



PATRIKA

Newsletter of the Hindu Society of Minnesota

www.hindumandirmn.org



Message from the President

Greetings from the Executive Committee!

We are all getting geared up to celebrate our Grand Opening of the Raja Gopuram, June 26 to June 28, 2009. Please mark your calendars and Be There! This is your event and you need to be present to make it a Grand Success! This event is a culmination of 32 years of community participation and involvement.

With Divine Grace and lots of dedication and "Karma Yoga" volunteer work from all of you, we have built, what we can proudly call, the most beautiful temple in Northern America! Now as we all know, we cannot survive by looks alone. In our Temple, we now have a platform for our spiritual, social and cultural aspirations. We need to design a good sustainable system so we can serve the community and world we live in. Our next step is to maintain our Temple and make it self sufficient and debt free.

If you look around our temple, you will see that we have not been extravagant. Despite that we still have a \$6.3 Million loan to repay. Our monthly interest payments are equal to \$30,000 and our other operating expenses run an average of \$ 45,000 each month. Currently we are fortunate that our monthly revenues of \$75,000 on average match our net monthly expenditure. Unfortunately, this balanced cash flow situation does not afford us an opportunity to reduce our outstanding debt. Building a beautiful temple that caters to our diverse needs takes time, money and lots of hard work. Many of you have donated large sums of your hard earned money, for which we are truly grateful. Thank you! Our pledges from many of our devotees, like you, for the next 3 to 4 years are about \$1 million. However, we need your help to pay off our loan and offer a full portfolio of services to our community.

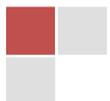
Our goal is to provide you with a comprehensive community center offering affordable housing, instilling spiritual values to our children, youth and adults; providing charitable services to the needy and being the focal point of religious and cultural activities, whether we have a birth, a death or a wedding in our families.

Our humble request to you is to participate in our temple activities and contribute your time and money generously, we need you now, more than ever before!

Sincerely,
Mythili Chari
President,
Executive Committee,
Hindu Society of Minnesota



Mythili Chari





Hinduism & Service

The argument that Hinduism does not promote efforts to relieve the sufferings of others is based on a serious misunderstanding of the doctrine of karma. The law of karma teaches that our actions, good or evil, produce appropriate effects. Virtuous actions produce positive and joyful results while evil actions produce pain and suffering for others as well as for ourselves. Some people, however, incorrectly interpret this to mean that we should not undertake any actions to remove the sufferings of another since each one suffers as a consequence of his or her own past choices.

Hinduism does not deny that human suffering is often caused by improper desires and actions. Hinduism, however, never teaches that we must use this as an excuse for not doing anything to help another in need. In other words, understanding the cause of suffering, is not a valid reason for indifference. If my child hurts himself, while running too fast down the stairs, it would be cruel and callous of me not to offer help because I understand the reason for his fall.

If we examine this issue from the standpoint of enlightened self-interest, there is every reason to help others in need. If we choose to do nothing when others suffer and adopt the attitude that "it is his karma," we must know that the same argument may be used when we suffer. Karma, after all, teaches that we reap what we sow.

Helping others in need, however, should not be motivated by self-interest. Compassion (daya) is one of the highest virtues in Hinduism. The scriptures of Hinduism emphasize that God exists in all living and non-living beings and things. Service of those who are suffering and in want provides a special opportunity and privilege for worshipping God in those beings. To refuse to help, when we can, is to be blind to the presence of God in all and to refuse to serve God. Manushya Yajna, that is the service of human beings, is one of the prescribed duties in Hinduism. In the Ramayana, Rama describes the service of others as the highest expression of dharma. On the other hand, causing pain to another, through our actions or our refusal to act, is the gravest contradiction of dharma. It is wrong, therefore, to blame the suffering of another on his or her karma and to ignore the obligations of dharma.

A beautiful story of compassion is told about the famous Hindu teacher, Ramanuja. Ramanuja went to a teacher and requested initiation with a mantra. The teacher gave him God's name and advised him not to share it with anyone or he would go to hell. Immediately, Ramanuja went to top of the local temple and shouted, "I am going to give you a name which will save you." He then repeated the name loudly. His teacher heard about it and asked for an explanation. "I am prepared to go to hell a hundred times, if I can save thousands," replied Ramanuja.

We are obliged to do all that we can to relieve suffering. The doctrine of karma is not an excuse for indifference and inaction.

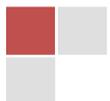


Anantanand Rambachan



Anantanand Rambachan

Professor and Chair
Religion Department
St. Olaf College





Significance of Raja Gopura Mahotsava

The Hindu Temple is the house of God and a place to worship for all. Even though we believe that God is Omnipresent, we feel the presence of God in the temple much more. Formal consecration of the icons, intense devotion of multitudes of earlier visitors and our mental attitude when we visit the temple to pray are some of the reasons.

As we approach the temple we see the Raj Gopura, The main gateway to the temple, which is erected at the front entrance of the temple. It is the tallest and is the most majestic structure in the temple. Multiple images of deities, humans, animals and birds are depicted on the front and around the tall structure. It signifies that the universe has a place for all these forms of life and we revere each of them.

