

ANNUAL REPORT AT GENERAL BODY MEETING 1997
Bharatiya Temple of Lansing
December 7, 1997

Manohar D. Naga, Chair, Board of Trustees

Dear Temple Members, Friends, and Devotees,

The year 1997 has been a great year of challenges and accomplishments. I am proud of the team making up the Board. Let me introduce them and thank them for their hard work and for having given me great support. They are: Suman Kashyap, Vice Chair, who has served for 3 years on the Board and is up for re-election today; Meena Sharma, Secretary, completing 5 years; Minesh Mody, Treasurer, who took over from Ashok Agarwal in mid-year; and Executive Board members Ramesh Dedhia, retiring after 3 years; Sudhakar Kulkarni, completing 5 years; Adinarayana Reddy, completing 2.5 years and up for re-election today; Smita Rajadhyaksha, completing one year; and Lakshmi Subramanian, completing two years.

During this year, the Board decided to prepare for the Pratishtapana of our *murtis*. The following tasks were completed in this connection.

- a. Priest selection: Two priests were hired from India. One, Sri Sandip Kapase, is already here. The other, Sri Balasubramanian Kannan, will arrive shortly. With their help, we will be able to keep the temple open for 40 hours per week.
- b. Extension of the sanctum area and construction of a library-cum-office area.
- c. Purchase of the house next doors as residence for the priests.
- d. Agreement with the renowned temple architect, Padmashree Muthiah Sthapathi, for construction of *mandaps* for the *murtis* and addition of several traditional temple motifs.
- e. Preparation of visa applications for six shilpis (craftsmen) from India to visit here for an extended period to execute the mandaps and other designs drawn up by Muthiah Sthapathi.

Also during this year, the activities we have been carrying on for the last few years continued with undiminished vigor.

- a. Celebration of all major festivals, including Pongal, Shivaratri, Ramanavami, Krishna Janmashtami, Ganesh festival, Navaratri, Diwali, etc.;
- b. Many discourses, including lectures by Swami Dheerananda (June 9), Acharya Meenakshi Devi on the Bhagavatam (July 15-21), and Swamini Sharadapriyananda (September 1-7);
- c. Monthly havan program by the Arya Samaj members of our community under the leadership of Jai Bhagwan Jaglan;
- d. Yoga camp by Soneji on February 15;
- e. Bala Vihar classes;
- f. Youth camp by Dr. Subba Rao (July 10-13);
- g. Cultural programs, including the quarterly Sangeetanjali devotional music program (with a fund-raising dinner program on September 20 featuring singer Leenas Haldipur), a Bharatanatyam program by Ms. Yamuna Rani on September 14, and a dance drama ("Traditional Dances of India") at the Kellogg Center scheduled for December 12;
- h. Monthly soup kitchen, contributions (by our devotees) to the Greater Lansing Food Bank, and other charitable activities; and

- i. Celebration of the 50th anniversary of India's independence with a dance drama by Mythili Kumar and her troupe of 8 other dancers and 5 musicians at Chippewa Middle School on June 27.

We also developed and committed to the philosophy of inclusiveness of all Bharatiya faiths in our temple. Discussions with the Jain community to include a Jain sanctum are in progress.

The coming year will be a very important year for our temple. In 1998, we hope to celebrate the grand Prana Pratishtha ceremony for our *murtis*, the completion of the sanctum area, and the installation of three *shikharas* (towers) on top of the building over the sanctum area. 1998 will be the turning point in establishing our temple as a vibrant organization serving the religious and spiritual needs of the Hindu community in central Michigan. I am pleased at the enthusiasm exhibited in preparing for the Prana Pratishthapana by the nine committees working under the overall leadership of Dr. C.A. Reddy. Let us work together to build a sharing community that is a min-India and that serves as an example for other Indian communities in this country.