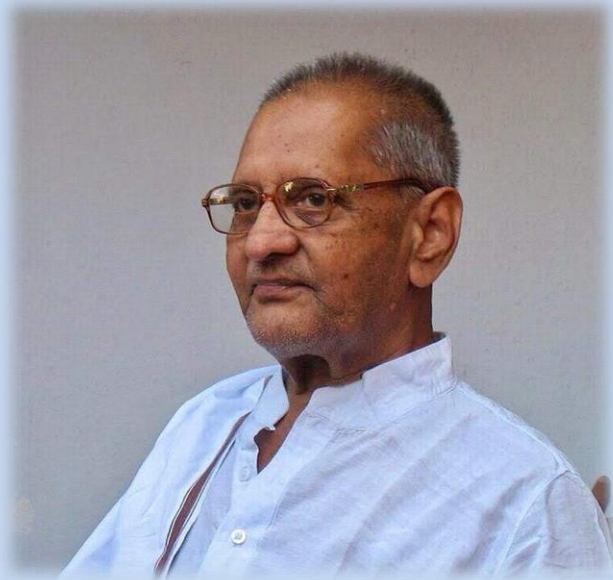


## SELF-REALISATION IS THE KEY TO HAPPINESS



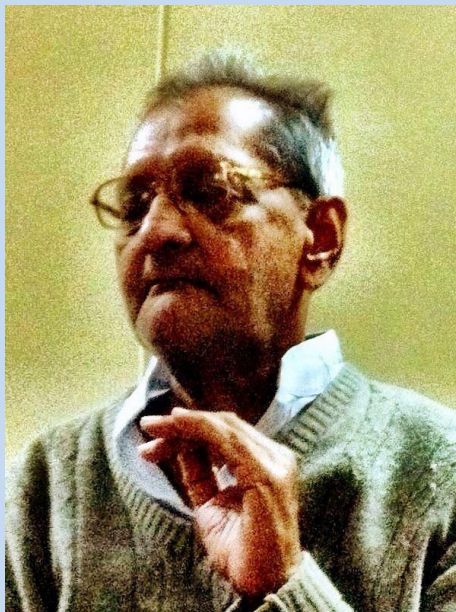
"How do you cut a jack fruit without sullying your hands? Apply oil to them first and proceed with the job. Similarly, the oil of '*Gnana*' will prevent you from getting into a mess in this world. After obtaining *Gnana*, you can perform actions without any attachment," he says. In such an easy to understand manner, he brings home high philosophy to the ordinary folk.

Meet, Bhupathiraju Venkata Lakshmi Narasimha Raju, popularly known as Jinnuru Nannagaru, who has taken upon himself the task of taking people to a 'sorrowless', and 'tension-free' state. He

was in the metro last week to deliver a series of discourses.

Born to Bhupathiraju Suryanarayana Raju and Rajayamma at Jinnuru village in West Godavari district in 1934, he studied up to SSLC. Right from his childhood, social work was his first love. When he was in elementary school, he started the mid-day meal scheme with voluntary donations collected from the villagers for the benefit of poor students. He also helped sick people.

"In 1957, the saint of Tiruvannamalai, Ramana Maharshi, appeared in my dream. He took me into his arms and kissed my hand. At that time I did not know who that old man was. Six weeks after that incident, I was reading The Hindu.



There was a small advertisement in the inside page about Ramana Maharshi. As I was reading it, I felt as though current was passing through my body. The address of the Ramana Ashram was given in the advertisement and readers were asked to read about the life of the saint through the literature published by the ashram. I immediately wrote a letter and got the literature from Tiruvannamalai. I was attracted by his teachings and decided to follow them."

Ramana Maharshi attained 'samadhi' in 1950. In 1959, Nannagaru visited Tiruvannamalai and from then onwards started observing his Guru's Jayanthi every year. Later, he started touring different districts in Andhra Pradesh and spreading the message of his guru.

During 1984-85, Nannagaru built a Ramana Kshetram at Jinnuru. He also constructed three ashrams at Tiruvannamalai for the benefit of devotees visiting the Ramana Ashram. His

devotees started affectionately calling him 'Nannagaru', meaning father and started a trust in his name. The trust, headed by PSN Raju as its chairman, grants old age pensions to poor persons who are too weak to work, and to meritorious poor students, irrespective of caste and religion.



Nannagaru visited London twice on the invitation of The Ramana Maharshi Foundation in the U.K. and delivered lectures on the life and work of the latter to his devotees. He does not care for awards and prefers to do his work silently. The moment a man starts feeling great about himself, he feels that he is superior to others and his ego-sense will glorify, he says.

Commenting on miracles by Godmen, he cautions, "Do not get attracted towards miracles. It will lead to the diversion of the mind of the truth seeker. The practitioners do it to gain fame and in the process they develop an ego that they are above everyone. It is a waste of time and energy to go to such people."

Spiritualism and not religion is the need of the hour. For spiritualism to grow, one should give importance to preaching. Unfortunately in Hinduism, while no importance is given to preaching, undue importance is given to rituals. Preaching will develop interest in the individual devotees and then they would practice what they learn and ultimately realise the truth.

The present day society is only concerned about how much wealth a person has and not how he had earned it. People are now concentrating only on 'artha' and 'kama' leaving the other two – 'dharma' and 'moksha'. Only when a person earns wealth through proper means he can attain salvation, he opines.

He expressed serious concern at the growing insensitivity of the people and lack of patriotism. Recalling an incident which he had seen in England, he says: "I was looking out of the window of the house I was staying in and noticed a man taking out his dog for an early morning walk. The dog eased itself on the pavement. The man took out a handkerchief from his pocket and wrapped the stool in it and carried it away to dispose it of at the appropriate place. That was patriotism. In contrast, we are only concerned about our house, our front yard and backyard but least bothered about the public utilities around us".

"All men want happiness, which is in one's spiritual heart. Instead of looking for it within oneself, they start searching for it elsewhere. When one is in the waking state (awake), he/she is not happy and when in deep sleep, they are happy but unaware of it. Realisation is simultaneously experiencing both happiness and awareness", says Nannagaru recalling the words of his guru.



# Self-realisation is the key to happiness

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Jinnuru Nannagaru  
- Photo: C.V. Subrahmanyam

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B.M.G.

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