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President's Message

The 'rock star' reception given to Mr. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India during his trip to Australia was amazing to say the least. Never before have I witnessed such euphoria at the visit of any head of state to Australia. It was no doubt a very successful visit. He delivered what was termed a historic address to the Australian Federal Parliament in Canberra in which he reiterated the common democratic forms of government, the cricket rivalry and the two countries having fought in World War one and World War two side by side.

The Prime Minister's trip was very well organised and orchestrated and full credit goes to the High Commissioner of India, His Excellency, Mr. Biren Nanda. He had organised a reception in Mr Modi's honour in Sydney for the leaders of the Indian community to meet with him. I was fortunate enough to receive an invitation to attend the reception in Sydney and presume such invitations would have gone to all community leaders throughout Australia. Though I was not able to attend the reception in Sydney, I am told it was a grand affair. Mr Modi's speech at the public forum in Sydney in which he said that PIO (People of Indian origin) card holders would automatically be given the OCI (Overseas Citizens of India) card was very welcome. However, I was also expecting to hear that dual citizenship would be granted to Non Resident Indians so that we could also vote in the General elections in India and elect the members of parliament there. Unfortu-



Dr. Gurdip Aurora

nately the issue of dual citizenship was not raised.

There was also a reception followed by a dinner hosted by the Hon Tony Abbott, Prime Minister of Australia, at



Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi and Hon'ble Prime Minister of Australia Mr. . Tony Abbott MP

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the MCG and I did get a chance to meet with Mr Modi and Mr Tony Abbott there. Mr Modi appeared to be a very humble man. When I welcomed him as "Hindustan Ke Badshah, welcome to Australia", he held both my hands and said not to address him like that as he was merely a servant of the people of India. As a contribution from the Indian community in Australia, I suggested that we could "adopt a small village in India" and develop it to provide the people living there proper housing, clean water, electricity, roads, sanitation and health care needs. He thought it was a great idea and asked me to write to him. I have since spoke to a handful of Indian business leaders in Melbourne and who are very enthusiastic in their support for such a project.

Mr Modi has fully extended his hand of friendship



Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi and Dr. Gurdip Aurora

towards Australia. Now it is the task of the Australian leaders to reciprocate. In the past the relationship between India and Australia has been according to Mr Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Howard Government of "Indifference towards India on the part of Australia. "A love hate relationship can be fixed but there is no solution to indifference" he said. Mr Downer made this statement during a dinner meeting with me. Mr Tony Abbott and Mr Bill Shorten need to ensure they do not make the same mistake as their predecessors did in the past.

The dinner in honour of Mr Modi was a grand affair and I also had the opportunity to meet with the leader of the Opposition, the Hon Bill Shorten and the Hon Scott Morrison, Minister for Immigration and Border protection. I reinforced the fact to him that it would be of utmost importance for Australia to have strong relationship with India.

Mr Modi signed a few MOU's (Memorandum of Understandings) while in Australia and I have been forwarded a copy of one of the agreements between Australia and India on Social Security to read and comment upon. If you wish to comment on the report please send me your opinion, which I will include in my submission. The agreement is being published elsewhere in the newsletter



Dr. Gurdip Aurora and Minister for Immigration and Border Protection The Hon Scott Morrison MP

Resignation of Vice President and Secretary

Since the publication of the last newsletter, two resignations have occurred. Mrs Monica Raizada has resigned from the position of Vice President and Mr. Vishal Raizada has resigned from the position of Secretary of the association.

These two positions have now become available. If you are interested to do community work please apply to the present committee at the AISV email address. It is important that committee members follow the rules of the constitution. All positions are voluntary.

On a different note the defeat of the Liberal Government in Victoria was not unexpected.

