

Thirunakkara Temple , Kottayam

By

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Kottayam is a town in the plantation belt of Kerala and is about 60 Km from Cochin. This great temple is situated in the middle of the city in a huge open ground called Thirunakkara Maidanam. Though the local people claim that this idol was consecrated by Lord Parasurama himself, the present temple is only about 500 years old.

This area was once upon a time ruled by Thekkumkoor kings. One king of this dynasty used to visit the Vadakkunathan temple at Trichur every month. When he became old he told the God that since he cannot undertake this journey due to old age, he cannot see Vadakkunatha and he would prefer death. God told him in his dream that he would accompany him to Kottayam. On his way back the king happened to meet a very learned Brahmin priest in Vaikom belonging to the Pereparambu family. On the king's request the Brahmin accompanied the king to Kottayam. Accidentally in a place called Samiyar Madam, this Brahmin was able to recover a Shiva Linga deep within the earth.. The Linga was rough all over. According to the advice of the Brahmin, the king built a temple for this Linga. Along with the Linga(which is normally kept covered by a gold cover), there is a Pancha Loha statue of the Goddess, Lord Subramanya, Lord Ganesa and Lord Ayyappa idols are there. Besides these there is separate temple for Vadakkunathan , Subrahmanya, Durga and Brahma Rakshas.

There is an interesting story about the Brahma Rakshas. It seems one Moos was a great friend of the king. The king was not known for his beauty but his friend was very handsome. The queen fell in love with the friend of the king. On knowing this the king ordered his servants to kill the Moos. But instead of him the King's servants killed the junior priest of the temple (keezh Santhi). The wife of the priest became a Brahma Rakshas and started troubling every body. So the king built a temple for her. For a long time afterwards women do not prefer to enter this temple.

Another interesting fact about the temple is that Nandi, the steed of Lord Shiva is given lot of importance here.

It seems long ago one night some people saw a bull eating their crops. They threw a stone at it and it was injured. Then the Bull ran away. That day that bull which was actually Nandi came in the dream of the king and told him, "You consecrated me here. But you are not giving me any food. What alternative do I have except eating what is available. I am now injured because your people threw stones at me. " Next day the king called the owner of the field from which Nandi has eaten and ordered that the produce from the field should go towards Naivedyam for Nandi.

It seems in some years a boil appears on the stone statue of Nandi in this temple. Then the Ayurvedic doctors treat the boil. During the years when the boil appears, it seems some calamity will happen to the people or country. The last time it appeared was in the year 1932.

There are three major festivals in this temple in the month of Thulam(October-November), Meenam(March-April) and Mithunam.(June-July) Out of these the festival in the month of Meenam is the most important.