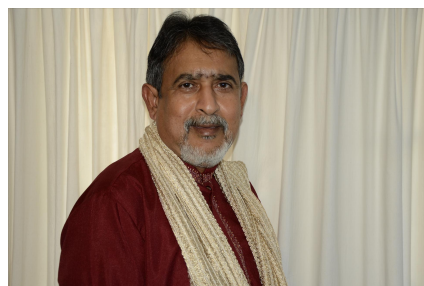


Temple Project extols Hindu values

By Thakur Ranjit Singh 31/07/2012 10:06:00



Hindus in the country's largest city would consider July 21, 2012 as a historic day as the seeds for a new Temple and Community Centre were sown, which will soon grow to become a venue of veneration and community service.



Hundreds of devout Hindus were present at the 'Bhoomi Pooja' held for Sri Ram Mandir and Community Centre.

The event also saw the revival of old science of 'Vastu Shastra' (see separate story in this section).

Shri Ram Mandir Charitable Trust has commenced the construction of its long cherished ideal of building a place of worship for Hindus and a Community Centre for all in West Auckland.

This is the only project of this type for Henderson area. The Project is located at 11 Brick Street (Off Swanson Road).

Professional support

A set of Trustees, all of who are professionals, are custodians of the Trust, headed by Pravin Kumar of Lotus Group of Companies. He is a well-known community leader, businessman and Chartered Accountant.

Other trustees are Auckland University Senior Lecturer Pandit Rajnish Sharma, Barrister and Solicitor and former Fiji parliamentarian Giyannendra Prasad, businessman and Chartered Accountant Salendra Kumar and former Fiji schoolteacher, parliamentarian and trade unionist Master Shiu Charan.



Acquiring a 2366 square metre land from funds donated by one of the trustees, the Trust ventured to build a three-level building containing the Mandir (Temple) and a Community Centre with modern amenities.

Noble objectives

Mr Kumar said that the objectives, among others were to provide a place of worship for all Hindus, promote, practice the ideals of Hinduism, and provide a venue for community activities.

"In this way, we will also look at wider social issues, while providing essential services to the community to address its spiritual, social and cultural needs. The Trust will represent the Hindu community on all cultural and religious issues," he said.

He said that the Trust will partner with existing government services and other institutions to address the general needs of the community and enhance diversity, multiculturalism and cross-cultural understanding.

“Hence this Project is much more than a place of worship for one community. It is open to all communities,” he said.

Major facilities



According to Mr Kumar, there would be two buildings in the Complex.

“The main dwelling will include a Temple, hall, kitchen and dining areas. An annexe will accommodate a home for the caretaker. The main dwelling will be at three levels, including basement, ground floor and first floor,” he said.

The basement hall (approximately of 441 Sq metres) will be an open area with parents’ room, toilet facilities, plant room and car park.

The Ground Floor (688 Sq m) will house the function hall, dining and kitchen facilities. In addition to a stage with audio-visual facilities, two additional rooms would meet various ceremonial needs.

The ground floor will have a capacity for 500 people.

The top floor (662 Sq meters), will house a Prayer Hall and the Temple.

The murals of Gods and Goddess will be located on one side of the floor and behind this area would be a small office and kitchen.

The major part of this area is an open prayer hall, also with a capacity for 500 people.



Multicultural Complex

Mr Kumar said that the whole complex would hold an audience of 1000 people and that Caretaker’s residence would be a two-level, four-bedroom house attached to the main building.

“All the levels will be connected by wide stairs towards the front and back of the building with a lift for disabled

access. The building will be constructed mainly with bricks, concrete and concrete tile roof. The site will provide onsite parking for more than 40 vehicles. There will be additional on-street parking on Mihini Road and Brick Street,” he said.

The building project is expected to cost around \$3.5 million.

Land acquisition and consents are expected to cost \$1 million while \$2.5 million will be needed for construction, furnishing, deities and other items.

Donations sought

Tenders for the Project have been issued.

Construction is expected to begin within a month, with the schedule of completion in 12-18 months.

“We expect to finance the Project through donations, sponsorships, fundraising events, and other sources.

Revenue generated through hall and other Temple related functions will also help in mobilising finances,” Mr Kumar said.

Special incentives and discounts are being offered to individuals, religious groups and charitable organisations donating \$1 500 or more, he added.

A notable feature of the Trust is its administration and management set up, without formal committees or elections, which cause differences of opinion and conflict of interest.

The Trustees have full control of the Complex and will appoint, choose or authorise individuals or groups to carry out certain duties on behalf of the Trust.

The day-to-day operations of the Trust will be the responsibility of an administrator appointed by the Trust.

Mr Kumar said the support received thus far has been encouraging.

“I am delighted by the overwhelming response of our community and thrilled by pledges of support and volunteering efforts of people shown at the Bhoomi Pooja. We wish to thank everyone for their support, which augurs well for the Project,” he said.

For further details, visit www.shrirammandir.org.nz