

## Press Release

### Meeting of the Council of Hindu Temples of North America (CHTNA)

Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012

Sri Siva Vishnu Temple (SSVT) located in Lanham, MD hosted the annual meeting of the Council of Hindu Temples of North America (CHTNA) on Saturday April 21<sup>st</sup> 2012. The Council of Hindu Temples of North America (CHTNA), a registered 501(c)(3), non-profit Hindu organization, was established in 1984 and incorporated in the State of New York in 1986. It is governed by nine Temples as Board of Directors and has its Secretariat at the Hindu Temple Society of North America, NY.



The primary objective of the Council is to unite all the Temples under a common banner including the official representation of all the Temples to speak on subjects and concerns affecting Hindu religion and culture. In addition to this objective, following are its goals;

- Maintain a directory of all the Temples and publish periodic newsletter distribution to all the Temples.

- Prepare and publish *Panchangam* (almanac) as per US time for use by all US Temples and their devotees.
- Assist member Temples in dealing with problems concerning Temples, such as visas for religious workers, benefits such as medical/life insurance, pension plans, inter-faith and intra-faith activities and management of the Temples.
- Collect bargain power with supplier/vendors.
- Sharing of common resource pools – such as priests, musicians, artist, spiritual leaders, etc.
- Exchange and sharing of ideas / experiences, such as:
  - Compliance with state/federal regulations.
  - Issues related to Temple management.
  - Internal / external conflicts of interest.
  - Temple security.
  - Involvement of Youth for continuity.
- Recognize and honor humanitarian and other religious services.

The CHTNA meets annually at one of the Temples in the United States. About 25 Temples participated in the meeting in April 2012. The meeting was productive and provided a forum for exchange of ideas for the benefit of the Temples. Professionals including attorneys specialized in religious visas and corporate management; finance consultant specialized in charitable remainder trust for the Temples addressed the gathering. Two attorneys made their presentations covering



the topics of legal and management aspects related to people management, property management including intellectual properties, the responsibilities of the temple management, Religious Visa (R1 visa) categories, restrictions and regulations, etc.

There was also very valuable discussion about the importance of the North American *Panchangam* (Almanac) applicable in the US. The meeting agenda included topics on group life and medical insurance benefits to Temple employees and utilizing common vendors at a discounted rate for commonly used items in the Temples such as flowers, fruits etc. There were extensive discussions on involvement of the next generation in Temple activities and also suggestions that the next generation be part of the Council meetings.

The annual meeting was preceded by a Meeting and Briefing in the White House lasting for 4 hours. The discussion included the significance of seva (community service) as a part of the Temple activities.

The movement of Hindu Temples in the US began in the 1970's and over the years about 800 Temples have been built all across the United States. It is in the interest of all these Temples, the Council needs to be strengthened and supported. In addition to annual meetings, the Board of Directors and the member Temples hold telephone conference calls to discuss matters concerning Temples.



### **List of Participating Temples**

Sri Venkateswara Temple, Bridgewater, NJ

Sri Venkateswara Temple, Cary, NC

Hindu Temple Society of Southern California, Santa Monica, CA

Sri Venkateswara Temple, Pittsburgh, PA

Hindu Temple of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA

Paschima Kasi Sri Viswanatha Temple, Flint, MI

Hindu Temple of St. Louis, St. Louis, MO

Vedic Dharma Samaj/Hindu Temple and Cultural Center, Fremont, CA

Sri Murugan Temple, Lanham, MD

Sri Lotus Venkateswara Temple, Fairfax, VA

Sri Durga Temple, Fairfax Station, VA

Sri Rajdhani Temple, Chantilly, VA



Sri Hindu Temple of Metropolitan Washington, Adalphi, MD  
Hindu Temple of Minnesota, Maple Grove, MN  
Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple of Colorado, Castle Rock, CO  
Sri Lakshmi Temple, Ashland, MA  
Sri Maha Vallabha Ganapati Devasthanam, Flushing, NY  
Sri Meenakshi Temple Society, Pearland, TX  
Sri Siva Vishnu Temple, Lanham, MD  
Sri Ganesha Temple, Nashville, TN  
Hindu Temple of Wisconsin, Pewaukee, WI  
DFW Hindu Temple Society, Irving, TX  
Sri Guruvayurappan Temple, Houston, TX  
Shirdi Sai Mandir, Dulles, VA

### **Current Board of Directors**

Sri Siva Vishnu Temple, Lanham MD – CHAIRMAN  
Sri Maha Vallabha Ganapati Devasthanam, Flushing, NY – SECRETARY / TREASURER  
Sri Venkateswara Temple, Pittsburgh, PA  
Paschima Kasi Sri Viswanatha Temple, Flint, MI  
Sri Ganesha Temple, Nashville, TN  
Hindu Temple of St. Louis, St. Louis, MO  
Hindu Temple of Wisconsin, Pewaukee, WI  
Sri Meenakshi Temple, Pearland, TX.

