

# Mutt rejects ₹1-cr govt grant

» PAGE 1

Asked whether they would accept the government grant if it was presented without a caste colour to it, Laxmi Narayana said, "We will consider it if they present it that way."

Questioned whether any local political leader had lobbied for the grant with the chief minister, Laxmi Narayana said, "We, on behalf of the trust and the mutt, did not approach the chief minister for a grant. We assume that while giving grants to backward-community mutts and temples, they included us. But we do not want the grant."

"Today, there are mutts and temples for every caste and community. But we do not belong to any community or caste. The temple is visited by VIPs, political



**K Laxmi Narayana, manager of Sri Yogi Nareyana mutt, Kaiwara**

leaders like S M Krishna, and local MLAs and MPs. Corporate tycoons also visit the temple."

Sources in the mutt said the 180-year-old institution is run entirely on contributions made by devotees. "Our annual revenue is ₹3-4 crore, from which we meet all our expenses. Everyday around

5,000 devotees visit the mutt and during weekends the number crosses 10,000. All of them are fed free of cost twice a day at the mutt. This apart, every year the mutt organises a music festival on the occasion of Gurupournima, inviting renowned Carnatic and Hindustani musicians," Laxmi Narayana said.

The mutt on an average witnesses 20-25 marriages everyday, and in a year more than 3,000 marriages are solemnised at its temple. Explaining the free food programme, Laxmi Narayana said, "Sometimes we buy groceries from the contributions made by devotees. Otherwise, farmers around Kaiwara village usually offer their field's first crop to the deity, which is our source of vegetables, cereals and pulses. This apart, the salaries of the mutt's 125 employees are also covered by

devotees' contributions."

A part of the revenue is spent for the welfare of nearby areas. A defluoridation unit has been set up at Kaiwara village to provide fluoride-free potable water to the villagers. The mutt has also developed muzrai department temples and constructed buildings for government schools in the area.

## HOARY PAST

Kaiwara village was known as Ekachakrapura in ancient times. According to legend, the Pandavas lived near the village and Bheema had set up the Bheemalingeshwara temple. The village is now associated with saint Tatayya or Kaiwara Tatayya, who lived there in the latter part of the 18th and early part of the 19th centuries. Proficient in both Kannada and Telugu, he had written a book of prophecies, 'Kalajnana'.

## VAT worries for film industry

**S Shyam Prasad**  
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For over three years, the Kannada film industry had its way during all its bargaining with the state government. Former CM B S Yeddyurappa almost always granted all the wishes, but not CM D V Sadananda Gowda. The 2012-13 budget hardly had any sops for the industry. But Sandalwood is more worried about what was left unsaid. Members, from a lyricist to a top star, were brought under the Karnataka Value Added Tax Act, 2003. In 2005, Schedule 3 of the Act brought 'copyrights' under VAT net at 4 per cent tax.

In March 2011, then CM B S Yeddyurappa granted exemption, but did not specify what will happen to the tax not paid between 2005 and 2010.

Broadly, this 'copyright' tax would affect almost everyone in the film industry, from a still photographer to a top star. Films, unlike other creative copyrighted material like 'books and periodicals', were not exempted under Section 5 of the Act.

"The Commercial Tax Department has written to the state government about the issue but the government has not taken any action on it. If someone in the department starts sending notices, everyone will be in trouble," said a senior producer. Mohan Chabria, of Anand Audio, said, "The most affected would be audio companies and people dealing with film satellite rights. Monies involved in these are all legal and transactions can be traced."

But Gowda does not seem to have a soft corner for the film industry. The only sop in the budget had a big mistake. It was announced that the subsidy given to children's film will be increased from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 4 lakh. However, the current subsidy is Rs 25 lakh each for two films.

Karnataka Chalanachitra Academy president Tara said, "A representation will be taken to the government again if need be." Producer and distributor Mars Suresh said, "The Central government wants to include films under service tax and the state government under VAT. The former proposal is still pending and the latter issue was almost settled. We are confident of convincing the government to exempt us with retrospective effect."

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**MANU PRASAD**



START-UPS WITH, AND THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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## Wake up, smell the filter coffee



**Radhakrishnan M with co-founder and wife A Chithra**

Fully automated vending machines that serve freshly brewed authentic filter coffee, that's the business Aromas of Coorg is into. In conversation with co founder Radhakrishnan M.

### ORIGINS

After lucrative careers in the corporate world, my wife Chithra and I had the urge to start something on our own. We are from Coorg and have been into coffee cultivation for more than three decades. Aromas of Coorg was born in 2009. Four factors made our idea into a company - our passion for entrepreneurship, our son, our roots from Coorg and our corporate exposure.

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### THE CHALLENGES

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**Company:** Aromas of Coorg  
**Domain:** Beverage solutions  
**Founder:** A Chithra Uthappa, Radhakrishnan M  
**Founded in:** 2009  
**Funding:** Bootstrapped.  
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