

UIA Response to Indian Link's Cover Story in October 2005 issue

We, in UIA Governing Council, have examined the cover page story you took out in your news paper of October 2005. Whilst there are some very useful comments and genuine effort to make UIA more efficient, we find that majority of the commentary are based on mis-informed, biased or one sided views. Therefore we have listed, in the following table, UIA's response to some of the major issues you have raised in your article.

Item	Indian Link Identified Issue	UIA's Response
1	UIA President said – “ there is an intangible perception in the community that UIA has done something to make the community more respectable”. Most members of the community, to whom this statement was repeated found this not only to be laughable, but insulting	UIA made that statement based on input from members of the community who did communicate with UIA following the India Australia Friendship Fair held on 14 th August 2005. Therefore UIA wish to know what survey Indian Link undertook to claim that most members of the community, to whom this statement was repeated, found this not only to be laughable, but insulting. Please let us have a copy of the results of your survey. If you did not undertake such a survey please let us know how did you arrive at such a conclusion.
2	That a body which is known more for it's ability to organise grand melas and infighting has any right – tangible or otherwise – to make a comment like that , is an indication of their lack of touch with reality” a prominent Indian Australian retorted.	UIA wishes to know who this prominent Indian Australian is. If you can not provide a name we will be forced assume that you fabricating stories and putting your own words in the mouth of faceless people.
3	Even issues like Handi Gandhi -----UIA helped him collecting protest signatures during the Fair 2005. The matter has moved to litigation, but UIA has now stepped back and this young Indian battler is doing every thing himself.	This not a true statement and UIA is continuously liaising with Sridhar Doopad and has agreed to accompany him to the hearing and also has agreed to provide any possible help following the outcome of the hearing. UIA is co-applicant in this case, Indian Link can cross-check with the Tribunal. Although this was informed during your interview with the President of UIA, you have printed only half the story which is an attempt to deliberately mislead the readers.
4	----the issues of local Australian Gay magazine ----- UIA also protested but it took an independent member of the community to make a phone call, after which the publication apologised.	The independent member happens to be Sreenadh Brahmapuram, Public Officer of UIA.
5	Musical Chairs at UIA	As explained by President of UIA during your interview with him, UIA has no say with regard to nominations by member organisations to Governing Council of UIA. The Governing Council will then elect the President and the remaining members of the Executive Committee from among the nominated members. Many member organisations have 3 to 5

		<p>year tenure for their elected representative body and it is their choice whether they want to depute their GC members for 1 or 2 or 3 years. In most instances it is for 2 years.</p> <p>Once you have failed to print these facts although they were told to you during the interview by President of UIA. This once again, begs the question of your journalistic standard.</p>
6	<p>UIA also aims to undertake welfare work for the benefit of the Indian Community in NSW whether directly or through a nominated Government Agency.</p>	<p>This nominated Government Agency is The Community Relations Commission through it's Chair. Indian context is unique because of the diversity of languages and community Groups. All other Communities make one application for Government Grant. However Community Relations Commission receives applications not only from UIA but also from it's member organisations. This has made it difficult to obtain Government Grant.</p>
7	<p>Comments of Mr.Avijit Sarkar and Mr. Darshak Mehta</p>	<p>These are the very same people who were requested to help UIA in it's community activities like organising the Cultural activities of the Fair and sporting activities for the younger members of UIA. They gave all sorts of excuses for not getting involved to provide any such help. These people do not want to get their hand dirty and help but are happy to take a pen and paper eager to criticize. UIA do not value such non-productive criticism of such arm-chair-critics. If they want to help the community, let them come forward ready to roll up their sleeves and get their hands dirty in the service of the community.</p>
8	<p>There was a help line for the students, but could not give details of the number of calls received on this line or if there were ever any cases where help was provided. ----- -----</p>	<p>If Indian Link wanted to know the details, UIA would have given the same gladly. We do not recall Indian Link making nay contact with UIA either on phone or email to get these details.</p> <p>For your information, UIA has been helping various students who approached for help. UIA provides information to help them to make informed decisions.</p> <p>UIA Public Officer visits Villawood detention Centre at least once in a month to assist Indian Students caught up in the detention centres.</p>

Finally we request you to publish above responses of UIA also as a front page cover story (as you did about your article on UIA) if you want your readers and the Indo-Australian Community members to know the truth. If you do not give the above UIA responses the same headlines as you gave when you wrote your criticism, we will be forced to assume that you are after cheap publicity.