



RAKSHA BANDHAN 2019



On Saturday the 3rd of August 2019, Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia Inc. – South Australia (VHP SA) chapter, organised the 2nd Raksha Bandhan festival.

VHP SA, has created HOTA Forum (Hindu Organisations, Temples & Associations) platform to facilitate interconnectivity among the various Hindu organisations and to create additional value with greater focus on the needs of the local Hindu community.

VHP SA celebrates Raksha Bandhan as a HOTA Forum event due to its strong focus on family values, female empowerment and the celebration of universal fellowship.

The event was very successful in presence of over 450 community leaders and representatives from more than 40 organisations of South Australia, who came here from across 5 different countries – Bangladesh, Bhutan, Fiji, India and Nepal.



Shri Bharat Raghuram, Kumari Shradha Sriram and Smt Sunaina Sharma

In the backdrop of shlokam chanting by young students of Bala Sanskar Kendra (BSK), the event started by Deepa Prajwalan (lighting lamp) by a group of esteemed female community leaders. After the prayers, children sang the Australian National Anthem.



Chief guests with members of the community during deepa prajwalan

In the welcome keynote address, VHP SA President Shri Rajendra Pandey explained the idea behind Raksha Bandhan, with the need for organisations and community to come together for tackling the bigger and wider issues that are of critical importance not only for our development in Australia but also for wellbeing of our people.

The event was hosted by young MCs' – Shri Bharat Raghuram, Shradha Sriram and Smt Sunaina Sharma – featuring performances by various local artists.



Students of Bala Sanskar Kendra chanting shlokams

A Bharatanatyam performance by Dr Geetha Sadagopan and her young team gave a wonderful start to the cultural performances with the blessings of Lord Ganesh.



Dr Geetha Sadagopan and young VHP volunteers performing a Ganesha vandana dance

Rajendra Pandey exhorted the community leaders to focus on imbibing Hindu traditions in their communities as our Vedic values promote respect for women. He emphasised that the increase in rate of domestic violence can only be curbed by prevention and for that we have to go back to Vedas and our Dharma. To promote this goal VHP launched Hindu Women Helpline.



President of VHP SA Rajendra Pandey, giving the key note address



Hon Jing Lee launching Hindu Women Helpline and handing over the mobile handsets to volunteers

Hon Jing Lee, MLC and Assistant Minister to the Premier inaugurated Hindu Women Helpline by handing over the mobile handsets to the 9 volunteers.

Smt. Shailja Mishra, member of Hindu Women



Smt Shailja Mishra

Forum of VHP, stressed on the spiritual importance of Rakhee and its origin. She highlighted that traditional Rakhi or Raksha is offered by sisters to bless their brothers and not seek protection. This is similar to the Raksha tied in by priests when we visit temples or organise religious sacraments.

Members of the Hindu Women's forum thanked and tied Raksha Sutras

to representatives from agencies that protect and look after Australians – Major Chris Roe (Australian Army), Chris Howe (South Australian Ambulance Services), Ms Carly White (Metropolitan Fire Services) and Sergeant Merv Yazarloo (SAPOL).



Representatives from agencies that protect Australia being honoured by members of Hindu Women Forum

The community leaders were then invited to tie Raksha Sutra to a person they didn't know before, to establish a caring relationship.

Everyone then participated in a vow, **'I am tying this Rakhi as a promise to protect you and together we will look after and protect Australia'**.

Each organisation was introduced individually to rest of the gathered community members, to help forge a relationship that will last a life-time.



Smt. Suma Rudrapatna in a classical vocal performance

It was followed by a classical vocal performance by Smt Suma Rudrapatna. She has been professionally trained in classical Carnatic music from Late Guru Sri. Belakavadi Srinivasa Iyengar and Smt. B V Vijayalakshmi.

