



# GOPIO NEWS BULLETIN

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A Publication of the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO)

MARCH 2026



## GOPIO INTERNATIONAL WEBINAR HIGHLIGHTED DIASPORA WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP & GENDER EQUALITY

READ ON PG 3



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A Publication of the  
Global Organization of People  
of Indian Origin (GOPIO)  
Published Monthly

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## GOPIO NEWS BULLETIN

**20 APRIL 2026**

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**15 APRIL 2026**

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## Editor's Note



Welcome to our March 2026 issue of the GOPIO International News Bulletin. As we move forward with a renewed cadence of monthly issues, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed, submitted, and coordinated content across our Chapters. Your active participation is what keeps our global GOPIO family vibrant, connected, and able to share the very best of our work with readers

around the world.

A few key notes to help us publish smoothly: please continue to submit articles as Word documents and images as JPEG attachments. This standardized workflow ensures timely processing and consistent presentation across all issues. If an event was held last month and you feel it merits inclusion, please don't hesitate to forward the details for the current issue's "leadership in action" or event recap sections. If something slips through the cracks in any given issue, we will readily accommodate it in the next edition, so please keep the lines of communication open and proactive. I would also encourage you to engage with other Chapters and coordinators to share their stories and best practices; our Chapters are doing wonderfully impactful work, and their experiences can inspire and inform peers across the globe.

In this issue, I'd like to highlight the "Leadership in Action" spirit that defines GOPIO's ongoing engagement. If you're asked to represent us at multiple functions and cannot provide a full article, please send a few high-quality photographs along with a concise caption. These visuals will help illustrate the breadth of GOPIO's activity and leadership across regions, even when time or resources for a full write-up are limited. We will feature these images with captions to celebrate the leadership and participation of our members in real time.

I am pleased to acknowledge several noteworthy developments. Congratulations to Prakash Shah for continuing the webinar series, a commendable initiative that connects members worldwide and fosters ongoing dialogue and learning. While we recognize that timing might not work for every country, the overall impact and reception have been very positive, underscoring the value of accessible, global programming that keeps our community engaged regardless of location. Our best wishes and gratitude go to all involved in sustaining this important initiative.

There are also special acknowledgments for GOPIO Brisbane, whose Roundtable Networking meeting was a resounding success and high-profile affair, reflecting the energy and commitment of our chapters on the ground. Equally deserving of appreciation is the planning effort for the Mumbai convention, a great initiative led by Prakash Shah. I understand—and deeply appreciate—the behind-the-scenes work required to bring such large-scale events to fruition, from logistics and coordination to participant outreach. Let us all rally behind Prakash ji and offer our support in every possible way to ensure the continued success of this landmark event.

**CONTD. ON PG 8**

# GOPIO International Webinar Highlighted Diaspora Women's Leadership and Gender Equality

A March 14 webinar hosted by the Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) spotlighted diaspora women's leadership, shared experiences, and the global push for gender equality. The event, organised by GOPIO's Women's Council Wing, brought together participants and speakers from multiple regions, including South Africa, Germany, India, Mauritius, the United Kingdom, the Caribbean, the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

Ela Gandhi, granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi, and Anita Bose-Pfaff, daughter of Subhash Chandra Bose, addressed the audience as part of the program. Gandhi, the chief guest, spoke about the challenges women faced in society and in leadership, recounting the historical struggle for women's political representation in South Africa and her role in advocating for women's participation in negotiations that led to democratic reforms. She highlighted the triple burden many women confronted—work, home, and childcare—and emphasised the need for



shared responsibility and societal change to advance gender equality.

Prof. Anita Bose-Pfaff, a half-Indian scholar and European professor, shared insights on cultural identity and gender equality across nations. She discussed educational progress while noting ongoing barriers in professional spheres. She recalled her father, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's, views on women's rights and their role in society, citing the Indian National Army's first woman leader, Captain Lakshmi Sahgal, as an example.

The webinar also featured Connecticut State Senator Sujata Gadkar-Wilcox, who shared her experiences as the first Indian American and first Asian American woman senator in Connecticut. She highlighted the challenges women from diverse

backgrounds face in politics due to patriarchy and entrenched cultural norms.

Additional notable participants included NVIDIA board member Dr Aarti Shah, Gujarat University Vice Chancellor Dr Neerja Gupta, and pageant director Ruchika Arora. The event was

moderated by Dr Neeraja Arun Gupta, who framed the theme "Give to Gain" and introduced the distinguished speakers.

Charu Shivakumar, chair of the GOPIO Women's Council and a Southern California resident, led the session and articulated the council's mission to empower diaspora women through networking, education, and leadership development. The program also included remarks underscoring the council's commitment to advancing women's leadership across social, educational, political, and corporate spheres.

Siddharth Jain, GOPIO's international general secretary, delivered the vote of thanks, applauding the speakers, GOPIO leadership, and members from various chapters and councils who attended the event.

# GOPIO hosts global webinar 'The Power of Youth: Creating Impact in an Evolving World'



GOPIO and its Youth Council officials with speaker at the GOPIO Youth Webinar

The Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) International Youth Council successfully hosted a global webinar themed “The Power of Youth: Creating Impact in an Evolving World.” The virtual gathering brought together young leaders, entrepreneurs, professionals, students, and members of the Indian Diaspora from across continents for a powerful 90-minute exchange of insight, reflection, and action.

In an era defined by

artificial intelligence, rapid technological shifts, and borderless opportunity, the session moved beyond age-based definitions of youth to focus on awareness, ownership, and purposeful action. As articulated during the initial address, youth is not about chronology - it is about consciousness. It is about stepping up today for a better tomorrow. The webinar emphasized that in a trend-driven world, true leadership requires clarity over noise, purpose over

popularity, and discipline over distraction. Participants were reminded that roles do not define individuals; it is how one plays those roles that creates impact. The recurring message throughout the session was clear: youth are not preparing for the future; they are actively building it.

Opening Address: A Global Call to Conscious Leadership, GOPIO Associate Secretary Sunil Vuppulal opened the session by highlighting India’s powerful youth demographic

dividend and its global potential. He underscored the urgent need to bridge the gap between access to technology and meaningful employment opportunities, positioning youth empowerment as a collective responsibility.

GOPIO Chairman Dr. Thomas Abraham welcomed participants and spoke on GOPIO's mission and achievements in the last 36 years and emphasized the pivotal role of the Indian Diaspora in driving global innovation and leadership.

