

Global Hindu Heritage Foundation

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Recommendations to Improve and Protect Hindu Temples in Andhra Pradesh

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Submitted to:

**Honorable Sri C Ramachandraiah
Minister for Endowments Department, AP**

Moderator: Dr. Ghazal Srinivas

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On August 11, 2012

**International Symposium on Save Temples
DFW Hindu Temple, Irving Texas**

Panelists and the Topics

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- 4 **Satyan Kalyandurg**
- 5 **Krishna Athota**
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- 9 **Gopal Ponangi**
- 10 **Sesharao Boddu**
- 11 **Laxmi Tummala**
- 12 **Ram Yalamanchi**
- 13 **Padma Sonti**
- 14 **SrikantAkula**
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GHHF Recommendations to Honorable C. Ramachandraiah Minister for Endowments Department

GHHF Recommendations to Preserve and Protect Hindu Temples and Hinduism

- 1) Donate lands to private organizations who are preventing cows from slaughter by operating Gousalas
- 2) Endowments Department should take stand to prosecute the illegal and inhuman transportation of cows to the slaughterhouse.
- 3) Restore and renovate Vakula Mata Temple forthwith.
- 4) Conversion efforts at all Temples should be monitored and take legal action to the fullest against the culprits
- 5) Endowments Department should advocate, support and work toward the passage of Anti-conversion law in the State.
- 6) The Department should ask employees to declare their religion immediately and retain only Hindus as employers. They should be punished severely if they found lying on the application.
- 7) Endowments Department should develop plans to do Annadanam to all Hindus at all Hindu Temples every Sunday or frequently and on all festivals.
- 8) Endowments Department should develop Temple tourism to facilitate the devotees who are planning to visit various pilgrim places – for examples, touring all Pancharama Kshetras, touring all Temples around Sri Durga Temple in Vijayawada, touring around Arasuvalli, Sri Kurman etc.
- 9) Endowment department should erect Welcome Boards in all the cities where a major historical Temples are located. Example “Welcoming to Punya Kshetras of Sri Durgamata Temple, Vijayawada.”
- 10) All the pilgrims should be informed of the history and significance of the visiting Temple and also suggesting nearby pilgrim centers to visit.
- 11) Advertise in the Buses, Railways, Airport and Movie Theaters about all major pilgrimage centers, about the festivals,

- 12) S V Bhakti Channel should broaden the coverage to include all the Temples. It should cover all significant religious events happening in the State
- 13) Like the Aarthi conducted to Gang River, Endowments Department should initial similar arthis to Krishna, Godavari and other rivers across the State.
- 14) The Department should initiate Sunday schools for children in all the Temples to instill the morals, ethics and good conduct.
- 15) Every Temple should publish the names of all the Office bearers, their phone numbers, and email addresses. They should be available all the time during their office hours to address the issues facing devotees.
- 16) Any inquiry sought by the devotees either through email or by postal mail should be made to respond within a certain time. Indifference and no action is not the answer or solution. Failure to take proper action undermines the very essence Hindu Temples.
- 17) Temple employees who fail to discharge their duties should be reprimanded or removed.
- 18) The Endowment Department Website should include all the information about the total number of acres belonging to the Temples at the time of Independence. How many acres are sold; auctioned. Who bought it and for how much? Need to update the information every week.
- 19) The Department should publish the number of acres encroached; names and addresses of people encroached, what action, legal or otherwise, has taken against the encroachers; how many acres have been recovered from the encroachers; Website should have this information updated on weekly basis.
- 20) In Dharma Prachara Sabha, NRIs from different continents should be appointed to receive the feedback from them about their experiences of visiting Temples and how the system can be improved.
- 21) Textbooks should be revised to include the moral stories of all major Gods and Gurus to instill Hindu spirits among youth.
- 22) Andhra Pradesh Magazine should publish the history of one temple every month without fail.
- 23) Government should not allow movies to be shot on the Temple premise about love scenes, crime scenes, denigration of Hindu Gods, fighting, killings, obscene acts etc. Censor Board should be consulted on this matter by Endowments Department.

- 24) Temple Police Force – Like Railway police, Hindu Temples should be protected by Temple Police force by Hindus to provide safe environment for the pilgrims.
- 25) E D should take stand against Minority reservations because Hindus are being neglected, meritocracy is insulted and the efficiency in the society is blunted.
- 26) Government should support the Hospitals in Tirupati instead of TTD; Hindu Temple money should be used for the promotion of Hindu religion
- 27) Investigate as to how many patients are from Hospitals supported by TTD are being sent to the Christian Hospital where the patients are being converted to Christianity.
- 28) ED should take a stand against any government measures to allocate money for the construction of Churches and Mosques.
- 29) TTD should stop funding all the educational institutions listed in Second schedule since they are secular. They have nothing to do with promoting Hindu religion. Example: Government appointed Christian as a Principal of Padmavathy College who removed the picture of Balji and hung the picture of Jesus. These institutions must be totally supported by the Government funds instead of TTD funds
- 30) TTD should also stop funding all the Hospitals. They need to be supported by the government funds. If TTD wants to support, no other religious persons should be employed. Once TTD decides to support, make these hospitals in par with other hospitals who have the latest equipment. These hospitals should never refer the patients to other Christian Hospitals where they become target of conversions. Many incidents can be given in Tirupathi where the patients were sent to Christian Hospitals where they were converted.

GHHF Recommendation on Temple Funds and Lands

Hindu Kings and rich people donated around 500,000 acres of lands to the Hindu Temples. Even though the land prices are skyrocketing, the Hindu Temple are in a desperate condition for the daily 'Aarthi and Nyvedyam'. Christian and Muslim religions are becoming wealthy day by day. But the Hindu temple and gods becoming poorer everyday because of the poor government management and redirecting the funds of Hindu Temple to Non Hindu organizations and other politicians. Endowment department should protect this trend and make sure to get back these lands and assets from the grabbers.

- 1) Temple Lands should not be auctioned or sold in future.
- 2) Temple lands should be survey every 2 years and make sure the lands are not encroached by the neighboring farmers.

