

HIS HOLINESS SHRI CHANDRASEKHARENDRA SARASWATI SWAMIGAL



His Holiness Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamigal was the 68th Pontiff of Shri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham. He was usually referred to as Paramacharya, Mahaswami or Maha Periyavaal. During his thirteenth years of age he was taken to Kalavai, when he was studying at Tindivanam, to be initiated into ascetic order and ordained as the 68th Acharya of the Shri Kanchi Kamakoti Mutt. He was given the Sanyasa name Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati. He adorned the Peetam from February 13, 1907. True to the tradition of the Peetam set by Adi Sankara, Mahaswamigal travelled throughout the country by foot or by the traditional palanquin. He also stood by the national sentiments in discarding "foreign cloth" (He immersed them in water instead of setting fire) and started wearing Khadi. He set the trend to create Trusts for achieving the objectives of the Peetham. His foremost concern was preservation of the Vedas, tradition and dharma. He advocated simplicity, shunned pomp, ostentation and extravagance. His exposition of Vedanta, Sastras and the Dharmic duties attracted scholars and laymen alike, from far and wide, for it had always been rich in values and simple in understanding. Great humorist he had the keen acumen to relate root words of all the languages to Sanskrit highlighting its greatness. He attained Moksha (merges with the Supreme Lord) at Kancheepuram on 8th January 1994 (Dhanur, Krishna Dwadasi) in his Centenary year.

His Holiness

Shri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Swamigal



When & Where Born

Chandrasekharendra Saraswati was born on 20 May 1894, under Anuradha nakshatra according to the Hindu calendar, into a Kannadiga [Smartha Hoysala Karnataka](#) Brahmin family in [Viluppuram](#), South Arcot District, [Tamil Nadu](#) as Swaminathan.

Personal Background

He was the second son of Shri Subramanya Sastrigal, a District Education Officer and his devout wife, Smt Mahalakshmi. The child was named Swaminatha, after the family deity, Lord Swaminatha of [Swamimalai](#), near [Kumbakonam](#). Swaminatha began his early education at the Arcot American Mission High School at Tindivanam, where his father was working. He was an exceptional student and excelled in several subjects. In 1905, his parents performed his [Upanayanam](#), a Vedic ceremony which qualifies a Brahmin boy to begin his Vedic studies under an accomplished teacher. His brother was Sadasiva Sastrigal, popularly known as [Sivan Sir.](#)^[1] Sadasiva Sastri was born on 3 October 1903 in Viluppuram, South Arcot District, Tamil Nadu. He has written a magnum opus based on Hindu philosophy in a Tamil book titled "Yenippadigalil Maanthargal". He died in 1994.^{[2][3][4][5]}

Principles & Practices in Spiritual Life

He preached about the importance of following the Dharmic path. He treated all religions equally and with respect. He was the head of the Mutt for eighty-seven years. Throughout his life, the focus of his concern and activities was rejuvenating Veda adhyayana, the Dharma Sastras, and the age-old tradition, which had suffered decline. He referred to Veda rakshanam in most of his talks.

Remaining active throughout his life, the sage of Kanchi twice undertook pilgrimages on foot from Rameshwaram in the far south of the Indian peninsula to Benares in the North.[citation needed]

Providing support through Veda Patashalas (schools teaching Vedic lore) through the Veda Rakshana Nidhi which he founded and honouring Vedic scholars, he reinvigorated Vedic studies in India. He organised regular sadhas ('conferences') which included discussions on arts and culture—these led to a renewed interest in Vedic religion, Dharma sastras, and the Sanskrit language. His long tenure as Peetadhipathi is considered by many to have been the Golden Era of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam



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Spiritual Works

His various discourses are available in a volume of books called 'Deivathin Kural' (Voice of the Divine) which have been compiled by R. Ganapathi, a devotee of Chandrasekharendra Saraswati, and published by Vaanathi Publications. These books are available both in Tamil and English. A condensed form of these books is also available in English. These are available in all branches of the Kanchi math.

Critical moments of life

Though Periyavaa did not get directly into politics, he was interested in the happenings. At Nellikery in Palakkad (Present Day Kerala), Rajaji and Mahatma Gandhi met the Acharya in a cow shed. It was a practice in the mutt to wear silk clothes. But Acharya was the first one to do away with them and shifted to Khadi robes at Rameshwaram. He requested his devotees to do away with foreign/ non-natural clothes some time earlier at Trichy

Philanthropic Works

Go Samrakshanam, Pidi Arisi etc are the noval philanthropic works of "Maha Periyavaal ", along with the Collection of Vedic Scriptures, developing the vedic schools

Writings / Celebrated books

Deivathin Kural or Voice of God is the famous one translated into English and most of indian languages

Location

Shri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham was established by Sri Adi Sankara in the year 482 B.C. and has the distinction of an unbroken line of 70 Acharyas (spiritual leaders). Srimatam Samsthanam No 1, Salai Street, Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu 631502.

Sources

www.kamakoti.org www.mahaperiyava.info <https://www.facebook.com/Periyava>
<https://mahaperiyavaa.wordpress.com/> <http://mahaperiyava.org/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chandrashekarendra_Saraswati/ <http://periyavaa.blogspot.in/>