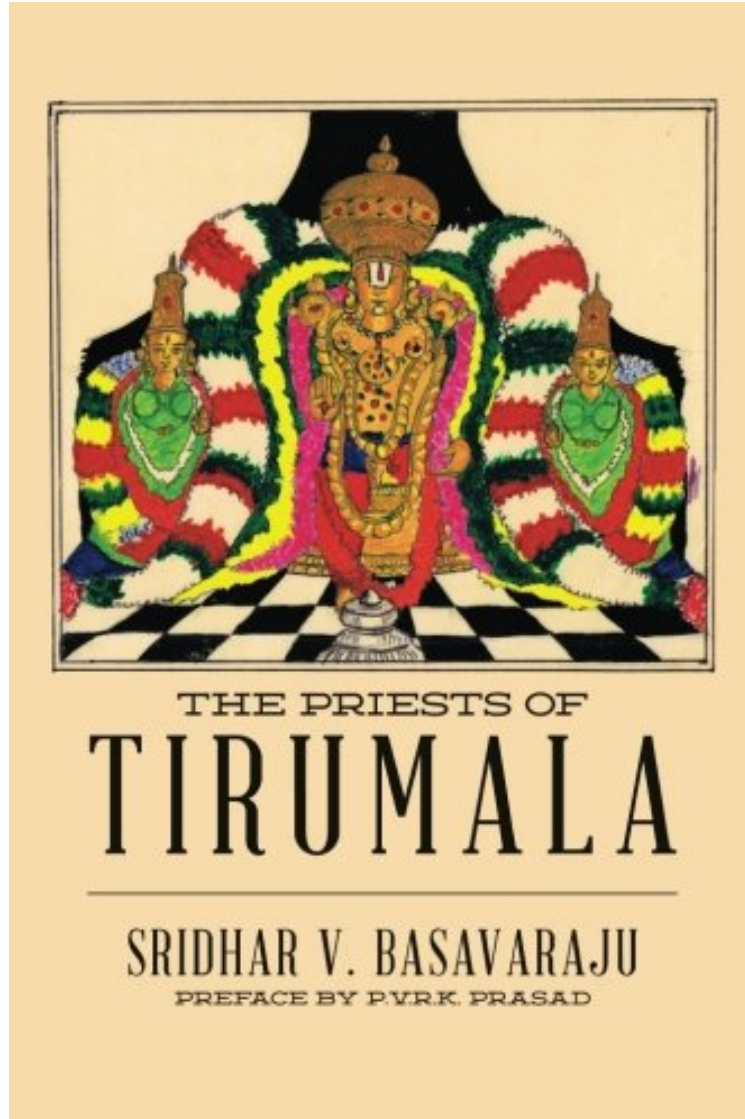


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The Priests of Tirumala

Sridhar V. Basavaraju
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The Temple of Lord Venkateswara in Tirumala, Andhra Pradesh, India, is the worlds wealthiest and most visited temple. People flock here from all parts of the world to catch a fleeting glimpse of the self-manifested icon of Lord Venkateswara and submit their woes at his lotus feet. As the pilgrims stand for hours waiting for their chance to draw near, groups of pious priests and temple servants move about unhindered. Who are these privileged people? Rather than discussing the Lord Venkateswara, the topic of most books on the Tirumala Temple, this unique book focuses on those who perform the worship, revealing the remarkably efficient ancient system of checks and balances regulating rituals performed by the families of priests and functionaries who have been dedicating their lives to the temple throughout generations stretching back a thousand years. The Priests of Tirumala is organized into three main sections that tell the fascinating stories of the Mirasi Archaka families, Jiyangar matham, and Acharya Purushas. The book offers a wealth of painstakingly collected details on the temples history about the way rituals are conducted by different functionaries inside the sanctum bringing to light the inner workings of this intriguing institution like never before.

About the Author Sridhar V. Basavaraju is a medical doctor born, raised, and working in the United States. His book The Priests of Tirumala was written due to personal interest in discovering the stories of those conducting the thousand-year-old system of worship at South Indias Tirumala Temple, the wealthiest and most visited temple in the world.