GOPIO President, Mr Prakash Shah, President of GOPIO International, encouraged deeper engagement with GOPIO initiatives to foster community-led growth and promote global collaboration.

Setting the Context: From Trends to Transformation Mr. Viresh Patel, Founder & CEO of Intell IDEA and Co-Chair of the Youth Council, also panel executive host for this webinar, set the tone for the session by reframing youth as a mindset of awareness and responsibility rather than age. He outlined key themes that would shape the dialogue during the webinar, such as Awareness & Emotional Intelligence, AI & Future Skills, Financial Wisdom, Entrepreneurial Mindset, Wellbeing & Balance, and Purpose-Driven Leadership

Mr. Viresh emphasized that speed without direction is noise, and that real growth begins with inner clarity. Drawing parallels between the human mind and AI,

he noted that “our mind responds to the prompts we feed it,” reminding participants that self-awareness is the foundation of emotional excellence and conscious leadership.

### **Keynote Address: Adaptability in the Age of Reinvention**

GOPIO Youth Council Chair Ms. Vasu Pawar, CEO of Step2StepUp Inc., a non-profit, delivered a keynote

**In an era defined by artificial intelligence, rapid technological shifts, and borderless opportunity, the session moved beyond age-based definitions of youth to focus on awareness, ownership, and purposeful action. As articulated during the initial address, youth is not about chronology - it is about consciousness. It is about stepping up today for a better tomorrow.**

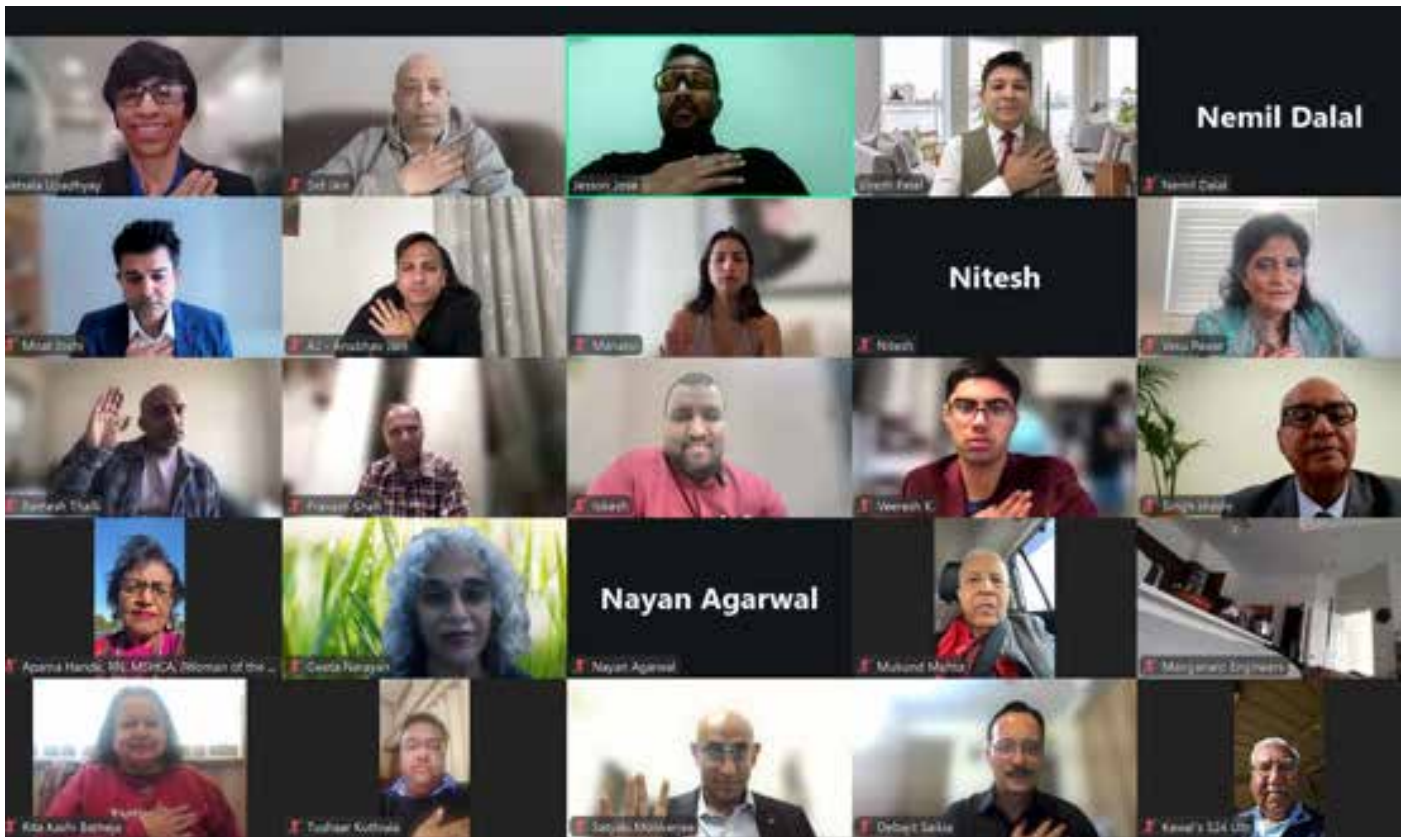
address 'Adaptability in the Age of Reinvention' centred on adaptability, ethical leadership, and structured mentorship. She emphasized that the age of reinvention demands more than ambition — it demands alignment, disciplined execution, and ecosystem-building. Pawar highlighted that leadership is not about holding power but about creating more leaders, reinforcing the importance of enabling others to rise. Her message urged youth to shift from aspiration to actual impact through consistency, courage, and character.

Moderator Patel then introduced the Chief Guest welcoming the Chief Guest Nitesh Banta, Co-Founder & CEO of B12, who spoke on Building Beyond Hype, Banta, after graduating from Harvard, initiated a few companies and then went to Google, from there to venture investing and entrepreneurship. Banta spoke about the exponential pace of AI development and its transformative societal impact.

Banta advised young leaders to continuously learn, build with AI tools, and engage across generations. Importantly, he distinguished between founders who chase valuation and those who build lasting value, emphasising sustainability, problem-solving, and long-term thinking over hype cycles.

### **Awareness & Identity: Breaking Patterns, Building Possibilities -**

Patel then introduced



### A section of the audience

and welcomed Celebrity Guest Ms. Manasvi Mangai, former Miss India, Actor and now a Hollywood producer. Manasvi shared her journey from Miss India to creative leadership, emphasising the importance of staying true to one's passions and cultural roots. She discussed her career in entertainment and her new initiative, the South Asians in Media and Arts Foundation (SAMA), aiming at supporting the next generation of talent in the arts and media.

