



**The Hon. Dr Geoff Lee MP**

Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education

Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans

M21/326

Mr. David Shoebridge MLC  
Member of the Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000  
[david.shoebridge@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:david.shoebridge@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Mr Shoebridge,

I have received correspondence from the community regarding your assertions at the 2021 Budget Estimates hearing in relation to a community organisation called Vishwa Hindu Parishad, which is currently a provider of Special Religious Education in New South Wales public schools. Please see the correspondence enclosed for your reference.

The reference to the organisation as “far-right Hindu extremist” and a “militant extremist religious organisation” has upset members of the Hindu community. My Agency, Multicultural NSW, has enquired with NSW Police Force and the NSW Department of Education and I am advised that Vishwa Hindu Parishad is not a known terrorism group within NSW.

At a time when promoting community harmony is critical your comments have unfortunately created divisiveness and distress. Whilst I am hopeful this was not your intention, I encourage you to consider the impact your comments have made in fostering social cohesion at this time and apologise for any offence they may have caused.

I am happy to discuss this matter with you further to address community concerns.

Yours sincerely,

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Encl. Correspondence conveying concerns from the Hindu community.