



SABARI Saranashramam

ANNADANA KENDRAM and HOSPITAL

KOO MKARAKA, PERUNADU,
PATHANAMTHITTA DISTRICT, KERALA

www.ayyappa.co.in

SABARI

Saranashramam

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Sabarimala: Abode of Equality and Fraternity

Sabarimala Sri Dharmashasta (Ayyappa) Temple is a renowned pilgrimage center in South India, nestled in the Western Ghats region of the peninsula. It is considered one of the most popular pilgrimage destinations in the world, attracting over five crore devotees annually. The temple is dedicated to Lord Ayyappa, the son of Harihara, a combination of Shiva and Vishnu.

During the Mandal Vartha - Makara Vilaku Season, pilgrims flock to Sabarimala, affectionately known as Ayyappas and respectfully addressed as Swamis, travelling along the highways and railways of Kerala. With hearts full of devotion, pilgrims from around the globe, dressed in black, blue, or saffron attire and carrying the 'Irumudikkettu' on their heads, embark on long treks in groups to reach Sabarimala, the divine abode of Lord Ayyappa.

Perched atop a hill at an elevation of 1148 meters above sea level in the Sahya Mountain ranges of the Western Ghats, the holy shrine of Lord Ayyappa offers a spiritual sanctuary. Pilgrims traverse lofty mountain peaks and dense tropical forests to reach the Ayyappa Shrine at Sabarimala, named after the ancient tribal sage Sabari mentioned in the epic Ramayana. Each year, the number of pilgrims swells by millions, drawing devotees from all corners of India and abroad.



Warm welcome given to Sabarimala Melsanthi (Head Priest)



Ayyappa devotees reach Sabari Saranashramam on the way to Sabarimala



Devotees stay and conduct bhajans and discourses in Sabari Saranashramam

Basic Amenities: Need of the Hour

The services and essential facilities available for pilgrims are currently inadequate. *Pilgrims travelling to Pamba and Sabarimala in pursuit of Swami Ayyappa's Darshan after a rigorous 41-day penance face significant challenges due to the lack of basic amenities for lodging, cooking, and personal hygiene. This situation must be addressed promptly.*

Basic necessities such as sanitation, vehicle parking, clean drinking water, hygienic food, accommodation, hospitals, waste disposal, and toilets must be provided to devotees. The current scenario, where the majority of

pilgrims converge at Pamba and Sannidhanam during peak times, leads to overcrowding and congestion. A comprehensive plan is urgently needed to alleviate these issues and enhance the overall pilgrimage experience.

Ayyappas Seva Kendram at Koonamkara

To address these challenges, a proposal has been put forth to establish a base camp for devotees at Koonamkara, located 18 kilometers from Pathanamthitta, 10 kilometers from Vadasserikkara and 45 kilometers before Pamba

Present temporary building of Annadana Kendra, Koonamkaraka Situated on the way to Sabarimala, 45 km before Pamba





Sabarimala Melsanthi inaugurating the Annadanam by lighting the lamp

with 18 acres of available land. A master plan has been developed to provide infrastructure such as accommodation, food distribution centers, parking facilities, hospitals, temples, and museums. This plan has been crafted by the Sabari Saranashramam Trust, a registered public charitable organization.

This initiative aims to offer pilgrims all necessary facilities and educate them on the values and traditions of the Ayyappa tradition. It also envisions the establishment of various institutions and projects to meet the spiritual, social, and physical needs of pilgrims through education, social services, medical assistance and accommodation.

The project consists of three phases. The first phase aims to provide facilities for immediate requirements within 1-2 years. The second phase will address mediumterm requirements over a 5-year period, while the third phase will focus on long-term needs.

Sabari Saranashramam, located in Koonamkaraka, was established in 2011. Koonamkaraka is a picturesque village just 2 km from Perunad, which has strong historical ties to



President and ward members of Perinad Panchayath lighting Lamp in the Inaugural function of Annadanam

the Sabarimala temple. Perunad was once the administrative capital of the Raja of Pandalam, who resided there during the construction of the temple. To this day, a representative from Perunad participates in the Palli Vetta ritual during the Sabarimala temple festival. The Thiruvabharana procession from the Pandalam Royal Palace to Sabarimala also stops in Perunad for worship.

