

MUSIC  
**Riding on a local thought**

teaching and reasearch, they are equally committed to upholding a tradition and furthering the cause of Carnatic music.

As most rasikas know, it is not easy to offer a rich fare of classical music 'free' to the audience. The expenses involved are staggering. Himamshu and his associates have been able to mobilise funds from philanthropists, affluent rasikas and also government agencies, all of whom have been generous in their support all these years. The organisational aspect is the most challenging as one can imagine. In the age of email and internet, things make look easy as arranging for accomodation, travel, tickets etc. can be done without too much fuss. But till recently these had to be done only by running around, finding people with time and energy and co-ordinating various activities connected with the conduct of a ten-day music festival. This, Himamshu was able to do because he had the energy and the commitment and, more importantly, a group of sincere associates who have lent admirable support to him for a worthy cause.

While saluting the efforts put in by members of the Trust and others, one feels a little apprehension about the future.

People genuinely interested in classical music will have to be really active and support the organisers of rich events. One cannot rely on corporate sponsorship or government agencies alone. The larger public which gets some of the rewards of such organisational efficiency should be able to come forward to mobilise both funds and personnel so that events of this kind can be continued and new events can be promoted elsewhere. One has to appreciate the musicians and rasikas who have made every year's programme a huge success. One cannot but admire the organiser's efforts. At the same time it is important to remember that what has been achieved in the past 55 years has been the result of untiring efforts put in by everyone and that should be continued by future generations.

began in the early 1960's as a modest three-day affair, the festival features now almost all the best that Carnatic music offers today and also some prominent Hindustani music exponents. The late Smt. Soundaramma Venkatesh, a municipal concillor, was the driving force in the early years. C.R. Himamshu, the present secretary joined the team of organisers when he was in his team and has been instrumental in making the event a gala affair today. His mother, the late Rajamma C.R. Gowda was Mysuru T. Chowdiah's niece and was an accomplished vocalist herself. Himamshu has with him a team of dedicated volunteers drawn from different walks of life. While pursuing different vocations from shop-keeping to



▲ **AN ILLUSTRIOUS JOURNEY** The organisation has brought some of the best musicians to its stage. Himamshu (extreme right) works tirelessly to keep the festival together

The 8th Cross Ganesha Festival in Mysore has been hosting music concerts for 55 years. Thanks to the untiring efforts of C.R. Himamshu, the three day festival is now a ten day festival with all the top musicians performing in it

S. NARAYANAN

If one happens to be in Mysore in August-September when the Ganesha Festival is celebrated all over the city, in private and public spaces, one cannot fail to notice a very prominent event, a 10-day Carnatic music bonanza in the lovely Mysore suburb, V.V. Mohalla, popularly known as Vontikoppal. To be precise, it is the "8th Cross Ganesha Festival" (as the residents call it) which is the main attraction, chiefly because it is exclusively an affair connected with classical music of the highest quality. The music concerts are not held in a

specially built auditorium but in the open under a tent (once temporary, but now permanent), where you have to huddle together if it rains. Even when it is pouring one can see people standing or sitting in ordinary plastic chairs listening to Sanjay Subramanyam or T.M. Krishna or Chitraveena Ravikiran offering an elaborate alapana or neraval or swaraprastara. The concerts are not ticketed and one can get to hear all the stalwarts from all parts of the country. A podium with the idol of Lord Ganesha at the back is the concert stage. The concerts

begin at 6.30 p.m. and go on till 10 p.m. or beyond, depending on the 'mood' of the musician. The audience is made up of local residents and those living in nearby

localities. The atmosphere is both joyous and serene, and the quality is of a very high order. The audience includes knowledgeable rasikas, aspiring youngsters,

and a fair number of the newly initiated. The concerts during this season are arranged by SPVGMCTrust has been running the show for past 55 years. It

**The concert line up**

On September 5, there will be a nadaswara recital by Krishnamurthy and party. On September 6, there will be a vocal duet by Trichur Brothers, Krishna Mohan and Ramkumar Mohan. They will be accompanied by L. Ramakrishnan on the

violin, Trichur R. Mohan on the mridangam, and Kovai Suresh on the ghatam. On September 7, there will be a chitraveena recital by Ravikiran, who will be accompanied by Akkarai Subbalakshmi, K.V. Prasad

on mridangam, and G.S. Ramanujan on the ghatam. On September 8, Carnatic vocal recital by T.M. Krishna, R.K. Sriramkumar on the violin, Manoj Siva on the mridangam, and Guruprasanna on the ghatam.



