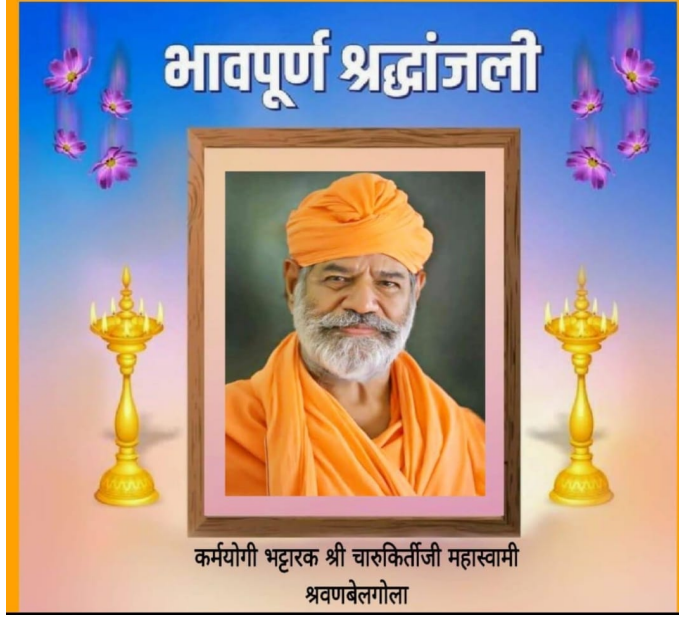


# Bhaṭṭāraka Cārukīrti ji of Shravana Belagola

3 May 1949 — 23 March 2023

We are deeply saddened to hear of the demise of Bhaṭṭāraka Cārukīrti ji of Shravana Belagola.



Pūjya Bhaṭṭāraka ji was a sādḥaka. His administrative duties were an expression of his devotion to Jain Dharma and Bhagavān Bāhubalī Svāmī. He was an able administrator. In his soft-spoken manner, he conscientiously ran the Shravana Belagola maṭha with efficiency, foresight, and wisdom for over five decades from 19 April 1970 to this day.

Four mahāmastakābhiṣekas - 1981, 1993, 2006, and 2018 were organized under his stewardship. Each mahāmastakābhiṣeka was grander and more widely attended than the previous one. He utilized the funds gained during the mahāmastakābhiṣeka to ensure that

Shravana Belagola gained stature and modern relevance.

Following the 1981 mahāmastakābhiṣeka, he built the Jnana Pracharak Trust, under which he built schools and colleges. He also established the Gommateshvara Janakalyana Trust, which carries out various charitable activities.

After the 1993 mahāmastakābhiṣeka, he established the National Institute for Prakrit Studies And Research. NIPSAR undertook crucial tasks such as preserving ancient manuscripts using scientific methods and translating & publishing ancient Jain texts. He also built graceful gates to the entrance of the two hills that comprise Shravana Belagola - the Vindragiri and the Chandragiri.

After the 2006 mahāmastakābhiṣeka, he built a children's hospital called the Bahubali Bala Chikitsalaya.

After the most recent mahāmastakābhiṣeka held in 2018, he built a 100-bed general hospital and initiated the Bahubali Prakrit Vidyapeetha.

He also initiated and funded a charitable medical clinic at Shravana Belagola and a mobile medical clinic that travels to nearby villages to give them free medical treatment. He regularly

held health camps run by experienced doctors. He donated calipers and Jaipur Feet to physically challenged individuals and gifted sewing machines to poor women to make them economically self-sufficient. All the charitable schemes run by the Shravana Belagola maṭha are for the welfare of all, not restricted to any one community.

Pūjya Bhaṭṭāraka ji was a scholar. A double postgraduate in History and Jain Studies, he was fluent in Kannada, Marathi, and Hindi, well-versed in Sanskrit and Prakrit, and proficient in English.

He was genuinely appreciative of the scholarship. He held Jain scholars in high esteem and financially supported their endeavors. He rewarded various Indian and international scholars of Jain studies, such as Prof Dr. Padmanabh S. Jaini, Prof Dr. Willem Bollée, Prof Dr. Nalini Balbir, and others.

Pūjya Bhaṭṭāraka ji committed to Prakrit. He dreamt of building a world-class Prakrit University at Shravana Belagola. He built the National Institute of Prakrit Studies and Research (NIPSAR) for this purpose.

He was committed to the study of Digambara Jain Āgamas. He edited and published extensive Kannada translations of the Śaṭkhaṇḍāgama and the Kaṣāyaprābhṛta.

He was a quiet person, given to reflection. Despite his immense religious and social stature, he remained low profile and never sought any publicity. He was devoted to Shravana Belagola and the Jain Dharma.

Being a pragmatic leader, he trained suitable candidates to run Jain maṭhas efficiently. As of today, nine Bhaṭṭārakas running important Digambara Jain maṭhas have trained under him. They serve as the Bhaṭṭārakas of Karkala, Kanakagiri, Kadambahalli, Arhatgiri, Moodabidre, Humcha Padmavati, Narasimharajapur, Saunda and Aratipura.

He was very modest and deeply respectful of all the Jain ascetics who visited and stayed at Shravana Belagola. His demise is a significant loss to the Jain community at large. There are very few leaders of his stature in the community who are so open-minded, ecumenical and genuinely respectful, and accepting of all Jain traditions.

Pūjya Bhaṭṭāraka ji was a renouncer. He undertook several vratas and remained steadfast on the path of ahiṃsā, saṃyama, and tapa. We pray that his soul may attain kṣāyika samyagdarśana and mokṣa soonest.

Om Shanti!