- 3) Temple Hundi collections should be Audited every year and announce to the public through the media.
- 4) Endowments Department should take stand to prosecute the illegal transfer of the lands to the Muslim and Christian charities in the past 10 years regime.
- 5) All Hindu Temple Properties should be consider the Right to Information Act, and should have the information for any devotee on hand.
- 6) Computerize all the Hindu Temple Assets and Lands and make them available for the public to review every year.
- 7) Profits coming from the major temples to be distributed to the small temples and their maintenance, and Endowment department should have an agenda for this process and Project Plan.
- 8) Temple ornaments should be managed by Hindu Trustees and maintain the records with the weight and pictures. The ornaments should be published to the public with the total cost. (500 years old ornaments of Lord Sri Venkateswara, disappeared in YSR regime)
- 9) Government should release funds for managing the lands and assets.
- 10) Government should re construct all the 'Koneru' of temple so as people will not encroach the lands near and around the Koneru.
- 11) The Govt should retake any temple lands that are encroached by the grabbers and build any shops.

GHHF Recommendation to protect the Temple Land Encroachment

Hindu temples and the lands associated with them have been the corner stones of Hindu religion since the beginning. They represent the lifeblood for the preservation and perpetuation of ancient and venerated Hindu religious traditions and practices. The revenues generated from these lands provide sustenance to those dedicated to maintaining the traditions, and providing religious services to the devotees.

It is being increasingly realized, rather painfully, that significant fraction of the temple lands are being encroached upon, leased out to private parties, used to construct recreational facilities, promotion of non-Hindu religions, and or selling the land to private parties. Only a small fraction of the revenues are ploughed back in to temple management, while the remaining is being used for the appeasement of non-Hindu groups.

The Endowments Department of Andhra Pradesh can prevent the encroachments of the temple lands, restore the lands back to the appropriate temples, so that they can be managed and maintained by the temple administrations.

1. The endowments department take immediate steps to identify the encroachers and bring them to justice

2. Release the encroached lands belonging to the temples and restore them to the temples in question.
3. Endowment department provide alienation of temple properties.
4. Restrain the acquisition of the temple lands for any private or government use.
5. The Endowments Department identifies and catalogs all the lands belonging to all the temples in their jurisdiction.
6. Publish revenue versus expenses for each of the temple lands in the jurisdiction to identify those that are in dire need of support.
7. Identify, and collect all compensations due to the temples by the people who currently are leasing the temple lands, and transfer the funds to the temples in question.
8. Evict unauthorized encroachers from the occupied lands.
9. Restore the lands to the temples where delinquent lease payments are involved.
10. Prevent diversion of temple revenues and funds for the reckless appeasement non-Hindu groups.

Let all Hindu endowments be released to Hindu bodies, and be managed by them without external interference, either private or governmental.

GHHF Recommendations to provide adequate Facilities

Endowments Department should take appropriate measure to ensure proper, adequate, comfortable and clean facilities at all Hindu Temples. Hindus always pride themselves for their philosophy of Athidi devo bhava – Guest is god. Also we believe Lakshmi Devi stays in clean and serene environment. When Prahlada saw a form in his front, he asked: 'who are you?' That goddess said: "Prahlada, I am Lakshmi Devi. I am to be found where there are virtue, righteousness, and truth." Hindu Temples should be reflected of these virtues. She also said, "I stay away from people whose houses are not clean, and who are lazy." Providing proper environment to the pilgrims is a must. Endowments Department should be cognizant of the scriptural injunctions and provide all needed facilities to leave the holy place with peace of mind and satisfaction.

We recommend the following suggestions with regard to the facilities:

- 1) Adequate cottages must be planned and built to meet the demands of the pilgrims in all major Temples.
- 2) The reservations of these cottages must be opened up for public view through Internet. We have to create hassle free environment in such a way that a pilgrim should be able to go to the cottage directly to check in with a printed reservation copy.
- 3) One should be able to view the rooms on Internet as to how they look to make reservation.

- 4) Cleanliness is godliness. The Department should make very effort to keep the rooms, and bathrooms clean.
- 5) Adequate clean bathroom facilities should be provided. Cleaning should be done at least twice a day. In many places there are no good and clean bathrooms. Foul smell can be felt many yards away from the bathrooms. Need to be corrected
- 6) From the Bus stations, railway stations and airport, free transportation service should be provided at major Hindu Temples.
- 7) Darshan lines should not be stopped for VVIP darshans. We all have seen that darshan lines can go on even with VVIP darshans.
- 8) Enough security force should be available to protect the pilgrims and discourage anti-criminal elements.
- 9) The Department should recruit and train Sevadala members as volunteers to help the pilgrims to find their way.
- 10) Need to develop a survey about these facilities to improve them to meet certain standards of cleanliness.

GHHF Recommendations on the Appointment of Board of Directors and Executive Officers

The Board of Directors of the temples have been typically political appointees and very few individuals with background, or served in Hindu organizations or with good knowledge on Hinduism, philosophy, customs, values, rituals and experience in temple management and related activities.

Our experience of meeting with Board members of some Hindu Temples is shocking. None can even say one good thing about Hinduism. It is a shame that we are projecting a totally unfit Hindus to these positions.

Selection committee members should have thorough knowledge on Hinduism. One would expect them to understand and be aware of the issues and challenges that face the future generation specially, younger generation who will follow and uphold Hindu Religion.

Our recommendations to appoint Board of Directors and Executive Officers who:

- 1) The Endowment Department should develop a criterion to select the Board of Directors of all the Temples.
- 2) In fact any body that is in politics at the time of appointment should not be appointed as Board members. At least one should not be in politics for 3-6 years before they can be appointed to the Board.
- 3) Practicing individuals in Hindu religious background, sympathetic to our causes and who can act on it.
- 4) They need to be recommended by Acharya Sabha.

