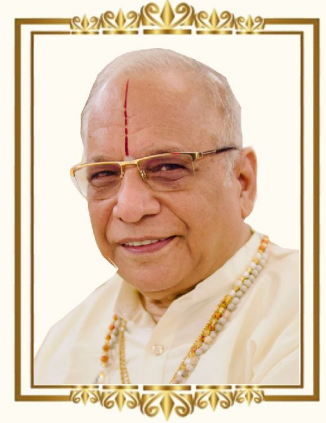




SHRI GARIMELLA BALAKRISHNA PRASAD (POSTHUMOUS)



Shri Garimella Balakrishna Prasad was a distinguished Indian classical and devotional vocalist, composer and Vaggeyakara, renowned for his seminal role in reviving and popularizing the compositions of the 15th-century saint-poet Shri Tallapaka Annamacharya, bringing them vividly to life. He is widely regarded as the most prolific tunesmith of Annamacharya Sankeerthanams in modern times and a transformative spiritual figure in India's devotional music tradition.

2. Born on 9th November, 1948 in Andhra Pradesh, Shri Prasad received his foundational music training from his parents and further honed his craft under eminent maestros, notably Dr. Nedunuri Krishnamurthy. In 1978, he joined the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Annamacharya Project, where he served for nearly three decades. He continued his association with TTD in various capacities until the end of his life, including as Asthana Vidwan. Undeterred by challenges, he traveled extensively across India, performing tirelessly to propagate and popularize Annamacharya Sankeerthanams.

3. Over a career spanning six decades, Shri Prasad presented more than 6,000 concerts across India and internationally. Among his 2,500 musical works spanning more than 200 ragas, he composed music for over 1,000 Annamacharya Sankeerthanams, thereby transforming a largely manuscript-based tradition into a living devotional practice. A 21st-century Vaggeyakara, he created 22 new Indian classical ragas, and composed over 400 classical works, including kritis, varnams, and thillanas in Sanskrit and Telugu. He pioneered the concept of Sankeerthana Yagmam, week-long musical marathons featuring hundreds of devotional compositions. In 2009, he led over 1,60,000 singers at Hyderabad's Parade Grounds during Lakshagalarchana, a Guinness World Record event.

4. Shri Prasad authored over 10 books containing musical notations of Annamacharya compositions and released more than 100 music albums, encompassing nearly 800 songs. He anchored several widely watched devotional television series that enabled systematic learning of classical and devotional music. He trained more than 50 students through the TTD Annamacharya Project, while lakhs of musicians worldwide regard him as their guru through self-study of his recordings and publications. Two doctoral dissertations were completed on his musical works. His interpretations also shaped the musical ethos of the acclaimed Telugu film *Annamayya*, influencing public engagement with Annamacharya's legacy.

5. Shri Prasad received numerous awards and honours, including the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (2020), the highest national recognition for performing artists. He was conferred Asthana Vidwan titles by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, Shri Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham, and Shri Ahobhila Mutt, among many other prestigious cultural institutions.

6. Shri Prasad passed away on 9th March, 2025.