# Down The Memory Lane

By K. Vijaya Kumar

Former Jt. Director of Information & Publicity

## Witness to 55 years of Heritage Musical Journey on 8th Cross

It is just not numerical number '8' but their logo. It has significantly occupied a very prominent place in classical music (mostly Karnatak) scene of culturally rich Mysuru. It is just a small stretch of road in 8th Cross of an Old Extension of our city — V.V. Mohalla — off Kalidasa Road. But one cannot make out what a magnetic musical attraction this small stretch of road has to attract renowned classical musicians to perform and eagerly waiting *kala rasikas* to listen to them every year during Ganesh festival. A musical treat, indeed, for nearly two weeks. It although looks like even the presiding deity Lord Ganesh wants to hear a good concert. Looking at these most attractive flex-type panels with the photos of all



Of course, he has the great encouragement under art patron K.V. Murthy, President R. Vasudevamurthy and Vice-President M. Lakshminarayan. He also has a band of dedicated colleagues in organising the festival — Joint Secretary N. Nagaraj, Treasurer C. Cheluvraj, Trustees T.S. Venugopal, Shylaja, Amresh Das, M.K. Sridhar and Vasanth.



great musicians that our country has produced, one cannot believe that it is a stage behind grand decoration for this 55th Year of Heritage Music Festival. The pictures of Ustad Bismillah Khan, M.S. Subbulakshmi and Yehudi Menuhin are decorated on the top as it is being observed as their centenary year. Name any artistes on the either side of the picture panels, they have all performed here over the past 55 years. And that is again perhaps, the glory (ಮಹಿಮೆ) of this 8th Cross. Somebody had described this as 'Divine Dais.'

As I started living in Jayalakshmi-puram across V.V. Mohalla over 45 years ago in 1970, in between except transfers, and again living in V.V. Mohalla, very close to 8th Cross from 2000, I am a witness to its popularity and how well and meticulously programmes planned and conducted. I had seen in those days chairs were not provided and people used to sit on the large cotton carpets (ಜಮಖಾನ) spread on the full stretch of the road.

### 'Special person Himamshu'



This is how Magsaysay Awardee top musician T.M. Krishna has described C.R. Himamshu, who is the brain behind in organising this festival and who has grown along with it. As a tireless Secretary continuously for nearly 50

years belonging to the family of the legendary violinist T. Chowdiah (younger sister's grandson), he commands high respect from all these well-known artistes and they would wait for his invitation to perform without saying 'No.'

I too know him for a long time closely and his mother late Rajamma C.R. Gowda was a popular musician. His brother C.R. Harish was working in my Department as head of the Vehicle Section.

Another unique capacity of him was to have close contacts with music-loving senior officers of the government like R. Krishnakumar, Chiranjeev Singh and many others and would get their support for the programmes.

Himamshu regrets that the annual grant sanctioned by Chiranjeev Singh when he was the Secretary of Kannada & Culture Department in 1985 to host the programme has been discontinued since the last three years. He earnestly appeals the Department to continue the support.

Those elders who have enjoyed and seen this Music Festival since its beginning in 1962 may share their experiences with interesting anecdotes, if any.

### Stage for Gamaka Vaachana

It is heartening that the organisers have provided some time for *Kavya Vaachana* before the music concert, arranged by city's well-known *Parampare* from last year. But only a few listeners are seen attending this rich-valuable programme. Here I would like to quote what our great DVG has said on Kumara Vyasa Bharata just in one line (as mentioned by Dr. N.K. Ramasheshan in his discourse):

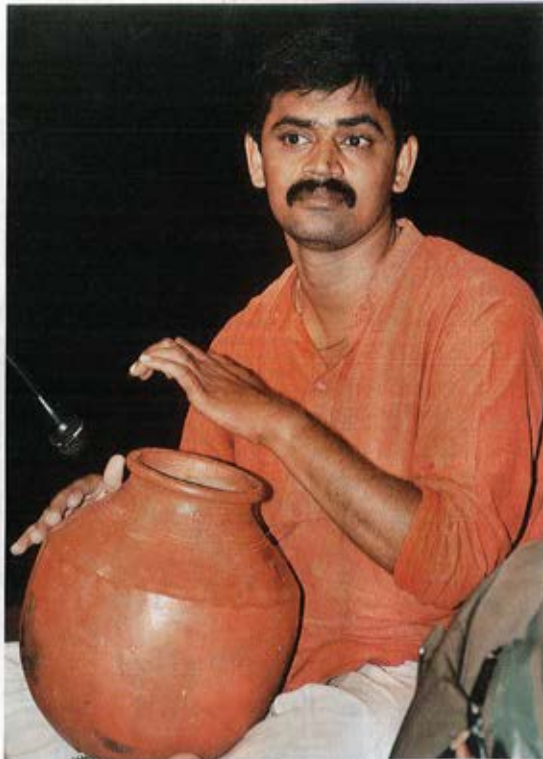
'This is perhaps, the grandest epic poem in the language (Kannada), for vastness of conception, for vividness of portraiture.'

