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Hindus Calling on VI Government to Recognize Diwali (Festival of Lights) as Public Holiday in USVI

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Three Indian women with bengal fireworks, celebrating Indian Festival Diwali. By. GETTY IMAGES

Hindus are seeking a public holiday in the U.S. Virgin Islands on Diwali, the most popular of their festivals, starting 2022.

Hindu statesman Rajan Zed, in a statement in Nevada today, said that it was not fair to the USVI Hindu community as they had to be at work/school on their most popular festival while there were public holidays on other religious days.

Mr. Zed, who is president of Universal Society of Hinduism, suggested that territory's government needed to revisit its public holiday policies as the USVI is a multicultural society. He urged

Governor Albert Bryan and Lieutenant Tregenza to seriously examine what Mr. Zed says is an issue of fairness.

Mr. Zed stated that it was important for Hindu families to celebrate Diwali day together at home/temple. Public holiday on Diwali would ensure that and it would be “a step in the positive direction”.



Hindu statesman Rajan Zed

He also said awareness about other religions created by such holidays like Diwali would strengthen cohesion and unity in the overall USVI citizenry and make them well-nurtured and enlightened citizens.

As an interfaith gesture, Mr. Zed urged leaders of other religions/denominations active in USVI to come out in the support of Hindu brothers and sisters for Diwali holiday.

According to Mr. Zed, Hinduism is rich in festivals, and religious festivals are very dear and sacred to Hindus. Diwali, the festival of lights, aims at dispelling the darkness and lighting up the lives and symbolizes the victory of good over evil. Diwali falls on Monday, October 24, in 2022.

Hinduism, the oldest and third largest religion of the world, has about 1.2 billion adherents and moksh (liberation) is its ultimate goal. There are about three million Hindus in USA.

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