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APPANACHARYA'S

GURU RAGHAVENDRA STOTRA

TRANSLATION BY PRASANNA TADIPATRI

Many of us are familiar with the Raghavendra Swami Stotra "Sri Purnabodha". However, many people recite it without understanding the beauty of its meaning. I would like to post my understanding of the stotra, not a word by word translation but just a rough gist. The circumstances behind the stotra are amazing. When Sri Raghavendra Swami entered Brindavana "sajeevani", that is unlike many Brindavana-s which were constructed after the Swami had passed away, Sri Rayaru entered Brindavana while alive (showing his foresight & divya drShti), instructing his disciples to start laying slabs when the japa mala in his hand became still. One of his disciples, Sri Appanacharya was on the other side of the Tungabadra river, and upon hearing that his beloved guru was entering Brindavana crosses the river. This "Sri Purnabodha" Stotra was recited by Sri Appanacharya while crossing the river, and upon arriving at the site of the Brindavana, to his dismay Sri Rayaru had already entered the Brindavana. But miracle of miracles, the final words to the Stotra come not from Appanacharya but from within the Brindavana itself--"sakshi hayasyotra hi"! Thus, this stotra of Sri Raghavendra Swami is unique in that it actually has Sri Raghavendra Swami's own seal of approval.

You can see the stotra here:

http://www.dvaita.net/pdf/stotra/r_stotra.pdf

I'll try to start with a brief summary of the first few verses.

Some of the verses are so easy, even someone with a basic grasp of Sanskrit can translate them, whereas other verses have puns & double meanings (for example, in the beginning of the Stotra, Sri Raghavendra Swami's words are compared to Ganga nadi, and the same verse can be translated 2 different ways!)

Some of you had difficulties viewing the stotra-- you can visit the main page, and the famous "Râghavendra Stotra" is the 2nd one from the bottom (in Sanskrit or English script).

As Sri Appanacharya, Raghavendra Swami's disciple was crossing the Tungabadra river to catch one last glimpse of Sri Rayaru, he recites the stotra. One can imagine what was on Sri Appanacharya's mind--he was thinking of his beloved Guru and also crossing the dangerous river to get to the banks on the other side.

The first 2 verses describe Sri Raghavendra's words, which are like a divine river.

"gururAghavendra vAk, devata sarit, amum vimali karotu" (the end of the 2nd verse) May Sri Guru Raghavendra's words (vAk), like a divine river (devata sarit), purify (vimali karotu) us (amum). You may remember the story of how Bhagiratha brought the Ganga nadi down to purify the remains of his ancestors. Likewise, Sri Rayaru's words, the works he has left behind purify us and lead us on the path to Moksha.

So now let us start from the beginning and see how the verses describe both the "devata sarit"--divine river Ganga, and "gururAghavendra vAk"--Sri Rayaru's words.

"Sri Purnabodha guru teertha payobdhi pAra". Purnabodha is one who is full of intellect, here it refers to Sri Madhvacharya, our guru. Teertha can mean many things and refers to Sri Madhvacharya's works which are like an ocean (abdhi). Raghavendra Swami's works can help us across this huge ocean. In other words, the works of Sri Madhvacharya (our guru and the guru for Raghavendra Swami) are so vast, like an ocean, but thanks to Sri Raghavendra Swami, we can at least understand this a little.

Interpreting this same verse from Ganga nadi perspective. "Sri pUrNa"--srI is auspiciousness, so the fully auspicious Ganga nadi has as its ultimate destination the kSheera sagara, or ocean (abdhi) where Vishnu resides. This is the teertha, or birthplace for Budha's father (bodha guru)--Chandra. I'm not sure what it means when we say the moon was born in the milky ocean where Vishnu resides--you'll have to ask someone who knows this much better than me. Basically, the gist of the verse is that the divine ganga river ultimately reaches Vishnu's abode.

"kAmArimAkSha viShamAkSha shira sprshanti".

From the perspective of Rayaru's words, ari is enemy, kAmAri is the enemy of evil desires, one who has conquered evil desires, basically learned people. Why have they conquered evil desires? Because of their mAkSha--their eye of knowledge. They see not just with their actual eyes, but with this 3rd eye. As a result, we can say they have an unequal or odd (vi+sama) number of eyes (akSha). Sri Raghavendra Swami's words reach these learned people who through their knowledge, have conquered all the desires that we fall prey too. In other words, we too, by understanding Rayaru's words (and the works he has left) can improve ourselves, conquer all the evil desires we have.

From the Ganga nadi perspective, kAmAri can be either taken as the enemy of kAmadeva, Shiva. Some of you may have read the story of how Shiva burned kAmadeva with a mere glance when kAmadeva tried to disturb his penance. Of course, they are not really "enemies"--Shiva once again restored Kamadeva to his prior form. This is just a poetic way of describing that. Also, Shiva is the presiding deity over our mind. It is his blessings we need to conquer our evil desires, so in that sense too, he is "kAmAri". He is described as having a 3rd eye, symbolizing knowledge ("maakSha"). So basically all this is describing Shiva, the enemy of our evil desires, the one who destroyed kAmadeva, who possesses the 3rd eye. It's Shiva's head(shira) that the waters of the Ganga river touched (sprshanti). Once again, remembering from the stories we heard from when we were younger, when Ganga nadi came down from the heavens, she was caught in the Shiva's locks of hair until Bhagiratha prayed for her to be released.

"PurvottarAmita taram ga carat suhamsA, devALi sevita paranghri payoja lagna"

There are 2 schools of philosophical thought called Purva & Uttara Mimamsa. We can tell by Sri Raghavendra's words that he is very well

versed (amitataram ga) in these. Suhamsa are learned people, and by following his words they eventually reach "paranghri"--the feet of paramAtma, Lord Narayana, whose feet are worshipped by even the devatas (devALi sevita).

The meaning from Ganga perspective is more straightforward--the Ganga nadi is full of countless waves going East & West. There are su+hamsa or swans going along the river. This river has touched the feet of Vishnu, worshipped by the gods.

Please forgive any errors in translation. The next verse is interesting and I will cover it next time. After that, I can cover more verses in each posting because there is usually only 1 meaning for each verse.

In the previous verse, we left off with "devaalisevita paranghri payoja lagnaa". The next verse too can be interpreted as referring to either Ganga nadi (devatasarit) or Sri Raghavendra Swami's words (guru raghavendra vaak).

"jivesha bheda guNa pUrTi jagatsusattva"

Sri Raghavendra Swami, being a devotee of Sri Madhvacharya did a great service to humanity by taking the concepts in Dvaita Siddhanta and explaining it in a way the common man can understand (Sri Madhvacharya being Vayu Deva himself writes on a very high, sophisticated level. It takes great scholars like Raghavendra Swami to bring it down to a level we can understand.) Some of the tenets in Dvaita Siddhanta are 1) Jiva-Isha bheda. There is a distinction between Paramatma (the supreme soul-God) and Jiva (the individual soul). Paramatma is forever free from samsara, infinite with respect to space, time. He is perfection and contains no flaws (sarvaguNa sampUrNaH sarva dosha vivarjitaH). The jIva, that is, you and me, we are bound in this samsara, we don't realize that there is a greater force behind all that we see. We need Sri Hari's grace to achieve moksha, liberation from samsara. This eternal distinction between jIva & paramatma, even after moksha is one characteristic of Dvaita Siddhanta.

2) guNa purti --Some say that Paramatma is nirguNa, possesses no qualities. This is not Rayaru's philosophy, nor is it Sri Madhva's. Paramatma is sarvaguNa sampurNa sarva dosha vivarjitaH. Dvaita scholars point out that texts which describe paramatma as 'nirguNa' refer to the fact that he is not bound by the 3 guNa-s of prakriti--sattva, rajas, tamas. Narayana/Paramatma certainly possesses qualities like benevolence, infinite knowledge, etc...hence we should not say he is devoid of all attributes.

3) jagat su sattva --The world is real according to Dvaita siddhanta--it is not merely an illusion like a rope mistaken for a snake. Why is this important? Because, it is in this world that we do good deeds, our sadhana. If it is simply illusory, what is the meaning for anything we do? Hence the emphasis on the reality of the world.

4) nica ucca bhava--Some say that there is "sarvamukti". Everyone gets mukti, liberation from samsara. Yet the Gita states clearly "Urdhvam gacchanti sattvasthan, madhye tiShTanti raajasaH, jaghanya guNa vrttisthaH adho gacchanti tamasaH"--Sattvic souls achieve moksha, rajasic souls forever experience the mix of happiness & sorrow, while tamasic souls, by doing evil acts, instead of achieving salvation, it is damnation they get in the end (one can think of it as a sort of eternal life imprisonment). Raghavendra Swami has written commentaries on the Bhagavad Gita and he too is of the same view--that there is a gradation. Not everyone achieves the same fate.

So these and other tenets are compared in the shloka to "nakragana"-- groups of crocodiles which devour the arguments of his opponents, those who making wrong arguments (durvaadi), compared to sheep ("ajapati"). Why crocodiles devouring sheep? We see this from the ganga nadi perspective-- jivesha bheda: Here "jiva+isha" means the largest among the living creatures, such as elephants. Such large creatures are torn apart "bheda" by the crocodiles residing in the Ganga river. The crocodiles are "Jagat su sattva"--among the most powerful creatures in the world.

The "nica uccha bhaava mukha"--means the lower & upper part of their mouth (jaws). These "nakra gana"--groups of crocodiles "gila" swallow even the lead sheep "ajapati". Here the "durvadi" refers to the terrifying sound that the sheep make while being devoured.

It is quite a strong image that the stotra brings across, but one can appreciate how well the stotra is put together. The same words can be interpreted from 2 entirely different points of view. Such is the beauty of the Sanskrit language and the skill of the poet, Sri Appanacharya, of course through the grace of Rayaru.

So after saying "May the words of Sri Raghavendra Swami, like the Ganga nadi, purify us", the rest of the Stotra, for the most part, has one meaning. You may already realize what some of it means:

"Sri Raghavendra sakala pradaata"--Sri Raghavendra gives everything. To whom?

"svapaada, kanja dvaya, bhakti madbhyaH" --those who with bhakti=devotion, [worship=namanti] his 2 lotus feet.

"aghadri sambhedana drShti vajraH"--agha means sin. aghadri is a mountain of sins. Like the way Indra's vajra (thunderbolt) destroys a mountain, a mere glimpse of Sri Raghavendra Swami destroys one's sins. It is important to point out that though Sri Raghavendra gives everything, it is only according to the wishes of Sri Hari. For example, once when 2 boys tried to play a prank on Raghavendra Swami-- one boy pretending to be dead, the other boy approaches Rayaru and asks if he can revive his friend. Rayaru says he cannot. When the boy returns, he finds his friend has really died! No matter how much he pleads with Rayaru to revive his friend, Rayaru simply says that the boy's time has come. Nothing can be done. Two things to realize 1)When we try to play pranks or jokes on great yatis, they are not the ones who come to harm. We do.

2)Ultimately, the one who gives everything, as the Hari Dasaru's say "koDuvavanu neene, kombuvanu naanu"--Narayana is the ultimate giver. Raghavendra Swami is the medium through which we receive His blessings. In other words, we cannot forget about God and simply worship Rayaru. Neither will be pleased by that.