**AI & Human Skills: Staying Human in a Digital Age** - Mr. Anubhav Jain, Founder of TWC UK and GUTSY, explored how AI is redefining industries. He stressed that while AI may outperform humans in speed and logic, emotional depth, empathy,

creativity, and ethical judgment remain profoundly human. He encouraged youth to focus on “problem engineering” and human connection rather than competing with machines. The future, he noted, belongs to those who combine technological

### **literacy with emotional intelligence.**

**Financial Literacy: From Awareness to Action** - Mr. Mirat Joshi, Director, Strategy & Regulatory Initiatives at CITI Bank, emphasized that financial literacy is freedom literacy. He discussed savings, investments, compounding, diversification, and the importance of starting early. He advised youth to cultivate disciplined investing habits and choose the right investment vehicles early

in life. Wealth creation, he noted, is not about speed but consistency — great things that truly last take time to build.

**Entrepreneurial Mindset: Courage Meets Clarity** - Mr. Nemil Dalal, Visiting Partner at Y Combinator and crypto expert, shared insights on founder-market fit and early-stage innovation. He highlighted resilience, execution bias, and obsession with solving real problems as defining traits of successful entrepreneurs. He emphasized that the current AI era is resetting power dynamics between startups and incumbents, presenting unprecedented opportunities for bold builders willing to iterate, learn from failure, and adapt.

**Purpose Over Popularity: Character as Competitive**

Advantage - Mr. Jesson Jose, Founder of Sports Mission Infusion (SMI), presented his impactful work in

Mumbai, addressing crime prevention and gender-based violence through sports and character development programs. He underscored that integrity must outweigh algorithms, and that success should be measured by internal impact rather than social metrics. His call to action urged the “silent majority” to challenge abusive behavior and champion responsible masculinity.

**Hustle to Harmony: Mental Well-being in High Performance** - Mr. Lokesh Naidu, Founder of Loksun.ai and Optico. health, spoke on balancing ambition

with mental clarity. He cautioned that success without peace leads to burnout. The discussion emphasized daily micro-practices - reflection, digital boundaries, mind fullness, and intentional pauses — as tools for sustaining performance. Emotional awareness, not emotional suppression, was positioned as the path to inner strength.

### **Youth Innovation Showcase: The Future Presenting Today**

Ms. Nayan Aggarwal, Young innovator from Chandigarh University, presented an AI-powered patient avatar simulator for psychology students, which provides dynamic, unpredictable interactions similar to real patients while eliminating

risks associated with real patient contact. Veeresh K, a high school sophomore from Northwood High School, discussed his web-based Alzheimer's cognitive assessment tool aimed at reducing stigma and promoting early screening in communities where mental health support is stigmatized. Both young presenters emphasized the importance of making mental health support more accessible and culturally sensitive. Mentor Panel on Future Impact The meeting featured a panel discussion with mentors sharing their perspectives on AI, financial freedom, emotional well-being, and future skills.

Mr. Ramesh Thalli, an AI Solution Architect, emphasized the importance of building skills from a young age and highlighted how modelling tools can empower individuals to create and innovate.

Mr. Satyaki Mookerjee, CDO JIO-BP, stressed the need for lifelong learning, adapting to technological changes, and developing human qualities like empathy.

Dr. Geeta Narayan, Emotional Intelligence Expert & Coach, spoke about emotional agility, cultural grounding, and the value of Indian youth in contributing to the world, emphasizing the importance of purpose-driven performance and intergenerational intelligence.

**Youth Power for Positive Change** - The meeting focused on the power of youth and

the importance of harnessing that power peacefully. Dr. Shashi Bhushan Singh, Ex Director & Head R&D at DRDO, emphasized the need for reducing conflicts and using technology for a positive impact.

**Interactive Panel for Defining Success in 2030** - Mr. Viresh and the panel with all speakers coming together, discussed their perspectives on their perspectives of the definition of success in 2030.

**Closing Reflection: One Action Within Seven Days** - The session concluded with Moderator Patel highlighting a call to action for participants to implement one change within 7 days, aiming to transform lives rather than just following trends. Participants were reminded: Awareness builds clarity. AI requires humanity. Money requires wisdom. Entrepreneurship requires resilience. Leadership requires integrity. Success requires balance

The event ended with concluding remarks and a vote of thanks by GOPIO Secretary Siddharth Jain, expressing gratitude to speakers, participants, and the global GOPIO team. Technical support was provided by GOPIO Associate Secretary Vatsala Upadhyay.

The GOPIO International Youth Council serves as a global platform for empowering young leaders across the Indian Diaspora through dialogue, mentorship, innovation, and collaborative impact initiatives.

# GOPIO International Women's Council Hosts Webinar on Action Against Domestic Violence



**GOPIO Officials and Speakers at the Webinar titled Understanding Action Against Domestic Violence, Top Row: from l. to r.: Charu Shivakumar, Dr. Thomas Abraham, Aparna Hande; Middle Row: from l. to r.: Zoya Salim Kara, Jayashri Chintalapudi and Shefali Mehta; Bottom Row: from l. to r.: Nami Kaur, Kumu Gupta and Kewal Kanada**

**N**ew York, NY — The Women's Council Wing of the Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) hosted a webinar on February 23 titled "Understanding Action Against Domestic Violence." Held virtually, the webinar brought together speakers and participants from the USA, Canada, India, Australia and New Zealand. The panel was organised by GOPIO

Women's Council Chair Charu Shivakumar, based in Southern California.

GOPIO Chairman Dr Thomas Abraham welcomed participants and highlighted GOPIO's role in advocating for the Indian diaspora and its achievements in promoting dual nationality. Dr Abraham said that violence against women remained a very important issue for the Diaspora community and urged the

involvement of service-provider organisations worldwide.

GOPIO Women's Council Chair Shivakumar introduced the session's purpose, emphasising the need to raise awareness and provide solutions for domestic violence. GOPIO's Global Ambassador Nami Kaur discussed her personal commitment to women's rights and the importance of extending educational efforts globally. The webinar aimed

to educate and inspire action against domestic violence, with a panel of experts expected to provide insights and recommendations.

