

Obama to get Hanuman idol from India for luck

The 108-feet-tall Sankat Mochan Dham Hanuman temple here wore a festive look Tuesday as priests prepared for elaborate worship of an idol of Lord Hanuman, which will then be presented to US presidential candidate Barack Obama for his success in the November elections.

Recent photographs of Obama carrying a good luck charm of a "tiny monkey god", apparently representing Hanuman, has impressed priests and Hanuman devotees in the national capital.

Hence, they decided to present the 46-year-old Illinois senator with a 15-kg gold-plated Hanuman idol through one of the Democratic party's representatives, Carolene Saurce, in an elaborate ceremony at the temple in Chandni Chowk.

Lalu Maharaj, one of the head priests of the Hanuman temple in Connaught Place, will perform prayers along with others before giving away the idol. He said they will ask god for Obama's success in the elections.

"Tuesday is an auspicious day for Hanuman devotees. Therefore, today we will perform a 'puja' of the Hanuman idol and then present it to Carolene who will in turn gift it to Obama," Maharaj told IANS.

Brij Mohan Bhama of the Sankat Mochan Dham said they will also appeal to the Indian people in the US to support Obama in his endeavour.

'Barack Obama is a great believer in lord Hanuman. His victory will benefit India,' Bhama added.

Aarti Misra, a Hanuman devotee who had come to the temple in Chandni Chowk like she does every Tuesday and Saturday, was equally impressed with Obama's faith.

'I am sure Obama will be successful in his endeavour. A person who believes in lord Hanuman and has his blessings can cross the greatest hurdles in life with ease. I will pray for him,' she said.

Obama, who defeated his rival Hillary Clinton in an epic 17-month long electoral battle for the Democratic party nomination, also carries a tiny Madonna and child figurine as a good luck charm.

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