The Hindu temples are built according to sacred architecture (Vastu Shashtra) as described in Vedas. The Temple built by following the Vastu Shastra evokes in us

the profound sacredness as we enter through the Raja Gopura. Shastra means literature or enlightened literature. Vastu means "the manifest" "originating from vustu denoting "the unmanifest". The Temple represents Human body. The head is considered to be main sanctum, the large temple hall called mahamandapa is the central portion of the body and the rajagopura symbolizes the feet. The Rajagopuram can also be considered as the gross body of the temple with the consecrated temple deities representing the spiritual entity. Devotees, unable to visit the temple offer their obeisance to God from far away with the sight of the Raja Gopura.

The Raj Gopura consists of odd number of stories and Kalashas. Three represent three states of waking, dream and deep sleep in which we gain all our experiences. Five represent five senses through which we experience the outer world. Seven signifies the mind (Manas) and the intellect (Buddhi) in addition to the five senses and nine represents the above seven plus the addition of ego (Ahamkar) and bliss (Chitta). The significance of entering through the Raja Gopuram is that as we enter temple we must turn our entire inner equipment of these nine entities (Antahkarana) towards the God, establish communion and have an intense experience our inherent Sat-Chit-Anand.

During the upcoming Grand Celebrations as we consecrate the Raja Gopura we will also consecrate the Dwarpalakas, the statues in front of Varadaraja Temple, the Dhvajastambha, a flagpole, the Garuda the Vahana for Lord Vishnu, the Balipitha in the front part of the main hall (Mahamandapa) perfectly aligned with the central sanctum sanctorum. In addition Nandi, the ceremonial mount for Lord Shiva will be installed in front of Shiva Temple.

With these celebrations for the completion of the temple, our dream of thirty years will be a reality. The entire community touched with Divine Grace was inspired to work very hard to create such a beautiful spiritual monument. For generations our Hindu Community will be blessed to enjoy its beauty and serenity as they take pride in our rich spiritual and cultural heritage.



Kumud Sane



Kumud Sane , M.D.
Chair, TEC.





Family

Akshaya, Anu, Arpit and Apekshya Panda feel greatly privileged to be part of the wonderful Indian community in Minnesota. The majestic Hindu Mandir has not only provided them a place to worship and maintain the deeply ingrained rich Indian values and culture, it has also provided them a quiet and peaceful place to spend the weekends surrounded by friends and well wishers.

Call it destiny or divine pull, Akshaya arrived in Minnesota from Boston after completing his MBA at Boston College at the end of September, 2003 and his first interaction with the Indian community in the Twin Cities was at the historic ground breaking ceremony of the new temple on the Vijaya Dashami day on

October 4, 2003. He has been so emotionally attached to the temple from that day that there is no looking back. He has been a part of all the religious events that have taken place in the new temple so far besides volunteering for the Holi and Diwali cultural programs and other fund raising events organized by the temple. He has served in the executive committee of the temple in various capacities.

Apart from volunteering his time for the temple which he loves with his heart, Akshaya also has a passion for cricket as a Ranji Trophy alumnus and plays for the Gymkhana cricket team as its captain in the Minnesota cricket league. He enjoys singing bhajans, ghazals and film songs.

Anu, the better half of Akshaya, holds a Masters degree in English literature. She had completed her M. Phil and was enrolled in Ph.D in India before she came to Minnesota. She has shown her leadership qualities by serving the Oriya community of Minnesota as its Vice President and has also been in the Mandir Executive Committee for the past two years. Arpit and Apekshya owe their good upbringing to their mother who has been the guiding force behind their success. Anu is passionate about everything she does. Besides her love for teaching her two kids, she enjoys getting involved in community activities. Her hobbies are reading and innovative cooking.

Arpit is a high school senior heading to college this fall for his undergraduate studies. He was accepted to a number of top schools including Harvard, Stanford, U Penn, but has decided to attend California Institute of Technology. He was the recipient of the "Minnesota Scholar of Distinction in Mathematics" in 2008 awarded by Minnesota Department of Education. He was a Chemistry Olympiad Nationals Qualifier and a winner of the National Merit Scholarship award besides being a national AP Scholar. He has captained the Wayzata High School math team to multiple state championships, first place in the ARML Power contest and was the top scoring 12th grader in the math league in Minnesota. In addition, he has represented Minnesota at the national math competitions as a member of the MN ARML "All-Star" math team. For the past several months, Arpit has been conducting research in ataxia at the Department of Neuroscience at the University of MN. Besides his academic involvements, Arpit is a classical Hindustani vocalist who has sung bhajans on numerous occasions at the temple. He sang at an interfaith prayer for Tsunami relief in 2005. He has volunteered at the Mandir front desk and the Methodist Hospital and loves to coach young students for various math competitions. His ambition is to become a physician one day.