"kshamaa surendro avatu mam sadaayam". Here "Kshama" doesn't mean forgiveness. It means the earth (From the Bhagavata, one of the "teachers" we can learn from is the earth--no matter how much we step on it, kick it, it is forgiving.). "Kshama surendro"-- Raghavendra Swami is like a Lord Indra (the leader of the devata-s) here on earth. "sada ayam avatu mam"--may he (Sri Raghavendra Swami, through the grace of Sri Vayu, through the grace of Sri Narayana) always protect us.

We pray to Raghavendra Swami to bestow what the devotees ask for. But where did Sri Rayaru get this amazing power from? The next shloka explains where the real strength for Raghavendra Swami comes from:

Sri Raghavendro haripada kanja |
niShevaNaallabdha samastasampat ||
devasvabhavo divijadrumoyam |
iShTaprado me satatam sa bhuyaat ||

Hari pada kanja --The lotus feet of Sri Hari. The meaning for "Hari" is one who takes away our sins. Lord Narayana takes away our sins & purifies us, so he is known as Hari.
niShevaNaat --by worshipping. Seva as we all know means worship. In Sanskrit, when there is a prefix, the 'sa' becomes a 'Sha'
labdha samasta sampat -- he (Raghavendra Swami) obtained all the riches. I'll explain what is meant by 'sampat' later.

Sri Raghavendra Swami worshipped the lotus feet of Sri Hari (Lord Narayana), and in doing so, he obtained all the riches (divine qualities).

devasvabhavo - divine nature.

In the Bhagavad Gita, at the beginning of Chapter 16, an outline of what is "deva svabhava" (divine nature), and "asuri svabhava" (demoniac nature) is outlined. These are: "abhayaM " absence of fear, "sattvasamshuddhi" full composure of mind, daanam --donating money to good causes, dama --control over sense organs, yajna--worship to devata-s, svaadhyaya--study (of Vedas), tapa--penance, aarjavam--agreement between mind & actions (you don't say one thing, then do another), ahimsa --non-violence, satyam--truthfulness, akrodha--not giving way to anger, tyaga--sacrifice for the greater good, shaanti--tranquility (not given to extreme emotions), apaishunam--not finding fault with others, bhuteshu dayaa--looking to the welfare of others, aloluptvam--detachment from material pleasures, mardavam--compassion even to those who do harm to you, hri--one avoids doing bad karma, achaapalam--steadfastness, teja--radiance, kshama--forgiveness, dhrti--conviction & courage, shaucam--mental & physical purity, adroha--not hating others, natimanitaa--not having conceit.
"bhavanti samapdam daivIm" --These are the qualities that make one divine character. Sri Raghavendra Swami possesses all these. It is not material riches that 'sampat' refers to, but richness of character.

Here is a breakdown of the words:

divija druma --divine tree (Kalpavriksha). The kalpa vriksha gives whatever the devotee desires ayam --he (Raghavendra Swami)

iShta pradah --Giving one's desires.

me - me (Me in Sanskrit means me in English. Easy, right?) satatam sa bhuyat -- May he always be.

May Raghavendra Swami, who is like the Kalpavriksha tree, always give me whatever I desire.

What should we desire? Car, money, big house, things like that?

No...because with material things like this, we cannot get real pleasure. No matter how large a house you get, do you take it with you after death? Of course not. Whereas if we ask for things like jnana--knowledge, bhakti--devotion, these will lead us towards Rayaru, towards God. And by doing so, we not only improve ourselves, but unlike all the material objects we get, knowledge & devotion of God is something we

can take with us, something more permanent, which will eventually lead to Moksha.

But though we strive to better ourselves in this lifetime, what about all the obstacles that come in our way?

**bhavya svarupo bhava dukkha tula
sanghagni charyaH sukha dhairyashaali
samastaduShTagraha nigrahesho
duratyayopaplavasindhusetuH ||**

bhavya svarupa--Rayaru's auspicious form bhava dukkha -- All the sorrows in this samsara we're in tUla sangha--a huge mass of cotton (You can see the nice analogy here) agni charyaH -- like fire burning

Sri Raghavendra Swami's auspicious form burns away all the sorrows we encounter in this world the way fire burns a large mass of cotton.

He is 'sukha dhairyashaali' --endowed with the qualities of happiness & courage.

samasta --All
duShTa graha--graha need not just mean the planets (like we talk of Shani graha being inauspicious). It's anything which has a negative impact on our life.
nigraha Isha --the lord in controlling

Raghavendra Swami is quite competent in controlling (driving away) the bad effects not just from shani graha, etc, but also any bad influence on our lives.

duratyaya upaplava--The ocean of difficulties & adversities we encounter.
sindhusetuH--a bridge to cross over

Raghavendra Swami is like a bridge to help us cross over the ocean of difficulties we may face in life.

So when reciting this Rayaru Stotra, we should think deeply upon the beautiful meaning in these verses, but more importantly on the greatness of Sri Rayaru as conveyed by these words.

Continuing with the next verses (I will try to do 2 verses in each posting).

**nirastadoSho niravadyaveShaH |
pratyarathi mUkatvanidaanabhaaShaH ||
vidvat parijJNeya mahAvisheShaH |
vAgvaikharI nirjitabhavya sheShaH || 6**

Just looking at the verse, you can see the skill in Sri Appanacharya's composition. Each line not only ends with the same letter (Sha), but also there is the same number of syllables (11) in each line. Most people (myself included) would have difficulty composing anything in Sanskrit, let alone a poetic verse (with double meanings as we shall see later). Yet Sri Appanacharya spontaneously composed this while swimming across the Tungabhadra River & running to catch a glimpse of

his guru Sri Rayaru!! This is truly a miracle of Rayaru that his disciple was able to do this!

Here is a rough translation

nirasta doSha--doSha means flaw. Sri Rayaru is free from all flaws, such as being susceptible to anger, passions, etc. Of course when we say he is flawless, it should not be taken in the same sense as when we say God (or Narayana) is flawless. As per Madhva siddhanta, everything is dependent on God. So at the very least, everything besides Narayana has the flaw of 'paratantrya'--depending on something else. Not only that but being finite is also a flaw ('apUrNata doSha')--and every soul has this flaw as well. When we say Rayaru is flawless, all that is meant is that he is free from all the defects & flaws we find in ordinary people.

niravadya veSha- veSha means form. vadya is praiseworthy, avadya is not praiseworthy. And there is 'nir' before it--so it is a double negative. not not praiseworthy. The form of Sri Rayaru is indeed praiseworthy is the message here.

pratyarthi --prati means against. pratyarthi is an opponent who comes for debate.

mUkatva -- silence

nidAna bhaSha -- Sri Rayaru's skill in speech is capable of silencing opponents who come to debate him.

vidvat -- We sometimes hear the term 'vidvAn'. This is the same word. A vidvan is a scholar.

parijneya -- jnA means to know. jneya means known by.

mahAvisheShaH -- great qualities, here Sri Rayaru's great qualities can only be understood by scholars. In other words, it takes great scholars to truly understand his skill & intellectual prowess (which we can see today in the works he has left behind). Of course the rest of us can understand some of it, 'yathA shakti'--as per our capacity, but here they are pointing out how he is a scholar among scholars.

vaak vaikhari --vaak is speech. vaikhari is skill, so skill in speech (similar to nidaanabhASha above) nirjita--defeated bhavya Shesha-- the great 'Shesha'. We can see the double meaning.

Some people misunderstand this verse as saying that Sri Rayaru defeats even Shesha Devudu, but this is not correct. Shesha Deva is far above Raghavendra Swami (Prahlaad) in the 'taratamyA'--the tara/tama or ranking among the deities.

Shesha can be taken in 2 ways. 'remainder' or a pandit by name 'Sheshatirtha'

We can either take the verse to mean that Sri Rayaru through his debating skill defeated all the others who came to debate him (if we take shesha to mean remainder). Or that he defeated a great pandit by name 'Sheshatirtha'.

This verse is especially interesting because Sri Vijayeendra Tirtha actually wrote a work called 'Vagvaikhari', where the specific debate between Sri Rayaru & Sheshatirtha is mentioned.

Moving to the next verse:

**santaana sampat parishuddha bhakti |
vijJNaana vaak dehasupaaTavaadIn dattvaa || sharIrottha samasta doShaana
hatvaa | sa no.vyAt guru raghavendra || 7**

This verse goes along with the previous 2 verses. After describing Sri Rayaru as being able to burn away the sins of his devotees, flawless in form, and being skilled in debates, now we ask the great Raghavendra Tirtha to protect us.

You'll notice that I put datvaa in the 2nd line. People normally say it with the 3rd line, but it really goes with all the items preceding it. santaana --progeny. Santana can also mean 'expansion'. So it can mean magnanimity of heart & mind (a giving nature), or broadness of intellect.

sampad --wealth (not just material wealth, but also wealth of knowledge). Also we should think back to the daivi sampad mentioned in the previous posting.

parishuddha bhakti --shuddha means pure. Pure devotion, both towards Rayaru, our guru Sri Vayu Deva and towards God vijJNaana --vishesha jnaana. Special knowledge. That is, the knowledge that will free us from samsara, and put us on the right path in life.

vaak supATava-- the word 'supATava' means skill or strength, and can be taken as referring to vaak or deha. Here skill in speech deha supATava -- an agile body. As the Dasarus point out, 'sadhana sharIra vidu nee dayadi koTTiddu', this body that we have is needed for us to do sadhana. To make use of the life we've been given, we need to have a strong body.

aadin--Adi in this sense means 'etc.', not just the list above.

dattva -- giving. In other words, Sri Rayaru gives us progeny, wealth, knowledge, the ability to talk skillfully, and physical strength.

Next the counterpart to all this is explained.

samasta doShaan--all the flaws

sharIrottha --arising from the body

hattva--eliminating. Sri Raghavendra eliminates all the flaws arising from our body. This need not just be physical ailments of the body, but also mental flaws. Because of some outside influence we may think bad/inappropriate thoughts, and because of Sri Rayaru's grace we can get rid of these.

sa guru Raghavendra-- That Guru Raghavendra, avyAd -- may he protect nah -- us It is very important to recite the stotra carefully-- otherwise without your knowing you may request the wrong things! This is the wrong meaning. Do NOT recite the verse this way:

"dattva sharirottha samasta doShaan"-- give us all flaws within our body "hattva sa no avyad guru Raghavendra"--having killed us, protect us.

We definitely don't want this meaning, so please make sure that "dattva" goes with all the items mentioned earlier. And "hattva" goes with all the bodily flaws.

Another interesting meaning of 'santaana sampad parishuddha bhakti', is that santana as pointed out earlier can mean 'expansion'. 'santaana sampad'--can mean one in whom the whole universe is expanded. That is, Narayana within whom the whole universe exists (remember the story of Krishna showing Yashoda the whole universe? "taayige baayalli jagavella torida jagadoddhaaraka namma uDupiya Sri Krishna"). We're asking Sri Rayaru for devotion towards such a Narayana.