The first speaker, Ms Zoya Salim Kara, Team Leader for Ethnic Services at Sahaayta in Auckland, New Zealand, presented on family harm, explaining that New Zealand refers to domestic violence as “family harm” to acknowledge the broader impact on family members. She discussed tools like the Power and Control Wheel and the Wheel of Equality, which help assess and educate about healthy and unhealthy relationships. Zoya highlighted specific issues faced by Indian communities, such as honour killings, dowry-related violence, and the use of immigration status as a tool for control. She emphasised the importance of distinguishing between arranged and forced marriages and discussed cultural differences in expressions of anger and violence.

Zoya also discussed the prevalence of domestic and elder abuse in New Zealand,

highlighting the importance of legal rights, community support, and available resources such as the 0800-refuge number and various agencies. She emphasised the need for awareness and action against violence, regardless of gender or cultural differences.

GOPIO International Women’s Leadership on Domestic Violence

GOPIO Women’s Council Co-Chair Kritilata Ram from Mauritius shared insights on their local response to domestic violence, including a quick-reaction system involving the police and support agencies. Boston native Ms Kumu Gupta spoke about her work in the U.S., including a phone-drive program for victims of domestic violence and efforts to raise awareness about deepfake images. GOPIO Health Council Co-chair Aparna Hande, a survivor and educator, planned to share her personal journey and discuss the signs and symptoms of domestic violence, but technical difficulties interrupted her presentation.

Aparna shared her personal experience of overcoming

domestic violence and her subsequent work helping other survivors, describing how she created a model family that sheltered 25 people over the years. She emphasised the importance of breaking the silence around domestic violence and creating safe spaces for survivors.

GOPIO Women’s Council Co-Chair Jayashri Chintalapudi, a former lawyer licensed in India and currently an entrepreneur, shared the story of a friend who was murdered by her husband due to domestic violence, highlighting the need for awareness about the various forms of abuse and the dangers of leaving an abusive relationship. Aparna and Jayashri called for action to prevent domestic violence and support survivors, with Aparna advocating for GOPIO’s role in this effort and Jayashri emphasising the importance of recognising and addressing the signs of abuse.

The meeting focused on raising awareness about domestic violence and exploring actionable steps to support victims. Ms Rachana



Srivastava shared a poem highlighting the importance of addressing domestic violence, and Charu emphasised the need for education and collaboration across organisations. Kumu suggested listing organisations that assist victims of domestic violence on Indian consulates' websites. At the same time, Ms Shweta Goyal, a researcher in Australia, discussed the development of frameworks to support multicultural women facing stigma. The participants discussed potential collaborations and GOPIO's role in supporting these efforts globally.

The meeting focused on discussing domestic violence prevention and intervention services for the South Asian community in the United States. The service organisation Saahas from Southern California explained their work in preventing domestic violence through community-based initiatives, including home visits, financial empowerment, and cultural sensitivity. GOPIO Associate Secretary Vatsala Upadhyay, former president of My Family Services in the Detroit, Michigan, area, highlighted the need for better collaboration among organisations and suggested providing information about available resources to immigrants during visa processing. The discussion emphasised the importance of culturally competent services and data-driven approaches to address domestic violence in the South Asian diaspora.

GOPIO Webinar titled Understanding Action Against Domestic Violence — A Section

of the Audience

Another participant shared her experience as a survivor of domestic violence, highlighting the ongoing nature of abuse even after separation or child custody arrangements. She emphasised the lack of resources and support available to victims and criticised organisations for not adequately addressing the serious issues faced by survivors. Vasu Pawar, another survivor, shared her story of enduring abuse while working in the US, emphasising the importance of addressing the various forms of abuse, including financial abuse, and the need for organisations to take survivors' problems seriously. Both speakers stressed the importance of raising awareness and providing support to victims of domestic violence.

The meeting focused on discussing domestic violence prevention and support for victims. Charu shared a personal story about a friend who experienced domestic violence but was hesitant to involve authorities. GOPIO-Orange County (California) Chapter President Hark Vasa spoke about helping a woman who had been severely beaten by her family, highlighting the challenges in accessing support from agencies due to red tape. GOPIO Life Member Yatri Shukla emphasised the importance of supporting individuals like Vasa who provide direct help to victims, despite criticism from others. The discussion also touched on the role of community members in offering shelter

and support to victims of domestic violence.

The meeting also focused on addressing domestic violence, particularly affecting senior women, and discussed strategies to support victims. GOPIO Life Member Suman Kapoor from New Zealand highlighted the need for education and empowerment to tackle such situations. In contrast, Charu and others emphasised the importance of maintaining trust and connection with victims. The group discussed creating a fund within the GOPIO Foundation to support women's causes and to address the need for a global network of women's representatives. The Council also planned a Women's Conference Webinar on March 14 to mark International Women's Day on the topic "Diaspora Women Scaling Educational, Political, Social and Corporate World."

About GOPIO — Founded in 1989, GOPIO is a non-partisan, not-for-profit, secular organisation with Individual Life Members and chapter delegates from over 100 chapters in 36 countries. GOPIO's volunteers are committed to enhancing cooperation and communication between NRIs/PIOs and local communities, building networks, bonds, friendships, alliances, and camaraderie among citizens and colleagues alike. GOPIO volunteers believed that by helping to network the global Indian community, they helped make tomorrow a better world for the Indian Diaspora, the countries they live in, and India.

