



Let noble thoughts come to us from every side

Holi Mahotsav 2014 Post Event Report

Over two sunny days Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Australia celebrated the 12th anniversary of the Holi Mahotsav starting on Saturday 22 March and finishing on Sunday 23 March 2014 at Tumbalong Park in Darling Harbour, Sydney. An estimated 15000 - 20000 people attended the festivities.

Over five hundred artists performed during the festival days and represented a rich mixture of culture, spirituality and entertainment. The cultural performances included: Indian, contemporary, classical, folk and belly dances, fusion and folk music, Punjabi songs, Balinese and Chinese performances and a street dance which engaged into dance the standing audiences.

And we had Yoga, prayers, chanting, meditation and dance and art workshops over the two days. Another feature was Did You Know and One City Celebrates exhibitions from Bhavan's special marquee.

This year Bhavan's Chandigarh Vidyalya (School) participated: students and teacher presented a variety of authentic Indian music and dances.

Highlights of Saturday (Spiritual Day) include: Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannātha (Street parade with hand pulled Cart) starting from Hyde park passing through the main streets of Sydney City CBD and culminating in to Darling Harbour by ISKCON and Yagna (Sacred fire ceremony) by The World Gayatri Pariwar visiting from Haridwar, India.

The audience enjoyed delicious vegetarian Indian food and craft stalls.

On Sunday the traditional practice of colour throwing took place in the designated area in multiple sessions throughout whole afternoon. This joyful activity brought many people of different cultural background together and was celebrated with happiness and harmony among the participants and viewers.

During the special VIP session held on the Sunday the special guests expressed the importance of such events as Holi Mahotsav and demonstrated their support and pleasure of being part of the celebrations. Among the respected speakers who graced the festival there were: The Hon. John Robertson MP, Leader of the Opposition & Deputy Leader of the

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Opposition; Hon. Amanda Fazio MLC, Opposition Whip; Felice Montrone, Deputy Chairperson of Community Relations Commission; The Hon. Arun Kumar Goel, Consul General of India; Paul Andersen, Director, Strategic Place Management Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority; Kersi Meher – Homji, Prolifics Sport Writer and Peace Contributor; Dr Phil Lambert, General Manager, Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority; Mrs Alka Goel; Ana Tiwary, Producer / Director Individual Films; Shanker Dhar;

The success of Holi Mahotsav could not have been possible without the selfless untiring support of nearly thousand artists and performers from a large number of dance academies and cultural groups. We bow before and salute them with humility and greatest gratitude. The crowd passionately danced and sang with the performers and enjoyed every bit of the multicultural program.

Our special thanks come to all performing artists –All World Gayatri Parivar; Bhavan Vidyalaya, Chandigarh; Aparna Dixit; Sahaja Yoga; Aziff Tibal Belly Dance; Chinese Traditional Dance; Expression; Rythmic Squad; Hip Hoppers; The Global Gypsies; Arpita Shome; Indian Mystique Pty Ltd; Kiran Shah; Taraana Indian Classical Dance; Rhythms Dance Troupe; Nartan Institute of Performing arts; Geetanjali School of Dance and Performing Arts; Mango Dance; Nupur Dance Group; SGGHS Bollywood; Team Ace Japanese Dance Group; Shysta Sodhi; Aleem Mohammed and Shireen Mohammed; Electric Korma Musical Band; Prabhu OSONIQS Rhythm and Bhangra Performers.

The stage performances were provided under direction of our eternal and incredible stage managers Manju Chand Raja and Bhoji Watts assisted by great masters of ceremonies: Monalisa Grover, Soim Raja, Jignasha Bhatt and Saurabh Arora.

The food stalls during the Holi Mahotsav pepped up the festival by adding variety to the event. A wide selection of delicious Indian vegetarian meals, beverages and sweets was offered by renowned Indian restaurants: Taj Sweets & Restaurant and Khaana Khazanna. Stay Cool Tropical Sno, Sugar Cane Juice and Fresh Sugarcane Juice brought cooling and calming drinks.

This year we introduced Merchandise marquees instead of stalls showcasing traditional dresses, tops, fashion accessories, fancy bangles by The Saree Collection and artistic Henna art tattoos from Zenat Art Henna Tattoos and Psychic Readings)Tarrot and Palmistry).

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Indian Mystique offered free dance workshops for kids and face painting. Among other craft marquees we had: India Tourism Sydney - Incredible India UAE Exchange Australia PTY LTD, TV, Bank of Baroda, Central Equity, TEG Immigration.

We express our heartfelt gratitude to our main sponsors and supporters: NSW Government: Premier of NSW, Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW, India Tourism, Sydney and Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority. We are grateful to the LAC City Central NSW Police for supporting with street parade and ISKCON Sydney for organising and running Rath Yatra.

Holi Mahotsav has become an integral part of the month long **Living in Harmony Festival** hosted by the City of Sydney and we are grateful to them for inclusion.

We are grateful to our media supporters Sydney Morning Herald, ZEE TV, Easter Suburn Newspapers, Desi Kangaroo, The Indian Telegraph, Indus Age, Indian Link, The Indian Down Under, Punjab Times, Masala Newslines, Navtarang Newspaper & Radio, Nepalese Times and the Epoch Times, SBS **TV** who join us in making this 2014 festival even brighter and diverse.

We applaud with immense gratitude the help of the volunteers Karina Flores Sasse, Jonathan Perticara, Katerina Hristovska, Nagma Ansari, Shirin Ansari, Tarun, Charisma Kaliyanda, Anousheh, Joshna, Dhiya, Marvin, Divya, Nisha, Nabila, Navjeet, Gio, Amy, Bushra Qazi, Dheeraj Kishnani.

We acknowledge the support of Mr Sridhar Kumar Kondepudi – Director Bhavan Australia and Mr Govinda Watts in managing the security.

And we acknowledge with deep gratitude the contribution of our incredible staff Jesica Flores Sasse, Shabana Begum, Parveen Dahiya, Jessica Zheng, Jignasha Batt for their valuable contribution without which we would not have been able to host the festival.

We are grateful to Brendan Burke, Alison Jenny, Gracie Low, Desiree Lane, Graham, Peter Malony, Peter Baker and other staff from Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority for their valuable contribution in hosting this festival.



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