

SRI MAYAPUR CHANDRODAYA MANDIR

Temple of the Vedic Planetarium

Project of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Founder-Acarya: His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



Frequently Asked Questions

1) *What are the true facts & story regarding the so-called “rising budget” of the TOVP Construction?*

At the very inception of the TOVP project, before concluding any contracts and before starting actual construction, the figure of \$60 million (US dollars) was mentioned as the projected figure for both the super structure and finishing works. Out of the said \$60 million (US dollars) projected calculation, Ambarisa Prabhu gave \$25 million (US dollars) with the balance to be collected from the worldwide fundraising campaign. Had we amassed the balance \$35 million (US dollars) within a short period of time, we could have possibly finished the TOVP project for \$60 to 70 million (US dollars). In spite of the best efforts of our fundraising team, we could not accrue a significant portion of that required balance. Therefore, given the escalating costs of construction materials and services, naturally the initial projected budget was augmented.

It is a universally accepted principle that if one does not have all the necessary funds to complete a construction project within a very rapid period of time, the budget naturally increases. Even a 5-star hotel's construction cost could be \$180 to \$200 per sq. ft. The TOVP's current projected budget of 90 million US dollars comes to \$150 per sq. ft. This has been accepted by the GBC body and is no cause for concern, considering the usual anticipated escalation in construction costs over time.

2) *What kind of Kalashas will there be on top of the three domes & what will be the approximate cost?*

The central Kalash of the TOVP will be about six stories tall, which is perhaps larger than most other ISKCON temples in the world. All three of the main Kalashas, along with their Chakras, and the smaller Kalashas on the towers, will be stainless steel coated with titanium nitrate. Considering that these three Kalashas will be nothing less than the crown jewel of the entire project, visible from a substantial distance, they must possess and radiate a great aesthetic quality. We are currently in discussion with a company from Russia, where traditionally they have an appreciable expertise in building magnificent Russian Orthodox Churches. The quotations we are receiving from Russia are significantly lower than those from India. The estimated cost for all the Kalashas and Chakras is 1.3 to 1.5 million US dollars.

3) *What kind of construction materials are being used for the TOVP? Are such materials extravagant in cost, or reasonably priced, practical and durable?*

Firstly, we must all understand that the TOVP is not an ordinary building but a unique monument which is meant to endure for at least half a millennium. It suffices to say that such an 'Adbhut Mandir' cannot be built

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like an ordinary residential building.

We have spent a significant period of time researching and investigating the best possible construction materials which will sustain for such a long period of time and require a minimum degree of maintenance. At the same time, we have spared no efforts to make a comparative analysis of costs for each and every material to provide a pragmatic and achievable projection of material costs. In such a monumental building, it would be simply unacceptable to have its finishing works completed in a cheap or commercial fashion—the visiting pilgrims from all over the world and the future generations of Vaishnavas would not forgive us if we should do so. However, we can guarantee and ensure you that each and every construction material purchased for the TOVP has been painstakingly considered as to its utility, durability, aesthetic quality and cost benefit.

(Those interested in more specific details regarding construction materials and their comprehensive testing processes may refer to **Annexure A** attached herewith).

4) *Regarding donations in the USA having been sent to Sacred Deeds Foundation, how can we obtain confirmation that such donations have actually reached the TOVP in Mayapur?*

In this regard, please see the letter from the GBC Executive Committee dated March 2016, specifically point no. 4. **(Annexure B)**

5) *Since we have been informed that the Sacred Deeds Foundation in the USA is no longer authorized to receive donations on behalf of the TOVP, henceforth where shall we be able to send our donations to an authorized and safe entity?*

Yes, it is true that the Sacred Deeds Foundation in the USA is no longer authorized to receive donations on behalf of the TOVP. Henceforth, you may send your donations to the TOVP through its newly authorized entity, TOVP FOUNDATION, INC. Details given below

TOVP FOUNDATION, INC.
13901 NW 142 Ave.
Alachua, FL 32615.

Other questions and topics concerning various modes of donations to the TOVP have been given in **Annexure C** attached herewith.

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6) *What is the composition of the current TOVP team, and specifically of its fundraising wing?*

The composition of the current TOVP team remains unchanged, being headed up by Ambarisa Prabhu along with his TOVP team members in Sridham Mayapur. Regarding the fundraising wing of the TOVP, Ambarisa Prabhu remains the Chairman & his director for worldwide fundraising is Braja Vilas Das, with Jananivas Prabhu, Head Pujari of the ISKCON Mayapur Chandrodaya Mandir, as the Spiritual Mentor.