Elaborating a bit more on 'parishuddha bhakti'. What are the forms of devotion towards the Lord? Shravana (listening to His greatness, either through pravachana or bhajan), kirtana (reciting his songs), paadasevana (serving his feet), archana (worship), vandana (praising Him), daasyam (service), sakhyaM(familiarity), aatma nivedanam(surrendering oneself completely). These are the "navavidha

bhakti"--9 forms of devotion. When going through the list, one may seem somewhat strange--how can we be a friend, sakha of the Lord when he is so far superior to us? Isn't friendship between equals? But in the Upanishads, when describing the relation between the jIva(the soul) & paramatma (God), "dva suparna sayujaa sakhaaya"...they are described as 2 friendly birds. And ultimately from birth to birth it is the Lord who is always with the jIva, so one must develop an emotional closeness towards the Lord who is ever present within us--"Krishna neene anaata bandho, kaaruNya sindho"

Here is the next verse:

yatpAdodaka sancaya suranadi mukhyaapagaasaaditaa |
(a)sankhyaanuttamapuNyasangha vilasat prakhyaata puNyAvahaH ||
dustaapatrayanAshano bhuvI mahaavandhyAsuputra Prado |
vyangasvanga samR^iddhido grahamahApaapahastaM shraye || 8

tam shraye --I surrender to him, Raghavendra Swami (and through him, Lord Vishnu) yat paadodaka sancayaH--whose collection of padodaka. (pada means feet. Udaka is water, so padodaka is the water used to wash a person's feet). In English, 'a heap or collection of water' may sound awkward, but expressions like 'vAri sancayaH', 'udaka sancayaH' are used in Sanskrit.
vilasat -- illustrious
prakhyaata --famous
puNya AvahaH-- aa+vah means to bring. puNya is merit or virtue.

The water used to wash Sri Raghavendra's feet brings all the illustrious and famous virtues . Next, this padodaka is compared to a divine river.

puNyasangha--a (large) amount of merit that is asankhya--immeasurable anuttama--unsurpassed aasaaditaa--which can be obtained mukhyaapagaa--from bathing & drinking in suranadi--divine river (Ganga)

That is, Sri Rayaru's padodaka provides puNya like the immeasurable, unsurpassed amount of puNya that we get from bathing in the divine river Ganga.

This padodaka also:

naashanaH--destroys
dustaapatraya--the 3 types of miseries, related to Adhidaivika, adhibhautika, adhyAtmika (more on this later).
suputra padaH --gives a great son to
bhuvI mahaavandhya--even the most barren woman on earth (barren meaning unable to conceive a child) samR^iddhi daH --provides in great abundance
svanga--su+anga. elegant limbs
vyanga--vi+anga. to someone deprived of them earlier.
graha--the 9 celestial bodies. These don't correspond exactly with the planets.Mercury(budha), venus (shukra), mars(mangala), jupiter (guru), shani (saturn), sun (surya), moon (chandra), raahu & ketu (no, these do not correspond to Uranus & Neptune!!). According to our shaastra, these celestial bodies have an effect on our lives.
mahaapaapa--the powerful bad effect of these graHa-s apahaH--are taken away.

Sri Rayaru's padodaka destroys the 3 types of miseries, gives a great son to even women on the planet least likely to conceive, provides very elegant limbs to those deprived of them earlier, and takes away the bad effect the celestial bodies may have on our lives.

We suffer many miseries in this world, and they are categorized 3 ways (taapatraya) . Adhyaatmika--(Atma=self) those related to our inner mental state. For example, mental anguish because of things that may have happened. Adhibhautika--(Bhuta=the 5 bhutaas that make up our body)those related to our physical body. So injuries or pain we may have sustained. Then there is Adhidaivika--(deva=deity). There are many unseen forces. We call this fate, or someone is affected by 'shani' etc.

Of course, the terms adhyaatma, adhidaivika, adhibhautika are also used in other senses, not just relating to the miseries we undergo. For example, "adhyaatma cintane" means thinking about things related to ParamAtma and has nothing to do with the mental anguish mentioned above. But in the context of this shloka, "dustaapatraya naashanaH" refers to Sri Rayaru's ability to remove these 3 types of suffering.

I hope you all noticed the (a) in parentheses before sankhya. It is actually asankhyaa=immeasurable, though the 'a' carries over from the previous line. It is not 'sankhyaanuttama puNya...', but 'asankhyaa anuttama puNya'=immeasurable merit.

One other note on this shloka--"yatpadodaka sancayaH" can also be interpreted as an accumulation (sancaya=heap) of jnAna (one meaning of paada) and devotion (udaka can mean maanasasneha) towards Sri Rayaru & of course through him Lord Vishnu. I'm not sure on how these meanings are derived, but you can ask someone who knows the Sanskrit commentary on the verse better.

The next verse speaks of the power of even Rayaru's devotees:

yatpaadakanjarajasaa paribhuShitaangaa |
yatpaadapadmamadhupaayitamaanasaa ye ||
yatpaadapadma parikIrtana jIrNavaacaH |
taddarshanaM duritakaanadaavabhUtaM || 9

tad darshanaM--the sight of [those devotees of Rayaru] pari bhUshita anga--anga means body. adorned all over (pari bhUshita) with yat paada kanja rajasaa --the dust particles from the lotus feet of Sri Rayaru(paadakanja means lotus feet, which we saw in an earlier verse "svapaadakanja dvaya bhaktimadbhyaH"). This may sound familiar to those of you who recite Sri Hari Vayu Stuti--Sri Madhva is so great that even the dust particles from his feet can protect us. aayitamAnasaa ye -- whose mind is attached to yatpaada padma --The lotus feet of Sri Rayaru, which is compared to an actual lotus madhupaayita--upon which a bee is attached.

That is, the shloka talks of the sight of a devotee whose body is adorned all over with the dust from Sri Rayaru's feet, a devotee whose mind is attached to the lotus feet of Sri Rayaru the way a bee is attached to a lotus.

Continuing to describe the devotees who:

parikIrtana --recite the praise of

paadapadma -- the lotus feet of Sri Rayaru

jIrNavaacha-- We commonly use jIrna to mean digested. "jIrnavacha"

are mature words (one has digested the meaning of them). Hopefully after understanding these translations, when you recite the stotra this adjective will describe you, since you will be doing kIrtana of Sri Rayaru fully understanding the meaning!

The sight of such devotees is finally described at the end:
durita kaanana --a forest of miseries
daavabhUtam --daava is a forest-fire.

A mere glimpse of such devotees who recite the praise of Rayaru fully understanding the meaning of what they recite, acts like a forest-fire to burn the forest of miseries we experience.

If seeing the devotees can do this, then what about actually seeing Sri Rayaru (or his Brindavana)? This is called "kaimutya nyaaya"--"kim uta"=what more? In other words if seeing Sri Rayaru's devotees is so great, then it goes without saying that seeing Sri Rayaru is much greater

In the previous verse we saw the beautiful analogy of how the minds of devotees are attracted to the lotus feet of Sri Raghavendra Swami as well as Lord Vishnu, the way a honeybee is attracted to a real lotus.

The next verse continues with the praise of Sri Rayaru:

sarvatantra svatantra.sau |
shrI madhvamatavardhanaH ||
vijayIndra karaabjottha |
sudhIndra varaputrakaH || 10

asau -- He, Raghavendra Swami

sarvatantra--all the shaastra's and skills. It is said that Sri Rayaru was well-versed in all 64 kalas. Here is a list found on the internet of what the 64 'kalas' or arts are, though I'm not sure of its accuracy: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kalae>

svatantraH --independent. Here it means Sri Rayaru is independent, in the sense that he learned the shAstra-s on his own. It should *not* be taken in the sense that Sri Hari is 'svatantra'. For those who are familiar with the "tattva's" (a classification of everything) in Madhva siddhanta, you have certainly heard of the verse "svatantraM asvatantraM cha dvididhaM tattvam ishyate | svatantra bhagavaan vishNuH bhaavaabhaavo dvidhetarat||" That is, everything can be classified into two categories. Lord Vishnu is svatantraH (independent), and all else is dependent on him (both things that exist, and things that do not exist). So it should be stressed that the only thing that is truly independent in the universe (that it does not depend on something else for its existence or function--satta or pravritti), is Lord Vishnu.

When it is said that Sri Rayaru is 'svatantra', it should be taken in the sense that he independently learned shaastra (unlike the way we learn, where we are dependent & helpless without a Guru's guidance). vardhanaH --responsible for the growth of shrI madhva matha --the philosophy of Sri Madhvacharya: Dvaita siddhanta. Also, the 'shrI' here can be taken as describing Madhva's philosophy, full of luster and glory.

Sri Raghavendra Swami excelled in all the various shaastra's as well as arts, on his own merit. He propagated the philosophy of Sri Madhvacharya.

An alternate meaning of 'sarvatantra' is that shaastra of Sri Vishnu.

'sarva' is one of the names of Vishnu in the Vishnu Sahasranama 'sarva sharvaH shivaH sthaanuH', meaning one who is perfect in every aspect. One meaning of tantra is shaastra. So, sarvatantra, the shaastra preached by Vishnu (in the form of Sri Veda Vyasa, the author of Mahabharata, and the Brahma Sutras), was accepted by Sri Raghavendra Swami as his own philosophy (svasya tantram iti).

vijayIndra --Sri Vijayeendra Teertha, the pontiff of Rayaru Matha before Raghavendra Swami's predecessor, karaabjottha -- kara means hands. abja means "born in the water", referring to a lotus. Blessed by the lotus-like hands of Sri Vijayeendraru sudheendra -- Sri Sudheendra Teertha, the predecessor of Sri Rayaru. vara putrakaH --vara means best. The best son (that is, disciple).

Sri Vijayeendra Teertha, with his lotus-like hands blessed Sri Sudheendra Teertha, whose illustrious disciple was Raghavendra Swami. There is a double meaning here as well. vijayI means victorious. Vijayeendra refers to the victorious Indra. Sudhi means knowledgeable, and can be taken to mean the wise Narada. If we recall the story of Prahlada, Indra was about to take the wife of the demon Hiranyakashipu and kill her son. It was Narada who intervened, and through his divine knowledge, knew that the son of Hiranyakashipu was the great Vishnu Bhakta Prahlada, none other than Raghavendra Swami. Prahlada then received instruction from Narada on the greatness of Vishnu.

It's absolutely amazing--the same phrase "vijayeendra karabjottha sudheendra varaputrakaH" not only describes the predecessors of Sri Raghavendra Swami (Sri Sudheendra, and before him Sri Vijayeendra), but also the account of how Prahlada (Raghavendra Swami) was released from the lotus-like hands (karabjottha) of the victorious Indra (vijayeendra), and became the great disciple (vara putrakaH) of the intelligent Narada (sudheendra).

shrI raghavendro yatirAT |
gururme syaat bhayaapahaH ||
jnaana bhakti suputraayuH |
yashaH shrI puNyavardhanaH || 11

shrI Raghavendra --Raghavendra Swami. There is an excellent lecture by Shri Satyatmaru of the Uttaradi Matha on the meaning of 'Raghavendra' . By splitting the name several different ways, and giving different meanings, we can see both the beauty of the Sanskrit language, as well as the linguistic proficiency of Sri Satyatmaru. Unfortunately I don't recall the exact recording, but if you look at the Uttaradi Matha site, I believe it is under the MBTN section.

yatirAT -- A yati is an ascetic. yatiraaT means great among ascetics. guru -- our preceptor, teacher
syaat apahaH -- may he take away. One of the first words we learn in Sanskrit is asti = it is/he is. syaat comes from the same root. It means 'may he be' or 'may it be'. apahaara is taking away. Here syaat means "may he be". apahaH means "one who takes away"
me bhayaa --my fears.