Let more people develop a taste to listen to *Gamaka Vaachana* and encourage this age-old art.

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[Photos: M.N. Lakshminarayana Yadav]





ಅಂತರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಮಟ್ಟದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಸಿದ್ಧವಾಗಿರುವ ಈ ಪಾತ್ರೆಗಳನ್ನು, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ವಿವಿಧ ಭಾಗಗಳಿಂದ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸಿ, ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ಸಂರಕ್ಷಿಸಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪ್ರದರ್ಶಿಸಲು ಸರ್ಕಾರವು ಈ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮವನ್ನು ಆಯೋಜಿಸಿದೆ. ಈ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮವು ಈ ವರ್ಷದ ಅಕ್ಟೋಬರ್ 15 ರಂದು ಮುಕ್ತಾಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಈ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮವು ಈ ವರ್ಷದ ಅಕ್ಟೋಬರ್ 15 ರಂದು ಮುಕ್ತಾಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಈ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮವು ಈ ವರ್ಷದ ಅಕ್ಟೋಬರ್ 15 ರಂದು ಮುಕ್ತಾಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.



81 ವರ್ಷದ ಹಿರಿಯರಾದ

1964 ರಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ಥಾಪಿಸಿದ ಈ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯು ಈ ವರ್ಷದ ಅಕ್ಟೋಬರ್ 15 ರಂದು ಮುಕ್ತಾಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಈ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯು ಈ ವರ್ಷದ ಅಕ್ಟೋಬರ್ 15 ರಂದು ಮುಕ್ತಾಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

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# Music never stops here

H M Aravind | TNN

There was nothing unusual when four-year-old C R Himamshu took interest in music for he belonged to a family of musicians. At 59 now, there is nothing that can part his association with the world of music. For over 50 years, he has been treating Mysoreans to Indian classical music.

Ahead of Dasara festivities, Vonti Koppal in the city hosts musical events, thanks to Prasanna Vidya Ganapathi Mahotsava Charitable Trust that gets prominent musicians to the city enriching its cultural quotient. Every Ganesha festival, the Trust conducts classical music events. "I was crazy about Indian classical music and felt it would suffer if not promoted. That is what we are trying to do," he explains. His grandfather Mysore T Chowdaiah, violinist, had told him that music should reach people. "That was my inspiration," he says. His mother Rajamma was a vocalist and taught music at the Fine Arts College of the University of Mysore.

Though Himamshu loved music, he took to organizing music shows. A resident of Vonti Koppal,



pal, he got involved with the Prasanna Ganapathi Mahotsava Committee in 1962, which was later registered as a Trust in 1985. Every year, the committee installs Ganesha idols at the 8th cross in Vonti Koppal.

A follower of Mahatma Gandhi and former Union minister Tulsidas Dasappa, he quit studies after SSLC and was inclined towards politics, yet he didn't give up his passion for music.

His inspiration was his grandfather Chowdaiah, also known as Violin Chowdaiah, who designed the seven-stringed violin to match up to the accompanying vocalist. "From Lalgudi Jayaraman to Maharajpuram Santam, from K R Mahalingam to Mandolin Srinivas, many have performed at Vonti Koppal," he says. "His devotion to music is unquestionable. He has helped many youngsters to focus on music keenly," says vocalist Manasa Nayana. The only concern for Himamshu is that the government support for music is



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not encouraging. "Mysore is regarded as a cultural capital, but there is no support to promote cultural activities," he says.

# ಸಂಗೀತ ಹಿತಾನುಭವ ಈ ಹಿಮಾಂಶು

ಅರಮನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಗೀತೋತ್ಸವ ಜಗದಗಲದ ಕಲಾವಿದರಿಂದ ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಈ ಪರಂಪರೆಯನ್ನು 50 ವರ್ಷಗಳಿಂದ ನಡೆಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬರುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ಇಲ್ಲಿಂದ ವಿಕಾಸ. ಅದೇ ವಾಣಿ ವಿಲಾಸ ಮೊಹಲ್ಲಾದ 8ನೇ ಕ್ರಾಸ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿರುವ ತ್ರಿಪ್ರಸನ್ನ ವಿದ್ಯಾಗಣಪತಿ ಮಹೋತ್ಸವ ಸಮಿತಿಯ ಸಂಗೀತ ಕೈಂಕರ್ಯ. ಇದೀಗ ಪರಂಪರೆಯ ಸಂಗೀತವಾಗಿಯೇ ಸಾಕ್ಷಿಯಾಗಿದೆ.

