

Satsang Sandesh

India Temple Association, Inc.

Hindu Temple, 25 E. Taunton Ave, Berlin, NJ 08009 SOUTH JERSEY • DELAWARE • PENNSYLVANIA (Non-Profit Tax Exempt Organization, Tax ID # 22-2192491)

Vol. 45

Phone: (855) MYMANDIR (855-696-2634)

34) www.indiatemple.org

JANUARY 2018

Religious Calendar

No. 1

January 1, Monday Vrat Purnimal January 7, Sunday **Ganesh** Puja January 12, Friday Shat Tila Ekadashi January 14, Sunday Makar Sankranti, Uttarayan, Pongal **January 18, Thursday** MAGH January 22, Monday Vasant Panchami, Saraswati Puja January 27, Saturday Jaya Ekadashi

January 1, Monday @6pm January 31, Wednesday @ 6pm Shri Satyanarayan Puja

January 20, Saturday Sunderkand Path 10am

UPCOMING EVENTS

Vishnusahasranamam and Lalithasahasranamam on Friday January 5 at our Berlin Temple @ 10am

> Happy Makara Sankranti, Uttarayan, Bhogi, Maghi, Pongal, Lohri

Sunday January 21, 2018 at 1.30 pm to 3 pm Children's Vasant Panchami / Saraswati Program

VIKRAM SAMVAT 2074 CALENDAR- ONLINE HAPPY NEW YEAR 2018 AND BEST WISHES ALWAYS! https://www.indiatemple.org/

Please book these dates in your planner and join these major events with friends and families

Special Prayers

ITA has a program whereby you can have prayers performed on your behalf every year on a special day in your life by pledging \$301. Also, at your request, Shri. Bhupendra Shuklaji or Shri Sudhir Jhaji will perform a special puja on your behalf, or the regular temple puja performed on the designated day will be dedicated in your name. Below are the donors for this month.

- Dilip Guharoy
- Mulchand Giyanani
- Milan & Monica Gupta
- Kusum Kumar
- Divyakant Parikh
- Ashvin-Deviyani Shah
- Jan 02Anil DesaiJan 20Jan 05Vinod PatelJan 20Jan 14Shailen PatelJan 24Jan 14Narendra AminJan 28Jan 14Ravin PatelJan 31Jan 18Jan 24

ITA GENERAL BODY MEETING SUMMARY

On Saturday December 16th at 1:30 PM in Berlin Temple the ITA held its Annual General Body Meeting and Election. The meeting had been moved from the 9th of December due to inclement weather. Approximately 40 individuals were in attendance. We believe that the General Body Meeting is a critical forum for providing input to the ITA leadership and strongly encourage members to attend future meetings.

Pankaj Desai (ITA Vice President & Trustee) welcomed the Membership, outlined the meeting agenda and introduced **Rina Patel** (2017 <u>Election Committee Chair</u>). She then introduced her fellow Election Committee Members, **Surendra Gambhir** and **Ramesh Gupta** (Trustee). She provided a short summary of the new election process, describing the additional criteria and vetting implemented in order to ensure that Trustee Candidates are individuals that have made significant contributions to the organization and are planning to continue to contribute. She then introduced the Trustee Candidates: **Nilang Dalwadi**, **Chetna Giyanani**, **Kavita Gupta**, **Anoo Joshi**, **Danny Saparia**, and **Naylesh Shah**. Each candidate discussed their personal backgrounds, past participation and planned future contributions to the ITA. One of the candidates, Ramesh Viswanathan (<u>Trustee</u>), was unable to attend the meeting as a result of the GB meeting date change. As there were only 7 eligible candidates and 7 open positions, balloting was not required. On behalf of the Election Committee, **Rina Patel** declared the candidates as having been elected to the Trusteeship.

Pankaj Desai, thanked the Election Committee and welcomed the new ITA Trustees. He also thanked the retiring ITA Trustees: **Bhavesh Patel, Sangeetha Rashatwar, Surendra Sheth** and **Praveen Garg** for their many years of service and contribution. He also specifically recognized **Harshad Patel**, who was in attendance, for being the ITA's longest serving Trustee with 23 years of tenure.

