MEDIA RELEASE

The Hindu Association of WA (Inc)

Hindu Centre, Lot 41, Warton Road, CANNING VALE WA 6155

The **MAHA KUMBHABHISHEKAM** program (or Consecration Ceremonies) of the new **PERTH HINDU TEMPLE** is being held from 13 July 2005 to 26 October 2005. This 104-day event is arguably Australia's most significant ethnic event of the current year and will undoubtedly cause Perth to be included in the world's cities with major Hindu Temples.

The consecration sequence commenced with Ganesha Hawan at 5:30 am on 13 July 2005 and is currently being followed by daily Yantra Pooja for 48 days as per Hindu customs. The main events of Maha Kumbhabhishekam will take place from 1st September to 9th September 2005 and will be conducted by learned Pandits invited from several parts of the world. The ceremonies will be conducted under the leadership of Shree Parameswara Kurukkal (Malaysia) in the presence of Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami (Hawaii). The highlights of the events during that period are:

- **Placing of Precious stones** by devotees on 5 September 2005 at 5.00-7.30 pm.
- **Application of Oils on the Icons** by devotees on 6 September 2005, from 12 noon
- **Maha Kumbhabhishekam** on 8th September at 11.00 am
- **Shiva - Parvati Wedding** on 8th September at 7:00 pm
- **Vishnu - Lakshmi Wedding** on 9th September at 7:00 pm

This will be followed by Mandalabhishekam for another 48 days up to 26 October 2005.

The Maha Kumbhabhishekam or the consecration of the new Perth Hindu Temple hallmarks a dream-come-true for hundreds of Western Australian Hindus who have put in tremendous efforts over a period of 10 years for development of the 5-acre Hindu Centre and the new Temple building. The auspicious opening of the majestic structure of the new temple will once again bring to the fore the twin challenges that face Hindus all over the world:

- Facilitating a greater awareness of the true essence of Hinduism through religious, educational, social and cultural activities in a Westernised Hindu community and
- The incorporation of true Hindu values into the day-to-day living.

The outstanding architecture of the temple is the work of a dedicated team of local and overseas devotees. Artisans especially brought from India have contributed to the intricate sculptural work on shrine domes, on pillars and temple walls and is no less than that seen in museums. Indeed it is a building which will create its place in the History of Western Australia. The architecture includes influence from North India (Uttar Pradesh,

Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan), Western India (Gujarat), South India (Tamil Nadu, Andhra, Kerala) and Sri Lanka in specially styled domes of shrines and main entrances.

Acknowledging the fact that the Hindus in WA come from different countries and regions, our new temple is an **outstanding example of multiculturalism within the Hindus**. The South side Gopurum (or entrance door) and all icons in the South side of the temple including Vishnu, Lakshmi and Hanumaan are in the North Indian pattern. The sculptures on the wall Ram Parivar, Vishnu, Sri Krishna and Ganesha are in the North Indian and Gujrati pattern. The North side Gopuram is in Gujrati pattern. The North side icons, Kartikeya, Vasanta Mandapam, Utsava Mandapam and sculptures on the wall are in the South Indian and Sri Lankan pattern. The central shrines of Shiva, Devi and Ganesha are universal to all Hindus all over the world. **The Perth Hindu Temple is thus an absolutely unique structure with no other temple in the world with similar characteristics.**

Hinduism is today the world's third largest religion (after Christianity and Islam) and its 850 million followers live in many countries including India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Fiji, USA, UK, Canada and Australia. The culture and beliefs of the Hindus from different countries and even within the same country differ quite a lot. However, the fundamentals of Hinduism, which are tolerance, non-violence and dharma, are same all over the world. The religion of Hindus is the Sanatan Dharma, which means the "immemorial way of righteous living". Hindu deities (or icons) in the temples all over the world are generally similar.

In its 5-acre Hindu Centre in Canning Vale, the Hindu Association of WA runs free yoga sessions, free cultural and language classes, a voluntary migrant assistance service, two radio programs in Hindi & Tamil and provides free food on all Hindu festivals at the Hindu Centre in Canning Vale. It also has been running a fully functional Hindu Temple in the old building for about 15 years.

Some important milestones in the development of the Hindu Centre are:

- The land for the temple site was purchased on 10August 1986
- Swami Shantananda consecrated the land in a ceremony in 1987
- Construction of the cultural hall commenced in March 1989 & completed 1990
- Foundation ceremony for the new Temple was held on 10 April 1998
- Artisans from India commenced detailed work in 2002

"A Temple is the place of worship, where idols are kept and prayers offered. The area around the Temple is sacred, soothing and pure. The constant worship that is carried out by the devotees creates an atmosphere which is filled with spiritual vibrations. Chanting increases the holiness and purity of a Temple greatly and elevates the souls of its devotees" – Shri Swami Sivananda.

The opening of the Temple is a tribute to our adventurous forebears who came to the sunny shores of Australia with unity and broad vision for all Western Australian Hindus.

This magnificent place of worship will strengthen the bonds through community prayers, impart cultural knowledge and assist in guiding youth to remain on right path to contribute in the national development process in Australia. As always, the new Temple will also be open to every individual who wishes to know more about the Hindu culture.

The Hindu Centre has been built with donations from Hindu families with no construction grant or aid from any organisation. The present value of the Hindu Centre is about $3 million with the currently applicable zoning. The development of the Hindu Centre facilities including the retirement village, will continue in the future years as per the Master Plan even after the Maha Kumbhabhishekam, as and when the funds become available.

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