



LINKING AUSTRALIA WITH INDIA

Indian Link

NEWSPAPER

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

As watchers of the trends in Australia's Indian community, Indian Link has had opportunities to observe and report on a variety of community events across the country.

Primary among our coverage is Diwali, the most major of Hindu festivals, which falls around October-November each year. Every major city in Australia celebrates this Festival of Lights, where the community gathers in large numbers. In recent years, prominent members of the mainstream are invited to participate in the festivities.

Indian Link produces special Diwali editions annually, providing comprehensive reportage of the main Diwali events across the community in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth.

In our opinion, the Melbourne event of Festival of Lights at Federation Square, organised by Celebrate India, **far outshines** every other Diwali function nationally, in terms of grandeur as well as reach and influence.

For ten years now, this event has been able to not only sustain itself but far exceed expectations each year.

In terms of **numbers** in the last three years alone, the attendance has grown from 55,000 in 2013, to over 56,000 in 2014, to 62,500 in 2015, when the event was extended to include a smaller function on a second day, never done before. (These figures can be authenticated by Fed Square authorities).

Our estimate has been that no other Diwali celebration can match these numbers in attendance.



In addition, having grown from a day-long cultural event to a two-day extravaganza, the event now extends to **ten days** over and beyond the main event at Fed Square, reaching people at Flinders St Station, City Square, the city's tram network, even Melbourne Airport. Hundreds of primary school children across the city participate annually in specially designed Diwali competitions.

In terms of the **cultural extravaganza** itself, Celebrate India picks its acts and activities after a thorough search and streamlined auditioning process, bringing into its fold quality platforms from across Melbourne's multicultural and mainstream communities, to offer the best entertainment to their audiences. Perhaps this is one of the many reasons of its steadily growing success.

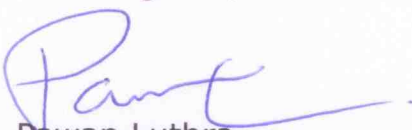
As well, the **organising committee** is deliberately kept small to ensure dedication: made up of volunteers, the team is guided by the leadership of Arun and Jaya Sharma, who have showcased clear purpose of vision, their only aim being, spreading the multicultural word about bringing communities together.

With its wide range of activities, this annual event has touched **mainstream Australians** like no other Indian community function nationwide. Its aim in spreading the multicultural message underlying the very foundations of Hinduism, has well and truly been accomplished.

This success, as well as the structured manner of functioning, have been the major impetus for us at Indian Link to strike a **partnership** with Celebrate India. We are very particular (and somewhat choosy) about the organisations we align with, choosing our rare partners very carefully. (Our partners to date have been the likes of Cricket Australia, AFL, Sydney Festival, Sydney Film Festival, Organ and Tissue Donation Authority, Sydney's Powerhouse Museum, and the Breast Cancer Foundation).

Indeed, by our experience, we can confidently state that Celebrate India's Diwali event has set the **benchmark** - every Diwali function across the community wants to emulate the success achieved by this Melb-based not-for-profit.

Kind Regards,



Pawan Luthra
CEO-Indian Link
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