From the GBC Executive Committee

July 21, 2021

Dear ISKCON Devotees and Friends,

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

We write to inform the global ISKCON society regarding a recent decision of ISKCON's Governing Body Commission (GBC).

The GBC has been discussing the history and status of the Lokanath Swami issue for many weeks, both in our plenary sessions and among a smaller group of devotees assisting the GBC Executive Committee. As many of you know, this issue has drawn global attention within our society and evoked strong—and often contradictory—feelings among devotees around the world.

Among many issues, the GBC is also weighing whether our own past investigations, actions, and decisions regarding this problem were sufficient, appropriate, and what should be improved in the future.

Therefore, on July 14th, the GBC voted to establish a special Panel of senior devotees with expertise in both child protection and legal principles, to review the matter in its entirety and return a report with recommendations to the GBC. Two of these three Panel members are attorneys, and two of the three are former Directors of the ISKCON Child Protection Office. All three are respected individuals of the highest integrity.

The resolution reads:

A Panel composed of Tamohara Das, Navin Shyama Das, and Champakalata Devi Dasi, shall assess and evaluate the matter regarding Lokanath Swami based on a mandate drawn up by General Counsel and present its Report within 60 days of the Resolution. When the panel concludes its deliberations it will present its recommendations/report to the GBC Body, who will decide the way forward from there."

The ISKCON India leadership has also been invited to nominate two devotees for inclusion in the panel.

We are aware that within the ISKCON society, there is heated debate whether or not the Lokanath Swami's case should go to the Child Protection Office. Our current CPO Director agrees with the need for the above-described Panel, and he advocates that afterward the case should be sent to the CPO. Other respected voices argue that this case was reviewed by a special investigative process in the past, prior to the existence of the CPO, and sufficient remedial steps and restrictions were put in place, and thus no further review is required.

The GBC decided that a skilled and experienced Panel must first clarify the broader issues involved, including the facts and history of the case, and then recommend what the next step will be.

We recognize that this is a very contentious issue, with strong convictions on all sides of the matter. The GBC is dedicated to moving forward in a sober, just, and thorough manner. We ask for all parties' patience while the Panel completes its task.

Thank you,

GBC Executive Committee

Bhakti Caitanya Swami, Chair
Banu Swami
Revati Ramana das

The following are the Scope and Terms of Reference for the abovementioned special Panel

SCOPE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR PANEL
IN RESPECT OF REVIEW INTO LOKANATH SWAMI'S ('LNS') MATTER:

1. Reports to: The GBC

2. Purpose: The Review Panel shall inquire into, make findings, report and make recommendations concerning the following:

• To establish a shared baseline of facts and evidence regarding this case.
• After establishing the shared baseline, then assess and review the facts and evaluate the evidence of the case.
• Assess and review the manner in which the previous investigation and adjudication of this case were handled by the GBC, including but not limited, to whether the GBC erred, or otherwise, in such handling and, accordingly, make recommendations on the appropriate action that could be taken.
• Assess and review the sanctions on LNS, including, but not limited, to the extent these sanctions were complied with by LNS, and the basis of sanctions, taking into consideration expert legal opinions and principled decision making. This will include, but not be limited, to examining the issue of double jeopardy.
• Present its findings and make recommendations on the above to the GBC.

3. Conclusion:

To submit a report to the GBC within sixty (60) days from the convening of the Panel.