Pankaj Desai, then delivered the President's Update on behalf of **Lalit Patel** (<u>President & Trustee</u>) who was absent due to severe case of the flu. Lalit Patel's update started by reminding everyone of the key aspects of the ITA's mission: to maintain a place of worship and center for cultural activities; to provide a platform for religious and cultural activities through which the Hindu religion and philosophy may flourish; and to be a charitable and educational organization. He then highlighted the positive collaborative environment that the ITA has been operating under for the past year and the resulting progress that is making the organization stronger. He then enumerated the key accomplishments of 2017: completion of the next-door Pujari residence; revision of the ITA By-Laws; reengagement of the Advisory Board; continuing growth in new events; increased attendance at existing events such as Navratri, Holi, Dussehra and Mata Ki Chowki; and increased participation in children's programs such as Balvihar whose enrolment is over 270. He then discussed the key priorities for 2018 which include: fully implementing the new By-Law provisions; evaluating need for and completing of the parking lot; improving the documentation of policies and procedures; and continuing to improve member participation. In concluding the President's remarks, **Pankaj Desai** extended his appreciation to all of the leaders, volunteers, donors and members that have supported the organization in the past year.

Shobna Daga (<u>Treasurer & Trustee</u>) provided a summary P&L of the ITA for the fiscal year ending June 30th, 2017. She indicated that the ITA continues to be financially healthy and generate a modest surplus. Navratri, donations and other programs continue to grow but are partly offset by increases in expenses such as health care costs. **Gopal Patel** (<u>Investment Committee Chair & Trustee</u>) provided a brief update on the investment portfolio. He indicated that returns for the 12 months ended June 30th were 11.8% and that YTD returns were 12.2%. Both return metrics were in line with expected returns given the ITA's balanced equity and fixed income portfolio.

Divyakant Parikh (<u>Temple Manager & Trustee</u>) provided an update on the Temple facilities. He stated that the Pujari residence is complete and both Pujari's have started living in the house. He also indicated that Berlin Township had approved the Parking Lot plan and that the ITA was awaiting final approved drawings. Once in hand, ITA planned to seek bids from contractors. He anticipates that the parking lot construction will start in spring and be completed by summer. He acknowledged that project is taking longer than originally anticipated due to challenges from the township as well as shortage of volunteers with the right construction experience. He also highlighted the new chandelier in the Puja Hall and thanked the generous donors for their contribution.

<u>Charu Sheth (Trustee</u>) provided an update on ITA events for 2017. She indicated that she was very happy this year with the growth in volunteer participation and member attendance. In addition to another successful Navratri, she highlighted that 650 people attended Dussehra, 350 attended Holi and over 600 attended Mata Ki Chowki. She also discussed programs that were expanded this year which included Tulsi Vivah, Chaitri Hawan, and celebration of all days of Ganesh Chaturthi Utsav. In the area of children's programs, she talked about the growing success of the children's Janamashthami, Diwali, Vasant Panchmi and Navratri events. She individually thanked all volunteers, pujaris and Darshan Committee members that helped make each of the individual events possible and encouraged everyone to attend future events.

Samir Patel (<u>Trustee</u>) provided a short update on the key changes in the new By-Laws: 1. Change in Trustee Elections; 2. New Organization Structure; and 3. Additional Accountability Measures and Protections. He also provided a quick update on key programs. The Balvihar Program, overseen by Malathi Shankar, continues to grow with record enrollment and attendance. This year the program added more audio-visual tools in the classroom and launched a student leaders program in which Balvihar graduates return to help teach younger students. He further discussed the new Head Start Speaker Series, which is being overseen by Parth Chauhan, that is focused on helping our youth be more successful. He also discussed Vinita Ganju's (<u>Trustee</u>) new initiative to help Senior's deal with life issues.

