



Aalaya Patrika

ICF Hindu Temple of Oklahoma

(A NON – PROFIT ORGANIZATION – FED ID NO. 73-1160874)
7200 N.COLTRANE, OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73121
Phone: 405-478-0787



Dear Devotees,

Our honorable priests with consultation of board of Hindu Temple of Oklahoma have decided to carry out Kumbhprokshanam in our temple during June 25-28th, 2009. It is an historical event in our temple history. Please save these dates for participating in Kumbhasamprokshana(prana pratishtha).

Kumbhprokshana June 25-28th, 2009

In this historical and holy celebrations, sanctification of Rajagopuram, Vimanagopurams, Prana pratisthas of Lord Venkateshwara, Sri Mahalakshmi, Sri Hanuman, Sri Garuda, Dwaja stambha, Goddess Durgamata, Lord Kathikeya and all Navagrahas will take place. The meaning of Kumbhprokshana and prana prtistha are described in the Pancharaatra Agama and Shiva Agama briefly given below.

Kumbhprokshanam (consecration) is the process of infusing divinity and spiritual power into the vigrahas (images) of the temple. The process of the consecration is called “Praana Pratishta”. This is a special event, which is usually done during the inauguration and once every twelve years for resanctification. During this elaborate religious event several homams are conducted according to agamas. The priests (planning to invite 12 priests from outside) will perform havans/homams in the Yagasala outside the Temple over 3 days to infuse divinity and spiritual power into MAIN KALASA (sanctified pot) filled with consecrated water, with Vedic chanting and religious rites. As a grand finale to this 3-day event, during the muhurtham (auspicious time) on Sunday, June 28th, the Priests will transfer the divine power back to the deities by performing KUMBHA SAMPROKSHANA (salutary bathing) to the Vighrahas and Vimanas (pinnacles) on the roof (hence the term Kumbha + Samprokshana) with the sanctified holy waters from the kalasas with vedic chanting as per agamas. Through Agamic rituals, the pranic powers are transferred to the Deities installed inside the sanctum sanctorum. The Deity, which was till then only a sculptured stone image, is transformed into a vibrant and live Bimba of the Lord with innate beauty, grace and grandeur, conferring His Divine blessings on all devotees who surrender themselves absolutely and take shelter in Him.

Traditionally, the Kumbhabhishekam ceremony is followed by special poojas for the benefit of society and mankind as a whole. Accordingly, on the evening of this ceremony Kalyana utsavams (marriage ceremonies) are performed followed by taking the deities in a procession. Kumbhabhishekam ceremony has everlasting effect on the society as a whole, besides on devotees. Agama sastras mention,

**“Sarvaroga nivriyartham, sarva yaaga phalapradam
Sarva sampathkaram nrienam putrapoutrabhi vardhanam”**

It is conducted with the sole purpose of eradicating all illness, obtaining good benefits from various Yagaas, deriving rich benefits for the well being and for the healthy propagation of the progeny.

Details of the program will be sent in the month of May but please reserve these dates June 25-28th in your calendar for Kumbhprokshanam(prana pratishtha).

www.hindutempleokc.org

With warm regards,
ICF HTO Board and Executive Committee

Message from ICF President and Chairman of Board

Dear Devotees:

On behalf of the new Board and Executive Committee (E.C.) of Hindu Temple of Oklahoma, we wish all of you a belated Happy and Prosperous New Year. The Board and the E.C. also thank the members of H.T.O. for electing us to the Board and the E.C. and for giving us the opportunity to serve the Hindu community of Oklahoma. We also wish to thank the individuals who contested in the elections.

We have restructured the administration of the temple into various committees. Each committee will be chaired by a member of the Board or E.C. The chairperson of the various committees will appoint the co-chairpersons and various volunteer members to their respective committees. Devotees who are interested in serving and volunteering at the Temple can contact the chairperson of the committee that they wish to volunteer in.

