



Coordination :: Cooperation :: Collaboration

FEDERATION OF INDIAN ASSOCIATIONS OF ACT (FINACT)

<http://www.finact.net.au>

ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15

Executive Committee:

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Dr Krishna Nadimpalli | President |
| Mr Lakhan Sharma | Vice-President |
| Mr Sujith Mysore | Secretary |
| Mr Mahesh Scaria | Treasurer |
| Mrs Jayanti Gupta | Representative (Women) |
| Mr Taranjyoth Singh | Public Relations Officer |

**Annual General Meeting
12 June 2015**

Member Associations

Australian Anglo Indian Association of Canberra

Australian Tamil Society of ACT

Bengali Cultural Association of Canberra

Bihar Jharkhand Sabha of Australia and New Zealand

Canberra Hindu Mandir Inc

Canberra Jain Mandal

Canberra Malayalee Association

Canberra Punjabi Sports and Cultural Association

Canberra Sikh Association

EKTA - Indian Subcontinent Students' Association

Gujarati Samaj of ACT

Indian Australian Association of Health and Well-being

Initiatives for Women in Needs

Integrated Cultures ACT Inc

Karnataka Association of Canberra

Mandir School of Music

Oriya Association (OriOz)

Rajasthan Sabha of Australia and New Zealand

South Indian Fine Arts Society

Telugu Association of Canberra

Canberra Multicultural Artists Association

Acknowledgements

The following people/organizations have supported FINACT extensively over the year in different capacities and FINACT would like to thank them for their support.

Government Delegates:

Mr Andrew Barr, Chief Minister of ACT

Ms Yvette Berry, Minister of Multicultural Affairs, Patron of FINACT

Ms Joy Burch, ACT Minister, former patron of FINACT

Mr Shane Rattenbury, Minister of Sports

Dr Andrew Leigh, Member of Parliament

Ms Gai Brodtmann, Member of Parliament

Senator Concetta Feirvanti-Wells, Parliamentary Secretary for Social Services

Senator Kate Lundy

Senator Zed Seslja

Senator Katy Gallagher

Mr Navdeep Suri, High Commissioner of India

Mr Biren Nanda, Former High Commissioner of India

Mr Nic Manikis, Office of Multicultural Affairs

FINACT Supporters:

Mr Amardeep Singh, President (2013-14)

Mrs Jayanti Gupta, President (2012-13)

Mr Jacob Vadakkedathu, President (2011-12)

Mr Sanjay Pandey, Communication

Mr Joe Bailey for motivation of the team

FINACT Volunteers:

Mr Chittibabu Divi, organized Cricket Tournaments

Mr Rajesh Gudapati, organizing CHD & IPD

Mr Narendra Vemula, organizing CHD & IPD

Mr Sree Prasad, organizing CHD & IPD

FINACT Partners:

Mr Martin Garoni & Team, Cricket ACT

Mr Raj Satija & Team, IAAC

President's Message

It is a great pleasure for me to submit the annual report for the year 2014-15 when FINACT has made several initiatives, organized events and supported communities. FINACT organized Indian Independence Day in association with IAAC and all Indian communities. This reflects the Indian communities showcased on the Independence Day. The Community Harmony Day was another



significant milestone to enable the community leaders to develop networks with key political leaders, Government officials, High Commission of India and many other community leaders. FINACT organized a dinner with Minister Rajiv Pratap Rudy and Indian Parliamentary Delegation thereby creating an opportunity for the local community leaders to meet and greet the Indian delegates in an informal setting. FINACT initiated and organized ACT Mini (Multicultural) Cricket World Cup in partnership with Cricket ACT which was very well received by various multicultural societies in Canberra. The tournament will likely be an annual event growing bigger and better each year. It was a pleasure to see FINACT's association with High Commission of India in organising the International Yoga Day at Old Parliament Lawns.

FINACT has supported many initiatives of the member associations. FINACT has coordinated with many different communities and enabled them to form Canberra Hindu Mandir and apply for the land. I am pleased to see FINACT's efforts to get land for the temple is fruitful and became ACT Government's consideration. This shows my efforts to bring all the Indian communities united and represented as undivided community is the way forward.

