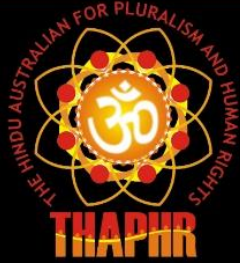


# THE HINDU AUSTRALIAN FOR PLURALISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS



## Media Release

We are deeply concerned with recent occurrence happened with Shubh Patel, a 12-year old Australian football young star where he was instructed by the referee to remove the Kanthi (a religious necklace made of soft wood from tulasi or holi basil plant) during match.

According to Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) rules, a player must not use equipment or wear anything dangerous. This includes items of jewellery such as necklaces, rings, bracelets, earrings, leather bands, rubber bands, etc. Unfortunately, Kanthi is not like these metallic objects that can be recognized as 'dangerous'. Nevertheless, Shubh showed his deep respect to both Hinduism and his passion football together as he decided to sit on the sideline to obey the referee's instruction without discontinuing his religious believe and practice.

We applaud Shubh's decision and wants to reiterate that the Hindu community will always support the freedom of religious practice across the world.

We do believe that football is such a game that bring nearer the people from all walks. It is our firm belief that human rights like religious beliefs and practice should not be compromised in the name of game laws in the playground. It will create negative impact in the mind of the new generations towards interesting games like soccer. We request all the Australian authorities and professional bodies to come forward to ensure the protection of basic human right of practicing one's faith in not only in sports but in all fields.

THAPHR is pleased that Football Queensland has resolved the issue with a respectable and realistic solution, and we call upon all sporting bodies to introduce cultural awareness training for their officials and volunteers.

**Adelaide**

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