

**Silanyasam - Foundaiton Laying Ceremony by His Excellency
Lal Bhadur Shastri, Prime Minster on the 8th of September, 1965**



Shri.M.Bhaktavatsalam, Honourable Chief Minister
Of Madras laying the foundation stone Silanyasam Ceremony
On behalf of Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, Prime Minister.

While the sculpturing of the sacred Vighras and other sculptural work were making progress at Walajabad, the Board of Management of the Samaj decided to make arrangements to lay the foundation stone of the temple complex called the "Silanyasam". This is only a small initial part of the several Aagamic rituals, prescribed in the Sivagamas. 8th of September, 1965 was chosen for the Silanyasam. The auspicious time fixed was between 6-30 A.M. and 8-30 A.M. His Excellency Lal Bahadur Shastri, Prime Minister had been good enough to give his consent to grace the occasion and perform the Silanyasam--laying the foundation stone. Shri M.Bhaktavatsalam, Honourable Chief Minister of Madras (as Tamil Nadu was then called), who had been gracious enough, in its formative years, to help the temple project, in no small measure, had also accepted the invitation of the Samaj to grace the occasion and had actually arrived in Delhi on the 6th of September itself. Siva Shri Sundara Bhattar, the Chief Sivacharya of the famous Madurai Meenakshi Temple had also arrived with his assistants to perform the aagamic rituals.

At about 10-30 P.M. on the 7th of September 1965,- the previous night there was a Radio announcement- -wholly unexpected that intelligence reports had indicated of an imminent aerial attack by the Pakistan Air Force on the capital. A total blackout was immediately enforced by the Civil defence authorities. Shri R. Venkataramah, President and the Board of Managemen of the Samaj as well as the devotees of the Lord were seriously concerned that a mortal threat to the sovereignty and integrity of our Motherland was looming large at the very moment, they were engaged in the sacred task of laying the foundation stone of a place of worship. At 3A.M. on the 8th of

September, 1965, the Prime Minister informed the Chief Minister of Madras that he had to deny himself the privilege and honour of participating in the morning function, on account of the grave national emergency and that the Chief Minister might like to officiate on his behalf. At about 4-30 A.M. On the 8th of September, war planes were sighted near Shahdara for aerial bombing but were shot down by the fighter planes of our brave Air Force. The balls of fire of the falling planes of the Pakistan Air Force could be seen from the temple site by the few devotees who were engaged in making the preparations for the morning's function. That was the beginning and end of Pakistani attack on the Capital, in the fifteen-day war that followed, at that time. At 5.A.M., the all clear siren was sounded. In about one half of an hour, a large number of devotees assembled at the site, for witnessing the Silanyas. It should be mentioned, in this connection, that the area round the site of the temple had not been developed at that time for people to settle themselves. Just before the ceremony, an inspiring message was received from the Prime Minister which was read by Shri R. Venkataraman, President, to the gathering present at the site. It read as follows:- Quote: Lord Swaminatha Devasenapathy had assumed command and had ended the war with Pakistan the moment it began. I wish the foundation stone laying ceremony all success:Unquote

The Silanyasam ceremony went off very well amidst the chanting of Vedic hymns and agamic mantras with Mangala Vadyam. The foundation stone was laid at the appointed hour, by Shri M. Bhaktavatsalam, Honourable Chief Minister of Madras and by Shri Arutkavi Sri Sethuraman, later known as Sri Sadhu Ram Swamikal. The Grace of Lord Swaminatha Swami permeated at the very outset of the Silanyasam, warding off what could have been a great calamity. That was really Lord Siva Skanda Leela! In the afternoon news Bulletin of the All India Radio, of the 8th of September, 1965, prominence was given-- next only to the news of the hostilities-- to the Silanyasam of the temple. The headline described the momentous event to say that despite the unprovoked attack by Pakistan, the peace loving people of India were going about their normal activities, including, laying the foundation of a temple at the heart of the capital.