



19th Sept, 2011

Press release

“Don’t use the deities of Hinduism inappropriately and disrespectfully”

Council of Indian Australians Inc is concerned about the trend of using the symbols of Hinduism inappropriately and disrespectfully. Previously, Goddess Lakshmi was printed on a swim suit and a Sydney-based radio host made some comments about the beliefs of followers of Hinduism, who consider River Ganges as sacred. Both these matters were tackled and remedied with withdrawal of the offensive actions and an apology.

With this background, The Council finds it very disappointing that Back To Back Theatre, in collaboration with Malthouse Theatre in Melbourne, is doing a play “Ganesh and the third Reich” in Melbourne Festival on 29th Sept, 2011. This play is going to use Lord Ganesha as matter for comedy and laughter.

One of most widely worshipped deities in Hinduism, Lord Ganesha, is regarded as god of wisdom, good luck and destroyer of obstacles, and is invoked at the beginning of businesses, projects and undertakings. Hinduism is a tolerant religion and respects other religions. It is one of the oldest and third largest religion of the world with more than one billion followers.

Council’s President, Dr Yadu Singh said “People need to be sensitive to the beliefs and feelings of other people. Using Lord Ganesha in this manner is inappropriate and will be offensive to many followers of Hinduism”.

He further said “Depiction of Lord Ganesha in this manner is going to become an Issue in India and is likely to create a controversy between India and Australia, which is unnecessary”.

The Council urges Melbourne Festival, Arts Victoria, Tourism Victoria, and City of Melbourne to consider the hurt, which people might experience from such parody of one of the most revered deities of Hinduism, and act with sensitivity.

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