

A HAND BOOK FOR EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION & GOVERNANCE OF TEMPLES



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the outset we feel happy to state that we owe everything to the Supreme God who granted us an opportunity to serve Him in a visible form in the temples, and enjoy His Bliss abundantly.

Simultaneously we record our indebtedness to the galaxy of Rishis, the discoverers of Vedas and Sanatana Dharma, who passed on their Divine knowledge, with a compassionate view, for the benefit of the common public, through temple worship, with an unbroken tradition till date.

Equally important is to remember the services of every worker who carried the bricks, sculptors who chistled the rocks, masons who toiled for the construction of mammoth temples, the saints and acharyas who invested their lives for sustaining the spirit and sanctity, the Philanthropic rulers and public who made huge endowments for the continuance of temple services, the warriors who made supreme sacrifices for protection of temples, and several others in various undisclosed forms, and ultimately the Hindu society which kept its faith alive, over several millennia against all odds, in temples and Sanatana Dharma.

In this context we take care not to miss mentioning the names of the following stalwarts, thinkers, authors and social workers, among several, who analysed the subject of Temple

Management in various angles and contributed profusely for the benefit of devotees, Administrators and State authorities, through their invaluable works. For them we are eternally grateful. They include :

Dr. C. Annarao, former Chairman and Executive Officer of TTD,

Sri PVRK Prasad , Former Executive Officer of TTD

Sri Padala Rama Reddi, Advocate, High court of A.P.

Sri Kalanidhi Satyanayana Murty, Former Law Secretary. Govt. of A.P.

Sri Tumuluri Lakshminarayana, former Secretary and Sri Raghavulu, Present Secretary, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, New Delhi

Dr. K. Ghana Syamala Prasada Rao, Former Secretary, Sahitya Bharathi.

Sri N Ramesan, former Secretary to Govt of A.P., and Chairman, TTD,

Sri R Parthasarathi Bhattacharyulu, Vedic Scholar and Recipient of Rashtrapati Award.

Prof. SV Seshagiri Rao, Professor & Head of the Department, Osmania University, and Chairman, Martyr's Memorial Research Institute, Hyderabad

HH Sri Kamalananda Bharathi Swamiji, Chairman, Hindu Devalaya Parirakshana Samiti, Hyderabad

Sri Srinivasa Deekshitulu, Senior Analyst , TTD and Secretary, Sri Vaikhanasa Ashramam, Tirupati, etc.

PREFACE

It is a common observation that new temples are springing up at a higher pace, in India, and also abroad. But the knowledge of temple committee members about Hinduism in general, and temples in particular, is quite low. Consequently the quality of services, maintenance, and security of properties in those temples is much less than desired, while the apathy of Hindu devotees is continuing without much change.

Our ancestors have gifted us great temples, constructed at several sacred locations of plains, hills, rivers and sea shores, and endowed with huge properties of land and jewelry. Subsequently they stood the tests of time and proved to be the sources of Hindu consciousness.

Such holy places of historical, cultural and spiritual importance and high riches are paradoxically now facing acute financial crisis, and are in a state of utter negligence and dilapidated condition. In fact, less said is the better about the ineffective administration of Endowment Departments in various states of India, under the prevailing legal system. The fundamental reasons for this state of affairs is the general apathy of the Hindu society at large, added to the State control of temples and too much of politicisation

Pained by these conditions, Shri Veda Bharathi published some booklets in Telugu and English (2009), with same Authors and with the title of “Towards an Autonomous Temple Administration”. It is gratifying to note that these books received wide applause and triggered discussions at various levels.

While the above books are prepared with specific objective, Sri Yelamanchi Prasad and Sri Prakasa Rao, the veterans of Hindu cause in USA, felt the need for a more comprehensive Handbook on the basics of temples and their practices, for use in all countries, in addition to the tips for the administrators, and reformers for improvement of temple conditions in India. In that process they approached Shri Veda Bharathi for the same. We are grateful to them for selecting us for this great assignment.

Here we would like to humbly submit that this work could be accomplished only with help of several books and articles, embedded with the knowledge of temple management practices authored by seasoned administrators and propagators, and also with the support of several well wishers of Hindu Society.

BENEFICIARIES OF THIS HANDBOOK

While keeping the requirements in mind of several categories of people associated with the temples, the Handbook is prepared to :

1. **Help the devotees** who would like to have some basic understanding of the internal aspects of a temple system.
2. **Encourage the philanthropists** who would like to contribute their services for welfare of the society through the temples.
3. **Assist the Administrators** in running the individual temples effectively on sound Hindu principles
4. **Create awareness among public** about the legal position with regard to Hindu Dharma, Temples, and religious freedom as guaranteed by Indian Constitution
5. **Highlight the shortfalls of Endowment Departments** in several states of India in temple management practices.
6. **Further motivate the Reformers** of Hindu Society and Law makers of Governments for taking up all necessary alternative steps for **“Governance of temples by Hindus only”** under the guidance of great Acharyas and Dharmadhikaris.

The matter describing all the above aspects is brought under three parts :

Part 1 contains information regarding the concept and definition of Devasthanams and temples, various theories and positive aspects behind the constructions, and the benefits to the devotees at individual level.

Part 2 deals with the inner and outer key elements of temple managements, service areas where serious attention has to be paid, quality control systems for better sanity and sanctity in the premises, temple revenues, accounting and audit etc..All these features suggest good management practices for efficient administration of temples.

Part 3 deeply touches the sensitive subject of Governance of temples at State level. In that process, it provides sufficient material to the unsuspecting Hindu community about the religious rights which the Constitution of India conferred on the citizens of India, the scope of Article 26 of the Constitution, the present position of Hindu temples which are now virtually held captive by the State Authorities, and as to how to retrieve them and bring them back to an organized Hindu fold, so that they can regain their past glory.

While presenting the material as indicated above, extensive references are made to the works of several authors like Sri Tumuluri Lakshminarayana, Sri Padala Rama Reddy, Sri Kalanidhi Satyanarayana Murty, Sri Srinivasa Deekshitulu to whom we are ever grateful.

It is hoped that this book will catch the attention of great thinkers of this society. Even if few of them take it seriously and react to the suggestions made in it, our object would be fulfilled. We pray God to make this effort successful.

**Arise, awake and stop not till the
goal is achieved.**

- Authors