# GOPIO Networking in Action: Granddaughters of Gandhi and Bose Meet in Cape Town

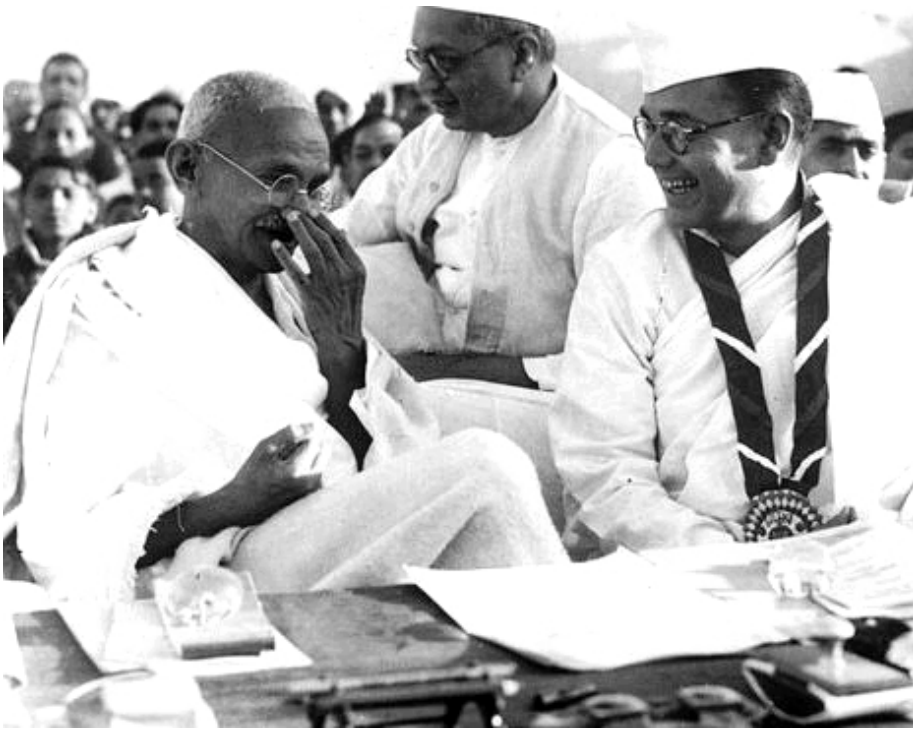


Two granddaughters of India, Ela Gandhi and Maya Bose Pfaff, at a historic meet in Cape Town

Cape Town, South Africa — In a historic and heartwarming moment, the granddaughters of two of India's most revered leaders, Mahatma Gandhi and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, came together for the first time in Cape Town. The gathering followed a GOPIO International webinar celebrating International Women's Day, underscoring themes of legacy, connection, and shared history.

The in-person meeting took place after last Saturday's GOPIO webinar, which featured Ela Gandhi and Dr Anita Bose Pfaff. Dr Pfaff's daughter, Maya, who resides in Cape Town, attended a seminar hosted by Ela Gandhi at Stellenbosch University. It was there that Maya and Ela Gandhi met for the first time in person. Ela Gandhi's daughter, Asha, was also present, marking a poignant moment of family convergence.

The encounter brought together descendants of two of India's most influential leaders, symbolising continuity, dialogue, and the enduring bonds of history. The gathering was described as remarkable and joyous by those involved, reflecting the shared commitment to legacy and cross-cultural connection.



1938 / Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Elected President of the Congress Party

GOPIO International extended heartfelt compliments to everyone who helped make this meaningful moment possible. The organisation highlighted the value of such intergenerational and international exchanges in fostering understanding, leadership, and women's empowerment.

Quotes and reflections

from attendees were shared in the wake of the event, emphasising gratitude for the opportunities to connect across continents and generations. The participants hope this meeting will inspire continued collaboration among communities worldwide.

As GOPIO International continues its mission to promote global Indian

empowerment and cultural exchange, this milestone in Cape Town serves as a tangible testament to the power of inclusive networking and intergenerational dialogue.

The event followed an International Women's Day program featuring Ela Gandhi and Dr Anita Bose Pfaff.

A subsequent in-person meeting in Stellenbosch linked Cape Town's local leadership with a broader global narrative.

GOPIO plans to build on this momentum with future programs that celebrate leadership, heritage, and cross-cultural cooperation.

GOPIO International (Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin) is a global network dedicated to promoting the rights, well-being, and cultural empowerment of people of Indian origin. Through webinars, conferences, and community programs, GOPIO fosters leadership, education, entrepreneurship, and cross-cultural understanding across continents.

## Editor's Note

### CONTD. FROM PG 02

As we look ahead, I want to reiterate my thanks to everyone for their steady support and active participation. Your contributions—whether in the form of articles, photographs, event reports, or simple forwardings of information—shape this bulletin into a meaningful reflection of GOPIO's global impact. Please continue to reach out to your networks, share the bulletin with your contacts, and invite new voices to contribute so that we can broaden our storytelling and deepen our shared sense of community.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed compiling it. Until next month, happy reading, and warm regards to all.

—Umesh Chandra OAM  
Editor in Chief

GOPIO International Editorial Team

# GOPIO International and NFIA Honour Raj K. Purohit, Longtime Advocate for Diaspora Initiatives

**G**OPIO International (Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin) and the National Federation of Indian American Associations (NFIA) joined forces to pay tribute to the late Maharashtra political leader, Shri Raj Purohit, who served as an advisor to both organisations for many years and was a passionate supporter of diaspora activities.

The tribute program opened with brief video reflections on Purohit and his funeral, followed by a one-minute moment of silence and prayers.

Speakers from both organisations offered their remembrances. GOPIO officials included Chairman Dr Thomas Abraham, President Prakash Shah, and General Secretary Sid Jain, who highlighted Purohit's dedicated service and his longstanding involvement. GOPIO Associate Secretary Vatsala Upadhyay and Cultural and Youth Council Chairs Rajul Shah and Vasu Powar participated in the event. NFIA President Satish Parikh and former NFIA President Subash Razdan also paid their respects. Former GOPIO and NFIA President Niraj Baxi, a personal friend of Purohit



and a key driver in engaging him with diaspora activities, served as moderator.

Testimonies extended beyond GOPIO/NFIA leadership. Gujarat University Vice Chancellor Dr Neerja Gupta recalled Purohit's readiness to help during a personal emergency in 2005. Serial entrepreneur and Silicon Valley luminary Raj Jaswa spoke about his close relationship with Purohit. Mumbai businessman Raju Solanki, head of the Federation of Maharashtra Chambers of Commerce, and a friend of Purohit, shared his admiration for Purohit's

influence. GOPIO Ahmedabad President Advocate Nachiket Dave also offered remarks.

Akash Purohit, newly appointed GOPIO Advisor and Chief Guest, represented the family and reflected on his father's enduring political legacy, expressing a commitment to continue his father's work in serving the diaspora community. An emotional moment as Akash spoke underscored the personal impact of Raj Purohit's legacy.

The event concluded with audience participation and continued reflection on Purohit's contributions to diaspora engagement.

# GOPIO-Led Summit Outlines Civically Grounded Response to Rising Bias Against Indian Americans

BY NAGARAJ  
SUBBARAO SARMA

A coalition of Indian American community leaders convened on January 19, 2026, to chart a measured, civic-minded response to a rise in anti-Indian and anti-Hindu sentiment across the United States. The meeting, organised by the Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) USA, brought together GOPIO affiliates and representatives of several Indian American organisations to discuss strategic ways to safeguard communities while reaffirming core American democratic values.

Chaired and moderated by Dr Thomas Abraham, Chairman of GOPIO USA, the session opened with a briefing on the challenges facing the community and potential strategic responses. Prakash Shah, President of GOPIO International, urged restraint, noting that recent hostility and anti-Indian rhetoric appear to stem from a small fringe on the far right and do not reflect mainstream American values.

