



AUSTRALIA INDIA INSTITUTE PRESENTS

CELEBRATION OF THE VICTORIAN INDIAN COMMUNITY

75 YEARS OF INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE, AUGUST 2022



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INDIA MATTERS
CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

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MESSAGE FROM THE THE HON. LISA SINGH, CEO OF THE AUSTRALIA INDIA INSTITUTE:



It was 75 years ago, on the eve of the 14th of August 1947, that Jawaharlal Nehru delivered his moving speech about India's "Tryst with Destiny". And at the stroke of the midnight hour, an independent India was born.

India's independence brought with it triumph and jubilation, but also a series of economic, social and political challenges. Much of India's progress since 1947 can rightly be viewed as a process of recovery from the many challenges and setbacks inherited under British rule.

However, this has helped shape India's course for a brighter future and today, as we celebrate India's 75th anniversary of independence, we reflect on a country that has embarked on a journey of tremendous

growth and development, one with a population approaching 1.4 billion people, one that is rich and diverse and home to all walks of life, and one which stands as the 6th largest economy and the world's largest democracy.

To celebrate this momentous occasion, I have no doubt India's tricolour flag, the *Tiranga*, will be flown in the front yards and balconies of the many Indian-Australians that call Australia home.

The Victorian Government has played a vital role in supporting 75th anniversary commemorations and continues to foster stronger links between Victoria and India, through '*Victoria's India Strategy: Our Shared Future*' and through increased engagement with the Indian community. This brings new opportunities to help strengthen the relationship of our two countries.

The Indian diaspora in Australia has been instrumental in shaping the bilateral relationship. They are the fastest growing community, standing at over 780,000 and continuing to integrate and grow in their vibrancy and business and community ties. In Victoria alone, there are 276,700 Victorians who identified as having Indian ancestry in 2021.

As the world looks up at the transformation of India at 75, its astonishing progress as a vibrant democracy and as a partner and friend to Victoria gives us all a reason to celebrate.

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Victoria is a state that celebrates a strong Indian community. We asked Indian Community Champions why Victoria means so much to them.

To watch the full video series, please go to aii.unimelb.edu.au/



COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Deepak Vinayak OAM

Indian Community leader and former People of Australia Ambassador

"Community leadership is not a nine to five job. People expect you to be 24 hours, 365 days on call. And I really enjoy this because for me, this is not my Victoria. This is not your Victoria. This is our Victoria, because everyone has contributed and participated to make this state. We're very inclusive and colourful. And for everybody, this is where we call home."

The real fabric of Victoria is a blend of unique, colourful languages, cultures, and faiths, and have witnessed love and affection from multicultural communities of this state."



Jaya Manchikanti

Founder of Indian Care, Premier's Volunteer Champion of the Year, 2021

"My hopes and dreams for the Indian community in the future is to integrate really well. And that is happening. We are seeing a lot of cross cross-cultural marriages, which is great. I also hope to see that we retain the lovely traits in our own culture, the languages, the cultural dances and music. And, I want to really inspire women to take on leadership positions."



COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Molina Asthana (BCom, LLB, LLM)

Principal, Swarup Asthana Lawyers and Business Advisors

"When I first arrived to Australia, I found Melbourne a very vibrant city. My vision for the Indian community is to see community members in more leadership positions. We have already seen that happen recently, but I would love to see more Indians who are politicians, those who are judges or partners of big firms, in the media or sports people just out there doing things, being leaders and contributing to Australia, and for letting Australia grow as a nation as well.

It is a community that is growing, not only in size, but growing in importance and in stature."



Dr T J Rao

Surgeon and former Consul General of Victorian to India

I've been greatly honoured by the Indian community. It means a lot to me.

Today an Indian is recognised wherever you go, because of our contribution. Take any field: there is an Indian who is represented, especially in the field of medicine, and a number of doctors who are heads of departments today in Australia.

By way of knowledge in our own profession, we are giving back to the society.



