

## Bhavan's participation at 55<sup>th</sup> Australian National Field Days, Orange, NSW, Australia

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan was delighted to have had the opportunity to participate in the 55th Australian National Field Days, 2006 where India was Guest Nation Exhibitor. India's participation at the event was a part of the initiative taken by Consul General of India Sujan R. Chinoy to project India regionally. Consul General informed Bhavan that this was the first time that India was participating in a regional event in Australia in a major way. Mr Gambhir Watts President of Bhavan Australia welcomed the opportunity to project India's tradition, culture, life and literature. Mr Watts also accompanied the Consul General Mr Sujan Chinoy on a reconnaissance visit to Orange to gauge the level of logistics involved. The Australian National Field Days (ANFD) is known to be Australia's longest-running Agricultural Exhibition. This event is held annually to showcase and demonstrate products that are offered to the Australian farmers, agriculturalists and related industries. Ireland, China, New Zealand, Canada and the UK were some of the countries who had participated as Guest Nation Exhibitors in the past.



Bhavan Australia organised Indian dance performances featuring the Nupur Dance Group, Ruchi Sanghi Group and the Punjabi Beat Bhangra Group, all from Sydney, over the course of the three-day event. It was a logistical challenge for the Bhavan to coordinate the various dance troupes and fashion companies to be present in Orange for the three days. Each of the dance troupes were assigned a day to perform. Every day a special coach arranged by Bhavan would bring a dance troupe to perform and then driven back to Sydney the same day! Performances were given both at the outdoor venue, as well as indoors. Each of the dance troupes gave lively performances during the Fashion Parade at the Women's Interest Centre. Bhavan Australia also organised a Fashion Show of traditional and modern Indian dress, twice daily, at the Women's Interest Centre with help from a local choreographer arranged by the ANFD for the fashion show. Bhavan arranged for Dilbur Fashions of Sydney to provide the dresses for the shows using local Australian models arranged by the Consulate and ANFD. Special mention must be made of Ruchi Sanghi Dance group, Punjab Beat Bhangra, Nupur Dance School who took part in these events with great enthusiasm.



Yoga in Daily Life welcomed the opportunity to participate in the Australian National Field Days and readily accepted when the founder Paramhans Swami Maheshwarananda was invited by Mr Sujan Chinoy, Consul General. It was represented by Shanta Goundar, Amritma and Gowri Sriraman. They were struck by how well received Yoga was in the rural community. A few pregnant ladies dropped in seeking advise on Yoga poses to practise during their pregnancy. Groups of school kids dropped in to have a go, so did farmers who also dropped in for some rest and relaxation! There was an interest in the Yoga supplies, including CDs and books on display. Some of the AFND organisers also took this opportunity to practise their Yoga. They also provided free tea (both black and herbal) to the steady flow of visitors. Brahma Kumaris bringing with their Positive Mind, Positive Future felt it was a timely to spiritually support the rural Australia in Orange. Mr Kamath of BK said that the Australian farmers were facing the 7th year of drought and hence to serve them spiritually was a great honour. He added that several farmers and their



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children visited their stall. A special talk organised called "Sustaining your Mind". Were the basics of positive thinking was imparted to the visitors to help stabilise their Mind and to look positively to the future. One of the visiting farmers told Mr Kamath that he just could not stop worrying day or night about what might happen. He said he would definitely try to bring the practice of meditation into his life. Even school children visited the stall and enjoyed the meditation experience. Brahma Kumari's felt that a special good will was created during those 3 days of the event.



This year's event, according to the organisers, drew about 30,000 visitors to the Field Days from all over the south-central part of Australia. For India the Field Days provided an opportunity and a platform to project India in a comprehensive manner, including its vibrant economy, its modern technologies and its traditional culture, to regional Australia. The 55<sup>th</sup>. Australian National Field Days was declared open by the Consul General of India at the inauguration organised on the first day of the event, in the presence of a large gathering that included Orange City Mayor John Davis and Cabonne Council Mayor John Farr. Russell Turner, the local MLA, was also present along with ANFD Chairman Allan Watts and his team. The inauguration ceremony was held against the impressive backdrop of a traditional Indian façade, an ornate wooden structure, provided by Mr. Shankar Dhar, Regional Director, India Tourism. Bhavan Australia, added value to the event by organising scintillating performances of Indian dance. The Consulate General Of India, Sydney showcased India's Agricultural, Manufacturing, Services and Technology sectors at the event. The participants organised by the Consulate General of India, Sydney, included Mahindra & Mahindra Tractors Division, Mahindra & Mahindra Automotive Division, MRF Tyres, NASSCOM, the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) among others. India's varied culture on display at the Field Days invited very favourable comments from among the visitors, media and local officials. They observed that it was the first time that a Guest Nation at the ANFD had put on such a remarkable display of its culture in addition to exhibits. As part of a publicity blitz to make Australians in regional parts of the country aware of modern India and its multi-faceted achievements, the Consulate General of India had arranged for the distribution of over one thousand copies of a special publication on India entitled "India- A Dynamic Democracy" brought out by the External Publicity Division of the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, to visitors at the Field Days, especially to school children. A large quantity of tourism-related brochures were also made available to visitors. A special exhibition hall decorated with traditional Indian motifs and tourism posters was set up by the Consulate General of India in co-operation with the Orange City Council with facilities to screen documentaries on India to visitors throughout the three days.

The Consul General of India also addressed the Rotary Club in Orange at a dinner meeting which was attended by about 45 Rotarians from the region. Mr Gambhir Watts President was also specially invited to the Rotary Club for the dinner. Door prizes on each of the three days of the ANFD were generously provided by ACR International Travel & Tours "Spice Trails", the Taj Group's Hotel Blue located in Woolloomooloo Bay, Sydney, Blue Line Cruises, Sydney.

## Snakes and Ladders

**An Australian Film produced and directed by an Australian Indian Navneet Choujar.**

Set in a classic Hitchcock format, the film is an example in what can be achieved on a shoe string budget. Shot entirely on location, it tells the story of a fugitive John Barrot, who is being chased by two detectives Peter Brown and Helen Carter. He breaks into a film director's (Craig Lockwood) house. There he finds Craig's girlfriend (Olivia Bowman), alone in the house and forces her to provide him with a hiding place for the night. It is the story of one fateful night when all of them learn that life is a game in which winning or losing can make the difference between life and death. running for approximately 90 minutes, the film attempts to delve into the psychology of a fugitive and his hostage, and the working of a human mind.



The Director Navneet Choujar first started a manpower agency catering to the films in Bombay. Navneet worked as a Chief Assistant Director for many serials which were broadcasted on the mainstream Indian channels and various movies. Navneet is the Direction / Editor & Storywriter for this film.

**This film will be screened at Chauvel Cinemas, Paddington Town Hall on Sunday 17th December at 12:00pm followed by Question / Answer sessions with the Director & Actors.**

**For Tickets & Inquiries contact Navneet Choujar Ph: 043 933 9007.**