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Iskcon Vrindavan celebrates its 40th foundation day

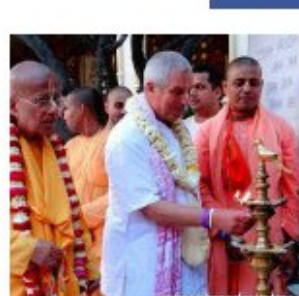
MARCH 25, 2015 BY VT STAFF

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Vrindavan, March 25, 2015: The celebration of the 40th foundation day of Iskcon Vrindavan began on Tuesday. The five day long festival is being organized from March 24th to 28th March 2015. The Krishna Balamandir (Iskcon- Vrindavan) was founded in April 1975. On the first day of celebration 64 disciples of its founder Shрила A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

participated. More than hundred original disciples of Prabhupada are being expected to congregate during the event.

The event was inaugurated by lighting the lamps by the senior disciples of Prabhupada and Mahabhishek of the deities. Shri Brahmananda Das, one of the original disciples of Prabhupada performed Aarti to the presiding deities of the temple. The rituals were followed by the chanting of Mahamantra and dancing. Constant 24 hours kirtan, Chaitanya & Krishna lila drama are also being performed to escalate the devotional mood of the event.

During the festival there will also be excellent entertainment every evening, including a nightly vignette by Parividdha Das, Krishna Balarama Lila by the Adi Yogi Troupe, a performance by the Vaikuntha Players, and the Ramayana performed by the Venu Nad Kala kendra Odhissi dance Troupe.

The devotees shared the memories of 1975, on how the utsava deities were taken on a grand procession with elephants, cows, drums, bands and hundreds of devotees before installing them in the temple during the temple's foundation. The devotees said that the Krishna Balaram Mandir is one of the places where Srila Prabhupada's presence can strongly be felt. They recalled that Prabhupada performed the first arati of the deities of Shri Krishna Balaram. The mahaprasadam was distributed to more than 7000 people.

According to the organizers, a 200 page book on the history of Iskcon Vrindavan will be launched on the second day. The book has been named "Vrindavan is my home: the history of Shрила Prabhupada's Sri Sri Krishna Balaram Temple. The book is compiled by Daivisakti Dasi, which contains the interviews of hundreds of devotees and their memories. It also contains beautiful photographs related to Prabhupad and the Krishna Balaram Mandir.

Shri Deena Bandhu Das will lead devotees on a special pilgrimage to the places in Vrindavana where Srila Prabhupada lived. They will visit Radha Vansi Gopal Mandir, Radha Gokulananda temple, and Radha Damodar temple, where devotees will sit and share memories in Srila Prabhupada's rooms.

"Srila Prabhupada gave many explicit instructions on how he wanted Iskcon Vrindavan to be developed – which are all laid out in the soon-to-be-released book 'Vrindavana is My Home,'" says Panchagauda Das, the present temple president of Iskcon Vrindavan. "And forty years on, there is still a lot of development for the next generation to bring forward," he added.

According to Kusha Devi Dasi, the female disciples of Prabhupada have planned for a blissful 'Vraja Ras' Kirtan Mela which will be held throughout the festival. "We are happy to announce that for the first time since Shрила Prabhupada's departure, his daughters are taking turn to lead kirtan in Vrindavan," said Kusha Devi.

Shri Gopal Krishna Goswami Maharaj, Chairman of the Iskcon Governing Body, Bhakti Rasamrita Swami, Loknath Swami, Shivram Swami, B.V. Govinda Swami, Dina Bandhu Das, Hansa swaroopa Prabhu, Surbhi Prabhu, Gunarava Prabhu, Hari Prabhu etc. were present to commemorate the foundation day event.

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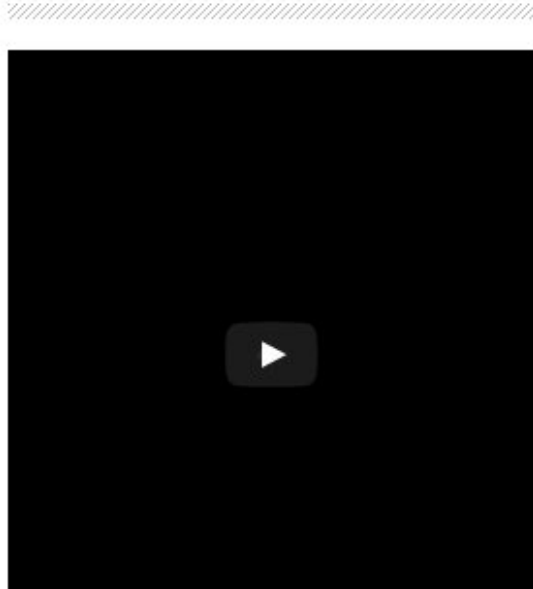
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