

When the Lord Chose a Hilltop in the Jungle
Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swami Temple,
Tirumalayapalem
Reawakened by Seva, Restored by Grace

Mahavatar Babaji TadEkam Foundation

***Gokavaram Mandal, East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh 37 km from
Rajahmundry | 15 km from Korukonda***

There is a teaching that runs like a sacred thread through everything TadEkam does:

Seva Bhi Sadhna. Seva Bhi Dhyana. Sadhna/ Dhyana Hi Shakti.

Service is not charity. Service is inner worship. And sometimes, the highest form of that worship is to walk toward a forgotten hillock at the entrance of a jungle village in East Godavari — to look up at its broken steps and crumbling walls, at a sanctum that has stood in silence for centuries — and say:

I see you. I have come.

That is exactly what happened at Tirumalayapalem.

A Swayambhu Kshetram — A Hill That Chose Itself

In the village of Tirumalayapalem, Gokavaram Mandal, East Godavari District, there stands a cone-shaped hillock at the very western entrance of the village. It rises from the earth the way a sankalpa rises from the heart — quietly, deliberately, as if it had always known its purpose.

This is no ordinary hill. It is a **Swayambhu Kshetram** — a self-manifested, divinely chosen sacred site. The Lord did not wait to be installed here. He chose this place. He was already present in the stone, in the air, in the ancient stillness of this hilltop above the East Godavari jungles long before any human hand laid the first brick.

One of the most ancient temples in all of East Godavari District crowns its summit. How many centuries it has stood, no living person can say with certainty. But look at the great, gnarled tree at the foot of the hill — its roots buried deep in the earth long before any of us drew our first breath — and you begin to feel the antiquity of this place. Trees like this do not grow beside ordinary ground. They grow where something enduring has chosen to dwell.

The climb is 200 steps. Two hundred steps of stone, ascending through the warmth of the East Godavari air, through the breathing presence of the surrounding jungle — each step bringing you closer to the stillness that only elevated, sacred places hold.

And for centuries, the temple that waited at the top was crumbling. Its steps were broken. Its walls carried the weight of seasons uncounted. And its sanctum was empty — no idols, no murti, no installed form of the presiding deity.

And yet the divine Presence never left.

Swayambhu places do not need human installation to be sacred. The Lord was already there, waiting — as Narasimha once waited inside a pillar, as Varaha once waited in the cosmic depths — for the right moment to be revealed.

The Lord Who Protects — Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swami in the Varaha Roopam

The name of the presiding deity carries within it the weight of three divine truths, held in a single sacred form.

Varaha — the Boar Avatar, third of Vishnu's Dashavatara — who descended into the cosmic depths to rescue Bhudevi, the Earth Herself, when she was dragged into darkness by the demon Hiranyaksha. He is the Lord who does not abandon the world, however deep it may sink. His very form — the immense, gentle power of the boar lifting the Earth on his tusks — is the image of seva made divine. He serves the Earth. He carries what others have dropped.

Narasimha — the Man-Lion, the fourth Avatar — who burst through a stone pillar at the precise moment that the child-devotee Prahlada cried out for protection. Not from the sky, not from the earth, not at dawn or at dusk —

but from the *pillar itself*, in the threshold between all things, at the exact moment he was needed. After slaying the demon Hiranyakashipu to protect his devotee Prahlada, Lord Narasimha's wrath could not be calmed. The child devotee Prahlada prayed to Goddess Lakshmi to soothe Narasimha's fury.

Lakshmi — the Goddess of grace, abundance, and divine compassion — who alone could bring peace to that fierce and blazing love. Her calming presence makes the fierce expression of Narasimha serene. Where Narasimha is fire, Lakshmi is the rain that does not extinguish but transforms.

Together — Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swami — this is a deity who rescues, protects, and blesses all three worlds. It is believed that the deity is capable of fulfilling the wishes of devotees. Those who have climbed these 200 steps in faith for generations know this not as belief, but as lived experience.

That such a Lord would choose a hilltop above the paddy fields and tank-gardens of a quiet East Godavari village — standing watch over his people through drought and flood and the slow turning of centuries — this is not coincidence. This is *sankalpa*. This is divine will, expressed in stone and jungle and unbroken devotion.

The Guru's Word

Guruji Naushir — disciple of the immortal Himalayan Mahayogi Mahavatar Babaji, and the living north star of the Mahavatar Babaji TadEkam Foundation — had clear instructions for his sevakas. TadEkam's seva would flow first through the heart of India's Southern States and then into Central India — not as a strategic plan drawn on paper, but as a dharmic calling, as precise and unhurried as the will of That One — *TadEkam* — from which all arises.

