

Press Release

Twenty-five years struggle of ISKCON-Bangalore devotees successful with the Supreme Court verdict

16 May 2025, Bangalore/Delhi:

- Twenty-five years struggle of ISKCON-Bangalore devotees to establish Srila Prabhupada as the Acharya of ISKCON, post his Maha Samadhi, successful with the Supreme Court verdict.
- Supreme Court verdict paves the way for ISKCON-Bangalore to affirm it's stand: Srila Prabhupada is the sole Acharya of ISKCON.
- ISKCON Hare Krishna Hill temple belongs to ISKCON-Bangalore and not ISKCON-Mumbai: Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court decreed that the famous ISKCON Hare Krishna Hill temple in Bangalore belongs to ISKCON-Bangalore society, and not ISKCON-Mumbai society. ISKCON-Mumbai society has been injunctioned not to interfere with the affairs of ISKCON-Bangalore society.

Synopsis:

The long-standing dispute between ISKCON-Bangalore and ISKCON-Mumbai began after Srila Prabhupada attained Maha Samadhi in 1977, when some ISKCON leaders claimed to be his successors, contrary to his directive establishing a Ritvik initiation system. ISKCON-Bangalore, led by Madhu Pandit Dasa, upheld Srila Prabhupada as the sole Acharya and resisted pressure to conform to the self-appointed guru system. In 2000, ISKCON-Mumbai attempted to take control of the Bangalore temple, despite the land being allotted to ISKCON-Bangalore in 1988. This sparked a 25-year legal battle, now concluded by the Supreme Court in favour of ISKCON-Bangalore.

Sri Madhu Pandit Dasa, President, ISKCON Bangalore, Founder and Chairman of The Akshaya Patra Foundation, Chairman and Mentor Global Hare Krishna Movement said: *This internal ISKCON battle was against self-proclaimed gurus who claimed to be successors to Srila Prabhupada, the founder Acharya of ISKCON, without being authorised by Srila Prabhupada before his Maha Samadhi. Rather he set up a Ritvik system whereby all devotees in ISKCON at all times will be direct disciples of Srila Prabhupada, the Founder Acharya. However, it snowballed into a court property battle by ISKCON Mumbai which is managed by self-proclaimed gurus when they tried in 2000 to expel the devotees of ISKCON Bangalore from ISKCON because of refusing to accept the guruship of self-proclaimed gurus of ISKCON by claiming that ISKCON Mumbai society controls the properties of ISKCON Bangalore society.*

**Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare**

"Today the 25-year-old court battle has been concluded by Supreme Court by its verdict that BDA had allotted temple land of ISKCON Bangalore society in 1988 - an independent ISKCON society registered in Bangalore - and the property and funds to build the temple were raised in Bangalore. In essence, ISKCON Mumbai has been enjoined from interfering with management of ISKCON Bangalore. They can no longer expel from ISKCON thousands of devotees who want to accept only Srila Prabhupada as the sole Acharya of ISKCON."

Background to this dispute between ISKCON-Bangalore society and ISKCON-Mumbai society.

In 1977, just before Srila Prabhupada (Founder-Acharya of ISKCON), attained Maha Samadhi, he had set up for future a system of initiation (Diksha) through his representatives called Ritviks. According to this system, all future devotees initiated will become direct disciples of Srila Prabhupada, and he shall remain the Acharya of ISKCON.

But soon after his Maha Samadhi, his ambitious disciples in positions of leadership (mostly Westerners) disobeyed Srila Prabhupada's written directions, and claimed themselves to be the successor Acharyas of ISKCON, and started initiating (giving Diksha). These self-proclaimed Acharyas accepted high ornamental seats, received honorific titles, had songs composed to sing about them, led lavish lifestyles – all contrary to the simple life Srila Prabhupada had led and taught.

When ISKCON devotees worldwide opposed this self-proclaimed and self-appointed Acharya system, they were harassed, tormented, physically abused, expelled from ISKCON temples, and in one extreme situation murdered (Sulochana Das, 1984).

In 1999, when devotees of ISKCON-Bangalore led by Sri Madhu Pandit Dasa, refused to follow this self-proclaimed and self-appointed Acharya system, we too met with such opposition and harassment from ISKCON International leadership through ISKCON-Mumbai society. ISKCON-Mumbai tried to forcibly take over the Hare Krishna Hill temple in Bangalore. At that time, the devotees of ISKCON-Bangalore asserted their right as the land in Rajajinagar was allotted to ISKCON-Bangalore society by Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) in 1988. This led to a court battle that has taken 25 years of struggle to establish the truth of Srila Prabhupada's order in his ISKCON institution. Today's Supreme Court order settles the matter in favour of ISKCON-Bangalore. With this verdict, thousands of devotees worldwide can peacefully accept Srila Prabhupada as the Acharya in ISKCON and practice their faith, without fear of persecution.

In the last 25 years, the devotees of ISKCON-Bangalore group have expanded to 25 temples in India, 8 temples abroad, with over 1000 full-time missionaries (monks) and over 10,000 congregation devotees (practicing from their homes). Akshaya Patra Foundation that serves 23 lakh children every day in 17 states in the country also began from ISKCON-Bangalore temple.



Chanchalpathi Dasa
Sr Vice President, ISKCON Bangalore
President, Vrindavan Chandrodaya Mandir
Vice Chairman and Co-mentor, Global Hare Krishna Movement
Co-founder and Vice Chairman, The Akshaya Patra Foundation

RSVP:

Krithika Rao: 9901953399

Vimala Krishna Dasa: 9902971439