



## **Hindu Temples' National Blood Donation Campaign**

### **SECOND 9/11 HINDU TEMPLES NATIONAL BLOOD DRIVE: A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE**

#### **Press Release**

#### **9/11 a Day of Remembrance**

**The goal is participation of 100 temples and 5000 units of blood on a single day**

WASHINGTON, April 24, 2012 -- Hindu-Americans across North America will mark the 11th anniversary of 9/11 by donating blood at their places of worship. This will be the second time that such an ambitious project is held at the many Hindu mandirs (temples) in North America.

This effort is being coordinated by the HMEC (Hindu Mandirs Executive Conference <[www.myhmec.org](http://www.myhmec.org)>), network of approximately 600 temples in North America, and agencies such as the American Red Cross will collect the blood. The HMEC and leaders of the Indian-American community are making an appeal to the temples to come forward and join this movement.

Hindus are a diverse community originally from India and many other countries around the world. They form the majority of 3 million Indian-Americans in the USA.

According to the U.S. National Institutes of Health, nearly 14 million units of whole blood and red cells are required every year. Some patients of Asian descent require a closer blood match than that provided by the ABO positive/negative blood typing. For this reason, it is extremely important to increase the number of available blood donors from the Asian communities. 5% of the total eligible population in the US gives blood. However, less than 1% of the Asian community donates blood.

- *Rahul M. Jindal, MD, PhD, Transplant Surgeon, Walter Reed AMC and Clinical Professor, The George Washington University, Washington, DC, is the national chairman for the event. He urged Indian-Americans and Hindus in particular to donate blood on 9/11 or around that time.*
- *Abhaya Asthana, PhD, Bell Labs Fellow at Alcatel-Lucent Technologies said that donating blood is sharing the gift of life.*
- *Mahesh Mangalick, Ph.D, Huntsville, AL, pointed out that this is a very noble project organized by the HMEC, an initiative of Vishwa Hindu Parishad, America.*
- *Luz Rodriguez, New York, urged students to participate in large numbers on this day of remembrance.*
- *George Subraj, President, Zara Realty ([www.zararealty.com](http://www.zararealty.com)), New York, said that irrespective of religious or national affiliations, Americans should donate blood, in particular on 9/11.*
- *Sanjay Puri, Chairman of the US-India Political Action Committee ([www.USINPAC.com](http://www.USINPAC.com)) lauded the focused appeal and encouraged the Indian-American community to participate in this effort.*
- *Sant Gupta of Virginia urged all Hindus to join in making the 2012 National Blood campaign a historic event!*
- *Dhaval Joshipura, Chicago, urged second generation Hindu Americans to take leadership roles in this effort.*
- *Mihir Meghani, MD, co-founder of Hindu American Foundation (<http://www.hafsite.org/>) said that he was pleased with the results of blood donation drive of 2011 and urged all Hindus to make 2012 a great success.*
- *Sree N. Sreenath, Ph.D., President of Sewa International USA (<http://www.sewausa.org/>) urged Seva Chapters in the USA to join this effort.*
- *Dinesh G. Patel, MD, Chief of Arthroscopic Surgery, Harvard, applauded the efforts of HMEC and urged Indian-Americans to improve on last year's blood donation numbers.*
- *Mr. Patanjali Rambrich, Hindu-Guyanese community activist, Queens, New York, urged all Hindu mandirs to participate in large numbers by donating blood and bone marrow.*

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### **Highlights of the first Hindu Temples National Blood Drive (2011)**

- 2500 units of blood and bone marrow have been donated. Each unit of blood saves 3 lives.
- 79 Hindu mandirs across North America participated.
- Indian-American Student Unions of various colleges and universities organized blood drives in college campuses.
- SEVA International USA, organized blood donation drives in various locations around the US.
- Many Indian-owned businesses also participated.
- We also participated in bone marrow drives to save the life of Amit Gupta  
<http://amitguptaneedsyou.com/>
- Amit received a successful bone marrow transplant. Finding a suitable bone marrow donor for South Asians is an ongoing challenge.
- Link to watch the 4 mins video about the 2011 blood donation drive:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSP7tSOW9p0&feature=youtu.be>



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### ***A Project for Hindu Seva Divas***

**About HMEC:** [www.myhmec.org](http://www.myhmec.org)

Hindu *Mandir* Executives' Conference (HMEC) is an annual initiative seeking development of network between the executives of all Hindu *mandirs* of America. HMEC is dedicated to the sustenance of Hindu Dharma (religion) in North America. A key component is to explore ways of anchoring Hindu Dharma's *sanaatan* values in the hearts of coming generations and roles which *mandirs* can play to make that happen. HMEC is also a venue to explore *mandirs'* roles to meet the ever changing needs of the North American Hindu.

"Hindu" and "Mandir" in HMEC are used in the broader context and include all religious places and spiritual organizations of the philosophies that have originated in India. Thus HMEC embraces Sanatana Dharma Mandirs, Jain Derasars, Buddhists Mandirs, Sikh Gurudwaras and Spiritual Organizations.