With FINACT's support to pursue Telugu and Malayalam language are in the process of recognition as Australian Community Language. FINACT has facilitated a meeting with Canberra Taxi operators and ACT Government for the better understanding of the issues.

Thanks for the Member Associations

Background

Federation of Indian Association of ACT (FINACT) provides a unified voice for all associations and promotes the values of Indian communities in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and surrounding regions. FINACT is a peak umbrella body in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and enjoys membership representing organisations of Indian regional, linguistic, youth, women and senior citizens. The main objective of FINACT is to be the unified voice for the numerous and diverse Indian community groups in the ACT that is reflected in its slogan Coordination: Cooperation: Collaboration. FINACT is enabling the Indian communities to represent with one voice to Australian Governments and High Commission of India.



FINACT Activities

In pursuing the core aim of the unity in diversity of many communities, FINACT has made several initiatives, organised events and achieved significant milestones in 2014 – 15.

Indian Prime Minister Visit:

Hon'ble Mr Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India visited Australia and was the first Indian Prime Minister to address both houses of Australian Parliament. FINACT has coordinated with Australian Prime Minister Office through Senator Kate Lundy to get



parliamentary passes for about thirty community leaders. FINACT has also represented to the Australian Prime Minister's Reception at Melbourne.



Indian Independence Day:

FINACT executive has pursued with High commission of India to organize the Indian Independence Day with an aim to promote patriotic values in the younger generation and also depict the diversity of Indian communities. This occasion has depicted that Indian community is unified and not divided even though we are one of the largest and diverse community.



The event was sponsored by High Commission of India and organized jointly with India Australia Association of Canberra (IAAC). For the first time, all communities have joined together and celebrated Indian Independence Day. The program was attended by more than 300 people, participated by 60 people represented by 12 organisations. There were several dignitaries including representatives of ACT and Federal Government and High Commission of India. FINACT has released a souvenir on this occasion with many messages from dignitaries.

FINACT Cricket Tournament:

FINACT has organized the t-20 cricket tournament for all Indian communities to participate and there were 11 teams played the tournament. The main aim of this tournament is to build community harmony and develop networks for the youth. The draws for the fixtures was drawn by Mr Surinder Datta, Deputy High Commissioner on Gandhi Jayanthi event. The tournament went for six weeks and the winner of the team is Kerala Tuskers.



Senator Kate Lundy, Former Commonwealth Minister of Sports was the chief guest of the awards ceremony. FINACT has released a souvenir with messages from several dignitaries.

ACT Mini (Multicultural) Cricket World Cup:

With the Cricket World Cup being held in Australia and New Zealand early 2015, Federation of Indian Associations of ACT, Cricket ACT, ICC World Cup and ACT Sports have jointly organised the ACT Mini (Multicultural) Cricket World Cup. The tournament was a showcase of the Multicultural and Indigenous communities in the ACT using cricket to bring them all together to celebrate the cricket in a fun and active environment.



There were six community teams participated in the tournament viz; ACT Indigenous, Bangladesh, India, Ireland, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The tournament was inaugurated at the ACT Global Cricket Day on 1st February 2015. HE Kazi Imtiaz Hossain, High Commissioner of Bangladesh was the guest to inaugurate the first match of Bangladesh community.



Mr Shane Rattenbury, Minister of Sports & Recreation and Mr Surinder Datta, Deputy High Commissioner were the chief guests of the award ceremony. The final match was played between India and Pakistan. Pakistan community has won the final match and is the champion of the tournament.

Community Harmony Day:

FINACT organised the Community Harmony Day on Saturday, 28 February 2015. The theme of Australian Community Harmony Day is “THANK YOU” for this year. Most of the community leaders are voluntarily putting lot of their personal time and energy for the community with lots of passion. FINACT and its member associations recognized their contribution and read a citation at the event to say “THANK YOU” by offering a flower by the dignitaries.