Thiruvabharana Ghoshayathra:

Every year, the box containing the holy ornaments (Thiruvabharanam) brought from Pandalam Palace to Sabarimala will be placed down on 13th January; the day before Makaravilakku





The chief priests of Sabarimala and Malikappuram take Annaprasad from Sabari Saranashramam

Tribals: Successors of Sabarimatha

Surrounded by eighteen hills, dense vegetation, and streams known as 'Poonkavanam' (Holy forest) the Sabarimala temple holds a sacred charisma. The area is believed to have been frequented by Rishis and other divine saints. The hills are home to eighteen tribal colonies, comprising approximately 350 families and 3700 individuals, who have been largely neglected.

It was in Poonkavanam that Mata Sabari performed her enduring penance, and where Lord Sri Ram visited her during his search for Goddess Sita, as recounted in the epic Ramayana. The area



Ayyappas taking food from Sabari Saranashramam

holds significance as the place where Sabari Mata achieved Nirvana. The Sabari Saranasramam is named in honor of her attainment of salvation, as well as in reverence to the footprints of Sri Rama, Lord Ayyappa, and Sabari Mata in the region.

The foundation of Sabari Saranashram was established by Brahmasri Thazhamon Madom Maheswararu, the Supreme Priest (Thanthrimukhayan) of Sabarimala Temple, on September 16, 2011. The ceremony was attended by Pandalam Palace Raja Vishakhram Thirunal Rama Varma, Former Sabarimala Melsanthi Brahmasri Vasudeva Sharma, Sri. Kummanam Rajasekharan, Sri. Viswarupan, Sri. V K Vishwanathan, Sri. Karinkunnam Ramachandran Nair, and other dignitaries.

Sabari Saranashramam aims to bring the spirituality of great saints like Mata Sabari into the modern era. Our goal is to develop Sabari Saranasramam as a center for social transformation and spiritual awakening, serving as a source of inspiration for all Sabarimala pilgrims. The project for Sabari Saranasramam has been designed with these objectives in mind. Additionally, the *Saranashramam aims to support and empower the tribal community of 'Poonkavanam' through education, vocational training and other resources.*



*Sri Suresh Gopi,
Hon'ble Minister of state for
petroleum & natural gas and
ministry of tourism, Govt. of
India, inaugurate
Manikanta Gurukulam at
Sabari Saranashramam*

Annadana Kendram

Since 2009, an Ayyappa Seva Kendra has been operating under the auspices of Sabari Saranashramam. This center provides free meals to over 2000 Ayyappa devotees daily, along with free accommodation and medical care throughout the pilgrimage season from November to January each year.

We have identified several projects for immediate implementation at Sabari Saranasramam. In the first phase, we plan to

construct a two-story building to house an "Annadana Kendra" (food distribution center) and a hospital at Koonamkara. This project serves a dual purpose, providing facilities for Ayyappa devotees during the pilgrimage season while also serving as a rehabilitation center for the tribal folk of 'Poonkavanam' also. *The estimated cost of the Annadana Kendram and Hospital complex is Rs. 2,35,00,000 /-*

*Proposed building of Annadana Kendram &
Hospital at Koonamkaraka*



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Parking area of vehicles

Appeal

We appeal to all devotees to contribute their might for the successful completion of the project so as to enable us to provide maximum basic facilities to the devotees and our tribal brothers through the Annadana Kendra, Rehabilitation centre and Hospital.

Those who wish to contribute may please send the amount by cheque/demand draft in favour of Sabari Saranashram Trust. Details of bank accounts are given below.....●

Bank : **State Bank of India**
 Account No. : **67090269730**
 Branch : **Vadasserikkara**
 IFSC Code : **SBIN0070093**
 Swift Code : **77040220052**



*Donations are exempted under 80 G of
 Income Tax Act. AAITS7752BE2009701*

- *Trustee:*
Sri. Kummanam Rajasekharan
Former Governor of Mizoram
- *President*
Sri. V. K. Vishwanathan
- *Secretary*
Sri. V. N. Ramachandran Nedumudy
- *Treasurer*
Sri. A. R. Mohan





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