



# Shree Pretoria Hindu Seva Samaj

Established in 1932

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*"Satyameva Jayate" - Truth Alone Prevails*

## MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE SHREE PRETORIA HINDU SEVA SAMAJ HELD IN THE SAMAJ BOARDROOM:

**DATE: Tuesday 25 April 2023**

**TIME: 6:30 PM**

### 1. OPENING PRAYER AND WELCOME

The meeting commenced at 6:35pm with a prayer and a warm welcome by the President to all attendees.

### 2. QUORUM

The meeting was declared duly constituted by the President as the requisite quorum as prescribed by clause 17 of the Samaj Constitution had been met.

### 3. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Rameshbhai Chhagan, Hiteshbhai Nandani, Nayantaben Naran, Vijaybhai Naran, Ketanbhai Parmar, Jasminben Govind, Manishaben Lakha, Harshadbhai Pema, Mansiben Nandani, Khushiben Nandani and Vinaybhai Chagan. Rakeshbhai Kara attended in his capacity as office assistant.

*Apologies/Absent:* Upendrabhai Parmar and Jateenbhai Naran. Rakeshbhai Kara (Office Administrator) was also absent.

### 4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rameshbhai announced that Vinaybhai will not be attending the AGM as he will be overseas in the month of May. A second announcement made was the probationary appointment of Mansiben Nandani as the Finance Administrator.

### 5. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO MINUTES

None

### 6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES

The minutes and agenda were approved on the motions of Vijaybhai and Vinaybhai.

<b>7.</b>	<b>CORRESPONDENCE</b>
<b>7.1</b>	<b><i>INCOMING:</i></b>
7.1.1	Received request from Urviben Metha on behalf of the Jain community of Gauteng to hire Samaj facilities (kitchen, utensils and dining hall) at discounted rates. Despite the fees being substantially reduced, the group decided to use another venue.
7.1.2	Received request from Jagdishbhai Makan, representing the Sunday Mandir Bhajan Mandal, to be granted space in the Samaj foyer free of cost during Hanuman Chalisa celebrations so that he could sell Shanti Bhajan books.
7.1.3	Received various applications for the vacant Finance Administrator position. After interviews held, it was decided to appoint Mansiben Nandani, who has a postgraduate degree in commerce on a probationary basis until 31 May 2023.
7.1.4	Received an invitation from the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (SA) to a meeting and discourse by HH Swami Vigyananand Ji Maharaj (Joint General Secretary of Vishwa Hindu Parishad) of India to be held in April. Unfortunately, no official was able to attend.
7.1.5	Received a copy of the letter sent by the auditors to Ravibhai Paul requesting that he submits all allegations of “irregularities” to them by 3 April. To date, no submission has been made by him.
7.1.6	Received a request by the newly formed Shiva Yoga Society in Pretoria East for information on how to legally structure themselves. Besides advise, several documents were forwarded to them.
7.1.7	Received Tamil New Year greetings from the Tamil Federation Gauteng.
7.1.8	Received message of congratulations from the Sunday Mandir Bhajan Mandal on a well-organised Hanuman Chalisa event.
7.1.9	Received and responded to a wide-ranging request from Sanjaybhai Govind, including a copy of the Constitution, AFS for 2022 & 2023, names of trustees and officials, eligibility of current officials to stand again, etc.
7.1.10	Received letter of congratulations from Jaynaben Patel on a well-run Hanuman Chalisa function with a request that the Navyug Mandal youth be rewarded with a special treat.
7.1.11	The President received a summons to appear before the CCMA due to complaint laid by Ravi Paul. The charge listed was that he was not provided reasons for his dismissal. The President expressed his disbelief as he had provided Ravi Paul with a full page of reasons in his letter of dismissal.
<b>7.2</b>	<b><i>OUTGOING:</i></b>
7.2.1	Advised Jagdishbhai that stalls will be made available at the entrance of the auditorium during Hanuman Chalisa Celebrations which he could hire. Jagdishbhai insisted that they not be charged any amount as the Sunday Mandir Bhajan Mandal was “part of the Samaj”. After discussion, Exco decided to allow the SMBM to use the foyer free of charge.
7.2.2	Rameshbhai sent a mail to Tayfin Auditors (Samaj’s external auditors) informing them that the finance administrator hired on 1 January 2023 (Ravibhai Paul) was alleging historical “irregularities” but was unable/unwilling to provide this evidence to the trustees or executive committee, despite frequent requests. This had led to tension with the finance team. Tayfin was asked to contact Ravibhai and investigate and report back to the Trustees and Exco on the validity of the claims he has made.
7.2.3	Circulated minutes of Exco Meeting held on 28 March to the community.
7.2.3	Circulated April edition of the New India Samachar.
7.2.4	Letter sent to Council to request adequate maintenance of Rebecca Street graveyard and crematorium.