Hon Jing Lee MLC, Assistant Minister to the Premier, congratulated Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia for bringing together 40 organisations from 5 different countries. She spoke about



Hon Jing Lee MLC: Impact of Santana Dharma

In recognition of Hindu women who have made a difference in the community, the 'Tejaswini – Woman of Substance' awards were handed over by Hon Jing Lee. She presented Tejaswini certificates to all winners.

spirituality in Buddhist tradition and related it to the Sanatan Dharma followed by Hindus. She expressed her support for the initiative of coordinating HOTA Forum in South Australia and urged the community organisations to continue to support each other.

She referred to the reason as to why number '8' is considered lucky number for Chinese Buddhists and how it signifies infinity and the eightfold path that is important for her community and encouraged the Hindu community to live by their Dharma too.



Winners of Tejaswini – Woman of Substance awardees with Hon Jing Lee

The award recipients were Smt Aneeta Pillay (Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia), Smt Bharti Garg (Jai Durga Sankirtan Mandal), Smt Bhavna Dubey Chaudhary (Gayatri Pariwar, Adelaide), Smt Deepa Sapkota (Adelaide Nepali Samaj Australia), Dr Preetam Ganu (Adelaide Marathi Mandal), Smt Harshini Ben Harish Panchani (Shree Swaminarayan Temple Adelaide, Under Narnarayan Dev, Bhuj Kutch), Smt Kavitha Tangeda (South Australia Telangana Association), Smt Keerthi Rajimon (Saaketham Adelaide), Smt Maneesha Salunkhe (Adelaide Sarvajanic Ganeshotsav Samiti), Ms Maria Ceravolo also known as Bhairavi Ma (Kali Bhavan South Australia), Namita Dutta (Bengali Cultural Association of South Australia), Smt Nandita Mazumdar (Chinmaya Mission, Adelaide), Smt Neelam Chahal (Jat Mahasabha South Australia), Smt Neha Patel (Vaishnav Sangh of Adelaide), Smt Nita Jitendrabhai Patel (BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir), Smt Nivetha Subramanian (Vedic and Cultural Centre of Australia), Smt Parul Joshi (United Indians of South Australia), Smt Prem Lata (Shree Sita Ram Ramayan Mandali of South Australia), Smt Ramya Shiva Shankar (Adelaide Kannada Sangha), Smt Reenarani Jakki (Adelaide Telangana Association), Smt Ripa Rani Deb (Bangladesh Puja and Cultural Society of South Australia), Smt Shivani Garg (Divya Jyoti Jagrati Sansthan), Smt Shruti Ghangurde (Adelaide Marathi Mandal), Smt Sree Malladi (Telugu Association of South Australia), Smt Sreelatha Rajesh (Bharatheeya Hindu International Malayalee Association), Smt Sridevi (Shirdi Saibaba Community and Cultural Org of SA), Smt Suma Rudrapatna (Shruthi Adelaide), Smt Suraksha Gurung (Adelaide Nepal), Smt Toma Ghosh (Satsang Oceania, Adelaide), Smt Vasantha Lakshmanan (ISKCON Adelaide), Smt Yog Maya Bhattarai (Australian Hindu Samaj Sewa Samiti).



Smt Katrine Hildyard

Ms Katrine Hildyard MP, Member for Reynell addressed the community organisations gathered together and applauded Vishva Hindu Parishad for providing a platform where people from diverse backgrounds can connect with each other. She understands the values of being part of a caring community and supporting and working with others to make a difference.

Shri Russell Wortley, Member of Legislative Council and Smt Dana Wortley MP, State Member of Torrens also addressed the Hindu community of South Australia. Russell and Dana have always been a strong supporter of the Hindu community of South Australia.



Students of Temple of Fine Arts in an Odissi performance

Next was a beautiful Odissi dance by the students of the Temple of Fine Arts Adelaide. They presented Basanta Pallavi.

In recognition of the volunteers, certificates



Shri Russell and Smt Dana Wortley: strong supporters of Hindu community

were handed over by Hon Jing Lee. She presented certificates to all winners.

