Transformational Management Review
(Transform. Manag. Rev.)

Vol.01, Issue No.02, July-December, 2026
pp.306-321
E-ISSN: 3139-5813

Article Type: Research Article

Designing Devotion: How the BAPS Mandir Aligns with Faith, Service, Innovation, and Tolerance in Abu Dhabi, UAE

Received: 02/02/2026
Accepted: 02/06/2026
Published: 27/07/2026

Dhananjay Bapat

Associate Professor at Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India.
Email: *dhananjay1304@gmail.com*

Abstract

The case examined a Hindu Mandir from Bochanwasi Shri Akshar Purshottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS), which combined aspects of sacred authenticity and tolerance in Abu Dhabi. Framed through the lens of Service Innovation, the mandir can be seen as a co-creative service ecosystem, bringing together people of different faiths, countries, and cultures. The major attraction were divine Mandir with inner sanctum and deities, welcome hall, harmony hall, tolerance trees, Divine Eye, Orchard, Water Rise, Abhishek Mandapam, charnavrind (God's footprint), pinnacle (Shikhars), ceilings, carvings of value stories with messages from different culture, an inner dome of harmony, inner dome of peace, Murtis, Conch shells, commemorative plaques, Guru Parampara murtis (statue), and Main Mandir (Temple). The case delved into the aspects of faith, leadership, service profit chain, and tolerance. The case can be seen from the standpoint of two models: The Inclusive Experience Model and the Sanctity First Model. The Service Profit Chain offered a useful diagnostic lens. Service Profit Chain in the context of Abu Dhabi Mandir referred to how internal processes and saint and volunteer involvement can drive external outcomes? It is to be seen how the Mandir could become a global model of tolerance. Volunteer and Saint involvement could play a critical role in making the visitor experience authentic and welcoming. Students can analyse the role of leadership and derive lessons for spiritual and value-driven organisations.

Keywords: BAPS, service innovation, service profit chain, tolerance

Introduction

His Divine Highness (HDH) Mahant Swami Maharaj, the present spiritual head of Bochanwasi Shri Akshar Purshottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS), inaugurated the BAPS Hindu Mandir on 14th February 2024. While highlighting the importance of cultural unity, the Honorable Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, expressed gratitude to the President of the UAE, His Highness (HH) Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, for supporting the BAPS Hindu Mandir (Times of India, 2024). The Mandir was an interesting story of how a major Hindu Mandir emerged in an Islamic nation, grounded in the broad principles of unique experience, service innovations, and tolerance. The temple had a height of 108 feet and marked seven spires, each representing seven Emirates of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). (UAE). The Mandir was made as an is an addition to the existing places of attractions, Burj Khalifa and Sheikh Zayed Mosque, in the UAE. The BAPS Hindu Mandir brought a new addition to the cultural and tourism identity of the UAE (Times of India, 2024). There were the following questions: How could the leadership of the BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi design and deliver services that preserve sacred authenticity while embodying universal inclusivity - balancing emotional devotion, institutional ethos, and diplomatic symbolism within a pluralistic context?

Going back in February 2018, the President of the UAE, HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, hosted the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi. The meeting was scheduled between the UAE rulers and Brahmaviharidas, a saint from BAPS, and other saints from BAPS. Brahmavihari Swami was a key project head for the BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi. He led the design and construction from design to execution, and was considered a global ambassador of interfaith harmony and worked under the current spiritual leadership of HDH Mahant Swami Maharaj. According to Brahmaviharidas Swami, “I was uncertain of what would happen. The protocol officer gave instructions. The protocol officer was puzzled as both the Crown Prince and Indian Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, welcomed Brahmaviharidas Swami and other saints with open arms. The Crown Prince avidly listened to Swami Brahmaviharidas explaining the two concepts, and the Crown Prince was pleased to approve the traditional temple”. HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan visited the Akshardham Mandir in New Delhi on 26th June 2018 and was highly impressed. Delhi Akshardham Mandir, a Hindu Mandir and complex, was inaugurated in 2005, consisting of Akshardham Mandir (43 metre high, 96 metre wide, and 109 metre long), Hall of Values, iMax theatre projecting life of Bhagwan Swaminarayan, Boat ride showcasing a journey through rich Indian history, Musical fountain, Garden, Lake, Food Court, etc. It attracted about 10,000 visitors each day. HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan went through sculptures of the elephant plinth and went through the messages of harmony, patience, strength, and wisdom. He appreciated Akshardham’s dedication towards renewable energy, water conservation, and preservation of art, culture, and values (Vohra 2024).

