

Resolutions of the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha in its conference from 9th to 11th January, 2010 at Hyderabad.

1. The fourth Conference of the Hindu Dharma Acharya Sabha (Acharya Sabha) was held at Hyderabad during January 9-11, 2010. The members heard a report from the National Coordinator listing the conferences in the country and overseas in which the Acharya Sabha was represented either through the National Coordinator or through one of the Acharya members. The highlights of the same are below:

- a) Participation in a Conference in Jerusalem in February 2008 centering on scholarly exchanges with Jewish scholars for a better understanding of Hindu religious philosophy and practice. This interaction was greatly appreciated by the Jewish scholars.
- b) Participation in an international conference of government and religious leaders in May 2008, called by the President of Israel.
- c) Participation in an UN Conference in December 2008 at the Hague where the UN Declaration on Human Rights was re-visited; on behalf of the Acharya Sabha. Some important changes were made in the final document to describe "Religious Freedom"; this was to reflect the concerns of the Acharya Sabha and Hindu Society on the "right to religious conversion" by Abrahamic religions.
- d) Participation in February 2009 in a Hindu-Buddhist dialog in Cambodia organized under the auspices of Global Peace Initiative of Women.
- e) Attendance in the World Parliament of Religions held in December 2009 at Melbourne in Australia.
- f) Attendance in a preliminary meeting in December 2009 with the Russian Orthodox religious leaders in Moscow to explore future clarificatory dialog with a view to substituting spiritual collectives for international political bodies like the UN, in matters of cultural and religious importance.

2. Besides the foregoing, activities on behalf of the Acharya Sabha since the last conference, comprised

- a) creating further public awareness about the arbitrary and technically unsound Rama Setu Project which also seriously hurts the religious sentiments of Hindu Society, to supplement the legal steps in the Supreme Court;
- b) stimulating public awareness of and opposition to the series of hydro-dams on the upper Ganga and Bhagirathi by the Govt. of India and by the State Govt. of Uttarakhand, by site visits and submission of Memoranda to the political leadership and the Central and State governments ;
- c) participating in the inaugural meeting of a Dharma Rakshana Manch which drafted a "Hindu agenda" to be given to political parties fighting elections for inclusion of elements of it in their manifestos;
- d) publication of a News Letter for the Acharya Sabha;

- e) publication of the first edition of an Acharya Sabha Directory; and
- f) helping in the country-wide organization of and participation in the Vishva Mangal Go Yatra under the leadership of a respected member of the Acharya Sabha and stimulating public awareness of the importance of the cow to the economy and its sacred place in Hindu tradition.

3. In the ensuing deliberations, the Acharya Sabha heard detailed accounts from individual Acharya members about a variety of important socio-economic projects undertaken by them in the field among the Hindu rural poor and underprivileged, with a view to not only enhancing their empowerment but their self esteem and pride in their culture. In this connection, the Acharya Sabha noted that a large number of Hindu organizations participated in the Fair held recently in Chennai and that the wide variety and volume of socio-economic projects undertaken under Hindu organizations surprised the general public and the Media. The Sabha was of the view that usual picture presented particularly by Missionaries, namely that Hindu society does not engage much in charitable or in socio-economic work among the poor and underprivileged, was unfounded or motivated.

4 The Acharya Sabha was apprised of the importance of legal steps to protect the legitimate interests of Hindu society through well researched legal action in the High courts and in the Supreme Court. Some of the successes achieved were heard and appreciated by the Acharya Sabha. The Acharya Sabha was informed further that

- a) it was very unlikely that the Govt. will be able to convince the Supreme Court about the suitability of the Rama Setu Bridge as it is conceived now;
- b) there is a Supreme Court decision that masjid buildings are not an inalienable part of Islamic worship;
- c) the Kerala High Court has admitted a Writ questioning the proposed Islamic Investment Bank in Kerala which was slated to work as per Islamic Sharia with share participation from budget funds; and
- d) in Melvisharam village dispute in TamilNadu, thanks to the intervention and fighting up to the Supreme Court on behalf of the Hindu families oppressed and terrorized by the local Muslim population, the State government has been directed to separate the two parts of the village so that Hindus may run the religious and cultural aspects of their lives as they deem fit.
- e) in many matters legal action would require and will be benefited by well-timed public awareness campaigns and protests. Leadership of individual Acharyas in different parts of the country will be beneficial in this regard.

5. It was brought to the notice of the Acharya Sabha, based on interactions with agencies inside and outside the country, that the Sabha has come to be looked upon as a welcome apex voice on behalf of Hindus all over the world. It was therefore necessary for the Sabha to plan its policies and activities accordingly. Ageing leadership of the Heads of Mathas and Peethas should ensure continuity and smooth succession by young disciples well- rooted in our culture and heritage and also well educated and trained to face the modern world, engage in scholarly debates and to participate in international conferences. Another need in this regard is for members of the Sabha to improve communication among themselves and with the Secretariat and the National Coordinator's

office, and the setting up of a modern office with computer and other equipment. Skilled persons should run the offices of the Acharya members. Improved and up-to-date documentation is also necessary.