Apekshya is in the 7th grade in Wayzata West Middle School. Besides making it three times in a row to the state level Geography Bee competition where she finished 2nd last year, she is in the second year of UMTYMP. In 2008, she was the top 6th grader in the state of Minnesota in Math League. She loves dancing Kathak which she started learning at the age of 3 in Lucknow and is currently the youngest company member in Rita Mustaphi's Katha Dance Theatre. She has learned from Pandit Birju Maharaj and has performed in many prestigious programs in Minnesota and outside.



She has performed in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple during Kumbhabhishekam and Rath Yatra of Sri Jagannath and also for several Holi, Diwali and other religious and fund raising functions of the temple. Both Arpit and Apekshya have been featured in the Star Tribune for their outstanding performances. The Panda family is proud to be part of the Hindu Temple of Minnesota and feel very lucky for receiving so much of love, affection and blessings from the members of the community. It is indeed a home away from home.



Achievement Award

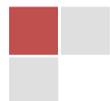
Dr. Dash Received 2009 Indian Association of Minnesota Achievement Award

On March 14, The India Association of Minnesota presented the 2009 Achievement Award to Dr. S.K. Dash for his many innovations in science and technology, dedicated service to the community, his outstanding social and philanthropic activities and leadership. This award reflects his many contributions, both in the US and in India, to the advancement of science, arts and humanitarian efforts. Dr. Dash is a senior trustee and former Chairman of the Hindu Society of Minnesota. During his chairmanship and leadership the new Hindu Temple land was purchased and now the largest Hindu Temple has been built on this site with the support of many trustees and the community.



Executive Committee

The Executive Committee (EC) works hard at the day to day operations and maintenance of our Mandir. Our meetings are held on the 2nd Sunday on every month. It consists of elected and other members and who are volunteers; and our temple manager, Narender Venkata. The elected members of the EC are Mythili Chari, Naina Varanasi, Rajiv Dama, Sitaram Lakshmanan, Madhu Jain, Sangeetha Jain, Vishal Dutt, Chetna Atreya, Kamakshi Murthy and Dharmesh Shah. The other EC members are Vijay Kumar, Mani Subramani, Krishna Kumar, Raj Sury, Anandi, Bala, Ganesh Padmanabhan, Sarat Mahopatra, Venkat Kothur, Leela Venky, Byron Byraiah, Palaniswami, Punjabhai, Raji Shankar, Padma Chintapalli, Baskar Gopalan, Sripad, Shyamala Ganesh, Jayashree, Janaki Byraiah, Vallabha Tantry, Sujatha Bottu, Lalitha Sundaram, KR Jayanthi, Ranjan Bhatt, Anu Sharma and Raji Shankar. Nayana Ramakrishnan, our ex-President, who is the ex-officio member of the EC. Our EC has an open forum. This list is not exhaustive. There are several sub committee members who work extremely hard that are not listed here. If you want to contribute your ideas and make a difference at our Temple, do come to our meetings and get involved! You are more than welcome! Our sincere thanks and gratitude to all the people who make this temple a wonderful place.





Hindu Society of Minnesota
10530 Troy Lane North
Maple Grove, MN 55311



Temple Timings

Monday – Friday
| 9:30 am - 11:30 am | 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm |
Saturday & Sunday
| 9:00 am - 8:30 pm |



Editorial Committee

Manish Singhal
Vidya Subramani
Dolly Majumdar
Noopur Narayan
Padma Chintapalli

Questions/comments?

Please email
mandirmn@yahoo.com
with 'Patrika Editor' in the
subject line.

Patrika Archives:

<http://www.hindumandirmn.org/News.aspx>



You are invited to the
“RAJA GOPURA MAHOTSAV”

The Divine Gateway Celebration
Friday, Saturday & Sunday June 26th, 27th, 28th - 2009
Event Sponsorship Levels

\$1,251	Garuda Vahana Sponsor (Eagle) Indian Souvenir, Gopura Abhishek from Helicopter, Sankalpas for all 3 days, Commemorative Book, Bag
\$1,001	Mahavahini Sponsor (Crane) Indian Souvenir, Gopura Abhishek from Crane, Sankalpas for all 3 days, Commemorative Book, Bag
\$501	Heeraka Gopura Sponsor (Diamond) Indian Souvenir, Sankalpas for all 3 days, Commemorative Book, Bag
\$125	Navaratna Sponsor Navaratnas, Indian Souvenir, Sankalpa for Sunday 28th June 2009
\$101	Suvarna Gopura Sponsor (Gold) Indian Souvenir, Sankalpa for Friday 26th June or Saturday 27th June 2009, Commemorative Book, Bag
\$51	Rajata Gopura Sponsor (Silver) Indian Souvenir, Special Pujas like Kumkum Puja, Commemorative Book, Bag
\$21	Archanas

Helicopter Abhishek: \$151 per person. Crane Abhishek: \$51 per person
(Helicopter and Crane abhisheks subject to weather conditions)

Exciting Social and Cultural Events:

Religious Events, Scintillating Cultural Programs by Noted Artists, Community Dances, Global/Anand Bazaar, Fireworks
Lunch & Dinner will be served during the Mahotsav Celebrations

Participate in the **RAFFLE DRAWING** for a LEXUS!

For more information visit www.hindumandirmn.org or call 763-425-9449