

# AIS Views

A monthly newsletter of Australia India Society of Victoria Inc

Business Centre P O Box 1000, Brunswick 3056 - Tel: 9366 5006 (BH)

Web Page: Under construction

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Vol 25/03 March, 2002

Australia India Society of Victoria is an integrated non-sectarian, Indian Association in Victoria. It represents Indians and Australians from many parts of the world.

AISV membership is open for anyone who is interested in India, her culture and her people.

The aims of AISV are to promote cultural and social events in context of India, to safeguard interests of its members and to act as a representative for the Indian community in Victoria at various Federal, State and Local governmental levels.

## “Hardwar, Badrinath and Hemkunt Sahib-A trip of a lifetime” by: Dr. G. Aurora

For an agnostic like me it is not an easy task to write on a trip to Hardwar, Badrinath and Hemkunt Sahib. I do not mind in the least admitting that I at the beginning, was, a very reluctant traveller for this trip that was planned by my wife. I do not feel ashamed by confessing that she more than adequately compensates for my somewhat sceptic views towards religion very adequately by her unflinching devotion and utmost dedication not only to her own religion Sikhism, but also respect for the Hindu religion. My own up bringing has taught me to respect all religions and I do follow that philosophy most ‘religiously’.

The travelling party were to be my wife and me, along with my sister-in-law and brother in law along with a family of five and two of their friends. Tarwinder Singh was the group leader and had been going to Hemkunt Sahib every year for the last fifteen years or so. Located in the Uttarkhand Himalayas bordering Tibet and Nepal, Hemkunt Sahib is accessible for only four months of the year. Long before the Sikhs discovered Hemkunt, the place was well known to the local people who live in the nearby villages as a place of pilgrimage. Tarwinder advised us in great detail of the apparel we would need for this trip; sleeping bags, type of woollens, bed sheets etc. We also carried with us several cartons of water bottles, fruits, sweets, savouries and biscuits. Tarwinder had booked all the accommodation and naturally he was very aware that the lodgings had to be clean with good toilets and bathrooms.

Tarwinder had hired a twelve-seater air-conditioned tourist bus with very comfortable seats and an excellent music system. The driver and his jockey were very experienced and the driver had been on the trip several times in the past. This was very important as the roads on the mountains to Badrinath and Hemkunt were some of the most treacherous I have seen in my life. In some places traffic was only allowed one way at a time, as the roads were not wide enough to allow two vehicles to pass each other simultaneously. There were boom gates with specified times for travel in each direction. The roads and the flow of traffic are under the control of the Indian army at all times.

We started from Gurdwara Bangla Sahib in New Delhi on 26 September at 12.15 PM as we had to pick up Tarwinder’s two children from school at 1.00 PM. Delhi was hot and the temperature was around 36 degrees Celsius. In hindsight, perhaps an early start, around 10AM, would have been more appropriate as we reached our first night’s stop in Srinagar (UP) at 9.30 PM.

Our first halt was for a lunch break at “Cheetal” about two and a half hours drive from New Delhi. Cheetal is like an oasis in a Desert. It is an eating-place run by a non-resident Indian from USA. The place is built over five acres of landscaped gardens (designed by a landscape architect especially brought over from Singapore) with several aviaries housing different species of birds. The service was equivalent to any western style restaurant and the quality of food was absolutely wonderful. We left Cheetal at 4.15PM for our next stop Rishkesh,

where we visited the local Gurdwara and had a tea break. We left soon for our final stop Srinagar for the night. We did not stop at Hardwar on the way as the best time to visit the holy site was during daytime. We arrived in Srinagar late at night and had dinner there in a local restaurant. Tarwinder had visited the restaurant before and found the eating-place very clean with a high quality of food. Our accommodation was in a government guesthouse, which was well maintained and clean.