7) *We have heard that there was a disagreement between certain members of the TOVP team- has this disagreement been resolved, and what is the current position in that regard?*

This matter is fully addressed & explained in **Annexure B** attached herewith, which is a letter from the GBC Executive Committee dated March 2016.

8) *Are the TOVP records being regularly audited, and if we want to see TOVP accounts how can we do that?*

The TOVP accounts are being annually audited by a competent auditing company of chartered accountants in Mumbai. Income and expenditure accounts for the TOVP can be viewed on the TOVP website (www.tovp.org), usually on a monthly basis.

9) *What are the current plans in the near future for further TOVP fundraising campaigns throughout the world?*

Ambarisa, Jananivas and Braja Vilas Prabhus are planning an All-India Campaign this coming summer 2016 with the Sacred Padukas (shoes) of Lord Nityananda. They will visit all of the ISKCON centers in India, as well as many Bhakti-vriksha and other congregational groups. The South African Yatra has also invited the TOVP fundraising team for a second visit at a convenient time to be decided. A TOVP tour is also planned for Malaysia and Singapore in fall 2016. Additional invitations to other international destinations are also being considered and shall be announced in the near future.

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10) *We would like to know something about the experience and expertise of the team who are acting as the consultants and builders for the TOVP project.*

The TOVP project is very fortunate to have a renowned team of expert consultants and builders acting as the backbone of the entire project. Such persons & entities are listed below-

- TOVP In-House Architectural team - In actuality Srila Prabhupada is the primary architect for the TOVP. In his many letters, conversations and instructions, Srila Prabhupada clearly laid out the design and critical parameters for the entire TOVP project, including the essential features of its Vedic Planetarium.

The TOVP team, along with its in-house architectural unit, has intricately researched these instructions of Srila Prabhupada and translated them into the architectural language, designs, and engineering concepts which are being manifested before your eyes today. This architectural set-up has proven more professional, competent and economically viable than any of the other leading architectural firms in the market today.

- Structural Engineer - Mr. B.B. Choudhary, Planning and Design Bureau. He also headed up the construction of the famous Akshay Dham project in New Delhi.

- Gammon India Ltd – Main contractor for TOVP structure and other works. Gammon is a renowned multi-national company which has constructed numerous projects throughout India, Asia, Africa and Europe. It even constructed the Famous heritage site, The Gateway of India, in 1919.

- Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing Consultants - ESolutions from Chennai is an accomplished consulting company well-known for its ingenuity in the MEP field.

- Acoustical Engineering – Tikendra Singh is an electronics and telecommunications engineer and leading acoustic and audio-visual consultant in India and abroad.

11) *After all is said and done, when will the Mayapur deities actually move into their new TOVP home?*

We hold out great hope and offer our earnest prayers to Srila Prabhupada and the entire Parampara, and to Their Lordships Sri Sri Pancha Tattva & Sri Sri Radha Madhava Astasakhis and Sri Prahlad Maharaj and Sri Nrsimhadev that we shall stand firm on our target date of Gaura Purnima 2022. Despite our great hope and ardent prayers, we are very much dependent on all of you to donate generously and fulfill your pledges timely, in order that we may keep our promise to Their Lordships to move them in on the targeted date.

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Annexures

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Annexure A

Essential Building Materials selected for TOVP Construction

Stainless Steel – Stainless steel for use in the three dome space frames, building foundation and other load bearing purposes, as well as TMT steel for less critical areas has been specially manufactured by Jindal Steel Company, the premier steel manufacturer in India. All such steel materials are rigorously tested and accompanied by Material Test Certificates (MTC) under warranty.

Cement – TOVP is using a special grade of OPC cement. Such cement is further tested on-site as to the PH value of the water used in the batching plant and the PH and specific gravity of the add mixture, which are enhanced by various chemicals mixed into the cement to increase its strength and durability. Further testing is done for the consistency of the cement, initial and final setting time of the cement, fitness test of the cement as well as its specific gravity and compressive strength after a period of 3 days, 7 days & 28 days. There are also slump tests for concrete as well as its compressive strength after 7 days & 28 days.

Bricks – Bricks also undergo strict testing on site for determining their strength, water absorption, size and dimensions etc.

Aggregates, 20 mm/ 10 mm and Sand – Aggregates (stone chips) undergo a series of tests on site including sieve analysis, bulk density, specific gravity and water absorption, flakiness and elongation index, impact value and crushing value, as well as silt content of sand and bulking of sand.

