2) the Vidyavardhak Sangh (Association for the Development of Education), and (3) the Cooperative Hospitals Society. There are six trusts, the Math itself being a trust. This was first registered in 1954 as a Public Religious and Charitable Trust under the Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950. The Jagadguru is the sole trustee of the Math. He has formed committees to advise and assist him in the administration of the Math. Under his trusteeship, the Math is making rapid strides in the pursuit of its objectives and is providing welfare services in various fields.

The Jagadguru as the sole trustee of the Math administers directly the Sanskrit Pathashala, the Boys' High School, the Girls' High School, the Library, the Kalyan Mantap and the Guest Houses.
### Table 1: Registered Bodies of the Math

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. The Trusts</th>
<th>II. Vidya</th>
<th>III. Vardh-</th>
<th>Cooperation</th>
<th>Active Society</th>
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<tr>
<td>1) Sri Jagad-</td>
<td>2) Sri J.G.</td>
<td>3) 'Hostels'</td>
<td>4) Sri</td>
<td>5) Sri</td>
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<td>guru</td>
<td>Dharma</td>
<td>Pracharak</td>
<td>Mandal,</td>
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<td>Moorasevi-</td>
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<td>c. Girls' High School</td>
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<td>Paranjyoti</td>
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<td>School</td>
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<td>d. Library</td>
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<td>e. Kalyan Mantap.</td>
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<td>d. Dharmashala</td>
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<td>e. Guest Houses.</td>
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</table>

(Sri Jagadguru, Hubli, Karnataka)
In order to keep pace with the changing times and to render services more effectively, the Jagadguru decided to have specific trusts formed. Accordingly, besides the Main Trust, five more specific trusts were registered as Public Trusts in 1975 and 1976 under the Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950. They are as under:

1. Sri Jagadguru Gangadharma Pracharak Mandal, Moorusaviramath, Hubli.

2. Sri Lingaraj Free Boarding. 
Sri Jagadguru Gurusiddeshwar Vidyarthi Nilaya, and Ulavappa Akki Vidyarthi Nilaya, Hubli.


4. Sri Jagadguru Gurusiddeshwara Keertana Mahavidyalaya, Moorusaviramath, Hubli, and


The first four trusts were registered on the 7th January, 1975 before the Assistant Charity Commissioner,
Belgaum, with Sri Jagadguru Moorusaviramath Pattadhikari as the sole trustee. The last trust was registered on the 5th May 1976 with Sri Swamiji as the President of the Executive Committee. The objectives of the trusts and other details are given in Table 2.

The General Body meetings of the trusts were held separately in 1976. At these meetings, the Constitution and Bye-laws were adopted with certain changes as desired by the members of the General Body. Keeping in view the changes taking place in society and in the interest and welfare of the community, the General Body resolved to have the Managing Committees (as shown in the Table No. 2) replacing the Sole Trustee. However, Sri Jagadguru Gangadhar Mahaswamiji, who was the Sole Trustee, continues to be the permanent President of the Managing Committees of all trusts.

The main trust as well as the five specific trusts mentioned above are actively functioning in the pursuit of their respective objectives with the income derived from the properties held by each of these trusts. In fact, a large section of devotees in the whole of
Karnataka, and even outside the State, is being served and benefited by the ever-increasing activities of the Math under the untiring efforts, able guidance, and leadership of Jagadguru.

Table 2: **Particulars of Trusts including the Main Trust of Moorusavira Math.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Name of the Trust</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>No. of Term of Office</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Sri Jagadguru Moorusavira Math, Hubli</td>
<td>1. Propagation of Virasaiva religion 2. Promotion of Education 3. While promoting education, particularly striving for the upliftment of Virasaivas through religious preaching, Pravachanas, Keertans, and by running Pathashalas (Sanskrit) and Dascha and supervising the religious conduct of Virasaivas.</td>
<td>Jagadguru is time. the Sole Trustee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Sri Jagadguru 1. Religious propagation and undertaking of other religious activities.