- 5) Who can focus on survival of our past rich history and upkeep all of our existing temples.
- 6) Who have interest in promoting Hindu education, religion etc.
- 7) Can plan for a vibrant Hindu causes for the present and also, for the future.
- 8) The Endowment Department should investigate the background of these members for their religious background and their criminal background. Any body with a criminal record and a non-Hindu should not be appointed.
- 9) Executive Officer should also be appointed based on his knowledge about Hinduism and his Hindu background. Acharyas must be consulted before ECs are appointed to the Temple management.
- 10) They should be aware of the sentiments of the pilgrims and be equipped with the sensitivity of the sentiments of the pilgrims.

GHHF Recommendations regard to the BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors of the temples have been typically political appointees. Many of them have little or no knowledge about Hinduism, or served in Hindu organizations. They must have good knowledge on Hinduism, philosophy, customs, values, rituals and experience in temple management and related activities.

Selection committee members should have thorough knowledge about Hinduism and must be aware of and understand the issues and challenges that face the future generation specially, younger generation who will follow and uphold Hindu Religion.

Our recommendations to appoint Board of Directors who:

1. Practicing individuals in Hindu religious background, sympathetic to our causes and who can act on it.
2. Are recommended by Acharya Sabha.
3. Who can focus on survival of our past rich history and upkeep all of our existing temples.
4. Who have interest in promoting Hindu education, religion etc.
5. Can plan for a vibrant Hindu causes for the present and also, for the future.

You may change the format/pointers as you see fit. Thanks.

GHHF Recommendations to the issues pertaining to Priests

A couple of days ago, "The Hindu" newspaper reported that Archakas from over 18000 Temples in the Andhra Pradesh were striking from work as they were unhappy over their salaries and other emoluments. This is a very important matter that can have far reaching consequences. I would now analyze some of the relevant issues regarding the Priests and raise a few questions with my own comments and some suggestions to the Honorable Minister.

First, our religious Paatashaalas, the schools for Sastrijis, do not graduate enough scholars to attend to the religious requirements of the Hindu devotees. Consequently, people do not get to use such services and the religious traditions die. That is a very undesirable consequence of the current state of religious affairs. We need more people to go through the Paatashaalas. We also have to increase the number of such Vedic schools. There are not many students waiting in line to join these Vedic schools. Even the Archakas do not want their children to be Archakas. We somehow have to make it very attractive for youngsters to choose this profession.

The surplus funds from the "rich" temples should first be spent for renovation and maintenance of well established "poorer" temples; then they must be spent towards the Vedic schools for the training of priests. They should support Sanskrit language related activities because Sanskrit is our holy language and the decay of Sanskrit will lead to decay of the religion. Expenses for promotion of Sanskrit among youngsters should be a high priority. Our Vedas are in Sanskrit. Almost all our Indian languages are rich with religious prayers in their own different languages. Our religious performers should be proficient in BOTH Sanskrit and the local languages.

The Sanskrit institutes are also unfortunately in different states of decay. It is essentially due to lack of resources. The main roots of Hinduism lie in Sanskrit. Sanskrit provides the basis and authority for our practices. Sanskrit binds the practices and literature in different languages. Sanskrit is the link that keeps the Hindus from different areas together. If Sanskrit is allowed to decay, the Hindu roots will die and with it our religion. For less than five per cent of the net income of TTD, all Sanskrit institutions and Paatashaalas can be rejuvenated. Will the minister be inclined to make it happen? I think it will be very nice and timely.

In addition to attractive salaries, we have to establish healthcare and pension provisions for the priests and Sanskrit teachers. We should also hold them in high social esteem. Then, it is likely that more people will choose to become eminent Sastrijis, resulting in religious benefit for the community. I would comment here that Sastrijis employed in the Hindu Temples in America are generally given attractive compensation packages and are treated with much greater respect than their counterparts in India.

We should deeply ponder over what we should do to change the situation so that religious practitioners are properly educated, trained, respected and rewarded economically and that there are adequate number of such persons to attend to the community's needs at affordable costs and prices?

There is another side to the Archaka issues. The Archakas in the temples - most of the Indian temples - do not recite Vedic mantras that are appropriate for various pujas, occasions and rituals in the temples. You may see that even in our Temple in the USA we recite more Vedic mantras for the occasions that visitors from India often make comments that they do not get to see or hear such performances even in the 'famous' temples in India. We know such is the case to be the reality. Can we do the needful to change that situation?

I would suggest that by a ministerial order it must be proclaimed that the maintenance of ambience conducive to the mood for prayers by devotees should be a high priority of the managements in the temples. And also that the Archakas should always recite appropriate mantras and slokas clearly and audibly and that they would not be unduly rushed. I hope that the creation of sufficient economic incentives and enhanced dignity in the social order will inspire many youngsters to take up the noble profession of Archakas.

May Goddess Sri Mahalakshmi and Lord Balaji bless us all. Lokaa: samastaa: sukhino Bhavanthu. Namaste!

GHHF Recommendation to protect Cows from being slaughtered

Since Vedic times, cow is considered sacred, treated as mother and hailed as harbinger of auspiciousness. She is a symbol of wealth, health, prosperity, blessing, peace of mind, purity, purification, and success in life. She is identified as a **Kamadhenu** – wish fulfilling. She is revered, honored, respected as mother – an unselfish giver of bounty without expecting from her children just like a mother. All the scriptures such as Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, Mahabharata, Manusmriti, and others extoll the virtues of the cow. All the Gods reside in her and killing her is considered the most heinous crime. It is often said "*jivantu avadghnyah ta me vishasya dushanih*" meaning that let cows live without slaughter for their whole life-they remove poison and toxins. Many sages, many Hindu Temples and numerous Ashrams maintained Goshalas (cow shelters) for centuries recognizing the numerous benefits that accrue from the cows. In fact our scriptures tell us that the cow is a gift of the gods to the human race. It is a celestial being born during Samudra Manthana-churning of the cosmic ocean.