Participants stressed that the Indian American community is peaceful, law-abiding, and socially constructive, with no history of organised violence or

social aggression. While misunderstandings are possible—as they are in any diverse society—the group highlighted the community’s long-standing positive contributions to American education, technology, medicine, hospitality, finance, entrepreneurship, and public service. They also noted that Indian Americans hold leadership roles in many Fortune 500 companies and are credited with contributing to roughly 20% of Silicon Valley startups. Collectively, the community is estimated to contribute about \$600 billion annually to the U.S. economy, illustrating deep integration into the American fabric.

Strategic and Measured Response, The gathering acknowledged that online hostility and bias incidents have risen, driven in part by economic anxiety, debates over skilled immigration, racial profiling, and the amplification of stereotypes on digital platforms. Leaders agreed that addressing these challenges requires a measured, strategic, and responsible approach—one that protects community safety while upholding constitutional values.

To that end, GOPIO announced the creation of a dedicated committee to document bias incidents,

provide support to those affected, and coordinate constructive public responses. The committee will work in concert with other minority and faith-based organisations to strengthen solidarity and defend democratic norms.

Strengthening Civic Engagement and Integration, A central theme was the importance of reinforcing assimilation alongside cultural pride. Speakers emphasised full participation in civic institutions, local communities, and democratic processes. Discussions covered expanding voter engagement, civic education, youth leadership development, and bipartisan outreach to promote sustained inclusion and meaningful civic participation. Community members were encouraged to engage in local activities and support charitable and interfaith initiatives.

Key Recommendations: Document and address bias incidents through a coordinated monitoring, reporting, and support framework.

Strengthen civic engagement and assimilation, including voter participation, community service, and interfaith and intercultural collaboration.

Proactively highlight

positive contributions in education, healthcare, technology, finance, entrepreneurship, and public service.

Build coalitions with other communities to advance shared values of pluralism, inclusion, and social harmony.

Engage constructively with media and policymakers to distinguish legitimate policy debate from harmful stereotyping and digital hate.

**Commitment to Unity and Responsible Leadership:** Leaders stressed the importance of unity and collaboration among existing organisations, cautioning against duplicative efforts. GOPIO reaffirmed its role as a trusted, inclusive platform for constructive dialogue, institutional engagement, and positive storytelling about the Indian diaspora's role in strengthening democratic societies.

"The Indian diaspora's story is one of peaceful integration, civic contribution, and shared prosperity," participants stated. "Our response to current challenges must reflect those same values—measured, principled, inclusive, and focused on strengthening the societies we proudly call home."

**Action Plan:** A GOPIO Task Force has been formed to document hate campaigns and civil rights violations affecting the community. Task Force members are Rajender Dichpally (Chair), Nagaraj Subbarao Sarma, Pankaj Sharma, Miraj Joshi,



**The Indian diaspora's story is one of peaceful integration, civic contribution, and shared prosperity," participants stated. "Our response to current challenges must reflect those same values—measured, principled, inclusive, and focused on strengthening the societies we proudly call home.**

and Jayashri Chintalapudi. Members of the community

are urged to report any hate campaigns or civil rights violations to [watch@gopio.net](mailto:watch@gopio.net) or by phone at 203-329-8010.

**Context and Next Steps:** The initiative signals a pivot toward constructive civic engagement and coalition-building in response to growing bias against Indian Americans. As the Task Force begins documenting incidents and coordinating public responses, observers will monitor how the community's emphasis on lawful, peaceful participation translates into tangible policy advocacy and intergroup collaboration.

For more information or to report an incident, contact GOPIO's bias-reporting channels at [watch@gopio.net](mailto:watch@gopio.net) or 203-329-8010.

# India's Republic Day Marked by Grand Celebration and AI Summit at Chapman University

**O**RANGE, CA – January 23, 2026 — Chapman University hosted a grand celebration of India's 77th Republic Day at the Global Citizens Plaza, followed by a distinguished AI Impact Summit on campus. GOPIO-LA joined as a supporting organization for this special event.

The Consul General of India in Los Angeles, Dr. K. J. Srinivasa, attended as Chief Guest and raised the Indian national flag alongside Indian Army veterans Gurjeet Singh and Aparna Hande, GOPIO-International Vice President Kewal Kanda, and members of GOPIO-LA.

The program began with a warm welcome address delivered by Pradip K. Shukla



and Yatri Shukla, highlighting the importance of academic collaboration and strong community partnerships. Following the Republic Day celebration, Chapman University hosted the AI Impact Summit, focusing on innovation, artificial intelligence, and global collaboration. The summit highlighted the growing role of technology in strengthening

India–U.S. relations and fostering academic, business, and research partnerships. The combined celebration brought together over 100 distinguished guests, including community leaders, business professionals, veterans, faculty, and students, reflecting unity, pride, and a shared vision for democracy, innovation, and global cooperation.

# GOPIO-LA Launches Yoga Initiative with Wellness Event in Cerritos



**C**erritos, CA — GOPIO-LA kicked off its 2026 wellness agenda with a community yoga event on February 14, held at Don Knabe Park. The first Yoga Initiative, which ran from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m., attracted more than 25 participants and marked the organisation's renewed commitment under its newly elected 2026 Executive Committee.

Under the leadership of GOPIO-LA President Baljinder Tahim, the morning blended fitness, mindfulness, and social connection. Surendra Shah led the session, guiding

attendees through breathing techniques and proper yoga postures to accommodate both beginners and regular practitioners. Bollywood-themed fitness segments by Varsha Parikh energised the crowd and set a positive tone for the morning.

Participants were treated to a post-session stroll around the park, while Rekha Mehta kept energy high with fresh fruit and banana bread. Meeta Gupta, the group's Treasurer, formally welcomed a new member during the gathering. The event also featured an innovative wellness touch from Kedar Kokatay Ji,

who demonstrated a Nano Antioxidants Machine.

Aparna Hande, Vice President of GOPIO-LA, organised a light-hearted raffle, during which Hande announced the prize winner. The event provided valuable networking opportunities for current members, past presidents, and senior leaders to engage with the new leadership's vision.

Officials say the strong turnout and enthusiastic response signal the beginning of an ongoing wellness program designed to foster a healthier, more united GOPIO community.