The award recipients were Shri Abhijit Moholkar (Adelaide Marathi Mandal), Shri Anand Bhatia (Bengali Cultural Association of South Australia), Shri Aravind Pindi (South Australia Telangana Association), Smt Bindu Anantula (Telugu Association of South Australia), Shri Biplob Kumar Bal (Satsang Oceania, Adelaide), Smt Dayaben Desai (Gayatri Pariwar, Adelaide), Shri Deo Chand (Shree Sita Ram Ramayan Mandali of South Australia), Shri Dhiren Bhai Pindolia (Shree Swaminarayan Temple Adelaide, Under Narnarayan Dev, Bhuj Kutch), Shri Dinesh Lade (United Indians of South Australia), Shri Gaurav Phour (Jat Mahasabha South Australia), Smt Hema Nepal (Kali Bhavan South Australia), Shri Hillol Das (Bangladesh Puja and Cultural Society of South Australia), Shri Jaffee Kapoor (Divya Jyoti Jagrati Sansthan), Smt Kavita Bhardwaj (Chinmaya Mission, Adelaide), Shri Kiran Kumar Gurram (Adelaide Telangana Association), Shri Konal Shah (Vaishnav Sangh of Adelaide), Shri Mahen Singh (Shree Sita Ram Ramayan Mandali of South Australia), Shri Manoj Kumar (Adelaide Kannada Sangha), Shri Nanda Kasuba (JET Australia Foundation, Adelaide), Shri Nandkumar Gaonkar (Adelaide Sarvajanic Ganeshotsav Samiti), Shri Nawaraj Pant (Adelaide Nepal), Shri Prashanth Prabhakar (Vedic and Cultural Centre of Australia), Shri Puskar Sharma Poudyal (Australian Hindu Samaj Sewa Samiti), Shri Rakesh Paul (Jai Durga Sankirtan Mandal), Shri Satish Chand (Manavta Ramayan Mandali), Shri Shyamananda Krishna Das (ISKCON Adelaide), Shri Sreejith Kesavan (Saaketham Adelaide), Shri Srikanth Sayeenathan (Shruthi Adelaide), Shri Suresh Kannan Nair (Bharatheeya Hindu International Malayalee Association), Shri Tejas Kapadia (Shirdi Saibaba Community and Cultural Org of SA), Smt Tika Katel-Poudel (Kali Bhavan

South Australia), Shri Velladurai Nadar (Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia), Shri Vipul Jayprakashbhai Patel (BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir), Shri Yadu Acharya (Adelaide Nepali Samaj Australia).

It was followed by recognition of young volunteers. They were awarded Abhimanyu Hindu Youth Award.



HOTA Volunteer award winners with Hon Jing Lee

The winners were Aditya Rudra Pandey (Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia), Alisha Verma (Jai Durga Sankirtan Mandal), Arihant Aditya Sharma (Shree Sita Ram Ramayan Mandali of South Australia), Aritro Chakraborty (Satsang Oceania, Adelaide), Arundhati Banerjee (Shruthi Adelaide), Basu Dabadi (Australian Hindu Samaj Sewa Samiti), Devbhai Vipul Patel (Shree Swaminarayan Temple Adelaide, Under Narnarayan Dev, Bhuj Kutch), Emon Pritam (Bangladesh Puja and Cultural Society of South Australia), Gautam Dhillon (Divya Jyoti Jagrati Sansthan), Gazal Dhakal (Adelaide Nepal), Kabita Acharya (Adelaide Nepali Samaj Australia), Karthik

Konakanchi (Shirdi Saibaba Community and Cultural Org of SA), Kashvi Velidandla (Telugu Association of South Australia), Lijo Sayanth Santhosh (Bharatheeya Hindu International Malayalee Association), Nandana R Binu (Bharatheeya Hindu International Malayalee Association), Nandani Rajagopalan (ISKCON Adelaide), Praneetha Vadlakonda (Adelaide Telangana Association),



