

Colourful Religious Pageant in Bangalore

[30-10-1971]

Citizens of Bangalore to-day had a glimpse of the rich traditions of the Hindu religion and culture in the form of a huge procession with His Holiness Sri Jayendra Saraswati Swami of Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham as the central figure.

Thousands of people lined the main thoroughfares of the city to witness the colourful procession and to have 'darshan' of Sri Swamiji who was seated in a flower palanquin. The people who stood ten deep in some areas like Malleswaram, Seshadripuram, Gandhinagar and Avenue Road, bowed in reverence to Sri Swamiji.

The procession organised by the Hindu Samaja Utsava Committee, which started from Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Math premises in Malleswaram in the evening, slowly wended its way along the four-mile route before reaching the Fort High School grounds in the night.

Cars and scooters carrying the portraits of great saints and preachers of Hindu religion headed the procession. They were followed by a decorated elephant, horses and bullocks. Kavadi dance, and dummy horse dance groups lent colour to the procession while the traditional "Kambasale Nrutya", "Pattadata Kunita" and "Silambu dance" made it attractive.

Tableaux of "Vighneswara", "Yathis in Tapovana", "Kailasa with Siva and Parvati holding a court", and many others depicting Hindu culture and mythology made the procession a memorable one.

Besides the Bhajan groups of various religious institutions, groups of women joined the procession singing devotional music. Women with lighted lamps and men reciting the Vedas went in front of the palanquin carrying the Swamiji.

At the end of the procession, His Holiness addressed the huge gathering that had gathered at the Fort High School ground.

Thousands of people had gathered near the Fort High School to receive the Swamiji. There was a display of fireworks. The Swamiji in his address emphasised that there was no basis for the fear entertained by some that the Hindu Dharma was on the decline. On the other hand it was bound to prosper and spread throughout the world in the next decade.

"Hinduism was indestructible and its oneness and universality had received a setback in the stress of politics and the incessant propaganda against it by the votaries of one or two other religions", the Swamiji told pressmen here on Thursday.

On untouchability, His Holiness said it was needless to expatiate elaborately on the need for the removal of that evil. Less talk on the issue and more of quiet and concrete action would automatically solve the problem.

Condemning the evil of the dowry system, His Holiness drew attention to the meaning of the term 'Varadakshine' and said according to the Hindu customs, a boy had to offer 'dakshina' to the bride at the time of the wedding. It signified the high sanctity attached to the institution of marriage in which the bride was looked upon as the "Griha Lakshmi". Unfortunately, he said, instead of offering the 'dakshina' to the bride, the bridegroom had been demanding it for himself. The sacred institution had degenerated into a sinful commercial proposition causing untold misery to the poor parents of girls.

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In order to weed out the dowry evil, His Holiness said the co-operation of the parents and of the bridegrooms was called for. It was time, he said, young men asserted themselves and put their foot down firmly on suggestions of dowry associated with the Hindu marriages which, he said, had turned out to be a joke attended by pomp and waste. The Swamiji said that whenever he received invitations for weddings seeking his blessings, he had made it clear that his blessings would be there on condition that dowry was eschewed. Many had been writing to him affirming their distaste for the evil practice of dowry.

His Holiness dismissed the current controversy on the date of the origin of the Ramayana and did not want any confusion to be created to detract from the greatness of the epic and the high esteem in which it was held by the people over the ages.

His Holiness told a questioner that the Vishva Hindu Parishad movement was a laudable one and it was erroneous to think, as some people did, that the R.S.S. and the Jan Sangh were behind it. The movement deserved all encouragement. It had nothing to do with politics though some people tried to mix it with politics.

His Holiness is leaving here for Mysore in the course of his padayatra tomorrow and will cover many centres like Mandya, Srirangapatnam. He will reach Talaikaveri on the 14th in time for Thula Snanam there.

KANCHI JAGADGURU SRI JAYENDRA SARASWATHI SWAMIJI AT MYSORE

November, 6 — Jagadguru Sri Jayendra Saraswathi of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam who arrived here for a two-day stay was given a reverential welcome this morning.

Devotees offered flowers, fruits and coconuts to the Swamiji along a five-mile procession to the accompaniment of 'mangala vadya.' The smiling Swamiji stood on a stool at several points to enable thronging devotees to have His darshan.

The Swamiji was received at the toll gate by Municipal President Jogi Siddiah and Deputy Commissioner D. Balagopalan. At the CPC Polytechnic, the starting point of the procession, the Swamiji was received with 'poorna kumba' by Sri Ganapathi Sachindananda, on whose invitation the Kanchi Swamiji is visiting Mysore. The Swamiji stayed at the Sri Sachidananda Ashram on the Mysore-Nanjangud Road.