When the villagers of Tirumalayapalem came forward with folded hands and quiet, unassuming hope — asking for help to restore the temple on their ancient hill — Guruji's guidance was already waiting, like the temple itself. TadEkam heard the call without hesitation.

The sevakas did not come with blueprints. They came with bhakti.

The Climb — With Everything on Their Heads

Vehicles could reach only halfway up the hill. Beyond that, the jungle took over — the path narrowing and steepening, alive with birdsong and the breathing presence of old trees.

So, the villagers carried everything on their heads.

Stone by stone. Slab by slab. Pillar by pillar.

Up the broken steps, through the heat, one head-load at a time — they carried the materials needed to restore what time had worn away, to expand what devotion had outgrown, to give a waiting Lord a worthy home.

There is something profoundly Vedic about this image. This is precisely how the ancient Shilpis — the divine craftsmen of Bharat — once built the great temples of the South. No cranes. No machinery to mediate between human intention and sacred stone. Only hands, and hearts, and the hill itself as the altar.

The small circulating area around the sanctum was expanded — raised on pillars, covered with a proper stone Mandapam — so that devotees could circumambulate with dignity, with shelter from the sun, with the feeling that this place had been thought about, cared for, and loved. The broken steps were restored, one by one, so that no pilgrim would stumble on their ascent. The old walls were repaired and strengthened.

Every brick placed was a prayer. Every head-load carried up those slopes was an act of surrender to Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swami — who, after all, once carried the entire Earth on His tusks.

The Arrival of the Murtis

Then came the moment that transforms a structure of stone into a living shrine — the arrival of the divine forms.

The murtis were brought from Mahabalipuram — that sacred coastal town of Tamil Nadu where, for over a thousand years, master sculptors have been turning consecrated stone into living divinity. In the heart of Mahabalipuram's craftsmanship lies a divine story — one where stone transforms into a symbol of faith and devotion, where artisans breathe life

into every creation. These sculptors carry forward a tradition of generations, producing works of quality and intricate craftsmanship, known across India and the world.

In the Sanatana understanding, a properly consecrated murti is not a representation of the deity. It *is* the deity. The divine Presence enters and inhabits the form. The stone becomes the living Lord.

When the murtis of Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swami in His Varaha Roopam arrived at Tirumalayapalem — carried up the same 200 steps, on the same loving shoulders that had carried the stone and mortar before them — something ancient and dormant on that hillock awoke completely.

The sanctum that had been empty for centuries was empty no longer.

The Lord had come home. The long wait was over.

And if you stand before Him today — in that Mandapam built by the hands of ordinary people who carried extraordinary love up a jungle hill — you will feel it. Something in the air of that place that is difficult to name but impossible to miss.

What You See from the Summit

Stand at the top of that cone-shaped hill and let your eyes rest on what surrounds you.

The jungle breathes on all sides — ancient, layered, green beyond green, full of birdsong that shifts with every hour of the day. This is the forest of East Godavari — one of the great living lungs of Andhra, holding within its canopy secrets that no map has fully recorded.

And below, the village of Tirumalayapalem — spread out like a painting, like an offering laid at the foot of the sky. The houses small from this height. The water tanks shimmering where the sun catches them. The gardens of banana and coconut. The paddy fields stretching outward, their colour shifting season by season from the pale gold of harvest to the deep, wet green of new growth.

The villagers speak of this view with undisguised, unself-conscious joy. To stand here and see your own village from above — to see the tanks your grandparents built, the fields that feed your children, the houses where your

family's stories have unfolded across generations — is to feel, suddenly and completely, that this place is precious. That it is held. That it is seen.

Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swami has been seeing it from this hilltop for centuries.

His expression is fierce — protective and wrathful — yet serene. And so it is with this hilltop. The climb demands real effort. The jungle does not pretend to be tame. The steps are steep enough that you feel the ascent in your legs and lungs. But at the summit, there is only peace. The particular peace of a place where the divine has chosen to dwell, and where human devotion has risen to meet it.

2

Utsavam — Five Days of Celebration

Every year, in the first or second week of May, Tirumalayapalem comes fully, joyously alive.

The village committee organises a five-day festival in grand and traditional style — a celebration that belongs to the entire community, young and old, those who live nearby and those who have moved away and return for these days like pilgrims returning to their source. The sounds of devotional music rise up the hill. The fragrance of flowers offered to the Lord mingles with the jungle air. Families gather. Old friendships are renewed. Children who have never known any other version of these days will carry these memories for the rest of their lives.