Waterproofing – All floors' slabs, domes and chatris etc. undergo a comprehensive waterproofing process by Mapei, a world-renowned waterproofing company from Italy, who also provide us the best quality waterproofing materials which undergo an exacting series of tests before application and at various periods of time after application.

Plumbing – The best quality plumbing materials, such as high density polyethylene pipes and other components, have been designed and tested to last for a minimum of 100 years.

Marble – As the Rajasthan marble mines in India can no longer produce high quality and uniformly colored white and other marble, we have done extensive research worldwide as to where we can purchase high quality stones for the best and reasonable prices. For the deity altars, we are importing red marble from southern France, rare blue marble from Bolivia and pure white marble from Vietnam. As marble is considered a relatively soft and porous stone, we are having a German company provide materials and expertise for chemical sealants which will prevent absorption and staining at low maintenance rates.

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Annexure B (1/3 pages)

Letter from GBC Executive Committee, March 2016

Dear Friends and Fellow Vaishnavas,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

We are writing to you as members of the Executive Committee of ISKCON's Governing Body Commission. We want to provide additional information about emails you may have received regarding the relationship between Radha Jivan Prabhu (Anand Poddar) and the Temple of Vedic Planetarium (ToVP) project in Mayapur.

Radha Jivan Prabhu served for three years as fund-raiser for the ToVP, and has offered much valuable service to the project, including traveling extensively and spearheading many fund-raising initiatives. Recently, however, Radha Jivan Prabhu has contacted many of you using the official ToVP mailing list to advocate that he was insulted by ToVP staff, and later unfairly removed from his position.

The GBC has worked closely with the ToVP project since its early conception under the direct guidance of Srila Prabhupada during his physical presence. And we have worked closely with Ambarish Prabhu, (Alfred Brush Ford) the Chairman of the ToVP project, for over ten years.

In that capacity, the full GBC body met with Radha Jivan Prabhu during our recent Annual Meetings in Mayapur to discuss his concerns and complaints. We heard from him patiently for almost an hour, offered our deep and heartfelt appreciation for his service, and hoped we had helped to resolve the problems.

Later Ambarish Prabhu, in a mood of genuine humility, sent a letter to Radha Jivan Prabhu publicly apologizing for any mistakes in his dealings with Radha Jivan Prabhu. Despite these efforts, we are saddened that Radha Jivan Prabhu continues to publicly criticize Ambarish Prabhu, the ISKCON leadership, and the ToVP project.

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Annexure B (2/3 pages)

At this point, we wish to reassure you that:

I. The GBC remains fully and confidently in support of the leadership of Ambarish Prabhu as Chairman of the ToVP project. We are greatly appreciative of his commitment to this project and to Srila Prabhupada's vision for this great endeavor.

II. We offer our continued support to the ToVP team of nearly fifty devotees, who are cooperating together as engineers, designers, project managers, and fund-raisers under Ambarish Prabhu's leadership. We have full faith and trust in the ToVP team to carry forward its mission of service to Srila Prabhupada.

III. There are no allegations of financial improprieties whatsoever against the previous fundraising team, including Radha Jivan Prabhu. The monies raised for the ToVP worldwide are all accounted for.

IV. For those in North America, donations were previously sent to Sacred Deeds, a non-profit in Gainesville, Florida. Those funds were all transferred to the ToVP treasury in India as of March 5th. No additional funds need be sent to that account. The ToVP will contact its North American donors in the near future with information of where donations should now be sent via another non-profit ISKCON corporation.

V. The fundraising team will continue under the leadership of Braja Vilas Prabhu, who has been with the project for six years, and the spiritual guidance of Jananivas Prabhu, head pujari of the ISKCON Mayapur Chandrodaya Temple. Both of them will be traveling across India with Lord Nityananda's padukas (Deity shoes) in 2016.

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Annexure B (3/3 pages)

In closing, we want to thank all of the devotees and friends of ISKCON worldwide for their service and contributions to ISKCON, and especially to the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium.

We request that you continue in your dedication to the completion of this wonderful temple, via your financial contributions, promotional campaigns, and other services. Such service, no doubt, greatly pleases Srila Prabhupada and Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and will bring many blessings upon you, your family, and indeed the entire world.

