

Dear Sponsors,

We are thrilled to report that great progress was made this month, and just in time for Kartika, Srimati Radharani's special month!

While the cleaning of all the sponsored areas around Radha Kunda has been going steadily, our focus this month was on renovation and gardening of the Jihva Mandir area. And the result, in spite of so many obstacles, is nothing short of amazing! See (link to [Jihva Mandir](#) page with some gardening photos)

On September 2nd, we celebrated Radhastami, the appearance of Srimati Radharani. Many Vaishnavas were inspired to give for Radharani's special day! It was with great excitement that we met with our manager at Radha Kunda to give him the good news that we had the funds in hand to begin work in earnest on the renovation/gardening we had envisioned at Jihva Mandir.

First, a truck and labor were hired to cart away the top layers of trash and cement-filled, rocky soil. Next, about two feet of clean, fertile dirt was spread over the area. A walkway was laid, damaged concrete platforms were repaired, small brick boundaries were constructed around existing plants and trees, the surrounding wall was built up and painted, and finally, a variety of sapling bushes and trees were planted.

The endeavor was not without its challenges. Thinking that we might be trying to take over their land, the local pandas vociferously complained about our efforts. One morning, they even drove away the workers! Our manager, Abhay Charan Prabhu kept reassuring them that we are only trying to do some small service for Srimati Radharani. However, since India has an allowance for people to claim ownership over land that they use, the pandas would not be appeased by our verbal promises.

Finally, Abhay Charan was able to meet with the Babaji who heads up the governing committee for Radha Kunda town. The Babaji expressed his full support for our cleaning/beautification efforts. At his suggestion, Abhay Charan signed a document stating that we are making no claims to the land at which point the dissenters were (mostly) pacified.



There was still one Baba who fumed that we were cleaning rocks and trash from the area where he claimed to sleep. (picture to the left) Eventually, he grudgingly consented to our cleaning, but insisted that we leave a spot without gardening so that he can sleep there. We did. And he doesn't sleep there. But at least, thanks to the head Babaji, the work was allowed to continue.

Right now the grass at Jihva Mandir is getting greener. And the plants (that haven't been shredded by monkeys) are thriving. We are wishing we could fast forward a few months to get a glimpse into what the garden will grow into.

We were happy this month to get a sponsor for Nityananda's sitting place at the Radha Gokulananda Mandir. Permission to clean this area was slow in coming, but right now, slow steady progress is being made in the clearing away of huge rubble piles. We are hoping to eventually garden this area too.

Meanwhile, we are changing the cleaning program system. Up until now, cleaners worked in the morning only. Unfortunately, it only took a few minutes for the areas to look like they hadn't been cleaned at all thanks to the perpetual flow of pilgrims with their plastic bags and the offerings contained therein. Our new cleaning system will involve "cleaning patrols" – cleaners who patrol from 8am to 5pm each day, picking up the trash as it is dumped. Such "patrols" will triple our hiring costs, but it'll be well worth the price if the areas actually stay clean.

Radharani willing, we are also planning to put a trash can in each area and purchase a flat-bed style rickshaw for carting away trash.

Between the renovations, gardening, trash can placement and cleaning patrols, we are hoping to affect a change in consciousness in the pilgrims who visit Radha Kunda. If an area is beautiful and clean, the hope is that people will be less likely to dirty it.

Thanks again for your generous support of this cause! Please check ([Before and After page](#)) for the latest photos. Jai Jai Sri Radhe Shyam!

Yours in the service of Sri Radha Kunda,

Campakalata devi dasi and Mayapurcandra das