7.2.5	Circulated first notice of AGM meeting to community on Monday 19 April 2023.	
7.2.6	Sent out mail to HCOI inviting them to attend International Yoga Day hosted by the Samaj and asking for yoga t-shirt sponsorship.	
<b>8</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE</b>
8.1	<b><i>Migrate Marabastad Tenants to Debit Order system.</i></b> Mansiben to report on progress made in migrating tenants to debit order system.	Mansiben, Vinaybhai, Harshadbhai.
8.2	<b>Shivling Mandir</b> Vijaybhai reported that work on repairs to the Shivling mandir outside the main mandir will commence on Tuesday 2 May 2023.	Vijaybhai
8.3	<b>Repairs to Samaj Marabastad Centre</b> Vinaybhai, Harshadbhai & Vijaybhai reported they had appointed a company to commence with the repairs to the Samaj Marabastad Centre. Work will commence in May 2023. Rameshbhai requested that a proper sign be placed at the premises indicating the name of the centre as "Samaj Marabastad Centre".	Vijaybhai to report on progress.
8.4	<b><i>Installation of Solar Power for Office</i></b> Harshadbhai, Vijaybhai and Vinaybhai reviewed all the quotes for the installation of solar power for the office and recommended that Imraan's quote be accepted. This was agreed to. The generator will only be used for events in the auditorium and mandir (if needed).	Harshadbhai
8.5	<b>FUND RAISING GALA DINNER</b> Vijaybhai reported that he had approached 3 restaurants (2 in Jhb and one in Pretoria) for quotes and was still awaiting them. Members decided that the fund-raising function should be held in an Indian Restaurant in Pretoria.	Vijaybhai
8.6	<b>Communication with Balmandir Parents</b> Rakeshbhai and Nayantaben to report on the system created to ensure effective communication with parents of Balmandir classes. Nayantaben to still report.	Nyantaben
8.7	<b>Hindi Classes</b> It was agreed that Ketanbhai & team will provide an implementation plan at April meeting to EXCO for implementation of Hindi classes. This was not done.	Ketanbhai
8.8	<b>Filling of Finance Administers Position</b> The Finance team to report back on their efforts to fill the vacant finance administrator's position. This matter was dealt with.	

8.9	<b>90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Video</b> Rakeshbhai to report on progress in creating a highlights version of approx. five minutes of the 90 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration as well as the loading of an edited version of the full video in three parts (1, 2 and 3) on various media platforms. Rakeshbhai still busy with it.	Rakeshbhai
8.10	<b>Marketing of Samaj Facilities</b> Rakeshbhai to report on progress on changing the voice-over on the short marketing video as well as his marketing plan. Rakeshbhai not present to report on progress.	Rakeshbhai
8.11	<b>Insulation of dining hall</b> Jasminben to present a quote to insulate / slightly renovate the dining hall.	Jasminben
8.12	<b>Swap of Stands</b> Rameshbhai expressed concern with the inordinate delay in finalising the transfer of stands. He requested that Vinaybhai contact Petro Potgieter to get the name of the Council official who is attending to the matter and to request her/him directly to kindly expedite matters. Vinaybhai reported that the Council does not wish to give him the name and the instability in Council is a further excuse for non-action. This matter is on-going for over 4 years with no resolution in sight.	Vinaybhai

## 09 OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

Rakeshbhai Kara reported as follows:

### ***Activities / Achievements in March***

#### ➤ ***Administration Tasks***

#### ➤ **Samajchar:**

- Assisted in photocopying and printing for Balmandir.
- Created Balmandir Newsletters.
- Uploaded Minutes of the meeting on the website and sent out.
- Created Senior Citizens meeting poster.
- Editing Mandir's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Video.
- Completing Dec Edition Samajchar 2022.
- Fixed internet issues.
- Uploading files on the Server

- **Finance:**
  - Receipts have been captured.
  - Petty cash balances.
  - Cash deposit done.
  
- **Website Uploads / Social Media:**
  - Various Community Notices sent out on WhatsApp.
  - Circulated Balmandir Newsletters on Balmandir WhatsApp.
  - Uploaded Minutes of meeting for 28 March 2023 on the Samaj website.
  - Circulated to the community minutes of executive committee meeting held on 28 March 2023.
  - Uploaded Adverts on Facebook, Instagram & Tik Tok.
  - Circulated New India Samachar on WhatsApp.
  - Circulated AGM 1<sup>st</sup> Notice.
  
- **Priest Booking:**
  - Sent out payment request & confirmation letters for Priest booking.
  - Priest Daxina for the Month of April is R13,160.00
  
- **Complaints / Compliments Received:**
  - Received two compliments on Hanuman Chalisa function.