- 1) Article 48 of the Constitution states: "The State shall endeavor to organize agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and shall, in particular, take steps for preserving and improving the breeds, and **prohibiting the slaughter of cows** and calves and other milch and draught cattle." Endowment Department should take steps prohibiting slaughter of cows immediately and see that these steps are made mandatory.
- 2) Donate lands to private organizations and/ or subsidize Goushala supporters, who are preventing cows from being slaughter.
- 3) Endowments Department should start Goushala on all major Hindu Temples to herald the significance of cow to the entire world.
- 4) Endowments Department should take stand to prosecute the illegal and inhuman transportation of cows to the slaughterhouse. Potential penalties for illegal transportation should be advertised heavily.
- 5) Heavy penalties should be imposed on the law enforcement for any violation of the law that prohibits the illegal transportation.
- 6) Endowments department should station near the slaughter houses the security personnel to monitor the illegal transportation to take appropriate action
- 7) Each product released by Cow such as milk, ghee, curd, urine, and cow dung are all medicinal that improve mental alertness, spirituality and health. Each

product is invaluable. Endowment Department should have mechanism to inform all the Hindus and others the virtues through the distribution of literature, videos, billboards, advertisements in cinema theaters, and other means.

8) In fact all slaughterhouses should be closed.

GHHF Recommendations to promote Tourism

All our scriptures talk about the importance of visiting the Punya Kshetras and the merits one would accrue. Hindus believe in the power of Almighty and the vibrations they receive in visiting these holy places. India is known as Karma Bhumi.

It is only through the performing our own karma of visiting these holy places one would receive moksha. *Tirtha Yatra* (undertaking journey to river fords) is considered an essential part of Hindu way of life. Skanda Purana says: "*Truth, forgiveness, control of senses, kindness to all living beings and simplicity are the tirthas.*" Visiting holy places is not only physical journey, but also it also implied mental discipline.

Tourism should be cognizant of the importance of visiting holy places and make the journey comfortable and memorable. Following are our recommendations:

- 1) Endowments Department should develop Temple tourism to facilitate the devotees who are planning to visit various pilgrim places – for examples, touring all Pancharama Kshetras, touring all Temples around Sri Durga Temple in Vijayawada, touring around Arasuvali, Sri Kurman etc.
- 2) Develop tourism packages from different cities in the State as well as different cities from all over India. This package should include pick up from the airport / railway station, accommodation, meals, and darshan. This kind of packages should be free from hassle and corruption.
- 3) Endowment department should erect Welcome Boards in all the cities where a major historical Temples are located. Example "Welcoming to Punya Kshetras of Sri Durgamata Temple, Vijayawada."
- 4) At all the major Hindu Temples, Endowments Department should start **Welcome Centers** where every will go through before they are allowed to visit the punyketra. Show the videos describing the history and significance of the Temple.
- 5) Also inform them about the nearby Temples, their history of the holy place and their significance, and also talk about the tour packages or tourist information.
- 6) Advertise in the Buses, Railways, Airport and Movie Theaters about all major pilgrimage centers and about the festivals.
- 7) Welcome Centers should be manned by expert in the local pilgrimage places and should be manned 24/7. At no time the devotee should be waiting for more than 10 minutes for the information. Phone numbers should be posted on the websites, Welcome to the city Boards and billboards for pilgrims to call.

- 8) Every pilgrim should be given an Assessment Form to express their experience with the personnel of the Tourism Centers.

GHHF Recommendations on Religious Conversion

Sreyaan Svadharmo Vigunah Paradharmat Svanusthitaat
Swadharmeh Nidhanam Sreyaah, Paradharmo Bhayavavah
Bhagavad Gita Chapter 3, Verse 35

Performing ones natural prescribed duty tinged with faults is far better than performing another's prescribed duty perfectly; even death in performing ones natural prescribed duty is better; for performing prescribed duties of others is fraught with danger.

The verse is valid from following ones religion stand point as well.

The Constitution of India guarantees to all citizens an equal entitlement to freedom of conscience and this recognition of individual freedom and the spirit of mutual respect and co-existence among various religious denominations is the bedrock of our India's ideological framework enshrined in the Constitution.

1. The 348(3) Ordinance currently empowers the state of Andhra Pradesh to prohibit propagation of religion in places of worship or prayer other than the religion traditionally practiced at such place and the matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. This Ordinance needs to be extended to all places within Andhra Pradesh and not just religious places within the State of Andhra Pradesh.
2. Strict implementation of above Ordinance
3. Heavy penalties for violators of the above.
4. Employees at the Temple and related departments should only recruit practicing Hindus. Employees involved in propaganda of Christianity at such places should be severely penalized. An example is the recent findings about employees in Thirumala engaged in conversion activity
5. AP Government should monitor the Finances of Christian and Islamic organizations and their places of worship. Lot of foreign funding is available for them. The funds are used to convert Hindus.
6. Government should constitute special teams to bust the rackets involved in conversion using money similar to Multi-level Marketing
7. Public meetings by Christians opens denigrating Hindus and Hinduism should be banned
8. Appoint a separate anti-conversion group whose aim is to bring back the converted into the Hindu fold. TTD and Endowments Department should make

every effort to send these groups to as many villages as possible. Every effort should be made across the state to thwart the illegal conversions, investigate the deceptive practices of these missionaries, and prosecute them as per law

GHHF Recommendations for Maintenance of the Hindu Temples

1. Lack of preventive maintenance:

Temples need preventive maintenance.
Gopurams need structural reinforcing and Termite protective coating.
Who is doing Preventive Maintenance?
Is it Archeological Society of India or Endowment Dept.?
What kind of coordination exists currently?

Ex: Aircraft, Cars, and Homes

Preserving Architectural Heritage of India:

Hindu temples are more than assembly halls. They are microcosms of Omnipresent Divinity. Temples are architectural assets of the nation and the world.

How are we preserving our Heritage?

Are we doing it proactively or reactively?

EX: Boat mishaps: Declare ex gratia: We seem not focusing on proactive steps to prevent reoccurrences: like prevention of over loading, maintaining condition of Boats and use of life jackets.

EX: Recent Train mishap in Nellore. Leadership is not talking about fire and smoke alarm installation, creating emergency exits, emergency lighting and installation of Electronic signaling.

2. Beauty and aesthetics of temples:

Our temples are master pieces of architecture and beauty. This is being ruined by improper additions, repairs and installation of bad lighting fixtures, security points.

EX: In the west you need city approval to get license for a billboard or signboard.