ಈ ಸಂಗೀತ ಉತ್ಸವದ ಪ್ರವರ್ತಕ, ಪೋಷಕ ಸಿ.ಆರ್.ಹಿಮಾಂಶು ಮುಖ್ಯರು. ಅನೂಜಾನವಾಗಿ 50 ವರ್ಷಗಳಿಂದ ಸತತ ಸಂಗೀತ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಗಳನ್ನು ರೂಪಿಸಿ ನೀಡುತ್ತಾ ಬಂದಿರುವುದು ಇವರ ವಿಶೇಷ.

ಸಂಗೀತ ಕುಟುಂಬದಲ್ಲಿ ಹುಟ್ಟಿದವರು. ಪಿಟೀಲು ಚಿಡೆಯನವರ ತಂಗಿ ಚಂದ್ರಮ್ಮಳಿ. ಅವರು ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರೀಯ ಸಂಗೀತದ ಹಾಡುಗಾರರು. ಇವರ ಮಗಳೇ ರಾಜಮ್ಮ ಇವರ ಮಗ ಸಿ.ಆರ್.ಹಿಮಾಂಶು.

ರಾಜಮ್ಮನವರು ಶಾಸ್ತ್ರೀಯ ಸಂಗೀತದ ವಿರುಷ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ಸಂಗೀತದ ಪರಂಪರೆಗೆ ಇವರ ಸೇತುವೆಯಾಗಿ ನಿಂತರು. 1962ರಲ್ಲಿ ಗಣಪತಿ ಸಮಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಸ್ಥಾಪಿಸಿ ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಗಳನ್ನು ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಾ ಬಂದ ಇವರು 1970ರಿಂದ ಸಂಗೀತದ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಗಳಿಗೆಯೇ ಗಣೇಶೋತ್ಸವವನ್ನು ಮೀಸಲಿಟ್ಟರು. ಮೈಸೂರಿನ ಸಂಗೀತಾಸಕ್ತರು ಕಡಿಮೆಯಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಎಂಬ ಅಪಸ್ವರ ಈ ಸಮಿತಿಗೆ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಏಕೆಂದರೆ ನಗರದ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ದಿಕ್ಕುಗಳಿಂದಲೂ ಸಂಗೀತಾಸಕ್ತರು ಬಂದು ಆಲಿಸಿ ಆನಂದ ಪಡೆದು ಹೋಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಭಾರತದ ಸಂಗೀತ ದಿಗ್ಗಜರಲ್ಲಾ ಬಂದು ಹಾಡಿ ಆನಂದ ತುಂಬಿ ಹೋಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇವರೆಲ್ಲಾ ಯಾವ ಮುಂಗಡವನ್ನು ಅಪೇಕ್ಷಿಸದೆ ಎಟುಕಬಹುದಾದ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ಸಂಭಾವನೆಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದು ಹರ್ಷಚಿತ್ರರಾಗಿ ಹೋಗುವುದು ಇಲ್ಲಿನ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣೇಭೂತರು ಹಿಮಾಂಶು ಅವರೇ. ಇವರ ಮಾತುಕತೆ ಕಲಾವಿದರಿಗೆ ಗೌರವ, ಸಜ್ಜತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಸಂಸ್ಕಾರವೇ ಕಾರಣ.

ತಂದೆ ಸಿ.ಆರ್.ಗೌಡ ರೇಷ್ಮೆ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸೇವೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿದವರು. ಅವರ ಅಪೇಕ್ಷೆಯಂತೆ ತಾಯಿಯ ಮಮತೆಯಂತೆ ಇವರು ಸಂಗೀತಕ್ಕೆ ಪೋಷಕರಾಗಿ ನಿಂತು ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ರಾಯಭಾರಿಯೂ ಆದರು. ಅವತ್ತಿನಿಂದ ಇವತ್ತಿನವರೆಗೆ ಸಮಾನ ಮನಸ್ಸರನ್ನು ಜತೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಇಂಥದೊಂದು ವಾರ್ಷಿಕ



