



At last, TTD gives up gold plating project

TIRUMALA: The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam's (TTD) dream of giving a golden veneer to the Venkateswara temple has been wound up by the Specified Authority.

This puts to rest the project which was dogged by controversy ever since it was conceived by former TTD chairman D K Audikeshavulu Naidu.

The project, titled Ananda Nilaya Anantha Swarnamayam, envisaged gold plating of the 24.8 ft walls around the sanctum sanctorum of the temple.

It would have required 218 kg of gold and 6.8 tonnes of copper. In bringing the curtains down on the project, the Specified Authority, which met on Thursday, was obeying a High Court directive issued last December after hearing public interest litigation against the idea filed by Raghava Reddy (Nellore), Subramanian Swamy (Janata Party) and Parameswara Samiti (East Godavari).

The petitioners had contended that gold plating the walls would besmirch the inscriptions on them and damage the wall itself. They said the idea was only a vanity project of Audikeshavulu Naidu. Having scrapped the idea, the Specified Authority now has to return the handsome donations of gold and cash donations that were raised by Naidu during his tenure in the TTD.

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40 Peters Road, Madras 600014. Ph. 28132790, 28131232