Thank you again for your continued support of this important international project. If you have any additional questions, please contact the ToVP office at Brajavilasa.rns@gmail.com

Your servants, on behalf of the Governing Body Commission of ISKCON,

GBC Executive Committee
Sesa das (Chairman)
Bhakti Charu Swami
Praghosa das

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Annexure C (1/3 pages)

Q1. When and how can I start donating to the TOVP?

If you are reading this FAQ then we have setup our new organization for receiving donations in the USA, and you can start donating immediately. Please follow the rest of this FAQ for more information.

Q2. How can I donate towards the construction of the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium?

Just visit TOVP.org and click the red 'Make a Pledge' banner in the top right. You can also directly click here: <http://tovp.org/donate/seva-opportunities/>. There you can choose what level of donation you would like make. Please follow the instructions on the form. If you need help please view the following page: INSTRUCTIONS PAGE

Q3. What methods of payment do you accept on TOVP.org?

We use PayPal for our payment processor. Within PayPal you can use any major credit/debit card, and bank transfer.

Q4. Can I setup recurring contributions or pay in installments?

Yes you can, our donation pages on TOVP.org have options for setting up recurring contributions and allowance for installments on larger contributions. If you need help please visit the following instruction page: INSTRUCTIONS PAGE

Q5. What if I don't have a PayPal account?

You do not need a PayPal account to make a one-time payment, but if you would like to make recurring contributions or installments towards a larger contribution, then you will need to have a PayPal account.

Q6. Can I make direct bank transfers instead of using PayPal?

Yes you can make direct bank transfers using the bank account information given at the page: <http://tovp.org/donate>. Please send us details of your payment, along with your personal details, to tovpinfo@gmail.com after every payment.

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Annexure C (2/3 pages)

Q7. Can I set-up recurring payments using direct bank transfer?

Some banks allow you to set-up automatic recurring payments; please contact your bank for more information. After every automatic bank transfer please inform us of the payment at tovpinfo@gmail.com.

Q8. In the previous system I was able to setup automatic debits from my bank account, why can't I do that anymore?

Previously a third party was engaged to debit a donor's bank account automatically. We are no longer using this system as it poses challenges to the donor if they no longer wish to donate as the donor will not be able to easily cancel these payments. With PayPal the donor can easily cancel their recurring contributions anytime they want, and if they need assistance to cancel the TOVP can also assist from their side to cancel.

Q9. Can I mail a check?

Yes, please mail your check with a letter containing your personal details to:

TOVP FOUNDATION, INC.
P O BOX 609
ALACHUA, FL 32616
USA.

Q10. What are your bank account details?

Please visit <http://tovp.org/donate> for details.

Q11. I had previously set-up recurring PayPal payments. Do I need to change anything?

Yes, please cancel your previous automatic payment by following the instructions below.

Q12. How do I cancel a PayPal recurring contribution?

Please visit <https://www.paypal.com/?cmd=manage-paylist>, log-in to PayPal, and you will directly land on the 'Preapproved Payments' page. Find the recurring payment you wish to terminate. You may need to modify

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the time frame or select 'View All' from the drop-down list to find the recurring payment, click the merchant name, and click cancel.

Annexure C (3/3 pages)

For payments that have already been completed, you can attempt to request PayPal for a refund. If you are unsuccessful in your refund request, do not worry, we will make sure that your previous donations will arrive at the TOVP safely.

Q13. I had previously set-up automatic bank payments with Sacred Deeds. What do I need to do?

If you previously opted-in to automatic payments through Sacred Deeds, you will need to stop those payments by contacting your bank; they should assist you in stopping the payments. Then you can follow the above instructions to start your payments again.

Q14. Which organization is now receiving funds on behalf of the TOVP in the USA?

The TOVP has formed a new organization, entitled TOVP FOUNDATION, INC. They will now handle all USA donations for the TOVP project.

13901 NW 142 Ave.

Alachua, FL 32615.

Ph. 386 462 9000

Email: tovpinfo@gmail.com

Q15. Will I get tax exemption from these donations?

Yes, the new organization is a registered 501.3c organization. You will receive a tax receipt for your contribution.

Q16. Who is managing TOVP FOUNDATION, INC.?

The TOVP itself will directly manage this organization. The chairman of the TOVP Foundation Inc. will be the ISKCON GBC Chairman, Sesa Das (ACBSP), and it will be overseen by Braja Vilas Das, the TOVP Fundraising Director.

Q17. I have some more questions that were not in this FAQ, who do I contact?

Please contact the global director of fundraising, Braja Vilasa Das, at brajavilasa.rns@gmail.com.

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