

2007 year in review

BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, UK

Dear Friend,

We at BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, UK, write to express our deepest gratitude for your kind support of our activities during the year of 2007. Your invaluable goodwill ensured that we were able to reach out to many thousands in the community, making 2007 a very successful and satisfying year for us all.

Join us as we glance back upon just some of the events that made 2007 especially memorable.





Lord Coe Finds Inspiration for the Olympics 23 January

Blue Peter Appeal for Orphans in Malawi 27 January

Sebastian Coe, former world record-breaking Olympic athlete and currently Chairman of the London 2012 Olympic Games' Organising Committee, visited BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, Neasden, London, on 23 January. He was touched by the spirit of volunteerism fostered by the Mandir and welcomed BAPS' support in the 2012 Games.

Enthusiastic young BAPS volunteers and children from The Swaminarayan School collected over 4,000 pairs of shoes for the Blue Peter Shoebiz Appeal, in support of a worldwide UNICEF campaign aimed at helping needy children in Malawi orphaned through AIDS.



Parents' Days

Hindu Festivals



Parents' Days 17 & 18 March, 17 June & 28 July

A series of Parents' Days brought together mothers and fathers with their children for a day packed with fun and inspiration. Interactive workshops shared the message of love, mutual trust and effective communication – essential tools in every successful parent-child relationship.

Hindu Festivals

As always, major Hindu festivals featured throughout the year. Colourful celebrations with devotional singing, live enactments and touching sermons inspired devotees who also participated in traditional rituals.



"Today was an eye-opener. I promise to spend more quality time with my children."

- Parent



Holi
3 March



Maha-Shivaratri
16 February



Swaminarayan Jayanti
31 March



Ramnavami
27 March



Krishna Janmashtami
4 September



National Sponsored Walk 15 April

More than 3,500 devotees and well-wishers in 10 centres around the country participated in the annual National Sponsored Walk to raise money for charity, including £25,000 for the British Heart Foundation.

Brent Respect Festival 8 July

Over 650 BAPS volunteers and members of the local community took part in the world's largest finger-painting as part of the Brent Respect Festival organised by the Brent Council. People of all ages, beliefs and backgrounds came together to produce the 16,400 sq. ft. painting, perfectly embodying its message of community respect and cohesion.





Centenary Celebrations at Wembley Arena 7 October

BAPS held its centenary celebrations for Europe at Wembley Arena, London, in the presence of His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj. The event themed *"In the Joy of Others..."* paid fitting tribute to a century of worldwide social and spiritual services.

In a personal letter for the occasion, Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Gordon Brown MP congratulated and thanked BAPS for its role in the community, noting specifically:

"The contribution you make to the education of our young people and the cultural community life of London and the United Kingdom is something you all should be very proud of. You espouse ideals of community and voluntary service, which are an example to us all."



£12,000 Donated to Breast Cancer Care 20 October

As a part of the BAPS Centenary Celebrations and Breast Cancer Awareness Month, BAPS volunteers collected £12,000 for Breast Cancer Care, UK. BAPS also committed to continue fostering this new relationship to raise awareness about breast cancer within the local community.





Royal Visit on Diwali 9 November

Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall visited the Mandir to participate in the auspicious Diwali celebrations. In his address, His Royal Highness congratulated the "peace-loving and values-based Hindu community" in the UK and thanked them for their "huge contribution to the fabric... of our society."

Hindu New Year Festivities 10 November

The Hindu New Year was heralded on 10 November. Thousands flocked to the Mandir to celebrate this auspicious day with prayers and thanksgiving, and to see the world-renowned Annakut – a breathtaking ceremonial offering of over 1,200 food dishes.



"Your community is one of the most positive forces which helps to bind the country together."

– HRH The Prince of Wales



"By far the most magnificent in all of Britain."

– HRH The Prince of Wales

UK Pride of Place Award

Time Out's Seven Wonders of London



UK Pride of Place Award 4 December

Time Out's Seven Wonders of London 11 December

The Mandir was conferred the 'UK Pride of Place Award' by Government authorities after a nationwide online poll. After weeks of voting, the Mandir registered the largest number of votes across the country as well as in London, with an overwhelming 81% of votes from the London Borough of Brent. This means the Mandir was voted as the place that generates the greatest pride among local residents.

Time Out, the highly respected international city-guide publishers, declared the Mandir as one of the "Seven Wonders of London". In an "epic series... to pay tribute to... the capital's seven most iconic buildings and landmarks", they embarked upon an ambitious search of London's best. The Mandir featured among the choice seven.



We have been humbled by these latest new honours and would like to dedicate them to you and all those who have supported and contributed towards the Mandir and its activities.

We look forward to your continuing support so that together we can make 2008 an even greater success for our community!

With prayers and best wishes for a happy, healthy, and prosperous year ahead,

BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, UK

BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha Global Highlights



youth leadership training camp
Taupo (New Zealand), October



support for 400 needy children and
100 families afflicted with leprosy
Dar-es-Salaam (Tanzania), September



walkathons in 32 cities
in support of local charities
North America, August-September



blood donation drives in 12 cities
North America, September



deaddiction campaign with 25,000
young volunteers reaching out to
over 2.1 million nationwide
India, May



free eye care camp for
600 needy patients
Dar-es-Salaam (Tanzania), November



disaster relief aid for
flood-stricken villagers
Gujarat (India), July



nationwide health fairs for
the local community
North America, Year-round



swaminarayan akshardham, new delhi,
recognised as 'the world's largest
comprehensive hindu temple'
Newdelhi (India), December



Inspirer: His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj

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