Pankaj Desai, concluded the prepared portion of the meeting by thanking all attendees and opening the meeting for comments and questions.

ITA GENERAL BODY MEETING SUMMARY (continued)

Questions & Comments

Danny Saparia asked why the financial presentation had been shifted to June 30th cycle. The Trustees explained that the change was required by the new By-Laws. The goal was to better align the financial budgeting with the start of our major activities such as Navratri and Balvihar. It also allowed the Trustees to present full year results at the GB meeting. Trustees further noted that our financial year for tax and filing purposes remains December 31st.

Rina Patel asked how the cost of the parking lot was going to be funded. The Trustees indicated that a portion would be funded from the CY2018 operating budget and a portion would be funded from the ITA's investment account. The Trustees would not be in a position to be more specific until the final bids were received.

Harshad Patel requested that the Trustees develop ethics and moral code of conduct for Trustees to better safe guard the institution. Trustees indicated that they would take his recommendation under consideration and explained that a formal conflicts policy would be developed.

Mahendra Toprani asked how the space freed up by Shuklaji's move to Pujari's residence would be utilized. The Trustees indicated that in the near term the space would be used for meeting and other general needs. However, the Trustees plan to also explore whether a small elevator can be constructed in that space.

Bhulabhai Bhakta voiced concerns that not enough attention was being focused on services to seniors and that too much attention was being placed on children's programs. He also felt that ITA should dedicate more resources to seniors that lacked sufficient family support. Trustees indicated some new initiatives for seniors were already in the works and that they are open to working with the Senior Group on additional programs that are within the ITA mission and did not create liability concerns.

Jaysukh Sheth expressed his support for the new Advisory Board structure and appreciation for the opportunity to be more engaged in the ITA. Trustees thank him for his support.

Once all questions were answered and comments were heard, Pankaj Desai concluded the meeting.

Senior Social Group

Senior Social Group (SSG) will meet every Tuesday at 1pm in the Social Hall at Berlin Temple. Please contact Mr. Bhulabhai Bhaktaji at 8569830769 for details.

Free Notary Service Notary Service by our ITA Members—

The following ITA members provide Free Notary Service to our community: Ghanshyam Dave.:856-596-7531; Raman Modhera: 856-528-2863 and Dalapat patel: 609-298-2724

ITA RECOGNITION FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION EQUAL TO OR IN EXCESS OF \$1000 AS PER

ITA GUIDELINES Please note that ITA will recognize your, well deserved support of \$1000 and up during calendar year of 2017

Please note that ITA will recognize your well deserved support of \$1000 and up during calendar year of 2017 in publication of February 2018 Satsang

Please take this opportunity of making up any shortfall you may have before December 31 2017 to be recognized and may take an additional income tax deduction

Jayshreeben Mehta of Marlton NJ passed away on December 8. ITA and its Board extend their sincere condolences to her son Ketanbhai Mehta and rest of the family.

On November 23rd, Smt. Taralaxmi Shah, 94 years, mother of Hemangini Harshad Mehta, passed away in Voorhees. She is survived by two sons and two daughters, 7 grand children and 9 great grand children. ITA and its Board extend their sincere condolences to Hemaben and Family.

ITA GENERAL BODY MEETING & TRUSTEE ELECTION REPORT



Dear Membership,

I, Rina Patel am the election committee chair. The other members are: Ramesh Gupta (current BOT) and Surendra Gambhir, Ex-president of SJ Senior Citizen's Group.

magnitude of the responsibility and the tasks given, the election committee strives to discharge its responsibility in an impeccable manner, one members would find fair and unbiased.

Trustees under the new by-laws have a much greater set of responsibilities and commitment requirement's. The new by-laws also set a more rigorous eleibility criteria for Trusteeship. The goal of these changes was to ensure that Trustees would be filled by dedicated and unconflicted individuals. As a result the EC's role in this election cycle was more involved and important.

Committee vetted the applicants with much stringent parameters then we have in the past in qualifying them. These parameters included:

Verifying Member Eligibility by substantiating records with ITA accounting data.