We left Srinagar at 7.00AM for Gobind Ghat, where we spent the night before trekking to Gobind Dham and Hemkunt Sahib. A stop at Badrinath temple preceded our night stay at Gobind Ghat. The scenic beauty from Rishkesh to Srinagar and then Badrinath, with mountains and the two main streams of the Ganges, Alaknanda and Bhagirathi flowing between them all along the trip was overwhelming, something that one needs to see and encounter to believe it and revel in its beauty. Alaknanda and Bhagirathi unite at Devprayag to form the main stream known as the Ganga, which cuts through the southern Himalayas to emerge from the mountains at Rishkesh. It then flows onto the plain at Hardwar. We stopped for lunch in a town called “Peepal Kothi”. Peepal Kothi is a small town with very good restaurants providing tandoori roti and naan served with delicious vegetarian dishes.

We then went straight to Badrinath ji temple situated at **Badrinath (mountain)** peak of the main Himalayas. It is an uninhabited village and shrine in northern Uttar Pradesh state, northern India. Situated in the Himalayas along a headstream of the Ganges River, it lies at an elevation of about 10,000 feet (3,050 m). On the slopes of this mountain is the Badrinath ji temple dedicated to the Hindu god Vishnu who did penance in Badrinath. Badrinath is an important Hindu shrine and one of the most sacred places in India and has been a well-known

pilgrimage centre for more than 2,000 years. Nearby is the hot springs of Tapt Kund (warmed by Agni, the god of fire) where many pilgrims bathe. Badrinath is almost uninhabited in winter and very busy with pilgrims in summer. It was not very crowded when we reached there and we had ample time to offer our prayers to god Vishnu.

Badrinath was a cold town and one needs to carry a woollen jumper to keep warm. I found the town to be very clean and the people extremely friendly. The town is very colourful with the buildings painted in bright colours. There was ample accommodation available as it was nearing the close of the pilgrimage season, the town being difficult to get to from November to April.

We spent two hours in Badrinath. However, when we were ready to return to Gobind Dham we were told we could not leave the town. The traffic was now coming from the other direction following which the army vehicles have access to the roads to go to the Chinese border about sixty kilometres away. We had not planned to stay the night at Badrinath but the gate was closed and we could not leave. We were stuck but had to obtain permission to leave in order to meet our tightly scheduled deadlines.

## From President's Desk

The Annual General Meeting of Australia India Society of Victoria is to be held later this month and I would request all of you to attend the meeting. I have sent a letter to all life-members of AISV to attend a special informal meeting starting one hour prior to the AGM and this would be a reminder for them to keep the AGM date free. I would like to extend a similar invitation to all members of AISV to attend this special meeting starting at 2.30PM. The purpose of the meeting is to have your input in the future direction of the society.

I would also like to publicly declare my position vacant to enable any committee member in the present committee to nominate for the position of the president. I would like you to nominate yourself for the position of a committee member or a member of the executive committee, excluding the position of the president, which can only be filled by a member of the present committee. The ever-common excuse of not having time to join the committee is not acceptable. You should endeavour to find time to do some community work and there would be no better platform than the AISV to launch yourself in community activities.

The Victorian Indian Community Charitable Trust (VICCT) has been inactive for some time. I am trying my best once again to actively involve the community to get going the VICCT for the purpose of establishing a retirement village, hostel accommodation and nursing home for the elderly including the building of a community centre and library. The Indian community is one of the largest ethnic communities in Australia and Indians are the highest per capita earners in Australia but still do not have a place they can identify with or call their own. AISV and VICCT has learnt a lot from its previous experience of building the now defunct Indian Community Resource Centre in Brunswick (Building sold to new owners and used as a meditation and yoga centre) and would not make the same mistakes again. If you are keen to become actively involved in the above project, please do get in touch with me.

