

The Hindu Renaissance Award

The Hindu Renaissance Award was created in 1991 by the founder of Hinduism Today to recognize and strengthen Hindu leaders worldwide. Swami Avdheshananda Giri was presented the award in August, 2008, at a grand satsang during his visit to the Sunnyvale Hindu Temple in California. Hinduism Today's representative, Easan Katir, gave the following short address explaining the award's spirit, its history and the choice of this year's awardee.

The Hindu Renaissance Award is given by Hinduism Today magazine to leaders who inspire, strengthen and reinvigorate Hinduism and its millions of followers all over the globe," Easan Katir explained. "Such peerless leaders can come in many forms, reflecting the diverse ways of our faith. Some are silent sages, mystics who take us to the heights of our own being by the force their own enlightenment. Others are tireless social workers, servants of Hindus in need, helping children, priests, villages, the sick and the poor, living the Hindu ideals of ahimsa and compassion. Yet others are scholars, intellectual champions capable of debating deep scriptural truths and fighting in many arenas to protect dharma. This year's recipient belongs to more than one of these categories. Swami Avdheshananda Giri Maharaj was chosen the Acharya Mahamandaleshwar of the holy Juna Akhara and has excelled at the task."

Previous awardees were Swami Paramananda Bharati ('90), Swami Chidananda Saraswati ('91), Swami Chinmayananda ('92), Mata Amritanandamayi Ma ('93), Swami Satchidananda ('94), Pramukhswami Maharaj ('95), Satya Sai Baba ('96), Sri Chinmoy ('97), Swami Bua ('98), Swami Chidananda Saraswati of Divine Life Society ('99), Ma Yoga Shakti ('00), T. S. Sambamurthy Sivachariar ('01), Dada Vaswani ('02), Sri Tiruchi Mahaswamigal ('03), Dr. K. Pichai Sivacharya ('04), Swami Tejomayananda ('05), Ramesh Bhai Oza ('06) and Sri Balagandharanathaswami ('07).