

Temple Construction-Chennai

Brief History

Srila Prabhupada had a vision to have a gorgeous temple in Chennai. In 2002, a land measuring 6.25 acres was purchased. Temple Sthapati and Architect were employed and construction finally began in 2003. H.H Bhanu Swami Maharaj, the GBC, did a lot of research on ancient temples, pranams, chakras, etc. with the idea of having a simple structure and a grand altar.

Structure

- As is famous among South Indian temples, this temple too, has many domes. The Dome is Jagganath Puri temple styled, each above Radha Krishna, Gaur Nitai and Jagganath, Baldev and Subhadra. At the entrance is a Pallava style dome.
- After H.H Bhanu Swami Maharaj's research to have a Vaikuntha-themed lighting system in place along with the assistance of a lighting architect, an LED based lighting system was placed. Entire temple is lit up in different colours in the evening.
- There is a chip, using which colours can be changed according to the dress of the deities.

Resources

- The whole project cost amounted to Rs. 10 Crore.
- A Concession Committee having experts from the fields of Law, Finance, Architecture, etc. played a key role in adhering to the budget. The lighting engineer was the brother of a fellow devotee.

Challenges

- The land on which the temple is built is of clay soil and hence, a normal foundation is not sufficient. It requires a raft foundation.
- The water table in the area is salty and the temple still has to depend on outside sources for its water supply. A plan is in place to adopt rain-water harvesting system.
- The area being coastal is prone to frequent cyclones and floods. Usually, once in 5 years, the temple gets flooded and the devotees are stranded. During this time, devotees move into the main city area to distribute books, prasadam and do sankirtan.

Resources

Positives

- Initially, many said that the temple being located far from the city, there will not be many visitors. With emerging software parks and research centres in the locality, the temple is thronged with people from all walks of life who engage in kirtan, book distribution, japa and preaching.
- H.H Jayapataka Swami Maharaj (the GBC for Chennai) has penned the name 'Chaitanya Nitai Desh' for Chennai.