2. Sri Jagadguru 1. Religious propagation and undertaking of other religious activities.


2. Provisioning training to religious preachers.

3. Training Shivayogi Sadhakas.
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<tr>
<td>5. Sri Jagadguru Gurusiddheswara Keerthana Mahavidyalaya, Moorusavira Math, Hubli.</td>
<td>1. Training persons Five years for rendering keertanas blended with music and literature.</td>
<td>2. Publishing books related to Keertanas.</td>
<td>3. Providing education, scholarship, food and shelter to the poor boys &amp; girls who come to learn Keertanas.</td>
<td>4. Teaching the art of making speeches, pravaohana and Purana.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 6. Karthru Sri Jagadguru Gurusiddheswar Pooja Seva Samiti, Moorusavira Math, Hubli. | 1. To create and to Fifteen years inculcate the principles of religious & spiritual life; | 2. To develop Aoara and Vichara of Virasalvism among the common people; | 3. To see that the Pooja of the Gaddige is performed every day round the year. |   |
Under the second trust, Sri J.G. Dharma Pracharak Mandal, the activities undertaken are, firstly, publication of books, booklets relating to the cultural extension lecture camps, and the publication of the monthly magazine, 'Taranjoti'. Secondly, the maintenance of Dharmashalas and Guest Houses.

The third Trust, Sri Lingaraj Free Boarding, Sri J.G. Vidyarthi Nilaya and Akki Ulavappa Vidyarthi Nilaya, as the name suggests, consists of a boarding home and two hostels for men. The fourth trust, Sri Kumareshwar Shivayogi Sangha trains the Sadhakas* to be swamies of maths, i.e., the heads of religious institutions. The fifth trust, Sri J.G. Keertana Mahavidyalaya, trains the pupils, including the Sadhakas, in Keertans. After training, one can find useful employment and lead an independent life. The sixth and the last trust, Sri J.G. Pooja Seva Samiti, is mainly meant to extend spiritual solace to the people at large.

Besides the six trusts mentioned above, an association known as Vidyavardhak Sangha, is established for the purpose of running the Women's College and the

* Priests under training.
Women's Hostel. Further, J.G. Cooperative Hospital and the sanitorium at Ghataprabha, are run by a cooperative society. Sri Jagadguru Gangadharaswamy is the President of the Managing Committees of all these bodies.

The Math has also invested in shares in ginning and pressing factories at Hubli and Bijapur. This helps the Math to provide opportunities to the needy people to work in the factories. Also, out of the income derived from these investments, certain portion is earmarked for providing financial assistance to poor students.*

Besides directly running these institutions, it has been possible for the Math to extend help to various educational institutions, sanitoria, health centres, and free-boarding homes for students and scholars (vide Appendix - A).

The Staff:

Recruitment of teaching staff for the Boys' and Girls' High Schools and the college is made through

* This financial assistance is provided through the Gangadharaswamy Lingayat Education Fund.
advertisement in the newspapers, scrutinising applications, interviewing candidates and selecting the eligible persons as per the qualifications prescribed by the State. The Managing Committee takes an interview of the candidates, and the list of the selected candidates is sent to the Jagadguru for his approval. The office and the menial staff of these educational institutions are normally selected by the Jagadguru and are formally approved by the Managing Committee. However, with regard to the selection of the office and menial staff of the Sanskrit Pathashala, printing press, the boarding home and the hostels, it is the Jagadguru who directly recruits through personal interview of the candidates. The selection of the staff for the hospitals is done by the Managing Committee of the Hospital, subject to the approval of the Jagadguru. The staff required for the Pooja Seva Samiti also is appointed with the final approval of the Jagadguru. Thus, in the selection of the staff to the various institutions of the Math, the final approval of the Jagadguru is necessary.

There are forty-seven staff members coming under the office of the Math and controlled by the Jagadguru directly. They include office staff (7),
boarding home staff (13), Jagadguru's personal staff (4), press staff (5), staff of the Pooja Seva Samiti (7), mahuts (2), Book Seller (1), Mali (1), watchmen (4), cattle attender (1), attender (1), and scavenger (1).

The office staff of the Math deals with almost all the matters pertaining of the trusts and the institutions run by them, excepting the High Schools, which have their own independent offices to look after their affairs. Since all the trusts are the offshoots of the Math, there is, in fact, no distinction made so far as the working of the Math office is concerned. Among themselves, the trusts have a close relationship, one or two members of the Managing Committee of one trust finding place in another trust also.