6. The Sabha heard a useful presentation on the resources available in the SASTRA University in connection with the proposal to establish a Hindu Heritage Institute to carry on academic research and teaching.
7. The Acharya Sabha noted with appreciation the extensive padayatra public awareness campaign carried out in Andhra Pradesh in the recent past by the AP Devalaya Parirakshana Samiti, with the active support of Hindu activists overseas. These village to village yatras in several districts of Andhra Pradesh, carried out with arduous efforts highlighted to the masses at large, several issues relating to the actual ground situation of government control of temples in the State.
8. The Acharya Sabha noted with great concern the slow growth of Hindu population in the country and the rapidly increasing Muslim and Christian population in a number of States. In several pockets these religious minorities have acquired controlling influence in the cultural and religious life of society besides the voting patterns in elections to the Parliament and the State Legislatures. It has also been reported that recruitment of Hindu youth to the Defence forces and the Law enforcement agencies has started flagging in some states. This indeed is not a good development particularly in view of the extraordinary financial and other types of support being shown to the religious minorities by Governments both at the Center and in many States.
9. In the foregoing context, the following Resolutions were passed by the Acharya Sabha:
 - a. Individual Mathas and Peethas must undertake, pro-actively, a well thought out program of projects supported by or on behalf of the Acharya Sabha. Some examples of such projects are:
 - i. Supporting the teaching of spoken *Sanskritam* in a large number of locations (schools run by Mathas and Peethas, temples, new private entities). The effort must be to develop some proficiency in spoken *Sanskritam*, the grammar coming a little later. Youth as well as grown ups should be brought within the scheme.
 - ii. Improving the management of public temples out side the Endowment Act. Such temples tend to be very small, neglected for want of *archakas* and regular temple rituals. These temples should be saved from dereliction and disappearance. Some of them should be identified by the Acharyas concerned, for rejuvenation so that the nearby population will be attracted to the temples and help in restoring our ancient temple culture. In doing so, rural and semi-rural temples could be given priority. Temple-going will also greatly help in our resistance to conversion.
 - iii. The *archakas* in such rejuvenated temples should be trained not only in worship procedures and *samskara* rituals in the concerned *Sampradayas* but in teaching our Dharma to the simple people visiting the temples and in encouraging Seva work. Regular singing of *bhajans*, *namasankirtanam*, and *satsangs* should be systematically organized.
 - iv. Better management of festivals and pilgrimages, by steps to prevent accidents, improving environmental hygiene around the temples and provision of emergency medical aid etc. Acharyas may identify some of their committed and competent devotees and put them to work in this regard.

- v. In the selected temples speeches by learned persons on *Dharmic* and contemporary issues of concern to Hindu society, Bhagavad Gita, Bhagavatam and the like should be arranged. They may be largely by local residents but when possible, persons from outside the area may also be invited.
 - vi. Vigorous exhortation by Acharyas of their devotee masses in their *pravachans* in the field, to abandon out-dated and harmful practices such as (i) lack of respect for women, (i) dowry demand and ill treatment of brides and young married women for reasons such as dowry etc; (ii) child marriage, child labor denying education to them; (iii) mass killing of animals as a religious ritual and (iv) casteist approach in family and social contexts. Lack of respect to women in general and teasing of young women should be deprecated strongly in their *pravachans*.
 - vii. Systematic tree plantation in villages and municipalities under the aegis of individual Acharyas.
- b. The establishment of an Institute of Hindu Heritage Studies and Research should be investigated with the assistance and collaboration of the SASTRA University. With suggestions from Acharyas a Panel of scholars could be formed to decide the nature of the academic courses in such an Institute and to design the appropriate curriculum. The Institute must produce research work and publications of high academic standard to stand rigorous scrutiny.
 - c. Under the guidance of a core group of Acharyas a carefully considered ‘road map’ for the Acharya Sabha, thought through by think tanks should be produced. Such a road map should deal with ideas, on a prioritized program for execution, the structure of the Acharya Sabha at different levels, funds required for pursuing the program, strengthening the Central Secretariat and associated offices servicing the Acharya Sabha.
 - d. Efforts must be set in motion to create legal cells at the national and regional levels. Names of competent and committed lawyers may be suggested to the Central Secretariat by the Acharyas for this purpose. With the help of such Cells possibilities to take legal recourse in the interests of Hindu Dharma and society, should be systematically explored.
 - e. A Rashtiya Jyotish Goshti may be planned at a suitable time to thoroughly consider *Panchangams* with the help of the best available experts in astronomy, mathematics and astrology. Acharyas may suggest to the National Coordinator suitable experts for such a Goshti.
 - f. Cow slaughter and export of cows for slaughter in neighbouring countries are still taking place on a wide scale due to the inaction of State governments. This must be resolutely opposed by Acharyas in their *pravachans* and they should give leadership and practical assistance in rescuing the cows and for keeping them in Goshalas.
 - g. Hindu families should contribute consciously to the Defence forces and the various police organizations, increasing, if necessary, the number of children in the families.

- h. Suitable efforts may be made to create a Forum of Parliamentarians to project Hindu concerns and interests inside the Parliament and in government.
- i. At the time of the oncoming Haridwar Kumbha Mela a group of Acharyas may be convened to give further consideration to implementation of some of the foregoing Resolutions.
- j. Legal action may be considered to force the Encyclopedia of Britannica to withdraw the Article on Hindusim by Professor Wendy Doniger of the University of Chicago, which contains several comments and explanations hurtful to Hindu religious sentiments.
- k. In the context of the needless controversy rekindled by some Islamic elements in the country on the settled subject of singing Vande Mataram, Acharya members should actively promote the voluntary singing of this National song in all public places including schools and colleges. In their *Pravachans* the beauty and meaning of this great song should be explained to the people at large by the Acharya members.
- l. The Acharya Sabha offered condolences on hearing the demise of the following members of the Sabha, all from Tamil Nadu: the Head of the Ethiraja Matham in Sriperumbudur, of Perarulala Ramanuja Jeer Matham in Tirukurangudi and the Head of Emberumanar Jeer Matham in Alwartirunagari.

January 12, 2010