

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA 150th B'DAY CELEBRATED ON 17 MARCH 2012 - A REPORT

Hindu Swayam Sevak Sangh Australia, Canberra Chapter, celebrated **Swami Vivekananda's 150th Birthday** on 17 March at HTCC, Florey Temple, as **Hindu Unity Day**, from 4 pm to 6.30 pm. The MC of the program was Shubhra Roy from Hindu Heritage Classes, HTCC who kept the audience nicely occupied for whole event. .

We sent invitation to 29 Hindu /Indian associations requesting them to participate in the program. We requested them to speak on how Swami Vivekananda's ideas influence their association's aims, which may be spiritual, social, or community oriented. In total 16 associations/organisations attended the function and their representatives presented song, poem or speech at the occasion. The names of the participating organisations are as follows:

- Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh
- Hindu Temple and Cultural centre
- Mandir Society of Australia (Vishnu Shiva Mandir)
- BAPS Swaminarayn Sanstha
- ISKON- Hare Krishna Temple
- Gujarati Samaj of ACT
- Bengali Cultural Association
- Indian Seniors Association
- Canberra Telugu Society
- Lord Ayyappa Group, Canberra
- Odisha Community
- Sewa International
- Ekal Vidhyalaya
- Hindu Heritage Classes, HTCC
- Hindi Samaj of ACT
- Rajasthan Sabha
- Canberra Kannada Association

The program commenced with a Ganesh Prayer by Dr Shailesh Diwedi, Priest Hindu Temple and the Lighting of a lamp and offering garland to Swami Vivekananda by Shri Shibu Dutta. Welcome address was delivered by Shri Prakash Mehta representing Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh Australia. He explained Swamiji's dream to make Hindu Dharma as Viswaha Dharma and Bharat as Jagadguru and how Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh is working in line with this dream.

A few organisations/associations included in the program could not get a chance to speak at the occasion due to shortage of time. It went beyond the schedule of 4 to 6 pm.

It was great to see that the speakers were from all ages, from 10 years to more than 70 years. The legacy of Hinduism is surely being passed on to the young generation. The program included Swamiji's Poem recital by children, 3 Hinduism awareness songs, power point slides and Swamiji's speech at the First Conference of the World Religious Leaders in Chikago, USA.

It was very encouraging to see children participating in the program enthusiastically. 10 year old Yash Agasti from Odisha community mesmerised the audience with his rendering of Gayatri Mantra on keyboard. 13 year old young girl Lushimi Uthayakumaran from Vishu

Shiva Mandir who never heard about Swamiji, has done good researched on internet about Vivekanand ji and her speech was very well received by audience.

Ravi Vaikyl from Ayyappa Group and Tarun Agasti entertained the audience with an old Hindi film Desh-Bhakti song.

Other prominent speakers at the occasion were Shri Himanshu Pota who emphasised that Swami Vivekananda's real message was that God realisation should be the only aim of life, Shri Kanti Jina from Hindu Council of Australia, Shri N. Agarawal from Mandir Society of Australia Shri Subhash Jalota Indian Seniors Association, Shri Shankar Chaterjee from BCA, Shri Subhash Dang from HTCC, Shri Samir Patel from BAPS Swami Narayan Santha and Shri Laxman Prasad from CTS.

The program concluded with a vote of thanks by Shri Santosh Gupta, followed by light refreshment. Total attendance was about 80 people.

The program was organised to demonstrate the Hindu Unity and spread awareness of the Swami Vivekananda's preaching about Hindu Dharma, Yoga and Vedanta in relation to 21st century.

Santosh Gupta

Encls:

- A. Invitation
- B. Program Schedule
- C. Book Printed for the occasion
- D. Photographs