There are plastic structures in front of our temple Rajagopurams (Tirupati) and security structures that are ugly and destroy the aesthetics of the temple.

3. Lighting:

Improper cheap lighting is ruining the architectural beauty of our temples. Lighting needs to be done by duly licensed contractors with architectural LED lighting.

4. Spiritual Tourism:

Are we using our great temples and their architecture to promote spiritual tourism in India and internationally?

Should we not offer short courses on Sanatana Dharma, Yoga and Meditation etc.?

5. Cleanliness:

We are supposed to keep our bodies clean because the indweller is no other than GOD. What about our temples?

Any changes outside & surrounding areas must look at the Temple aesthetics/ architectural committee formed by civic architects and stapatis.

Any temple illumination project should get clearance from the above committee.

Are we doing what we preach? Purity leads to Divinity.

Are we maintaining that level purity and a level of cleanliness in the temple premises?

GHHF Recommendations Maintenance and Improvement of Temples

1. No mining around any mountain that has a temple on it.
2. Sending letters every village in Andhra Pradesh about how to approach the govt to renovate the temples and adopt a temple program.
3. Putting ads on TV about the renovation of temple and adopt a temple mission.
4. Announce all the famous temple areas as National Parks or National Heritage sites so as the Private properties will not be built or sold to the private owners.
5. Create deadlines for Adopt a temple – (18 months or 2 years at the max)
6. Open a hotline to help the temples. (We can take that task, and we can maintain the hotline as a volunteer work)
7. Review the progress of the Volunteer brigade project bimonthly. (GHHF and Ministry of Endowments)
8. Arrange Satsangs at temples in villages.
9. Establish couple of schools for temple architecture and construction of temples.
10. File lawsuits on moviemakers who make fun of Priests and their attire.
11. Creating a promotion channel to the Archakas.

GHHF Recommendations to deal with the Unions menace

It is a known fact that the state government appoints Executive Officer (EO) and Board members for a period of two years. These are the people in many cases with no prior experience in the management of these Temples. The Board members are totally partisan politicians who have no interest in serving the Temple. It has become on the job training for many appointees. By the time they understand the workings of the TTD or similar Hindu temples, they are replaced with another set of Officer and Board members. Knowing fully well, that the EO and Board members will only be there for two years, the UNIONS take advantage by blackmailing them, demanding unreasonable salary increases, benefits and compensations. The Union threatens them with their perennial, powerful weapon called STRIKE if TTD does not meet their demands. Fresh on the job, no EO would like to see the employees go on strike; consequently he will yield to the demands of employees.

We recommend following suggestions to counter the menace

1. No Hindu Temple should allow the unionization of its employees. They need to be told that it is the donor's money that sustains their livelihood. It is not a commercial, industrial and government operation to allow unionization of the employees
2. TTD should ban existing unionization right away. Working at TTD should be considered a rare privilege and good karma in this life. Any misuse of their responsibility to serve the Lord is against the tenets of Hindu ethos.
3. TTD should develop a scheme to impart and socialize the service-oriented mentality based on our scriptures and the consequences thereof.
4. TTD should find out how many of the employees are Hinds, Christians, Muslims, Atheists, or Marxists; whether they believe in Hindu Gods or they are only there to exploit and defame the centuries old Balaji Temple?
5. TTD should bring some transparency of employee scales and other benefits to devotees and other activist organizations
6. Houses built by the employees on Temple property should be recovered. These houses may be rented to the eligible employees at market value
7. TTD should set the precedence by investigating the incident; identify the employees who participated in the attack against D.R. Narendra and Narra Munichandra, and take appropriate action against the culprits. Failure to do so would encourage them to continue to harass the devotees, social activists, benefactors, donors and well-wishers of the Temple. They will continue to do the same thing knowing that TTD cannot or will not take any action against them.
8. There will be thousands and thousands of devotees across the globe, who would be delighted to do volunteer services at TTD and other Temples. This would be an enormous savings to the Temples treasury. Furthermore they will do their job with full faith and no expectations. Whenever the Union threatens to strike, TTD authority should deploy the Volunteer brigade immediately with

[GHHF] Vakulamata Temple may collapse soon; TTD officials must be prosecuted for their neglect; Temple must be restored and renovated.

May 28, 2012

Sri Vakulamata Temple is in shambles, and is in dilapidated condition. It is shocking, appalling, horrifying and numbing to witness the Temple in such a dilapidated condition. TTD officials should be charged with dereliction of their duties as the custodians of the sacred Temple. Neglecting to protect and restore the historical Temple by TTD and State government is a crime against the sentiments of all Hindus. This is an unpardonable, unforgivable and reprehensible excuse. All the officers in charge of the Endowment Department and TTD should be personally and professionally liable for prosecution for dereliction of their duties.

Who is Vakulamata? Vakulamata is the mother of Lord Venkateswara. As per the legend that as the mother of Lord Krishna could not see his marriage with Rukmini, Lord Krishna consoled her by promising that she get the opportunity to witness his marriage in Kaliyuga. Vakulamata had the rare opportunity to be the foster mother of Lord Venkateswara, marriage was arranged with Padmavati, the daughter of King Akasa Raja, and finally got the opportunity to witness kalyanam of Lord Venkateswara with Padmavati.

In recognition of her motherly love, Vakulamata Temple was built about 300 years ago on a rocky hill with more than 50 acres of land in Perurbanda village, which is less than ten kilometers from Thirumala. As per the wishes of Vakulamata, this temple was constructed in such a way that it faces the Seven Hills, where her son abides. It is also believed that naivedyam was offered to Lord Venkateswara only the mother was offered first. Then Priests used to ring the bells at Vakulamata to indicate that naivedyam was offered to the mother. Only then the Priests at Seven Hills used to offer Naivedyam to Lord Venkateswara.