1962ರಲ್ಲಿ ಗಣಪತಿ ಸಮಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಸ್ಥಾಪಿಸಿ ಸಾಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಕ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಗಳನ್ನು ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಾ ಬಂದ ಹಿಮಾಂಶು 1970 ರಿಂದ ಸಂಗೀತದ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಗಳಿಗೆಯೇ ಗಣೇಶೋತ್ಸವ ವನ್ನು ಮೀಸಲಿಟ್ಟರು. ಮೈಸೂರಿನ ಸಂಗೀತಾಸಕ್ತರು ಕಡಿಮೆಯಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಎಂಬ ಅಪಸ್ವರ ಈ ಸಮಿತಿಗೆ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಏಕೆಂದರೆ ನಗರದ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ದಿಕ್ಕುಗಳಿಂದಲೂ ಸಂಗೀತಾಸಕ್ತರು ಬಂದು ಆಲಿಸಿ ಆನಂದ ಪಡೆದು ಹೋಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮವನ್ನು ಅಚ್ಚುಕಟ್ಟಾಗಿ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಾ ಬಂದಿರುವುದು ಮೆಚ್ಚುಗೆಯ ಅಂಶ. ಮೊದಮೊದಲು ಸ್ವಲ್ಪವೇ ವಿಧ್ವಾಸರು, ಎದುರಿಸಿಗಳು ಬಂದು ಹಾಡಿ ಹೋಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ನಂತರ ಭಾರತ ಖ್ಯಾತಿಯ ಸಂಗೀತ ದಿಗ್ಗಜರು ಬರುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ಅರಮನೆಯ ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿಯ ಮುಂದುವರಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ನೆನಪಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದು ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ಮಹಿಮೆಯೂ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಭಾವನಾತ್ಮಕವಾಗಿ ಸಂಗೀತ ರೂಪರನ್ನು ಅರ್ಪಿಸಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾಯುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಸುಮಾರು ಸಾವಿರಕ್ಕೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಸಂಗೀತಗಾರರು ಕಛೇರಿ ಕೊಟ್ಟಿರುವುದು ಮೈಸೂರಿನ ಒಂದು ಸುವರ್ಣವಕಾಶವೇ ಸರಿ. ಇವರ ವಾಸ್ತವ್ಯ, ಆತಿಥ್ಯ ಎಲ್ಲವನ್ನೂ ಸಂಭಾಳಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಬರುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಹಿಮಾಂಶು. ಇದೊಂದು ಹಿತಾನುಭವವೇ ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೆ ಅವರು. ಈ ಸಮಿತಿಗೆ ಸಂಗೀತ ಪೋಷಕರು, ಗಣ್ಯರು ಇರುವುದು ಹಿಮಾಂಶು ಗೊಂದು ತಂಡ ಸ್ಪೂರ್ತಿಯಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸಂಗೀತದ ವಿಧ್ವಾಸಿಗಳನ್ನು ಯಾರನ್ನೇ ಹೆಸರಿಸಿದರೂ ಅವರೆಲ್ಲರೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮ ನೀಡಿರುವವರೇ ಆಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಸೇವೆಗೆ ಇವರೆಲ್ಲರೂ ಪಾತ್ರರಾಗಿರುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಚಿರಋಣ ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೆ ಹಿಮಾಂಶು. ಇವರಿಗೆ ಸಂಗೀತಗಾರರ, ಸಂಗೀತದ ಪರಿಭಾಷೆ, ವ್ಯಾಕರಣ, ದೇಹ ಭಾಷೆ, ಆಳವಾದ ಅನುಭವ ಈ ಕಾರ್ಯದಿಂದ ಸಿಕ್ಕಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಸಂತೋಷಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಇಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೇ ನಾನು ಧನ್ಯ ಎಂದೇ ಭಾವಿಸಿರುವ ಇವರು ಸಂಗೀತ ರೂಪರನ್ನು ಶ್ರೇಷ್ಠ ಶ್ರೋತೃಗಳಿಂದೇ ಭಾವಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇಂಥ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ ಅನೇಕ ಹಿರಿಯ, ಕಿರಿಯ ಸಹೃದಯರ ಅಶೀರ್ವಾದವೂ, ಪೋಷಕತ್ವವೂ, ಕೈಂಕರ್ಯವೂ ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣ ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೆ.

■ ಈಚನೂರು ಕುಮಾರ್



ನಮ್ಮೂರು  
ನಮ್ಮವರು