

Landmark Temple In London Celebrates Its Historic Silver Jubilee

Source

LONDON, ENGLAND, July 26, 2013 (Express): A Historic Hindu temple which was the first of its kind to be built in Europe is celebrating its momentous Silver Jubilee in Willesden, London this week. People from as far afield as Australia, India and America travelled to the UK for the 25th anniversary of the landmark Shree Swaminarayan Temple.

The temple is the first Swaminarayan Mandir, a temple for followers of a Hindu sect called Swaminarayan Sampraday, to be built in the capital. The sect was established over two centuries ago by Lord Shree Swaminarayan and has over 20 million followers worldwide.

Celebrations included a street festival attended by thousands, a live music concert and an opening ceremony choreographed by the youth of the Temple. The festivities, which mark the 25th anniversary of the temple, have run from July 20 till July 2013 during the religious festival Patotsav.

A Peacock Dance For Goddess Amman

DURNTEN, SWITZERLAND

DURNTEN, SWITZERLAND, July 20, 2013 (Bezirk Hinwil): For more than a week now the fourth annual festival of Sri Vishnuthurkkai-Amman temple in Durnten

has been in full swing. As in previous years, several hundred faithful were expected daily. The core of the festival is the homage of the Gods.

The Deity that is the focus of worship may differ in each temple: In Durnten it is the Goddess Amman. Every day elaborate ceremonies are being held - on Sunday morning there'll be a water ritual at the nearby creek.

"The beginning of the festival was timed to coincide with the last day of school in Zurich Canton," says the chief priest T. Sarahanabavanathan. He wants to give as many believers and their families a chance to participate in the festival. Most of them are originally from Sri Lanka. The priest emphasized that guests are welcome at any time. "We want the people in Switzerland to see our culture up close. Therefore, interested parties can stop by if they like."

A particularly good opportunity was offered on Saturday morning. At about 10.30 the main event of the twelve-day festival took place: the procession in honor of Goddess Amman. Here her statue was drawn around the temple on a trolley. Worshipers made offerings, and there was a peacock dance.

Annual Chariot Festival Canadian Temple

TORONTO, CANADA, July 26, 2013 (Inside Toronto): The glory of Lord Ganesha will be celebrated in Scarborough this Saturday, July 27, as a gigantic hand-carved chariot circles the parking lot of a Kennedy

Road temple. As part of an annual Hindu Chariot Festival, the Deity will emerge from Sri Varasiththi Vinaayagar at 9 a.m. and ride outside for about two hours while offerings are made.

The event always draws a crowd of many thousands, and temple officials have said all are welcome to watch. The Chariot Festival is an important event for Sri Lankan Tamil Hindus in Toronto, and thousands are expected to attend Saturday's event.

On this day the statue of the Elephant God Lord Ganesha is kept on the pedestal of the chariot and slowly drawn around the temple by the devotees. For this purpose, the chariot is attached to two long heavy ropes enabling all who wish and cherish to pull it, a chance to hold on to the rope.

New Canadian Hindu Temple Completed

Source

GRANDE PRAIRIE, CANADA, July 28, 2013 (Daily Herald Tribune): Grande Prairie's growing community of Hindus celebrated the official opening of the first temple in the province north of Edmonton on Sunday.

The day was marked by a traditional ritual of "prana pratishta," a rite in Hindu theology that distinguishes the consecration of the deities, followed by an inauguration by Mayor Bill Given. With that, the formal ceremony transformed a patch of ground east of the city limits into a sacred dwelling of public worship.

"This is such a joyous occasion," said Ratna Kali Roy, the wife of Nikhilesh Roy, president of the Grande Prairie Hindu Association (GPHA). "We consider ourselves very lucky that we have been able to do this."

The notion of a cultural center is rooted in the need for one by Grande Prairie's practicing Hindus. According to Roy, the families have had to travel 280 miles to Edmonton, if wanting to visit the nearest temple rather than gathering in private homes. "It worked before when the (Hindu) community was quite small, but now it has grown a lot, and we definitely needed a space to call our own and celebrate properly," she said.

"This will be a place for us to celebrate our festivals, instill our traditions in our children and showcase our culture to the people of peace region, said Roy."

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