

Respected Sastriji, our honorable chief guest Dr. Srinivasa Rao, our beloved MLA Advocate Swaraj, Dr. C. Rajendran, friends on and of the dais,

This is perhaps one of the finest hour in the history of this century-old institution. This is the first time that Sastriji is sharing the dias with us, but he has been associated with us for a long time. I remember how benevolently Sastriji contributed a brilliant paper on ‘the contribution of foreign scholars to indological studies’ in the very first issue of our research journal purnatrayi in 1988. Again we were perhaps the first to publish a serious study of his Thai Ramayana in the journal. Sastriji had then very much appreciated our review of the Mahakavya. As all of you know, this visit of Sastriji was scheduled for the last year’s talk. We missed it. We are fortunate that Sastriji is with us now. Her daughter professor of Hindi in Delhi University is also with us.

Parikshith Maharaja was a great scholar who had specialised in Nyaya Sastra, he was a Darsanakalanidhi and Tharkavageesa. His Highness was our patron till he left us in 1964. This lecture is to commemorate his contributions. We started this in 1988 and this is the 27<sup>th</sup> in the series. We are sure that Parikshith Thampuran will rejoice to see a Sanskrit scholar par-excellence delivering this lecture.

This occasion is memorable also because the Malayalam version of the Thai Ramayana by Ssastriji is being released now. This is the only Sanskrit work that has won the covetable Jnanapeeth award. The Sanskrit kavya is translated to Malayalam by our Dr. C. Rajendran. Kendra Sahitya Akademi has published the work. We are honoured that Hon’ble Secretary of the Akademi Dr. Srinivasa Rao has graced us with his august presence.

There is one more reason that makes this moment memorable. Dr. Dharmaraj Adatt is visiting us after assuming the charge of the Vice Chancellor of Sree Sankaracharya University of Sanskrit, Kalady. This Pandita Parishath showers on him all its blessings.

Our beloved young and energetic MLA, our graceful Municipal Chairperson, our smiling councilor and all others are here as hosts to welcome our distinguished guests.