It should be pointed out here that there are certain conflicting situations because of the existence of gap between the attitudes of the organisers and of the employees, and between the expectations of the organisers and the actual work performance of the staff.
As Maths are religious as well as charitable institutions, the institutions such as boarding homes, hostels, and the Pooja Seva Samiti run by them will come under this category. The staff directly recruited by the Jagadguru is required to work for the Math with devotion. Clear-cut statement of terms and conditions of service is not only unnecessary but also it creates a number of obstacles in the way of successful implementation of charitable activities. The Swamiji opines that work as a form of service should have a socio-religious base, and the people who come for jobs should consider work in this light, and not the remuneration and other facilities that they might get. However, in case the Swamiji is pleased with honest and devoted work of an employee of the Math, he would bless him with cash or with things like clothes and household vessels. There were instances, when the Swamiji had blessed highly devoted workers with houses to live in, land for cultivation to support their families.

However, it may not be possible for every staff member working in the Math to work in the spirit with which the Jagadguru wants them to work. Some of the staff members working in the Math do not seem to be
quite satisfied with the working conditions in the Math in terms of salary, leave, promotion and other benefits. It should be mentioned here that most of the staff have been provided with free food and accommodation by the Math. The salary paid by the Math is said to be too meagre. This perhaps has resulted in frequent employee turnover.

**Puja Seva Samiti**

Kartru Sri Jagadguru Gurusiddeshwara Puja Seva Samiti is an institution established in 1976 by Sri Jagadguru Gangadharaswamy. The stated objectives of the institution are to inculcating the spiritual and religious principles in the minds of the people and to make permanent arrangements of Puja, Abhisheka, etc., in the name of different devotees (Bhaktas) every day, covering the whole year. Thus, worship of the Gaddige all the year round without interruption is assured.

In order to become a member of the Puja Samiti, a desirous devotee has to pay Rs. 1,000/- . Thus the Samiti has collected the membership subscriptions from 365 people. The amount of Rs. 3,65,000/- thus collected has become the Trust Fund which is deposited in a bank as fixed deposit. Out of the interest accruing on this deposit,
the expenses towards the Puja of the Gaddige and the arrangements for Prasāda are met. On the occasion of such daily Puja, the devotee and the members of his family receive Prasāda. Besides, all the Sadhakas of Sri Kumareshwara Shivayogi Sangha are fed. As there are 365 members in the Samiti each member gets his turn of Puja only one day in a year. In case the membership exceeded the required number, it was learnt that more than one Puja or Abhisheka would be arranged on each day. Each member is informed regarding his "Puja Day" for the year formally by sending a letter. The date allotted to a devotee is not changeable since it is fixed for the whole year and for years to come. The clerk appointed by the Samiti would remind the member concerned regarding his "Puja Day", a week before so as to enable the latter to attend the Puja performance.

The members attend the Puja on scheduled dates and the Puja of Gaddige continues without interruption on a grand scale every day in the name of the particular persons as envisaged in the stated objectives of the Puja Seva Samiti.

Having considered the religious and ritualistic aspect of the objectives of the Samiti, a treatment of
the "latent objectives" of it would seem appropriate here for our purpose.

Firstly, the Jagadguru, at a meeting of the devotees put forth the idea of arrangement of Puja to the Gaddige in the form explained above, and he added that he was only giving an expression of the felt-desire and urges of the Bhaktas, who wanted this kind of opportunity to be created for them. No sooner did he say this a large number of devotees volunteered to enroll themselves as members of the Samiti. People belonging to different religions, castes and communities coming from nearby and far off places are the devotees of the Gaddige and the Math. The Jagadguru got them together formally by constituting the Samiti. Unintended though it was, the 'Samiti' provided a common forum for persons of different walks of life. The Math provides two occasions in a year for all the Puja Samiti members to meet together, that is, on the occasion of the Annual General Body Meeting and on the 'Puja Day' of Sri Jagadguru when all the Samiti members are invited for Prasāda.

At the General Body Meeting held last year, which the researcher attended as an invitee, one of the
Items discussed was the need to have a separate bath room and a Puja room for the members of the Samiti in the Math. After a good deal of discussion it was decided by the members that they should have one bath room constructed adjacent to the Kalyan Mantap. The Jagadguru expressed his inability to construct the room out of the funds of the Math, since the Math had faced financial difficulties in completing the construction of Women's College building which was in progress. However, he said he was ready to get it constructed if some members came forward to donate the necessary funds for the purpose. A lady member, quietly got up and said in all humility that she would meet the expenses of the bath room. She wanted to know the estimated cost of the building. A knowledgeable member stated that it might cost Rs. 6,000/- . She, thereupon, agreed to donate the amount in two equal instalments. It was accepted by all and the Jagadguru blessed her with a coconut and flowers. A bath room attached with a small Puja room is now built. This is an instance to show how the method of community organization could help mobilize the available resources to meet the common needs of the members, and realize the welfare objectives.
Most of the members who attend the Puja Day celebrations are important leaders of the community coming from different walks of life. The 'Puja Day' of the Jagadguru provides an occasion for them to come together and meet at a luncheon (Prasada). This occasion is made use of by the Jagadguru to put forth his schemes of development of the Math as well as certain difficulties he might be facing in the discharge of his normal duties, particularly the institution-building activities. Besides, the assembled members exchange their views and share their experiences on that occasion. Thus, the Math becomes a Community Centre.

