

UIA President Speech-14-8-2005



Dr. Siddalingeswara Orekondy speaking during India Australia friendship fair 2005 A
Sydney Olympic park,
As part of the Indian independence day celebration
Sunday 14th Aug 2005

Welcome to:

- Hon Phillip Ruddock – Attorney General of Australia
- Mr. Madhusudan Ganapathy – Consul General of India
- Hon Laurie Ferguson
- Hon Virginia Judge
- Hon Luise Markus
- Hon Barbara Perry
- Hon Paul Lynch
- Mr. Stephan Kerkayasharian – Chairman Communities council
- Presidents of various organizations
- Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls on behalf of united Indian associations it is my privilege to welcome you all to our 12th India Australia Friendship Fair.

United Indian Associations is the peak umbrella body representing Indian communities. It is a dynamic organization with participation of 11 associations. I am proud to be part of such a progressive organization. It was founded 12 years ago by visionaries like Dr.Hemachandra Rao, late Dr. Srivastava and others.

As you can see it has grown to be very strong today. This fair started 12 years ago, it was hosted by India league of Australia. The first fair was held at Macarthur girls' high school in Parramatta.

Its popularity has grown year after year, bigger venues. We arrived at this famous venue 3 years ago. Nearly 100 organizations are participating in this event today. We are grateful to our sponsors, volunteers and the participating organizations for making this event a huge success. Particular thanks to participants from Canberra.

The Indian community in Australia consists of people coming from India, Sri Lanka, Fiji, U.K, East Africa and South Africa.

We are a young and growing community, we are essentially peaceful people. High in employment, high in assimilation, low in unemployment and crime. Nearly 80% of Indians have taken Australian citizenship. As you can see we make very good citizens, we give more to the nation than we receive. Considering the world's situation we condemn terrorism and violence against humanities in all its shape and form.

We are celebrating our 58th Independence Day of India which is tomorrow. We got the independence through the leadership of a great person - Mahatma Gandhi.

Gandhi did not hold any position. He did not have an army, not even a suit of clothes. Yet he won the battle against the mighty British Empire.

The weapon he used was AHIMSA which means non violence, along with independence to India he became a world figure. It is indeed sad to know that his name and image is used by a private organisation to sell curries including beef and chicken.

Such denegation of Gandhi's image is deplorable; it is hurtful to the community who hold him at highest esteem. We call him Mahatma – the great soul, we also call him father of the nation.

We call upon the Australian Government and in particular the attorney general to stop this abuse.

Once again on behalf of members of the United Indian Association, I welcome you all to enjoy the fair. Have a good day .