# GOPIO Brisbane Hosts Invite-Only Community Leadership Roundtable to Chart 2026 Priorities



**M**arch 20, 2026 — GOPIO Brisbane held its first event under the new committee in the wake of the AGM, a purposefully invite-only Community Leadership Roundtable aimed at shaping priorities, partnerships, and initiatives for 2026 beyond the organisation's three iconic annual events. The session was led by Dr Priya Jaganathan, newly installed President of GOPIO BRISBANE, who described the gathering as the start of a fresh chapter for the group.

The roundtable brought together community leaders, government representatives, stakeholders, and supporters

to discuss how GOPIO BRISBANE could broaden its impact. Topics centred on identifying community needs, fostering inclusion, providing practical support, ensuring sustainability, and exploring GOPIO BRISBANE's role as a bridge between the Indian diaspora and Brisbane's wider multicultural community. Attendees heard from a new leadership team united by a shared goal: to elevate the GOPIO BRISBANE brand and deliver meaningful, community-driven initiatives with tangible impact.

Honouring Leadership, Legacy and Support, the event also paid tribute to

the foundation established by former leadership and acknowledged ongoing support from key community champions. Mr Umesh Chandra and Mrs Usha Chandra were recognised for their long-standing contributions, dedication, and leadership within GOPIO BRISBANE. The new team and other guests warmly acknowledged their years of service and role in shaping the organisation's legacy.

Leadership and Facilitation, The evening was marked by warmth and professional conduct under the new committee, with Ms Archana serving as Master of Ceremonies and Secretary.

She introduced guests and guided the evening's flow. Attendees included Mr Tapas Mandal and Mrs Mandy Kaur, Vice-presidents, who helped welcome guests and set a collaborative tone. Dr Santi, Assistant Treasurer, presented the guests of honour and contributed to formal acknowledgements. Photographer Mayur Brahmhatt documented the event through his lens, capturing the connections and moments of the night.

Dr Priya Jaganathan, President, welcomed attendees and spoke of honouring GOPIO BRISBANE's strong legacy while introducing fresh ideas and a broader community focus. She acknowledged the work of previous committees and reaffirmed the value of GOPIO BRISBANE's three annual flagship events, while noting the



need to explore additional initiatives responsive to current community needs. She emphasised that the roundtable was not about presuming what the community requires but about listening, learning, and identifying where GOPIO BRISBANE could make a meaningful impact. The theme of the evening, "Give

to Gain," was introduced to emphasise that contributions should create value for the organisation, the community, and those who give their time, expertise, sponsorship, or support.

Key Speakers and Themes: Four key speakers contributed diverse insights from government, community, legal, and



advocacy perspectives. The Lady Mayoress of Brisbane, Nina Schrinner, underscored the importance of community connection, harmony, and belonging in an uncertain world, describing GOPIO BRISBANE as a vital bridge that helps people feel seen and supported. Lisa Ward, CEO of ECCQ, reflected on mental health, domestic violence, intergenerational conflict, youth disengagement, racism, and the need for meaningful systemic change, stressing the importance of listening deeply to community voices. Pravinita Singh Pillay of Cornerstone Lawyers offered a migrant’s perspective on education, communication, assimilation, and practical support for families navigating life in Australia. Senator Paul Scarr reaffirmed his support for multicultural communities and highlighted the importance of opening cultural events to the broader Australian public, supporting international students, and recognising migrant stories.

Cr Vicki Howard received special mention for her ongoing support of initiatives that strengthen multicultural connections and belonging across Brisbane.

**Key Themes:** The discussion yielded several recurring themes. **Community connection and belonging:** Emphasis on the role of GOPIO BRISBANE in offering safety, belonging, and access to support for migrants, students, women,



and families.

**Supporting international students:** Focus on reducing isolation, improving mental health support, easing integration, and strengthening advocacy for systemic change.

**Mental health and hidden**

**distress:** Recognition of stigma and the value of culturally aware, accessible support, including trusted informal community networks.

**Financial independence and empowerment:** Advocacy for skills development and



a guiding framework: Impact + Income + Influence. She explained that meaningful community work requires tangible impact, sustainable funding, and visibility through events, advocacy, and a strong presence. The roundtable aimed to translate these principles into practical initiatives for 2026, with a focus on broadening engagement and leveraging partnerships to extend GOPIO BRISBANE’s reach beyond its flagship events.

income opportunities as pathways to empowerment.

**Water safety and drowning awareness:** Calls for education and community-based support around Australia’s water safety.

**Youth engagement and sport access:** Highlighting sport as a vehicle for

inclusion and the need for affordable access to facilities.

**Sustainable funding and partnerships:** Emphasis on securing funding and forging strategic partnerships with councils, agencies, sponsors, and the private sector.

**Strategic Direction,** Dr Priya Jaganathan presented

The session concluded with a commitment to continued dialogue and collaboration, as GOPIO BRISBANE sought to translate insights from leaders, policymakers, and community advocates into action in the year ahead.



# New GOPIO Brisbane committee hosts a community roundtable titled Give to Gain

Community Leaders Convened in Queensland for the Give to Gain Roundtable to Strengthen the Indian Diaspora

The evening's formal program commenced at 6:00 PM with arrivals and open networking, culminating at 6:30 PM with the start of official proceedings at Level 7, Cirque Centuria, 154 Melbourne Street, South Brisbane. Chief Guest Lady Mayoress Nina Schrinner delivered the keynote, followed by insights from panellists Lisa Ward, CEO of ECCQ, and Prav Pillai, Principal Lawyer at Cornerstone Law Offices.

Umesh Chandra OAM (GOPIO International Executive Vice President) gave an overview of GOPIO International and its worldwide chapters, highlighting the organisation's global reach and impact.

A pair of events highlighted Queensland's commitment to community-led growth as leaders gathered for a GOPIO Queensland roundtable at an invitation-only forum and a Harmony Week morning tea with the Queensland Police Service. The discussions focused on strengthening collaboration, pathways for empowerment, and celebrating the Indian diaspora's contributions to Queensland's economy and society.

At the invitation-only roundtable hosted by GOPIO

Brisbane, attendees explored the theme Give to Gain: Strengthening the Indian Diaspora in Queensland. Organisers, led by Dr Priya Jaganathan and the GOPIO Brisbane team, facilitated a space for dialogue among senior community leaders, decision-makers, and partners.

