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**Australia India Society of Victoria Inc.**

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## President's Message

In this, my last message for the year, I would like to thank all the members of my committee and all our supporters, for their contribution to making this a yet another successful year for the AISV.

The committee needs to be congratulated for their hard work in addressing issues on domestic violence and for the very successful Independence Day function on 15 August 2013. I would like to acknowledge the hard work put in by our vice president, Monica Raizada, as a chair of the Domestic Violence Task Force, Jay Manya, Jasvinder Sidhu, Lyndell McCreadie, Harjit Bedi, Uma Reddy and Raj Kumar for their valued contribution to the running of the AISV.

On a not very happy note, I would like to mention here that I have consistently been given very poor reviews of our direct Air India flights between Melbourne and New Delhi. Close associates, friends and relatives have all generally condemned the service. Delayed flights without prior information or notice, very poor inflight service, meals not being served for up to eight hours at a stretch and then served in a not very good condition – cold, soggy or inadequate! Even the reviews that I have read in the newspapers and on the internet reflect very poorly on this service.

I have been very disappointed with these reviews and feel that Air India needs to significantly improve its performance and get its act together if it is going to be suc-



Dr. Gurdip Aurora

cessful in this competitive sector. Being a direct flight will not necessarily assure a good traffic flow if people do not get value for their money and a proper service.

I would also like to inform you here that we will be celebrating India's Republic day and Australia Day at the Cinnamon Club in Cheltenham on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2014. This is the first time that we are celebrating our Republic Day on the actual day itself. Please mark this date and do be there to support us. We would love to see you all.

Wishing you a safe festive season and good health in 2014.

**Dr. Gurdip Aurora, President.**

## Obituary

I wish to offer my sincere condolences at the death of Nelson Mandela.

I had the honour and privilege of hearing and meeting Mr. Nelson Mandela during his visit to Melbourne in 1990. He was at that time the Vice President of the African National Congress and had just been released from prison. The occasion was a reception given in his honour, by the Premier Joan Kirner and the Government of Victoria, at Parliament House.

It was the experience of a lifetime to be in the same room with this great man



**His Excellency  
Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela  
Former President of South Africa**

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and to hear him speak at such close proximity. The hall was filled to capacity and there was total silence as he spoke.

I managed to meet him as he was leaving the reception. I introduced myself and conveyed to him the admiration, affection and best wishes of the Indian community of Victoria. My first feeling when he shook my hand was the incredible softness of his skin, similar to that of a child. He told me he would always be grateful to the Indians, who had in the past, and to this day, continued to support him and the African National Congress. "He held the Indians in utmost regard". He also said he had learnt

much from Mahatma Gandhi, in particular from his defiance of the Transvaal Government's ordinance to register Indians in 1906. "Gandhi was not a South African but had the courage to fight discrimination against Indians in South Africa. He (Mahatma Gandhi) inspired me and I have followed his philosophies". He expressed his gratitude for the best wishes and support conveyed by the Indians in Melbourne, and asked me to pass on his thanks and love to them.

Dr. Gurdip Aurora  
President

## Vice President's Message



Ms. Monica Raizada  
Vice President

I have had an interesting journey so far as Vice President of Australia India Society of Victoria. The experience I have gained in my role as Chairperson of the Domestic violence Project has prepared me to face the challenges very successfully with the help of my team. As a result AISV has been able to assist quite a few victims of Domestic violence in the last 18 months or so.

AISV held a family harmony day on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> July at Eric Raven Reserve in Glen Iris. Ms. Kelly O'Dwyer MP was the chief guest on the day. She commended the efforts of AISV on highlighting and educating the community on this very important issue.

I am a firm believer in Indian cultural and traditional family values and am of the belief that family unit can be run smoothly only when there is mutual understanding, trust, care and harmony between the husband and wife. This is only possible in the complete absence of 'Family violence' whether it is physical, verbal, mental or financial in nature. We need to understand that to be able to live a complete life while ensuring that our future generation has a stable and happy future, harmonious family atmosphere is very essential.

To help our community achieve family harmony, AISV is planning its next 'Family Harmony Day' in March 2014. I would like all people including the membership of AISV and their friends to attend this event. Details will be posted on the AISV website and Facebook page shortly.

The Honorable Marsha Thomson MP is working very hard to address the issue of domestic violence within the Indian community and has set up a task force to brain storm the causes of domestic violence. She is being actively supported by Mr. Jasvinder Sidhu, Committee member AISV and a team member of the AISV domestic Violence project. I have been attending these meetings very regularly and I am very happy with the progress of this task force. In our monthly meetings since May 2013, the task force has been working as a team towards creating resources and facilities for the domestic violence victims, synchronizing the services available while bridging the gaps. The task force forum has appreciated my proposal of "Saheli Project" where 'Sahelies/Mentors' will be trained and guided to be able to assist the victims of domestic violence on an ongoing basis.

