

Hindu dancers to dazzle

By CLAYTON BENNETT

A TROUPE of Hindu dancers from Singapore has joined with Darwin locals to perform a unique spiritual and cultural showcase at the Darwin Entertainment Centre this Saturday.

The Hindu Society of the NT is working with Singaporean dancers to put on a cultural evening of music and dance.

Organiser and performer Jeyanthi Arumuganathan said the show will be a mix of classical and semi-classical dance styles as well as one piece that is unchoreographed. In the unique piece dancers will interpret a song without instruction and thus all dance different to the same music. "Each of us react differently in the same situation just as we do in



Singaporean dancer Jeyanthi Arumuganathan strikes a pose with locals Apoorva Baranitharan (14), Venaska Cheliah (17) and Sita Valadiah (19) rehearsing for Saturday night's performance

life," Ms Arumuganathan said.

The production, *Aham*, means "one's own consciousness" and blends Indian fusion and classical

dancing. Ms Arumuganathan teaches dancing in Singapore and said she always wanted to try choreographing live performance.

"This is my first official attempt at choreography," she said.

"I have always wanted to do it for the community."

The Bharatanatyam dancer said she feels at home when dancing.

Accompanying her on stage will be fellow Singaporean dancer Hema Sivanathan and local dancers Apoorva Baranitharan, Venaska Cheliah and Sita Valadiah.

"We're learning new skills, it's something different to what we usually do," 17-year-old dancer Venaska Cheliah said.

"We feel privileged to be involved in this production, it's really opened our eyes."

Aham, Darwin Entertainment Centre, this Saturday, 6.45pm, \$20

Territory tops nation's drowning statistics

MORE people drown in the Territory than anywhere else in Australia, shocking new figures reveal.

Eight men drowned across the Territory in the last financial year, all but one in regional and remote communities, according to the Royal Life Saving Society NT Drowning Report 2010/11.

This is the highest drowning rate per capita in the country, at 3.48 per 100,000 people, the society said.

The society's NT executive director Floss Roberts said it was "encouraging" there were no drowning deaths at flooded river crossings during the wet season this year. But it was "very concerning" that many people were not taking basic water safety

precautions like wearing life vests.

"Our drowning deaths are a result of our outdoor lifestyle," she said.

"We need to be constantly aware that water safety is required at every recreational level, whether fishing, boating and swimming."

It was crucial to increase water safety education and training in regional and remote areas, she said.

It was also important primary school-aged children had sufficient swimming ability, so they would be safe in and around water as adults.

The society's report shows only 4 per cent of young children could swim 50 metres and perform water safety skills in 2010/11, well below the national benchmark.

Hardship grants still available

PASTORALISTS affected by the ban on live cattle exports to Indonesia have to Friday to apply for payments from Centrelink. About 500 businesses have received the Business Assistance Payment or the Business Hardship Payment, a one-off lump sum of \$5,000. Another 180 have received a hardship grant of up to \$20,000.

The total amount paid out so far from these grants is nearly \$6 million.

Federal member for Lingiari Warren Snowdon urged those affected by the temporary ban who have not yet made a claim to do so immediately.

For more information on options for claiming grants, call 1800 808 869 or go to www.centrelink.gov.au

Daly dam fears unfounded

ALARM over a feared plan by the Federal Opposition to dam the Daly River has proved to be unfounded.

Territory Labor polities were up in arms after a national newspaper article suggested the Coalition would, if it won power, dam a number of north Australian rivers including the Daly to create more agricultural land. Fisheries Minister Kon Vatskalis said the Territory Government would "fight tooth and nail" to protect the Daly's "international reputation as a premier fishing destination"

But the Coalition has since confirmed it has no plans to dam rivers, a message echoed by Territory opposition leader Terry Mills.



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