**Gurdip Aurora**

## AISV Newsletter Deadline

The material to be published in the newsletter is required to be in hand by the **first of each month**. The newsletter committee seeks your cooperation in an effort to produce a publication of an acceptable quality and standard. The material for publication may be mailed to AISV address or fax to 9366 7660

### AISV

#### Management Committee

##### President

Gurdip Aurora  
9873 4365 (Tel)  
9764 2060 (Fax)

##### Vice President

Pratima Francis  
9214 7899 (Tel)  
9214 7839 (fax)

##### Secretary

K P Saratchandran  
9366 5444 (Tel)  
9366 7660 (Fax)

##### Asst Secretary

Usha Sharma  
9502 3073

##### Treasurer

Nigel Chandu  
9317 8859 (Tel)  
9318 4318 (Fax)

#### Committee

Ahmad Keshtiar  
0411 181 331

Kamala Chandu  
9317 8859

Priya Saratchandran  
9366 5444

Tom Thomas  
9333 3329

#### The publication

AISV newsletter is a monthly publication. The sole purpose of this newsletter is to maintain communication link with the members and to provide up-to-date information of the forthcoming cultural and social events in Victoria.

It may cover topics such as history, travel, biographies as well as various social, cultural, psychological or family issues. It can also become a forum to discuss issues concerning Indians in multicultural Australia. It is in no way an appropriate forum to express personal discontentments or counterproductive gestures towards our own countrypeople. Any suggestions are welcome from readers as long as they are in good faith.

#### AISV sub-committees

##### Cultural:

K P Saratchandran(chair), Aroti Ghosh, Usha Sharma, Ahmad Keshtiar

##### Immigration:

Gurdip Aurora(chair), Priya Saratchandran, Tom Thomas

##### Newsletter:

K P Saratchandran(chair), Suniti Betigeri, Remesh Remesan, Umesh Pawar, Kalpana Pawar

##### PR & Promotional:

Gurdip Arora(chair), Tom Thomas, Usha Sharma, Tim Thomas

##### Youth Affairs:

##### Women's Affairs:

Kamala Chandu(chair), Pratima Francis, Priya Saratchandran, Usha Sharma

##### Major Events:

##### Koorie Fund:

Pratima Francis

## Jusmin Travels

### Discounted airfares

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and within Australia

Contact: **Julaiga** for all your travel needs

29 Forum Place,  
Tullamarine, Vic 3043  
Tel: (03) 9335-2822  
Fax: (03) 9335-3015

15 Munro Street  
Coburg, Vic 3058  
Tel: (03) 9384-6088  
Fax: (03) 9384-2188

FOR EMERGENCY RING (03) 9330-3193

#### Disclaimer

Australia India Society of Victoria Inc. disclaim all and any liability to any person in respect of anything and of the consequences of anything done or omitted to be done by such a person, in reliance whole or partial, upon this newsletter or any part of the content of this newsletter.

**Advertisement Rates:** Full Page \$150, Half Page \$ 80, Quarter Page \$ 50, B & W photo add \$ 20, Leaflet Insert \$ 50,

Repeat Ad 20% disc, AISV members 25% dis

**AISV Membership Fees:** Life Member \$300, Single & Pensioner \$ 20, Family Member \$ 30, Student & unwaged \$ 5

## “Mehfil Night” - 2002!

The Australia India Society of Victoria organised monthly ‘Mehfil’ night will commence the first program for the year 2002 on Friday March 16, 2002.

It will be an open night!! An opportunity for all those ‘closet singers’ who would want to express their hidden talents!! We will provide, as usual, an able orchestra.

So friends! Bring your songbooks, come out of your shyness and sing a few songs. Surprise yourself and others with your hidden talents!!

**Invite all your friends come and enjoy this fabulous program!!**  
**‘Mehfil’ night- a Friday musical night presented by**  
**A.I.S.V**  
**in service of the community!**