Lady Mayoress Nina Schrinner served as Chief Guest, with Senator Paul Scarr, Councillor Vicki Howard (Civic Cabinet Chair of the Community and the Arts Committee), and Lisa Ward, CEO of the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland, in attendance. The discussions centred on enhancing collaboration, bolstering support systems, and creating pathways to help Queensland's Indian diaspora thrive. The event underscored a broader message that generosity and shared purpose among leaders can yield resilient, connected, and opportunity-filled communities.

In a separate engagement, the Queensland Police Service hosted a Harmony Week morning tea, which the speaker described as growing into a meaningful event that raises funds for the needy. This year's proceeds were earmarked for the Youth Ethnic Network, aiming to connect diverse young people and cultivate leadership within communities.

A third note from the

evening's reflections emphasised the enduring influence of past presidents and leaders who laid the organisation's foundations. The speaker highlighted that Queensland's Indian community is expanding not only in numbers but in its role in shaping the workforce, economy, and future.

The organisers saw opportunities to connect that contribution to tangible pathways through co-creation, strengthened partnerships, and more inclusive systems. The speaker thanked Dr Priya Jaganathan, the GOPIO Brisbane team, and Lady Mayoress Nina Schrinner for her leadership, noting the need to translate important conversations into concrete action.

The events collectively signalled a proactive approach to leveraging community leadership for practical outcomes, with organisers and participants looking ahead to turn dialogues into actionable initiatives.

Usha Chandra expressed gratitude to the committee and acknowledged Irene for her tireless efforts, recognising the contributions that helped make the event a success.

Tags: #GiveToGain #CommunityLeadership #Queensland #IndianDiaspora #Collaboration

# GOPIO Cairns hosts Holi Festival of Colours



**T**he Cairns community gathered in a vibrant display of culture, unity, and joy at the Cairns Holi Festival – Festival of Colours,

hosted by GOPIO Cairns Inc at McKenzie Street Parklands on Saturday. Families, friends, and visitors from across the region enjoyed a lively day of

music, colour play, and food as the traditional Indian festival of Holi was celebrated in a welcoming, family-friendly environment.





The event ran from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, with music from a local DJ that kept the crowd energised throughout the afternoon. Attendees experienced the joy of Holi by sharing colourful powders that symbolise happiness, friendship, and the arrival of spring.

“This event was about bringing the community together,” said a spokesperson from GOPIO Cairns Inc. “It was wonderful to see people from many different backgrounds celebrating culture, enjoying

the music, and sharing the spirit of Holi.”

Food trucks, including Satable and Momo Express, offered a variety of delicious options for attendees, adding to the festive atmosphere. Organisers thanked the many volunteers, vendors, community members, and supporters who helped make the event a success.

“Holi is a celebration of colour, joy, and community. Seeing so many smiling faces enjoying the festival together was truly special,” the organisers said. GOPIO

Cairns Inc hopes the festival will continue to grow as an annual multicultural celebration in Cairns, strengthening community connections and promoting cultural understanding.

**Summary:** The Holi Festival in Cairns successfully brought together diverse members of the community for a day of colour, music, and cuisine, with organisers expressing optimism for the event’s growth as a staple multicultural celebration in the region.

# GOPIO Gold Coast Celebrates International Women's Day 2026 with Empowering "Give To Gain" Theme



**G**old Coast, 8 March 2026 — GOPIO Gold Coast hosted a vibrant International Women's Day celebration on 8 March at Southport Sharks, Musgrave Ave, Southport, underscoring the theme "Give To Gain." The event featured a dedicated emcee who reflected on the power of women lifting one another through support, mentorship, and opportunity, emphasizing that collective advancement leads to broader societal progress.

The evening brought

together a lineup of influential women and community leaders who shared compelling messages about empowerment, resilience, and leadership. Attendees heard from voices described as powerful and inspiring, all united by a commitment to driving real change for women within the community and beyond.

A spokesperson for GOPIO Gold Coast expressed gratitude to the organising team for their hard work and collaboration, noting

that the event provided a meaningful platform to celebrate achievements while spotlighting ongoing work toward gender equality. The emcee, who provided a thoughtful and engaging cadence to the program, conveyed appreciation for the opportunity to guide discussions and highlight impact initiatives.

Participants left with a renewed sense of purpose, reaffirming the collective goal: to give more, support more, and foster a more

equal world. The gathering underscored the belief that mutual empowerment accelerates progress for everyone, reinforcing GOPIO Gold Coast's commitment to community leadership and women's empowerment.

Hashtags associated with the event included #IWD2026, #GiveToGain, #WomenSupportingWomen, #CommunityLeadership, and #emceelife.

For more information, visit GOPIO Gold Coast's official channels or contact their communications team.



# GOPIO COMMUNITY CONNECT LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

A SERIES OF FUNCTIONS AND EVENTS, WITH FORMAL INVITATION AND OFFICIAL PRESENCE FROM THE GOPIO INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



Lord Mayor's civic reception for the Maltese community



Vietnamese Lunar New Year, with Senator Paul Scarr and Minister Fiona Simpson



With the Director General of the Taiwan Economic Board



Indian Senior Citizens International Women's Day celebrations



Logan Mayors - multifaitth breakfast planning committee, GOPIO involved.



At ECCQ's International Women's Day breakfast



GOPIO Brisbane team at ECCQ IWD breakfast



At the ICAQ traditional Indian New Year celebration as an official guest

# GOPIO COMMUNITY CONNECT LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

A SERIES OF FUNCTIONS AND EVENTS, WITH FORMAL INVITATION AND OFFICIAL PRESENCE FROM THE GOPIO INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



At the ICAQ traditional Indian New Year celebration as an official guest



Iftaar dinner by Ahmadiyya Community of Queensland with Charis Mullen MP



Official guest at Citizenship ceremony hosted by Brisbane Lord Mayor



Harmony Day -arts exhibition by the Taiwanese community



Harmony Day -arts exhibition by the Taiwanese community

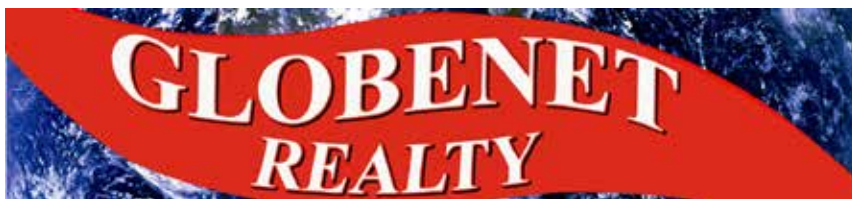


Harmony Day -arts exhibition by the Taiwanese community



With Councillor Penny Wolff at Harinam Sankiratan

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