Abhimanyu Youth award winners with Hon Jing Lee

Prisha Prashanth (Vedic and Cultural Centre of Australia), Pritha Prashanth (Vedic and Cultural Centre of Australia), Rucha Parikh (Vaishnav Sangh of Adelaide), Samadarshi (South Australia Telangana Association), Sandra Raji (Saaketham Adelaide), Saraswathi (South Australia Telangana Association), Sayyam Bhujbal (United Indians of South Australia), Shrey Anilbhai Patel (BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir), Shreya Nidumolu (Chinmaya Mission, Adelaide), Shreya Shiva Shankar (Adelaide Kannada Sangha), Tanvita Naik (Adelaide Sarvajanic Ganeshotsav Samiti), Viraj Lohate (Adelaide Marathi Mandal).

Next, it was a Kathak performance by Mithali Mukherjee. Through her dance, she showed glimpses of Lord Krishna's life. How Krishna used to trouble Radha on her way to Yamuna River, spoiling her sand painting and dropping her flowers.

After that she did a music parlance called Tarana. In this the dancer exactly replicates the percussion sound in her foot.



Shri Raja Mohan Kambhoji (left) handing over the baton of HOTA Forum to Shri Himanshu Jani (right)

Each year any HOTA partner organisation can volunteer to be the host for the HOTA forum meetings. Shri Shirdi Sai Sanasthan was the HOTA host for the year 2018-2019.

Shri Raja Mohan Kambhoji, President of Shri Shirdi Saibaba



Smt Mithali Mukherjee's Kathak performance



The students of Vedic and Cultural Centre of Australia singing Mahishasura mardini stotram

Community and Cultural Org of SA passed over the HOTA Forum baton to Shri Himanshu Jani, Director of BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir, to host 2020 HOTA Forum events. In his acceptance speech, Shri Sandir Bhavsarai highlighted vision of the organisation, and its activities.

The evening was energised with singing of Mahishasura mardini stotram, by students of Vedic and Cultural Centre of Australia.

To recognise contribution of Hindu senior citizens to the community, the Agastya – Senior Citizen Awards were handed over by Hon Jing Lee to all winners.



The Agastya award winners with Hon Jing Lee

The award recipients were Shri Ajaib Singh Chahal (Jat Mahasabha

South Australia), Smt Bhagyalakshmi Rajagopalan (Bharatheeya Hindu International Malayalee Association), Shri Bikramjit Sen (Bengali Cultural Association of South Australia), Smt Chandrika Singh (Shree Sita Ram Ramayan Mandali of South Australia), Smt Dayawati Pandey (Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia), Dr Adi Purusa Krsna Das (ISKCON Adelaide), Dr Jyothi Thalluri (Telugu Association of South Australia), Shri Harinder Rewal (Jai Durga Sankirtan Mandal), Smt Indiramma Ramaiah (Adelaide Kannada Sangha), Smt Jayanthi Amma (Shirdi Saibaba Community and Cultural Org of SA), Shri Jitendrabhai Patel (BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir), Mr Joe Simon Russo (Kali Bhavan South Australia), Shri Lakshmi Pathi (Shruthi Adelaide), Shri Prabhakar Hakke (Adelaide Marathi Mandal), Shri Rajagopalan Perinchery Kulappura (Saaketham Adelaide), Shri Ram Bahadur Thapa (Adelaide Nepali Samaj Australia), Shri Rameshchandra Patel (United Indians of South Australia), Shri Ranjit Kumer Das (Bangladesh Puja and Cultural Society of South Australia), Shri Sanjay Raje Adelaide Sarvajanik Ganeshotsav Samiti), Shri Tek Bahadur Bhattarai (Australian Hindu Samaj Sewa Samiti), Shri Vittal Shettigara (Vedic and Cultural Centre of Australia).

Kautilya – Hindu Entrepreneur Award was instituted to recognise migrants, who have not only successfully established their own business but are also supporting the community. Hon Jing Lee presented Kautilya certificates to all awardees.