May the great ascetic and our teacher, Sri Raghavendra Swami, take away our fears.

jnaana --knowledge. That knowledge which will lead us to Moksha is real knowledge.

bhakti --devotion. That devotion which is devoid of any selfishness, which is fixed on Lord Vishnu, who leads us to Moksha, (as well as those who help us along the path to Moksha, like Sri Rayaru, both in the form of his blessings and in the form of the works he has left us) suputra --good progeny. It is our children, our descendants who pass on our heritage, by imparting the knowledge we have learned, it can continue for generations to come.

aayuH --longevity. However, we must make use of our life. It is asked in our shaastra-- "taravaH kim na jIvanti?". Trees also live, but what do they do with their life? We shouldn't simply aspire to lead a long life. Rather we must do something purposeful with our life.

yasha -- fame. We should strive to be famous, not infamous. Through our good deeds, we must achieve fame, not for any selfish gain, but rather to serve as a model for others.

puNya --merit. Good deeds. This goes along with each of the items above. We should lead a long life doing good deeds, acquire fame through good deeds, our progeny should carry on the good deeds we do. For this we need to always have the right knowledge--discerning what is Dharma and what is adharma. And of course Bhakti in the Lord is essential as well, since He is the one who blesses us with all this. vardhanaH-- We saw in the previous verse, this means growth. May Sri Raghavendra Swami (and Lord Vishnu through him) bless us and allow all of these qualities to grow within us.

I have tried giving a brief translation of each verse before the detailed analysis, since this seems easier to follow:

The next 3 verses all describe how Sri Rayaru has the qualities of an ideal Guru, and how he frees his devotees from our troubles & fears.

**prativAdijayasvAntbhedacihnAdaro guruH | sarva vidyApravINo.nyo
rAghavendrAnna vidyate || 12**

There is no Guru like the respected Guru Raghavendra. He symbolizes defeat over philosophical opponents, and instilling fear in the hearts of such opponents. There is no other expert in the various shAstras and arts (with the exception of course of those above him in Taratamya).

Adara guruH --respected Guru (Raghavendra) [possesses] prativaadi jaya--prativaadi means opponent (one who speaks against you). jaya is victory, so victory over opponents svaanta bheda-- anta is inside. Bheda can mean many things, here it is the fear inside the hearts of opponents.

cihna--symbol. That is Sri Raghavendra symbolizes victory over opponents sarva vidyA pravINaH --pravINa means expert. He is an expert in all forms of learning (shaastra) rAghavendrat anyaH --someone besides Sri Raghavendra na vidyate --cannot be found. This needs to be understood as there is no expert in the various shaastra-s besides Sri Rayaru, except for those above Sri Rayaru in taratamya. Of course, there are veda abhimani devatas (controlling deities), like Saraswati, Lakshmi who know far more than Sri Rayaru, and we must not forget that.

**aparokShIkR^ita shrIshaH samupekShitabhAvajaH | apekShitapradAtA .nyo
rAghavendrAnna vidyate || 13**

There is no one like Sri Raghavendra who has 1)directly perceived the supreme Lord Vishnu (lord of Lakshmi Devi) 2)discarded the base desires

arising from a weakness of mind and 3) grants us all that which we legitimately desire.

aparokShi kR^ita -- [Sri Raghavendra] directly perceived shrIsha -- Lord of Shri (Lakshmi) -- Lord Vishnu samupekShita -- [Sri Raghavendra] really discarded. The 'sam' means samyak, or really.
bhAvaja -- that arising out of the mind, our evil desires.
pradAtA -- [Sri Raghavendra] is the giver of apekShita -- that which we desire rAghavendrAt anyaH -- someone besides Sri Raghavendra possessing the above qualities na vidyate -- cannot be found. (Except those above him)

**dayAdAkShiNyavairAgya vAkpATamukhANGkitaH | shApAnugrahashakto.nyo
rAghavendrAnna vidyate || 14**

There is no one like Sri Raghavendra Swami, who possesses compassion (in removing sorrow of others), straight-forwardness (consistency between speech, thought, and action), vairAgya (dispassion towards worldly objects), skill in speech. He is capable of giving curses to the undeserving, and blessings to the good people.

dayaa -- compassion. This is not just the compassion he showed during his lifetime, but even now, granting the desires of those devotees who pray to him & visit his Brndavana.

dAkShiNya -- straightforwardness, meaning he does not say one thing and do something else. Often times, we see people who talk about bhakti, jnaana, etc. but do not practice it in their daily lives. This is not at all the case for Sri Rayaru who not only preached bhakti in the Lord, but lead the life of a Vishnu Bhakta.

vairAgya -- dispassion for worldly objects. Sri Raghavendra Swami did not go after material pleasures, because these do not lead to any long term happiness.

vAkpATava -- we saw the phrase "vagdeha supATava". Here it is mentioned again, that Raghavendra Swami had skill in speaking.

mukha -- 'mukha', like 'adi' at the end of a list means 'etc'. So it's not just those qualities but many others.

ankitaH -- Sri Raghavendra Swami is adorned with all these.

shApa- curse. Those evildoers who seek to either harm devotees of Sri Rayaru or cause harm for the world in general are cursed by Sri Rayaru. anugraha - blessing. The devotees of Sri Rayaru are given Rayaru anugraha, the blessings of Rayaru.

Alternatively, shApAnugraha can be taken as a compound.

"shApAtmocakarUpAnugraha dadAti". He blesses devotees by freeing them from various curses that are afflicting them.

shaktaH -- Sri Rayaru is capable of this.

rAghavendrAt anyaH -- someone besides Sri Raghavendra possessing the above qualities na vidyate -- cannot be found. (Except those above him)

Continuing with the next 2 verses,

**aj~nAna vismR^iti bhrAnti samshayApasmR^iti kShayAH | tandrAkampavacaH
kauNThyamukhA ye chendriyodbhavaH || doShAste nAshamAyAnti
rAghavendraprasAdataH || 15**

Through Sri Rayaru's grace, various flaws originating from the sense organs, like ignorance, forgetfulness, delusion, doubts, the faculties

of knowledge failing, decay of our sense organs, lethargy, and stammering & shaking all get destroyed.

aj~nAna - ignorance

vismR^iti - vi + smR^iti (memory). Sometimes vi gives the same meaning, sometimes the opposite. Here, it gives the opposite=forgetfulness.

bhrAnti - delusion or distorted perceptions. As per our siddhAnta, the world is real, not an illusion. But what is meant here by bhrAnti is the erroneous perceptions we occasionally have. We can also see a hint of our siddhanta in the verse itself. What causes 'bhrAnti'? It is

flaws in our sense organs (indriyodbhavAh doShAH). When the flaws are removed, the sense organs naturally have the ability to produce correct knowledge. Just because we occasionally encounter illusions does not mean that ALL perceptions are an illusion (as some would like to say). samshaya- doubts, or in a more general sense, lack of faith.

apasmR^iti - The definition given is 'failure of faculties of

knowledge', but this is similar to vismR^iti. I'm not sure on the exact distinction, perhaps someone else can clarify.

kShayAH - The root 'kShi' means to destroy, and this word is derived from that. In this context, it means destruction of sense organs (so they're not working properly) tandrA -lethargy. That is, for example, not having the motivation to use our sense organs to pursue higher goals in life.

kampavachaH -- vachaH means speech. kampa means shaking (this is very similar to the Marathi word for 'to shake', perhaps there is something similar in Hindi). "Shaking speech", or stammering kaunThya --

foolishness or dullness te doShAH --these flaws naasham AyAnti --are destroyed. Literally "come to destruction". yA means to go. A+yA means come.

rAghavendrAprasAdataH -- From the grace (prasAda) of Sri Rayaru.

There are many saints that claim to cure diseases. How does Sri Rayaru differ from them? Whereas others simply try to cure things superficially, Sri Rayaru goes to the root cause. According to the Gita (Sri Rayaru wrote a commentary on the Gita called the Gita vivrti, allowing the deep meaning of the verses to be understood by the common man):

kAma esha krodha esha rajoguNa samudbhavaH | Chapter 3 of Gita, verse 37

indriyANi mano buddhirasyaadhiShTanam uchyate || Chapter 3 of Gita, verse 40 Flaws in our organs are due to things like 'kama' and 'krodha' (inappropriate desires & anger), caused by Rajo Guna. The sense organs and the mind are where these take root. In the previous verse of the Gita, Arjuna asks what is it that causes a man to commit bad deeds even though he does not want to. "pApam charati ..anicchanapi". The response by Krishna is contained in the verses above.

So what does this have to do with Sri Rayaru's grace towards us? By purifying our sense organs, we would not be motivated to do bad deeds, compelled by things like 'kama, krodha', etc. Unlike those mystics who promise to cure mental afflictions without understanding their cause, Sri Rayaru, having written a commentary on the Gita, not only understands what causes the flaws in our sense organs, but also has the strength to free us from them.

The next several verses describe various sadhana that a Rayaru bhakta must do:

1)japa & dhyana ("japitAt...")

2)prayer 3 times a day ("iti kAla traye nityam..") 3)pradakShina ("yathA shakti pradakshiNaM...") 4)Taking the sacred water from Brindavana ("vR^indavanagataM jalaM..") 5)Doing namaskara to Sri Rayaru ("namaskAram karomyahaM...")

**"OM shrI rAghavendrAya namaH" ityaShTaakShara mantrataH |
japitAdbhAvitAnnityamiShTarThAH syurna samshayaH|| 16**

By doing japa (reciting with full concentration) the 8-letter mantra OM "shrI rAghavendrAya namaH", one will always achieve what is desired. There is no doubt about this.

"OM shrI rAghavendrAya namaH" --This mantra is 8 letters (in Sanskrit of course!)excluding the OM. However, while doing japa, men should always recite this with OM as a prefix AND suffix. Women and those who have not had 'upanayana' should not recite OM while doing japa. iti aShTaakshara mantrataH japitAt --by reciting this 8-lettered mantra. aShTa means 8. akshara means letter (They are called akshara since letters cannot be destroyed, and also since the Sanskrit letters go from 'a' to 'ksha'). A mantra is called this because "mananAt trAyate"--by thinking about it, it (the deity presiding over the mantra) protects you. bhAvitAnnityam --one will always have iShTarthaH -- artha is a goal, iShTarthaH are desired goals. syuH na samshayaH --there is no doubt that this will happen.

How come sometimes desires (kAma) is viewed as something bad to avoid, and other times (iShTarthaH) it is something that is good, that devotees are blessed with? When it is said that we must not have kAma, what is criticized is the bad kAma -- the inappropriate desires that get in the way of our sadhana. Those desires that set us on the right path in life are of course no problem. In fact, even desiring for moksha, seeking jnAna, these are in a way desires! So we must make that distinction between the desires that cripple our sense organs, from the desires that will help put us on the right path in life.

If you have been paying close attention to how many letters are in each verse, it seems like the OM adds an extra letter. However, 'chandas' does not matter when it comes to mantra. Every accepted version of the Sri Raghavendra Stotra has the prefix OM (the suffix OM is only there if you are doing japa of just the mantra).

Here is a breakdown of the mantra

OM --This is a symbol of auspiciousness, and in its primary sense denotes Lord Vishnu.

Shri RaghavendrAya Namah --salutations to the illustrious Guru Raghavendra shrI --auspicious, illustrious agha dra -- "agham draavayate" agha means sin. dra stands for drAvayate, meaning to drive away. That is, he drives away sin.

ve rA -- "vem rAti" ve stands for vA-nchita, meaning what is desired. One meaning of rA is to shower. That is, he showers his devotees with what they (appropriately) desire.

As with any mantra, one should recite this understanding its meaning, and also the Rshi (here it is Sri Appanacharya, the author of the mantra) devata (Both Lord Vishnu, and Sri Rayaru), as well as the chandas.