**Entry is free for all!!**



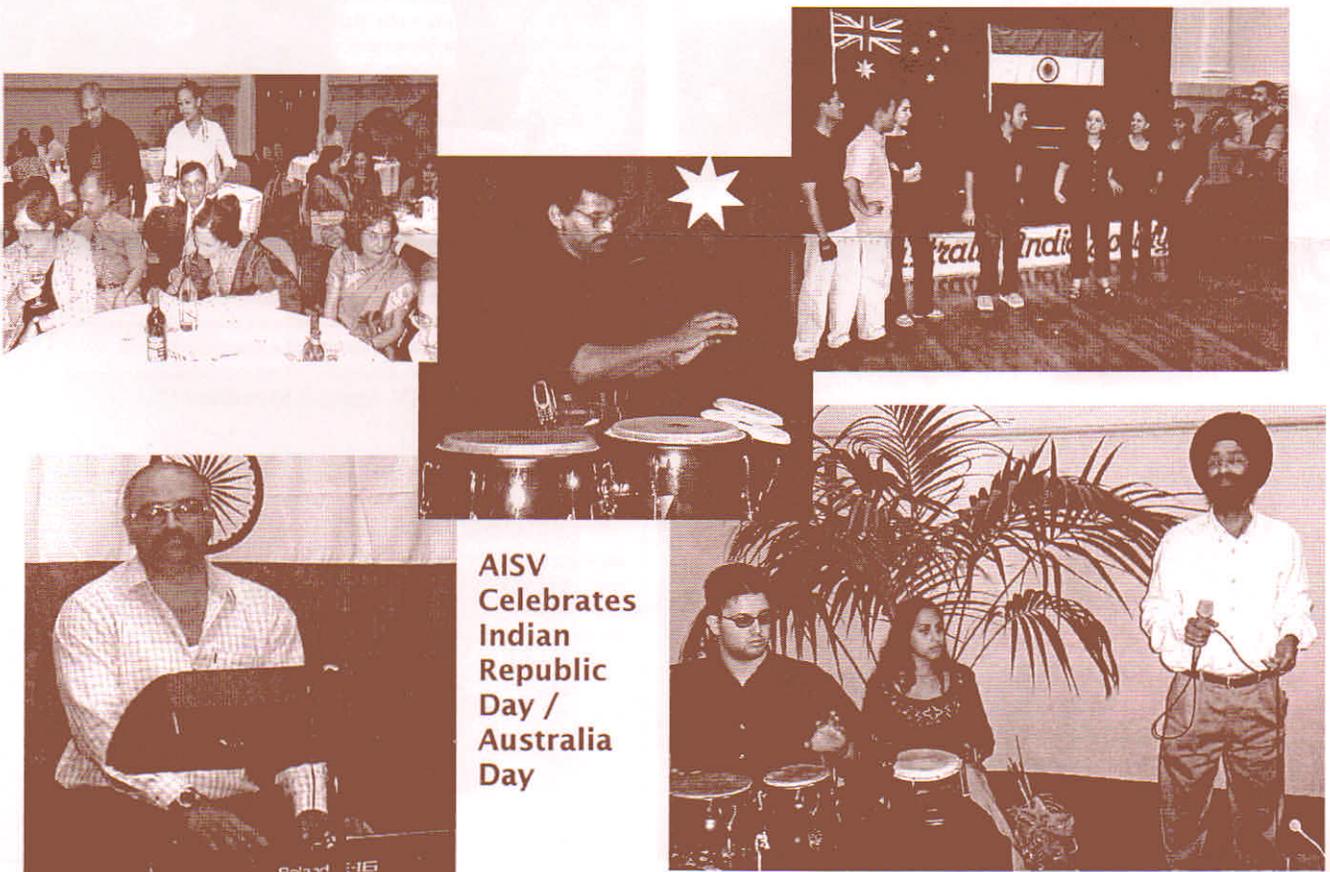
Date 16-03-2002 - Time. 8-10pm

Venue – Coburg Library Hall

Cnr. Victoria St & Louisa St, Coburg. (Melway 29 G1)

Parking is plentiful !!!

For enquiries- Phone Dr. Saratchandran 9366 5444.



AISV  
Celebrates  
Indian  
Republic  
Day /  
Australia  
Day

# AISV Republic Day Celebration

A pictorial essay!



**Notice for AISV Annual Members !!!**

**Annual Members: your subscription is overdue now - Please pay without any further delay !!!**

Have you considered becoming a life member of AISV ? We urge you do !!

