

## **HOTA Forum 2019 at Sri Sai Mandir, Regents Park**

The HOTA NSW Team organized the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual HOTA Forum meeting at Sri Sai Mandir, Regents Park on Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2019. HOTA (Hindu Organisations, Temples and Associations) is a forum of Hindu temples and other Hindu organisations working together to discuss and deliberate various topics of common interest, issues, ideas and opportunities with the objective of enhancing community service and preservation of Hindu culture.

HOTA was launched by Sri Swami Vigyananand Ji at 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian National Hindu Conference in April 2014. Since then the following organizations have hosted the event.

2014 - Sydney Sri Ayyappa Temple

2015 – Shri Shiv Mandir, Minto

2016 - Shri Venkateswara Temple, Helensburgh

2017 – Shri Ram Krishna Temple, Austral

2018 – Mukti Gupteshwar Mandir, Minto

This year Sri Sai Mandir hosted the event at their Mandir premises on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2019. As many as 26 Hindu Organizations comprising Temples, Associations and Organizations came together and presented their contributions and future ideas for community service, which will never be possible by working individually in isolation. Quoting Swami Ji, *“HOTA demonstrates that there is definitely added strength and value in sharing resources, networking, collaborating and working together...”*.

The proceedings of the day were well managed by Pandit Samir Vyas and Shri Sourabh Nigam with other representatives of Sri Sai Mandir. The event started with Prayer and Lighting the Lamp. This was followed by brief speeches from the chief guests, Shri Suresh Bangalore (Director of Sri Sai Mandir), Shri Prem Mishra (Mukti Gupteshwar Mandir), Shri Subramanian Ramamoorthi (VHP President) and Shri Rudra Kumar, HOTA Coordinator. Shri Subramanian Ramamoorthi spoke on the vision, benefits of conducting HOTA Forum as an annual project by networking and collaborating on a common platform.

Pandit Samir Vyas extended a warm welcome to the participating delegates and briefly explained about the origin of Sri Sai Mandir, and the weekly schedule of activities. He also highlighted the community service rendered by temple through various programs at the mandir premises.

As a special gesture, all the previous hosts of HOTA were honoured by the President Shri Subramanian Ramamoorthi. The HOTA baton was handed over by Sri Prem Misra (Mukti Gupteshwar Temple) to Shri Suresh Bangalore and other Sai Mandir representatives.

During the mid-session, 3 groups were formed for brainstorming on what the needs of Hindu community and how it can be addressed.

Group 1 – Temple: Leader: Shri Renga Rajan, Sydney Ayyappa Temple.

The group members came up with the following points:

- Establishing a 24X7 Central Security system to monitor all temples
- Organizing priests from Overseas and immigration matters
- Coming up with one Panchang applicable for all temples and organizations located in Sydney
- Sharing of resources

Group 2 – Organizations: Leader: Shri Satyanarayan Bhoopathy, Sewa Australia & Smt. Shirley Singh, Manav Dharam

The Organization team came up with the following points:

- Funding for Counselling services to Distressed families and new migrants
- Portal for guiding new migrants
- Blood donation drive collaborating with all HOTA members and other Hindu organizations

Group 3 – Associations: Leader: Shri Arunesh Seth & Parikshit Sarva Hindu Mahasabha

The associations team came up with the following list of action items:

- Involve Youth across various activities
- Organize Sport event for Hindu Youth
- Educating youth on Hindu values and significance
- Availing the services of Senior Citizens

The nominated leaders from the above three groups will contact other members in the group on a regular basis to plan and execute specific actions from their agreed action plan. In the next fortnight, they will be provided with their group member details and timeline for their specific action items. The leaders can also cross-contribute towards outcomes of other groups. For example, Shri Arunesh Seth from Association group has volunteered to help the Temple group in their need to establish a 24 X7 Central security system. Quarterly meetings will be held to report and monitor the progress. Sri Sai Mandir has kindly agreed to arrange the quarterly meetings.

The summary of outcome will be presented in 2020 HOTA Annual meeting.

The current year host Sri Sai Mandir will be hosting Raksha Bandhan in August 2019 at the Mandir premises. A formal invite will be sent to all HOTA member organizations when the date is finalized.

Here are a couple of photos for your viewing. More photos can be viewed using the link below.

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/rGKkxNdtZHNomZSy8>