Further, Eligibility requires these candidates to have been involved in temple operations for the past few years. We verified information provided by candidates with various temple management. We requested each candidate to provide detail Bio in reference to their Professional background, their Mandir areas of expertise that they possess that can be used to contribute to benefit the Mandir in such as Mandir governance, program management and execution, Fund raising, Membership Relations etc. Requested candidates to attest to and sign off on the temple Political Participation Policy

In fact as a result of this process two candidates, withdrew there applications because they did not feel they could fulfill the requirements of Trusteeship.

The Election Committee completed its review process and found the following candidates eligible for elections for 2018-20 term: Dalwadi, Nilang Giyanani, Chetana Gupta, Kavita Joshi, Anoo Saparia, Danny Shah, Naylesh Viswanathan, Ramesh

As per the General body meeting agenda, each candidate was asked to speak about their experience, background, his / her involvement in the temple activities, and what he/she plans to do for our temple / community once elected.

As there were only 7 seats available on the board and only 7 candidates, we the Election committee ratified the candidates to the board of trustees.

Last but not the least, our Mandir should be the pivot of our Hindu community, a place where the young meets the old, the old makes way for the young, and the young steers the community in a direction that dynamically adjusts to the current aspirations of the second generation Hindus. Fortunately and finally, this has come to pass as we see involvement of the next generation in our temple management.. Kudos to the next generation of volunteers who are working hard to bridge the gap between the old and the young!

Thank you BOT for selecting and entrusting EC to conduct these elections. Regards Election Committee

Happy Makara Sankranti, Uttarayan, Bhogi, Maghi, Pongal, Lohri



Happy New Year 2018! Happy Vikram Samvat 2074! Wish you healthy, peaceful, and prosperous new year !



Pravers

We will be reciting Vishnusahasranamam and Lalithasahasranamam on Friday January 5 at our Berlin Temple. We will start at 10am. This will be followed by Aarti at 12 noon. Please join us with family and friends. We will recite Vishnusahasranam in the Temple to ring in the New Year with Blessings for all.



Highlights of 2018

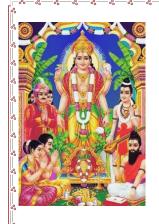
Jan.14th 2018 - Sunday Makar Sankranti, Uttarayan, Pongal Feb.13th - Tuesday Maha Shivaratri Celebration in Temple Mar.02nd - Friday Dhuleti / Holi Mar.18th - Sunday Chaitri New Year/Gudi Padavo/ Ugadi Chaiti Chand

Mar.24th -Saturday Akhand Ramayan Paath Starts Mar.25th - Sunday Shri Rama Navami Celebration in Temple Shri Sahajananda Jayanti Akhand Ramayan Paath Conclude

PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS BY HSC OF NJ ICC, 820 RT 73, MARLTON, NJ

We will have one meeting in the month of January on the 17th at 6.30 PM ITA (Seva Samiti) in Association with Samaritan Hospice Care will screen a film "BEING MORTAL"-Medicine and what matters in the End. Discussion of the PBS FRONTLINE film is based on the best-selling book by Atul Gawande, MD. This documentary explores the hopes of patients and families facing terminal illness and their relationships with the physicians who treat them. HOPE IS NOT A PLAN. The discussion of this film will be facilitated by Dr. Vinita Ganju and Joanne Rosen. So, please come to see the film and be a part of the conversation that brings medical professionals and community members together around this shared responsibility.

If you want to sponsor for snacks, please contact Manju Goel at 856-424-9028 Ram Arora, President



Monthly Pujas at Mandir SATYANARAYAN PUJA Monday, January 1 and Wednesday, January 31 @ 6:00 PM Followed by Mahaprasad sponsored by Indian Vila Anyone can sit in this Puja and receive blessings of Lord Satyanarayan. Please contact Charuben at 856-662-8754 or Kshamaben at 707-332-3400 if you are planning to be Puja Participant. Suggested Donation of \$31 or more from Puja participants will be appreciated. SUNDARKAND PAATH

Saturday, January 20 @ 10 AM to 12:00 Noon Followed by Mahaprasaad sponsored by Gagan Palace



Sunday January 21, 2018 at 1.30 pm to 3 pm Children's Vasant Panchami / Saraswati Program will be at the temple





Vasant Panchami, also called Basant Panchami is a famous festival that marks the end of the winter season and ushers in the springtime. Vasant Panchami is mainly dedicated to Goddess Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge and arts.