Unfortunately, Vakulamata Temple was totally neglected for many years and is in utter dilapidated condition. A number of organizations approached TTD over the years to restore the Vakulamata Temple. In response to the demands of various organizations, when TTD was planning to renovate Vakulamata Temple, and 2 crore rupees was allocated. In the meanwhile, illegal quarrying started slowly stripping away the hill from all sides. It appears that as much as 70 percent of the hill was flattened. It is possible that the Temple may even collapse since the foundation has become weak. However local mining companies got a stay order in 2010 preventing TTD to take up renovation of the Temple.

Why TTD did not counter the stay order? Does it mean TTD officials are also conspiring to demolish the historical Temple?

Are the TTD officials getting benefited from mining companies?

Are the state government officials such as Chief Minister, Endowment Minister, local MLAs and others silencing the TTD officials?

EO should identify the politicians by name as to who is interfering with his responsibilities.

GHHF representative met with EO on March 30 following Lord Venkateswara Abhishekam. He asked the EO "why he is not taking steps against the illegal miners and taking steps to renovate Vakulamata Temple?" EO mentioned that there is political pressure on him against taking any action on illegal miners. The representative said that *"you are a Hindu first and are responsible for managing and maintaining the activities of the most sacred Temple for all Hindus. If you feel that you are not able to discharge your duties, why don't you resign and set an example for the Hindu community?"*

EO listened, smiled, and walked away with no response?

We request EO to identify the politicians who are interfering with his duties and also whether he or the politicians have any contacts with these illegal miners.

Why no action is taken to identify the people who did the illegal mining?

Why no case was filed against the Illegal miners?

Why no Security personnel were posted at the hill of Vakulamata Temple during the time of illegal mining?

We demand that the concerned government officials, local politicians and TTD officers should respond to our requests and submit a report to the public in the name of transparency. We demand TTD that the renovation of Vakulamata Temple should be started forthwith and also take legal action against illegal miners.

Dhanyavad,
Prakasarao V Velagapudi, Ph.D
President, Global Hindu Heritage Foundation (GHHF); 601-918-7111;
Dr. Ghazal Srinivas, Honorary Ambassador of GHHF

[GHHF] Recommendations to TTD on Unions, Salaries, Blackmailing, Assets, Acharyas, Volunteer Brigade, Activities, Facilities and Hospitals.

May 15, 2012

TO: Honorable Ch. Muthyam Reddy, MLA

Member, Board of Trustees, TTD

Tirupati, AP India

*"From the time Muslims started arriving, around 632 AD, the history of India becomes a long, monotonous series of murders, massacres, spoliations, and destructions. It is as usual, in the 'name of a holy war' of their faith, of their sole God, that the barbarians have destroyed civilizations, wiped out entire races." (Alain Danielou in his book, **History of India**)*

*During the past few centuries the most belligerent, the most aggressive, the most rapacious, the most power-drunk section of humanity has been precisely, the Christian Western world. During these centuries western Christendom had invaded all other continents; its armies followed by priests and merchants have subjugated, robbed or pillaged most of the non-Christians. Native Americans, African, Australian, Asiatic populations have been subjugated to this peculiar brand of Christian "love" which has generally manifested itself in pitiless destruction, enslavement, coercion, destruction of the cultural values, institutions, the way of life of the victims and the spread of alcoholism, venereal disease, commercial cynicism and the like. **Pitrim Sorokin (1889-1968), Harvard University Sociologist***

The question is do we have to go through another cycle of destruction, defacing and disfiguring of the Hindu Temples from the state governments in India in 21st Century?

Global Hindu Heritage Foundation is very much concerned about a number of issues pertaining to the employee Unions, the benefits of the employees, the employees' indiscipline, training of volunteers, allocation of housing sites, and a number of similar matters.

NOTE: What we have written is in the best interest of our Hindu religion and Hindu Temples. It is not against any one person or any person in the position. Whenever we refer to EO, we are talking in generic term only. It is not to offend any body. It is only to defend Hinduism from the clutches of government control and selfish individuals irrespective of their religious background. Please also know that no country in the world has taken over the religious institutions of the majority people. Why only in

India? Can we ever reconcile our consciousness with what is happening to our Temples?

Global Hindu Heritage Foundation (GHHF) is formed in USA in 2006 with a mission to regain the freedom of managing Hindu Temples by Hindus themselves; to challenge the illegal enactment of Endowment Act; to preserve the integrity of the wishes of the land donors; to prevent the Hindu Temples across the state to stop the sale /auction of the donated lands; to demand accountability, transparency and verifiability of all assets including the lands and jewelry; to demand that these Temples would not become pawns in the hands of politicians; to insist on the proper role of Acharyas and Swamiji's in the functioning of the Hindu Temples; to advocate on providing adequate facilities to the devotees; to demand proper treatment of all the devotees by the Temple employees; to prevent the misuse of funds donated by the devotees; to educate the Hindus about the discrimination of the government in managing the Temples; to inform the Hindus as to how the government is denying their freedom to manage their own Temples while the same government is allowing the other religions to manage their institutions without any interference; to inform Hindus about the use of Hindu and public funds by the government to the promotion of other religions; to take steps to prevent the regularization of encroached Temple lands, and others.

On behalf of GHHF, we want to address a number of issues either directly or indirectly affecting the functioning of TTD with regard to the following matters:

1) TTD EMPLOYEES ATTACKED DEVOTEES:

As you are aware that D. R. Narendra and Narra Munichandra went to Right To Information Office on February 24, 2011. Mohan Reddy, the TTD Employees Union Leaders along with a number of employees started abusing them, roughed them up and beat them without any provocation. They have used very abusive language as they beat them up. It appears that they were very angry with the High Court's Stay Order prohibiting the distribution of Housing Sites by TTD. They were asking them to withdraw the case so that they would have their housing sites. If they do not withdraw, TTD employees threatened them by saying that they are going to take care of them. (*Newspaper coverage on this incident is printed below for your information*).

It is sad, shocking, outrageous and deplorable to know that this kind of attack took place on this sacred place. Is this a place for such disgusting behavior, indiscipline and a gang style attack? Do these employees possess any ethos and morals to respect the sacredness of this place? Do they know where they are working? Do they believe in Lord Venkateshwara? Do they believe in Hindu Gods? Are they Hindus? Are they practicing Hindus, mafia, atheist, Christians, Muslims, or Marxists who may have infiltrated TTD to defame it, loot it, abuse it and tarnish it's image?