<b>A. Upcoming Activities for Next Month</b>
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- Marketing of Samaj Auditorium.
- Publish December edition Samajchar 2022
- Look for content for April Samajchar 2023

## 10 FINANCIAL REPORT

Harshadbhai reported that he was not presenting a financial report as the audited financial statements would be ready for circulation within the next two weeks.

## 11 EDUCATION REPORT

Nayantaben reported that the teachers were still waiting for the Department to provide the Balmandir with a list of requirements to introduce robotics to pre-schoolers. Robotics will be introduced as soon as this is received.

## 12. RELIGION & CULTURE REPORT

Ketanbhai & Nayantaben reported that thus far the following functions were observed and reported on this year: 26 January: India Republic Day, flag hoisting ceremony; 18 February: Shivaratri; 6 March: Holi.

### **ACTIVITIES IN MARCH / APRIL**

On 30 March, Ram Navmi was observed with an aarti at 12pm in the mandir and a bhajan session by the Sunday Mandir Bhajan Mandal session from 8pm to 9pm in mandir. Some TUKS HSS Students also attended.

Hanuman Jayanti was observed on 6 April. The Laudium Bhajan Mandal recited seven (7) Hanuman Chalisas' in the mandir.

On 16 April, the Religion & Culture Committee in partnership with the Pretoria Navyug Mandal, hosted its Annual Hanuman Chalisa Celebrations in the Samaj auditorium. This event attracted a huge crowd of devotees, estimated to be about 1,000 people. The Samaj received many complimentary remarks and feedback from the community for a well-organized event.

## 13. FACILITIES & FUNERAL REPORT

The activity of this Committee was covered under Matters Arising.

## 14. SOCIAL SERVICES REPORT

- Manishaben Lakha & Jasminben Magan Govind reported that the Samaj's Senior Citizens Club did not meet in April due to the many religious functions that took place. The next meeting of the Senior Citizen's Club is scheduled to be held on 20 May at 9am. An audiologist will conduct hearing tests. This will be followed with discussion on the next outings/events the club could arrange for the rest of the year.

<b>A. Upcoming Activities for Next Month</b>
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- 20 May 2023: Audiology screening 20 May 2023, 09h00-12h00
- 24 June 2023: Mother's Day & Father's Day – Interactive session
- July 2023- Visit to Goshala (Date to be determined)
- August 2023 Visit to Hare Krishna Temple & Gurudwara (Date to be determined)
- September- Eye tests- (Rookiebhen Soma to arrange)

## **15. NAVYUG REPORT**

Khushiben Nandani & Jatinbhai Naran reported that they were extremely pleased with the effort and dedication shown by their young members in jointly organising the Hanuman Chalisa event that took place on 16 April. In addition to sacrificing many hours in practicing for delivering the last 6 recitals, members undertook a fund-raising drive and raised R9 944.50 as donations towards the event. They also assisted extensively in providing meals to the community.

Khushiben extended special thanks to all her team members, especially her co-chair Jatinbhai who stood in for her when she was writing exams, to Guruji for providing guidance with instruments and singing, to the Laudium Mandir Bhajan Group for allowing them to sing the last few Hanuman Chalisas and finally to ex-Navyug members for sharing their experiences when they ran the event and their advice.

## **16 GENERAL / NEW MATTERS**

### *16.1 Bombing of Mandir – January 1993*

Rameshbhai reminded members that in January 1993, 30 years ago, the Samaj mandir was bombed by unknown persons possibly as a reaction to the Ajothya-related riots that took place in Gujarat two months prior to the bombing. He expressed his fear that the coming generation will remain ignorant of the event if the executive did not take measures to remind the community of what had happened. After some discussion, the majority of members agreed that a small write-up and photo be placed next to the plaque on the outside wall of the mandir.

### *16.2 Assistance to Laudium Retirement Home*

Rameshbhai informed members that the Laudium Retirement Home has booked a stall at the SAAF Museum for the Airshow scheduled to take place on 6 May 2023. He requested Samaj members, especially the Navyug members to volunteer to assist at the Airshow stall.

### *16.3 TDF Venue Change*

Rameshbhai informed members that he had met with Sudhirbhai of the High Commission of India (HCOI) and Priyamben Singh who suggested that this year's Tshwane Diwali Festival take place in Groenkloof at the CBC grounds adjacent to Little Company of Mary hospital a few weeks after Diwali. They agreed to invite all sections of the Pretoria community, under the auspices of the HCOI, to a meeting to encourage their participation in a multi-cultural event. The Samaj will coordinate the participation of local groups in the event. In addition, TDF will host a fireworks display event at the Laudium Stadium the Saturday before Diwali.

## **17 NEXT MEETING**

Next meeting dates: 23 May; 20 June; 25 July; 22 Aug; 26 Sept; 24 October; 21 Nov.

## **18 CLOSING PRAYER**

The meeting closed with a prayer at 9:30pm

**RAMESH CHHAGAN  
PRESIDENT**