

Sanskrit prayers reverberate in Nevada Senate

The Senate session of the American state of Nevada started in its capital Carson City with Hindu prayers.

Rajan Zed, the India-born director of Interfaith Relations of the Hindu Temple of Northern Nevada and a Hindu chaplain, read benedictory invocations in Sanskrit. The session began May 7.

This is the first time a Hindu prayer was delivered in the Nevada Senate since its formation in 1864, said Zed, quoting Albert Tilstra, pastor and chaplain coordinator for Nevada Legislature.

Wearing saffron clothes, sporting a rudraksh mala and traditional sandal paste marks on his forehead, Zed stood next to a Ganesha statue and began with Rig Veda's first hymn: 'Om Agni mile purohitam...'

Next, Zed read the prayer from Taittiriya Upanishad and followed it up with verses from the Bhagavad Gita.

Earlier, the president of Nevada Senate, Lt. Governor Brian K. Krolicki, introduced Zed. As he started chanting the prayers, all the senators stood up.

Besides members of the area's Hindu community, ministers and priests from various Christian denominations like Presbyterian, Episcopal, United Methodist and Seventh Day Adventist attended the prayer session.

A former journalist in India, Zed, 53, lives in Reno, Nevada, with his family.

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