**Thank You - Treasurer**

## Dishes of the Month



### Chicken Biryani

#### Ingredients

Chicken - 600 gms (big pieces)  
2 Onions - cut into thin slices and deep-fried till crisp  
2 Potatoes - cut into long thin fingers and deep fried into potatoes fingers.  
Basmati Rice - 300 gms  
Tomatoes - 3-4 nos medium (grated)  
Onions - 3-4 big ones (grated)  
Coriander - 1/2 bunch chopped finely  
Pudina leaves - 1 cup chopped finely  
Thick curd (little sour) - 1 cup  
Juice of one Lime  
Jeera powder - 2 tbsp  
Dhania powder - 2 tbsp  
Garam Masala - 2 tbsp  
Hing - 1 tbsp  
Haladi - 1 tbsp  
Black Pepper powder - 2 tbsp  
Red Chilli powder - 4 tbsp (or as per taste)  
4 tbsp -Ginger Garlic paste  
2-3 Green Chillies - chopped finely  
Saffron - few strands (mixed in Salt - as per taste)  
3-4 tbsp Everest Biryani Masala

#### Whole Garam Masala

4 - Lavang, 2 sticks - Dalchini, 2-3 - Green Elaichi, Javitri,  
2-Black Elaichi, Tej Patta - 3-4 leaves

#### Method:

1. Marinate chicken pieces in lemon juice, curd, salt, Coriander leaves of the bunch, Pudina leaves - 1/4 cup, Jeera powder, Dhania powder, Garam masala, Hing, Haladi, Black pepper powder, Red chili powder, 2 tbsp ginger garlic paste, green chillies chopped finely for at least for 2-3 hrs.
2. Heat 4-5 tbsp oil in kadahi and add chicken pieces. Fry on high flame till water evaporates and chicken becomes dry and well fried. Remove only the pieces in a plate.
3. Now in the same kadahi add remaining 2 tbsp ginger garlic paste, then add grated onions. When onions change color add grated tomatoes. Fry till oil separates. Add 3-4 tps Everest Biryani masala. Fry for a few seconds and add chicken pieces fried earlier. Add little water. Cook for few minutes.
4. In another kadahi, Heat ghee. Add whole garam masala, fry basmati rice for 5 minutes till it changes colour and add water and a few drops of lime juice. Cook rice till each grain separates. Remove and spread in a plate and let it cool.
5. Heat ghee in a vessel (in which all the rice and chicken can fit) add half the chicken piece along with gravy. Add few tsp curd, few chopped coriander, few pudina leaves chopped, potato fingers, fried onions, little ghee.
6. Now add half the rice repeat this and let rice be the top most layer. Add f ew tsp ghee on the top most rice layer, fried onions and potato. Cover tightly and cook on indirect flame (place heated tava on the gas and then keep the vessel) for 8-10 min.
7. Uncover and serve with chopped onion, lemon wedges, thick curd. Enjoy.

Source Unknown

## Diary Dates 2002

### Friday, March 16, 2002

'Mehfil Night' - A third Friday Musical programme. For details refer page-3.

### Sunday, March 24, 2002

'AISV AGM' - 2002 Annual General Meeting of AISV will be held at 'Coburg Library Meeting Hall, Cnr Victoria & Louisa St.

Coburg (Mel Ref: 29G1). All financial members are urged to attend.

### Sunday, March 24, 2002

SBS Radiothorn-Hindi programme raising funds for Royal Childrens Hospital. AISV urge our members and friends to contribute generously to this noble cause. Please tune into 93.1 FM at 9 am for further advise on the phone number etc.

If you wish to make a pledge beforehand please contact Dr. Saratchandran on 9366-5444.

For enquiries regarding the 'Radiothorn', please contact Mrs. Jaya Sharma on 9390-7971.