During the visit, he expressed his desire to have the same awe-inspiring architecture and magnificence of Akshardham in the UAE. It was then decided by UAE rulers that the temple would look like a temple in the UAE, and it would not be a camouflage or replica (Vohra 2024). According to Brahmavihari Swami, "One thing that stood out was that the mandir project was going to leave a legacy not just in the UAE, but also probably the world, because it was going to be a Mandir of magnificence coming up in the Middle East". The history of Mandir could be traced to 1997, when HDH Pramukh Swami Maharaj envisioned a Mandir in Abu Dhabi while sitting at a dune in Sharjah (Vohra 2024). Despite the doubt, the miracle happened on February 14, 2024 when a magnificent Mandir with a unique experience was set on 27 acres of land graciously gifted by the royal family of the UAE.

The Leadership behind the BAPS Hindu Mandir considered two frameworks: the Inclusive Experience Model and the Sanctity First Model. The Inclusive Experience Model considered cultural integration, coexistence, and participatory engagement with local or native communities. The Sanctity First Model focused on sacredness, and supported cultural, spiritual, or ecological spaces. Its primary objective is to safeguard the integrity and purity of the site, tradition, or experience, even if that limits public interaction or integration. The Sanctity First Model focused on strict rituals, access and religious protocols. To make sense of alternatives, Brahmavihari Swami could see through the lens of service innovation. For that matter, every service system was an amalgamation of people, technology, and processes. The Mandir was a complex ecosystem with the involvement of volunteers, visitors, rituals, architecture, and experience.

The Service Profit Chain was a popular concept that shows how internal organisational processes can lead to external outcomes such as customer satisfaction, loyalty, and profitability. This concept can be applied to a non-profit institution, BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi. The concept of profit can be societal harmony, tolerance, community impact, and spiritual upliftment, rather than focusing on financial gain only. This model is applied in commercial organizations and connects the link between internal service quality towards employees' satisfaction, and then to customer satisfaction, loyalty, and financial success. Rather than financial success, the model is focused on community impact and societal harmony. Internal service quality is about support structures and systems. Volunteers were associated as they embody devotion and faith. The Mandir leadership ensured clarity on the role of volunteers. This helped to create a sense of purpose and belonging among volunteers. The next link was employee or volunteer satisfaction. Volunteer-derived fulfilment by relating to a higher purpose. Satisfied and motivated volunteers could create a sense of purpose. Satisfied and motivated volunteers could exhibit a higher level of commitment and productivity. This was reflected in dedication, discipline, and commitment. Volunteers were able to handle large crowds in an efficient manner and could go beyond their assigned roles. Their long-term engagement and commitment resulted in a higher quality of

service, even during peak periods such as festivals or special events. The commitment of volunteers enhanced the perceived value of visitors. The Mandir offered a unique experience that was enriched by intricate architecture, a visitor journey, and volunteer support. Thus, the value covered the functional, emotional, cultural, and spiritual aspects. The visitors experienced a feeling of high spiritual value and inspiration, accompanied by the aesthetic beauty of the Mandir. This resulted in a high level of visitor loyalty. It was observed that visitors were willing to recommend. The final level of the service profit chain is profit. Profit in this context covered spiritual and social impact. The Abu Dhabi Mandir contributed to uplifting the spiritual value, fostering cultural understanding, and enhancing interfaith harmony. The Mandir served as a symbol of peace, unity, and tolerance. In conclusion, the Service Profit Chain demonstrated how the principles of internal quality, motivation, service excellence, and customer experience were aligned.

About Organization - BAPS

BAPS, a worldwide social-spiritual Hindu organisation, had its roots in the ancient Vedas and the Vaishnav philosophy of the Hindu religion. The organisation was the largest and most dynamic denomination and is recognised as the fastest-growing religious movement in India (Williams, 2001). The organisation network consisted of more than 1300 Mandirs and 5025 spiritual centres all over the world. The organisation was the recipient of a Guinness World Record for its Mandir in London, Akshardham Mandir in New Delhi, and the largest network of Mandirs across the world (for more details, please visit baps.org). The Guinness World Record was bestowed as a recognition of the Most Hindu Mandir, which was consecrated by a single person and the World's largest comprehensive Hindu Mandir. The organisation followed the basic objectives of inspire, energise, promote harmony, tolerance and happy coexistence (baps.org).

