

# Gold Coast Hindu Cultural Association News...



• GCHCA representatives meeting the Councillor Margaret Grummitt

**By Mr Kartik Menon**  
Joint-Secretary  
Gold Coast Hindu Cultural Association

A LARGE number of Australian children who belong to immigrant South Asian families learn the classical dance-drama form of bharathanatyam from a young age. To those who practice bharathanatyam outside the Indian Sub-continent, learning the art form has become a manifestation of the performance of ethnic and cultural identity. It has been suggested that for fear of complete acculturation, immigrant parents see the arts as the standard vehicle for the cultural training of subsequent generations of South Asian youth whose ties to the homeland are even more tenuous.

Proponents of the art form describe bharathanatyam as the quintessential rite of passage among the South Asian bourgeoisie. For both the immigrant South Asian and the subsequent generations of South Asians born and raised in the West, bharathanatyam is valued as an art form

which is a 'carrier of culture' and figures crucially in the construction of 'Indianness.'

"I have had the opportunity to learn this divine art form from a very young age and I've thoroughly enjoyed it. It is a unique art where your mind, soul and muscles coordinate beautifully. I would urge every parent in our community to let their children learn this wonderful art," says Dr Vasugi Sithirasanen, who volunteers her time to choreograph dance performances for community events and has a daughter who is currently learning the art form.


In its bid to preserve the cultural and spiritual identity of children from South Asian backgrounds, the Gold Coast Hindu Cultural Association has embarked on a project to build an iconic Hindu Cultural Precinct within Gold Coast City. Apart from a place of worship and an educational centre, the precinct will feature a prominent performing arts centre which will be used as a learning and performance space for Indian arts.

"Many of our children on the Goldcoast and surrounding areas are currently learning bharathanatyam. However, we do not have a space to call our own and we have to resort to hiring community centers and school halls or even use the homes of individuals for classes and concerts. Often, many of our children and teachers have to travel long distances to access such spaces. Having a cultural centre for Indian performing arts is critical in ensuring that we as a community are able to promote arts education and take it to the next level on the Gold Coast," said Professor Gulasekaran Rajaguru, whose six-year old daughter learns bharathanatyam.


The Gold Coast Hindu Cultural Association (GCHCA) seeks philanthropic support from members of the community to make this project viable. To make a tax deductible contribution and to find out more about the initiatives of the association, members of the community may contact Mr Indrajit Siva, Secretary of the GCHCA through email [gchcan@gmail.com](mailto:gchcan@gmail.com).

GCHCA is receiving wider community support including from every levels of the governments. Recently the Councillor Margaret Grummitt, Gold Coast City Council, has wished and offered her full support to build the Gold Coast Hindu Education and Cultural Precinct to cater the diverse and vibrant community in and around Gold Coast region.

Regular monthly Bajans are held on the third Friday of every month from 7.15pm to 9.15pm at the Helensvale Community Centre, 31 Discovery Drive, Helensvale. We will be having our next Bajan on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2013. All are welcome.



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