Encyclopaedia of Hinduism unveiled

A 25-YEAR quest by nearly 1,000 scholars to document and present one of the world’s oldest living traditions came to fruition when the international edition of the Encyclopaedia of Hinduism was unveiled in Columbia on Monday (August 26).

Hundreds of scholars, dignitaries, students, Hindu leaders and the public converged on the University of Southern California campus to witness the release of much of the comprehensive and definitive guide.

The two-day event coinciding with the release featured top Indian scholars who discussed the significance of the Encyclopaedia and the richness and diversity of Indian culture that binds more than one billion people worldwide.

Those present on the occasion included South Carolina governor Nikki Haley, Consul General to India Ajit Kumar, social reformer Anna Hazare, Congressman for South Carolina Joe Wilson and Encyclopaedia managing editor Dr Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati.

Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati, president of Parmarth Niketan Ashram, presented the first official set to the Governor Nikki Haley for the state library.

‘The wisdom, truths, teachings and insights of Indian and Hindu culture are not limited to or applicable to only Hindus or Indians. Rather they belong to the world and can deeply benefit all over the world were grateful to the University of South Carolina for the launch of the monumental work.

A project of India Heritage Research Foundation, founded, guided and led by one of India’s most revered spiritual leaders, Pujya Swami Chidanand Saraswati, the comprehensive Encyclopaedia has 11 volumes.

It covers Hindu spiritual beliefs, practices and philosophy and includes about 7,000 articles on Hinduism and its practices, besides touching upon Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism.

The work also deals with Indian history, languages, art, music, dance, architecture, medicine, and women’s issues. It contains more than 7,000 articles and 1,000 illustrations and photographs.

The Encyclopaedia’s volumes run from 600 to more than 700 pages. Some 3,000 copies are being printed in the first edition.

* http://www.gg2.net/videos.php

Historic launch: (Left to right) Consul General Ajit Kumar, Dr Sudhir Parikh, managing editor Sadhvi Bhagawati Saraswati, University president Dr Harris Pastides, founder His Holiness (HH) Pujya Chidanand Saraswatiji, social reformer Anna Hazare, Dean Dr Meera Narsimhan and Congressman Joe Wilson

Swamiji said.

Haley said she was honoured to receive the beautiful 11 volumes on behalf of the state.

‘It is so beautiful, and such a great gift, this Encyclopaedia of Hinduism. I am so honoured. I am so glad to be here tonight at this historic event,’ she said.

Dr Harris Pastides, president of University of South Carolina, said he was humbled to see the Encyclopaedia being launched on his campus.

‘It is a deep honour to be participating in the American release of the Encyclopaedia of Hinduism. This is a remarkable work of scholarship and research. I hope that many in academia and in everyday life will turn to it as a resource to better understand the characters, the tenets, and the impact that Hinduism has had, and is having in the world,’ he said.

Consul General Kumar added that India and Hindus all over the world were grateful to the University of South Carolina for the launch of the monumental work.

WIN TICKETS TO THE CAKE & BAKE SHOW

BAKING is the new buzzword in Britain this summer - and as we get busy kneading and piping, the UK’s favourite baking exhibition is set to return to London this month.

The Cake & Bake Show takes place from September 13-15 at Earl’s Court and will feature, among others, the Fabulous Baker Brothers; Great British Bake Off champion John Whaite; pastries to the stars Eric Lanlard (pictured); television chef Rosemary Shrager; renowned baker Richard Bertinet; chef and TV presenter Simon Rimmer; chocolatier Paul A Young; and Britain’s Best Bakery judges Peter Sidwell and Mich Turner.

GG2 readers are in for a treat as we have 12 pairs of tickets to give away.

For a chance to win, answer the following question correctly:

Who are the “Fabulous Baker Brothers”?

Send your answers by email to competitions@gg2.net or post them to Garavi Gujarat, 1, Silex Street, SE1 0DW. Please mention your name and contact phone number.

The last date for receiving entries is September 11.

Visit www.thecakeandbakeshow.co.uk for information. Tickets: £14.50 adults, £12 concessions (OAPs and students), £7 children aged 5-12, free for under 5s; £20 two-day ticket.