

GBC Inquiry regarding Child Abuse at Sridham Mayapur and Vrindavan

Whereas, it has been brought to the attention of the GBC Body that there were lapses in the implementation of sufficient child protection measures in the ISKCON Mayapur and Vrindavan Schools;

Whereas, it is imperative to first identify, by way of an inquiry, the causes of such a lapse in the current governance and system setup for child protection and, subsequently, to put in place measures to avert such lapses from being repeated in the ISKCON Mayapur and Vrindavan schools;

Whereas, such an inquiry shall not preclude the formation or functioning of other committees with respect to improving child protection within ISKCON;

Resolved: That the GBC conducts an inquiry to identify the lapses in the implementation of child protection measures at ISKCON Mayapur and Vrindavan schools, details of which are set out below as follows:

1. Scope of enquiry:

- 1.1. This inquiry will be limited to ISKCON schools with specific focus on examining their current organisational structures and legal frameworks required for child protection and to assess the current risks in respect of the same.
- 1.2. Identify the root causes of governance shortcomings in the ISKCON Mayapur gurukula by interviewing relevant members of the CPO, GBC Zonal Secretaries, Mayapur temple leadership, the current school leadership, and any other parties that may have been connected, directly or indirectly, to the ISKCON Mayapur Gurukula, review the documentation that governs the relationship between these entities and similarly review the governance arrangements and documentation for ISKCON Vrindavan gurukula.
- 1.3. Ascertain whether the governance shortcomings identified above are likely to be replicated across other ISKCON school settings; this will likely include wider interviews and documentation review.
- 1.4. Review the structural and legal relationship between the different layers of ISKCON with governance of schools and the CPO.
- 1.5. Ancillary to the above review will be the Inquiry's access to and study of the CPO Guidelines as they relate to scope as outlined in items 1.1-1.4

2. Desired Outcomes:

- 2.1. Phase one shall entail collating the findings of the Inquiry and making specific written recommendations to the GBC Body in order to remedy the identified shortcomings and areas of improvement for implementation by relevant bodies; and
- 2.2. Phase two will be supporting implementation of the adopted recommendations of the Inquiry.
 - 2.2.1. Identifying qualified resources who could help implement the approved recommendations.

2.2.2. Commissioning mandatory annual child protection audits for every school. These audits should be carried out by professionals (with no conflict of interest) and their reports should be made public.

3. Proposed team:

- 3.1. Individuals with extensive school safeguarding and inspection experience will be appointed at the discretion of the inquiry coordinator; The team members shall be independent from ISKCON management and have no conflict of interest;
- 3.2. The Avanti Schools' legal advisors are available for consultation where necessary;
- 3.3. Other volunteers for management, communication and administration to support this process will be recruited as needed;
- 3.4. Navin Krishna Das will coordinate the inquiry;

4. Funding: Navin Krishna Das has kindly agreed to raise the funding for the following:

- 4.1. Team consultation fees
- 4.2. Legal consultation fees

5. Timeline: First phase report is to be presented to the GBC Body within 8 weeks after whatever preliminary information is requested by the team is provided to them

6. Action items: Upon approval of the GBC Body, the following actions need to be completed

- a. The GBC directs its secretary, and the CPO Director to assist in this endeavor and provide the information timely as requested by the inquiry team.
- b. By and before 30th December 2022, GBC members on the India Bureau, headed by Gopal Krishna Maharaja, procure the India Bureau's formal resolution and commitment to support the completion of this inquiry;
- c. By and before 2nd January 2023, GBC Zonal secretaries (Jayapataka Swami, Gopal Krishna Goswami, Bhakti Purushottama Swami, Hridaya Caitanya das and Anuttama das) and Indian Bureau representatives (Devakinandan das, Basu Ghosh das and Dayaram das) with authority over Mayapur must procure the Mayapur executive board (MEB) formal resolution and commitment to support the completion of this inquiry.
 - i. MEB resolution should include assigning a dedicated co-director to arrange and assure cooperation from the Mayapur management structure for the timely completion of the inquiry;
 - ii. The co-director should procure by 15th January 2023 the preliminary information stated below so that the formal inquiry can ensue.
- d. By and before 8th January 2023, GBC Zonal secretaries and Indian Bureau representatives with authority over Vrindavan must procure the Vrindavan executive board (VEB) formal resolution and commitment to support the completion of this inquiry.
 - i. VEB resolution should include assigning the temple president to arrange and assure cooperation from the Vrindavan management structure for the timely completion of the inquiry;
 - ii. The temple president should procure by 31st January 2023 the preliminary information stated below so that the formal inquiry can ensue.

Preliminary information

- a) Provide a copy of all resolutions passed by the GBC body and local management with respect to child protection at these schools;
- b) The existing CPO guidelines that needed to be adhered to at these centers;
- c) Provide a copy of any scheme of delegation or legal or financial arrangement that connects the schools to ISKCON. This could be property leases, MOUs, management agreements, governing articles, and so on;
- d) Provide a copy of the child protection, health and safety, whistleblowing, complaints, grievance policies that the school has adopted;
- e) Provide a list of the names and contact details of the governors of the school and principal/head teacher;
- f) Provide a copy of any scheme of delegation or legal framework that sets out the relationship between the international CPO to the GBC body.
- g) Provide a copy of any scheme of delegation or legal framework that that sets out the relationship between the local CPT to the GBC body and to the international CPO.
- h) Who owns the land and buildings upon which the school operates?
- i) What is the legal entity that owns the school? Please provide the governing documents for this entity (articles of association and memorandum, trust document etc.).
- j) What is the legal entity that operates the school? (If different from the owner). Please provide the governing documents for this entity (articles of association and memorandum, trust document etc.).