

Anonymous Donor Gifts 23 Acres of Land to Balaji Temple

By a Staff Reporter

SAN JOSE, Calif. — An anonymous donor gifted 23 acres of land in Tres Pinos in California's San Benito County to the Balaji Temple here during the annual Guru Vandana celebrations Nov. 18-21.

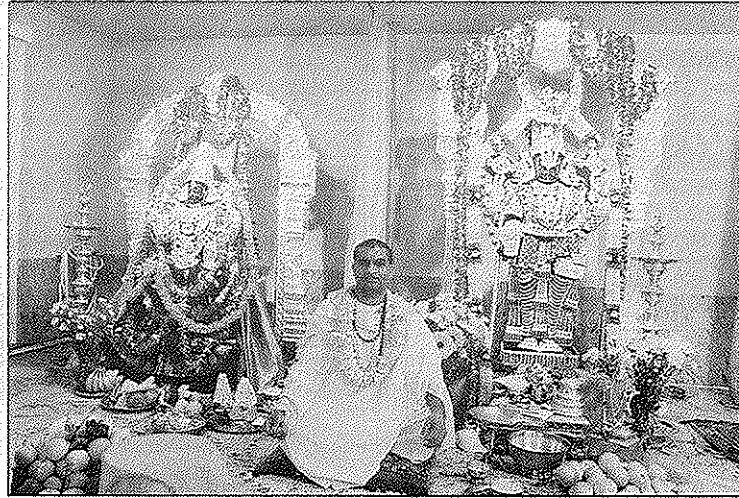
A Maha Lakshmi Abhisheka, Satyanarayana Swami Puja, Balaji Abhisheka with 108 "kalasha" and a Guru Paduka Puja performed by "shishyas" in honor of Guru and Swamiji Narayanandanath marked the highlights of the four-day program.

The "deeksha" started with a chanting of the sacred mantra, "Om Namo Bhagavathe Vasudevaya," to invoke Hindu deities, including goddess Lakshmi, Lord Venkateswara, Lord Vishwaksena and Lord Ganapathi, along with Vasthu Purusha followed by Kalasha Sthapana, Ankurarpana Puja and Raksha Bandhana.

The following day, celebrations continued with the Navagraha Puja and Mahalakshmi Abhishekam and with Swamiji performing the Ashtavadana Puja.

On day three, Swamiji performed Mutthangi Homa, which serves to purify Mutthangi Kavacham, as well as the 108 Kalasha Satyanarayana Puja.

According to a press release, devotees participated in the Karthika Purnima Satyanarayana Puja and read the "katha" themselves.

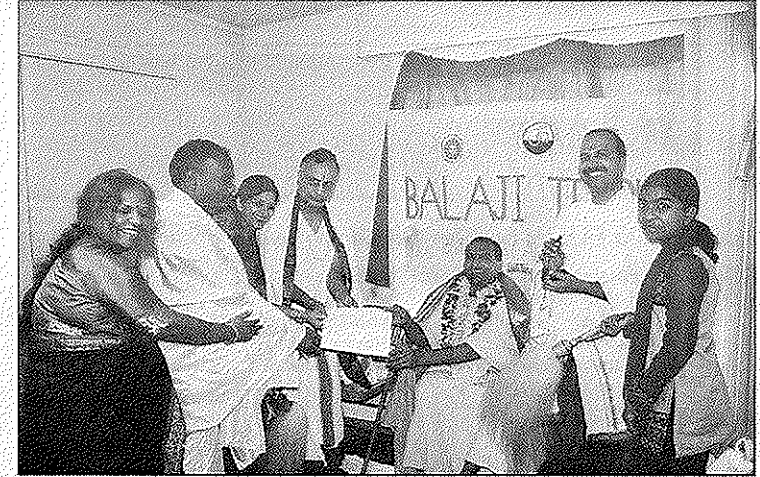


The head priest of the Balaji Temple in San Jose, Calif., addresses devotees during the four-day Guru Vandana celebrations at the temple Nov. 18-21.

As part of the fourth day of celebrations, Swamiji, along with associate priests Prabhu Ram, Ram Venkat and Rajesh Kamath, performed Balaji Abhishekam with 108 "kalash," which had the names of individual donors etched on them and contained the water from the rivers Ganga, Yamuna, Narmada, Kavery and Kailash, which are considered holy in Hinduism.

The Navagraha Abhishekam was performed using a combination of lentils in a symbolic gesture of removing the pain and obstacles from the life of devotees.

After the Abhishekam, Lord Balaji was decorated with Mutthangi Kavacham donated by another anonymous devotee.



Swamiji (center), head priest of the Balaji Temple in San Jose, Calif., accepts a gift of 23 acres of land from an anonymous donor on behalf of the Temple Committee to be used towards the development of the temple.