We are striving hard to create a better WEB presence in order to facilitate improved communication with devotees and to provide faster response. Towards this goal, we will be publishing the following important information on our WEB site www.hindutempleokc.org. Additionally this information will also be available on the temple bulletin board.

- Information about forthcoming Pujas and services.
- Notification about Board and E.C meetings
- Approved Minutes of the above mentioned meetings.
- Financial Reports
- Organizational structures of Committees.
- Priest Call Schedule.
- Temple Calendar
- Balavikas and Youth Group Activities.

Please visit our new and improved WEB site regularly for updates and ensure that we have your correct email address. We are looking forward to your feedback and suggestions as we move forward towards establishing a stronger working relationship with our devotees and the community.

The construction activities are progressing well and the Praana Prathista (*Techniques to manifest 'life' within an object*) is scheduled for celebrations towards the end of June 2009. This is a once-in-a-lifetime event and we invite you to volunteer in the preparations and participate in the celebrations. We thank you profusely for your continued support of the Hindu temple of Oklahoma.

*K.C Sekar, Chairman of Board of Directors
Ravi Malpani, President of Executive Committee*



Committee Reports Feb 2009

Administration: Chair: Dr. Ravi Malpani.

The temple administrative structure was reorganized into several working committees, each of which will be headed by a chair who is a member of either the EC or the Board. The various committees are recruiting volunteers and functioning admirably. The committee reports henceforth will provide information regarding the functioning of the temple and its activities. Mr. Timanna Hosur has been appointed to oversee the purchases and supplies to the temple. The priests' calendar has been prepared and posted on the website. In addition, the minutes of the Board and EC are posted on the web and the temple bulletin board. Dr. Veena Khanna will oversee landscaping activities. All the operations of the temple will be directed by Dr. Ravi Malpani with advice from the temple Board.

Finance Committee: Chair: Mr. Rama Rao

The members of the finance committee are Dr. Ravi Malpani, Mr. Vidyasagar Rao and Dr. K.C. Sekar. The Chair, Mr. Rama Rao will be working closely with Mr. Ram Ramchand, CPA of the temple and submit the financial report to the EC and the Board for approval. The list of donors for the year 2008 has been compiled and will be mailed out to all the members shortly. In addition financial report for 2008 will be prepared by our CPA and the donation statement will be mailed out shortly. The financial reports will be available on the website for the years 2006 and 2007. Mr. Rama Rao has also submitted the budget for 2009 which was approved by the Board in their last meeting.

Pooja Committee: Chair: Mrs.: Bharathi Rao and Rajitha Gunda

The Pooja committee has met several times in preparation for the upcoming PranaPrathista. This function is expected to be the biggest event the temple has celebrated since its inception. The committee is working closely with both our priests in arranging for the rituals according to the sastras in both Shivite and Vishnavite traditions. The Board has decided to have only one PranaPrathista celebration in June. Additional priests will be invited from other temples in North America to assist our priests. The various pooja articles to perform will be ordered and shipped from India. The Board and EC committee chairs will oversee these activities with a coordinator. Preparations are also underway to produce a souvenir to commemorate the occasion. The budget for this celebration was approved by the board in their last meeting. All the arrangements and activities will be posted on the temple website on a continuing basis. The committee needs volunteers to assist in all the activities during this four day event.

Construction Committee: Chair: Mr. Amulya Reddy

The construction of the Rajagopuram and the temples within are on schedule, and expected to be completed by June in preparation for the PranaPrathista. The priests have recommended to locate the Dwajasthumbum inside the temple and the construction of this is on-going. The Durga Matha idol has been ordered from India after approval from the priests. The other ordered idols are close to completion in India. The construction of the Raja Gopuram, the three Vimanams, four temples, Navagrha, Dhujasthumbam and all the intricate work inside the temple will cost a little over a million dollars. The bank loan at the end of the construction is expected to be around \$575,000 (\$ 75,000 from previous loan).

