

PHOTO TOUR REPORT

Hong Kong

April 8-13, 2008



Srila Narayana Gosvami Maharaja arrived in Hong Kong on April 7th and stayed until April 16th, after which he flew to Vancouver, Canada. The six-day Hong Kong Harikatha festival began on April 8th on Lantau Island, in a village called Pui'O, which is a one-hour ferry-ride from the city.

A house was rented for Srila Maharaja and his traveling party. The rest of the one-hundred-fifty devotees, from mainland China and other countries like Philippines and Malaysia, stayed in guest houses and camped on the beach. The festival site was at a devotee's property in Pui'O, where the festival organizers put up a large tent and transformed it into a beautiful temple.



Arriving at the festival site.



Offering flowers to the Deities.



Greeting devotees

On the first evening, Srila Narayana Maharaja introduced the audience to the opening chapter of Srimad-Bhagavatam, wherein eighty-eight thousand sages headed by Saunaka Rsi inquired from Srila Suta Gosvami about how one's soul can be happy. Srila Maharaja then discussed the importance of pure bhakti, unalloyed devotion to Sri Krsna performed exclusively to please Him.

He spoke in English, and every few minutes his words were translated into Chinese by his disciple Jamuna devi dasi. He told the devotees and guests, "Srila Suta Gosvami says that if anyone wants to be happy, he should follow the principles of bhakti-yoga. Only bhakti-yoga, service to the transcendental Supreme Lord Krsna, can give happiness – nothing else can do so. Bhakti-yoga is very easy. Simply chant:

‘Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare.’

“If you are working, if you are walking, or if you are cooking – at any time you can chant. In daytime, night-time, or morning-time, even if you are sick or not pure, you can chant these holy names of Krsna.

“Srila Suta Gosvami is telling us that we should hear the glorification of the Supreme Lord Krsna, we should meditate on Him, and we should glorify His good qualities and activities. This is bhakti-yoga. In this way we can be happy – not by any other means.”

Throughout the week, Srila Maharaja, and under his direction his representative speakers, related many histories from the Bhagavatam. They spoke about the teachings of Sri Kapiladeva to His mother Devahuti, and about the history and character of Jada Bharata, King Citraketu, Ajamila, and Prahlada Maharaja. They also spoke about Sri Krsna’s sweet pastimes in Vrndavana. Srila Narayana Maharaja then briefly discussed the Lord’s pastimes in Mathura and Dvaraka, up to His concluding pastime of returning to His transcendental abode in Goloka Vrndavana.

The last evening of the festival was April 13th, and the divine appearance day of Lord Sri Krsna in the form of Lord Ramacandra was April 14th. Because most of the Chinese devotees would be leaving on the morning of the 14th, Srila Narayana Maharaja was kind enough to give a beautiful discourse on the heart-rending pastimes of Lord Sri Rama on that last evening.



On the pathway from the festival-site to Srila Maharaja’s house – a buffalo-conservation reserve.



Initiation was held on April 10th at Srila Maharaja's residence, where over fifty devotees from mainland China, Hong Kong, and the Philippines received their second birth.



Receiving plates of fruits and flowers, representing an offering of the devotees' hearts



Devotees from Hong Kong receiving his new name – Johnson became Jayadeva dasa, Varva became Visakha dasi, Michael became Madhusudana dasa, and so on.

Srila Maharaja mercifully gave darsana every morning, at which time groups of devotees from different countries and cities would come to meet him and ask him questions. He said to a new devotee, “If you want to be happy in this world and the transcendental world, you must chant ‘Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare.’ Otherwise in future births, you may become a donkey, a dog, a cat, a pig, or any other animal. Be happy forever. Do not fear – there is no need to fear.

“You see that there are hundreds of thousands of devotees in Canada, America, Europe, and here also. So many beautiful young girls and boys are taking initiation. So don’t fear; your life will be happy.

“Wearing the three strands of tulasi neck-beads is very powerful. You will have no problems with blood pressure if you wear this. By wearing tulasi, whatever you will tell will be true, and you will always be healthy and wealthy.”



CLICK ON THE ABOVE PICTURE TO SEE A CLIP OF THE DARSAN

Srila Narayan Maharaja left Hong Kong on April 16th, en route for Vancouver, Canada. About fifty devotees met him at the airport to see him off, and they were all happy to receive his invitation to come to India for this year's one-month-long Vrndavana Kartika parikrama in October. We will send you that airport darsana soon.