Another long range objective is that the Jagadguru has made it possible for the present generation to keep regular contact with the Math through the Puja Seva Samiti. In case any member of the Samiti dies, then a senior member of the family would continue to be a member of the Samiti as per the byelaws of the Samiti. The Samiti, as an integral part of the Math, acts as the liaison between the Math and the people. On the occasion of the 'Puja Day' of a member, as laid down in the rules, the member can invite about 20 persons, consisting the members of
his family and friends for the Puja and Prasada. The Samiti, thus provides an occasion, at least, once in a year for the close relatives and friends to come together in the name of Puja and Prasada, and develop in them a sense of belonging to a single fellowship.

Besides, it could be said that the particular member is content with the feeling that at least once in a year he could feed some of his own kinsmen and also others connected with the Math and to that extent he has participated in community service. On the other hand, the Math is benefited, among many other things, monetarily. It saves expenditure, for instance, on feeding Sadhakas and the guest-­visitors of the Math, since the same is borne by the members of the Samiti.

The Puja Seva Samiti is managed by a fifteen-member Managing Committee of which Sri Jagadguru Gangadharaswamy is the President. The Managing Committee has appointed the following staff to carry on the activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vaidikas</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pujari</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Helper to cook</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Clerk</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Accountant (part-time)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Hon. Supervisor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The salary of the staff is paid out of the interest amount of the trust fund. An honorary supervisor looks after the stores where food articles are kept, and issues the daily ration and checks up the accounts maintained by the accountant. Excepting the accountant, who is a part-timer, all the members of the staff are full-time workers.

The analysis of the working of the Puja Seva Samiti in terms of Community Organisation Method would be incomplete without giving at least a brief description of the task assigned to the Pujari. Routine performance of the Puja of Gaddige is the main duty of the Pujari. But he has to maintain the ever-burning sacred oil lamp known as Nandadeepa. It is customary to burn Nandadeepa in front of the Gaddiges* in general, and the Kartru

* There are several Gaddiges in the Math of several of the past Swamijis. However, the Gaddige of Sri Jagadguru Gurusiddeshwar is the principal seat of daily puja.
Gaddige of Sri Jagadguru Gurusiddeshwar, in particular. The Nandadeepa is to burn all the twenty-four hours of the day. Besides, oil lamps are to be lighted in front of other Gaddiges in the Math. It is estimated that on an average 5 kilograms of oil are required to keep all the lamps burning round the clock. It is in the tradition of the Math that Bhaktas donate oil to light the Nandadeepa. Whatever oil donated by single individuals is found not sufficient to keep Nandadeepa burning all the twenty-four hours, some merchants (the devotees of the Math) are ready to contribute the needed oil. But somebody should go and fetch it from them. The resources are available; only they are to be properly pooled together. Hence an arrangement is made whereby the Pujari collects the oil from the merchants.

The Pujari visits the bazaar once a week and collects about 5 kilograms of oil (worth about ₹50/-) from the oil-pressers. He collects it from more than two scores of people in different measures from each, for, some would donate about 50 grams, some about 100 grams, yet some others 200 grams, and so on. Many a time he lifts a measure of oil from some known oil vendors and it is usually not objected to. Just
like raising Pasagi from vegetable vendors, he collects oil from the oil merchants. Those who donate oil thus are mainly ganigas (the traditional oil-pressers and merchants), a sub-caste among the Lingayats. However, other Lingayats such as the Jangamas, Panchamasalis and Shiva Simpigas, and other Hindu Castes such as Marathas and Palegars also donate their mite to the oil-pool.

Thus the community people contribute sufficient oil voluntarily to meet the daily needs of the Math. The Puja Seva Samiti's role in mobilizing these resources helps in involving the immediate community in welfare activity.

