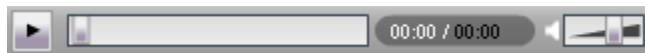


India Australia Friendship Fair

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Dancer at India Australia Friendship Fair 2009

August 15th is India's Independence Day and nowhere is it more royally celebrated in Australia than at the India Australia Friendship Fair in Sydney. This riot of colourful, music, dance and entertainment has got to be one of the best days out whether your background is from India or not and should be on your "what to do in Sydney" list if you are visiting Sydney in August.



Dancers India Australia Friendship Fair 2009

India and Australia's friendship has never been more poignant as in 2009 Australia unfortunately witnessed a significant number of cowardly attacks against Indian students studying there. Currently there are approximately 97,000 Indian students studying at universities and specialist colleges throughout Australia. Having travelled extensively in India myself, I attended the India Australia Friendship Fair to show my personal support for the Indian community and to experience the fair for myself.



India Australia Friendship Fair 2009

Whilst at the India Australia Friendship Fair I took the opportunity to speak with Graeme Innes, Disability and Race Discrimination Commissioner for the Australian Human Rights Commission and also Mrs Aruna Chandrala, President of the United India Association and India Australia Friendship Fair Director for 2009 about these recent Indian student attacks and the fair. You can hear the full interviews in the podcast – India Australia Friendship Fair.



Colourful Stalls

My personal opinion is that these attacks on the Indian students, whilst having a racial element to them, are perhaps more a reflection of the Indian students being vulnerable to attack by anti social elements of Australian society. The Indian students travel late at night to and from the jobs they work in to support themselves during their studies and also their having to live in lower socio economic communities due to the cost of accommodation. They therefore presented opportunistic and soft targets to their attackers.



A riot of colour at the fair

Australia is a diverse multicultural country, over a quarter of its population being born overseas, with that diversity being readily reflected in the faces you see on the streets, the food that is available in the supermarkets and restaurants and the range of cultural events on the Australian entertainment calendar.



Lots to see and do

The India Australia Friendship Fair is a shining example of that diversity. I can think of no better way to encourage understanding between cultures than at a great party. And a great party it is! If you like food, dance, music, shopping for clothes and jewellery and are in Sydney during the month of August, then check the date of the next fair at the [United India Australia association website](#) and get along for a great day out. You won't be disappointed.

Listen to the India Australia Friendship Fair podcast and I am sure you will add the fair to your "What To Do In Sydney" list along with other great days out like taking an [audio tour of The Rocks](#).