Service Orientation in Practice

The organisation is involved in about 160 different humanitarian activities. The organisation contributed to humanitarian service, social activities, educational activities, medical facilities, spiritual assemblies, and personality development camps through weekly assemblies, special events, cultural festivals, and environmental conservation activities (baps.org). HDH Pramukh Swami Maharaj transformed the organisation into an ever-expanding service empire, almost along the lines of a corporate system of efficient management (Paranjpe 2005).

UAE- Embarking on the Model of Tolerance

Islam is the official religion in the UAE, with about 75 % practising Islam religion, with 63 % as Sunni, 7 % Shia branch of Islam. The other religions present in the country are Christianity (13 %) and Hinduism (6 %). The UAE has adopted a model of tolerance as a testimony to its

long-term strategy and as a symbol of global peace, harmony, and co-existence with happiness and mutual respect. The importance of tolerance is high as it created the full-fledged Ministry of Tolerance and Coexistence.

The Government of the UAE declared the year 2019 as the year of tolerance, and the Ministry of Tolerance was headed by HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. According to HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, "The year of tolerance will be key in promoting the UAE's model of tolerance and prosperous coexistence with the world". The Year of Tolerance included Pope Francis's visit to the UAE. HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan remarked, "It is indeed an honour to welcome his holiness the Pope to our country" (Basalom 2019). As part of building a cohesive society, the UAE Government encouraged the Hindu Mandir to be built on the land of the UAE.

Tolerance as a mission

Tolerance was considered to be respect for diversity and was considered a distinctive feature of progressive societies. Whereas a traditional person is attached to local social norms and imposes heavy sanctions for those who deviate, a progressive person accepts social alterity without opposition (Corneo and Jeanne 2009). The BAPS Hindu Mandir was a remarkable symbol of universal cooperation. It is built on the land donated by Muslim rulers. Other support includes the lead Architect, who is Christian, the Project Manager, who is Sikh, the Structural Engineer, who is Buddhist, the Construction Contractor, who is Zoroastrian (Parsi), the Main Director, who is Jain, the Chief Consultant, who is an atheist, and the Mandir, which is Hindu (Bliss 2024). This is in line with the UAE's endeavour to make it a happy co-existence. HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan mentioned to HDH Mahant Swami Maharaj when they met in 2019, "Your visit, your holiness, is an opportunity to marvel at your example in working cooperatively to resolve conflicts between different communities and to build a spirit of tolerance as a gateway to understanding mutual respect and peace". The BAPS Hindu Mandir created a tolerance zone with 6500-year-old black subfossil oaks and desert palms showcasing the message of tolerance and harmony (Sarup 2024).

Mandir Construction in the difficult times of the COVID crisis

The construction of the Mandir was a challenge as the COVID crisis struck in the years 2019 and 2020, and everything was at a standstill. In this darkness and at the peak of the pandemic in December 2020, Brahmavihari Swami received a letter from HDH Mahant Swami Maharaj. According to Brahmavihari Swami, "The letter was a spark of hope that reignited our hearts and brought back the breath of life. I was stunned and could not fathom how he could know. But that makes him a spiritual leader who can understand and hear the whispers of our soul". The construction activity involved a lot of complexities with shipping stones to the UAE, and

then further processing and assembling at the BAPS Hindu Mandir site. It required a great deal of coordination without any chances of error. The pink stone was brought from Rajasthan, and artisans work on raw carvings and was converted into finished carvings with polishing. It took almost nine months to get a Mandir pillar in polished form. The BAPS Hindu Mandir was constructed using pink sandstone and white marble in Italy. The intricate carvings and traditional was created in India. It is estimated that about 4000 skilled artisans and master craftsmen worked day and night. It is considered an oasis in the desert. The stones were shipped to Abu Dhabi and were assembled stone by stone (Vohra 2024). Several artisans and sculptors were associated with the construction of the Mandir and had to weather scorching sun and sandstorms during construction activities. It is these craftsmen who could leave the visitor spellbound as they transformed the blocks of marble into breathtaking architectural masterpieces. The timelines of the Mandir are presented in Table 1.

Inauguration and Major Attractions

The public dedication ceremony took place on Feb 14, 2024, in the divine presence of HDH Mahant Swami Maharaj, Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and the UAE Leadership. It was estimated that over 15000 people attended in person, and millions watched on the live broadcast. The first day of the official public opening resulted in 65000 people visiting the complex. This marked a significant attraction toward a message of tolerance and service. Emirates Airlines created a special podcast in its in-flight entertainment system for its passengers about the construction of the BAPS Hindu Mandir and its importance in promoting harmony and cultural unity. The intricately crafted BAPS Hindu mandir represented spirituality, dedication, sanctity, and architectural beauty. HDH Mahant Swami, who succeeded HDH Pramukh Swami Maharaj, performed a stone consecration ceremony (Shila Pujan) in 2018 and foundation stone laying (shilanyas). The Mandir was envisioned as a symbol of collaboration and unity, with its seven spires representing the seven emirates of the UAE.

