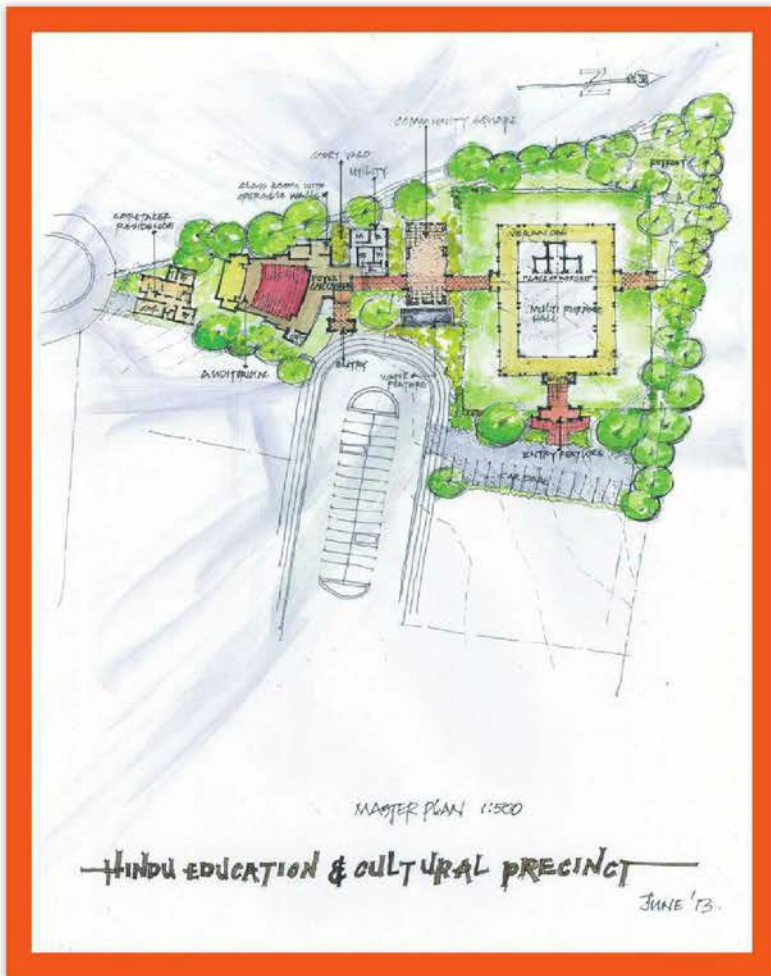


# Land acquired for Hindu precinct project

The first step in founding a Hindustani cultural and creative arts centre is now accomplished



Project concept of Hindu Education and Cultural precinct, and inset (Gold Coast Hindu Association President Dr Muthu)



BY  
TASNEEM  
ZAVERY

Have you always desired to learn Hindustani classical literature, dance forms, music and craft all under one roof? Look no further, as the Gold Coast Hindu Cultural Association's (GCHCA) vision to create a Hindu Education and Cultural Precinct is not far from becoming a reality! Having recently acquired a piece of land measuring 5300sqm in Arundel on the Gold Coast from the Gold Coast City Council for this project, GCHCA is excited that step one of their proposed plan has been accomplished.

Indian Link met with Dr V

Muthukkumarasamy, President of the GCHCA to understand more about this unique one-of-a-kind venture in Australia.

"We wanted to pass down our wealth of knowledge to future generations as we saw a gap among emerging youth in the aspects of religion and culture. We envisioned such a forum to enhance, facilitate and provide cultural and religious engagement for the betterment of a responsible and good individual," says Dr Muthukkumarasamy, commenting on the concept behind this project.

The idea to build this precinct came about in 2012, when an eight-member interim committee comprising of a barrister, engineers, accountants and medical practitioners was set up to study the feasibility and viability of the project, which stands at an estimated cost of \$5 million. The interim committee sent a proposal

for this noble venture to the Gold Coast City Council in early 2012, and received confirmation of the land in the heart of the city only recently.

The interim committee offered recommendations in favour of creating the Education and Cultural precinct, and facilitated formation of the current 11-member committee elected at the inaugural AGM of the association held in August 2012.

So how will the GCHCA set about generating funds?

"People from across the globe and various parts of Australia have donated generous amounts. In a span of nine months we have received about half a million dollars. For Phase 1, currently we require \$2 million. People who have donated over \$10,000 before September 2013 have become Founder Members. People who donate \$5000 are

eligible to become Life Members. We urge the public to come forward and contribute as little as \$2 and upwards towards the building fund. We have set up a bank account in December 2012 and all donations received for the GCHCA Building Donation Account are tax deductible," says Dr Muthukkumarasamy.

"We are very particular about transparency and audit accounts are available on the website for everyone to view," adds Dr Muthukkumarasamy.

Work on the precinct has already begun with the committee busy with the Development Application, engaging with town planners and architects. As this is a virgin tract of land the application will be lodged by the middle of November. "The approval for the application will take between six to nine months, after which a Building Application will be lodged; the approval period is three months and finally we will be sending out tenders for the construction process of the building. During the construction process we need to keep in mind Hinduism architecture - proper natural light, ventilation and space based on *vastu*, but also keeping in mind Australian standards as we are looking at an ecofriendly environment," explains Dr Muthukkumarasamy.

GCHCA is looking at series of activities to be held at the precinct such as classical music and dance, a place of worship for people, classical language classes for all ages, workshops and seminars on spirituality and cultural awareness, yoga and meditation, community events and celebrations, and youth-related activities, to name a few.

Dr Muthukkumarasamy says facilities such as libraries and resources will be provided to get easy access to history, literature, arts and also extending assistance like legal services, counselling and free medical services to people from lower economic backgrounds.

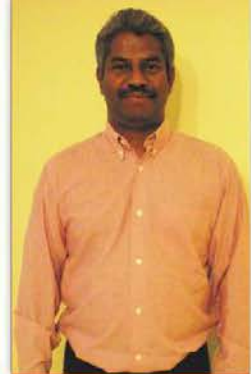
"We want the Gold Coast Hindu Education and Cultural Precinct to be an example to the rest of Australia and the world in broadening their views and making room for more creative communities. All are welcome to participate and be a part of this innovative institution, we are open to feedback and professional expertise from anyone and everyone. We invite everyone to support the noble objects of the association to join as life members and supporters," says Dr Muthukkumarasamy.

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