The award recipients were Shri Abhilash K Nair (Homes Ahead) – Bharatheeya Hindu International Malayalee Association; Shri Amit Gohel (Precision Steel Detailers Pty Ltd) – Vaishnav Sangh of Adelaide; Shri Anish Nair (Twin Frame Media) – Saaketham Adelaide; Shri Dilli Ram Adhikari (Sam's Continental & Restaurant) – Australian Hindu Samaj Sewa Samiti; Smt Gautami Patel (GR Phones) – Adelaide Kannada Sangha; Shri Govinda Sapkota (SAGE Home Loans) – Adelaide Nepali Samaj Australia; Shri Gurjinder Singh (Chahat Restaurant) – Jat Mahasabha South Australia; Shri Harish Reddy Bisam (Integrated Accountants) – Adelaide Telangana Association; Shri Jatin and Shri Manik Luthra (Royal Indian Groceries) – Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia; Shri

Jayesh Patel (Shayona Homes) – BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir; Shri Kamaldeep Singh (Travel Care) – Adelaide Sarvajanic Ganeshotsav Samiti; Shri Manu Gupta (Stunning Homes) – Jai Durga Sankirtan Mandal; Shri Navdeep Agnihotri (OMNI Restaurant and Function Hall) – Vedic and Cultural Centre



The Kautilya award winners with Hon Jing Lee

of Australia; Shri Nishant Gupta (Hanu Computers) – ISKCON Adelaide; Shri Parag Bhingare (PB Web) – Adelaide Marathi Mandal; Shri Parag Desai (Crust Pizza, Norwood) – Gayatri Pariwar, Adelaide; Shri Parshottam Odhavji (OM Packaging) – United Indians of South Australia; Shri Pranit Kumar Saha (MetricsERP) – Satsang Oceania, Adelaide; Shri Rajeshwar Singh – Shree Sita Ram Ramayan Mandali of South Australia; Shri Ramesh Bidari (Business Planet) – Adelaide Nepal; Shri Ravi Condapatti Srinivasulu (Adelaide Driving Academy) – Telugu Association of South Australia and South Australia Telangana Association; Shri Sanjay Chandiramani (Mortgage Choice Adelaide) – Shruthi Adelaide; Shri Siva Madike (Independent Living and Mobility Equipment) – Chinmaya Mission, Adelaide; Shri Vijay Kataria & Smt Asha Kataria (Baba Alterations and Dry Cleaning) – Shirdi Saibaba Community and Cultural Org of SA.

VHP SA introduced three new awards this year.

The first one, Gau Rakshak Samman – for treating all living beings from animals down to insects and tiny creatures with great respect – to Aimee Weir and The Vegan Alliance.

The second one, Jeevan Daan Sammaan – Blood Donation Award – to Smt Naga Deepthi Tumuluri.

The third one, Saraswati Samman – Meritorious Student Award, to Bharat Raghuram; Nishan Chahal and Tharun Kathir.

The last cultural performance was a



Special Gau Rakshak award winner Smt Aimee Weir with her partner and Hon Jing Lee

Nepali folk dance. The team performed on the Kauda song of the 'Magar Community'. Kauda is one of the oldest and popular songs of Magar people.



Jeevan Daan Sammaan winner Smt Naga Deepthi Tumuluri



Saraswati Samman award winners Shri Bharat Raghuram, Nishan Chahal and Tharun Kathir with Hon Jing Lee

All of the performances were of the highest quality and a testament to the diverse and ancient art forms of the subcontinent. Showing a variety of different skills and talents, the artists were impeccable in their preparation and output.



Shri Johar Garg from Jai Durga Sankirtan Mandal

A formal vote of thanks was presented by Shri Johar Garg from Jai Durga Sankirtan Mandal, the year 2021 HOTA host who once again congratulated the Hindu community of South Australia for coming together and



Members of the Nepali community performing a folk dance

thanked VHP SA for organising Rakshabandhan 2019.

The gathering concluded with a gala dinner.



Volunteers of the Vishva Hindu Parishad - SA, backbone of the event and the organisation