ECONOMY IN 2021



Two-way merchandise trade between India and Victoria reached A\$2.36 billion



India is Victoria's 15th largest two-way trading partner



Top exports include fruit and nuts, wool, non-ferrous waste and scrap, vegetables, and wood



Top imports include refined petroleum, textiles, and pearls and gems

EDUCATION & SKILLS



Melbourne is home to leading Indian tech companies such as Infosys, Wipro, Tech Mahindra, TCS (Tata), HCL Technologies and Ramco Systems



Victoria is the Australian study destination of choice for Indian students with 37 per cent of the total Indian students in Australia residing in Victoria



As of 11 July 2022, there were a total of 21,695 Indian students enrolled in Victorian institutions



Global Victoria has the largest presence in India of any Australian state or territory

COMMUNITY IN 2021



276,700 Victorians were identified as having Indian ancestry



Between 2014 and 2022 Indian community groups have received over A\$10 million through Victorian government initiatives



A RELATIONSHIP OF VIBRANCY, COLOUR AND CONTRIBUTION

**AN EDITED ESSAY BY MARK PIERCE,
DR SURJEET DANJI AND SARAH WHYTE**

Some relationships are limited, static or finite. Victoria's relationship with India is none of these things. Both Victoria and India embrace a growing and dynamic relationship, which is more multi-faceted, richer and closer than ever before.

The first Indian immigrants arrived in Victoria around 1843, with an initial group being fourteen workers recruited by a Victorian landowner. As Melbourne became more prosperous, it built Government House which pre-dated but matches the State buildings of imperial Delhi.

Those State buildings remain the centre of power in post-Independence India. India's Independence in 1947 created the world's largest democracy, governing a nation which has confronted and overcome many daunting challenges in the past seventy years. India's traditional agricultural and textiles industries continue to thrive, while at the same its information technology enterprises are among the most dynamic in the world.

The relationship changed character and pace after Indian independence.

Those long-standing links between us have now strengthened by the addition of new strands in the relationship. The presence of large numbers of International Indian students is of fundamental importance, not just in imparting knowledge and skills but in inculcating greater cross-cultural understanding.

The diaspora has 84 registered Indian association/ organizations in Victoria, operating under the umbrella body of Federation of Indian Associations of Victoria (FIAV). They consolidate their social, economic, and cultural activities through linkages with the local and state institutions.



India is the second top country of birth in Victoria after Australia.

40%


of the total India-born population chose Victoria (276,770) as home, followed by New South Wales (261,103).



Melbourne's Indian population has trebled since 2001, with the average age being 31 years with 50 per cent being married and almost 47 per cent having Australian citizenship. (source: Census Data 2021)



Approximately 25 per cent of the Indian and Indian-Australians are professionals, and 14 per cent work in clerical/ administrative sectors



Indian cultural festivals, the richness of modern Indian literature, the vibrancy of Indian films; all these elements help to bind together India and Victoria.

In terms of culture, we can develop more extensive links through festivals like Diwali or the Jaipur Literature Festival, through film festivals and co-production of new films, through exchanges of artists and writers. Films remain one of the best ways to reach a mass audience, to promote Victorian attractions to Indians such as the Great Ocean Road, Melbourne's lanes, the Grampians, Moomba or the King Valley.

The lit-up Melbourne Federation Square annually marks Diwali celebrations. Bollywood film stars dedicate trips to grace the well-established Melbourne Indian Film Festival, which is held with support from the Victorian Government. By providing grants to Indian screen projects to undertake production, or both production and post-production, in Victoria, Film Victoria's Indian Cinema Attraction Fund showcases Melbourne and Victoria to audiences of Indian cinema.

We can even look forward to Indian players in Australian Rules football as well as in our cricket and hockey teams. In return, Victorians could be introduced to popular Indian contact sport of kabaddi. There are also so many Victorian and Indian women who grace these sports on both sides, something we hope to build upon in the near future.

Victoria has now established a new form of relationship with India, one which carry us forward into the rest of the century: ours is a relationship of partners – of equals seeking mutual benefit, playing to each other's strengths, building trust and confidence in each other and a relationship for the longer term.



THE VICTORIAN CONNECTION

For States like Victoria, working on a State-to-State basis is the most effective way to develop relations throughout India. Since the launch of Victoria's India Strategy, Victoria and India have strengthened our bilateral ties in edtech, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality (ARVR), the business of sports and urban development and sustainability. We have grown relationships with our start-up sectors, specifically in medtech, agtech and energytech.