An addition to the previous posting, the "Om Sri Raghavendraya Namaha" mantra's chandas is Gayatri. So we can recite this before doing japa: "Gayatri ChandaH, Srimad Appanacharyo RshiH, Sri Raghavendra Swamyantargata Paramatma Sri Vishnur Devata" (Please correct any mistakes with Sandhi). Again, it is very important to know the Chandas (meter for the verse), Rshi (mantra draShTa--the seer for the mantra), and Devata (whom the stotra is addressed to). Also, it is preferrable to add Sri Vayu deva as well, though it is long to recite-- Sri Raghavendra Swamyantargata "Bharati Ramana MukhyaprAnAntargata" Paramatma Sri Vishnur Devata.

hantu naH kaayajaan doShaan aatmaatMIyasamudbhavaan | sarvaanapi pumarthaamShcha dadaatu gururaatmavit || 17

May our Guru Rayaru, who knows & understands Paramatma, destroy all the flaws arising from our body, and those arising both from within ourselves as well as our relatives & friends. May he also bestow upon us the 4 "purushArthas"--dharma, artha, kama, & moksha.

Guru --Guru Rayaru.
aatmavit-- Vid means to know. He knows 'atma'. Here 'atma' refers to Paramatma. That is, Sri Rayaru knows & understands Paramatma. When we talk of Rayaru's miracles, this is the real strength behind his power & his miracles.

hantu -- 'may he kill'. The verb han means to kill. The -tu suffix means 'may he'
nah kaayajaan doshaan -- "The flaws arising from our body". nah means our. kaaya is body, so kaaya+ja, means born/arising from our body. dosha is a flaw. The -aan suffix at the end of it means plural.
aatmaaatmiya--aatma+aatmiya. Atma means self. You may have heard the term 'Atmiyaru' in Kannada. Those close to oneself, like friends & relatives.
samudbhavaan (doshaan)-- We have to understand that the doshaan carries over from before. sam=samyak, means well. ud+bhu also means arise. The sam hints at the fact that SO many flaws and problems arise both from within us and from those near to us (because of our association with them). May all of these flaws be destroyed through Rayaru's grace.
sarvaan pumarthaan--Sarvaan means all. Pum arthan =purusharthan, that is the 4 lofty goals of man's existence. More on this later.
dadaatu--may he give. From the root 'daa'.
api--and also. Meaning, may Sri Rayaru not just take away our flaws, but also grant us the 4 purusharthas.

We are fortunate enough to have received this birth as a human being, instead of being born as some animal. The motivation for most animals is either desire for food or lust (kama). We should strive to be better than that. There are humans who simply pursue material wealth (artha). Again, a step above them, there are those who follow the path of righteousness (Dharma) But is that the ultimate goal of man's existence? No, there is an even higher goal--Moksha, which is each soul experiencing its own innate sukha and is only achievable through continuous devotion towards the Lord. This is the ultimate goal.

Does that mean that the other 3 purusharthas are 'bad'? No, as is characteristic of Sri Madhva's siddhanta, there is a gradation. Kama and artha are ok as long as they are in accordance with Dharma. For example kama for one's wife is appropriate but not towards 'parastri',

as that is adharma. Likewise wealth obtained through righteous means is ok, but not that obtained by treading the path of adharma (deceit, treachery). While following the path of Dharma, we must not think that Dharma is an ultimate goal in and of itself. There are people who are righteous but do not even give any thought to God.

But this view is not right. It is Narayana who enables us to follow the right path in life (dharma marge prerayati), and as a worship to him (tasya pujaartham), in all the good deeds that we do, we should remember Him and see Him as the real doer not us (naaham karta Harih kartaa). By doing so, even those good deeds will not bind us in samsara, and eventually we will achieve the real ultimate purushaartha-Moksha.

iti kaalatraye nityaM praarthanaam yaH karoti saH | ihaamutraapta sarveShTo naatra saMshayaH || 18

Anyone who offers prayers as mentioned above (reciting japa, etc.), regularly 3 times a day, has all of his desires fulfilled in this world and the next. He prospers with bliss, there is no doubt about this.

iti --As pointed out earlier, doing japa, thinking of Sri Rayaru with full devotion. One shouldn't recite the stotra like a parrot, simply repeating the words. Rather, one should understand the meaning and focus on Sri Rayaru and Lord Vishnu dwelling within him.

kaala traye--3 times a day. Preferrably morning, noon, and evening. For those who do Sandhya Vandana, doing Rayaru japa can be done quite easily after your trikala sandhyavandana.

nityam--continuously. That is, you don't do Rayaru japa for a while then give up on it later. You continue doing it throughout your lifetime.

praarthanam--prayers. Normally prarthana means request, so it can be taken as requesting bhakti & jnana about Sri Rayaru, Sri Madhvacharya, and Lord Vishnu.

yaH karoti saH --he who does what is mentioned above. This is easier to translate word-for-word into Kannada (or another Indian language).

"yaH karoti saH" means "yaaru mAduttano avanu...".

ihaamutra--iha means here. amutra means in the next world as well.

aapta sarveShTo--sarva iShTa means all one's desires. aapta means obtains. Notice the past tense 'aapta'. That is, by reciting Rayaru stotra, doing japa, etc. you can consider all your desires as having been obtained (that's how certainly they'll be fulfilled) modate-- prospers with bliss.

na atra saMshayaH --saMshaya means doubt. Na atra, means there is no doubt there. There is no doubt that a devout bhakta of Sri Rayaru obtains all his desires.

agamya mahimA loke raaghavendro mahAyashAH | srimadhvamata dugdhaabधि chandro.vatu sadaanaghaH || 19

Sri Raghavendra Swami possesses great fame. His greatness is such that it can't even be understood in this world. He is like a moon to the milky ocean that is Sri Madhvacharya's philosophy (making it rise). May such a flawless guru like Sri Rayaru protect us.

Raghavendra -- Sri Rayaru

mahaayashaaH -- yashas means fame. Great fame. I think that the aaH at the end of it is singular. For nouns ending in '-a', like deva, devAH is plural. But for those ending in '-s' I think it's different.
mahimA -- This greatness of Rayaru
agamyaloke--not understood in this world. gam means to go, but here in a figurative sense, it does not go to the minds of people=not understood.
shrI madhvamata --the philosophy of Sri Madhva (is like) dugdhaabdhi -- the milky ocean chandraH -- the moon. Sri Rayaru is compared to the moon. We notice on a full moon, the ocean rises. Likewise, the ocean that is Sri Madhva's philosophy rises because of Sri Rayaru.
sadaa avatu--may he always protect (us).
anagha--agha means flaw. anagha means flawless. Sri Rayaru is flawless. Of course, all souls have 'apurNata doSha', they are not infinite. Only paramAtma is free from this flaw. But here flawless means Sri Rayaru is free from the flaws affecting most ordinary people (kamakrodhaadi doSha vivarjitaH)

Analyzing the meaning of the word "Madhva"="Madhu+va" Madhu means bliss. va means knowledge. Thus, "Madhva" refers to that knowledge leading to eternal bliss. This is what is contained in Sri Madhvacharya's philosophy. Sri Rayaru has brought this out not only by doing Madhva matha prachaara prior to his entering Brndavana, but also in the form of the works he has left behind, like Gita Vivrtti. Indeed, like the moon causing something as vast as the ocean to swell up, Sri Rayaru's works have caused the deep philosophy propounded by Sri Madhvacharya to rise & spread throughout the land.

**sarvayaatraaphalaavaaptiyai yathaa shakti pradakShiNaM | karomi tava
siddhasya vR^indaavanagataM jalaM || shirasaa dhaarayaamyadya sarva
tiirthaphalaaptaye || 20 ||**

I perform pradakshina around the Brindavana as many times as possible(circling Brindavana so it is always on the right). Such an act brings a reward equivalent to that of visiting all the sacred pilgrimage centers(tirtha yaatra). I sprinkle upon my head the water from the Brindavana of you, the great achiever. Such a prokshana is like the prokshana of water from various sacred rivers.

avaaptiyai -- For the sake of obtaining (avaapti is feminine noun) sarva yaatra phala --the fruits of various tirtha yaatras, that is pilgrimage centers pradakShiNaM karomi --I do 'pradakshina', circling the Brindavana. In other words, circling Rayaru Brindavana is like visiting various pilgrimage centers.

yathaa shakti -- as capable by me.

tava siddhasya --"O great achiever Sri Rayaru, your..". Here, siddha refers to Rayaru. Rayaru has achieved so much, written so many great works, blessed so many devotees. We should think back to how he has achieved all this, mentioned in one of the early verses "hari paadakanja niShevaNaallabha samasta sampat". By worshipping the feet of Lord Hari, Rayaru has achieved 'sampat' --wealth: wealth of knowledge, wealth of good qualities.

vR^indaavanagataM jalaM -- jala is one of many Sanskrit words meaning water. vR^indaavanagataM jalaM means that water that is done as abhisheka to Rayaru Brindavana.

shirasA dhaarayaami--shiras means head. I accept the prokshana water upon my head.

adya--today, now.

sarva tiirtha phalaaptaye--this is similar to the beginning of the verse, but here it refers to the actual nadi tIrtha (sacred rivers). Receiving the prokshana water from Brindavana is like receiving the water from various sacred rivers. Also when reciting the verse, notice the gender difference. avaapti is feminine, so it becomes 'avaaptyai'. aapti is masculine so it becomes 'aaptaye'. But they both carry the same meaning.

Though there is mention of the 'phala' or reward one gets for doing pradakshina or prokshane (sprinkling water from Brindavana on our head), we shouldn't do this with the rewards in mind. We should do pradakshina & accept prokshane out of devotion. Furthermore, the rewards are mentioned to point out the greatness of these acts of devotion.

The use of the word Siddhi also refers to the fact that Sri Rayaru was accomplished in all the siddhis. The 8 siddhis are aNima, mahima, garima, laghima praapti, praakaamyam, Ishatvam and vashitvam. The reason why Rayaru Brindavana is equal to all the pilgrimage centers is that the presiding deities (abhimani devatas) of the various pilgrimage centers are also present in the Brindavana. It is not that we get blessed by the mere act of visiting a pilgrimage center --the controlling deity at that pilgrimage center is who really blesses us, and it is said that these same deities are also present in Rayaru Brindavana. Inside the Brindavana there are more than 1000 saligramas from the various pilgrimage centers and this is another reason why Rayaru Brindavana is equivalent to all the pilgrimage centers. The location of Rayaru Brindavana is another factor. At that very place (Mantralaya), Prahlad had performed Yajna in Kritayuga. In Treta Yuga, Sri Rama, Sitadevi, and Lakshmana had passed through the region. In fact the stone used for Brindavana was the very one that Sri Rama & Sita had rested upon! In Dwapara Yuga, the very spot where Brindavana is was where Anusulva's chariot rested. As long as Anusulva's chariot was there, Arjuna could not defeat him. Krishna removed him from that spot and only then could Arjuna defeat him. Such is the esteemed presence of the Brindavana location. Finally from within the Brindavana, Sri Rayaru constantly invokes the presence of various deities through his japa & dhyana. That is why it has the power of various tirtha kshetras.

Both while reciting the stotra, and doing pradakshina & receiving prokshana water upon our heads, we should think about how Rayaru Brindavana carries the esteemed presence of all the Tirtha Yatras.

