

"VASUDHAIVA KUTUMBAKAM"

HINDU HERITAGE AND CULTURAL VALUES

"संगच्छध्वं" May 2021

SPECIAL EDITION

MAY 2021



You don't have to disrespect and insult others simply to hold your own ground. If you do, that shows how shaky your own position is.

— Red Hairscrew

Green Party MP Shoebridge threw false allegations at VHP Australia on the floor of NSW Parliament, hopefully he would have realized the quote by now.

धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः

DHARMA PROTECTS THOSE WHO PROTECTS DHARMA

Congratulations, A Perfect example of Dharma winning over Adharma.

Hindu Community, Hindu Council, HOTA, VHP Australia Volunteers. (Protectors of Dharma)

Our Special thanks to all MP, MLC and to Mr Mark Latham who supported us (Dharma in our eyes) in this ride throughout. To put the whole episode of defaming and humiliation and the dharma yudha by the entire Hindu Commu-

nity and Sri Subbu ji President VHP Australia and Smt Akila ji Gen.Sec VHP Australia and Coordinator Special Religious Education (SRE).

Starting on Wednesday 3rd March, in the Education Estimates Committee meeting, Mr David Shoebridge had enquired to Education Minister Sarah Mitchell about the vetting process for Providers of SRE in NSW government schools. He specifically targeted the

Hindu Providers, Vishva Hindu Parishad Australia (VHP Australia), which he described as "a right-wing Hindu organisation that is considered a military extremist religious organisation by the CIA", and inquired whether the Department of Education was checking what this organisation was teaching in schools.

The Minister and Department of Education explained the screening process, and took the specific questions on notice.

Following day, at a Multicultural Estimates Committee session, Mr Shoebridge came up with same question and repeated the allegation against VHP

Australia – to Multicultural Minister Mr Geoff Lee. Mr Shoebridge acknowledged the response he had received from then-Education Secretary Mark Scott - and I

quote: "The NSW Department of Education has close connections with the NSW Police Force. We have police officers who work with us. We are informed



We want to share this is an unprecedented and memorable event for all us. VHP Australia has more than 255 teachers, teaching in 80 schools in various suburbs, who volunteer their time every week to prepare and teach children about their Hindu dharma. These teachers are contributing to Australian society and to the schools in which they teach

by them that the organisation that you have spoken of today is not identified as a terrorist organisation or a terrorist organisation in New South Wales. They are not known as an organisation of concern in New South Wales. Where New South Wales police are aware of any con-

cerns regarding any group or organisation known to be in our schools, they advise us immediately."

Mr Shoebridge had been given this answer from the Department of Education – stating clearly that VHP Australia is not identified as a terrorist organisation in NSW or

as an organisation of concern.

Mr Shoebridge went ahead and made the claim on 4th March in the Parliament, Despite of the unequivocal response all the authorities.

After approx. 70 days of dharma yudha

on the same floor, state Parliament 3MPs cutting across the party lines severely criticized Mr Shoebridge's Hinduphobia and hatred towards Hindu institutions.

Mr Mark Latham, in particular, went really hard on Mr Shoebridge. Finally,

the floor passed a resolution for Mr Shoebridge to apologize to Hindu community in general and in particular to VHP Australia.

All are still healing from Mr Shoebridge's baseless and hurtful allegations. But both Subbu ji and Akila ji put their foot

down and went about to respond and not react nor give up comprehensively to the allegations, and formed the army (सैन्यम्) from various political levels and used Mr Shoebridge's Allegation itself as a weapon to show the strength (बलम्;) of Dharma and truth.

Credibility of VHP Australia is firmly established in the leadership of Smt Akila ji, Sri Subbu ji and in the support of all the Hindu community and those Genuine Australian leaders with out who this victory and stability of goodwill would have been impossible.

Article by:

Mr. Rajagopal Maddali

Crestwood VHP SS Volunteer





Mrs. Akila Ramarathinam
National General Secretary
Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia Inc

16 March 2021

Dear Mrs Ramarathinam

I am writing in response to comments made in the NSW Parliament about your organisation during a hearing on education on 3 March 2021.

I am sorry to hear of the concerns this has raised for you and your organisation and members of the Hindu community.

As you are aware, providers of Special Religious Education (SRE) /Special Education in Ethics are approved by the Minister for Education and I am pleased to confirm that Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia has had approval since 19 October 1998 and been a longstanding partner in our schools.