The aim of the event was to facilitate a networking opportunity for all of member associations with various Indian community leaders, ACT Ministers and MLAs, Commonwealth MPs, Senators, Key Government Officials and High Commission of India and representatives of other community organisations in ACT. The event was organised in an informal way that meant meet and greet.

We had so many lovely and honorable people attended and ample time to speak to one and all. There were: Vicky Dunne MLA Speaker of the House, Yvette Berry, MLA Minister for MC Affairs, Senator Kate Lundy, Senator Zed Seselja, Meegan Fitzharris MLA, Dr Chris Bourke, MLA, Brendan Smith, MLA, Mr Surinder Datta, Deputy High Commissioner of India. There were many leaders from multicultural community Gonzalos Olmos, Sam Wong, Martin Geroni, Alicia Doherty, Dean Sahukhan, Willie Senanayake, Ziaul Hoque and Binod attended the event. Many leaders representing diverse Indian communities also attended and were recognized.



The event also recognized the contributions of Senator Kate Lundy and FINACT gave a farewell by honouring her with a shawl (Indian tradition). Meegan Fitzharris, new MLA for Molonglo was also welcomed and honored by the members of the community.

The event was successful and we received several compliments for the event, some of them are listed below:

“Many thanks for the opportunity to come along, it was a great afternoon and really showed the spirit and commitment of the FINACT organisations” – Meegan Fitzharris, MLA

“Thanks for organising a great day last Saturday” – Senator Zed Seselja.

“Congratulations on a job extremely well done. I cannot remember of a community event so meticulously planned, organised and executed by any Indian associations in Canberra” – Joe Bailey

“Please accept our grateful thanks for organising it so well. This team under your guidance has taken FINACT to levels unthinkable before” – Ashok Jain

“Please continue to pursue the relevant issues for the benefit of the constituent organisations” - Kanti Jinna

“Thank you and congratulations for organising the very successful Harmony Day 2015 on 28 Feb 2015. If Bengali Cultural Association can be of any assistance, please let us know” - Debashish Raha

Indian Parliamentary Delegation Reception:



FINACT is organised in association with High Commission of India the event Meet & Greet the Indian Parliamentary Delegation Reception and Dinner on 28 May 2015. The event was also marked to welcome His Excellency, Navadeep Suri, High Commissioner of India.



Hon'ble Minister Rajiv Pratap Rudy and Twelve Indian Parliamentarians representing various states visited Canberra. The event is to facilitate the community leaders in Canberra to represent and pursue any issues with the Indian Government. This is aligned with the Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to have better coordination with NRIs and improved foreign policy. FINACT hosted this event on behalf of all Indian Communities in Canberra for the honorable guests. The event is provided with drinks, nibbles and dinner in the evening.

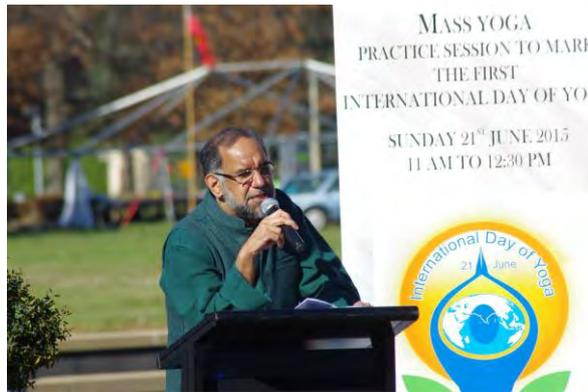


Dr Chris Bourke, MLA has represented the Chief Minister of ACT and Ms Gai Brodtmann, Member of Parliament were the local representatives honored the guests and gave a speech. Dr Krishna Nadimpalli, President spoke about branding of Canberra and possible areas of collaborations with India.

International Yoga Day:

On December 11 2014, the United Nations General Assembly declared **June 21** each year to be the International Day of Yoga.

Yoga, a 6,000+ year-old physical, mental and spiritual practice having its origin in India (Bharat), aims to transform the body and the mind. The declaration came after the call for the adoption of 21 June as International Day of Yoga by the 15th and current Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi during his address to UN General Assembly on September 27, 2014.



