International Conference
Temples management

Historical, functional and futuristic perspectives

22 - 24 January 2024 | Bengaluru, India

Broad themes

- Role of Temples
- Temple architecture and engineering designs
- Governance of temples

- What local organizations can do?
- Support from government

- Operational guidelines
- Capacity building
- Best practices

Timelines

Abstract
500 words submission.
30th September 2022

Abstract
1500 words submission.
10th November 2022

Submission of full paper
8,000 words
28th February 2023

Partnering organisations

CHANAKYA UNIVERSITY
BAPS
CIIL
HMEC

International Conference

Temples Management:
Historical, Functional and Futuristic Perspectives[1]

22 to 24, January 2024
To be held at Chanakya University, Bengaluru, India
www.chanakyauniversity.in.

Organized by

Chanakya University, Bengaluru; Central Sanskrit University, Delhi; Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore; IKS division of Government of India, Delhi; B A P S Swaminarayan Research Institute, Akshardham, New Delhi; Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti, Government of India, Delhi; Hindu University of America; Hindu Mandir Executive Council, America; Maharishi Sandipani Rashtriya Ved Vidya Pratishthan, Ujjain; Nepal Shiksha Council; Samskrit Promotion Foundation, New Delhi; Sri Somnath Sanskrit University, Gujarat; The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad; Vishwa Hindu Parishad.

1) Why this Conference?

Temples are the nerve centers for the Bhartiya culture. Built and supported by kings and localcommunities and individuals over the several millennia, temples served as the hubs for spiritual, economic and knowledge activities. Various designs of construction, different styles of function were adopted based largely on agama shastras. Temples were historically by publicand private trusts, committees, local groups and government agencies. Centuries of invasionsfrom land and sea resulted in a large-scale disruption of the activities associated with temples due to their demolition, reduced patronage from kings and reduced involvement of communities faced with stark choices of survival. These adversities over the last millennia resulted in temples retreating from being a dynamic socio-economic-spiritual-cultural hubs ofaction teeming with life to a largely limited roles as places of spiritual and religious activity. Yet, these temples in various forms and functions across the country have retained the devotee's beliefs and interests. Indeed, increased enormously.

In recent decades enormous efforts were made to rejuvenate them. Similar efforts to resurrection continue to even this day across India. However, colonial era laws and the laws of secular India on temple management have been a primary source of interference in the temple management. Additionally, the temples and its resources and management are constrained by inadequate and short-term plans and projects. Many temple funds are divertedfor secular purposes by the Governments. These issues have led to several protests, legal disputes, mismanagement of resources, and continued debates and discussions, both formaland informal manner.

In recent years, different set of arguments are emerging: One, free temples from the government control; so that devotees or trusts or local groups may manage and control

---

theiradministration and assets. The prime argument is that the government need to apply secular principles and treat Hindu temples and institutions on par with the religious institutions of other religions where the government does not interfere in their management. Second, increase government control; thereby, vested interests do not utilize the temples assets and their administrative control for the benefit of a few. This set of arguments highlights the factthat there has been mismanagement of temple assets in some places. Therefore, their management by the government could provide a mechanism to consider the voices of common devotees and provide a robust and transparent management of the temple resources.

For example: According to some estimates, a) Tamil Nadu state government controls some 44,000 temples and related land assets of five lakh acres; yet its income is Rs.128 crores. While, the Shiromani Gurudwara management controls 85 gurudwaras with a budget of Rs.1,000 crores, according to Jaggi Vasudev of Isha Foundation. b) Karnataka state government controls some 35,000 temples and divides them in to A, B, C categories based onannual income of more than Rs.25 lakh, more than Rs.10 lakh, who pays 10% and 5% of their income respectively to the government, while for C category, the government annually pays Rs.12,000 for local expenses. Some temples in Karnataka have got ISO 9001 certificate for its excellent management. In both cases, there are arguments saying, private trusts or organizations have rented out their premises for commercial use, thereby, diluting the very purpose of the original objectives of the temples as centers of learning. Other arguments say,the income earned by the commercial and through temple activities are utilized for wider public use like building educational institutions, hospitals and related activities.

There is a need to steer these discourses in a more structured and meaningful way. In a truly Bharatheeya way of arriving at solution for complex issues through informed debates and discussions, we plan to organize a three-day workshop; to enable systematic understanding of: a) historical, b) functional and c) futuristic perspectives of temples management in India.A set of leading experts will be invited to write in-depth research papers on specific themes. Later all these papers will be disseminated in a public domain for wider use.

