July 91

BHAKTIVEDANTA GURUKULA VILLAGE
SRI DHAM MAYAPUR

MEMORANDUM

TO: ISKCON Board of Education c/o Sri Rama dasa, and HH Gour Govinda Swami

CC: ISKCON Mayapur GBC zonal secretaries, all GBC members, Gurukula parents.

RE: Recent child molestation investigation and subsequent action.

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

On 5 July the parents of a 5 year old day student in the Mayapur gurukula reported to school authorities and other community members that their son had been molested by some pre-teen-aged students. This revelation, together with that of another incident between a 7-year old day student and a 14-year-old which had come to light two days before, prompted resident GBC Tosan Krishna dasa and other parents to call for a full scale investigation into child abuse at the Mayapur gurukula.

The investigation team appointed, as per the GBC resolution #90-119, was Adi Karta dasa, recently arrived General manager of the gurukula, Dayarama dasa, co-general manager ISKCON Mayapur (both Mayapur Administration Council members) and Bhaktarupa dasa. Tosan Krishna dasa also participated on the team.

During six days of intensive work by this team nearly every student and many teachers were interviewed. The team submitted a writen report to us on 11 July which named 10 serious perpetrators among the students (with ages ranging from 10-19), two serious perpetrators from the greater devotee community, one suspected perpetrator aged 22 from the gurukula non-teaching staff, three minor perpetrators among the students (aged 10-15), and 16 additional boys who were victimized by the perpetrators to one degree or another but did not contaminate others.

58 boys and the entire teaching and administrative staff were cleared of involvement.

We, the gurukula administration took immediate action on the report expelling all of the perpetrators. In a determined effort to eliminate this problem, as well as others, a couple of the 'victim-only' and a few boys not mentioned in the report were also moved out of the school. Most of the expelled students have been sent home, although a few boys for whom we felt proper arrangements could be made will be engaged outside of the gurukula or at other temples.

Much soul-searching has also gone on simultaneously, and some

factors have been identified as contributing to the problem. Boys from low-class back-grounds were accepted in the school, and there was a general lack of qualified staffing. This resulted in both insufficent practical, absorbing engagement to help the boys control their lust as well as attention and encouragement. While some general discussions were held on the evils of illicit sex, there was a lack of a comprehensive, effective program of both general preventation and specific counselling for those who had been molested when they were younger.

Additional steps are planned to prevent further occurances. A comprehensive counselling program using devotee counsellors and professional techniques will be implemented for all affected boys. General education programs on molestation will be implemented for every student. New admissions to the school will remain closed until improved vocational and general supervision programs are up and running. Krodesvara dasa, former president of New Nandagram farm in Australia, will be joining the school in one month to work exclusively on building the vocational training program. Other staff for this program will be vigorously sought, as well as adult staff for general supervision.

There were also some communication problems between some of the junior staff and parents. Meetings were held with all the staff, the parents as well as a joint meeting. While the problem may have been dealt with in the short term it seems that further work is required. Regular P.T.A. meetings, a new thing for Mayapur, have been agreed upon to try to resolve any long term problems of communication.

In order to implement the above programs we will require assistance from outside sources, both in the form of training for the staff as well as help to improve the staffing position.

A detailed and specific report has been sent to the Board of Education along with the Mayapur GBC zonal representatives.

While we are sorry to have to be the bearer of these kind of tidings the good side of it is that these things have come to light and we have been able to do something about it. We pray to Krishna that we will be able to increase and maintain the purity of the gurukula here, and of course your blessings are required in this endeavour.

Please let us know if there is any other service that we can do for you in regard to these matters.

Your servants,

Bhaktividya Purna Swami
Principal

Náresvara dasa
co-director ISKCON Mayapur

July 11, 1991

TO THE MAYAPUR GURUKULA BOARD OF EDUCATION

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

Attached is our report on the child molestation situation at the Mayapur Gurukula. This report is not meant for public consumption, but another report based on this should be prepared by your good selves, which can be made public.

This report may also be the basis for the report required to be submitted to the Mayapur G.B.C.'s and Board of Education. As Mayapur is an International Project, directly under the G.B.C. Body, perhaps you will prepare a version to be circulated to all G.B.C. members.

Please let us know if you require any further service from us.

Your servants,

The Ad-Hoc Investigation Team.