Fairs and Festivals: An Aspect:

The cultural programmes are conducted in the Math round the year on important occasions like the observation of fairs, festivals and Jayantis (celebration of birth days of saints). Some of the fairs and festivals are calendrical and some others are non-calendrical or non-cyclic. The important calendrical activities are: the observation of the Basava Jayanti, Ganesh Chaturthi, Vijaya Dashami, Hanagal Kumaraśwami Jayanti, Gurusiddhaśwami Jayanti and the annual fair
of the Math. Apart from the religious, socio-psychological and economic functions, the fairs and festivals provide opportunities for the people to participate in the cultural activities.

The annual fair of the Math is celebrated on the last Monday of Shravana month. The fair attracts not only the devotees but also the folk cultural troupes from far and near. It is customary on the part of a few villages to organize Bhajan Mela, Datti Mela, Dollian Mela, Ghoudiki Mela and Sanadi Mela* for the occasion and to attend the fair every year. The following were the troupes that participated during the year 1977.

1. Bhajan Mandal

   (i) A Bhajana Mandal known as Sri Maruteshwar Bhajan Mandal came from a village Shirabadgi, about 13 K.M. away from Hubli. The troupe consisted of 40 members who belonged to Lingayat, Kuruba and Valmiki castes. The speciality of this troupe was that the Bhajan singers also danced to its tune as they sang it. It attracted a large audience.

* These are different types of folk dance-cum-music styles developed and practised in the region.
(ii) A Kuridikeri Bhajan Mandal came from the village Kuridikeri which is about 16 K.M. away from Hubli. This troupe consisted of 20 members belonging to Lingayat and Kuruba castes.

2. Datti Mela:

   A Datti Mela came from a village, Naganur, which is about 160 K.M. away from Hubli. The troupe consisted of 9 members who belonged to Kuruba caste. The speciality of the Mela was that the members had put on a long and black apron made out of country blanket (kambali) and put a lot of turmeric powder on their forehead. They danced rhythmically to the tunes of the songs they sang. As they danced they also balanced burning lamps (kales) on their head. Two members of the Mela balanced five lamps each (which were arranged one above the other) on their head and they were the centre of attraction of the show. Also a few of them, as they danced, picked up money kept on the ground in the form of currency notes.

3. Dollina Mela:

   (i) A Dollina Mela, again coming from Naganur village, consisted of 6 members who gave a performance of drum beating and dancing. While beating the drums
they sang the songs of their favourite God or of a holy man.

(ii) A Dollina Mela from a village Hoovin Shigli, in Savanur Taluka, consisted of 12 members who belonged to Kuruba caste. The speciality of their programme of dollu performance was a wonderful feat of somersault, jumping and dancing systematically from place to place, back and forth.

(iii) Another Dollina Mela came from Ghimiur, about 40 K.M. away from Hubli. It consisted of 16 members and all of them belonged to Kuruba caste. They gave a similar programme of dollu as the earlier one.

4. Choudiki Mela:

A Choudiki Mela also came from Naganur village. There were 4 women in the group belonging to Valmiki and Kuruba castes. They sang songs as they played on a musical instrument known as Choudiki.

5. Sanadi Mela:

A Sanadi Mela came from Sherewad in Hubli Taluka. The members of the Mela are pipe musicians. All four of them belonged to Korava caste.
People believe, particularly those who perform these arts, that these are some of the ways of exhibiting their devotion and offering their services to the Gaddige, in order to appease the Lord Gurusiddeshwar Swami who became a Jeevanmukta (one who is buried in a sanctified pit, on one's desire while one is alive). Nonetheless, the fairs of the Math serve as a means whereby the traditional cultural traits are energised and maintained even today. The activities of the folk culture, thus, not only depict the rich cultural heritage in the contexts of exhibitions of art and the group activities but also serve as a means of recreation to the large number of people assembled on the occasion. While some people come to give certain cultural programmes, some others assemble to enjoy the show. The children are attracted by the young elephant of the Math, the youths do not fail to visit the old chariot which has its wood carvings depicting the styles of sexual intercourse around the chariot. Besides, certain programmes such as enthroning of the Jagadguru in the evening give a sense of satisfaction to all and they provide an opportunity to feel the pulses of cultural continuity to the people. It is only on the last Shravan Monday, known as the Jatra day when enthroning ceremony is held.
Thus the fairs and festivals have culturally positive role to play to enhance the recreational and aesthetic sense of the people at large, and to promote the community sentiment.