Finally I would like to wish you a very Happy and safe festive season and hoping to see you on 'Australia Day and Indian Republic Day' dinner and cultural program on 26 Jan 2014 at the Cinnamon club.

**Monica Raizada, Vice President.**

## India's Independence Day celebrations 15th August 2013



Ms. Harjit Bedi  
Asst. Secretary

After several weeks of hectic planning, AISV celebrated the 66th Independence Day for India on Thursday, August 15, at The Queen's hall of The Parliament House in Melbourne.

One had to be there to experience this great event at the Victorian Parliament. It would have made any Indian proud.

For the first time in the history of the Victorian parliament, the Indian community celebrated India's Independence Day on the actual Day the 15th of August. As a matter of fact no other community has ever had a function in the Victorian Parliament ever and in this respect Indian's have created history.

The evening started out with over 100 members, guests and several dignitaries, including Mr Raj Kumar Counsel General of India, intermingling in the foyer over canapés and wine between 6:30 and 7:00 pm. Among the invited guests were the Hon Alan Griffin MP, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, The Hon Nick Kotsiras MP, the Hon Martin Ferguson, the Hon Daniel Andrews, The Hon Tim Pallas, the Hon Marsha Thomson MP, Ms Elizabeth Miller MP and the Director of immigration and Citizenship, Ms Amanda Paxton.

Soon after, the doors to the main hall were flung open the guests were ushered inside to an array of beautifully laid tables with a massive white stone sculpture of Queen Victoria in the back ground, looking down on the guests. It was a very gratifying and exhilarating experience to see the Indian National flag fly alongside the Australian Flag in the Parliament house. It was indeed a

very proud moment for all of us who had the privilege to attend the function

Manpreet Kaur was the MC for the evening. The national anthems for both India and Australia were sung by Prati-ma and Roshni Francis, respectively, a mother and daughter pair.



Ravi of Indus Age, Dr Gurdip Aurora, The Hon Martin Ferguson, Minister for Energy, Resources and Tourism and Mr. Ravi Bhatia, President AIBC

AISV was joined by Australia India business Council (AIBC) to hold the function together. It was a great achievement by the President of AISV Dr Gurdip Aurora. The executive members of AISV and AIBC need to be congratulated for organising this wonderful event. The ambience was great, the gathering was exclusive and the food was good. There was a three course meal with plenty of wine, beer and drinks.

Delicious Entrées, of beetroot Carpaccio and goats' cheese prepared by the chefs of the Parliament house, were served as the Bollywood dancers entertained the audience. After that Dr Gurdip Aurora, president of the AISV welcomed the guests followed by a short address from Mr Ravi Bhatia, President of the Australia India Business Council. AIBC was the co-host for the celebration of this event.



Dr Aurora receiving the Australian Flag and the accompanying plaque from the Hon Martin Ferguson, Minister for Energy, Resources and Tourism.

In his welcome address, Dr Gurdip Aurora, President of AISV told the audience that by celebrating India's Independence Day on 15 August, he was merely fulfilling the wishes of the late Consul General of India, Dr. Behera. It

was his wish that the Indian community should celebrate its National day on the day itself and not the weekend or days after.

The evening rolled on with a few short speeches from the MPs, punctuated by a display from a very energetic Bollywood and Ukrainian dance troupe.

Dr Aurora thanked the Hon Martin Ferguson for his services to the Indian community and for being a special friend of AISV. During his speech he mentioned that ties between India and Australia dated back over one hundred years. He mentioned that thousands of Indians fought and sacrificed their lives fighting side by side with the British and Australian armed forces in World War 1 and again in World War 2. Over three hundred and sixty two Indians lost their lives in Gallipoli, which has never been acknowledge by either the Indian or the Australian Governments.

Among the highlight of the evening was when The Hon Martin Ferguson presented Dr Gurdip Aurora with the Australian Flag that was flown in the House of Representatives Chamber in Canberra on 18 November 2010.



Dr Gurdip Aurora with Ms Amanda Paxton, Director of Immigration and Citizenship, Victoria and a guest of AIBC

Apparently it was a very big honour for Australia India Society of Victoria to receive the National flag as only one is usually presented each year, according to Martin Ferguson.

Dessert of divine crème caramel with strawberry and shortbread was served along with tea and coffee. This was devoured hurriedly by most people as they were all keen to join in the tour of the Parliament House which was beginning about the same time.