OUR REQUEST:

- a) Did TTD investigate the incident and identified at he employees who participated in the attack against Narendra and Munichandra. Did TTD to take any appropriate actions against the culprits, which may include suspension, imposition of fines, imprisonment and dismissal.
- b) Please know that failure to investigate and take appropriate action by TTD would encourage them to continue to harass the devotees, social activists, the benefactors, donors and well wishers of the Temples. They will continue to do the same thing knowing that TTD cannot take any action against them. To prevent this climate of attacking and ignoring the directives of TTD, your office and Board should take immediate steps against the attackers.
- c) Failure to investigate and take appropriate action by TTD will be considered as an organization that has no guts, no courage, no guidelines, no moral authority, and no legal authority. TTD will be considered as an ineffective organization yielding to the heavy handedness of the employees.
- d) Does TTD has the authority to take appropriate action or not against these abusers? If it has the authority, why it is taking this long to take appropriate action against the attackers.

2) UNIONS:

No Hindu Temple should allow the unionization of its employees. They need to be told that it is the donor's money that sustains their livelihood. It is not a commercial, industrial and government operation to allow unionization of the employees. They are working at the most sacred place on the planet earth. They are at the mercy of the devotee's faith in and donations to the Lord. Working at TTD should be considered a rare privilege and good karma in this life. Any misuse of their responsibility to serve the Lord is against the tenets of Hindu ethos.

- a) TTD should ban the unionization forthwith and the continuation of their employment should be based on their performance and devotees input.
- b) TTD should develop a scheme to impart and socialize the service-oriented mentality based on our scriptures and the consequences thereof.
- c) TTD should find out how many of the employees are Hinds, Christian, Muslims, Atheists, or Marxists. Do they believe in Hindu Gods or they are there only to exploit and defame the Balaji Temple?

3) BLACKMAILING:

GHHF and other organizations have been looking at the circumstances that have created the unions and their unchecked power over the TTD and similar Hindu Temples. It is a known fact that the state government appoints Executive Officer (EO) and Board members for a period of two years. These are the people in many cases with no experience in the management of these Temples. The Board members are totally partisan politicians who have no interest in serving the Temple and have every

selfish interest in pleasing the Chief Minister (whether he be Christian or Muslim) and making money through schemes such as ticket scams. It has become on the job training for many appointees. By the time they understand the workings of TTD, they are replaced with another set of Officer and Board members.

Knowing fully well that the EO and Board members will be here for only two years, the UNIONS are taking advantage by blackmailing them demanding unreasonable salary increases, benefits and compensations. The Union will threaten with their perennial, powerful weapon called STRIKE if TTD would not meet their demands. Fresh on the job, no EO would like to see the employees go on strike; consequently he will yield to the demands of employees. The scale is always tilted toward weight of UNIONS year after year with no end in sight and with no fixed salary scales.

- a) What plans do you have to counter the blackmail menace? What would be your recommendations to the government as to how the salary issues be handled?
- b) What is the role of the devotees and activist organizations in setting the salary scales and other benefits?

4) SALARIES AND BENEFITS.

In addition to the salaries the employees receive along with annual increases, health benefits are paid for the family, education expenses for the children are paid (even if they go to private schools), marriage expenses of the children are paid, and employees are paid for their clothes, shoes, glasses etc.

QUESTIONS:

- a) How comparable the salaries and benefits of the TTD employees with other government officials? Do you have any information on this matter?
- b) Can you also provide us with all the benefits the TTD employees receive for the perusal of the devotees?

5) ASSETS:

As many devotees know that TTD has properties spanning across different states.

- a) A comprehensive list of Temple assets including lands, real estate property, jewelry etc., encroached lands, pending cases in the courts shall be made available every year for the review by the devotees. Immediate steps should be taken vacate lands occupied by employees or third parties.
- b) Houses built by the employees on Temple property shall be recovered. These houses may be rented to the eligible employees at market value.
- c) Action must be taken against the employees who build or attempted to build houses in spite of the court order prohibiting them.

6) ACHARYAS, SWAMIJI AND PEETHADHIPATHIS:

The Gurus, Acharyas, Swamiji's and Peethadhipatis of various Ashrams and Mattas are essence of Hinduism. They are the upholders of dharmic way of life instilling spirituality in and guiding their devotees to participate in selfless service to the community.

- a) TTD invited the Acharyas to Dharmic Sadassu to be held in Tirupati three times and cancelled all three times. As an Executive Officer, can you explain the circumstances under which you cancelled the Acharya Sabha meetings? What kind of political pressure was put on TTD to cancel it? The EO and the Board should be concerned with the propagation and preservation of Hinduism rather than buckling under pressure. AS Hindus EO and Board members should stand up for righteousness not unrighteousness. You all should not be pawns in the hands of Hindu-biters.
- b) Is there a hatred toward our spiritual leaders to the extent you do not even invite them to inaugurate major festivals, to start a new project, to conduct bhumi Pujas, to inaugurate religious buildings etc. The contempt for Hinduism and its spiritual leaders is shocking and mindboggling. TTD is inviting all kind of unscrupulous politicians including Christians and treat them with full religious protocol accorded only to spiritually elevated souls. It is a shame that being a Hindus, EOs and Board members are participating in the adulteration of sacredness of the Temples and mitigating the importance of Hindu religion.
- c) Why do these Officials allow the government to impose nonreligious guidelines on the most scared place? Can't these Officials act as Hindus and challenge the government interference? If Hindus in these positions cannot take a stand against the irreligious policies, who will do it? Do any of them realize that they are sowing the seeds of destruction of their religion and their Hindu Temples?
- d) Is there any reason why our religious leaders are not consulted, invited, and honored on a regular basis?

7) VOLUNTEER BRIGADE.

There will be thousands and thousands of bhaktas across the globe, who would be delighted to do volunteer services at TTD and other Temples. This would be an enormous savings to the Temples treasury. Further more they will do their job with full faith with no expectations. They will be looking forward to this rare privilege to serve their beloved Gods and Goddesses. Many Ashram across India operate their functions and activities with volunteers expecting no salaries.