## Directory

### Australia India Society of Victoria

Business Centre P O Box 1000, Brunswick, 3056  
Tel: 9310 7722 Fax: 9366 7660

### Department of Immigration & Multicultural Affairs

P O Box 241E, Melbourne VIC 3000  
Tel: 9235 3999 Fax: 9235 3300

### Ethnic Youth Issues Network

1/250 Gore Street, Fitzroy, VIC 3065  
Tel: 9419 9122 Fax: 9416 0450  
Contact: Ms Carmel Guerra

### Federation of Indian Associations of Victoria

P O Box 2554W Melbourne VIC 3001  
Tel/Fax: 9521 2300

### High Commission of India

3-5 Moonah Place, Yarralumla ACT 2600  
Tel: 06-273 3999, 273 3774 Fax: 06-273 3328

### Honorary Consul for India

15 Munro Street, Coburg, VIC 3058  
Tel: 9384 0141 Fax: 9384 1609

### Indian Resource Centre

47 Grantham Street, Brunswick, 3055

### Multicultural Arts Victoria

156 George Street, Fitzroy VIC 3065  
Tel: 9417 6777 Fax: 9416 3342

### Overseas Qualifications Unit

Level 25, 55 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000  
Tel: 9655 6164 Fax: 9655 6151

### SBS Radio

PO Box 294, South Melbourne VIC 3205  
Tel: 9685 2525 Fax: 9645 7482 Contact: Mr Peter Horton

### Victorian Co-operative on Children's Services for Ethnic Groups

569 Nicholson Street North Carlton VIC 3054  
Tel: 9387 0177 Contact: Mr John Zika



## **Hardwar, Badrinath and Hemkunt Sahib-A trip of a lifetime**

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We drove back to the town to meet with the chief of the police who was the only individual who could authorise our bus to leave. He would have to communicate our departure from Badrinath to his counterpart near Govind Ghat. I was assigned the task of speaking to the chief of the police and after some diplomatic manoeuvring (no bribe) we were able to get his approval for our bus to leave. It was going to be a dangerous return trip and the driver was cautioned to be very careful and watchful for on-coming traffic.

We arrived safely in Gobind Ghat, where we spent the night. We had dinner in a local restaurant where again the quality of food was excellent. Throughout the whole trip we had mostly vegetarian dishes, tandoori nan and roti. The accommodation at Gobind Ghat was average. The room was old with the plaster peeling off with the attached bathroom and toilet in a dilapidated condition.

The next morning we left for Govind Dham at 7.00AM. We were told to carry clothing for two days including essential items in a cabin bag. Only minimal baggage was allowed as it was to be carried on horse back. The rest of the baggage would remain in the bus. It was cold and some people were wearing woollens. I was told that it would become very warm with sunrise and that the woollens would have to be taken off. I decide to do a brisk walk initially to ward of the cold as I had opted not to wear any warm clothing. Later I was very glad I made that decision against popular advice.

A few members of the group decided to cover the thirteen kilometre mountainous trip on horse back, while I along with Tarwinder and his friend Bunny decided to walk the distance. Tarwinder's mother went on a "Palki" carried by four able bodied young men. It costs eight hundred rupees to hire a horse for the entire trip to Hemkunt Sahib and four thousand rupees to hire a palki. While I wore proper hiking shoes, Tarwinder decided to go all the way to Gobind Dham barefoot. The thirteen kilometre trek was made of cobble stones and dirt. At times the climb was very steep and treacherous. All along the route, approximately every five hundred meters was a small shack that sold bottled water, cold drinks and tea and coffee. There were make shift areas with 'durries' to lie down if you were tired and most places had comfortable chairs to take a well earned rest. As you proceeded further up the mountain, such rest places offered fresh tandoori Aloo Pranthas and rotis served with vegetable curries and tea or a cold drink. Limca, Pepsi, bottled mineral water and Coke were readily available throughout the thirteen kilometre trek to Gobind Dham.

