AUM SAI RAM

DRAFT NOTE TO GURUS

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Introduction

The purpose of the veda poshana initiative is to spread vedam chanting across the SSSO. In this context the focus of the gurus will be three fold:

a) Preliminary identification among the set of trainers presented members who are capable of teaching others.
b) Rigorously evaluation of the identified members.
c) Providing motivation, training and tips to the trainers identified.

The current arrangement is that during the technical sessions, each guru would be associated with around 5 trainers whom they would interact with on a one to one basis.

Identification

According to information available till now, around 50-60 members who are already conversant with Purusha Suktam for a few years are being presented as trainers. However, it will be useful to do a preliminary check on them on a one to one basis. This could include:

- Ability to chant Purusha Suktam from memory without any aid. Making the members chant the mantram individually will help in this regard.
- Though this is not a competition, one of the parameters of thoroughness is the ability to chant from anywhere. This too can be done to identify appropriate trainers.
- It would be useful for Gurus to separate out members who make gross mistakes in chanting in terms of order, intonation, stress etc

Rigorous evaluation

Once a member has been identified there is a need to evaluate them more rigorously compared to the previous stage. In this stage the subtleties have to be checked:

- **Swarashuddhi:** The intonations need to be perfect. It has been decided that the intonations given in the Mantra Pushpam book published by Ramakrishna Mutt, Mumbai would be taken as standard. All the gurus are requested to see this book in advance and chant a few times as per the intonations in the book. The gurus are requested to inform the coordinators any issues/ problems faced. It has been noticed that many students of the institute make several unconscious mistakes while chanting. These have been observed in the most common mantrams. It would be useful for the gurus to present a common understanding in terms of intonations to the trainer members.

- **Aksharashuddhi:** Apart from intonations, the stress on each syllable need to be checked. For example the difference between ba and bha, ka and kha etc need to be checked. It would be useful for gurus to check their chanting in this regard. One suggestion in this regard, is to use scripts in languages which show this difference. Tamil script needs to avoided at all costs, as it does not show up the difference. English script needs to be used carefully. Samskrit, kananda, telugu may be preferred.
- **Maatrashuddhi:** It would be useful to have a standardised approach towards the length of time we chant the syllables. Sometimes students elongate the ending of each sentence. In certain convocation chantings students have completed each sentence with a practiced precision. As a suggestion we may follow a middle approach.
- **Special considerations:**
  - It would be useful to standardise whether we pause at a vowel in the middle of a sentence which follows a dheerga ex.
    Padbhyagum shudro Ajayata or Padbhyagum shudro – Ajayata. Over years, we have found different students chant these differently. Even recorded chantings by pundits vary.
  - Differences in pronunciation between north and south Indians needs to be considered.

Motivating the trainers

It would be useful to give the trainers some tips regarding teaching. Teaching becomes proper with experience. It would be useful to share some experiences with the trainers.

PS: I request the gurus to add any point/ issue left out to the above note. You are welcome to kindly give your valuable suggestions.