



PRESS RELEASE

Hindu Community thanks MP Andrew Charlton and Jason Clare

Date: 3rd April, 2025

A dream of many Hindu parents to send their children to a Hindu School is close to fulfilment, thanks to a funding announcement made by Federal Education Minister Jason Clare today. A re-elected Albanese Labor Government will invest \$8.5 million to support the construction of the first ever Hindu school in Australia an initiative by Hindu Education and Cultural Centre (HEACC).

Hindu Education and Culture Centre has raised funding from Hindu community and have purchased a five acre land in Oakville. The funding will be used to build a primary school there. Operated by the Hindu Education and Cultural Centre, the school will deliver the New South Wales curriculum embedded with teachings on Hinduism's culture, traditions and philosophy. The new school is strongly supported by the Hindu Council of Australia and by Better Balanced Futures.

MP Andrew Charlton announced a funding of \$2.4 million to build facilities for operating a Karma Kitchen, an initiative of Hindu Council of Australia. Karma Kitchen has been operating for over 10 years with the support of various restaurants and volunteers' kitchens to be able to provide free nutritious meals to homeless and vulnerable Australians. The kitchen will be built so that it can provide meals to around 400 people daily and expanding services such as aged care meal support, community dinners, and crisis catering.

Hindu parents with school going children thanked the MPs for making the funding available. It is a dream come true for these parents who have been improvising for lack of a Hindu school by taking their children to various Hindu Dharma, Language, traditional Hindu Dances, Music and Hindu Arts classes. Their children will now be able to get all the education at one place during school hours.

Hindu youth were overjoyed that their children will be able to go to a Hindu school which they sadly missed out on. Many of them have contributed towards the purchase of the land and vowed to continue supporting the school in future.

Senior citizens thanked for the announcement of Karma Kitchen funding. While Australia has a successful Meals on Wheels services for seniors, there is a gap for Hindus needing Hindu vegetarian meals. This funding for Karma Kitchen will fill that gap not only for Hindus but for everyone else who enjoys Indian food.

The idea of a Hindu education and cultural centre in Sydney was first floated 12 years ago. This was a vision only at that time as the community had limited understanding of the various steps needed to realize this. Notwithstanding, several Hindu community leaders continued to pursue this vision and finally turned it into a possibility when HEACC raised funds from the Hindu community to purchase a five-acre land in Oakville. The federal funding will be used to build and operate the primary school, along the lines of other independent schools delivering the New South Wales curriculum embedded with teachings on Hinduism's culture, traditions and philosophy.

Both these initiatives, securing funding for the Hindu school and for Karma Kitchen were taken up by Hindu council more than two years ago. Better Balanced Futures (a coalition of faith leaders from all major faiths) came forward to help Hindu Council and HEACC. BBF's wide experience in obtaining funding and supporting building of several faith based independent school provided the basis for Hindu Council and HEACC to prepare their funding requests and proposals, ultimately bringing the Australian Hindu community's dream one solid step closer to reality.

The process recommended by BBF were used to prepare proposals, presentations and funding asks. Professors Zehavit Gross and Professor Suzanne Rutland visited the site and wrote an academic paper.

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