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I must admit the mountainous trek became more and more difficult as time passed. I was sweating profusely and most of the way I was saturated with my own sweat and the bottled water I was pouring on my body to keep myself cool. I also soaked my handkerchief in cold bottled water and wrapped it around my neck to cool the blood going up the carotid arteries to the brain. The whole trek was tough but challenging. Everyone was saying prayers as they walked. I also started to quietly recite the prayers I had learnt during my earlier years. Tarwinder was left far behind as he was bare feet and walking at a slow pace.

I stopped every half hour or so to rest and replenish fluids. Talking to other people on the way up took some of the pain and discomfort away. I even managed a fifteen minute power nap in one of the shacks. Slowly but surely I reached the ten kilometre point where

there were several eateries and the place was very crowded. It was 11.45AM. By this time I was in agonising pain. My legs were giving way under me and I told myself that I would now hire a horse to cover the remaining three kilometres. Then I saw the people from our group who had opted to go on horse back. There were about to leave. I told them they had made the right decision by opting to travel on horse back. No they said. In a chorus they told me of their very sore bottoms, coccyx bones and bruising on the inner thighs. I was in a dilemma. Put up with painful legs or go by horse and get a sore bottom and bruised thighs in addition. I decided to walk the remaining three kilometres.

I had Tandoori aloo prantha and tea at one of the eateries while resting. I negotiated with the owner that I would make my own tea and he allowed me to do so. I lay flat on my back for an hour or so. Tarwinder and Bunny arrived. They were an hour behind. They asked me stay back with them. I had an extra forty five minutes rest with them. We walked back together at a much slower pace and reached Gobind Dham around 2.30 PM.

The accommodation in Gobind Dham was a government guest house. It was below average, but the best available. We had to sleep on bunk beds. The room was littered with cobwebs and the bathroom and the toilet had old fittings and leaking. We brushed off the cobwebs, used our sleeping bags on top of the beds in the room but slept well after that arduous trek. Hot water was available for twenty rupees per bucket, ample for a quick bath.

At 12,000 feet it is not easy to build and maintain good accommodation. Moreover Gobind Dham is only open to the public for four months in a year. A nice professional massage of thirty minutes duration for thirty rupees and a bucket of very hot water for a bath eased a significant amount of my pain and I slept well.

The following day the trek to Sri Hemkunt Sahib, six kilometres on top of the mountain was started by our group at 7.00AM. A decision was made by Tarwinder that everyone should go to the Gurdwara on horseback. In hindsight that was the wisest decision. We reached the Gurdwara around 9.30 AM. It was an awesome sight. Surrounded by humongous mountainous peaks on all sides I could see a small natural lake in the middle. The lake is known as Lokpal, and its sanctity derived from its association with tales of the God. On the bank of this lake was a stream (Hem Ganga), which left the lake and flowed down to meet the Ganges. By the side of the lake is the site of the Sikh temple, Hemkunt Sahib. A few meters away was situated a Hindu temple called the Shri Lakshman mandir. At an altitude of 4,329 meters, these are the highest temples in India.

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The Sikhs come in remembrance and prayer to see the place where their tenth Guru meditated and realised his oneness with God in his previous incarnation. The Hindus pay respect to God Lakshman, the younger brother of Ram, who it is said to have meditated or done penance at the lake. This mandir is also associated with Gods Lakshman, Hanuman, Shiva and Vishnu. It is said that Lakshman was brought to the shore of Lokpal after being mortally wounded in a battle with the son of Ravana. Lakshman's wife wept and prayed that her husband be saved. The monkey God Hanuman was then able to find a life-giving herb. When the herb was administered to Lakshman, he

**Hardwar, Badrinath and Hemkunt Sahib-A trip of a lifetime**

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miraculously revived. In celebration, God showered flowers from heaven, which fell to earth and took root in the Valley of the Flowers.

Another story is told about Lakshman's previous incarnation as a seven headed snake. In this form, so the local people say, he mediated under the water at Lokpal and lord Vishnu slept on his back. The name Lokpal refers to Vishnu, the sustainer, who looks after the earth. Lokpal is also rumoured to be the native place of yet another god Shiva, the destroyer, and his wife Parvati.