ITA invites all kid devotees to come and join this wonderful celebration of Vasant Panchami day on Sunday, Jan 21 between 1.30 pm to 3 pm.

Program Highlights: 1.30 PM - Samuhika Saraswati Pooja by kids 2-2.30 PM - Kids program dedicated to Goddess Saraswati 2.30-2.45 PM - Aarti



Thank You All for your donations to our Winter Jacket Collection. Here is the response from Visitation Church where it was given. The Visitation Church and School helps poor immigrant families and other needy people. Hina Desai carried out this successful mission. Thanks Hina!

Dear Lata,

Your "*Winter Coat/Jackets Drive*" including quite a lot of new blankets, some clothes, and some household goods was simply amazing through the **India Temple Association Seva Samiti to Visitation B.V.M. Church and School** were equally amazed when they were delivered stuffed into our trunk, the entire back seat to floor, and the entire passenger side from floor to seat (*where I could barely see out the back and passenger win-dows*) ... "Viso" greatly appreciated your thoughtful generosity! Thank You, Karin and Jim Gallagher

PROGRAMS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH YOGA ABHYAS FOR HEALTH, HAPPINESS & GOD REALIZATION:

Contact: Veena Gandhi at 856-435-9148 GITA STUDY GROUP: Every Tuesday 8-9 pm at our Mandir Contact: Sharad Pimplaskar @ (856) 985-4785 BHAJANS & STUTI: Every Friday, 7:30-9 pm Contact: Shree Shuklaji(856) 768-6785

REGULAR PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

BALVIHAR: For children (PRE-K to 8th Grade) teaches Sanatana Dharma, Vedic Heritage and Indian Culture. Two Sundays a month from 10 am - 1 pm @ Marlton Middle SchoolContact: Malathi Shankar (856) 424-7849 or Bhavesh Patel 1-855-my-mandir ext 3.

YOUTH PROGRAM: A program for young adults (8th to 12th Grade) and parents. Two Sundays a month from 9:45 am - 1 pm at our Mandir. Contact: Praveen Garg (856) 783-4692 or Sangeeta Rashatwar (856) 424-4211 **CREATIVE ART WORKSHOP** 1st, 3rd & 5th Sunday @ 9:30 am at our Mandir

Contact: Sudha Patel (856)489-4065

PUJA SERVICE CHARGES, TEMPLE FACILITIES USAGE FEE AND OTHER CHARGES:

The following provides list of applicable charges and fees. Shri Shuklaji /Shri Sudhirji will be available for religious services on request. Please note that 50% of the listed cost of Puja performed outside the temple goes to Pujari in addition to his regular salary. Please check temple availability at www.indiatemple.org; Click on "CALENDAR tab" and, from drop-down menu, Click on "EVENT/RENTAL CALENDAR". Please contact Shri. Divyakant Parikh at 1-855-MY-MANDIR Ext 1 for the booking of the Temple Facilities and/or scheduling of Puja Services by Shuklaji or Sudhirji. Please note that 50% of the listed cost of Puja performed outside the temple goes to Pujari in addition to his regular salary.