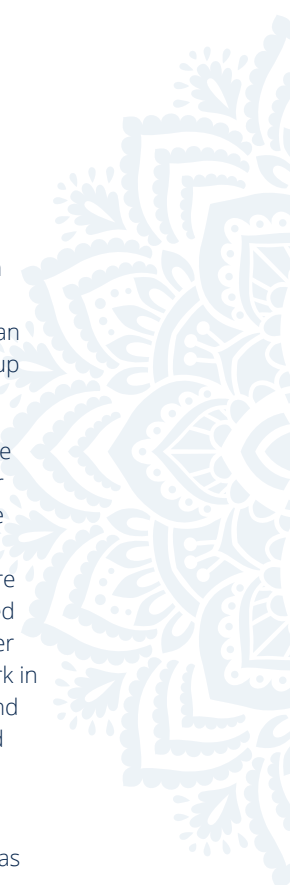
The Indian community in Victoria is gaining the sort of profile and prominence which our Greek and Italian communities did after the first waves of post-war migration. Currently, as of end June 2022, India was Victoria's largest onshore education market, with 18,800 Indian visa holders studying in Australia and a remaining 2,500 students offshore. There were 21,791 Indians who were granted permanent migration in 2020-21. Approximately 30,000 were granted temporary skilled employment visas in the same period. Approximately 25 per cent of Indians and Indian-Australians are professionals, and 14 per cent work in clerical and administrative sectors. In Melbourne, people of Indian background make up the two main industry sectors: professional, scientific, technical, and administrative; and wholesale and retail trade industries.

The vast majority of Indians in Victoria reside in areas stretching from Noble Park to Cranbourne East, and on the opposite side of the bay in places such as Wyndham, Werribee, Point Cook and Laverton. Greater Dandenong is home to 'Little India,' and Point Cook is known to some as 'Mumbai Cook' due to the visibility of Indian residents.

Meanwhile, Victoria's Trade and Investment offices in Bengaluru (established in 2005) and in Mumbai (2012) have demonstrated the value of collaboration with India's states. In their work, that was done in Melbourne, and through the efforts of Indian colleagues and counterparts, we can glimpse the shape of our shared future.

Victoria already has built up a trade and investment worth billions of dollars and thousands of jobs with India. Many IT companies have their HQ in Melbourne, strengthening those transnational ties. The largest Indian community in Australia lives in Victoria; the recent census demonstrates again the remarkable scale and pace of growth within that community. About half of all Indian students in Australia study in Victoria.

However, much more can and must be done.





THE FUTURE


We can envisage substantial research partnerships across the board, but especially in fields like green energy and life sciences, as these are of critical importance to both Victoria and India.

We can look forward to developing synergies in information technology and financial services, sectors at the cutting edge of twenty first century economies. More and more of our businesses will gain the confidence and experience required to participate in each other's markets.

Victorian businesses may reach one simple conclusion about market growth and returns when interacting with India: we cannot afford not to be there. We have already taken many steps along the way and should not reduce the pace or lower our level of ambition: many drivers will enable us to accelerate the rate of growth in relations.

The primary driver is the ever-expanding Indian community in Victoria, bringing their hopes and dreams, their talents and skills to the state. This community's knowledge of India – customs and contacts, networks and nous - comprise an enormous and growing asset. Listening to and learning from the Indian community is an integral component of Victoria's India strategy. More importantly still, the community can help show young Victorians the rich texture of Indian culture – through dance, festivals, music, the rich kaleidoscope of Indian textiles and the wondrous worlds brought to life in modern Indian literature.

The second is the business community, supported by government and aided by business chambers. Finding ways for Victorian businesses to talk to each other about how to establish and develop trade and investment with India will be a crucial way to leverage off the experiences of individual firms. Those discussions could be led by a CEO forum, one including both traders and investors.





Supporting the relationship, is the Australia-India Institute at the University of Melbourne. With the support of the Victorian Government, the Institute encourages and sponsors high-level exchanges, particularly the Australia-India Leadership Dialogue. The Institute's program of speeches, publications, discussions, seminars and visits are all designed to generate ideas and initiatives which can, in turn, help inform and animate government and business strategies towards India.

Victorians can see the increasing presence of India in their lives, in their shops and on their streets, on their screens and on their kitchen shelves. Positive, informed awareness of India in the community, reinforced over time, will be crucial to the success of any strategy, whether from government or from business. All Victorians need to appreciate our shared future with India, in order to make that future a practical, tangible goal.