I blame two individuals for this defeat and this is purely my observation. The first is Ted Baillieu, who was Premier of Victoria and who, in my opinion, was 'a no doer' in the two years of his term as Premier. He was a premier of 'indecisiveness and inaction'. He was a Procrastinator who made no decisions at all during his term in office, which resulted in Victoria lagging behind in growth and employment. Two years of valuable time was lost before he was replaced by Dennis Naphthine. If the East West road link had been initiated during his term in office, the project would have been up and running by now creating growth and employment. The outcome of the election may have been different.

The second individual responsible for the liberal defeat has to be the Prime Minister, Tony Abbot and his policies. He and his party are in a self-destructive mode and unless there is a change in their direction and policies, they will be in opposition at the next election.

Another factor in the Liberal defeat was that Ambulance workers and Country Fire Authority personnel actively canvassed in their uniforms to vote against the Liberal government and support Labor, as the Naphthine government could not settle the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement with the union members of these very influential organisations. According to me this was also a very important factor in the marginal seats all of which Labor won.

I commiserate with the Liberal party at their loss in the elections. However, I would like to convey my best wishes to the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon Matthew Guy. I know him very well and I am sure he will be a strong opposition leader and a man of action.



**Dr. Gurdip Aurora and The Hon'ble Bill Shorten MP,
Leader of the Opposition.**

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Hon Daniel Andrews as the new Premier of Victoria and the Victorian Labor party for their success in the state elections. I also know Mr Andrews well enough to say I have confidence in him that he will fulfil all the promises he made before the elections and take Victoria to a bright future. I must hasten to add that Victoria desperately needs to upgrade its roads and hopefully Mr Andrews will have enough support to remove the fifty level crossings he promised as well as building the East West Road link project.

Dr. Gurdip Aurora, President.

Recent Awards

2013: Winner of the most prestigious award, the "Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award" bestowed upon an Overseas Indian Association by the President of India.

2011: Winner of the Victorian Multicultural Awards for excellence towards community services.

Disclaimer

Australia India Society of Victoria Inc.(AISV) 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.

Australia India Society of Victoria

Celebrates

INDIA'S REPUBLIC DAY AUSTRALIA DAY

Monday 26 January, 2015



AISV is celebrating India's 65th Republic Day on Monday, 26 January 2015 at 6:30pm for 7:00pm at The Cinnamon Club, 1293 Nepean Highway. Cheltenham.

BYO Wine Only!

TICKETS

Members: \$50 Non Members: \$55

Includes 3 Course Dinner , Entertainment

Please deposit funds into AISV account: BSB 083-414, Account no: 690471204



For further inquiries, contact:

- Dr. Gurdip Aurora 0417 357 715
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Monday

22 December 2014

18:00 to 20:00 Hrs

Australia India Society of Victoria, Inc. (AISV) in partnership with Jagriti: A Social Awakening, Inc. is organizing a forum with family violence experts, researchers, legal experts, community and faith leaders and social workers.

The keynote speaker and others will talk about their perspective and experiences in dealing with Family Violence.

Mr. Tim Watts MP

Member for Gellibrand,
Victoria

Ms. Maya Avdibegovic

CEO of In touch Inc.

Dr. Gurdip Aurora

President, AISV

Hon Marsha Thomson

State Member for
Footscray

Dr Angela J Taft

Professor, Director, Judith
Lumley Centre

Free Admission! Please RSVP by COB 20th December 2014, Saturday for Catering Purpose.

There are limited seats, please contact any one of our committee members with your name, contact number and number of adults & children attending.



Please attend
this very
important topic
on Family
Violence.

Key note
Speaker
Mr. Tim Watts
MP

Chief Guest
Minister for
women &
Prevention of
Family Violence
Hon'ble
Fiona
Richardson

Venue
Tandoori Flames
15 Vernon St
South Kingsville
VIC 3015



AISV India's Independence day 2014 celebrations at The Manningham function centre.

Topline1: Afghan Society representation

Topline2: Ms. Kelly O'Dwyer & Telmo Languiller

Top Left: The Hon. Matthew Guy and Telmo Languiller

Top Right: Yarra United Cricket Club representation

Bottom Left: Mr. Chin Tan Chairperson of VMC & MC

for the evening Ms. Preeti Jabbal.