As we stated on the record during the hearing, the Department is not aware of any concerns in respect of Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia, as an approved provider of Special Religious Education. I attach overleaf the comments we made on the record in Parliament at the conclusion of the hearing.

Our Department remains committed to working with all faiths within the community and to offering our students a multi-cultural education. We very much recognise the contribution of volunteers working in our SRE providers.

We would be very happy to meet with you to discuss your concerns further.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ruth Owen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ruth Owen CBE
Deputy Secretary, Learning Improvement
NSW Department of Education





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Mrs Akila Ramarathinam
National General Secretary
Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia Inc.
akilar@vhp.org.au

File Ref: M21/268

Dear Mrs Ramarathinam,

Thank you for your correspondence from 21 March 2021 to the Minister for Multiculturalism, the Hon Dr Geoff Lee MP, conveying concerns from the Hindu community in New South Wales. Your correspondence has been forwarded to me as Chief Executive Officer of Multicultural NSW for reply.

Undoubtably, the Hindu community in New South Wales has contributed to making this State the most peaceful and harmonious multicultural society in the world. It is testament to our success as a multicultural society that, across all our differences, we all live together, work together, celebrate together, and support each other in times of need.

In relation to your concern about comments made by Mr David Shoebridge MLC, Member of the Legislative Council, I refer you to the responses made by the Minister for Multiculturalism and myself during the Budget Estimates hearing of 5 March 2021 and to the responses from the Department of Education and NSW Police Force cited during the hearing.

I also enclose a copy of correspondence from the Minister for Multiculturalism to Mr Shoebridge on the matter.

Thank you for taking the time to bring this matter to the Government's attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. La Posta".

Joseph La Posta
Chief Executive Officer

CC: The Hon. Geoff Lee MP, Minister for Multiculturalism

Encl. Minister for Multiculturalism letter to Mr David Shoebridge MLC - Hindu community concerns

multicultural.nsw.gov.au



Joseph La Posta
CEO - Multicultural NSW



The Hon. Dr Geoff Lee MP
Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education
Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans



M21/326

Mr. David Shoebridge MLC
Member of the Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
david.shoebridge@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Shoebridge,

I have received correspondence from the community regarding your assertions at the 2021 Budget Estimates hearing in relation to a community organisation called Vishwa Hindu Parishad, which is currently a provider of Special Religious Education in New South Wales public schools. Please see the correspondence enclosed for your reference.

The reference to the organisation as "far-right Hindu extremist" and a "militant extremist religious organisation" has upset members of the Hindu community. My Agency, Multicultural NSW, has enquired with NSW Police Force and the NSW Department of Education and I am advised that Vishwa Hindu Parishad is not a known terrorism group within NSW.

At a time when promoting community harmony is critical your comments have unfortunately created divisiveness and distress. Whilst I am hopeful this was not your intention, I encourage you to consider the impact your comments have made in fostering social cohesion at this time and apologise for any offence they may have caused.

I am happy to discuss this matter with you further to address community concerns.

Yours sincerely,

The Hon. Dr Geoff Lee MP
Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education
Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans

Encl. Correspondence conveying concerns from the Hindu community.

Mr. David Shoebridge
Greens New South Wales



VHP SANSKRIT SCHOOL

The Hon Minister Lee statement in Parliament last 12th May 2021 Thursday --[Hansard](#)

I recognize the great work of the VHP Sanskrit School in New South Wales. Today New South Wales has a robust Hindu community. According to the 2016 census 189,400 people in New South Wales identified as Hindu. Hinduism is one of the most youthful religions in Australia. Some 34 per cent of Hindus are under the age of 14 and 66 per cent are under the age of

34. Hindus have established many temples and celebrate a myriad of Hindu festivals, which I am fortunate to attend in my capacity as both the member for Parramatta and the multiculturalism Minister.

In that respect, on Saturday 17 April I was pleased to join the VHP Sanskrit School—which is part of Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia, or VHP—at its

training day for Sanskrit teachers in Quakers Hill.

I saw firsthand the work it does to ensure that generations of Australian children learn ancient Sanskrit and absorb its messages of peace, harmony and inclusiveness.

The VHP Sanskrit School is an integral part of language education in New South Wales. I congratulate the volunteers on their passion, dedication and enthusiasm for teaching the Sanskrit language and culture to the next generation.