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION



\$500,000 to Mata Chintapurni Arts/Education and Cultural Centre through the 2021-22 Multicultural Community Infrastructure Fund for the construction of St Albans Hindu Community Centre



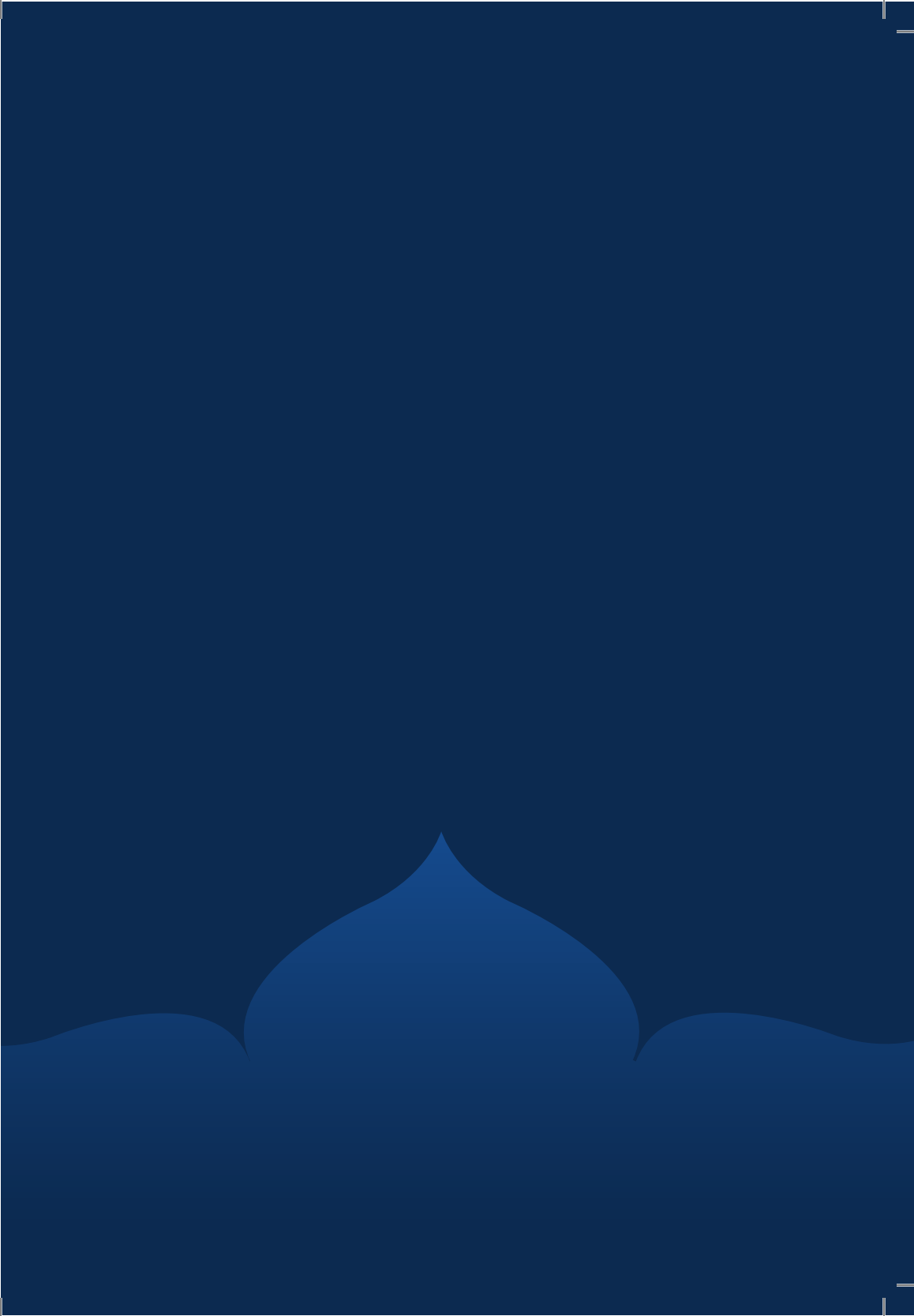
\$1 million to Sri Guru Nanank Satsang Sabha as an election commitment in 2018/19 for the creation of a Community Centre focused on the needs of the Punjabi community in Blackburn. The funding supported construction and fit out of the existing community centre



\$600,000 to Sri Durga Arts Cultural and Education Centre as an election commitment in 2018/19 for the upgrade and renovation work on the Sri Durga Temple in Rockback, including the construction of a cultural centre with a gathering hall, library, meeting rooms and amenities



\$556,250 to Sankat Mochan Samiti through the Multicultural Infrastructure Fund in 2018/19 to refurbish the Sankat Mochan Indian Cultural Centre





75 AUSTRALIA
CELEBRATES
INDIA 1947-2022