



Indian Diaspora Council

Indian Diaspora Council International

Shared heritage, aspirations and interests

www.indiandiasporacouncil.org

Post Office Box 650523 New York 11365 USA

PRESS STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

July 23, 2019 (EST-USA)

IDC CONDEMNS ATTACK ON HINDU PRIEST IN NEW YORK

The Indian Diaspora Council International (**IDC**) joins with other organizations, agencies, groups, individuals and institutions locally and worldwide in expressing strong and unequivocal condemnation of the brutal targeted attack on Swami Ji Harish Chander Puri of the Shiv Shakti Peeth Temple located in Glen Oaks, Queens in New York.

According to the Police and news reports, Swami Ji Harish Chander Puri was attacked 3 blocks from the Shiv Shakti Peeth Temple on July 18, 2019 by an umbrella-wielding Sergio Gouveia, according to the Police. "They hit me [to the] sidewalk and, after, they beat me," said the swami during a Tuesday July 23 rally outside the temple. "After that was bleeding inside the mouth, nose, the ear." Puri told the Police that Gouveia, 52, punched him and bashed him with an umbrella as he ranted about the swami being in his neighborhood, authorities said. The attack left Puri with gashes to his nose, chest and limbs that were so severe, he had to be hospitalized, according to police and a criminal complaint.



The July 23, 2019 rally was organized by NYS Sen. John Liu. Participants included: US Congressman Gregory Meeks; NYS Attorney General Leticia James; NYS Senators John Liu, Leroy Comrie and Kevin Thomas; NYS Assembly Members David Weprin, Clyde Vanel, Alicia Hyndman; NYC Council Member Ed Braunstein; other elected officials and representatives. Other speakers included District leader Dr Neeta Jain; Dr. Uma Mysorekar (Hindu Temple of NA) and Aminta Kilwan Narine (Sadhana).

IDC considers this a despicable and reprehensible act, an unjustified criminal action directed at an innocent person regardless of religion, race or ethnic origin. **IDC** joins with community organizations and agencies in support of quick condemnation and community solidarity for justice. We share the pain and anguish of our brethren and sisters in the USA and globally, and we extend our support and prayers for speedy recovery of Swami Ji Harish Chander Puri.

IDC encourages many more officials, organizations and institutions nationally in the USA to express their condemnation of this criminal action against an innocent man because of his religion. We urge all efforts to prevent similar attacks in the future and support a national dialogue at local and national levels to resolve conflicts and misplaced perceptions which can lead to such tragedies. We share in the belief that such callous and uncivilized crimes perpetrated against innocent people cannot diminish the desire and courage to live peacefully with dignity and their hard won freedoms.

The USA is the largest community of NRIs and PIOs numbering over 4 million and rapidly increasing with many significant contributions in all segments of US society.

For more information contact: Ashook Ramsaran at AshookRamsaran@gmail.com Mobile (USA) [+1 917 519 5783](tel:+19175195783)

Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC), established in 1997, is an international non-profit organization with global affiliates and membership in 21 countries with the objective to embrace, engage and enhance the shared heritage, aspirations and interests of persons of Indian origin with optimum inclusivity.

IDC CONDEMNS ATTACK ON HINDU PRIEST IN NEW YORK