**sarvaabhIShTaartha siddhyarthaM namaskaaraM karomyaham | tava
saMkIrtanaM vedashaashtraartha j~nanasiddhaye || 21**

For the sake of obtaining all my desires I worship you. I sing your praise with the objective of acquiring the knowledges of all the Vedas and shastras.

sarva --all

abhIShTaartha --abhi+IshTa+artha. abhi means towards. abhIShTa means what we have desire towards. artha means objects. It need not be desire for material objects, but whatever we desire. As always, it is better to desire higher things in life --jnaana, bhakti, sukha, etc.

siddhyarthaM --Here artha means goal. siddhyartha means for the sake of accomplishing/acquiring all the abhISHTaartha-s mentioned earlier.
karomi ahaM --I do...
namaskaaraM --obeisance, pranam. More later on this.

tava sankIrtanaM -- Chanting your name with devotion. When understanding this we have to repeat "karomyahaM". So I do obeisance AND sing your praise.
jnaana siddhaye --For the sake of obtaining the knowledge that comes from understanding veda shaastraartha -- Artha as we have seen has several meanings. Here it means "meaning", the meaning of the Vedas and Shaastras We should strive to understand Shaastra, and Guru Rayaru's grace can help us achieve it.

How should one do Namaskara? Men should do 'saaShTaanga'--with 8 parts touching the ground--2 feet, 2 hands, 2 shoulders, head & chest. Women should not let their chest touch the ground (having vishesha Lakshmi sannidhana--special presence of Sri Lakshmi devi). They should do 'panchanga' namaskaara--without the shoulders & chest touching the ground.

SankIrtana means more than just singing the praise of Rayaru. It also encompasses understanding & reciting Rayaru's works.
Both while doing sankIrtana and namaskara, we must have deep devotion. As the Haridasas say "Bhakuti sadhanavallada anya saadhana uNTe?"

Is

there any other sadhana besides Bhakti? No, of course not -- while learning the meaning of this and other stotras, if you do not develop a sense of devotion towards Sri Rayaru and the Lord, then you have missed the most important part.

The previous verses described doing pradakShiNa & namaskara. This stotra continues with what we should be thinking of while doing prayer.

**samSare.akShayasaagare prakR^itito.agAdhe sadaa dustare |
sarvaavadyajalagrahairanupamaiH kaamaadibha~Ngaakule ||
naanaavibhramadurbhrame.amitabhayastomaadiphenotkaTe |
duHkhotkR^iShTaviShe samuddhara guro maaM magnarUpaM sadaa || 22||**

O Guru Rayaru, free me from this ocean-like samsara that I have been submerged in, which by its nature is bottomless, always difficult to traverse. This samsara has blemishes which are like crocodiles, agitated with desires which are like the ocean waves. The ignorance and perverse knowledge are like turbulent whirlpools (which pull us down). The foams of endless fears and mental agonies as well as the sorrows & sadness which are like the worst poisons make this samsara sagara even more treacherous.

The samsara that we are in is described as an ocean, and we pray to Rayaru to guide us across this treacherous ocean .

guro -- O Guru Rayaru
maam samuddhara sadaa-- always lift me up. ut + dhara means to lift out (you may have heard of the noun form, 'uddhaara', here it is the verb).
sam =samyak, means really lift me out of this samsAre magnarUpaM -- magna means submerged. We are all deeply submerged in this samsAra.

akShaya saagare -- indestructible ocean. kShaya means destructible, akShaya means indestructible. Notice that all of the nouns have an 'e' suffix at the end. This is 'sapthami vibhakti' and means 'in'. So in this samsara sagara.

prakR^ititaH agAde -- prakR^iti means nature. agaada means deep. This ocean-like samsara is deep by its very nature.

sadaa dustare -- sadaa means always. The root tR^ii- means to cross. dustara means difficult to cross. Again, by its suffix 'e' you can see it is describing this samsara/ocean.

sarvaavadya jalagrahaiH -- The 'avadya' is compared to jalagraha. vadya means praiseworthy, avadya, the opposite, means blemishes, in other words all the imperfections in this samsara. A jalagraha is a crocodile, since it resides in the water(jala) and seizes its prey. Like crocodiles seizing its victims, all the problems we come across in this samsara seem to be lurking ready to seize us. These 'crocodiles' are anupamaiH, unparalleled.

kaamaadi bhangakule -- Like the waves in an ocean (bhanga) tossing us around, all kinds of inappropriate desires (kaama) make this samsara sagara turbulent for us. Adi means etc., meaning that it's not just inappropriate desires, but so many other things that make this samsara sagara treacherous!

naanaavibhrama durbhrama--One of the beauties of the Sanskrit language and difficulties in translation is that the same word can have many meanings. Bhrama can mean confusion. It can also mean whirlpool. So the various (naanaa) types of confusion and ignorance we have in this samsara are like the whirlpools in an ocean. The 'vi' and 'dur' suffixes are both negative. They refer to both the ignorance we have as well as the wrong knowledge, which is worse (thinking that what is wrong is what is right).

amita bhaya stoma adi phena utkate -- amita means countless. bhaya is fear. bhayastoma is literally a 'heap of fears'. The countless fears we have in this samsara make traversing this samsara even more difficult. phena means froth, so here the collection of fears is compared to the froth in the ocean.

duHkha utkR^iShTa viShe - The sorrow that we have in this world is compared to poison (viSha). utkR^iShTa means highest, but since it is describing viSha it means full of poison.

By describing all the difficulties we encounter in this samsara, Sri Appanacharya is instructing us to get our mind away from all the bad things in this world that pull us down and also seek the grace of Rayaru and tadantaryami BharatiramaNamukhyaprANantargata paramAtma (Bhagavan Vishnu who resides in Vayu Deva, whose consort is Bharati Devi, who resides in Rayaru).

The previous verse was difficult to translate because of its analogy, but the next few verses should be easier to follow. Also, the rest of the Rayaru Stotra, almost until the end focuses on the importance of reciting the stotra. This section at the end is common for many shlokas and is called the 'phalashruti', describing the phala or fruits one obtains by reciting the stotra. (Of course, one should not recite the stotra with the fruits in mind. The intention of the phalashruti is to instill in us more of a desire to recite the stotra).

**raaghavendragurustotraM yaH paTheDbhaktipUrvakaM | tasya
kuShThAdirogANAM nivR^ittistvarayaa bhavet || 23 ||**

One who recites the Raghavendra Stotra with complete devotion will be freed from all bodily diseases, like leprosy.

yaH paThet --whoever recites. paThati can mean read or recite.
raaghavendra guru stotraM --this Guru Raghavendra Stotra.
bhakti pUrvakaM --pUrvakaM means full of. As mentioned earlier, one should recite this stotra full of devotion(bhakti), not mechanically recite it, or recite it with the mind lost in thought elsewhere.
tasya kuShThaadirogaaNaaM --kuShTharoga means leprosy. His diseases like leprosy (so not just that, but any kind of bodily disease, or even mental disease).
nivR^ittiH -- will be gone.
tvarayA bhavet -- tvarayaa means fast. So this will happen fast

**andho.api divyadR^iShTiH syaadeDamUko.api vaakpatiH | pUrNaayuH
pUrNasampattiH stotrasyaasya japaadbhavet || 24 ||**

By doing japa of this stotra (reciting it several times with devotion), even a blind person can become blessed with great sight.
One who is mute/dumb by birth can become a proficient speaker. He who recites this stotra will have a long life and obtain massive riches.

asya stotrasya --This stotra's
japaat bhavet -- By doing japa (meditation, repeatedly reciting the stotra), the following all happen:
andhaH api--Even though blind
divya dR^iShTi syaat -- he becomes blessed with great sight. syaat comes from the same root as 'asti' (it is) and means 'would be'.
divyadR^iShTi can also mean divine sight, like Sanjaya being able to see what is happening during Kurukshetra.
eDamUkaH api -- eDamuka means mute by birth, unable to speak. Even such a person vaakpatiH (syaat) --would become proficient in speech. vaak means speech. pati can mean among other things, an expert. While explaining the meaning, we have to repeat the word syaat from before.
pUrNaayUH (syaat)-- pUrNa means full. aayuH means life. He is blessed with a long life.
pUrNa sampattiH (syaat)-- A person who does japa of this stotra also becomes full of riches. We should go back to what sampat means in the Bhagavad Gita (mentioned in one of the early postings). It doesn't have to mean material riches, but also richness of character (daivi sampat)

We may sometimes get the doubt, is this all just an exaggeration, that a mute person can be blessed with speech, etc.? There are documented cases where Rayaru has revived many people (given them 'pUrNayuH'). Also, an illiterate cowherd, Venkanna after being blessed by Rayaru was able to read the news given by the Nawab of Adoni . The pleased ruler made Venkanna a diwan (So Venkanna became a 'vaakpati' and 'pUrNasampatti' through the grace of Rayaru). If the mere Darshana of Rayaru can lead to all this, then how much more can be obtained by reciting Rayaru Stotra with devotion(which Rayaru himself approved, as we shall see in the final posting)?

However, before we come to the conclusion that any difficulty can be solved through Rayaru's grace, it is important to point out that there are 3 types of karma: sanchita, aagami, praarabdha. Prarabdha karma is past actions that we must experience the fruits of, no matter what. If we are suffering because of some prarabdha karma, then there is no way

around it, we will have to experience it. However the effects of other 2 types of karma can be washed away through proper bhakti & Jnana in Rayaru and the Lord.

As a closing remark, Rayaru's blessing comes from his approaching Vishnu, the supreme controller, to remove the suffering of his devotees. Unlike the magic or false claims made by some, Rayaru's ability to heal his devotees is genuine, so we must keep that in mind, as well as the real strength (Lord Vishnu) behind Rayaru's ability to bless his devotees. Continuing with the phala-shruti (the benefits of reciting the stotra),

yaH pibejjalametena stotreNaivaabhimaMtritaM | tasya kukShigataa doShAH sarve nashyanti tatKShaNaat || 25

One who drinks the water sanctified by the recitation of this stotra will immediately be freed from all diseases and weaknesses arising within the stomach and the rest of the body.

yaH -- He who
pibet -- drinks
jalam -- the water
abhimantritaM --sanctified by the recitation of etena stotrena -- this Rayaru Stotra ('trtiyaa vibhakti' --3rd case is used for both etad and stotram meaning 'by') eva --only. Here it can be taken to mean that this Stotra can confer such great benefits, so great that the recitation of it alone can cure us of the ailments described later. But a word of caution, we should not get into the mindset "Rayaru's stotra can cure my diseases, so I will completely forget about all the other medicines, etc.". In my opinion, the point that is being made here is to bring out the greatness of reciting the stotra, how the puNya accrued from reciting the stotra can cure our diseases, NOT that we should give up on all other medicines for our bodily diseases and blindly recite Rayaru Stotra. We must do our part as well!
tasya --his (one who suffers from)
kukShigataa -- kukShi means stomach. gataa means going, but when translating we can take it to mean coming from/arising.
doShAH-- flaws or diseases.
sarve -- One example is given here, stomach diseases. By adding sarve, we can take it to mean not just stomach diseases but other bodily diseases nashyanti --get destroyed tatKShaNAt --a kShaNaa is a minute interval of time (It seems to be given some places as being about half a second). The implication is that our diseases, due to our past pApa, get destroyed immediately from the puNya obtained from reciting this stotra.

