



THE UNTOLD STORY OF THE ANZAC-INDIA FRIENDSHIP

MEDIA RELEASE:

The untold story of the Anzac-India friendship forged amidst the trials of Gallipoli in 1915 will be on display at the Australia India Institute's Anzac Day event on April 22 in Melbourne.

The event will feature little-known details of the Australia-Indian military connection revealed by Australian military historian Professor Peter Stanley from UNSW.

Professor Stanley will focus on the friendship formed under fire and on the forgotten contributions of the Indian force to our national story.

Dr Sushil Kumar, Consul General of India, and the Honourable Tim Watts MP, Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs will also attend, with Minister Watts sharing his insights on the enduring bonds between Australia and India.

"Although small by comparison to the Australians, the Indian troops' efforts were valiant and played a critical role in some of the major offensives of the campaign," said Lisa Singh, CEO of the Australia India Institute.

As part of the event, a special 'Bahadur' painting will be officially unveiled and presented to the Institute. It was painted by mouth by Leading Air Craftsman Mridul Ghosh, a resident of the Paraplegic Centre for Armed Forces in Pune, India.

The painting features a portrait of Australian Private John Kilpatrick Simpson, whose courageous efforts to rescue wounded soldiers for medical attention earned him the nickname 'Bahadur – bravest of the brave' from Indian troops.

"This event is not just about commemorating the past; it's about reclaiming untold stories and presenting them in a new light," said Lisa Singh, CEO of the Australia India Institute.

"By shining a spotlight on the contributions of Indian troops at Gallipoli, we aim to commemorate the breadth of the Australia-India friendship that first formed on the battlefield," she added.

VIP attendees include:

- Dr. Sushil Kumar - Consul General of India
- The Honourable Tim Watts MP - Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade
- The Honourable Ted Baillieu AO
- Steve McGhie MP - Member of the Legislative Assembly, Parliament of Victoria
- Dean Lee - CEO, Shrine of Remembrance
- Makarand Bhagwat - President, Hindu Council of Australia (Vic)
- Colonel Rajesh Kaswan
- Colonel Paramjit Singh Brar
- Colonel Ashok Abhilashi
- Wing Commander Satish Kumar Singh

Interviews available with:

- Lisa Singh, CEO, Australia India Institute
- Professor Peter Stanley, Australian military historian UNSW
- Mark Trayling, grandson of Indian Navy Commander JB “Dick” Simmons and commissioner of ‘Bahadur’ painting

Archival pictures can be provided upon request.

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