Communications Committee: Chair: Mrs. Jaishree Raman

Significant changes have been made to the web site to better communicate information and temple activities. The priest

schedule, the board minutes, and financial report are now available in the web site. In addition video streaming of the poojas and pictures will be posted. When all the changes are implemented the Hindutempleokc.org web site will serve as a dynamic web site providing the latest information about the temple. The next edition of Aalaya pathrika will be posted on the web site including interesting articles by the priests.

Balavikas: Chair: Dr. Vijaya Malpani

The Balavikas and Youth Group activities will be coordinated and curriculum developed. The Balavikas curriculum is posted

on the temple website. The Board and the EC committee recognizes that currently the class room space is limited to conduct all the classes for Sunday school. Preliminary planning to expand the class rooms will begin once the current construction project is completed.

Cultural Committee: Chair: Dr. Vimala Sekar

Various cultural activities are planned for PranaPratishta celebrations. In addition, routine planning for temple continues.



IMPACT OF VEDANTA ON INDIAN CULTURE
by
Dr. Acharya Srinivasa Vedala

The word "Vedanta" refers to the supplementary sections of the Vedas, the Upanishads. The fundamental commanding work of Vedanta is composed from the Uttaramimamsa. Prasthanatrayi, which translates into three points of departure, refers to the three canonical texts of Hindu philosophy, especially the Vedanta schools. It consists of the Upanishads (Upadesha prasthanajunctive texts), the Bramhasutras (Nyaya prasthanajlogical texts), and the Bhagavad Gita (Sadhana prasthanajpractical text). Great saints like Adi Sankaracharya, Ramanujacharya and Madhvacharya each wrote commentaries (bhashyas) on these three Prasthanas. Together, these three works constitute the essence of Vedanta's soul.

The Upanishads are revered to be the spring of thought for Indian Philosophy. The main idea of the Upanishads is the path the Atman [individual soul] takes to unite with the Brahman [supreme soul]. This union can be achieved by the synthesis of the three practices that the Gita preaches.

The main principle of the Brahma Sutras can be found within the Upanishads. The Uttaramimamsa states that the Atman can be set free by attainment of Paraa Vidya (Spiritual knowledge), which enables the Atman to identify the Brahman. Vedanta has had considerable influence upon Indian culture. This impact can be seen in various aspects of Indian philosophy as well as in the ways of life.

Monotheism is the belief that there is only one god. The rise of the Upanishads gave way to such beliefs; and this concept became further widespread due to the influence of the Bhagavad Gita and the Bramha sutras.

The Bhagavad Gita heavily emphasizes the significance of Nishkama Karma translated "desire less action".

At one point in the Gita, Lord Krishna commands Arjuna to "perform action, Paartha, being steadfast in yoga abandoning attachment and maintaining equanimity in success or failure. He also adds the "right is to work only, but never to its fruits". The Gita also laid the foundations for Bhakti which was based upon love, faith and devotion. Although lower forms of worship are allowed, Bhakti requires an immeasurable level of devotion and faith in God.

In addition, the Gita also establishes the three practices of Yoga, Jnana, Karma, and Bhakti, which are all ascertained as corresponding entities. In order to achieve freedom, one must be able to identify the value of these paths and be able to unite these three paths as a combination.

Avatara Vada, the doctrine of divine incarnation, is also cited by the Gita; and it implies that divine manifestations will rise upon the Earth when virtue and religion decline.

The Gita has also combined the six systems of Indian philosophy into Darsanas. Vedanta is the epitome of the various sectarian principles of Hinduism and of Indian Philosophy. In addition, many ideals of Buddhism can also be traced back to Vedanta.

The Advaita Vedanta (Monism) of Adi Sankaracharya propagates the Maya Vada. According to this doctrine, all creation is Maya (illusory); and only God is real.

Swami Vivekananda preached and propagated the Practical Vedanta as a religion. By following his teachings, we have been able to make Vedanta a part of our life. He also taught that the illusory wall between religion and life must be broken down in order for Vedanta to teach us the singularity of life--Vedanta must be a part of our life.