This is Sanatana Dharma as it was always meant to be lived — not locked inside philosophy or confined to the pages of scripture, but celebrated in the streets, in the fields, in the voices of an entire village gathered around a hilltop temple that their ancestors knew and their grandchildren will know.

The festival is the village's annual act of gratitude to the Lord who chose their hillock as His home — Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swami, who has watched over Tirumalayapalem, from this summit above the jungle, for more centuries than any living memory can reach.

What Seva Does to a Sacred Place

Since TadEkam completed the restoration, the temple has grown in ways that no construction plan could have foreseen. Word spread through Gokavaram Mandal and beyond. Devotees began arriving from surrounding villages and from as far as Rajahmundry, 37 kilometres away. The temple has been further developed and embellished — the community that once brought the request to TadEkam with folded hands has now taken full, proud, loving ownership of its ancient gift.

This is always the TadEkam way. The Foundation arrives at the call of Babaji and Guruji. It does the seva that is asked of it. And then it steps back — and lets the Divine, and the community, and the living tradition of Sanatana Dharma take over.

Because TadEkam knows what Guruji Naushir always taught:

We are instruments. The work is His. The grace is His. We are only the hands.

And what hands they were — climbing 200 steps with construction material on their heads, restoring a Swayambhu Kshetram to its rightful glory, carrying murtis from Mahabalipuram so that a Lord who had long been present but never formally enshrined could at last receive His devotees in a home worthy of His grace.

A Temple in the Larger River of Seva

The Tirumalayapalem temple is one luminous bead on a long mala of seva that TadEkam has been weaving across the land — from the village of Kotturu in Guntur district, where a forgotten tribal community found water, light, and dignity; to the sacred bouldering rocks of Kangundi in Chittoor district, where Swami Dattapadanandji recognised a living Shivling with vibrations approaching those of Mount Kailash; to the forests and river banks where TadEkam now turns its attention to the great Jal Tattva — the sacred Water Element.

Guruji Naushir's guidance is always expanding, always deepening. The Godavari Pushkaralu and Kumbh strategy for 2026–2028 is the next unfolding: beginning with Godavari Maa and her twelve Pushkaralu river-sisters, with the eventual vision of embracing all 400 rivers of this sacred land.

Every river. Every hilltop. Every forgotten village. Every crumbling temple where the Lord has been waiting, quietly, for someone to arrive.

Guruji Naushir left his physical form in August 2022. But those who do TadEkam's seva will tell you — he has not stopped arriving. He arrives in the recognition of a call that needs answering. He arrives in the willingness to climb 200 steps with stone on your head. He arrives in the quiet joy of watching a sanctum that was empty become full.

He arrives in the act of seva itself.

2

Come, Climb the Hill

If you find yourself near Korukonda in East Godavari — 15 kilometres away — travel to Tirumalayapalem. Find the hill at the western entrance of the village. Stand before the ancient tree at its foot, and let it remind you of how long this place has held its sacred charge.

Then climb.

Two hundred steps. Take your time. Let the jungle accompany you. Feel the effort in your body, and let it be part of your offering.

At the top, the Mandapam awaits — built by hands that loved what they were building. The murtis of Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swami are looking out over the same jungle, the same paddy fields, the same village below that they have watched over across the long centuries of this Swayambhu Kshetram's existence.

Stand before Him. Make your offering. Even if it is only your presence. Even if it is only the breath in your lungs and the sincerity of the climb.

Then turn. And look out at the world below — the houses, the tanks, the gardens, the fields, the unbroken canopy of East Godavari green — all of it held, all this time, in the gaze of the Lord on the hill.

You will understand, then, why the villagers return here every year. Why they climb these steps in the heat of May for five days of celebration. Why they carried materials on their heads up a jungle hill and called it not labour, but love.

Because some places choose us before we choose them.

And this hilltop in Tirumalayapalem — this ancient, self-manifested, living Kshetram above the forests of East Godavari — has been choosing its devotees for a very, very long time.

Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swami ki Jai.

TadEkam — That One, from which all arises. In whom all is held. To whom all returns.

Seva Bhi Sadhna. Sadhna Hi Shakti.

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YouTube links to the temple and TadEkam's seva

https://youtu.be/DVrx_qUEDDw?si=7B4sZan7O_McaqRB

<https://youtu.be/FltalQPey3M?si=a0XoLDRcpfShzi8F>

Story by Major General Sanjay Vishwasrao after his visit to the Temple in 2018. It based on inputs provided by Head of Family Smt Seema Khaire and Sevaks Shri BKM Rao, Smt Madhvi and Smt Sudha.