The temple was envisioned as a symbol of community and collaboration, with its seven spires representing the seven emirates of the UAE. Upon entering the temple complex, visitors could see two streams of water: these are symbolic of the rivers Ganga and Yamuna, two of the three most holy water bodies for Hindus. The third stream, related to the river Saraswati, was dedicated to the goddess of knowledge and music. It appeared as a beam of light at the base of the temple. These rivers were depicted in the Divine Eye, which is a whirlpool-like sculpture (Sarup 2024). The main mandir is 32.9 metres tall, 79.8 metres long, and 54.8 metres wide. It is constructed using 40000 cubic stones of marble from Italy and 1,80,000 cubic metres of pink stone from Rajasthan. The stones are meticulously carved and assembled like a giant jigsaw puzzle. The mandir highlighted the transformative power of architecture and cultural heritage. It is aimed at bringing the region and culture together. The architecture is unique as it does not use reinforced

steel and concrete in the main temple. The BAPS Hindu Mandir included 402 pillars with a unique design. The carvings featured saints, gods, goddesses, flora, fauna, peacocks, elephants, camels, ceremonial processions, and phases of the moon and stars. It could accommodate 8000 to 10,000 people. Other buildings included prayer halls, a community centre, a children's park, an amphitheatre and a library (Sarup 2024).

The major attractions at the BAPS Hindu Mandir complex were as follows (Bliss 2024):

- Welcome Hall: The entry to the Mandir from the car parking is through the Welcome Hall.
- Harmony Hall: It was one of the largest 3D printed walls in the UAE, with a length of 4.5 m length and 4.5 m depth. The wall was decorated with small replicas of important landmarks from east to west.
- Prayer Dune: It represented a place where Pramukh Swami Maharaj prayed in the year 1997.
- Fairytale Immersive shows: It consisted of 13 13-minute shows unfolding fairytales projected on four walls.
- Tolerance trees: It was a 6500-year-old subfossil oak and desert palm showcasing the message of tolerance, harmony, and life
- Three Holy Rivers and Divine Eye: The divine eye began where Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati rise. Ganga, Yamuna, and Saraswati are considered the holiest rivers in India. This is intended to create a cultural and spiritual bridge between the UAE and India.
- Orchard: It consisted of a food court where vegetarian food (without onion and garlic) is available. It had comfortable seating crafted with wooden pallets, which were discarded material during shipping. Thus, it gives a sustainable form of construction.
- Smruti Gift Store: It included a variety of well-designed gift articles and souvenirs for visitors of all ages.
- Holy Plaza- 96 Bells and Gaumukhs: It was surrounded by the water of the Ganga and Yamuna. The 96 bells represented the life of the revered saint, HDH Pramukh Swami Maharaj, with a focus on global harmony and bringing all cultures together.
- Water Rise: This features water rise when a visitor climbs the stairs which was against the principle of gravity. The message is that spirituality needs to rise despite the obstacles and challenges.

