

# HIS HOLINESS VISITS THE NATION'S CAPITAL

RaviAharamRamanujaDasa

Washington DC, Maryland, and Virginia devotees were blessed by HH Sri Swamiji's visit to the area from July 19<sup>th</sup> through the 23<sup>rd</sup>. HH Sri Swamiji blessed the proposed location of the Sri Venkateswara Temple of Virginia, a six-acre site situated just outside Washington, D.C.



*HH and Perumal during Thirtha Goshtti*

Following the *Thir:tttha Go:shththi* on 20<sup>th</sup> morning, HH Sri Swamiji and his host of scholars performed the *Sankusttha:pana Maho:thsavam*, a ceremony to consecrate the land for the proposed temple. Nearly 400 devotees rejoiced at the sacred Vedic ceremonies. His Holiness instructed the devotees on what the true purpose of a temple should be, and how a temple should be maintained.

His Holiness also attended the annual convention of the American Telugu Bramhana Sangham. His

Holiness addressed the convention of the importance of our culture, its roots and origin. It was an enlightening discourse that focussed on the timeless nature of our Vedic culture, and how all of us, irrespective of our caste, should be proud to know that we hail from a heritage of great sages, scholars and great saints. His Holiness also clarified that we cannot call ourselves *Hindus*. If Hindu represents the fact that we were born on the south of river Indus, what about people who were born on the banks of Godavari or Krishna? Shouldn't they be called Godavarites or Krishnites? Its a derogatory misrepresentation of our origin that was thrust onto us by some of our foreign rulers with ill intentions such as to prove that they are supreme.

We can call ourselves Vedics, because we follow the Vedas or we are Bha:rathiyas since we are descendants of King Bharatha or we are of Sanathana Dharma because the ideals we follow are universal truths which are everlasting. The Darwin's theory of evolution says that we came from Apes. This theory doesn't hold, if you look at the universal truths mentioned in our Vedas and the wonderful explanations of our Sasthras. You can only get a Mango tree from a Mango seed, not an

apple tree Only a human being can give birth to a human, not an Ape. Our current history claims that Marco Polo or Vasco de Gama discovered India. In fact, we had affluent kingdoms and a strong history long before they came to India. We had such riches that gems and precious stones were sold on pavements of the road. Knowing that they came to Bharat and looted all our wealth using their deadly weapons and tried to destroy all our scriptures, culture. They couldn't do the latter as the Vedic culture is embedded in the blood and flesh of our people. They forced us to obey them. Though we got independence long back, we are still fixed up in the same grove struggling to survive and unable to believe our great culture. Generations have passed without proper knowledge. Very few are still protecting our great Vedic culture. Let us realize our greatness and the richness of our culture and spread the message to people around, and let us follow the path shown by our Vedic literature. It shows the path for the good of the whole world and the generations to come !



**HH Sri Swamiji consecrating the site.**

His Holiness also led a congregation of devotees in conducting a *Lakshmi:-Na:ra:yana Pu:ja* at the temple site. In his discourse before the *Pu:ja*, HH Sri Swamiji explained the importance of the Guru, and how our foremost Guru, *Bhagavad Sri: Ra:ma:nuja* reformed the original temple to Sri Venkateswara in Tirumala, proving beyond a doubt that He is an incarnation of the Supreme God, and making it accessible to all devotees, irrespective of their caste or gender.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> morning, HH Sri Jeeyar Swamiji discussed the conceptual design of the temple and also how it should strictly follow all guidelines with regards to temple building as described in the *A:gama Sa:sstras*. HH Sri Swamiji also visited the Clarksville JET Educational Center. He toured the facility and liked the premises and wished that the training activity would continue.



**HH laying the brick amidst Vedic chants**

After returning to the temple site, His Holiness led devotees in the mass chanting of *Sri: Vishnu Sahasrana:mam*. Here are some excerpts from his discourse -

**Sri: Vishnu Sahasrana:mam** is a great **Maha Ma:la manthram**. It is not a **Manthra** that was revealed by a single person. It's the result of thousands of years of penance by numerous sages. As a result of all their intense penance, they experienced their love towards the Supreme Soul in the form of a cosmic sound and all these divine sounds were compiled by Sage **Ve:da Vya:sa** in the form of a **Maha Ma:la manthram**. Such is the greatness of this **Stho:thra** that one can gain control even over the Lord of Death, **Yama**. **Bhi:shma** attributed all his greatness and his ability to control death, at his beck and call, to **Sri: Vishnu Sahasrana:ma stho:thram**.

At the conclusion of the chanting there was brief spell of torrential rain and it felt as if Lord **Varuna** himself graced the event. His Holiness led the devotees in a great **Bhajan** and it was an exhilarating experience.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> morning, immediately following **Pu:ja**, HH Sri Swamiji provided 12 fortunate devotees with **Sama:sra:yanam** inside the temple premises.

**Devotees offering camphor to the Lord**



This ritual initiates a devotee to surrender unto Lord and establishes an eternal connection with God through the grace of the **A:cha:rya**. HH Sri Jeeyar Swamiji explained the significance of **Sama:sra:yanam** such that it easily clarified the doubts and questions of the devotees. Then, HH Sri Swamiji blessed the Sri Venkateswara Temple Project and proceeded to New Jersey.



*some of the Volunteers group along with HH*

Although it had been a hectic and short visit, all devotees felt that they had shared deeply personal inspiring moments in the Divine presence of their beloved Guru and great saint, HH Sri Sri Sri Tridandi Ramanuja Chinna Jeeyar Swamiji !

HH Sri Swamiji offered Mangalasanams to all to participate actively in bringing up the new temple at the earliest and also intensify the children activities and the regular activities that are organised by the JET, Vikasatarangini so that they all can learn well, realise truths and do good service to the society in service of God.

Jai Srimannarayana !