



Speech by

Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Hansard Wednesday, 24 February 2010

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Vindaloo Against Violence

Hon. A PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs) (9.52 am): Today is Vindaloo Against Violence day. Vindaloo Against Violence is the creation of Mia Northrop, a Melbourne woman who is encouraging all Australians to take a stand against racial violence today by eating out at their local Indian restaurant. While Queensland has not seen the level of violence that has been witnessed in Victoria, we cannot afford to be complacent. Vindaloo Against Violence is the perfect chance for Queenslanders to show their support for the state's 26,000-strong Indian community.

I am pleased to inform the House that the cafeteria at Parliament House will be serving Indian cuisine today. Dishes will include tandoori chicken, vegetable pakora and, of course, beef vindaloo. On ABC Radio this morning, Spencer Howson threw out a challenge to MPs who think they can stomach a hot vindaloo. Spencer nominated Vaughan Johnson, the member for Gregory, and I nominated Deputy Premier Paul Lucas. So the challenge is on. Perhaps the chef can come up with an extra hot vindaloo to test their mettle and, Mr Speaker, perhaps you can adjudicate.

I want to encourage as many Queenslanders as possible to enjoy their favourite curry at their local Indian restaurant today. I want to thank the Premier, Mr Speaker and the Leader of the House for supporting Vindaloo Against Violence. I am sure that all members, staff and visitors to the House will get behind this great initiative.

Queensland is home to more than 20,000 Indian students and the Bligh government values their contribution to the state's cultural, social and economic life. We are getting on the front foot and supporting Queensland's Indian community. Earlier this year I was pleased to announce the appointment of Umesh Chandra as liaison officer between the Queensland government and the state's Indian community, and Umesh is here today up in the gallery. I look forward to sharing a curry with him at lunchtime today.

Last Friday, I also visited international students at Griffith University during O Week and I will be meeting students from QUT later today. In addition, this Sunday the Queensland Police Service will be conducting a free information seminar in Brisbane for Indian students, highlighting the range of state government support services that are available to them. The Bligh government is getting right behind Queensland's Indian community and I want to encourage all members and all Queenslanders to support Vindaloo Against Violence day.