Tosan Krsna dasa

Adikarta dasa

Bhaktarupa dasa

Dayarama dasa

Note: The Mayapur Gurukula Board of Education1 (MGBoE) has inserted the details of the actions taken.

MAYAPUR GURUKULA CHILD MOLESTATION
REPORT OF AD-HOC COMMITTEE
11 JULY, 1991

A. SERIOUS PERPETRATORS.

1) [redacted], aged 17, in-charge of laborers, teacher of mantra chanting. Was abused when younger in Mayapur Gurukula.

Repeated incidents of homosexual attack of many boys of different ages. Threatened many boys. Encouraged other older boys to engage in similar activities. Lied to investigators. Was previously warned - did not stop. Known as a bully throughout the Gurukula. Candrasekhera told many boys not to associate with him. Was responsible for handling Gurukula funds - an investigation into possible embezzlement by him is recommended.

He was kept confined for 48 hours during investigation - eventually confessed to nearly everything. Was beaten with a stick by senior Bengali devotees during interrogation - not severely. Pankajanghri Prabhu witnessed no marks on his body. Temple Administrative Council, in emergency session, voted to expel him from Mayapur, and did not recommend that he be engaged in ISKCON work elsewhere.

2) [redacted] aged 19, Abused several younger boys, threatened many boys. Lied to investigators, but confessed immediately under threat of being beaten. Was not hit.

He was kept confined for 48 hours during investigation. Temple Administrative Council, in emergency session, voted to expel him from Mayapur.

3) [redacted], aged 16. Not present in Mayapur during investigation. Several younger boys reported that he abused them. Recommended that if he returns from his house, that he be kept separate from the Gurukula, and be immediately questioned about his involvement in these activities.

MGBoE Action: Will act as recomended, but we do not expect that he will return after hearing about what is going on.

4) [redacted] aged 19 - work in-charge for many boys. Abused several younger boys. Threatened boys about talking to investigators. Did not co-operate at first, was struck with a stick, then confessed. Was confined overnight during investigation. Separated from Gurukula. Since then kept with brahmacaris.

Recommend that he not return to Gurukula. Also if he remains in Mayapur his presence may upset some of his victims, so he should be sent to another temple under strong leadership.

MGBoE action: Arranging for him to be moved to another temple, preferably with a strong program. Will inform authorities about the problem.

5) [redacted], aged 12. Repeatedly abused two small boys. Did not co-operate with investigation and was heavily slapped. First confessed to abusing the small boys, then, after more slapping, reported that he had been abused by [redacted] and [redacted]

Recommend that he be sent home. It is doubtful that he will be able to control himself in the future.

MGBoE action: Sent home to Jessore. Informed local temple regarding situation.

6) [redacted], aged 12. Repeatedly abused at a young age. Engaged in homosexual activity with many other boys his age. During investigation was seen threatening the small boys on behalf of [redacted].

Recommend he be sent home.

MGBoE action: Pending further investigation.

7) [redacted], aged 14. Repeatedly abused at a young age and was involved with many other boys. Was co-operative with the investigation.

Unlikely that he will be able to keep himself aloof from bad association and from controlling his sexual urges.

Recommend that he be removed from the community - not just sent "home" to the goshalla where his devotee parents live.

MGBoE action: Arranging with his father to move him away to live with relatives.

8) [redacted], aged 13. Repeatedly abused at a young age and abused smaller boys - including a 5 year old. Classroom teacher reports that he is of sub-normal intelligence. Co-operated with investigation.

Recommend unsuitable for the Gurukula.

MGBoE action: Same as 7 above; they are brothers.

9) [redacted], aged 10. Abused smaller boys, including a five year old. Co-operated with the investigation. Questionable whether he is suitable for the Gurukula.

MGBoE action: Sent home to Jagannath Mandir.

10) [redacted], aged 14. Was abused by an older boy. Abused a younger boy. At first he lied to investigation, was slapped, then confessed.

Recommend he be sent home, as may not be able to control himself in the current situation.

MGBoE action: Sent home.

11) Devashish, (devotee at Jagannatha temple). Fondled about 8

boys and attempted worse.

Recommend that he not be engaged in any ISKCON temple, as he will not be able to control himself whenever he is near a young boy.

MGBoE action: Sent away.

B. SUSPECTED PERPETRATORS.

1) Dadu, aged 90. Nama Hatta Devotee. Allegedly repeatedly invited a seven year old to his room. When the boy went in one time, the old man fondled him.

Recommend he be banned from visiting or staying in Mayapur.

MGBoE action: Will ensure that the above recommendation is carried out by temple administration.

2) [redacted], aged 22, Gurukula head cook. Abused at a young age. One small boy and a witness, aged 14, convincingly reported that he fondled the small boy. Dramatically denied by [redacted], even under threat of stick.

Recommend that because suspicions of him remains, he be engaged elsewhere in Mayapur. Perhaps he should get married.

MGBoE action: Moved out of Gurukula.

C. MINOR PERPETRATORS.

1) [redacted], aged 13. Saw sex films as a karmi. Fondled another boy's backside. Previously reported and dealt with satisfactorily.

2) [redacted], aged 10. Encouraged a 10 year old boy to engage in mutual fondling. Co-operative with investigation. General education program may be sufficient for his rectification.

MGBoE action: Counselling begun. Parents are due to visit next month. Will discuss the desirability of moving the boy to a more structured program in Vrindaban.

3) [redacted], aged 15. A minor perpetrator.
Recommend that he be sent to the temple side.

MGBoE action: Moved out of gurukula.

D. VICTIMS (ONLY)

1) [redacted], aged 10. Abused repeatedly by an older boy. Lied to investigators out of fear of other boys. Finally admitted after considerable slapping.

Recommend that he receive regular special counselling for at least five years. If this is not done, he may become a

perpetrator in the future.

MGBoE action: Sent home.

2) [redacted], aged 11. Abused repeatedly by several older boys. Co-operated with investigation even after being threatened by older boys.
Recommend that he receive regular special counselling for at least five years.

MGBoE action: Started counselling.

3) [redacted], aged 8. Fondled by several different older boys and violated twice. Co-operated with investigation. Appeared to be emotionally disturbed during questioning.
Recommend regular special counselling for as long as necessary.

4) [redacted], aged 12
5) [redacted], aged 10
6) [redacted], aged 7
7) [redacted], aged 6
8) [redacted], aged 5

These boys were seriously victimized to one degree or another. Regular counselling will be required for them as emotional damage is likely to be substantial.

9) [redacted], aged 14. Seems to attract molesters. He reported five or six incidents of boys approaching him. Some rumour of his further involvement which was unsubstantiated.
Recommend that he should definitely be sent home.

MGBoE action: Requested parents to send ticket so that he can return to Australia.

10) [redacted], aged 12. Has been the object of many rumored incidents, but also has reported incidents to Gurukula authorities regularly, Was not fully convincing in his claims of innocence and may be holding something back.
His father should speak to him and try to determine if anything remains hidden. Further counselling may also be necessary. His initial failure to co-operate is a matter of concern and should be dealt with strongly.

MGBoE action: Started counselling. Main problem seems to be very bad attatude with authorities. Problems seems to be that his father is one of the leaders in Mayapur and so he thinks that he can do as he pleases and get away with it.

11) [redacted], aged 11
12) [redacted], aged 12
13) [redacted], aged 12
14) [redacted], aged 12

15) [redacted], aged 14

These boys reported fondling, attempted fondling, or attempted abuse by a devotee from Jagannatha Temple. No special counselling required - they seemed to be well adjusted in these matters.

16) [redacted], aged 10. Minor incident of mutual fondling initiated by boy of same age. As he also did not report some thievery that he witnessed, he seems to be lacking in discriminatory ability. Some special counselling would be good.

MGBoE action: Started counselling.

E. UNCONFIRMED ALLEGATIONS

1) [redacted], aged 15. Many alleged illicit connections. He was not willing to speak truthfully to investigators initially, then left Mayapur before allegations could be fully investigated

Recommendation: (Adikarta and Bhaktarupa) - Gurukula administration should seriously weigh the benefits he might gain from continued Gurukula enrollment, versus the possible contamination he may bring to the other boys.

Recommendation: (Doyarama) - He should not be allowed to come back to Mayapur.

MGBoE action: It seems that he may not return. Request Bhakticaru Swami to talk to him before making final decision.

2) [redacted], aged 17
3) [redacted], aged 13

These boys are frequently seen together, and a few rumors were circulating about them. The rumors appeared to the investigators as unsubstantial.

4) [redacted], aged 14, monitor for small boy's ashram. Some rumors about him, but not substantiated. Many students complained about his violent nature, so the staff should be particularly vigilant that this nature does not manifest in ways harmful to the children. His position as monitor of small boys after only one year as a devotee seems a little ambitious, in spite of his obvious external qualifications.

MGBoE action: Service changed.

5) [redacted], aged 11. some minor allegation, not confirmed. Was slapped during investigation.

F. MISCELLANEOUS

1) [redacted], aged 15. No allegations against him, but unco-operative attitude during investigations. Was chastised.

MGBoE action: Moved from gurukula to temple.

2) [redacted], aged 19. Was abused when younger. No recent allegations of homosexual activities, but due to lack of proper direction and engagement, confessed that he was going to movies regularly. There was an old incident of him kissing a young girl. Marked lack of scriptural knowledge noticed for a long-standing student.

Recommended that a more structured program be developed for him outside the Gurukula, as his association may not be so beneficial for the boys.

Doyarama Prabhu recommends he be sent to a small temple under strict authority. Perhaps some strict department in Mayapur would agree to engage him. He would not want him on temple side in a loose department.

MGBoE action: Service changed to gurukula kitchen. A structrued program had been mapped out. To be watched for developments.

G. BOYS INTERVIEWED WHO APPEARED TO BE COMPLETELY CLEAN OF ALL INVOLVEMENT OR ALLEGATION;.

[redacted]

H. BOYS NOT INTERVIEWED; NO ALLEGATIONS.

[redacted]

NOTE: A few other boys who were considered by teh MGBoE to be not suitable for the gurukula have also been moved out.

APPENDIX A:

Answer to complaint received via Gour Govinda Swami/Sri Rama from [redacted]:

Incident #1 Devashish - confirmed, devotee to be sent away.
Incident #2 Verified to have been [redacted] - already expelled from Mayapur
Incident #3 [redacted] remembers the incident but denies locking the door, in any way restricting the movement of the boy, on threatening him sexually or otherwise. We are recommending that [redacted] be shifted to the temple side or another ISKCON centre.

APPENDIX B:

General comments about the Investigation:

1) The abusive activity was so widespread, the atmosphere so surcharged with threats to the boys, and the need to satisfy the parents and community members that strong action would be taken was so great, that the investigation was done very quickly. (The report was completed within six days of the formation of the investigation team.) While we feel that the investigation is basically complete, some small details should be pursued in the future by the Gurukula administration, as noted. The possibility of error should also be noted, and we apologize for any we may have made.

2) The staff of the school co-operated with the investigation. However, the general attitude of the staff towards the investigation was disturbing. Many seemed to be down-playing its importance. —Many have, as yet, failed to accept that they were neglectful in not preventing the occurances. Many have failed to demonstrate that they have honest feelings of sympathy for the abused small children.

3) The Chairman of the Mayapur Administrative Council, Satadhanya Dasa, openly spoke, on at least two occasions during the investigation, that he thought that too much was being made of the investigation and that these activities were normal in a boy's school. This attitude may be more widespread. Discussions should be held by the Gurukula staff and the G.B.C. Committee as to how to eliminate this attitude, because it is extremely dangerous when held by any ISKCON authority.

4) The notes taken during the investigation are very sketchy, and the investigators memory of the interviews was the main source of the report. Due to the sheer volume of the activity, to make a proper report with extensive details would be an administrative task beyond our capabilities. The Gurukula staff should note that one of the benefits of the investigation

for future dealings with the affected children will be partially lost unless the notes can be immediately processed into a complete investigation report.

APPENDIX C:

Other recommendations

1) Some boys stated that when they reported incidents to the school authorities they were punished along with the perpetrators of those incidents. This was especially true if the incident led to a physical fight between the boys. In at least two cases, future incidents experienced by these boys were not reported out of fear of punishment. Disciplinary policies must be structured in such a way as to encourage reporting of sexually related incidents.

2) Admission policies must also be structured to minimise the number of high risk new students (i.e. those who may be perpetrators or who will not be immune to [or immunizeable from] becoming involved. Factors contributing to high risk in new students would be: older boys, boys from lower economic backgrounds or broken homes, boys not academically inclined, emotionally disturbed boys etc.