

May 26, 27, 28  
2023

# Maharudram

Shri Bhakta Anjaneya Temple San Diego

An Exquisite Divine Experience



धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः

By, Dr. Turuvekere Sethumadhava

SAN DIEGO AREA HINDUS BLESSED WITH AN EXQUISITE, DIVINE AND 3-DAYS LONG SRI MAHARUDRA MAHAYAJNA EXPERIENCE

The 3-days long grand Sri Maharudra Mahayajna, a rare and unique Hindu Vedic ritual that was organized in a grand scale, for the welfare of all devotees, their families and friends, all humanity and for global peace & prosperity concluded at the beautiful Shri Bhakta Anjaneya Temple in San Diego, CA on Sunday, 28th May 2023.

The 3-day event offered a once-in-a-lifetime soulful treat complete with spiritual ecstasy and divinely meditative spirit for an estimated 500 devotees, 6 priests, 150 Ritviks and about 50 volunteers, who were blessed with the opportunity to participate in the happenings and partake the divine complimentary prasadam offered thrice a day to everyone who thronged to the event from the San Diego area and places as far as Los Angeles, Phoenix, Bay Area, Chicago, Riverside and India.

Sri Rudram chant is an ancient Vedic hymn in praise of Lord Shiva and is the oldest prayer with a listing of various names of Lord Shiva. Through the chanting of Sri Rudram, Lord Shiva's various attributes and aspects are invoked and worshipped. Chanting the Rudram is considered to be of great benefit. The Rudram chanting can be done with or without the accompaniment of a Vedic yajna ritual. When accompanied with the Vedic fire ritual, it is called the Rudra Yajna.



Ladies attending Kumkumarchana program at the temple on Friday, May 26<sup>th</sup> 2023



Ritviks from San Diego, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Bay Area, Chicago and India assembled at Shri Bhakta Anjaneya Temple to partake in the Divine Maharudra Mahayajna during the Memorial Day Weekend, 2023

## San Diego Hindu Community Prays for Loka Kalyana

"The temple premises was transformed into Kailasa for three days, with the divine chants Rudram and Chamakam resounding in all directions. It was transcendental."

Sri Rudram - Comprising of Namakam and Chamakam Srirudram, is also known as Rudraprasna. It is part of the Yajur Veda and one of the greatest of the Vedic hymns for all round benefits of humanity and is known to remove all doshas and difficulties. The first part, chapter 16 of the Yajurveda, is known as Namakam because of the repeated use of the word "Namo" in it. The second part, chapter 18 of the Yajurveda, is known as chamakam because of the repeated use of the words "Chame".

Scriptures define several methods of Rudram recitation. These are summarized by Sage Satapatha who listed in his treatise "Maharnava Karma Vipaka" four types of Abhisheka procedures compatible with Vedic scriptures. Those are Rudram, Ekadasha Rudram, Maha Rudram and Ati Rudram - each being more potent than the preceding one.

Reciting the entire Sri Rudram - 11 Anuvakas (chapters) of Namakam once followed by 11 Anuvakas of Chamakam, is the most common method practised in day- to- day worship Abhishekam to Lord Shiva in the temples. 2. Reciting Namakam 11 times followed by first, second canto of Chamakam for each Namakam recitation is known as Rudraikadasini (Ekadasha Rudram). 3. Eleven Rudraikadasini make one Laghu Rudram (121 times recitation). This is usually done by 11 priests each chanting Rudram 11 times simultaneously. 4. Eleven Laghu Rudrams make one Maha Rudram (1,331 times) and 5. Eleven Maha Rudrams make one Ati Rudram (14,641 times).

The Rudra Yajna is the most sacred and powerful among all the Maha Yajnas. Very rarely a Yajna of this significance and magnitude can be witnessed and the opportunity for the people to actually participate in the worship.

### MahaRudram A Powerful Yajna

Maharudram Puja and Homa are considered as the most powerful and beneficial Puja dedicated to Lord Shiva.

### Greatest Vedic Hymn Dedicated to Lord Rudra

According to Yajur Veda, Sri Rudram and Chamakam are the greatest Vedic hymns dedicated to Mahadev or Lord Rudra.

### Great Benefits

Promotes health and happiness

Chanting Rudra mantra regularly in the prescribed manner with devotion and focus of mind will promote health and happiness

**The vibrations of the Mantras recited were extremely divine.****“Not enough words to describe the emotional experience”**

"The vibrations of the Mantras of the Vedas recited at the Shri Bhakta Anjaneya Temple during the Sri MahaRudram Yajna were extremely divine. There are not enough words to describe the emotional experience that it was.", said many devotees who attended the program during the weekend.



While preparations have been going on for weeks before the event, the spiritual proceedings of the event started Friday evening with Bhagavathi Seva and Lalitha Sahasranama Parayana. The event picked up a great speed and attendance in the evening around 6:00 PM with Kumkumarchana attended by an estimated 250 devotees including 150 women who offered the Pooja to Goddess Lalithambike while the main priest offered prayers to a specially decorated Deepam. The ladies who sponsored the Kumkumarchana program were given a bag with a saree, Lalithambike photograph, kumkuma for archana, akshate and fruits. Friday night's proceedings concluded with the distribution of deeksha vastrams to the priests and Ritviks in strict accordance with the Shastras.