For the Sikhs, Hemkunt is the place of the Guru. A place high in the Himalayan mountains, their tenth Guru alluded to in his autobiographical *Bachitra Natak*. It is included in a compilation of writings attributed to Guru Gobind Singh Ji, known as the *Dasam Granth*. In these writings, the Guru tells of his origins. He describes the place Hemkunt Parbat Sapat Sring, the "lake of ice" "mountain" adorned with "seven peaks", as the same place where king Pandu, the forefather of the five Pandava brothers of *Mahabharata* fame, practised *yoga*. There, the Guru did intense meditation and austerities until he merged with God. Because of his earthly parents had served God, God was pleased with them and gave a commandment that the Guru to be born to them. In the world he would carry out a mission to teach the true religion and rid people of evil ways. He was reluctant to leave his state of union with the creator, but God compelled him. In this way the Guru took birth into the world.

The following is an elaboration on the story of the Guru's previous life as told in the passage from the *Dasam Granth*. A powerful youth was called into existence during *Sat Yug*, 'the age of truth' (the first of four ages according to Hindu mythology) to do battle with fierce demons that terrorized mortals and gods. When they had been destroyed, the youth, known as *Dusht Daman*, 'the destroyer of evil', was instructed to go to Hemkunt Sapatsring to meditate until he was called upon by God. Guru Gobind Singh's own account in *Bachitra Natak* completes this story. After realising his oneness with God through meditation and austere discipline, he was reborn in *Kal Yug*, the 'age of darkness', as the son of the ninth Guru and his wife. Later, after his father's martyrdom, he became the tenth and final Guru of the Sikhs.

On arrival we all went to bathe in the lake. The water was icy cold. A quick dip or two lasting not more than five seconds was enough to send you scampering to dry land. People with glasses of hot steamy tea stood waiting to offer it to you to make you warm.

Hardwar town is the gateway to the abode of Gods. The mythological and religious importance of Hardwar is well known. The 'Kumbh' and the 'Ardh Kumbh' fairs are held periodically, every twelfth and sixth year in Hardwar, when a large number of pilgrims and devotees converge to commemorate this divine event. According to astrologers, the 'Kumbh Fair' takes place when the planet Jupiter enters Aquarius and the Sun enters Aries. According to mythology, 'Devas' (Gods) and 'Asuras' (Demons) churned the ocean to obtain Nectar and when the coveted 'Kumbha' (pitcher) of Nectar (Amrita) which gave immortality was obtained from the depths of ocean, one of the 'Devas' whisked away the 'Kumbha' from the 'Asuras' and evading from the 'Asuras', stopped at four places viz. Hardwar, Allahabad (Prayag), Nasik and Ujjain before he finally arrived into the safety of heaven. A few drops of Nectar are supposed to have spilled over on the water at these four places and sages, saints and pilgrims started periodically to flock to each of these 'Tirthas' to celebrate the divine event. In fact, it is a unique event that blends religious and social features alike

**Dr. Gurdip Aurora is the current president of the AISV who took a recent fascinating trip to India. He has visited both north and south of India. His south Indian experience will be the coming article.**



**Australia**

**India**

**Society of Victoria Inc**

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL**

(Please PRINT)

Title/s: .....

Surname: .....

First Name: .....

Spouse's Name: .....

Children: .....

Address: .....

.....Postcode: .....

Tel (BH): .....

Tel (AH): .....

Fax: .....

Mobile: .....

Other Details:(Hobbies, Interests)

Languages

spoken: .....

**Membership Category:**

Life:  \$300 Conc.:  \$ 20

Family:  \$ 30 Single:  \$ 20

Do you require a receipt? yes  no

I hereby apply/renew membership of Australia India Society of Victoria in the above category. I am aware of the rules and regulation of the society.

Signature: .....Date:.....

Please note:

- Application for the membership must be accompanied by the appropriate fee
- Annual membership is for one calendar year
- Please make a cheque payable to Australia India Society of Victoria and forward it to -

**The Secretary  
Australia India Society of Victoria Inc.  
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