Bottom Right: AISV sponsored event, Greater Eastern Primary Health - A conference on family violence and mental health.



Anti-dowry legislation

A few members of the Indian community have recently spoken to me and have expressed their serious concern on some misguided members of the Indian community raising the issue of 'Dowry related family Violence in Victoria' and that 'Migrants should sign anti-dowry affidavits' at the time of their wedding before migrating to Australia.

I have been in Australia for four decades now and as per my observations and those of all Indian community leaders and thousands of people I have spoken to do not believe there is a dowry problem here in Australia. I have not encountered a single incident of a groom or his parents demanding dowry. It does not mean that giving or demanding of dowry does not exist here in Australia but such cases would be very minuscule in this country. Moreover, people may not want to divulge this very personal information to anyone outside the immediate family. The question therefore is why we need legislation for a problem that does not exist here in Australia?

Seeking and demanding dowry in India is illegal and is against the law and punishable by jail since the passing of the Dowry prohibition act, 1961.

Only in July this year The Supreme Court in India said women were increasingly using the anti-dowry law and lodging false complaints to harass in-laws and restrained police from mechanically arresting the husband and his relatives on mere lodging of a complaint under Section 498A of the Indian Penal Code. Citing very low conviction rate in such cases, it directed the state governments to instruct police "not to automatically arrest when a case under Section 498A of IPC is registered but to satisfy themselves about the necessity for arrest under the parameters provided".

Despite the anti-dowry law of 1961, researchers at the University of Portsmouth have found dowry is still regularly practiced in parts of India, and dissatisfaction with the amount of dowry provided contributes to the domestic abuse suffered by newly married women, as well as to gender inequalities on a wider scale.

The study also showed that mother-in-laws were the main harassers and perpetrators of violence against young women nearly 50 per cent of the time.

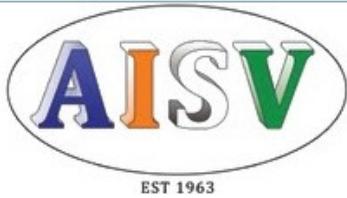
Like anywhere in the world, parents always want their children to lead a comfortable life and at the time of the wedding help them to settle down in their married life by giving them whatever assistance they are able to provide. This support can be in the form of money as well as worldly goods. This form of help is generally reserved for 'daughters' in the family. At times this assistance could be voluntary and may not have been demanded by the groom or his parents. However, if there is a 'toxic' breakdown in the marriage at a later date, this voluntary assistance to the 'bride' becomes a major 'dowry' issue in the family dispute.

These disputes are no different from the disputes we see here in Australia in marriage breakdowns. In the course of my career, I would have seen hundreds of these very bitter disputes end up in the family law courts. And these clashes usually revolve around children and property. So should all the couples here in Australia sign an affidavit before marriage that they will not fight over property or children should their marriage was to break down?

Any signing of an anti-dowry affidavit before migrating to Australia trusting that this would solve the 'Dowry problem' and believing that dowry problem will miraculously and suddenly disappear from the face of the earth is an unrealistic dream. Dowry-related domestic abuse is still prevalent in India, despite years of feminist campaigning.

I am of the opinion that no parent or their child will sign such an affidavit and thus this would be futile. Moreover, affidavits signed in India are not worth the paper they are printed on. Dowry problem will only go away with continued education, possibly starting at secondary school level

Dr. Gurdeep Aurora



Australia India Society of Victoria Inc.

ABN 47 351 032 576 / Incorporated 1985 - A0004545G

Annual Membership* - New/Renewal Application Form

Select: New Application / Renewal

Title/s

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

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

Children's names

1.....

2.....

3.....

Address

CityPost 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

Cheque Payable to Australia India Society of VIC Inc. or Online transfer : BSB 083-414 Account number 69-047-1204

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 to be mailed 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.