- a) TTD should initiate a Volunteer Brigade, invite them and train them so that they can be placed in different departments. In fact you should have a continuous flow of these brigade members trained to take up the seva as and when needed.

- b) TTD should place a minimum number of these Brigade members in different departments so that they can take over the responsibilities when needed. They will also serve as a check for any corrupt practices and inefficiency.
- c) Whenever the Union threatens to strike, TTD authority should deploy the Volunteer brigade immediately with minimum disruption. With this force behind him, the EO's hands will be strengthened and he would not be a target of blackmail if he knows that he has the back up to replace the striking employees.

8) Hospitals

TTD is donating large sums of money to four hospitals that serve the greater Tirupati metropolitan area such as SVIMS, SVRR Government Hospital, BIRRD Hospital, and TTD Central Hospital. TTD appears to have no control over the use of these funds. These funds are not designated for any specific task. Consequently, these funds are used for general purpose.

First of all, the hospitals are not religious organizations. But for serving the public, we should not be too much concerned or critical about donating these funds. However, it would be prudent to donate these funds for specific purposes such as latest equipment for testing purposes.

OUR CONCERN:

GHHF, Hindu Devalaya Parirakshana Samiti and Tirumala Tirupati Samrakshana Samithi came to know through our own friends and family members, whenever a patient due to accident goes to one these for hospitals for treatment, they are invariably asked to go to the nearby Christian Hospital. These Hindu patients are charged more money than the Christian patients and on top of it these patients unwillingly become victims of proselytization about their God.

- 1) TTD should look into donating to one hospital to make it a full pledged hospital with all the required latest equipment so that no patient will be turned away because of inadequate facilities. TTD should not be a party to push Hindu patients to the claws of Christians.
- 2) TTD should investigate as to the needs of the latest equipment with nearby Christian Hospital and equip one of the hospitals with all the facilities.
- 3) TTD should appoint a committee to find out how many patients were turned away from these four hospitals and the reasons for their referral.

9) Vakula Mata Temple

TTD should take up to rebuild Vakula Mata Temple on the original site with all the amenities for the pilgrims. Vakula Mata is the mother who provided means for Lord Balaji and took care of His needs. It is time we honor her, recognize her and worship for her role in setting up Balaji Temple in Kaliyuga.

10) Skyway Interlink Railway

It is high time to look at the convenience of the devotees and establish Skyway Interlink Railway connecting Tiruchunur, Vakula Mata Temple, Govinda Rajula Temple, Kapila Teerdham and Alipiri. This kind of system will take the devotees from one place to another in few minutes instead of going through traffic in the city and also seeing all kinds of non-sacred places in the city.

11) Dharma Sadassu

As you know TTD used conduct Dharma Sadassu inviting all the religious leaders, Peetadhipatis and Swamiji and have a conference to discuss various aspects of Sanatana Dharma. These kind conventions have been discontinued because of the Top brass intervention for New Delhi.

- 1) Can TTD explain why Dharma Sadassu has been discontinued? Who was behind the cancellation? Is it so wrong to have Dharma Sadassu conducted by TTD, which is the most sacred and religious place on the planet earth for Hindus.

12) Politicians and Sadhus

It is very hard to read that whenever the most religious activity takes place at TTD, only politicians are invited to either ground-breaking ceremony, Rathotsavam, or opening ceremonies of various activities. Religious leaders are the most appropriate persons who should be undertaking those activities.

- 1) Can TTD explain why the politicians are invited to these religious functions?
- 2) Is there any body in the Board who has any level of knowledge on Hinduism? Is there any body that can talk about Hinduism?
- 3) If some body asks these Board members about Hinduism, do you think if any body can talk about or answer any queries of the devotees.

12) Sant Ravidass Project

This project should concentrate on visiting the Dalit communities, talk about the message of Sat Ravidas and start reconversion efforts by creating pride in their caste system.

TTD should give top priority to create Hindu mind set among all the dalits. TTDs failure will be a disaster for our religion. Any project can be delayed, postponed indefinitely or scrapped, but this cannot be taken lightly.

If we loose TTD, we will loose the country , we will loose Hinduism, we will loose the freedom and we will loose culture that was loaded with moral compass.

13) Dharma RadhaDaana Trust

To our knowledge there are only 5-6 Radhas located in Kadapa and Krishna Districts to propagate Sanatana Dharma. TTD should extend this project to all the districts acquiring 4-5 Radhas for each district. We have to go full force to talk about the value of our religion. Responsibility should be given to the local trusts, Temples and people with passion.

14) No New Construction on the hills

TTD should stop the new construction on the hills to make sure it is too crowded to have any sanctity or sacredness left.

15) Walk way to Tirumala

TTD should consider widening the walkway for the convenience of the pilgrims. TTD may even consider having another pathway for returning pilgrims to avoid the heavy traffic.

16) Pranadaata Trust – Ambulances

TTD should take up this project and request donors to gift Ambulances Pranadaata Trust so that they can be used to transport sick people to the hospitals. There will be so many people come forward to donate Ambulances. Request 108 ambulances so that TTD can print Lord Venkateswara Picture on it as well as one of the Ashtottaranama on each of the Ambulances. TTD can even put the name of the donor on the Ambulance if the donor agrees. Many pharmaceutical companies will be happy to donate the medicines for the ambulances.

16) Repeal the Endowment Act

We request you to think as a Hindu, not as affiliated to a political party, and see what is happening to our religion and our Temples. Government is literally destroying the very fabric of Hindu culture, insulting the Sadhus, destroying the temples, allowing temples to be dilapidated, auctioning thousands of acres for political appeasement, and robbing the treasury of the Temples.

Can you imagine any politician talking about taking over the Mosques and Churches? Did any TTD board members or officers talked about it? Please help restore the freedom for Hindus to manage their own affairs and manage their own Temples, the way the Christians and Muslims are given the freedom to manage their religious places. Thank you for time.

Dhanyavad

Prakasarao V Velagapudi, PhD

President, GHFH