2) **Broad Themes**
   a) **Role of Temples**: Original design and current practices and as learning centers. Temples were considered as social and community centers on normal days and more so during temple fairs (*jatra*) and festivals; all social groups and communities participated and volunteered their service to the temple. It provided space for storage of food grains and food distribution during scarcity and famines; also, as centers for organizing social gatherings, including marriages.
   b) **Temple architecture and engineering designs:** It displayed massive size and spread to accommodate various cultural activities; the sculptures displayed local culture, art, and social life; narrated stories of epics and key players. In today's world, what kind of architectural & engineering designs would help to restore and improve. How to ensure cost optimization and who should do it. Show best practices and methods for capacity building and monitoring.
   c) **Governance of temples**: inadequacies and problems in recent years, how to improvetemples management? who should do it and how? How to enable to serve

as spiritualcenters. Historically, the temples were managed by democratically elected committeeswith clear mandates regulating their functions. How can we learn from these practicesthat have been functional for many hundreds of years?

d) **What local organizations can do?** What local organizations and devotee groups and other groups can do? How commercialization and exhibition trends can reduce and focus more on the core values of the temples. How should the local communities play a greater role in the management of the temples? What should be the role of thelarger Hindu community in making these decisions?

e) **Support from government:** Extent of role, the central, state government, district authorities, taluk/tehsil/village gram panchayats should play and how? Should the government assume the historical role of kings and patronize temples through fundingsupport?

f) **Operational guidelines:** What are the simple and functionally viable operational mechanisms, as guidelines? What are the mechanisms we can adopt in the 21st centuryfor management of temples and religious institutions, so that they once again become vibrant hubs of spiritual-religious-knowledge-social-economic hubs of activities?

g) **Capacity building:** How to enable capacity building of temple management groups at all levels and performance monitoring? What can the would-be temple managers learn from some of the best management institutions in the country to manage the temples in the 21st century? How can technology play a role in the temple management?

h) **Best practices:** What lessons can be learnt from best practices of other religions andother countries that can be adopted by the temple management?

3) **Workshop Structure**
   a) Set up a national level advisory group to guide on indicated themes and overall framework of the workshop and its structure.
   b) Excluding inaugural and closing ceremonies, the workshop will have theme wise parallel sessions.
   c) In each theme, only short listed and selected papers will be presented. They will be critically discussed by two expert discussants. Followed by Q&A session.
   d) In the closing session, all session coordinators will make a presentation of session wisesummaries for wider discussion.
   e) In each session, academic researchers, experts, senior officers of the government agencies, representatives of temple trusts/organizations, legal experts and others willbe invited.
   f) Subject to covid guidelines, the workshop will be organized for in-person meetings andon-campus accommodation will be provided to all participants.

4) **Guidelines to authors for papers submission**
   a) A set of detailed guidelines for all shortlisted authors will be emailed separately.
   b) Each paper will have a maximum of 8,000 words.
   c) A paper can also be a complete case study (8000 words) of a larger temple coveringall the themes as listed under (2).
   d) Each paper will undergo double-blind review process (from abstract to manuscriptacceptance) and copy editing for final acceptance.
   e) Only accepted papers will be presented in the workshop and each paper will be

paidan honorarium of Rs.25,000.

f) The entire set of papers in a book form will be published internationally and providedigital open access for all.

5) Timelines for Research papers selection and submission

a) Abstract – 500 words submission. 30th September 2022.

b) Abstract – 1500 words submission. 10th November 2022

c) Submission of full paper- 8,000 words. 28th February 2023.

d) Review process completion. 30th March 2023

e) Revised paper submission. 30th May 2023.

f) Copy editing completion. 30th August 2023.

g) Submitting book proposal to Publisher. September 2023.

h) Presentation of final papers in the conference. January 2024.

i) Revised papers submission. February 2024.

j) Final manuscript submission to publisher. March 2024.

6) Expected Outputs
   a) 40 Working Papers, individually/group authored and digitally accessible.
   b) A book from an International Publisher in English language.
   c) The book will be translated into 12 major Indian languages by the Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti, Government of India and the Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore.
   d) The book will be translated into a few foreign languages by The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad.
   e) The translated books, both twelve Indian languages and a few foreign languages will have free global access in e-book version.
   f) A policy brief (in different languages) towards sustainable management of temples with focus on its core values for state, central government agencies and private organizations.
   g) A summary paper for wider audience in multiple languages.
   h) All publications will be provided free open access on websites.

7) **Date**: 22-24 January, 2024.

8) **Location**: Chanakya University Campus, Bengaluru. www.chanakyauniversity.in

Participation Certificate shall be provided to all participants.

9) Contact and Coordination[2]

- **Chanakya University, Bengaluru.**

  Srilekha P, Teaching Assistant and Conference coordinator. Email: srilekha.p@chanakyauniversity.in

  Dr Manasa R, Assistant Professor, Chanakya University. Email: manasa.r@chanakyauniversity.in

  Prof HS Ashok, Dean, School of Social Sciences, Chanakya University. Email: hsashok@chanakyauniversity.in

- **Central Sanskrit University, Delhi.**

- **Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore.**

- **B A P S Swaminarayan Research Institute, Akshardham, New Delhi.**

- **Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti, Government of India, Delhi.**

- **Hindu University of America.**

- **Hindu Mandir Executive Council, America.**

- **IKS division of Government of India, Delhi.**

- **Maharishi Sandipani Rashtriya Ved Vidya Pratishthan, Ujjain**

- **Nepal Shiksha Council.**

- **Samskrit Promotion Foundation, New Delhi**

- **Sri Somnath Sanskrit University, Gujarat.**

- **The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad.**

- **Vishwa Hindu Parishad.**

---

[2] Individual names from each partner organizations will be added soon.