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IJMASRI, Vol. 1, issue 1, pp. 166- 169, Oct. -2023

<https://doi.org/10.53633/ijmasri>

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY ADVANCED SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (IJMASRI)

ISSN: 2582-9130

IBI IMPACT FACTOR 1.5

DOI: 10.53633/IJMASRI

RESEARCH ARTICLE

PERUR PATEESWARAR TEMPLE

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Abstract

The history of this temple dates back to 1500 years period. And this magnificent temple was built by Karikala Cholan. Perur temple's main deity is Pateeswarar and Pachanayaki Amman. The temple architecture here is really wonderful and unique. The hall here with in the temple has rare sculptures and carvings that stand testimony to splendid work of art. This Sanctum – sanctuorum of this Temple was built by Karikala Chola in the early Christian Era. In the ninth century, Saint Sunfarar visited the temple and immortalised it in his Thevaram. In the Kongu Chola Period (11th to 13th centuries Ardha Mandapa and Mahamandapa were built and used for inscribing the details about the numerous gifts made to the temple. From 14th to 17th centuries, the Hoysala, Vijayanagar and Nayaka kings gave endowments. The famous Kanaka Sabhai was built by Alagadri Nayak of Madurai in the 17th century. Tippu Sultan of Mysore attached half of the Inams of the temple in the 18th century. Later on, the East India Company restored it to the temple. The Swami and Amman Temples were renovated in the Middle of the 18th century and later on the Mantap of 63 Saints was built. In the 20th century, the Kalyana Mantapam and the front Mantapam were built and the tower was repaired. Historically, the surroundings of Perur date back to the Roman period as a “Treasure Trove” of Roman coins was discovered here.

Introduction

Perur Pateeswara Swamy temple is the most popular temple in the city. Built by the King Karikala Cholan, this temple is situated 7 kms west of Coimbatore near river Noyyal. The presiding deity is Shiva and the ‘Swayambu Lingam’ is the idol worshipped here. This sanctum is the joint effort of the Chola, Hoysala and Vijayanagara rulers during their reign. The greatest attraction of the temple is the ‘Kanaka Saba’ or the golden hall which is adorned by a gold plated statue of Nataraja bestowing blessings

upon the two sages – Gowmuni and Pattimuni. The gopurams and pillars of the hall are exquisitely carved out sculptures highlighting Dravidian architecture. The significance of Perur temple in earlier days are unfolded in the poetic creations of Arunagiri Nather and Kachiappa Munivar. The temple stands on the banks of the holy river Noyyal called ‘Kanchi Manadi’ by the locals. Pilgrims from all over visit this spot to pay homage to their ancestors. It is believed that the mortal remains of the dead turn into white stones after about 144 days.

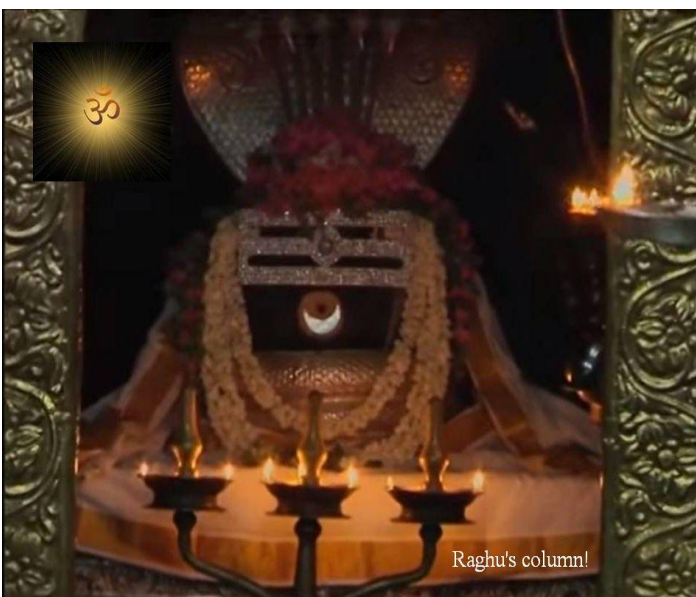


heads of the eight directions are figuring in the vimana of the sanctum sanctorum. The vimana of Mother Pachai Nayaki is square in shape. There is a shrine for other Ambica Mother Manonmani. Lord Muruga is in between the shrines of Lord and Mother in the Somaskanda form. As this is a salvation centre, Lord Bhairava appears without His dog vahan as Gnana Bhairava. The shrine of Lord Varadaraja Perumal is outside the shrine of Mother Pachainayaki. Lord Nataraja generally appears in all temples in an active dance posture. The difference in this temple is that He appears with legs downwards showing the end of the performance