Yoga is an invaluable gift of India's ancient tradition. It embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfilment; harmony between man and nature; a holistic approach to health and well-being. It is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness within yourself, the world and the nature. By changing our lifestyle and

creating consciousness, it can help us deal with climate change. Let us work towards adopting an International Yoga Day.

High Commission of India in association with FINACT and several yoga schools in Canberra has organized the First International Yoga Day on 21 June 2015 at Old Parliament House Lawns in Canberra. There were about 150 people performed guided Yoga and the session



was conducted by Yoga Mandir. His Excellency, Navadeep Suri, High Commissioner of India addressed the event and reiterated the significance of yoga on mind and physical fitness. He has also read the message from Hon'ble Tony Abbott, Prime Minister of Australia on International Yoga Day. There were several yoga awareness sessions organized for a week at High Commission of India.

Farewell to High Commissioner of India:

FINACT organized a farewell for His Excellency Biren Nanda and his family in association with IAAC and Kanti Jinna at Ruchi Restaurant on 18 January 2015. Mr Biren Nanda was highly impressed with the leadership and activities of FINACT. He has appreciated the FINACT is putting its best efforts to represent all Indian communities in Canberra as united.



Member of Confederation of Indian Associations of Australia (CIAA):

Dr Krishna Nadimpalli has attended the meetings of CAII at Parliament House and also in Melbourne. The main aim of CIAA is to represent all Indian with one voice. The delegates of various governments will be confused when there are multiple representations and everyone is claiming their association is the main one. The delegates will be confused and may not be able to make a decision and it is not helpful for the community.



Minister Kevin Andrews has invited the founder members of the CIAA for a dinner at the Parliament House. His Excellency, Navdeep Suri has met the members of CIAA at Melbourne and giving his support for this good initiative. High Commissioner has appreciated the efforts of FINACT in bringing together all communities in Canberra.



FINACT Support

Canberra Hindu Mandir:

FINACT has coordinated various Hindu communities planning to build temples and helped them to come together. These groups have formed Canberra Hindu Mandir as an association.



FINACT has facilitated the Canberra Hindu Mandir to influence the ACT Government to consider a large size of the land for future generations. These

opportunities come once in a while and will be there for the community forever as long as Canberra exists.

Canberra Hindu Mandir (CHM) acknowledges the FINACT efforts and has become a member organization. CHM requests the FINACT to continue the coordination role to enable CHM to build this massive facility for our own communities.

Australian Community Language Recognition:

FINACT has pursued with Australian Government and National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI). Senator Zed Seselja has helped FINACT to meet Senator Concetta Fiervanti-Wells, Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Social Services.



FINACT has sought expression of interest from all member associations to nominate their language and pursued for *Telugu and Malayalam*. Currently NAATI is reviewing for the consideration of both the languages.

Punjabi Rural Sports in Canberra:

Canberra Punjabi Sports and Cultural Association organised first Kabbadi Khed mela (Punjabi Traditional Sports Festival) on 7th March 2015 to promote Punjabi culture and sports in the hinterland of National Capital. This



is an inception for a bigger goal to host Sikh Games in National Capital in near

future. The Sikh games usually attended by more than 10,000 interstate visitors every year.

FINACT has facilitated and invited several dignitaries including Mr Shane Rattenburry, Minister of Sports & Recreation, Dr Chris Bourke, MLA, Ms Meegan Fitzharris, MLA, Senator Kate Lundy, High Commissioner of India and High Commissioner of Pakistan. Mr Shane Rattenburry has said, he would be pleased support the Sikh Games in Canberra.

Facilitate Meeting Between ACT Government & Taxi Industry:

CSA has approached FINACT that they have many families in taxi industry and has concerns with the introduction of Uber in Canberra. Canberra Sikh Taxi group is part of CSA. FINACT has facilitated a meeting with Mr Shane Rattenburry, Minister assisting the Chief Minister on Transport Reform.



Minister has appreciated the efforts of FINACT to bring the concerns of the community and has learned the genuine concerns of the taxi industry that includes operators, drivers and ancillary services. The taxi industry representatives also expressed a big thanks to FINACT and acknowledged.

SPONSORERS