The tour, for most, was the highlight of the evening. All interested were taken to both lower and upper houses and given good accounts of what happens in each of the houses.

The staff at the Parliament House was all friendly, helpful, approachable and very professional. About 10:30pm the evening was wrapped up, enjoyed by everyone, despite the next day being a work day for most.

**Harjit Bedi**  
Asst. secretary

# Australia India Society of Victoria Celebrates India's Republic Day/Australia Day 2014

On Sunday January 26, 2014



AISV is celebrating India's 63rd Republic Day on Sunday, 26 January 2014 at 6:30 pm for 7:00 pm at TheCinnamonClub, 1293 Nepean Highway, Cheltenham.

All members and their guests are cordially invited to attend.

BYO: Wine only

#### TICKETS:

Members: \$50 Non Members: \$55 Includes 3 Course Dinner and Entertainment  
Please deposit funds into AISV account: BSB 083453, Account no: 690471204  
and contact Treasurer: Uma 0415 341 627



- For further inquiries, contact:
- Gurdip Aurora 0417 357 715
- Monica Raizada 0433 773 413
- Uma Ganapathimeddy 0415 341 627
- Shivani Lamba 0412 155 424
- Jasvinder Sidhu 0433 858 273
- Harjit Bedi 0412 939 957



## **Important Announcement - Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2014**

### **'Engaging Diaspora: Connecting Across Generations'**

**7-9 January, 2014 - New Delhi, India**

I am pleased to inform you that the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Government of India is celebrating the 12th edition of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) with the theme "Engaging Diaspora: Connecting Across Generations" from January 7-9, 2014 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, India. The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports is the partner Ministry for PBD 2014 and FICCI is managing and coordinating the event.

As you may be aware, PBD is a unique platform that connects over 2000 overseas Indians across 60 countries. Besides opportunities to connect with different stakeholders from Industry and Government, the PBD 2014 will offer new synergies to Indian Diaspora to network & collaborate across sectors in different States. The Divas will be formally inaugurated on 8th January, 2014 by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. On 7th January, a special seminar entitled the 'Youth PBD', will be held to focus on youth diaspora. Hon'ble President of India will deliver the Valedictory Address and confer Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards on 9th January 2014.

The PBD 2014 endeavours to:

- **Strengthen Diaspora's engagement with India's growth story and provide an invigorating platform to network across traditional & new sectors**
- **Enhance linkages for Diaspora across the spectrum: socio-economic and cultural including Media & Entertainment**
- **Foster Diaspora synergies in Science and Technology & Healthcare**
- **Deepen engagement with young Diaspora and facilitate new perspectives**
- **Recognize Diaspora's contribution to the Indian growth and development**

As we expect enthusiastic participation from the diverse overseas Indian Community, PBD 2014 will continue to make an effort to address the issues and concerns of the Diaspora effectively.

May I request you to kindly help us disseminate the information on PBD 2014 and use your good offices to reach out to the NRIs/PIOs in your country. Delegates can access the PBD website for all the information ([www.pbd-india.com](http://www.pbd-india.com)) and register online

A dedicated team lead by Ms Vinita Sethi, Assistant Secretary General, FICCI will be coordinating the event.

For queries, please contact Mr. Samrat Soo / Ms. Priya Dhawan at

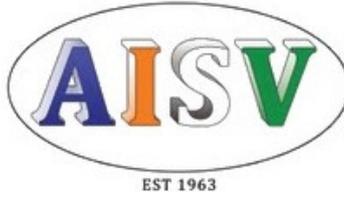
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**Dr. A. Didar Singh**  
**Secretary General**

Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) New Delhi India.

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# Australia India Society of Victoria Inc.

## Annual Membership\* - New/Renewal Application Form

New Application .....Renewal.....

Title/s .....

First Name.....Surname.....

Partner/Spouse's First Name.....Surname.....

Children's names

1.....

2.....

3.....

Address

.....

City .....Post Code .....

Tel (B/H) .....Tel: (A/H) .....

Mobile: .....

Email: .....

Other Details: (Hobbies, Interests)

.....

Would you be interested to join the committee of AISV Yes ..... No.....

Membership Category (Circle one) Life: \$500, Family: \$80, Concession: \$50, Single: \$50

Do you want a receipt Yes/ No

I hereby apply/renew membership of AISV in the above category. I am aware of the rules and regulations of the society.

Signature / Date / Place

Membership Application may be sent to:

**1401 Ferntree Gully Road, Scoresby, VIC 3179**

\* Except Life membership

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 to 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, safeguard interests of its members and to act as representatives for the Indian community in Victoria at various Federal, State and Local governmental levels.