Bhagavathi Seva, Lalitha Sahasranama Parayana and Kumkumarchana



Ritviks chanting Mahanyasa, Rudram and Chamakam during the Rudrabhisheka program on Saturday, May 27th

**Mahanyasa Poorvaka  
Rudrabhisheka**

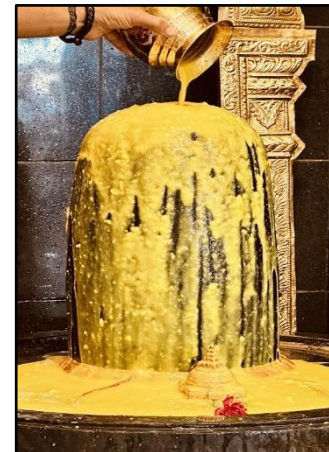
**“The Mahanyasam, meaning the great “Nyasa” (purification) is recited to purify the body, mind, and soul of all the impurities.”**

Saturday's morning program started bright and early at 7AM with the Mahanyasam followed by Ekadasa Rudram with priests and ritviks who participated in an elaborate ritual involving the chanting of Rudram for 11 times. There were more than 130 ritviks who came from faraway places. Rudrabhishekam was done during the chanting.

Rudrabhishekam is a powerful Vedic ritual performed to invoke the energy and

blessings of Lord Shiva for the benefits of health and healing. Rudrabhishekam carries tremendous healing power because it brings together two potent techniques - Abhishekam or the sacred bath, and the chanting of mantras.

After the Rudrabhisheka, Priest Shrikantha Shastriji decorated Sri Narmadeshwara beautifully and performed the Arati. Pandit Shivarama Krishnaji mesmerized all the devotees to

**Rudrabhishekam**

Rudrabhishekam carries tremendous healing power because it it brings together two potent techniques - abhishekam or the sacred bath, and the chanting of mantras.

wonderful meditative mood with his melodious bhajans.

## Devotional Bhajans Truly Mesmerizing...



Pandit Shiva Ramakrishnanji from Los Angeles Veda Circle mesmerized the devotees with devotional bhajans

The early evening was lit up with an elaborate Rudra Krama Archana by the priests and ritviks followed by a grand Moola Vighraha Abhisheka to Hanuman to commemorate third temple Prana Prathisthapana Anniversary. Priests and ritviks chanted various Shlokas, Stotram, Ghana Patham, and Hanuman Chalisa.

Pandit Shrikantha Shastriji decorated Shri Bhakta Hanuman with beautiful golden kavacha and wonderful flower garlands and concluded the puja with Maha Arati.

Sunday's program started at 7:00 AM with Rudra chanting and Rudra Homam. Rudra Homam was arranged in a big 80 ft by 40 ft tent and all ritviks and devotees were able to watch the program comfortably. All Ritviks who participated in the Rudram chanting had an opportunity to do the Homam with assistance from priests. After chanting Rudram 12 times along with the Homam, Pandit Shrikantha Shastri led the Vasordhara, an Upachara and a grand finale of Purnahuti. Priest Shiva Ramakrishnanji, Priest Ramesh Bhatji, Pandit Dattathreya Sharmaji, Pandit Gopala Krishnaji and Jayaramanji took different roles and assisted in the Mahayajna ritual program with Priest Shrikantha Shastriji and Raja Venkateswaran seamlessly. All devotees did the pradakshina to Homa Kunda and moved inside the temple to watch the Kalasabhishekam.

## Sri Bhakta Hanuman Third Prana Pratisthapana Anniversary



Priest Shrikantha Shastriji performing Maha Arati to Sri Bhakta Hanuman during Third Anniversary Program.



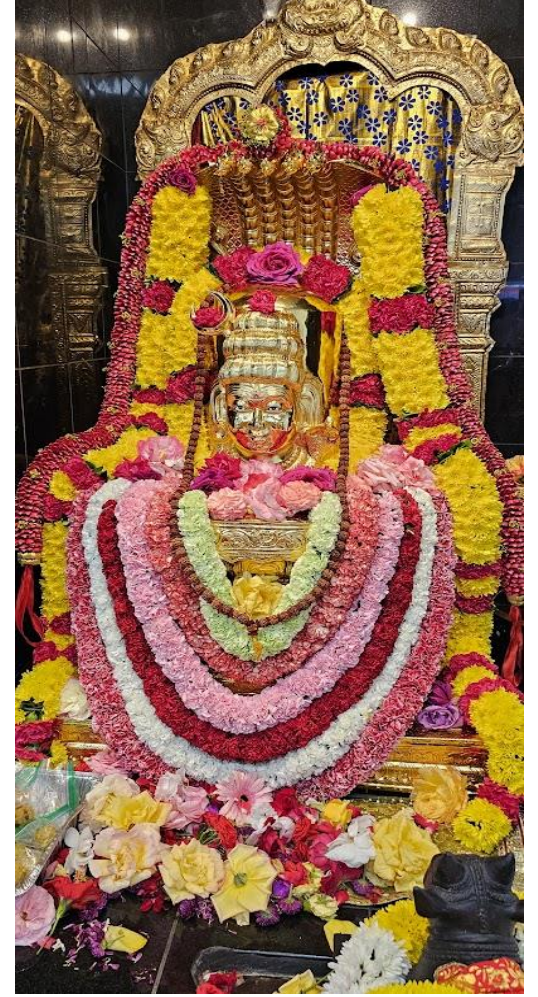
Priests leading the Rudra Homam Rituals. All Ritviks who chanted 11 times Rudram got the opportunity to perform the Rudram Homam during Maharudra Mahayajna