- Abhishek Mandap: It is a tribute to Bhagwan Swaminarayan and spiritual gurus. It is solemn, and visitors can participate in traditional prayer ceremonies.
- Charnavrind (God's footprint) Dome: It consisted of the divine soil of the birthplaces of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and Gunatit Gurus. It showcased 16 auspicious divine signs. The ceiling shows a traditional Indian rangoli blended with Islamic art, with constellations of Aries and Sagittarius constellations.
- Shikhars: Shikhars were also referred to as pinnacles, each housing a revered deity along with carvings of Kalash and dhvaja (flags). The Shikhar indicates seven emirates with inspiring stories from epics of Ramayana, Mahabharat, Shrimad Bhagwat, Shiva Puran, Swaminarayan texts, and other shastras (Hindu spiritual literature). The bottom layers show cows, camels, falcons, lions, elephants, horses, peacocks, and other animals in their natural habitat. The layer above indicated deities, celestial beings, saints, and devotees engaged in playing musical instruments, dancing, creating art, and other devotional activities. Different animals from the Indian and Arabic regions are covered.
- Ceilings: This indicates intricately crafted ceilings that cover the beauty of nature and the feelings of human beings towards the elements of nature. This represented different flowers with carved flora and other patterns in horizontal and vertical depths.
- Sculpted Arches (Torans): It represented 130 torans of intricate and fine carved design. A toran is a traditional Indian decorative hanging that is placed at the entrance of a home. This symbolises a warm welcome and prosperity.
- Pillars: It has 96 marble pillars, each showcasing intricate design with carved Idols and stories. There are about 1400 smaller pillars within each pillar. This involves significant time spent by artisans.
- Carvings of Value stories with messages from different cultures: This shows 14 ancient and modern civilisations: African, American, Arabian, British, Dutch, Egyptian, Emirates, and Greek, along with Inuit, Mayan, Mesopotamian, and Native Americans.
- Carvings of Indian Value stories: This shows 15 Indian value stories from Panchatantra and the contemporary world, with a focus on Indian culture.
- Inner Dome of Harmony: It symbolises the dome with coverage of five basic elements: earth, water, fire, air, and space, which are essential elements of nature.
- Inner Dome of Peace: Peace is an essence for the sustenance of the universe.
- Murtis: It consists of the centre of attraction of the Mandir with Murtis enshrined in the

seventh sanctum.

- Conch Shells (Shankh): There are two conch shells, one on each side of the mandir. The left side holds water from the auspicious river, Ganga, and the right side held water from Yamuna. Before entering Mandir, the visitor was expected to sprinkle water on the body and head.
- Commemorative Plaques: These consisted of two plaques with a focus on vision, generosity, values, and support. Both plaques are displayed in English and Arabic.
- Values Sculptor: Four stone sculptors held the mandir presented on two sides. On the left side, it showed purity, charity, knowledge, and peace. On the right side, it was faith, compassion, truth, and harmony.
- Abhishek Dome: Abhishek Mandapam (Hall) included the seated murti of Bhagwan Swaminarayan. The visitor is expected to pour water with a positive vow and attain god's blessings. Abhishek means "consecration" or "bathing of a deity" with sacred water, or milk. It symbolized purification, devotion, and caring.
- Guru Parampara: It includes the murtis of BAPS Gunatit gurus, which showcase a spiritual journey through a tradition of enlightened gurus. There is a spacious circumambulatory path around the main mandir, or move upward to the mandir. Guru Parampara referred to the ancient Indian tradition of passing spiritual knowledge through generations. It is critical to maintain the spiritual lineage.
- Main Mandir: The exterior of the mandir is made from pink sandstone, and the interior is made from Italian marble. One can see two domes from a distance, and pyramidal domes, which are smaller than the main dome (Bliss 2024).

Source: Swaminarayan Bliss, May-June 2024

Figures 1.1 to 1.6 depicted pictures of the Mandir complex, and Exhibit 1 described the viewpoint of visitors.

Mandir Construction Features

The mandir is built according to the traditional Nagar (North Indian) architectural style, faithfully following the principles outlined in the Shilpashastras. It is 108 feet high, 180 feet wide and 262 feet long. The outer structure of the two-level mandir stands out in the form of seven spires (each housing a widely revered deity). The mandir is represented in the form of tribute to the friendship between India and the UAE, with the seven spires symbolizing the seven Emirates of the UAE, namely, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al-Quwain, Ras Al Khaimah



Figure 1: Outside Mandir View, **Source:**Swaminarayan Bliss, May June 2024 (Bliss 2024)



Figure 2: Divine eye at Mandir, **Source:** Swaminarayan Bliss, May June 2024 (Bliss 2024)

and Fujairah. The mandir's facade included sculpted stone panels depicting universal values, narratives of harmony from various cultures, and representations of avatars, celestial beings, spiritual leaders and famous devotees from the Hindu tradition.

The mandir construction was characterised by innovations. For example, in construction, there was a blend of traditional architecture techniques and technology. It did not use any metal. The stones were assembled in a time-honoured lock and key method, which was part of the old tradition of ancient Indian mandirs. There was no metallic reinforcement in the mandir, making it a pure stone structure. This method was based on gravitational load rather than the application of adhesive substances. The temple is modelled on seismic simulations. The carved stones for the temple are joined based on the principles of the jigsaw puzzle and then fixed in place by gravity.



Figure 3: Carvings at Mandir with value stories, **Source:** Swaminarayan Bliss, May June 2024 (Bliss 2024)



Figure 4: Holy Plaza, **Source:**Swaminarayan Bliss, May June 2024 (Bliss 2024)

The temple has deployed about 300 sensors to track pressure, temperature, stress, and seismic activities. For sustainable requirements, the mandir used fly ash. The furniture in the food court is based on wooden material that was used to transport the material for protective purposes.