PUJA SERVICE **	INSIDE TEM- PLE	OUTSIDE TEMPLE	Following listed fees and charges are in addition to the charges listed for Puja Services
Archana(Panchopachar)	\$11	N/A	
Vahan (Vehicle) Puja	\$21	N/A	
Namakaran/Annaprashan	\$51	\$101	
Birthday	\$51	\$101	TEMPLE FACILITIES USAGE FEE:
Shraddha	\$51	\$101	Prayer Hall: \$200
Anniversary Celebration	\$101	\$151	Social Hall: \$300
Seemant	\$101	\$151	
Kesh Mundan Puja	\$101	\$151	
Sodashopchar, Kalash Puja, Punyah-Vachan			
or Blessings	\$101	\$151	
Satyanarayan Puja	\$121	\$151	
Engagement Ceremony	\$101	\$201	
Havan/Grah Shanti	\$201	\$251	OTHER CHARGES
Vastu Puja - outside service only	N/A	\$251	\$51. travel charges for 25 to 50 miles
Wedding Grah Shanti	\$201	\$301	\$101 travel charges for 51 to 100 miles
Wedding Ceremony per day	\$301	\$351	\$51 Non-member charges
Upanayan/Yagnopavita	\$251	\$301	
Antim Rites (Funeral Service)	Voluntary donation		
Uttar Kriya per day-outside service only	N/A	\$101	
Yagna//laghu rudra - outside service only	N/A	\$351	
Navchandi Yagna—outside service only	N/A	\$651	

NOTE: Charges and availability of other Puja Services not listed above may be discussed with Divyakant parikh @ (856) 745-9676

DIRECTION TO BERLIN TEMPLE

A. From Tacony Bridge:

Take NJ route 73S; drive about 12-13 miles and follow sign for East Taunton Ave. Temple on your right

B. From Ben Franklin Bridge:

Take route 30E to NJ route 70E to NJ route 73S, drive about 7 miles and follow sign for East Taunton Ave. Temple on your right

C. From Walt Whitman Bridge or Delaware Memorial Bridge:

Take I-295N to Exit 29-A for route 30E to Berlin Twp. Turn left on East Taunton Ave.

D. From Central and North Jersey:

Take NJ turnpike south, Exit 4 for route 73S. Drive about 10-11 miles and follow sign for East Taunton Ave. on your right.



President Lalit Patel 1-855-my-mandir x 710 president@indiatemple.org

Vice President Pankaj Desai 1-855-my-mandir x 711 vp@indiatemple.org

General Secretary Bhavesh Patel Joint Secretary Jagdishbhai Shah 1-855-my-mandir x 712 gs@indiatemple.org

Treasurer Shobna Daga 1-855-my-mandir x 713 treasurer@indiatemple.org

Religious Services Facility Rental Temple Manager Charu Sheth Divyakant Parikh 1-855-my-mandir x 1 manager@indiatemple.org

Darshan Schedule

Morning 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

Evening 3 pm - 9 pm

Aarti 12 pm & 8 pm

Times may change during special occasions

Please use the front door and ring the bell if locked

India Temple Association, Inc.

25 E. Taunton, Berlin, NJ 08009

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PLEASE REVIEW YOUR ADDRESS LABEL AND RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP BASED ON EXPIRATION DATE OR SUPPORT ITA WITH YOUR ENROLLMENT IF YOU ARE NOT IDENTIFIED AS A MEMBER

Please check appropriate items from the following, and mail it to Hindu Temple, 25 East Taunton Ave., Berlin, NJ 08009 Attn: Mr. M. Kanzaria

I/We would like to join Ind	lia Temple Association and I/We are remitting the membership dues
(please select one) Individual of	r Family one year (\$75)
Individual or	Family three year (\$111)
Individual of	or Family five year (\$161)
Life (\$1,00	
[] I/ We are seniors, age 65 an	d above and would like to join India Temple Association. I am/We are
remitting the membership dues	
(please select one) Individual of	r Family Five year (\$25)
Life (\$101))
I am adding additional dor	
Scholarship Fund	Lifetime Seva (\$301)Temple Renovations
Seva Samiti Fund	Bal Vihar Fund Youth Fund
I am relocating to the follo	ving address
	6
Last Name:	First Name:
Spouse Last Name:	Spouse First Name:
Address:	
Telephone:	E-mail:
Spouse Telephone:	Spouse E-mail: