ISKCON®

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CONFIDENTIAL

Official Decision on the case of Rasakeli dasi (Arti Saxena)

This decision concluded on July 3, 2021, was rendered in accordance with the guidelines for arbitrating cases of alleged child abuse established by the ISKCON Child Protection Policy and Operational Guidelines, ('Guidelines') ratified by the ISKCON Governing Body Commission June of 2012. This finding is the Official Decision of the ISKCON Central Office of Child Protection (ICOCP) in the case of Rasakeli dasi. For purposes of identification, Rasakeli dasi, aka Arti Saxena, is an initiated disciple of Radhanath Swami, currently living in Dallas, Texas, United States.

This decision defines the parameters of the relationship of Rasakeli dasi with ISKCON. The ICOCP advises child abuse victims, their parents, and all members of the ISKCON to report allegations of child abuse to governmental social service/ law enforcement authorities. Also, the ICOCP advises all members of ISKCON to learn and follow their local laws regarding child abuse and mandated reporting of child abuse.

There are allegations of verbal/emotional abuse and neglect against [redacted] that occurred throughout 2016-2018. According to the ISKCON Child Protection Policy and Operational Guidelines, abuse is defined as:

NEGLECT-An act of omission (failure to do) where the parent or caretaker fails to provide for the child's basic needs and proper level of care to support the child's health or development.

PSYCHOLOGICAL / EMOTIONAL ABUSE - is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and lasting adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It is a repeated pattern of behavior that conveys to the child that they are worthless, flawed, unwanted, unloved, or only of value to meet another person's needs. This verbal battering seriously erodes and damages the child's self-esteem and sense of worth as a person.



Evidence:

- [redacted] **own descriptions and narrative of experienced abuse/neglect as reported to his parents, other community members and his clinical psychotherapist.**
- **Witnesses' statements confirming that Rasakeli dasi did prevent** [redacted] **from using the water fountain at school on multiple occasions.**
- **Statements from other parents of former students of Rasakeli dasi's, whose reports bear similar details to those of** [redacted] **and his parents.**
- **Statements from witnesses suggesting that Rasakeli dasi was unable to provide an emotionally nourishing environment with some students, including having an overly "authoritarian" approach, and being unwilling to adapt her teaching/discipline style to the needs of students, parents or school policy.**
- [redacted] **clinical psychotherapist opining that** [redacted] **symptoms are consistent with those of a child who has experienced emotional abuse.**

The ICOCP has received 7 additional statements from victims/witnesses regarding child abuse allegations against Rasakeli dasi. The reported incidents involved young children under her tutelage in her classroom or afternoon school care. The victims were males and females.

The alleged incident(s) took place in the United States, in the Dallas Hare Krsna community. At the time of the alleged incident/s, Rasakeli dasi was a teacher at TKG Academy, where [redacted] attended school.

The allegations against Rasakeli dasi are as follows: (list allegations)

1. Rasakeli regularly spurned and scolded [redacted] including using derogatory terms to refer to the victim, yelling at him and making him sit at the "dummy table".

2. Denying [redacted] access to basic hygiene and health facilities such as drinking from the water fountain or using the bathroom at school.

3. Denying [redacted] emotional responsiveness, including withholding warmth or affection appropriate to the educational setting, as well as imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations beyond the victim's capabilities.

This review panel has considered all the information at its disposal and has come to the following decision based on the nature and extent of the acts and the repeated occasions of verbal abuse/neglect, as well the impact of the abuse and neglect on the victim.

Conclusion:

Based on the evidence presented, the Review Panel found it more likely than not that Rasakeli dasi is responsible for child neglect and verbal/emotional abuse. This is an ecclesiastic decision that defines the relationship between Rasakeli dasi and ISKCON.

Requirements:

*1. Rasakeli dasi must receive a psychological evaluation, including assessment of risk to children, by someone approved by the CPO and submit the outcome of the evaluation to the CPO **if** she wishes to be engaged in any authoritative or leadership position involving children. This includes in-person or online activities.*

*2. Rasakeli dasi must receive therapy/counselling and other personal or professional development requirements based on the outcomes of the evaluation and submit documentation to the CPO to verify that this has been done, as well as provide progress reports during this time **if** she wishes to be engaged in any authoritative or leadership position involving children.*

Restrictions:

3. Rasakeli dasi may not hold any visible position of leadership or management for a period of 2 years - thereafter it will be subject to review

of the CPO. Visible leadership or management includes (but is not exclusive to):

- *giving class or leading kirtana/harinama in any ISKCON temple or project for a period of 2 years.*

- *performing brahminical services/public worship such as, offering arati, going on the altar, offering a garland to Srila Prabhupada, etc for a period of 2 years.*

4. As a lifetime restriction, Rasakeli shall not have service involving children in any ISKCON temple, school or project **subject to point 1 above**. Children are defined as anyone under 18 years of age.

5. Rasakeli dasi may not be present if victims or their family members are present at an ISKCON center or function for a period of 2 years.

6. Other(s)
It is strongly suggested by the panel that Rasakeli dasi write a letter of apology to the victim and the TKG Academy/ Dallas community for her behavior whilst in a position of being a carer for young children. If she does write this, that should be sent to the CPO for delivery to the community at an appropriate time. Rasakeli dasi should not contact the victim directly.

The lifting of these sanctions is subject to full compliance of the above requirements and restrictions.

Any violation of the above may result in continuation of sanctions, dependent on the determination of the ICOCP Director.

Standard CPO Policies

Restriction Policy: The decision of the panel constitutes the minimum restrictions that an ISKCON organization must enforce. Any specific ISKCON center may choose to enforce restrictions that are more stringent. It is expected that all ISKCON entities will carefully consider these decisions of the

CPO before imposing more stringent limitations, as the constraints prescribed herein are deemed sufficient.

Appeals: According to the 'Guidelines', in cases where allegations are determined to be valid, the Official Decision may be appealed to the Child Protection Office within 60 days of receipt of the decision. It must be submitted in writing to the CPO Director. The only two principles that an appeal may be accepted are 1) if procedures in the original review prevented a fair and impartial hearing, or 2) if there is new and compelling additional evidence. The official decision described in this document is effective immediately. Should s/he choose to appeal this decision the individual named must abide by the original decision during the appeal process.

Note: Write if, when, where this case was reported to law enforcement.

Case was reported to local Dallas Child Protective Services (CPS). No further action was taken by CPS once they determined that Rasakeli was no longer teaching at TKG Academy, and [redacted] was no longer under Rasakeli's care.