There is also another possible reason why the stomach in particular is mentioned. As a Vaishnava, it is important for us to do Ekadashi upavasa--fasting on the 11th day of the month. What is the reason why most people don't do it? Weakness of the stomach--'kukShi gataa doShAH'!! Through Rayaru's grace, we will be able to overcome such weaknesses, gain the strength to do Ekadashi Upavasa, which gives puNya, brings us closer to Rayaru and the Lord. Next time we take tirtha from Rayaru Brindavana, we should keep this stotra in mind. Either way--if you are already doing Ekadashi Upavasa, from Rayaru's blessings you won't fall prey to such 'kukShi gataa doShAH'. If you are not doing Ekadashi Upavasa, then by seeking Rayaru's grace, you will become capable of doing upavasa in the future without worrying about

stomach problems. But as mentioned earlier, effort is needed on our part as well

yadvR^indaavanamaasaadya paMguH kha~njo.pi vaa janaH | stotreNanena yaH
kuryaat pradakShiNanamaskR^itiH | sa ja~NghAlo bhavedeva
gururaajaprasaadataH || 26

Any lame or disabled person who approaches the Brindavana, performs namaskara, and does pradakshina around it, while reciting this Stotra, such a person will certainly become capable of walking through the grace of the king among Gurus, Sri Rayaru.

paMguH -- A lame
kha~njaH api vaa-- or even a disabled
janaH -- person
aasaadya -- having approached
yad vR^indaavanaM -- that Sri Rayaru Brindavana yaH --He (that disabled/lame person) kuryaat -- who does
pradakShiNa-- pradakshina, circling keeping the Brindavana on the right.
namaskR^itiH --namaskaara, obeisance.
anena stotrena -- with this stotra, that is, reciting this stotra while doing namaskara.
sa --That person
bhavet -- becomes
ja~NghaalaH -- an expert in walking. It comes from the word ja~Ngha, which means shin, so someone with fast shins/legs eva --there is no doubt about this.
guru raaja --the king among Gurus. When we say Indra is the king among the gods, we mean king of those gods below him (not Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, for example). Likewise, when referring to Rayaru as King of Gurus, we should not take that to mean that he is greater than ALL other Gurus. We should keep in mind that Sri Madhvacharya, Sri Jayateertharu, and many others are far above Rayaru in taratamya and 'higher' Gurus.
prasaadataH --through the grace of Rayaru (and tadantaryami Vayu, tadantaryaami Vishnu), such miracles happen.

It is worth mentioning again that Rayaru's blessings are different from many other "fake guru's" -- unfortunately we see many people these days who claim that they can perform miracles but are only really interested in fame and money.

Rayaru's ability to cure his devotees comes from the fact that being high in the taratamya (as an avatara of Prahlad, who is 19th in the Taratamya--ranking of deities) , he can actually ask those controlling deities for our internal organs(abhimani devatas) to bless us and free us from diseases. This is not something that ordinary people can do. Rayaru, in his previous birth as Prahlada could not be harmed by fire, poison, or anything else that Hiranyakashipu tried to torture him with. In order for someone to cure our diseases and weaknesses, such a person himself must be above all that, and Rayaru certainly possesses that. How? We see that Prahlada/Rayaru's devotion comes "haripaada ka~nja niShevaallabha samasta sampat"...by worshipping Lord Hari, he obtained the ability to cure his devotees.

One other important point to mention about this stotra is that for the first time the composer of this Stotra, Sri Appanacharya refers to Sri Raghavendra Swami as "Gururaja"

The next verse describes especially auspicious times for reciting the stotra:

**somasuryoparaage cha puShyaarkaadi samaagame | yo.anuttamaM idaM
stotramaShTottaraashataM japet || bhUtapreta pishaachaadi pIDaa tasya na
jaayate || 27**

He who recites this unparalleled stotra 108 times when there is an eclipse (either solar or lunar) or when the sun is in the pushya nakshatra position, such a person will not be tormented by ghosts, demons, or spirits.

soma--moon

surya--sun

uparaage--At the time of an eclipse. This means both the solar eclipse (the sun blocked by the moon), and lunar eclipse (the moon blocked by the sun). An eclipse is considered to be a good time for the recitation of the Rayaru Stotra.

puShya--one of the nakshatras (It seems to correspond with the Cancer constellation in Western astronomy).

arka--sun.

samaagame--During the union of the sun & puShya. That is, when the Pushya nakshatra is dominant on a Sunday. This is also considered an auspicious time for recitation of the stotra.

aadi--Not just these, but other auspicious times as well.

yaH --He who

japet --recites

idaM anuttamaM-- this unparalleled. uttama means great, anuttama means "uttamaparaH na asti" or "that for which there is nothing greater".

stotraM -- Guru Raghavendra Stotra

aShTa utara shataM --108. shata means 100. aShTa means 8. utara means more (as opposed to Una=less). So 8 more than 100 = 108. The number 108 has special meaning, so reciting any stotra or mantra (like Gayatri mantra) brings puNya. If done at an auspicious time like that mentioned earlier, it is even better.

tasya -- for that person,

bhuta --ghost. bhU means "to be". This is the past tense, that which was.

preta --pra + I, having gone(passed away). The spirit of a dead person.

pishaacha--demon.

adi--or other evil spirits.

pIDA--torment

na jaayate--will not arise. That is, he won't suffer from such evil spirits.

There is also one other deeper meaning to aShTottara shata. The names of Rayaru in this stotra add up to 108.

**etat stotraM samuccArya gurOrbR^indaavanaantike |
dIpaSaMyojanaajj~naanaM putralaabho bhaveddhruvaM || 28**

By reciting this stotra near Guru Raghavendra's Brindavana, and lighting a lamp near it, one will be blessed with knowledge and good progeny. There is no doubt about this.

etat stotraM--this Rayaru Stotra
samuccArya-- sam stands for samyak and means well. uccAraNa means recitation. uccArya means having recited. One should recite the stotra well, that is with full devotion not with the mind distracted by mundane matters.
gurOh-- Guru Rayaru's.
bR^indaavanaantike--in the proximity of Guru Raghavendra's Brindavana in Mantralaya.
dIpa --lamp
samyojanaat--yojana(from the root yuj) can mean many things. Here it means lighting the lamp.
j~naanaM --knowledge. By lighting a lamp near Rayaru Brindavana and reciting the stotra with devotion, one acquires knowledge.
putra lAbho -- Obtaining a son. putra means son (puM naama narakaat traayate iti putraH--one is protected from the Naraka known as 'puM' by having a worthy son). labh means to obtain, lAbha is the noun form of it.
bhavet--will happen (that is both obtaining a son, and true knowledge).
dhruvaM--there is no doubt about this.

There is another meaning for 'dIpa samyojanaat'. This word was chosen very specifically by Sri Appanacharya because of its double-meaning. Sri Raghavendra Swami's works are called 'dIpa', 'prakaasha' or 'dIpikA', because they shed light on the difficult to understand works by Sri Madhvacharya, Sri Jayateertha (Teekacharya). Sri Raghavendra has also done independent works in addition to commenting on the works of these scholars, like the tantradIpikA which is on the Brahma Sutra. Yuj most commonly means to unite. By correctly uniting, or connecting Sri Raghavendra's works to that of Madhvacharya and his followers, one obtains correct knowledge without a doubt. This is another meaning of 'dIpasamyojanaat j~naanam bhavet dhruvaM'. This true knowledge can protect us from Naraka (for example, in the Ishavasya Upanishad it is stated that 'andham tamaH pravishanti ye avidyaaM upasate'--incorrect knowledge can lead one to Hell. Thus it is important to have true knowledge.). So "protection from naraka, arising from true knowledge, which comes from connecting Sri Rayaru's works with that of other Dvaita scholars" can be taken as another meaning for 'putra'

Again continuing with the 'phalashruti' (description of fruits obtained by reciting the stotra)

**paravaadijayo divyaj~naanabhaktyaadivardhanaM |
sarvaabhIShTapravR^iddhiH syaat naatra kaaryaa vichaaraNaa || 29**

By reciting this verse, one obtains victory over his opponents. Such a person also acquires divine knowledge and devotion towards the Lord & his devotees. There is no need to worry about anything because whoever recites this verse will have all of his desires fulfilled.

(yo bhaktyaa paThati sa labhati) -- We need to think this: Whoever recites this verse with devotion, such a person obtains:
jayaH --victory over

paravaadi --his opponents. para means other. vaadi means speaker. So one who speaks against you is an opponent.

divyaj-naana--divya means divine. j-naana is knowledge. Divine knowledge means that knowledge leading to Moksha. There is a division in the type of knowledge we acquire--paravidya and aparavidya.

paravidya means that higher knowledge that will lead us out of samsara. Aparavidya is knowledge about other worldly 'laukika' things and is considered inferior to paravidya.

bhakti -- devotion. We must recite the stotra with devotion. As a result of that we will acquire more devotion towards Guru Rayaru and Bhagavan Vishnu, so we will recite it in the future with more devotion. This is how our devotion grows.

aadi --etc. So in addition to knowledge & devotion, we can also add vairagya (dispassion towards worldly pleasures).

vardhanaM --growth. vR^iddh is the root verb meaning to grow. When it becomes a noun and the suffix -ana is added 'R^i' becomes 'ar'. The growth here is growth of all the things mentioned earlier--jnaana, bhakti, and vairagya.

sarva --All

abhIShTa--that we desire (abhi+ iShTa=have desire towards) pravR^ddhi - real growth. pra means prakR^iShTa, roughly translated as 'really...'. vR^ddhi means the same thing as vardhana.

syaat-- will happen. That is, we will not only get all that we desire, but it will continue to grow (wealth, happiness, knowledge, etc.) atra kaaryaa-- here, in this respect na vichaaraNaa --there is no need to worry (we don't need to worry "will I get this? will I get that?". By reciting the stotra with devotion, Rayaru will bless us with whatever we desire).

Though the second part of the verse says that we will achieve whatever we desire, we should desire higher things like what is stated in the first half of the verse--jnaana & bhakti, NOT material pleasures.

raajachoramahaavyaaghrasarpanakraadipIDanaM | na jaayate.asya stotrasya prabhaavaannaatra saMshayaH || 30

Because of the special power of this verse, he who recites this will not suffer from any of the following: the government, thieves, great tigers, snakes, crocodiles, etc. There is no doubt about this.

prabhaavaat--Because of the special power. The special power doesn't mean some kind of magic. Rayaru being a devotee of the Lord has the ability to bless those who approach him with sincerity. How does the Lord have the ability to protect us from all of the things that trouble us? "Ishaavaashyam idam sarvam"--as stated in the Isha Upanishad, everything here is under the control of the Lord, so we will be freed of all of our troubles through His grace.

asya stotrasya -- of this Rayaru Stotra, pIDanam --pIDa is suffering. na jaayate --will not arise. What types of suffering? The list (just a sample of some of the things that may trouble us) is given below raaja --The government. Any kind of hassle by government officials chora-- thieves mahaa vyaaghra-- great tigers.

sarpa--snake

nakra--crocodile. Notice that the translation is given as plural though all the words seem to be singular.

"raajachoramahaavyaaghrasarpanakraadipIDanaM" is one single compound word, so each part of the compound is not made plural.

aadi --not just what is mentioned above but anything else that can trouble us.
atra -- here, with respect to what has been stated na saMshayaH --there is no doubt. That is, this stotra really will protect us.