## Grand Rudra Homam with adherence to Hindu Tradition

Maha Rudra Homam is a potent fire ritual that invokes the blessings of Sri Rudra

The Rudra Homam was performed by 6 priests and all the Ritviks who chanted the Rudram during the Abhisheka. The high point of the events was the Homam that was done with utmost care and adherence to tradition, without omitting any important aspect. Fire Worship is the earliest form of Worship for the Hindus; offering to Fire God the best that we have was (and is) considered to be the real offerings to our Gods.

Maha Rudra Homam is a potent fire ritual that invokes the blessings of Sri Rudra, one of the many forms of energy Shiva, to cleanse a person's inner spiritual system of any deeply ingrained illnesses. Performing Rudra Homam invokes various forms of Lord Rudra of which three are most significant: Pushtivardhanam, Sugandhi and Thryambaka. These three aspects of Lord Rudra endow material benefits, righteousness in actions and spiritual unfoldment, respectively.



## Maha Alankara, Maha Arati, and Maha Prasadam

“Over the last three years, having seen so many alankarams of Narmadeshwara by Shastriji, this is one of the best ever” said Raja Venkateswaran.

“Experience was truly transcendental” – remarked many devotees who attended Maharudra at the temple. It was the first time for many devotees to attend a Vedic ceremony of this grand scale.

## Kalasabhishekam with Rudram, Chamakam and Suktam Chanting



Pandit Shrikantha Shastriji performed Kalasabhishekam to Sri Lord Narmadeshwara while all the priests and ritviks chanted Rudram, chamakam and Suktam. The Vedic hymn Sri Rudram is the oldest listing of various names of Lord Shiva. Through the chanting of Sri Rudram, Lord Shiva's various attributes and aspects are invoked and worshipped.

Yajna concluded with Acharya Sanmanam (honoring of the learned Vedic scholars and priests) and offering thanks to volunteers. All events started and ended on time.

Annadanam (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Snacks, Tea and Coffee) to devotees, ritviks and priests were offered on all 3 days in keeping with the principles of a Yajnam. A huge number of highly dedicated volunteers helped in ensuring the smooth coordination of everyday logistics including kitchen management, front desk management, and in a lot of other behind the scenes activities.

Chanting the Rudram and listening to the chanting are considered to be of great benefit to devotees.

Priest Shivarama Krishnanji again mesmerized the devotees with wonderful and divine Shiva, Vishnu, and Hanuman Bhajans with his golden voice while Pandit Shrikantha Shastriji decorated Lord Narmadeshwara with beautiful golden Kavacha and excellent colorful garlands. It was such a divine experience to watch the Maha Arati to Shiva and listen to Vedic Chanting and Bhajans by priests, ritviks and devotees.

The need of time is to create compassion, humility and follow the righteous path. The only way to secure these goals is to follow the path shown by our culture and the Vedic scriptures. We have to nurture, nourish and inspire our young generation to stay rooted in our sacred culture and the Maha Rudra Yajna offers the solution amidst the confusion and disorder. Our younger generation should remember this unique experience and learn from it to carry forward the tradition was the main reason we performed the Maha Yajna, said Pandit Shrikantha Shastriji. Priest Shiva Ramakrishnanji also echoed similar thoughts. Maha

“The Temple premises was transformed into Kailasa for three days, with the divine chants of Rudram resounding in all directions. We will cherish the memories from the event for a lifetime”.

- Temple Devotees

Priest Shrikantha Shastriji's wife Pavithra, daughter Yogitha, son Sudhamshu, Raja, Murali, Sundar, Raghavendra, Srinivas, Jay and several other volunteers (sorry, could not include all names) worked tirelessly for several weeks to make this Maharudra Mahayajna a unique and divine experience. Religious cook Sridhar Avadhanula and his wife came from the Bay Area and worked patiently with Pavithra and team to provide very tasty and timely prasadam all three days. Devotees recollected the 2015 Maharudra Mahayajna divine experience. “We will cherish the memories from this event for a lifetime and we are already looking forward to more of such events,” said several devotees.

A few Sample & Random pictures of the Temple volunteers in action



Thank You