

HANSARD

26 NOVEMBER 2009

JADE BUDDHA DISPLAY — WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM

Statement by Member for Riverton

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton) [12.53 pm]: I am very pleased to report that the magnificent 2.7 metre tall jade Buddha on display at the WA Museum this month was very popular. More than 25 000 people visited the jade Buddha, making it the most popular exhibit in recent decades at the museum.

Many of the visitors to the exhibit were from the local Buddhist community, which is now a very large community. Many non-Buddhists also visited the exhibit. The fact that the Buddha is made out of four tonnes of jewellery-grade jade and was beautifully carved understandably drew much interest.

Other people were drawn to the exhibit by curiosity about the teachings and practices of Buddhism and, more generally, Asian cultures and religions.

Many people were involved in bringing this remarkable icon to Perth. I would especially like to thank Suresh Rajan, the executive officer of the Ethnic Communities Council of WA; Mr Victor Gnu, the chairman of the local organising committee; and Ian Green, the chairman of the international organising committee.

The jade Buddha has now left Perth to continue its trip around the world but will return in about five years and then go to its final resting place in Bendigo, Victoria, for the new temple being built at a cost of \$20 million. I trust the success of the jade Buddha will encourage the museum to host displays like this linking our Australian and Asian cultures.