The temple is known by different names like: Kamdenupuri, Pattipuri, Adipuri, Daksha Kailasam, Thavasiddhapuram, Gyanpuram, Kalyanpuram, Pirva Neri Thalam, Pasupatipuram, West Chidambaram. The significance of Perur temple in earlier days is unfolded in the poetic creations of Arunagiri Nather and Kachiappa Munivar. Lord Shiva is the presiding deity of this temple who is known as 'Patteeswarar' and his consort Parvati is known as 'Panchanayaki'. The deity in the temple is believed to be 'Swayambu Lingam' (self emerged)



Sri Anjaneya in the temple is made of wood. As Lord played here as one from a lower community, the sapling planting festival is devotionally celebrated in the temple. There is a tamarind tree in front of the temple the seeds of which do not germinate if sown, indicating the truth that those pray to Lord Patteeswara will attain total salvation and will be freed from the cycle of births and deaths.



The Palm Tree is praised as Irava Panai meaning that it would never fall down meaning that those devoted to Lord Patteeswara would ever be standing straight with name and fame. The bones of those dead, when placed in the Noyyal river flowing near by the temple turn white stones, it is said. It is believed that Lord utters the five lettered Na Ma Shi Va Ya mantra on the ears of those dead and takes them

Greatness of Temple

The foot print scar of divine cow Kamadenu is still visible on the head of Lord Patteeswarar. The

with Him. It is a wonder that no germs could be found in cow dung around this place.

Temple History

Divine cow Kamadenu performed severe penance on Lord Shiva seeking the post of Lord Brahma to take up the Creation work. It was pouring its milk on the Shivalinga here hidden in an anthill. Its calf Patti in a playful mood, hit the anthill and demolished it. Shocked Kamadenu fell at the feet of Lord and sought His pardon. Appearing before the divine cow, Lord said that He was only pleased with the calf. Lord further said that the place was the first among the salvation sthalas to His devotees and that He would grant the creation boon to Kamadenu at Tirukaruhavur and advised it to perform penance there. Lord mercifully said that this place (Perur) would be praised as Kamadenupuram and Pattipuri after name of the calf and that He would stay in the place as Patteeswarar



Cultural

This ancient place has produced apart from the Thevarams, very fine literary and historical compositions. Cholan's PoorvaPattayam deals with the origing of the Temple and gives an account of the folk – Lore of the place. The inscriptions, ranging over a few centuries, give valuable information about the customs and manners that existed a thousand years ago. The Thiruppugazh pieces of Arunagiri Nathar give an account of the Temples five centuries ago. The Perur Puramnam of the Post Kachiyappa Munivar is a poem

of high literary merit. The numerous poems by various authors of Perur. Lastly, Saint Santhalinganar has left four religious books, of which “Against Killing” is a poetic masterpiece of moral and philosophical content.

Sculpture and Archaeological

The famous Kanaka Sabhai presents a unique collection of Stone sculpture carvings, the like of which is not found elsewhere. Its two rows of ten big pillars have exquisite carvings of manifestations of siva. Its terraced roof has a series of stone-chains with a numerously pettalled lotus at the centre. The smaller pillars have a large number of mythological carvings. The tank is a fine piece of symmetrical steps with 16 angles. The Cars have fine wooden carvings which attract the cupidity of even foreigners. The idols excel the other temples in beauty. Even the small shrines surrounding the main temple are very ancient inscriptions of high value.



A few other notable features

The Noyyal river with green coconut topes on either side of the banks has a beautiful set-up with its ‘Cholanturai’. South and North Kailasams are two small temples guarding the two directions of the sacred place. The sacred trees ‘Erava Panai’ and ‘Pirava-Puli’ are of mythological fame as evidencing immunity from Death and Birth vouchsafed by this sacred place. These and other innumerable items are found scattered in this ancient place and make it worth visiting to Perur.

Festivals celebrated at Pateeswarar temple. Every year during March the Panguni Uthram festival is celebrated in a grand manner with thousands of devotees thronging this shrine to offer their prayers to Lord Pateeswarar. Other important Festival are also conducted at this temple with conventional rituals. The annual festival is celebrated in Panguni month. In the Tamil month Karthikai Shankabishekam is conducted in the morning and Annabishekam in the evening. Natyanjali (festival of dance) is celebrated with large number of classical dancers participating in the performance during September every year. Arudra darisanam is conducted during Margali month with

large gathering of devotees offer their prayers and to receive the Lord's blessings.

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