The Mandir was designed after studying different mandirs of Jaganathji and Konark in Odisha, India, and Ranakpur and Dilwara in Rajasthan, India. The Mandir in Abu Dhabi represented intricate art with episodes from Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagvatam, Shiva Purana, Swaminrayan



Figure 5: Water Rise, **Source:**Swaminarayan Bliss, May June 2024 (Bliss 2024)



Figure 6: Shankh, **Source:** Swaminarayan Bliss, May June 2024 (Bliss 2024)

Charitam, lives of Ayappan. It also included moral tales from civilisations around the world and different cultures. Every part of the Mandir had a story to tell, with every stone sending out a message of devotion and tolerance. It could become a spiritual oasis for global harmony (Vohra 2024). The Mandir featured 14 stories from ancient civilisations across the globe, highlighting the universality of faith.

Exhibit 1: Visitor Viewpoint at BAPS Hindu Mandir

Some of the views of visitors are as follows.

> A harmony of different cultures coming together here today.
>
> **Bhavish Aggarwal, CEO, Ola Cabs**

Table 1: BAPS Hindu Mandir in UAE: Timeline

Year	Major events
1974	Weekly Sabha started
1985	Visit by HDH Pramukh Swami Maharaj in UAE
1989	Visit by Sadguru Saint Doctor Swami from BAPS
1997	Visit by HDH Pramukh Swami Maharaj and honored by Gujarati and Jain community
2001	HDH Pramukh Swami Maharaj accompanied by HDH Mahant Swami, was received by Sheikh Hamid Al Qasim, Minister of Justice
2006	HDH Pramukh Swami sanctified murtis for Dubai
2012	HDH Pramukh Swami Maharaj blessed Brahmavihari Swami to request permission for Mandir
2013	Brahmachari Swami meets HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan at the royal majlis in Abu Dhabi
2014	Verbal approval received for the construction of the BAPS Hindu Mandir
2015	Prime Minister Narendra Modi appreciated the gracious decision and informed the assembly of 60,000 and tweeted, "This is a great step"
2016	An allotment order for Crown Prince was granted for 2.5 acres of land
2017	The UAE government gifted 13.7 acres of land
2018	His Highness gifts a 13.7-acre plot of land in Abu Mureikah, between Abu Dhabi and Dubai
2019	Official permission was granted and His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj was honoured by HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan at the royal majlis.
2020	The foundation stone was laid and BAPS organized COVID relief
2021	Pratham Shila Sthapan ritual performed
2023	The First Shikhar Shila ritual was performed
2024	Mahant Swami performed rituals of Murti Pratistha at BAPS Hindu Mandir. Public dedication ceremony in the presence of the heads of Government of India (Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi and Ruler of UAE, HH Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan). About 65000 visitors flock to the site on 3rd March, 2024

Source: *Opening of BAPS Hindu Mandir, Swaminarayan Bliss, May- June 2024 (Bliss 2024).*

Probably this is to me, one of the finest examples of how religious harmonies can be brought together.

HH Sri Satguru Uday Singh Ji

There is an exchange of mutual respect that this place embodies, which I think is

unique. There is nothing like that anywhere else.

Rabbi David Rosen, Special Advisor, Abrahamic Family House, Abu Dhabi

This is the coming together of two cultures and civilizations. Just the diversity of what the mandir represents. The land was provided by a Muslim ruler, the lead architect is a Christian, whose foundation designer is a Buddhist, The contractor is a Parsi, Project Director is Sikh. Come on where do you see this?

Umang Bedi, Co-founder, Verse Innovation

Thousands of years of culture, human creativity, and human wisdom.

Dr. S.Jayashankar, Minister of External Affairs, India

This is the actual manifestation of Vasudeva Kutunbakam (The world is one family).

Sonu Nigam, Leading Singer, India

At a time when the world is becoming polarised and divided, this mandir stands as a beacon of cultural, religious, and global harmony.

Nazem Alkudsi, Sovereign Wealth Consultant, UAE

Source: Compiled by the Author from www.baps.org

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About Author:

Dhananjay Bapat

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How to Cite?

Bapat, D. (2026). Designing Devotion: How the BAPS Mandir Aligns with Faith, Service, Innovation, and Tolerance in Abu Dhabi, UAE. *Transformational Management Review*, 01(02), 306-321.