



ISKCON Communications

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness
Founder-*Acharya* His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

MEDIA RELEASE

Senate Candidate Van Hollen to Visit ISKCON Temple for Janmastami Holiday *--Lord Krishna's Birth Celebration Attracts Thousands to Potomac Maryland Event*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Potomac, MD—Maryland Congressman Chis Van Hollen will be visiting the Potomac based temple of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) on Saturday evening, September 5, to share remarks during the celebration of Janmastami, the birth or “Appearance Day” of Lord Krishna.

More than five thousand people are expected to attend the celebration at the Hare Krishna Temple, located at 10310 Oaklyn Drive, Potomac.

Other confirmed dignitaries include Maryland House of Delegates Members Kumar Barve and Aruna Miller.

“We are honored to host Congressman Van Hollen and other dignitaries,” said Anuttama Dasa, ISKCON spokesperson. “Maryland is known for its diversity and inclusiveness. We are happy to see these elected officials are demonstrating their support and appreciation for the contributions of all the minority religious communities in Maryland.”

Highlights of the Janmastami event will include live drama and dance performances; *kirtan* music (sacred chants); *darshan* of the Deities (sacred temple images); *abhiseka* (traditional Deity bathing ceremony); face painting and *мени*; moon bouncer for kids; and a free midnight vegetarian feast beginning at 9 PM.

Best known as the speaker of the Sanskrit text “Bhagavad-gita,” Krishna is revered by all Hindu denominations and students of yoga. He is of special importance to the Vaishnavas, who consider Krishna to be the “Supreme Personality of Godhead” or God.

“The sacred Sanskrit writings from India explain that God is not an old bearded man, but instead is the most beautiful, eternally youthful person and intimate friend of all,” explains Dasa. “Krishna comes into this world to teach us how to be happy by reestablishing our connection with Him. His advent is a very joyous occasion.”

Janmastami is free, and parking buses will shuttle participants to the Oaklyn Drive location. For more information see iskcondc.org.

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Backgrounder

The festival of Krishna Janmastami—the birth anniversary of Lord Krishna—has been celebrated since ancient times, and is one of the most important and popular of holidays across India. Vaishnavism, the worship of Lord Krishna, is a principle denomination within the broader Vedic, or Hindu, traditions. Vaishnavas are monotheists and believe Lord Krishna to be the same God worshiped by Christians, Jews and Muslims.

The Sanskrit scriptures, the Vedas, teach that Lord Krishna descends to Earth to reestablish religious principles and to save human society from forgetfulness of God. Janmastami celebrates the day that Krishna appeared on Earth, over 5,000 years ago. For devotees of Krishna, it is a joyous occasion, replete with the singing of devotional songs, worship services, an all day fast, and partaking in a sanctified vegetarian feast after midnight.

The Hare Krishna movement, formally known as the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), was founded in 1966 by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, who brought the ancient Vaishnava tradition to the West.

In 2016, ISKCON will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary. Since its founding, ISKCON has grown into a global confederation of six hundred temples on six continents. During Janmastami ISKCON expects to host more than seven million worshippers worldwide.

While some members live ashram (monasteries) similar to monks and nuns most Hare Krishna devotees live and work in the general community, observing daily spiritual practices at home and attending temple on a regular basis.

The publishing arm of ISKCON, the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, has published more than 500 million books and magazines in several dozen languages. It is said to be the largest publisher of Vedic literature in the world.

ISKCON also has affiliated vegetarian food relief programs, including Hare Krishna Food for Life, operating in dozens of countries. In India alone, Food for Life feeds 1.2 million school children daily in partnership with the Indian government.

For more information see iskcon.org and news.iskcon.org