The Jagadguru:

The present Jagadguru of the Math has occupied the pontifical seat over the last twenty years. He is well versed in religion, art, literature and languages. After studying for sixteen years, that is, till 1947, in Shivayoga Mandir (Bijapur District), the Jagadguru went to Varanasi (in Uttar Pradesh) for further studies. By then he was already a Swami-designate to the Chittaragi Math in Bijapur District. In his ten years of study at Varanasi, he obtained the Degrees of Kavya Tirtha, Sahitya Ratna and Vedanta Shastracharya.

As a religious head, president and sole trustee of various bodies and trusts of the Math, the Jagadguru has been a moving spirit behind all the activities - the religious, educational, and welfare - that the Math has undertaken. In this connection it may not be out of place to mention briefly his sphere
of activities and of his views about things that interest us.

The Jagadguru is not considered as a charismatic leader, but he enjoys sufficient popularity. People go to him with variety of their problems – familial, financial, psychological, administrative, communal, etc., for guidance and solution. The Jagadguru listens to them patiently and tries to assist them by using the traditional as well as modern techniques to solve the problems.

The Jagadguru’s writings and speeches stand testimony to his erudition. In almost all his utterances and writings, he has upheld the values of peace, social justice and democratic life. He tries to put them into practice in his own organisation over the destinies of which he presides.

He reiterates that Virasaivism does not believe in Chaturvarna, the four-fold order of society.

* The Jagadguru has written seventeen books (including booklets), on religion and philosophy. Among them, 'Ashirvani', 'Hongivana' and 'Amrutabindu' are the collection of his speeches and talks.
He contends that moral conduct is basic to religion. A religion without right conduct, according to him, is a body without life. Those who protect Dharma shall be protected by it (Dharma Rakshati Rakshitah).

The Jagadguru, writing on women’s education, states that it is not only essential for self-development but also for national development that woman should be educated. He quotes Swamy Vivekanand saying thus: “Educate your women first and leave them to themselves; then they will tell you what reforms are necessary for them”.

The Jagadguru says that Kayaka brings mental purity and perfection to life. It is a means to Mukti (Salvation). Therefore, each individual should adopt a Kayaka and thereby help developmental activities of the nation. 10

The personality of the Jagadguru is dynamic and varied. He is the moving spirit behind all the

welfare activities undertaken by the Math. Social Welfare or collective good is his life's mission. In fact he once stated that he spends less time on Puja* and more time to meet the people and know about their various problems.

The Jagadguru carries the noble command of Basava, i.e., "Wishing welfare to all beings" (Sakal Jeevatmarige leesane bayasuva). As Basava's ardent follower, once he spoke thus:

I may be the Soul Trustee of the Math, but the entire property of the Math belongs to Society and the nation. This property is, therefore, to be used for social welfare.*

The task of bringing about "welfare of all beings" is a gigantic one. To convince and to persuade

* The Jagadguru's daily schedule of Puja is as follows: Morning: 7.30 a.m. to 8.30 a.m. Afternoon: 12.30 p.m. to 1.30 p.m. Night: 8.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m. The Jagadguru expressed that the puja is for the sake of the well-being of the people than for self-realization.

the people he often quotes Christian doctrine that runs as under:

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out the evil spirits, freely ye have received, freely give.

While giving the message of peace at the World Conference on Religion and Peace, held at Kyoto, Japan, the Jagadguru said as follows:

... mutual relations and understanding should develop among all religions, that they should accept the light that each religion has to offer and practise the truths inculcated so that emotional integration becomes possible. The basic pre-requisites for this are self-confidence, firm determination, purity of motive, catholicity, and devotedness to work. The more these qualities are assimilated, the more is it conducive to the welfare of the nations, and the peace of the world.¹²

¹². Taken from his speech delivered at the Conference, 1970, p. 15.
These views and ideas of the Jagadguru coupled with the Vīrasaiya ideology of the welfare of all constitute the frame-work within which various kinds of welfare activities have been organised.

As a founder of several institutions, innovator of different programmes and well-known person for taking up of construction of new and renovation of old buildings, the Jagadguru has been the moving spirit of all the activities of the Math, the immediately surrounding community and the Vīrasaiyas of the region. (Please see Appendix - C for the Jagadguru’s interest shown in construction of buildings).