Some of you may be thinking that tigers & crocodiles don't trouble us, why does the verse mention this? There is a symbolic meaning as well. It is not just harassment from wild animals, but also what really troubles man: kaama (desire), krodha (anger), lobha (greed), moha (delusion), mada (arrogance), and matsarya (jealousy). So many of the troubles people experience are a result of some or even all of these. Rayaru in his avatara as Prahlada compares the harassment by our sense organs to the way co-wives harass their husband, pulling him in different directions. How does reciting this stotra help us? Our mind will be fixed on Guru Rayaru & Lord Vishnu so it won't be as easily swayed by material things. Also because of the knowledge that the Lord blesses us with (divyaj~naana...vardhanaM), we will be able to conquer these enemies that are the real crocodiles, snakes & tigers in our lives.

yo bhaktyA gururaaghavendra charaNadvaMdvaM smaran yaH paThet | stotraM divyamidaM sadaa nahi bhavet tasyaasukhaM kiMchana || 31

He who always recites this divine Stotra, thinking of the feet of Guru Raghavendra, he will not suffer from any sorrow.

yaH paThet-- He who recites
idaM divyaM stotraM --this divine stotra. We shall see in the next posting what makes this stotra divine.
smaran-- while thinking of. 'smarati' means he thinks. 'smaran' is the present participle 'thinking'.
yo bhaktyA --with devotion. The repeated use of 'yah' can be understood, for example in Kannada we might say "yaaru smaraNe mAdi yaaru ii stotra odtaano". The 'yaaru' is repeated but still makes sense, though it seems redundant in English.
guru raaghavendra --Guru Raghavendra's
charaN dvaMdvaM -- two feet. dvaMdva means two. It has an extra anusvara on it because it is the direct object, what he is thinking of.
sadaa--always. This is placed in the verse in such a way that it can be applied either to thinking (always thinking of Guru Raghavendra) or reciting (always reciting with devotion), or that what follows is always true.
tasya asukhaM -- his sorrow. sukha is happiness, asukha is the opposite=sorrow.
kincana --the least bit
nahi bhavet --won't happen. To emphasize the fact that he will be happy and not suffer from sorrow, this double negative is used. "He will not be the least bit unhappy" = "He will be happy".

We must be careful when reciting this stotra. If you say it "nahi bhavet tasya sukhaM kincana", you'll be effectively saying "he who recites this stotra won't be happy"!! It is better to hold out the 'a' sound a bit longer, rather than shorten it: "tasyaaasukhaM" to stress the fact that he who recites the stotra will not be Unhappy

The previous verse ended with "na hi bhavet tasyaasukhaM kiMchana"

(there is no sorrow whatsoever) for "yo yo bhaktyA gururaaghavendracharaNadvaMdvaM smaran" (whosoever worships the feet of Sri Rayaru with devotion). This final verse is a continuation of that. The final "saakShI hayaasyo.atra hi" has special significance which will be explained later.

**kintviShTaartha samR^iddhireva kamalaanaathaprasaadodayaat |
kIrtirdigvidita vibhUtiratulaa saakShI hayaasyo.atra hi || 32 ||**

However, such a person who recites this stotra with devotion will have all his desires more than fulfilled. His fame will spread in all directions and he will have unparalleled prosperity. This is all possible because of the grace of Lakshmipati --Lord Vishnu. In fact, the truth of this stotra and the description of fruits obtained is confirmed by Lord Hayagriva (one of the many forms of Vishnu) Himself.

kiM tu --However. Not only will a devotee be free from sorrow, but also...
iShTaartha --desired wealth. iShTa means desired. artha means wealth. We should take wealth to mean the "devi sampat" (divine wealth=richness of character) mentioned in the Gita and also one of the early postings. samR^iddhi -- growth/fulfillment. Our desires will be fulfilled. eva --not otherwise. The use of 'eva' emphasizes that a sincere devotee will be blessed by reciting the stotra.
kamalaanaatha --kamalaa can mean lotus, but also Goddess Lakshmi. Kamalaanaatha means the Lord of Lakshmi, Lord Vishnu. Lakshmi stands very high in the taratamya. Unlike other deities (with the exception of Vishnu of course) she has never ever been bound by samsara (she is nityamuktaLu). Her Lord and controller, since time immemorial is Lord Vishnu.
prasaadodayaat --through His grace all this is possible. So the reason why a devotee is guaranteed to be blessed is because of the grace of that Lord Vishnu who is the controller of even Goddess Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth.
digvidita kIrtiH --dik means direction. One meaning of 'vid' is to find. kIrti means fame. Fame will be found(spread) in all directions for he who recites the stotra with devotion.
atula vibhUti --unparalleled prosperity. tula means a scale which is used to make things equal (like in a tulAbhaara). atulaa means unequalled or unparalleled. vibhUti is prosperity. bhU means "to be". The vi prefix can sometimes enhance the meaning, or give the opposite. Here it enhances the meaning. When one exists very well, one is prosperous.
hayaasyaH --hayagrIvasya. Lord Hayagriva is one form of Lord Vishnu, possessing the head of a horse. Of course, not an actual horse, since He is aprAkR^ita (non-material) sAkShI --His being witness. sAkShaata IkShate iti sAkShi. That which directly perceives is a sAkShi. This is especially appropriate for the Lord, because being omnipresent, He directly observes everything.
atra hi -- is here indeed. Here, meaning in the stotra. That is, Lord Vishnu Himself in the form of Hayagriva directly guarantees that everything in the stotra is correct.

The background for the Stotra was mentioned in the beginning. Sri Appanacharya crosses the Tungabhadra river reciting the stotra eager to catch one last glimpse of Sri Rayaru. At the end of the stotra, he arrives just as the last slab is placed on Rayaru Brindavana. Not being

able to finish the stotra after reciting "...vibUtiratula.." and overcome by emotion, he immediately does a sAShTaanga namaskara to Brindavana. It is at this point that from within the Brindavana, the final words "saakShI hayaasyo.atra hi" are heard.

Sri Raghavendra Swami himself approved this stotra, that is the special significance behind this! It is believed that Sri Raghavendra Swami was doing japa of Hayagriva mantra from within the Brindavana when Sri Appanacharya arrived.

Sri Appanacharya then, as per custom, adds a closing verse saying who the author is.

iti shrI raaghaveMdraarya gururaajaprasaadataH | kR^itaM stotramidaM puNyaM shrImadbhirappAnaabhidaiH ||

Thus, this meritorious stotra was composed by Sri Appanacharya who is blessed with good qualities, through the grace of the king among Gurus, the venerable Sri Raghavendra Swami.

iti --thus

prasadataH --through the grace of

shrI raaghaveMdra-- Raghavendra Swami. Also, the deeper meaning of Raghavendra: "aghaM draavayate veM raati raajate cha" -- one who takes away sin(agha), showers all desired things, and is illustrious (raajate) is Raghavendra. Ultimately this applies to Lord Vishnu because of whom all this is possible (yad anugrahataH santi na santi yad upekShayaa) also known as Lord Hari because He takes away our sins (agham apaharati).

guru raaja --the king among guru-s. It can refer to Raghavendra Swami, tadantaryaamI Sri Madhvacharya, tadantaryaami Lord Vishnu.

idam puNyaM stotram --this stotra which brings 'puNya' or merit.

kR^itam--was made (composed)

shrImadbhir--shrImat means full of good qualities, he who is full of good qualities (because of Rayaru's & Lord Vishnu's grace)

appaNaabhidaiH --he by the name of AppaNa (Sri Appanacharya)

As a closing synopsis, let's take a brief look at what has been covered in the Sri Purnabodha stotra. In the first few verses, there was a double meaning where the words of Sri Raghavendra Swami were compared to a divine river (vaagdevataa sarit), both of which purify us (vimalI karotu). Sri Raghavendra gives us everything (sakala pradaata). How is this possible? He is divine by nature(deva svabhaava), being the avataara of Prahlada, but the real strength comes from his worship of Lord Hari (hari paada niShevaanaat labdha samasta sampat). May he who has silenced his opponents (pratyarthi mUkatva) through his oratory skill and shaastra knowledge bless us with such knowledge (vijnaana) and skill in speech (vaagdeha supATavaadin dattvaa). Not only does Rayaru's padodaka bring great puNya (puNyavaha), but also beholding his devotees (yatpaadakaNja rajasaa...taddarshaNam). So by "kaimutyanyaaya", if beholding Rayaru devotees is great in and of itself, what more can be said of beholding Rayaru himself? We saw the play on words by Sri Appanacharya, though in the middle of crossing a river. "sarvatantra svatantra"--Raghavendra Swami is skilled in all arts on his own AND his philosophy is that of sarva-naamaka Lord Vishnu. In the same verse, the previous 2 Swamiji's before Rayaru (VijyaIndraru &

Sudhindraru) as well as a hint at Prahlaada's avatara are given using the same words. When continuing with the next verses, we need to be careful when interpreting "anyo raaghavendraanna vidyate"--there are many higher than Raghavendra Swami. With the exception of a few above him in Taratamya (Lakshmi, Brahma, Vayu, etc.) there is no one else like him. All our ignorance, doubt, quivering speech, etc. get destroyed through his grace. The middle of the Stotra contains the very important 8-lettered "Om Shri Raghavendraaya Namah Om" mantra, with Sri Appanacharya as the Rshi, anuShtub chandas, and Lord Vishnu and Rayaru as the devataa. There are many important things that a devotee should do as acts of devotion to Rayaru--prayer "kaalatraye nityaM" at all times, one should do pradakShina "yathaa shakti", according to capacity, japa, dhyaana, accepting the tirtha water from brindavana upon one's head (vrindaavanagataM jalaM shirasaa), and of course namaskaara and kIrtana of Rayaru. In praising Rayaru, we must not forget his Guru, shrI Madhvacharya. Like the moon causing the ocean to rise, because of the effulgence of Raghavendra Swami, the deep Dvaita philosophy of Shri Madhvacharya has arisen

(shrImadhvatadugdhaabhdhi chandraH) There is a very beautiful analogy where the samsara we are in is compared to a dangerous ocean always difficult to traverse (sadaa dustare)with desires acting like whirlpools(kaamaadi bhangaakule) tossing us around, our ignorance is spinning us around (durbhrama vibhrama). We pray to Guru Rayaru-- "samuddhara maam!" Please lift us out of this samsara! The rest of the stotra focuses on the phala, or fruits obtained by reciting the stotra. The blind can see (adhah divyadr^iShTi syaat), stomach pains are gone (kukShigataa doSha nashyanti), lame or disabled people can walk well(pangu khanjo vaa janghaalo bhavet), and one will certainly achieve correct knowledge (jnAnaM bhavet dhruvaM). There is a deeper meaning here and a reference to Sri Raghavendra Swami's works on Dvaita philosophy--the Dipikas that he has written allow us to make sense of the works written by other great Dvaita scholars. It is because of this that one acquires knowledge (dIpasamyojanaat jnAnam bhavet dhruvaM). By reciting this stotra, we need not worry about being harassed by actual thieves("chora"), tigers ("mahaavyaghra"), or what they symbolize--what really harasses man: kama, krodha, etc. That is the power of reciting this stotra (asya stotrasya prabhaava).

Finally as we saw here, a person who recites this stotra does not suffer from sorrow ("na hi bhavet tasya asukham kinchana"), but rather has his desires fulfilled ("kintviShTaaartha samR^iddhireva). We need not have doubts about this, since Lord Hayagriva, through the voice of Sri Rayaru, in the stotra composed by Sri Appanacharya has approved this--"saakShi hayaasyotra hi"

Sri Raghavendra gurvantargata BharatIramaNa mukhyaprANAntargata Sri SitaramachandraH PrIyataam SuprIto Varado Bhavatu.
Sarvam Sri KrishnArpaNamastu,