



Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia Inc., WA Chapter

Inauguration of VHP WA Chapter- 29th of October, 2016

The Western Australia chapter was launched in October 2016. The activities started in Perth have been the inaugural Diwali function in October 2016

Diwali - 29th of October, 2016

This auspicious occasion of Diwali, the 29 th of October, 2016, saw the successful inauguration of the Vishva Hindu Parishad, Western Australia chapter in the Butler Community Centre, with Mrs. Neha Shinghal as President.

The registration opened at 3:00pm and around 65 people showed up to support this launch. Everyone was greeted at the desk by volunteers and directed to the seating area in the hall. At 3:30pm, the chief guest, honourable mayor, Tracey Roberts from the City of Wanneroo council graced the occasion with her presence.

The evening started with a prayer to Lord Ganesha, "Ganesh Vandana" by Durba ji on her harmonium and Pandey ji on the tabla. She enthralled the audience with her melodious bhajan and set the stage for the evening.

Mrs. Neha Shinghal did a presentation on the Vishva Hindu Parishad, Australia (VHP Inc.) in the service of the society. She spoke about the work that this 53 year old institution does, not only in Australia but around the world and the fact that VHP believes in "**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**" which means that the "The world is one family". In her speech she mentioned how important it was to bring together people from India so that they can still feel connected to their roots and their rich cultural heritage while living abroad.

Neha talked about integrating Indian values in the Australian lifestyle and raising responsible children who would become contributing citizens of the society. She concluded with a mention of working closely with Aboriginal communities, getting more active in social services, establishment of Hindu Schools and working in partnership with the local Government as the future plans.

Mayor Tracey Roberts did an emotional speech about how she felt being a part of the evening. She also did recognise the fact that Indians were really well integrated with the local community. She mentioned about the importance of the work being done by the VHP and that if the smaller groups were doing well, it would benefit the society at large. To show her respect for Indian culture, she had dressed up in the traditional salwaar kurta for this event. In her speech she commended on the work that VHP has been doing in Australia and how wonderful she felt that the launch of the WA chapter was happening in the Council of Wanneroo. Both the mayor and her husband enjoyed the evening with traditional Indian and Bollywood dance performances and classical bhajans.

The Mayor lighted the lamp in front of the deity of Lord Ganesha as he is the God for auspicious beginnings, and officially inaugurated the evening. Neha presented her with a VHP scarf as a mark of respect and welcomed her for being a part of this event.



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The first dance of the evening was a group performance by Disha, Nirjari and Hazel who learn dancing at the Academy of Indian Classical and Bollywood Dance on "Hanuman Chalisa". It was followed by another beautiful performance by a very talented duo- Khushi and Nahla on "Chittiya Kalaiyan". The third dance was a solo performance by Gayatri on a Gujrati garbha song called "Dhol Baaaje". It was followed by the final dance "Prem Ratan" by Avni, Janvi, Bianca and Khushi. These young and extremely talented girls were called once more on stage for another round of applause.

The dances were followed by 2 more bhajans by Durba ji on "Meera" and "Payoji Maine Ram Ratan Dhan Payo". Mayor Tracey Roberts was so moved that she did another speech recognising VHP's work, a word of thanks and her appreciation for the event.

Then everyone got together for a group photograph and some smaller groups broke up afterwards for more pictures with the mayor. Evening tea was served right after with mouth watering samosa's, pakora's and chilli paneer.

A children's workshop was organised at the very end where they coloured in and made Diwali related bookmarks. There was a choice of three different ones from which the children could make.

This concluded the evening and the effort to bring this evening together was massively appreciated by everyone present. It was heartening that there were lots of queries about the upcoming VHP events in the future.