The VHP Sanskrit School is a community organization that aims to promote the principles of unity in diversity, social cohesion, multiculturalism, harmony and inclusiveness in Australia.

About the remarks by Mr. David Shoebridge

I put on record my concerns about the remarks that were made by Mr. David Shoebridge from the other place about the Vishva Hindu Parishad during a recent budget estimates hearing. I have conveyed to him my view that his comments were unhelpful and I have asked that he reconsider them, noting the undesirable impact they have had on community harmony.

The NSW Department of Education and the NSW Police Force have stated that VHP is not an organisation of any concern in this State. New South Wales is one of the

most successful multicultural societies in the world. We come from more than 307 ancestries, speak nearly 220 languages and practice nearly 150 religions. That is a lot of diversity. But here is the thing: What makes us a success is that we find unity in our diversity.

Being a multicultural society means that we are connected to the world. We have enshrined in legislation the principles of multiculturalism and we actively live out those principles every day. Our resilience as a multicul-

tural society can be measured by the way we respond to global issues as a unified community. No matter what happens overseas, we must remain united by our common commitment to Australia. In New South Wales we work together and discuss our differences with mutual respect. Overseas events can have a substantial impact on our communities and we recognise that. But the great thing about living in Australia is that we have learned to live alongside each other and to celebrate our many common values and priorities.

From the First Peoples to the newest arrivals, we all have a stake in the future of this land and we all share a vision for the future in which we all stand together, united by our Australian values.

I congratulate the VHP Australia

New South Wales is a place of acceptance, opportunity and hope for a better life. At all times, and particularly during times of difficulty, we must come together in support of those shared ideals. It is part of the great success story of multiculturalism in New South Wales that, despite our differences, we can still live together and support each

other in times of need .

I congratulate the VHP Sanskrit School as well as VHP National General Secretary and Hindu Dharma Scripture Coordinator Mrs Akila Ramarathinam. I thank all the volunteers for the work they do in the community. Their efforts ensure that our children understand the value of history, language, culture and the eternal mes-

sages of peace and harmony, which is so important to our future.



Hon. Dr. Geoff Lee
Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism Seniors and Veterans



Thank You!



Our sincere gratitude to

Swami Shrikananda ji-Chinmaya Mission

Smt. Malarvili Vytheeswaran- Jet Australia

Mr. Murray Norman-CEO, Christian SRE

Mr. Vic Alhadeff

Mr. Satch Thanga-Saiva Manram

AFSRE

Hindu Council of Australia

HOTA-All Hindu Temples and organisations

SRE Volunteer Teachers, VHP SS Volunteer Teachers

To all MP's, MLC's & Ministers.



धन्यवाद

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ధన్యవాదాలు

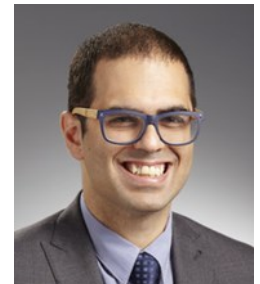
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Official Website of NSW Parliament asking David Shoebridge to apologize for his statements about VHP Australia:

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/Hansard/Pages/HansardResult.aspx#/docid/HANSARD-1820781676-85656>



धन्यवादः

Thank you

VHP Australia thanks the community members and well-wishers for their unwavering support extended to our team all over Australia. The past few weeks have been difficult. We acknowledge the efforts and thank all those who have responded voluntarily. We look forward to your continued support and are hopeful that Australia's multicultural policies work equally for everyone.

From VHP Australia Family



VHP @ its best



COVID-19 HOTLINE
FOR INDIAN COMMUNITY IN AUSTRALIA

WE CAN HELP

Are you anxious about your family and friends in India? Do you want more information about the actual situation in India or want to get resources or help for someone?

Reach out to us and our team will connect you to the right people on the ground to get the required support from reliable sources across India.

CALL 0478 478 108

Email: HinduHelpline@vhpsa.org.au

Web: www.HinduHelpline.org.au

Hindu HELPLINE

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Love to make a Difference?

Join the Australian Defence Force as a *Hindu Chaplain*.

Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia is offering an entry pathway to Hindu Australians to serve our country using our Dharmic knowledge.

Do what you believe in!

For more information contact the VHP office in your state. Submit your interest at this link: www.tinyurl.com/ADFHinduChaplain

NAVY ARMY AIR FORCE